There are many types of content from which to choose when developing your course in Blackboard. This document provides some guidance on why you would choose one content type over another, and shows how to import content from Microsoft Word.

Item vs File vs URL

It can be confusing trying to choose which Blackboard tool is best. Items, Files, and URLs are all similar, yet different. Items allow the most versatility while the other tools offer a simple way to quickly add something. We often suggest using Items because they allow you to add multiple files or links and, most importantly, create some context for what your students see.

These three tools are available from any content area under the **Build Content** button.

Click **BUILD CONTENT**
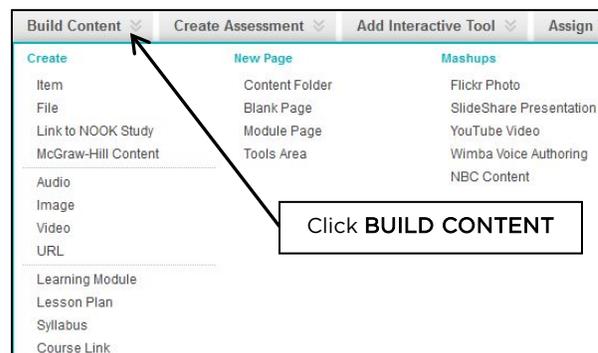
Folder vs Learning Module

Folders and Learning Modules are two tools used to chunk course content within Blackboard. Instructors often structure their course around chapters, modules, units, or some other grouping of the material.

Learning Modules allow you to create a unit, for example, and add readings, lectures, assignments, quizzes, exams, and anything else the student must complete. Sequential order may be enforced to ensure the student completes the pieces in the correct order. They also see only one piece at a time which can help student focus.

Folders also allow you to create a group of course materials within Blackboard. You may add any type of content or assessment to a folder for students to view and complete. All content is seen at once which may add some context to the unit or module, and order may be enforced with Adaptive Release rules.

Both folders and learning modules are available from any content area under the **Build Content** button.

> **Teaching Tip**
>
> Items are the most versatile content type.
>
> Folders allow more flexibility than Learning Modules.

Course Links

If you ever need to point your students to a tool or resource elsewhere in your course(i.e. Discussion Forum, Send Email, reading, My Grades, Readings, etc), **Course Links** allow you to easily accomplish this.
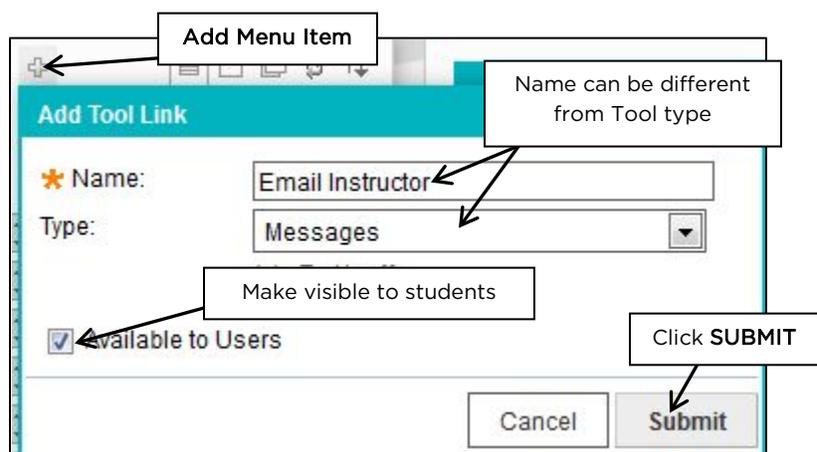
1. From a content area within your course, click **BUILD CONTENT** and choose **COURSE LINK**.
2. Click the **BROWSE** button to the right of *Choose Item*, and select the resource or Blackboard tool you want your students to access. The *Name* and *Location* fields will be auto-completed for you.
3. Provide some context in the *Description* text box.
4. Click **SUBMIT**.

1. Course Link Information

Click **BROWSE**

* Choose Item   Browse...
* Name   ▪ ⌄ Black
* Location
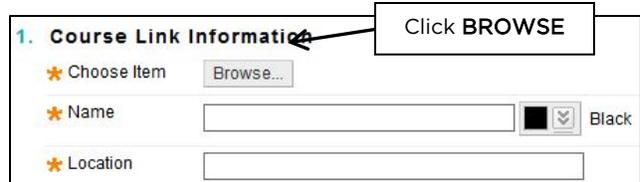
Tool Links

Tool Links are similar to **Course Links**, except they live within the course menu. These are useful when you want your students to easily access a tool such as My Grade, Messages, Blackboard IM, etc.

1. From the course menu within your course, click the **Add Menu Item** button and choose **CREATE TOOL LINK**.
2. Enter a label for the Blackboard Tool in the *Name* field. It does not have to match the Tool name, but should be easily identifiable by your students.
3. Choose the tool from the *Type* pull-down list
4. Check the box to make this visible to your students.
5. Click **SUBMIT**.

Add Menu Item

Name can be different from Tool type

Add Tool Link

* Name: Email Instructor

Type: Messages   ▾

Make visible to students

☑ Available to Users

Click **SUBMIT**

Cancel   Submit

Teaching Tip

Tool Links and Course Links are great ways to make course navigation easier for students.

YouTube Mashup vs Embed Code

There are two easy ways to bring YouTube videos into your course. The first is through the **YouTube Video** mashup and the second is by pasting the embed code into the HTML editor.

The YouTube mashup tool offers you a few extras. You can choose how the video appears in Blackboard, you may include the direct link to YouTube, and you may include YouTube information pertaining to the video.

Using the embed code straight from YouTube.com can be easier if you are searching for videos from their website. After you have copied the embed code, toggle the HTML mode to "on" in the Visual Text Editor and paste the embed code into the text box.

Paste From Word

Microsoft Word is by far one of the most popular word processing tools used by just about everyone. The problem is bringing content from Word into Blackboard. A simple copy and paste often results in odd formatting for no apparent reason. Luckily there is a tool within the Visual Text Editor to import text from Word.

1. Click the **ADD MASHUP** button and choose **PASTE FROM WORD**.
2. A new window appears into which you paste your Word content.
3. Click **SUBMIT**.

One limitation to this tool is that it only accepts formatted text. Any images, videos, shapes, etc will not be transferred into Blackboard.