

Wikipedia:About

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A general introduction for visitors to Wikipedia. The project also has an encyclopedia article about itself: Wikipedia, and some introductions for aspiring contributors.

Wikipedia (pronounced /wɪkɪˈpiːdi.ə/ *WIK-i-PEE-dee-ə*) is a multilingual, web-based, free-content encyclopedia project based on an openly editable model. The name "Wikipedia" is a portmanteau of the words *wiki* (a technology for creating collaborative websites, from the Hawaiian word *wiki*, meaning "quick") and *encyclopedia*. Wikipedia's articles provide links to guide the user to related pages with additional information.

Wikipedia is written collaboratively by largely anonymous Internet volunteers who write without pay. Anyone with Internet access can write and make changes to Wikipedia articles (except in certain cases where editing is restricted to prevent disruption or vandalism). Users can contribute anonymously, under a pseudonym, or with their real identity, if they choose.

The fundamental principles by which Wikipedia operates are the Five pillars. The Wikipedia community has developed many policies and guidelines to improve the encyclopedia; however, it is not a formal requirement to be familiar with them before contributing.

Since its creation in 2001, Wikipedia has grown rapidly into one of the largest reference websites, attracting nearly 78 million visitors (<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/wikipedia.org?metric=uv>) monthly as of January 2010. There are more than 91,000 active contributors (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wikistats/EN/TablesWikipediansEditsGt5.htm>) working on more than 17,000,000 articles in more than 270 languages. As of today, there are 3,578,729 articles in English. Every day, hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world collectively make tens of thousands of edits and create thousands of new articles to augment the knowledge held by the Wikipedia encyclopedia. (*See also: Wikipedia:Statistics.*)

People of all ages, cultures and backgrounds can add or edit article prose, references, images and other media here. What is contributed is more important than the expertise or qualifications of the contributor. What will remain depends upon whether it fits within Wikipedia's policies, including being verifiable against a published reliable source, so excluding editors' opinions and beliefs and unreviewed research, and is free of copyright restrictions and contentious material about living people. Contributions cannot damage Wikipedia because the software allows easy reversal of mistakes and many experienced editors are watching to help and ensure that edits are cumulative improvements. Begin by simply clicking the *edit* link at the top of any editable page!

Wikipedia is a live collaboration differing from paper-based reference sources in important ways. Unlike printed encyclopedias, Wikipedia is continually created and updated, with articles on historic events appearing within minutes, rather than months or years. Older articles tend to grow more comprehensive and balanced; newer articles may contain misinformation, unencyclopedic content, or vandalism. Awareness of this aids obtaining valid information and avoiding recently added misinformation (see *Researching with Wikipedia*).

What Wikipedia is not circumscribes Wikipedia's scope. Further information on key topics appears below. Further advice is at **Frequently asked questions**, **advice for parents**, or see **Where to ask questions**. For help getting started with editing or other issues, see *Help:Contents*.

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English Wikipedia right now

Wikipedia is running MediaWiki version 1.17wmf1 (r83487).

It has 3,578,729 articles, and 23,423,632 pages in total.

There have been 448,981,785 edits.

There are 843,161 uploaded files.

There are 14,112,500 registered users, including 1,779 administrators.

This information is correct as of 21:51 (UTC) on March 7, 2011.

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About Wikipedia

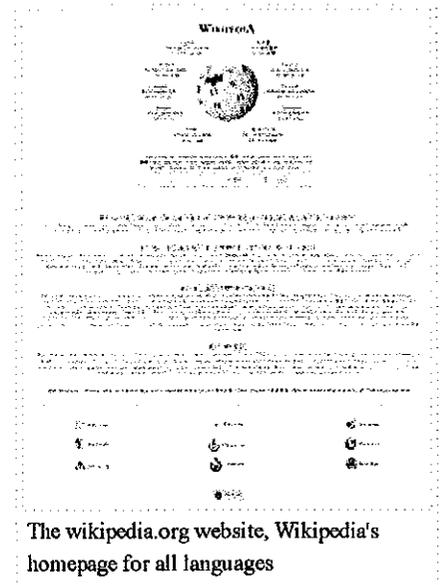
Wikipedia history

For more details on this topic, see History of Wikipedia.

