

## **What is RSS?**

RSS is an XML-based format that allows the *syndication* of lists of hyperlinks, along with other information, or *metadata*, that helps users decide whether they want to follow the link.

A feed contains a list of *items* or *entries*, each of which is identified by a link. Each item can have any amount of other metadata associated with it as well.

Once a feed is available, computers can regularly fetch the file to get the most recent items on the list.

## **How can I use RSS myself?**

Use an aggregator (reader). Below are three ways to subscribe. We are using the OU Campus Newsletter as an example.

### **Add an RSS Feed Using Mozilla Firefox Browser**

1. Click on the RSS link (we are using <http://refdesk.com>)
2. Subscribe to this feed using *Live Bookmarks* (pull-down menu).
3. Click the *Subscribe Now* button. This will place a bookmark in Firefox. Just like any other bookmark, you'll need to choose where you want it to appear.

### **Add an RSS Feed to Google (gmail account)**

1. Log into your Gmail account
2. Click on *Reader*
3. Click on Add subscription
4. Paste in  
<http://www.oswego.edu/training/newsletter/ounewsletter.xml>
5. Click on *Add* button
6. You should see a title "OmniUpdate Newsletter"

*TIP: Keep your feeds organized. Create an RSS Bookmark Folder for all your RSS feeds.*

## Add an RSS Feed in Thunderbird

1. Choose *Tools > account settings*
2. Click on *Add Account* button on lower left
3. Select *RSS News & Blogs*
4. Click *Next*
5. Enter the name the new account (I.e., RSS Feeds)
6. Click *Next*
7. Click *Finish*
8. Click *OK*
9. On the left menu, click on the name you chose (I.e., RSS Feeds)
10. Click on *Manage subscriptions*
11. Click on *Add* button
12. Paste in address of feed: I.e.,  
`http://www.oswego.edu/training/newsletter/ounewsletter.xml`
13. Choose *Show the article summary instead of loading the web page*
14. Click *OK*
15. Close the window

In this example, you should see an item “OmniUpdate Newsletter” on the left menu. As you click on each listed item, the URL for the page will show at the top of the message.

## Other RSS Readers (aggregators)

Internet Explorer 7  
Yahoo

### Google’s list of RSS Readers:

[http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Internet/Clients/WWW/Feed\\_Readers/](http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Internet/Clients/WWW/Feed_Readers/)

### RSS Reader Software List:

<http://www.rss-specifications.com/rss-readers.htm>

### Find other feeds:

<http://www.rss-network.com/>  
<http://www.rss-specifications.com/rss-top-10.htm>  
<http://www.rssfeeds.com/>  
<http://www.vandelaydesign.com/rss/rssdirectories.htm>  
<http://www.rss-specifications.com/rss-directory.htm>

### Popular Feeds:

[BlogLines Most Popular Feeds](#)  
[RadioLand 100 Most Subscribed Feeds](#)  
[Technorati Top 100](#)

## ***RSS Feeds and OmniUpdate***

### **Why Would I want to use RSS on my site?**


1. Website visitors do not have to release personal information in order to subscribe to an RSS feed.
2. 100% opt-in, users control the content they wish to receive.
3. Faster method for scanning content

### **RSS benefits for publishers:**

1. Reaching new audiences through syndication
2. Improved search engine optimization
3. Easier and less expensive vehicle for communication than email.
4. Additional way to communicate with customers or potential customers.

If you have a periodical that is regularly published as an HTML page, RSS is a tool to help you get the word out. Just send an email to [webmaster@oswego.edu](mailto:webmaster@oswego.edu) and we will set up your feed.

After the feed is set up, here are the instructions to add a new item to the feed:

1. Create, save and publish the new html page.
2. Click on Page Editor tab > Editable Web Pages button.
3.  Click the Access icon for that file.
4. Under “News Feed” select the appropriate feed from the pull-down menu.
5. Save the file but do not publish yet.
6. The item won’t actually be part of the feed until you check it out and publish it.
7. Click Edit > Checkout .
8. Edit the main part of the page.
9. Save it.
10. Before publishing, click “Add RSS.”
11. Add a title and a description for this individual item of the RSS feed. Sentence form is best with no special characters. This is what will show up to users when they subscribe to the feed.
12. Click create.
13. Publish.

This item is now part of the RSS Feed.

## Notes

### *Beginner RSS Resources*

[Educational RSS Articles](#)

[RSS Syndication](#)

### *General RSS Resources*

[RSS Tools](#)

[RSS Specifications](#)

[AIIRSS](#)

[FaganFinder RSS](#)

### **Images & RSS**

The width of the image is in pixels. The default width for the RSS image is 88. The maximum allowed width is 144. The default height for a RSS image is 31. The maximum allowed height is 400.