

# **A GUIDE TO USING BLOGS: Creating Online Reflective Journals**

My-Peer Project

WA Centre for Health Promotion Research

# What is a 'blog'?

A blog is a type of website, usually written by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other things such as pictures or videos. Blogs allow you to put your own thoughts/stories/information on the Internet.

We will be using Blogger which is a website that allows you to create free blogs. The address is: [www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com)



# Why are we using a blog?

Talking Realities is using blogs a bit like an online diary, as a way for you to write down your thoughts and feelings in one place. These blogs will be used during your Talking Realities course.

Your blog is a private website for your eyes only unless you decide to give permission to others to read it.

You will be given some time each week to update your blog so you can reflect on your feelings/thoughts/worries/happy points/experiences over the last week.

At certain points during the course you will be asked to review your blog and reflect on things that have changed for you as a result of participating in Talking Realities.

We are trying this as a new part of Talking Realities and we would really like to know what you think of using it.

# How do I create a blog?

This is the first page that you will come to when you go to the Blogger website ([www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com)):



Click on the 'CREATE A BLOG' to do just that. You will be transferred to the next page where you can create your blog account.

NOTE: Creating an account will require an email address. (If you do not have an existing email then you can get a free one by going to [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com))

Complete all the details on this page including making up a password.


**Blogger™**

1 CREATE ACCOUNT ▶ 2 NAME BLOG ▶ 3 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

## 1 Create a Google Account

**Google Accounts**

This process will create a Google account that you can use on other Google services. If you already have a Google account perhaps from Gmail, Google Groups, or Orkut, please [sign in first](#).

Email address (must already exist)	<input type="text"/>	You'll use this address to log in to Blogger and other Google services. We'll never share it with third parties without your permission.
Retype email address	<input type="text"/>	Type in your email address again to make sure there are no typos.
Enter a password	<input type="password"/> <a href="#">Password strength:</a>	Must be at least 8 characters long.
Retype password	<input type="password"/>	
Display name	<input type="text"/>	The name used to sign your blog posts.
Word Verification	 <input type="text"/>	Type the characters you see in the picture to the left.
Acceptance of Terms	<input type="checkbox"/> I accept the <a href="#">Terms of Service</a>	Indicate that you have read and understand Blogger's Terms of Service

**CONTINUE**

**CONTINUE**

Then click on 'CONTINUE'.

You will then be transferred to the next page, which will ask you to give your blog a name. You can make up anything you like.

You will also be asked to give a blog address. This is the address that you type into the top of your screen when you are connected to the Internet to view your blog.

The screenshot shows the Blogger 'Name your blog' setup page. At the top, the Blogger logo and 'Push-Button Publishing' are visible. A progress bar indicates three steps: 1. CREATE ACCOUNT, 2. NAME BLOG (current step), and 3. CHOOSE TEMPLATE. The main heading is '2 Name your blog'. Below this, there are three input fields: 'Blog title' with a text box and a note that the title will appear on the blog, dashboard, and profile; 'Blog address (URL)' with a text box pre-filled with 'http://', a '.blogspot.com' suffix, and a 'Check Availability' link; and a note that the selected URL will be used by visitors to access the blog. Below these fields is an 'Advanced Options' section with the note '(you can always set up advanced options later)'. This section contains two rows: 'Host your blog' with a link to 'Advanced Blog Setup' and a note about hosting elsewhere, and 'Import a blog' with a link to 'Import Blog Tool' and a note about importing an existing blog. At the bottom right of the form is a large orange 'CONTINUE' button with a right-pointing arrow. The footer contains a list of links: Home, Features, About, Buzz, Help, Discuss, Language, Developers, Gear, Terms of Service, Privacy, Content Policy, and a copyright notice for 1999-2009 Google.

**Blogger** Push-Button Publishing

1 CREATE ACCOUNT 2 NAME BLOG 3 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

## 2 Name your blog

**Blog title**

Your blog's title will appear on your published blog, on your dashboard and in your profile.

**Blog address (URL)**  .blogspot.com

[Check Availability](#)

The URL you select will be used by visitors to access your blog. [Learn more](#)

**Advanced Options** (you can always set up advanced options later)

**Host your blog** Want to host your blog somewhere else? Try [Advanced Blog Setup](#). This will allow you to host your blog somewhere other than Blogspot.

