

Sharing GW Content

Introduction

The fundamental difference between GW and the desktop versions Microsoft Office is the way in which content is shared.

Files v Links

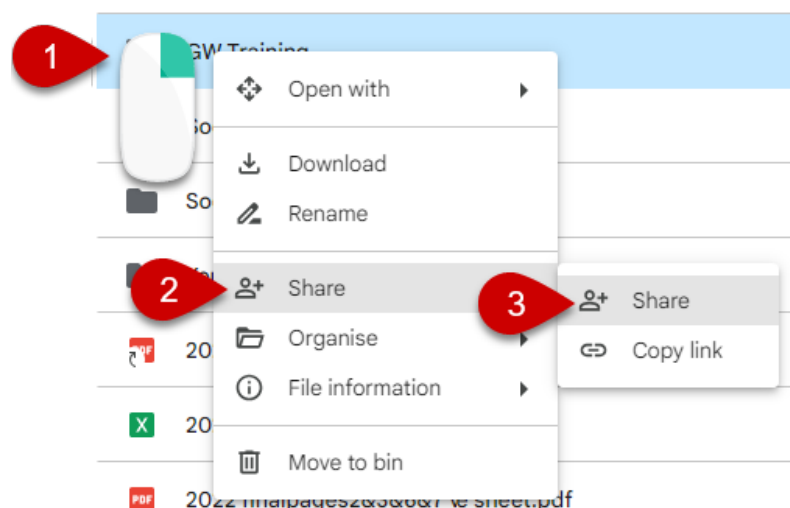
In traditional MS Office you share a document by sending a physical self-contained copy of the file, typically via email. So if you share a file with 12 people there will be multiple versions of the document spread around the users' computers. If they make edits and share the edited versions with the audience, the number of copies soon spirals and it becomes hard to know which is the master. It also consumes a lot of disk space.

With GW content, files are a virtual concept. A 'file' is a portal into a database where the document contents are stored - a smart window that can assemble all the items together to present on screen something that looks like a physical document. This means there is no physical file to send to someone unless you download a copy in MS Office or PDF format

So in Google Workspace we use a completely different approach to sharing. We can share a link to a GW file, we can share a folder or a drive and we can limit what recipients can do with the content that we share. There is only one copy of the file

Sharing a My Drive folder

Navigate to the My Drive folder you want to share - note that by sharing a folder you will be granting the user access to all the contents of that folder, including any subfolder. If you just want to share an item, then share the **item** only



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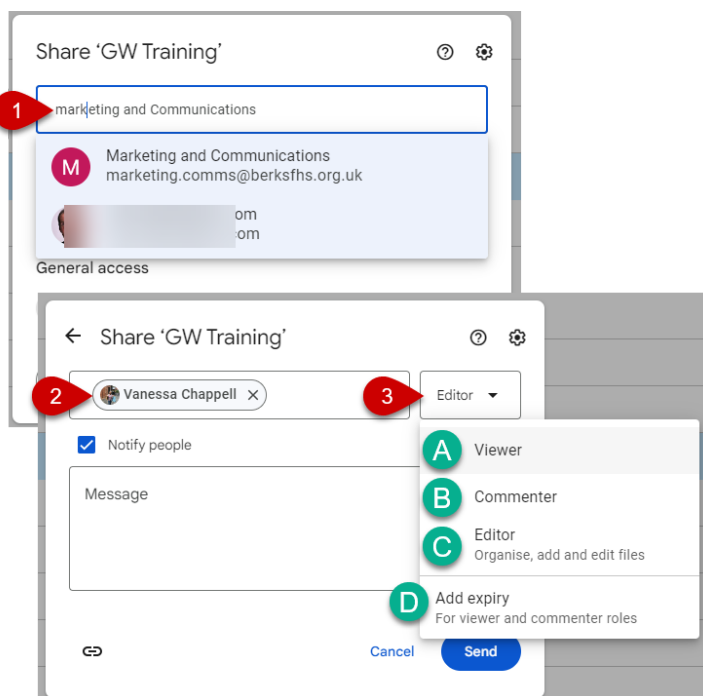
You can search for people or groups, and add multiples of each.

Then you can choose the rights they will have to the share.

An **Editor** can add files to the share and directly edit or suggest edits to content.

A **Commenter** cannot edit documents but they can add marginal comments

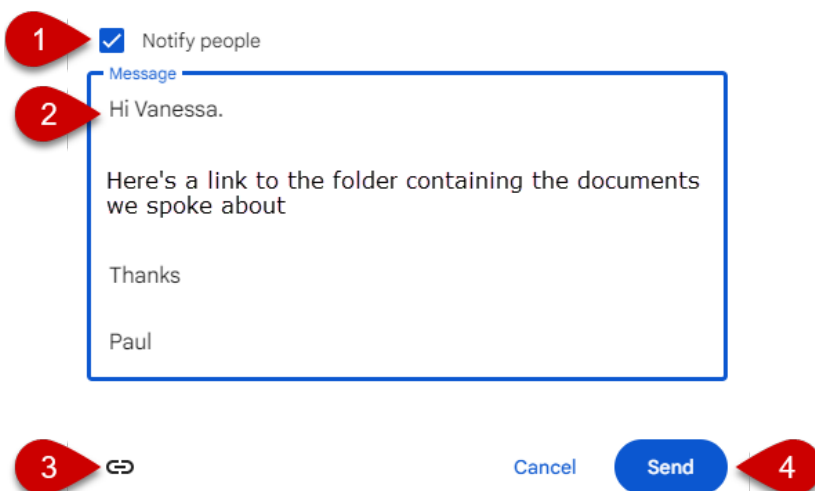
A **Viewer** can only view the documents



Telling the user that you have shared something

When sharing a folder or document, you have the option to notify people from here or to do it separately.

