

## An Introduction to Microsoft OneNote for Authors



I like to think of myself as an organized person. I'm also a relatively efficient person so I'm always looking for ways to get the most amount of work done in the least amount of time. For years, I've tried different organizational methods to keep track of manuscript details, such as character descriptions, plotting, GMC, and research information. Originally, I kept three-ring binders. It was a hassle to print everything for inclusion in this binder, especially when I was constantly adding or editing pieces.

Later I stored this information in various documents in folders on my computer. Every time I needed to check a secondary character's hair color or a plot point in my book, I'd have to find the file and open it. I'd often have five or six documents open on my laptop at a time. Switching between them became confusing and annoying.

Then I stumbled upon Microsoft One Note. It took about five minutes for me to realize OneNote was the answer to my organizational frustrations, and I'm about to show you why.

### Where to Find OneNote

First of all, you'll need a copy of OneNote. If you own MS Office 2013 or 2010, OneNote is included. If you don't, you're in luck. OneNote is available via the cloud, as in a web version on the internet, and free off the Microsoft site. All you need is a Hotmail, MSN, Outlook.com, or Windows Live account. You can download it onto your Mac or PC from this link:

<http://www.onenote.com/>

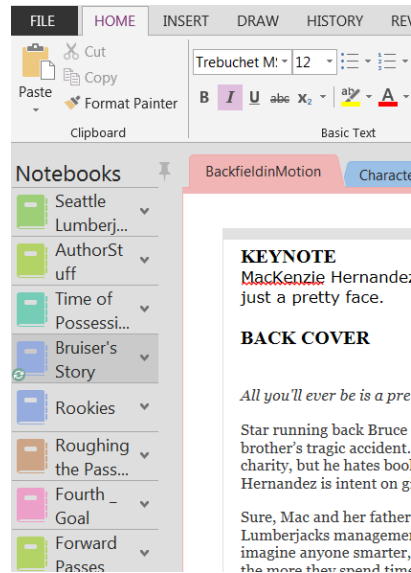
If you have a tablet or smartphone, you can obtain a copy from the app store on your device.

***This cheat sheet primarily uses screen shots and instructions from Office 2013. If you are using the web version or older versions of Office, your OneNote might look slightly different.***

### *Creating a New Notebook Using the Office Version of OneNote*

1. Open OneNote on your computer.
2. Click **File, New**, and give your notebook a title, etc.
3. If you wish to sync it to the "cloud" for use on mobile devices or to share with others, you can designate those options as this point.

## OneNote Features



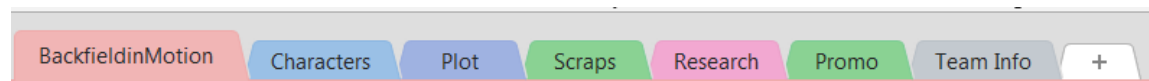
In OneNote you can create multiple notebooks. In the screen shot on the left, all my notebooks are listed on the left, including a series notebook for my Seattle Lumberjacks series, an author notebook for promo info, etc., and various notebooks for each book written or in progress.

I'd suggest one notebook per manuscript. These notebooks are shareable. I'll be using samples of the OneNote notebook I created for my football romance, *Backfield in Motion*.

My Author Stuff notebook includes tabs for new release tasks, reviewer lists, blogger lists, basic author info such as a bio, etc.

## Tabs and Section Groups

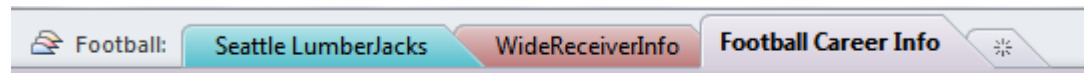
Each notebook can have multiple tabs. I created the same tabs I would have used in a three-ring binder. I have tabs for plotting, motivation, backstory, characters, etc.



To create a new tab, click on the plus sign to the right of the last tab. Type the name for the tab and press **Enter**.

You can also create **Section Groups**, which is a group of related tabs. I created a group called Football for my research information on football. In my Football section group, I added tabs for my football research and information on the team I created (Seattle Lumberjacks).

