

# Setting up a Basic Webpage

Nowadays it seems that if you're running a campaign you need a website. Lots of people use the web to find information and contact details so it's worth having even just a simple page with basic information.

Setting up a website can be a bit daunting – there are all sorts of things you have to get your head round - like how to write your website, how to get it on the internet...

## ***Step 1 - find a 'host'***

A 'host' is somebody who runs a 'server' - which is just a computer connected to the internet that has webpages and other stuff on it. You can pay lots of money, a little money, use a free service (but have to accept horrible adverts on your site) or find a friend or organisation that may be sympathetic to your campaign and let you have some webspace (ie space on the server for your website) for free.

If you are planning a big and complicated website and want to pay for a reliable service then try one of the activist related hosts like [www.netuxo.co.uk](http://www.netuxo.co.uk).

If you're looking for free webspace then you can try [www.campaignon.com](http://www.campaignon.com), or ask around your mates if they know anyone with a bit of spare webspace (you'd be surprised how many geeks out there have a “bit of spare space”).

## ***Step 2 - write your webpage***

First of all have a good think about what information you want to put on your webpage. It's a good idea to write it all down on a piece of paper first.

A basic site will just have the following:

- A title(!) - to let the reader know what it's all about
- What do you want to achieve with your campaign?
- Background information
- A few nice pictures
- Contact details and, if relevant, maybe a map and details of how to get to where you are
- Links - you may want links to similar campaigns and resources.

A simple site like this is great, and if it's well written it won't need updating all the time.

## ***News***

The downside of a basic site is that people looking on the web won't be able to see what's happening right now. You could have a “Latest News” section, but this means that you'll need to update it regularly - and you shouldn't underestimate what a chore this will turn out to be! Remember: “Old News is Much Worse than No News”, so a basic site is much better than a snazzy site with lots of last year's news.

## ***Step 3 - build the webpage***

Webpages are written in something called HTML, but most of us don't speak HTML, so how can we

write our webpage? If you're lucky your host will have made it easy for you to just type up your website online, with nice buttons on the screen marked **B** for bold, *I* for italic and so on.

But if you haven't got this then you'll have to do it yourself. You can do one of the following:

- Find a friend to do it
- Use a programme like Dreamweaver, Nvu to write your webpage in - these look a bit like a word processor, but they save your page in HTML
- Use a word processor - almost all word processors can save as HTML - when you save the document just click "Save As" and choose HTML or webdocument. However, please, please do not use MS-Word as it makes a right pig's ear of it, and your page won't work for everyone on the web. You can use OpenOffice.org (download it for free - it has the same stuff as Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Access etc).

## **Pointers for a basic webpage**

- Black (or some dark colour - like dark blue or dark green) on a white background will look loads better than some fancy patterned or coloured background. It'll also be a lot easier to read - this is important if you want people to actually read your webpage!
- Don't go overboard on pictures - select a few of the best, and make sure they're not too big (pictures should ideally be less than 25k each - ask a friend for help if this doesn't mean anything to you).
- Don't bother with flashing or moving images - they're annoying, and can make it difficult to read a webpage.
- Keep each page fairly short (ideally no more than a couple of screenfulls) - if it's longer than that you can split your site into different pages - eg background information, contact details, links. Make sure the main pages have clear links at the top (and ideally, bottom) of each page.

## **Contact Details**

Don't forget to put some contact details on the website - and keep them up to date. If you put an email address on your page then it will be picked up by spammers, and you'll get lots and lots of junkmail.

A popular way round this problem is to write your email like this:

myemailaddress [AT] whatevername [DOT] co [DOT] uk

this is fairly easy for humans to read.

## ***Step 4 - upload your webpage***

How you do this depends on your host - so ask them.

## ***Step 5 - tell everyone!***

Email other campaigns with websites and ask them to link to your website, and put a link to their site on yours. That way google will find you (but it may take a few weeks).

**For more briefings on grassroots activism,  
and to find out about training workshops look at our website:**

**[www.seedsforchange.org.uk](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk)**