

Building a Biography Page: Preparing to Edit

Creating a page for a person on Wikipedia is extremely satisfying. Here are some tips on how to get started & create a biography article that's as informative and helpful as possible!

Creating an account is the best way to begin, as it makes it easier to keep track of your edits and to interact with other Wikipedians (e.g. ask for help!). The “Create account” button is on the top right of the page. Typing in your email means that you can recover your password if you forget it! Once you've created an account, click on your username (in red at the top of the page) to create a *User page* and write a little about yourself such as that you're new to editing, & what you're interested in editing on (e.g. women engineers). Complete an *Edit summary* (tell people what you did, e.g. Created page) and press save!

If you ever need help with Wiki, you can go to your own Talk page (the Talk tab on your User page), click Edit and write:
==Request for help== {{Help me}} Delete this bit and replace it with your question? ~~~~

Set your Preferences next, so that you can easily choose how you edit. Click “Preferences” on the top right, then go to the “Editing” tab, and where it says “Editing mode”, choose “Show me both editor tabs” from the dropdown box. Now, when you look at any Wiki-page whilst logged in, you'll see “Edit” and “Edit source”. The *Visual editor* (“Edit” button) is just like using Microsoft Word, and is great for getting started.

Explore History and Talk tabs on articles. The History tab shows you every edit ever done to a page, and who it was done by, and when. This is why edit summaries are important – they make it clear what each editor has added, removed, corrected, etc. The Talk tab is where Wiki-editors discuss what should be included on a page (it's where you can see whether any groups keep an eye on the page's quality, and also if there's any controversy on a topic). If a page already exists and you'd like to edit it, it's good to leave a message on the talk page explaining what you're hoping to improve and telling others that you're new to editing so would welcome their help.

A quick check of Wikipedia is the next step. Check whether the person you'd like to edit on has a page already. If so, you can add to it in a moment! If not, double check that your person meets Wikipedia's *Notability criteria*: “they have received significant coverage in multiple secondary sources that are reliable, intellectually independent of each other, and independent of the subject.” You can read more about notability by typing “Wikipedia:Notability (people)” into the Wikipedia search box or a search engine.

Gathering your sources is the final step in preparing to edit. Once you've found a page, or satisfied yourself that the person is notable, find some good sources to give you some information on the person. As the notability criteria says, the source should give the person significant attention (more than just a few sentences!), and should be a published piece (not someone's unpublished notes or somebody's blog!). You can use autobiographies to add some details to an article, but your article should *mainly* be built up from information from elsewhere (e.g. newspapers, journals, books, & academic websites/blogs) so as to have a more *Neutral point of view*.

You're now ready to dive in! Over the page is more information on the component parts of a Wikipedia article to help guide you in your editing, and to the right is a checklist you can tick off as you go along – happy editing!



Biog-edit Checklist

I have...

- Created account & logged in.
- Searched to see if the page already exists (& checked they are notable if not).
- Located at least 3 sources to give me information on the person and add references.
- Opened up my Sandbox to edit in (for new pages) or clicked “Edit” (for existing pages).
- Written/improved a lead section making it clear who the person is/was and why they are notable.
- Added more information about their life and work (putting everything in my own words).
- Referenced where I learned that information using the Cite button.
- Made wikilinks.
- Created an infobox (where needed).
- Considered adding a picture.
- Added categories.
- Added external links and/or templates to wiki sister sites (where needed).
- Written an edit summary & pressed save (if it existed already), or clicked the big blue submit button!

