

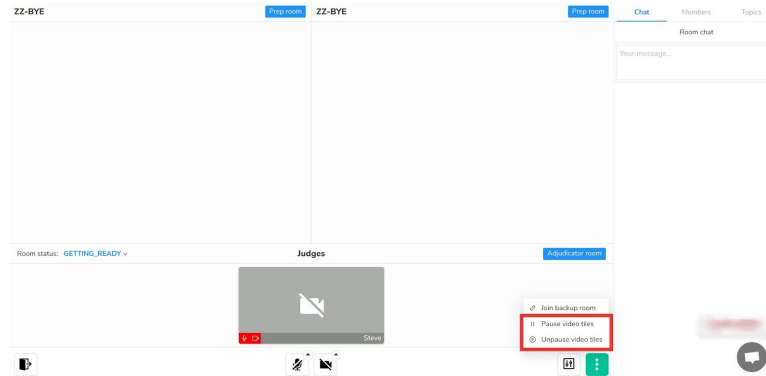
# Tips for participating in an online DDF competition

## General Tips

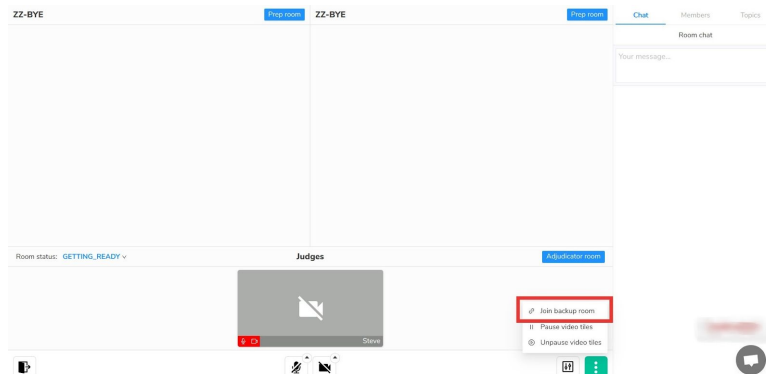
1. **Use a laptop and the most recent version of the Chrome browser.** Yaatly is designed to make full use of your screen space and is built on Chrome infrastructure; other browsers frequently experience problems.
2. **You must have a strong wifi connection** or (preferably) be plugged into your router with an ethernet cable. A cell phone hotspot is not likely to have a robust enough connection to provide stable videoconferencing.
3. **Your computer should be fully charged** or, preferably, plugged in. The event may be hours long; your battery may not last as long as the event.
4. You may use the microphone & speaker built into your computer, **but headphones and a dedicated (external, USB) microphone will improve your sound quality dramatically.**
5. You may use the camera built into your computer, but **a dedicated (external, USB) webcam--particularly if it may be positioned to capture a more complete image--will produce better video.**
6. You should have only **one computer connected to Yaatly per room.** Additional computers in the same room running Yaatly create nasty feedback loops.
7. Generally, **cameras should be on at all times** to enhance the connection between performer and audience.

## Connectivity issues

1. Most importantly, use common sense to handle connectivity issues. If a participant drops out or freezes, judges should **pause the timer and give them a chance to reconnect and continue from where they left off.**
2. If a participant is disconnected for an extended period, judges should **continue on with the next performer and, if the original performer returns, allow them to start again.**
3. Yaatly has features to help participants improve connectivity. **Participants can pause the video feeds on their own laptops** to cut down on down/upload demands and lighten the burden on their CPU. The "Pause Videos on Your Screen" option is found in the lower right corner menu in the competition rooms. Doing this only affects your local device; you're still able to publish video from your own device and others' video feeds will not be affected by you pausing yours.



4. If connectivity issues persist, consider using the backup room available from within the competition room. These rooms are generic video conferencing rooms, but sometimes participants are better able to connect to such rooms.



### Judging & technology

1. Judging decisions SHOULD be based solely upon the quality of a student's performance. **Judging decisions SHOULD NOT be based upon the quality of a competitor's connectivity, video quality, lighting, equipment or the like.**
2. **Please do not penalize students if it appears they may be reading** from their screen (e.g. in extemporaneous or memorized events). Assessing the focus of eye contact is nearly impossible in an online environment.
3. Ideally students perform while standing, **but some students may remain seated to maintain better proximity to their microphone.** [NOTE: All Extemporaneous Commentary speeches should be delivered while seated.]
4. **Please do not disqualify a competitor for any reason.** Given rule changes at both the state and national level over the past few years as well as the unique circumstances of competing online, if there is a concern of a rule violation that justifies potential disqualification, please rank the competitors as you normally would based upon the quality of their performance, and consult the tournament director prior to submitting your electronic ballot.