(Approx. 490 words)

Connecting to Friends and Family Members

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There are many ways to communicate electronically with people these days, keeping a safe distance. This article explores ways to communicate with lots of people at the same time.  
 **By Email**

You can create a group of contacts in your email program. Then you can create and send a message to that group and they will all get your message.  
  
Use the BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) line for the group so that all the email addresses aren't visible to everyone. This protects the privacy of the recipients.  
  
**By Phone**Did you know that you can set up a conference call with all your friends and family for free?  
[**Freeconferencecall.com**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=291a0a6c50&e=2857111c01)is a free service that allows an unlimited number of people to call a phone number, enter an access code, and talk with all the other people on the line. The phone number to call isn't local, so long-distance charges may apply. However, most people have unlimited long distance for calls within the US these days.Freeconferencecall.com also offers free screen sharing and video conferences. [**Compare their services to others on their website (scroll down to see the chart).**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=95959202f4&e=2857111c01) **By Video**There are many options for face-to-face communication using video. Your computer or device would need to have a camera.  
 **In addition to**[**freeconferencecall.com**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=2bb2196f9c&e=2857111c01)**,** noted above for audio meetings, there are also these other apps that are free (or very low-cost).  
[**Zoom**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=753d0028f9&e=2857111c01)is a popular video conference application. The free version allows for unlimited 1 to 1 meetings, 40-minute sessions for 3 or more people, application sharing, and collaboration.[**Click to read about all their offerings.**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=9436297601&e=2857111c01)They are offering added support and training during the pandemic.[**Click for more information.**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=6a9d119c28&e=2857111c01)[**Skype**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=c4b9d30b40&e=2857111c01)is a free video communication tool that you can use to connect to otherpeople who have Skype accounts. Software downloads are available for Windows, Mac, and Linus desktops and Apple and Android mobile devices**.**[**Click for a list of features.**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=c3ad0d14b5&e=2857111c01)Skype also offers free video conferences and conference calls that anyone can join even if they don't have a Skype account; no special software is required**.**[**Read more about this feature.**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=36741d312a&e=2857111c01)(Skype is a product of Microsoft.)  
 **Group FaceTime** allows you to communicate with up to 31 other people at the same time.[**Here is how to get started.**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=e069b522e5&e=2857111c01)[**Google Duo**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=95be5947f8&e=2857111c01)**,** for Mac and Android devices, allows you to connect to up to 12 people (now up from 8) on phones, tablets, and computers.  
  
Here are a few articles comparing these tools and tips for using them.  
[**Compare Zoom vs FaceTime**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=bd4b825fa8&e=2857111c01)[**Zoom vs. Skype vs. Discord vs. Facetime vs. Google Hangouts (for Video Conferencing Calls)**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=3cfa0e215c&e=2857111c01)[**Using Zoom? Here are 10 tips to get the most of it**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=b5893d9ff7&e=2857111c01)

[**Google Duo's group video limit rises to 12 people just at the right time**](https://ccgvaz.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fc5b48c8cad5d194a77f4cb54&id=4550aff921&e=2857111c01)