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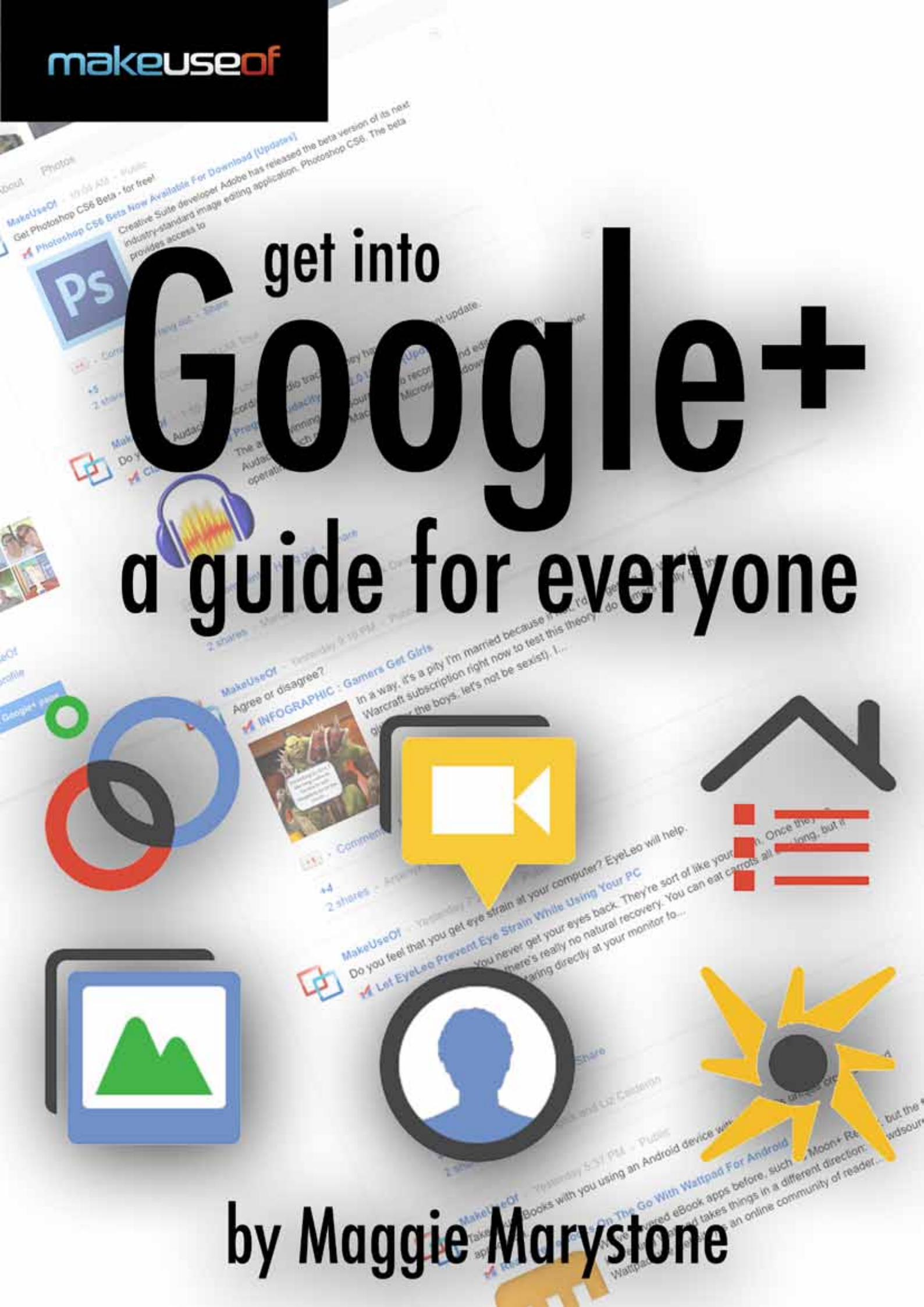
get into Google+

a guide for everyone



by Maggie Marystone

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1. Introduction

Perhaps you were a founding member of MySpace. Maybe you're a Facebook power user, or maybe you've just started to explore the world of social media. Either way, if you're reading this guide, you have probably wondered, "Why should I sign up for Google+?"

The answer is simple: Google. You may have heard of them. Even if you already have other social networking accounts, you should sign up for Google+ simply because Google is going to be around for a very long time. It's almost impossible to avoid using Google products in your online life. In December 2011, Google+ was averaging 625,000 new users *every day*, and Google predicts they will have *400 million users by the end of 2012*. Google continues to connect their products in new, interesting and effective ways - Plus is at the center of that.

You may have heard that Google+ is on its way out. Google says otherwise.

"Not only is Google Plus not a ghost town," Vic Gundotra, Google's vice president for engineering, said to the New York Times, "we have never seen anything grow this fast. Ever."

Here's the point: joining Google+ means you will be poised to take advantage of all that Google has to offer. From personalized search results to instant photo uploads, you will soon see the value of Google+ even beyond its main benefit: sharing and discovering content that *you* are interested in.

2. What is Google+?

Is Google+ just another social media network?

Google+, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and the like are all social networks. They're designed to let you share up-to-the-second updates, ideas, thoughts, links and media with your friends and the public.

How is Google+ different?

The big difference between Google+ and other social networking platforms is that Google has integrated Google+ with its other services (and continues to do so): search, YouTube, Gmail and much more. While Facebook and Twitter offer various ways of using their platform to share and comment on content you find on third-party websites, you will find that Google+ is already built into services you use every day.

Google+ also redefines social networking privacy by introducing a concept new to the genre: Circles. Circles differentiate Google+ from Facebook by allowing users *precise control over who sees what*.

How does this work? You know your Tweets are public. Your Facebook page is visible to...well, do you even know? With Google+ individualized content is delivered only to those you dictate.

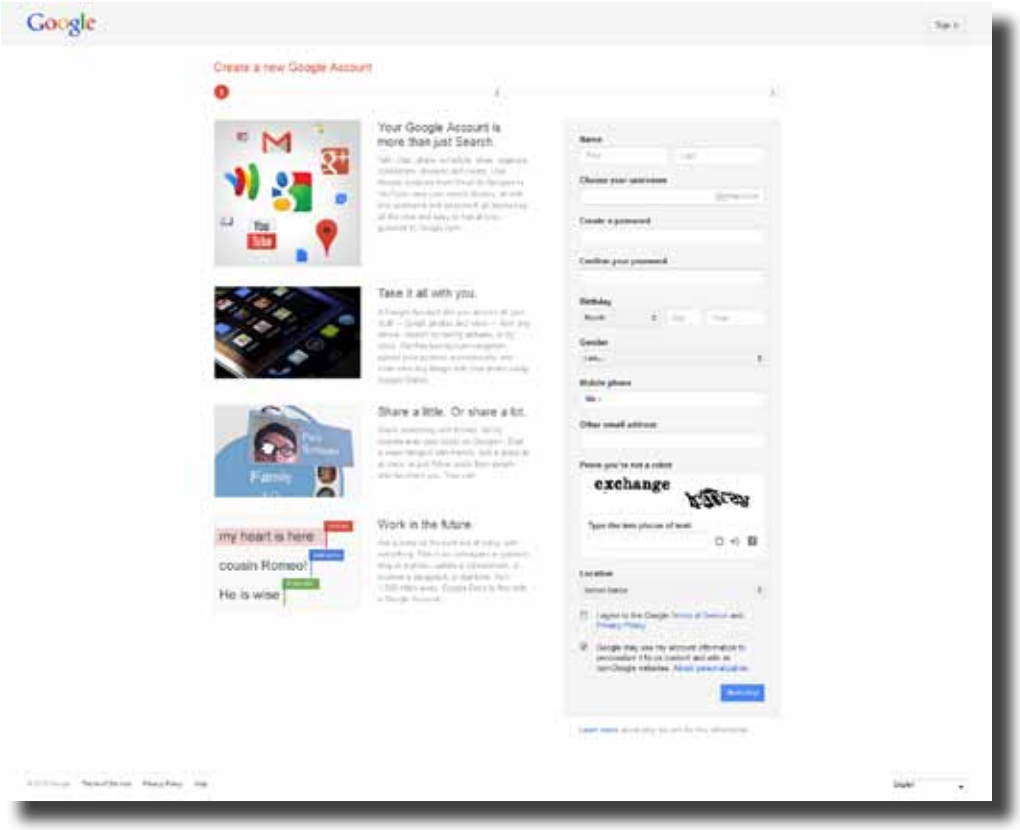
For example, if you were to tweet, "I hate my job," odds are you don't want your boss seeing that tweet. Similarly, if your mother is your friend on Facebook, how can you be sure she can't see all those photos from that crazy party last weekend? Historically, on Facebook, users were stumped. This functionality is now available but seems to be discouraged by Facebook: it's buried deep within the interface.

With Google+, you are in control of your content right from the start.

Any time you share, you designate exactly who will be able to see the content you're sharing. Share with a particular person or a Circle of people.

We will learn more about that later. First, let's get you a Google+ account.

3. Creating a Google account



To participate in Google+, you need a Google account. If you already have a Google account, use your existing account credentials to sign into google.com or mail.google.com. Then click on the +You button on the left side of the Google toolbar to sign up for Google+.

If you don't have a Google account, now is the time to get one. Creating a Google account will grant you access to many different services and applications from Google (Gmail, Google Docs, Google Calendar, YouTube and much more. You have two options here: sign up for a Gmail email account or sign up for Google Apps for Business.

