



Creating and managing folders

Comprehensive guide for designers

For Blackboard Vista 4.x

The home page is the first thing that students see when they access a course. It presents and organises the course content for students. The home page is created by default and cannot be deleted, and is effectively the visible ‘master folder’ of course content. In addition, you can group content together as folders. Folders on the home page allow you to organise and present content by theme. For example you may want to group resources related to different topics into separate folders, or resources related to individual weeks during the course etc. Folders can also be created within (i.e. nested within) another folder, allowing you to further organize your course content.

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Contents of a folder

Folders can contain the following course content:

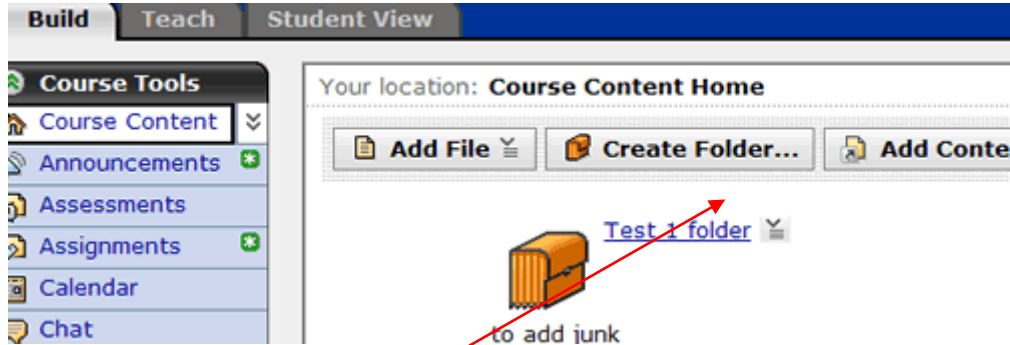
- assessments
- assignments
- chat and whiteboard rooms
- content files
- discussion topics
- learning modules
- media library collections
- syllabus
- web links (URLs).

Folders can also include introductory information about the contents, or other aspects, of the folder. They can also be ‘badged’ with headers and footers.

Creating a folder

Folders can be created on the home page or within any existing folder, under the **Build** tab.

1. Navigate to and open the home page or folder you wish to add a new folder to.



2. Click on **Create Folder** to open the **Create Folder** screen.

 A screenshot of the 'Create Folder' form. At the top, it shows the breadcrumb 'Your location: Course Content Home > Create Folder'. The form has a title field with an asterisk, a larger description text area, and two radio buttons for 'Item Visibility' (one selected for 'Show Item'). At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Add Another Folder', 'Save', and 'Cancel', along with a red asterisk legend for 'Required field'.

3. Enter a title for the folder and add any introductory text you would like appear when students open the folder in the **Description** text box.
4. Choose to hide or show the folder, and then click **Save**.

Customising a folder

Once a folder has been created, you can customise its appearance and add suitable headers and footers. This is done through the *Page Options* menu from within the given folder.

Customising the header and footer

1. Click on the folder.
2. Select either **Edit Header** or **Edit Footer** from the **Page Options** menu.
3. With the HTML Editor on (enabled), use the text formatting tools to create or edit your header/footer.
Note: You can add an image (e.g. as part of your header) and hyperlinks (e.g. as a web link in a footer).
4. Click **Save** to save your header or footer and return to the folder main page.

Customising the page display

You can customise the layout of links/icons and background colour, and add a background image.

1. Click on the **Page Options** button (top right of screen) and select **Customise Page Display** from the drop-down list that appears. The following screen appears.

Your location: **Course Content Home**

Customize Page Display: Course Content Home

<p>Layout Templates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Layout 1 <input type="radio"/> Layout 2 <input type="radio"/> Layout 3 <input type="radio"/> Layout 4 <input type="radio"/> Layout 5 <input checked="" type="radio"/> Custom Layout 	<p>Layout Preview</p> <p>Columns: <input type="text" value="6"/></p> <p>Icon/Text: <input type="text" value="Icon and Text"/></p> <p>Icon Placement: <input type="text" value="Above"/></p> <p>Alignment: <input type="text" value="Centered"/></p> <p>Table Width: <input type="text" value="Wide"/></p>
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Change all existing folders to these settings.

