

GoogleSites Orientation Guide

GoogleSites is a wonderful free webhosting service that Google provides. The only requirement is that you have a gmail address in order to get some space. The web editor is not as robust as you'll find in packages such as Microsoft Expression Web (once called FrontPage) or Adobe Dreamweaver, but it is certainly sufficient for the needs of most home web developers.

GoogleSites provides a "Help" menu for users who have questions about how to make various features work properly. However, this document will serve to get you started in your GoogleSite development activities.

First Steps



1. Register for a Gmail email account.
2. Plan your site. The creation of websites is much simpler if you have an idea of what you'd like it to look like when you're finished. So, while you don't have to write out every word that you plan on putting on any one page, you should have a reasonable idea of how many pages you'd like to have, how they will connect with one another, and whether there will be any "outside" (not created by you) pages that connect to your website. Brief hand sketches will suffice. The image here illustrates a brief sketch I made for a project with my undergraduate students. Note that some text is included, but most of the sketch involves relationship indicators such as lines and heading styles. You should create a sketch that will be helpful to you in whatever manner works best for you.

Creating a New Site

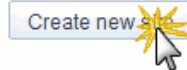
Before you can add content to pages, you must create a new site in Googlesites. Once the site is created you'll be able to add pages and links to those pages.

1. Navigate to

<http://sites.google.com>

You may have to enter your username and password if you aren't already logged in to your gmail account. Once you log in, the "My Sites" window will appear. If you've been exploring this tool, you might have sites already created. Otherwise, your "My Sites" window will be blank.

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My sites

2. To create a new site, click on the "Create new site" button.

3. Complete each of the fill-in boxes on the resulting form. If you leave any of the required fields blank, Googlesites will prompt you to complete the form. Note that when you are selecting your site you can always go back and change your theme later.

Create new site

Site name

Your site will be located at this URL:
<http://sites.google.com/site/> [\[This will populate automatically for you.\]](#)
 Site URLs can only use the following characters: A-Z,a-z,0-9

Site description

Mature content This site contains mature content only suitable for adults.

Share with Everyone in the world can view this site ←
 Only people I specify can view this site

Site theme *Choose a theme. You can always switch it later if you change your mind.*

Default Simply White Charcoal [More themes...](#)

4. Make sure you make your site viewable to people. For the purposes of your class project, you'll want to make it viewable to the world. That way, you know that I'll be able to see it for evaluative purposes and your classmates can see it for feedback purposes.

5. Be sure to scroll down the page until you see the "code" that you must enter. The "Create Site" button is under this area.

Please type the code shown.



Type what is displayed on your screen.

6. Be sure that you make a note of your site's address.

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Create new site

My sites

[edmdsample](#) Shared with everyone in the world

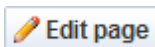
You'll need it in order to submit your work for class.

7. When you've successfully created a new site, you'll see it listed in your "My Sites" window.

Creating Pages in a Site

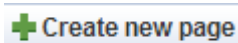
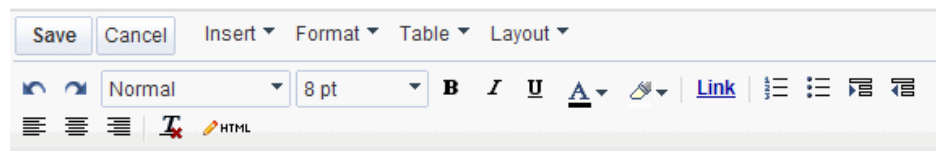
In order to put content on your site, you must create pages. Pages can be linked together, or can contain images and links to other pages that you created or were created by someone else. Be sure that if you are including images on your pages, that you have the appropriate permissions for those images. Clip-art is generally safe, but images that you find on the Web may not be (unless you were the photographer or creator of the image). You're always safe in terms of copyright if you use images that you create or photograph yourself.

1. From the "My Sites" window, click on the link to your site that you have created.

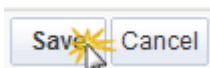


2. Your "Home" page for your site will appear. To make changes to the "Home" page, click the "Edit page" button at the top of the screen. The page editor window will appear. You will notice that there are tools and buttons that are very similar in appearance to those that you find in

packages such as Microsoft Word.



3. To create a new page for your site, click the "Create new page" button at the top of the screen. Make your changes using the editing tools provided for you. The most effectively laid out pages will use heading styles to help organize the text for the reader.

