

How to Use Blogger:

A Guide for Teachers

First Edition

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WHAT IS A BLOG?

Blog is short for weblog. A weblog is a journal/diary/newsletter that is available for public viewing on the internet. Blogs are updated frequently.

WHY BLOG?

“Using blogs in education provides pupils with their own personal writing space where they can write what they like and as often as they like whilst developing literacy and ICT skills. Schools can use them for individual, group or class publishing.

Blogs have proved to be a fun way of working and encourage children to take more interest in their schoolwork. It is an effective way of getting children to communicate with one another and with the ability to interact and enter comments against post pupils are working in a collaborative environment.”

Learning and Teaching Scotland

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/ictineducation/ictadvice/blogging/learningandteaching.asp>

In addition Blogs can be used to house valuable revision materials, links with other useful websites and also provide a vehicle for audio and video materials.

BENEFITS OF BLOGGING

Blogging is easy to use. It is not as complicated as designing your own website from scratch, as it has ready-made templates in place for the Blogger to manipulate to his/her advantage.

Blogging is free to use in some cases, and is in fact with Blogger.com. This allows quick and easy publishing of material, without set-up costs and maintenance costs.

Blogs help communicate to an audience without the fuss of sending out newsletters or other paper-based sources. Plus it can be edited and updated regularly.

CREATING YOUR OWN BLOGGER ACCOUNT

Open **Internet Explorer**

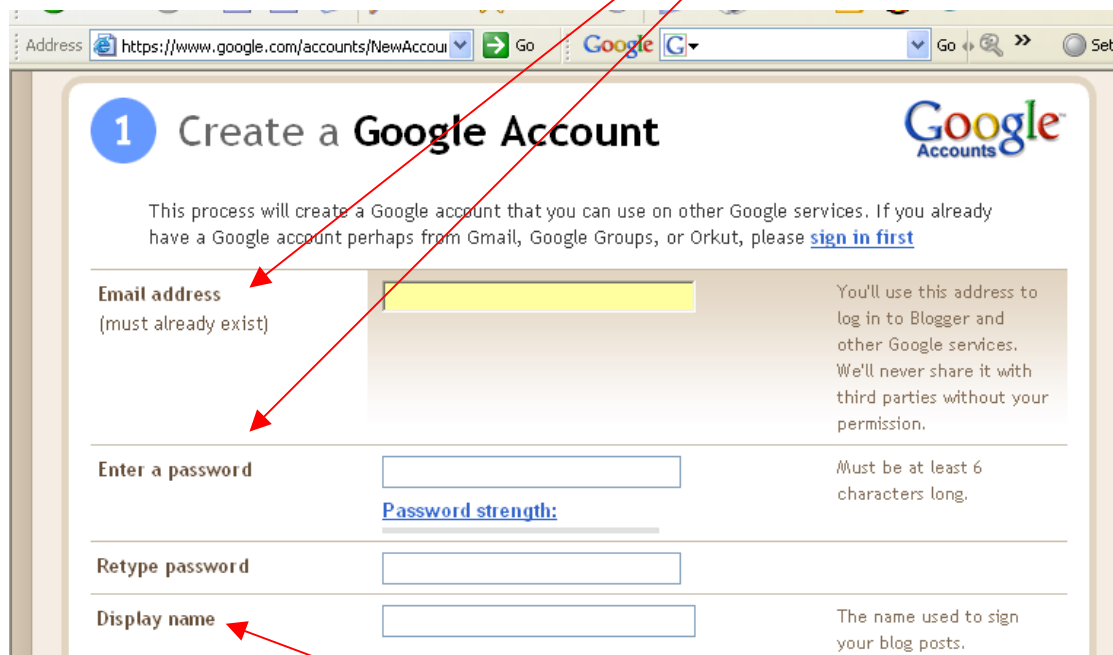
In the **Address Bar** type in: www.blogger.com

Scroll down the page until you see this:



Click on **Create Your Blog Now**.

Now you arrive at this page. You need to have an **existing email address** (school one is fine) and then you create a **password** for yourself.



You will also need a **Display name**, which will be your by-line.

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Then you come to this page:

1 CREATE ACCOUNT 2 NAME BLOG 3 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

2 Name your blog

Blog title Enter a title for your blog.

Blog address (URL) http://.blogspot.com You and others will use this to read and link to your blog.

[Check Availability](#)

OR

Advanced Setup Want to host your blog somewhere else? Try [Advanced Blog Setup](#). This will allow you to host your blog somewhere other than Blogspot.

[CONTINUE](#)

Here you create the **title** of your blog and a web address for your blog. Your **blog address** will always end in **blogspot.com**.

After you select **Continue** you reach this page:

1 NAME BLOG 2 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

2 Choose a template

Choose a custom look for your blog.

