# How to Use Breakout Rooms

Splitting a meeting into smaller groups, and bringing everyone back.

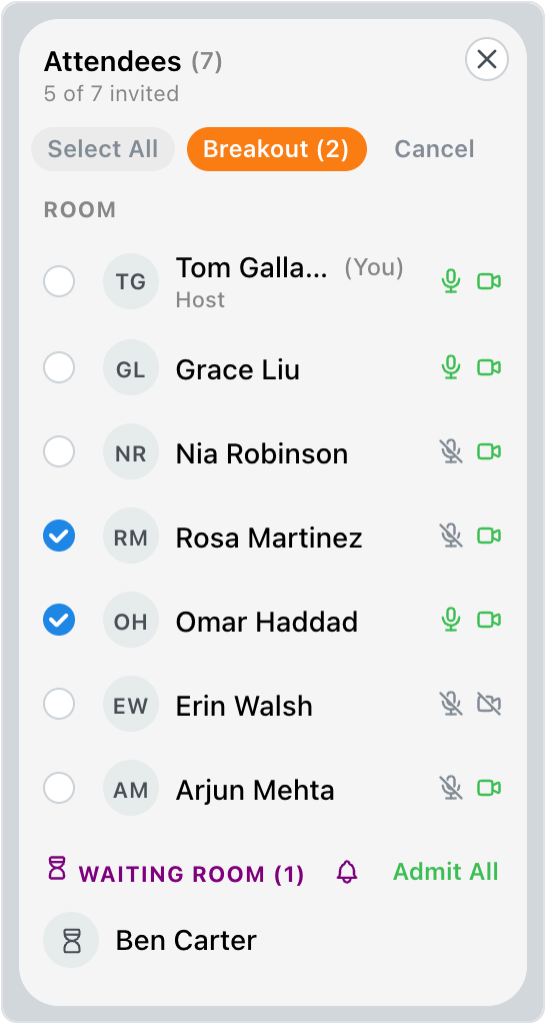
A breakout room is a smaller, private conversation that runs alongside the main meeting: a negotiation caucus, a team huddle, a quick word with one person. Hosts can send anyone to a breakout; attendees can invite others to join them in one.

The room needs **Breakout Rooms** turned on in its features (see How to Create a Meeting Room). In a webinar, only the speakers can use breakout rooms; viewers cannot.

## 1. Send People to a Breakout (Hosts)

In the attendee list, click **Breakout** on the Room line. Tick the people to send, then click **Breakout (2)** (the number is how many you ticked). They move straight into a new breakout, named **Breakout 1**, **Breakout 2** and so on. Tick yourself too if you are going with them. **Cancel** backs out.

Once a breakout exists, the same button lets you add people to it, or start a **New Breakout**. The **Breakout** tile on someone's card opens the same choice with that person already ticked.

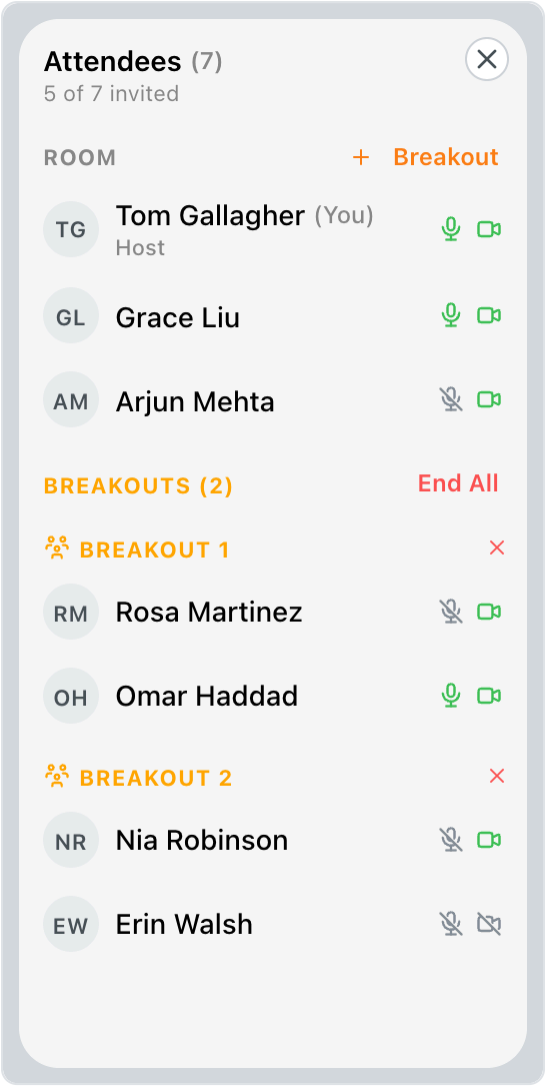



## 2. Keep Track of Breakouts

Each breakout is listed under its own name in the attendee list, with the people in it. From there a host can:

