

Monitoring Activity Using Course Blocks

What are "Blocks?"

Blocks are part of the Moodle Course Page. These areas give the user information at a glance. Courses are created with a default set of blocks enabled. There are additional blocks available. Blocks can be repositioned on the course page, or they may be deleted.

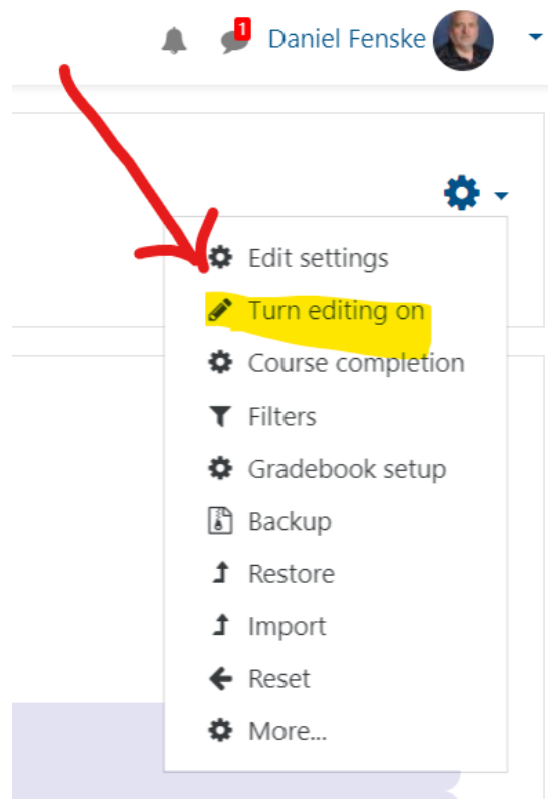
The screenshot shows a Moodle course page titled "Sandbox Course for Daniel J Fenske". The page is divided into two main sections. On the left, under "General Course Content", there is a list of course sections: "Chapter 14", "Section 2", "Section 3", "Photosynthesis" (marked "Hidden from students"), and "Section 5". On the right, there is a sidebar containing several blocks: "Online users" (showing 1 online user, Daniel Fenske), "Search forums", "Latest news" (with a link to "Add a new topic..."), and "Upcoming events" (showing no upcoming events). Handwritten red annotations are present: "BLOCKS" with a checkmark is written above the sidebar; "CONTENT AREA" is written in the center, with a red arrow pointing from the "Photosynthesis" section to the "Online users" block.

There are two Blocks that are very useful for monitoring what is going on in your course. Those Blocks are the recent Activity Block and the Online Users Block. Recent Activity is displayed by default. As things happen in the course, this block will display that for you. You can also get a report by clicking on the link that appears in the Block "Full report of recent activity...".

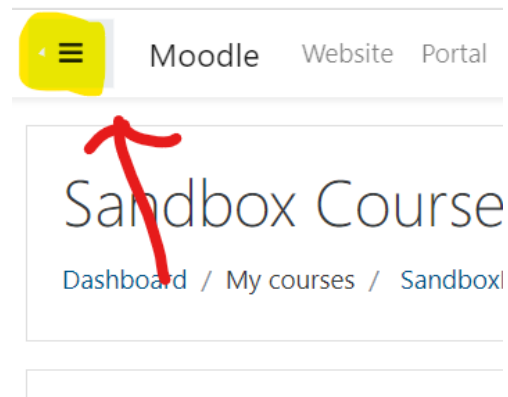
The Online Users block displays a list of students who are currently logged in to your course. This Block must be added if you wish to make use of it. The instructions for adding this Block follow.

Add a Block

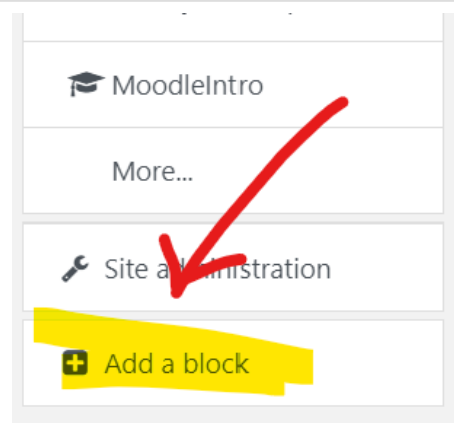
1. Navigate to your Course Page. Turn Editing on.