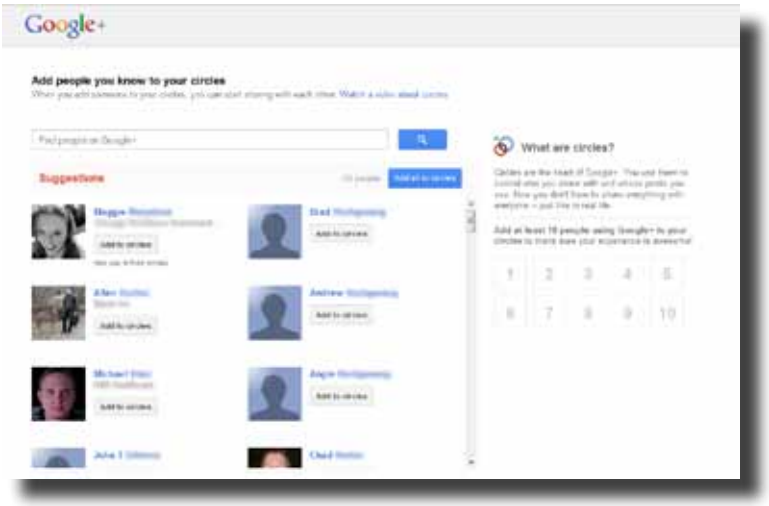
As of January 2012, new users who sign up for a Google account will automatically be registered for Google+ as well. Sign up here: https://accounts.google.com/SignUp.

4. The Google+ Sign-up Process

Now that you have a Google account, let's get started. Sign up at plus.google.com or click the "+You" button on your Google menu bar if you're already signed into your Google account.

By joining, you are automatically creating a public Google+ profile. Be sure to use your real name when signing up: not doing so violates Google's Terms of Service.

4.1 Completing your profile



Okay, it's time to complete your Google+ profile. First, specify your gender.

Next, upload a photo. This is crucial. Do it now. You probably already have a profile photo for Facebook or another social network. Using the same profile photo across social networks is a way for your friends to recognize you and pay attention to your content. Posting a profile photo is the number one thing you can do to ensure your content will be viewed by other people.

The next screen will prompt you to **Add people you know to your circles**. Google will likely already have a few suggestions for you. Alternatively, if you have a Yahoo or Hotmail account, you can import your contacts from those accounts or simply search Google+ for people by name.

Click "Continue," and you will see a list of "interesting and famous people." Add anyone you like to your Circles. Don't worry about adding everyone you know right now. You can add and remove people from your Circles at any time.

Your Profile

Next up is adding additional information to your profile: the schools you went to, where you work and where you live, for example.

When you're finished you'll be taken to your main Stream page. However, there's still a little work to be done on your profile. Click on the profile icon in the Google+ toolbar. If this is the first time you have visited this page, a pop-up will appear asking you to fill out more details in your profile.

You can always edit your profile by clicking on the Edit Profile button on your profile page.

The more information you provide in your profile, the

easier it will be for other people to find you. You are in control of who can see virtually every aspect of your profile. Do you want to keep your high school private so only people in your "former classmates" Circle can see it? It's simple.

There are a couple exceptions to this granular control over your content. Your name is visible to anyone on the web, and changing it in Google+ will change it across all your Google products. Similarly, your Tagline or "brief description of you" is always public.

Your profile includes the following:

Tagline: A brief description of you. This appears just below your name on your profile.

Introduction: Enter something so people know they've found the right person. Probably best to keep this set to Public.

Bragging rights: Get creative with this one or leave it blank; it's up to you!

Occupation: What do you do?

Employment: Where have you worked? Enter multiple jobs and control whether a particular job is visible.

Education: Enter the schools you attended. Again, you can choose who to share this information with for each school you list.

Places lived: Enter all the places you have lived, and Google will add points to your map!

Home: If you like, enter your home contact info. Fields are provided for Phone, Mobile, Email, Address, Fax, Pager, and Chat.

Work: Just like Home - enter contact info for your work.

Relationship: This is your relationship status just like on Facebook. Your choices are: I don't want to say, Single, In a relationship, Engaged, Married, It's Complicated, In an Open Relationship, Widowed, in a Domestic Partnership, In a Civil Union (interestingly, Facebook offers two "Relationship" options that Google doesn't - Separated and Divorced.)

Looking for: Options are Friends, Dating, A relationship and Networking

Gender: Male, Female or Other

Other names: If you have other names you go by (e.g., a nickname or maiden name), this is a good place to put that information so people know they've found the right person.

Profile discovery: Checkbox for "Help others discover my profile in search results."

Other profiles: Connect your Google+ profile to: Facebook, Yahoo, Flickr, LinkedIn, Quora, Twitter, Yelp, Hotmail, MySpace, Plaxo and last.fm. Here you can also add a custom link to, say, your blog or personal website.

Contributor to: Are you a contributor to other websites? List them here!

Recommended link: This is just the standard link list. Enter a few of your favorite sites so people can get to know you.

NOTE: You have control over which tabs appear on your profile. Posts and About tabs always appear (after all, that's what Google+ is all about). But what if you don't want to have a public Photos tab on your profile? No problem. Click Edit profile and then click on the Photos tab. Uncheck the box for "Show this tab on your profile." That's it! Controlling the visibility of the Photos, Videos and +1s tabs work the same way.

5. Circles

Here are two ways to think about Circles: Outgoing and incoming. Design groups you want to talk to and groups you want to listen to.

Circles are groups of users on Google+. Circles allow you to organize and filter your content stream with names that are convenient, descriptive and familiar to you. Once you create a Circle, you can share content with everyone in that Circle. In other words, Circles help you share the right stuff with the right people. You can also listen in on what people in that Circle are saying by viewing the Stream from that Circle.

Typical Circles include: Family, Work, Friends, Classmates, etc. You can add a person to any Circle that you have created, or you can create a new Circle entirely.

Important: None of your friends will know which of your circles they are in. Circles are not public and are only for YOUR privacy and convenience.

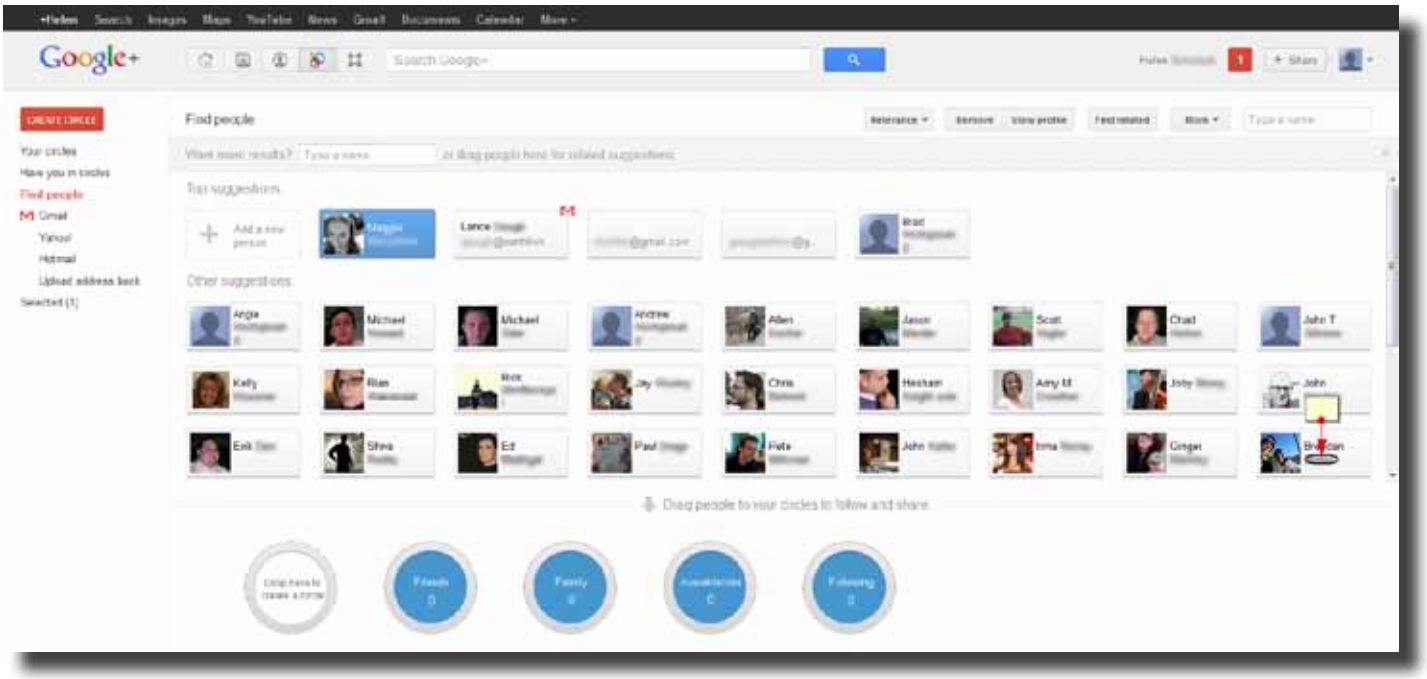
There is no right or wrong way to organize your Circles, but remember that Circles are important filters for both sharing and receiving content. Create Circles for the groups of people in your life with whom you want to share content. Also create Circles for groups of people whose content you want to follow.

5.1 How to Create a Circle

Click on the Circles icon in your Google+ menu bar. Google+ starts you off with a few default Circles, including Friends, Family, Acquaintances (people you have met but don't know that well) and Following (people you don't know but whose content you find interesting). You can use these default Circles or create your own. To create a new Circle, drop a person into the "Drop here to create a circle" image. Keep adding people to the Circle or click the "Create circle" link. You will be prompted to name the Circle and add a description. You can also search for more people to add to the Circle.

NOTE: Circles are listed alphabetically, but the default circles are always listed at the top. If you want to control the way your Circles are sorted, consider deleting all the default Circles and creating new ones.

5.2 How to Add Friends to a Circle



It's as easy as drag and drop! Add people to as many Circles as you want. There's no limit. Remember: Circles are there to help you.

