

Quick Guide for Google Docs Spreadsheets

If a member of your group does not already have a Google account, one person will need to create one. The account is free, and many school districts are encouraging the use of free online software to reduce costs. If your district or school uses other spreadsheet software, you will want to use that software with students. For now, you will create a basic spreadsheet using Google Docs that can be saved online and then accessed at the other centers. In Session 6, you will explore using Google Docs in more depth.

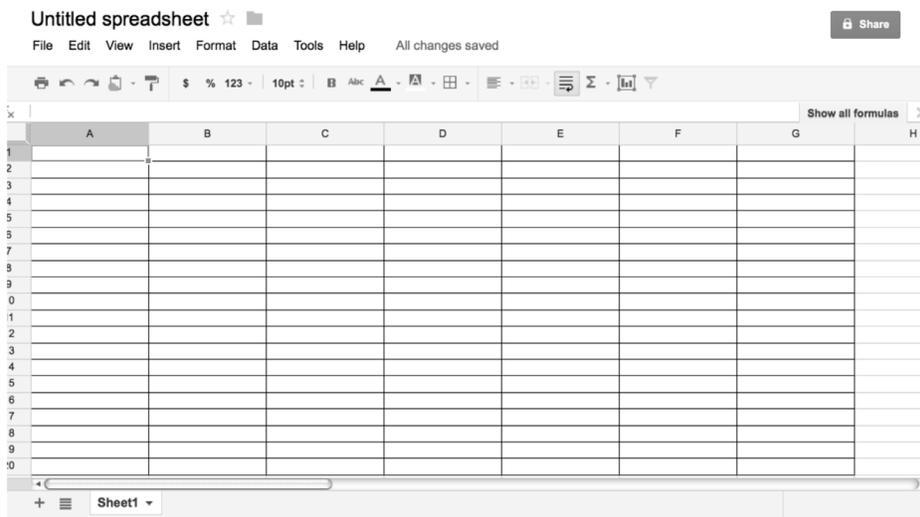
Note: Google Docs is soon changing to Google Drive. Exact instructions for accessing and using the software may change as a result.

Creating a Google Account

1. Go to <http://www.google.com>.
2. Select “Sign In” in the upper right corner. A new screen will open.
3. Select “Sign Up” in the upper right corner. A new screen will open.
4. Enter the requested information and follow the directions provided.

Creating a Google Docs Spreadsheet

1. Log in to the Google account.
2. Access Google Docs. If you do not see a Documents option, look under “More.”
3. On the main Google Docs window, click the “Create” button. Select “Spreadsheet” from the drop-down menu.
4. A window will appear that looks similar to the one below.



5. The spreadsheet is made up of a series of rows (1–10 in the image) and columns (A–G in the image). The box at the intersection of a row and a column is called a cell. For example, Row 1, Column A would be cell A1.

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6. At the top of the untitled spreadsheet is a menu bar that you will use as you create your spreadsheet. Below the menu bar is a toolbar of tools for frequently used actions.
7. Note the Help menu. Use this menu to access the Google Docs Help Center. Once there, select “spreadsheets” under “Get started” on the left. This section will walk you step-by-step through the process of creating, saving, uploading, and downloading a spreadsheet; using a template; editing and formatting cells; adding formulas and charts; and sharing your spreadsheet with others.

If you are new to spreadsheets, you may want to have a tab or window open on your web browser for the Help Center and another tab or window open for your actual spreadsheet so that you can toggle back and forth quickly, if needed.

8. Under the File menu, use “Rename” to title your spreadsheet. As a group, decide what you want to name your file.
9. You are now ready to build a spreadsheet that will allow you to test various scenarios of costs for creating your garden.
10. Enter the categories of items into the cells in Column A. Leave cell A1 blank. To enter text or numbers in a cell, click on the cell and type directly into it.

You can also click on a cell and enter a formula by typing into the formula bar. The formula bar is located directly under the toolbar beside the fx symbol.

11. Enter the headers for each column in Row 1. The headers might include the unit for each item, the number you will buy, the price for each unit, and a total cost for that item. You can use any headers that make sense to you.
12. After entering the headers, create a column that calculates the total cost of each item and then the total cost of all the items. This step requires you to enter a formula in the cells below the total cost header. You will also need to enter a formula to calculate the total cost of all the items.

To enter a formula, click on the cell where you want to put it. Then click in the formula bar and enter the formula. For example, to multiply the quantity of units and the cost of each unit to get the total cost for that item, enter the formula “=C2*D2” without the quotation marks. All formulas begin with the equal sign because the value displayed in the cell is equal to the result of the formula. Repeat the formula for each row (e.g., =C3*D3, =C4*D4, =C5*D5, etc.)

13. Now enter the formula to calculate the total cost of all the items.
 - a. Name one of your rows “Total Cost.”
 - b. In that row, click on the cell that falls below the totals for each of the rows above.
 - c. Enter a formula to calculate the sum of all the cells above. That formula is “=SUM(name of first cell: name of last cell)” without the quotation marks. You can select the SUM function by clicking on the Insert menu and selecting “Function” or by clicking on the  symbol in the tool bar.
14. Enter the data for each row and column, and then calculate the cost of your garden. Once you have done so, you can either create another spreadsheet for a different amount of each item or you can simply change the values until you find the most cost-effective combination for your garden.

Google Docs Help Center: <http://support.google.com/docs/?hl=en>