Set default to these settings for all new folders.

Background Image

Tile the image

Background Color

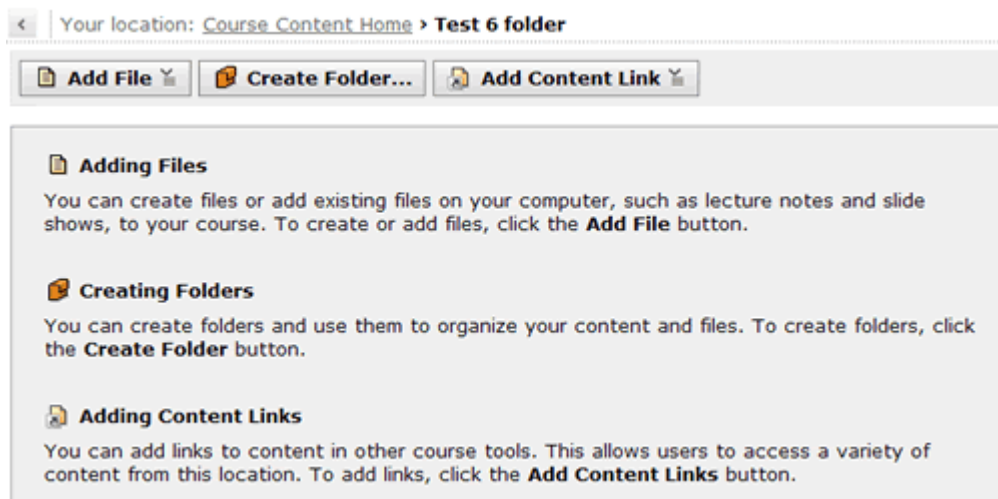
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2. Select one of the five pre-set layouts by clicking the appropriate radio button. (Specific layout settings appear in grey under the **Layout Preview** area. Layout 1 is the default setting.)
OR
Click on the **Custom Layout** radio button and then use the pull-down menus under **Layout Preview** to make your custom settings.

If you wish organising folders to have the same layout as the home page, select the check box.
3. Background Image - You can have a single background image or an image repeated in 'tile' format.
4. Background colour - Click on the **Select Color** button to set the background colour of the central frame on-screen.
5. Click **Apply**.

Adding contents to a folder

From the newly created folder, three options are presented to you.

