

SOCIAL BOOKMARKING: PUBLISHING YOUR BOOKMARKS ONLINE

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A bookmark, a strip of material inserted between the pages of a book to mark a place in it, is of great help to readers who, most of the time, forget the last page they have read. Likewise, Internet users, whenever they stumble upon a useful or interesting page, they make a bookmark of that page on their browser so that they can come back to them later, rather than jotting down the address on a piece of paper which will probably be thrown away by accident and spending much time on search engines to find it again. Without being required to type the address, users just click on the bookmark, called as a *favorite* by Internet Explorer, and return to the address. Considering the benefit bookmarking provides, almost all of the users appreciate its convenience and send their bookmarks by e-mail to their colleagues, students and friends while creating the list of the web pages/sites that they are interested in.

However, a user can find and bookmark only a fraction of the sites that might be of interest considering the sites galore on the Internet. What if you had to format your computer and noticed that you had forgotten to back-up the bookmarks? More importantly, what if you could see all the bookmarks that had been created by other users and benefit their experience and research? This is what social bookmarking mainly aims to do: Instead of keeping all these bookmarks on your own computer, you can publish your bookmarks to a social bookmarking

website and users of that website can benefit from the collection of bookmarks, described and tagged, as well as you can from theirs.

The term, social bookmarking, was coined by the first social bookmarking site *Del.Icio.Us* (<http://www.del.icio.us>), allowing the users to publish their bookmarks online and saving a significant amount of time by providing its users with all the bookmarks that had been created by others. Following *Del.Icio.Us*, many other popular bookmarking sites have appeared, such as *StumbleUpon* (<http://www.stumbleupon.com>). Although the services provided by these bookmarking sites are various and the procedure to bookmark websites is not the same, they have one thing in common: sharing interesting webpages/sites, which otherwise you would not have noticed or found in the results provided by the search engines.

Popular bookmarking sites

There are many bookmarking sites on the Internet which attract many users. Among them, considering the number of users and the features, the most popular ones are *Delicious*, *StumbleUpon*, *Diigo* (<http://www.diigo.com>), *MyWeb* (<http://www.myweb.com>), and *Spurl.net* (<http://www.spurl.net>). They provide various services. While *Delicious* and other bookmarking sites are for storing, sharing and searching bookmarks easily, *Stumble Upon* is exclusively focused on the discovery of random URLs added by users according to choices of their interests and used to share the links among colleagues or friends. *MyWeb* not only saves the link but also stores a cached copy of the actual web page. *Spurl.net*, similarly to *MyWeb*, allows hosting of local copies of pages that have been bookmarked, the full text of which can be searched.

In the next lines, one of the most popular social bookmarking sites, namely *Delicious*, will be discussed considering the services it provides, the process in which bookmarks are created and possible ways to benefit from *Delicious* in language teaching and learning activities.

How to set up an account for social bookmarking

Once the browser pointed to *Delicious* (<http://www.delicious.com> or <http://www.del.icio.us>), the following screen (Figure-1) will appear, proving the most popular bookmarks on Delicious and the links for ‘Join now’ and ‘Sign in’ on the top of the page. Since this is the first time that the page has been visited, the Join now link will be clicked on to create an account.

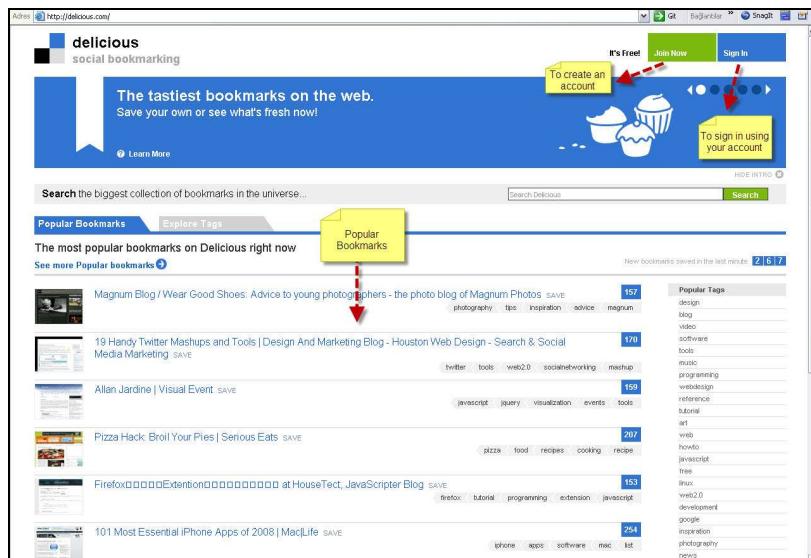


Figure-1. Frontpage of Delicious

The next step will be filling in the required information for the account (Figure-2).

