

A Quick Guide to Wikipedia

AAAS edit-a-thons

AAAS 2016
Exhibit Hall C
February 13-14, 2016

Simons Foundation, Wiki Education
Foundation, and Wikimedia DC

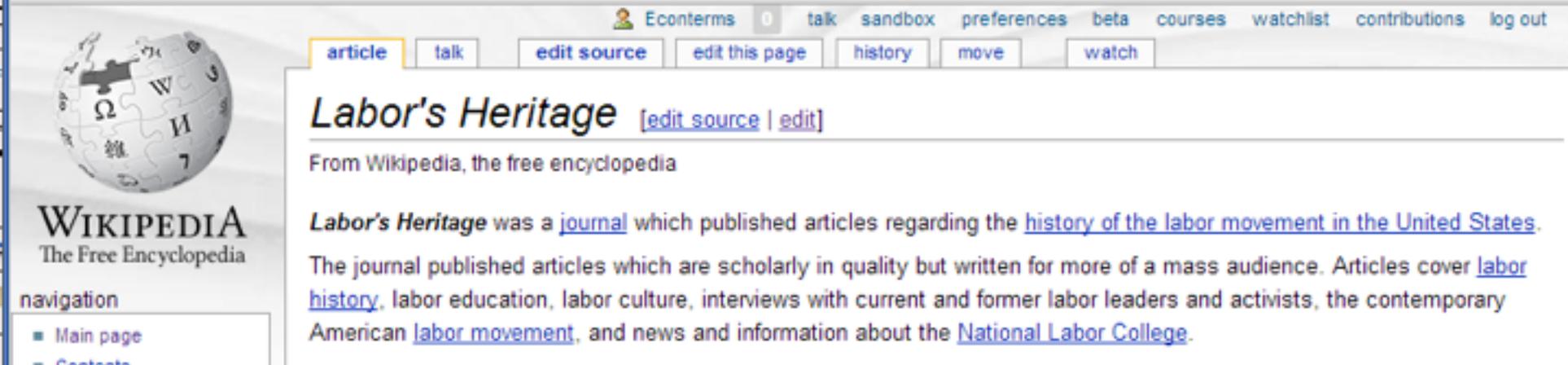
This handout by Wikimedia DC chapter

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 the sentence: '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 links for '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.

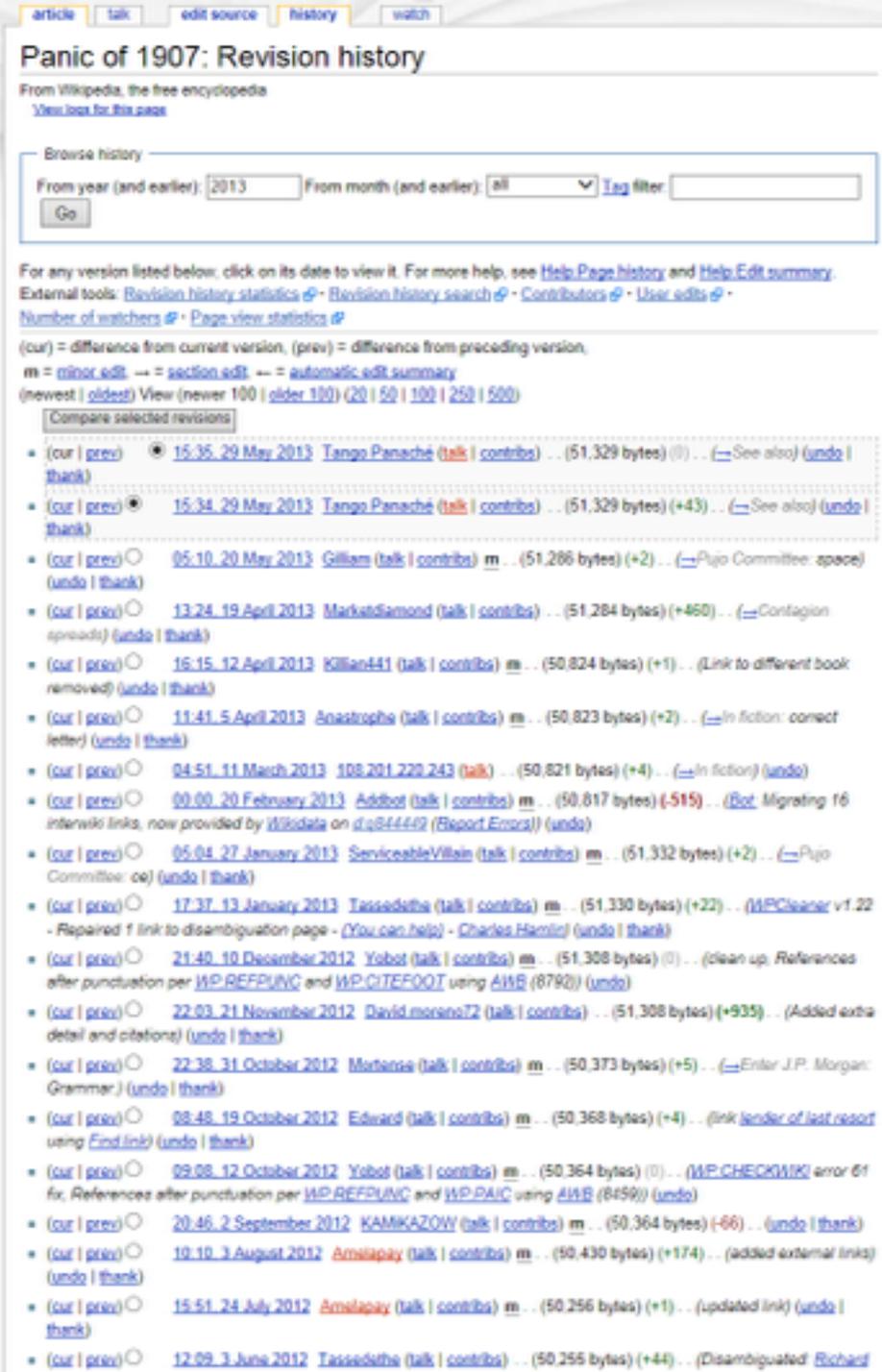
From an article, try out this important tab: “**history**”
That lists past revisions of the article.