Wikipedia was founded as an offshoot of Nupedia, a now-abandoned project to produce a free encyclopedia. Nupedia had an elaborate system of peer review and required highly qualified contributors, but the writing of articles was slow. During 2000, Jimmy Wales, founder of Nupedia, and Larry Sanger, whom Wales had employed to work on the project, discussed ways of supplementing Nupedia with a more open, complementary project. Multiple sources suggested the idea that a wiki might allow members of the public to contribute material, and Nupedia's first wiki went online on January 10, 2001.

There was considerable resistance on the part of Nupedia's editors and reviewers to the idea of associating Nupedia with a website in the wiki format, so the new project was given the name "Wikipedia" and launched on its own domain, wikipedia.com, on January 15 (now called "Wikipedia Day" by some users). The bandwidth and server (in San Diego) were donated by Wales. Other current and past Bomis employees who have worked on the project include Tim Shell, one of the cofounders of Bomis and its current CEO, and programmer Jason Richey. The domain was eventually changed to the present wikipedia.org when the not-for-profit Wikimedia Foundation was launched as its new parent organization, prompting the use of a ".org" domain to denote its non-commercial nature.

In May 2001, a wave of non-English Wikipedias was launched—in Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, Esperanto, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. These were soon joined by Arabic and Hungarian.^[1] In September,^[2] Polish was added, and further commitment to the multilingual provision of Wikipedia was made. At the end of



the year, Afrikaans, Norwegian, and Serbo-Croatian versions were announced.

Trademarks and copyrights

Wikipedia is a registered trademark of the not-for-profit Wikimedia Foundation, which has created a family of free-content projects which are built by user contributions.

Most of Wikipedia's text and many of its images are dual-licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Sharealike 3.0 Unported License (CC-BY-SA) and the GNU Free Documentation License (GFDL) (unversioned, with no invariant sections, front-cover texts, or back-cover texts). Some text has been imported only under CC-BY-SA and CC-BY-SA-compatible license and cannot be reused under GFDL; such text will be identified either on the page footer, in the page history or on the discussion page of the article that utilizes the text. Every image has a description page which indicates the license under which it is released or, if it is non-free, the rationale under which it is used.

Contributions remain the property of their creators, while the CC-BY-SA and GFDL licenses ensure the content is freely distributable and reproducible. (See the copyright notice and the content disclaimer for more information.)

Wikipedia contributors

Main pages: Wikipedia:Who writes Wikipedia and Wikipedia:Wikipedians

Anyone with Web access can edit Wikipedia, and this openness encourages inclusion of a tremendous amount of content. About 91,000 editors—from expert scholars to casual readers—regularly edit Wikipedia, and these experienced editors often help to create a consistent style throughout the encyclopedia, following our Manual of Style.

Several mechanisms are in place to help Wikipedia members carry out the important work of crafting a high-quality resource while maintaining civility. Editors are able to watch pages and techies can write editing programs to keep track of or rectify bad edits. Where there are disagreements on how to present facts, editors work together to arrive at an article that fairly represents current expert opinion on the subject.

Although the Wikimedia Foundation owns the site, it is largely uninvolved in writing and daily operations.

Credits

Text on Wikipedia is a collaborative work, and the efforts of individual contributors to a page are recorded in that page's history, which is publicly viewable. *See Help:Page history*. Information on the authorship of images and other media, such as sound files, can be found by clicking on the image itself or the nearby information icon. The file page for the image or media will be displayed and it includes the author and source, where appropriate, along with other information. *See Help:File page*.

