

Virtual Zendo

Welcome to Soji Zen Center's virtual zendo, a silent space for joining others in the practice of seated meditation or zazen. Please become acquainted with this entire page before attending for the first time.

When are the virtual scheduled events?

The virtual zendo is currently held Monday evenings @ 7:00 pm (EST), Thursday evenings @ 7:00 pm and Sunday @ 10:00 am. The dharma talk is scheduled on Sundays @ 11:30 am. We will update this schedule if additional times are added.

- Thursdays 7pm: <https://widener.zoom.us/j/878164931>
- Mondays 7pm: <https://widener.zoom.us/j/324254127>
- Sundays 10 am: <https://widener.zoom.us/j/543065197>
- Sundays 11:30 am <https://widener.zoom.us/j/827011630>

Study Group will continue on Wednesdays at 7pm, with zoom meetings provided by Rakugo as this is a closed group.

Dokusan is scheduled on Sundays starting at 9:30 am via SKYPE with Shuzen Roshi. Please email brendaswaters@gmail.com your Skype ID and mobile number. Providing this information is a backup in case of connectivity issues.

How does it work?

The virtual zendo uses a video conferencing application called Zoom. Participants can join the virtual zendo during the scheduled periods of zazen by using the link to open a Zoom video conference.

Before participating in the virtual zendo, you must first download the Zoom application to your local computer or device. To do so, simply click the link to join the Zoom conference, and your browser will give you directions on how to install the app. Participants' audio will be muted by default when entering the Zoom conference.

Please see below for more details on using the Zoom application to participate in the online Zendo.

Who?

The online zendo is open to all practitioners. We ask that you observe the guidelines described below to maintain an online environment conducive to silent meditation. The zazen sessions are facilitated by Village Zendo volunteers. Those who have visited the online zendo, have become familiar with the format, and would like to volunteer as facilitators may contact the organizer @ ALCastaldo66@gmail.com

What Is the Structure For Virtual Zazen?

Please join the session a few minutes before the scheduled time, so as to be seated and settled in place before the period of zazen begins.

Each session consists of one 30 minute period of zazen, At the beginning of each period of zazen, the facilitator will ring three bells to begin zazen. After 30 minutes, there will be two bells to end the sitting period, followed by the Four Great Vows (We request that participants chant with their microphone muted, as the Zoom application does not handle many simultaneous speakers).

Four Vows (chant three times)

Sentient beings are numberless, I vow to save them.
Desires are inexhaustible, I vow to put an end to them.
The Dharmas are boundless, I vow to master them.
The Buddha Way is unsurpassable, I vow to attain it.

Guidelines and Virtual Zendo Forms

Traditionally, to help facilitate a calm and settled space so that practitioners can attend to the moment-to-moment unfolding of experience in meditation, there are Zendo practices, or forms, agreed upon and practiced with harmony in mind:

Minimize visual distractions

- If using a desktop computer, shift the space from a workstation to a practice space by clearing or covering work papers. Please be sure to not have pictures with text or light sources directly in front of the camera.
- One recommended way to sit is in profile, facing away from the computer screen. This allows participants not to be distracted by the movement of other sangha members, mirroring our formal practice of facing the wall during zazen. Some choose to sit off-camera; that's also fine.

Minimize visual distractions for others

- Please face the camera away from any direct light sources, including candles. Many members position the camera to face an altar or incense.

Minimize audible distractions for yourself and others

- Please maintain silence in the online zendo until the closing recitation.
- As a chime sounds when sangha members enter and leave the online zendo, to cultivate the harmony of practicing together, please join on time.
- Best practices include muting the microphone upon entering the online zendo.

Tips for using Zoom

The online zendo often opens a few minutes before zazen is scheduled to begin. When you click on the Zoom link, you will be prompted to download and install the Zoom app.

If this is your first time using Zoom, please take 10 – 15 minutes before the first sitting to become familiar with a few of the common Zoom functions. Practitioners tend to settle into the online zendo more easily after having oriented themselves.

Here are step-by-step instructions for exploring a few common functions in Zoom, the home of the online zendo.

Audio:

By default, your audio will be muted when you join the online zendo. Please keep your microphone muted during zazen so that you do not distract others. Also keep your audio muted during chanting, because Zoom's audio does not work well when many people are talking (or

chanting) at the same time. You may follow along with the chant leader as they chant. The image of a microphone with a slash indicates mute.

To adjust the video

The two most commonly used controls to adjust video in the online zendo are Start/Stop Video (bottom left) and Enter Full Screen Click (top right).

Other common controls

Chat: connects listeners with the moderator.

Participants: allows attendees to see who else is in the online zendo.

***Note: Please, do not click share screen.

Questions and Feedback

If you have questions or feedback, please email info@sojizencenter.com or alcastaldo66@gmail.com. If you have technical difficulties, the [FAQ](#) on Zoom's web site may be helpful.

Thank you for joining Soji Zen Center's virtual zendo. Please explore the calendar to see the other events we are offering to support our community at this time.

(These instructions were adapted from the San Francisco Zen Center and Village Zendo, with gratitude).