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Bloggging Basics



Wikipedia says: A weblog, which is usually shortened to blog, is a website usually consisting of articles, though they can focus on photographs, videos or audio, in a reverse chronological order. Like other media, blogs often focus on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; however, some function as online diaries instead. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic.

Objectives for our class:

The Blog will give us an opportunity have a dialogue with one another in English. It will work as a forum for the class to talk about assignments, critiques, or our day to day experiences. You may post to the Blog as often as you like but are required to post at least once a day. This tutorial will show you the basics on how to get started, post photos, links to sites of interest and use HTML to enhance your postings.

Getting Started:

The first step in creating your blog will be choosing a site as a host. There are many blog hosting sites on the internet with a multitude of features. Below are 2 sites that are easy to use and very effective.



Blog host sites:



Blogger - www.blogger.com

Free site with an easy interface and account sign up. Has a variety of styles to choose from for the look of your blog. One of the most popular blog hosting sites on the internet. Supports photos, HTML coding and template changes



Live Journal - www.livejournal.com

Site with free and paid levels of membership. The paid membership allows you to upload photos to your blog from your cell phone along with other features. This site has a friends page similar to sites like MySpace and Friendster where you can link your blog to friends blogs.

*It is a good idea to visit both of these sites and look at the features they offer and decide which will work best for you. **Remember it is free to sign up** for an account so if you are not sure of which one to use, you could sign up on both until you decide which one you like best.*

Sign up for an account:

Simply follow the instructions for creating an account. You can change most everything about your accounts look, description and title later if you wish.



The design of your blog page:

The make-up of a blog's design is known as a skin or a template. Skins and templates are a series of codes and commands that tell the browser which colors, fonts, and images to use, much like the code that makes up a web page. When you sign up for an account you will need to choose a basic template for your blog. You may change these later by choosing new templates, or by changing the existing language in the template you have to subtly alter it.



Here are three examples of blogger templates that are available for you to use when you sign up for an account.



Posting: *for this example we will use the blogger platform*

Once you have created your account and chosen a template you can begin to post entries to your new blog. If you have since logged off your host site, log in and you will see a screen similar to the one in Fig 1.1. This screen will show you a list of your blogs (yes you may have more than one). The options below detail some of the links on this screen.



fig 1.1

Click here to enter the blog editor page. There are many options here for changing the look of your page.

New Post: Click here to enter a post to your blog. See fig 1.2

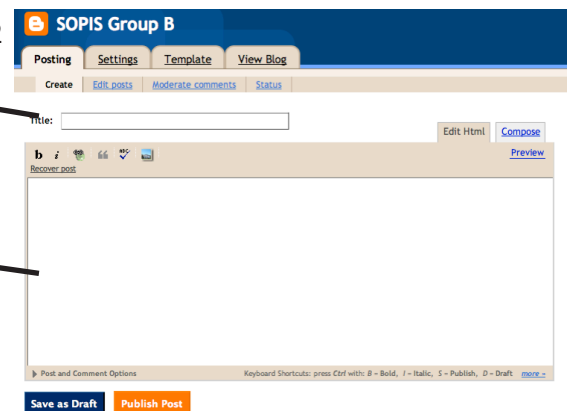
Change Settings: Click here to change your title, subtitle or other attributes of your blog.

Posting an entry to your blog is simple. There is a field for the title which will be displayed at the top of the posting along with the date. In the content field, you can enter simple text, HTML code, photos, links and more. We will go into more on this later. For now, enter your first post as simple text and tell the world you are here!

Title of post goes here

fig 1.2

Post content goes here



Once you have entered the text for your post, click publish post to send it to the internet. You will be given an option to view it once it completes.

Basic HTML code

```
<meta name="keywords" content="BBC, News, BBC News, ne
<meta name="OriginalPublicationDate" content="2006/06/
<meta name="UKFS_URL" content="/1/hi/world/africa/5
<meta name="IFS_URL" content="/2/hi/africa/5085450.
<meta http-equiv="content-type" content="text/html;cha
<link href="http://newsrss.bbc.co.uk/rss/newsonline_wor
<link href="/2/low/africa/5085450.stm" rel="alternate"
<meta name="headline" content="S Africa marking Soweto
<meta name="Section" content="Africa" />
<meta name="Description" content="South Africa marks 30
<meta name="THUMBNAI_URL" content="http://newsimg.bbc.
<link type="text/css" rel="stylesheet" href="/noi/shar
<style type="text/css" media="all">
    @import "/shared/css/toolbar_b
</style>
```

The stuff webpages are made from.

