

## Tips for setting up the Zoom video call platform for instrument lessons

- If possible, run Zoom using the computer app for MacOS or Windows (<https://zoom.us/download>). This will allow you to access advanced settings that can be used to improve the audio.
- In Settings > Video, disable "Spotlight my video when speaking," so your video stays focused on your call partner the entire time. Uncheck "enable HD" so your video uses less network bandwidth, which leaves more bandwidth for audio. Finally, experiment with setting your camera to "original ratio," because this will allow you to use the camera's entire sensor and consequently a wider field of view. (*see Figure A*)
- In Settings > Audio > Advanced, disable "suppress persistent background noise" and "suppress intermittent background noise." If these two settings are enabled, the audio can sometimes cut out, because the software assumes, for example, that a long note is just noise. Additionally, check "Show in-meeting option to 'Enable Original Audio' from microphone" (*see Figures B and C*)
- Try to place your device (computer, phone, tablet) in the room so that the video frames you in such a way as to see all of the technical things you might want a student to see. You might, for instance, want to put it on a tall counter or table if standing.
- If you own a portable recorder (Zoom H2, H4n, Tascam or Edirol, to name a few), many of them can function as an audio interface, which means you can plug it into your computer (usually over USB) and use it to pick up your sound during the call, which can be a huge improvement in audio quality. USB microphones (Blue Yeti or AT2020USB, for example), and dedicated audio interfaces with professional mics are also options. Setup for each device is a little different, but for all of them, you will need to choose your Microphone in Audio settings (*see Figure B*)
  - If you don't have any such device, it might be worth picking something up if you're going to be playing your instrument in a lot of calls. Contact your teacher for recommendations.
- If you are still having issues with sound, experiment with wearing headphones (or at least one headphone). This could help with sound quality, because the computer will not have to perform echo cancellation.
- When possible, use a wired ethernet connection to the internet, rather than Wi-Fi. This will eliminate one variable that could be responsible for a bad call connection.

