Wikipedia

Correcting or improving an article for the first time

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Table of Contents

1. A wikipedia edit- the three parts

A wikipedia edit has three parts

- **Writing an interesting fact** (the text)

- **Saying where that fact can be found** (a reference)

- **Leaving an edit summary** to tell your co-writers what you have just done (edit summary)

2. Welcome to Wikipedia

Wikipedia is the product- **Wikimedia** is the organisation/legal entity-**Mediawiki** is the software.

A wikipedia article can be as simple as you like (a stub), or a major piece of referenced writing. You are probably looking to improve the quality of an existing article: while you can just pick up a mobile phone and press the edit button you are seriously advised to start by setting up an identity, and edit a bit on your new user page to get the measure of the syntax, and to set up some helpful links. Each user has a **talk page**, where lively discussions take place- and error messages are posted.

Have a look at mine.

- **[[User talk:ClemRutter]]**

Each article page has its own talk page

- **[[High Force]]**   **[[Talk:High Force]]**

Each page has a **page history** displaying, the edit summaries . The page can be added to you personal **watch list** by clicking the star icon above the editor**.**

Every edit is monitored to some extent- by bots and other users. There are five million articles on English Wikipedia and of course not all of them are of the same quality. We instinctively can recognise a good article and rarely find an article that we couldn't improve.

Every article is eventually rated for quality- there are published checklists. The Scale goes :

```
• FA    Featured articles
• GA    Good articles
• B
• C
• Start
• Stub
• Unclassified
```

3. Registering- the first activity

Wikipedia is just another web application, so registering and logging on is similar to all other sites.

Choose a user name- try to be a bit serious here. If you want to remain anonymous- and have no other ideas.-try a street name followed by a favourite bus number. Passwords don't need to be too secure- there's no money involved here.

Done it? You are now a Wikipedian.

Log on, look at the screen.

Look at the top- there is your name, - two icons and seven options. These tabs are relevant to you.
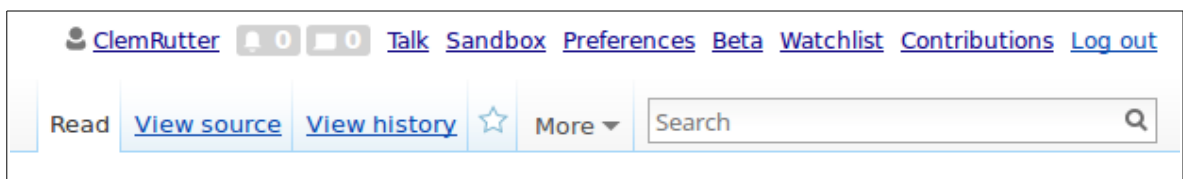

```
Your name                your user page
Icon- notification icon
Icon- you have a message on your talk page icon
Your talk page           this is where you get to talk about problems
Your sandbox             this is where you build up yout text
Your preferences         The defaults are usually fine- but do change a couple in
                         the editor section
Beta                     New facilities that you help to trial
Watchlist                My home page- part of the monitoring system
Contributions            Gives links back to pages you have edited- a real
                         shortcut
Log-out
```

Underneath are the tabs relevant to this page. The main page is a read only page, here is a normal page
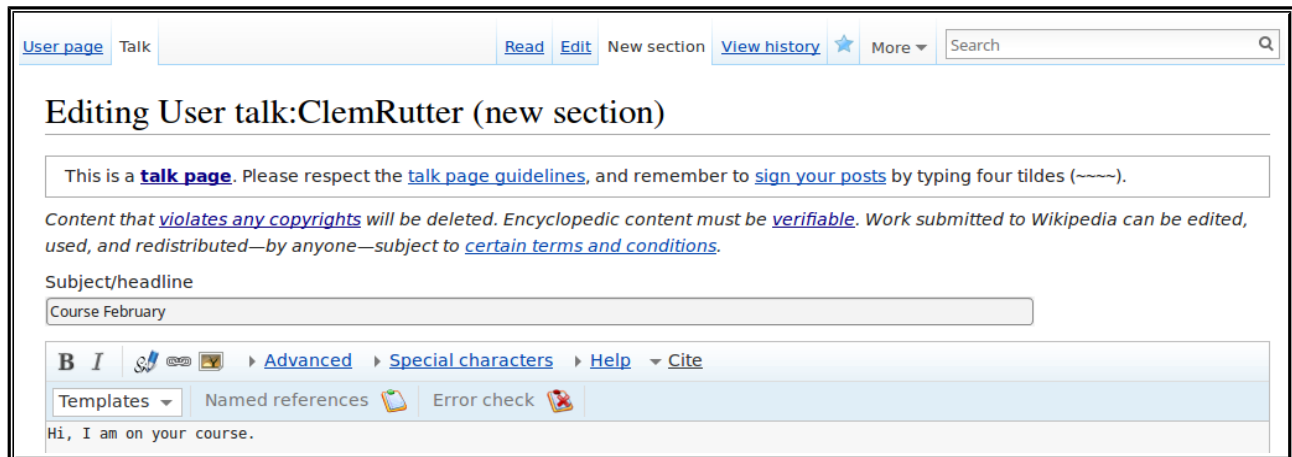

