# SoftChalk Lesson Builder

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Getting Started in SoftChalk

What is SoftChalk

SoftChalk is software that allows instructors to create interactive and engaging web lessons easily and quickly. Lessons look professional and may contain activities and quizzes that promote self-learning. These lessons can then be packaged and uploaded to Blackboard Vista.

Download SoftChalk

In order to begin using SoftChalk, you must install the software on to your computer. You will download the software from the SoftChalk website, and then license your copy afterwards.

1. Open an Internet browser.
3. Click Get Your Free 30-Day Trial.
4. Enter your information, and then click **Submit**.

5. **Download** the appropriate version plus any of the guides you may need.
6. When asked if you would like to Run or Save the file, click **Run**.

![Image of file download dialog box with options to Run, Save, or Cancel]

The software will begin the installation process. Once it is complete you will see the SoftChalk icon on your desktop.

![Image of SoftChalk icon]

**Enter License Key Information**

Once you have SoftChalk installed you will need to license your copy. The university has a license for SoftChalk.

You will obtain the license information once you complete training.

1. Open SoftChalk by double clicking the icon on your desktop.
2. Once inside SoftChalk, click **Help**.

![Image of SoftChalk application interface]

Updated March 14, 2011
3. Click Enter License.

4. Enter the License Information and User Information. Click OK.

5. You may now begin using your licensed copy of SoftChalk.
Creating Lessons

Using Content from Microsoft Word or Other Sources

To bring over content from Microsoft Word, or any other program, you can copy your content and then paste it into your SoftChalk lesson.

1. Open the document you wish to copy content from.

2. Select all of the content within the document by pressing Ctrl+A on your keyboard.

3. To copy your selection, press Ctrl+C on your keyboard.
5. Within SoftChalk, choose **Edit** and then **Paste**.
Formatting Content

Notice the toolbar under the top menu with the standard word processing functions.

Using SoftChalk Lesson Builder

This is example content. We are just using this as an example of how to get started in SoftChalk Lesson Builder. Here is some information about SoftChalk LessonBuilder.

The information below was taken from the SoftChalk 5 manual and can be found in under Help Topics in SoftChalk.

I like PowerPoints!

Introduction

Welcome to SoftChalk LessonBuilder, the award-winning software that lets you create engaging web lessons quickly and easily. You can style your lessons, add many activities and quizzes that promote active learning.

You create your lessons using LessonBuilder, which is a desktop application that runs on both Windows and Macintosh computers. Your students can also view your lessons using other web browsers such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari.

Most of your formatting from the original document will copy over to SoftChalk. If you would like to edit or add formatting:

1. Highlight the text you would like to edit.
2. Use the formatting tools shown above to edit your text.

Headings

Headings within a page determine navigation on pages and the table of contents.
Customize your Lesson

When you select a style for your lesson, your lesson automatically acquires a professional appearance with a header (also referred to as a banner), footer, navigation bar and options for sidebars.

Using Style Properties

1. From inside of the SoftChalk software, click Properties, and then Style Properties.

2. Click on a style under Style Choices. Notice that you can scroll down to view even more styles.
3. Select a style to preview what it will look like on the left.
4. Once you have chosen a style that you like, click **OK**.

You will not see the new style you selected until you preview the lesson. You may notice that your headings have changed color. For more information on previewing your lesson, see page 34.
**Adding Headers, Footers, & Navigation**

Headers and footers allow you to add text to your lesson, such as copyright information or titles that distinguish lessons from one another. Navigation tools allow the reader to move from page to page.

1. From inside of the SoftChalk software, click **Properties**, and then **Style Properties**.

2. Click the **Title & Layout** tab.
3. In the **Lesson Title** area, give your lesson a title and a subtitle. These titles will show up in the header of your lesson.

4. In the **Footer** area, you may add information to appear at the bottom of your lesson.
5. On the right you will see navigation options:

- **Sidebar Layout**: You can have several sidebars for your lesson. These can appear on the far left or the far right of the lesson. Sidebars could contain handouts or additional resources or information.

- **Table of Contents**: You can have table of contents options appear in several places throughout your lesson.

- **Navigation**:
  - **Arrows** – When selected, the Previous and Next arrows appear in the navigation bar at the top in the web browser.
  - **Page Numbers** - When selected, numbers for the pages appear in the navigation bar at the top in the web browser.
  - **“On This Page” sidebar** - When selected, a sidebar appears in the web browser with links to the headings (Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3) on the page.

- **Print all pages**: When selected, a print all button appears allowing your students to print all the pages of your lesson. (This feature does not include printing the TextPoppers, QuizPoppers or Activities.)

6. After you have made your selections, click **OK**.
Creating Multiple Pages

Inserting page breaks within the SoftChalk lesson allows you to create multiple pages within the lesson you are creating.

1. Place your cursor where you would like the new page to begin.
2. Choose Insert, and then Page Break.
3. You will see a blue dotted blue line representing your page break.

