



# BARRINGTON AREA LIBRARY

## Google Docs Basics

### Document Outline

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### Overview

Google offers many services and products. They are best known for their internet search engine, google.com. They also have a popular email service called Gmail. This handout will focus on another product of theirs called Google Docs.

**Google Docs** is an online word processor included as part of the free, web-based suite offered by Google, which also includes Google Sheets, Google Slides, Google Drawings, Google Forms, Google Sites and Google Keep. Files can be edited and shared with other users for a collaborative experience, with changes being able to be seen in real time.

### Google Account

A Google account is not required in order to view or edit a Google Doc, making it a great collaboration tool. However, in order to create a Google Doc, you must create a Google account. You can register any email address (@yahoo, @hotmail etc.) as a Google account. Therefore, you do not need to use Gmail in order to use it.

Any email address that is @gmail.com is known as a Gmail account and is automatically a Google account, giving you access to the Google Drive apps, including Google Docs.

You can login directly at **docs.google.com** or if you use Gmail, you can log in at **gmail.com** and find the link to Google Docs in the upper right corner.

## Google Docs

### Homepage

When you are in Google Docs, you will see the homepage first. If you would like to start a new document, there is a template gallery at the top to choose from, or you can choose New Document.

If you have already created a Google Doc or would like to access a document that has been shared with you, you can select the document below Recent Documents. Your recent documents can be filtered three different options:

1. Owned by anyone: this is going to include all documents you have created or have been shared with you by others. You will see all Google Docs you have opened
2. Not owned by me: this is going to only show you the Google Docs shared with you or that you have viewed but did not create
3. Owned by you: this is only going to show you the Google Docs that you have created, but not ones created by others

At any time, you can remove a document by clicking on the three gray dots in the corner of the document thumbnail and then selecting Remove from the menu that pops up.

### New Document

Once you create a Google Doc, you'll notice that much of it is like a stripped down version of Microsoft Word, if you've used that program or other word processing programs before.

At the very top, you can change the title of the document by clicking on "Untitled Document" and then entering the title you want. You can add the document to your favorites by clicking on the star. As you add or make changes to your document, you'll see the document automatically saving to your Google Drive, which houses all Google files that you have.

It is possible to create an offline version you can edit and use while not connected to the internet by clicking on the cloud icon in the top left corner. However, this means the online version of your document will not update for you or others who might have access to it until you reconnect to the internet.

The toolbar at the top allows you to zoom in on your document, format text, and insert images and comments. The search bar that says “Menus” can allow you to search for an option if you’re not sure where it would be in the toolbar.

If you would like a copy to save to your computer or laptop, you can download the document, selecting the file type that you need. However, once it is downloaded, any changes made to the Google Docs will not update the downloaded copy. You will need to re-download for the updated version.

## Sharing

At the top right of your screen, there is the option to Share the document. When you click on Share, you can:

- Control if others can view, edit, or comment on your document
- Share files through a URL link or grant access only to specific Gmail addresses
- Less security with sharing link outside of a Google account, but ability to revoke access
- More accountability for sharing with other Google users through revision history
- Every file you create and is shared with you will be found in your recent documents

## More Resources

Visit [LinkedIn Learning](#) in the Barrington Area Library Databases for video tutorials on Google Docs!

[www.balibrary.org/online-learning](http://www.balibrary.org/online-learning)

Google Docs Cheat Sheet

<https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9299931?sjid=13468917516261848722-NC>

Share a Google Doc with a Non-Google User

<https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/blog/productivity-tips/share-a-google-doc-with-a-non-google-user>