You can easily **change the template later**, or even create your own custom template design once your blog is set up.

Minima
Created by: Douglas Bowman
[preview template](#)

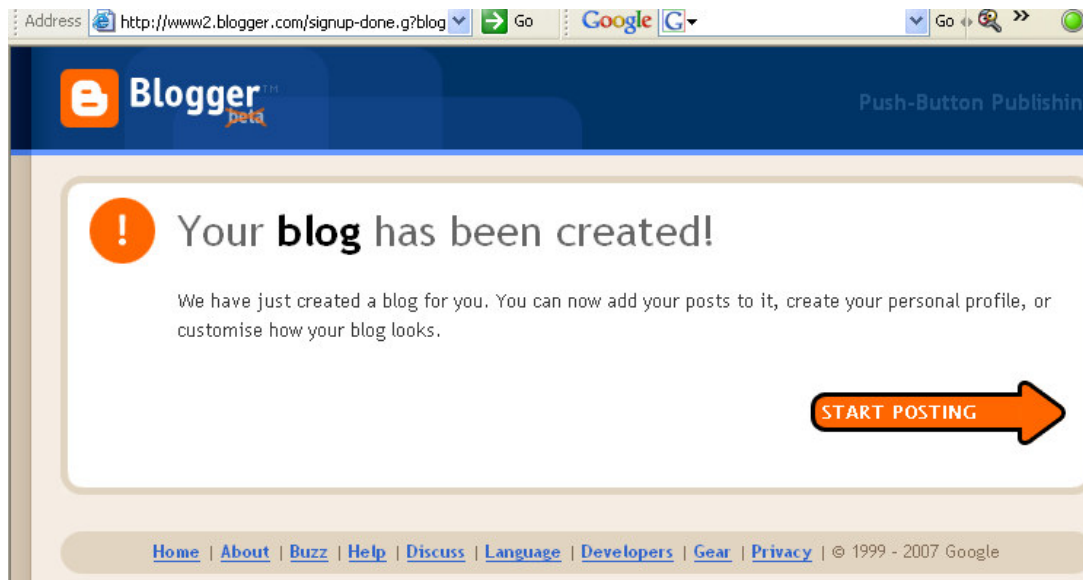
Minima Black
Created by: Douglas Bowman
[preview template](#)

[Sample Blog](#)

[Sample Blog](#)

Here you will find a selection of pre-designed templates for your use. Later as you become a more advanced user of blogger you can alter the templates, but for beginners take advantage of the ready made ones.

Click on the Continue button at the bottom of the screen and...



You are ready to begin!

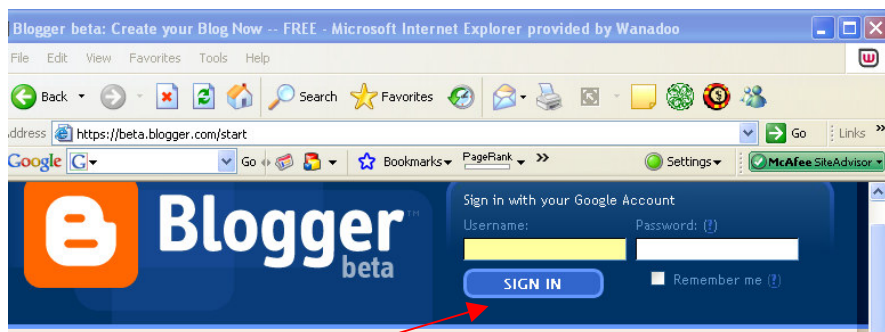
SIGNING IN

Before you can create and edit posts or anything else, you have to sign in to the blog account.

Open **Internet Explorer**

In the **Address Bar** type in: www.blogger.com

You should see a page like this:



Click on **Sign In**

In **username** enter the appropriate email address given at the start of the session.

For **password**, again enter the appropriate one given.

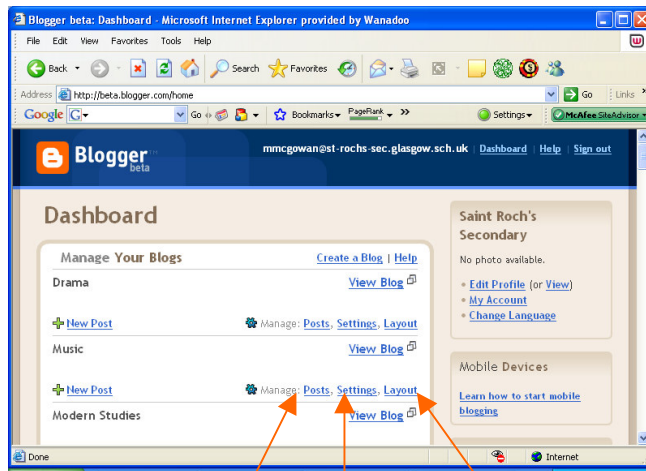
As the site loads you may have a few dialogue boxes coming up. Click Yes or Ok on all of them.