Making the best use of Wikipedia

Exploring Wikipedia

Main page: Portal:Contents

Many visitors come to Wikipedia to acquire knowledge, others to share knowledge. At this very instant, dozens of articles are being improved, and new articles are also being created. Changes can be viewed at the Recent changes page and a random page at random articles. Over 2,000 articles have been designated by the Wikipedia community as featured articles, exemplifying the best articles in the encyclopedia. Another 7,000 articles are designated as good articles. Some information on Wikipedia is organized into lists; the best of these are designated as featured lists. Wikipedia also has portals, which organize content around topic areas; our best portals are selected as featured portals. Articles can be found using the search box on the top-right side of the screen.

Wikipedia is available in languages other than English. Wikipedia has more than two hundred languages (see other language versions (http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedias)), including a Simple English version, and related projects include a dictionary, quotations, books, manuals, and scientific reference sources, and a news service (see sister projects). All of these are maintained, updated, and managed by separate communities, and often include information and articles that can be hard to find through other common sources.

Basic navigation in Wikipedia

Main page: Help:Navigation

Wikipedia articles are all linked, or cross-referenced. When highlighted text like this is seen, it means there is a link to some relevant article or Wikipedia page with further in-depth information elsewhere. Holding the mouse over the link will often show to where the link will lead. The reader is always one click away from more information on any point that has a link attached. There are other links towards the ends of most articles, for other articles of interest, relevant external websites and pages, reference material, and organized categories of knowledge which can be searched and traversed in a loose hierarchy for more information. Some articles may also have links to dictionary definitions, audio-book readings, quotations, the same article in other languages, and further information available on our sister projects. Further links can be added if a relevant link is missing, and this is one way to contribute.

Using Wikipedia as a research tool

Main pages: Wikipedia:Researching with Wikipedia and Wikipedia:Citing Wikipedia

As wiki documents, articles are never considered complete and may be continually edited and improved. Over time, this generally results in an upward trend of quality and a growing consensus over a neutral representation of information.

Users should be aware that not all articles are of encyclopedic quality from the start: they may contain false or debatable information. Indeed, many articles start their lives as displaying a single viewpoint; and, after a long process of discussion, debate, and argument, they gradually take on a neutral point of view reached through consensus. Others may, for a while, become caught up in a heavily unbalanced viewpoint which can take some time—months perhaps—to achieve better balanced coverage of their subject. In part, this is because editors often contribute content in which they have a particular interest and do not attempt to make each article that they edit comprehensive. However, eventually, additional editors expand and contribute to articles and strive to achieve balance and comprehensive coverage. In addition, Wikipedia operates a number of internal resolution processes that can assist when editors disagree on content and approach. Usually, editors eventually reach a consensus on ways to improve the article.

The *ideal* Wikipedia article is well-written, balanced, neutral, and encyclopedic, containing comprehensive, notable, verifiable knowledge. An increasing number of articles reach this standard over time, and many already have. Our best articles are called Featured Articles (and display a small star in the upper right corner of the article), and our second best tier of articles are designated Good Articles. However, this is a process and can take months or years to be achieved, as each user adds their contribution in turn. Some articles contain statements which have not yet been fully cited. Others will later be augmented with new sections. Some information will be considered by later contributors to be insufficiently founded and, therefore, may be removed or expunged.

While the overall trend is toward improvement, it is important to use Wikipedia carefully if it is intended to be used as a research source, since individual articles will, by their nature, vary in quality and maturity. Guidelines and information pages are available to help users and researchers do this effectively, as is an article that summarizes third-party studies and assessments of the reliability of Wikipedia.

Wikipedia vs. paper encyclopedias

Main article: Wiki is not paper (on Wikimedia Meta-Wiki)

Wikipedia has advantages over traditional paper encyclopedias. Wikipedia has a very low "publishing" cost for adding or expanding entries and a low environmental impact in some respects, since it never needs to be printed, although computers have their own environmental cost. In addition, Wikipedia has wikilinks instead of in-line explanations and it incorporates overview summaries (article introductions) with the extensive detail of full articles. Additionally, the editorial cycle is short. A paper encyclopedia stays the same until the next edition, whereas editors can update Wikipedia at any instant, around the clock, to help ensure that articles stay abreast of the most recent events and scholarship.