The screenshot shows the "Enter Details" step of the account creation process. It features three numbered steps: 1. Enter Details (highlighted in blue), 2. Add Buttons, and 3. Import Existing Bookmarks. A yellow callout box on the right says "provide the required information". The form includes fields for First name, Last name, Email Address, User name, Password, Retype Password, and a CAPTCHA field. A red vertical line highlights the "All fields are required" note above the password fields. Below the CAPTCHA, there's a note about preventing automated registrations and a CAPTCHA image. At the bottom, there's a link for assistance and a checkbox for accepting the Terms of Service.

Get started with Delicious is easy!
Please start by entering your account details below.

All fields are required

First name

Last name

Email Address

User name

Password

Retype Password

>Password Requirements

Please type the letters below **8vRd**

This helps us prevent automated registrations

If you require assistance with registration our support team can help you.

I have read and agree to the Terms of Service

Register

Figure-2. Creating an account

Once the required fields have been filled in and the button ‘Register’ is clicked on, the next screen (Figure-3) will appear, asking whether bookmarking buttons will be added to your browser. This step can be skipped; however adding buttons is strongly recommended since saving links to your account will be very easy.

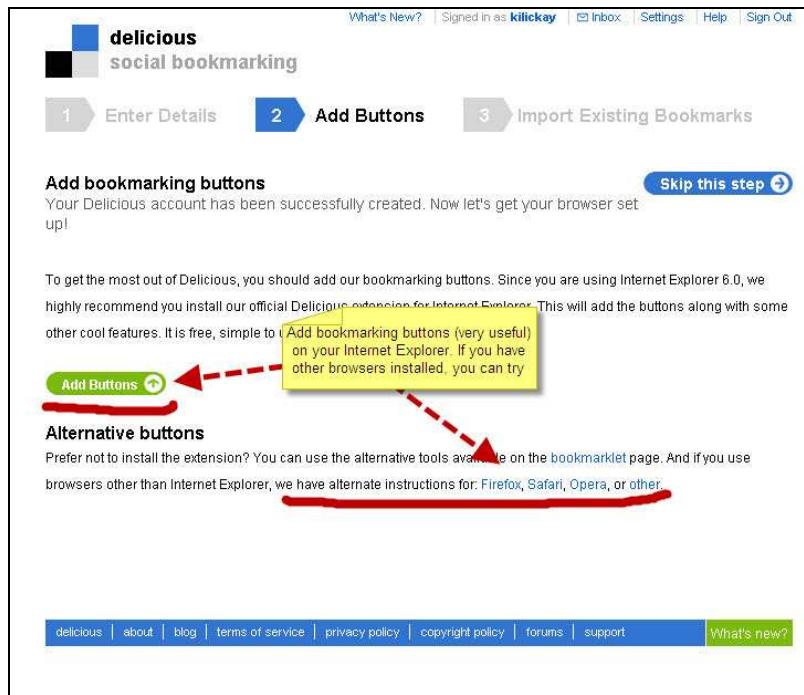


Figure-3. Adding bookmarking buttons

The third screen is related to importing existing bookmarks, which are saved on your browsers (Figure-4). Please note that the favorites or bookmarks on your browsers will be transferred to your account, but will not be available for other users unless they are made public.