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MANAGING YOUR BLOG

Once you have signed in, you are now at the **Dashboard**:

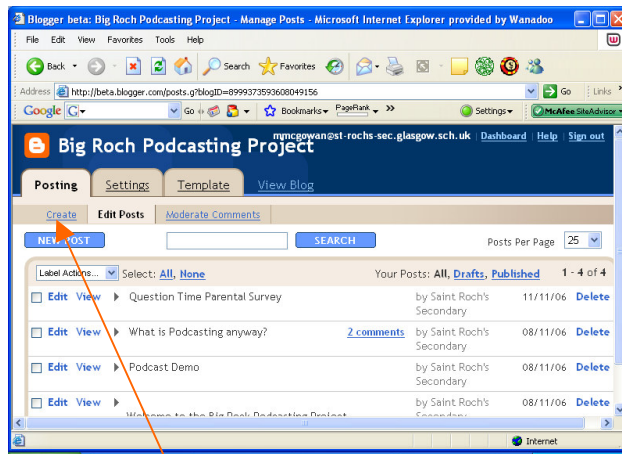


This is the control panel of the Blog. You can manage your blogs through the main uses of **Posts**, **Settings** and **Layout**.

CREATING & EDITING POSTS

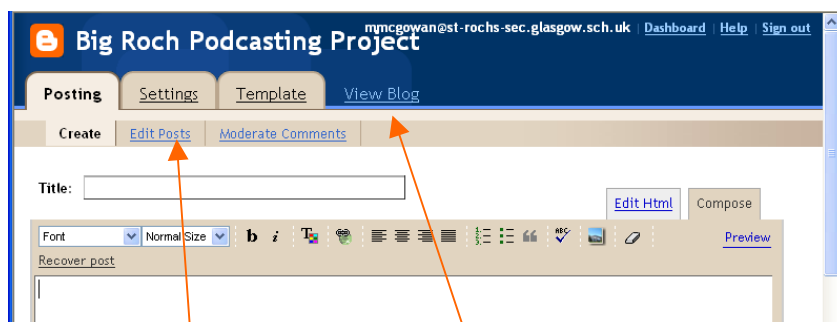
Right, you've signed in and your now ready to start adding content to the blog of the century. So how do you go about it?

In the **Dashboard**, Select **Posts**



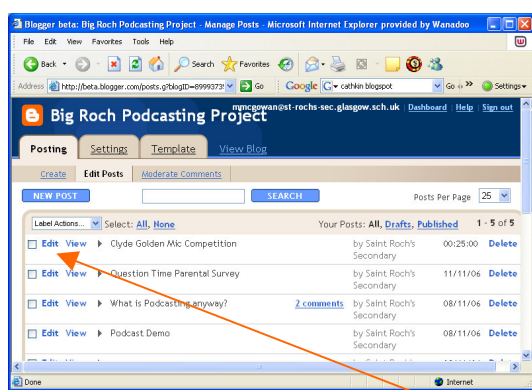
Click on **Create** to start writing a new post.

Posts consist of Titles and then the message body.

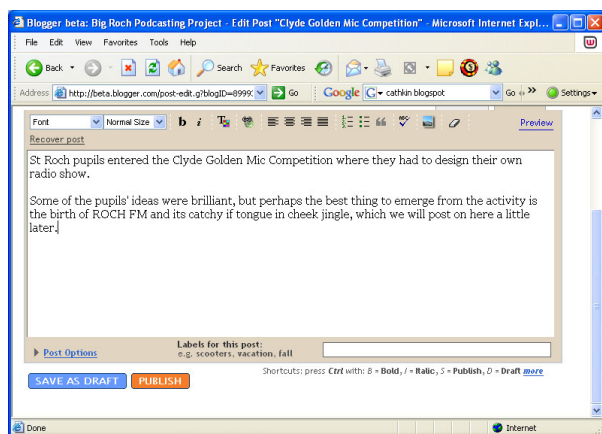


Once you have entered a title and a body, you then can **Publish** your work to the blog. You can check via **View Blog**.

If you select **Edit Posts** you are presented with a view of all your existing posts on that particular blog.