Are you looking for interesting people on Google+? Google can suggest some for you to follow based your interests. Click the Find People link in the right sidebar on your Google+ home page.

“Follow public posts from interesting and famous people. Add celebrities, journalists, photographers, and more to your circles to see what they’re sharing publicly.”

5.3 Creative Uses of Circles

As we have discussed, various aspects of Google+ have started to pop up in other Google products. Circles are no exception. Google Circles are now available for Google Voice users. What does that mean? Here’s an example: Google Voice users may now use Circles to create groups of callers who ring straight through to your phone and those who are sent directly to voicemail. Similarly, you can apply any of your Google Voice rules to any of your Circles.

There are other potential uses for Circles; the main limit is your imagination. Here are just a few more:

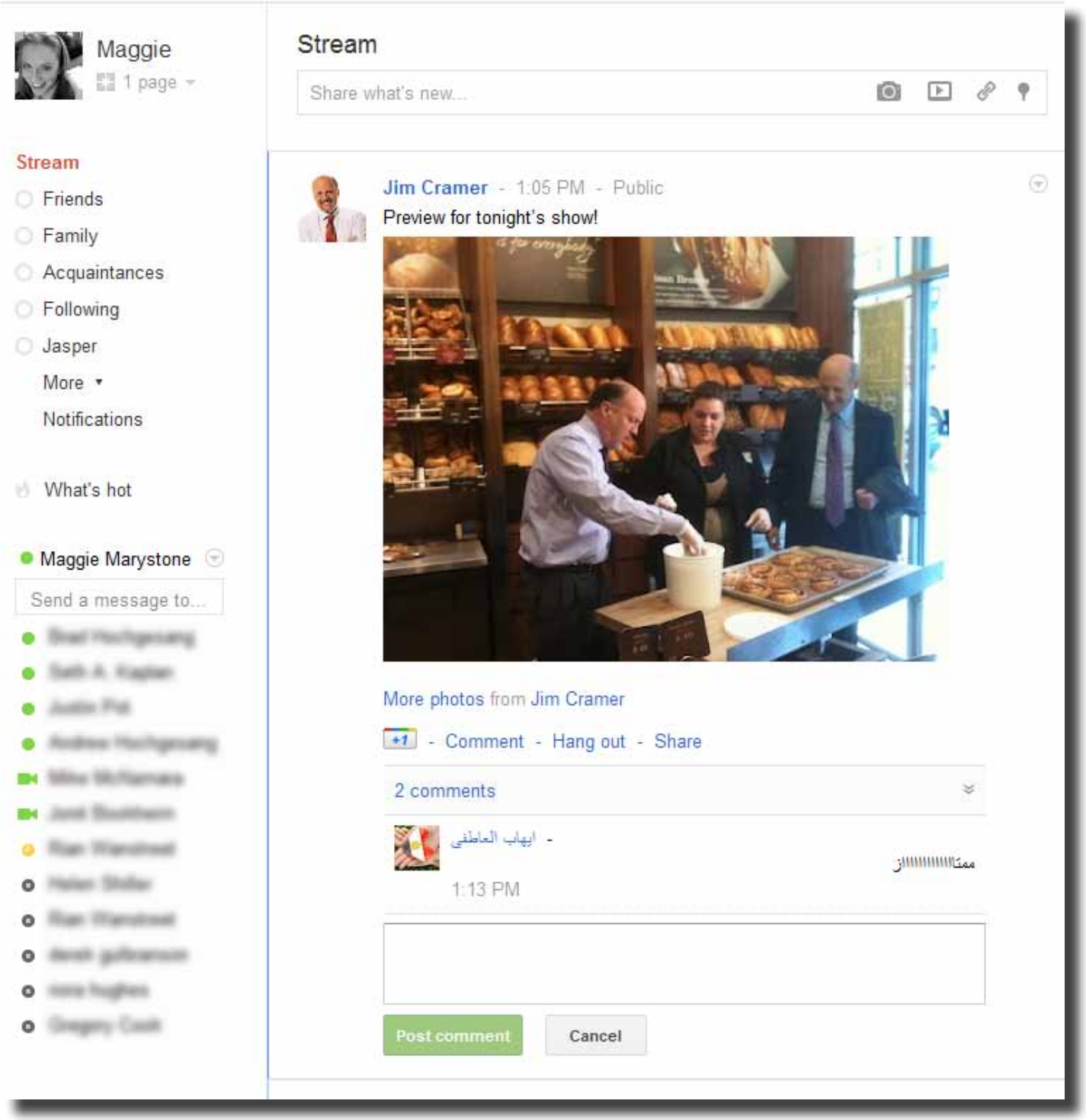
- If you’re a sports fan, you could create a circle for your favorite team and easily view only content related to your team.
- Add circles for your favorite Cities, colleges, and more
- Notify your baseball team of cancelled games, if you’re a coach or manager.
- Create a carpool circle and use Messenger to communicate with the whole group at once
- People with large extended families have found that creating Circles for each branch of their family and another Circle for everyone in the family is an easy way to make sure they were sharing relevant content to the people they meant to reach.
- Add a “Read Later” circle, and add just yourself to it. Then, as you browse the Internet and come across and article you don’t have time to read, you can share it with your Read Later circle, and it will be saved for you to read when you have time.

6. Chat

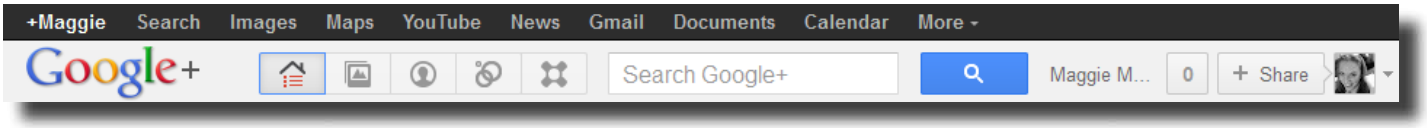
The same Google Chat feature you’re familiar with from Gmail is also here in Google+. It’s located below the What’s Hot link on the left sidebar.

7. Stream

View your main Stream by clicking on the Home icon in the Google+ menu bar. Narrow down your stream to only posts from people in a particular Circle by clicking the name of the Circle in the Stream list, below your profile photo. See the Advanced Features section for some tips on how to filter your stream.

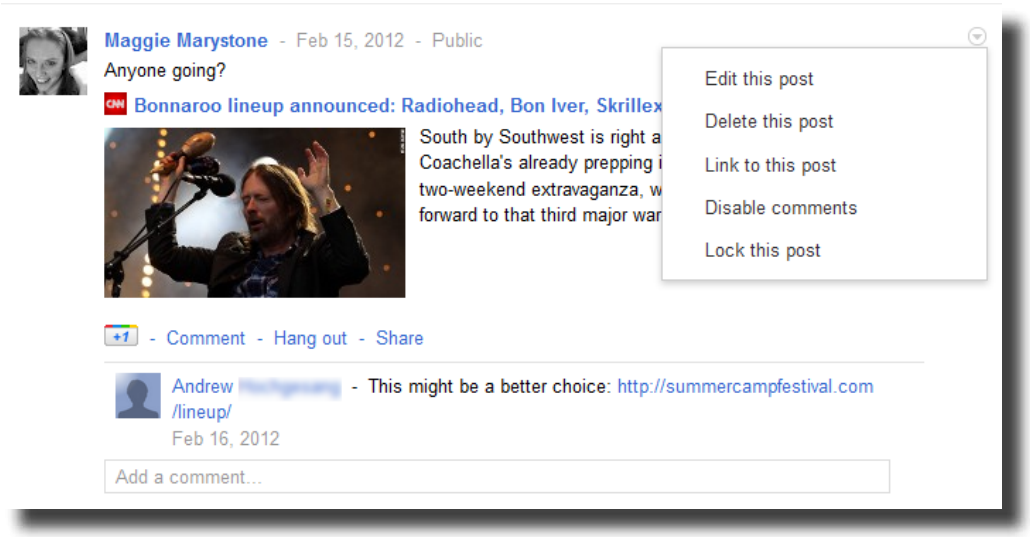


8. Sharing Content



Sharing content on Google+ is a breeze. Click the "+Share" button located in the top right corner of any Google+ page. Alternatively, post new content to your Stream from the "Share what's new" field at the top of your Stream. Spice up your post by attaching a photo, video, link or location. Every time you share content on Google+, you have the power to make sure your message is only viewable by the people you want to see it.

