

Contributing to Wikipedia



A guide to improving content on the online encyclopedia

I'm Adrienne, User:Wadewitz. I've been contributing to Wikipedia since 2004. I'm happy to help you learn how to contribute too, so you can contribute your knowledge and help make Wikipedia better.



DRAFT: 9 DEC 13

Imagine a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. That's our commitment.

This is the vision for Wikipedia and the other Wikimedia projects, which volunteers from around the world have been building since 2001. Bringing together the sum of all human knowledge requires the knowledge of many humans — including yours!

What's included here:

This guide will walk you through how to contribute to Wikipedia, so the knowledge you have can be freely shared with others. You will find:

- What Wikipedia is and how it works

- How to navigate Wikipedia

- How you can contribute to Wikipedia

- Important policies that keep Wikipedia reliable

- How to edit Wikipedia with the VisualEditor and using wiki markup

- A step-by-step guide to adding content

- Etiquette for interacting with other contributors

What is Wikipedia?

Wikipedia is one of the largest collaborative projects in history. With millions of articles and in hundreds of languages, Wikipedia is the fifth most visited website in the world.

A lot of content already exists on Wikipedia, but many important topics have poor coverage and some have no article at all. Wikipedia relies on contributors like you to keep information current, expand short “stub” articles, and create new articles on topics not already covered in your language Wikipedia. Contributions you make to Wikipedia can enlighten hundreds, thousands, or even millions of people worldwide.

When you make an edit to Wikipedia, you’re joining a community of hundreds of thousands of people — Wikipedians — who have freely contributed their knowledge to Wikipedia.

What you contribute to Wikipedia is free content and becomes part of the commons. It may be edited and reused by others under a free license.



WP:STATS



Want to find out how big Wikipedia is right this minute? Type WP:STATS into the Search box and press enter. Shortcuts to helpful pages on Wikipedia are notated throughout this guide as

| *shortcut* WP:STATS

Navigating Wikipedia pages

Itaquis serovidem quid eate pa
sed que as doloribus, sunda
consequi aditia vidignis as
doluptae num fugitatem ilita.

Talk

Each article has a corresponding Talk page where contributors can leave comments and suggestions, discuss changes, and ask for help from one another.

Featured content

Here you can find some of the best work on Wikipedia: articles, photographs and other content that meet the community's highest standards.

Help

The Help pages, just like the articles, are written by Wikipedia contributors.

Community portal

The community portal lets you explore what's going on across Wikipedia, from news to collaborations to policy discussions.

Toolbox

This section has useful tools for getting more information about a page and its history.

Languages

These are the other language versions of Wikipedia — out of more than 280 — that have an article on the same topic.

Language settings

These settings allow you to change the language used for menus and select your keyboard layout.




WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

[Main page](#)
[Contents](#)
[Featured content](#)
[Current events](#)
[Random article](#)
[Donate to Wikipedia](#)
[Wikimedia Shop](#)

▼ **Interaction**
[Help](#)
[About Wikipedia](#)
[Community portal](#)
[Recent changes](#)
[Contact page](#)

► **Tools**
► **Print/export**

▼ **Languages** 
[Afrikaans](#)
[Akan](#)
[Alemannisch](#)
[አማርኛ](#)
[Ænglisc](#)
[العربية](#)
[Aragonés](#)
[Azerbaijanca](#)
[Bamanankan](#)
[বাংলা](#)
[Bân-lâm-gú](#)
[Basa Banyumasan](#)
[Башҡортса](#)
[Беларуская](#)
[Беларуская \(тарашкевіца\)](#)
[भोजपुरी](#)
[Български](#)
[Boarisch](#)
[Bosanski](#)
[Brezhoneg](#)
[Català](#)
[ЧӀавазна](#)
[Cebuano](#)
[Čeština](#)
[Cymraeg](#)
[Dansk](#)
[Deutsch](#)
[Deutsch](#)
★ [Deutsch](#)
[ދިވެހިސަތު](#)
[Diné bizaad](#)
[Dolnoserbski](#)
[Eesti](#)
[Ελληνικά](#)
[Español](#)
[Esperanto](#)
[Euskara](#)

Article [Talk](#)

Encyclopedia

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article is about the type of reference work. For other uses

An **encyclopedia** (also spelled **encyclopaedia** or **encyclopædi**) is a compendium holding a summary of information from either all branches of knowledge,^[2] Encyclopedias are divided into articles or entries by article name.^[3] Encyclopedia entries are longer and more detailed. Generally speaking, unlike dictionary entries, which focus on linguistic encyclopedia articles focus on factual information to cover the topic.^{[4][5][6][7]}

Encyclopedias have existed for around 2,000 years; the oldest still written in ca. AD 77 by **Pliny the Elder**. The modern encyclopedia was first published in the 17th century. Historically, some encyclopedias were contained in one volume, such as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* or the world's largest *Enciclopedia universal*. Some modern encyclopedias, such as *Wikipedia*, are freely available.

