

# A Quick Guide to Wikipedia

## Refugees Edit-a-Thon

Washington DC MLK public library  
Digital Commons  
May 14, 2016

Peter Meyer, Wikimedia DC  
with First Hand Refugee Talks



To get to this event's page: search for WP:Meetup/DC  
to get to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Meetup/DC>  
then click on this event's name

# Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia

- **Freely licensed** without restrictions
- Its content created & maintained by **volunteers**
- **Non-profit educational project**, supported by Wikimedia Foundation (WMF)
- All edits/versions are recorded indefinitely
- “Everything’s in a database.”
- 5 million articles in English
- 250+ languages



The image shows a screenshot of a Wikipedia article page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'article', 'talk', 'edit source', 'edit this page', 'history', 'move', and 'watch'. The 'article' tab is currently selected. Below the navigation bar, the article title 'Labor's Heritage' is displayed in a large, bold font, followed by a link to '[edit source | edit]'. Underneath the title, it says 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. The main body of the article begins with a paragraph: 'Labor's Heritage was a [journal](#) which published articles regarding the [history of the labor movement in the United States](#). The journal published articles which are scholarly in quality but written for more of a mass audience. Articles cover [labor history](#), labor education, labor culture, interviews with current and former labor leaders and activists, the contemporary American [labor movement](#), and news and information about the [National Labor College](#).' On the left side of the page, there is a sidebar with the Wikipedia logo and the text 'WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia'. Below the logo, there is a 'navigation' section with a list of links: 'Main page' and 'Contents'.

A **wiki** is a Web site that:

- is editable from the browser immediately
- remembers its past versions
- has concise links between its own pages

The tabs at the top look a bit different for different people.

From an article, try out this important tab: “**history**”  
That lists past revisions of the article.

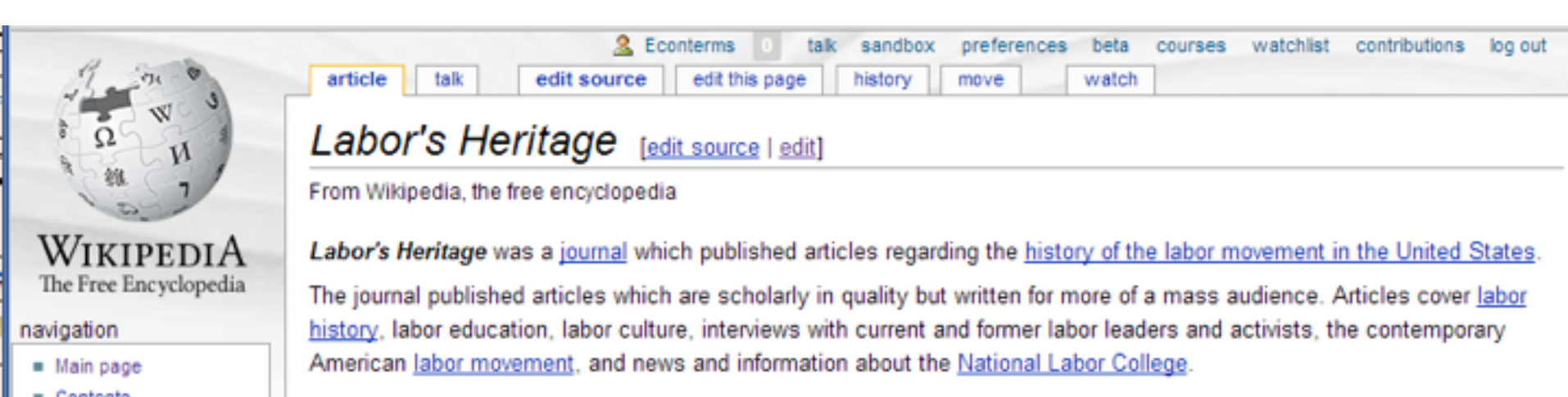
# Articles have histories

Any user can see this history of changes to a wiki page.

