

Furl Furled Furling

Social on-line book marking for the masses.

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Ten Reasons You Should Use Furl

1. Search your bookmarks by keywords and topics.
2. Save site found using multiple computers (home and school) to one resource.
3. Access your bookmarks anywhere you have web access.
4. Share web sites with your students or peers.
5. Export your web sites into a bibliography for college or as a handout for your class.
6. Access your bookmarks as your computer crashes or you get a new computer.
7. Publish your saved web site links by category.
8. Learn about new sites from your “Furl Mates.”
9. Subscribe to other users' Furl who look for similar web sites as you do.
10. Furl saves a copy of the web page. If it is moved or deleted, you still have access to the pages you bookmarked.

What is Furl?

I used to tell people that Furl was a site for saving your favorites/bookmarks online. That is still true, but it is more than that. It is your personal web site where you can store bookmarks and archive web pages. You can also learn what web sites others find interesting. Furl gives you 5 gigabytes of web space to store pages. Furl allows you to save anything you view on the web. You can also use it to share what you read on the web with other teachers or with your students. You can use it for many educational purposes.

1. Web sites for student research or projects
2. Books recommendations
3. Professional research
4. List of books you would like to read
5. Placing web links on your school web page
6. Students can find resources at home and access them at school and vice versa
7. Share what you are reading on the web or view what your peers are reading on the web
8. Web site collections by school topic

I'm sure you will think of more ways you can use Furl. On a personal level, you can use it for recipes, gift lists, travel sites and more. Most importantly, Furl will help you organize and find the web sites that you think are important and may wish to visit again.

Getting Started

There are three steps to getting started with Furl:

1. Registration
 - a. Go to <http://www.furl.net> and click on the “Create Your Free Account. You will need to create a username, password and enter your e-mail address. You will use your e-mail account to validate your registration. You do not need to put in your first or last name.
 - b. TIP: Your username will be used to share resources you find. So choose a username that you will want to share with others and one your students can remember. Public access to your Furl will be at:
<http://www.furl.net/members/yourusername>
Example: My Furl can be accessed at <http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff>.
2. Check your e-mail for a confirmation message.
 - a. Click the link in the message to activate your account
 - b. They use e-mail to validate you are a real person and not a robot used by spammers.
3. Install the browser button in your web browser (There is a Furl Toolbar for Internet Explorer.) This is the most difficult part of using Furl.
 - a. Go to <http://www.furl.net>
 - b. Login using the username and password you created
 - c. Click on the My Tools tab near the top the page.



- d. You now have two choices. You can install the Furl Tool Bar or you can install a Furl Button on your links bar. (I prefer the Furl Button.) This isn't hard, but it may give you some minor problems. Luckily, Furl has a great help page at <http://www.furl.net/buttonHelp.jsp> that will give more detailed instructions than I will give here. If all else fails find a student to help you.

See the next page for simple instructions on installing the Furl Button.

Installation of the Furl Button

On the My Tools page, you will see the words “Furl It (complete)” towards the middle of the page. A copy of the words is shown below.

Furl It (Complete)

Click on the phrase Furl It and drag the words to your links bar. When you are over your links bar let go of your mouse button.

TIP: If you are using Internet Explorer your Tool Bar must be unlocked. To unlock the tool bar go to the view menu choose Toolbars. If the Lock Toolbars option is checked (locked) highlighting it and clicking on it will unlock it.

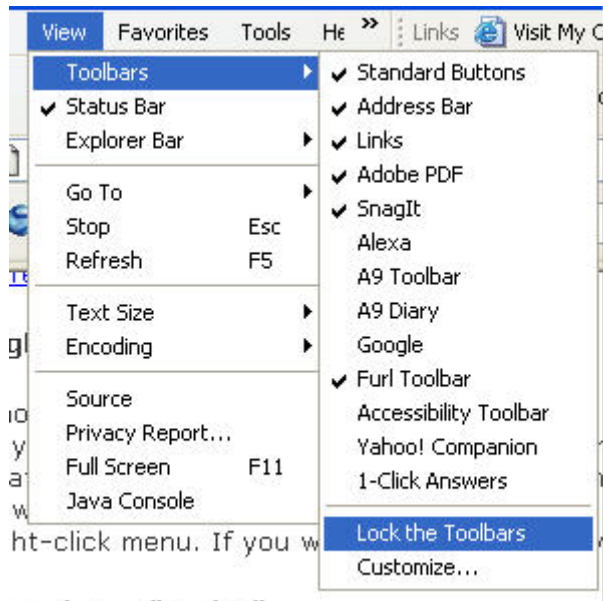
The image at right shows the toolbar unlocked.

