Google Documents

About sharing in Google Docs

Sharing in Google Docs lets you collaborate on documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and drawings with other people in real-time. It also prevents you from ever having to send an email attachment again.

You can share your docs with as many or as few people as you like -- and it's all under your control. You can **assign a visibility option** to a doc and share with people in just one step.

Benefits of collaboration

Google Docs enables multiple people in different locations to collaborate simultaneously on the same doc from any computer with Internet access. For example, Alice and Meredith are working on a project together, and they need to write a document, keep track of their work in a spreadsheet, and create a presentation to share with other people involved in the project. Alice lives in New York and Meredith lives in Los Angeles.

When one of them makes changes to the document, spreadsheet, or presentation, the other person can see the changes in real time and respond to the edits immediately. Both of them work on the same docs, so there's no need to send attachments back and forth, comparing and consolidating individual files.

Visibility options: Private, Anyone with the link, and Public on the web

There are three different visibility options: private, anyone with the link, and public on the web. You can see the current visibility setting for your doc by hovering over the blue **Share** button in the upper right of your screen.
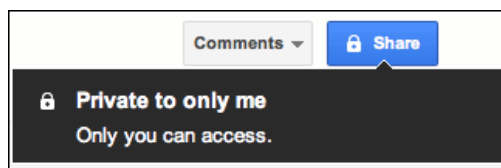
Private

All documents start out as private. (Are you a Google Apps customer? Your [domain's default setting](#) might be different.) When you create a private doc, you're the only person with access to it. From there, you can give access to other people. Anyone trying to access the document will have to sign in to their Google Account to verify that they have access to the doc.

Private is the best setting for your private documents, like a list of contacts or a resume. It's also a good setting if you want to collaborate with a small circle of people. For example, you and a friend or family member could work together on a private letter or taxes.

Anyone with the link

A doc set to **Anyone with the link** is like an unlisted phone number. Another person can only view it if they have the exact URL of the doc or file. If you also select the 'Allow anyone to edit' option, anyone with the URL will also be able to *edit* your doc. Sign-in isn't required, so viewers and editors may show up as anonymous.

Anyone with the link is a great setting if you want to give easy access to information to a bunch of people (as long as the contents of the doc aren't sensitive). For example, if you're a college professor and you want to share a syllabus and a book list, you could put that info into doc set to anyone with the link and send your students the link.

If you want to [restrict access](#) to your doc, click the **Share** button on the top right of any doc, then click **Restrict access**.

Public on the web

Set a doc to public if you want to make it publicly available to anyone. Public docs can show up in search results, and anyone who finds the web address of the doc can access it. If you also select the 'Allow anyone to comment' and/or 'Allow anyone to edit' options, anyone who finds the document will also be able to view, comment and edit your document.

Public on the web is a great setting if you're trying to get the word out about something. For example, you could create a flyer for a concert, save it as a public doc, post a link to it on your blog, and maybe ask your friends to do the same.

Limits on sharing

You can explicitly share a doc or file with **200** viewers and editors (combined), or you can make your doc available to anyone by [changing its visibility option](#). **50** may edit and view a spreadsheet, document, or drawing at the same time. **10** people may edit and view a presentation or a document in the older version of Google documents.

If you need to share a doc or file with more than 200 people, you can create a mailing list. Then, share the doc or file with the mailing list rather than individual people.