Blogs at Penn State

Fall 2007

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Community Help: http://blogger.psu.edu
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Movable Type Blog How-Tos

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Blog Basics

These instructions will help you set up one or blogs quickly and start writing. The blog will published within

Activate Personal Web Space
You must have activated your Penn State Personal Web space in order to use the Penn State blog service. To activate your personal Web space, go to http://www.personal.psu.edu/, then click the “Apply for Web space on www.personal.psu.edu” link.

Create Blog
2. In the System Shortcuts menu on the right, select Weblogs to create a blog.
3. Click the Create New Weblog link to the right of the “Weblogs” tab.
4. Select a Weblog-Name in the Settings window (e.g. Professor’s X’s IST 000 blog)
5. In the Site URL field, replace “WEBLOG-NAME” with a simple path name (e.g. “istclassblog”). By default, blogs are published in your personal Web space in the /blogs directory.

Notes:
• Remove /WEBLOG-NAME/ if you want only one blog
• If you have access to departmental Web space, you can create a /blogs directory on a different Penn State server.

These settings will create a blog entitled “A Test Blog” at the address http://www.personal.psu.edu/xyz123/blogs/test.

6. Click **Save Changes** to create the blog, then click **Rebuild my Site**. This will post the initial files to your personal Web space.
Select Themes (Colors/Fonts)

1. In the left hand menu, select **Templates** under the Configure options.

2. At the bottom of the Templates page in the **Plugin Actions** menu, click the link for **Select a Design Using Style Catcher**.
3. Click **Find Styles** in the upper right to see available themes. 
   **Note:** To preview even more styles, enter http://thestylecontest.com/browse into the field for Theme or Repository URL.

![Theme selection interface](image)

4. Highlight a theme image and click **Apply Selected Design**, then confirm by clicking **Choose this Design**.

**Write your First Post**

1. At the top of the page, click **Main Menu**. You should see an entry for the blog you just created.
2. Click the link for “Create a new entry on this Weblog” on the right.

3. Fill in the **Title** field and enter text in the **Entry Body** field. You can use the formatting buttons.
   Note: The buttons will create HTML code.

4. To include a link in your text, highlight the text you want to be a link (e.g. “Penn State Home Page”), then click the chain icon and fill in the URL in the pop-up window.

5. To include an e-mail link, highlight the text you want to be a link (e.g. “Contact the Webmaster”), then click the envelope icon and fill in the email address in the pop-up window.

6. To indent an entire paragraph as a quote, highlight the text and click the quote mark icon. This will enclose the text in an HTML <blockquote> tag.
7. Click **Preview** to review how the HTML formatting tags will be displayed.

8. You MUST click **Re-Edit this Entry** to return to your entry. Note: If you see a blank blog entry form, click the forward button in your browser, then click **Re-Edit this Entry**.

9. In the upper right pull-down menu, change the entry status to **Published**. Note: The Scheduled option lets you post entries at specific times in the future.

10. Click **Save** when you are ready to post, then click **Save** again.

### View Blog Post and URL

Click **View Site** at the bottom of the left menu to open your blog. The URL of the blog will be listed on the top of the page.

Click the back button to return to editing the blog.

Note: If you don’t see the entry you just wrote, then click the back button to return to editing the blog and make sure the “Status” menu is set to **Published**.

### Edit an Older Entry

To edit an older entry

1. Enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click **Entries** in the upper portion of the left menu.
3. Click the link for the entry you wish to edit.
4. Edit and click **Save**.
5. Click **Rebuild Site** in the lower part of the left menu to post the changes.

### Delete an Older Entry

To delete an older entry

1. Enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click **Entries** in the upper portion of the left menu.
3. Check the entry or entries you wish to delete, then click the **Delete** button at the top.
4. Click **Rebuild Site** in the lower part of the left menu to post the changes.

### Set Default Status to “Publish”

If you want all entries to be immediately visible to the public, then you can set the default status of new entries to Publish.

1. Enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click **Settings** in the left menu.
3. Click the **Switch to Detailed Settings** link on the right. More tabs will be displayed.
4. Click the **New Entry Defaults** tab.
5. Change the **Post Status** pull-down menu from “Unpublished” to **Published**.
6. Click **Save Changes** at the bottom of the screen.
7. Click the **Rebuild My Site** button. Click **Rebuild** in the next window.
8. Click **New Entry** in the left menu and check to see that the **Status** menu is set to Published.

### Activate WYSIWYG Editor

If you want all entries to be immediately visible to the public, then you can set the default status of new entries to Publish.

