

Your Online Office



Imagine creating a document, spreadsheet or slide presentation *anywhere, anytime*. Or an ability to begin that work on a desktop computer, continue working on the task on a laptop, and even carry out some edits on a smartphone. Throw in the ability to real-time group edit, and it's priceless. That is what **Drive** can do for you. The best part is, it's free. If you have a Gmail account, then you already have access to Google Drive.

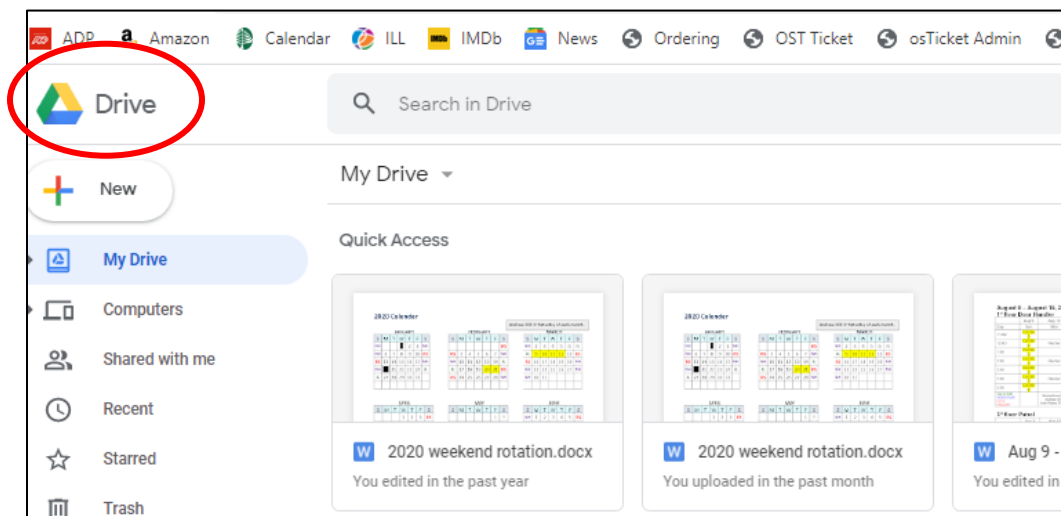
What is **Google Drive**? It is a cloud service from Google that allows you to work anywhere as long as you have an internet connection. It offers online versions of the Microsoft Office programs you are already familiar with—Word, PowerPoint, Excel—with very few differences to the programs themselves. **Google Drive** offers 15 GB of space for free, with more space available for purchase.

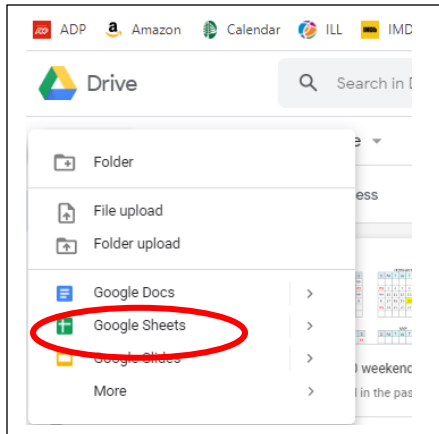
GETTING STARTED

Go to drive.google.com and log into your account. In **My Drive**, you can upload or sync files, or create new ones.

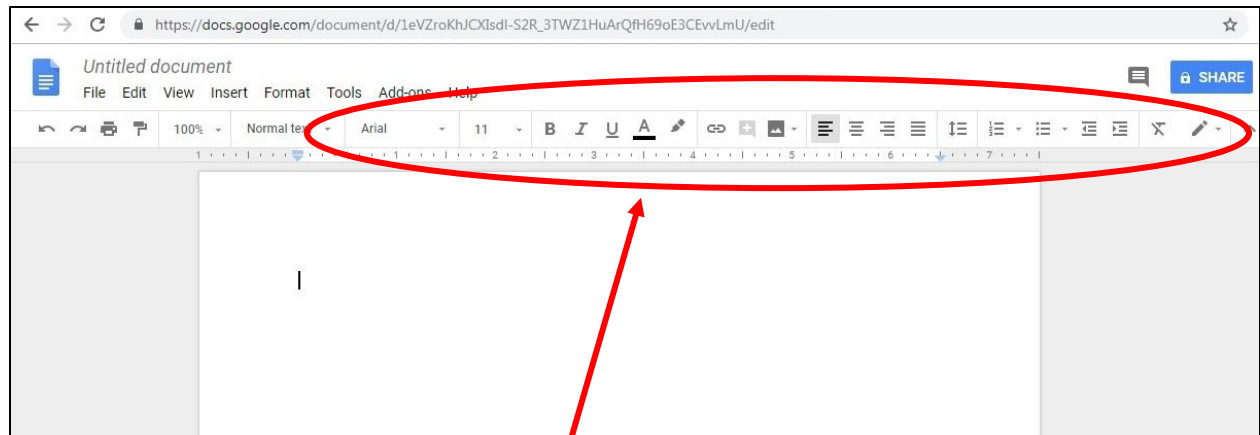
DOCS

To create a new document, click on the plus sign at the top of the screen (or select a template).