The tabs relevant to the page.

```
Articles      (selected)
Talk

Read          (selected)
Edit source
View history
Book mark star      This adds this page to your watch list
More                Move page and Google translate on
Search box.         Directly type in name of target article.
```

4. Talk to me- the second activity:

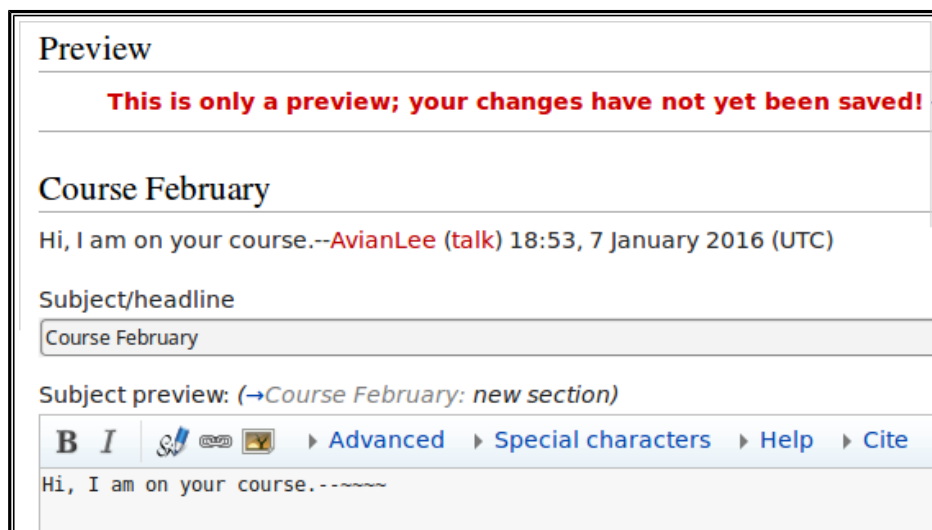On this page you get to make a simple edit, and develop the good habit of sharing your thoughts with other users.

Type into the search box:- User talk:ClemRutter. Select new section and write me a message.

At this point I won't have a clue who has written it, so click on the pencil and a little wikicode is added. Yes, four tildes.
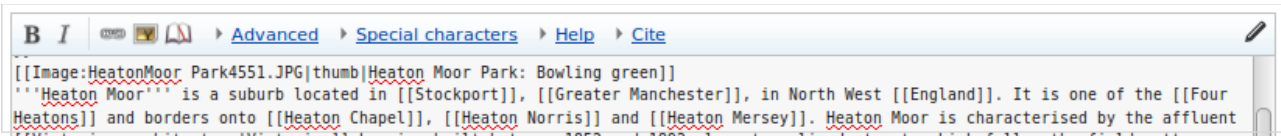
Preview it (down at the bottom) then save it. I now have your user name so I can write back
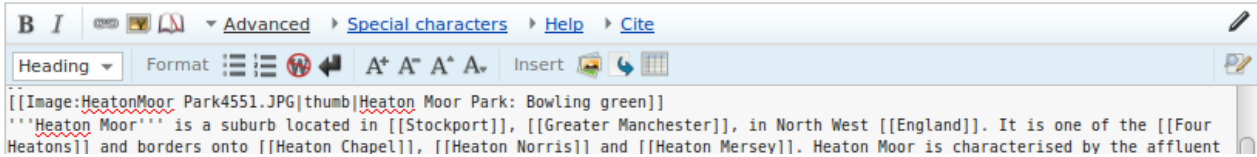
The editor-what it will do

On this page we investigate all the extra things the editor can do to make life easier.