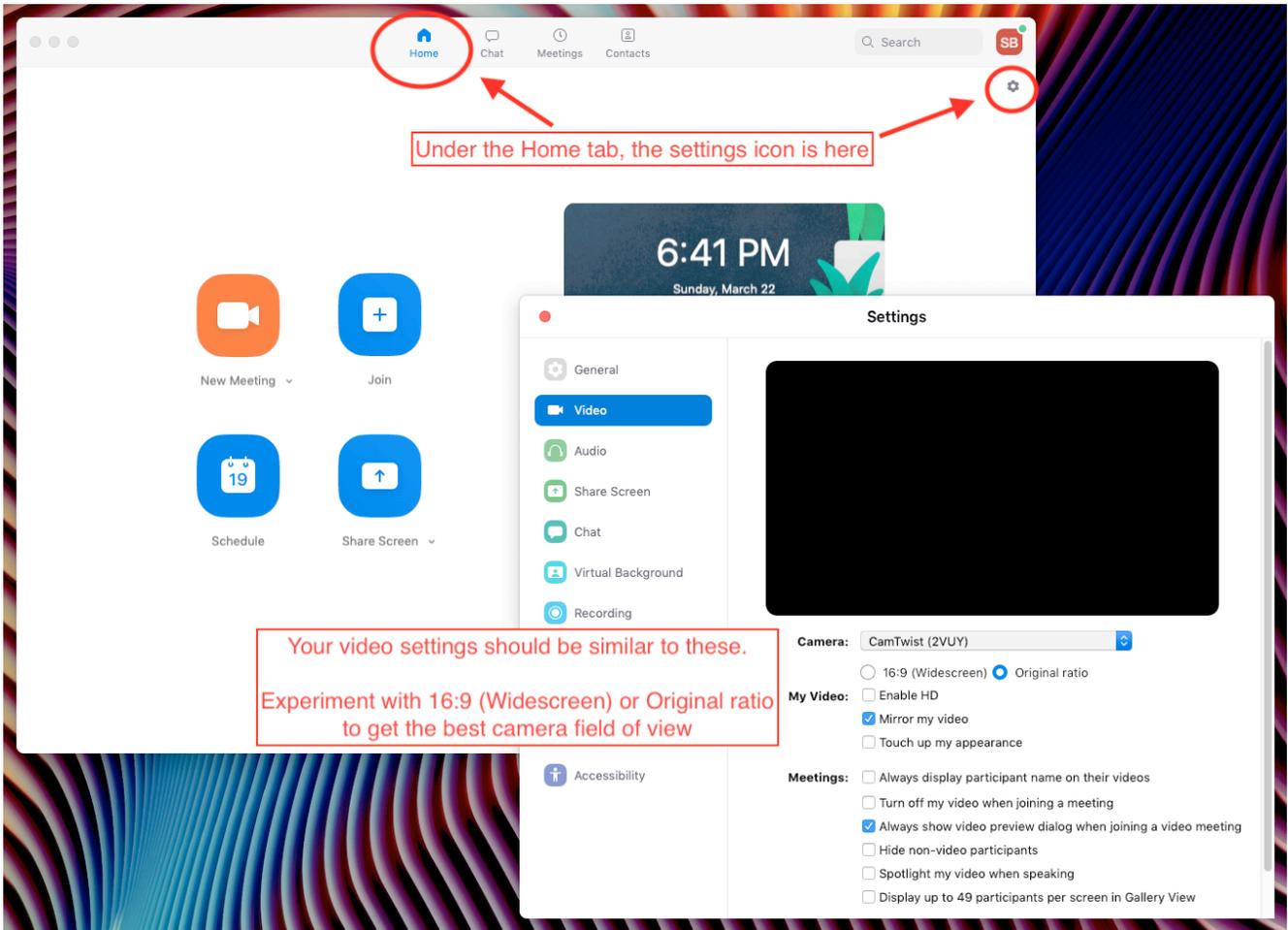


Figure A: Video settings

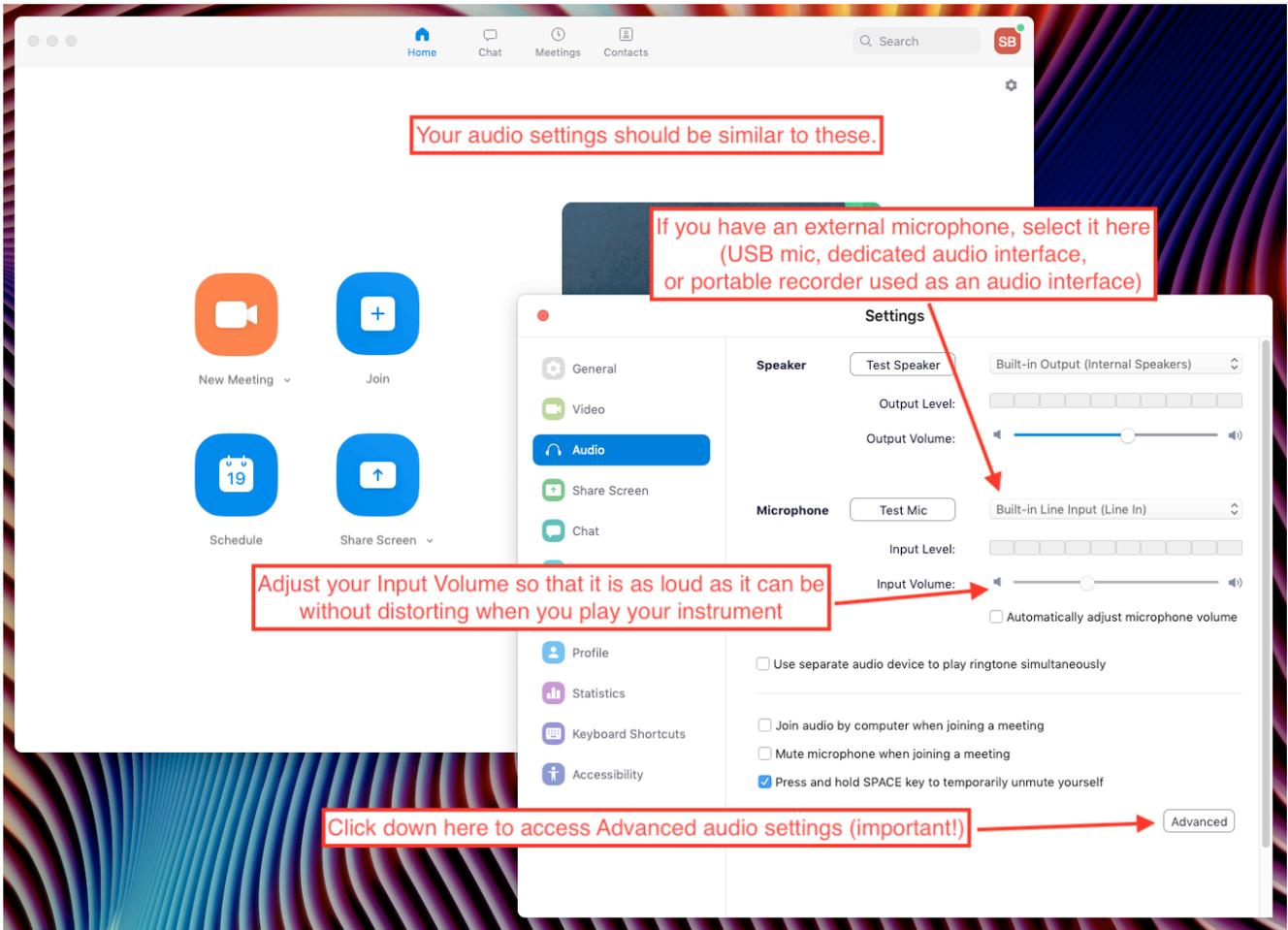


