

Getting Started with LiveJournal

These notes are designed for students or staff who want to use LiveJournal blogging software. It is a very basic introduction into what is a very complex online application. It covers the following specific areas:

1. What is LiveJournal?
2. Creating an account
3. How to post an entry
4. Adding Friends
5. Commenting on Yours and Your Friends' Blogs
6. Editing Journal Style

Note: Please refer to the accompanying document **LiveJournal - Blogging & Blog Readers**.

1. What is LiveJournal?

LiveJournal is blogging software that allows users to create an online journal or blog (Web-log). The LiveJournal service - which is not supported by NTU - is being used because it allows you as students, to make your posts public, share them with select friends, or to keep them private.

Users create and use their accounts online via the LiveJournal website. LiveJournal itself is available in its basic form as a free service, or users can choose to pay for additional features. These instructions are for the **Plus** account, which is free, although your blog **will** contain advertising. "Blog" & "Journal" are used here as interchangeable terms.

This help-sheet will concentrate on setting up a blog that is readable only by selected friends and not open to the public. The Blog may be found, via a search, or if someone knows your account, but if posts are only viewable by friends, then any other visitor will just see an empty blog (and of course any personal information you add to your profile!).

Note: This is not a NTU service and as such Nottingham Trent University accept no responsibility or liability in the use of this service.

2. Creating an Account

Open a web browser, and type in the web address of the LiveJournal website

www.livejournal.com

The following webpage should now appear:

- **To create an account**

1. Click either the **Create an Account** green button on the page or on the link at the top of the page. This will take you the Account Information page.



Join LiveJournal - Account Information

As you complete each part of this Account Information page, a blue box of text on the right of the window will give you help as you click into each textbox.

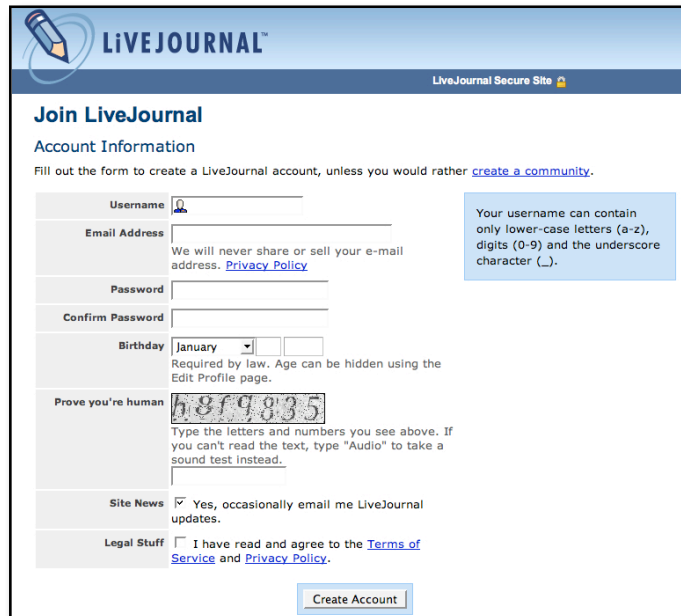
Note: Your username will form part of the web address for your blog, so choose your username carefully. If your username is PinkPanther1 **your LiveJournal address** would be: PinkPanther1.livejournal.com

- **Username / Web Address**

1. If your tutor has given you a username (eg. PinkPanther1) then please use this.
2. Alternatively choose your own name. Your username can contain only lower-case letters (a-z), digits (0-9) and the underscore character (_).

- **Email Address**

3. Again, to help organise tutorial activities, please use your NTU email address (for example N012345@ntu.ac.uk) unless you have been explicitly told that you do not need to.



- **Password**

4. This password has to be at least six characters long and contain at least one number or symbol.
5. Memorize the password, and keep it to yourself.
6. Follow the hints given in the blue Help box when making up your password.
7. You will be required to **Confirm Password**, to make sure you did not make any mistakes when entering it.

- **Birthday**

8. This is a legal requirement. Though you do not have to use your own birthday if you do not wish to, but do ensure you give a real date.

- **Prove you're human**

9. This is a simple security measure.
10. Type in the letters and numbers that appear in the grey box.



- **Legal Stuff**

11. Tick the box indicating that you have read and agreed to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy (available from the hyperlinked text).

- **Create Account**

12. Click on the **Create Account** button.

Problems

If there is a problem with any of the details you have entered, you may be asked to revise and re-enter some of your details. Any problems should be indicated in red text.