There are four tabs at the top of the editor- with none selected-we have a simple edit bar

The first gives us some extra controls- a bit superfluous really. The one on the right can be useful.
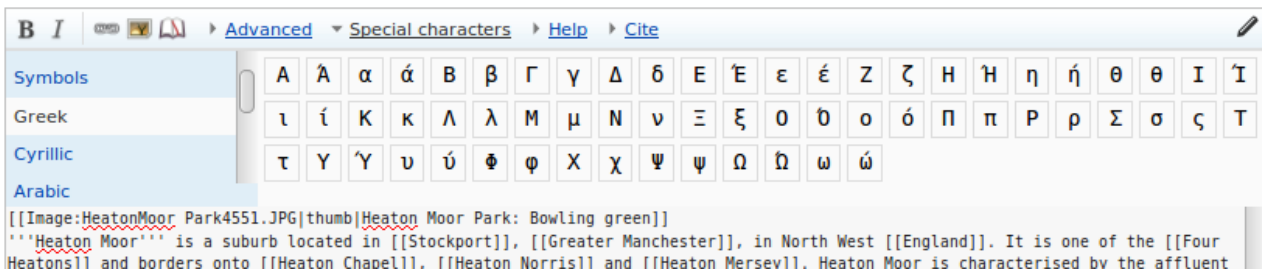
The **Special characters** come in handy as does the **Help crib sheet** below.
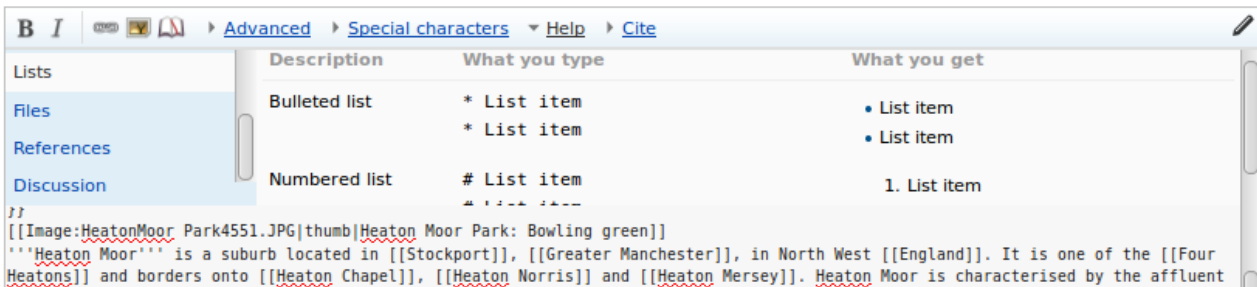
The one that is essential is the **Cite tab.** We use the cite templates on every edit.
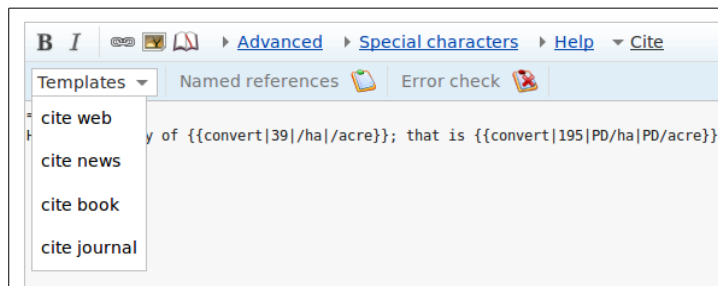
Finally you can set another toolbar under the edit window. Goto **Preferences>Gadgets>** section editing- check **CharInsert**. In certain advanced articles it can be very helpful.

