



*Autism & Aspergers Consulting, LLC*

# Getting Started with Virtual Consulting.

Version 1.0 by James J. Malan



## Getting Started with Virtual Consulting:

- 1) Before beginning, be sure your system meets the minimum requirements, if you already use Skype to send and receive Video calls you are already set to go! (You can skip to step 3)

### System Requirements

PC running Windows 2000, XP or Vista (32 or 64 bit). (Windows 2000 users require DirectX 9.0 for video calls).

Internet connection (broadband is best, GPRS is not supported for voice calls, and results may vary on a satellite connection).

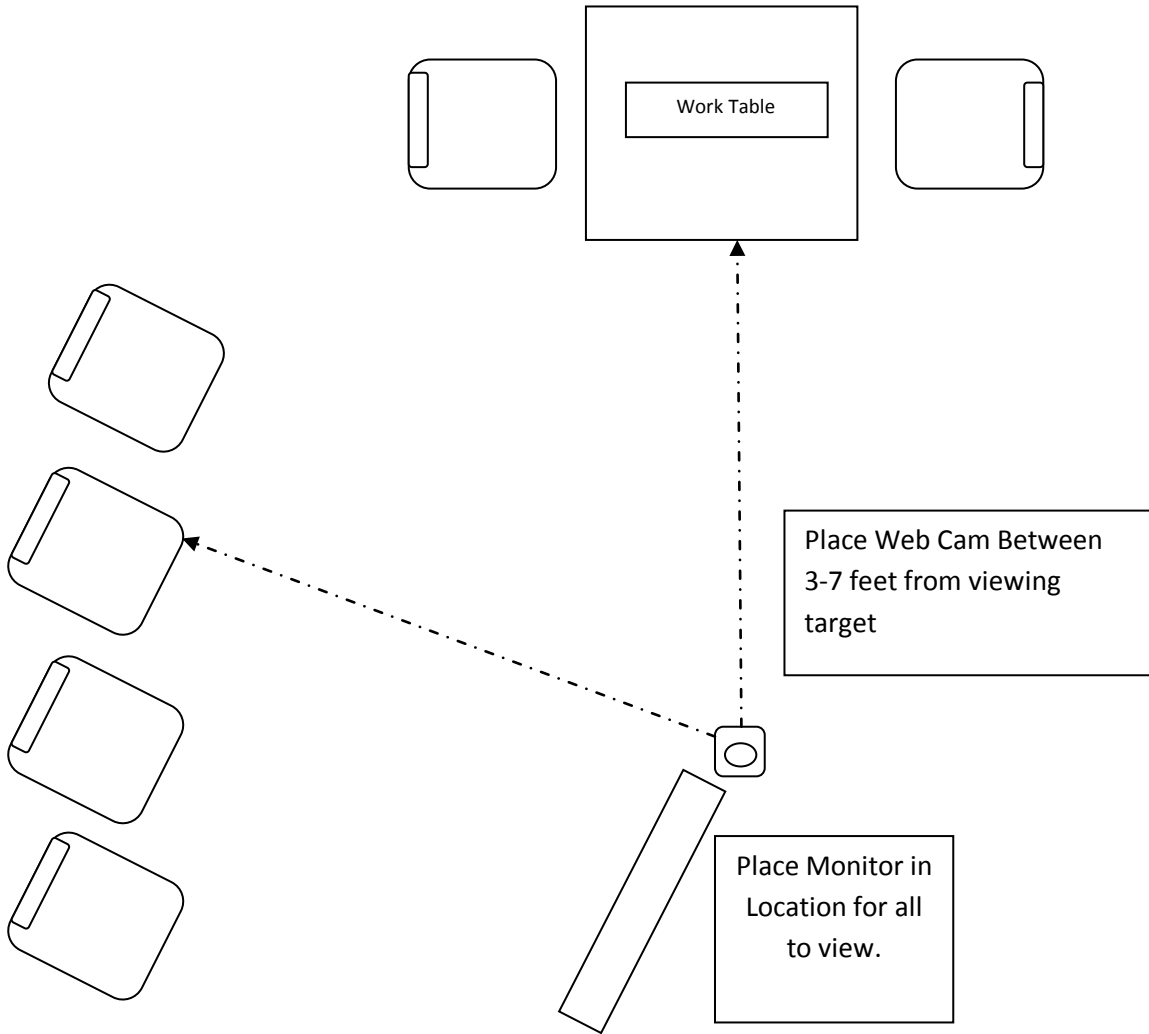
Speakers and microphone – built-in or separate. (Our Recommended Web Cams have a built in Microphone *see below*)

Voice and video calls we recommend a computer with at least a 1GHz processor, 256 MB RAM and of course a webcam.

***For High Quality Video calls you will need a high quality video webcam (We recommend Logitech QuickCam Pro for notebooks and Logitech QuickCam Pro 9000 for desktops) and software, a dual-core processor computer and a fast broadband connection (384 kbps).***

- 2) Next, after all your hardware is verified and installed, Download, Install and sign up for a free Skype account. All of the Skype to Skype software, calls and video are provided by Skype for free.
- 3) Add Autism.Aspergers.Consulting & Autism.Aspergers.Consulting2 to your contacts list.
- 4) Contact your consultant to schedule a Virtual Consultation, you may be asked to fill out a prevideoconference form. Contact [billing@aactnow.com](mailto:billing@aactnow.com) for pricing and payment.
- 5) The day of your consultation, be sure everything is working and any technical issues are resolved at least 30 minutes before the start of your consultation. Your consultant will call you via Skype at the scheduled time. If this is the first time you are using Skype you may want to conduct a test call.
- 6) During the consultation your consultant will be evaluating your child, evaluating your therapy team and providing feedback, instructions and lecture. Screen sharing of demonstration video's and program instructions may also be used. To optimize the consultation you should use a physical arraignment that allows the Web Cam to be placed at a distance of 3-7 feet from the work area and can easily be rotated to provide lecture to trainers. See fig 1.
- 7) Placing a portable Microphone on the work table may enhance the experience, but is not necessary. Web Cam Microphone can pick up many sounds try to minimize background noise as much as possible. **Avoid Crunching, Opening wrappers and talking out of turn during the video conference.**

Figure 1.