**Import a blog** Use our [Import Blog Tool](#) to import an existing Blogger blog.

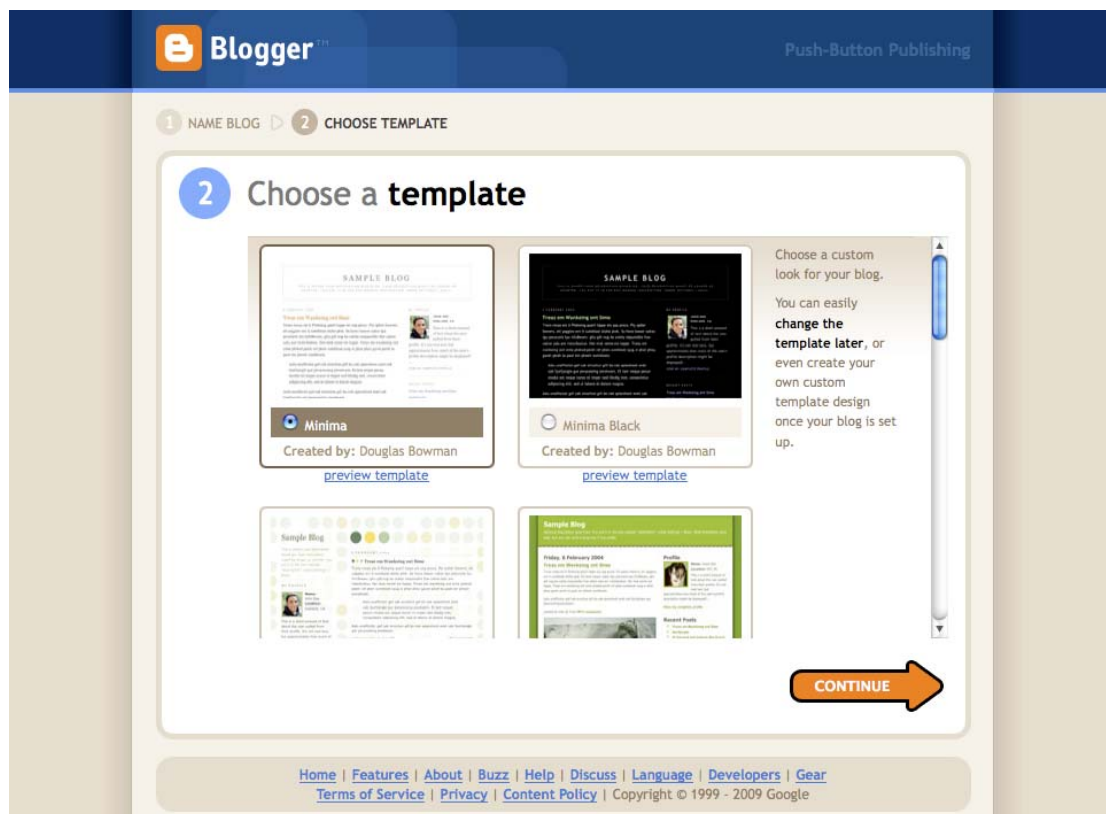
**CONTINUE**

[Home](#) | [Features](#) | [About](#) | [Buzz](#) | [Help](#) | [Discuss](#) | [Language](#) | [Developers](#) | [Gear](#)  
[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Content Policy](#) | Copyright © 1999 - 2009 Google

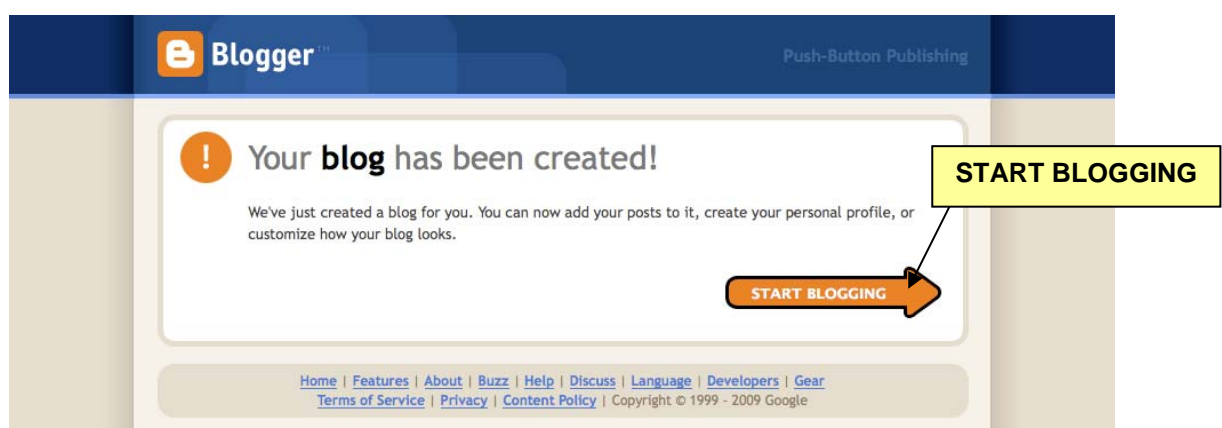
Then click on '**CONTINUE**' to go to the next page.

