



Making Video Phone Calls with FaceTime, Google Hangouts and Skype

(For information about using Zoom, see our TechTips article in the April 22nd issue of the Rossmoor News)



Apple's FaceTime app (Apple mobile devices and computers only)

- You can make a FaceTime call with a person's phone number or their email address. *However, your contact must also have an Apple mobile device (iPhone, iPad) or Mac computer.*
- FaceTime can be used to make an ordinary audio phone call or a video phone call. You can make both types of calls using a Wi-Fi connection, even if you don't have a good cellular connection.
- To start a FaceTime call for the first time, open the FaceTime app, tap the plus button  and type the person's phone number or email address.
- Next tap the number or address, then tap the icon for Audio  or Video .
- FaceTime saves the list of contacts you've called before, so you don't have to enter them the next time you use the app.
- You can also start a FaceTime video call from your iPhone during any regular phone call. Tap the FaceTime icon  shown in the Phone app to switch to FaceTime.

Here's a link to the Apple support page about how to use FaceTime to make video and audio calls from your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204380>

Here's a link to the Apple support page about how to use FaceTime on your Mac computer: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT208176>

Making Group FaceTime calls (up to 32 people)

To use group FaceTime video calls, you need iOS 12.1.4 or later, or iPadOS on one of these devices: iPhone 6s or later, iPad Pro or later, iPad Air 2 or later, iPad mini 4 or later, iPad (5th generation) or later, or iPod touch (7th generation). Earlier models of iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch that support iOS 12.1.4 can join group FaceTime calls as audio participants. To make group FaceTime video calls on a Mac, you need macOS Mojave 10.14.3 (build 18D109) or later.

Here's the link for making group FaceTime calls from your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT209022>

The Apple support link on making FaceTime calls on a Mac computer (see above) includes instructions for group FaceTime calls.



Google Hangouts (for iOS, Android, Windows, web access)

Because it's tightly integrated with Google services, you can launch a video chat directly from Gmail and embed meetings into calendars, all without ever leaving the Chrome browser. Like FaceTime, this is handy for quick chats (more on chats below). Nonpaying users can invite 25 people to join a video call at once (a temporary boost from 10). Hangouts has no time limits, and like Skype, Hangouts also offers the ability to make voice calls to a standard phone. Businesses pay \$6 to \$25 for extra users, recording and document-sharing features.

Classic Google Hangouts is now called **Google Hangouts Chat**, and the video conferencing features are now offered under **Google Meet**. Below are the links to tutorials on both products.

Google Hangouts Chat combines instant messaging (chatting) with audio and video phone calls. Since it is integrated with Google calendar, if you schedule a video call on your calendar you can have the calendar app send out event notifications to the calendars of the people specified in the calendar event. You can also copy a link to the event and email an invitation to the invitees.

Price: Free to \$25/month

Here is the Google Hangouts Chat tutorial: <https://support.google.com/hangoutschat#topic=7649316>

Here is the Google Meet tutorial: <https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9282720?hl=en>



Skype (iOS, Android, Windows, MacOS, Linux, Xbox, and Amazon Echo)

Skype was one of the first apps to offer video phone calls, and it is still around. It was acquired by Microsoft in 2011 and has been integrated with almost all the Microsoft products, from Windows to the Xbox. Skype is part Instant Messaging tool, and part real-time chat system.

Its most unique feature is that you can also use it to make calls to any telephone worldwide for low per-minute fees.

Skype's free video system is often unstable and is prone to stutter and disconnections. As a result, it is unusual for users to reach its four-hour or 50-user limit. Currently, since Skype no longer requires its software to join or host meetings, it is still an easy way to get a videoconference going without anybody having to install anything new.

Skype for Business was a much more robust tool that has recently been replaced by **Microsoft Teams**.

Price: Free, with a fee to make audio calls to landlines.

Support for Skype is provided by Microsoft at:

<https://support.skype.com/en/faq/FA11098/how-do-i-get-started-with-skype>

Meet Now is a feature in Skype that allows on-the-fly video conferencing, as opposed to Group Chats, which set up the group members in advance. Here is a link to the tutorial:

<https://support.skype.com/en/faq/FA34926/what-is-meet-now-and-how-do-i-use-it-in-skype>