Blackboard Learn
Content, Organization and Course Creation

What is Blackboard Learn?

Blackboard Learn is the Learning Management System (LMS) we use at North Island College. In **Blackboard Learn** you can create and share content, communicate with students, and create and grade assignments and tests.

What Tools and Processes are Included in this Handout?

- Finding your Course
- Making your course available
- Organizing your Content Collection
- Uploading Files, Creating Folders
- Items vs. Files
- Organizing Content for Course Flow

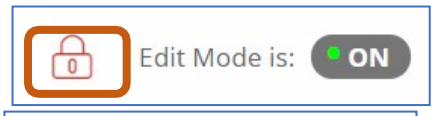
Finding your course

Your courses are created through Colleague. You and your students will be automatically enrolled.
You can find your courses at mynic.nic.bc.ca under **My Blackboard Learn Classes** or by clicking on **Blackboard** on the NIC website: https://www.nic.bc.ca/

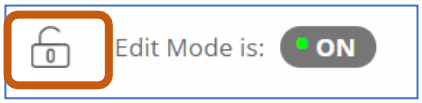
Making your course available

Courses are set to 'unavailable' by default. You must make them available before students will be able to access them.

To make your course available, click the **lock icon** at the top right of your course:



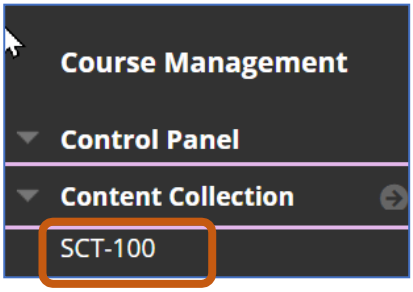
This is what it will look like when the course is **available** (unlocked).



To make it **unavailable**, click the lock icon again.

Organizing the Content Collection

Every course has a **Content Collection** that is different from the **Content** area in the course menu. Think of the **Content Collection** as a warehouse for your course's content. You can store files in the **Content Collection** for use in your course. No one will see the files until you add them to a **Content** area.



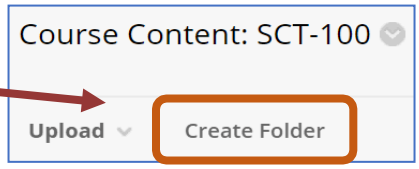
You can find the Course **Content Collection** in the course menu on the left side of your course under **Course Management**.

The **Content Collection** associated with your course will be the first link on the list under **Content Collection**. This number is your **course code**.

Any files you upload to your course will be stored here.

Before you start adding content to your course, create some **folders** in the **Content Collection** to keep things organized.

To do this, click on the course code under **Content Collection** and then **Create Folder**.



Create as many folders as you need for your course. For example, create a **Start Here** folder for all important documents your students will need to refer to throughout the term.

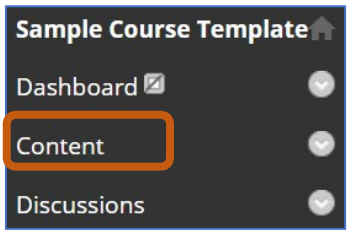
If your course is organized in 'modules', 'units', 'weeks', or 'topics', create a folder for each of those in the **Content Collection**. If you will be sharing a collection of PowerPoint files, or videos, create a folder for those as well.

Give the folders names that make sense to you for organizing your content.

If you're not sure about the content you will be sharing yet, you can always go back and create the folders later.

Uploading files, Creating Folders

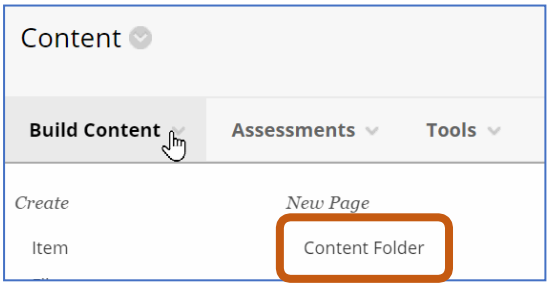
There is a link in the course menu called **Content**. This refers to the content area in your course where your content will be displayed.