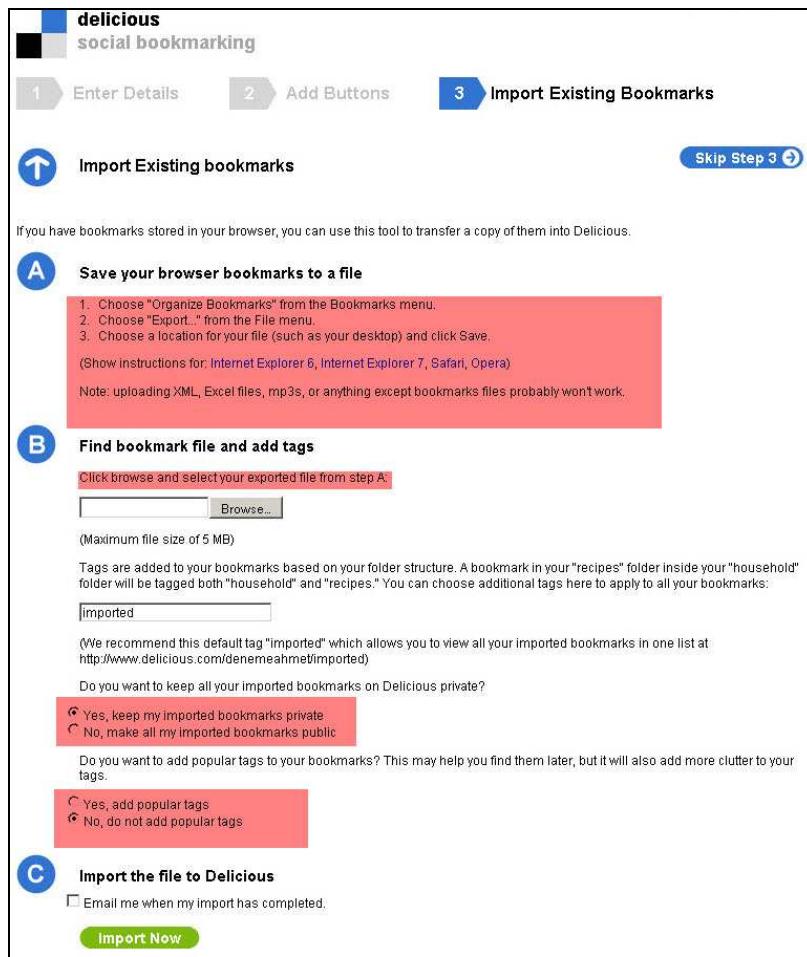


Figure-4. Importing existing bookmarks

How to add bookmarks to your account

There are two ways in order to add bookmarks to your account. The first way is to save a new bookmark while you are signed in your Delicious account (Figure-5).



Figure-5. Saving a new bookmark-1

The link can be copied and pasted into the place provided by Delicious (Figure-6).

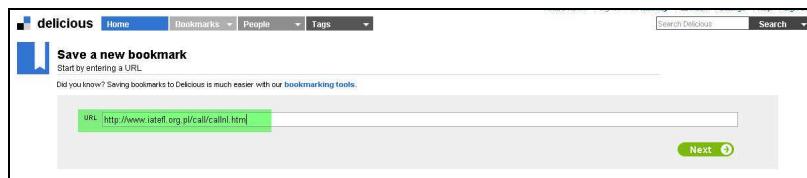


Figure-6. Typing the link

The second way (a more appropriate and easier way) is to use the *Delicious bookmarking buttons* on your browsers (Figure-7).



Figure-7. Bookmarking buttons

When the bookmarking button is clicked on, a scrolling menu will appear (Figure-8). 'Save a new bookmark' will be selected.



Figure-8. Bookmarking menu

In the screen that appears, the ‘url’ and the ‘title’ will be automatically provided. ‘Notes’ is not required; however, ‘tags’ (keywords to describe the bookmark) have to be entered. Any keyword can be provided to be used as a tag, but *Delicious* provides popular tags considering the link entered (Figure -9).

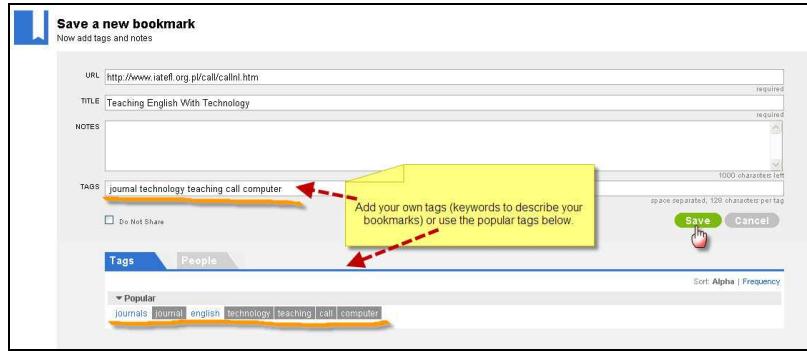


Figure-9. Saving a new bookmark-2

All bookmarks (except the ones on your browsers transferred to your account) are public (shared) on default. If the bookmark is not meant to be shared, ‘Do not share’ is to be checked (Figure-10).

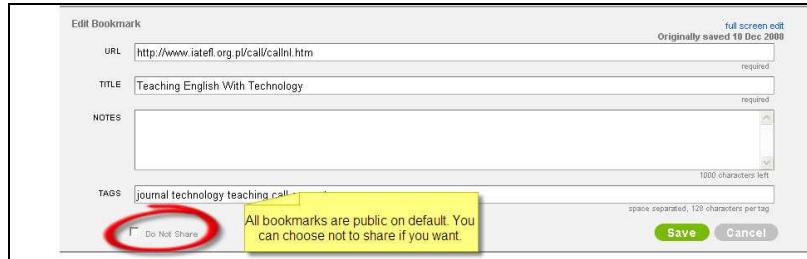


Figure-10. Making bookmarks public/private

How to edit/delete bookmarks on your account

The bookmarks saved on Delicious can be edited/deleted using the links provided very below the bookmark (Figure-11).



Figure-11. Editing a bookmark

When the ‘EDIT’ link below the bookmark is clicked on, the following screen appears with the information about the bookmark. Any information provided before can be edited.

