



FoxTALE Forums (Online Discussions)

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What are Forums?

Forums are the primary FoxTALE tool used for holding an online discussion. Professors and students can post messages and log in at any time to read them. Forums are asynchronous, meaning that everyone doesn't have to be online at the same time.

Each forum can contain one or more discussions. Each discussion is comprised of one or more posts and replies. Students can take their time in composing a post or reply. After posting, you have thirty minutes to make changes to your post.

In contrast, **chats** are synchronous, meaning that everyone must be online and in the chat room at the same time in order to communicate. Chats are available as an activity in FoxTALE, but the chat module does not work well.

Forums are divided into two categories. You will see the two categories when you click the **Forums** link in the **Activities** block on the course home page.

- **General forums** are found in section 0 of the course. The News forum and Teacher forum are included with your FoxTALE course by default. The Teacher forum is a private forum available only to teachers of that course.
- **Learning forums** are forums that appear in specific parts of the course. These forums are organized and numbered according to the course sections in which they appear.

Creating a Forum

1. Turn editing on.
2. In the topic or week to which you would like to add the forum, go to **Add an activity > Forum**.
3. Enter a name and description, and change the settings as desired. The most common type of forum is **Standard forum for general use**.



- If you want to give students a grade for this forum, use these settings in the **Allow posts to be rated?** section:
 - Check the box for **Use ratings:**
 - Grade:** Select the maximum grade for the forum (from 1 to 100)
 - If desired, you can restrict ratings to posts within a specific date range

After a student posts to the forum, you will see a dropdown box in the forum for assigning a grade to the student. Students can only see their own ratings.

- You can find extensive documentation on creating forums, including the various settings and types, at moodle.org. See *Chapter 4 Using Forums, Chats, and Dialogues* in [http://docs.moodle.org/en/Using Moodle book](http://docs.moodle.org/en/Using_Moodle_book).

Posting to a Forum

- From the course outline, click the forum's name. Existing discussions will be listed.
- To begin a new discussion, click **Add a new discussion topic**. To reply to an existing discussion, click the name of the discussion. Then click the **Reply** link.

The screenshot shows a Moodle forum interface. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'FoxTALE » SB-ABERC » Forums » Graded Forum: Colors'. To the right is a search bar labeled 'Search forums' and a help icon. Below the breadcrumb, there is a notification: 'Everyone can choose to be subscribed' with a link 'Subscribe to this forum'. The main content area contains a text input field with the question: 'What color is your car, and why did you choose this color?'. Below the input field is a button labeled 'Add a new discussion topic'. At the bottom, there is a table listing discussions.

Discussion	Started by	Replies	Last post
black	Daffy Duck	0	Daffy Duck Thu, 24 May 2007, 10:35 AM

- Enter your information, and click **Post to forum** at the bottom.
- You have thirty minutes to change or delete the post before it is final. Professors can delete any posts, but students cannot delete their posts after thirty minutes.



How do I start or stop all the emails?

When you subscribe to a forum, you receive email copies of every post in that forum. Emails are sent about thirty minutes after the post was written. Some people prefer to receive emails for every post, and some people dislike emails and prefer to log in to FoxTALE to read posts.

By default, students can choose whether or not they want to be subscribed to each forum. However, if a professor forces subscription on a particular forum, then students no longer have this choice, and everyone in the class will get email copies.

In a particular forum, professors or students can click **Unsubscribe to this Forum** to stop the emails. You will then have to log in to FoxTALE to read the posts to this forum.

You can also set a global setting to apply to all forums. Edit your profile. Go to the **Forum auto-subscribe** setting, and choose your desired setting. You can override this setting for individual forums.

Setting Subscriptions to a Forum

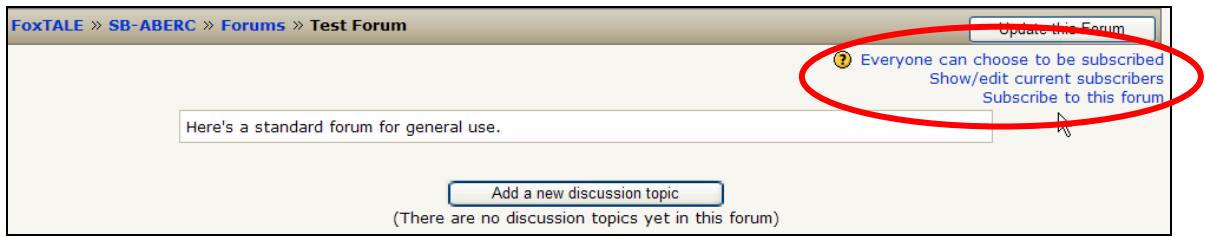
When you create a new forum or update an existing forum, you will see the setting **Force everyone to be subscribed?** with these choices:

- **No**
- **Yes, forever.** Students will not be able to unsubscribe themselves.
- **Yes, initially.** All current and future course students will be subscribed initially but they can unsubscribe themselves at any time. Note how the **Yes, initially** option behaves when you update an existing forum: Changing from **Yes, initially** to **No** will not unsubscribe existing students, it will only affect future course students. Similarly changing later to **Yes, initially** will not subscribe existing course students but only those enrolling later.
- **Subscriptions Not Allowed.** Students will not be able to subscribe.

After you create a forum, if you click the forum name on the course's home page, then you will see the forum's main screen.



In the upper right corner, you will see three links.

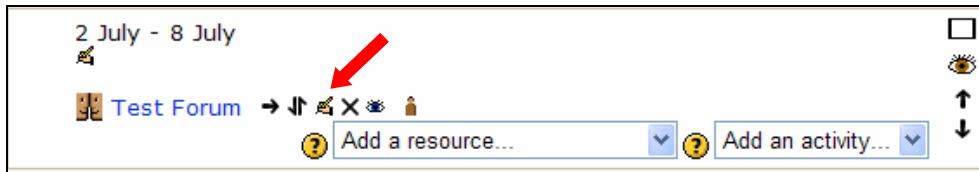


- The first link will read **Everyone can choose to be subscribed** or **Everyone is subscribed to this forum**, depending on which setting you have chosen. Click this link to toggle back and forth between forcing and not forcing subscription.
- The second link allows you to view and change a list of who is subscribed if you are not forcing subscription.
- The third link allows you to subscribe to the forum. (Note: As a professor, you are not subscribed automatically if you do not force subscription.)

Changing a Forum

You can change the name, introduction, or settings on an existing forum.

To edit your forum, turn editing on. Click the hand icon next to the forum name in the course outline.



Be sure to save your changes by clicking **Save changes** at the bottom of the screen.