8.1 Disabling comments and locking a post



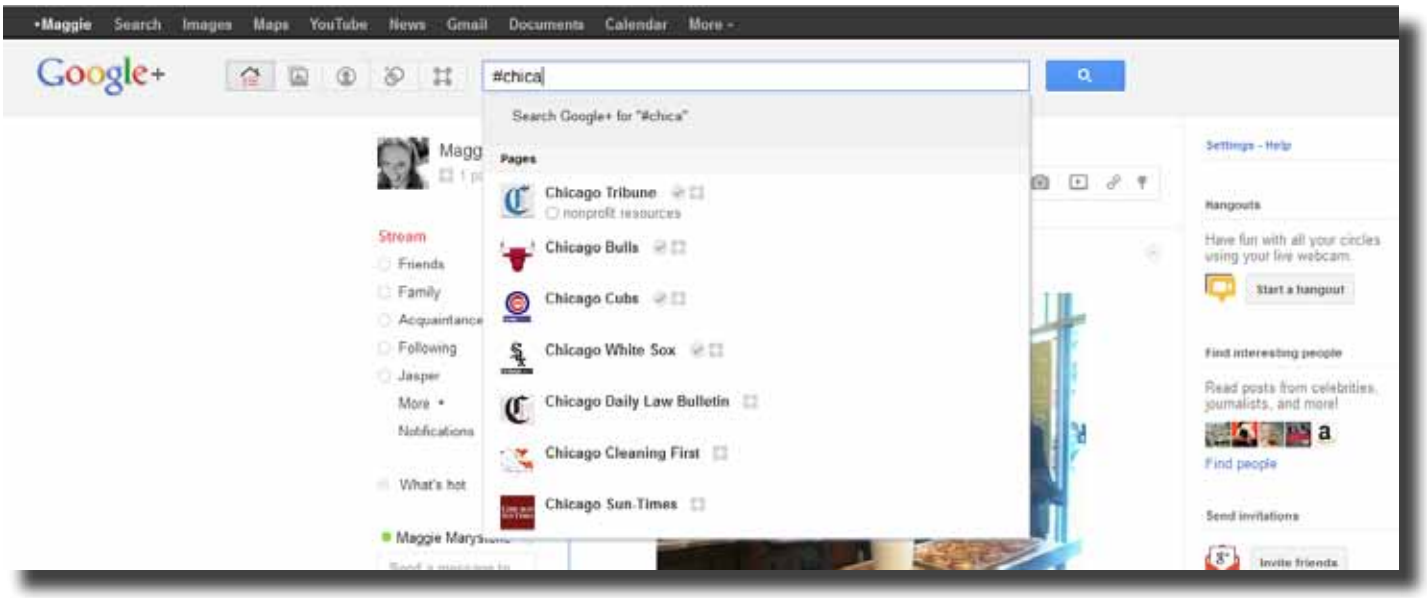
Here are two more great Google+ features you won't get from Facebook (at least not yet!) - disabling comments and locking posts. You can access both of these options by clicking the small grey drop-down arrow to the right of any post on your stream.

Disabling comments will not delete any existing comments. It just prevents any new comments from being posted. If you would like to delete a comment posted to content you have shared in your stream, hover your mouse over the comment you would like to delete and click the grey X at the bottom right corner of the comment. Alternatively, you can flag the comment to report abuse or to block the commenter.

Locking a post means that anyone you shared that post with will not be able to re-share it in their own Stream.

8.2 #Hashtags

If you use Twitter, you'll be familiar with hashtags and how they work. Tag your content with # followed by a keyword. Keywords can be anything from #art to #SOPA to #___. Google+ will even suggest relevant hashtags.



When you're writing a post, type # followed by a few letters you think might be relevant to the topic you're writing about. Google will suggest some popular hashtags. This auto-complete hashtag feature helps cut down on variants of the same hashtag, leaving our social content better organized.

8.3 +1

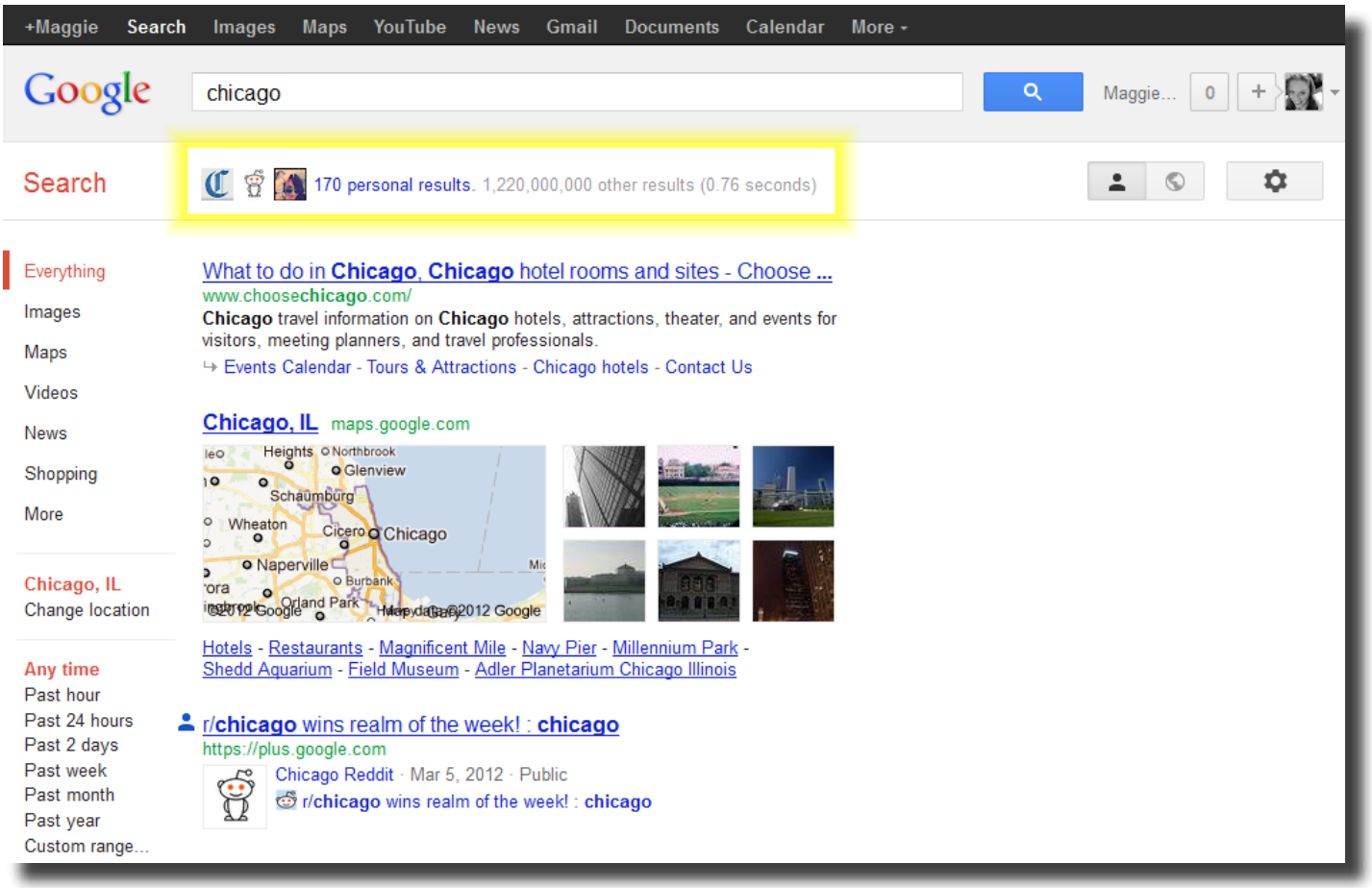
The +1 feature is similar to Facebook's Like button. Clicking on a +1 button is like voting for a site and is visible by all of your friends. Any site you have +1'd will be listed on the +1 tab of your profile. Clicking +1 on a website will not automatically add the link to your Google+ Stream, so if you want to share the link, remember to post it to your Stream. However, your friends will be able to see any links you've +1'd that they stumble upon, you'll see theirs too.

When you +1 a site, you also affect how that site shows up in related Google searches. Your friends will also see relevant sites that you've +1'd in their search results.

See the Tips & Tricks chapter for a list of Google+ browser extensions.

9. Searching & Browsing

9.1 Social Search



If you've read this far, you know that Google is integrating Google+, +1's and sharing throughout the Google ecosystem. Google Search is no different. Now when you search Google, your results will include three new features.

- Personal Results
- Profiles in Search
- People and Pages

From Google's official blog:

1. **Personal Results**, which enable you to find information just for you, such as Google+ photos and posts—both your own and those shared specifically with you, that only you will be able to see on your results page;

2. **Profiles in Search**, both in autocomplete and results, which enable you to immediately find people you're close to or might be interested in following; and,

People and Pages, which help you find people profiles and Google+ pages related to a specific topic or area of interest, and enable you to follow them with just a few clicks. Because behind most every query is a

