

Google Site (wiki) How-To

By Deborah Healey

What's a wiki?

It's a collaborative website, where different individuals can add and edit content. Each change is tracked, so it is possible to go back and restore a previous version of a page in the site. It's usually best for class wikis to set them up so that only certain people (class members and the teacher) can edit the wiki, especially if anyone on the Web can view the wiki.

See also Wikis in Plain English: http://www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=20514

Why would you use one in English language teaching?

Wikis are a great platform for one or more group projects. Each group can have its own wiki or its own page in the wiki. Group members can easily add text, graphics, audio links, and even embedded video. They can share files, too. When students are ready, they can make their wiki available for anyone on the Web to see. The teacher can look through the History to see who edited each page and when. Best of all, there are free wiki site providers, such as Google Sites (<http://sites.google.com>) and PB Works (<http://pbworks.com/>).

Getting Started

You'll need a Google login to use Google Sites. If you have a gmail account, use that as your login.

Go to <http://sites.google.com/>

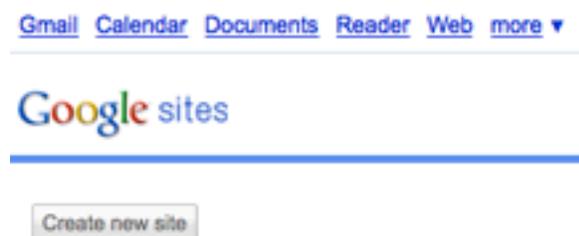
You'll see the login screen.

If you have a Google account, sign in. If not, you'll click on Sign up for Sites, then follow the instructions to set up your Google account.



Create Site

After you log in, you'll be able to create a new site. Click on the Create New Site button.



Choose template, title, and theme

Your next step is to choose a template and a title for your site. The title generates a URL that you can use.

Although there are several templates, it's easiest to start with the Blank template. That way, you can get started little by little. Once you have the basic idea of how to create a wiki, then you can create another one using one of the more complex templates.

This one



Pick a name

Name your Site:

Your site will be located at this URL:
https://sites.google.com/site/

Site URLs can only use the following characters: A-Z,a-z,0-9

Click here

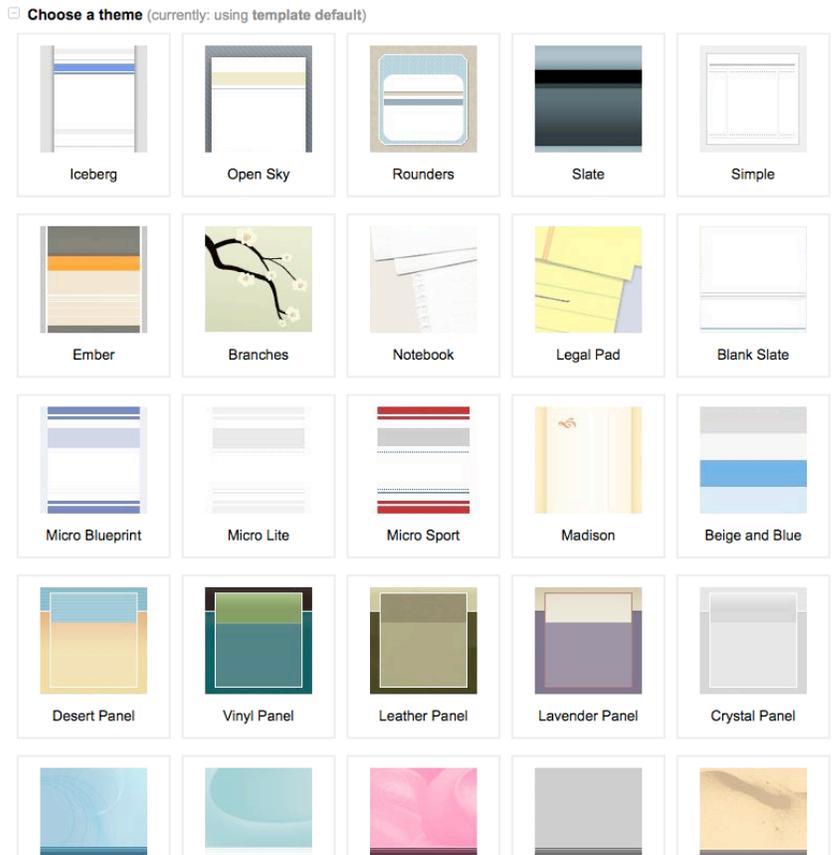
Choose a theme (currently: using template default)

More Options

Please type the code shown.



Click on the plus sign by Choose a theme to pick a design. Don't spent too much time here – you can change the theme later.



Protect your site

Click the plus sign by More options – this is how you protect the site.

Choose **Only people I specify** can view this site.

Do NOT click on This site contains mature content unless you are planning to include pornography on your site.

Type the code as best you can. If you can't read this one, it will give you another one.

Finally, click on **Create site**.

More Options
 You can adjust these options later by using the "Manage site" action.

Site description

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

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

Please type the code shown.