To remove the page break:
1. Right-click on the page break.
2. Choose Remove Page Break.
Inserting Objects

TextPoppers

You can create text annotations using the TextPopper feature. Within the web browser when you move your cursor over a highlighted word, a text annotation “pops up” with additional information.

1. Within your lesson highlight the text to which you would like to add the annotation.

Using SoftChalk Lesson Builder

This is example content. We are just using this as an example of how to get started in SoftChalk.

The information below was taken from the SoftChalk 5 manual and can be found in under Help.

I like PowerPoints!

Introduction

Welcome, to SoftChalk LessonBuilder. This software that lets you create engaging lessons where you can add many activities and quizzes that promote active learning.

(If you are already familiar with LessonBuilder 4, you may want to go directly to the section on...

2. Click Insert, and then TextPopper.
3. To choose how you want your TextPopper to look, click the drop down menu under **Background Style**.

4. Enter text you would like to appear in the TextPopper. You must enter text in the bottom area. The top area is optional. You may also right-click in a text area to insert an image, hyperlink, media or equation.
5. Notice the **Stickaround** checkbox under the **Features area**. Selecting this option makes the TextPopper stay on the screen until you click **Close**; if you do not select this option, the TextPopper goes away when you move your cursor away from the annotated text.

6. Click **OK**.

You may notice that your text has changed color; but you will not see the TextPopper until you preview your lesson. For more information on previewing your lesson, see page 34.
QuizPoppers

QuizPoppers allow you to add self-quiz questions throughout your lesson. These questions can be used by students to conduct self-tests after reading content within your lesson. There are seven types of QuizPoppers:

- True/False
- Multiple Choice
- Multiple Answer
- Short Answer
- Matching
- Ordering
- Essay

1. Click in your lesson where you want your QuizPopper to appear.
2. Choose Insert, and then QuizPopper.
3. Choose the type of quiz question you would like to add to your lesson.

If you preview your lesson at this point, you'll see a header with no text, a footer with some default "style" items don't appear when you're looking at your lesson in SoftChalk.

You can add more options to your lesson (see below).

Set Options for Your Style

2. Click the Title & Layout tab (see below)
4. Enter the statement or question text.
5. Enter answer choices and/or select the correct answer.
6. You may also add Feedback and Options for your question.
7. Click OK to return to your lesson editing window.
Hyperlinks

You may add hyperlinks to webpages within your lesson. In addition, linking to a Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, PDF or other file is also possible.

1. Highlight the text you would like to make a hyperlink.

2. Click Insert, and then Hyperlink.
3. Within the **URL or Selected File box**, type the URL of the webpage you would like to link to.
4. If you would like to link to a file, click **Select File**, and then locate the file.

**Note:** When you insert a file, a copy of the file is placed in your lesson folder when you save. Your original file remains in its original location. If you modify the original file, you will need to create a hyperlink to it again.

5. Click **OK**.
Images

1. Click within your lesson to put the cursor where you want your image to appear.
2. Click Insert, and then Image.

3. Click Select Image.
4. Select your image file.
5. Click Select.

6. You can change the alignment, border and dimensions. You can also add text for accessibility. Click OK.
Media

You can insert various types of media into your lesson, such as sound, video and animation files.

1. Click within your lesson to put your insertion point where you want your media.
2. Click Insert, and then Media.
3. Select the File Type, and then click Select File.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>File Type</th>
<th>Format(s) Supported:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>.aiff, .au, .mid, .midi, .mp3, .ra, .ram, .rmf, .wav, .wma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td>.avi, .mpeg, .mp4, .mpg, .mov, .wmv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash</td>
<td>.swf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shockwave</td>
<td>.dcr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Movie</td>
<td>.swf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Locate the file you would like to add to your lesson.
5. Edit the display options if you would like.
6. Click OK.
YouTube Videos and Widgets

The insert widget feature allows web widgets to be embedded into SoftChalk lessons. This also works for embedding YouTube Videos.

1. Find a widget from another website, or a YouTube video you would like to show your class.
2. Click the Embed button just below the video.
3. Copy the embed code for that widget or video.
4. Return to your SoftChalk lesson.
5. Click within your lesson to put the cursor where you would like your widget to appear.
6. Click **Insert**, and the **Widget**.

### Widget Menu

![Widget Menu](image)

**TextPopper**
- QuizPopper
- Quiz Group
- Activity

**Page Break**
- Horizontal Rule

**Image**
- Bookmark
- HyperLink
- Media

**Widget**
- Special Characters
- Math Characters
- Equation

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**Introduction**

7. Fill out the information in the **Name** and **Description** areas.

8. Click **Paste Code**.

9. Click **OK**.

![Widget Code](image)
PowerPoint Lessons

You may create a read-only version of a PowerPoint for your students to view, and then add a link to the PowerPoint file in SoftChalk.