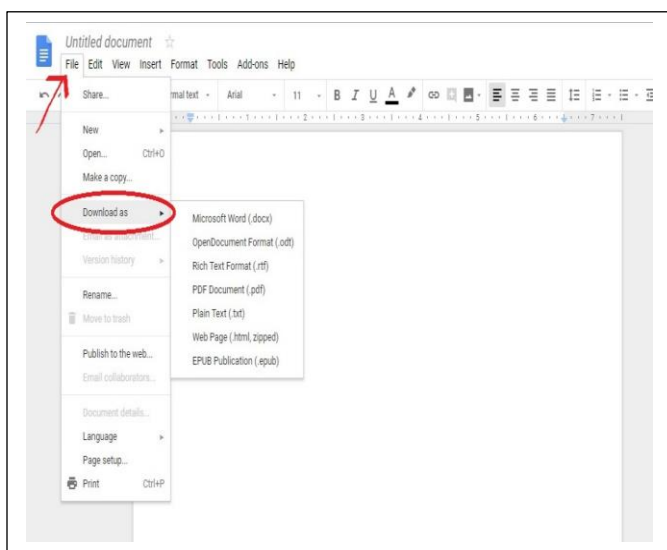




A dropdown menu should appear. Click on **Docs**. This will open a new screen that greatly resembles Microsoft Word. It is here you can create a blank document.



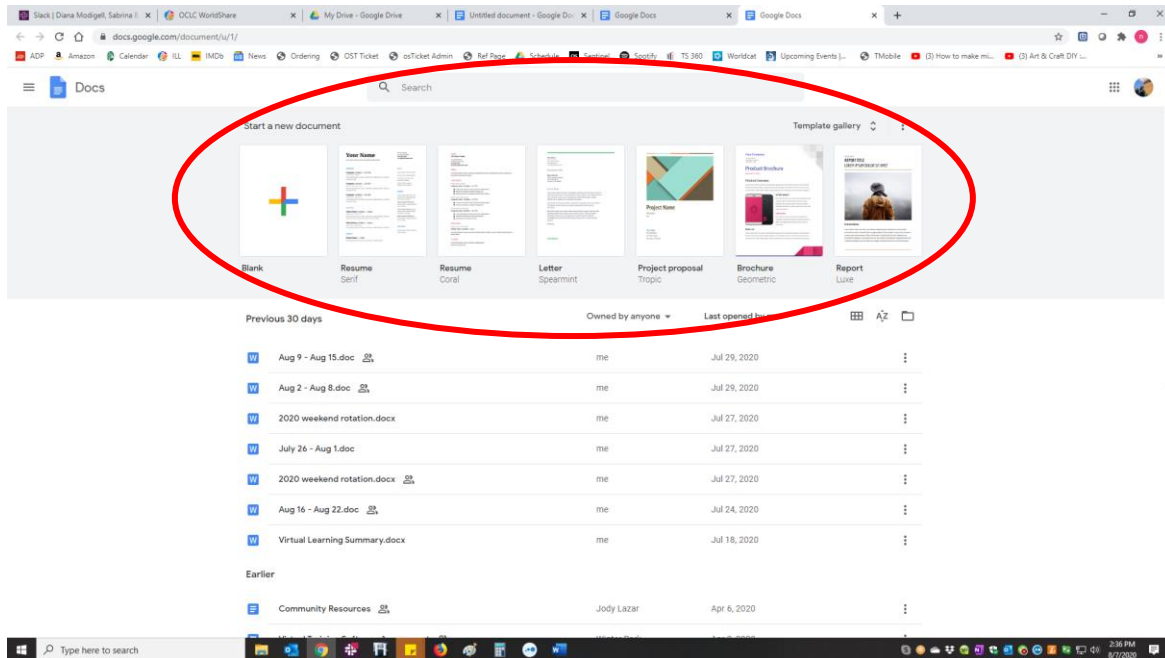
Just like in Microsoft Word, you have a ribbon at the top of the screen that allows you to change the size, color, and font the text. You can edit the text to appear bold, italicized or underlined. You can align your text to the right, left or center of the page.