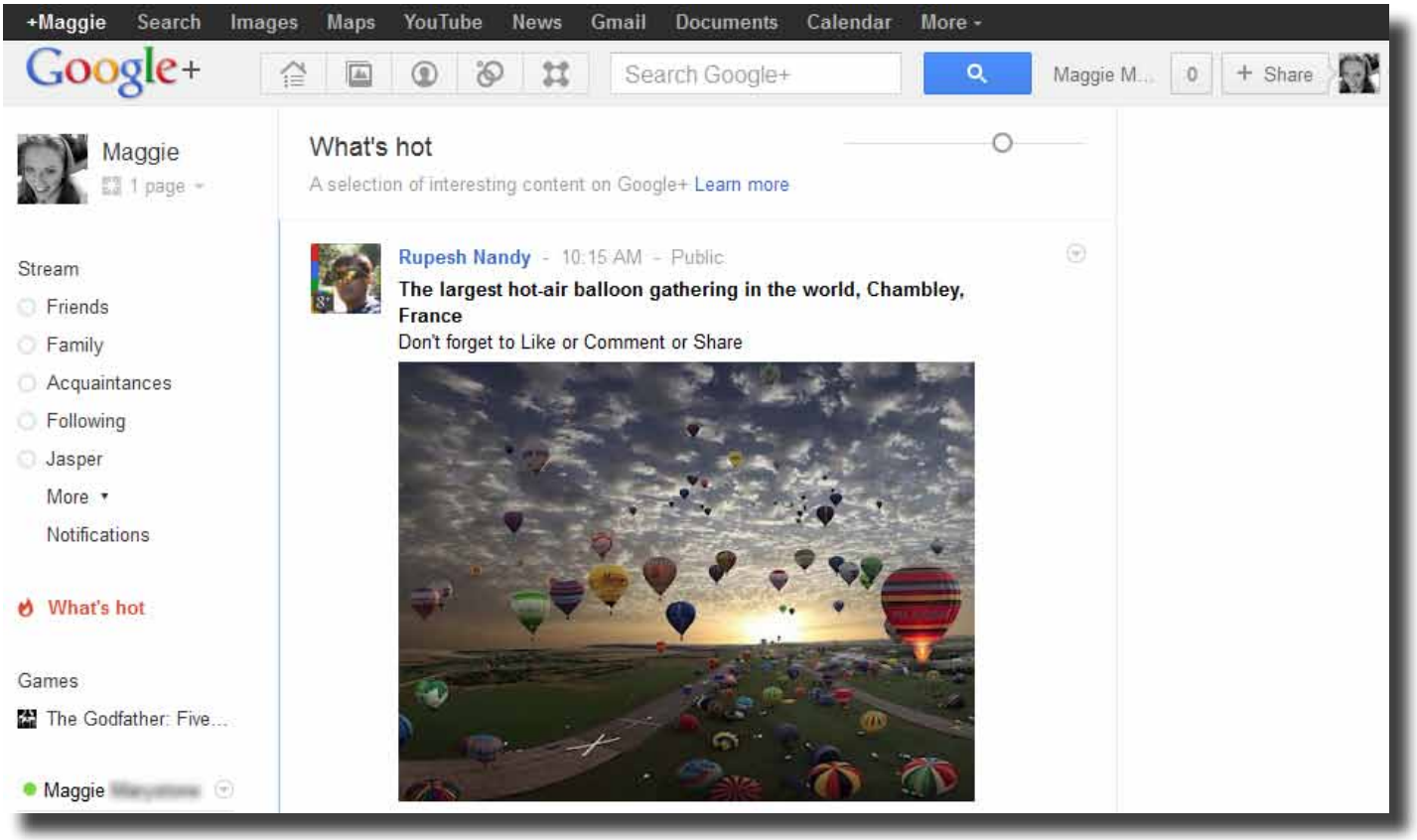
9.2 Real-time search

This feature, which relied on access to Twitter's API, was discontinued in July 2011. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Real-Time_Search

Hopefully some version of this, featuring information from Google+, is coming soon.

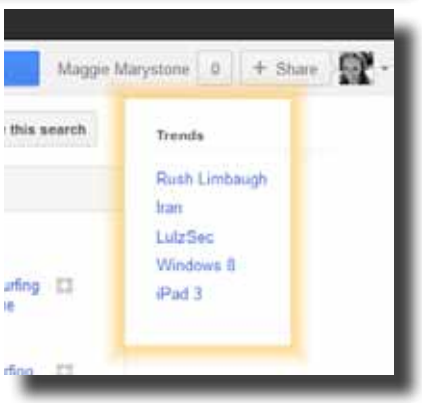
9.3 What's hot

Looking for new and interesting content? Google provides "a selection of interesting content on Google+." If you see a post you like, +1 it and add the author to your circles. Comment on the post and share it in your own stream.



9.4 Trends

What are other people searching for on Google+? Search Google+ for a keyword using the Google+ search window at the top of the screen. In addition to the results from your search, the results page will show you a list of trending topics on the right. You can also save your searches so they appear below the "What's hot" link on your main Stream page.

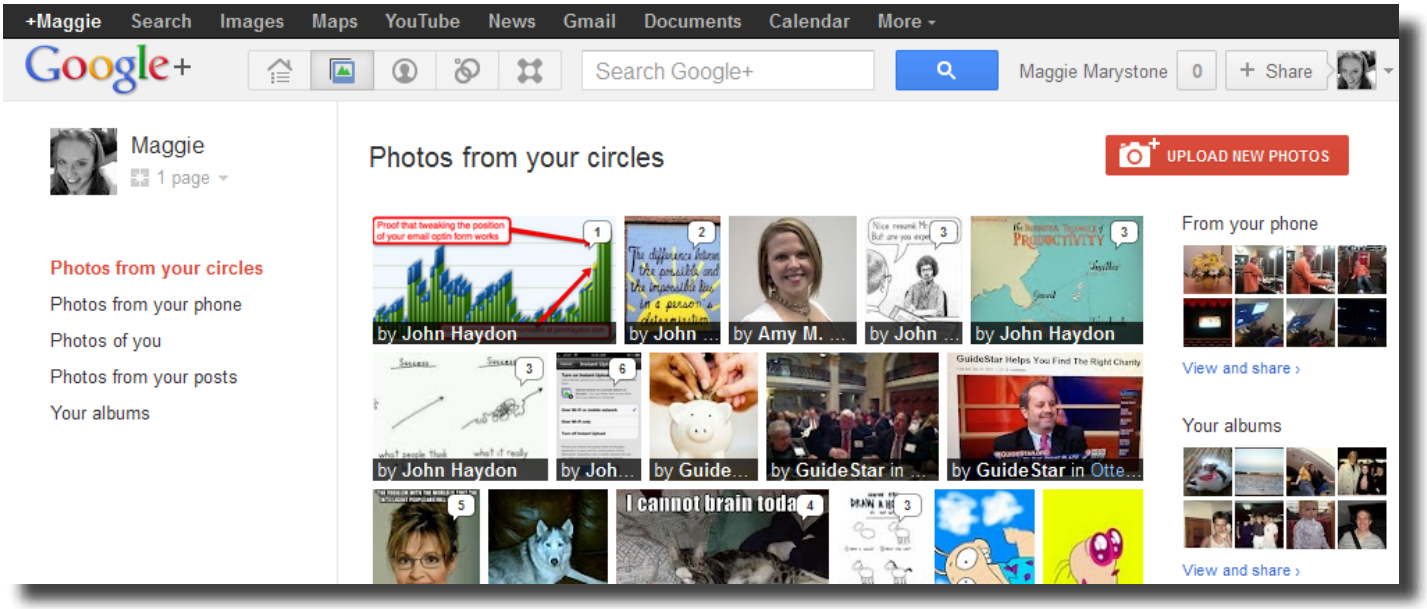


10. Photos

Access your Google+ Photos page by clicking on the photo icon in the Google+ menu bar. On the left, you will see that your photos are organized into 5 categories;

- Photos from your circles
- Photos from your phone
- Photos of you
- Photos from your posts
- Your albums

Google+ gives you the same kind of control over who sees your photos as you have come to expect with your other content on Google+. Keep them private, make them public, or share them with specific people or circles.



10.1 Photos from your circles

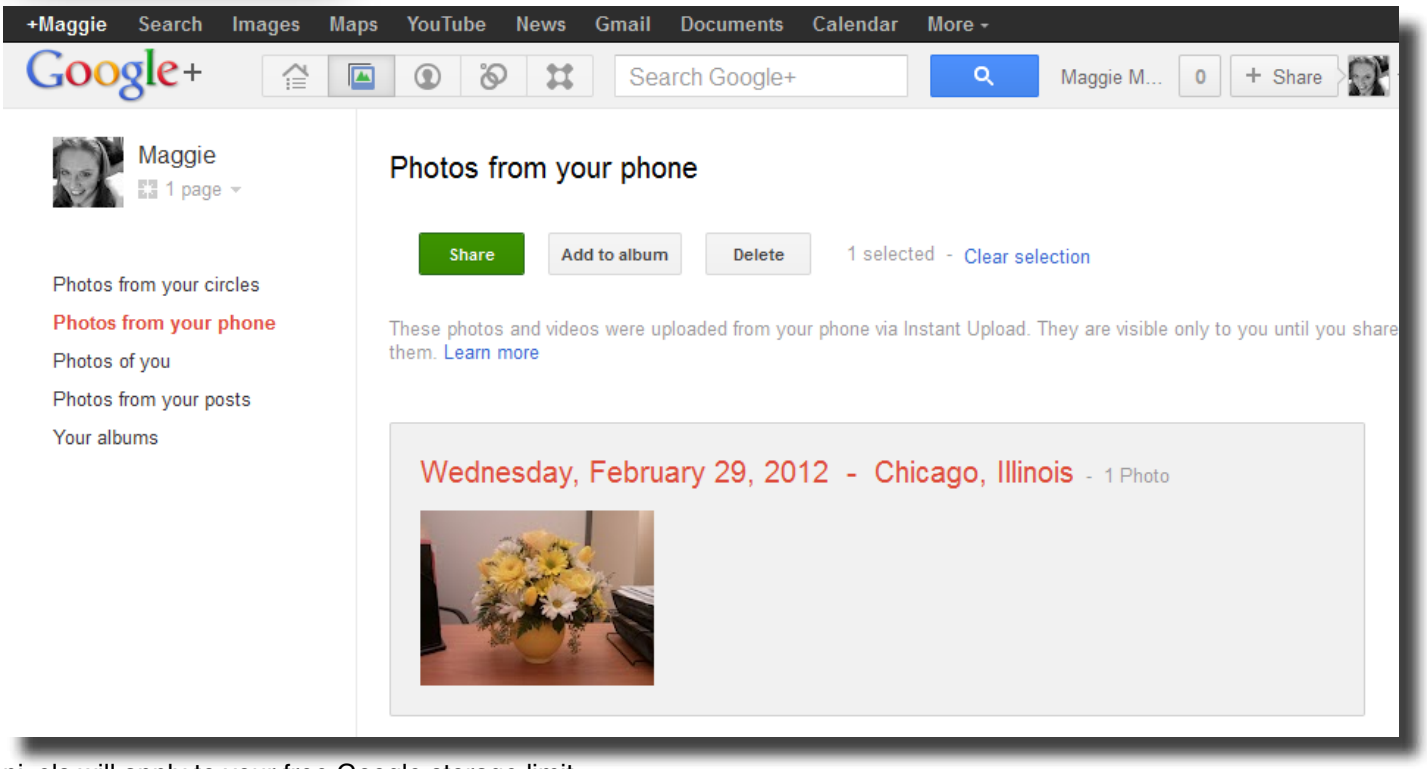
View all the recent photos posted by people in your circles. Clicking on any photo launches a larger version of the image in a lightbox — a place to comment, +1 or share the post. You can also view the photo details and download a full size version of the photo (if the author has allowed it). Also, report the photo or comment as inappropriate under the Options menu.