5. Preparing your user page- the third activity:

Your user page is yours. Editing it can be an exercise in creativity. However, to start with- editing it will familiarise yourself with common structures, and leave a pageful of useful links to help pages, policies and a manual of style.
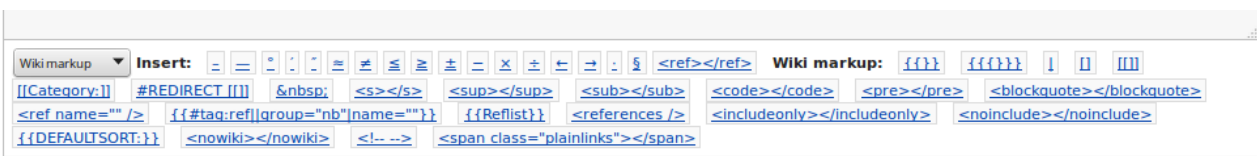
Click on your name at the top of the page- click on edit (open the editor)- type this,

```
My name is XXXXXX, I live in South Lancashire. I am new to wikipedia and am
following a booklet by [[User:ClemRutter]] at XXXXXX. My interests are in the
field of XXXXXXX, I hope today to start an article on YYYYYY.
```

In the edit summary write:

```
Starting a new page introducing myself.
```

Click preview, and then click save. Quite simply this will tell other Wikipedians that you are are a serious new contributor. As this is a user page so you don't need to add a reference!

Adding to the user page

We are now adding useful reference material. Click on your user name- click on edit- type this,

```
{{guideline list}}
{{style}}
```

Click Preview, and then click save. You have copied in (transcluded) a list of useful links.

Click again on your user name- click on edit- type this,

```
[[User:XXXXXX]]
[[User talk:XXXXXX]]
[[User:XXXXXX/Sandbox]]
[[Special:Contributions/XXXXXXXX]]
```

Click preview,.it is all bunched up, try adding an extra line between them and they will align, preview and then try the three changes below. Previewing each time

```
:[[User:XXXXXX]]
:[[User talk:XXXXXX]]
```

This shows you how to indent the line. The next gives you bullet points

```
*[[User:XXXXXX/Sandbox]]
*[[Special:Contributions/XXXXXXXX]]
```

This important as it introduces the |(pipe) character. The bit before the pipe gives us the link address and the bit after the pipe is what the reader sees.

```
*[[User:XXXXXX|This page]]
*[[User talk:XXXXXX|My talk page]]
*[[User:XXXXXX/Sandbox|My sandbox]]
*[[Special:Contributions/XXXXXX|My contributions]]
```

In the edit summary write- `adding links`, preview and save. We now have a useful user page with links to important pages that we will often use.
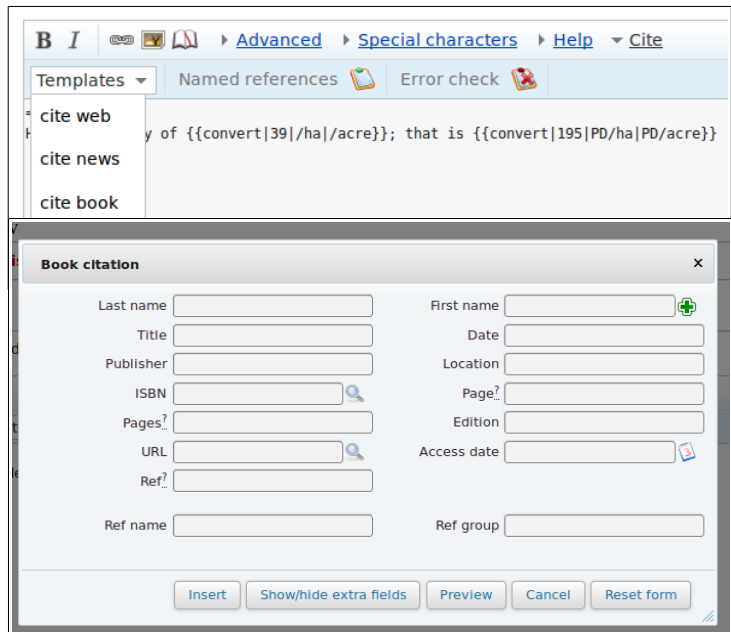
6. Going live- improving the target article

By each section, there are two links- [Edit] and [Edit source]. Click on **[Edit source]**

Adding a simple reference

We need a reference for each paragraph. At the top or the editor there is a link '**cite**' which opens a new bar- the '**refBar**'

