

LMS Help Sections - Comparison

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Moodle

The screenshot shows the Moodle course interface for 'Living with the Internet'. On the left sidebar, there are sections for 'People' (Participants), 'Activities' (Forums), 'Search Forums' (with an 'Advanced search' button and a question mark icon), and 'Courses' (Living with the...). The main content area has a 'Weekly outline' with dates and checkboxes, and a 'Latest News' section with recent posts. A red box highlights the question mark icon next to the 'Advanced search' button, with an arrow pointing to the 'How to Search' pop-up window.

How to Search

Full-text searching supports a number of options, listed below. You can combine these to specify your search more precisely.

search for these words	For basic searching of one or more words anywhere in the texts, just type them separated by spaces. All words longer than two characters are used.
+search +for these words	The previous example would also match "information" because it contains "for". To force exact matching of a word, use the plus sign.
+search -engine	Use the minus sign if there are particular exact words you don't want included in the search.
"search engine"	To search for a particular phrase, use double quotes around it.
user:Kim	To search for texts by a particular user, prefix a word from their name with "user:".
userid:6	If you know the user id of a particular user, you can search for them like this.
subject:assessment	To search for a word within the subject or title of a text only, prefix the word with "subject:".

For advanced searching, press the search button without typing anything in the words field - you will see a complete form that makes it easier to do advanced searches.

Close this window

[Index of all help files](#)

Index of Help files

General

- [Cookies](#)
- [Directory paths](#)
- [How to search](#)

Administration

- [Language editing](#)
- [Upload users](#)

Setting up courses

- [Activity Modules](#)
- [Activity Reports](#)
- [Course availability](#)
- [Course categories](#)
- [Course formats](#)
- [Course fullname](#)
- [Course ID number](#)
- [Course news items](#)
- [Course number of weeks/topics](#)
- [Course short name](#)
- [Course start date](#)
- [Course upload size](#)
- [Enrolment keys](#)
- [Grades](#)
- [Group mode](#)
- [Group mode \(forcing\)](#)
- [Guest access](#)
- [Meta Course](#)
- [Recent Activity](#)
- [Scales](#)
- [Section summaries](#)
- [Teachers](#)

Help section ?

- There is no "help" link linking to a help section
- The only help available within the platform:
 - * is linked from a question mark
 - * opens in a pop up window
 - * provide contextual help

- pop up window includes contextual definitions or procedures
- a link is available to "Index of all help files"
- the index opens in the same pop up window, and later each item of the index opens in the same pop up

Note:

Teacher, Administrator and Developer documentations are available on Moodle.org, but no links is available to them from the platform

Notes

- lack of obvious link to a help section
- good integration of the question marks, very action oriented
- very contextual help
- help content mixing info for user, teacher and administrator

<http://test.adenu.ia.uned.es/moodle/>
(installed on our server) Fri Mar 07 2008

Sakai

The screenshot shows the Sakai web interface. The left navigation menu includes links for Home, Profile, Membership, Schedule, Resources, Announcements, Worksite Setup, Preferences, and Account. The 'Help' link is highlighted with a red box. The main content area features a 'Message of the Day' section, a 'Calendar' section for February 2008, and an 'Announcements' section. A pop-up window is open over the 'Announcements' section, displaying a search bar and a list of links. A text box highlights the 'Announcements: Overview' section, stating: 'This section text displays contextual content. From the help link in the left menu, it shows the welcome text.'

Help section ?

- "help" link available at anytime from the 1st level navigation menu
- "help" also available from a question mark existing for all the main sections
- help opening in a pop up window

- 3 sections in the pop up window:
 - * a search box (and the associated search results)
 - * an index, unfolding in more topics
 - * the text content displaying contextual information, (or welcome text by default).

