Creating Google Scholar Profile

Let’s now dig into the research platform that’s most often used by researchers: Google Scholar.

Google Scholar offers a popular way to create a profile that showcases your own papers and the citations they’ve received. It also calculates a platform-dependent h-index, which many researchers love to track (for better or for worse).

To get you onto Google Scholar, so you can up your scholarly SEO (aka “googleability”), more easily share your publications with new readers, and discover new citations to your work from across the entire scholarly web.

**Step 1: Create your basic profile**

Log on to scholar.google.com and click the “My Citations” link at the top of the page to get your account setup started.

On the first screen, add your affiliation information and university email address, so Google Scholar can confirm your account. Add keywords that are relevant to your research interests, so others can find you when browsing a subject area. Provide a link to your university homepage, if you have one. Click “Next Step,” and–that’s it! Your basic profile is done. Now, let’s add some publications to it.
Step 2: Add publications
Google has likely already been indexing your work for some time now as part of their mission as a scholarly search engine. So, this step is pretty easy, compared to what it takes to get your work on to Academia.edu or ResearchGate.

Google Scholar will provide you with a list of publications they think belong to you. You’ll need to read through the list of publications that it suggests as yours and select which ones you want to add to your profile. Beware—if you have a common name, it’s likely there’s some publications in this list that don’t belong to you. And there’s also possibly content that you don’t want on your profile because it’s not a scholarly article, or is not representative of your current research path, and so on. Read through the publications list and deselect any that you do not want to add to your profile, like the below newsletter item that Google Scholar thinks is a scholarly article, then click the grey “Add” button at the top of your profile.
Next, confirm you want Google to automatically add new publications to your profile in the future. Note that this might add publications you didn’t author to your profile if you’ve got a very common name, but can be worth it for the time it saves you approving new articles every month.

Your profile is now almost complete! Two more steps: add a photo by clicking the “Change Photo” link on your profile homepage, and set your private profile to “Public.”

**Step 3: Make your profile public**

Your profile is private if you’ve just created it. Change your profile visibility by clicking “Edit” next to “My profile is private” and then selecting “My profile is public” in the drop-down box.
**Bonus: Add co-authors**

While your profile is technically complete, you’ll want to take advantage of Google Scholar’s built-in co-authorship network. Adding co-authors is a good way to let others know you’re now on Google Scholar, and will be useful later on in the Challenge, when we set up automatic alerts that can help you stay on top of new research in your field.

To add a suggested co-author, find the “Add Co-authors” section on the top right-hand section of your profile, then click the plus-sign next to each co-author you want to add.

That’s it! Now you’ve got a Google Scholar profile that helps you track when your work has been cited both in the peer-reviewed literature and elsewhere (more on that in a moment), and is yet another scholarly landing page that’ll connect others with your publications. The best part? Google Scholar’s pretty good at automatically adding new stuff to your profile, meaning you won’t have to do a lot of work to keep it up.

**Limitations**

Dirty data in the form of incorrect publications isn’t the only limitation of Google Scholar you should be aware of. The quality of Google Scholar citations has also been questioned, because they’re different from what scholars have traditionally considered to be a citation worth counting: a citation in the peer-reviewed literature. Google Scholar counts citations from pretty much anywhere they can find them. That means their citation count often includes citations from online undergraduate papers, slides, white papers and similar sources. Because of this, Google Scholar citation counts are much higher than those from competitors like Scopus and Web of Science.
That can be a good thing. But you can also argue it’s “inflating” citation counts unfairly. It also makes Google Scholar’s citation counts quite susceptible to gaming techniques like using fake publications to fraudulently raise the numbers. We’ve not heard many evaluators complaining about these issues so far, but it’s good to be aware of.

Google Scholar also shares a limitation with ResearchGate and Academia.edu: it’s somewhat of an information silo. You cannot export your citation data, meaning that even if you were to amass very impressive citation statistics on the platform, the only way to get them onto your website, CV, or an annual report is to copy and paste them—way too much tedium for most scientists to endure. Their siloed approach to platform building definitely contributes to researchers’ profile fatigue.

Its final major limitation? There’s no telling if it will be around tomorrow. Remember Google Reader? Google has a history of killing beloved products when the bottom line is in question. It’s not exaggerating to say that Google Scholar Profiles could literally go away at any moment.

That said, the benefits of the platform outweigh the downsides for many. And we’re going to give you a way to beat part of the “information silo” problem in today’s homework.

Homework

Google Scholar can only automate so much. To fully complete your Google Scholar profile, let’s manually add any missing articles. And let’s also teach you how to export your publication information from Google Scholar, because you’ll want to reuse it on other platforms.

1. Add missing articles

You might have an article or two that Google Scholar didn’t automatically add to your profile. If that’s the case, you’ll need to add it manually.

Click the “Add” button in the grey toolbar in the top of your profile.

On the next page, click the “Add articles manually” link in the left-hand toolbar. Then you’ll see this screen:
It’s here where you can add new papers to your profile. Include as much descriptive information as possible—it makes it easier for Google Scholar to find citations to your work. Click “Save” after you’ve finished adding your article metadata, and repeat as necessary until all of your publications are on Google Scholar.

2. **Clean up your Google Scholar Profile data**
Thanks to Google Scholar Profiles’ “auto add” functionality, your Profile might include some articles you didn’t author.

If that’s the case, you can remove them in one of two ways:

- clicking on the title of each offending article to get to the article’s page, and then clicking the “Delete” button in the top green bar

- from the main Profile page, ticking the boxes next to each incorrect article and selecting the “Delete” from the drop-down menu in the top grey bar

If you want to prevent incorrect articles from appearing on your profile in the first place, you can change your Profile settings to require Google Scholar to email you for approval before adding anything. To make this change, from your main Profile page, click the drop-down menu that appears in the top grey bar. Select “Profile updates”: 

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This Guide is based heavily upon [https://impactstory.org/](https://impactstory.org/)
On the next page, change the setting to “Don’t automatically update my profile.”

Prefer to roll the dice? You can keep a close eye on what articles are automatically added to your profile by signing up for alerts and manually removing any incorrect additions that appear. Here’s how to sign up for alerts: click the blue “Follow” button at the top of your profile, select “Follow new articles,” enter your email address, and click “Create alert.”

3. Learn how to export your publications list in BiBTeX format
There will likely be a time when you’ll want to export your Google Scholar publications to another service like Impactstory or Mendeley. Here’s how to do that.
Tick the box next to each article whose details you want to export, or tick the top left-hand box to select all articles on your profile. With the relevant articles selected, click the “Export” button like we see on the right here, then choose BiBTeX. Next, choose to export either the selected articles or all articles from your profile, then click the final “Export” button to download your “citations.bib” file.

4. Explore your citations
Your final bit of homework is to enjoy learning about all the different places you’ve been cited. Because Google Scholar indexes citations from across the entire scholarly web, there’s likely a lot of places in the world that you’re being cited, in many different publication formats.

Take some time to look not only at the numbers Google Scholar provides, but to also click through the numbers to see the actual citing publications themselves. Read them. See if you can’t connect with the authors on ResearchGate or Academia.edu, if you’re so inclined.

And if you haven’t yet been cited, don’t despair! Now that more people have the opportunity to find your research on Google Scholar and elsewhere, the citations likely aren’t far away.

In coming days, we’ll cover how to use Google Scholar to stay abreast of new research in your field and new citations to your work. Stay tuned!