1. Enter your blog, then click **Settings** in the left menu.
2. Click the **Switch to Detailed Settings** link on the right. More tabs will be displayed. Click the **New Entry Defaults** tab.
3. Change the **Text Formatting** pull-down menu to **WYSIWYG**.
4. Click **Save Changes** at the bottom of the screen and rebuild your site.

### Toggle between WYSIWYG and HTML Source

1. Enter your blog, then click **New Entry** in the left menu.
2. On the entry page, click the link for click the link “**Customize the display of this page**” at the bottom.
3. In the **Editor Fields** options, select **Custom**. Place a check next to **Text Formatting** and any other items you wish to edit for each entry.
**Note:** If you cannot place a check, make sure **Custom** is selected.

4. Click **Save** to close window and change preferences.

5. The entry form will be changed to include a **Text Formatting** menu.
   **Note:** The **Status** menu where you set the publish option may be pushed to the bottom.

6. To toggle between views, change the **Text Formatting** menu, then click **Save**. The entry window will change.
   **Note:** The Converted Line Options is the recommended HTML source view.
Control Spam Comments to Blogs

By default, blogs are set to allow anyone from inside (and possibly) outside of Penn State to post comments. Unfortunately, some operations create “spam” comments, which are really advertisements or something else related to your topics.

To reduce spam, but still allow comments, use these settings.

1. Log in to http://blogs.psu.edu/mt, then enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click Settings in the middle of the left menu.
3. Scroll to the **Comments** section.
   
   **Note:**

   To reduce spam comments, select “Accept comments from Anyone”, but select “Trusted commenters only” in the second option group down.

4. In the “Accept comments from” group select **Anyone**.
   
   **Note:** The “No One” setting will disable comments, and “Authenticated commentators option” will require you to create a separate blog password.

5. In the “Immediately publish comments from” group select **Trusted commenters only.** This will put comments from new e-mail addresses on “hold” until you can release it to the public.
   
   **Note:** Comments from e-mail addresses you have already pre-approved are automatically posted.
Upload an Image File

It is recommended you upload your image **before** you create an entry.

**Upload Image**

1. Create and enter a blog by clicking the link name.

2. Click **Upload File** in the top of the left menu.
3. In the upload window, click **Browse** and navigate to your image file on your local drive.

4. Click **Set Upload Path** link, then select the option for the current date in the **Path** drop-down menu. This will allow you to find images more easily at a later date. **Note:** If no path is set, the image loads directly into your /blogs directory on your Penn State Personal Web site.

5. Click the **Upload** button to upload the image. A new window will open with additional options.
Include the Image in a Blog Entry

Immediately after you’ve uploaded image (see previous section) you will see a new window with additional options for including an image in an entry.

1. Click one of the options below
   - **Create a new entry using this uploaded file** - Check this option to begin a blank entry with the image inside of it.
   - **Show me the HTML** - Check this option to if you’ve created an entry and typed in a significant amount of text.

2. Select the image link type
   - **Popup Image** - Creates link to an image from the entry. Best for large images.
   - **Embedded Image** - Embeds the image directly within an entry. Best for smaller images.

3. If you want to create a smaller image which links to a larger version, then follow the instructions below:
   - **Note**: The thumbnail option does not work for PNG images.
   
   a. Check the option for **Create a thumbnail for this image**.
   
   b. Select a target height or width (e.g. a width of 400 pixels or less) **Note:** the Constrain proportions option ensures that the image scales down smoothly

See the sections below for more detail on each option.
**Create a New Entry**

A new entry window will open with the HTML code for embedding or linking the image inside it.

Insert text before or after the code to complete the entry.

![HTML Code for Embedded Image inserted into a new entry.](image)

**Preexisting Entry (Show Me the HTML)**

You will see a window with HTML code for embedding or linking the image.

Copy and paste the code into your entry and the image will be displayed to the viewer.

![HTML Code for Embedded Image. Cut and Paste into your Entry.](image)

**Popup Image**

Creates link to an image from the entry. Best for large or wide images.

**Embedded Image**

Embeds the image directly within an entry. Best for smaller images.
Using the Same Image in Another Entry
You can use the same image in another blog entry by cutting and pasting the image HTML code (or "Embed code") from one entry into another entry.

Podcasting
You can create a podcast feed by uploading an audio file into your Web space and linking to it. The feed will be available in iTunes.

Detailed instructions are posted at
http://blogger.psu.edu/help/extras/podcast
Add Blog Categories and Tags

These instructions allow you to include blog categories and free tags for each entry.