The word *encyclopedia* comes from the **Koine Greek** ἐγκύκλιος meaning "general education": *enkyklios* (ἐγκύκλιος), meaning "education of a child";^[10] it was reduced to a single word due to a process of "reduction" or "complete knowledge".

Indeed, the purpose of an encyclopedia is to collect knowledge from all whom we live, and transmit it to those who will come after us; and so that our offspring, becoming better instructed, without having rendered a service to the human race in their own lives.
—Diderot^[12]

Contents [hide]

- Characteristics
- History
 - 2.1 Ancient times
 - 2.2 Middle Ages
 - 2.3 Renaissance
 - 2.4 18th–19th centuries
 - 2.5 20th century
 - 2.6 21st century
- Etymology
- See also
- Notes
- References
- External links

Characteristics [edit]



This section **needs additional citations** from **reliable sources**. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

The modern encyclopedia was developed from the dictionary in the 18th century, written by well educated, well informed content *experts*, but the encyclopedia focuses on alphabetical listing of words and their definitions. Synonyms are listed in a dictionary, giving no obvious place for in-depth treatment. Thus, a word is defined. While it may offer a definition, it may leave the reader in doubt as to a broader field of knowledge. An encyclopedia is, allegedly, not about its own veracity. In the terms of **Aristotle's Modes of persuasion** (emotions); it will be expected to have a lack of *pathos* (it should not address those needs, an encyclopedia article is typically non-emotional). If synonymous terms for the topic, the article is able to treat it in

Edit

Many readers never notice the Edit button, but it's the most important part of any Wikipedia article. Click the Edit button at the top to edit the whole article, or click one of the inline links to edit a particular section.

View history

The history of a Wikipedia article includes every contribution since it was created. You can see who changed what when, and compare any two versions side-by-side.

Create account  Log in

Read

Edit

View history

Search



Create account

If you haven't done so yet, create your account. With an account, you can keep track of your contributions, create a personal userpage, and receive notifications when other contributors reply to you or build on what you've done.

Search

Find articles by name, or find pages that include your search terms. You can also enter shortcuts to bring up specific pages that we reference throughout this brochure. A useful one is | *shortcut* WP:HELP

...see *Encyclopedia (disambiguation)*.

Encyclopedia^[1] is a type of reference work – a collection of articles on various branches of knowledge or a particular branch of knowledge, which are usually accessed alphabetically or thematically rather than those in most dictionaries.^[3] It provides linguistic information about words, and is often used to find information on a concept for which the article name is not obvious.

The first encyclopedia in existence, *Naturalis Historia*, was developed out of dictionaries around the 17th century. The first printed volume, but some, such as the *Enciclopedia Universal ilustrada europeo-americana*, became encyclopedias. Modern encyclopedias, such as Wikipedia, are electronic and are often updated frequently.



Brockhaus Enzyklopädie

Παιδεία^[8] transliterated *enkyklios paideia*, a circular, recurrent, required regularly, general^[9] + *paideia* (παιδεία), meaning "education, training", was used by copyists of Latin manuscripts. Together, the phrase literally translates as "complete education".

The encyclopedia disseminated around the globe; to set forth its general system to the men with us, so that the work of preceding centuries will not become useless to the centuries to come, will at the same time become more virtuous and happy, and that we should not die in vain in the future years to come.

Reasons for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (June 2010)

The 18th century. Historically, both encyclopedias and dictionaries have been researched and compared, and they are significantly different in structure. A dictionary is a linguistic work which primarily lists words and those related by the subject matter are to be found scattered around the encyclopedia. A dictionary typically provides limited information, analysis or background for the word, and is useful in understanding the meaning, significance or limitations of a term, and how the term is used. It is not written in order to convince, although one of its goals is indeed to convince its reader. In contrast, an encyclopedia should persuade the reader through *logos* (conveying only appropriate information, not stir up irrelevant emotions), and to have little *ethos* except that of the dictionary itself. It is a linguistic work, and covers not a word, but a *subject or discipline*. As well as defining and listing words, it should provide more depth and convey the most relevant accumulated knowledge on that subject. An

Contributing

Volunteers contribute in more ways than one. Here are examples of what it takes to make Wikipedia happen.



copy edit articles



review articles and make suggestions for improvement



assign students to edit Wikipedia or help student editors learn the basics through the Wikipedia Education Program



upload photographs and illustrate articles



welcome newcomers and answer their questions



monitor new articles and recent edits



add new text and references



discuss Wikipedia policies and help resolve disputes



develop the free, open source software that runs Wikipedia

Preparing to edit

Anyone can edit Wikipedia, but there are some basic rules. Here are some of the most important ones to follow as you start editing:

Neutral point of view

Everything on Wikipedia must be written from a neutral point of view. Articles must not take sides, but instead should describe — accurately and without bias — all the significant viewpoints on the topic published in reliable sources. Wikipedia is not the place for argumentation or advocacy.

