Google Docs - Introduction

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Google Docs - Introduction

Class Objectives

- Creating, saving, and printing documents
- Highlighting, copying, and pasting text
- Formatting lists
- Checking spelling and grammar
- Creating tables
- Applying headers and footers

About Google Docs

Google Docs is a word-processing program you can use to write letters, resumés, reports, and more. It functions very similarly to Microsoft Word, but, unlike Word, can be accessed anywhere, anytime, as long as you have a computer, internet access, and a Google account.

Getting Started

You can navigate directly to Google Docs by typing **docs.google.com** into the address bar of your browser. You will be prompted to log into your Google account.

You can also get to Google Docs directly from your Gmail. Click on the grid icon in the upper right corner of the page, scroll down to the Docs icon, which looks like a sheet of paper.
Once you are logged in, you can choose to start a new blank document, or select from a variety of templates for various types of documents.

Click on **Template Gallery** in the upper right corner to see templates for more types of documents. If you choose a template, the formatting will already be set up for you, and you can just type in your information. We will be working with a blank document.

To get started, click on the **Blank** option. This will open a blank, unformatted word processing document.

The tools you will use to create and format your document are located on the menu across the top of the page, while the most commonly-used tools, such as font size, bold, underline, text alignment, and list options are located in the toolbar directly below the menu.
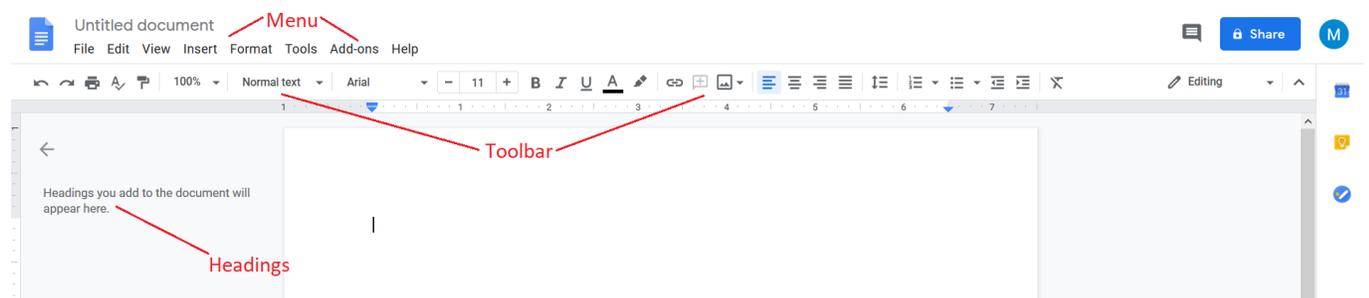
Saving

Google Docs saves your work automatically with each keystroke, so you don't need to worry about saving it. Your document is saved to your Google Drive, so you can open it and work on it anywhere, as long as you have a computer and an internet connection. You can see the save status above the menu, next to the document title.

At the top left-hand corner of your document, above the menu, you will see the words "Untitled document." Click on those words, and you can type in whatever you would like to call your document. This will be the name of the document in your Google Drive.

Typing and Entering Text

Start typing to enter text. The text will appear **where the blinking cursor is located**. Move the cursor by using the arrow buttons on the keyboard or positioning the mouse and clicking the left button. Hold the **Shift** key if you want to type a capital letter. Pressing the **Enter** key (also called a hard return) will add a line break to your document. Pressing the **Tab** key will move your cursor forward about 7 spaces. You can use this to easily indent the first line of a new paragraph.

Selecting Text

To change any attribute of your document, you must highlight it first. Select the text by dragging the mouse over the desired text while keeping the left mouse button depressed, or hold down the Shift key on the keyboard while using the arrow icons to highlight the text. Deselect the text by clicking anywhere outside of the selection or press an arrow key on the keyboard. A quick way to highlight is to quickly double click to highlight a word, or to triple click to highlight a section (such as a paragraph).