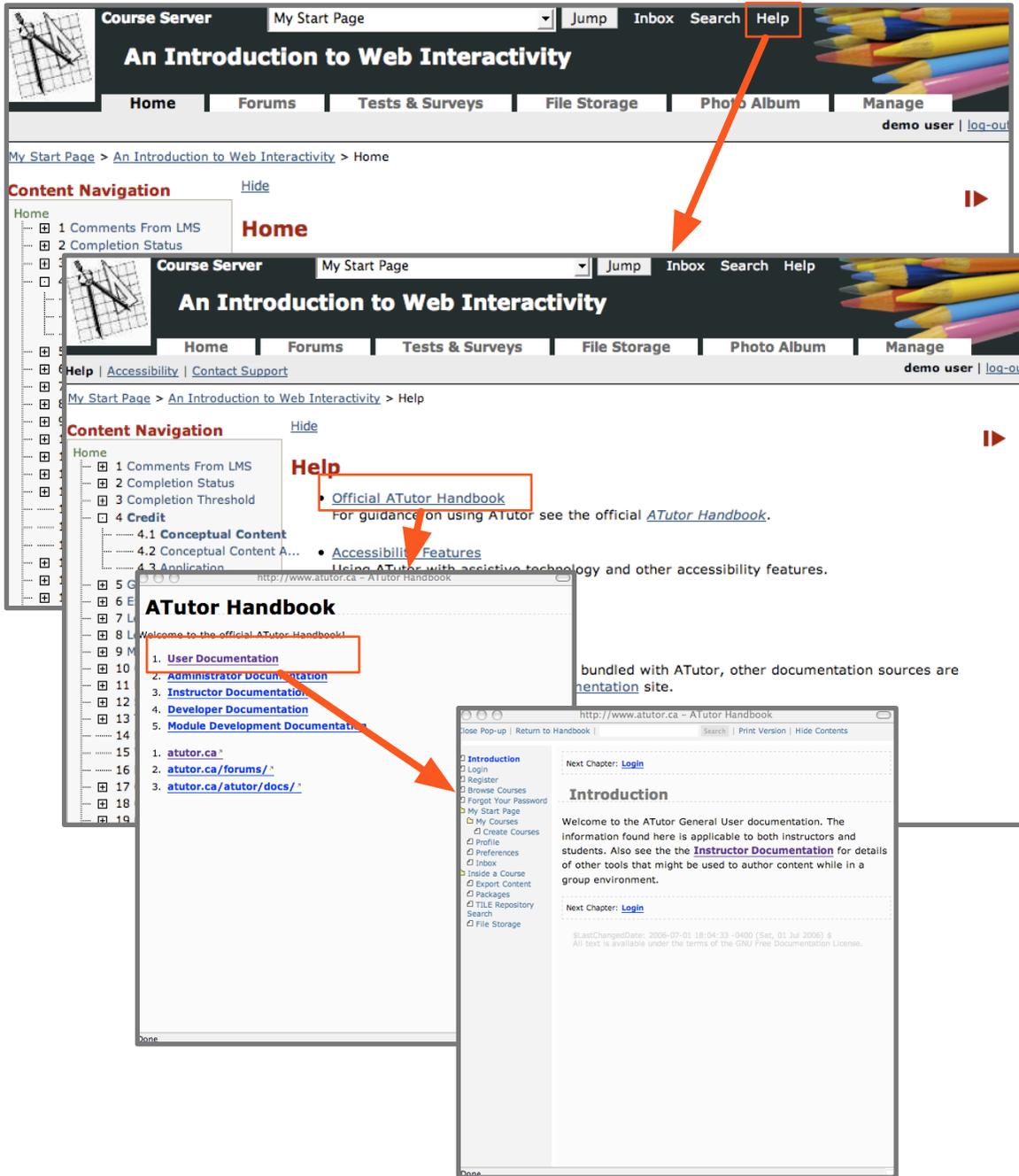
- The help provided is made of contextual procedures

- when displaying the contextual procedures, the index menu is synchronized = automatically opened to the related section with the current content identified (but not much visible)

Notes

- obvious links to the help section
- very extensive help content: search feature + index + contextual content

ATutor



Help section

- "help" link available at anytime from the top "utility" menu
- not available from anywhere else
- linking to a help section opening in the same window
- Help section includes Official ATutor Handbook, Accessibility and Contact Support
- Official ATutor Handbook leads to a pop up.
- This pop up has several menu items including
 1. User Documentation
 2. Administrator Documentation
 3. Instructor Documentation
 4. Developer Documentation
 5. Module Development Documentation
- User Documentation leads to reload the pop up
- The new pop up content includes
 - * a search box
 - * a right nav menu that can be hidden
 - * a print option

Notes

- no contextual help at all. The user needs to leave its current action to access the help
- long way to reach help content (4 clicks)
- targeted help: as soon as the 1st pop up opens, choice between help for user, admin, etc..

