HELP MANUAL – First Steps working with a wiki

Further Trainings and Information

<u>Further step-by-step information can be found in the energypedia help section:</u>
help.energypedia.info.

Please contact us if you need any further assistance or trainings. We can also offer trainings in "WikiGardening", "User Management", "Community Management" and "Quality Management".

Contact

Energypedia UG (haftungsbeschränkt)
Ludwig-Erhard-Str. 30-34, 65760 Eschborn, Germany
E: info@energypedia.info, T: +49 6196 2029722

What is a Wiki

A wiki is a page or collection of web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, using a simplified markup language. At its core, a wiki is a simple online database in which each page is easily edited by any user with a Web browser; no special software or third party webmaster is needed to post content. It also allows for linking among any number of pages. The collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia is one of the best-known wikis. Another successful example of a wiki opened for the public is www.energpedia.info. Energypedia.info is a renewable energy wiki in the context of development cooperation

Wikis are often used to create collaborative websites and to power community websites. The pages within a wiki can and should be linked to other relevant pages within and/or outside the wiki. Wikis are used in business to provide intranet and knowledge management systems. Ward Cunningham, the developer of the first wiki software, WikiWikiWeb, originally described it as "the simplest online database that could possibly work". He was looking for the simplest possible tool to help a group of people share information they were using in a collaborative project.

How a wiki works

The content is always live, that means once a change is done and saved others can see it immediately. Each article contains a discussion page where editors and readers can talk about the document. By looking at the history of a page, users can track changes and compare the versions of a document. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for collaborative writing.

A wiki's versioning capability can show the evolution of thought processes as contributors interact with content, helping us to focus more on content and less on who is contributing what. This can be a big culture change. It takes a while to get used to the idea that someone else can change what you wrote. But that also means they can improve it! So it is a bit like thinking together. Obsolete material needs to be removed.

Benefits of working with a wiki

The intention is to replace long monolithic documents by small -linked- information units. This makes it easier to navigate through large documents and find wanted information and further information.

Editing an article within a wiki is easy. This allows the wiki-users to keep information up to date, to correct articles published by other users or to add more relevant information to it by adding text or linking to another relevant article, or explanation.

If a page with specific content is linked to several pages, and the specific content is one that changes over time, the information must only be updated in one single document instead of all documents where it occurs. More reasons for using wikis arise from the needs of knowledge- and project- management.

Besides storing and providing information a wiki can be used as a tool for knowledge generation and allocation as well as a project planning tool. It also makes it possible for external personnel to access this information and see how the project proceeds.
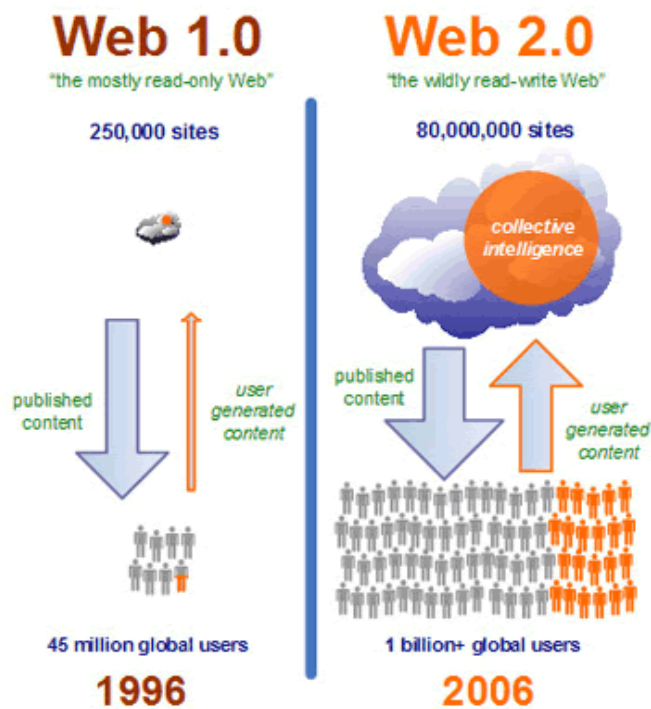
Very First steps