Click on **Templates** and select book. Just fill in the boxes- if you can fill in **ISBN** first you save yourself a lot of typing. Insert and preview- if it works great, if not, get someone else to fix it.
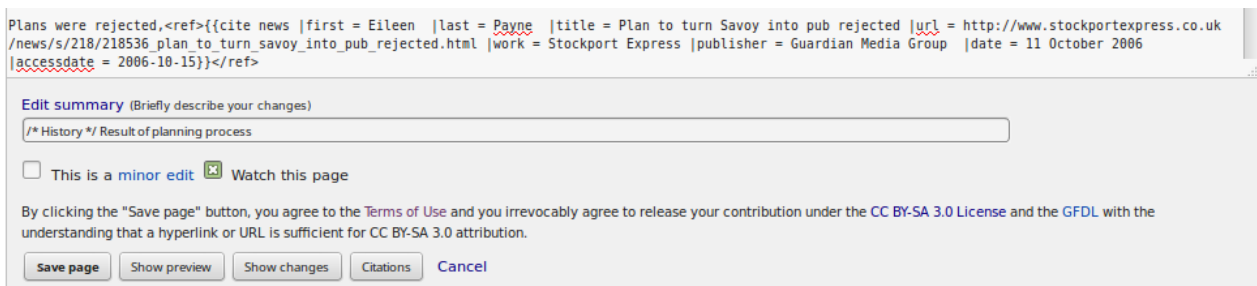
- You can leave most boxes blank

- There are more fields that you might want to use Show/hide extra fields

- Give the reference a short name- this becomes a marker. *(Example:PER2011)*

- The next time you use the same reference- you use the abbreviated reference **<ref name=PER2011/>**

Adding simple text or correcting the English.

The process is simple, you **open the editor**, **make the changes**, **add the references** and give a short **edit summary**.

Which facts to include

Wikipedia is an encyclopedia so all the text should be written in an encyclopedic style. We write from a **neutral point of view** [[WP:NPOV]]

We don't accept any cut& pasted text – **we don't violate copyright** or plagiarise [[WP:COPYVIO]]

All facts should be **notable and referenced from verifiable secondary sources**. The Guardian, Times, and Independant are reliable, as are the features in most local newspapers. Blogspots are not accepted- unpublished dissertations are not accepted unless they are deposited in a notable library. Interpretative panels in museums do get by. [[WP:NOTABLE]]

We **don't publish our own work**. [[WP:OR]] The source paper where a scientific discover is announced is a primary source so not accepted, a professional journal reporting that paper is a secondary source so is accepted. Foreign language text may be accepted. We don't repeat opinion, but can accept a fully cited quote expressing that opinion.

We don't edit is we have a **conflict of interest** [[WP:COI]], if we are not sure we declare it on the talk page and ask for help. We **don't try to push products** or companies. [[WP:SPAM]].

Common sense really

Disputed facts

Other editors may disagree and change it back. Fine. Persist, be bold but explain your reason in the edit summary. When it gets a bit messy, it is time to start a discussion on the talkpage. If you wish me to see the discussion **{{ping|ClemRutter}}**- and I will be notified.

Putting in links

Wiki links are made by putting a word in square brackets. Links are good- overlinking every common word is bad. Think of the reader- what links may they need. Go through the text converting words to **[[words]]** or to **[[an article name|what you want it to say]]**. I check first whether the article exists by typing the name in the search box.

Flagging problems

{{cn}} is the code meaning citation needed.

If you find text that has been copied from another site (and not the other way round) delete it and put **copyvio** in the edit summary.

Forensic work

It is always good to look at the **Page History,** the **Talk page** and **What links here** found on the left sidebar. It helps to see other editors views.

7. Look at similar articles

Every article has different headings we can be very flexible. **[[User:Moonraker]]** has a very useful user page:with lots of links to pages he has created on every type of subject. Click and have a look how he did it.

A look at the page structure.