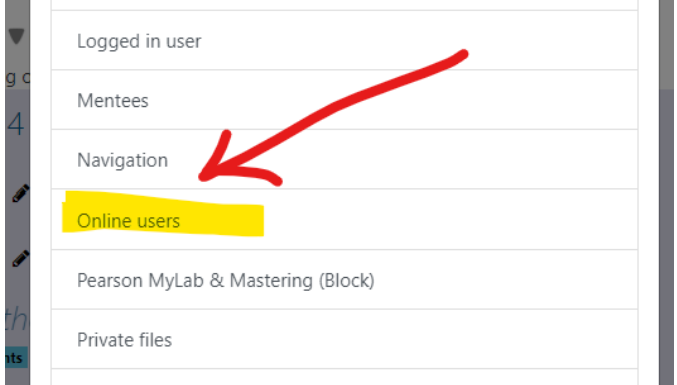
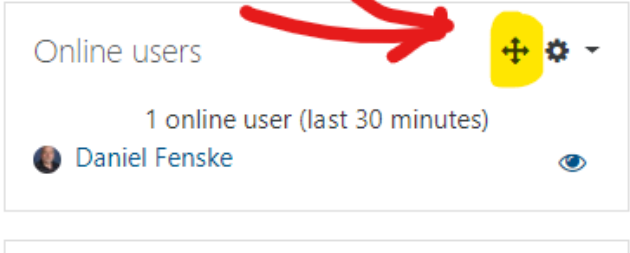


2. At the upper left corner of the page, find the 3 horizontal line button (the "hamburger"). Click on that button to expand the left side pane.



3. When the left side pane opens, scroll to the very bottom of the pane. You will see a box, "Add a Block". Select that button.

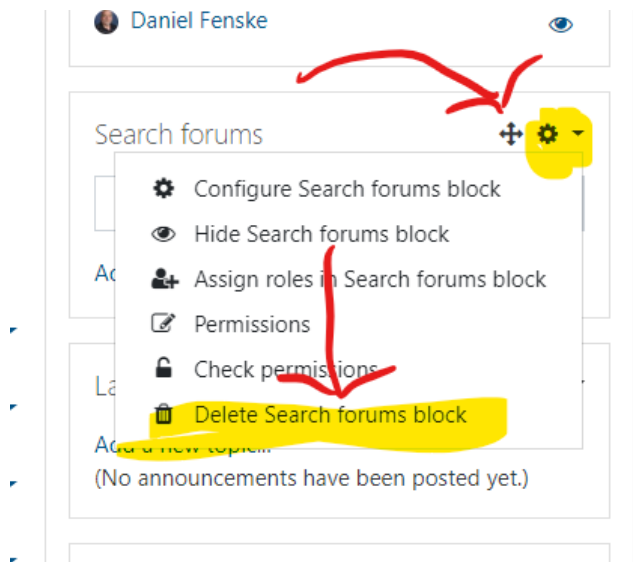


<p>4. For our purposes, we'll add a Block that tells us which users are currently logged in to our course. Scroll down the list of Blocks to find "Online users". Select that Block.</p>	
<p>5. The Block will appear in the right pane of your course. You can change the position (up or down in the pane) by clicking and holding on the crossed arrow icon. Your cursor changes to the crossed arrow. You can drag the Block up or down to your desired position.</p>	
<p>Turn your editing off, your block is in place.</p>	

Delete a Block

You may decide that you do not wish to use a Block, and want to remove it from the Course Page. Directions follow:

1. Turn Editing on (refer to step 1 of the directions above).
2. Locate the Block you wish to delete. Click on the "gear" icon. From the menu, select the last item "Delete ___ block".
3. Accept the confirmation dialog that appears. The Block is deleted. It may be re-added at any time.



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