



Making a Track involves filling out an online form. There are two interfaces available, **TrackMaker Frames** and **TrackMaker Lite**. Learn more about the forms [here](#).

Making a Track

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Important Precautions for your Track

Because TrackStar is an online tool, server functions, electrical problems, or occasionally user action may interrupt the submission of a Track. For this reason, **we strongly advise Track authors to store a draft of their Track links and annotations in a word processor file on their own computer.** This prevents authors from having to recreate Track content from scratch in the rare case that a Track must be re-submitted. We know that good lessons take time to create, and we want to help you preserve your hard work.

Using the "Make a Track" Form (new user)

To make a track, click on the **Make or Edit a Track** link in the center of the TrackStar home page. The area of the screen looks like this:

TrackStar Home

Make a Track

[Make or Edit a Track](#)

[Make a Quiz for your Track](#)

[Build a Web Page for your Track](#)

You will be directed to the TrackStar Login page. As a new user, you should

fill in the lower form with your name, e-mail address, and password (with verification). When you have completed the form, click the **Register and create a Track** button under the form. The form looks like this:

New users, register here :

First name:	<input type="text" value="Velma"/>
Last name:	<input type="text" value="Adamson"/>
E-mail address:	<input type="text" value="velma@scrtec.org"/>
Enter a password*:	<input type="password" value="*****"/>
Confirm your password:	<input type="password" value="*****"/>

Register and create a track

This will take you to a confirmation page. On this page, click on **Make a Track**, which is highlighted for you below in green.

TrackStar Registration Successful

You have been successfully registered to Trackstar!

[Make a Track](#) | [Logout](#)

This will take you to the **Make a Track** page, where you provide background information and a general description of your Track. The rest of this page explains the fields in this form. See what this form looks like [below](#).

Using the "Make a Track" Form (returning user)

To make a track, log in to your account. To do this, click on the the **Make or Edit a Track** link in the center of the TrackStar home page. As a returning author, you should fill in the top form and click on the **Go edit or make a new Track** button, which is under the form. The form looks like this:

TrackStar Login Page

For an overview and detailed instructions, [click here](#).

Returning users, login here :

Enter your e-mail address:	<input type="text" value="zane@scrtec.org"/>
Enter your password:	<input type="password" value="*****"/>

Go edit or make a new track

You will then see a **Welcome** page with your name, showing the date of your last visit and the titles of your Tracks. Here is what a **Welcome** page looks like:

Welcome Jane Doe!

Last Session:

Your Created Tracks

[track ID:76]	DEMO	Created: 08-MAY-00	[
[track ID:77]	DEMO	Created: 08-MAY-00]

[Make a new Track](#) | [Logout and Return to TrackStar Home](#)

In the **Welcome** page, click on **Make a New Track**. This will bring you to the **Make a Track** page, where you provide background information and a general description of your Track. The top of the form looks like this:

Make a Track

Background Information and General Description

Print my e-mail address on my track so users can send comments to me.

Send me e-mail about Web sites related to my track.

1. Title of this New Track:

2. Brief Description of this New Track:

E-mail, naming a Track, & choosing a subject area

E-mail

In the above example, you can see that both boxes are checked. This is *not* the default however. Printing your e-mail address is an important collaborative feature, so that other teachers can contact you with questions, comments, or ideas about the Track you've made. If you want other users to be able to contact you, check this box. For the security and safety of minors, if this Track is student-made, please *do not* check this box.

If you want us to send you a monthly e-mail message containing some Web sites related to the subject of your Track, check the second box. If not, please leave the box unchecked, and you won't be pestered with unwanted e-mail.

Naming a Track

When you create a title, please *do not use quotation marks*. If you include quotation marks, your title will disappear. Instead, use italics. To use italics, use HTML tags. Put `<i>` before the words to be italicized, and `</i>` after the words to

be italicized, as in the example below.

1. Title of this New Track
<i>Stuart Little</i> and other E.B. White novels.

This title would appear as ***Stuart Little* and other E.B. White novels**.

Naming a demo Track

In order to conserve server space, we like to delete demo or practice Tracks. If you create a Track just to learn how TrackStar works, or if you don't want your Track to remain online after one week, please name it "demo" so that we can remove it from the server. See the example below.

1. Title of this New Track:	Demo Nurse Sharks
2. Brief Description of this New Track:	This track is a demonstration Track for my workshop. We will be making a Track on Nurse Sharks. I can include HTML tags in my Track description, but I don't have to.

Naming a Track you want to keep

Please enter a descriptive title for your Track. The TrackStar search engine will search titles for key words, so please be as specific as possible when naming Tracks. See the example below.