Categories vs. Tags

Categories are a fixed list configured by the blog creator, while free tags are a set of words manually added to each entry. The differences are

- Links for Categories are displayed in the side bar.
- Tags are displayed below each entry as links. If you use the same tag in multiple entries, all entries using that tag are displayed.

Both categories and free tags can be used in the same blog, but you should be sure to use words consistently.

Configure Entry Page for Categories and Tags

To add tags and categories to entries, you must configure the entry page to display these items.

1. Click New Entry at the top of the left menu.
2. Click the link Customize the display of this page at the bottom.
3. In the **Editor Fields** options, select **Custom**.

4. Place a check next to **Categories**, **Tags** and any other items you wish to edit for each entry. **Note:** If you cannot place a check, make sure **Custom** is selected.

5. Click **Save** to close window and change preferences.

6. The entry form will be changed to include a **Category** menu and **Tags** field. 
   **Note:** The **Status** menu where you set the publish option may be pushed to the bottom.
7. To add a new category, select Add new category... in the **Category** pull-down window. See details below.

8. To add tags, type in a series of words separated by commas (e.g. “blogs, social computing, Web 2.0”)

**Add a New Category or Subcategory (Details)**

Hint: Create categories in blog entries as topics arise so that your blog avoids “empty” categories.

1. Click **New Entry** at the top of the left menu to create a new entry.

2. In the **Category** pull-down window, select Add new category... A pop-up window will open.

3. In the Category window, enter the name of the category in the **Category Title** field.

4. In the **Parent Category** menu:
   - Leave the menu set to **Top Level** if you are creating a main category
   - If you are creating a subcategory, then change the **Parent Category** menu to an appropriate main category.

5. Click **Rebuild Site** in the lower part of the left menu to post the changes.
Examples of Parent Categories

For instance, if you wanted to create a subcategory of Blogs under a main category of Social Computing, you would:

1. Create a category named Social Computing and set the Parent Category to Top Level.
2. Create a second category named Blogs and set the Parent Category to Social Computing.

Edit/Delete Categories

1. Create and enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. In the left menu, click Categories. You will see a list of categories used in your site.

   The following options are available

   • **To edit the name of a category**, click the name of the category, then change the Label field.
   • **To move a category between levels**, click the Move button to the right of the category name, then select a new parent category. Top Level sets a category to main category level.
   • **To delete categories**, check all categories to be deleted then click the Delete button at the bottom.
   • To create a new main category, click Create New Top Level Category to the right.
   • To create a new subcategory within a parent category, click the Create button next to the name of the category.

3. Click Rebuild my Site when you are finished to post the changes.

4. Click View Site in the lower left menu to see the Categories in the sidebar. Click the back button to return to editing the blog. **Note:** New categories will not become links until you add at least one entry in that category.

Add a Tag (Details)

1. Click New Entry at the top of the left menu to create a new entry.
2. In the **Tags** field, add a series of words separated by commas (e.g. “blogs, social computing, Web 2.0”).

    **Note:** For best sorting, be use the same same version of the word (e.g. “blogs”, but not “blog”) across entries.

**Display Tag Cloud in Sidebar**

The **Tag Cloud** is an optional sidebar widget that can be enabled in the Widget manager.

See the instructions below for **Adding and Managing Sidebar Widgets** for more detailed instructions.

**Manage Tags**

1. Enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click **Tags** in the middle portion of the left menu.
3. You will see a list of free tags you have used and the number of times you include them.
4. Click on a tag to change its name or spelling.
5. To delete tags, check each tag you wish to delete, then click the **Delete** button below.
6. To see which tags you have already used, click **Tags** in the left menu. Tags can be deleted and renamed as needed.

**Edit/Add Categories and Tags in Older Entries**

To add a category to an older entry

1. Enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click **Entries** in the upper portion of the left menu.
3. Click the link for the entry you wish to edit.
4. Change categories or tags and click **Save**.
   
   **Note:** If you do not see a **Category** menu or **Tag** field, then make sure they are enabled (see previous section).
5. Click **Rebuild Site** in the lower part of the left menu to post the changes.
Adjust Blog Archive Settings

By default, the blog will archive your postings by the month and by category. You can adjust blog settings to display by category, by month by day or by the week.

1. Create and enter a blog by clicking the link name.

2. Click **Settings** in the middle of the left menu.
3. In the **Settings** window, click the link for “Switch to Detailed Settings” on the far right.

![Settings Window](image)

4. You should now see more tabs. Click the **Publishing** tab.

![Publishing Tab](image)

5. Scroll down to the **Archive Mapping** section.

6. Check the options you want for your archive. **By Month** and **By Category** are checked by default.

   **Note:** The Individual archive lists the title of each blog.

7. Click **Rebuild my Site** when you are finished to post the changes.

8. Click **View Site** in the lower left menu to see the changes in the sidebar. Click the back button to return to editing the blog.
Manage and Display Sidebar Widgets

Widgets are snippets of code which allow you to add different types of content to the sidebar of your blog.

