

Beyond FaceTime – Video Options for Staying Connected with Loved Ones



5/14/25

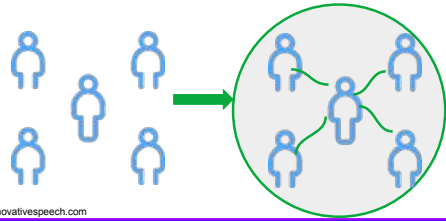


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Social Isolation and loneliness is an enormous issue

The feeling of connectedness is critically important



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Concerning Facts

*About 1 in 3 older adults 50+ felt socially isolated in the past year.

**According to the U.S. surgeon general, chronic feelings of loneliness can be as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day or having six drinks a day.



*[National Poll on Healthy Aging](#)

** [Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation, 2023 US Surgeon's Advisory](#)

(Most images in this presentation were created with the help of Gemini or Canva)

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Silver lining of pandemic

- Many seniors live far from family or have mobility issues, leading to infrequent in-person visits.
- Isolation has serious effects: higher risk of depression, cognitive decline, and even physical health risks
- COVID-19 exacerbated this, but also introduced many seniors to technology. (Before 2020, ~50% of seniors never video-chatted; **by late 2020, 1 in 3 were video chatting weekly**)

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Video calls have the power to enhance lives!

Let's help isolated seniors and people of all ages with communication and cognitive disabilities.



Offer opportunities for connection, support and engagement!

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Joan Green- Your Tech Advisor



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- Assistive Tech Specialist
- Founder of [Innovative Speech Therapy](#)
- Founder of [Tech Life Inner Circle Membership](#)
- Manage Free [JST Tech Savvy Solutions Facebook Group](#)

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Staying in touch through the years



Video offers many benefits! Remember this?



Jane and Elroy talking to George over a videophone console in the sixth episode of The Jetsons (1962)

Most of us started to video call with Skype



- Founded in 2003- bought by Microsoft in 2011
- Skype for Business was replaced by Microsoft Teams in 2021.
- Skype is no longer available. It officially shut down this month.

Video calls have come a long way!

There are many ways to connect from a distance and see a person speaking

- Meeting apps
- Social Media apps
- “Smart Displays”
- Dedicated devices



What video call options have you tried? How did it go?



Today's Overview of current tech solutions

- **Video Calling Applications** (e.g. FaceTime, Zoom, WhatsApp) – software for real-time video chats.
- **Smart Displays & Voice Assistants** (e.g. Amazon Echo Show “Drop In”) – hands-free devices for video or voice calls.
- **Senior-Friendly Devices** (e.g. GrandPad tablet, ONSCREEN for TV) – purpose-built tools with simplified interfaces.
- **Assistive Communication Tech** (e.g. hearing aid phone pairing, captioned phones) – accessibility features ensuring no one is left out.
Note: All solutions are geared towards keeping loved ones connected locally or internationally (most internet-based tools work worldwide, enabling global family connectivity).

Meeting Software/Apps- Can use for 1:1 and small group



[Google Meet](#)



[Microsoft Teams](#)




[Zoom](#)

GotoMeeting
Cisco WebEx
Slack- Huddles

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Facetime- Apple app



Free
(as long as you have an Apple device-iphone, ipad or Mac)

Videos-


- iPhone Tips for Seniors 4- [How to Make FaceTime Calls- 7 min video- Rich Bowlin](#)
- How to Use Facetime- Beginners Guide, [3 min video by Tech Boomers](#)



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Group Facetime Calls


- Android users can participate with a link
- People using iPhone can set it up so audio goes straight to hearing aids

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Facetime- Apple app





Share a Facetime Link from with **Android and Windows users**

[1 min video Apple Support](#) (iOS 15 and later)





How to Enable FaceTime Live Captions- 2 min video by TechBoomers

iOS 16 or newer- settings. accessibility> live captions> Live captions in facetime- customize in appearance

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Google Meet


- Free, [meet.google.com](#) or app
- Replaced Hangouts and Google Duo
- Can use on all computers, tablets and phones
- Real time closed captions
- Can call by phone number, shared URL or email address
- There may be a 60 min limit for group calls depending on who started the call.
- Can schedule in advance- Google Calendar





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Google Meet

- Integrated into Gmail on mobile
- May be confusing
- Can also start in calendar or with Google Meet app





Click pencil to send Gmail

Click camera for video call

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Google Meet Video Tutorials

How to Use Google Meet for Voice and Video Calls in 2025, [4 min video by Tech Boomers](#)

Google Meet Tutorial: How to Use Google Meet (Beingger Guide), [9 min tutorial by Manizha & Ryan](#)

Social Apps



Facebook
Messenger

Instagram

Challenges

- What if someone is unable to speak?
- What if someone can't remember how to initiate a call?
- What if someone can't touch device to answer a call?
- What if someone doesn't have a smartphone or computer?