The basic language that tells a web browser how to “draw” a page is called **Hyper Text Markup Language** or **HTML**. It consists of a long list of switch like commands which turn things on and off on the page. These switches can tell a word to use boldface type, place a photo in a particular place, or link a word to another website to name just a few. These switches are formally known as **Tags**. You can write HTML tags into a number of things including emails and blogs. The nice thing is that when someone else views what has been written, they see the executed command, not the tag itself.

HTML Tag structure

In order for a browser to recognize a tag as a command and not just a bunch of text, it has to be placed in specific brackets. See right. This is the tag for bold face type.

If we think of a tag like a switch, then we need to turn it on when we want to use it, and off when we are finished. Most tags require this on/off usage or they will not work. In the case of the bold face tag in fig 2.1 this would tell the browser to set everything after it to bold. It would continue to do this until we turned it off with the tag at the right.

If I wanted to place a word in bold face type on my blog, I would place the word between the two tags. The first turns the command on, the second turns it off. The correct syntax would look like this:

finally

**Tag to turn on
bold face type**

**Word to appear
in bold face
type**

**Tag to turn off
bold face type**

Tags can be nested within sentences

The following sentence contains a tag nested within it:

So I have **finally** made it to Parsons!

The result would look like this:

So I have **finally** made it to Parsons!

Basic HTML code

```
<meta name="keywords" content="BBC, News, BBC News, no...
<meta name="OriginalPublicationDate" content="2006/06/...
<meta name="UKFS_URL" content="/1/hi/world/africa/s...
<meta name="IFS_URL" content="/2/hi/africa/5085450...
<meta http-equiv="content-type" content="text/html;cha...
<link href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/rss/newsonline_wor...
<link href="/2/low/africa/5085450.sta" rel="alternate"
<meta name="Headline" content="S Africa marking Sove...
<meta name="Section" content="Africa" />
<meta name="Description" content="South Africa marks 3...
<meta name="THUMBNAIL_URL" content="http://newsimg.bbc...
<link type="text/css" rel="stylesheet" href="/no1/shar...
<style type="text/css" media="all">
    @import "/shared/css/toolbar_b...
</style>
```

continued

The stuff webpages are made from.

Here are some basic text modifying tags which you would commonly use:

Tag	Looks like:	Description
<code><h1>Headline</h1></code>	<h1>Headline</h1>	This is the headline tag. It designates the text to be large like in a banner or news headline. Headline tags can range from 1-6 with one being the largest.
<code><h6>Headline</h6></code>	Headline	
<code><i>Parsons</i></code>	<i>Parsons</i>	Italics tag
<code></code>		Changes the size of the font for everything placed between the tags with a value from 1-7

There are many online indexes of other HTML code tags which are easily found through any of the search engines. A good example is http://webmonkey.wired.com/webmonkey/reference/html_cheatsheet/

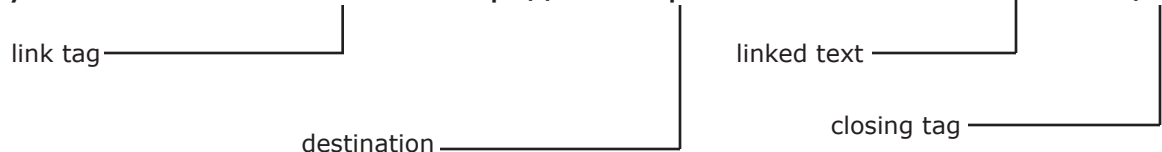


Links

Placing a link to another source into your blog or an email is simple with a link tag. Links are not limited to other websites or pages. They may link to other files as well. Link tags must contain all of the elements shown below in order to work properly. So look closely at what you need.