Add and Remove Sidebar Widgets

Additional built-in widgets include Technorati Search, Calendars and the Creative Commons license statement.

To make these active (or remove sidebar elements), complete these steps.

1. Login into http://blogs.psu.edu and enter a blog by clicking the name.

2. Click the Templates link on left. If necessary, click the Modules tab. A list of available sidebar widgets are displayed.

3. Click Manage My Widgets in the bottom Plugin Actions section

4. In the next screen, click the link for First Widget Manager.

5. All available able widgets will be displayed.
   a. Drag widgets you do not need to the right hand Available Widget column.
   b. Leave widgets you want to be displayed in the to the left Installed Widgets column. You can drag the order of the items to change the display order.
   c. Click Save Changes to exit the Widget Manager.
List of default widgets. Drag widgets to right column to Hide. Drag widgets to left column to show them in the blog.

6. Click **Rebuild Site**.

7. Click **View Site** to check your blog sidebar.

### Add a Headline Feed to Another Blog

This widget tool allows you to add headlines from another blog or news service to your sidebar.

#### Find the Feed Link

Blog headlines are stored in an RSS, ATOM or other XML file. To find a newsfeed link.

1. Navigate to a blog or news service like [http://live.psu.edu](http://live.psu.edu).

2. Look for the feed link button. It can be in several locations.
   - Many sites include orange or blue colored boxes like the ones below.

   ![RSS, XM, ATO icons]

   - In Firefox or Internet Explorer 7, an orange feed icon may be seen to the right of the URL.
In Safari, a blue RSS icon may be seen to the right of the URL.

3. Click the feed icon button to determine the URL of the feed XML file. In many cases, the file will end with the .xml the .rss extension. Some example feed URL’s include:

- PSU Live - http://live.psu.edu/wirerss/30

Add the Feed Link

1. Enter a blog by clicking the name.
2. Click Create a Feed Widget in the lower right.
3. Copy and paste the newsfeed URL into the textbox then click Continue. The name of the newsfeed will be displayed.

Note: The http:// prefix must be included (Not the feed:// prefix found in Safari).
4. On the next screen, edit the Title of the feed as needed.

![Title field with default text]

5. Select the number of entries you wish to Display then click Save.

6. To add another entry, click Create Another; otherwise click Main Menu or the blog name to exit.

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**Display the Feed Link**

1. Enter a blog by clicking the name.
2. Click Manage My Widgets in the lower right.
3. In the next screen, click the link for First Widget Manager.
4. Drag the feed widget (named after the feed) from the right hand Available Widget column to the left Installed Widgets column. Click Save Changes to exit.

![Widget Manager]

5. Click Rebuild Site.

6. Click View Site to check your blog sidebar.
Export a Blog

Export Text
This operation preserves the text of each entry, but images and links will be lost. To export text:
1. Create and enter a blog by clicking the link name.
2. Click the Import/Export button in the left menu.
3. Click the Export Entries tab, then the Export Entries from… button.
4. The text of all the entries will be downloaded into a text (.txt) file.
5. If you wish to import these entries into another blog, consult the new blog service for information on importing new text entries from a file.

Other Files
This operation allows you to save other files including images, raw HTML code and custom stylesheets.
1. Use SFTP or the Penn State Portal Pass Explorer (http://www.psu.edu/portalproject/passexplorer/) to navigate to the /blogs folder in your Personal Web space www/ folder.
2. These files can be downloaded and saved.
Discontinue an Entire Blog
If you wish to discontinue a blog and take it offline.

Delete Future Entries
To delete the blog from your list of Penn State Blogs to the following steps.

   Note: A blog can remain in your blogs profile, but not be visible to the public if no entries are posted.

1. Log in to http://blogs.psu.edu to see the Main Menu.
2. Click Weblogs link in the System Shortcuts to the right to see a list of your blogs.
3. Look for the blog you wish to delete and click the trashcan icon to the far right.

Remove Past Entries
Past entries are stored as static pages in your Penn State Personal Web space. To remove these pages:

1. Use SFTP or the Penn State Portal Pass Explorer (http://www.psu.edu/portalproject/passexplorer/) to navigate to the /blogs folder in your Personal Web space www/ folder.
2. Download any files you wish to archive then delete all files in the blogs directory.

   Note: If you have multiple blogs, delete the folder for the corresponding blog.