No original research

Simply put, Wikipedia is not a place to publish original ideas. Rather, you should summarize what others have published in reliable sources about the topic. Articles may not contain any new analysis, and they should not synthesize published materials to reach broader conclusions beyond what the individual sources say.

Copyright and plagiarism

Since all contributions are freely licensed, no editor owns any article; all of your contributions can and will be edited and redistributed. Except for brief quotations, copying content from copyrighted sources onto Wikipedia is not allowed. Whether direct copying or close paraphrasing, plagiarism and copyright violation are disruptive and time-consuming for volunteers to clean up. It's important that all content you contribute to Wikipedia is written in your own words. (Public domain and freely licensed content may also be added to Wikipedia as long as it is properly attributed.)

Reliable sources

The most reliable sources on Wikipedia are third-party sources with a reputation for fact-checking, such as books published by academic presses, peer-reviewed academic journals, and international newspapers. You should be using sources that represent significant viewpoints, rather than one-off studies or fringe work. Try to find the best and most reliable sources available on the topic.

Conflict of interest

If you have a conflict of interest about a particular topic — such as an employer or an organization you are a part of — you should avoid editing articles about it.

We've developed these policies and principles over the years so we can be sure that Wikipedia is as reliable and useful as possible.



Editing with the VisualEditor

With VisualEditor, you can see what your changes will look like as you edit, so you can focus on the content. Just click on the parts you want to change and start editing.

Editing toolbar

In edit mode, the toolbar lets you add formatting, references, images, and special page elements called templates (such as the infoboxes at the beginning of many articles). When you are finished editing, press the "Save page" button.

Lead section

The first sentence provides a definition of the topic, and the lead section goes on to summarize the key points covered in the article. This is the only section without a heading.

Images

Freely licensed images and other media files can be added to Wikipedia articles from Wikimedia Commons.

Citations

Inline citations in the body of the article are used to show where the information in each part of the text came from. The citation details appear as footnotes at the end.

Template

Reusable pieces called templates are used to format information in standard ways, and to insert things like the banners that alert readers to problems with an article.

Body of the article

Headings — and sometimes sub-headings — break the article up into sections, and are used to generate the table of contents. Each section usually covers some significant aspect of the topic, so that readers can jump right to the information they are looking for.

Appendices and footnotes

After the main body of an article comes sections with additional information, such as related Wikipedia articles ("See also"), footnotes with details on the sources used ("References"), and a list of other websites readers could turn to for more information ("External links")

The screenshot shows the VisualEditor interface for editing the article "Encyclopedia". At the top, there's a navigation bar with "Article" selected and tabs for "Talk", "Read", "Edit source", "Edit talk", "View history", and a search box. Below this is a toolbar with various editing tools like Paragraph, Bold (B), Italic (I), Link, Unlink, and more. The main content area shows the start of the article with a heading "Encyclopedia" and a sub-heading "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". A notice states: "This article is about the type of reference work. For other uses, see: [Encyclopedia \(disambiguation\)](#)." The lead sentence reads: "An **encyclopedia** (also spelled **encyclopaedia** or **encyclopaedia**)^[1] is a type of reference work — a compendium holding a summary of information from either all branches of knowledge or a particular branch of knowledge.^[2] Encyclopedias are divided into articles or entries, which are usually accessed alphabetically by article name.^[3] Encyclopaedia entries are longer and more detailed than those in most dictionaries.^[3] Generally speaking, unlike dictionary entries, which focus on linguistic information about words, encyclopaedia articles focus on factual information to cover the thing or concept for which the article name stands.^{[4][5][6][7]}" An image of several encyclopaedia volumes is shown on the right. Below the image is a caption: "Brockhaus Enzyklopädie". The text continues: "Encyclopedias have existed for around 2,000 years; the oldest still in existence, *Naturalis Historia*, was written in ca. AD 77 by *Pliny the Elder*. The modern encyclopaedia evolved out of dictionaries around the 17th century. Historically, some encyclopedias were contained in one volume, but some, such as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or the world's largest *Encyclopaedia universalis illustrata europaeo-america*, became huge multi-volume works. Some modern encyclopedias, such as *Wikipedia*, are electronic and are often freely available.

