Messy office owners, rejoice: Skype now blurs the background to your video

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Watch the user on the bottom left corner—voila! No more ho-hum apartment backdrop.
The desktop Skype client now supports blurring the background of your video calls so that all the clutter and mess that, ahem, some of us accumulate no longer needs to be broadcast to everyone you talk to.

The background-blurring feature has already been rolled out to Microsoft's corporate communication client, Teams, and now it's in the consumer-oriented app. While bulletproof detection of the background requires a depth-sensing camera, the approach used in Skype (and Teams) uses machine learning-derived algorithms in order to work with any camera. The algorithms have been trained to detect human outlines, including the voluminous hair that some lucky people are blessed with as well as arms and hands. Presumably this means that it will properly detect even those arms and hands that appear dismembered, appearing from off the edge of the screen. Using blur is optional, and it can be enabled on a call-by-call basis.

This use of machine learning does, however, mean that it's not 100 percent guaranteed to blur everything that you might want

blurred. So if there’s anything too embarrassing behind you, you still might want to move it out of the camera shot just in case.

Background blur should be available to anyone using the Skype desktop client on a desktop or laptop machine.

Listing image by Microsoft

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