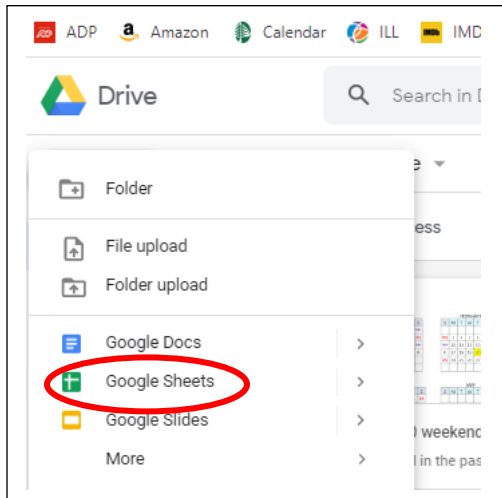
Whenever you type, Google automatically saves your work so do not worry about constantly saving it. You can also download the document to your computer in a variety of formats. *Be aware that if you save your document as a Microsoft Word document, it will be **.docx** rather than **.doc**. A **.docx** file can only be opened on operating systems from 2007 onwards (Windows Vista to the present).* You can use Google Docs to open and edit Microsoft Word documents. You can even download your Google doc as a Word document so it has a standard Word extension (**.docx**).

You can also download your work with the following extensions: ODT, PDF, RTF, HTML, TXT, EPUB.

If you close your Google session and want to re-open that Google Doc, it is as simple as going to <https://docs.google.com>. There you will sign in and then see a screen showing your Google documents. Along the top are templates you can use to make resumes, brochures and more.

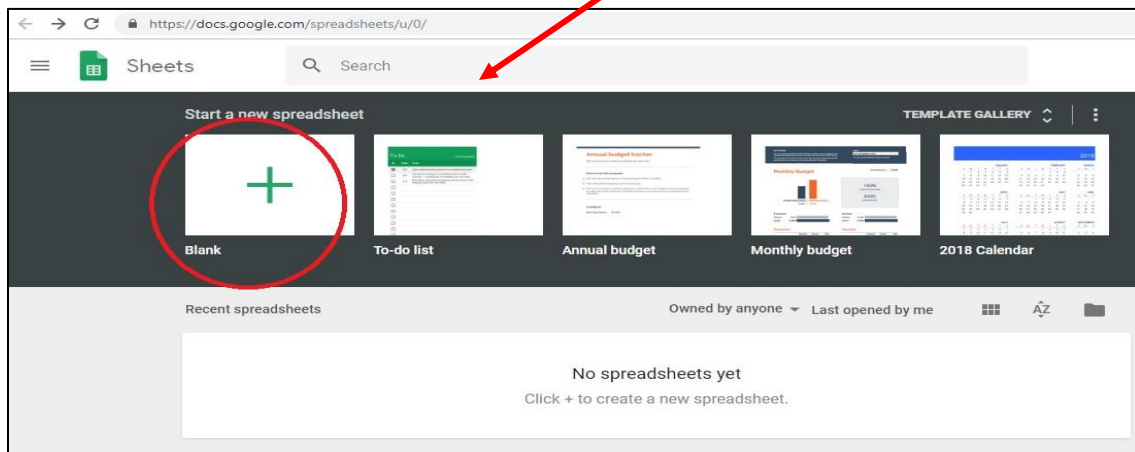


Finally, collaboration is simple. When recipients click the link to your document, you can view their name and their identifying color in-doc live. Watch them edit your doc or open up the Google Docs messenger feature and chat with each other about the changes you want to make. Google tracks those changes (along with who was responsible for them and the time they made them) so contributions are always recognized.