Characteristics

This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unreliable material may be challenged and removed. (June 2016)

The modern encyclopedia was developed from the dictionary in the 18th century. Historically, both encyclopedias and dictionaries have been researched and written by well-educated, well-informed content experts, but they are significantly different in structure. A dictionary is a linguistic work which primarily focuses on alphabetical listing of words and their definitions. Synonymous words and those related by the subject matter are to be found scattered around the dictionary, giving no obvious place for in-depth treatment. Thus, a dictionary typically provides limited information, analysis or background for the word defined. While it may offer a definition, it may leave the reader lacking in understanding the meaning, significance or limitations of a term, and how the term relates to a broader field of knowledge. An encyclopedia is, allegedly, not written in order to convince, although one of its goals is indeed to convince its reader about its own veracity. In the terms of *Aristotle's Modes of persuasion*, a dictionary should persuade the reader through *logos* (conveying only appropriate emotions); it will be expected to have a lack of *pathos* (it should not stir up irrelevant emotions), and to have little *ethos* except that of the dictionary itself.

To address those needs, an encyclopedia article is typically non linguistic, and covers not a word, but a subject or discipline. As well as defining and listing synonymous terms for the topic, the article is able to treat it in more depth and convey the most relevant accumulated knowledge on that subject. An encyclopedia article also often includes many maps and illustrations, as well as bibliography and statistics.

Four major elements define an encyclopedia: its subject matter, its scope, its method of organization, and its method of production:

- Encyclopedias can be general, containing articles on topics in every field (the English-language *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and German *Brockhaus* are well-known examples). General encyclopedias often contain guides on how to do a variety of things, as well as embedded dictionaries and gazetteers.^[citation needed] There are also encyclopedias that cover a wide variety of topics but from a particular cultural, ethnic, or national perspective, such as the *Greek Soviet Encyclopedie* or *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

See also

- Bibliography of encyclopedias
- Biographical dictionary
- Encyclopedic knowledge
- Fictitious entry
- History of science and technology
- Lexicography
- Library science
- List of encyclopedias
- Thesaurus

Portals

Access related topics

- Literature portal
- Information science portal
- Education portal

Notes

- ¹ ^{*} "encyclopedia" [ⓘ] (online). Oxford English Dictionary (OED.com), Oxford University Press. Retrieved 2012-02-18.
- ^{*} "Encyclopaedia" [ⓘ]. Archived from the original [ⓘ] on 2007-08-03. Glossary of Library Terms. Riverside City College. Digital Library/Learning Resource Center. Retrieved on: November 17, 2007.
- ^{*} According to some accounts, such as the *American Heritage Dictionary* [ⓘ], copyists of Latin manuscripts took this phrase to be a single Greek word, *enkykliopaedia*.
- ^{*} Denis Doornik and Jean le Rond d'Alembert. *Encyclopaedia* [ⓘ] University of Michigan Library.Scholarly Publishing Office and DLXS. Retrieved on:

References

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- Needham, Joseph (1986). "Part 7, Military Technology: the Gunpowder Epic". *Science and Civilization in China. 5 — Chemistry and Chemical Technology*. Taipei: Caves Books Ltd. ISBN 978-0-521-30358-3. OCLC 59245877 [ⓘ].
- Rosenzweig, Roy (June 2006). "Can History Be Open Source? Wikipedia and the Future of the Past" [ⓘ]. *Journal of American History* **93** (1): 117–46.

External links

- Hindupedia [ⓘ], encyclopedia of Hindu Dharma
- CNET's encyclopedia meta-search [ⓘ] (includes Wikipedia)
- Encyclopaedia and Hypertext [ⓘ]
- Internet Accuracy Project[ⓘ] — Biographical errors in encyclopedias and almanacs
- Encyclopaedia [ⓘ] — Diderot's article on the Encyclopaedia from the original *Encyclopaedia*.
- De expensetis et fugiendis rebus [ⓘ] — First Renaissance encyclopedia
- Errors and inconsistencies in several printed reference books and encyclopedias [ⓘ]
- Digital encyclopedias put the world at your fingertips [ⓘ] — CNET article
- Encyclopedias online [ⓘ] University of Wisconsin — Stout listing by category

Wikimedia Commons has media related to [Encyclopedias](#).

Look up [encyclopaedia](#), [encyclopaedia](#), or [encyclopaedia](#) in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.

Wikisource has original works on the topic: [Encyclopedias](#)

Editing with wiki markup

Wiki markup is the original form of editing Wikipedia articles (and on some browsers, it will be the only form available). It gives you precise control over the content and appearance of the page, once you understand how it works. Some of the underlying wiki markup for an article is pictured below. See how many of the corresponding elements you can find in the VisualEditor illustration.