A normal biography page will contain:

```
<!-- A summary called the lede or lead →-->
==History==
===Early life===
===Working life===
===Legacy===
==Works==
==Exhibitions==
==See also==
==References==
;Footnotes
{{notelist}}
;Notes
{{reflist}}
;Bibliography
==External links==
[[Category:Artists from Greater Manchester]]
[[Category:Articles written at the XXXXX editathon]]
```
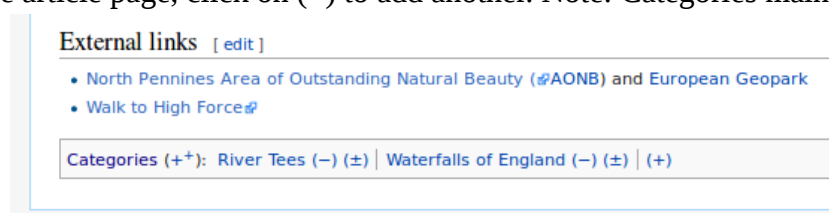
But we can start with almost no sections

```
Put in what you know- along with a reference to show where you can see that fact.

==See also==
==References==
```

Sometimes you will wish to rescue an article with no sections- in effect all the text is in the lead. The lead is meant to be a simple summary of the article usually under 4 paragraphs long. The lead will be sufficient for other users (ie the BBC) to do a quick 'copy' when a catastrophe occurs. So when starting on a big improvement- write a lead sentence, then put the rest of the text in a section which you can call **==Context==**. Under this section you can start to rewrite the article, with the headings suggested.

A look at categories

Choose one from a similar article. Cut and paste it under **==External links==** or find the other categories on the article page, click on (+) to add another. Note: Categories mainly use the plural.

A look at inserting an image

First find your image, and embed it in the page with **[[File:XXXX.jpg|thumb|W**onderful caption**]]**. Try to avoid telling it where to go, and its preferred size,[[File:XXXX.jpg|thumb|left|360px|caption]].

A look at the coord and convert templates

coords that converts a decimal or DMS values to the correct string either **inline** or in the **title**. These provide links to Google Maps and Open Street map- we see it in the illustration below, or type **{{t|coord}}**, preview and hit the link. This brings up the documentation, it works for all templates

convert that will convert any unit to its metric equivalent (displaying both). Type **{{t|convert}}**, preview and hit the link.
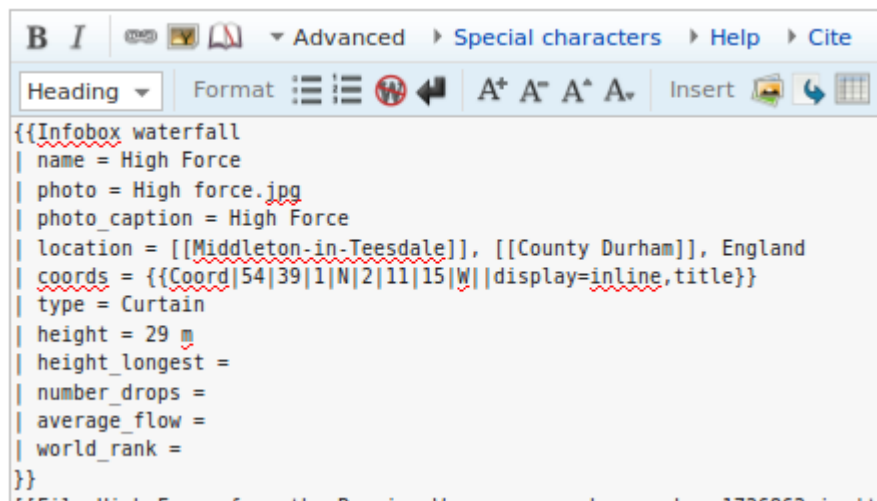
This shows the Waterfall infobox, the format and insert buttons and the coords template.

A look at infoboxes

The infobox is the pretty summary box at the top of most articles. Cut and paste from a similar article, and change the details. The **[[High Force]]** article uses **{{Infobox waterfall|.....}}** as in the diagram. See **{{t| Infobox waterfall}}** for full documentation.

A look at navboxes

This is another template- here it is **{{Disability artists}}.** Add that template tag in the ==External links==, and you will see the box shown. Click **(E)** to edit it and add in another article.

This booklet was produced for remote learners

wishing to join

the Wikimedia Community

Conceived

at

RasberryPi community event

on 3^h March 2016.

A useful user page: `[[User:Moonraker]]` with lots of links