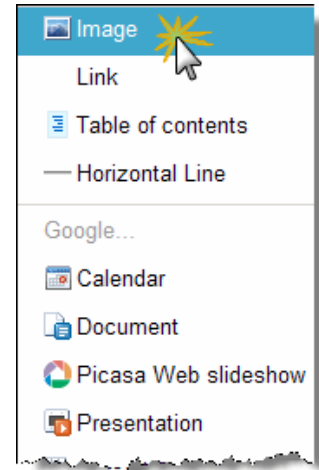


4. In order for your changes to be visible to the world, you must click the "Save" button near the top of the window.
5. The easiest way to see the effect of your changes is to open a different browser than you normally use and paste the URL to your site into the location bar. Alternatively, you can ask a friend to view your site for you. But, if you are currently logged in to gmail or Googlesite, and you attempt to view your site, you'll likely see the editor version, rather than the world-view version. Don't let this confuse you.

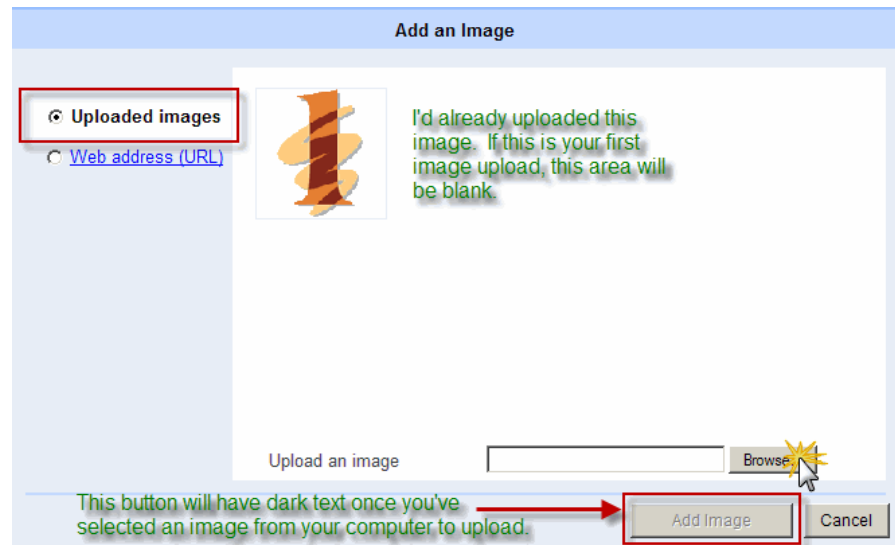
Adding Images to Pages

Remember that .gif and .jpg are the only two types of image files that are viewable on the web. Before you can add images to your pages, you must have image files in the proper format.

1. Open the editor to a page on your site first by clicking on the name of the page on the left navigation menu, or by creating a new page using the “Make new page” button; then by clicking the “Edit page” button near the top of the screen.
2. Click “Insert” from the menu options near the top of the window.
3. Select “Image” from the list of items on the “Insert” menu.
4. Browse your computer until you find the correct image file you’d like to add to your page and click the “Add image” button to add it to your page. Be sure that the “Uploaded images” radio button is selected for this step.



5. Your image should appear on your page at the point where the cursor was located. Remember, that you don’t have the same



alignment options on Web pages as you do in word processors. You are permitted to align the image “left,” “center,” or “right.” Text typically does not “hug” images on web pages like it does in documents such as this one. Although, if you are intent on that effect, you can use tables to simulate it.

Linking Pages Together

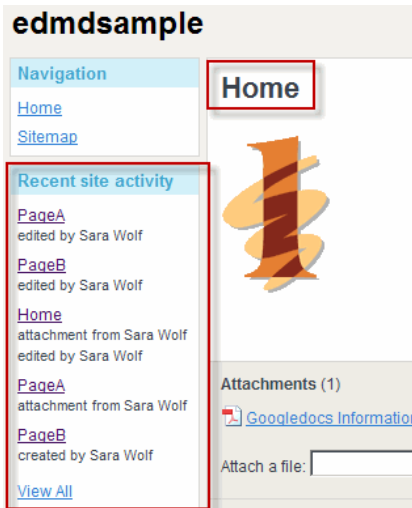
The power of the Web comes from the interconnection of pages and information. Your site comes with the “Recent Activity” sidebar item turned on by default. I suggest that you leave it visible until you are satisfied with your results. Then, you can decide whether you want to turn it off or not. By turning it off, you force the user to use the

navigation that you build into the body of your pages. The user can't go around it and just click through your site. On the other hand, if you've not accurately linked your pages together within each one, turning off the "Recent Activity" will bring that to light. The user would not be able to see information that you intend to be seen.

There are two ways to link pages together in Google sites:

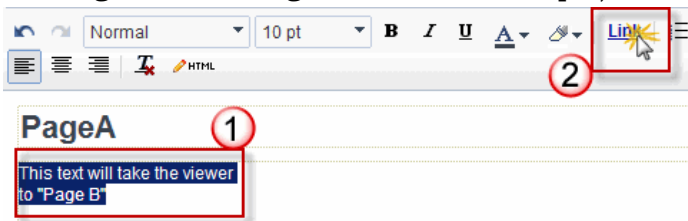
Linking Pages That You've Created

1. To link pages together, they must be in existence first. You are given one page, "Home" at the start of your site. To link the "Home" page to another one, you need to create the other one first. So, the first step to linking pages together is to create the pages. You can choose whether you'd like to add content at the creation stage or not. I tend to put what I call "placeholder" text on pages so that I remember what I want to add when I go back later to do so.