1. Title of this New Track:	Pre-Columbian Architecture in Peru: Macchu Picchu
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Choosing a subject area & grade level

Select the subject area(s) and intended grade level that *best* reflect the content of your Track. Since people often search for Tracks using the subject and grade level categories, please choose the most fitting category. If needed, you can select more than one by holding down the "open apple" key (Macintosh) or the "control" key (PC) while selecting. Please do not select all subject areas.

Adding a description for your Track

Please include a brief description of your Track in this field. Describe the content, goals, objectives, and activities in your Track. Tell whether the Track is part of a greater project, or is a self-contained lesson, and what state standards the Track meets, if any. The most valuable and utilized tracks are those that present material as an organized lesson rather than simply as a list of resources on a topic.

It's best if you write this and spell check it in a word processor, and then cut and paste it into this field. Teachers often decide to enter a Track (or not) by reading the description and title. Since teachers around the world use each other's Tracks, providing a good description can help people see quickly what a Track is about.

You may use HTML in this section, but it is not necessary. The TrackStar search engine will search Track descriptions for key words as well.

Using keywords in your description

The TrackStar search engine will search Track descriptions for key words. To speed the search, at the end of your description, include keywords. Type in a
 tag, a common HTML tag that acts as a carriage return in Web pages. See keywords in the example below.

1. Title of this New Track:

2. Brief Description of this New Track:

Choosing a format for the Track

This section of the Make a Track form is crucial to other teachers who may use your Track. If you are making a Track simply to learn how to use TrackStar, or if you don't want to keep this Track online more than one week, please click the radio button next to **Demo**. Click **Resource list** if the Track provides a list of sites to support research projects, thematic units, skill in practice, or information gathering. Click **Worksheet** if the Track requires students to find short factual answers in the Track's resources. If the Track supports higher order thinking skills, click **Extended Learning**. Each option is explained when moused over. See below for an example: when you mouse over the track format, a description appears to the right.

5. This track is:

[Resource List](#)
 [Worksheet](#)
 [Extended Learning](#)
 [Demo](#)

These encourage higher order thinking such as projects, webquests, comparison/contrast, analysis or synthesis. These are usually annotated. [d](#)

Using TrackMaker Frames or TrackMaker Lite

Once you have filled out the **Make a Track** form completely, you need to choose whether you will create your Track using **TrackMaker Frames** or **TrackMaker Lite**. This choice comes at the bottom of the **Make a Track** form. **TrackMaker Lite** (on the right) is more like our previous TrackStar form. It is easier to use, but it does not provide a real-time preview of the links or annotations you put into the

form. It also does not check whether your links work or not, whereas **TrackMaker Frames** does. **Track Maker Lite** limits the content of your Track to 15 sites. **TrackMaker Frames** (on the left) is Javascript enabled, provides a real-time preview of the pages and annotations you put into the form, and requires a browser that is Javascript enabled (such as Netscape Navigator 2.0 and up, and Internet Explorer 3.0 and up). **TrackMaker Frames** will check if your links work or not, and it limits the content of your Track to 15 sites. Different users like different interfaces, so try them both when you can, and decide which is better for you. If you have a slow connection, you might want to use **TrackMaker Lite**.

TrackMaker Frames

Use this version if your browser is frames and Javascript enabled. This version will allow you to preview sites and insert and edit links in a unique interface.

TrackMaker Lite

If you know exactly what your track layout is going to be, or are having difficulties with the frames version of TrackMaker, please use TrackMaker Lite. It is essentially the same thing but quicker and simpler.

[d](#)

Adding a link with TrackMaker Frames

Whether you choose **TrackMaker Frames** or **TrackMaker Lite**, it's best to collect your links before you start. A Track is a collection of annotated links on a chosen topic. Each link in your collection needs a title, a URL (Web address), and an annotation (questions, directions, and tasks for students to complete while visiting that link). When you choose **TrackMaker Frames**, you'll see a form like the one below.

TrackMaker

Your Track's title & number → DEMO: Pollination and Germination (track # 15043) Current link: 1 ← Where this link will appear in your Track

The title of the new link → Link title:

The URL of the new link → Link URL:

Annotation:

Questions and tasks related to this link →

Click on 'Add link' to add this link to your track.

Add link

What you click to add the link to the collection →

[d](#)

To the right of this form, you will see some brief directions. Simply type or paste in the information (title, URL, & annotation) into the appropriate fields.

Adding the link title and link URL

Add links one at a time with this form. First, create a title for the link and type it into the **Link title** field. See the example below.

The screenshot shows the TrackMaker interface. At the top, it says 'TrackMaker' and 'DEMO: Pollination and Germination (track # 15043)'. On the right, 'Current link:' is set to '1'. The 'Link title:' field contains 'How to propagate native plants'. The 'Link URL:' field contains 'http://'. Below these is an 'Annotation:' field which is empty. At the bottom, there is a blue bar with the text 'Click on 'Add link' to add this link to your track.' and a button labeled 'Add link'.