When you click the **Content** link you will have the option to build/add content.

This is where you can create folders for organizing your course.

Create folders like the ones you made in the **Content Collection** by clicking **Content** > **Build Content** > **Content Folder**.



It's good practice to have a **Start Here** folder and to have a folder for each 'chunk' of content be it a module, a unit, or a week.

Once you've created the folders you can begin adding content to your course. For now, we'll look at **Uploading Files** and using **Items** to add content.

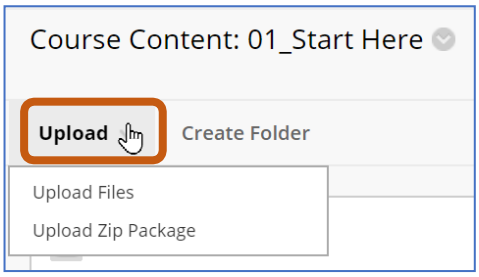
Uploading Files

You can **Upload Files** directly to the folders you have created in your course content area but for good organizational practice, you should upload them to the course **Content Collection** first.

In the **Content Collection** click on the folder you want to add files to – for example, you could add your syllabus to your **Start Here** folder.

To do this:

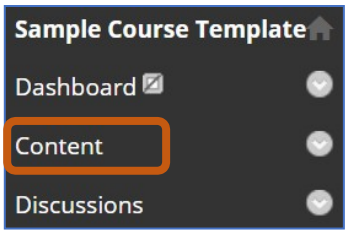
Click on the **Start Here** folder.



Then click on **Upload**. You can choose to add a single file or a zip (compressed) file.

Now that you have a file in your **Start Here** folder in your **Content Collection**, it's time to add it to the **Start Here** folder in the **Content** area of the course.

To do this:



Click the **Content** link in the course menu.

Find the **Start Here** folder that you created and click to open it.

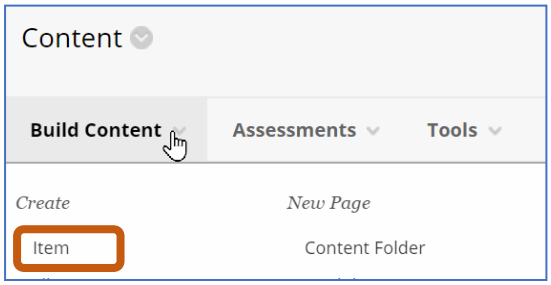
Under **Build Content** chose **File**.

You will have the option to **Browse your computer** or **Browse your Content Collection**. Choose **Browse Content Collection.** Find the **Start Here** folder that you uploaded a file to and select the file you want to display in the course. Click **Submit**.

Give the file a name, then click **Submit**. The file will now show up in the **Start Here** folder in the content area of your course.

Items vs. Files

Another way of adding content to your course is with an **Item**. An **Item** is different from a **File** in that it does not need to be uploaded or attached. You can create an **Item** by choosing **Item** under the **Build Content** link.



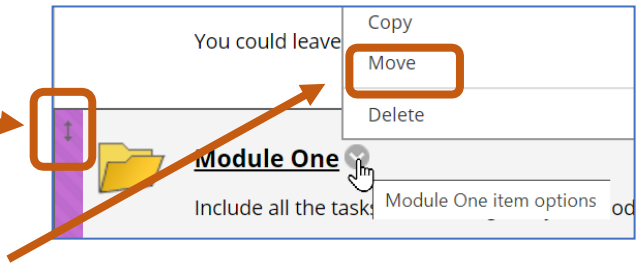
Items work well for short pieces of content that you want to display. They can help provide context to the other content you have added to your course.

You can use an **Item** to provide instructions for working through a module, or to embed a video, or an image.

Most courses have an Item on the Content page by default that you can edit to add your course name and description.

Organizing Content for Course Flow

Any time you create content in your **Blackboard Learn** course, whether it's a **Folder**, a **File,** or an **Item**, it will show up at the bottom of whatever area you are working in.

You can re-arrange your content by clicking the arrows to the left of the piece of content and dragging it up or down.

Or, you can choose from the **Item** options for your content and click **Move** to select where you want it to appear in the course.