

Serf[®] User Guide



Version 4.0

by

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Overview

Welcome to the Serf User Guide! This user guide has five parts. Each part is intended for a different type of Serf user. Depending on the role you play at a Serf site, you will probably not need to read all five parts of this manual. If you are an end user, for example, you only need to read the student guide. If you are an author, you will also need to read the instructor guide. If you are the server administrator, on the other hand, you will begin by reading the sysadmin guide, which tells how to install Serf on the computer that will serve your site. In all, there are five kinds of Serf user types, which are explained as follows:

1. *Serf Sysadmin.* At the top of the hierarchy is the Serf sysadmin, which stands for system administrator. The sysadmin is in charge of running the Serf server, making periodic backups of the work done by instructors and students, and troubleshooting any problems that may arise. Every Serf server must have at least one sysadmin.
2. *Administrator.* The administrator allocates the resources with which instructors and students work. These resources include rosters, calendars, syllabi, rooms, and styles. The administrator creates portals, courses, and channels by linking these resources together and assigning them to an instructor. For institutions with a small staff, it is possible for the Serf sysadmin also to function as the administrator. At larger institutions, the sysadmin can create several administrators to assist in the creation and monitoring of courses, portals, and channels.
3. *Instructor.* The instructor is the person to whom the administrator will have assigned the responsibility for teaching a course or authoring a channel. Depending on the options chosen by the administrator, the instructor will normally be able to create and edit the course syllabus or channel content, add and modify dates on the course calendar, adjust the style parameters that control the on-screen appearance of the course or channel content, and add or drop students from the roster of end users who are permitted to log on to the course or channel. The instructor also has access to the course gradebook, which is used to monitor student progress, grade assignments, and compute final grades.
4. *Teaching Assistant.* Each course can have one or more teaching assistants. The teaching assistant helps the instructor communicate with students, grade assignments, and maintain the course roster. In practice, however, smaller courses tend not to have teaching assistants.
5. *Student.* Last in the hierarchy but certainly not least in terms of importance is the student or end user. The student side of Serf is where all of the options described above combine to create a unique and powerful way of exploring, discovering, constructing, and assessing knowledge over the Web.

This user guide consists of a series of booklets intended to instruct each type of user in how to use Serf. The titles of these booklets are listed as follows:

Serf Sysadmin Guide
Serf Administrator Guide
Serf Instructor Guide
Serf Teaching Assistant Guide
Serf Student Jumpstart Pamphlet

Each booklet is paginated separately. Institutions that license Serf are permitted to make multiple copies of these booklets for training and supporting Serf administrators, authors, and users. Please note that the Student Jumpstart Pamphlet will need to have certain modifications made to it before you duplicate it for local use. These modifications are described at the beginning of the Student Jumpstart section of this manual. To facilitate making local modifications to the Student Jumpstart Pamphlet, you will find its Microsoft Word for Windows file in your Serf server's `\serf\serfmanual` folder after you install Serf. The name of the file is `SerfStudentJumpstart.doc`.

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