

# Big Blue Button

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# Big Blue Button Basics

**Big Blue Button, or BBB, is an alternative to Zoom. It is free to use, and there are no time limits on using it.**

**BBB is at [meet2.organise.earth](https://meet2.organise.earth)**

## Choose Big Blue Button because:

- it's free to use,
- gives unlimited time,
- you can run as many meetings as you like at the same time,
- it sits on our XR secure servers (so more secure than Zoom),
- AND runs on renewables!

Zoom is the most commonly used video conferencing tool, however it doesn't belong to XR so isn't secure. If your topic of discussion is extremely sensitive and you don't want any interception then you should NOT be using Zoom. Zoom can view recordings of meetings and view messages and access links sent via Zoom chat. Big Blue Button is XR's own video conferencing tool and more secure than Zoom. BBB is held on our XR secure servers and runs on renewable energy.

[A short presentation comparing Zoom and Big Blue Button is available here.](#)

[A recorded video of the above presentation is here.](#)

## Online Safety in Big Blue Button meetings

Consider online safety - [simple, practical guidance here.](#)

## How to Use BBB Video

If you prefer visual learning to the instructions below, you can watch [this video guide](#) to learn the basics of using Big Blue Button.

## Requesting a BBB Account

The advantage to having an account for your XR group is that anyone (irrespective of whether they have a Hub log-in or not) can access a BBB meeting. Once you have an account, you can create as many 'rooms' as you like within your account (giving each room a name such as Anchor Group, M&M, Actions etc) and each room has a unique URL. You copy the URL for the room and send that

with the date and time of the meeting. Then attendees click on the link at the start of the meeting, add their name and the BBB will open in a new Windows tab. So a Local Group can have a BBB account and then run their XR meetings even if not everyone present is on Mattermost & the Hub.

## To get an account:

- Email: [bbb@organise.earth](mailto:bbb@organise.earth)

Email from your XR group's email address and not a personal email address. In your email, include which group you are in. Once the account is created, you will be emailed the account details. Your group's email address will be the login/sign-in name and you can change the password to one of your choice.

## Joining a call

When you click the link to join the call you will be asked to connect your audio and webcam. Select **Microphone**, and check that if you speak you hear yourself coming back through your device. Don't worry, no one else can hear this!

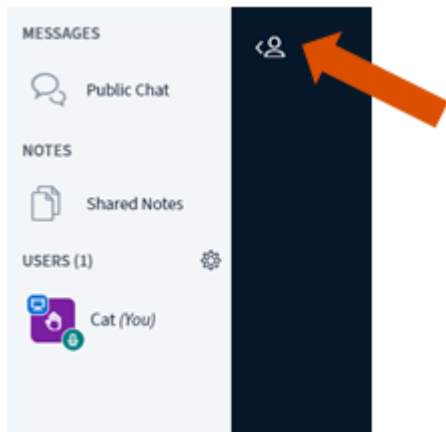
The image is a composite of four screenshots illustrating the process of joining a BBB call:

- Top Screenshot:** A browser window showing the BBB welcome screen. An orange arrow points to the URL bar. A dialog box titled "How would you like to join the audio?" is overlaid, showing "Microphone" and "Listen only" options. Another orange arrow points to the "Microphone" option.
- Second Screenshot:** A close-up of the audio selection dialog box. An orange arrow points to the "Microphone" option.
- Third Screenshot:** A feedback prompt: "This is a private echo test. Speak a few words. Did you hear audio?". Below it are two circular buttons: a green "Yes" button with a thumbs up icon and a red "No" button with a thumbs down icon. Orange arrows point to both buttons.
- Bottom Screenshot:** The BBB welcome screen again. An orange arrow points to a whiteboard icon in the bottom right corner.

Welcome to BBB! This large Welcome screen takes up most of the window, but if you click the whiteboard symbol in the bottom right corner it will go away and there will be more space to see

other people on the call. Down the left-hand side you can see who else has joined, and if they are connected to video and audio, and the Public Chat area.

If you can't see the columns on the left, look for the little person icon in the top left corner and click that to open up the sidebar.