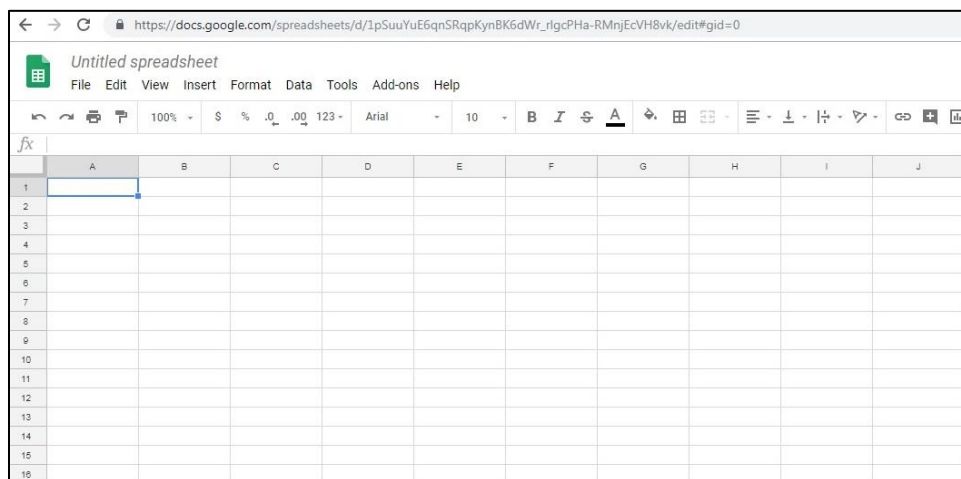


SHEETS

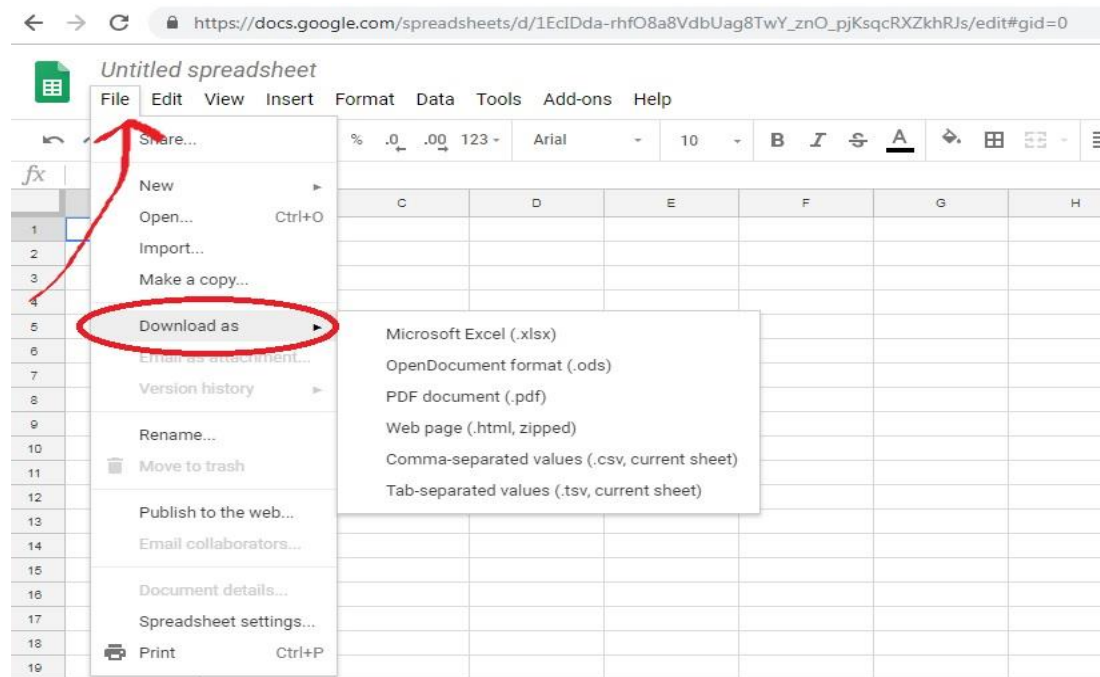
Sheets is Google Drive's version of Microsoft Excel. As with Docs, to create a new spreadsheet, click on the plus sign at the top of the screen and then choose Google Sheets. Another way to open **Sheets** is to visit <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets>. If you choose that method, you will get to a screen that looks just like



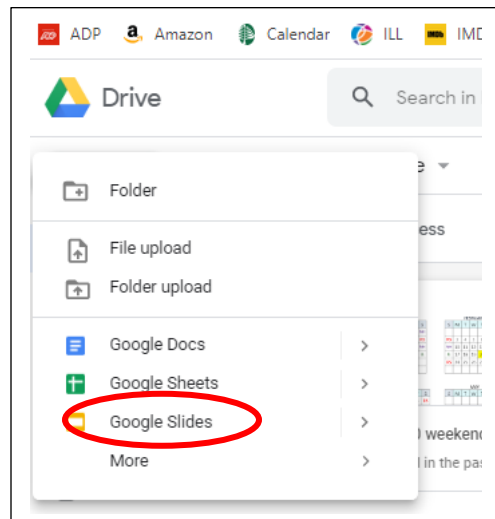
Creating a blank document takes you to a screen which is very similar to Excel. You can enter and edit your data in much the same way.



