Wikipedia:Your first article

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"WP:New Page" redirects here. For new page curation and patrol, see Wikipedia:New pages patrol.

Writing an article

Learn how you can create an article.

To experiment, you can use the shared **sandbox** – or if you're logged in, **your personal sandbox**.

To create an article, you can try the Article Wizard.

> **This page in a nutshell:** New articles should follow some guidelines: the topic should be notable (i.e. it should have some detailed coverage in good references from independent sources). Wikipedia is an encyclopedia – not something else. Please respect copyright law and avoid defamatory content. Feel free to be bold and create the article with a limited knowledge of norms here, but other editors might choose to delete it if it's not seen as belonging.

Welcome to Wikipedia!

You have probably already been using Wikipedia for some time, maybe you also have been doing some editing of existing articles – maybe you have been doing a lot of editing of other people's articles but now you are ready to start your own article from scratch. Jump in. Be Bold.

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Introduction

This guide will help you to start your first encyclopedia article and keep you inside the guard rails. We will explain some of the DOs and DON'Ts, then show you how to create an article. When you're ready to start writing, consider using the Article Wizard to help you create the article – it will walk you through these steps.

Here are some tips that may help you along the way:

1. You can only create a new article directly once you've registered an account – you need only choose a username and password. If you don't want to register for an account, registered and unregistered users alike may submit their article for review and publishing by others at the Articles for Creation project.
2. Wikipedia covers certain kinds of subjects and not others. Wikipedia requires that subjects for articles be "worthy of notice"; this concept of notability serves to avoid the indiscriminate inclusion of new topics. If the topic is likely to be suitable for an encyclopedia, go ahead; if you're unsure, or the article is about you or something you are closely connected to, you can ask questions at the Wikipedia Teahouse.
3. **Search Wikipedia first** in case an article *already exists* on the subject, perhaps under a different title. If the article already exists, feel free to practice by making any constructive edits to improve it.

4. **Practice first.** Before starting, try editing existing articles to get a feel for writing and for using Wikipedia's mark-up language – we recommend that you first take a tour through the Wikipedia tutorial or review contributing to Wikipedia to learn editing basics.

5. **Gather references** both to use as source(s) of the information you will include and to demonstrate the **notability** of your article's subject matter. Wikipedia requires the use of reliable published sources. Sources, particularly internet sources, should also be stable, meaning they should be high enough quality that they will continue to exist for future generations. There are many places to find reliable sources, including your local library, but if internet-based sources are to be used, start with books (http://books.google.com/bkshp?hl=en&tab=wp) and news archive (http://www.google.com/search?
hl=en&gl=us&tbm=nws&q=a#hl=en&safe=off&gl=us&tbs=ar:1&tbm=nws&sclient=psy-
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16495.2.2.0.0.0.0.75.150.2.2.0...0.0...1c.gI5pLKtnlBw&pbx=1&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.&fp=
eaf35048cd590c78&biw=1550&bih=1201) searches rather than a simple web search. Extra care should be taken to make sure that articles on **living persons** have reliable sources – articles about living people without reliable sources may be deleted, especially if they include negative or controversial content. References to blogs, personal websites, Facebook and YouTube are unsuitable and material obtained from them may be challenged and removed.

6. **Consider requesting feedback.** You can request feedback on articles you would like to create in a number of places, including the talk page of a related WikiProject or the Teahouse.

7. **Consider creating the article first in your user space.** As a registered user, you have your own user space. You can start the new article there, on a subpage; you can get it in shape, take your time, ask other editors to help work on it, and only move it into the "live" part of Wikipedia once it is ready to go. To create your own subpage, see here. When the new article is "ready for prime time", you can move it into the main article space. (Notes. The Article Wizard has an option to create these kinds of draft pages. Even in user space, unacceptable articles (see below) are liable to be nominated for deletion.)

Remember that if the article is not acceptable, it will be deleted quickly. Wikipedia has a new pages patrol division where people check new articles shortly after creation.

- **Articles that do not meet notability guidelines and do not cite reliable published sources are likely to be deleted.**
- **Do not create**: pages about **yourself**, your **company**, your **band**, or your **friends**; pages that **advertise**; **personal essays**; or other articles you would not find in an encyclopedia.
- **Be careful** about the following: **copying things**, **controversial** material, extremely **short articles**, and **local-interest articles**.