1 `[[File:Brockhaus Lexikon.jpg|thumb|300px|''[[Brockhaus Enzyklopädie]]'']]`

2 An `''encyclopedia''` (also spelled `''encyclopaedia''` or `''encyclopaedia''`) is a type of `[[reference work]]` - a `[[compendium]]` holding a summary of `[[information]]` from either all branches of `[[knowledge]]` or a particular branch of knowledge.`<ref>"Encyclopedia" in Glossary of Library Terms. Riverside City College, Digital Library/ Learning Resource Center. Accessed 2007-11-17.</ref>` Encyclopedias are divided into `[[article (publishing)|article]]`s or entries, which are

5 Encyclopedias have existed for around 2,000 years; the oldest still in existence, `''[[Naturalis Historia]]''`, was written ca. AD 77 by `[[Pliny the Elder]]`. The modern encyclopedia evolved out of dictionaries around the 17th century. Historically, some encyclopedias were contained in one `[[volume]]`, but some, such as the `''[[Encyclopædia Britannica]]''` or the world's largest `''[[Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana]]''`, became huge multi-volume works. Some modern encyclopedias, such as `[[Wikipedia]]`, are electronic and are often freely available.

6 `==Characteristics==`

The modern encyclopedia was developed from the `[[dictionary]]` in the 18th century. Historically, both encyclopedias and dictionaries have been researched and written by well-educated, well-informed content `[[expert]]`s, but they are significantly different in structure. A dictionary is a linguistic work which primarily focuses on alphabetical

7 Four major elements define an encyclopedia: its subject matter, its scope, its method of organization, and its method of production:
* Encyclopedias can be general, containing articles on topics in every field (the English-language `''Encyclopædia Britannica''` and German `''[[Brockhaus Enzyklopädie|Brockhaus]]''` are well-known examples). General encyclopedias often contain guides on how to do a variety of things, as well as embedded dictionaries and `[[gazetteer]]`s.`{citation needed}`

8 `==Notes==`
`<references />`

`==External links==`

`*[http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=did;cc=did;idno=did2222.0000.004;rgn=main;view=text Encyclopedia] - Diderot's article on the Encyclopedia from the original [[Encyclopédie]].
* [http://digidcoll.library.wisc.edu/HistSciTech/subcollections/CyclopaediaAbout.shtml Chambers' ''Cyclopaedia'', 1728, with the 1753 supplement
9 * [http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/ ''Encyclopædia Britannica''], 11th ed., 1911, at the LoveToKnow site.`

10 `[[Category:Encyclopedias]]`
`[[Category:Reference works]]`

For more wiki markup help, see the Wiki Markup Cheatsheet on page 15 or visit a reference page | *shortcut* WP:MARKUP

1 Image

Double square brackets around the title of a photo from Wikimedia Commons will insert the image. Pipes separate optional parameters to control how the image is displayed. The most common way is with two parameters: the word "thumb" to use the standard thumbnail format, and a descriptive caption that appears beneath the image.
`[[File:Example.jpg|thumb|caption]]`

2 Bold

Three single quotation marks before and after a string of text will make that text bold. Bold is usually used for the subject of an article in the first sentence.
`'''bold text'''`

3 Citation

Opening and closing ref tags are used to cite a source. An automatically-numbered superscript will appear at the location of the ref tags, and the content will appear as a footnote in the references section.
`<ref> citation text </ref>`

4 Internal link

Double square brackets around a term create a link to the article of that name. Adding a pipe and another string of text before the closing square brackets changes the link text.
`[[article title | text]]`

5 Italic

Two single quotation marks begin and end a segment of italic text.
`''italic text''`

6 Heading

A pair of double equals signs mark a line as a heading. Triple equals signs make a sub-heading.
`==Heading==`

7 Template

Double braces are used for templates, which are reusable page elements that serve a wide variety of purposes. The first thing after the opening braces is the name of the template. Pipes separate the parameters, which are additional inputs for some templates that can change the way the template works or the information it displays.
`{{template name | parameter}}`

8 References

The references tag, or an equivalent template, sets the location where the footnotes show up — typically in a "Notes" or "References" section near the end.
`<references/>`

9 External link

A single square bracket, followed by a url, a space, label text, and a closing square bracket makes a normal hyperlink. Typically, these are not used in the body of an article, only in footnotes or an "External links" section.
`[http://www.example.com text]`

10 Category

At the end of an article, double square brackets around a string that starts with Category: adds an article to the specified category. Categories are used to organize Wikipedia articles into related sets.
`[[Category:Something]]`

Adding content, step by step

A good way to begin is to add some missing information to an existing article. Pick a topic you're familiar with, and find a reliable source that covers it better than the Wikipedia article. Now comes the fun part. Click the [Edit](#) button!