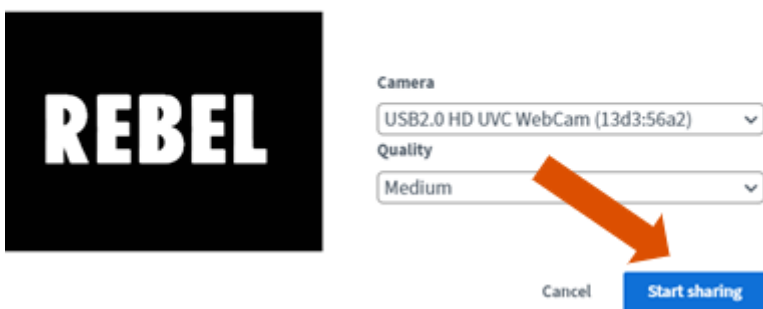
In the main window, you will see buttons at the bottom, and this is where you can control your **Audio** and **Video**. Click the microphone to mute or unmute yourself.



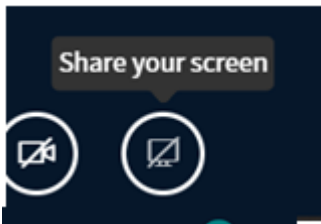
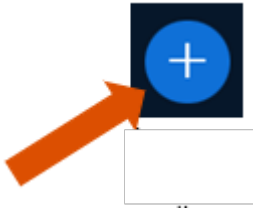
The button that looks like a video camera is to turn on your webcam. Like your audio, when you first use the 'log in to the meeting', there will be a pop-up window where you can choose your settings, and you will see a preview screen. Your camera should be automatically detected your camera, so unless you want to choose a different webcam, just click **Start Sharing**.

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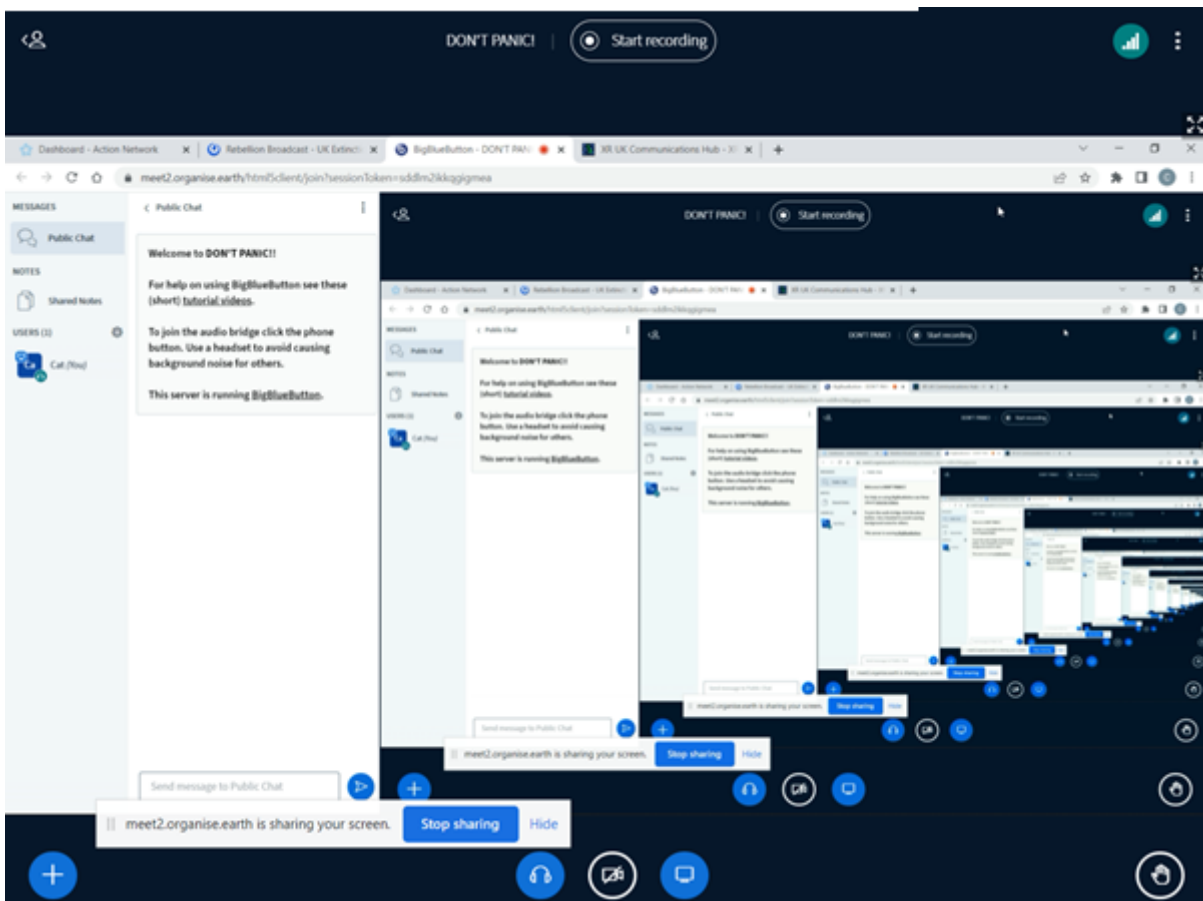
#### Webcam settings