Strengths, weaknesses, and article quality in Wikipedia

Main pages: Wikipedia:Why Wikipedia is so great and Wikipedia:Why Wikipedia is not so great

See also: Reliability of Wikipedia and Wikipedia:Researching with Wikipedia

Wikipedia's greatest strengths, weaknesses, and differences all arise because it is open to anyone, it has a large contributor base, and its articles are written by consensus, according to editorial guidelines and policies.

- Wikipedia is **open to a large contributor base**, drawing a large number of editors from diverse backgrounds. This allows Wikipedia to significantly reduce regional and cultural bias found in many other publications, and makes it very difficult for any group to censor and impose bias. A large, diverse editor base also provides access and breadth on subject matter that is otherwise inaccessible or little documented. A large number of editors contributing at any moment also means that Wikipedia can produce encyclopedic articles and resources covering newsworthy events within hours or days of their occurrence. It also means that like any publication, Wikipedia may reflect the cultural, age, socio-economic, and other biases of its contributors. There is no systematic process to make sure that "obviously important" topics are written about, so Wikipedia may contain unexpected oversights and omissions. While *most* articles may be altered by anyone, in practice editing will be performed by a certain demographic (younger rather than older, male rather than female, rich enough to afford a computer rather than poor, et cetera) and may, therefore, show some bias. Some topics may not be covered well, while others may be covered in great depth.
- Allowing **anyone to edit** Wikipedia means that it is more easily vandalized or susceptible to unchecked information, which requires removal. See Wikipedia:Administrator intervention against vandalism. While blatant vandalism is usually easily spotted and rapidly corrected, Wikipedia is more subject to subtle viewpoint promotion than a typical reference work. However, bias that would be unchallenged in a traditional reference work is likely to be ultimately challenged or considered on Wikipedia. While Wikipedia articles generally attain a good standard after editing, it is important to note that fledgling articles and those monitored less well may be susceptible to vandalism and insertion of false information. Wikipedia's radical openness also means that any given article may be, at any given moment, in a bad state, such as in the middle of a large edit, or a controversial rewrite. Many contributors do not yet comply fully with key policies, or may add information without citable sources. Wikipedia's open approach tremendously increases the chances that any particular factual error or misleading statement will be relatively promptly corrected. Numerous editors at any given time are monitoring recent changes and edits to articles on their watchlist.
- Wikipedia is **written by open and transparent consensus**—an approach that has its pros and cons. Censorship or imposing "official" points of view is extremely difficult to achieve and usually fails after a time. Eventually for most articles, all notable views become fairly described and a neutral point of view reached. In reality, the process of reaching consensus may be long and drawn-out, with articles fluid or changeable for a long time while they find their "neutral approach" that all sides can agree on. Reaching neutrality is occasionally made harder by extreme-viewpoint contributors. Wikipedia operates a full editorial dispute resolution process, one that allows time for discussion and resolution in depth, but one that also permits disagreements to last for months before poor-quality or biased edits are removed. A common conclusion is that Wikipedia is a valuable resource and provides a good reference point on its subjects.
 - That said, articles and subject areas sometimes suffer from significant omissions, and while misinformation and vandalism are usually corrected quickly, this does not always happen. (See for example this incident in which a person inserted a fake biography linking a prominent journalist to the Kennedy assassinations and Soviet Russia as a joke on a co-worker which went undetected for four months, saying afterwards he "didn't know Wikipedia was used as a serious reference tool.")
- Wikipedia is **written largely by amateurs**. Those with expert credentials are given no additional weight. Some experts contend that expert credentials are given less weight than contributions by amateurs. Wikipedia is also not subject to any peer review for scientific or medical or engineering articles. One advantage to having amateurs write in Wikipedia is that they have more free time on their hands so that they can make rapid changes in response to current events. The wider the general public interest in a topic, the more likely it is to attract contributions from non-specialists.