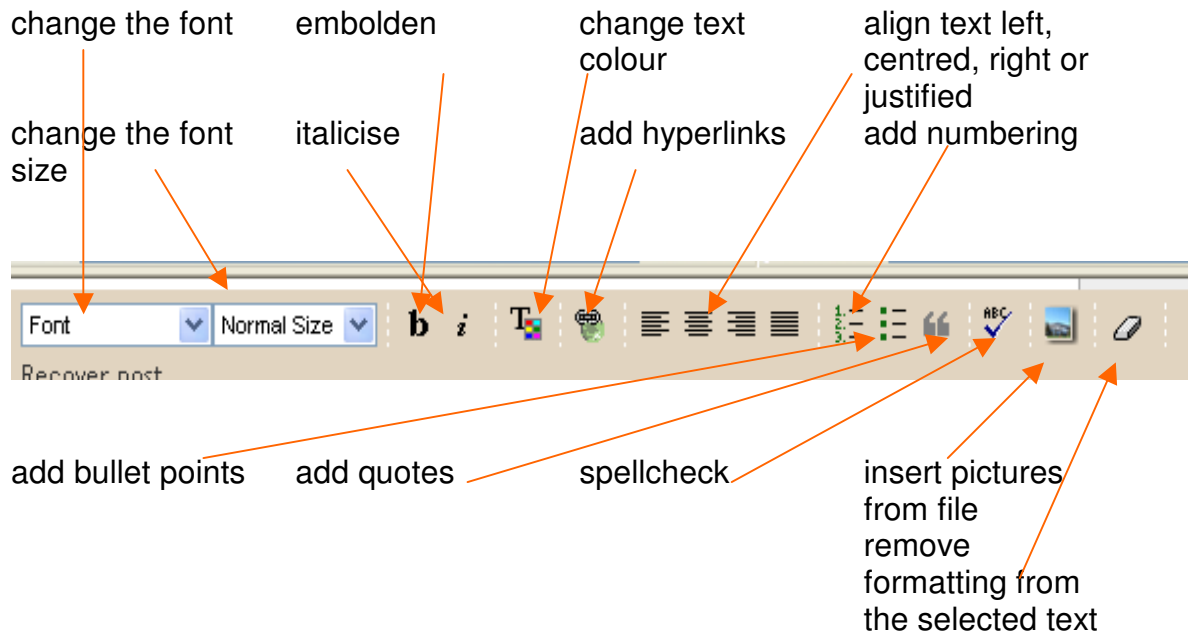
To edit the post content, click on **Edit**. This takes you to a menu below:



Here is the toolbar in greater detail:



As you can see the toolbars are similar to that used in Microsoft Word, whereby you can:

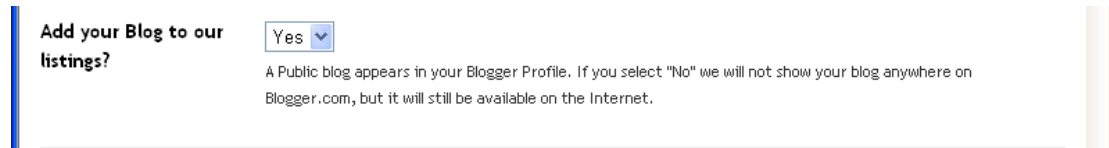



To view post content, click on **View**. It is that simple!

MANAGING BLOG SETTINGS

In the **Dashboard**, Select **Settings**

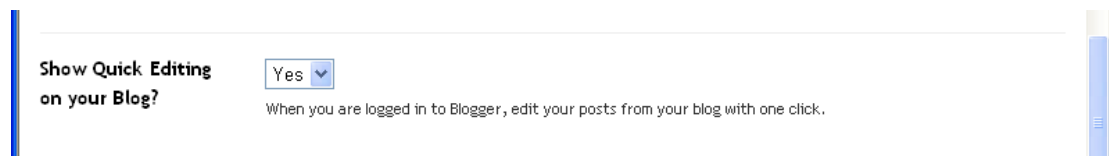
You will be faced with a few different drop down menus.




Add your Blog to our listings? 

A Public blog appears in your Blogger Profile. If you select "No" we will not show your blog anywhere on Blogger.com, but it will still be available on the Internet.

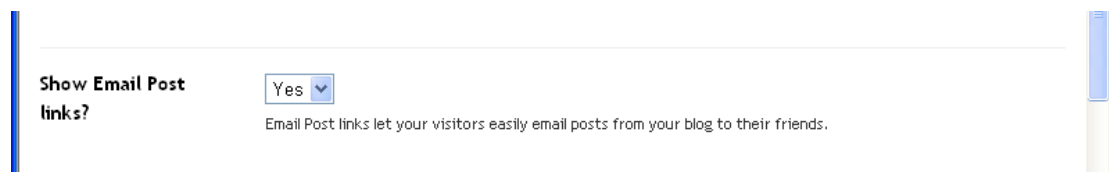
This is whether you wish your blog to be in the Blogger.com directory. Select No if you do not wish it to be.




Show Quick Editing on your Blog? 