Here you will be able to select a template for your blog.

A template is a collection of colours, text styles and formatting that will change what your blog looks like. You can change what your blog looks like any time in the future simply by selecting a different template. You can personalise the look of your blog further later on.



Then click on '**CONTINUE**' to complete the creation of your blog and you will be transferred to this page:

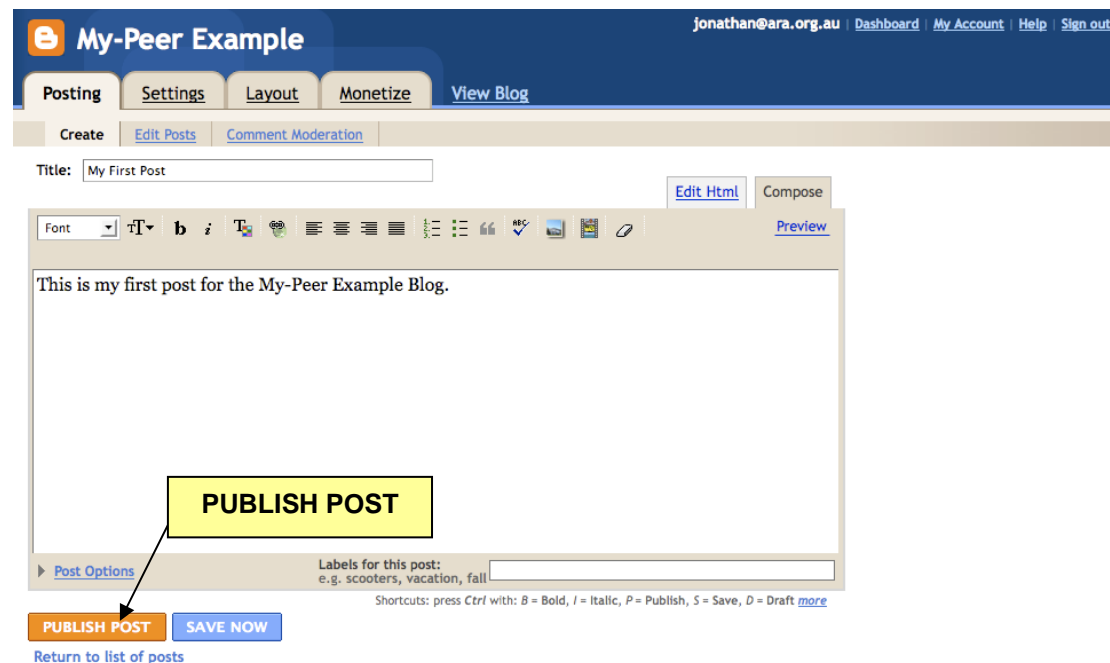


Now you can click on '**START BLOGGING**' to start writing content for your blog.

# How do I write something for my blog?

Each time you write something for your blog it is called a 'post'. A 'post' is like an article or story that you put on your blog.

Here is an example:



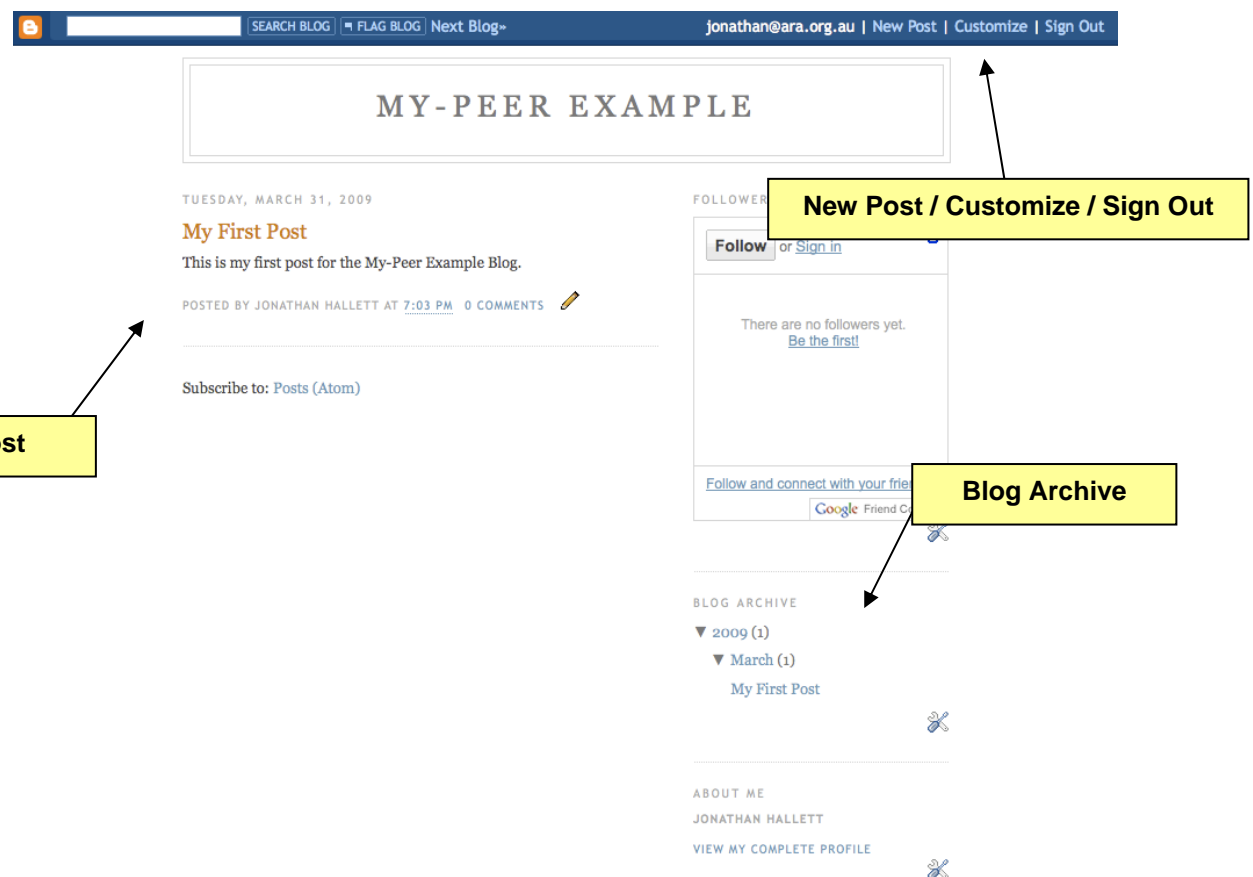
Make sure that you give the post a name in the 'Title' section and then write your post in the main box. You can change the look of your text such as making it **bold** or *italicised* or changing the colour by clicking on the small symbols above the text box.

When you have finished your post click on '**PUBLISH POST**' to save it and make it appear on your blog.

You will be told if the post is published successfully and then click on '**View Blog**' to have a look:



This is what your blog will look like (depending on the template you chose):

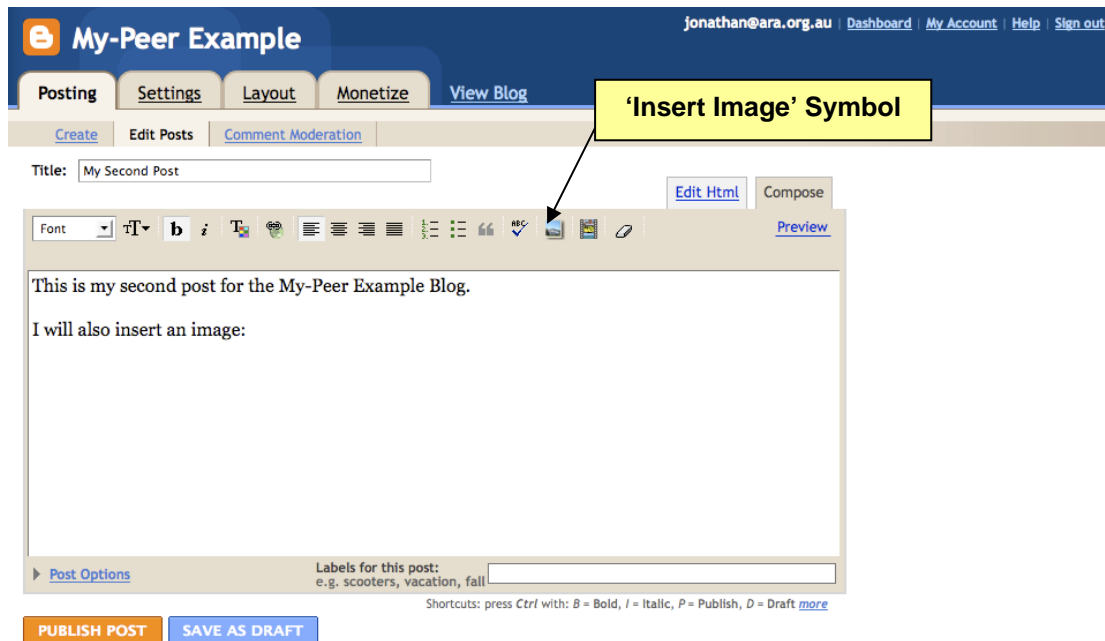


You can see that the first post has appeared on the blog.

