



How to Use Skype

“Skype” is a free software program that runs on your computer or mobile device and allows users to make voice or video calls over the Internet. Because you have total control over who you accept as your Contacts, this program lets you maintain a low Internet Profile if you are concerned about privacy.

To have a successful conversation with someone on Skype be sure to

- * Close all unnecessary Windows and Apps, especially if they are connected to the Internet. Make sure you have nothing else running on your computer or mobile device that might use up your bandwidth, and
- * Disconnect or Quiet any nearby telephones or cell phones and try to remove or turn off any other sources of noise near your computer.

Before You Get Started

If your computer is more than 3 years old, or you are connected to the Internet with a slow data connection, Skype may not run smoothly on your computer. Test your computer and Internet connection by opening and viewing at least the first 5 minutes of each of these videos. If they load immediately and run without any jerks or stops in the action, then your computer and Internet connection will be adequate for using Skype. If they take a long time to load or they restart and stop frequently to "catch up," then your participation in Skype calls will degrade the quality of the call for all of the other participants. Here are the videos:

- * Ray Pool improvising in Dorian Mode - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NomPFFmycDo>
- * Images of Wyoming - <http://tinyurl.com/WyomingImagesTest>

The alternative for people with slow computers/Internet connections is to provide a phone number to the Skype Meeting Host and participate in the Call using your phone instead of your computer.

Computer Equipment

To use Skype you will also need to have a microphone and either headphones or speakers attached to your computer or mobile device. We have found that internal speakers on most Windows PC computers are often not loud enough to be satisfactory for these calls and we prefer to use headphones or to attach external speakers to our computers. NSBTM conference calls are always only audio calls, so you will not need a webcam or a camera.

Installation

Everyone must download and install Skype in order to use it. To install it on a Windows PC or Mac go to <http://www.skype.com/> and click on the link to “Get Started.” You will need to know what email address you want to use, choose a Skype Name for yourself and set a password. This information will be used when you set up Skype on your own computer or mobile device. Download the version appropriate for your type of computer (Windows, Mac, etc.) and follow the directions for installation. To install Skype on an iPad or iPhone, go to your Apps Store and download the Free version of Skype. Android devices can download the free Skype app from Google Play. You should never have to pay anything to use Skype for basic calls.

Starting Skype

 When you are ready to participate in a Skype Call, look for an icon on your computer or mobile device that looks like one of these and double-click or tap it to start the Skype Program.



Before each call it is helpful to make your own voice call to the Contact “*Echo / Sound Test Service*” or “*Skype test call*” to verify that you can both hear the caller and yourself (i.e. your microphone and speakers or headphones are working correctly). To do this, click or tap on the Contact Name and then click or tap on the Green button labeled *Voice Call*. When you are finished, click or tap on the icon which looks like a red *Telephone Handset* at the bottom of your screen to end the call. If you can hear yourself during the test call, then you have set up Skype correctly.

Using Skype

Before you can participate in NSBTM Board Meetings you need to add **NSBTM.Meetings** to your Contact List. Open the Menu item **Contacts** and click or tap on **Add Contact** or look for the **Add Contact** button to start your search. Search for **NSBTM.Meetings** or NSBTM.acct@gmail.com and add it to your **Contacts**. Ignore requests from people you do not know or do not want to connect with on Skype.

Answering an Incoming Skype Call

When the NSBTM Skype Meeting Host calls you on Skype, click or tap the green *Answer* button to start the call.

When you are participating in a Skype call, you will see a *Call Bar* at the bottom of your screen which will contain buttons similar to these.



- * The most important button is the one which looks like a *Microphone* (4th from the left). This button is used to mute your microphone when you are not actually speaking on a call, or the dog is barking, or the phone is ringing, or you are coughing and sneezing. A red line through the *Microphone* means you are currently muted. Please mute your microphone at all times when you are not speaking during Board meetings.
- * Another useful button is the one 2nd from the left which looks like a cartoon speech balloon. This is your *Instant Message (IM)* button which is used to send text messages to an individual (or the whole group on a conference call) and to view your *IM* conversation with that contact.
- * The button 3rd from the left which looks like a *Video Camera* is used to turn your video on or off and on a mobile device to also switch between front and back cameras. Video is not used for any NSBTM conference calls.
- * The button 3rd from the right which looks like a *Telephone Handset* is used to end your participation in the Skype call.
- * The first button on the left will display your *Contacts* list during a Skype call.

Tips for Successful Participation in Skype Conference Calls

- * On Conference Calls, always turn off or *Mute* your microphone when you are not speaking.
- * Always identify yourself on a Conference Call when you begin speaking because others may not recognize your voice.
- * If you are hosting a Conference Call, you may want to create both a Skype Name and a Skype Contact Phone Number for every participant so you can easily switch their input from a computer to their phone number if they are compromising the quality of the Conference Call.

Concluding a Skype Session

- * After you “Hang Up” a Skype Call you need to figure out where you can QUIT Skype on your computer or mobile device. If you only “Sign Out” or make yourself “Invisible” in Skype, your Contacts will still see you as still being “Signed In” and may try to call or Instant Message you. On PCs you need to “Sign Out,” “Close” and “Quit Skype.” On a Mac you will see a Menu option to “Quit Skype.” On a mobile device (iPad/iPhone/Android), if you “Sign Out” and then close the App, you have quit the program and you will not be able to receive Skype Calls or Instant Messages.