Joomla

The screenshot shows the 'Course details' page for 'Intercultural communications'. At the top right, there is a navigation bar with several icons, including a question mark icon which is highlighted with a red box. Below this, a yellow banner says 'Thank you for enrolling for Intercultural communications.' Underneath are three columns: 'HomeWork' (No homework for today), 'Announcements' (No announcements for today), and 'DropBox (0 / 0)' (No new items in Digital DropBox). Below these columns is a section titled 'Aims and Objectives'.

The screenshot shows the Joomla LMS website home page. The header features the Joomla LMS logo and the tagline 'Spread your knowledge the easy way'. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, News, Features, Demo, Compare, Try & Buy, Tutorials, Help, Forum, and Resellers. The main content area is titled 'DropBox' and explains its purpose for exchanging files between participants. It includes a table with icons and steps for managing files in the DropBox.

Icon	Name	Step
	Mark as 'Read'	Select check boxes next to the necessary items and click Mark as 'Read' to sign that an item has already been viewed.
	New DropBox item	Allows a user to add a new item to the DropBox.
	Delete DropBox item	Select check boxes next to the necessary items and click Delete to remove selected items from the DropBox.

Help section

- "help" link available at anytime from 1st level nav
- not available from anywhere else
- click on "help" opens a new full window with full help section menu on the left (is it because it is the demo version?)
- text content is contextual = related to the page where the user was when he clicked on the help button
- left menu contains a search box
- left menu is not synchronized with text content
- text content includes definition, descriptions, procedures, lots of screenshots and a field to leave note
- there is no real consistency across text content layout from a page to another
- clicking on the help from another section in the website opens another help window

Notes

- 1st nav level link existing, but not very obvious: It is the last one and the question mark in the icon is slightly hidden
- contextual help OK
- help content layout confusing and inconsistent from a page to another

Claroline

Claroline 1.8.9 Demo

Claroline.net

m | My course list | My calendar | My User Account | Logout

2 users connected

Warning! This is a demonstration platform, so the courses created on it can be deleted without notice.
If you are looking for hosting services of Claroline courses, contact us.

To test Claroline as a teacher :

- click on "Create user account"
- select "Create course website" on the account creation page
- and follow the track.

Visit the Claroline Documentation website to find help about the platform and the tools.

My course list | Enrol on a new course | Remove course enrolment | All platform courses

My course list

CLAROLINE.NET

Let's build knowledge together

About us Contact Search

Home News Demo Download Documentation Forum Collaborate Community Consortium Services

Accu2008
Annual Conference of Claroline Users

Documentation

Online documentation Tutorials Manuals Promotional material Papers and articles

Main documentation Web Site

To keep the Claroline documentation up to date with the development pace of our developers community, the Claroline team has decided to move this documentation to a complete new site section allowing Claroline users around the world to feed the documentation themselves.

- Claroline Documentation site
- Site de la documentation Claroline
- Dokumentation von Claroline
- Claroline Documentation site (Arabic)
- Documentazione di Claroline

Incomplete documentation

The following online documentations are still incomplete, report to the english version for missing informations.

- Documentación de Claroline
- Documentatie van Claroline
- Documentação de Claroline
- Claroline documentation in Chinese

If you are interested in translating the Claroline Documentation Web site to Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish, send a mail to info@claroline.net.

Help section

- no "help" link from navigation
- just a sentence: "Visit the Claroline Documentation Website to find help about the platform and the tools"
- link opens the Claroline Documentation Website in the same window