When you are logged in to Blogger, edit your posts from your blog with one click.

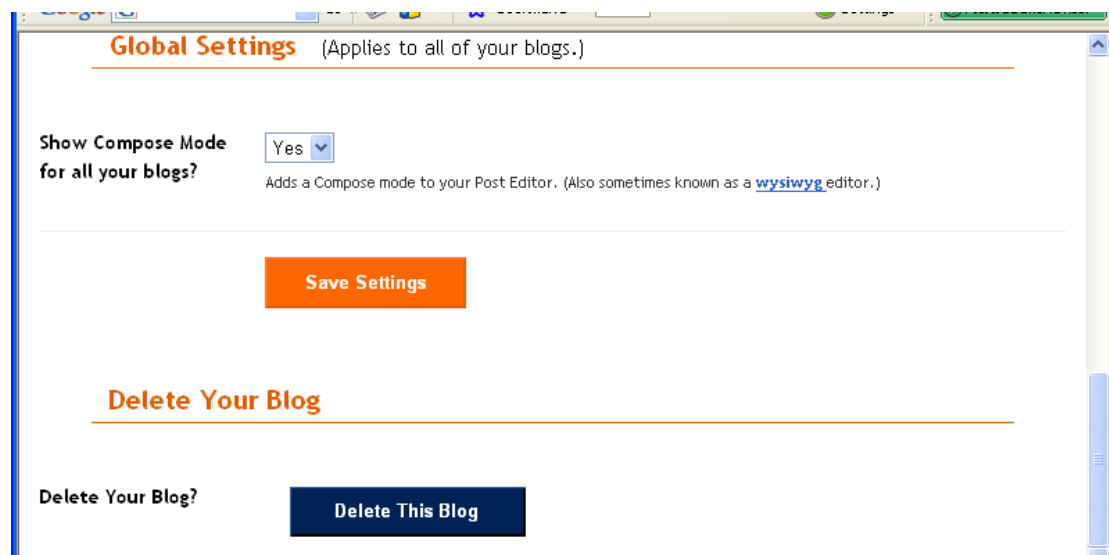
This easy editing tool for your blogs is to be recommended. Set to **Yes**.




Show Email Post links? 

Email Post links let your visitors easily email posts from your blog to their friends.

This setting allows visitors to email your blog posts to their friends. Again the option to allow shared comments of important posts is favourable.



Global Settings (Applies to all of your blogs.)

Show Compose Mode for all your blogs? 

Adds a Compose mode to your Post Editor. (Also sometimes known as a [wysiwyg](#) editor.)

Save Settings

Delete Your Blog

Delete Your Blog? **Delete This Blog**

The final two settings apply to all the blogs you create.

The **Compose Mode** editor allows you to write posts in normal text without having to worry too much about HTML. Recommended!

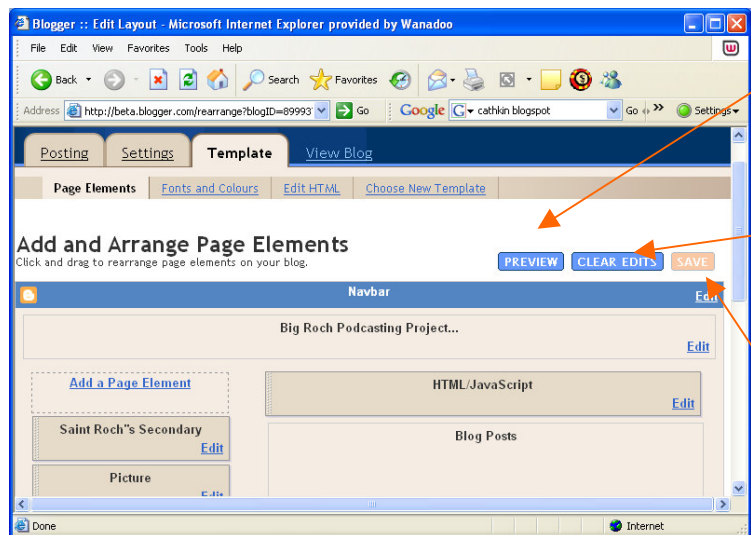
Delete Your Blog does exactly what it says and removes from existence all posts you have on that particular blog.

MANAGING & CREATING PAGE ELEMENTS

How do you get all the fancy parts of the blog to appear? The process of adding posts, pictures, HTML and hyperlinks to the blog is all done through an easy to use drag and drop system.

In the **Dashboard**, Select **Layout**

What you have is the parts that make up the blog people will view. These are called page elements. This is what you see below:



Preview offers a view of the blog before it is published.

Clear Edit undoes any changes made to the blog.

