

Unpacking Disability

with Meriah Nichols

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- [DISABILITY REVIEWS](#)
- [DISABILITY COMMUNITY](#)

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How to Enable Free Zoom Captions with Any Zoom Account



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This is a tutorial for how to set up free captions on Zoom – *any* account on Zoom, including your personal free account.

I need closed captions. I don't really care what you call it – “open captions” or “closed captions” or “subtitles” – I am simply talking about the text transcription that is the bottom of a screen that shows what people are saying. For the sake of simplicity, I'm just going to call them “captions” here.

With captions, I can participate in classes, meetings, hangouts. I can watch movies. Without them, I am stuck in trying to figure out, what is going on. I get **hearing fatigue** from the focus, then headaches and complete drains of energy. All that, and I did not even understand.

I've tried time and again to get them with Zoom. At best though, captions on Zoom required a third-party on board, which is really difficult to handle when you are not the host, not to mention when you don't have money to pay for the captioning subscription or to hire a CART captionist.

All of that is of no concern anymore, as... (drumroll, please!)

FREE ZOOM HAS AUTOMATIC CAPTIONS

Zoom has finally integrated free, live captions with *any* plan.

The only thing that needs to be done is some enabling clicks from the back end. ANYONE CAN GET THIS. It's free, and just by enabling it, you embed the captions directly onto the screen, below the presenter and participants.

It's really a game changer and it's easy!

How to Enable Free Zoom Captions

In This Post You Will Find: [[show table of contents](#)]

If you are enabling captions for your own account, this first paragraph is all you need.

Enabling Captions on Your Own Personal Zoom Account:

1. Sign into the Zoom web portal
2. In the navigation panel, click **Account Management** then [Account Settings](#).
3. Click the **Meeting** tab.
4. Verify that **Closed Caption** is enabled.
5. If the setting is disabled, click the toggle to enable it. If a verification dialog displays, click **Turn On** to verify the change.
6. (Optional) If you want to make this setting mandatory for all users in your account, click the lock icon, and then click **Lock** to confirm the setting.

Note: Make sure your version for Zoom is the most up to date!

Enabling Zoom Captions for Your Group

1. Sign into the Zoom web portal.
2. In the navigation panel, click **User Management** then [Group Management](#).
3. Click the applicable group name from the list, then click the **Settings** tab.
4. Click the **Meeting** tab.
5. Verify that **Closed Caption** is enabled.
6. If the setting is disabled, click to enable it. If a verification dialog displays, click **Turn On**.
Note: If the option is grayed out, it has been locked at the account level and needs to be changed at that level.
7. (Optional) If you want to make this setting mandatory for all users in the group, click the lock icon, and then click **Lock** to confirm the setting.

Enabling the Captions for Your Use While You Are Using a Company Zoom Account

To enable the closed captioning for your own use (but not using your personal Zoom account):

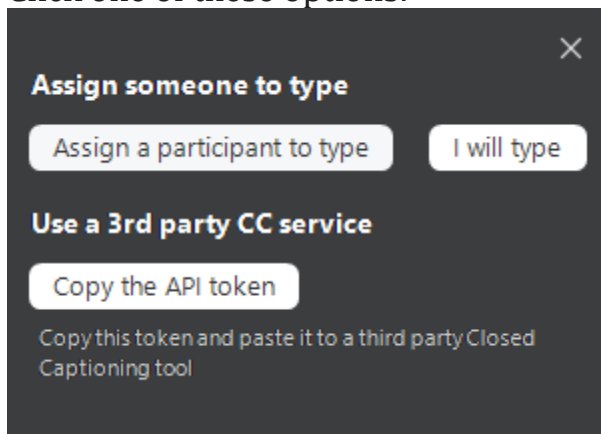
1. Sign in to the Zoom web portal.
2. In the navigation panel, click [Settings](#).
3. Click the **Meeting** tab.
4. Verify that **Closed Caption** is enabled.
5. If the setting is disabled, click the toggle to enable it. If a verification dialog displays, click **Turn On** to verify the change.
Note: If the option is grayed out, it has been locked at either the group or account level. You need to contact your Zoom admin.