Again, you have the option to download the spreadsheet to your computer but be aware of the file formats.

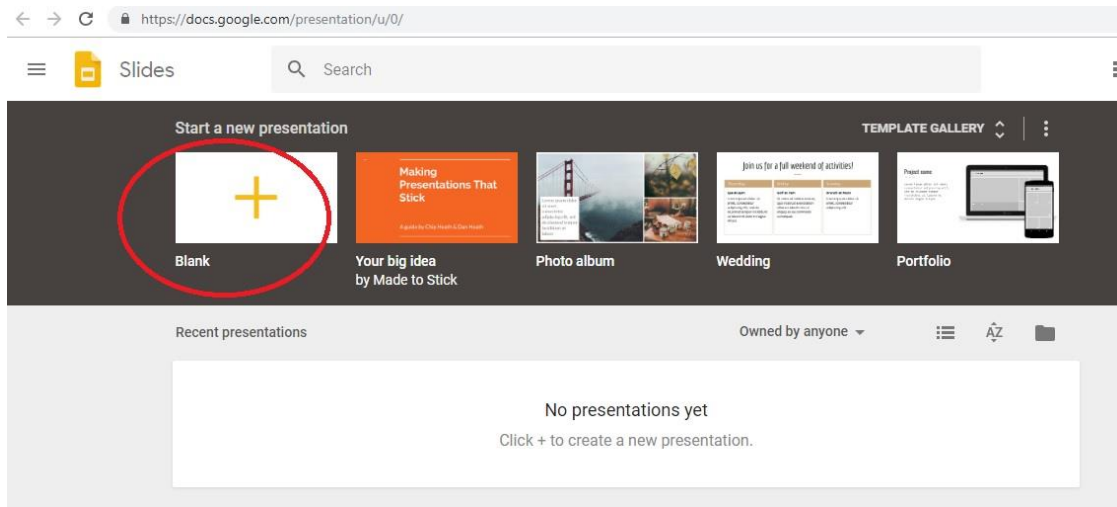


Caveats: Keep in mind that Google Sheets becomes significantly slower if your spreadsheet contains over a thousand rows of data. Also, Importing Excel spreadsheets into Google sheets may lead into unknown formatting errors that require your time to fix.