To screen share on BBB you have to follow a couple of steps. Unlike Zoom where one person is the host and has control over the whole call, everyone is equal on BBB. Look for the blue button at the bottom of the screen with a + in it. Click this, and you will get the option to **Take Presenter**. Once you have done this you will get an extra option next to your video and audio buttons to **Share your screen**.

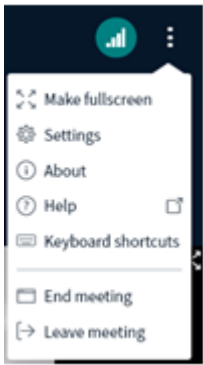


Once screen sharing begins it will give you a delightful "rabbit hole" effect of windows within windows - don't worry, once you switch to a different tab or window this will disappear - **just don't use the BBB tab to open the website you want to share, or you will automatically come out of the session!**



**Note that you cannot screen share on a mobile device.**

There are a few other options if you click the three vertical dots in the top right of the window.

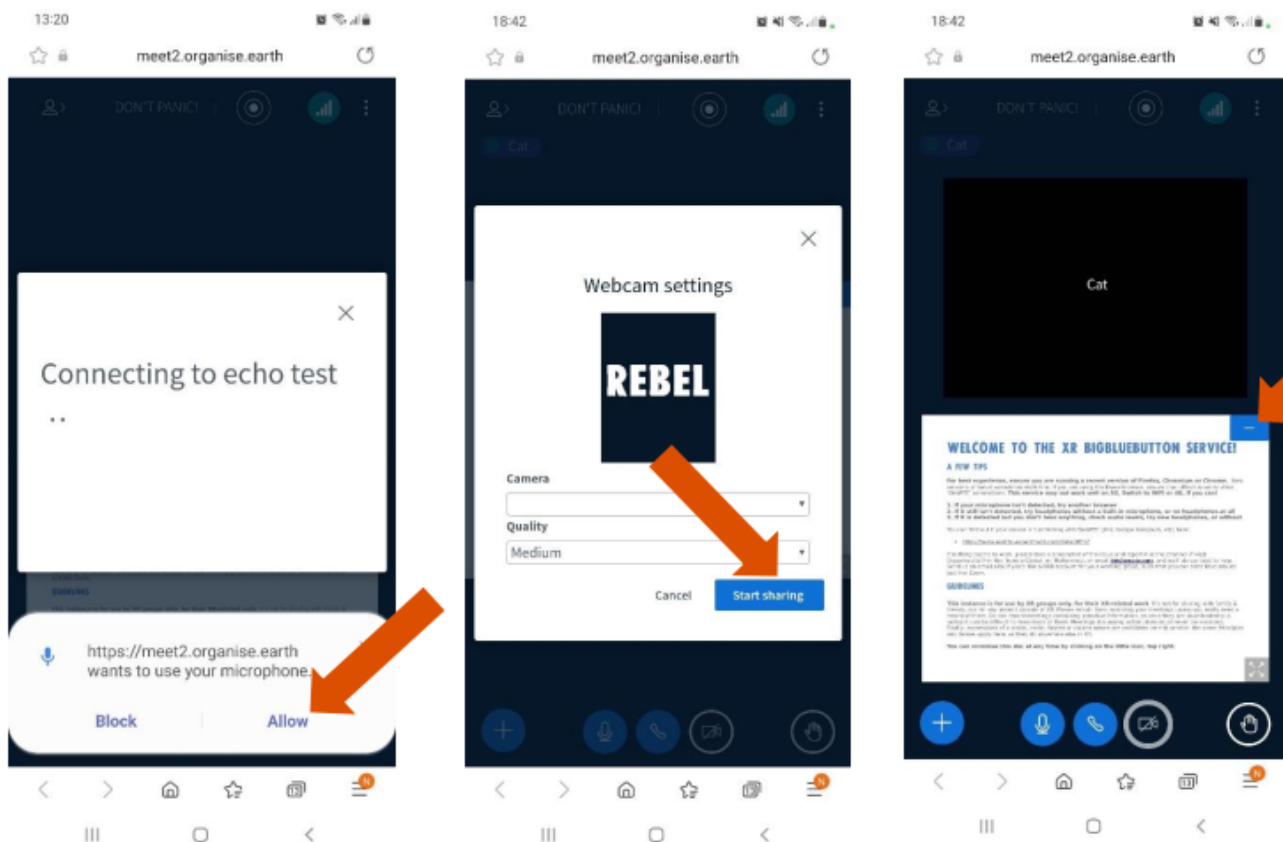


At the end of the meeting you can go here to **End meeting** or **Leave meeting** - or you can just close the tab in your browser and you will have left! Once everyone has left the meeting, even if no one clicks End, it will automatically finish.