Clicking the date shows the page as it existed then

Clicking the username shows their user page

The screenshot shows the 'Revision history' page for the article 'Article of 1907'. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'article', 'talk', 'edit source', 'history', and 'watch'. Below the title, it says 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia' and provides a link to 'View logs for this page'. A 'Browse history' section contains a search form with 'From year (and earlier): 2013', 'From month (and earlier): all', and a 'Tag filter' box, with a 'Go' button. Below the form, there is a list of revisions. Each entry includes a radio button for selection, a link to the previous revision, the date and time, the username, a link to the user's talk page, a link to the user's contributions, the size of the change in bytes, and a list of changes. For example, the first entry is by user 'Tango Panaché' on May 29, 2013, at 15:35, with a change of 51,329 bytes. The second entry is by the same user at 15:34, with a change of 51,329 bytes (+43). Other entries include 'Gilliam', 'Marketdiamond', 'Kilian41', 'Anastrophe', '108.201.220.243', 'Addbot', 'ServiceableVillain', 'Tessedathe', 'Yisbot', 'David.morosan72', 'Martense', 'Edward', 'Edvard', 'Yisbot', 'KAMKAZOW', 'Amsilapay', and 'Tessedathe'.



The screenshot shows the top portion of a Wikipedia article. At the top right, the user 'Econterms' is logged in, with a '0' next to their name. Navigation links include 'talk', 'sandbox', 'preferences', 'beta', 'courses', 'watchlist', 'contributions', and 'log out'. Below these are buttons for 'article', 'talk', 'edit source', 'edit this page', 'history', 'move', and 'watch'. The article title is 'Labor's Heritage' with links for '[edit source | edit]'. Below the title, it says 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. The main text begins with 'Labor's Heritage was a [journal](#) which published articles regarding the [history of the labor movement in the United States](#). The journal published articles which are scholarly in quality but written for more of a mass audience. Articles cover [labor history](#), labor education, labor culture, interviews with current and former labor leaders and activists, the contemporary American [labor movement](#), and news and information about the [National Labor College](#).' On the left side, there is a globe logo with the text 'WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia' and a 'navigation' menu with links to 'Main page' and 'Contents'.

At very top: When I'm logged in, at the top it shows links to these pages (among others):

- my username (Econterms), links to my user page
- my talk page
- a Sandbox (for editing practice)
- a Watchlist (a list of links to pages I've edited)
- and a list of my contributions (edits).

# Anatomy of an article

Lead section, or lede

Notability must be made clear there

Table of contents appears automatically

Infoboxes help people grasp quickly

Images can't be copyright-constrained

Footnotes help people delve into topics

Categories, at the bottom, connect related subjects

The image shows a screenshot of a Wikipedia article for Thomas Moran. Several blue arrows point to specific parts of the page:

- Title:** Points to the article title "Thomas Moran".
- Edit view:** Points to the "Edit" and "View history" links at the top right.
- Infobox:** Points to the information box on the right side, which includes a portrait of Thomas Moran and his biographical details.
- Table of contents:** Points to the "Contents" section on the left side of the article.
- 1st sub-section:** Points to the "Biography" section, which is the first sub-section of the article.
- Related articles:** Points to the "See also" section, which lists other related articles.
- Footnotes:** Points to the "References" section, which lists sources used in the article.

At the bottom of the page, there are "Sources" and "External links" sections. The "Categories" section at the very bottom lists various topics related to the article, such as "1829 births", "1901 deaths", "British historians", "Harvard University alumni", "People educated at Westminster School, London", and "People of the Royal Observer Corps".