Below are two examples of the installed Furl Button

Internet Explorer



Firefox



Now that we are done with the hard part, we can start using Furl.

Using Furl

Whenever you find something you want to save while you're browsing the Internet just click on your Furl Button. At the time I was writing this I had 380 items I had saved to Furl. For this example I went to Alan November's blog. (<http://novemberlearning.com/blogs/alannovember/>)

I wanted to be able to find this site again. Instead of adding it to my bookmarks, I clicked on the Furl Button I added to my tool bar (Shown on pervious page). The window shown below popped up. (You need to allow pop-ups in your browser, use a Control Key, or make an exception for Furl.) Let's examine the pop up window.

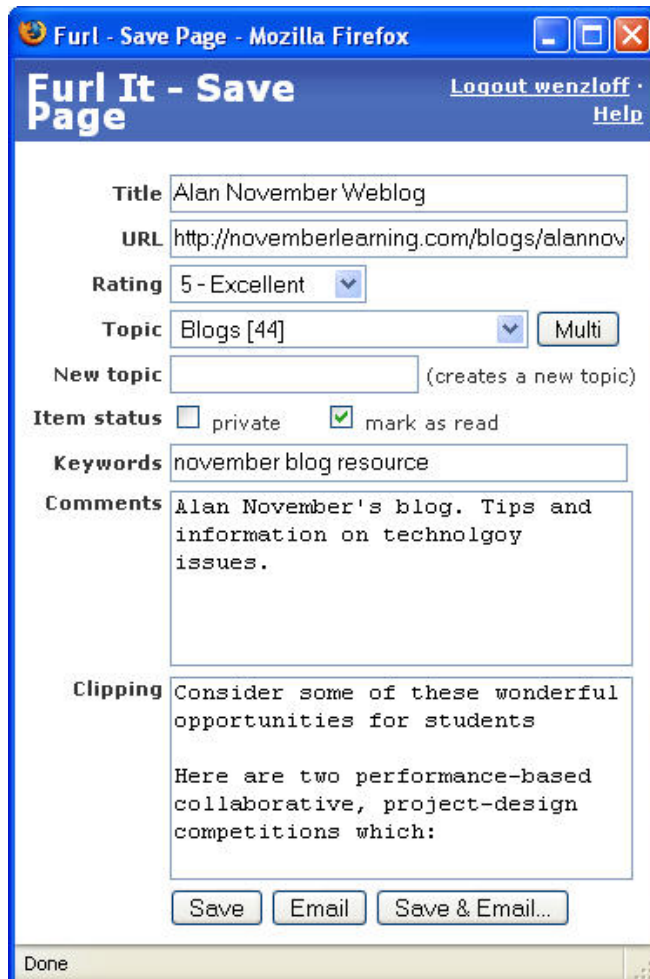
Title, URL, and the Clipping - These were added automatically. I had highlighted the text in the clipping box on Alan's blog. When I clicked on the Furl Button that text was copied and pasted into the Clipping box automatically.

Rating - 3 is the default. 5 is the highest ranking you can give a site. You can search your Furl site by ranking. This will also come into play for "Furl Mates" which will be explained later.

Topic - I had added Blogs as a topic previously. In fact you can see I have added 44 sites on blogs. You can view sites within a topic on your furl.

New Topic - You can create your own topics or use the ones from Furl. I'm sure you will want your own. You can create this by school subject, grade or topic.

Keywords - These will help you search your Furl. You will be able to search by topic and/or key word.



The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Furl - Save Page - Mozilla Firefox". The main title is "Furl It - Save Page". In the top right corner, there are links for "Logout wenzloff" and "Help". The form contains the following fields and options:

- Title:** Alan November Weblog
- URL:** http://novemberlearning.com/blogs/alannov
- Rating:** 5 - Excellent (dropdown menu)
- Topic:** Blogs [44] (dropdown menu) with a "Multi" button.
- New topic:** (empty text box) with the note "(creates a new topic)".
- Item status:** private, mark as read
- Keywords:** november blog resource
- Comments:** Alan November's blog. Tips and information on technolgoey issues.
- Clipping:** Consider some of these wonderful opportunities for students
Here are two performance-based collaborative, project-design competitions which:

At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Save", "Email", and "Save & Email...". The status bar at the very bottom says "Done".