If 'notify people' is checked you can enter a message to them in the box provided. When you press 'send', the system will send them a nicely formatted email containing the link to the document and your explanation



If you want to send a separate notification, uncheck the 'notify people' box. The message box will disappear and you will need to copy the link (3) to send to them. In that scenario the 'send' button (4) will change to 'done'

Using 'notify people' is a good idea simply because it is quicker and easier than doing it manually

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Sharing a document

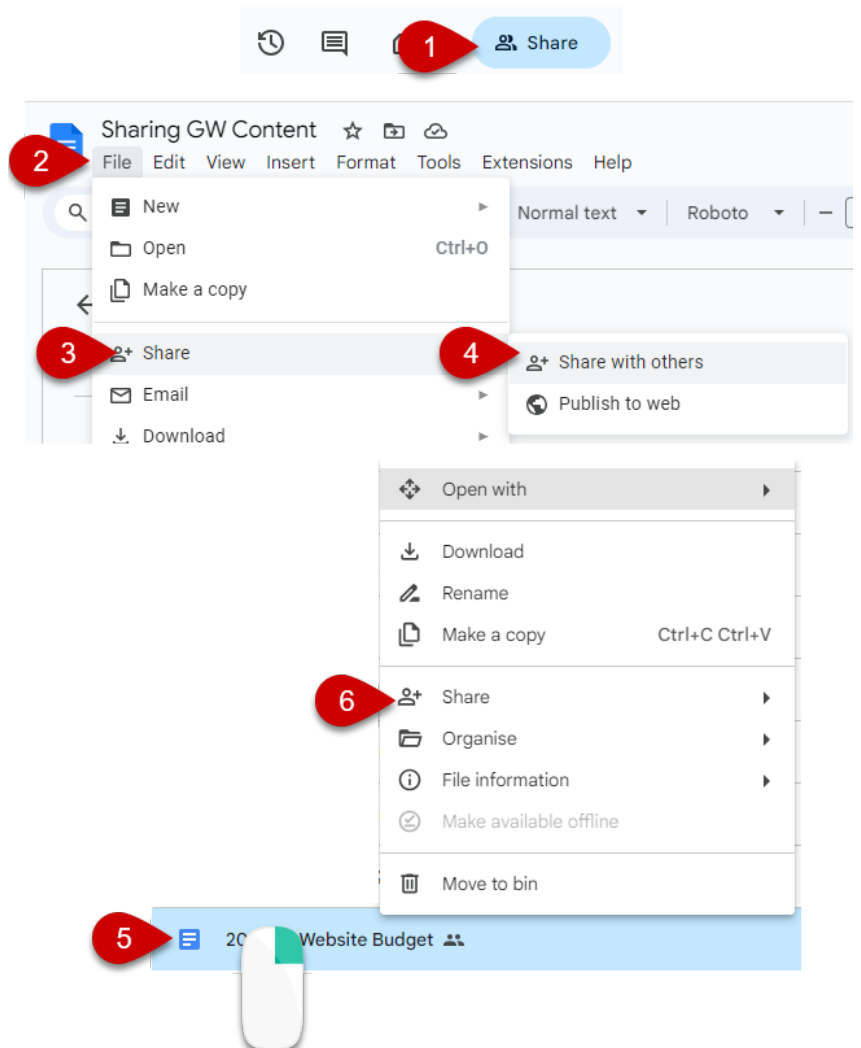
The process for sharing an individual document is essentially the same. If you have the document open you will see a 'Share' button in the top right of the edit window (1)

With the document open, you can also select the menu options (2, 3, 4)

And if you don't have the document open but can see it listed in Drive you can right click it (5 and 6)

These are just three ways but wherever a document can be found there is usually a way to share it using a right click.