Deleting Text

Use the **Backspace** and **Delete** keys on the keyboard to delete text. Backspace will delete text to the left of the cursor and Delete will erase text to the right. To delete a large selection of text, highlight and press either key. You can also replace text by highlighting and then typing the new text over the old text.

Undo

You can always undo your last action by clicking the **Undo** icon on the Toolbar. You can continue to click Undo back to the last point at which you saved your document.

Cutting, Copying and Pasting Text

Cutting and pasting on the computer works like using scissors and glue. You "cut" what you want to move and "paste" it someplace else. Copying allows you to move text elsewhere while keeping it in its original place.
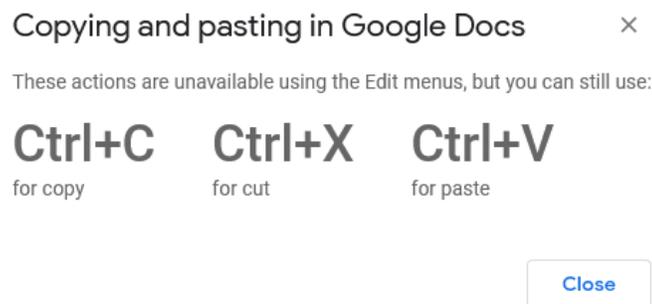
To Cut:
- Highlight the text you want to move.
- Click **Edit**, and select **Cut.** Alternately, you can highlight the text and press the **CTRL** and **X** keys at the same time.

To Copy:
- Highlight the text that will be copied.
- Click **Edit** and select **Copy**. Alternately, you can highlight the text and press the **CTRL** and **C** keys at the same time.

To Paste:
- Move the cursor to the location you want to place the copied text.
- Click the **Edit** and then select **Paste**, or you can press the **CTRL** and **V** keys.
  - In some internet browsers, when you used **Edit** and **Paste**, Docs will display a pop-up box telling you "These actions are unavailable using the Edit menus," and provide the keyboard short cuts to Cut, Copy, and Paste within Docs.

Copying and pasting in Google Docs ✕

These actions are unavailable using the Edit menus, but you can still use:

Ctrl+C Ctrl+X Ctrl+V
for copy for cut for paste

Close

Font

The **Font** is the text type. You can edit your text by font style, size, and color. To change the font:
- Highlight the text you want to change.
- Click the dropdown arrow next to the **Font Name** box in the **Toolbar** to select a different font style.
- Click the **+** or **-** on either side of the font size number to make the font larger or smaller.
- Click the **Text Color** icon in the toolbar to select a different font color.

Bolding, Underlining or Italicizing Text

- Click the **Bold**, **Italics**, or **Underline** icons on the Toolbar and begin typing. OR
- Select the text and click on the **Bold**, **Italics**, or **Underline** icons.

Paragraph Attributes

Format the alignment, spacing, and indentation of a paragraph using the **Alignment, Line Spacing,** and **Increase Indentation** or **Decrease Indentation** buttons on the **Toolbar**.

Making Bulleted and Numbered Lists

Creating Lists
- Click the **Bulleted List** icon or **Numbered List** icon on the **Toolbar**.
- Type the first entry and press **Enter** on your keyboard. This will create a new bullet or number on the next line. If you want to start a new line without adding another bullet or number, hold down the **Shift** key while pressing **Enter**.
- Continue to type entries and press the **Bulleted List** icon when you are finished typing to end the list.
- Use the **Increase Indent** and **Decrease Indent** icons on the **Toolbar** to create lists of multiple levels.

You can also type your text first, highlight the section, then click the **Bulleted List** or **Numbered List** icons on the **Toolbar**.

Use the dropdown arrows next to the **Bulleted List** and **Numbered List** icons to change the style of the bullets or numbers. You can change all the bullets and numbers by placing your cursor on one line within the list, then clicking the dropdown arrow and choosing a different style.

Headers and Footers

A header is text, such as a document title or page number, that is added to the top margin of every page; a footer is text added to the bottom margin. To add page numbers to a document, click **Insert** in the **Toolbar**, then place your mouse pointer over **Page Numbers**. You will see four options for page number placement. You can choose one of those options, or click **More options** for additional choices.