Articles have histories

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

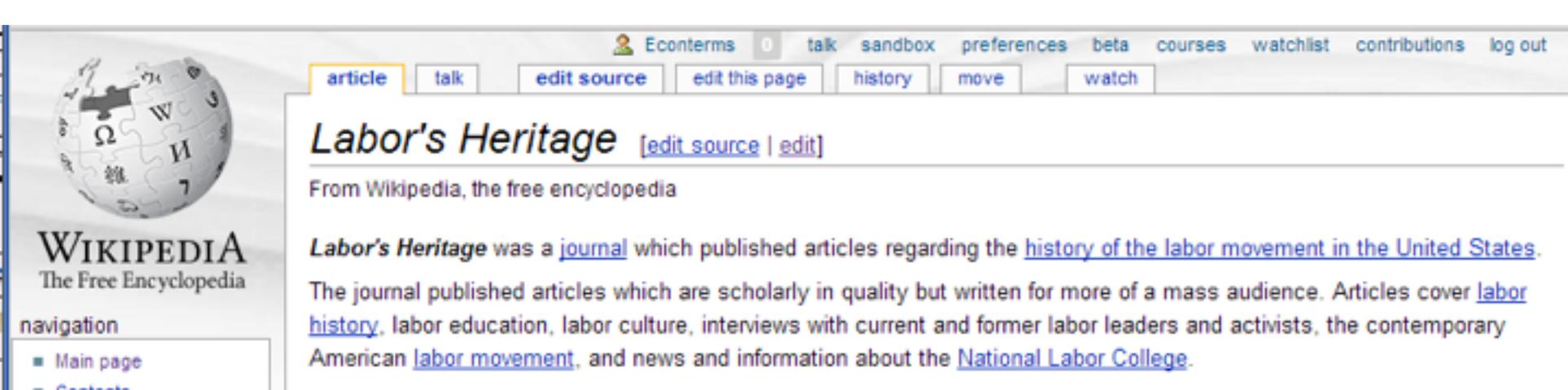
Clicking the date shows the page as it existed then

Clicking the username shows their user page



The screenshot displays the 'Revision history' page for the article 'Article of 1907'. At the top, there are navigation links for 'article', 'talk', 'edit source', 'history', and 'watch'. Below this is the title 'Article of 1907: Revision history' and a subtitle 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. A search bar for 'Browse history' is present, with filters for 'From year (and earlier): 2013', 'From month (and earlier): all', and a 'Tag filter' box. A 'Go' button is located below the search bar. The main content area lists a series of revisions, each with a date, username, and a list of links (cur, prev, talk, contribs, etc.). The current revision is highlighted with a radio button. The list of revisions includes:

- 15:35, 29 May 2013: Tango Panaché (talk | contribs) ... (51,329 bytes) (0) ... (See also) (undo | thank)
- 15:34, 29 May 2013: Tango Panaché (talk | contribs) ... (51,329 bytes) (+43) ... (See also) (undo | thank)
- 05:10, 20 May 2013: Gilliam (talk | contribs) m ... (51,286 bytes) (+2) ... (Pujo Committee: apoc) (undo | thank)
- 13:24, 19 April 2013: Marketsdiamond (talk | contribs) ... (51,284 bytes) (+460) ... (Contagion spreads) (undo | thank)
- 16:15, 12 April 2013: Killian41 (talk | contribs) m ... (50,824 bytes) (+1) ... (Link to different book removed) (undo | thank)
- 11:41, 5 April 2013: Anastrophie (talk | contribs) m ... (50,823 bytes) (+2) ... (In fiction: correct letter) (undo | thank)
- 04:51, 11 March 2013: 108.201.220.243 (talk) ... (50,821 bytes) (+4) ... (In fiction) (undo)
- 00:00, 20 February 2013: Adibot (talk | contribs) m ... (50,817 bytes) (-515) ... (Bot, Migrating 16 interwiki links, now provided by Wikidata on d:q:84449 (Report Errors)) (undo)
- 05:04, 27 January 2013: ServiceableVillain (talk | contribs) m ... (51,332 bytes) (+2) ... (Pujo Committee: ce) (undo | thank)
- 17:37, 13 January 2013: Tassedathe (talk | contribs) m ... (51,330 bytes) (+22) ... (MPCleaner v1.22 - Repaired 1 link to disambiguation page - (You can help) - Charles Hamir) (undo | thank)
- 21:40, 10 December 2012: Ysbot (talk | contribs) m ... (51,308 bytes) (0) ... (clean up, References after punctuation per WP:REFSYNCH and WP:CITEFOOT using AHR (8790)) (undo)
- 22:03, 21 November 2012: David.morales72 (talk | contribs) ... (51,308 bytes) (+935) ... (Added extra detail and citations) (undo | thank)
- 22:38, 31 October 2012: Martense (talk | contribs) m ... (50,373 bytes) (+5) ... (Enter J.P. Morgan: Grammar.) (undo | thank)
- 08:48, 19 October 2012: Edward (talk | contribs) m ... (50,368 bytes) (+4) ... (link tender of last resort using Find link) (undo | thank)
- 09:08, 12 October 2012: Ysbot (talk | contribs) m ... (50,364 bytes) (0) ... (MPCHECKWIKI error 61 fix, References after punctuation per WP:REFSYNCH and WP:DAC using AHR (8458)) (undo)
- 20:46, 2 September 2012: KAMKAZOW (talk | contribs) m ... (50,364 bytes) (-66) ... (undo | thank)
- 10:10, 3 August 2012: Amsilapay (talk | contribs) m ... (50,430 bytes) (+174) ... (added external links) (undo | thank)
- 15:51, 24 July 2012: Amsilapay (talk | contribs) m ... (50,256 bytes) (+1) ... (updated link) (undo | thank)
- 12:09, 3 June 2012: Tassedathe (talk | contribs) ... (50,255 bytes) (+44) ... (Disambiguated Richard



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 icon 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 biographical information box on the right, which includes a portrait of Thomas Moran and his birth and death dates.
- Table of contents:** Points to the "Contents" section on the left side of the article.
- 1st sub-section:** Points to the "Biography" section header.
- Related articles:** Points to the "See also" section.
- Footnotes:** Points to the "References" section.

At the bottom of the page, there are "Sources" and "External links" sections, followed by a "Categories" section with links to "1909 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

Wikipedia policy
Principles
Five pillars
What Wikipedia is not
Ignore all rules
Content standards
Neutral point of view
Verifiability
No original research
Biographies of living persons
Article titles
Working with others
Civility
No personal attacks
Harassment
No legal threats
Consensus
Dispute resolution
More
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](#)

Create account

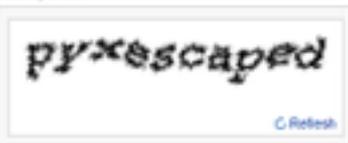
Enter your information below.