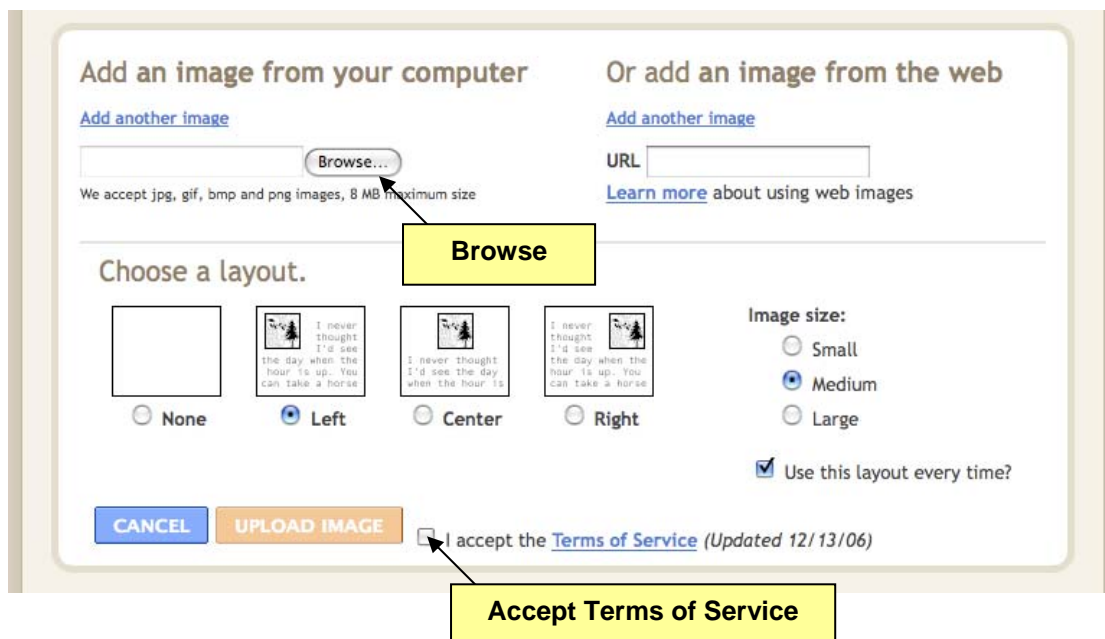
On the right side is a '**Blog Archive**'. This will contain a list of all your posts once you have them.

At the top of the page you will see your email and the options of '**New Post**', '**Customize**' and '**Sign Out**'. If you are not logged into your account these options won't be there.





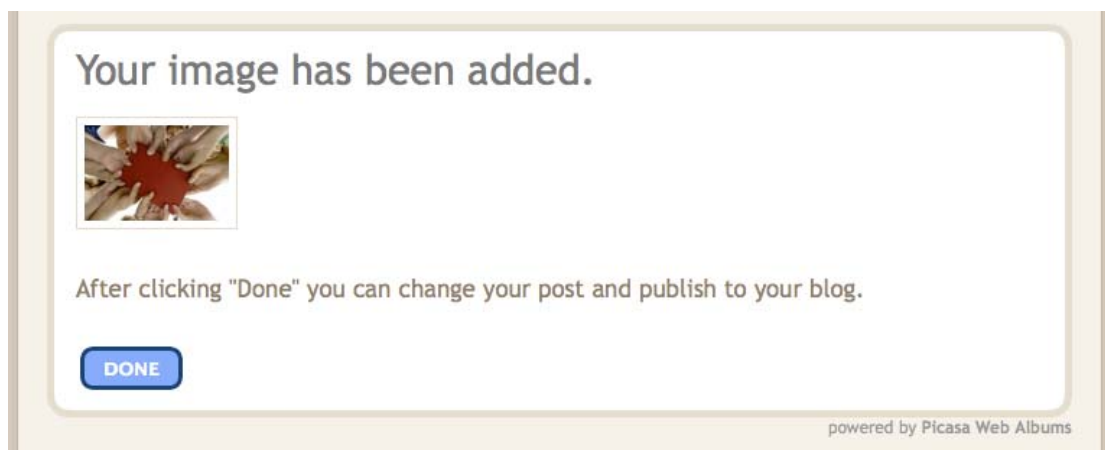
If you want to include an image in your post then you can click on the **'Insert Image'** symbol and a popup window will appear allowing you to add an image from your computer:



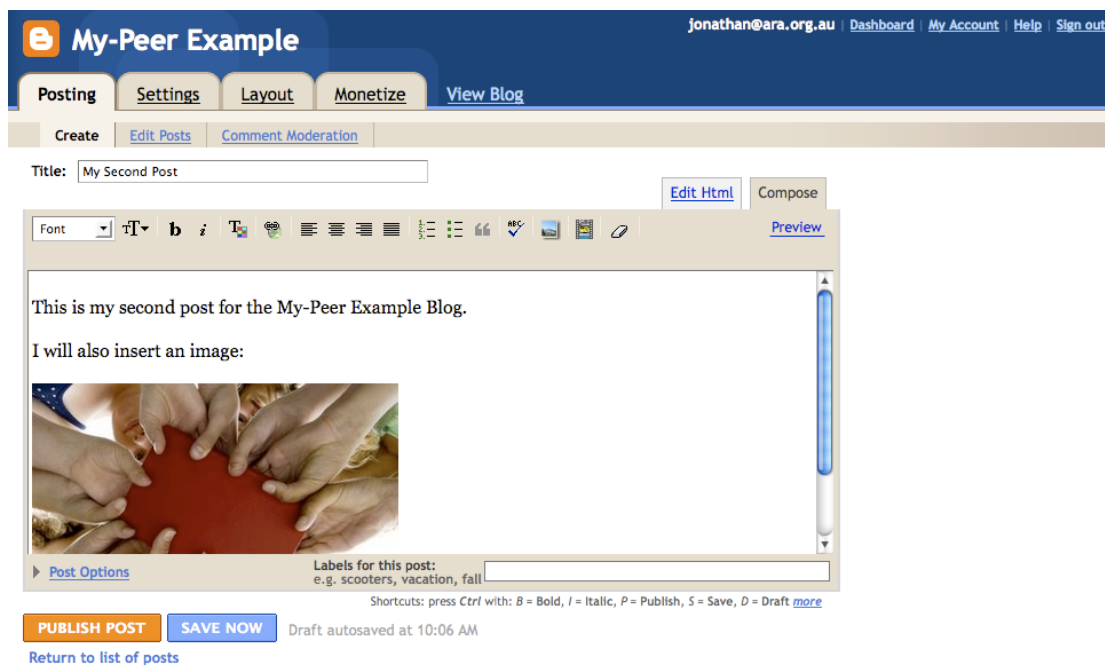
Click on **'Browse'** to look at the files on your computer and select your image. Then choose a layout by deciding whether you want the image centered or to the left or right of your post. You can also change the size of an image.

Then make sure you have ticked the **'I accept the Terms of Service'** box before clicking on **'UPLOAD IMAGE'**.

This window will appear confirming that your image has been added:




Select '**DONE**' to go back to editing your post:



Once you have finished click on '**PUBLISH POST**'. Then view your blog.

Your blog:

  [SEARCH BLOG](#) [FLAG BLOG](#) [Next Blog>](#) [jonathan@ara.org.au](mailto:jonathan@ara.org.au) | [New Post](#) | [Customize](#) | [Sign Out](#)


MY-PEER EXAMPLE


TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2009

### My Second Post

This is my second post for the My-Peer Example Blog.

I will also insert an image:




POSTED BY JONATHAN HALLETT AT 7:06 PM 0 COMMENTS 

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### My First Post


This is my first post for the My-Peer Example Blog.

POSTED BY JONATHAN HALLETT AT 7:03 PM 0 COMMENTS 


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Subscribe to: [Posts \(Atom\)](#)

FOLLOWERS

[Follow](#) or [Sign in](#) 

There are no followers yet.  
[Be the first!](#)


[Follow and connect with your friends!](#)  


BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ 2009 (2)


▼ March (2)

[My Second Post](#)

[My First Post](#) 

ABOUT ME

JONATHAN HALLETT

[VIEW MY COMPLETE PROFILE](#) 

You will see that there are now two posts. Older posts move down the page and the new ones appear at the top.

## How do I edit my blog?

If at any time you want to edit the posts that are already on your blog, go to your '**Dashboard**' by clicking on the link at the top of the page.

Your dashboard is like your control centre – it provides options for editing and adding posts, changing the look of your blog and various other settings.

You will see an '**Edit Posts**' tab underneath the '**Posting**' one:



This is where you can select a post and edit it.