The MediaWiki software that runs Wikipedia retains a history of all edits and changes, thus information added to Wikipedia never "vanishes". Discussion pages are an important resource on contentious topics. Therefore, serious researchers can often find a wide range of vigorously or thoughtfully advocated viewpoints not present in the consensus article. As with any source, information should be checked. A 2005 editorial by a BBC technology writer comments that these debates are probably symptomatic of cultural changes that are happening across all sources of information (including search engines and the media), and may lead to "a better sense of how to evaluate information sources."^[3]

Disclaimers

Main page: Wikipedia:Disclaimers

Wikipedia disclaimers apply to all pages on Wikipedia. However, the consensus in Wikipedia is to put all disclaimers only as links and at the bottom of each article. Proposals to have a warning box at the top have been rejected. Some do not like the way it looks or that it calls attention to possible errors in Wikipedia.

Wikipedia, in common with many websites, has a disclaimer that, at times, has led to commentators citing these in order to support a view that Wikipedia is unreliable. A selection of similar disclaimers from places which are often regarded as reliable (including sources such as Encyclopædia Britannica, Associated Press, and the Oxford English Dictionary) can be read and compared at Non-Wikipedia disclaimers. Wikipedia content advisories can also be found here.

Disclaimers

Core disclaimers

- General
- Legal
- Medical
- Content
- Risk

Other

- Academic use
- Non-Wikipedia

Contributing to Wikipedia

Main pages: Contributing to Wikipedia, Starting an article, New contributors' help page
Guide to fixing vandalism: Help:Reverting

Anyone can contribute to Wikipedia by clicking on the *Edit this page* tab in an article. Before beginning to contribute however, read some handy helping tools such as the tutorial and the policies and guidelines, as well as our welcome page. It is important to realize that in contributing to Wikipedia, users are expected to be civil and neutral, respecting all points of view, and only add verifiable and factual information rather than personal views and opinions. "The five pillars of Wikipedia" cover this approach and are recommended reading before editing. (Vandals are reported via the Administrator Notice Board and may be temporarily blocked from editing Wikipedia.)

Most articles start as stubs, but after many contributions, they can become featured articles. Once the contributor has decided a topic of interest, they may want to request that the article be written (or they could research the issue and write it themselves). Wikipedia has on-going projects, focused on specific topic areas or tasks, which help coordinate editing.

The ease of editing Wikipedia results in many people editing. That makes the updating of the encyclopedia very quick, almost as fast as news websites.

Editing Wikipedia pages

Main pages: Wikipedia:How to edit a page and Help:Wiki markup

Wikipedia uses a simple yet powerful page layout to allow editors to concentrate on adding material rather than page design. These include automatic sections and subsections, automatic references and cross-references, image and table inclusion, indented and listed text, links, ISBNs, and math, as well as usual formatting elements and most world alphabets and common symbols. Most of these have simple formats that are deliberately very easy and intuitive.

The page layout consists of tabs along the top of the window. These are:

- *Article*. Shows the main Wikipedia article.
- *Discussion*. Shows a user discussion about the article's topic and possible revisions, controversies, etc.
- *Edit*. This tab allows users to edit the article. Depending on the page's susceptibility to vandalism, according to its visibility or the degree of controversy surrounding the topic, this tab may not be shown for all users. (For example, any user who is not an administrator will not be able to edit the Main Page).
- *View history*. This tab allows readers to view the editors of the article and the changes that have been made.
- *Star*. ("Watch") If you are logged in to your account, clicking on the star icon will cause any changes made to the article to be displayed on the watchlist. (Note: when this icon is clicked, it changes to a filled-in star.)

Wikipedia has robust version and reversion controls. This means that poor-quality edits or vandalism can quickly and easily be reversed or brought up to an appropriate standard by any other editor, so inexperienced editors cannot accidentally do permanent harm if they make a mistake in their editing. As there are many more editors intent on improving articles than not, error-ridden articles are usually corrected promptly.