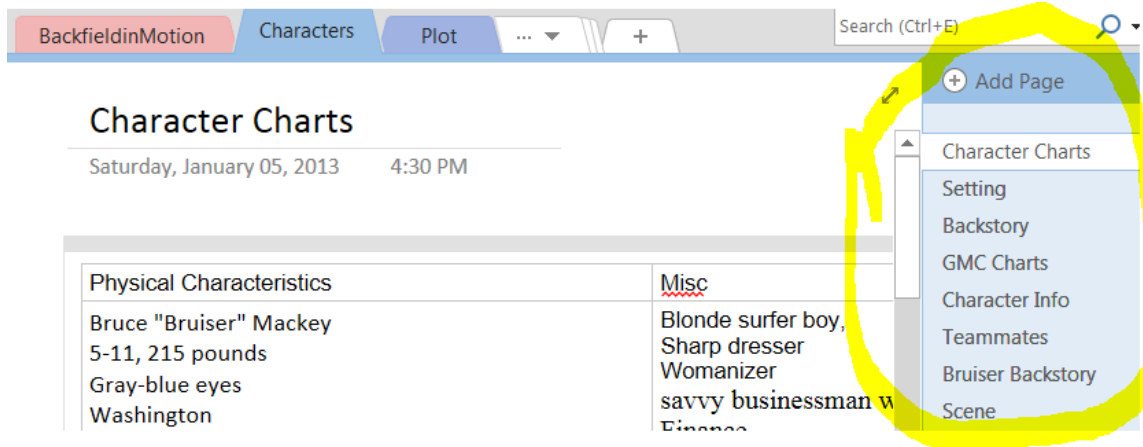
To create a Section Group, right-click on an existing tab and choose **Create Section Group**.



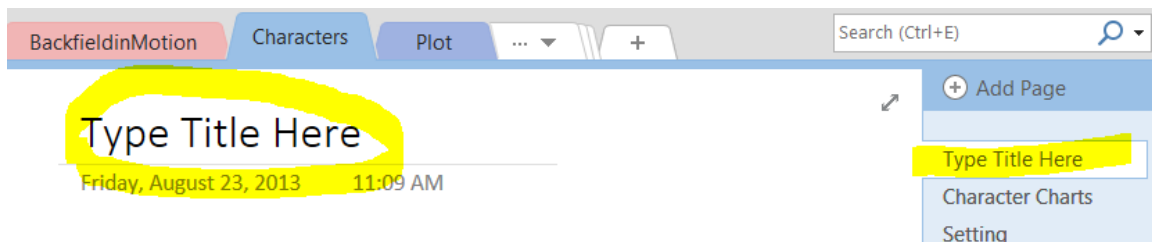
## Pages

Within each tab, you can have multiple pages. One of the advantages of OneNote is that you can put anything on your pages, absolutely anything. You can move your items around and draw on the pages. Pages are not limited to an 8.5x11 page size. A page can be as big as you want it to be. My character page includes pictures, text, tables, web links, etc. In the following example, I have character charts, setting, backstory, and GMC pages.

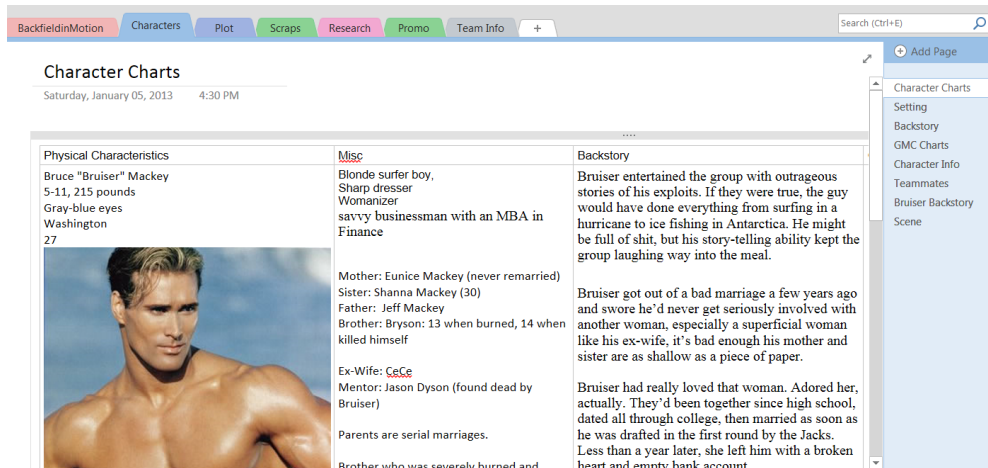
1. To add a page, click on the **Add Page** button on the left, but make sure you're in the tab in which you want to add a page.



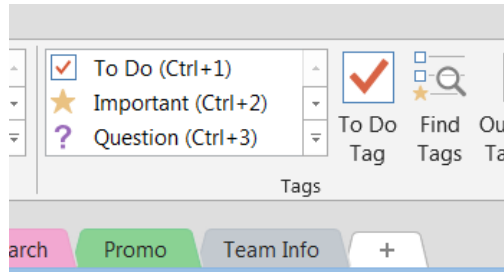
2. To title your page, type the title in the block above the date (see below), and press **Enter**. Whatever you type in that title area will also show up as the title on the Page list on the right.



To add content to your page, you can type anywhere on a page to make different blocks of information or multiple columns. Your pages can include: Excel spreadsheets, Word documents, links to webpages and documents, copies of emails, pictures, sound and video, etc. The list is endless. On my character chart page, I have a table and photos.



OneNote saves instantly, so you have no worries about losing data. As soon as an item is on the page, it's saved.



Another feature I find useful is the Tag feature. You can add a tag anywhere on a page. There are dozens of tags. The ones I found most useful are the To-Do tags, link tags, idea tags, question tags, critical tags, important tags.

