

INSTITUTE WRITING PROGRAM

THE WRITING CENTER

ePortfolio guide #9: Using Widgets and Plugins

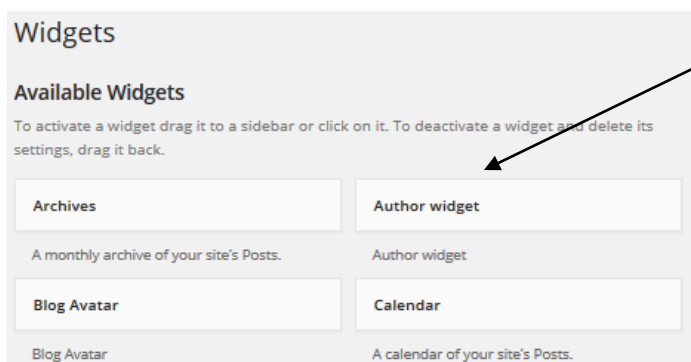
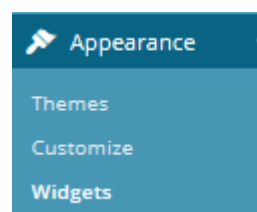
This guide will assist you in using widgets and plugins. Both widgets and plugins add functionality to your ePortfolio.

Widgets

Widgets are an easy way to customize your ePortfolio by adding new content areas and other features to your theme (because each theme accommodates widgets differently, using widgets effectively requires some trial and error). Widgets can be used to add stable content to all pages/posts in your ePortfolio, or to add features like a search bar or a list of common categories and tags.

To explore available widgets:

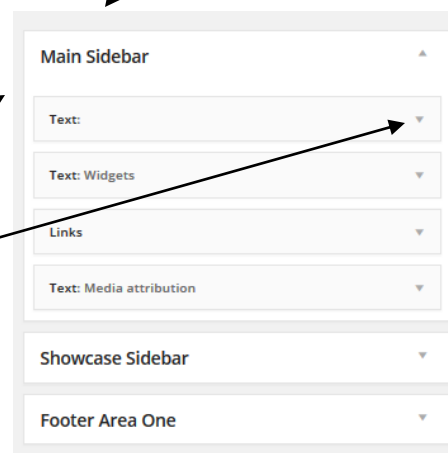
1. Login at sites.vmi.edu and navigate to your Dashboard.
2. Hover over **Appearance** and click **Widgets**.



3. A list of available widgets will be displayed on the left side of the screen with a short description under each one.

4. A list of the possible places to add widgets in your particular theme will be displayed on the right side of the screen. Each theme deals with widget placement differently.

5. To add a widget, click on and drag the white box for your chosen widget from the "Available Widgets" to one of the available areas on the right side of the screen.
6. To edit a widget you have added to your ePortfolio, click on the grey triangle on the right side of its white box.
7. To remove a widget, click on and drag the white box for your chosen widget from the right side of the screen back into the "Available Widgets" column.



Plugins

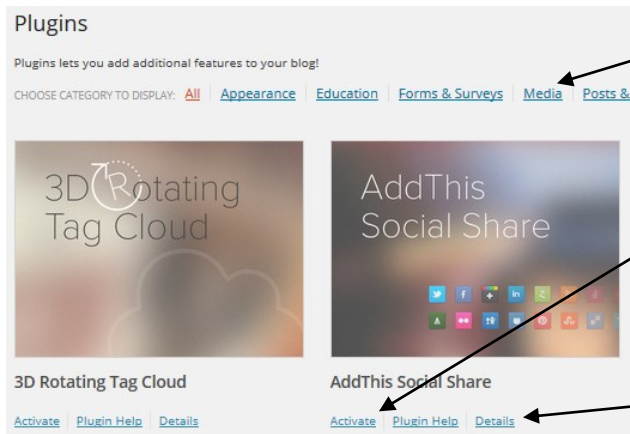
Like widgets, plugins add functionality to your ePortfolio, but plugins do so behind the scenes by adding new options to your Dashboard and/or post and page creation tools. Options including adding wikis, printer-friendly PDFs of each page, a contact form, and more.

To explore plugins:

1. Login at sites.vmi.edu and navigate to your Dashboard.



2. Click **Plugins** in the left column to view a list of all available plugins.



3. Here you can browse available plugins or sort them by category.

4. To tryout a plugin (you can always deactivate later), click **Activate**. A green checkmark in the upper-left corner of the plugin indicates it has been activated.

5. To find out more information about a plugin, click **Details** below it.

The Compfight Plugin


One particularly useful plugin is **Compfight**. This plugin allows you to quickly and easily search Creative Commons licensed photos and insert them into a page or post with the necessary attribution.

To use **Compfight**:

1. Login at sites.vmi.edu and navigate to your Dashboard.

2. Click **Plugins** in the left column, and scroll down until you see **Compfight Safe Images**.



3. Once activated, a small camera icon () will now appear in the toolbar whenever you create a new page or post.

4. Click on this icon to bring up a search window, then type in a search term, click **Search**, and then insert an image by choosing **S**, **M**, or **L** for a small, medium, or large version of the image.