Simplified Video Chat Options



- Large icons
- Simplified interfaces
- Larger screens
- Easy to use features
- Protected environment- private family/friend network
- Designated caregiver/ family member sets it up and uses a companion app

Assistive Access on iPhone

- Settings > Accessibility > General- Set Up Assistive Access
- Apps are redesigned to be larger and easier to use
- A trusted supporter sets it up- uses unique password, need to know Apple ID and password



Simplified Android Smartphone Modes

- Samsung- **Easy Mode** Settings > Display> Easy Mode
- Pixel phone- **Simple View** Settings > Accessibility > Quick Access- Simple View



iOS Live Speech

This feature enables users who are unable to speak aloud but can type, the ability to type using the speaker and in calls and then Live Speech says it aloud.

Settings > Accessibility > Live Speech

Phrases can be stored in categories.

[Apple Support- Type to Speak on iOS](#)



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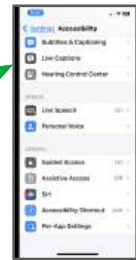
Live Captions on Your Smartphone

Enable the captions for in-person conversations or to use while having a phone call!

iPhone- Settings > Accessibility > Live Captions (need at least iOS17)

Android phones- Live captions came first on Pixel phones.

- Require Android 10 or newer



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Simpler Video Call Options



Grandpad



Amazon's Echo Show-Drop-in



CareLink 360



ViewClix



Onscreen-use TV

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Grandpad- 2 ways to purchase

1. [Subscription from Grandpad](#)

- Excellent phone support
- No need for wifi- comes with data plan
- \$89/month- device included
- Multi-party Zoom calls AM/FM Streaming Radio
- 8" display (diagonal)



2. [Subscription from Consumer Cellular](#) - device \$149 plus \$40 a month

[Pros and cons of purchase options- I asked ChatGPT](#)



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ViewClix

<https://www.viewclix.com/>

Calls, photos, clock, video clips, weather, and sticky notes/reminders

10.01" or 15.6" display (\$199 or \$299) and \$9.95 a month

Requires wifi

Auto-answer or can request a call

Up to 4 people in a group



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Onscreen

<https://onscreeninc.com/>

You call from your mobile device, and their TV or tablet answers automatically.

Supports Zoom and automated check-ins.

\$149.99 activation and setup fee then \$29.99 a month after 30 day trial.



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Echo Show

- Contacts- make sure family and friends are included
- "Alexa, call Joan"
- "Alexa, Drop in on Lilli"
- Start or answer calls on Echo Device or using Alexa app on mobile device
- It's a bit confusing to initially set up drop-in
- **Amazon tech support- 1-888-280-4331**
- Echo Show 10 (3rd gen) (motion)- \$249- 10.1" screen
- Echo Show 5 (3rd gen) \$89.00



Amazon Echo Show

Customer Service | About | English (United States) | Device Support

Do you need help with a recent item, Joan?
Select the item you need help with below or get help with something else

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Echo Show- Video tutorials

How to Setup Echo Show 8- Easy to Follow Walk-Through- 7 min video by Simplifying Tech for Seniors



How to Setup the Echo Show 8 (3rd Gen) by Steve DOES Quickies, 4 min video



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What are some fun activities to do during video calls?



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Engaging Video Call Activities

- Read picture books to grandchildren
- Stream live events- it's the next best thing to being there!
- Reminisce while looking at photos
- Play games
- Bake together
- Exercise together
- Participate in holiday traditions



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Free Private Facebook Group - IST Tech Savvy Solutions



Let's help each other.
Everyone is welcome to join!!
Just answer a few questions

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISTTechSavvySolutions/>

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Tech Life Inner Circle Membership

<https://bit.ly/techlifemembership>

Weekly Tech Training and Tech Support "Ask me anything!"

You're invited to join once as my guest for FREE!

Email Joan@innovativespeech.com and I'll send you the schedule, topics and Zoom link.



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Let's stay in touch!

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FB Group- [IST Tech Savvy Solutions](https://www.facebook.com/ISTTechSavvySolutions)

LinkedIn- [Joan Lipman Green](https://www.linkedin.com/in/JoanLipmanGreen)

Instagram- [joanlipmangreen](https://www.instagram.com/joanlipmangreen)

[Free 15 min phone consultations](#)