## How do I make my blog private?

To ensure your blog is private and no one else can see it there are two steps.

If you click on '**Settings**' you will have a range of options including changing the title of your blog and adding a short description which will appear under the title.

The first privacy setting is on this page and you can select '**No**' to adding your blog to the listing and to letting search engines find your blog:

My-Peer Example
jonathan@ara.org.au
Dashboard
My Account
Help
Sign out

Posting
Settings
Layout
Monetize
View Blog

Basic
Publishing
Formatting
Comments
Archiving
Site Feed
Email
OpenID
Permissions

Blog Tools

Settings

Delete blog

You can import posts and comments from a previously exported Blogger blog, export this blog, or permanently delete it.

Basic

Title

My-Peer Example

Description

500 Characters Max.

Add your blog to our listings?

Yes

A Listed blog may be linked to from Blogger.com, such as the Blogger home page, Blogger Play, and Next Blog. If you select "No" your blog will not appear in these places, but it will still be available on the Internet. This blog will still be displayed on [related blogs](#).

Select 'No'

Let search engines find your blog?

Yes

If you select "Yes" we will include your blog in Google Blog Search and ping [Weblogs.com](#). If you select "No", everyone can still view your blog but search engines will be instructed not to crawl it.

Select 'No'

Show Quick Editing on your Blog?

Yes

When you're logged in to Blogger, edit your posts from your blog with one click.

Show Email Post links?

No

Email Post links let your visitors easily email posts from your blog to their friends.

Adult Content?

No

If Yes is selected, viewers of your blog will see a warning message and will be asked to confirm that they want to proceed to your blog.

Global Settings (Applies to all of your blogs.)

Show Compose Mode for all your blogs?

Yes

Adds a Compose mode to your Post Editor. (Also sometimes known as a [wysiwyg](#) editor.)

Enable transliteration?

Disable

in

Hindi - हिन्दी

Learn more

Adds a button to the toolbar for converting words from English to the selected language. (You may later change the language in the Post Editor). Your transliteration corrections will be saved to help Google improve this tool. See [Privacy Policy](#) for details.

SAVE SETTINGS

Click when finished

Make sure you select **'SAVE SETTINGS'** once you have made your changes.

The second privacy function is under '**Permissions**' and allows you to specify who can read your blog:

The screenshot shows the 'My-Peer Example' blog dashboard. The top navigation bar includes 'Posting', 'Settings', 'Layout', 'Monetize', and 'View Blog'. Below this is a sub-navigation bar with 'Basic', 'Publishing', 'Formatting', 'Comments', 'Archiving', 'Site Feed', 'Email', 'OpenID', and 'Permissions'. The 'Permissions' tab is selected. The 'Blog Authors' section shows '1 Author can post to this blog' with a list containing 'Jonathan Hallett', 'jonathan@ara.org.au', and 'admin', and an 'ADD AUTHORS' button. The 'Blog Readers' section shows 'Who can view this blog?' with three radio button options: 'Anybody' (selected), 'Only people I choose', and 'Only blog authors'. A yellow callout box labeled 'Permissions' points to the 'Permissions' tab. Another yellow callout box labeled 'Select 'Only blog authors'' points to the 'Only blog authors' radio button. Below the radio buttons, text states: 'Your blog is open to all readers by default. You can restrict your blog to only readers you choose. However, these readers will need to log in before reading your blog, adding an extra step.'

Select '**Only blog authors**' so only you can view your blog. If in the future you want someone else to be able to view the blog you can select '**Only people I choose**' and then enter that person's email address.