In the following instance the link will point to another web page. We will turn to the same sentence we have seen throughout this tutorial:

So I have finally made it to `Parsons!`



Basic HTML code

```
<meta name="keywords" content="BBC, News, BBC News, new
<meta name="OriginalPublicationDate" content="2006/06/2
<meta name="UKFS_URL" content="/1/hi/world/africa/5
<meta name="IFS_URL" content="/2/hi/africa/5085450.
<meta http-equiv="content-type" content="text/html;char
<link href="http://newsrss.bbc.co.uk/rss/newsonline_wor
<link href="/2/low/africa/5085450.stm" rel="alternate"
<meta name="Section" content="Africa" />
<meta name="Description" content="South Africa marks 30
<meta name="THUMBNAIL_URL" content="http://newsimg.bbc
<link type="text/css" rel="stylesheet" href="/noi/shar
<style type="text/css" media="all">
@import "/shared/css/toolbar_b
</style>
```

continued

The stuff webpages are made from.

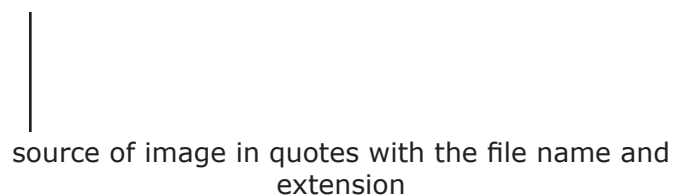


Photos

With your new knowledge of the link tag, it is possible to link to a photo file which is on the internet somewhere, and when the link is clicked, you will see the photo. But what if you want the photo displayed on your page? The tag is illustrated below.

```

```



Notice how this particular tag does not require a closing `</>` tag. There are exceptions to every rule here, but in this case it is not necessary. We are telling the browser to place an image. We are not trying to enable a function on a particular piece of text or data, therefore we do not need to enclose it or turn it off.

Try this



A good way to become familiar with coding and what makes up a webpage or a blog page is to look at the language that comprises them while you are surfing the internet. You can do this by clicking VIEW at the top of the page and choosing **View Source** or **View Page Source**. Much of what you see will seem foreign at first, but it will help you develop your understanding of HTML.

```
padding-top:2px;
padding-bottom:2px;
background-color:#FFCC00;
padding-left:10px;
padding-right:10px;
margin-bottom:0px; }
--></style></head><body bgcolor="#FFFFFF" link="#0000FF" onLoad="init();toolboxOnLoad();" onUnload="cleanUp();"><script lang
if(document.all)
document.write("<IE:HOME PAGE ID = 'oHomePage' />");
//--></script><span id="redirectUSP">&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;</span><table width="746"><tr><td height="5px"></td><tr><td id="sFlashTextId" align="right" class="navigati
</script><script src="http://include.ebaystatic.com/js/e465/us/ebaybase_e4653us.js"> </script><script src="http://include.ebaystatic.com/js/e465/us/ebaysup
ebay.oDocument._getControl("headerCommon")._exec("writeStyleSheet");
</script><div id="cobrandHeader"> </div><span class="ebay"><form class="nomargin" method="get" name="headerSearch" onsubmit="ebay.oDocument
ebay.oDocument._getControl("signIn")._exec("writeLink","sign in","http://signin.ebay.com/ws2/ebayISAPI.dll?signIn&pageName=hh:signInUS","sign out"
ebay.oDocument._getControl("greetings")._exec("writePersonalHeader","Sign in","http://signin.ebay.com/ws2/ebayISAPI.dll?signIn&pageName=hh:signInUS","reg
if(!document.layers){document.write("<noscript></noscript></td><td
ebay.oDocument.oPage.createConfig = function()
{
var c = ebay.oDocument.addConfig( new EbayConfig( "Common.Flash.DoubleClick.UrlData" ) );
c.oDomain = "http://us.ebayobjects.com/";
c.sStartSite = 'ebay.us.homepage.seller';
c.bUseRTM = true;
}
ebay.oDocument.oPage.createConfig();
</script><script language="javascript" type="text/javascript"><!--
sLOut = 'homepage.seller/seller';
if(typeof(dcSite) == "undefined"){
var dcSite = '/ebay.us.';
}else{
dcSite = '/ebay.us.';
}
if(typeof(isHomePage) == "undefined"){
var isHomePage = true;
}
//--></script><script language="javascript" type="text/javascript"><!--
function ebCreateConfigurations()
{
var hpRedesignConfig = ebay.oDocument.addConfig(new EbayConfig("hpRedesign"));
hpRedesignConfig.sCustomParams = "tp=";
var c = ebay.oDocument.addConfig(new EbayConfig("userConfig"));
```