Search for an existing article

Wikipedia already has 5,052,745 articles. Before creating an article, try to make sure there is not already an article on the same topic, perhaps under a slightly different name. Search for the article, and review Wikipedia's article titling policy before creating your first article. If an article on your topic already exists, but you think people might look for it under some different name or spelling, learn how to create *redirects* to alternative titles; adding needed redirects is a good way to help Wikipedia. Also, remember to check the article's deletion log in order to avoid creating an article that has already been deleted. (In some cases, the topic may be suitable even if deleted in the past; the past deletion may have been because it was a copyright violation, did not explain the importance of the topic, or on other grounds addressed to the writing rather that the topic's suitability.)

If a search does not find the topic, consider broadening your search to find existing articles that might include the subject of your article. For example, if you want to write an article about a band member, you might search for the band and then add information about your subject as a section within that

broader article.

Gathering references

Gather sources for the information you will be writing about. To be worthy of inclusion in an encyclopedia, a subject must be sufficiently notable, and that notability must be verifiable through citations to reliable sources.

As noted, the sources you use must be reliable; that is, they must be sources that exercise some form of editorial control and have some reputation for fact checking and accuracy. Print sources (and web-based versions of those sources) tend to be the most reliable, though some web-only sources may also be reliable. Examples might include (but are not limited to) books published by major publishing houses, newspapers, magazines, peer-reviewed scholarly journals, websites of any of the above, and other websites that meet the same requirements as a reputable print-based source.

In general, sources with **no** editorial control are not reliable. These include (but are not limited to) books published by vanity presses, self-published 'zines', blogs, web forums, usenet discussions, personal social media, fan sites, vanity websites that permit the creation of self-promotional articles, and other similar venues. If anyone at all can post information without anyone else checking that information, it is probably not reliable.

Notability
Subject-specific guidelines
Academics · Astronomical objects
Books · Events
Films · Geographic features
Music · Numbers
Organizations and companies
People · Sports and athletes
Web content
See also
Wikipedia essays (by subject)
Common deletion outcomes
Why was the page I created deleted?

To put it simply, if there are reliable sources (such as newspapers, journals, or books) with extensive information published over an extended period about a subject, then that subject is notable and you must cite such sources as part of the process of creating (or expanding) the Wikipedia article. If you cannot find such *reliable sources* that provide extensive and comprehensive information about your proposed subject, then the subject is not notable or verifiable and almost certainly will be deleted. So your first job is to **go find references** to cite.

There are many places to find reliable sources, including your local library, but if internet-based sources are to be used, start with books (http://books.google.com/bkshp?hl=en&tab=wp) and news archive (http://www.google.com/search? hl=en&gl=us&tbm=nws&q=a#hl=en&safe=off&gl=us&tbs=ar:1&tbm=nws&sclient=psy-ab&q=%22your+search+here%22&oq=%22your+search+here%22&gs_l=serp.3...13840.16191.2.16495 .2.2.0.0.0.0.75.150.2.2.0...0.0...1c.gI5pLKtnlBw&pbx=1&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.&fp=eaf35048cd 590c78&biw=1550&bih=1201) searches rather than a web search.

Once you have references for your article, you can learn to place the references into the article by reading Wikipedia:Referencing for beginners and Wikipedia:Citing sources. Do not worry too much about formatting citations properly. It would be great if you did that, but the main thing is to **get references into the article**, even if they are not perfectly formatted.

Things to avoid

Main pages: Wikipedia:What Wikipedia is not and Wikipedia:Avoiding common mistakes

Articles about yourself, your friends, your website, a band you're in, your teacher, a word you made up, or a story you wrote

If you *are* worthy of inclusion in the encyclopedia, let someone else add an article for you. Putting your friends in an encyclopedia may seem like a nice surprise or an amusing joke, but articles like this are likely to be removed. In this process, feelings may be hurt and you may be blocked from editing if you repeatedly make attempts to re-create the article. These things can be avoided by a little forethought on your part. The article may remain if you have enough humility to make it neutral and you really are notable, but even then it's best to submit a draft for approval and consensus of the community instead of just posting it up, since unconscious biases may still exist of which you may not be aware.

Non-notable topics

People frequently add pages to Wikipedia without considering whether the topic is really notable enough to go into an encyclopedia. Because Wikipedia does not have the space limitations of paper-based encyclopedias, our notability policies and guidelines allow a wide range of articles – however, they do not allow *every* topic to be included. A particularly common special case of this is pages about people, companies, or groups of people, that do not substantiate the notability or importance of their subject with reliable sources, so we have decided that such pages may be speedily deleted under our WP:SPEEDY policy. This can offend – so *please* consider whether your chosen topic is notable enough for Wikipedia, and then substantiate the notability or importance of your subject by citing those reliable sources in the process of creating your article. Wikipedia is not a directory of everything in existence.