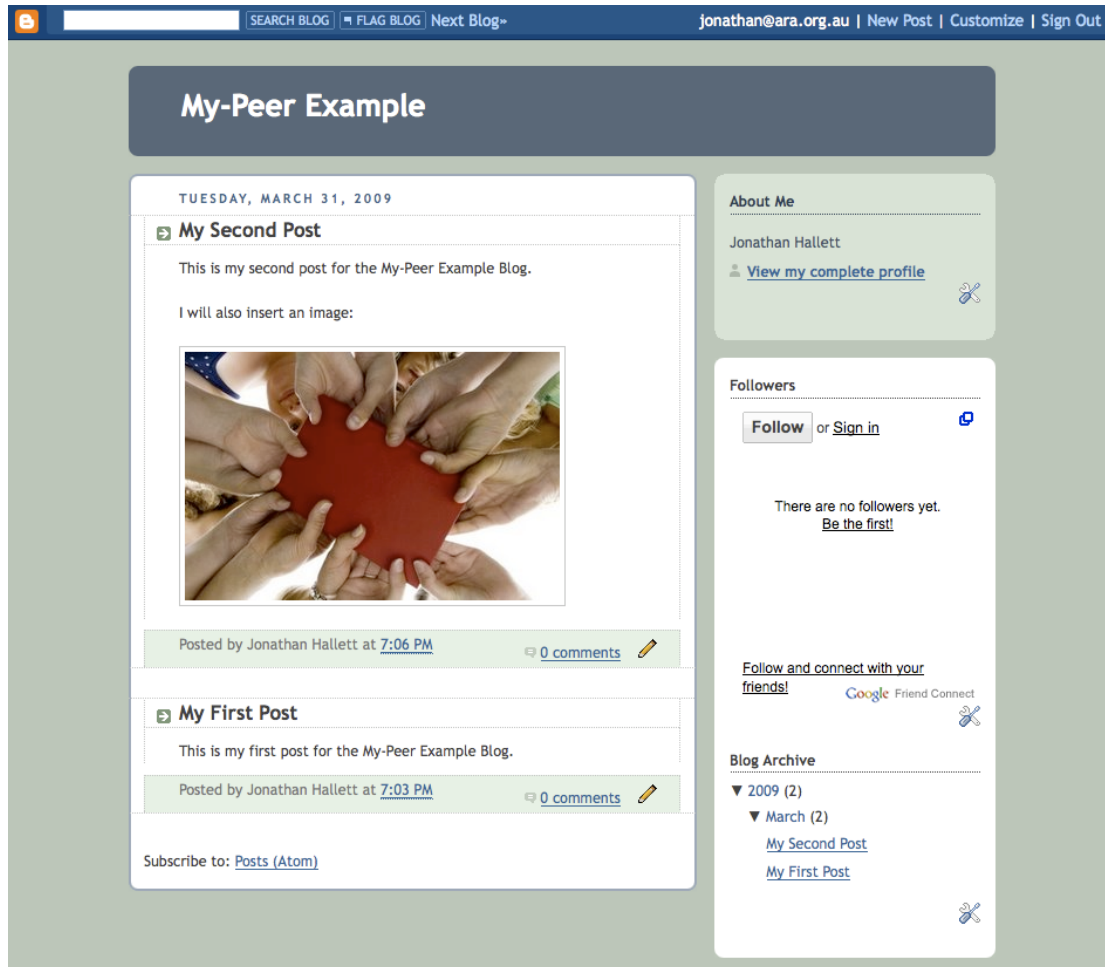
# How do I change the look of my blog?

Lastly, if you would like to now change the look of your blog select **'Layout'** and **'Pick New Template'**. Then select from the available templates a new one. Each template also has several colour options and you can preview what your blog will look like:

The screenshot shows the 'My-Peer Example' dashboard. At the top, a navigation bar includes 'My-Peer Example', the user 'jonathan@ara.org.au', and links for 'Dashboard', 'My Account', 'Help', and 'Sign out'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with tabs: 'Posting', 'Settings', 'Layout', 'Monetize', and 'View Blog'. The 'Layout' tab is highlighted with a yellow box and an arrow pointing to it. Below the tabs is a sub-navigation bar with links: 'Page Elements', 'Fonts and Colors', 'Edit HTML', 'Pick New Template', and 'SAVE TEMPLATE'. The 'Pick New Template' link is highlighted with a yellow box and an arrow pointing to it. Below this, a text box states: 'Select a new template for your blog. Changing your template will discard any changes that will be retained.' To the right of this text is a yellow box labeled 'Click when finished' with an arrow pointing to the 'SAVE TEMPLATE' button. Below the text box is a grid of six template preview cards. Each card shows a sample blog layout and a list of color options. The first card shows 'Minima' with options: Minima, Minima Dark, Minima Blue, Minima Ochre. The second card shows 'Denim' with options: Denim, Stretch Denim, Washed Denim, Stretch Denim Light. The third card shows 'Rounds' with options: Rounds 2, Rounds 3, Rounds 4. The fourth card shows 'Minima Lefty' with options: Minima Lefty, Minima Stretch, Minima Lefty Stretch. The fifth card shows 'Herbert' and 'Jellyfish'. The sixth card shows 'Harbor'. Each card has a 'preview template' link at the bottom. A yellow box labeled 'Preview template' with an arrow points to one of the preview links. The 'SAVE TEMPLATE' button is also visible in the top right of the template selection area.

Once you have chosen the template, select **'SAVE TEMPLATE'** and then view your blog to see the new look.

The blog now looks completely different but has the same content including your posts:



Now you are ready to continue using your blog.

Enjoy!