Starting closed captioning in a meeting

1. In a Zoom meeting or webinar that you are hosting, click **Closed Caption**.

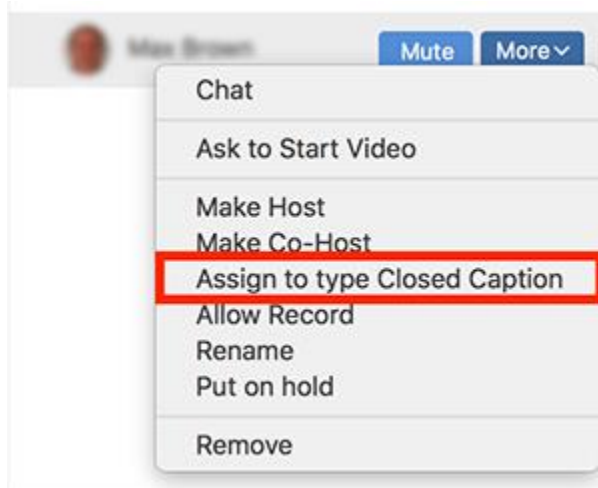


2. Click one of these options:

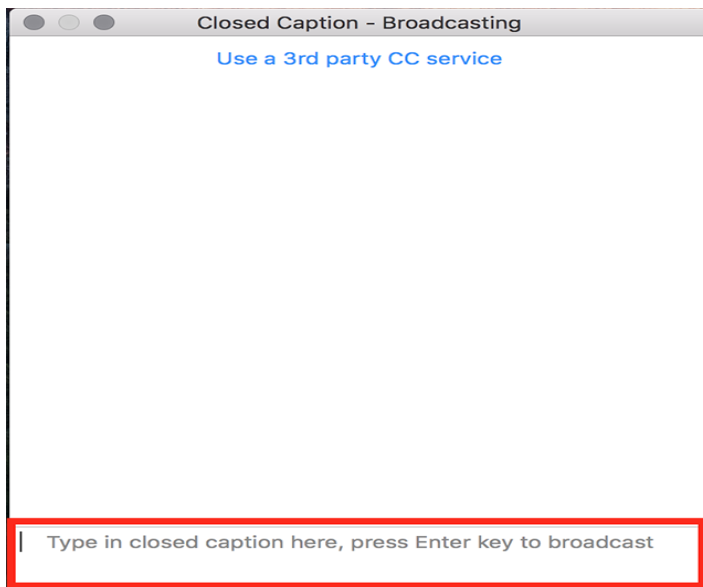


1. **Assign a participant to type:** Opens the participants window. Hover over the participant's name and click **More** then **Assign to Type Closed Caption**.

2. THIS IS WHAT YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE A CART CAPTIONIST



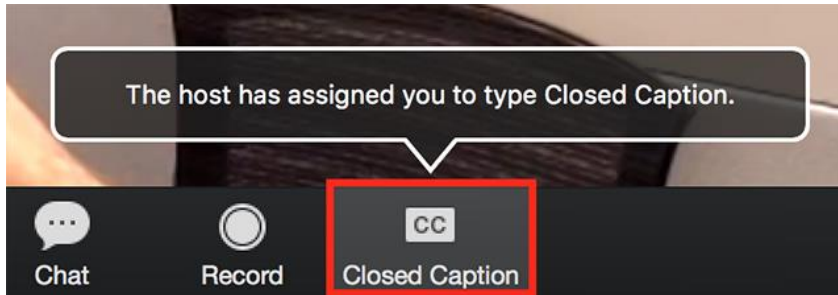
3. **I will type:** Opens the closed captioning window for you to manually type closed captions.



- **Copy the API token:** Copy the URL that you can provide to a third-party closed captioning service to [integrate the service with your meeting](#).

