

# THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210227-video-conferencing.html>

A new study from Stanford University has investigated the effects on our health of extended spells of video-conferencing. Researcher and communications expert Jeremy Bailenson dubbed the phenomenon "Zoom fatigue," but acknowledged the condition is not restricted to just that platform. In the past year, most of us have spent extended periods of time online using an array of video-conferencing platforms. The coronavirus pandemic has meant tools like Zoom, FaceTime, Skype and Google Hangouts have been the only way we have been able to see and chat to loved ones. Many companies have relied heavily on video-conferencing for meetings, and educators have used them to teach their lessons online.

Mr Bailenson outlined several factors that make video-conferencing so fatigue-inducing. He said it is not just tiredness and eye-strain from staring at a computer screen for hours and hours. It is also brought about by "cognitive overload" and feeling pressure to be perpetually switched on. We constantly feel we need to be in touch with friends or available for bosses, customers or students. Bailenson cautioned this leads to burnout and stress and can heighten your chance of developing moderate to severe depression. He said this anxiety can adversely affect your self-confidence. This is because of the large number of faces staring at you in meetings. Bailenson likens this to the stresses of public speaking.

Sources: <https://lifehacker.com/how-to-overcome-zoom-fatigue-1846347171>  
<https://newatlas.com/telecommunications/zoom-fatigue-video-exhaustion-tips-help-stanford/>  
<https://www.techradar.com/news/academics-have-identified-exactly-why-video-conferencing-has-you-feeling-exhausted>

# WARM-UPS

**1. VIDEO-CONFERENCING:** Students walk around the class and talk to other students about video-conferencing. Change partners often and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

study / university / communications / expert / fatigue / platform / chat / loved ones / video-conferencing / eye-strain / cognitive / be in touch / depression / faces / stress

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. FACE-TO-FACE:** Students A **strongly** believe face-to-face is always better than video-conferencing; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**4. ONLINE HEALTH:** How does spending time online affect our health? What solutions are there to combat this? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Problems	Solutions
Anxiety		
Eyes		
Back		
Fitness		
Weight		
Addiction		

**5. VIDEO:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "video". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. WEBSITES:** Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Zoom
- Skype
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Google Hangouts
- Instagram
- Messenger
- YouTube

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1. extended   | a. A person who has a comprehensive and authoritative knowledge of or skill in a particular area. |
| 2. spell      | b. Limited in extent, number, scope, or action.   |
| 3. expert     | c. Lasting longer than is usual or expected.  |
| 4. dubbed     | d. A short period of time.  |
| 5. phenomenon | e. Gave an unofficial name or nickname to someone or something.                                   |
| 6. restricted | f. A remarkable person, thing, or event.  |
| 7. array      | g. A range of a particular type of thing.   |

## Paragraph 2

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 8. fatigue      | h. Physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or stress.                          |
| 9. cognitive    | i. Extreme tiredness resulting from mental or physical exertion or illness.           |
| 10. overload    | j. In a way that never ends or changes; constantly.                                   |
| 11. perpetually | k. Average in amount, intensity, quality, or degree.                                  |
| 12. burnout     | l. Relating to the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding. |
| 13. moderate    | m. In a way that prevents success or development; harmfully or unfavorably.           |
| 14. adversely   | n. Giving too much of something, typically something undesirable, to someone          |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210227-video-conferencing.html>

## 1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. Oxford University conducted a study on video-conferencing. **T / F**
- b. A researcher called tiredness while online "Zoom fatigue". **T / F**
- c. The article says all of us have spent a long time online in the past year. **T / F**
- d. Educators said they resent having to use video-conferencing to teach. **T / F**
- e. The researcher outlined seven reasons why video-conferencing is bad. **T / F**
- f. The researcher said fatigue can come because of cognitive overload. **T / F**
- g. The researcher said people feel pressure to be constantly online. **T / F**
- h. The researcher likened video-conferencing to speaking in public. **T / F**

## 2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms. The words in **bold** are from the news article.

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <b>investigated</b> | a. defined         |
| 2. <b>spells</b>       | b. happening       |
| 3. <b>phenomenon</b>   | c. acute           |
| 4. <b>array</b>        | d. always          |
| 5. <b>relied</b>       | e. examined        |
| 6. <b>outlined</b>     | f. warned          |
| 7. <b>perpetually</b>  | g. range           |
| 8. <b>cautioned</b>    | h. gazing          |
| 9. <b>severe</b>       | i. periods of time |
| 10. <b>staring</b>     | j. depended        |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                       |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. extended spells                    | a. severe depression     |
| 2. dubbed the phenomenon              | b. on video-conferencing |
| 3. the condition is not restricted    | c. inducing              |
| 4. tools                              | d. to just that platform |
| 5. relied heavily                     | e. your self-confidence  |
| 6. fatigue-                           | f. of video-conferencing |
| 7. It is also brought about by        | g. touch with friends    |
| 8. we need to be in                   | h. "cognitive overload"  |
| 9. moderate to                        | i. "Zoom fatigue"        |
| 10. this anxiety can adversely affect | j. like Zoom             |

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210227-video-conferencing.html>

1. At what university does the researcher who did the research work?
2. What did the researcher dub a phenomenon?
3. Where did the researcher say we have spent extended periods of time?
4. Who does the article say we have chatted to using online tools?
5. Who has relied heavily on video-conferencing?
6. How many factors did the researcher outline?
7. What brings about fatigue besides tiredness and eye-strain?
8. What does the article say we are under perpetual pressure to do?
9. What does burnout and stress heighten the chances of developing?
10. What did the researcher liken video-conferencing to?

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210227-video-conferencing.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'video' and 'fatigue'.

video	fatigue

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• new</li><li>• dubbed</li><li>• past</li><li>• array</li><li>• tools</li><li>• heavily</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• inducing</li><li>• screen</li><li>• pressure</li><li>• touch</li><li>• severe</li><li>• public</li></ul>
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# VIDEO-CONFERENCING DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'video'?
3. What do you think of video-conferencing?
4. How do you think video-conferencing affects our health?
5. How much video-conferencing have you done in the past year?
6. What are the best video-conferencing platforms?
7. What do you think of 'Zoom fatigue'?
8. What do you think of school lessons being online?
9. What would the pandemic be like without video-conferencing?
10. What would companies do without video-conferencing?

*Scientists explain video-conferencing fatigue – 27th February, 2021*  
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# VIDEO-CONFERENCING DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'fatigue'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you do about eye-strain?
15. What do you know about 'cognitive overload'?
16. Do you feel you always have to be online?
17. How could being online make you depressed?
18. What video-conferencing calls have you made recently?
19. What do you think of public speaking?
20. What questions would you like to ask the researcher?