Advertising

Please do not try to promote your product or business. Please do not insert external links to your commercial website unless a neutral party would judge that the link truly belongs in the article; we do have articles about products like Kleenex or Sharpies, or notable businesses such as McDonald's, but if you are writing about a product or business be sure you write from a neutral point of view, that you have no conflict of interest, and that you are able to find references in reliable sources that are independent from the subject you are writing about.

Personal essays or original research

Wikipedia surveys *existing* human knowledge; it is not a place to publish new work. Do not write articles that present your own original theories, opinions, or insights, *even if* you can support them by reference to accepted work. A common mistake is to present a novel synthesis of ideas in an article. Remember, just because both Fact A and Fact B are true does not mean that A caused B, or vice versa (fallacies). If the synthesis or causation is true, locate and cite reliable sources that report the connection.

A single sentence or only a website link

Articles need to have real content of their own.

Attacks on a person or organization

Material that violates our biographies of living persons policy or is intended to threaten, defame, or harass its subject or another entity is not permitted. Unsourced negative information, especially in articles about living people, is quickly removed, and attack pages may be deleted immediately.

See also:

- List of bad article ideas

And be careful about...

Copying things. Do not violate copyrights

Never copy and paste text into a Wikipedia article unless it is a relatively short quotation, placed in quotation marks, and cited using an inline citation. Even material that you are *sure* is in the public domain must be attributed to the source, or the result, while not a copyright violation, is plagiarism. Also

> ## Copyright
>
> As a general rule, **do not copy-paste text from other websites**. (There are a few limited

note that most web pages **are not** in the public domain and most song lyrics **are not** either. In fact, most things published after 1923, and almost everything written since January 1, 1978 are automatically under copyright *even if they have no copyright notice or © symbol*. If you think what you are contributing is in the public domain, *say where you got it,* either in the article or on the discussion page, and on the discussion page give the reason why you think it is in the public domain (e.g. "It was published in 1895..."). For more information, see Wikipedia:Copyrights (which includes instructions for verifying permission to copy previously published text) and our non-free content guidelines for text. Finally, please note that superficial modification of material, such as minor rewording, is insufficient to avoid plagiarism and copyright violations. See Wikipedia:Close paraphrasing.

> exceptions, and a few words as part of a properly cited and clearly attributed quotation is OK.)
>
> – *Wikipedia:Copy-paste*

Good research and citing your sources

Articles written out of thin air may be better than nothing, but they are hard to verify, which is an important part of building a trusted reference work. Please research with the best sources available and cite them properly. Doing this, along with not copying text, will help avoid any possibility of plagiarism. We welcome *good* short articles, called "stubs", that can serve as launching pads from which others can take off – stubs can be relatively short, a few sentences, but should provide some useful information. If you do not have enough material to write a good stub, you probably should not create an article. At the end of a stub, you should include a "stub template" like this: {{stub}}. (Other Wikipedians will appreciate it if you use a more specific stub template, like {{art-stub}}. See the list of stub types for a list of all specific stub templates.) Stubs help track articles that need expansion.

> ## Good sources
>
> 1. have a reputation for reliability: they are reliable sources
> 2. are independent of the subject
> 3. are verifiable by other editors

Articles about living persons

Articles written about living persons must be referenced so that they can be verified. Biographies about living subjects that lack sources may be deleted.

Advocacy and controversial material

Please do not write articles that advocate one particular viewpoint on politics, religion, or anything else. Understand what we mean by a neutral point of view before tackling this sort of topic.

Articles that contain different definitions of the topic

Articles are primarily about what something **is**, *not* any term(s). If the article is just about a word or phrase and especially if there are very different ways that a term is used, it usually belongs in Wiktionary. Instead, try to write a good short first paragraph that defines one *subject* as well as some more material to go with it.

Organization

Make sure there are incoming links to the new article from other Wikipedia articles (click "What links here" in the toolbox) and that the new article is included in at least one appropriate category (see help:category). Otherwise it will be difficult for readers to find the article.