1. Open the PowerPoint file that you would like to share with your students inside of the Microsoft PowerPoint software.

2. Choose File and then, Save As.
3. At the drop-down **Save type as** menu, choose PowerPoint Show 97-2003 (.pps).

4. Click **Save**, and then return to the SoftChalk software.
5. In the SoftChalk software, select the text that you wish to use as the hyperlink to your PowerPoint file.

6. Choose **Insert**, and then **Hyperlink**.
7. Click **Select File** and navigate to your PowerPoint .pps file.

8. Select your file and then click **Open**.

9. Click **OK** to return to your lesson window.

**NOTE:** When you save your lesson, SoftChalk automatically places a copy of the linked PowerPoint viewable file into your lesson folder.
Activities and Games

There are fifteen types of interactive learning activities in SoftChalk. Activities in SoftChalk are easy to create. Once you begin creating your activity, SoftChalk will provide instructions for each activity type.

1. Click within your lesson to put the cursor where you want your Activity to appear.
2. Click Insert, and then Activity.
3. Select an activity from the list.
4. Read the instructions, and then begin creating your activity. When you have completed editing your activity, click OK.
Saving and Packaging Your Lesson

Saving a Lesson

Once you have begun creating your lesson, you will want to save frequently. SoftChalk saves your lesson in a folder. This folder contains all of the necessary files needed for your SoftChalk lesson to run.

To save your lesson for the first time:

1. Click **File** and then **Save**.
2. Select the location where you would like to save your lesson.
3. In the **File name** field, give your lesson a name.
4. Click **Save**.

![Save dialog box](image)
Previewing a Lesson

At any time while you are working on your lesson, you may preview it to see how it would look to your students in their web browser.

1. Click the **Preview** icon on the top toolbar.

2. If SoftChalk asks if you would like to save your lesson before previewing, click **Yes**.

3. You will see your lesson with all working options and features in an Internet browser window.
Opening an Existing Lesson for Editing

Once you have saved and closed your lesson, you will probably have the need to open the lesson again to continue working or to edit a completed lesson.

If you attempt to click the index.html file within your lesson folder, the SoftChalk lesson will open a read-only version in your preferred web browser. You must open the SoftChalk software first.

1. Start the SoftChalk software.
2. From the File menu bar, select Open.

The lesson is saved in a folder, so you must locate the folder that has the same title as the lesson you would like to open.

3. Locate the lesson folder.
4. Click Open.
5. Inside of the folder locate the file titled *index.html*.

6. Click **Open**.

7. You will now be able to edit your **SoftChalk** lesson.
Uploading a Lesson to Blackboard Learn

Once you have completed your SoftChalk lesson, you are ready to upload it to Blackboard Learn for your students to see.

1. Open the completed SoftChalk Lesson inside of the SoftChalk Lesson Builder Software.
2. Click File, Package Lesson, and then Zip Format (default).
3. A message will appear telling you that the file has been packaged and placed in the previously saved lesson folder.
4. Click OK and close SoftChalk.
5. Now open the folder where you saved the lesson that you created.

Note: This example has been saved to the desktop. You may have saved your lesson in My Documents or on a USB Flash Drive.

6. Make sure you see a .zip file with the same title as your lesson.

The example is called SoftChalkSample.zip

7. Close this window.
8. Log in to Blackboard Learn.
9. Enter the course you would like to add your SoftChalk lesson to by clicking the **title** of the course.

10. Once inside of your course, ensure that edit mode is **ON**.
11. Under Course Management, click **Content Collection**.

12. Click the content collection that pertains to the current course.
13. Click **Create Folder**.

14. Name the folder the same name as your SoftChalk Lesson, and then click **Submit**.

15. You will notice a new folder has been created. Click the title of this folder.
You are now inside of the folder you have created. Anything that you upload at this point will be contained in this folder.

16. Click **Upload**, and then **Upload Package**.

17. Click the **Browse** button.
18. Locate the SoftChalk lesson .zip file as you did previously in steps 5, 6, and 7.

19. Once you locate the file click it, and then select **Open**.

![Image of file browser with a file named SoftChalkSample highlighted.]

All of your files will be uploaded into the SoftChalk folder you created.
Adding a SoftChalk File to your Content Area

Now that your SoftChalk files have been added to the Content Collection, decide where you would like to add the SoftChalk lesson.

1. On the content page you have selected, click Build Content, and then select File.

2. Click Browse Content Collection.
3. The content collection area will open. Click the title of the folder that contains your SoftChalk Lesson files.

4. Locate and select the radio button next to the file titled **index.html**. Then click **Submit**.
5. You may change the name of the lesson and several other properties, and then click Submit.

Your SoftChalk lesson has been added to your content area and is ready to view.

To view the lesson, click the title of the lesson.
Get Help
For assistance using SoftChalk or for additional training, please contact the IT Training Team via phone, 713-221-8200 or via email ttlctraining@uhd.edu.