

And why should I care? Good questions. First, here's why you should care. Unlike getting website updates or ezines by email, RSS feeds give you absolute, 100% complete control over the situation. You don't have to reveal your email address. If you want to stop receiving content, you don't have to request to be taken off the list. One click, and poof the subscription is gone. Plus, since there's no email address involved, there's no way a publisher can sell, rent or give away the means to contact you. That's right no more spam! Pretty cool, huh? **That is cool! Umm What the heck is RSS?** RSS is simply an Internet technology standard that allows people to receive updates to web-based content of interest. You might have figured that much out by now. But basically, that's the essence of an RSS feed - you subscribe and then receive new content automatically in your feed reader. If you actually want to know how RSS works, [click here](http://www.xml.com/pub/a/2002/12/18/dive-into-xml.html).

What the heck is a feed reader? You may already be using a form of feed reader, and not even realize it. If you use personalized home page services like My Yahoo or My MSN, you've got RSS capabilities built in. That's how syndicated content like news, weather and stock quotes appears on your personal page. You can also add content from any blog or other site that uses RSS to provide updates. Other web-based tools are primarily dedicated to feed reading only. One of the most popular web-based feed readers at this point is [Google Reader](http://reader.google.com), and it's also free and easy to get started with. Another fine example is [Bloglines](http://www.bloglines.com/), another free web-based feed reader.

If you use the [Firefox browser](http://www.mozilla.com/firefox/), you can also receive RSS feeds from your tool bar by using the Live Bookmarks function. The next version of Internet Explorer will add this feature as well. Finally, there are desktop-based feed readers. These function somewhat like an email program for feeds. Examples include [Feed Demon](http://www.feeddemon.com/) and [RSS Bandit](http://rssbandit.org).

If it sounds complicated, it's really not. Point to the feed - and click to subscribe! **Sounds good. So how do I subscribe to a Feed?** First of all, look for the subscription or feed options. You might see a variety of buttons (amusingly called chicklets). If the site you want to subscribe to uses [FeedBurner](http://www.feedburner.com) to aid in the subscription process (like this and many other popular sites), you'll likely see the standard RSS icon, which takes you to a page that will give you an array of the most popular feed readers so you can select yours, and you'll go from there. This is the new standard RSS icon:

`<a type="application/rss+xml" rel="alternate" title="Subscribe to my feed" href="http://feeds.feedburner.com/AllanBesselink"></a>`

Sometimes there will be a chicklet for your particular reader right on the blog that will take you to the appropriate subscription page. You may see these (among others):

`<a href="http://fusion.google.com/add?feedurl=http://feeds.feedburner.com/AllanBesselink"></a>`

`</p> <p><a title="Subscribe to my feed!"
href="http://add.my.yahoo.com/rss?url=http://feeds.feedburner.com/AllanBesselink"></p> <p>In summary: RSS solves BIG problems.</p> <p>So there
you have it♦ RSS is being adopted at a phenomenal rate, because it♦s a good thing for
everyone.</p> <p>The benefit to readers is obvious. And it♦s good for publishers too,
because we want to make sure that people feel comfortable subscribing, and that our message
is not nuked by an overzealous spam filter.</p> <p>If there♦s anything here that is confusing,
or you have a question, please contact me and I♦ll be happy to help!</p> <p>Thanks to Copyblogger for a helping hand with this tutorial.</p>
<p>For more information on how RSS works for you, check out this video:</p>
Internet: Useful Tips:
RSS In Plain English