10.2 Photos from your phone

Do you have an Android phone or an iPhone? Be sure to enable Instant Upload. Once Instant Upload is enabled, every photo and video you take with the phone is automatically uploaded to your Google+ account. Never deal with the hassle of getting your photos off your phone again! As a Google+ user, you get unlimited photo and video uploads. Photos and videos are marked private by default but are easily shared with your friends and Circles, should you choose to do so.

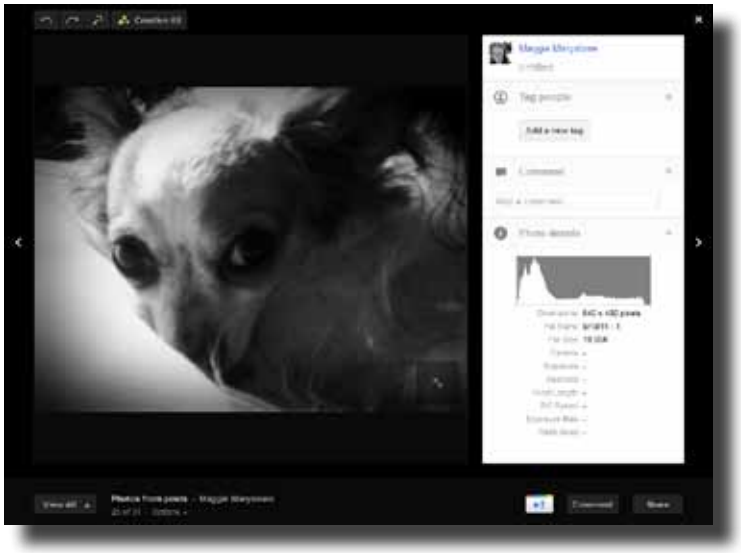
- Unlimited photo uploads. Photos larger than 2,048 by 2,048 pixels will automatically be resized when uploading in Google+.
- Unlimited video uploads (up to 15 minutes per video, up to 1080p)

If you'd like to upload photos at their original size, you can upload from Picasa 3.9. Photos larger than 2,048 by 2,048



pixels will apply to your free Google storage limit.

Photos uploaded via Instant Upload are visible *only to you* until you share them. To post photos from your phone to your Stream, go to the Google+ Photos page, highlight the photos you want to share by clicking on them and press the green "Share" button at the top of the page. To add photos to an album, select the photos on your Google+ Photos page and click the Add to album button.



10.3 Your Albums

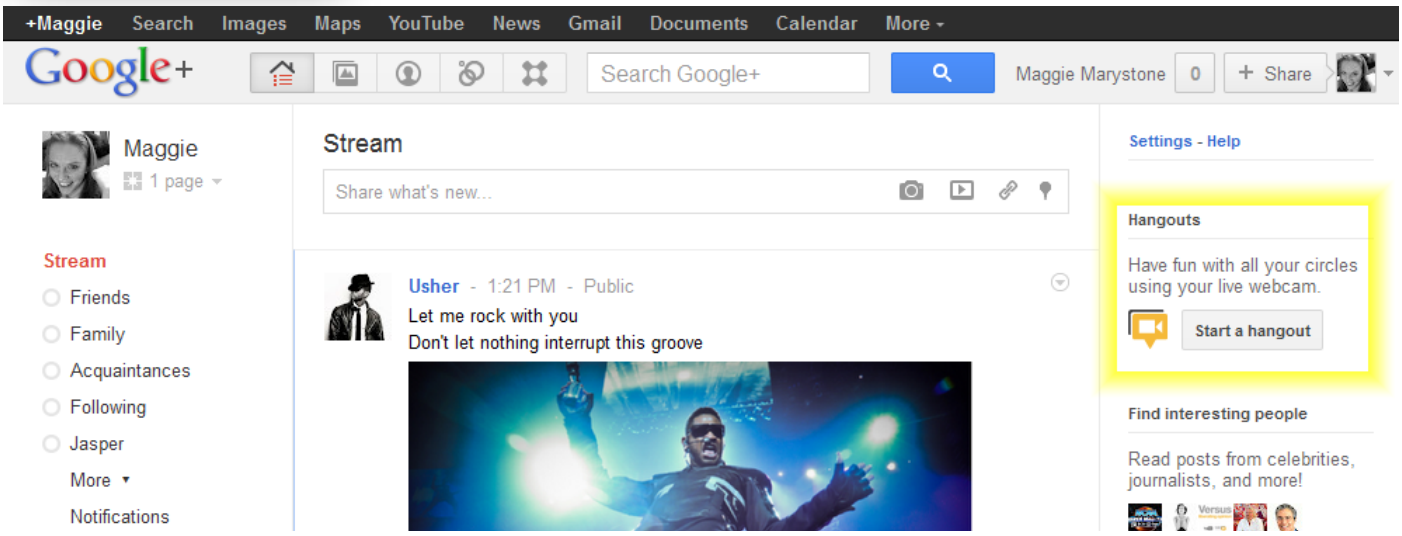
It's easy to organize your Google+ photos into albums. Click on the Your Albums link and then on the red "Upload New Photos" button to add photos from your computer. Since Picasa is integrated into Google+, Google+ offers a broad range of photo editing and organization tools.

When you view a photo from one of your albums or posts in the lightbox, you have access to Google's Creative Kit (click the link in the upper left corner of the lightbox). The Creative Kit is fairly robust image editing software. You can crop, rotate, resize and sharpen your photos as well as adjust the exposure and colors. You can even add decorations or text to your photos, all without ever leaving Google+!

11. Hangouts

Hangouts might be the best part of Google+, providing instant video chat with up to 9 other people across the world, for as long as you want, for free. Remember when we used to pay top dollar for this kind of thing? Granted, video conferencing isn't anything new. Google has got it right, however - easy to use, reliable and free.

Click the Start a Hangout button on your Google+ Stream page. If you don't have the Google Voice and Video Plugin, you will be prompted to install it. Once the plugin is up and running, you're ready to start a Hangout. Do a quick check of your audio and video settings, add people or circles, click the green Hang out button, and you're off!



The Hangout window includes a Group chat window, Invite link, Screenshare, YouTube and Mask Effects (the dog icon). Mask effects are pretty fun. The masks track your face as you move your face. Try them out!

Hangouts are being used across the globe by everyone from multi-national business executives closing lucrative deals to members of the military visiting with their loved ones back home.

You can join a Hangout from your mobile device, too. Phones and tablets with front-facing cameras make this a really useful feature. Are you on the move? Then bring the Hangout with you!

Case scenario: My partner, Brad, rents out a house he owns in southern Indiana to some friends. When a string of tornadoes hit, we were worried about our friends and family living in the area. Thankfully, no one was hurt, but we heard that several trees came down on the property there. We wanted to see the extent of the damage before we made the 5 hour drive to see it in person. Solution? We started a Hangout with a friend in the area, and he gave us a walking tour of the property so we could see exactly what the situation was!

12. Advanced Features

12.1 Manage your profile

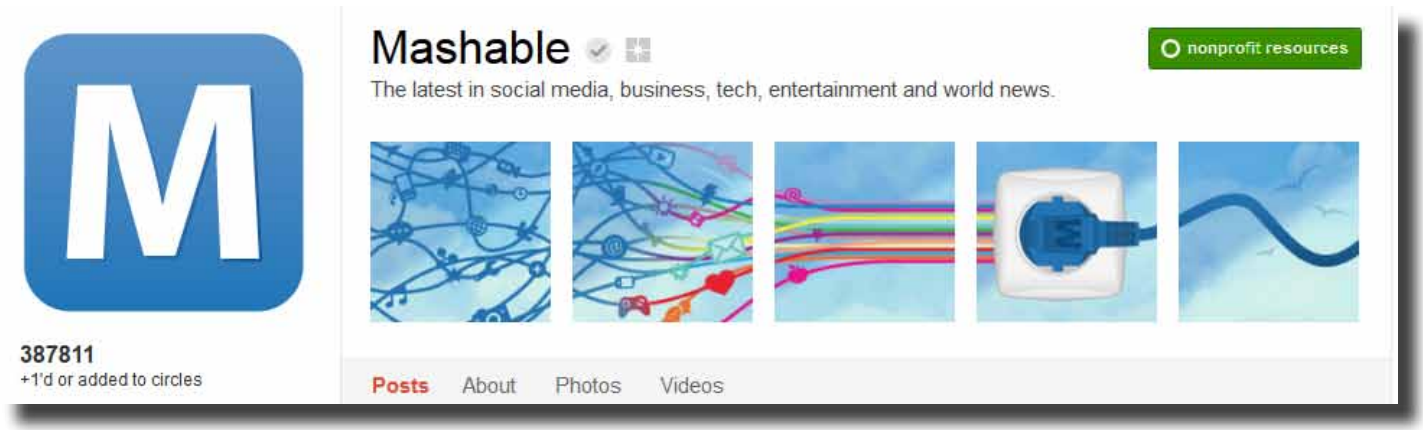
Now that you've had some time to learn about Google+, spice up your profile by adding some photos across the top of your profile page. There are lots of creative examples of how people have used this space. Here area few examples:

Think With Google, https://plus.google.com/101698568710409127237/posts

Eric Cheng, https://plus.google.com/107004843925454095805/posts

Ekkapong Techawongthaworn, https://plus.google.com/107056669830872665068/posts

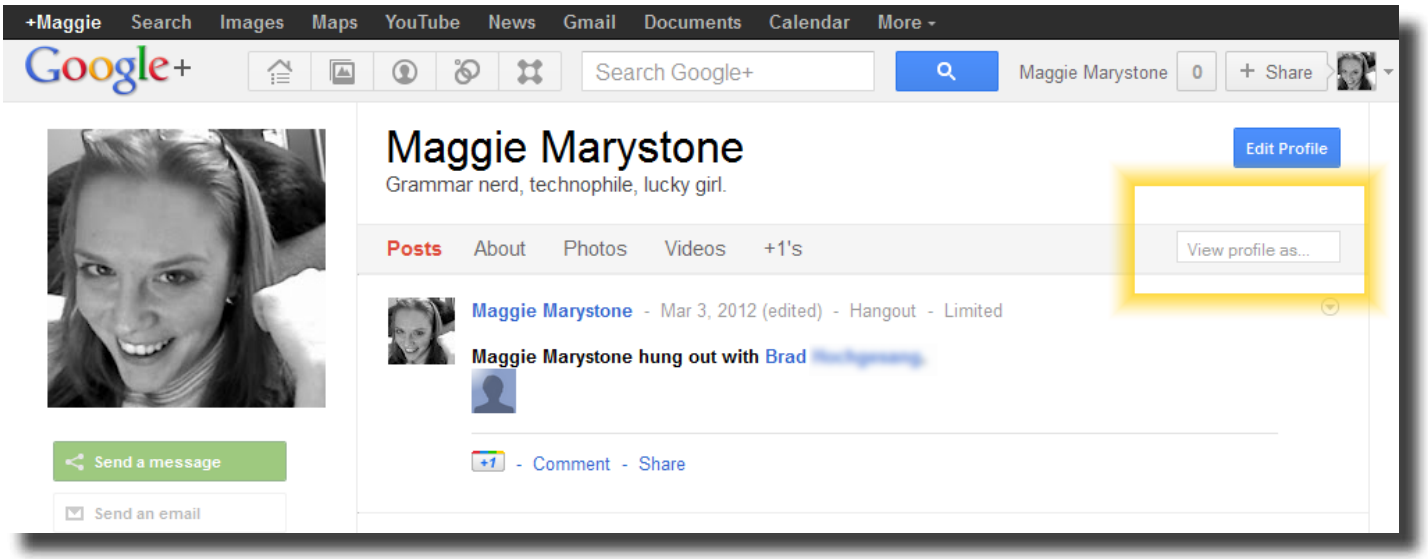
Barack Obama https://plus.google.com/110031535020051778989/posts



Mashable https://plus.google.com/113493854651753327245/posts

You can also modify which people appear under your profile photo by clicking on the “Change who is visible here” link below the list of people who are in your Circles.

12.1.1 Posts tab



When you are logged into Google+, the Posts tab on your profile lists everything you have posted to Google+, no matter which Circles you shared with. Each post includes the date and sharing details (public or limited to specific people or Circles) and, sometimes, info on the link you posted (e.g. "+1'd on www.makeuseof.com").

If you want to see what your profile looks like to someone else, just enter their name in the "View profile as..." field just under the Edit Profile button on your profile page.

12.1.2 Your settings page

The Settings page for Google+ offers control over your Google+ experience. The link to your Google+ settings page is at the top of the right sidebar on your Google+ Home page, just above Hangouts. You can also access the settings page directly by visiting https://www.google.com/settings/plus.

Settings are organized into categories:

- Who can interact with you and your posts?
- Who can send you notifications?
- Who can comment on your public posts?
- Who can start a Messenger conversation with you?

Options for all of the above include: Extended Circles, Anyone, Your Circles, Only You and Custom. The Custom setting is pretty powerful, as you can add specific Circles or specific people.

Notification delivery

How do you want to be notified of activity on your Google+ account? Specify which email address will receive each kind of Google+ notification. Optionally provide your phone number and activate Push notifications to your mobile device.

Manage email subscriptions

Enable "weekly updates about top content from my circles" or "Occasional updates about Google+ activity and friend suggestions." I recommend enabling the weekly updates when you first begin using Google+. It's a nice roundup of activity and will give you a good idea of the kind of content you'll find there.

Receive notifications

Specify whether Google should notify you by email or SMS when someone does any of the following:

- Mentions you in a post

- Shares a post with you directly
- Comments on a post you created
- Comments on a post after you comment on it
- Add you to a circle
- Tags you in a photo
- Tags one of your photos
- Comments on a photo after you comment on it
- Comments on a photo you are tagged in
- Comments on a photo you tagged
- Starts a Messenger conversation with you

You can also sign up for updates and tips on getting "the most out of my Pages" and other Google news.

+1 Personalization on non-Google sites

Google lets you choose whether you want them to use your +1's and other profile info to "personalize your content and ads on non-Google websites."

Google promises, "Enabling +1 on non-Google sites does not share your information or your friends' information with the site you're viewing." You can choose to disable this feature. When disabled, you will not see +1's from anyone in your Circles, and your +1's won't be shown to others.

Google+ Pages

Specify whether you want Google to "automatically add a Google+ page to my circles if I search for + followed by the page's name."

Google+ Games

Just a couple of settings here. You can opt to "show links to recently played games on the side of the Stream page" and "show Google+ games notifications in the Google bar."

Your circles

This is where you choose who to include in "Your circles." When you share content, one of the options you always have is to share the content with "Your Circles." As Google says, "When you share posts, photos, profile data, and other things with "Your circles," you're sharing with all of your circles, except the ones you're just following (they're unchecked in this list)."

Photos

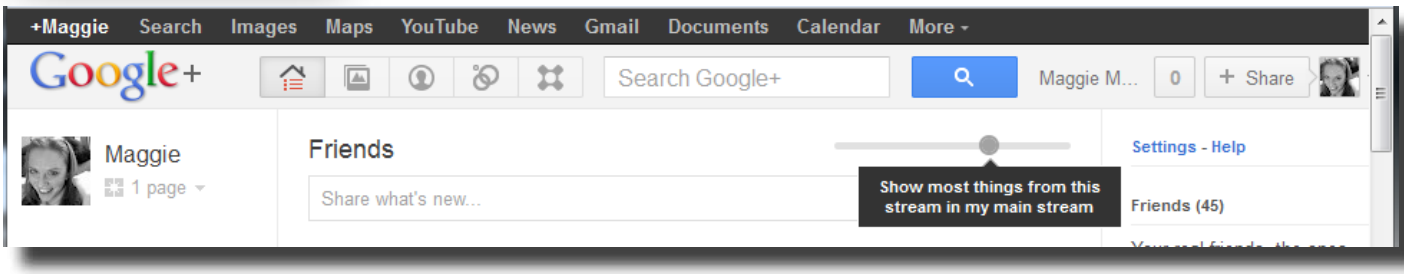
Tell Google if you want to do any of the following:

- Show photo geo-location information in newly uploaded albums and photos
- Allow viewers to download my photos
- Find my face in photos and prompt people I know to tag me

You can also specify "People whose tags of you are automatically approved to link to your Profile" The default setting is "Your circles."

12.1.3 Adjust content frequency by Circle

Once you have filtered your stream by Circle, you will see a slider at the stop of the stream. How much of the content

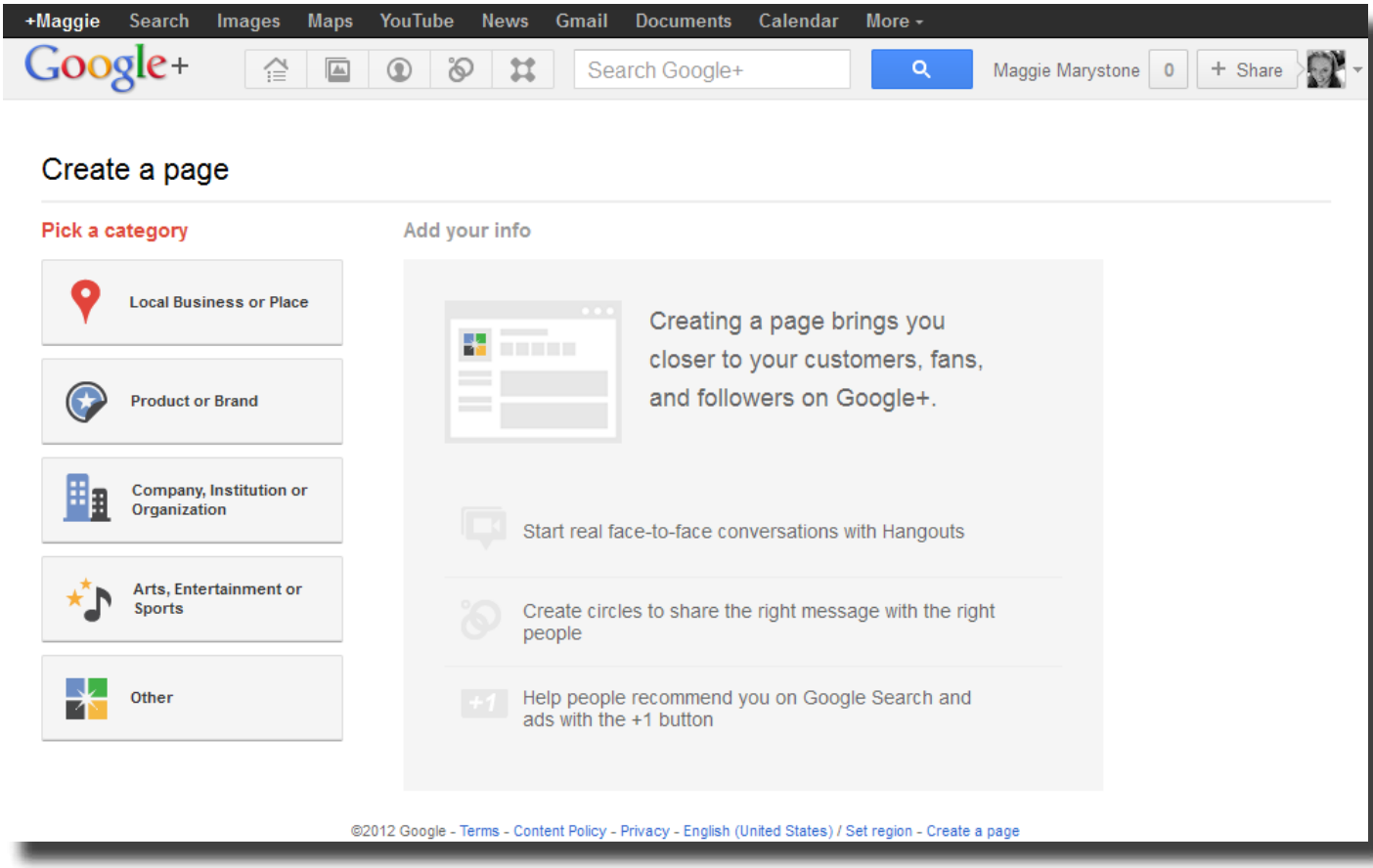


from this Circle do you want to see in your main Stream? Use the slider to adjust the frequency of posts from people in this Circle in your main Stream.