Wikipedia content criteria

Main page: Wikipedia:Wikipedia in brief

Wikipedia content is intended to be factual, notable, verifiable with cited external sources, and neutrally presented.

The appropriate policies and guidelines for these are found at:

1. Wikipedia:What Wikipedia is not, which summarizes what belongs in Wikipedia and what does not;
2. Wikipedia:Neutral point of view, which describes Wikipedia's mandatory core approach to neutral, unbiased article-writing;
3. Wikipedia:No original research, which prohibits the use of Wikipedia to publish personal views and original research of editors and defines Wikipedia's role as an encyclopedia of existing *recognized* knowledge;
4. Wikipedia:Verifiability, which explains that it must be possible for readers to verify all content against credible external sources (following the guidance in the Wikipedia:Risk disclaimer that is linked-to at the bottom of every article);
5. Wikipedia:Reliable sources, which explains what factors determine whether a source is acceptable;
6. Wikipedia:Citing sources, which describes the manner of citing sources so that readers can verify content for themselves; and
7. Wikipedia:Manual of Style, which offers a style guide—in general editors tend to acquire knowledge of appropriate writing styles and detailed formatting over time.

These are often abbreviated to WP:NOT, WP:NPOV, WP:NOR, WP:V, WP:RS, WP:CITE, and WP:MOS respectively.

Editorial administration, oversight, and management

Main page: Wikipedia:Editorial oversight and control

The Wikipedia community is largely self-organising, so that anyone may build a reputation as a competent editor and become involved in any role he/she may choose, subject to peer approval. Individuals often will choose to become involved in specialised tasks, such as reviewing articles at others' request, watching current edits for vandalism, watching newly created articles for quality control purposes, or similar roles. Editors who believe they can serve the community better by taking on additional administrative responsibility may ask their peers for agreement to undertake such responsibilities. This structure enforces meritocracy and communal standards of editorship and conduct. At present a minimum approval of 75–80% from the community is required to take on these additional tools and responsibilities. This standard tends to ensure a high level of experience, trust, and familiarity across a broad front of aspects within Wikipedia.

A variety of software-assisted systems and automated programs help editors and administrators to watch for problematic edits and editors. Theoretically all editors and users are treated equally with no "power structure". There is, however a hierarchy of permissions and positions, some of which are listed below:

1. *Anyone* can edit most of the articles here. Some articles are protected due to vandalism or edit-warring, and can only be edited by certain editors.
2. Anyone with an account that has been registered for four days or longer and made ten edits becomes *Autoconfirmed*, and gains the technical ability to do three things that non-autoconfirmed editors cannot:
 - Move articles.
 - Edit semi-protected articles.
 - Vote in certain elections (minimum edit count to receive suffrage varies depending on the election).
3. Many editors with accounts obtain access to certain tools that make editing easier and faster. Most of those tools, few learn about, but one common privilege granted to editors in good standing is "rollback", which is the ability to undo edits more easily.
4. Administrators ("admins" or "sysops") have been approved by the community, and have access to some significant administrative tools. They can delete articles, block accounts or IP addresses, and edit fully protected articles.
5. Bureaucrats are chosen in a process similar to that for selecting administrators. There are not very many bureaucrats. They have the technical ability to add or remove admin rights, approve or revoke "bot" privileges, and rename user accounts.
6. The Arbitration Committee is kind of like Wikipedia's supreme court. They deal with disputes that remain unresolved after other attempts at dispute resolution have failed. Members of this Committee are elected by the community and tend to be selected from among the pool of experienced admins.
7. Stewards are the top echelon of technical permissions, other than the Wikimedia Board of Directors. Stewards can do a few technical things, and one almost never hears much about them since they normally only act when a local admin or bureaucrat is not available, and hence almost never on the English Wikipedia. There are very few stewards.
8. Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia, has several special roles and privileges. In most instances however, he does not

expect to be treated differently than any other editor or administrator.