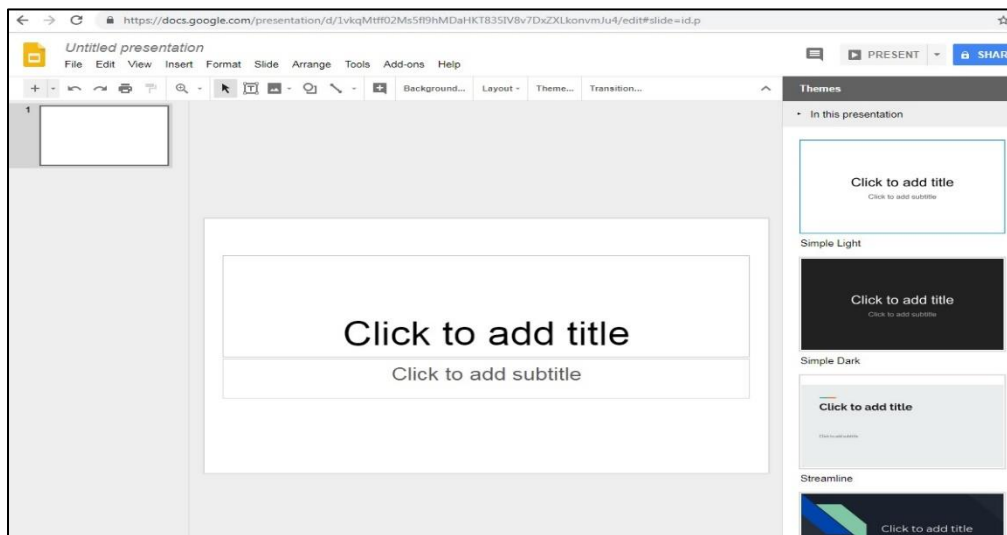


SLIDES

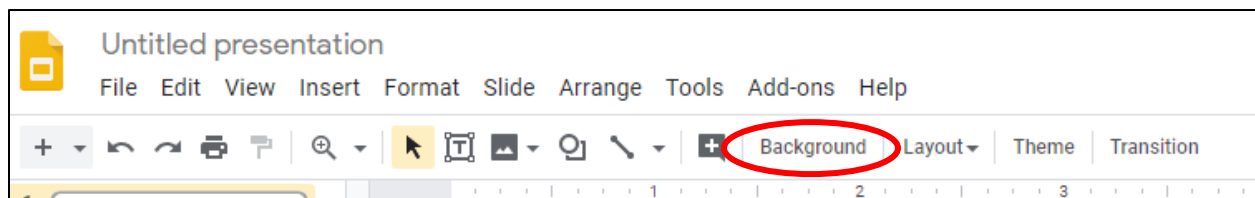
Slides is your portable version of Microsoft PowerPoint. Just like with Docs and Sheets, you can log into your Drive and click on the +New and then choose **Slides**. Another way to open **Slides** is to visit <https://docs.google.com/presentation>. If you choose that method, you will get to a screen that looks just like:

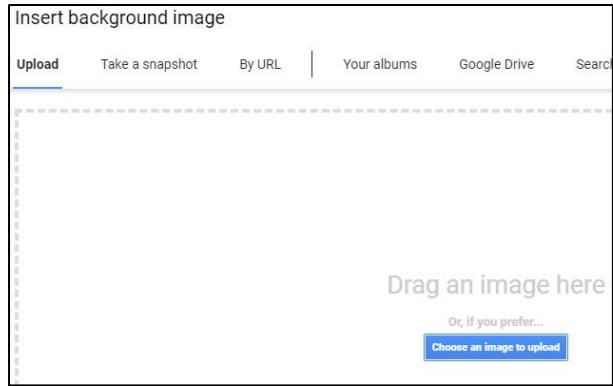
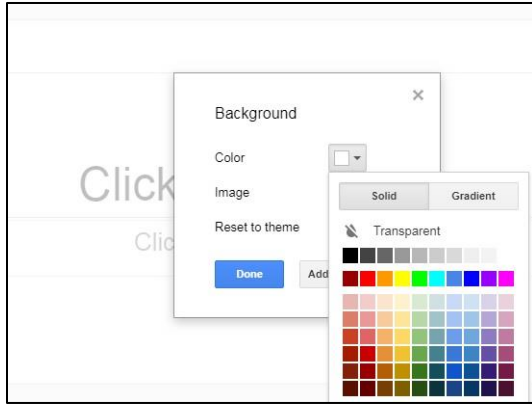


Each option will take you to a screen much like what you are used to when creating a new Microsoft PowerPoint presentation.



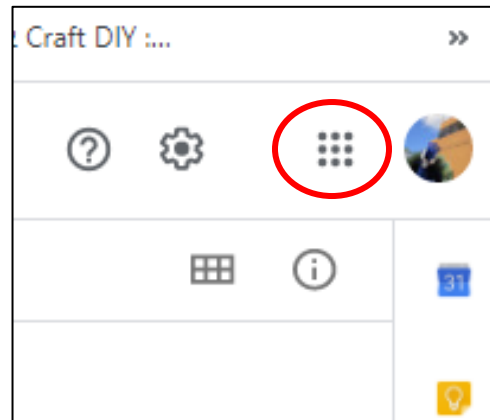
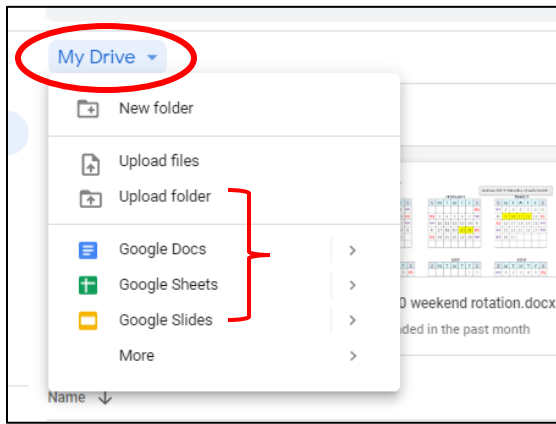
The side bar on the far right displays the themes that are available for your presentation. Or, if you prefer something more personal, you can create your own. Clicking on **background** at the top of the screen allows you to choose a color for your slides or you can use images instead.