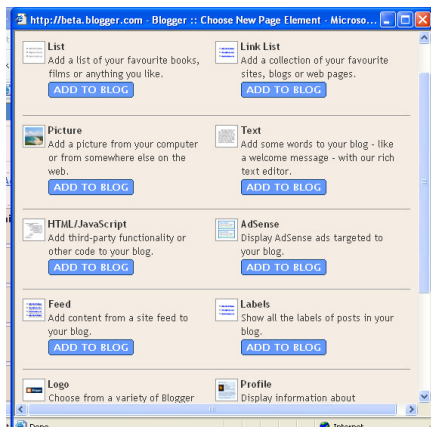
Save stores the blog as it is.

Moving Page Elements

To move existing page elements around, all you do is move the cursor arrow over an element until it changes from the white arrow into the black dragging tool. Then drag it to the place you desire.

Adding a Page Element

To add a new element, click on **Add a Page Element** and then you will have a choice of which type of page you wish it to be.



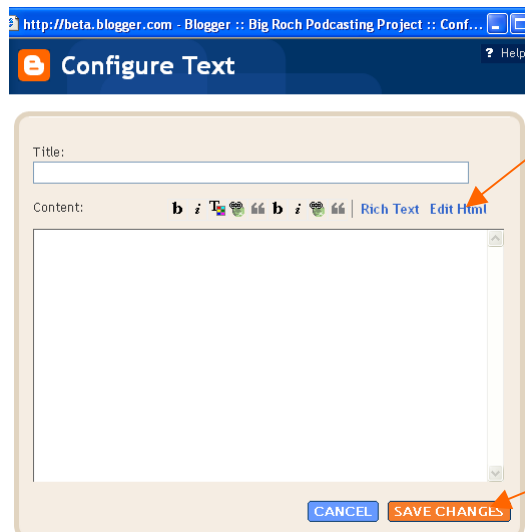
Select **Add To Blog** and then you will have a different menu for each type of page element.

For the purposes of this guide we will only look at the most common page elements:

Text, Pictures, HTML/JavaScript and Link List.

Adding Text

Underneath Text, click on **Add to Blog**. The **Configure Text** menu appears. It is a refined version of the **Create Post** menu you used earlier.



Edit HTML is useful for adding in hyperlinks to your text.

It has much of the same toolbar, and once you have written your title and your content, ensure you **Save Changes**.

Adding Pictures

Underneath Picture, click on **Add To Blog** and then this menu will pop up.



It gives you the opportunity to put a title and a caption of your image

To upload an image from your own computer, click on **Browse** and then locate the appropriate image file.

Remember to **Save Changes**.

Adding HTML/JavaScript

Underneath HTML/JavaScript, click on **Add To Blog** and then this menu will pop up.



Again you can enter a title and save changes.

However, in the content box all you have to do is copy in HTML Code for whatever application you need, and when you **View Blog** it will display the graphic, image or content you desired.

Adding Link List

Underneath HTML/JavaScript, click on **Add To Blog** and then this menu will pop up.

Here you enter the title of the link, and copy and paste in the web address in the box marked New Site URL.

Once you have done so, click on **Add Link**.

Links can be sorted alphabetically.

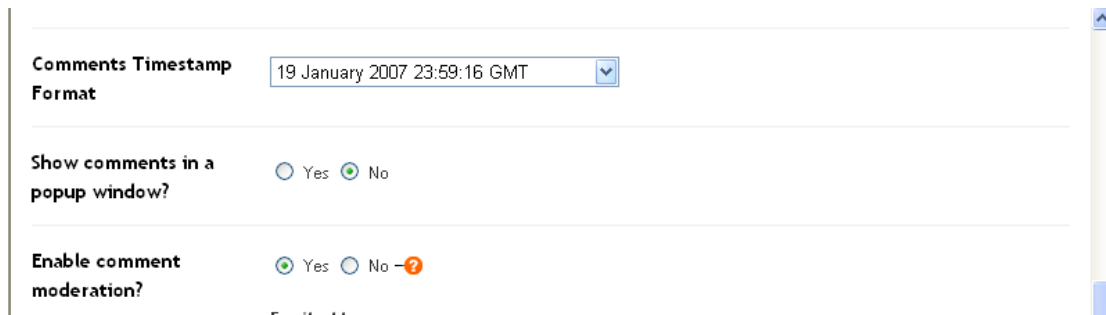
Moving the Page Elements

Once selected, you drag and drop the new page element to wherever you wish it to be placed on the blog.

MODERATE COMMENTS

You can ensure no-one replying to a post writes anything unacceptable with school use by being able to check their content.