Note: If there is a problem with your username it may be necessary to tell your tutor because it may affect group work in your class. Because LiveJournal is commercial software available to anyone, it is possible that your username is already taken. If so, contact your tutor and agree a new name, which your tutor can then inform other members of your group if necessary.

Setup Your Account

- **Once you have successfully created your account, you will see the *Setup Your Account* page.**
- **Unless you have reason to change the defaults & the account type from *Plus Account (Free)*, Click *Submit*.**

Note: A security dialogue box may appear, at which, select the default Yes, and the Edit Setup page should appear.

Edit Profile page

- Within the ***Getting Started > Edit Profile > Find Friends and Communities*** Fill-in as much or as little as you wish the click on the ***Save and Continue*** button
- The next page allows you to find friends and communities. Here you can search for a community to join if you know that community name.
- Alternatively click on the ***Ready for more!*** Button to continue. This will take you to a page that allows you to post an entry or further configure your account.

Confirmation Email

By now you should have received a confirmation email from LiveJournal. Open this message and click the link indicated. LiveJournal should automatically appear in your web browser, to tell you that your account has been verified. You are now ready to start using LiveJournal.

3. How to post an entry

You now have an account set up. If you are logged in to your account, at any point if you wish to view your LiveJournal Account as it appears to others, just click on your username in the top left-hand corner of your LiveJournal web page. This will take you to your blog at the address.

This section includes:

- **Making a basics post**
- **Security - controlling “who sees & does what”**

Making a basic post

This takes you through adding a basic text post to your blog and making it accessible only to your friends. To find your LiveJournal page in your web browser type [**your username**].livejournal.com. To post (or edit your journal or settings) on your journal

home page if you are not logged in, just click on “**User info**” to get access to your account/s. You can also post to a Community from your Update Journal page – see below.

Note: As mentioned previously, your LiveJournal blog may be found, via a search, or if someone knows your account, but if posts are only viewable by friends, then any other visitor will just see an empty blog. All your entries to your blog, default to being open to public viewing, unless you change the **Security** setting. (see further down under **Options** for more details)

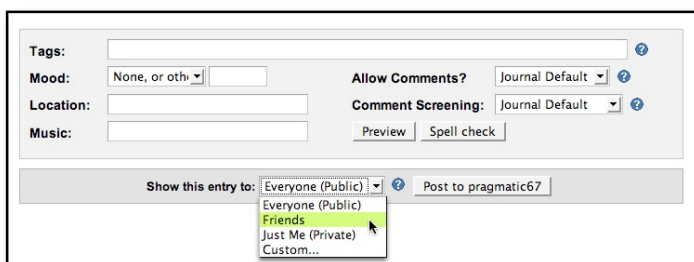
- **To make a basic blog entry:**

1. If you are logged on already, select **Journal > Post an Entry** from the drop-down menu as shown opposite. If you are not logged on (ie. your account name is not shown at the top of the page) then go to www.livejournal.com and select **Post to Journal** from the LiveJournal menu-bar.



2. If you have multiple accounts you can **Switch** to choose who to **Post as:** and which account or community to **Post to:** from the drop-down menu.
3. The **Date** for your post: Leave this unless you have particular reason to change it. This means you can add an entry now and set a later date & time when that entry will appear in your blog.
4. **Subject:** Like the subject of an email message, this appears at the top of each post that you make. Try to make it relevant to the content of your entry
5. **Text entry box:** This is where you write your post. You can edit the text using the built in word-processor like tools..

6. **Options box:** This block of fields and menus control various settings for the display of your entry and also allowing comments by other users.



The only one that you should need to alter at this stage is the **Show this entry to:** setting. For more details on security options see further down but for now choose **Friends** from the drop-down option.

7. Once you have completed each of these sections, it is suggested that you **Preview** your post. However, the preview window itself does not have a close button, so to you will need to close the window with the **red cross** in the top right hand corner.
8. Click on the **Post to [your username]** button to post an entry.
9. You will be taken to an intermediary page, where you can choose from amongst others options, **View the entry** or **Edit the entry**.

Security - controlling “who sees & does what”

When either posting a new entry or updating an existing journal entry, you have full control over who sees that entry and who can leave comments on your postings.

Security

There are four levels of security available. Remember to check this setting each time you make a post or posts by default will be made public. See below for more details on each of the security levels.