- Request an account for you wiki. Ask the Manager of your wiki for the access process.
- Take a look around the wiki to familiarize you with it.
- Your first article: You can use the energypedia sandbox for your first attempts at editing and to check out all the functions of the wiki editor. (www.help.energypedia.info/wiki/Sandbox)
- Don't be shy! Your article doesn't need to be perfect from the beginning.
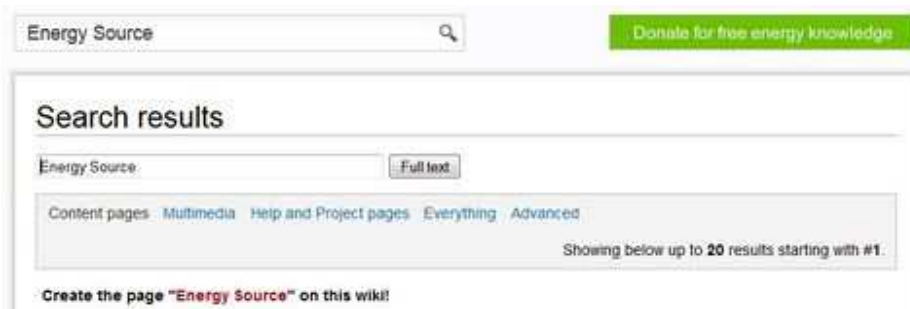
Create Articles

When you are planning on creating a new article please spend some time thinking about the title. It needs to be short and straight to the point.

1. To create new articles enter the preferred title in the "Search Box" and hit "enter".

2. If it does not exist yet, the title will appear in red font. Click on it to create the page.
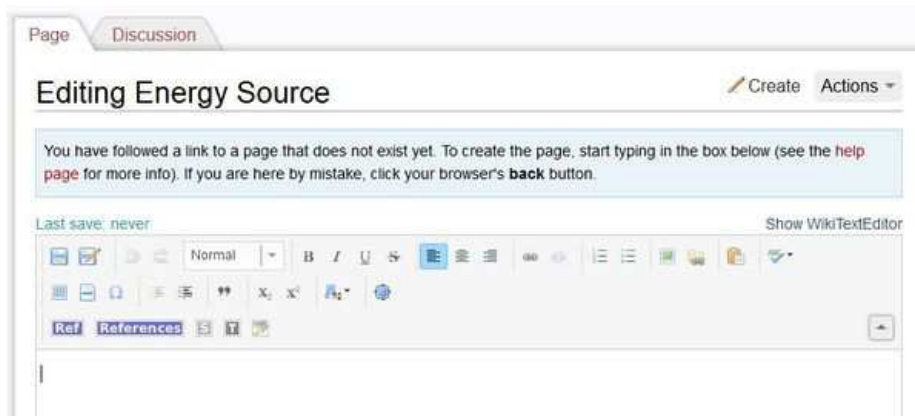
3. You will be lead to the editor of your new article. Enter your text and be sure to click the safe button when finished.

The Editor

expand or collapse the editor

spell check

spice up your article by inserting images or files you uploaded before

structure the text with bullet points and enumerations

set links to internal or external internet pages

format your text

color

subscript/ superscript

block quote

decrease/ increase indent

save & continue writing or exit directly

insert a table

cite your sources by including single footnotes ("Ref")
AND

create the article bibliography by inserting the "References" tag at the end of a page
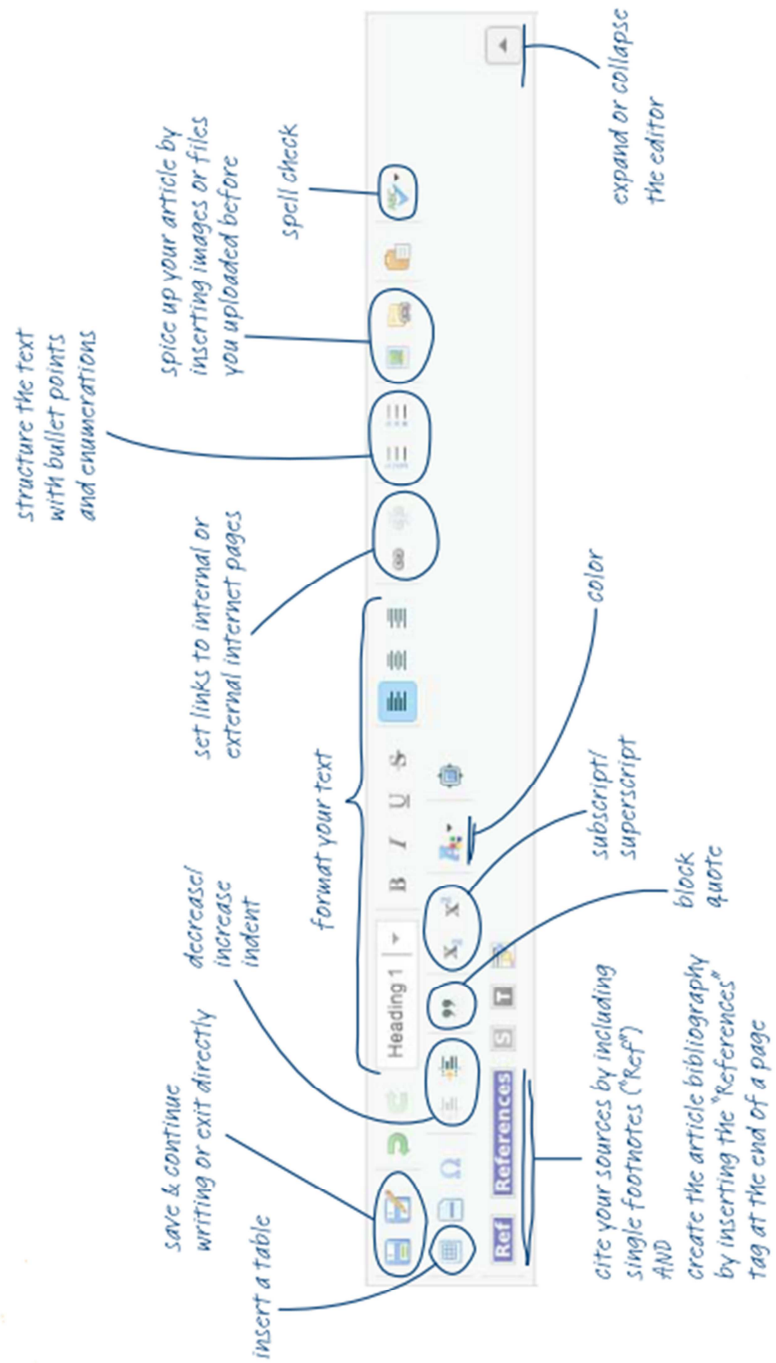
Categorize your Article