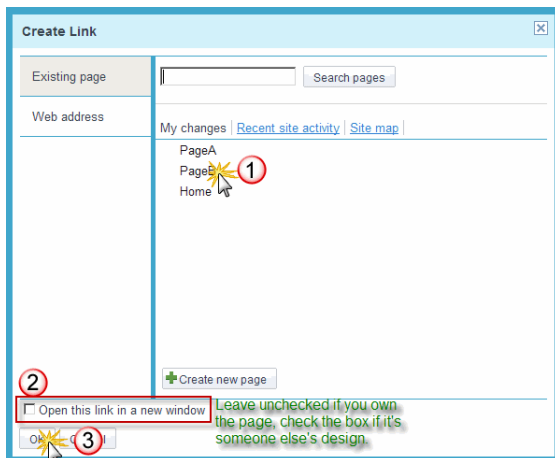
2. Once your pages are created, you'll see them listed to the left of your site editing window. Each of their titles will be "clickable." The image here is displaying the "Home" page, and listing the other pages available to me to edit.

3. Open one page that you would like to contain a link to another page (I'm using "Page A" and "Page B" for this example).



4. On "Page A", type the text that you would like to be clickable for the user to be able to see "Page B."
5. Highlight the text, and then click the "Link" button near the top of the

window. A window appears that contains the list of all pages on your site. "Existing Page" is highlighted to show you that you're choosing from the list of pages that you've created.



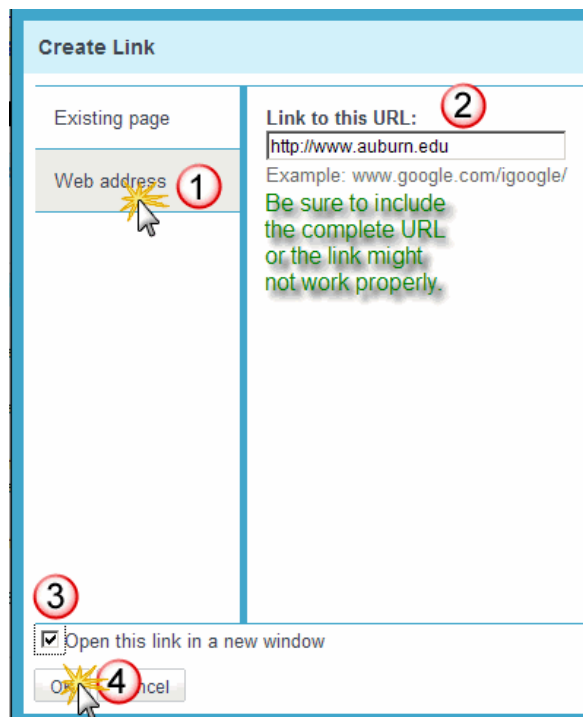
6. Click on the name of the page that you would like to be linked to the highlighted text. A green check mark will appear next to its name. Notice that you can decide whether you'd like your linked page to open in a new window. Generally, if I've created the page that is linked, I allow it to open in the same window. However, if I'm linking to an external page that I did not create (such as the Auburn

Homepage), I make it open in a new window. That way, viewers of my site will see that I did not create that page and the layout and design decisions of its designer will be preserved. Once you've clicked your desired page, click the "OK" button.

7. An indicator box will appear on your first page that shows you what action that link will take.
8. Be sure to "Save" the changes that you've just made, or people won't be able to view them on the Web.
9. Repeat this process until all of your pages are linked together as you desire them to be.

Linking Pages That You Did Not Create

1. In order to link a page that you did not create, such as the Auburn Home Page, to one of the pages in your GoogleSites site, you first must start on a page that you do own.
2. Repeat the steps from above, through step number 5.



3. Instead of looking at "Existing Pages", though, you'll click on the button that says "Web Address." The "Link to this URL" box will appear.
4. Type the full and complete URL of the desired site or page into the box. Be sure to include the <http://...> portion of the URL.
5. As stated above, check the checkbox for "Open link in a new window" if you are not the owner of the page you just linked.
6. Be sure to "Save" the changes that you've just made.

Wrapping it Up

You should be able to create your projects for class with the knowledge contained in this document. If you'd like to do more sophisticated Web development in GoogleSites, I encourage you to use the "Help" feature that Google has provided. Also, I encourage you to experiment with various options so that you have a good understanding of the possibilities available to you with this tool.