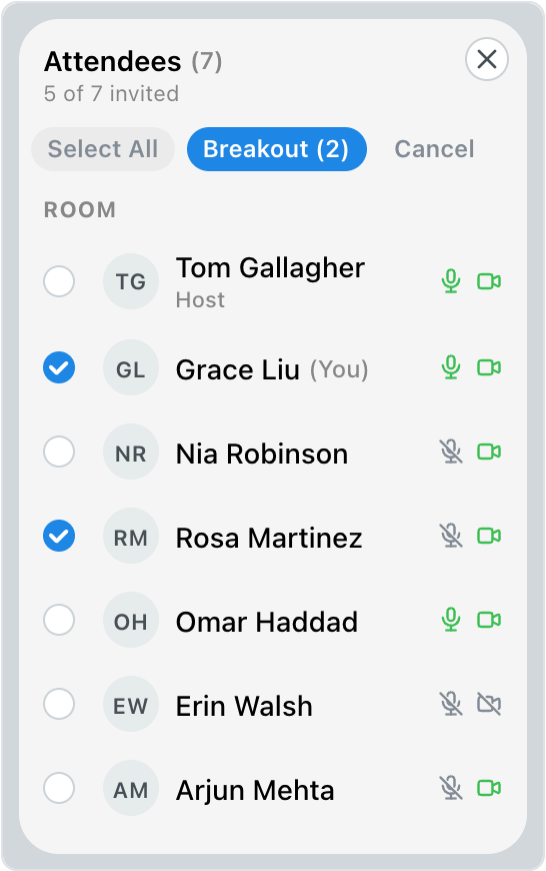
- Click someone in a breakout and choose **Return to Main Room** to bring just them back.
- Click the X beside a breakout's name (**End Breakout**) to close it and bring everyone in it back.
- Click **End All**, above the breakouts, to close every breakout at once.

Either way, the people coming back see **Returning to Main Room** with a five-second countdown first, so nobody is cut off mid-sentence without warning.




## 3. Invite Others to a Breakout (Attendees)

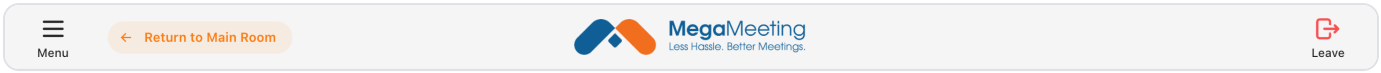
Attendees can start a breakout too, but by invitation. Click **Breakout** in the attendee list (or the Breakout tile on someone's card), tick the people to invite, and click **Breakout (2)**; you are ticked already. Each person invited sees **[Your name] wants to start a breakout room with you** and chooses **Accept** or **Decline**. Those who accept join you in the breakout.




## 4. Inside a Breakout

A breakout is a separate conversation: the people in it see and hear only each other, and the main meeting carries on without them. The room chat inside a breakout goes only to the people in that breakout.

Hosts, and attendees in a breakout they started themselves, can leave at any time with **Return to Main Room** in the room header.




> **GOOD TO KNOW: Breakouts are not recorded, and their chat is not kept**
>
> A recording captures the main meeting only. Chat inside a breakout is not saved with the meeting's chat, so anything worth keeping should be written down before the breakout ends.