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia edit interface for the article "Penny Cyclopaedia". At the top, there is a warning: "Content that violates any copyrights will be deleted. Encyclopedic content must be verifiable. Work submitted to Wikipedia can be edited, used, and redistributed—by anyone—subject to certain terms and conditions." Below this is a toolbar with options like "Advanced", "Special characters", "Help", and "Cite". The main editing area contains the following text:

''''The Penny Cyclopaedia of the [[Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge]]'''' was a multi-volume [[encyclopedia]] edited by [[George Long (scholar)|George Long]] and published by [[Charles Knight (publisher)|Charles Knight]] alongside the ''[[Penny Magazine]]''. Twenty-seven volumes and three supplements were published from 1833 to 1843.

The unnamed contributors to the ''Penny Cyclopaedia'' included many notable figures of the period, including [[Henry Ellis]], [[John Kitto]], [[Charles Knight]], [[George Henry Lewes]], [[Augustus De Morgan]], [[James Paget]], [[George Richardson Porter]], [[Thomas Southwood Smith]], and [[Ralph Nicholson Wornum]].<ref>{{cite journal|last=Baker|first=William|title=George Henry Lewes and the 'Penny Cyclopaedia': Twenty-Seven Unattributed Articles|journal=Victorian Periodicals Newsletter|year=1974|month=September|volume=7|issue=3|pages=15-18|url=http://www.jstor.org/stable/20085023|accessdate=6 December 2013}}</ref> [[Herman Melville]] is known to have used the ''Penny Cyclopaedia'' while writing ''[[Moby-Dick]]'' and other novels, and scholar Paul McCarthy has suggested that the encyclopedia's coverage of [[moral insanity]] and [[monomania]] may have influenced Melville's characters in ''Moby-Dick'' and other writings.<ref>{{cite journal|last=McCarthy|first=Paul|title=Forms of Insanity and Insane Characters in Moby-Dick|journal=Colby Quarterly|year=1987|volume=23|issue=1|pages=1-14|url=http://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2659&context=cq|accessdate=6 December 2013}}</ref>

==Notes==
<references />

==External links==
*[[http://books.google.com/books?id=TX7DmPgLuw0C ''Penny Cyclopaedia'']] digitised on Google Book Search
* Hathi Trust. [[http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009350519 fulltext]]

{{italic title}}
[[Category:1833 books]]

At the bottom of the edit area, there is an "Edit summary" field containing the text: "added information about notable contributors, and possible influence on Herman Melville's writing". Below this are checkboxes for "This is a minor edit" and "Watch this page". A warning states: "By clicking the 'Save page' button, you agree to the Terms of Use, and you irrevocably agree to release your contribution under the CC BY-SA 3.0 License and the GFDL. You agree that a hyperlink or URL is sufficient attribution under the Creative Commons license." At the very bottom are buttons for "Save page", "Show preview", "Show changes", and "Cancel".

Add some of what is missing. Using the source you've found, summarize the information you want to add in your own words.

At the end of your new block of text, add a reference. In the edit toolbar — whether you're using wiki markup or the VisualEditor — you can click the 'reference' icon to cite your source.

Now it's time to save your changes. In the 'edit summary' field, add a brief description of what you've done in your edit, then click 'Save page'. (With the VisualEditor, you'll be prompted for an edit summary after you click Save page.) The edit summary helps others editors understand what you are doing.

And don't worry. If you make a mistake, you can always make more changes or restore a previous version of the article.

This screenshot shows the Wikipedia article for "Penny Cyclopaedia" before any edits. The page includes the standard Wikipedia navigation bar at the top with the user name "Ephraim Chambers" and options like "Talk", "Sandbox", "Preferences", "Beta", "Watchlist", "Contributions", and "Log out". The article title "Penny Cyclopaedia" is prominently displayed, followed by the sub-header "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". The main text describes it as a multi-volume encyclopedia edited by George Long and published by Charles Knight alongside the Penny Magazine, with volumes published from 1833 to 1843. Below the text are "External links" and a "Stub" notice: "This article about an encyclopedia is a stub. You can help Wikipedia by expanding it." The categories listed at the bottom are "1833 books", "British encyclopedias", "English-language encyclopedias", and "Encyclopedia stubs".

BEFORE EDITING...

