

# How to...

## create and share documents using cloud-based services

There are endless reasons to create documents. We need documents to make programme plans, schedules, to-do-lists, presentations, essays and the list goes on. But documents aren't only created by one person but often also, co-created. Others provide feedback on a document and when those comments are taken into account, through edits and amendments, we are able to create fuller, more considered and factually correct documents with which to present our ideas. As we know well, there's nothing quite like teamwork.



Cloud-based word processing services like Google Docs and Microsoft SharePoint have made it easier than ever to co-collaborate. These programmes provide an online platform for more than one person to work on the same document, effectively streamlining the editing process and providing cloud-based access to documents that can be shared with everyone who the document holder has granted permission.

### Further advantages

- In some cases documents created on cloud-based services are automatically saved, doing away with the risk of losing unsaved work when working on offline processors.
- Because your documents are stored online they can be accessed from any computer or mobile, anywhere in the world.

### Step by step Guide

To help you share the benefits of cloud-based services with your young people, here is a basic guide to using Google Docs, a good (and free) online document creation and sharing service.

- To use Google Docs you'll need to set-up a Gmail account. This is a quick and easy process and can be done by going to [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com) and signing up. If you already have a Gmail account, simply log on.
- Once logged on, click on the Google apps icon (  ) near the top-right corner of the window and a number of icons will appear.
- Select the Google drive icon (  ).
- Click the button labelled "NEW" and a dropdown menu will appear. To create a simple word document, select "Google Docs" and a new document will appear in a new tab.
- At the top of the sheet click on the text labelled "Untitled document" and type in your document title.
- Work on your document just as you would on your Word processor, making use of the editing tools on the toolbar as required.
- Once your document is drafted, you can share your document with someone to comment or make changes. To do this, click on the "Share" button in the right-hand corner. A dialogue box will pop up asking you to "Share with others". In the empty field type in the email addresses of the person or people you'd like to share the document with.
- In the text box you can add a note to the recipient/s. You might want to fill that person in on why you're

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sending them this document and asking for their input.

- Press “Send”.
- Once the recipient has received the document and potentially made amendments, they are likely to send it back to you for review. This process of collaboration can continue until both of you (or everyone involved) is happy with the final document. It can then be sent onto a wider group of people, printed out or posted online to a select audience.

### Sharing documents without access to the Internet

Even without access to the Internet, you can co-collaborate and share documents, with the help of a USB memory stick.

#### What is a USB memory stick?

- A USB memory stick is a small storage device to transfer files and documents between computers and other devices.



#### How to use a USB memory stick:

- Insert the USB memory stick into the USB port on your computer.
- A “Removable Disk” drive icon will appear on your desktop.
- Although there isn’t only one way to copy and paste files onto a USB stick, one simple way is to go to your My Computer folder. From here you can search for the document you have already created and would like to share. Once it’s

located, right-click on the document and press “Copy”. Return to your original “My Computer” folder where you should see the “Removable Disk” icon. Click on this icon to open your USB folder and right-click “Paste” to paste your document on your USB. Your document should now successfully exist on your removable memory stick.

- Once your document has been transferred, be sure to safely remove your USB by right-clicking on the Removable Disk icon and selecting “Eject” or “Safely Remove Hardware”. When a dialogue box pops up ensuring you that it is now safe to eject your memory stick, you can unplug your USB from the computer.
- Follow the same copy and paste process to transfer the document onto the computer of the person you would like to share the document with.

#### A note on safety when sharing documents

- Although USBs provide an easily accessible way to share files, they are therefore also popular vehicles to transfer viruses. This is usually without the owner of the USB even knowing that their USB contains a virus. It’s therefore essential to be wary when using them and wherever possible to stick to other methods of transferring documents, such as email or cloud-based collaboration.
- Regardless of the platform or device you use to share documents, it’s vital to only share private documents with people you know and trust.
- When creating documents through a cloud-based service, it becomes even more important to guard your passwords and to log out of your account whenever it’s not in use.