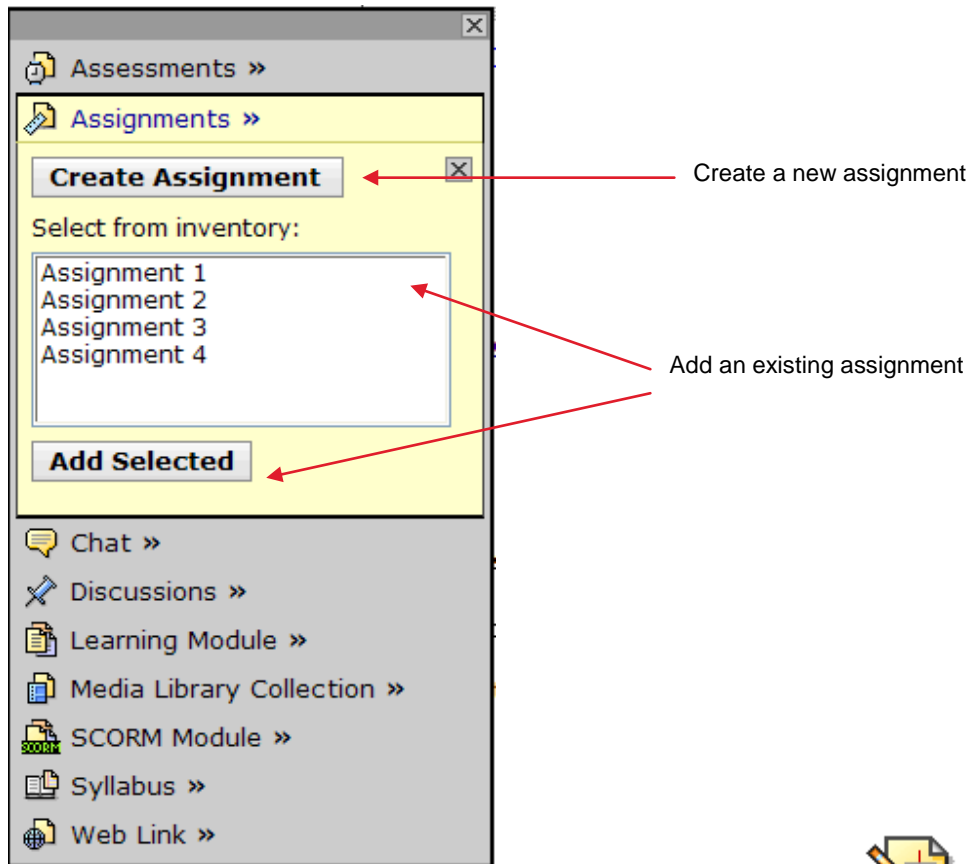


- To add a file, click on the **Add File** button and browse to the file, or create a new one. (You can browse to a file already uploaded to the section, a file in another Vista section you have access to, or to a file on your computer.)
- To add another folder (i.e. sub-folder within the current folder), click on the **Create Folder** button.
- To add a particular tool item (e.g. assessment item, assignment, discussion topic etc.), click the **Add Content Link** button. Select the appropriate tool type from the drop-down list (e.g. Assignments). The link expands to display a list of existing components of this type, and relevant actions.
Note: You can only add items/components of tools you have specified for your course. If you wish to add a tool not yet listed, go to **Manage Course** under the **Designer Tools** menu, then select **Tools**. The **Tools** screen opens. Select the tool(s) desired by selecting their check boxes.

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For each item type you will have the choice to:

- create new content (in this example an assignment) or
- add existing content by selecting the item and clicking **Add Selected**.



An icon linking to the assignment will now appear on the home page.




Note: By default, Assignments and Assessments are not automatically visible to students when they are added to your folder. (For example, a quiz must have at least one question to be shown; an assignment must be assigned to individuals or groups.) An item invisible to students will be tagged as 'hidden' when displayed in Build or Teach tab. You can show/hide these items by clicking on the *ActionLinks*  icon next to the title of the item on-screen and toggling the **Show Item/Hide Item** option in the drop-down list that appears.




Modifying/editing a folder

You can modify/edit both the settings (properties) of the folder – its title, description, visibility etc, as well as its contents.

To modify the settings


1. Click on the *ActionLinks*  icon next to the title of the folder on screen and select [edit properties] from the drop-down list. The Edit Properties screen appears.
2. Edit the information required, and then click Save.

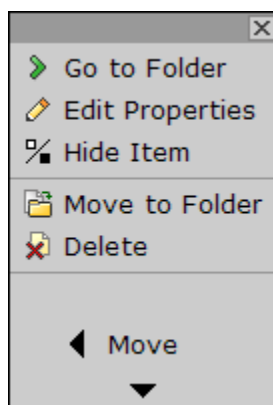
To modify the contents of a folder

1. Click on the *ActionLinks*  icon next to the title of the folder on screen and select  **Go to Folder** from the drop-down list.
2. Click on the *ActionLinks*  icon for the content item concerned and select the appropriate action – e.g. remove, edit settings, show/hide, move to another folder.

Note: Some items (such as unassigned assignments) will be hidden from student view, and indicated as such in **Build** and **Teach** view. Once ready, select **Show Item** from the drop-down *ActionLinks* menu (if not already made visible in the **Edit Properties** window for the item.) You can also set visibility through the **Selective Release Map** (SRM). Open the SRM, expand the folder to reveal its components, and click on the **Show Item/Hide Item** button for this item.

Moving/deleting a folder

You can move a folder (and all of its contents) to another folder, or remove the folder entirely. Simply click on the *ActionLinks*  icon next to the folder's title and select **Move to Folder** or **Delete** from the drop-down list.



You can also move the position of the folder link on the page with respect to other items on that page. Click on the **Move** arrows to shift in the direction desired.

Need more information?

For more information on creating and editing specific types of tools (Assessments etc). see the relevant guide in this series.

References:

Designer and Instructor Reference: Application Pack 2 for Blackboard Learning System – Vista Enterprise License (Release 4) 2006 Blackboard Inc.

Vista 4.2 Online Help (Blackboard Inc.)

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