You can have a meeting on BBB for as long as you like, there is no time limit.

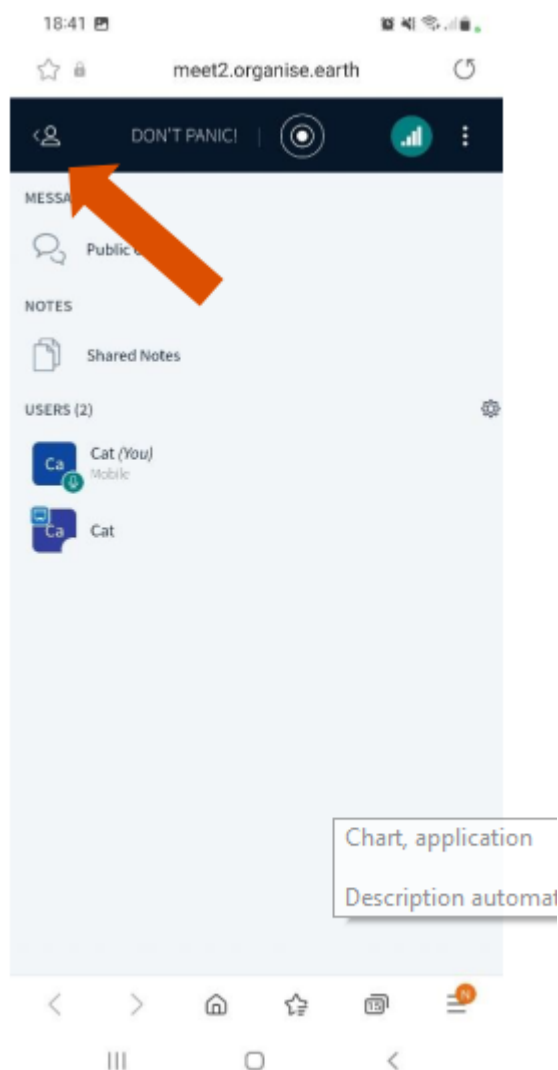
## Big Blue Button on a Mobile

As with using BBB on a computer, when you log in you will need to confirm your microphone and camera settings - it will detect them automatically from your device, so you don't need to change anything. Your phone may also ask you to 'Allow' BBB to use your microphone and camera, click 'Allow' to both of these.



Get rid of the Welcome screen to make more space to see the other folks on your call!

To pull up the list of the other people on the call and the **Public Chat**, click the little person icon in the top left of the screen. Click the same icon to minimise this column so you can see who you are speaking to again.



Click on the three vertical dots on the top right hand of the screen, or close the internet browser to leave the call.

# Automatic Closed Captions in Big Blue Button

## Background

BBB introduced automatic closed captions in version 2.6. Both options for manual and automatic closed captions exist which can be confusing.

