



Google Docs Forms: Survey Creation Made Easy!

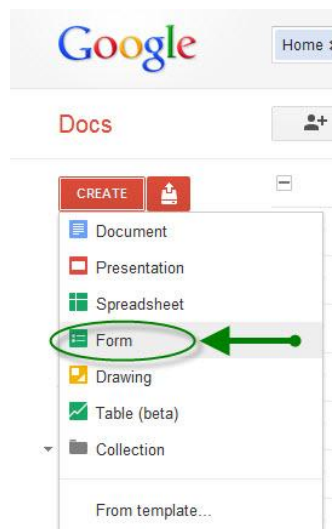
STEP 1: LOG IN TO GOOGLE DOCS

1. If you do not have a Google account already, you can create one in two ways. Either option is free. I recommend **option A**.
 - A. Create a free Gmail account <https://accounts.google.com> This login can also serve as your Google account. Gmail is at the center of Google Docs, and having a gmail account seem to streamline the use of the Google Docs tools.
 - B. Use an existing email account to which you have access, and create a Google account with it: <https://accounts.google.com/newaccount> You can specify a unique password for this account, which is NOT directly tied to your email account. (The passwords are maintained independently.)
2. Log into your Gmail account and select Documents:



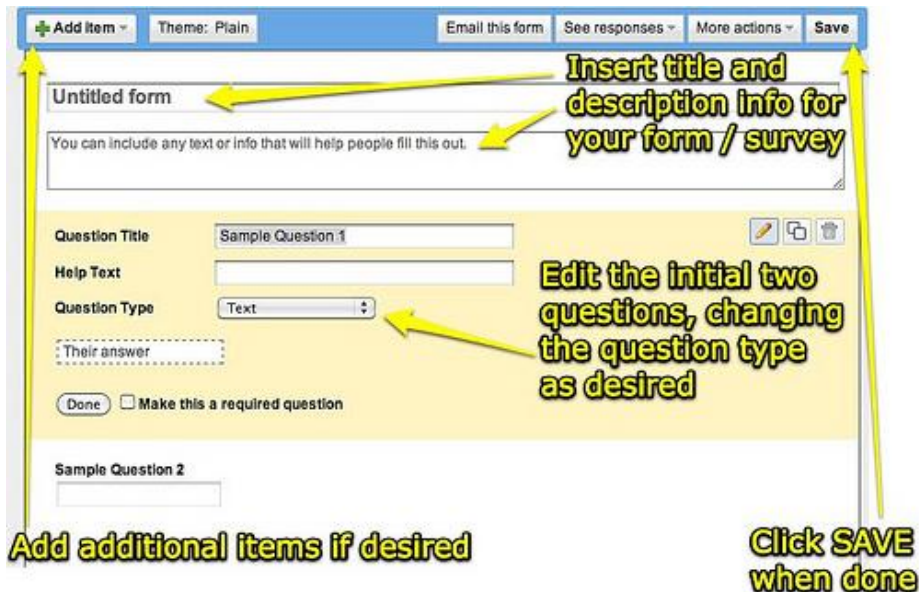
STEP 2: CHOOSE TO CREATE A NEW FORM

From the CREATE NEW drop-down menu in Google Docs, choose FORM:

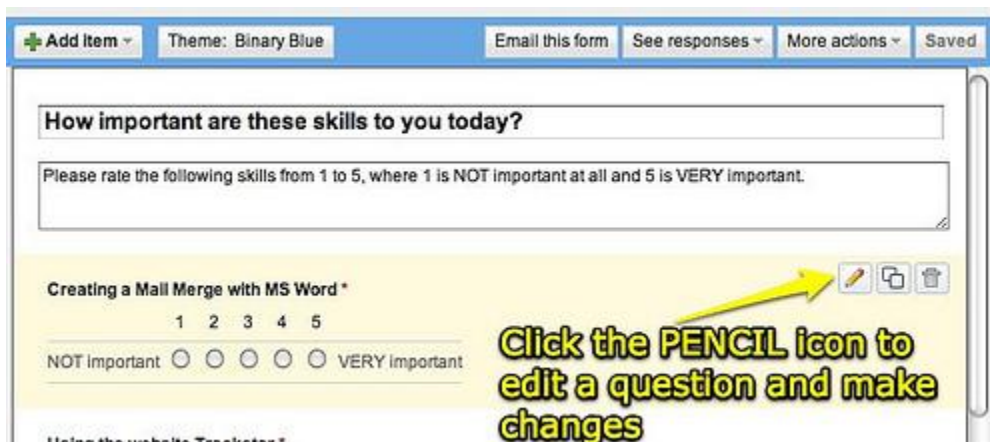


STEP 3: EDIT THE SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND ADD YOUR OWN

