



Preparing for an Online Retreat at Home

Sitting a retreat at home and online is certainly different from coming to a meditation center. Tending to your comfort and giving yourself quiet, private sitting and walking space (if possible, in the environment you are in) will help keep your attention focused and support your practice and learning. Plan to bring as much simplicity and ease to your day as possible. The schedule of the retreat is structured to support your well-being and practice with regular breaks and time for mindful movement.

ZOOM

We will be using Zoom throughout the retreat. Before your retreat begins, be sure to download Zoom and familiarize yourself with using the program, including the chat feature. Specifics about how we will be using Zoom during your retreat will be covered at the beginning of the retreat; however, we are not able to provide technical support during the retreat. Close all programs on your computer other than Zoom and turn off all notifications on your devices.

YOUR SPACE

- If you can, set up a dedicated space for sitting.
- Set up your computer, laptop, iPad or other device in a place where you can sit comfortably and be free from distractions, including interactions with other household members.
- Choose a place for walking meditation. This could be a hallway or room. You may also walk outside.

BEING ON RETREAT WHILE LIVING WITH THOSE WHO ARE NOT ON RETREAT

- Be kind! Those you live with may feel abandoned. Please be sensitive to their needs.
- Acknowledge that sitting a retreat at home may feel awkward at times – for you and for those you live with.
- If possible, ask if you can be in noble silence. Set up a way to write notes or to talk once a day if need be. If not possible, don't be stingy with your talking or feel guilty when you do but please bring attention to wise speech.
- If possible, ask for support in creating a quieter living space in general regarding TV and music. If not possible, be aware of sound as an aspect of your practice.
- Post the broad outlines of the retreat schedule i.e. start-lunch-closing.
- If you have children, enlist them as allies. Talk with them about what you are doing and ask for their help.



FOOD

Please ensure you have enough food available before the retreat begins to keep you nourished. Keep your meals simple. If possible, prepare food ahead of time that can be eaten throughout the retreat. Consider writing yourself a meal plan to cut down on decision-making during the retreat.

Retreat Guidelines

These guidelines invite you to practice as if you were in the CIMC hall, as far as possible. They will be reviewed again at the beginning of the retreat.

- Join each session of the retreat a few minutes early. This will support the teachers and your fellow retreatants.
- Please maintain noble silence as much as possible for the duration of the retreat; limit conversations with others at home as much as you can.
- Be on time for the scheduled sittings.
- Power off your phone for the entire time scheduled for the retreat on each day. Please don't check your phone during breaks. You might put an "away" message on your email and voicemail and leave your phone out of reach so you are not tempted to check it during your retreat hours.
- Please consider taking a "news fast" for the duration of the retreat. Ask a friend who is not on retreat to let you know if there is any time-sensitive news you need to know.
- Refrain from reading and writing during the entire time scheduled for the retreat on each day. That is, please don't read during breaks.
- Don't multitask.
- When you can, we would appreciate you keeping your video on during our time together. This supports a sense of connectedness and sangha. However, it's not a problem to turn it off from time to time if it's more helpful for you to do so.