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
About Wikipedia
Community portal
Recent changes
Contact page

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]]`)

Note: 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
Best for ultimate control and ability to customize the page; working with wiki “templates” {{ }}	Best for making straightforward textual edits, adding links, headings, etc.
Not very good for 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>	Not as good for 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):

...test | Earliest) 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 Asto
- 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 (section order, tweaks) **(top)** [rollback]
- 11:26, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) **N** James Kelly (crimp) (redir) **(top)** [rollback]
- 11:25, July 6, 2008 (hist) (diff) Shanghaied (→Background: wikilinks)
- 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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Interaction

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Tools

[What links here](#)

Article [Talk](#) [Read](#) [Edit source](#) [Edit beta](#) [View history](#) [★](#) [More](#)

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.^[3] The species lived in enormous migratory flocks until the early 20th century, when hunting and habitat destruction led to its demise.^[4] 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.^[5]^[upper-alpha]

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.

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
 - 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)
- Ambassadors, and Education Foundation – for class work
- Vast universe of policies, projects, roles, newsletters, subunits, mediation processes, too much to describe

Talk pages

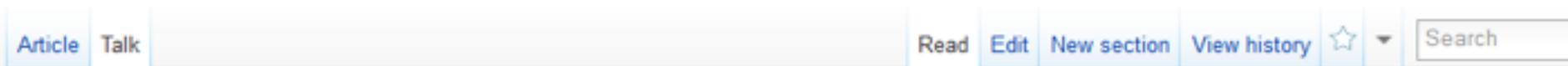
User talk pages – These are public pages intended for text messages sent to particular users. A trick to sign one's name is to put ~~~~, which fills out as the username, date, and time when the edit is saved.

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.

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

Advice for scientists from John Sadowski

Yes, Wikipedia work can help your career as a research scientist. You CAN put Wikipedia articles on your resume. I do, and I've gotten jobs because of it. Wikipedia work is great to put as a Broader Impact on and NSF grant, and other agencies such as the NIH appreciate open science impacts. There's also a long tradition of assigning students to improve Wikipedia articles for a class.

A Wikipedia article is not like a Twitter or Facebook page. It is not a space that you own or control; it is collaboratively curated by many contributors. It is not "your" article so much as an article about you that you have some (limited) input into. In fact, avoid calling it a "page" at all.

Don't copy and paste from sources. Generally the source works are copyrighted and can't be copied verbatim or even with small changes to Wikipedia. Recap what the sources say in your own words.

Wikipedia closely follows what reliable sources say. Wikipedia is not a place to express your opinions; it must be written in a neutral voice and not be based on original research. It's not enough that you think a statement is true due to your own expertise, you need to find a source to back it up.

More advice from John

- Cite secondary sources such as review articles rather than research articles where possible.*** If something has been cited in a review, that's an indication that it's notable enough to be included in the article. We want to avoid Wikipedia articles being filled with descriptions of random research articles that haven't been shown to be notable. "Perspectives" and "news and views" articles in scientific journals are also wonderful sources for Wikipedia since they are third-party publications that put a research article in context. I have further guidance about this in [User:Antony-22/Citing academic sources](#).
- Citations are used only to verify statements in the text.*** This is different than the norm in academic papers, where often you'll see a single sentence with many references for the purpose of giving examples and generating reverse citations. In Wikipedia, the text itself should stand alone to let the reader learn something even if they never read the cited source, and should cite the minimum number of references needed to verify that text.
- Avoid writing about yourself, your own research, your company, or your company's products.*** Don't use Wikipedia for self-promotion, and follow Wikipedia's conflict of interest guidelines. (See [Wikipedia:Conflict of interest](#) and [Wikipedia:Best practices for editors with close associations](#).)
- You can contribute images, too.*** In general, academic IP agreements only cover patent and software copyright, so individual researchers retain copyright in any images they produce as part of their research, as long as they haven't been published in a journal that requires transfer of copyright to them. So if you have any, say, microscope images that you're not planning to publish, you can upload them to Wikimedia Commons. In addition, you can upload images from journals such as PLOS that are available under most Creative Commons licenses.

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 in the D.C. area visit a local chapter like Wikimedia DC:
<http://wikidc.org>