Two sample questions are automatically created for your form, which you can edit as desired. Note you can change the question type to be text, paragraph text, multiple choice, checkboxes, choose from a list, scale, or grid. Click ADD in the upper left corner to add more questions. Click SAVE periodically in the upper right corner to save your work.



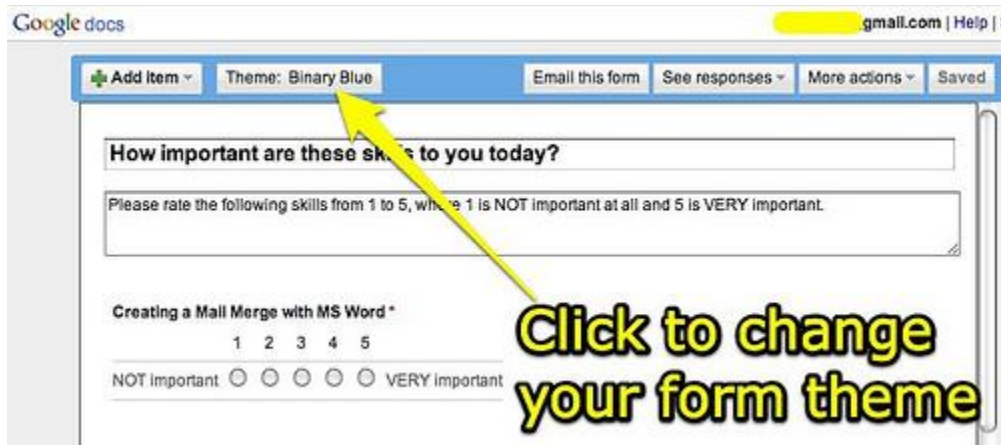
Notice you can make questions REQUIRED by clicking the checkbox at the bottom of the question editing area. After you have finished editing a question and you click DONE, you can edit it again by clicking the PENCIL icon on the right side of it. The second icon will DUPLICATE the question, and the trash can will delete it.



You can also click and drag to reorder your questions as desired.

STEP 4: CUSTOMIZE WITH A THEME

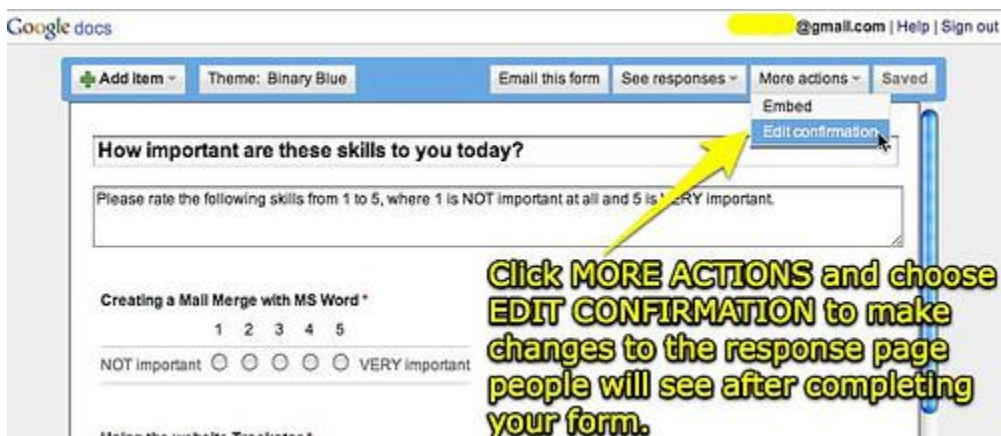
This step is optional, but you can select different themes which make your surveys look more interesting as well as (potentially) more professional. There are currently 97 different form themes available. Click THEME at the top of the form window to make a selection.



