# Creating an e-mail list in Google Groups

Creating an e-mail list in Google Groups is easy to do. Just follow the steps below and your group will be created in a matter of minutes.

Why use Google Groups? First, you could use Yahoo Groups as well – they both provide an easy method of managing a bunch of e-mails, but with that said, here's why to use an e-mail group, either at Yahoo or Google.

- It's easy to manage a number of e-mail addresses. How many times have you been on a distribution list with a bunch of other people and you wanted to reply to everybody? It should be easy – you hit reply-all and hopefully you get everyone on the list. But what happens if you use an older e-mail to do this to, and in the meantime 5 more people have been added to the list? They don't get the e-mail. A big Oops. Using an e-mail service like YahooGroups or GoogleGroups eliminates this problem. You send an e-mail to one address and the service then forwards your e-mail to everybody else who is on the list. You will never miss anybody again.
- It's easy to find past e-mails. Ever been in the situation where you are looking for an e-mail you sent in the past but can't find it? Both YahooGroups and GoogleGroups archive all of your past e-mails so they are all in one place. And both services provide the ability to search past e-mails for words or phrases.
- It's easy to share files. In addition to managing e-mail addresses, both services provide the ability to store and share files among all of the list members. You don't have to send the file to everybody on the e-mail list, just upload it to the list itself and the file is available to everybody. Note: Yahoo and Google handle file sharing differently and the specifics of this feature aren't covered in this write-up.

So let's get started. This document assumes that you have a Google log-in of some sort – either a Gmail account, or you've set up your own personal e-mail address to access Google. If you haven't done this yet, see the document titled "Accessing Google Goodies Using Your Regular e-mail Address." Of course, you can set up a new Gmail account for yourself.

1. First, log into Google. The easiest way to do this is to go to `www.google.com`. If you are already logged in, you will see a picture in the upper-right corner of the screen, similar to the one shown below. If you have uploaded your own picture, it will be displayed instead of the blue icon.
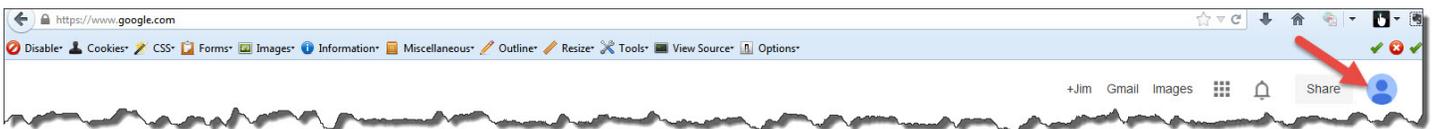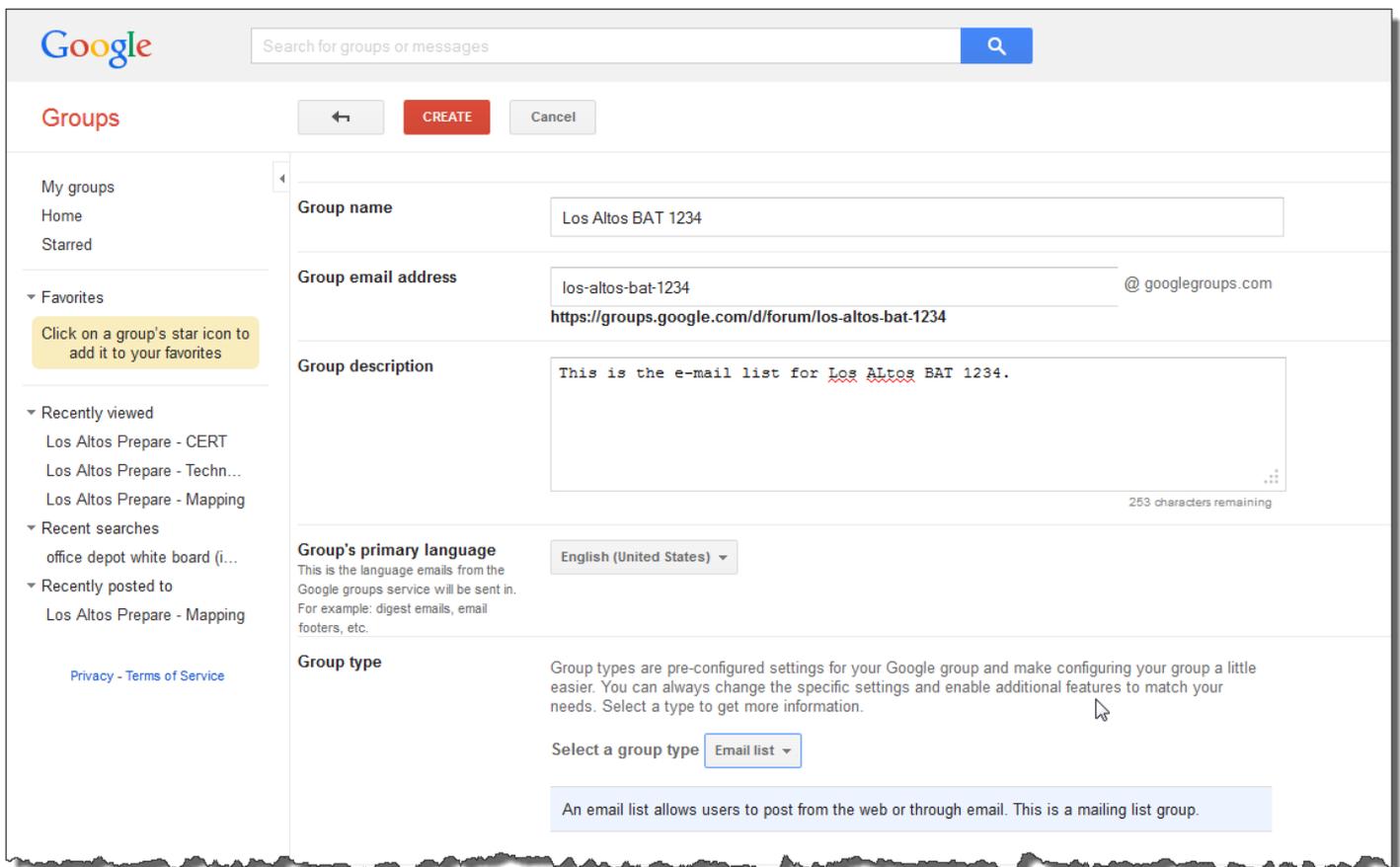