Local-interest articles

These are articles about places like schools, or streets that are of interest to a relatively small number of people such as alumni or people who live nearby. *There is no consensus* about such articles, but some will challenge them if they include nothing that shows how the place is special and different from tens of thousands of similar places. Photographs add interest. Try to give local-

interest articles local colour. Third-party sources are the only way to prove that the subject you are writing about is notable.

Breaking news events
> While Wikipedia accepts articles about notable recent events, articles about breaking news events with no enduring notability are not appropriate for our project. Consider writing such articles on our sister project Wikinews. See Wikipedia:Notability (events) for further information.

Editing on the wrong page
> If you're trying to create a new page, you'll start with a completely empty edit box. If you see text in the editing box that is filled with words you didn't write (for example, the contents of this page), you're accidentally editing a pre-existing page. Don't save your changes. See #How to create a page below, and start over.

Are you closely connected to the article topic?

Wikipedia is the encyclopedia that anyone can edit, but there are special guidelines for editors who are paid or sponsored. These guidelines are intended to prevent biased articles, and maintain the public's trust that content in Wikipedia is impartial and has been added in good faith. (See Wikipedia's conflict of interest (COI) guideline.)

The official guidelines are that editors **must be volunteers.** That means Wikipedia discourages editing articles about individuals, companies, organizations, products/services, or political causes that pay you directly or indirectly. This includes in-house PR departments and marketing departments, other company employees, public relations firms and publicists, social media consultants, and online reputation management consultants. However, Wikipedia recognizes the large volume of good faith contributions by people who have some affiliation to the articles they work on.

Here are some ground rules. If you break these rules, your edits are likely to be reverted, and the article(s) and your other edits may get extra scrutiny from other Wikipedia editors. Your account may also be blocked.

Things to avoid	Things to be careful about	Great ways to contribute
- Don't add promotional language - Don't remove negative/critical text from an article - Don't make a "group" account for multiple people to share - Don't neglect to disclose your affiliation on the article's talk page	- Maintain a neutral, objective tone in any content you add or edit - Cite secondary sources (e.g., a major media article) for any new statements you add – even if you are confident a statement is true (e.g., it is about your work), only say it if it has been restated already in a secondary source.	- Make minor edits/corrections to articles (e.g., typos, fixing links, adding references to new secondary sources) - If you are biased, suggest new article text or edits on the *article talk page* (not on the main article page). - Disclose your relationship to the client/topic. - Edit using personal accounts. - Recruit help: Seek out a sponsor (volunteer editor) who has worked on similar articles, or submit ideas for article topics via Requested articles.

Note that this has to do only with conflict of interest. Editors are encouraged to write on topics related to their expertise: e.g., a NASA staffperson might write about planets, or an academic researcher might write about their field. Also, Wikipedians-in-residence (http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedian_in_Residence) or other interns who are paid, hosted or otherwise sponsored by a scientific or cultural institution can upload content and write articles in partnership with curators, indirectly providing positive branding for their hosts.
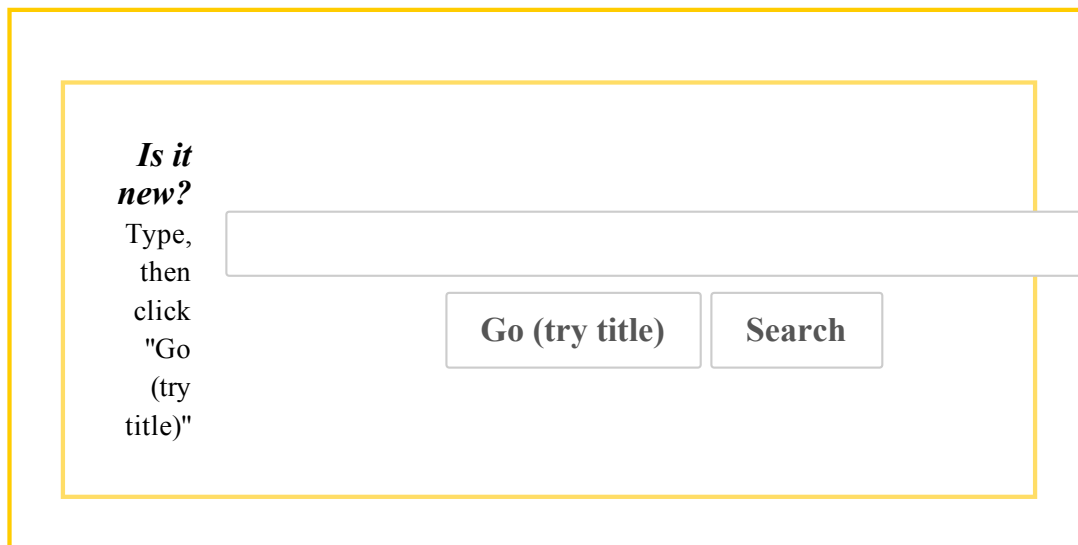
How to create a page

For a technical guide to the mechanics of page creation, see Wikipedia:How to create a page.