# Wikipedia Content Standards

- **Neutral Point of View**
- **Verifiability:** cite reliable sources that can be found
- Don't state speculation, unpublished data, contested claims, or opinions as fact (no “original research” here)
- **Assume good faith** of other editors
- **Avoid conflicts of interest:** edit articles about self, employer, ideology with great caution

<b>Wikipedia policy</b>
<b>Principles</b>
Five pillars
What Wikipedia is not
Ignore all rules
<b>Content standards</b>
Neutral point of view
Verifiability
No original research
Biographies of living persons
Article titles
<b>Working with others</b>
Civility
No personal attacks
Harassment
No legal threats
Consensus
Dispute resolution
<b>More</b>
List of policies
List of guidelines

# Neutral point of view (NPOV)

Wikipedia articles should represent diverse views fairly, proportionately, and in non-judgmental language

The policy is careful and sophisticated. To see more, enter search shortcut “WP:NPOV.” It’s really interesting.



# Who or what merits an article in Wikipedia?

If a person or topic has received significant coverage in reliable sources that are independent of the subject, then it is deemed “notable.”

For more, search for **Wikipedia:Notability**, or type in search shortcut WP:N

Articles should make notability clear at the top.

New editors: please make other edits before creating a new article.

# **We're ready to edit!**

(in a safe place at first)

You can always cancel, without saving,  
or undo a recently saved edit.


# Step 1 - Register a user account

## 1. Click “Create Account”

Your edits will be associated with your username

## 2. Choose a username and password

Each individual (“editor”) should have one account. Sharing an account is not allowed. Don’t create an account with just the name of an organization.



The screenshot shows the Wikipedia 'Create account' page. On the left is a sidebar with the Wikipedia logo and navigation links. The main content area is titled 'Create account' and contains a form with the following fields: 'Username' (with a '(help me choose)' link), 'Password', 'Confirm password', 'Email address (optional)', and a 'Security check' section featuring a CAPTCHA image of the word 'pyxescaped' and a 'Refresh' link. A 'Create your account' button is at the bottom.

Special page

Create account [Log in](#)

### Create account

**Enter your information below.**

Username (help me choose)

Password

Confirm password

Email address (optional)

Security check  
  
[Refresh](#)

Can't see the image? [Request an account](#)

**WIKIPEDIA**  
The Free Encyclopedia

Main page  
Contents  
Featured content  
Current events  
Random article  
Donate to Wikipedia  
Wikimedia Shop

Interaction  
Help  
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Toolbox  
Upload file  
Special pages  
Printable version

Languages

# Do I have to register an account?

**No, but there are advantages to doing so.**

- Signals your membership in the community
- A record of your work builds credibility, confidence, and pride
- More privacy, since anonymous contributors' IP address is recorded
- More editing privileges: to create and rename articles, upload images
- Wikipedia remembers your editing preferences
- You get your own “sandbox” page to practice editing and keep syntax
- More likely to get help from others with your own talk page
- Keeps computer's IP address private

NOTE: There should be a 1:1 ratio between editors and accounts on Wikipedia. Shared accounts are not allowed.

## Step 2 - Create a user page

1. Click the link at the top with your username on it.
2. Write something (like “Hello world”) and *click Show Preview*.
3. Leave a comment under Edit Summary explaining what you did. Now you have a user page!

This user page can be personalized, or not, as you wish.

If you are editing while employed or affiliated with an institution you may wish to post a conflict of interest statement. (Example: [[User:Sarasays]])

# There are two programs for editing

Edit Source	Visual editor
MediaWiki software markup language	What you see is what you get (WYSIWYG)
Type WP:CHEAT in the search box for more information	Type WP:VE/UG in the search box for more information
Relatively simple to learn, especially if you have any experience with HTML	Familiar symbols for formatting, similar to word processing programs
<b>Best for</b> ultimate control and ability to customize the page; working with wiki “templates” {{ }}	<b>Best for</b> making straightforward textual edits, adding links, headings, etc.
<b>Not very good for</b> people who dislike or get confused by markup languages! Also it is easy to lose your place, or make a typo. <i>Always click “Show Preview” before saving!</i>	<b>Not as good for</b> the complex wiki markup, such as “templates” {{ }}

# Can I edit the Wikipedia article about my workplace? My boss? My grandma?

Possibly, but **ONLY** under the right conditions.