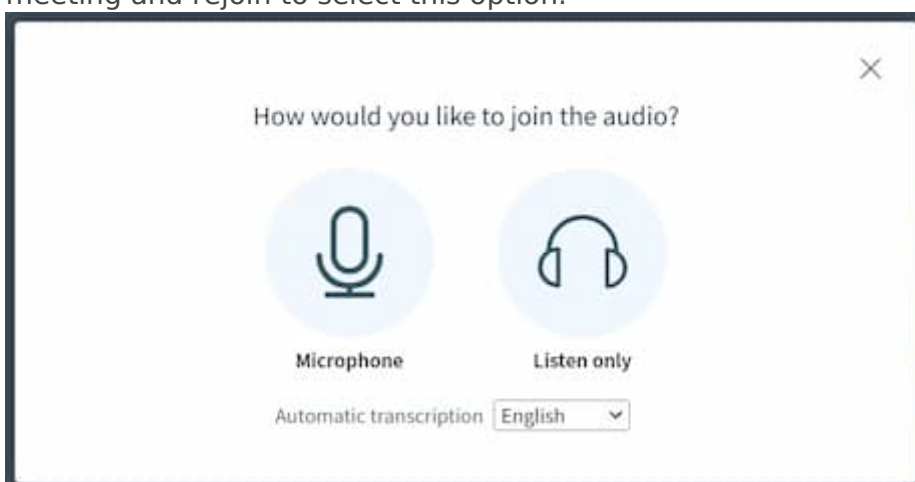
The automatic transcription is only available for browsers that support Speech Recognition (Google Chrome, MS Edge, and Safari). If you join with non-supported browsers, you will see a warning at the bottom of the join audio dialogue - "**Your browser doesn't support speech recognition. Your audio won't be transcribed**".

## Using Automatic Closed Captions

There are two aspects to Automatic Closed Captions:

- The option to have **your** words as a presenter/contributor transcribed.
- The option to view transcribed words.

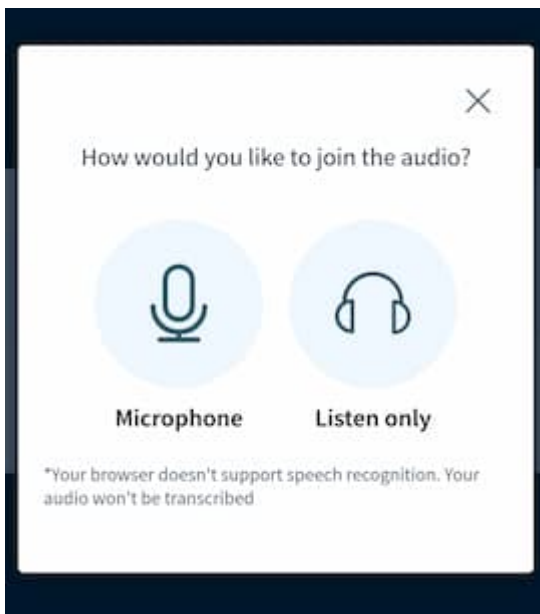
To have **your spoken words** automatically transcribed you need to select the option **when connecting to the meeting**. You cannot do it once in the meeting, however you can leave the meeting and rejoin to select this option.



Selecting the correct language is important as it helps the translation engine.

This option is **not available on iPhone or on Android**, as per the screen shot below:





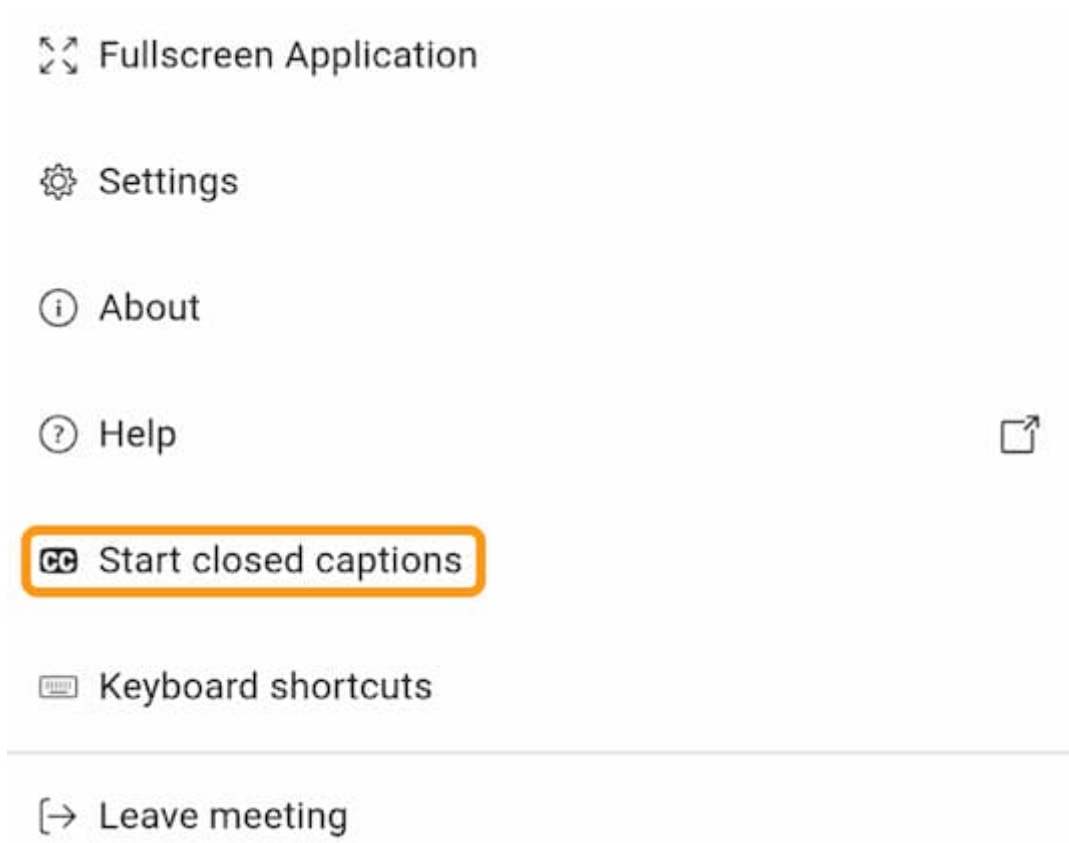
## To View captions on a Desktop/Laptop computer

When one or more users have enabled transcription, a CC button will appear. To view the transcriptions for those with 'CC' in their "who is talking" icon, press the CC button. The 'CC' button is in the bottom left of the BBB screen.



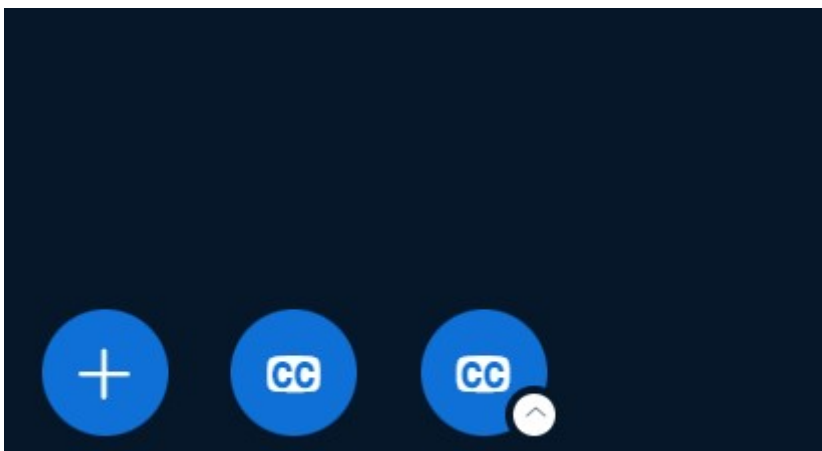
## To View captions on Mobile device

For mobile devices, the 'CC' button is accessible via the three dots menu at the top right corner. Then select "Start closed captions".



## Maximum Confusion – Manual and Automatic Closed Captions Together

It is possible to have both Manual and Automatic Closed Captions. Manual closed captions is where someone manually types the words of the speaker into the meeting captions. This is mostly used for translations. Below shows the ability to enable the viewing of the two different kinds of captions. The left hand CC option is for viewing manual captions. The right hand CC with the up arrow is for viewing automatic captions.



[Manual Closed Captions info here.](#)