Only logged in users can create an article. If you have written an article but have no account you can submit your article for review and publishing at Articles for Creation.

Title for your new article

In the search box below, type the title of your article, then click Go. If the Search page reports "You may create the page" followed by the article name in red, then you can click the red article name to start editing your article.

There may or may not be an article with the same title as the one you wish to create.

If there is no article with the exact title, this does not necessarily mean such an article does not exist. As mentioned above, a search can help reveal this.

Resolving clashes

Main page: Wikipedia:Disambiguation

Sometimes there is already an article under your chosen title, but on a different topic. In this case, the titles must be distinguished from one another. The process of distinguishing identical or similar titles with distinct meanings is called "disambiguation". This can be confusing for newcomers: if necessary, create your page as a userspace draft, then ask at the new contributors' help page or help desk for help on sorting out the disambiguation.

There are three main ways disambiguation is done, depending on how many topics there are and whether there's one which is much more important than the rest:

- **Disambiguation page**. For example, when you enter the word *"Salsa"*, you will be brought to a page known as a disambiguation page that will list all the subjects named *"Salsa"*, including Salsa (sauce), Salsa music, and several other meanings of the word Salsa. Please only create disambiguation pages for existing article clashes, not for prospective articles.
- **Primary usage**. In some cases, the title by itself will be used for the most common meaning of the term (the "primary usage"), and all other uses will be found on a disambiguation page. For example, when you enter Mouse, you will be brought to the article about the animal. All other uses, such as Mouse (computing), are listed on the disambiguation page.
- **Just two topics**. Or in some cases, if there are only two meanings of a title, the plain title will be used for one meaning (the more common one), and a message on the top of that page, known as a hatnote, will be used to direct readers to the other. For example, if you enter Avocado, you will be brought to the article about the plant. A hatnote will direct you to a town called Avocado, California.

Entering references

The very first thing you should write in your article is a list of the source(s) for your information. For now, just enter them like this (and they will automatically turn into links):

(1) http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/12/books/12vonnegut.html
(2) http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/space/space_shuttle.html

Later, you'll learn how to format them to appear as footnotes.

If you know that it will take you a few edits to list references properly, put the template `{{newpage}}` on top of the page to signify to other editors that you are working on it. Even better is to create your article in a subpage of your user page, take as long as you need to make it a good article, then move it to the main article space. You can create your personal sandbox for article development by clicking this link. However, even in user space articles on unacceptable topics are liable to be nominated for deletion.

Categorizing

Every article should be in one or more Wikipedia categories. Often the easiest way to find relevant categories is to think of a similar topic that has an article and visit it to see the categories it is placed in. Otherwise, you may go to Category:Articles and click on any relevant subcategories, then keep following relevant subcategory links as far as you can. Follow all relevant subcategory chains, and add a category declaration, written [[Category:your category]], at the bottom of your article for each relevant category that has no relevant subcategories of its own.

Final step

After you have entered your article, click Show preview to check for errors, then click Save page.

And then what?

Now that you have created the page, there are still several things you can do.

Keep making improvements

Wikipedia is not finished. Generally, an article is nowhere near being completed the moment it is created. There is a long way to go. In fact, it may take you several edits just to get it started.

If you have so much interest in the article you just created, you may learn more about it in the future, and accordingly have more to add. This may be later today, tomorrow, or several months from now. Any time – go ahead.

Improve formatting

To format your article correctly (and expand it, and possibly even make it featured!), see

- Wikipedia:Tutorial to learn how to format your article
- Wikipedia:Writing better articles
- Wikipedia:The perfect article
- Wikipedia:Lead section

Others can freely contribute to the article when it has been saved. The creator does not have special rights to control the later content. See Wikipedia:Ownership of articles.

Also, before you get frustrated or offended about the way others modify or remove your contributions, see Wikipedia:Don't be ashamed.