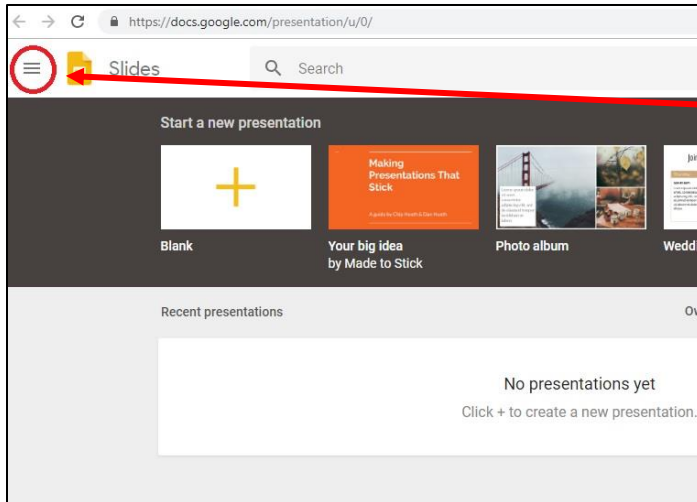




SWITCHING BETWEEN PROGRAMS

There are three methods to switch between **Docs**, **Slides** and **Sheets**. The first one is by clicking on **My Drive** near the top left of the screen and choosing a program. The second is click on the **dots** in the upper right corner.





The third method is, if you are already in a program, click on the **three lines** in the upper left corner.

Syncing, uploading and sharing files is exactly the same on all three—**Docs, Sheets** and **Slides**.

UPLOADING FILES

- You can upload directly to the Google Drive website or move files into the Google Drive desktop file.
- Files can be uploaded individually, or you can upload entire folders at one time (the only web browser to allow this feature is Google Chrome).

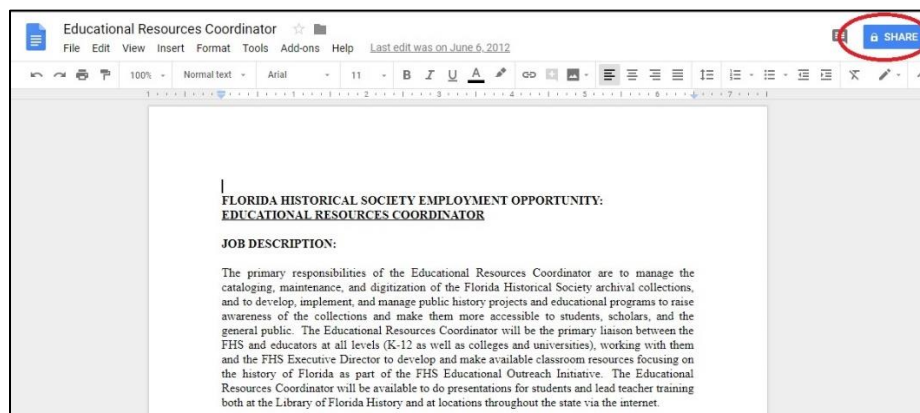
SYNC FILES

If you have installed Google Drive for your Mac/PC, then all Google documents, spreadsheets and presentations that you've created will automatically sync to the Google Drive folder on your computer.

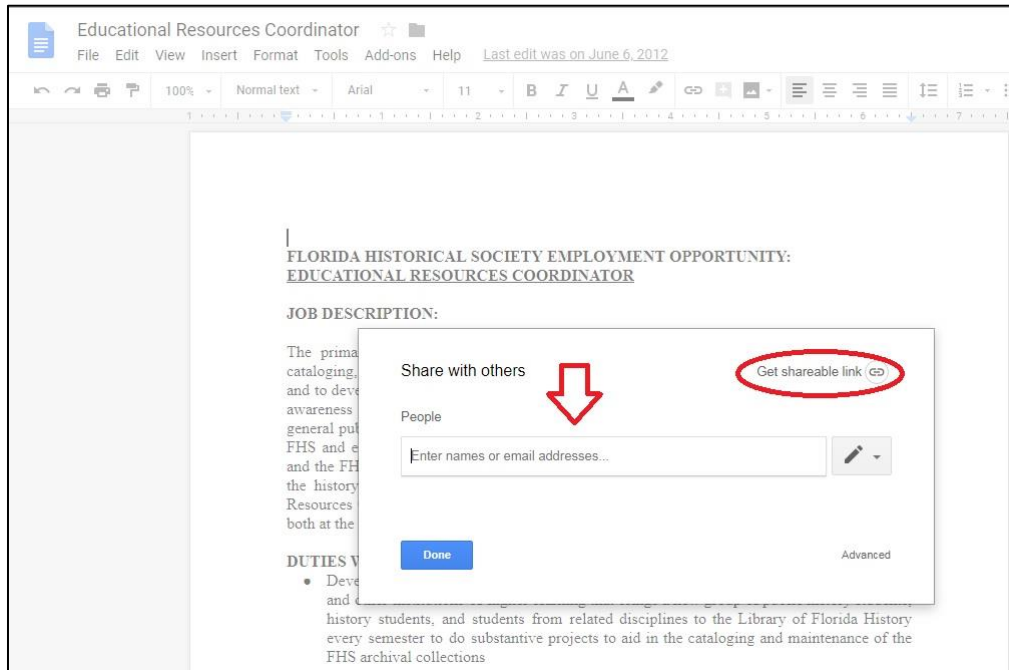
Any file moved to your Google Drive file (on your desktop) will no longer be on your computer. If you want to keep a copy in the Cloud AND on your computer, you must duplicate the file and place only one copy of it in the Google Drive folder.

