



## Google Docs – Online Collaborative Writing & Spreadsheets

Google Docs is a free online office suite from Google that currently contains a web-based word processor and spreadsheet. Why use this web-based office suite? First, it's free. Second, you don't have to worry about emailing documents back and forth to yourself or other people. You also don't have to worry about carrying word-processing documents around with you on a USB drive. Create/store them online so no matter where you go, as long as you have Internet access you'll have your basic office documents.

In addition, Google Docs is meant to be collaborative. So, imagine how nice it would be to have a “living” word-processing document online. You and a colleague(s) could edit this together, in real-time. Google Docs also keeps *track* of all the edits, so you can watch the document unfold online. You can revert back to previous versions at the click of a mouse button. You can monitor exactly which edits were made, who made them, and when they occurred. When you've finished collaborating, you can leave the finalized document online, print it, save it as a PDF, publish it to a blog, or turn it into a web page.

It's very easy, very cool, and free.

### To sign up for Google Docs (if you're not already a member)

- 1 Go to <http://docs.google.com> (no www)
- 2 On the right side of the screen click “Create a New Google Account.”
- 3 You will need to fill in all the required information and supply an existing email address (one that you can check now) and a password you'll remember.
- 4 Uncheck the Enable Web History button.
- 5 Click the “I Accept” button at the bottom.
- 6 The next screen will ask you to activate your new account.
- 7 You'll need to go check your email – the one you just used to sign up.
- 8 In your inbox, you should find an email from Google, with a clickable link in it. Click that link to activate your new Google account.
- 9 You should now see a screen with all of your new Google Account tool buttons.
- 10 You are now a Google member, and you have access to loads of cool tools including Google Docs, Google Calendar, Gmail, Online Photo Sharing, Blogging, etc. - all free.

Once you've verified your new account by responding to the email you received from Google, you'll simply go to <http://docs.google.com> to use Google Docs. You will use the <http://docs.google.com> link from this point forward to access your documents.

### To begin using Google Docs

- 1 Go to <http://docs.google.com> in your Internet browser.
- 2 You should see a welcome screen. If you had *existing* documents, you would see them listed here.

## To begin using Google Docs

- 1 To begin a new document, click the “New Document” link at the top left.
- 2 You'll be presented with a new word processing screen that looks similar to most word processors you've used.
- 3 Start typing, or paste text from an existing document. You could even upload an existing document – something you've already got typed in MS Word, for example.

The screenshot shows the Google Docs web interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, Help, and Sign out. Below this is a header for the document titled "Intro to Google Docs", which was saved on June 8, 2007, at 11:18 AM by "Oneal". A callout bubble points to the "File" menu, stating: "Click here to rename a document". Another callout points to the "Share" button, stating: "Here's where you decide to collaborate or publish." The main toolbar includes options like Edit, Insert, Revisions, Edit HTML, Preview, Print, Email, and Publish. A third callout points to the "Revisions" tab, stating: "Track your revisions here – you could also revert back to a previous version." The document content begins with "This is a sample. I'm typing this to sign up. Please edit this document." followed by a list of steps to sign up for Google Docs. A fourth callout points to the "Add collaborators" link at the bottom, stating: "Here's a real-time list of your current collaborators". The bottom status bar shows "No one else is editing this document" and a "Check spelling" button.

Click here to rename a document

Here's where you decide to collaborate or publish.

Track your revisions here – you could also revert back to a previous version.

Here's a real-time list of your current collaborators

At this point, you can *Add Collaborators* to your document (Share it), print it, save it in a variety of formats, turn it into a web page, publish it to a blog, etc.

Google Docs can be very advanced, and possibly take the place of your current word processor - or it can simply be a way to do more collaborative writing and editing with a word processor.

Now that you've created a document, the next time you sign in, you'll see a listing of all your current work.

Need help? Visit <http://docs.google.com/support>