How to search bookmarks

The ‘Search’ function is available on the top right of the main page on Delicious(Figure-12).

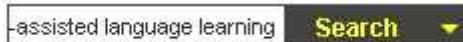


Figure-12. Searching bookmarks

The results of the search ‘Computer-assisted language learning’ will be provided as lists and they can be saved to your account using the link “Save” (Figure-13).

Result Title	Description	Tags
Computer-assisted language learning - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia	Wikipedia entry for computer-assisted language learning.	technology, education, web2.0, language, learning
EUROCALL: The European Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning	Information about the European Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning.	call, association, conference, language, learning
Computer Assisted Language Learning	General resources on computer-assisted language learning.	phonics, reading, call, language, learning
SED TL 512 Computer-assisted Language Learning John de Szende	Information on SED TL 512, a course on computer-assisted language learning.	call, class, course, computer-assisted, language
Computer-assisted language learning - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia	Wikipedia entry for computer-assisted language learning.	call, reference, education, language, learning
Computer Assisted Language Learning	General resources on computer-assisted language learning.	call, journal, journals, language, learning
Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) @ Chorus	Information on computer-assisted language learning resources at Chorus.	call, computerassistedlanguagelearning, edtech_ku, efl, language
This page is based on Computer-assisted language learning.	This page is based on the Wikipedia entry for computer-assisted language learning.	call, english, sit, computer, learning
Free resources and articles on Computer Assisted Language Learning (Modern Foreign Languages and ICT)	Links to free resources and articles on computer-assisted language learning.	call, english, sit, computer, learning

Figure-13. Search results

How to change settings

The settings (account, bookmarks, people, tags, and blogging) are pretty self-explanatory (Figure-14). The eye-catching ones are ‘People’ and ‘Blogging’. Using People settings, a network can be created for sharing links among the people selected and the contents can be hidden from others. Using Blogging, a list of your recent Delicious bookmarks or tags can be shown on your websites or blogs.

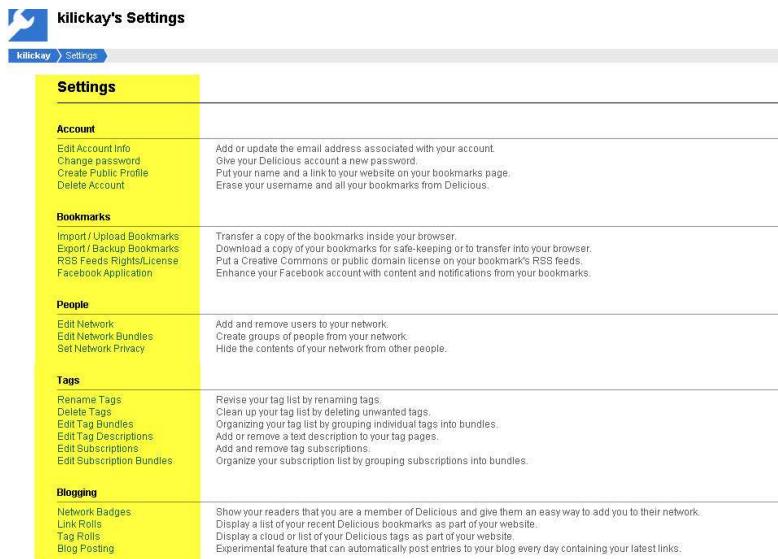


Figure-14. Account settings

How to use Delicious in language classrooms

Following the glimpse into social bookmarking, several ideas can be applied to language:

- Building a collection of bookmarks on Vocabulary, Grammar, Reading and Writing in any language. (Students in pairs or groups can search the web and add their favorite bookmarks).
- Creating a network among students (which I think will enhance communication) on interesting bookmarks related to their area of interest.
- It can be used also as a writing activity. The teacher can identify favorite sites such as stories, games and activities. Students can view the bookmarks and choose from among them. Then, they can write about why they like these sites as well as commenting on other students' choices.

However, it is worth keeping in mind that even though bookmarking sites can save time and provides another user's research, they do not necessarily make life easier as large quantities of information and sources will be provided together with lots of links to visit, which will require spending a lot of time just surfing, rather than studying or working. Please see Hammond, Hannay, Lund, and Scott (2005); Lund, Hammond, Flack, and Hannay (2005) for an introduction to social bookmarking tools and a general review of some of the bookmarking tools; Heymann, Koutrika, and Garcia-Molina (2008) for the discussion whether social bookmarking can improve other web searching data; Mathes (2004) for the limitations; Rethlefsen (2007) for the advantages of using a social bookmarking library system and finally the video created by CommonCraft on Social Bookmarking, which explains what social bookmarking is in plain English.

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