SHARING FILES

In **Docs, Sheets** or **Slides** click on the file you want to share. Click Share!



You have options: type in your contact's name or email address and share it directly with them or get a shareable link to copy and paste into any message.



If you share with an email address that isn't a Google account, this person will only be able to view the file, not edit it.

THE GOOGLE DRIVE CLIENT

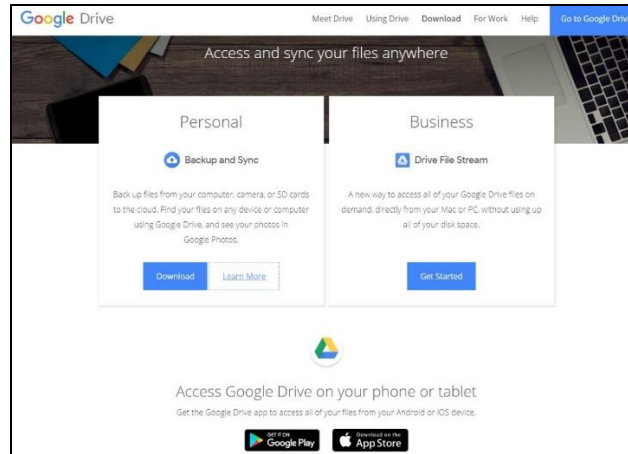
The **Google Drive** client is free software you can install on your computer *but you do not need to install it for your Google Drive to work properly.*

So then why would I install it?

The software consists of separate folders for Docs, Sheets and Slides. You can add files to that folder directly from your computer and they will sync to Google Drive as soon as you log into it online using your computer. You also have the option of installing Docs, Sheets and Slides apps on your phone or tablet. www.google.com/drive/download/

How does that help me?

It can save time if you have a lot of files you want to move into Google's cloud all at once. Provided you're already logged into Google Drive on your computer, all you would then need to do is move the files from one folder into another and then sync your Google Drive. Otherwise, you can upload them manually (see **UPLOADING FILES**).



- Choose whichever option suits you best—the desktop version or one of the mobile versions—and click **download**.
- Agree to their **terms of service** and let the download begin!

GOOGLE DRIVE VERSUS MICROSOFT OFFICE

So how well does Google Drive's version of Office hold up to the real thing? The differences are:

- Fewer font options in **Docs**. Microsoft Word is compatible with many fonts that you can download for free.
- **Slides** offers basic animation and transitions and does not have the special effects repertoire that PowerPoint has (such as fancy transitions, reflections, 3D).
- That being said, **Slides** leaves PowerPoint in the dust when it comes to online collaborating. **Slides** allows seamless collaboration between you and your team members, whereas collaboration is not always possible with PowerPoint (which requires each team member to have nothing older than the 2010 version of the program).
- All of Google Drive's programs save automatically while Microsoft programs do not.

In the end, it is up to you to decide whether Google Drive or Microsoft Office best suits your needs. In terms of software, Office has been around for years, and has tremendous potential and numerous features. However, Google Drive certainly takes the cake when it comes to convenience, collaboration, and price (free). If you are looking for an easy, user-friendly way to work with a group of people or if you simply wish to have access to your files while away from your desk, Google Drive offers a compelling alternative.

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES NOT COVER

Limiting how a file is shared, changing sharing permissions of shared folders and transferring file ownership.

LINKS

- <https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/products/docs/get-started/#!/>
- <https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/products/sheets/get-started/#!/>
- <https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/products/slides/get-started/#!/>
- <https://www.motocms.com/blog/en/microsoft-office-vs-google-docs/>
- <https://www.goskills.com/Microsoft-Office/Resources/Google-Docs-Microsoft-Word-comparison>
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