Save, E-mail, Save & Email - When you click the save button there will be a delay while your bookmark is saved to Furl. Don't close the window shown above. It will close when the site is saved. You can now save web sites to Furl by just repeating this action. You can also e-mail the site and comments to your friends.

TIP: Topics and Keywords are the key to searching your Furl entries. Take time to add keywords and topics.

Viewing and Editing your Furl Entries

You can click on the title of the web page to view your comments and the URL. You can then click on the URL to visit the site. However, there is an easier way to do that. Use the any one of the three icons shown in the read box below.

- Clicking the first icon will take you to the web site.
- Clicking the second icon will take you to an archived version of the web site. It will look like the day it did you visited it. (I would have loved to have this on September 12th or when the Red Sox won the World Series. I could have captured the newspaper for that day.)
- Clicking the third icon will allow you to edit any part of the information you saved. You can change the web site name, ranking, comment, etc.

Title (read · unread)		Date	Topic	Rating
<input type="checkbox"/> Leave It Behind: Building a Better Blog	  	Feb 2, 2005	Workshops	****-
<input type="checkbox"/> Webquest - Blogs and RSS	  	Feb 2, 2005	Workshops	****-

Searching Furl* (The Power of Furl)

I love Furl because of this search feature. When I used traditional bookmarks or favorites, the sites I bookmarked sometimes had names that didn't necessarily reflect the content that was important to me. Sometime ago I added a link called "Kids Count" to my favorites. When I looked at my favorites I can't remember why I saved it. Is it a math site, a survey, or a site promoting kids? I had no idea what the site was about until I visited it. Below is the real description of the site:

"KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, seeks to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children."

<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/>

When you "bookmark" a site with Furl, you can search using keywords you created, words you used in your comments and clippings, by date, and by topic. This allows you to find the specific site you saved. This is a very powerful and useful tool. The search form is simple and easy to use. The basic search form is shown below. You can just type in the word(s) you are looking for and click Search. In addition you have three optional settings; sources, filter by topic, and date.

Search for	<input type="text"/>	in all sources	<input type="button" value="Search"/>
Filter by topic	All	Date	Any

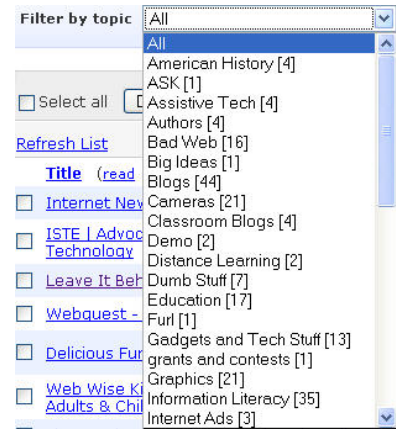
Sources

You can choose to search all sources. Using this option will bring results from your archive, from Furl, and from the web. As you scroll down the page of results, you will see the sites listed in that order. I often select “in my archive” to just see sites I have Furl.



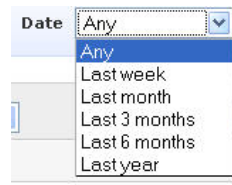
Filter by topic

You can also search by topic. You can search just by selecting one of your topics and it will bring you all of the sites in that topic or you can combine words, date and source along with topic to limit your results. (Search by topic limits your search to just your archive.) Filter by topic is the option I use the most. I have Furl'd close to 400 web sites and I can find them quickly.



Date

You can also limit your search by date. The options are shown on the right.



In the FAQ's under the Help Tab you can find more specific details on using +/-, and/or as well as other syntax for searching Furl.

Furl Features

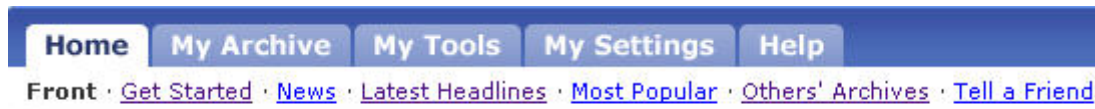
This section will go through Furl tab by tab and explain the features that are listed under each tab. You may or may not want to use any of these features immediately. However, you should be aware of them for later reference or use.