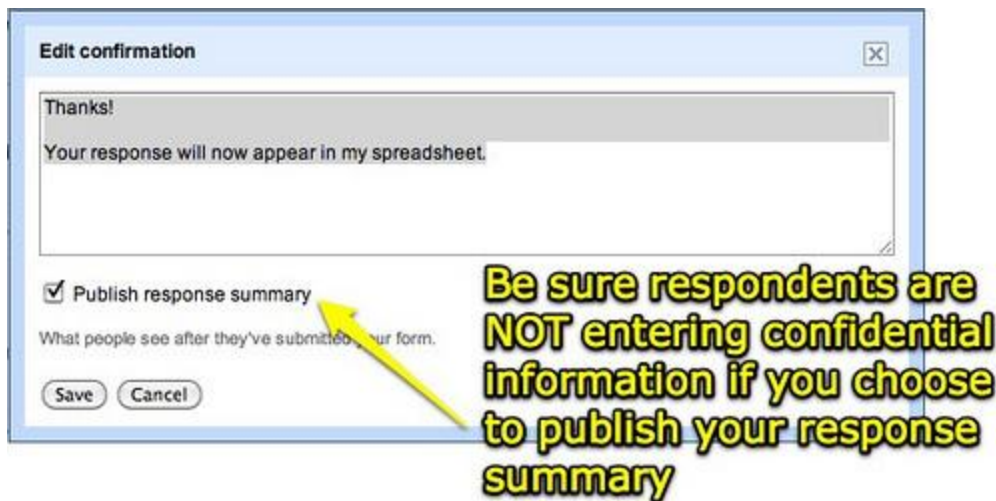
After choosing a desired theme, click APPLY in the upper left corner to return to the form editor.

STEP 5: CUSTOMIZE YOUR RESPONSE PAGE

By default, after people submit your webform they will be shown a webpage which reads, "Thanks! Your response will now appear in my spreadsheet." You can customize this message if desired.



You also can also choose to publish a response summary for respondents to see after they submit their own answers.

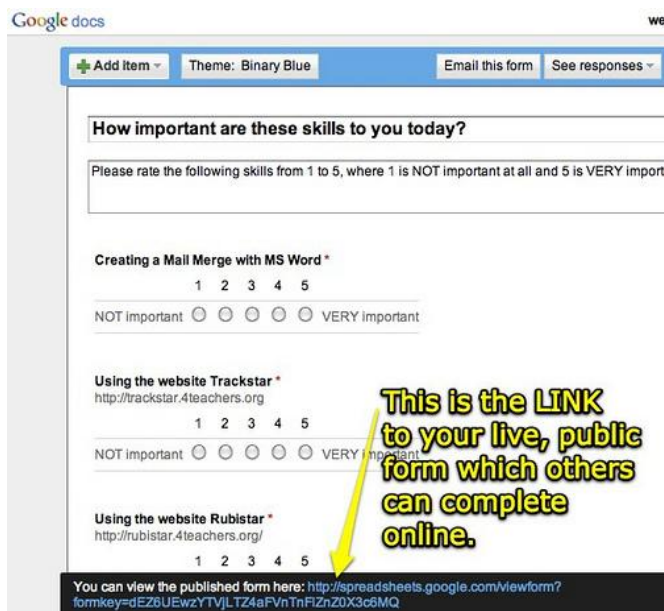


Google Forms now supports active / live hyperlinks in response messages as well, so you can provide a link back to your own website if desired. Last time I tried, you could NOT enter HTML code for a link, making “plain English” text a hyperlink. You have to use/paste the full URL for it to be active in the form response window. Even though it’s not as “pretty” and professional looking as linked text can be, it’s still WONDERFUL that Google Forms provides this functionality.

It is worth noting that when editing a form, your actions are NOT recorded in the document history, so they can be “undone” or “reverted” as they are in a standard Google document or spreadsheet. You also want to be careful to generally NOT move questions around in your form after people have started submitting answers, or the order of your spreadsheet columns can get messed up. After creating a form and opening it up for sharing, it’s generally best (I’ve found) to leave it “as is” and not tweak it further.

STEP 6: TEST & SHARE YOUR LINK AND FORM / SURVEY

At the bottom of your Google Form editing window, a link is shown to your “live” public form. This is the link you want to click and copy, so you can share it with others who will respond to your survey.