Next, enter the URL (the Web address) into the **Link URL field**. We suggest that you copy & paste the URL directly from your Web browser (such as Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) into the TrackMaker form. Please notice that we already have the **http://** in the form, so you don't need to paste this part of the address. See below for an example.

This screenshot shows the TrackMaker form after the URL has been entered. The 'Link title:' field still contains 'How to propagate native plants'. The 'Link URL:' field now contains 'http://www.anbg.gov.au/PROPAGATE/pl'. The 'Annotation:' field remains empty. The bottom bar and 'Add link' button are the same as in the previous screenshot.

Adding an annotation

Now you are ready to enter in an annotation. An annotation includes questions, directions, and tasks for your students. The best annotations make it clear what you expect your students to do at this link. Annotations *can* be very brief, like the one below.

The screenshot shows the TrackMaker interface. At the top, it says "TrackMaker" and "DEMO: Pollination and Germination (track # 15043)". The "Current link: 1" is displayed. The form has three main sections: "Link title:" with the text "How to propagate native plants", "Link URL:" with the text "http://www.anbg.gov.au/PROPAGATE/pl", and "Annotation:" with the text "Which plant has the fastest germination time?". Below the annotation field is a blue bar with the text "Click on 'Add link' to add this link to your track." and a button labeled "Add link".

Adding the link to your Track

Once you have filled in the form with the link's title, URL, and an annotation, you are ready to add this link to the collection of links that will make up your Track. To add this link to the Track, click on the **Add link** button below the form. When you do this, the link will be added, and it will appear on the right-hand side of your screen. The TrackMaker form will clear, making room for you to add your next link. You will notice that the **current link** field will change to reflect what link you are now on. See below for an example of what the screen looks like.

The screenshot shows the TrackMaker interface after a link has been added. The "Current link: 2" is displayed. The form fields are empty. To the right of the form, there is a preview window showing the URL "http://www.anbg.gov.au/PROPAGATE/plant01..." and a button labeled "Go to New".

To preview a link, click on the URL (Web address) on the right-hand side of the page. This will bring up a pop-up window that will download the link. If the link works, you will see the page load into the new window. If the link does not work, nothing (except maybe an error message) will load.

To edit any of these links, click on **Edit** next to the link. For more information on editing, please see [Editing a Track](#).

To save the Track, click **Submit Track**. By clicking on the **Submit Track** button, you "save" any additions or changes you have made. These changes are stored on the TrackStar server. If you do not click on the **Submit Track** button, your new Track will not be made, or changes to an old Track will not be saved.

Adding a link using TrackMaker Lite

TrackMaker Lite is very similar to our original TrackStar form. See the example below for an example of the fields in **TrackMaker Lite**. A Track is a collection of annotated links on a chosen topic. Each link in your collection needs a title, a URL (Web address), and an annotation (questions, directions, and tasks for students to complete while visiting that link). In this example, the **Link title** and **Link URL** (Web address) fields have been filled out.

Link Number 1	
Link title:	Solar System Simulator
Link URL:	http://space.jpl.nasa.gov/
Annotation:	<input type="text"/>

When you are finished with all of your links, scroll to the bottom and click submit.

Complete the title, URL, and annotation information for your links and then scroll to the bottom of the page and click **Submit Track**. By clicking on the **Submit Track** button, you "save" any additions or changes you have made. These changes are stored on the TrackStar server. If you do not click on the **Submit Track** button, your new Track will not be made, or changes to an old Track will not be saved.

Using HTML tags in your title & annotations

To make longer annotations, you may want to use HTML tags to format line breaks and create lists. Using HTML tags is the **only** way to keep your formatting on the Web. To make annotation text appear as separate paragraphs, place a **
** (break tag) or a **<P>** (paragraph tag) after each paragraph. The **<P>** leaves a larger space between paragraphs. To make several questions look more like a list, place **
** after each question. These are only two examples of using HTML tags within annotations. See the example below for an annotation that uses a **
** (break) tag:

TrackMaker	
DEMO: Pollination and Germination (track # 15043)	
Current link:	1
Link title:	How to propagate native plants
Link URL:	http://www.anbg.gov.au/PROPAGATE/pl
Annotation:	
Which plant has the fastest germination time? How long does it take?	
Click on 'Add link' to add this link to your track.	
Add link	

The above annotations would show up in your Track (without the tags) as seen below. Note how the second question is on the next line:

How to propagate native plants

<http://www.anbg.gov.au/PROPAGATE/plant01.htm>

Which plant has the fastest germination time?

How long does it take?

This page is [Bobby Approved](#).

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