

Blogs: The Basics & Beyond | Exercises

In order to understand how blogs and RSS feeds work, you will need hands-on experience. Try some of these exercises to get familiar with the concepts covered in class. Please let your instructor know if you have any questions. And remember, the most important thing is to have fun while you're learning!

Getting Comfortable with Blogs

1. Open your web browser and visit the class blog at www.splclasses.blogspot.com. This is a public blog so you can visit it even after the class ends to get tips & tricks related to blogging.
2. Have a look around and look for the various parts of the blog so you're familiar with what a blog might look like.
 - Main content area with posts or entries
 - Sidebar
 - Archives
 - Links aka "Blogroll" (These will be useful to visit later on after the class ends)
 - Author Profile or "About me" section
3. Leave a comment on a blog entry by clicking on "Post a comment" at the bottom of an individual entry. You can also click on "comments" at the bottom of the entry.
4. Locate the RSS feed link. Click on it to see options for subscribing to this blog's feed.

Making Use of RSS Feeds with Google Reader

1. If you already have a Gmail (Google email) account, please skip to step #3. If you do not have a Gmail account, open up your web browser and type www.gmail.com into the address bar. Then press "enter."
2. Click on the "Sign up for Gmail" link located at the lower right-hand corner of the webpage. Complete the web form to sign up for a Gmail account.
3. Now visit [Google Reader](http://www.google.com/reader) at www.google.com/reader and proceed to login. Note: If you just created a Gmail account, Google should recognize that you are already logged in to their services and open up your Google Reader account automatically.
4. To learn more about Google Reader, click "play" on the video or click the "Take a Tour" link.
5. To go straight to adding feeds, click the "Get started by adding subscriptions" link.
6. Subscribe to the "News," "Sports," or "Fun," bundles or click on "More bundles" to find more options. You can also do a keyword search. Look for the "Search and Browse" section at the bottom of the page and perform a search for a topic of interest.
7. Subscribe to the class demonstration blog by clicking on "Add subscription" on the left-hand side of Google Reader. Type www.splclasses.blogspot.com and click "Add." Or click on the RSS icon on the blog itself and choose the "Add to Google" option.