Avoid orphans

An orphaned article is an article that has few or no other articles linking to it. The main problem with an orphan is that it'll be unknown to others, and may get fewer readers if it is not de-orphaned.

Most new articles are orphans from the moment they are created, but you can work to change that. This will involve editing one or more *other* articles. Try searching Wikipedia for other pages referring to the subject of your article, then turn those references into links by adding double brackets to either side: "[[" and "]]". If another article has a word or phrase that has the same meaning as your new article, but not expressed in the same words as the title, you can link that word or phrase as follows: "[[title of your new article|word or phrase found in other article]]." Or in certain cases, you could create that word or phrase as a redirect to your new article.

One of the first things you want to do after creating a new article is to provide links to it so it will not be an orphan. You can do that right away, or if you find that exhausting, you can wait a while, provided that you keep the task in mind.

See Wikipedia:Drawing attention to new pages to learn how to get others to see your new articles.

Add to a disambiguation page

If the term is ambiguous (meaning there are multiple pages using that or a similar title), see if there is a disambiguation page for articles bearing that title. If so, add it to that page.

Still need help?

- For a list of informative, instructional and supportive pages, see Help directory.
- The best places to ask for assistance is at the Teahouse and at the main Help desk.
- , a volunteer will visit you there shortly!
- For a list of the services and assistance that can be requested on Wikipedia, see Request departments.
- Alternately you can ask a question through the Wikipedia help channel (http://webchat.freenode.net/?channels=wikipedia-en-help) on IRC chat.

Read a traditional encyclopedia

Try to read traditional paper encyclopedia articles to get the layout, style, tone, and other elements of encyclopedic content. It is suggested that if you plan to write articles for an encyclopedia, you have some background knowledge in formal writing as well as about the topic at hand. A composition class in your high school or college is recommended before you start writing encyclopedia articles.

The World Book is a good place to start. The goal of Wikipedia is to create an up-to-the-moment encyclopedia on every notable subject imaginable. Pretend that your article will be published in a paper encyclopedia.

Wikipedia help pages	
Noticeboards (?) · FAQs (?) · Reference desks (?) · *The Missing Manual* (?) · Help hub (?)	
About Wikipedia	Principles (Wikipedia in brief) · Policies and guidelines · What Wikipedia is not · Disclaimer (parental advice) · Making requests (where to ask questions · contact Wikipedia directly) · Who writes Wikipedia? · Why create an account?
Help for readers	FAQ · Books · Copyright · Glossary · Mobile access · Navigation · Other languages · Searching · Students · Viewing media
Contributing to Wikipedia	A plain and simple overview · A primer for newcomers · Asking for help · Advice for young editors · Avoiding common mistakes · Etiquette (community expectations) · Learning the ropes · Instructional material · Simplified Manual of Style · Simplified rule-set ("Ignore all rules" · "The rules are principles") · Style-tips · Tip of the day · Job Center · **Your first article** (article wizard) · Vandalism
Getting started	Wikipedia intro · Wikipedia tutorial · The Wikipedia Adventure · Newcomers' training · Manual of Style intro · Graphics tutorials · Picture tutorial (Uploading intro) · IRC (live chat) tutorial · Navigating intro · Policies intro · Referencing intro · Tables intro · Talk pages intro · VisualEditor user guide
How-to pages and information pages	Appealing blocks · Article deletion · Categories · Citations / references (Referencing for beginners · Citation Style 1 · Cite errors · References and page numbers) · Diff · Editing (toolbar · edit conflict) · Email confirmation · Find sources · Files · Footnotes · Image deletion · Infoboxes · Linking (link color) · Logging in · Merging · Namespaces · Page name · Redirect · Renaming pages · Passwords · Reverting · Talk pages (archiving) · URL · User contributions · User page design center
Coding wiki markup	Wiki markup (cheatsheet) · Barcharts · Calculations · Characters · Citation templates · Columns · HTML · Lists · Magic words (introduction) · Music symbols · Sections · Sounds · Tables (introduction) · Templates (documentation · messages) · Transclusion · Visual files · Wiki tools
Directories	Abbreviations · Departments · Editor's index · Essays · FAQs · Glossary · Guidelines · Help menu · Manual of Style · Policies · Shortcuts · Tips
Visit the **Teahouse** if you are a new editor looking for interactive help, or the **Help desk** for an interactive Q & A forum	

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title=Wikipedia:Your_first_article&oldid=696410329"

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│ Wikipedia tips

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  may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a
  registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.