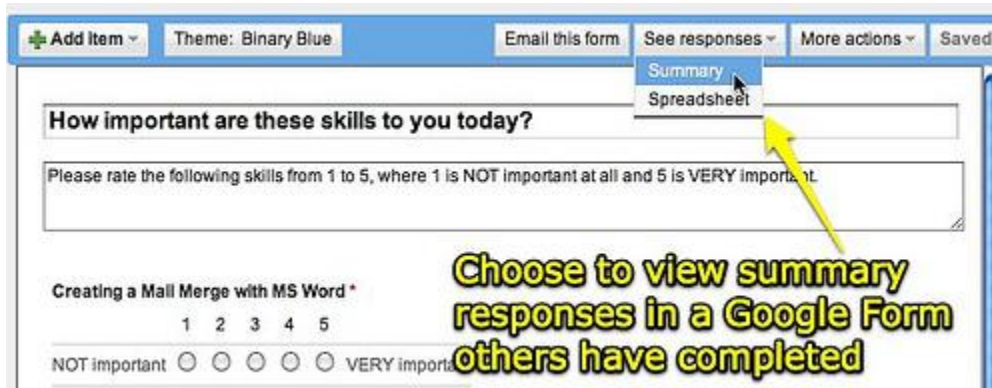
Before sharing, test the link and take the survey. Make sure that it is filling your spreadsheet properly and that your summary of responses (see step 7 below) is working as intended.

The website links Google Forms generates can be lengthy, and these can be cut off or truncated in email messages. To make links shorter, you can use URL shortener websites like tinyurl.com or bitly.com. These shortened URL's may be blocked so when sharing a survey link you can share BOTH a shortened version (like tinyurl.com) and the full web link.

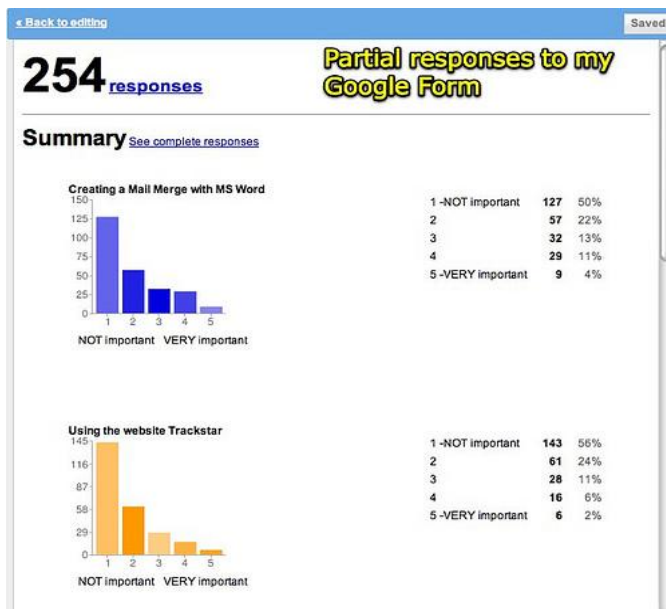
Another way to share your form is to EMBED it in a blog, a webpage, or into Desire2Learn. The EMBED code is available at the top of your form window, under the MORE ACTIONS button just above EDIT CONFIRMATION. Google Forms are embedded using the [IFRAME](#) tag. This tag is NOT supported on all blogging platforms and depending on where you are posting it (and your user rights – WordPress users must be administrators to post IFRAME and EMBED tags I think) your HTML code could get “stripped” out of your post. Embedding is a very user-friendly way to provide others access to your forms, however, and if you can use the embed code I think it's a good idea.

STEP 7: LOOK AT YOUR RESULTS

Google Form results can be viewed several ways. Data from your form goes directly into a Google Spreadsheet, which can be viewed online or downloaded as an Excel or other file type. Online or offline, you can then create various charts and graphs to see your results visually. I like to view the summary responses which the Google Form automatically generates, by choosing SEE RESPONSES – SUMMARY at the top of the form editing window.



The screenshot below shows two summary responses from a survey:



That’s about it! Remember you can turn your form OFF or back ON from the FORM menu of your spreadsheet, by changing whether the option “ACCEPTING RESPONSES” is checked or not.

Many tutorials for using Google Forms are available online, including those on the Google Docs help site itself: <http://docs.google.com/support/>

Instructions and screenshots used in this handout were adapted from those created by Wesley Fryer at <http://www.speedofcreativity.org/2010/07/30/create-a-free-online-survey-with-google-forms/>