RSS - READING FEEDS

Many sites offer RSS Feeds, which you can identify by a small yellow button that says either **RSS** or **XML**. However, if you click one of these links, you will most likely get a page full of code in your browser.

To properly read the Feed, you need an RSS reader. Here are the steps to get and use RSS Feed readers.

Step 1 - Get an RSS Feed Reader

There are a lot of different RSS readers available. Some work as web services, and some are limited to windows *orMac*, *PDAorUNIX*. Here are a few, which you can try:

- RssReader - A free Windows-based RSS reader. Supports RSS versions 0.9x, 1.0, and 2.0, and Atom 0.1, 0.2, and 0.3.

- FeedDemon - A Windows-based RSS reader. Very easy to use and has a very orderly interface. However, this is not freeware!

- blogbotrss - An RSS reader plug-in for Outlook or Internet Explorer. The light-version for Internet Explorer is free.

Step 2 - RSS Reader Installation

All the readers come along with installation instructions. So, use the provided script to install your RSS Reader on your computer.

When you first launch a standalone reader, most often, you will see a toolbar and three window panes arranged much like the preview mode in Microsoft Outlook. The pane on the left side typically displays the RSS Feeds, or channels, to which you are subscribed. These can be organized into categories or folders.

The upper-right panel typically shows a list of articles within whichever channel is selected, and the article content is then displayed in the lower-right panel. To change channel groups, just click the drop-down box at the upper left beneath the menus. Sometimes a brief description will appear in the lower right; if so, click the link in the article to load the complete text.

Some standalone apps can be configured to send you e-mail every time there's a new article on a topic you're interested in.

Step 3 - Add Channels and Channel Groups

To add a channel i.e., RSS Feed, go to the RSS page of any site using the yellow button that says either **RSS** or **XML**. Right-click or use CTRL+C to copy the URL from the address bar of your browser, which should show a page full of XML code.

Now go back to your newsreader, choose the category where you want the new subscription to live *Business*, *Entertainment*, *theNewYorkTimes*, and select New or New Channel from the File menu. In most cases, the URL you copied should automatically be pasted into the URL field in the New Channel wizard. If not, you can cut and paste the URL yourself.

Step 4 - Customize RSS Reader

When you accumulate lots of articles from your various Feeds, it can become difficult to find specific information. Fortunately, newsreaders include useful tools for finding articles.

A Filter tool will show only articles that contain a keyword you specify. This may also be labeled Search. To use it, type a keyword directly into the Filter/Search bar.

Some readers include the ability to set a watch, an automatic search through all your incoming Feeds for a specific keyword. For example, you could enter ICQ as a watch. If any article in any Feed you subscribe to mentions ICQ, the article will be included in the Watch list.

You need to check the help section of your reader to find out more options to customize it according to your needs.

Step 5 - Cleaning Unwanted Feeds

Eventually, you'll probably end up with more Feeds than you want or can read regularly. In most readers, to delete a Feed you're no longer interested in, you simply delete its title. Then your RSS reader won't seek out that information anymore, and you won't get any content from the publisher unless you go to its site or resubscribe to the Feed.

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