- **Everyone (Public):** This option makes your post available to anyone. For learning and teaching purposes it is **not recommended** to use this option unless you have a specific reason.
- **Friends:** This makes the posting viewable to anyone you have chosen to list as a Friend. We **recommend** this option as the most suitable for learning and teaching use. Even if someone lists you as a Friend, they will not be able to view your Friends-only entries, unless you also choose to list them as a Friend.
- **Just Me (Private):** Only you can read your Private entries.
- **Custom:** A chosen group of people you list as Friends, as defined by custom friends groups you create, can read a Custom entry. Controlling comments

These options are available for controlling who can add comments to your journal entry.

- **Journal Default:** Commenting available for all who have permission to view your journal entry.
- **Disabled:** No comments allowed
- **Don't email:** This turns off an email copy of a comment being sent to you

Note: You can more fully control commenting on your whole journal by going to **Manage Accounts > Comment Settings**

4. Adding Friends

Friends is a LiveJournal term to define other LiveJournal account holders who have permission to view your blog or blog entries.

There are several methods for adding friends but a good starting point is **Friends > Manage Friends**. You will most likely use the manage friends and **Add Friends** facilities.



- **Fellow friends**

The first box lists the LiveJournal account holders who have listed you as a friend. This may have no entries initially. If you have friends who have listed you as a **Friend**, you may want to list them as your friend too. You can add them as one of your friends by ticking the **Add friend** tickbox, then they can then read your journal entries. Remember to click the **Save Changes** button at the bottom of the screen.

- **Add Friends**

If you know the username of other LiveJournal account holders you can add them here, and also choose a style (other than the default) of what colour within this list you wish to associate with them. This may be helpful if you have many friends, but otherwise this choice will not be seen elsewhere. Friends will not be notified that they have been added other than in their own list of friends in their account settings. Remember to click the **Save Changes** button at the bottom of the screen.

After saving your changes, you will be presented with a “**Success**” page from which you can edit your Friends page again, or create custom groups of friends, or view your friends pages.

- **Invite New Friends**

This allows you to invite non-LiveJournal friends to set up an account. Follow the link and the instructions

You can also (once logged in) view another member’s bog and add them as a friend. They will see that you have allowed them to view your blog (if it has limited viewing), and possibly comment too. They may also add you as a friend to their blog.

5. Commenting on Your’s and your Friends Blogs

Comments on a Blog entry

It is easy to leave a comment on another users Blog, if they have allowed this.

- **To leave a comment**

1. Click on the **Leave a comment** link under the relevant posting.
2. The page you will be taken to, will show the journal entry, and underneath a form to enable you to leave a comment
3. Automatically selected (if you are logged in) will be your **Logged in user** ID. There should be no reason to change this, unless you wish to be anonymous.
4. Enter the **Subject** text and the **Message** text.
5. You can preview & edit the comment prior to it going live and also spell check it automatically.
6. When you are satisfied with your comment, click on the **Post Comment** button.
7. The next page will show you the live blog entry with the new comment attached.
8. To view your all your own blog entries, select **Recent Entries** from your blog sidebar

Managing comments on your own Blog

You can manage individual comments under **Journal > Manage Comments**.

You can manage the comments for your whole Journal under **Manage Account > Comment Settings**. This enables you to set amongst other options:

- Who you allow comments from.
- Whether you screen or moderate comments before they go live.
- If you wish to receive email notification of any comments added to your Journal.

6. Editing Journal Style

You can change the way your Journal looks and also the variety of content it has on it. There are literally tens of thousands of variations you can choose from to differentiate your blog.

- To change the Name of your journal

1. Go to **Journal > Customise Journal**.
2. You will now be on a **Journal Display** page.
3. From the first **Basic** tab you can change the Title of your Journal, though not your web address, which is based on your username.
4. Select **Save Changes** at the bottom of the page.



- To Change the look & feel of your Blog

1. From the **Journal Display** page click on the **Look and Feel** tab.
2. **Layout** determines the overall look and layout of your Journal.
3. **Themes** gives you finer control of the Layout you have chosen
4. Try to make your Journal as readable as possible. Some colour combinations do not aid easy reading.
5. **Mood Themes** are small icons similar to Smileys that denote the mood of each posting
6. Select **Save Changes** at the bottom of the page.

Note: **Custom Options** and the **Advanced** tabs allow even greater control of your Journal, though we advise the use of these with caution if you are unsure as to what you are doing.