   If you aren't logged in, the phrase "`Sign In`" will be displayed. Click on "`Sign In`" to sign in.

2. Next, go to `groups.google.com`. You will see the following screen:
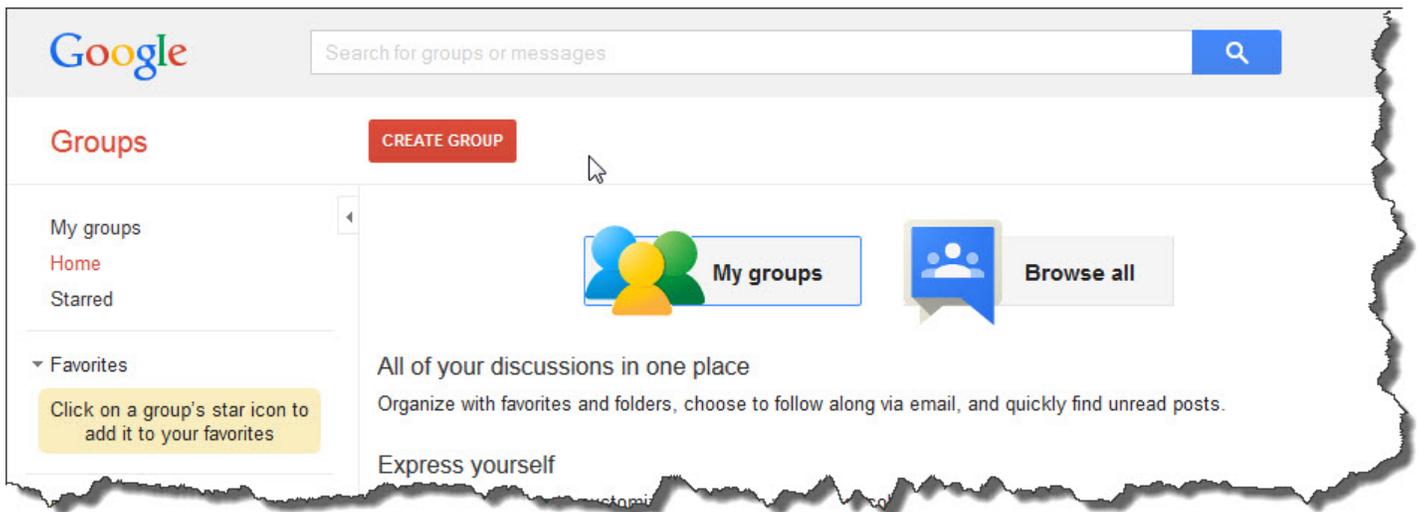
Click on the red "`Create Group`" button at the top of the page. This will bring up the page that allows you to specify information about your new group, as shown below:


3. Fill out the appropriate information. Use the following as guidelines:
    a. In "Group Name", choose a name that clearly represents the group you are creating. In our example, we are setting up an e-mail list for our BAT, which has been assigned the number 1234. To make it extra-clear, we added "Los Altos" to the front of it, so the name we chose is "`Los Altos BAT 1234`". You can name your list after your neighborhood's name or your pet cat – just remember that others will be using this list and they may not be fond of your cat. Make it a meaningful name.

b. Google will fill in the e-mail address box based on the name you entered. It basically replaces any spaces with hyphens or dashes. If you want a different name, you can highlight the box and type over the suggested address. Again, keep it meaningful. In our example, we kept the suggested name.

c. In the "`Group Description`" box, enter a meaningful description of your group.

d. Make sure that the "`Group Type`" is set to "`Email list`."

e. The default setting for "`Basic Permissions`" (not shown in the picture) are acceptable.

When you are ready, click on the red "`Create`" box at the top of the form.

4. Google will display a verification box similar to the one below.
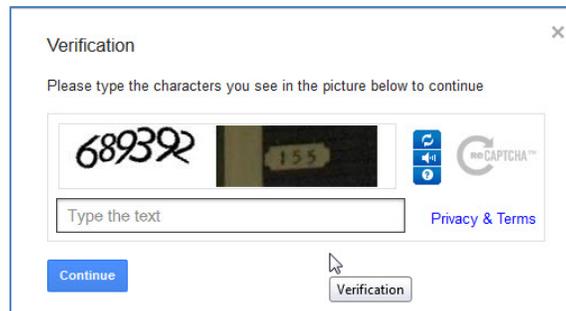
Enter the code displayed in the appropriate box and press the "`Continue`" button.

5. After a few seconds, Google will display the following box, letting you know that your new group has been established.
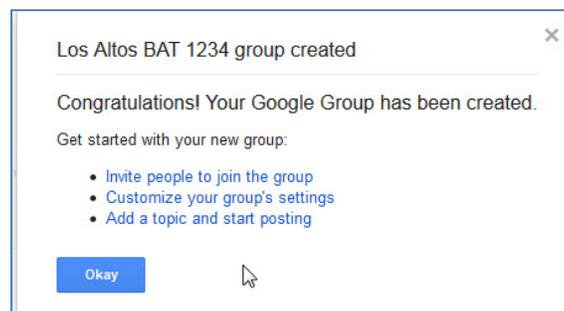

Click on "Okay"