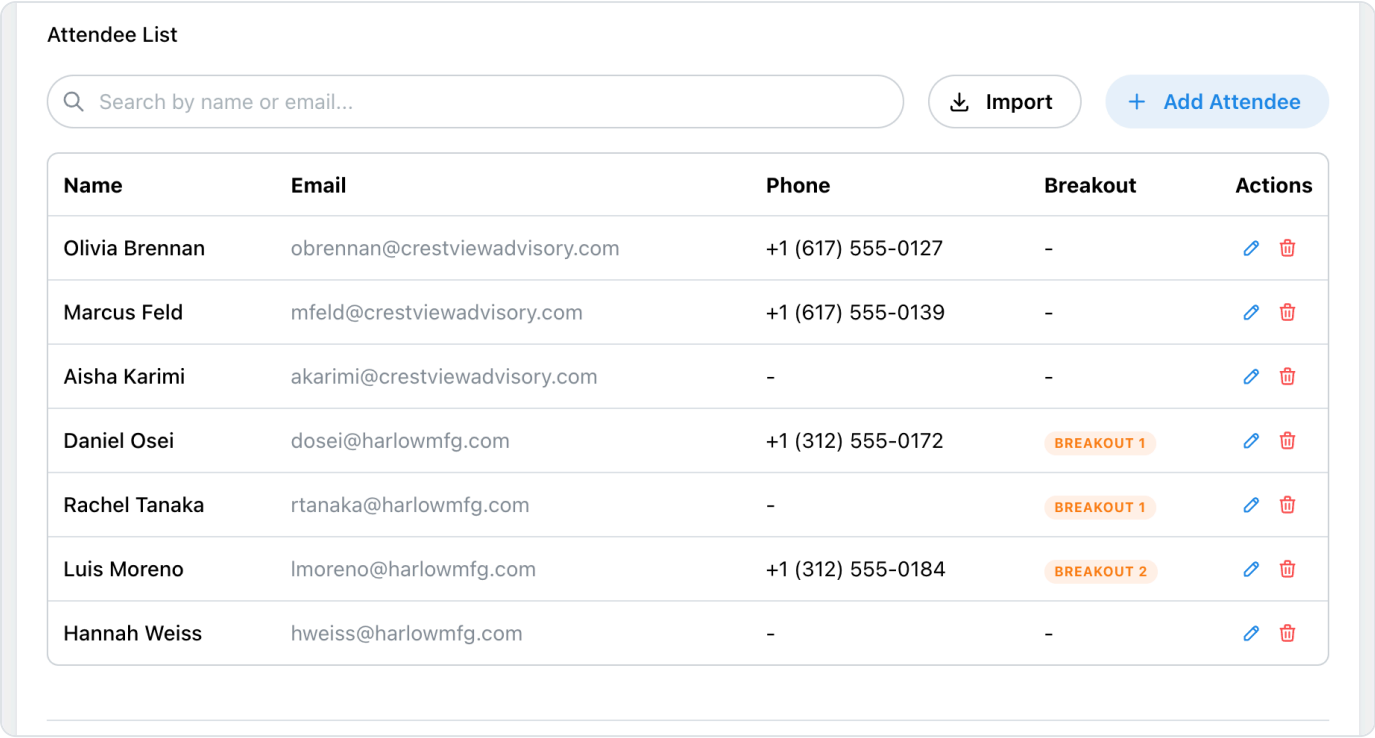
> **GOOD TO KNOW: Files, the whiteboard and the media player stay in the main room**
>
> They are not available inside a breakout. Go through documents together in the main meeting, before or after the breakout.

## 5. Plan Breakouts Ahead (Hosts)

If you know who belongs together, set it up before the meeting, and bring the groups in or send them off with one click.

### Before the meeting

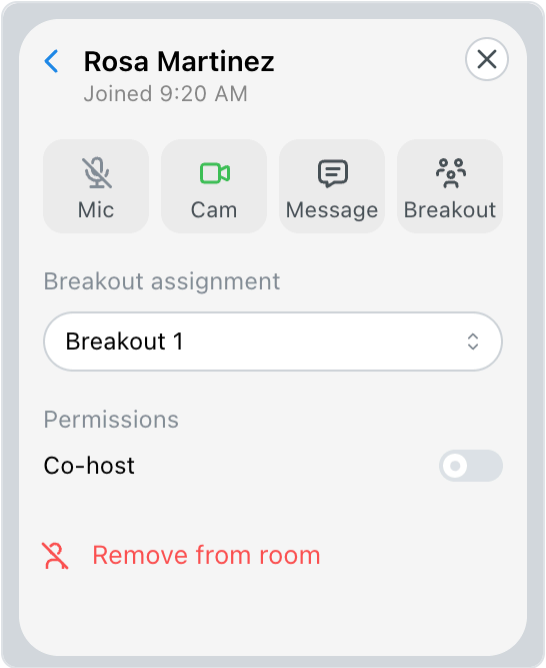
In the room's attendee list, open **Add Attendee** or edit someone, and choose **Start in Breakout** (**Breakout 1** to **Breakout 5**). The first time that person arrives in a session, they go straight into that breakout instead of the main meeting. Once anyone has one, the list shows a **Breakout** column (see How to Create a Meeting Room).