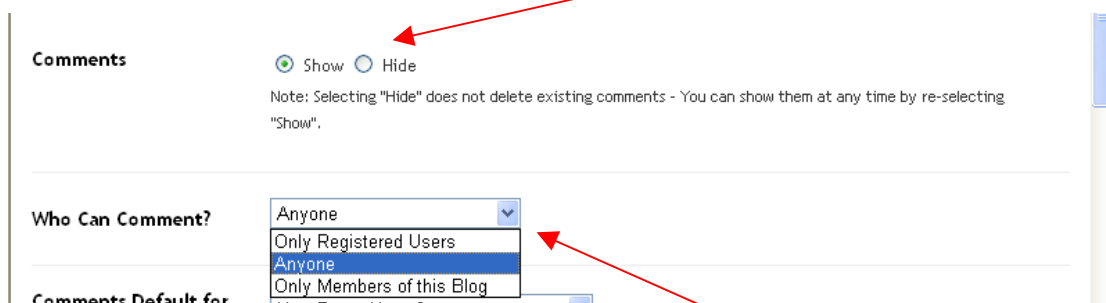
Go into **Dashboard** and then **Settings**. Scroll down to find this:



The screenshot shows the 'Comments' section of the Blogger Settings page. It includes a 'Comments Timestamp Format' dropdown menu set to '19 January 2007 23:59:16 GMT'. Below this are two radio button options: 'Show comments in a popup window?' with 'Yes' selected, and 'Enable comment moderation?' with 'Yes' selected. A red arrow points from the 'Show' radio button in the next screenshot to the 'Show' radio button in this one.

As you can see you can set comment moderation to **Yes** (which means you can allow or delete comments before they go online) or **No** (which is probably not suitable or wise for school use).

Two other useful functions you have within the **Comments** tab is to **Show** or **Hide** comments



The screenshot shows the 'Comments' section of the Blogger Settings page. It includes a 'Comments' section with 'Show' and 'Hide' radio buttons, where 'Show' is selected. A red arrow points from the 'Show' radio button in the next screenshot to the 'Show' radio button in this one. Below this is a 'Who Can Comment?' dropdown menu with options: 'Anyone', 'Only Registered Users', 'Anyone', and 'Only Members of this Blog'. A red arrow points from the 'Only Registered Users' option in the next screenshot to the 'Only Registered Users' option in this one.

and a drop down menu allowing you to permit **Only Registered Users**, **Anyone**, or **Only Members of this Blog** to be able to comment.

EMAILS AND BLOGGING

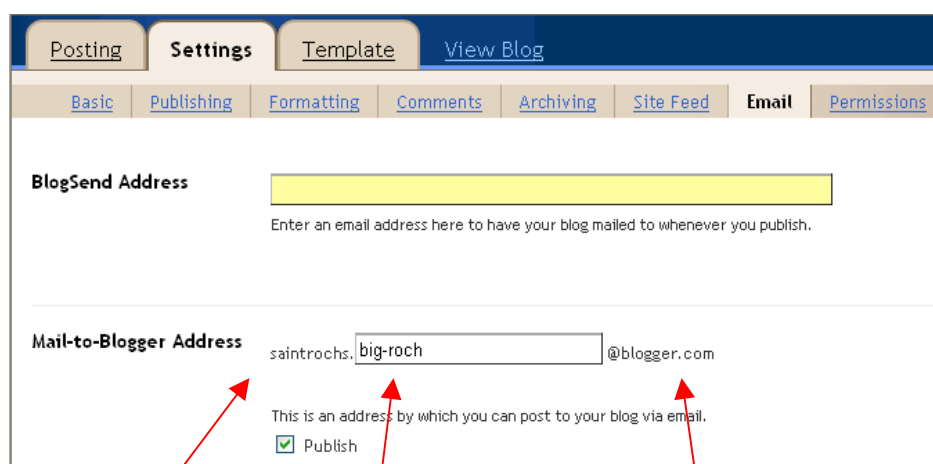
Publishing to your blog via email

One of the great advantages of using Blogger.com for your blogging is that it has the facility to publish directly from your email onto the web.

How do you do it? Simple.

Go to **Dashboard** and then **Settings**. Click on the **Email** tab.

You will see this screen:



BlogSend Address

Enter an email address here to have your blog mailed to whenever you publish.

Mail-to-Blogger Address saintrochs.big-roch@blogger.com

This is an address by which you can post to your blog via email.

