

Dressing for the camera and CODEC

Videoconferencing is a form of television so the guidelines for appearing on television are relevant. Because videoconferencing uses a reduced quality network link to keep costs down some other limitations are also introduced. Television cameras can only handle a very limited range of contrast so wear clothes in pastel shades and plain weaves. Strong saturated colours and white shirts are not recommended. Within a videoconference, faces are the focal point, so clothing must not pre-dominate the image. Avoid clothes that are brightly coloured or with a distinctive pattern. Videoconferencing signals are “heavily compressed” by the CODEC to enable transmission over cost effective networks. Compression of the visual signal is achieved by removing elements of the picture that remain unchanged between pictures (redundant information).

For a participant wearing plain clothes the relative changes in the image between successive picture frames will be concentrated on movements of the faces and arms as the image of the clothes will remain virtually unchanged. If however they are wearing a busily patterned shirt the changes will be significant. The large amount of changing information will absorb an appreciable part of the available transmission space. This will have the effect of leaving less space for the more important facial images that will subsequently be degraded. See the webpage [Participating in a VC](#) for more information.

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