“When advancing outside interests is more important to an editor than advancing the aims of Wikipedia, that editor stands in a [conflict of interest](#) (COI).”

Your **#1** priority must be: making a better, more useful encyclopedia article.

# Avoid Conflict of Interest Editing

- Register a unique user account
- Disclose your affiliations (see [sample Col Statement](#))
- Cite authoritative sources
- Don't remove controversies from text
- Recognize that no one person can “own” a Wikipedia article or control its content



# A user's edit history

**User contributions**  
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia  
For Peteforsyth (Talk | block | Block log | Logs | Deleted c

Search for contributions

Show contributions of new accounts only  
 IP address or username:  Namespace:

From year (and earlier):  From month (and earlier):

View (newer 100) (older 10%) (20 | 50 | 100 | 250 | 500)

- 11:41, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) User talk:John Abbe (→Howdy!: r) **(top)** [rollback]
- 11:38, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **m** Talk:Shanghaied in Astoria (moved Talk:Shanghaied In Astoria to Sha
- 11:36, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **m** Shanghaied in Astoria (moved Shanghaied In Astoria to Sha
- 11:36, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **N** Talk:Shanghaied In Astoria (moved Talk:Shanghaied In Ast
- 11:36, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **N** Shanghaied In Astoria (moved Shanghaied In Astoria to Sha
- 11:35, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) Shanghaied In Astoria (moved Shanghaied In Astoria to Sha
- 11:26, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **N** James Kelly (crimp) (redir) **(top)** [rollback]
- 11:25, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) Shanghaied In Astoria (moved Shanghaied In Astoria to Sha
- 11:19, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) Heather Wilson (→Fired U.S. attorney: connect another dot) (
- 11:15, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) Heather Wilson (further clarification)
- 10:53, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **m** Heather Wilson (→Fired U.S. attorney: ref tidying)

**time & date of change**

**link to article's history page**

**compare to previous version**

**m = minor edit, N = new article**

**edit summary (grey text indicates section)**

**(top) = page's most recent edit**

**link to page edited; namespace shown before colon (here, User talk:)**

# Citing Sources



WIKIPEDIA  
The Free Encyclopedia

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Paragraph [↶](#) [↷](#) [A](#) [↻](#) [Cite](#) [☰](#)

## Passenger pigeon [\[edit source\]](#) [\[edit\]](#)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

*For the 1986 Soviet film, see [Wild Pigeon \(film\)](#)*

The **passenger pigeon** or **wild pigeon** (*Ectopis*) is an extinct North American bird. Named after the French word *passager* for "passing b was once the most abundant bird in North America, and possibly the world. It accounted for more than a quarter of all birds in North America.<sup>[3]</sup> The species lived in enormous migratory flocks until the early 20th century, when hunting and habitat destruction led to its demise.<sup>[4]</sup> One flock in 1866 in southern Ontario described as being 1 mi (1.5 km) wide and 300 mi (500 km) long, took 14 hours to pass, and held in excess of 3.5 billion birds. That number, if accurate, would likely represent a large fraction of the entire population at the time.<sup>[5]</sup><sup>[upper-e</sup>

**Website**  
**Book**  
**News**  
**Journal**  
**Basic**  
**Re-use**

# Creating a new article

1. Search around to confirm the desired article doesn't exist under any name.
2. Draft the article stub in your user Sandbox.
3. Search (unsuccessfully) for the exact name of the article you want to create.
4. Click on the resulting redlink to create the article, and copy-and-paste to it from the Sandbox, then Save.