12.2 Pages

12.2.1 Person vs. Organization

At the core of Google+ are its users. That's why you must have a personal Google+ page before you can create a page for a business, product or organization. After you have created your personal profile, you are free to create a page for your business, nonprofit, sports team or any other entity you can imagine.



12.2.2 Local Business or Place

Create a page for your local business or place. All you need to get started is the primary phone number.

12.2.3 Product or Brand

Create a page for your product, brand, website, service or "other." Specify who the content is appropriate for: Any Google+ user, Users 18 and older or Users 21 and older. If the page you are creating is related to alcohol, you must note that here.

12.2.4 Company Institution or Organization

Companies, organizations, non-profits, schools and institutions go here. Specify who the content is appropriate for:

Any Google+ user, Users 18 and older or Users 21 and older. If the page you are creating is related to alcohol, you must note that here.

12.2.5 Arts, Entertainment or Sports

Music, movies, books, TV, sports shows are all in this category. Specify who the content is appropriate for: Any Google+ user, Users 18 and older, or Users 21 and older. If the page you are creating is related to alcohol, you must note that here.

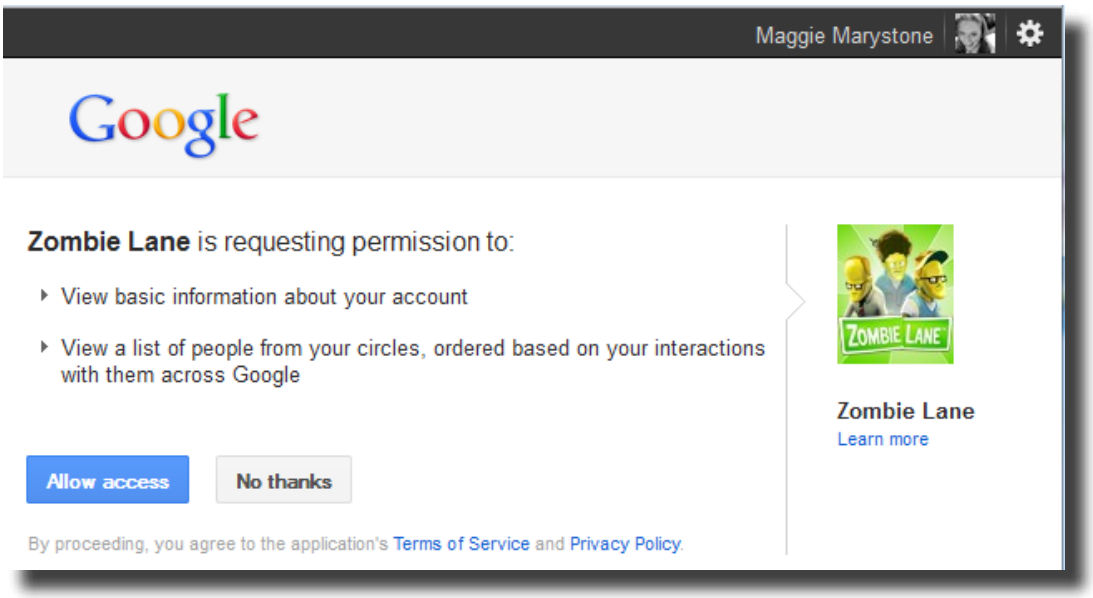
12.2.6 Other

If the page you would like to create doesn't fit into any of the above categories, Google+ provides the catch-all category of "Other."

12.3 Games

Google+ rolled out the Games section and continues to add more games regularly. Click on the Games icon in the Google+ menu bar. Currently, you can find games in the following categories:

- Featured games
- New games
- Top games
- Staff picks
- All games
- Action
- Adventure
- Arcade
- Board
- Card
- Casino
- Family
- Puzzle
- Racing
- Role Playing
- Simulation
- Sports
- Strategy



Browse through the games and find one you would like to play. Select the game and click the Play button. A popup will appear asking you to give permission to that game. Click "Continue."

Example: The Godfather: Five Families is requesting permission to:

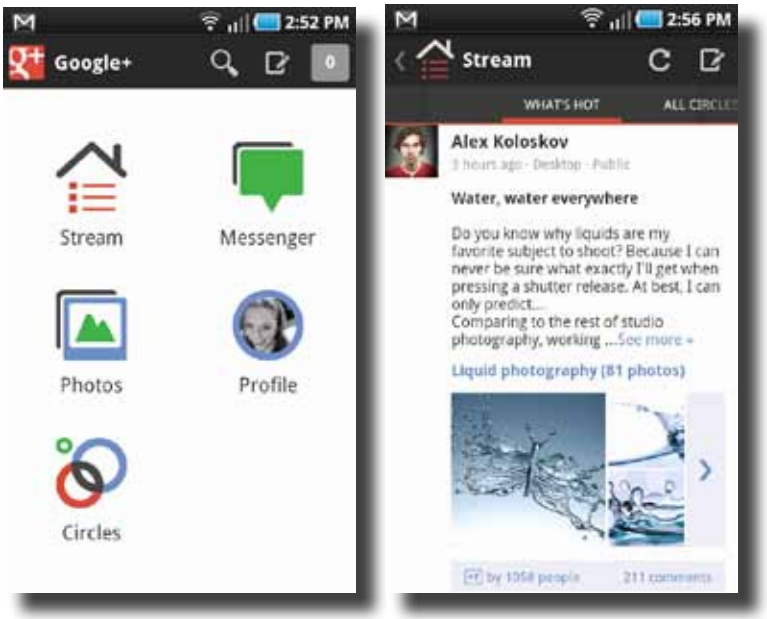
- View your email address
- View a list of people from your circles, ordered based on your interactions with them across Google
- Know who you are on Google

The gear icon in upper right corner allows you to Report Abuse or Remove Game.

13. Mobile Apps

As you would expect, Google+ is available as an app for Android and iPhone. You can access most of the features you enjoy on the desktop version of Google+. One notable exception is that you cannot start a *new* Hangout from the app; however, you can still join a Hangout you have been invited to.

*Note: Hangouts are available on iPhones and devices running Android 2.3 or higher.



13.1 Messenger

Messenger is Google+'s group text messaging application for Android. Send one message out to multiple recipients, and each person's replies will go to the whole group. This feature is especially helpful at large events where your group might have splintered off. "Everyone: meet by the Clock Tower in 10 minutes. It's time to go back to the future."

14. Tips & Tricks

14.1 Markup syntax - Fancify your posts

You don't have to know HTML to format text in Google+. When posting content or comments, use the following tricks to get your point across.

bold will turn into **bold**

italics will turn into *italics*

-strikethrough- will turn into ~~strikethrough~~

14.2 Hotkeys - Be fast, impress your friends

Navigating around Google+ can get a lot faster and easier if you use the Google+ Keyboard Shortcuts.

J - Scroll or move down the stream

K - Scroll or move up the stream

Space - Scroll down the stream (similar to page down)

Shift+Space - Scroll up the stream (similar to page up)

@ - Link to another Google+ user

+ - Link to another Google+ user

Enter - In the Post window it will take you to the comments box

Tab - Scroll through comments

Tab + Enter - Post or end a comment

Q - Focus on chat search box.

14.3 Google+ Browser Extensions

Several browsers offer extensions to improve and streamline your Google+ experience.

For Firefox:

Google +1 Button Extension: Adds the +1 button to your browser so you can easily +1 a site, even if the +1 button isn't embedded into the site itself.

Google +1 Button: Adds the +1 button to your browser so you can easily +1 a site, even if the +1 button isn't embedded into the site itself.

Plus One Button: Adds the +1 button to your browser so you can easily +1 a site, even if the +1 button isn't embedded into the site itself

Google+ Manager: Shortcuts, new menu, Translate, and much more.

Fullsize Image Viewer for GooglePlus: Right click on any image when you are on Google+; click on full-size item. This will open a full size image in a new tab.

For Chrome:

Google +1 Button: Adds the +1 button to your browser so you can easily +1 a site, even if the +1 button isn't embedded into the site itself.

Extended Share for Google Plus: Extends Google+ to share with Facebook, Twitter, and many more.

Google+ Tweaks: Tweaks to the layout and features of Google+ (full width, thumbnails only, etc.).

Hide Google+ Notification: Hides the little red Google Plus notification from the global Google header toolbar.

For Safari:

GooglePlus Safari Extension: Adds the +1 button to your browser so you can easily +1 a site, even if the +1 button isn't embedded into the site itself.

Prettify Google+: A CSS facelift for Google+

15. Conclusion

Now that you know the ins and outs to Google+, you are ready to start making Google+ work for you. Google has invested heavily into Google+, and you can bet they're going to continue to do everything they can to make Google+ a success. Don't miss this opportunity!

Being familiar with Google+ and how it works is a good idea - and not just for your online social life. Increasingly, employers are hiring people who are comfortable using the Internet and social media – including Google+. Whatever your reason for joining Google+, you won't regret being familiar with the Internet giant's social network. Create your account now and get started with Google+.

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