



Using Breakout Rooms in Zoom can be beneficial for synchronous activity in higher education if participants are given clear directives and goals to motivate collaboration.

### **Tips and Tricks for Successful Breakout Rooms:**

- **Assign precise tasks for participants to accomplish**, such as brainstorming or a discussion question.
- **Name the breakout rooms for the activity that needs to be accomplished.** If two rooms are set up, name them after the goal to be completed. For example, Room 1 would be the brainstorming room; Room 2 would be the discussion question room. Make clear directives of what participants will achieve in each room.
- **Set a rotation time between rooms.** Depending on the activity and room names, create 3-8 people groups. The time for a breakout room depends on the activity. Try different lengths and get feedback from the students to find the optimal length of time.
- **Have participants take notes collaboratively.** A shared [Google Doc](#) or [Jamboard](#) (online collaborative whiteboard) is a great way to have participants take collaborative notes.
- **Join in on group discussions.** As the host, you can move freely between breakout rooms but can only be in one room at a time. Circulate through the rooms and check in with the students. Or, you may prefer to turn off your microphone and video and simply observe.
- **Make instructions visible to students.** Copy instructions into the Zoom chat or in a shared document.
- **Broadcast a message of instructions or motivation.** As the host, you have the tool to broadcast a message out to each breakout room. Use this feature to drive the content or activity needing to be accomplished.
- **Let participants know how to ask for help after joining the breakout rooms.** Encourage participants to use the “Ask for Help” button at the bottom of their breakout room windows. This will notify the Zoom host that someone requests help, and the host can join.
- **Get very familiar with the Zoom breakout room options.** Practice breakout rooms and get comfortable with all the settings before going live with participants. Use the [CLT site](#) to review valuable features and resources.