Figure B: Audio settings

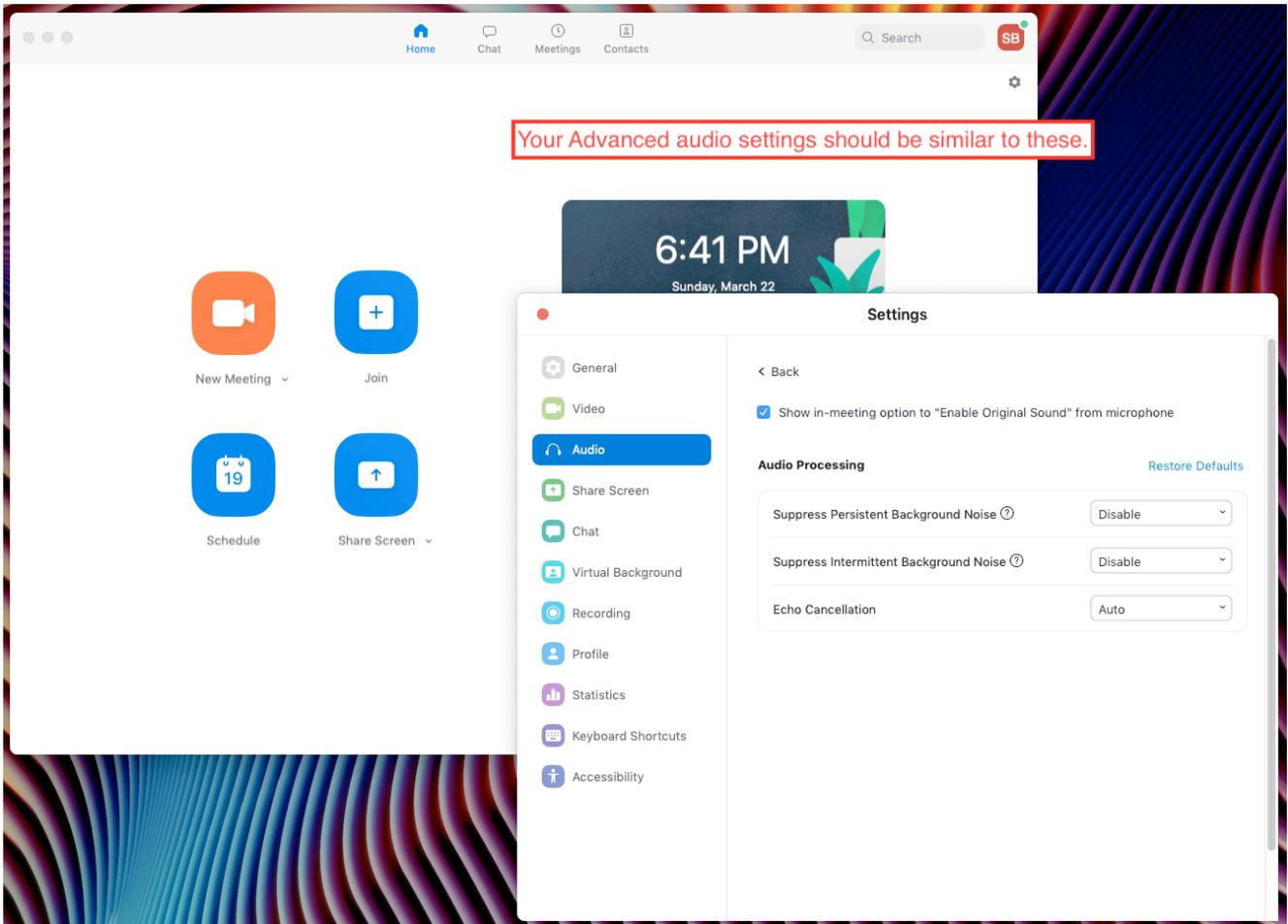


Figure C: Advanced Audio settings