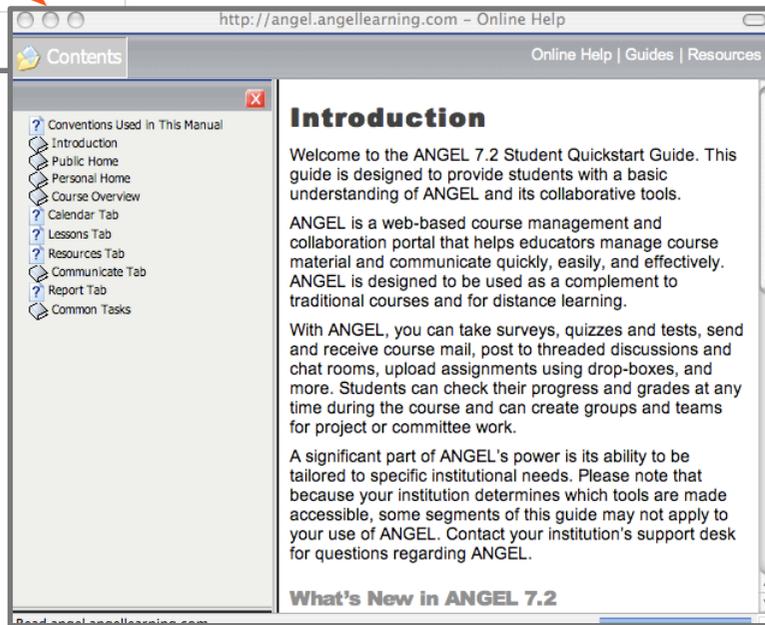
- Claroline Documentation Website has 5 major sections:
 - * online documentation: linking to another site wikipedia-style in the same window
 - * tutorials: linking to flash tutorial within the same window
 - * manuals: linking to student and teacher manuals downloadable in pdf or word
 - * promotional material: downloadable pdf fact-sheets
 - * paper and articles: list of downloadable articles

Notes

- no contextual help at all. The user needs to leave its current action and screen to access the help
- long way to reach help content
- help material not available as html. Need to download it (word,prf) or load it (flash) and then browse through it

<http://www.claroline.net/demo/demo.html>

Angel



Help section

- "help" link from 1st level navigation on the left
- always present on every page in the left nav, but no contextual help related to page content
- link opens a pop up

- help pop up includes
 - * left navigation menu
 - * text content
- help is not contextual: help pop up always opens on the introduction
- description and procedures. screenshots available

Notes

- the user doesn't need to leave its current action and screen to access the help. It is always there and quite visible due to a clean left navigation menu
- no contextual help at all: the user needs to search through the help to find content related on current task

Blackboard

TOC

point

Blackboard

About the Blackboard Academic Suite User Manual

Welcome to the Blackboard Academic Suite™! The Blackboard Academic Suite offers a robust set of tools, functions, and features for learning. Besides the features that are included as part of the Blackboard Academic Suite, there are numerous additional tools that can be added to Blackboard Academic Suite as Blackboard Building Blocks.

This user manual details the tools and functions included with the platform from the User or general user perspective. Other manuals detail the construction, customization, and management features for Instructors, Leaders, and System Administrators.

The flexibility of the Blackboard Academic Suite means that not all the tools and functions that are available are documented in this manual. Building Blocks allow System Administrators to add a variety of materials, tools, and functions to the Blackboard Academic Suite. Individual Building Blocks are not documented in this manual. Contact your System Administrator for assistance with a Building Block.

The tools and functions documented in this manual may not be available to users or only available in certain areas of the Blackboard Academic Suite. System Administrators, Leaders, and Instructors can customize the availability of most aspects of the platform.

Manual Organization

This manual begins by introducing the Blackboard Academic Suite. The second section reviews the Course environment of the Blackboard Learning System. The final section reviews the advanced features of the Blackboard Community System.

Manual Conventions

To make this manual easier to use a number of conventions appear throughout.

Symbol	Description
[!]	Required field.

Done

Help section

- NO demo available for blackboard, therefore I used the reference center: User Manual html version
- 3 sections in the window:
 - * top bar with a search box and various navigation options
 - * the text content displaying information
 - * a left nav menu unfolding/collapsing made of
 - > a table of content TOC, unfolding/collapsing in more topics
 - > search function
 - > favorites.
- The help provided is made of definitions and procedures

Notes

- it looks like it doesn't provide contextual help at all.
- the user doesn't need to leave its current action and screen to access the help
- various navigation options including the favorite features and search, can be useful but make the interface busy. maybe too busy for a novice user
- interesting and quite new function "Favorites" to save the favorite help pages