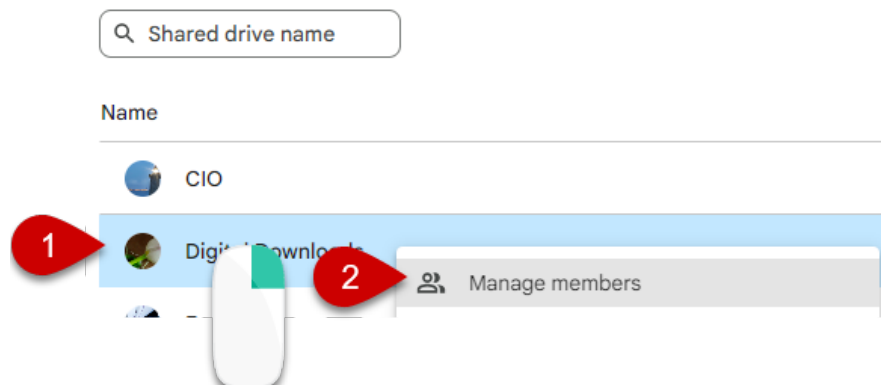
However you approach it, you will have the same opportunity to 'notify people' or copy the link to share manually.



Shared Drives

Creating/Updating a Shared Drive is a little different and depends on whether you created it or have been delegated management powers over it.

Locate the shared drive and right click it. If



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option (2) is greyed out, you have limited permissions to the share. If you have elevated rights to the share then you have these options.

You can add people or groups as above

You can set rights to the Shared Drive.

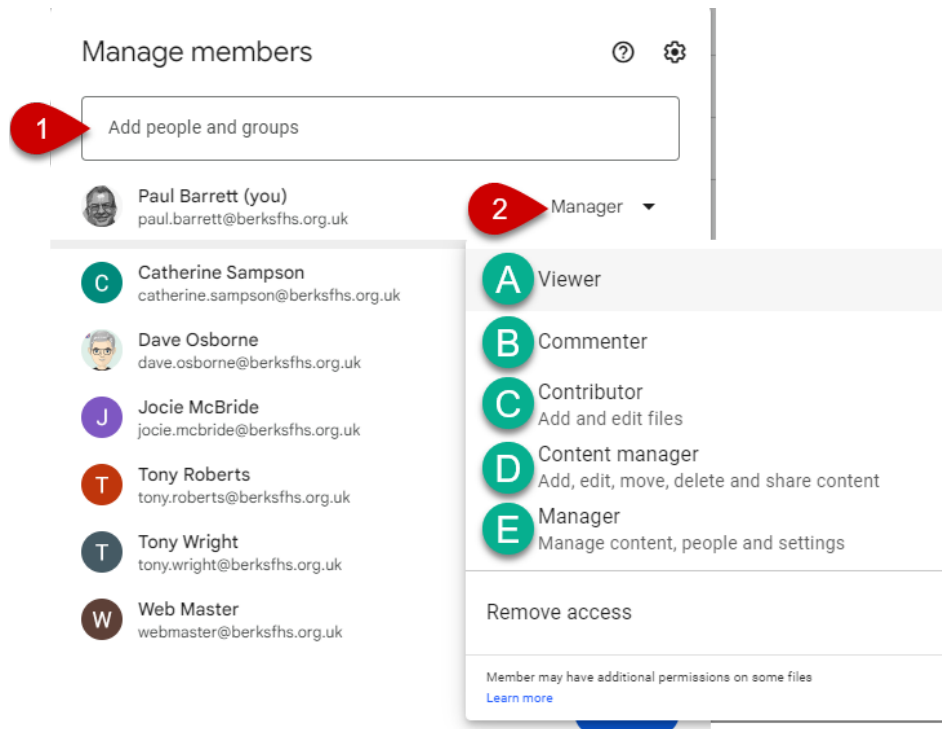
A **Viewer** can only view contents

A **Commenter** can leave comments

A **Contributor** can edit documents and add them, including moving a file in to a Shared Drive from somewhere else such as My Drive

A **Content Manager** can move documents out of the shared drive, delete it and share it

A **Manager** has absolute rights over the share and can do anything, including deleting the share!



Moving a file between My Drive and a Shared Drive

You have absolute rights to My Drive - it's yours. So you can choose to move a file from My Drive to any Shared Drive to which you have Contributor or greater rights (see above). When you move a file you will be warned that the file will acquire the access right of the target drive and lose the original rights in My Drive

If you change your mind and want to move the file back to My Drive, you can't unless you have Content Manager rights or greater to the Shared Drive. This can make it appear that moving files is a one-way asynchronous process. In reality, it depends on the rights you have to the shared drive. If you need elevated rights, contact someone who has Manager rights to the drive. You can find out who they are by right clicking the share drive and selecting 'View members'

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Sharing outside the Society

You can share content freely with people who have Society email accounts. You can also share with people outside the society BUT, they will need a Gmail account in order to access the content. If they don't already have one, it's free and easy to set up a Gmail account and it's by far and away the best way to share content and maintain version control.

If you need to share with someone outside the Society who doesn't have and doesn't want to create a Gmail account then, **and only then**, you will have to create and download a file from the system.

If the recipient wants a non editable copy of the document use the PDF format (preferred) but if they need to work on the document you will need to provide it in docx, xlsx etc format.

Editable formats should be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary because the moment a separate file exists with a separate life-cycle, version control is compromised - we can no longer be certain which is the master. Pandora's Box is open.

If this becomes necessary you will then be faced with how to merge the edited Word document back into Google Docs - see the separate guide on Version Control for detail of how to do this.

Author: PB 28 Aug 2023