Handling disputes and abuse

Main articles: Wikipedia:Vandalism, Wikipedia:Dispute resolution, Wikipedia:Consensus, Wikipedia:Sock puppetry, Wikipedia:Conflict of interest

Wikipedia has a rich set of methods to handle most abuses that commonly arise. These methods are well-tested and should be relied upon.

- Intentional *vandalism* can be reported and corrected by anyone.
- Unresolved *disputes* between editors, whether based upon behavior, editorial approach, or validity of content, can be addressed through the talk page of an article, through requesting comments from other editors or through Wikipedia's comprehensive dispute resolution process.
- *Abuse of user accounts*, such as the creation of "Internet sock puppets" or solicitation of friends and other parties to enforce a non-neutral viewpoint or inappropriate consensus within a discussion, or to disrupt other Wikipedia processes in an annoying manner, are addressed through the sock puppet policy.

In addition, *brand new users* (until they have established themselves a bit) may at the start find that their votes are given less weight by editors in some informal polls, in order to prevent abuse of single-purpose accounts.

Editorial quality review

As well as systems to catch and control substandard and vandalistic edits, Wikipedia also has a full style and content manual and a variety of positive systems for continual article review and improvement. Examples of the processes include peer review, good article assessment, and the featured article process, a rigorous review of articles that are intended to meet the highest standards and showcase Wikipedia's capability to produce high-quality work.

In addition, specific types of article or fields often have their own specialized and comprehensive projects, assessment processes (such as biographical article assessment), and expert reviewers within specific subjects. Nominated articles are also frequently the subject of specific focus under projects such as the Neutrality Project or are covered under editorial drives by groups such as the Cleanup Taskforce.

Technical attributes

Wikipedia uses MediaWiki software, the open-source program used not only on Wikimedia projects but also on many other third-party websites. The hardware supporting the Wikimedia projects is based on several hundred servers in various hosting centers around the world. Full descriptions of these servers and their roles are available on this meta page. For technical information about Wikipedia, check Technical FAQs. Wikipedia publishes various types of metadata; and, across its pages, are many thousands of microformats.

Wikipedia does not place cookies or other tracking software on users' computers^[4] except for cookies associated with logging into a Wikimedia account, including for the English Wikipedia.^[5]

Feedback and questions

Wikipedia is run as a communal effort. It is a community project whose result is an encyclopedia. Feedback about content should, in the first instance, be raised on the discussion pages of those articles. Be bold and edit the pages to add information or correct mistakes.

Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

Main page: Wikipedia:FAQ

- FAQ Index
- Category:Wikipedia FAQ

Giving feedback

There is an established escalation-and-dispute process within Wikipedia, as well as pages designed for questions, feedback, suggestions, and comments:

- Talk pages—the associated discussion page for discussion of an article or policy's contents (usually the first place to go);
- Wikipedia:Vandalism—a facility for reporting vandalism (but fix vandalism as well as report it);
- Dispute resolution—the procedure for handling disputes that remain unresolved within an article's talk space; and
- Village pump—the Wikipedia discussion area, part of the community portal.

See also:

- Bug tracker (<http://bugzilla.wikimedia.org>) —a facility for reporting problems with the Wikipedia website or the MediaWiki software that runs it;
- Village pump: proposals page—a place for making non-policy suggestions; and
- Wikipedia:Help desk—Wikipedia's general help desk, if other pages have not answered the query.

Research help and similar questions

Facilities for help for users researching specific topics can be found at:

- Wikipedia:Requested articles—to suggest or request articles for the future.
- Wikipedia:Reference desk—to ask for help with any questions, or in finding specific facts.
- Wikipedia:Researching with Wikipedia—for information on using Wikipedia as a research tool

Because of the nature of Wikipedia, it is encouraged that people looking for information should try to find it themselves in the first instance. If, however, information is found to be missing from Wikipedia, be bold and add it so others can gain.