## **Questions & Solutions.**

### **What is High Quality Video in Skype for Windows?**

High Quality Video is video calling with improved image quality. It's the best video quality yet and offers clearer, crisper and sharper video images.

To make High Quality Video calls you'll need a **Logitech High Quality Video webcam** and the latest [version of Skype](#). You will also need a computer with a dual core processor (minimum Core™ 2 Duo or a similarly fast processor) and a high-bandwidth internet connection (we recommend 384 kbps and above).

You will also need the latest High Quality video webcam [software](#).

### **What are High Quality Video webcams?**

High Quality Video webcams are Skype Certified webcams that can send VGA (640 X 480) video at up to 30 frames per second on Skype. You can buy High Quality Video webcams from the [Skype Shop](#) and many other retailers.

### **Where can I get High Quality video software?**

You can get the latest software for Logitech High Quality Video webcams from [here](#). You must download and install version 11.5.0.1117 or above to get High Quality video on Skype.

## **Improving the quality and experience of your Virtual Consultation.**

### **Avoiding call echo**

Skype has a built-in echo canceller which detects and reduces echo during calls. Ongoing echo problems may be caused by:

- A webcam microphone. These are especially sensitive and pick up background noise and echo more easily.
- Speakers. Your microphone can pick up noise from your speakers, so if you use speakers, keep the volume low.

**Note:** echo cancellation is affected by the level of background noise around you. It works best when you're in a quiet spot to begin with.

### **Avoiding background noise**

Skype has a built-in noise canceller which helps reduce the level of background noise. To avoid background noise you can:

- Try to find a quiet location to call from.
- Move your microphone closer to your mouth and away from noise sources like your computer's fan.
- Use Skype Certified headsets, handsets and webcams. Built-in microphones in computers and webcams are more prone to picking up background noise.

### **One-way sound**

One-way sound is when one person in a call can't hear the other.

**This may occur for a number of reasons:**

#### **- Wrong sound device settings:**

- If you can't hear the person you are calling or vice versa your sound device settings may not be configured correctly.
- Check your microphone is not muted. Some microphones have buttons to mute/un-mute.
- Check your volume. Everyone in the call should check their device settings and make sure they can hear other sound on their computers (eg playing music).
- You may have incorrect sound mixer settings. Check your sound card manual or get more advice from our [sound set up guide](#). (Please note: the sound card used in our guide is only an

illustration – your computer does not have to have the same model for Skype to work.) If that doesn't solve things, check our [Troubleshooter](#).

- Make sure you've selected the right sound device. Sign into Skype and go to **Menu > Tools > Options > Audio Settings**. Check the microphone and speakers in the dropdown lists are the ones you want to use.

**- Low bandwidth internet:**

- One-way sound can be caused by the caller having low internet bandwidth, eg dial-up connections, satellite connections (that use dial-up or GPRS for upload) or low-priced ADSL packages.

**- Personal firewall software:**

- Some personal firewalls may block Skype's access to the internet. Due to the way these firewalls are designed, blocking usually happens after you have upgraded Skype. This may mean you can't connect, have poor call quality or one-way sound. Check your personal firewall settings and allow Skype to make outgoing connections and accept incoming connections (sometimes called **Act as server**).

**- File sharing:**

- Uploading a file while using Skype can sometimes affect the quality of the call. It's a good idea to close all file sharing applications before calling.

**- Other people affecting the network:**

- If you use Skype within a corporate network, one-way sound may be caused because someone else in the network is affecting internet connectivity. It's quite hard to work out if this is the case, and if it is the problem, there's not a lot you can do about it. However, contacting your system administrator for help is a good idea.

**Robotic sound / words cut off / delay**

The main reason for robotic sound, dropouts in sentences and delay is bad network performance. Skype is built to be adaptive and to provide the best call quality in all network conditions. Skype also monitors the network performance during a call and shows an alert (two yellow phones next to the time counter on Call Phones tab) with an explanation of what might be affecting your call quality.

For firewall settings please see our [firewall guide](#).

## **Video problems**

### **- Low bandwidth internet:**

- You or the person you're talking to may be experiencing problems with video due to a slow internet connection. You should both try closing other applications that use the internet – that might improve the video quality.
- Video calls have recommended minimum bandwidth of 512Kb/sec downstream and 256Kb/sec upstream (ADSL).

### **- Processor (CPU) performance:**

- You or the person you're talking to might have problems with video call quality when you're running a lot of programs at the same time. Try closing some of them to speed up your computer.
- Video calls require at least 1 GHz CPU, 512MB RAM, and 256kbit/s up- and download speed.
- High Quality Video calls require at least 2 GHz CPU, 1GB RAM, and 300kbit/s up- and download speed.
- If you are using a laptop, you may have problems with video calls when in power saving mode. Change your computer to AC power or switch your computer to maximum performance.

### **- Low lighting:**

- If lighting in your room is quite low, you may not send great video quality to the person you are having a video call with. Increase the light level to send a clearer picture.

### **- USB limitations:**

- You may not be sending great video because you're using other USB devices. Try disconnecting them or try connecting your webcam to an alternative USB port. If you have connected your webcam via a USB hub, consider changing to a direct USB connection on your computer to improve video quality.