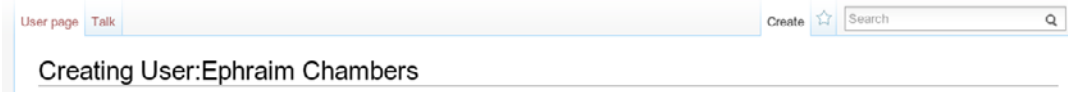
This screenshot shows the same Wikipedia article for "Penny Cyclopaedia" after editing. A green notification box at the top center states "Your edit was saved." The article text has been significantly expanded. The paragraph describing the encyclopedia now lists the names of the unnamed contributors: "The unnamed contributors to the Penny Cyclopaedia included many notable figures of the period, including Henry Ellis, John Kitto, Charles Knight, George Henry Lewes, Augustus De Morgan, James Paget, George Richardson Porter, Thomas Southwood Smith, and Ralph Nicholson Womum.^[1] Herman Melville is known to have used the Penny Cyclopaedia while writing *Moby-Dick* and other novels, and scholar Paul McCarthy has suggested that the encyclopedia's coverage of moral insanity and monomania may have influenced Melville's characters in *Moby-Dick* and other writings.^[2]" A new "Notes" section has been added, containing two references: "1. ^ Baker, William (September 1974), "George Henry Lewes and the "Penny Cyclopaedia": Twenty-Seven Unattributed Articles" *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter* 7 (3): 15–18. Retrieved 6 December 2013." and "2. ^ McCarthy, Paul (1987), "Forms of Insanity and Insane Characters in Moby-Dick" *Colby Quarterly* 23 (1): 1–14. Retrieved 6 December 2013." The "External links" section remains the same. The "Stub" notice and categories are still present at the bottom.

AND AFTER EDITING

User pages and Talk pages

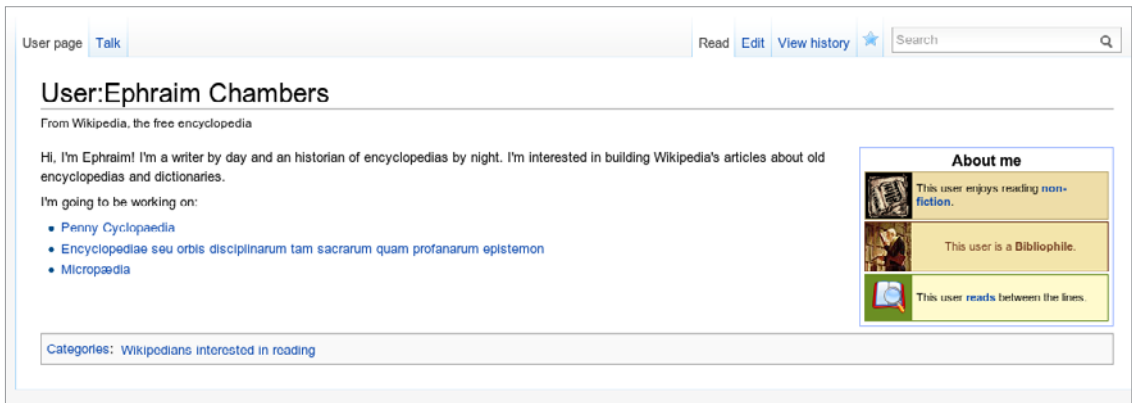
Wikipedia has other types of pages beyond articles. Once you've started editing, you might want to start your [user page](#) to let others get to know you a little bit.

At the top right (if you are logged in) you will see your username, which you can click to reach your user page. Links to pages that do not exist — such as your user page if you have not created it yet — are colored red, instead of the typical blue.



If you click the [Create](#) button on one of these pages, you can start from a blank page. A user page is a place to write a little bit about yourself, to give other contributors an idea of who you are and what you're interested in. You can share as much or as little as you like.

When you [Save](#) the page, your red link will turn blue!



You also have a [user talk page](#), where other contributors can leave messages for you. If you want to contact another contributor, you can navigate to their Talk page and leave a message at the bottom.

You should sign your messages on Talk pages; clicking the signature button in the edit toolbar will insert four tildes (~~~~), the special wiki markup for inserting your username along with the date and time of your message.

Every article has its own **Talk page**, too. These Talk pages can be used to make suggestions, post new sources, point out problems, and discuss changes that contributors disagree about.

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia article for "Air pump". The "Talk" tab is active. A notification window is open, displaying a message from Sage Ross (WMF) mentioning the user on a talk page. The article text defines an air pump and lists examples like a bicycle pump and a vacuum cleaner. It also includes a reference to George Wilson's 1849 paper and a notice that the article is a stub. The page footer contains the Creative Commons license and logos for Wikipedia and MediaWiki.

Interacting with the community

One important guideline for community discussions on Wikipedia is to be respectful and civil. Even if you get into disagreements, you should *assume good faith* on the part of other contributors. They almost always have the same goal you do — to make Wikipedia better. Keep the discussions focused on content, rather than making them about individual contributors.