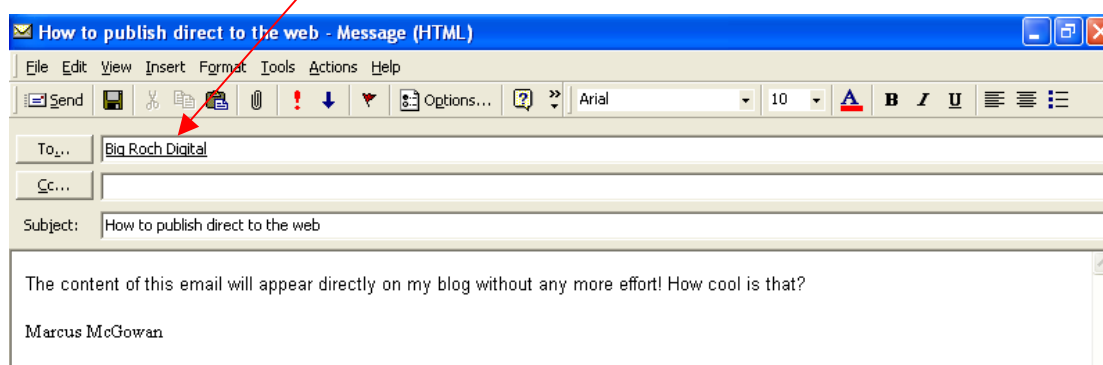
☒ Publish

Mail-to-Blogger Address is the function you need. It is divided into your username, a keyword of your choice, and then the host.

All Blogger.com email addresses end in @blogger.com.

Remember your blog ends in **blogspot.com** but your blog email address is **@blogger.com!**

So if I go into my email software, Microsoft Outlook and key in the address saintrochs.big-roch@blogger.com whatever I write within the email will be published within seconds on the web!



How to publish direct to the web - Message (HTML)

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Actions Help

Send [Icons] Options... [Icons] Arial 10 [Icons]

To: Big Roch Digital

Cc:

Subject: How to publish direct to the web

The content of this email will appear directly on my blog without any more effort! How cool is that?

Marcus McGowan

(Note: In the above example I had already saved the email address into my contacts)

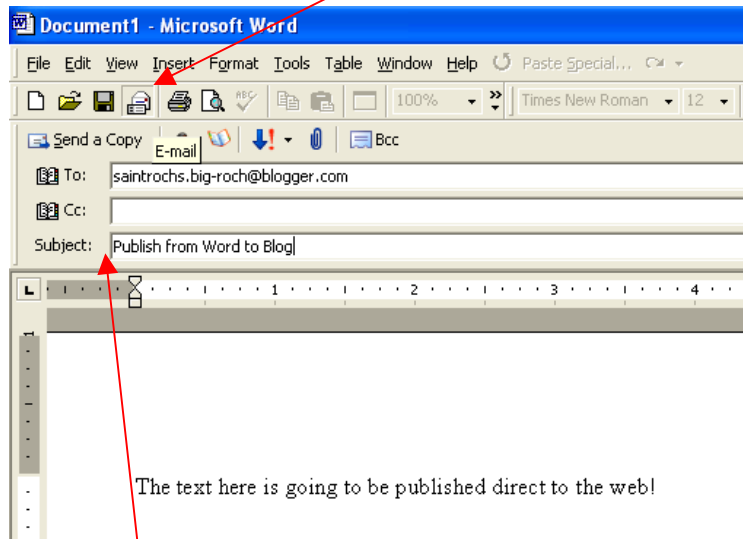
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Emailing from Microsoft Word to your blog

There is a not very well used function in Microsoft Word that can actually make blogging easier again.

In **MS Word** click on the **email** icon.



The Email toolbar will appear and then all you have to do is key in the email address of your blog and send it!

The **subject** of the email will become the title of that blog post.

One final point to consider is that formatting can sometimes be lost when publishing from word into your blog. Using tables is a good way of keeping the spacing and style of the text. Obviously hide the table!

SAFETY ISSUES SURROUNDING BLOGGING

Child Safety is obviously paramount in any kind of internet based activity. Guidelines are available.

This is taken directly from LTScotland:

Blog safety

Setting up a school blog is the same as setting up a public website. You should be careful not to write any personal information that could identify the user or the users location.

Care should be taken over the comment of the posts and when using blogs in education there is always going to be a certain amount of trust involved. It is the same as using the internet, there should be an acceptable use policy on the use of blogs within the school both as an author and as a reader.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/ictineducation/ictadvice/blogging/learningandteaching.asp>

Implications for Blogger.com

Blogger.com has a **NextBlog** button in its **NavBar** which takes users to random blogs. Schools cannot vouch for the content of every webpage or blog and so drawing up the acceptable user/reader policy is crucial in this case. Parents should be aware that schools (even with content blocking software such as WebSense) cannot be responsible for the content of external websites.

ABOUT ME

I am a Teacher of Business Education. I am involved in many aspects of ICT including Blogging, Podcasting and Animation.

If you have any questions or ideas you want to discuss, please contact me via email (of course!) at mmcgowan@st-rochs-sec.glasgow.sch.uk

Happy Blogging!

Marcus McGowan
22nd January 2007