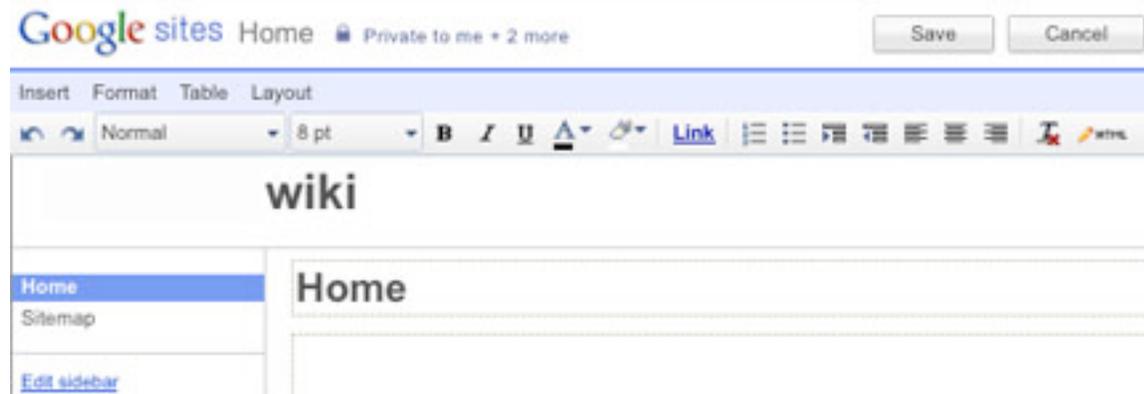
Adding content

Now you're ready to start adding information to your site!

Your first page is the Home page. To change what is on this page, click on **Edit page** in the top right corner.



You'll see something that looks like a word-processing editor. Type your new content. You can pull down the Insert menu to add graphics, sound, and video (but be sure you know where they are). Click on Link to add web links – copying and pasting is the easiest way.

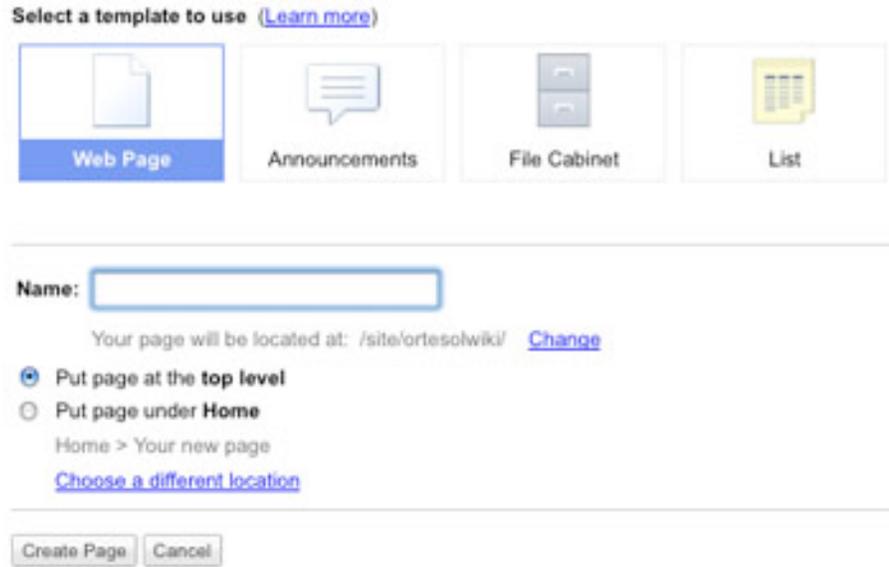


When finished, click on **Save** to save your work.

New pages

There are four basic types of pages that you can create in Google Sites:

1. Plain web page (like what you just created)
2. Announcements – this functions like a blog
3. File Cabinet – an easy way to add files
4. List – a kind of table with labeled columns



Choose the type, then give it a name. It doesn't matter where you put it.

Next, click on Create Page!

If you don't like the template you've chosen, you can pull down the Other Actions menu on the far right and select Change Page Template.



Sample list – choose your own categories

Suggested Links

[Add item](#) [Customize this list](#) Showing 9 items

Link title	Web address	Why it's good - who it's for	Added by... (your name)
Sort ▼	Sort ▼	Sort ▼	Sort ▼
Course website (sample link)	http://umbc.uoregon.edu/~teacher/webskills/	This is our course website. I'm using it as an example of a link to add. To add your own, click on Add item and fill in the form.	Deborah
Avoiding the 5 Most Common Mistakes in Using Blogs with Students	http://campustechnology.com/Articles/2008/10/Avoiding-the-5-Most-Common-Mistakes-in-Using-Blogs-with-Students.aspx?Page=1	It is good to know these mistakes in order to avoid them!	Luiza

The categories are Link title, web address (URL), Why it's good, and Added by.

Deleting a page

To delete a page, go to the page, then pull down the More actions button to Delete page. Say Yes, and the page is gone.

Resources

How-to screencasts: <http://sites.google.com/a/nausetschools.org/googlegoodies/screencasts>
 Lists screencast: <http://sites.google.com/site/sitemplateinfo/tips/list-items>