Look! Someone replied to me in a Talk page discussion by mentioning my username.



Evaluating Wikipedia article quality

The quality of Wikipedia articles varies widely; many are very good, but some lack depth and clarity, or contain bias, or are out of date. In general, high-quality articles have these elements:

- a lead section that gives an easy-to-understand overview,
- a clear structure,
- balanced coverage,
- neutral content, and
- reliable sources.

Additional information about article quality is available by consulting the “Evaluating Wikipedia” brochure (see below).

Additional resources

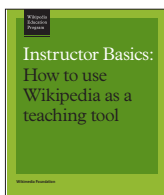
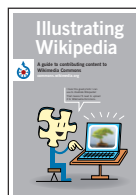


Evaluating Wikipedia: Tracing the evolution and evaluating the quality of articles

How articles evolve, elements of good quality articles, and signs of poor quality articles are all covered in this guide. <http://education.wikimedia.org/evaluating>

Illustrating Wikipedia: A guide to contributing content to Wikimedia Commons

A companion guide covering Wikimedia Commons, the media repository for images used on Wikipedia. The brochure covers what Wikimedia Commons is, how to upload files, how to use files, and the basics of free licenses. <http://education.wikimedia.org/illustrating>




Instructor Basics: How to use Wikipedia as a teaching tool

This brochure offers best practices for educators looking to assign students to contribute to Wikipedia as part of their course curriculum.

<http://education.wikimedia.org/instructorbasics>

Wiki markup cheatsheet

These examples cover the formatting needed most often when editing Wikipedia articles with wiki markup.

Instructions	What you type	What you get
Italic	<code>''italic text''</code>	<i>italic text</i>
Bold	<code>'''bold text'''</code>	bold text
Section headers	<code>==Heading Text==</code> <code>===Heading Text===</code> <code>====Heading Text====</code>	Heading Text <hr/> Heading Text <hr/> Heading Text
Link to another Wikipedia article (Internal link)	<code>[[Denis Diderot]]</code>	Denis Diderot
Link to another displayed title	<code>[[Denis Diderot Diderot]]</code>	Diderot
Link to another Wikipedia article (External link)	<code>[http://loc.gov Library of Congress website]</code>	Library of Congress website
Bulleted list	<code>* Wikipedia</code> <code>* Encyclopédie</code>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wikipedia • Encyclopédie
Numbered list	<code># List item A-B</code> <code># List item C-D</code>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List item A-B 2. List item C-D
Image with caption	<code>[[File:Example.jpg thumb Caption text]]</code>	 <p>Caption text 📄</p>
Your signature for Discussion page	<code>~~~~</code>	Username (talk) 19:50, 11 December 2013 (UTC)
Reference	<code><ref>[http://example.org Example.org], additional text.</ref></code>	Page text. ^[1]
Display references	<code><references/></code>	Example.org , additional text

Glossary

edit summary

A brief explanation of an edit to a Wikipedia page, which helps other contributors follow the development an article and understand the intention of the edit.

free license

A public copyright license that ensures the freedom to use and study a work, to make and redistribute copies of it, to make changes and improvements, and to distribute derivative works, by any person for any purpose. Wikipedia — and each individual contribution to it — uses the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license, which is a free license. See [[WP:CC-BY-SA]] to learn more.

history

The record of a Wikipedia page, accessible through the View history tab, that shows every edit made. Any two versions can be compared to see the specific differences (known as a *diff*), and previous versions can be restored.

infobox

A box summarizing key information about a topic that is often included at the top of an article. Infoboxes are a common type of *template*.

markup

The special code used to format a Wikipedia page. See the cheatsheet (page 15) for the basics, or go to [[H:MARKUP]] for more detail.

parameter

A bit of text, separated from other bits with a pipe character (|), that is used to control how images, templates and other wiki markup appear on a page.

stub

A short, undeveloped article with plenty of room for expansion. Adding content to stubs is a good way for new contributors to get started.

Talk page

The discussion space for an article or other Wikipedia page, where you can talk about the contents of the page with other contributors.

template

A way of automatically including the contents of one page within another. For instructions on using them, see [[H:T]].

User page

The personal page of an individual contributor, which begins with “User:” followed by their username. Wikipedians can use their User pages to share information about themselves and their interests, list the articles they have worked on or want to work on, and much more.

Wikimedia Commons

The media repository for Wikipedia and many other wikis, where you can contribute freely licensed photos, diagrams, videos and other media files for illustrating Wikipedia.

Wikipedian

Someone who helps build Wikipedia. Common synonyms include *contributor*, *user*, *editor*, and *community member*.

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10% post-consumer recycled fiber, elemental chlorine-free process, produced using renewable power