TIP: I have used an asterisk (*) to indicate areas that I think are more important menu items.

Home Page - <http://www.furl.net>

The home page has two features. First, it lists the sites that have been Furled that day. If you Furl a site it will appear here. Notice that there is a “See More” link at the bottom of the list. It allows you to see more sites that have been Furled that day.

Home Tab



1. Get Started

Basic explanation of what Furl is and how you can set it up on your computer.

2. News

News sources, web sites and blogs who have reviewed Furl.

3. Latest Headlines

This is another way of seeing what has been Furled today.
(Have you noticed that you can use Furl as a noun and a verb?)

4. Most Popular

You can view the sites most Furled by people. They are color coded by popularity, pink (hottest), beige (warm), and blue (cool). On the right hand side of the most popular page you can see the most popular topics. When you click on a topic you can see the most popular sites in that topic.

5. Others Archives

Search for Furl Users by name, username. or e-mail address.

6. Tell a Friend (Not phone a friend.)

E-mail a message to someone telling, encouraging them to sign up for Furl.

My Archive



My Topics*

This is an area you will want to visit when you first start using Furl. Use this area to delete some of the standard topics if you are not going to use them and to create or edit your existing topics. Deleting is a nice feature. I usually create topics as I Furl sites. You may need to use the edit feature if you make a typo in the topic name.

My Headlines

If you subscribe to Furls created by other users, you can view their latest posts under this heading. (I use RSS to keep track of other users Furls. I'll explain how that works later.)

My Recommendations*

This is an interesting area. It supports the idea of social book marking. Social book marking allows you to see what sites others value and allows you to see what you value enough to bookmark. The page is divided into two columns.

My Recommendations

Links and people that may be of interest based on what you have Furled.

This area uses a search tool to look at what you Furled and who else has Furled at those same sites. It then brings you a list of sites you might be interested in viewing based on people who bookmarked the sites you bookmarked. It also uses how you rated sites (Scale of 1 to 5 when you Furled them.). It compares your rankings to the rankings of others and brings you other sites they have ranked higher than three. You can remove a recommendation by clicking the red X next to the site. Or you can just ignore the site you don't like.

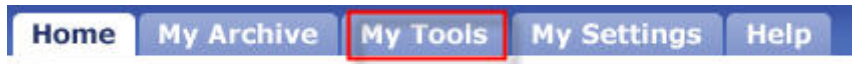
Furlmates

Furlmates is a list of people who have Furled and ranked sites similar to the sites you Furled and ranked. If you and another user both rank a site as a 5, the user will rank higher on your list of Furlmates. If you rank a site high and another users rank it low, then they will be moved down or off your Furlmate list. It is interesting to look at the archives of your Furlmates to see if they have Furled sites of interest to you. (This is a lot like searching for a book on Amazon. Amazon will tell you that people who bought this book also liked these other books. It uses the same type of search.)

My Subscribers

If people subscribe to your Furl, their username and a link to their Furl will appear here.

My Tools



You have used this tap to install Furl. There are three subsections to this tab.

Export*

You can export your entire Furl account or you can export topics. This is extremely helpful to create handouts or bibliographies. Just choose the topic and the format you want and Furl will create the Export for you. I have a sample export below.

TIP: I export my entire Furl in “Internet Explorer favorite’s format” on the first of each month. If Furl dies, I still have my information.

Export Your Archive

Choose a topic:

Choose a format:

- [Furl XML format](#)
- [Zip archive of your saved documents](#)
- [Internet Explorer favorites format](#)
- [Mozilla/Netscape bookmarks format](#)
- [MLA citation format](#)
- [APA citation format](#)
- [Chicago citation format](#)
- [CBE citation format](#)
- [BibTeX citation format](#)
- [RIS/EndNote citation format](#)

Sample Export in MLA citation format (This shows only the first two of forty-four citations.) You can copy and paste this information into any word processor to change the formatting.