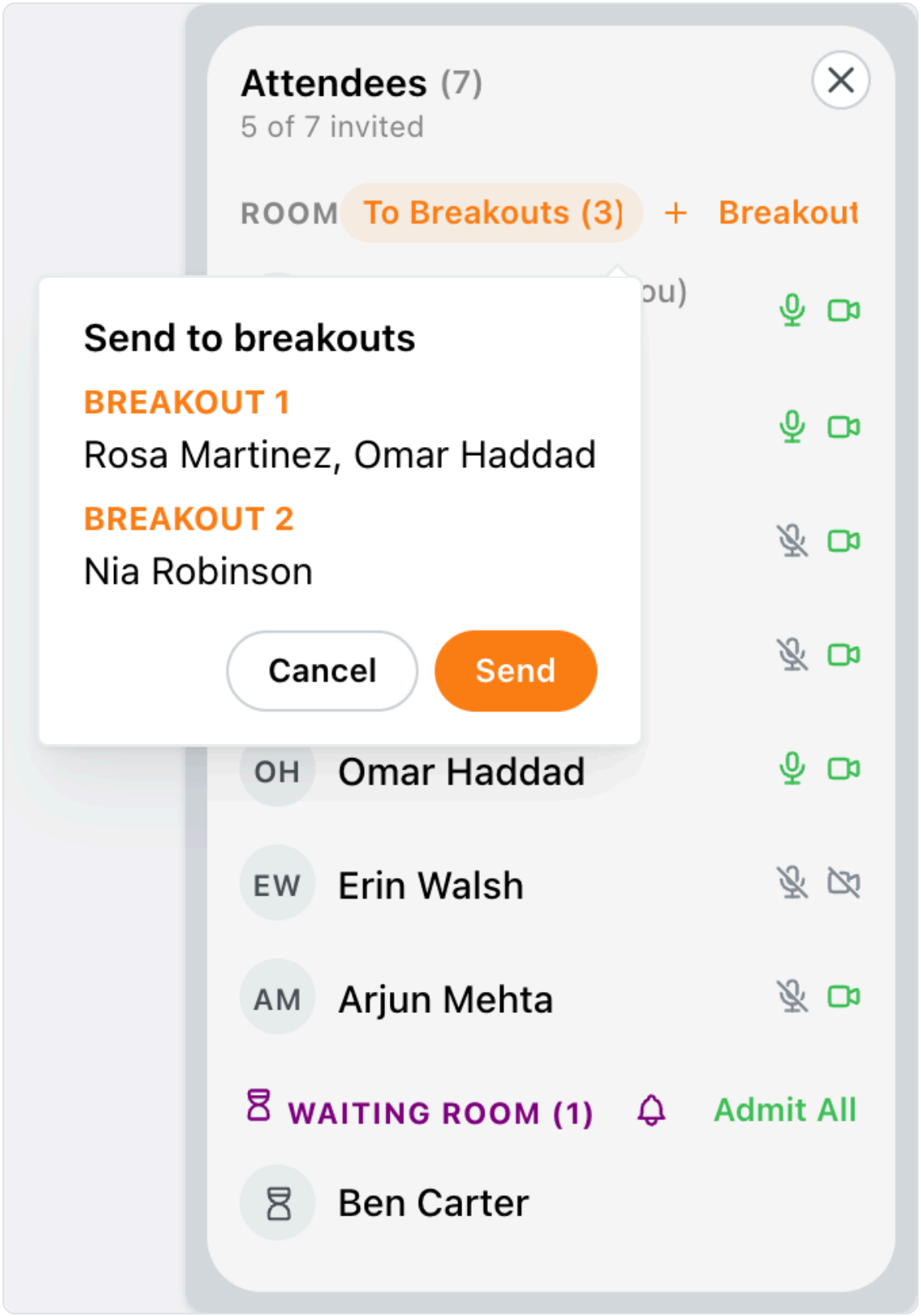

- **Start in Breakout** shows only while the room has **Breakout Rooms** turned on. Turning it off keeps the choices, and they apply again once it is back on.
- Observers and co-hosts always start in the main meeting.
- People added with **Import** start without a breakout; set it for each of them afterwards.

### During the meeting

Click someone in the attendee list and set their **Breakout assignment** (**Off**, or **Breakout 1** to **Breakout 5**) on their card. It works for anyone in the meeting, invited or not, except hosts, observers and people on the mobile app, and starts out as their Start in Breakout. It says where they go next and does not move them; a change lasts for this session and leaves the room's attendee list as it is.




Whenever people with an assignment are in the main meeting, the Room line shows **To Breakouts** with how many. Click it and **Send to breakouts** lists who goes where. **Send** moves them all at once; **Cancel** leaves everyone where they are. It is not available while a breakout is counting down to its end.




Someone you send to a breakout stays there until you bring them back: they do not get **Return to Main Room**. An attendee in a breakout sees the main meeting and their own breakout, never another one. When the groups are done, **End All** brings everyone back together.

## Tips

**BEST PRACTICE: Say how long the breakout will last**

Tell people before you send them, for example “ten minutes, then we'll bring everyone back”. They get a five-second warning when you end it, which is plenty for wrapping up a sentence but not a discussion.

**BEST PRACTICE: Leave a host in the main room**

If every host goes into breakouts, nobody is left to admit late arrivals from the waiting room or deal with anything in the main meeting. Keep one host, or a co-host, behind.