

# SDSL's Cornerstone Newsletter

South Dakota State Library's e-newsletter

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## Video Call Best Practices

From the desk of [Cheyenne Chontos](#), Continuing Education Coordinator

Whether through offering an online or hybrid program, engaging in an online professional development conference, or taking a webinar, video calls have become a big part of library life. While many of us are pretty familiar with the ins and outs of video calls, it can still be important to review best practices. If you're putting on an online program or webinar, it can also be helpful to share best practices with your patrons or colleagues beforehand to help everyone feel more comfortable and confident on video calls.



This is a list of basic best practices for participating in a video call. This is not an exhaustive list but should be used as a simple guide for effective video calls. Presenters or meeting facilitators may ask participants to follow other practices, depending on the video call, so please keep that in mind as well.

1. If you are in a meeting, video call, or webinar with more than a few individuals, it is generally best to put yourself on “mute” when you’re not speaking. This cuts down on background noise and other distractions for the presenter or meeting facilitator.
2. If you are able, turn on your camera during the video call. This shows the presenter or meeting facilitator that you are ready to engage with the material.
3. However, if you are experiencing broadband issues, such as video and sound stopping and starting, try turning off your camera, as this may help the issue. Utilizing backgrounds can also aggravate issues with broadband, so turn those off if you are experiencing issues.
4. If you are going to be sharing any materials during the video call, do a test run of sharing it before the video call starts. This helps to cut down on any technical issues that you may experience while sharing your information.
5. For best video quality, try to sit in front of your lighting source rather than behind it. So, if you’ve got big windows, try having the computer between you and the window. If you have the window behind you in the video, it can make your face look like it’s in a shadow.
6. Do your best to avoid distracting backgrounds. Most video calling platforms provide some basic backgrounds for video callers to use for those who do not want to show their in-person environment. The “blur” effect or a relatively blank background are good options.
7. Like an in-person training or meeting, it is important to be on time and ready to engage with the material. This also means avoiding multitasking while in video calls.
8. Before starting a video call, make sure that your computer is plugged into a power source. This ensures your computer won’t die during the meeting and can help with connectivity issues.

Librarians are welcome to join SDSL in our upcoming webinars and online and in-person events, which can be found on our [website](#). We look forward to seeing you!





## SDSL Events



### About SDSL

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The South Dakota State Library provides leadership for innovation and excellence in libraries and services to state government.

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*The SDSL does not endorse any service or product listed in this newsletter.*



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