***NOTE: “Submit for review” button is not required for registered editors.***

# Talk pages

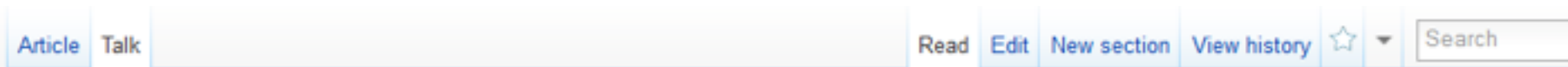
**User talk pages** – These are public pages intended for text messages sent to particular users. A trick to sign one's name is to put ~~~~, which fills out as the username, date, and time when the edit is saved.

## Article Talk Pages

A place for editors to discuss the topic

Give you a feel about whether the article has issues, controversies

If you feel that part of an article has problems or errors, this is a place where you can make suggestions instead of editing it yourself



## Talk:Henry Moore

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This is the **talk page** for discussing improvements to the **Henry Moore** article.

- This is **not a forum** for general discussion of the article's subject.
- **Put new text under old text.** [Click here to start a new topic.](#)
- **Please sign and date your posts** by typing four tildes (~~~~).
- **New to Wikipedia?** Welcome! Ask questions, get answers.

- Be polite, and welcoming to new users
- Assume good faith
- Avoid personal attacks
- For disputes, seek dispute resolution

### Article policies

- No original research
- Neutral point of view
- Verifiability



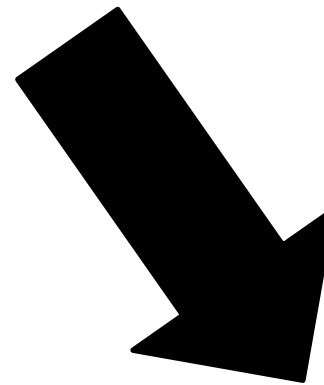
**Henry Moore** is a **featured article**; it (or a previous version of it) has been *identified* as one of the best articles produced by the Wikipedia community. Even so, if you can update or improve it, please do so.

# Institutions and lingo

- **Article:** an encyclopedia entry
- **Editor:** any user who makes an edit
- **Bots:** software tools that edit outside the browser
- **WikiProject:** a set of pages where editors coordinate around a field or topic
  - examples: search for WikiProject:Economics, WP:Fungi, WP:Academic Journals, WP:Architecture, WP:Chemistry
- Local **chapters**, like Wikimedia-DC
  - **Edit-a-thons** – events for editing
- **GLAM** = Galleries, Libraries, Archives, & Museums (partner institutions)
- **Wikimedia Education Foundation** – for class work
- Vast universe of policies, projects, roles, newsletters, subunits, mediation processes, too much to describe

# Bring a positive & collaborative spirit to the community

## Thank others for their work!



- (cur | prev) 19:51, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (10,203 bytes) **(+569)** . . (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 19:46, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (9,634 bytes) **(+171)** . . (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 19:32, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (9,463 bytes) **(-15)** . . (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 19:20, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (9,478 bytes) **(+1)** . . (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 19:12, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (9,477 bytes) **(+9)** . . (→*Fortifying The Downtown Gallery*) (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 19:03, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (9,468 bytes) **(+1,387)** . . (→*Early years*) (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 18:42, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (8,081 bytes) **(+2,039)** . . (→*Later years*) (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 18:29, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (6,042 bytes) **(+1,671)** . . (*created two sections*) (undo | [thank](#))
- (cur | prev) 17:56, March 29, 2013 Sarahobender (talk | contribs) . . (4,371 bytes) **(+842)** . . (→*Selling the Modernists*) (undo | [thank](#))

Send a thank you notification to this user

**This tutorial for was created by Georgina Goodlander (user:bathlander) for the “Wikipedia Edit-a-thon: The Civil War and American Art” event held Feb. 15, 2013.**

**It was adapted from “Introduction to Editing Wikipedia” by User:Sarasays.**

**Peter Meyer (user:econterms) has adapted it further  
*Please feel free to re-use, expand, improve, and share!***

To stay in touch and attend future events, team up with a local chapter like Wikimedia DC:

<http://wikidc.org>