6. At this point, Google may ask you to update your Google Profile with a picture of yourself, as shown in the picture below. It is not necessary for you to upload a picture of yourself. You can safely ignore this page – just press on the blue "`Save My Changes`" button.
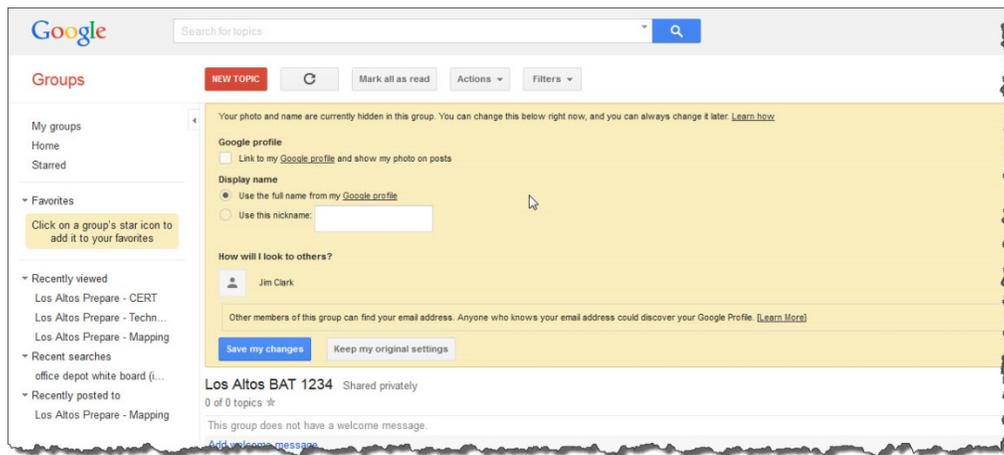
7. If you already have a Google account setup and have uploaded a picture already, this screen will not be displayed.
8. You are (or should be) at the main page of your newly formed group. Our example is shown below. Notice that the name of our group (`Los Altos BAT 1234`) is displayed.
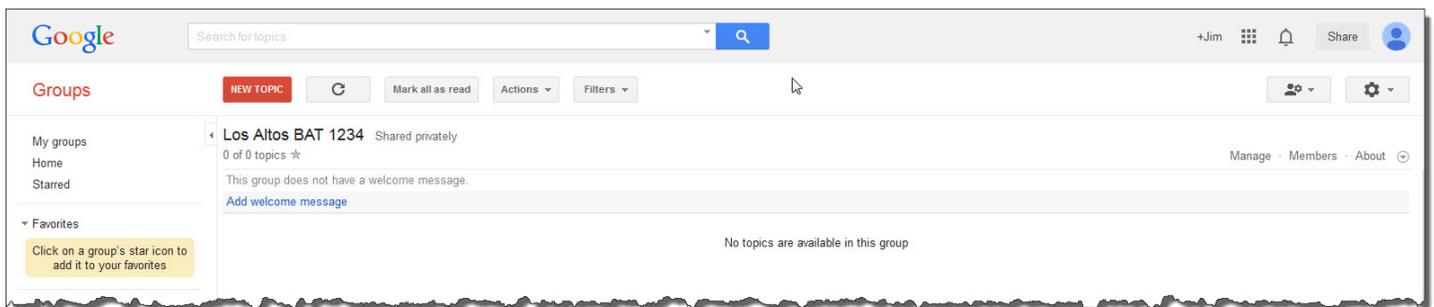
Managing Your Group

As the manager/owner of your new group, you have several options available to you that other members of the group cannot see or perform. This section provides a brief description of what you can do. Many of the options are pretty intuitive and because of this, we won't include any more pictures.

Adding Users to the Group

Obviously you will want to add neighbors and friends to your list so they can participate in the group.

There are two ways to add new users to your group: a) you can invite them to join (click on `Manage,` then click on `Invite Members` – an invitation will be sent to join the group; b) you can directly add users to the list, bypassing the invitation (click on `Manage`, then click on `Direct Add Members`). In both cases, make sure the `Email subscription option` is set to `All Email`, otherwise your new user may not get messages in a timely manner.

Moderating Messages Posted by Members

By default, everyone can post a message to the group and it will be sent out quickly to everyone on the list. Sometimes a member may abuse this privilege and start sending e-mails promoting their business or discussing topics that are not relevant to all list users. To handle this, you should first as the person to stop, but if they persist you can moderate their postings. This means that before their e-mail is sent to everyone on the list, you will have a chance to review that e-mail and decide it is appropriate or inappropriate for the list. To change an individual's posting permissions, click on "`Manage`" to see a list of all users, then click anywhere on the line that displays the user's information. This will display detailed options for this person and under "`Posting permission`", select "`Override, Members posts are moderated`", then click the blue "`Save`" button at the top of the page.

Use the moderation feature carefully. It should be used as a method to ensure that messages posted to the group are relevant to the goals of the Los Altos PREPARE program and should focus on connecting, preparing, and caring. Over-use of this feature might be viewed as censorship by other members of your group.

Other Features

There are still lots of things you can do with your list. It's your job to explore what is available to you and to use the tools to make your list easy to use and fun for others. Some of the features include:

- Setting up a neighbor/friend as a co-moderator so they can invite others to join the list
- Configuring your group so that a description is included in Google's directory, making it easy for others to find the group.
- Configuring the group so that replies to a message go to either the original author or the entire list

…and a lot more. Explore Google Groups and share your best practices with other BAT Leaders