Entering closed captions as a participant

1. Once the host assigns you the ability to type closed captions, a notification will appear in your meeting controls.

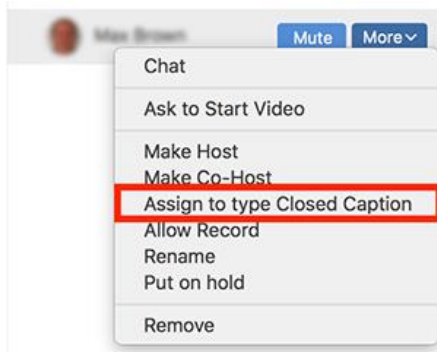


1. Click **Closed Caption**.
This will open up the closed caption box.
2. Type the caption in the box and press **Enter** to submit it.

Using closed captioning in Zoom breakout rooms

Breakout rooms are where Zoom is still flopping. The breakout rooms do not have automatic captioning and Zoom recommends that we subscribe to a third-party closed captioning service if we want closed captions in breakout rooms.

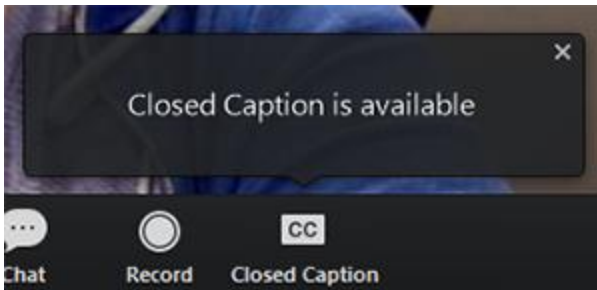
Even with a third-party, only one breakout room can actually utilize the captions. Also, the captionist needs to be assigned before starting the breakout room session:



After you start breakout room sessions, participants can click **Closed Caption** in the meeting controls to view closed captions.

Viewing closed captioning on Zoom Desktop client

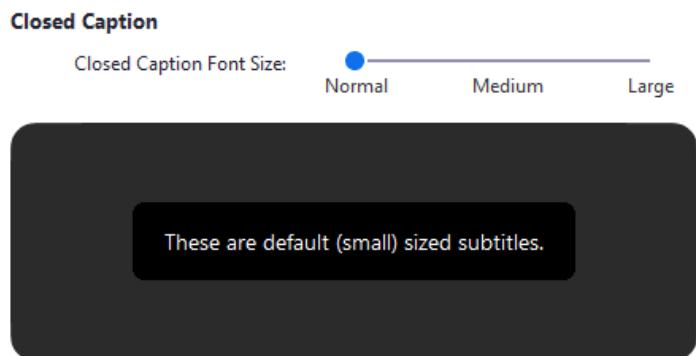
1. Sign in to the Zoom desktop client.
2. Join a meeting or webinar.
3. When closed captioning begins, you will see a notification above **Closed Caption** in the meeting controls.



1. Click **Closed Caption** to start viewing closed captioning.
Tip: Click and drag the closed captioning to move its position in the meeting window.

(Optional) To adjust the caption size:

1. Click the upward arrow next to **Start Video / Stop Video**.
2. Click **Video Settings** then **Accessibility**.
3. Move the slider to adjust the caption size.



Mobile app

1. Sign into the Zoom mobile app.
2. Tap the **Settings** icon.



3. Tap **Meeting**.
4. Toggle **Closed Captioning** to on.
When you are in a meeting where closed captioning is available, they will automatically appear on the bottom of the screen.

Automatic Captioning vs. CART Captioning vs 3rd Party Live Captioning

CART stands for **Communication Access Realtime Translation**. This is when there is a real person on the other side who is typing out what people are saying. This is a profession, very similar to a court stenographer. While there are errors in what they capture, the errors are usually few as the CART captionist is correcting errors as they go along.

CART captioning is best.

Always, it is the best. It's also important to know this if you have a meeting in which you want to be sure you are going to capture what is being said as accurately as possible, no big-time verbiage jumbles.

Automatic Zoom captions or live captions through a 3rd party are improving and they are better than nothing, but they are still automatic, so they can get messed up easily.

3rd party captions include Otter, Rev, Ava, web captions. You can integrate most all of them into Zoom, so that they display under the presenter.