- "ACD Issue Profile: Rachel Abrams." 16 Dec. 2004 <<http://www.rpi.edu/~abramr/article%20template.htm>>
- "Alex Halavais » Moblogging made EZ." 3 Dec. 2004 <<http://alex.halavais.net/news/index.php?p=936>>

Import

You can also import your existing bookmarks or favorites. Browse to find the file. It will be in the same folder as your browser program. Then simply click on Import. I have not used this feature. I have a lot of favorites. If I imported them I would have to take time to assign them all to topics. I decided to just start over with a clean account.

Add Furl to My Site*

If you have a school or personal web site you can post the links in your Furl to your web site. You can also publish one topic to your web site. Towards the bottom of this page are the Advance Settings and two options. Using the advanced options you can set how many sites, the sort order, topics, etc. A graphic of the setting and a sample of the results are shown on the next page.

Shown on the right are the advanced settings for adding part of your Furl to your web site. I have chosen 50 entries, sorted by title. I have also included the date I Furl'd them, my comments and clippings. I only exported my sites from my topic on Blogs.

A small sample of the results is posted below.

To add them to your web site, simply copy the HTML or JavaScript and insert it into your web page. If you don't know how to do this consult your web master.

The screenshot shows a configuration interface for selecting and displaying Furl items. The settings are as follows:

- Number of items:** 50
- Newer than:** any date
- Sort items by:** title
- Show:** date, comments, clippings, item ratings
- Include items from:** A list of categories with counts: All, American History [4], ASK [1], Assistive Tech [4], Authors [4], Bad Web [15], Big Ideas [1], **Blogs [44]** (highlighted), Cameras [21], Classroom Blogs [4]. A "CTRL/click" label is next to the dropdown arrow.
- Whose topics match:** any selected topics, all selected topics
- Links open:** in current window, in new window
- List item bullets:** show, hide
- Furl attribution:** with icon, text-only
- Output format:** JavaScript, HTML

An "Update Source Code" button is located at the bottom of the form.

[Assessing Technology Use in Education #](#)

Nov 15, 2004

Take a look at this from Mike S. Oakland Schools.

[Blog Hacks for templates #](#)

Jun 30, 2004

Directions on how to edit blogger templates.

Sample of what would be posted to your web site.

This is a great way to share web sites with students or parents.

My Settings



Preferences

You can change your password and also tell Furl to display your real name or your username. You can also determine if you want it cataloged by search engines. That is the spider option. Everything else is easy to understand.

Contacts

You can have the sites you Furl e-mailed to people. Just click add and insert their name and e-mail address.

Subscriptions

You can subscribe to other users' Furl. I used this at first to follow what others had Furl'd. Now I use RSS. It is easier. I will explain that in another section.

Help



Help is just what it says. It has a long list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), uses by others and contact information. They did a nice job on the help area and you may want to visit it to clear up some of the things I have written in this document.


RSS - Really Simple Syndication

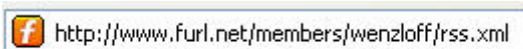
There are two ways you can share your Furl with others.

1. Give people the URL of your Furl. My Furl can be found at <http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff>. Your Furl will be at <http://www.furl.net/members/username>. Replace the username with the name you used to sign up for Furl.
2. You can give them the RSS Feed. My feed is <http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml> again just replace my name with your user name and that will give people your RSS feed. (Don't worry, I will explain this further.)

In my humble opinion this is one of the most powerful tools within Furl. RSS allows you to read web sites other people are reading and Furling. If someone Furls a site, they have indicated it has value to them. If you think that person is an expert in an area, or is interested in the same things you are interested in you may wish to follow what they Furl.

To take advantage of RSS you must use RSS aggregator. I use <http://www.bloglines.com>. It is free and easy to use. For my example I will use my Furl and my Bloglines account to illustrate how this works.

1. Visit the members Furl you want to follow. You can choose mine or one of your Furlmates.
2. Using your browser go to their Furl. Example: <http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff>
3. Decide if you want to follow everything they Furl or just a topic. If you want a topic, search their Furl for that topic.
4. On the right hand side of the web page there will be an orange RSS  button.
5. Click on the RSS button.
6. You will get a page that has all types of code in it. Ignore that and look at the location window that shows the URL. A sample is shown below.