Community discussion

For specific discussion not related to article content or editor conduct, see the Village pump, which covers such subjects as announcements, policy and technical discussion, and information on other specialized portals such as the help, reference and peer review desks. The Community Portal is a centralized place to find things to do, collaborations, and general editing help information, and find out what is happening.

Contacting individual Wikipedia editors

For more information, the first place to go is the Help:Contents. To contact individual contributors, leave a message on their talk page. Standard places to ask policy and project-related questions are the Village Pump, online, and the Wikipedia mailing lists, over e-mail. Reach other Wikipedians via IRC and e-mail.

In addition, the Wikimedia Foundation **meta-wiki**, a site for coordinating the various Wikipedia projects and sister projects (and abstract discussions of policy and direction). Also available are places for submitting bug reports and feature requests.

For a full list of contact options, see **Wikipedia:Contact us**.

Related versions and projects

This Wikipedia is written in English. Started in 2001, it currently contains 3,578,729 articles. Many other Wikipedias are available; some of the largest are listed below.

- More than 500,000 articles: Deutsch · Español · Français · Italiano · Nederlands · 日本語 · Polski · Português · Русский
- More than 150,000 articles: Bahasa Indonesia · Català · Český · 한국어 · Magyar · Norsk (bokmål) · Română · Suomi · Svenska · Tiếng Việt · Türkçe · Українська · 中文
- More than 100,000 articles: العربية · Bahasa Melayu · Български · Dansk · Esperanto · فارسی · עברית · Lietuvių · Slovenčina · Slovenščina · Српски / Srpski
- More than 50,000 articles: Eesti · Ελληνικά · Simple English · Euskara · Galego · Hrvatski · Norsk (nynorsk) · ไทย

Complete list of Wikipedias

Sister projects

Wikipedia is hosted by the Wikimedia Foundation, a non-profit organization that also hosts a range of other projects:



Commons
(<http://commons.wikimedia.org/>)
Free media repository



Wikinews
(<http://en.wikinews.org/>)
Free-content news



Wiktionary
(<http://en.wiktionary.org/>)
Dictionary and thesaurus



Wikiquote
(<http://en.wikiquote.org/>)
Collection of quotations



Wikibooks
(<http://en.wikibooks.org/>)
Free textbooks and manuals



Wikisource
(<http://en.wikisource.org/>)
Free-content library



Wikispecies
(<http://species.wikimedia.org/>)
Directory of species



Wikiversity
(<http://en.wikiversity.org/>)
Free learning materials and activities



Meta-Wiki
(<http://meta.wikimedia.org/>)
Wikimedia project coordination

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See also

- Wikipedia:Ten things you may not know about Wikipedia
- Wikipedia:History of Wikipedia processes and people
- Wikipedia:Quality control
- List of online encyclopedias

References

- [^] "Wikipedia announcements --- May 2001" (http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Announcements_May_2001). http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Announcements_May_2001, wikipedia.org
- [^] "Wikipedia announcements — September 2001" (http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Announcements_September_2001). http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Announcements_September_2001, wikipedia.org
- [^] Bill Thompson, "What is it with Wikipedia?" (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/4534712.stm>), *BBC*, December 16, 2005.
- [^] Angwin, Julia, *The Web's New Gold Mine: Your Secrets: What They Know* (a Wall St. J. Investigation) (1st in ser.), in *The Wall Street Journal*, § *Weekend Journal*, Jul. 31–Aug. 1, 2010 (4-star ed.), p. W1, col. 2 (test of popular websites including Wikipedia found no tracking software was installed by Wikipedia).
- [^] *E.g.*, the en-WP user login page (<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:UserLogin&returnto=Special:Contributions>), as accessed Jan. 22, 2011.

Further reading

- Wikipedia: The Missing Manual
- Meta:Wikipedia power structure
- WikiMedia Foundation activities in February 2008 (<http://lists.wikimedia.org/pipermail/foundation-l/2008-March/039460.html>), lists.wikimedia.org

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