To add a header or footer without a page number, click **Insert** and then place your mouse pointer over **Headers & Footers**. You can then choose whether you want a **Header** (text that is added to the top margin of every page) or a **Footer** (text that is added to the bottom margin of every page).

To get back into your header/footer to edit it, simply double-click on the header or footer. To remove the header or footer, just double-click on it and delete the text.

Tables

To insert a table:
- Place the mouse cursor where you want the table to be.
- Click **Insert** and place your mouse pointer over **Table**. You can then choose how many rows and columns you want your table to be, from 1x1 up to 20x20.
- Once you choose how many rows and columns you want, click the table preview, and the table's outline will be inserted into your document. Then you can type in your data. Placing your cursor on your table and clicking the right-hand mouse button will bring up a menu of options for your table, including adding or deleting rows or columns, changing the appearance of the borders of your table, and distributing rows and columns so that they are all the same size once you have entered your data.
- You can resize rows and columns by placing your mouse cursor over the very edge of the row or column. The pointer will change to a line with an arrow on either size. When you see the pointer change, click and drag the row or column to make it longer or narrower, or taller or shorter.

Charts

To add a chart to your document, click **Insert** and then place your mouse pointer over **Chart**. You can choose a Bar, Column, Line, or Pie chart. Click the type of chart you want to add, and Google Docs will insert a chart with example data pre-added. To fill in your own data, click on the chart, then click the small Link icon in the upper right corner.

This will take you to a Google Sheets spreadsheet, where you can type in your own data to replace the sample date in the chart. The chart will adjust itself automatically when you have filled in your own data.

Page Setup

You can change the right and left margins of your document by clicking and dragging the blue arrows in the ruler directly below the **Toolbar** at the top of your document. If you cannot see the ruler, click **View**, then click **Show Ruler.**

You can also change the margins by clicking **File**, then clicking **Page Setup**. This will open a menu that allows you to set your margins, change the **Orientation** of your document from Portrait (your page is taller than it is wide) to Landscape (your page is wider than it is tall). You can also change the background color of the page, if you would like it to be a color other than white. Clicking **Set As Default** after changing your margins, orientation, and page color means that every new document you start will have the same settings.

Spell Check, Grammar Check, and Other Tools

To check your spelling and grammar, click **Tools** and then click **Spelling and Grammar**. This will bring up a menu with options. Clicking **Spelling and grammar check** will tell Google Docs to scan your entire document for misspelled words and improper grammar. You will be given suggestions to fix each error, along with the option to ignore the error. Clicking the check mark next to **Show spelling suggestions** and **Show grammar suggestions** will prompt Google Docs to alert you to spelling or grammar mistakes as you type. Misspelled words will be underlined with a red squiggly line, while grammatical errors will be underlined with a blue squiggly line. If you uncheck these features, you will not receive spelling and grammar error alerts as you work. Clicking **Personal dictionary** will give you the option to add a word to your Google Docs dictionary. The words in your personal dictionary will not be flagged as misspellings in the future.

Other tools under the **Tools** section include **Word count**, which counts the number of total words in your document; **Dictionary**, which allows you to look up the definition of whichever word your cursor is on, and provides synonyms for the word; **Translate document**, which allows you to automatically translate your document into one of a wide variety of languages; **Preferences**, which allows you to set certain preferences for your document, and also allows you to tell Google Docs to automatically substitute symbols for specific typed characters.

You can also find **Accessibility settings** under **Tools**. These include support for screen-reading software for people with visual impairments, allow for Braille support, and other accessibility options.

Additional Resources

"21 Google Doc Features You Didn't Know Existed (But Totally Should)"
https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/google-docs-tips

Google Docs, by Rémy Lentzner, Hoopla ebook

Google Docs online course, available through our Universal Class service. Access it from our website, under Explore → eLearning → Universal Class

G suite for dummies, Nashua Public Library, 025.04252 MCFE, Adult Nonfiction