Why categories

Wikis allows you to categorize pages by adding one or more category tags to the text. Adding these tags create links at the bottom of the article which take you to the list of all pages in that category, which makes it easy to browse related articles.
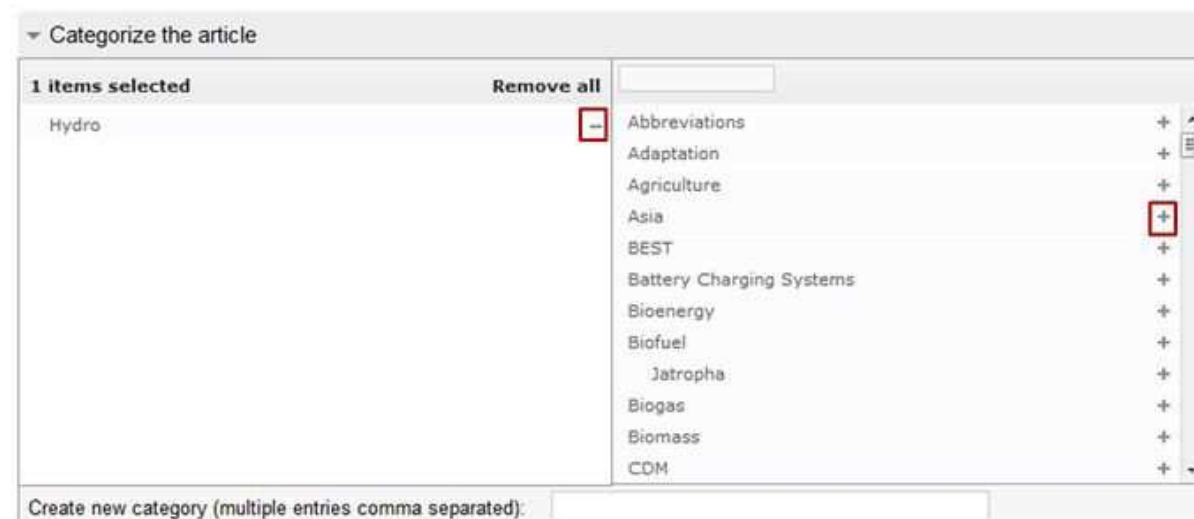

All pages should be categorized! This is essential for the functioning of the wiki and provides additionally some structure and guidance for the users.

How to add categories to articles

1. You have to be in the "edit mode" to add an article to a category. At the bottom of the editor-page click on the arrow next to "Categorize the article".
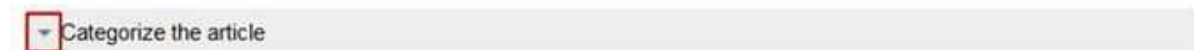
2. The following box will open:

3. The right part of the box shows existing categories, which can be added to the respective article by clicking on the "+" sign next to the category name.

The left part of the box shows categories which have been added to the article. They can be removed by clicking the "-" sign next to the category name.

Linking to Category Pages

To create a link to a category page is the same procedure as linking to another wiki article.

Categorize Files / Pictures /Categories

Other uploaded files like pictures or documents even categories themselves should be categorized exactly like normal pages. It is useful to connect the article-categories with categories already in place to establish connections and hierarchies.