<http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml>

7. Copy the URI. In this example it would be <http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml>

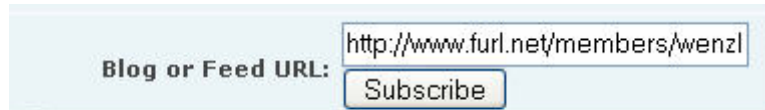
Now we need to go to the Bloglines web site (<http://www.bloglines.com>).

If you don't have an account, open an account. It will only take a few minutes. Once your account is opened and you have logged in, you will see a side bar where you can add RSS feeds.



Click on the Add button

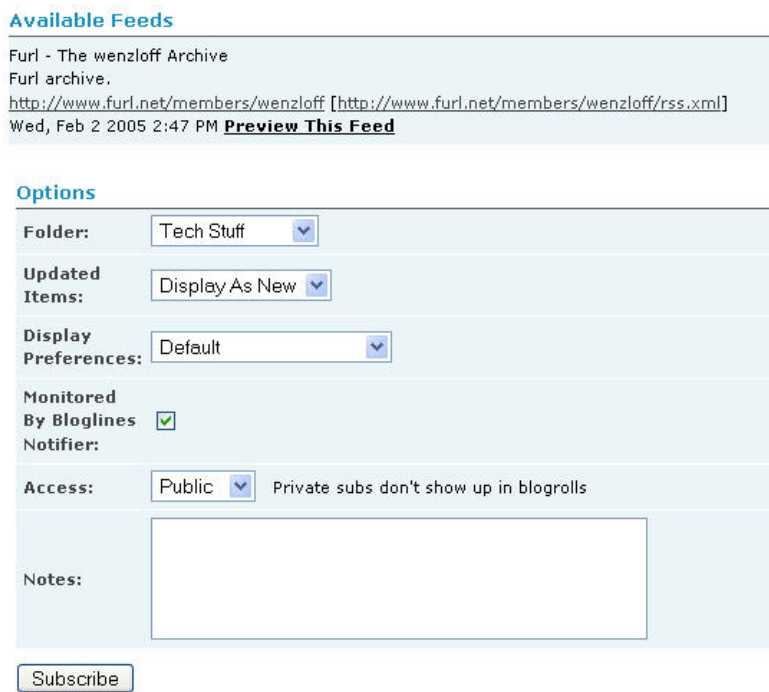
The right hand panel of the page will refresh and you will see the subscribe box shown below. Paste the URL you copied from Furl into the subscribe box.



A light blue rectangular box containing a text input field and a button. The text input field is labeled "Blog or Feed URL:" and contains the URL "http://www.furl.net/members/wenzl". Below the input field is a button labeled "Subscribe".

Click on Subscribe.

Another options box will appear. It is shown below. If it is a new account you won't need to do anything except click on the Subscribe button at the bottom of the blue area.



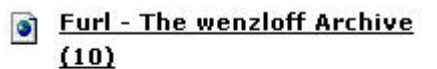
A light blue rectangular box titled "Available Feeds" containing subscription options. The title is in blue. Below the title, the text reads: "Furl - The wenzloff Archive", "Furl archive.", and "[http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml](\"http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml\") [http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml]". Below this is the date and time "Wed, Feb 2 2005 2:47 PM" followed by a link "[Preview This Feed](\"#\")".

Below the feed information is a section titled "Options" in blue. It contains several settings:

- Folder:** A dropdown menu with "Tech Stuff" selected.
- Updated Items:** A dropdown menu with "Display As New" selected.
- Display Preferences:** A dropdown menu with "Default" selected.
- Monitored By Bloglines:** A checkbox that is checked.
- Notifier:** A text input field.
- Access:** A dropdown menu with "Public" selected, followed by the text "Private subs don't show up in blogrolls".
- Notes:** A large empty text input field.

At the bottom of the options box is a button labeled "Subscribe".

Now on the left hand side you will see the link shown below. Notice the (10). That shows there are ten new entries. To view the entries just click on the hyperlink. The next time you visit Bloglines you will only see the new entries to my Furl.



You can now add RSS URLs for other Furls, blogs or news sources.

Students or teachers can also use RSS to subscribe to topics within your Furl. If you wanted to subscribe to a topic within a Furl you can do that also. This example is the RSS feed for the topic blogs within my Furl: [http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml?topic=blogs&count=5](\"http://www.furl.net/members/wenzloff/rss.xml?topic=blogs&count=5\") . You would need to edit the username and topic for your Furl.