

## **How to Optimize Zoom Audio Settings for Musical Performance** *from Philadelphia Folksong Society*

The Zoom meeting software is primarily designed for clear speech transmission without the user having to know anything about audio settings or controls. It is wonderful at that! Using those same default setting for music performance is .... well, disastrous! There are a sequence of changes that will make live vocal and instrument audio during a Zoom meeting as good as direct livestream audio. This list of steps will guide you through the process of setting up a Zoom account and configuring it for the best sound you can expect. Which is pretty darn good!

### **1. Use a computer.**

The first thing is to know is that optimal settings can ONLY be done on a computer. Mobile devices such as phones and iPads are fine for listening, but do not give you access to turn off the necessary settings to allow good sound for instruments during performance.

### **2. Download and install the App**

While you don't need to install the app to LISTEN to a Zoom meeting, You do need an account to access the advanced settings to properly configure audio for PERFORMANCE.

This link will take you to the official page to install Zoom: <https://zoom.us/download>

Once you download the software, you will need to enter an email address & password to create a Zoom account, then open the Zoom app.

**3. Click the 'Settings' wheel icon in the upper right corner.** That will open the settings panel. 'Audio' is the third option down in the list on the lefthand side.

**4. UN-check the 'Automatically adjust microphone volume'** this keeps the software from lowering the input when you play louder, and raising it when you play softer.

**5. The top slider bar adjusts your headphone/speaker output volume for your sound.** Headphones or earbuds are preferred for your best listening, and to keep other people's sounds from playing out of your speakers and back in through your microphone creating an echo.

**6. The bottom slider bar adjusts your input sensitivity.** While you can use the built in microphone, a USB mic, or other 'line in' input on your computer will significantly improve your sound. My laptop still has an 1/8" audio in and I use a small mixer to connect an XLR microphone.

**7. Click the ‘Advanced’ push button on the lower right.** That will open the advanced settings panel. ‘Audio’ is the 3rd option down in the lefthand list.

**8. Check the ‘Show in-meeting option to “Enable Original Sound” from microphone’.** This turns off more of the software designed for speech but un-helpful for music.

**9. Match all three settings as shown to DISABLE both ‘Suppress Persistent Background Noise” AND ‘Suppress Intermittent Background Noise’.** Set ‘Echo Cancellation’ to ‘Auto’ as opposed to ‘Aggressive’

You may now close the settings panel, you are done in here!

**10. Open the Zoom app to the ‘Home Screen’ and click the ‘New Meeting’ push button.** This will start a new meeting with only you as a participant. Toggle the ‘Original Sound’ option in the upper left until it reads ‘Turn OFF original sound’, that means it is ON.

You can access control of your microphone sensitivity and local output volume by clicking the ‘up-carrot’ next to the microphone icon in the lower left of the meeting panel. It will open the now familiar basic audio settings panel.

Close your temporary meeting, and that is all there is to it! You have now optimized all the settings of your Zoom account for music performance! When you join a performance meeting, just double check your settings and ENJOY!

Here’s a how-to video that can help: <https://youtu.be/mEAb4G063sM>