Insert Pictures or Documents

1. Before you can link any document or picture in your article you need to upload the corresponding file into the wiki!
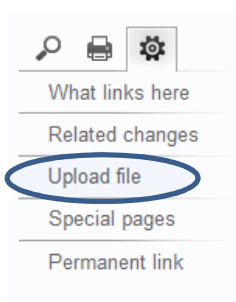
2. In the edit mode then mark the line where the file shall appear. Click the symbol "Image" or "Document Link" in the upper toolbar.

3. Enter the file´s name or its first few letters into the box "Image file name" and choose the correct one from the list.

4. Confirm with OK. The graph will appear in the edited text.

5. To change a file´s height or alignment, scroll over the picture or filename click on it with the right mouse button and choose "Image Properties".

6. To remove a graph from the article highlight it in the edit mode and press delete on your keyboard.
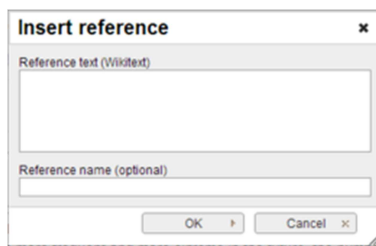
References

References are a must for every public article because only with good references your article gets reliable.

1. Click on "Edit" to get into the edit mode.

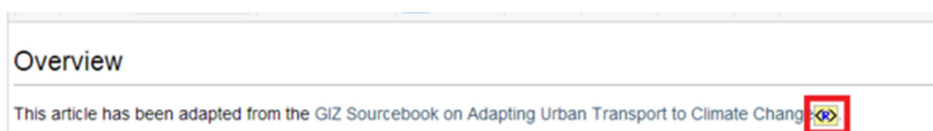2. Click on "Ref" - Insert Reference

3. Insert your reference text in the pop up menu that appears

- It is advisable to insert the same text in the "Reference text (Wikitext)" field and the "Reference name (optional)" field. If one reference is given several times within a text it will show up only once.

4. After "ok" a reference icon will now appear as a placeholder in your text.

5. Don't forget to place your list of references with the "References" button within the text so that all the references show up after clicking "Save".

Delete Articles

Only administrators have the right to delete articles from the wiki and to undelete pages that were previously deleted. Please contact the wiki administrator with the deletion proposal.

Some Golden Rules

DO's

Start writing!   If you have practical information or experiences to share then just start writing a new article or edit an existing one. A wiki article will never be completed and is always work in progress, so do not think that your knowledge is not worth to be written down.

Keep it short!   Focus on the relevant information and avoid unnecessary empty phrases and passages. Instead of writing a long article rather try to split it into several interlinked shorter ones which will help the readers to quickly find the exact piece of information that they are looking for.

Choose a precise title!   Most users will find your article via a title search, so find a concise but meaningful title which reflects the article's subject as precise as possible.

Structure your article!   Give your article a useful structure by including headlines and bullet points.

Design your article!   Make your article visually more attractive for the reader by including informative tables, pictures and graphs.

Link your articles!   Instead of writing the same information again in your text (for example, definitions or procedures), simply link to existing articles which already explain the relevant point in detail.

Categorize your article!   All articles should be categorized with one or more category. This will help users to find your article and more generally will give your wiki an underlining structure.

Keep editing articles!   To continuously improve the content, its users have to fill content gaps, correct typing errors or change outdated information if they come across them. That is why editing articles is so important for the quality of a wiki.

Be rational & polite!

DON`Ts

Simple uploading of files!
Rather summarize relevant content in a wiki article and link then directly to a file or page (maybe even on another homepage).

Copy and paste!
The advantage of a wiki is that it collects, summarizes and combines knowledge. Hence, copy and paste of whole publications does not offer any additional value for it. Rather ask yourself which parts of a publication are relevant and in which existing articles you might be able to integrate then (Don't forget to cite and reference correctly!).

"Further Information" sections!
All important information should be included in wiki articles but don't forget to link to interesting documents or articles for "Further Information".

Complaints about poor content!
If you think that an article is incomplete or even incorrect then do not simply complain about it but help to improve its content.

Unspecific titles!
An overly unspecific title makes it very difficult for readers to identify if an article is interesting for them or not. Moreover, due to technical reasons, no articles can have an identical title which makes specific enough article titles a necessity.

Arbitrary content!
Energypedia aims at compiling information on renewable energy, energy efficiency, new technologies and all related issue (for example, social and environmental impacts). So think first if your content fits on this platform.

Edit wars!
The ability to change articles on a wiki is a core advantage over ordinary webpages, however it can cause so-called edit wars when editors disagree about content and repeatedly rewrite each other's contributions. Such a series of back-and-forth reverts is very unconstructive for the whole community and destroys the working atmosphere amongst its users. If you realize that there is disagreement about content, do not just re-edit but rather start a discussion to solve the dispute in a civilized manner.