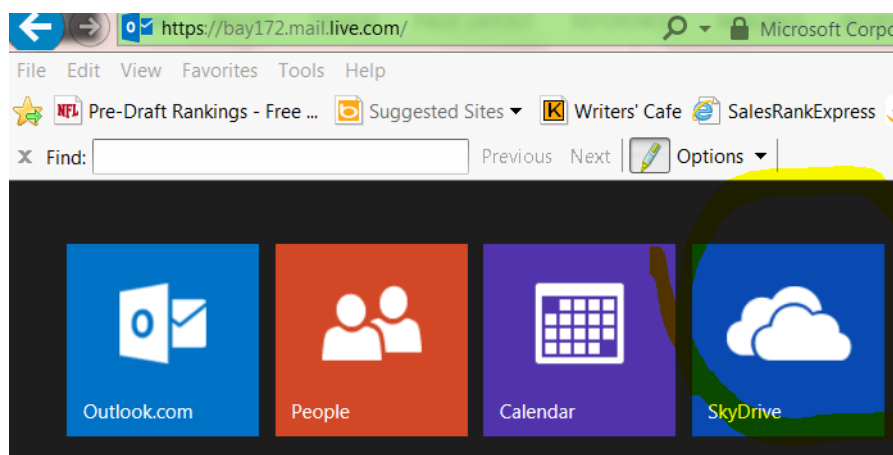
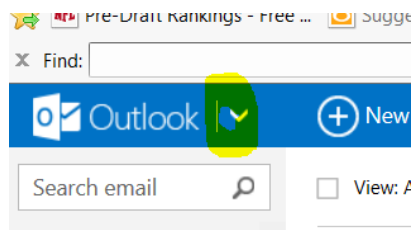
## *OneNote on the Web*

As mentioned earlier, OneNote is available via the cloud, as in a web version on the internet. All you need is a Hotmail, MSN, Outlook.com, or Windows Live account.

### *Creating a New Notebook Using the Web (Online) Version:*

To access the OneNote web application, open your Hotmail, Outlook.com, or MSN email account (you may need to convert it to a Windows Live account) or create one.


1. Click on the **down arrow** at the top of the page, then click **Skydrive**.



2. Click on **Create** and choose **OneNote Notebook**.
3. Follow the prompts to name your notebook, etc.

The web version of OneNote is slightly different from the PC version. As you can see, the tabs are on the side and don't look like tabs in a notebook. Most of the features are available, and OneNote Web is free. Even better, it can be easily shared with others if you're working on a collaborative project with other authors, such as linked novellas with shared characters.

The screenshot shows the Microsoft OneNote Web App interface. The address bar displays the URL: <https://skydrive.live.com/?cid=872297ab427a1b97#!/edit.aspx?cid=872297AB427>. The breadcrumb trail indicates the location: SkyDrive > Documents > Bruiser's Story. The top navigation bar includes FILE, HOME, INSERT, VIEW, and an OPEN IN ONENOTE button. A sidebar on the left contains a search bar and a list of sections: BackfieldinMotion, Possible Titles, Blurb, Characters (selected), Character Charts, Setting, Backstory, GMC Charts, Character Info, Teammates, Bruiser Backstory, Scene, Plot, Scraps, Research, and Promo. The main content area is titled 'Character Charts' and dated 'Saturday, January 05, 2013 4:30 PM'. It features a table with two columns: 'Physical Characteristics' and 'Misc'. The 'Physical Characteristics' column contains text about Bruce 'Bruiser' Mackey and a photograph of a muscular man. The 'Misc' column contains biographical details about the character.

| Physical Characteristics  | Misc  |
|---|---|
| Bruce "Bruiser" Mackey<br>5-11, 215 pounds<br>Gray-blue eyes<br>Washington<br>27  | Blonde surfer boy,<br>Sharp dresser<br>Womanizer<br>savvy businessman with an MBA in<br>Finance<br><br>Mother: Eunice Mackey (never<br>remarried)<br>Sister: Shanna Mackey (30)<br>Father: Jeff Mackey<br>Brother: Bryson: 13 when burned,<br>when killed himself<br><br>Ex-Wife: CeCe<br>Mentor: Jason Dyson (found dead<br>Bruiser) |

## More Info on OneNote

I hope I've given you some ideas on how you might use OneNote to organize your book information. Give it a try. You won't be disappointed.

OneNote Training is offered for free by Microsoft:

<https://support.office.com/en-US/article/OneNote-2013-training-courses-videos-and-tutorials-f9ba9d15-91c4-4a7e-81a8-88d728c410c2>

**Jami Davenport** has published twenty-plus books under two different pen names. Her *Seattle Lumberjacks Football Series* are Amazon best-sellers. She has worked in IT and education for over twenty years. Her day jobs have included high school business teacher and computer training coordinator and computer support coordinator for a state agency.