INTRODUCTION

FOSSweb technology is an integral part of the Planetary Science Course. It provides students with the opportunity to access and interact with simulations, images, video, and text—multimedia that can enhance their understanding of planetary science concepts. Different sections of multimedia are incorporated into each investigation during the course. Each use is marked with the technology icon in the Investigations Guide. You will sometimes use the multimedia to make presentations to the class. At other times, individuals or small groups of students will work with the multimedia to review concepts or reinforce their understanding.

The FOSSweb components are not optional. To prepare to use these digital resources, you should have at least one computer with Internet access that can be displayed to the class, either by an LCD projector, an interactive whiteboard, or a large screen arranged for class viewing. Access to a computer lab or to enough computers in your classroom for students to work in small groups is also required during certain investigations, and recommended during others.

The multimedia is available online at www.FOSSweb.com for teachers and students. We recommend you access FOSSweb well in advance of starting the course to set up your teacher-user account and become familiar with the resources.
REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSING FOSSWEB

You’ll need to have a few things in place on your computer before accessing FOSSweb. Once you’re online, you’ll create a FOSSweb account. All information in this section is updated as needed on FOSSweb.

Creating a FOSSweb Teacher Account

By creating a FOSSweb teacher account, you can personalize FOSSweb for easy access to the courses you are teaching. When you log in, you can access Resources by Investigation for each course through My FOSS Courses. This makes it simple to select the investigation and part you are teaching and view all the digital resources connected to that part.

Students and families can also access course resources through FOSSweb. You can set up class pages where students will be able to access notes from you about assignments and multimedia.

Setting up an account. Set up an account on FOSSweb so you can access the site when you begin teaching a course. Go to FOSSweb to register your access code—complete registration instructions are available there. If you cannot find your FOSSweb registration information and access code, contact your school administrator, your district science coordinator, or the purchasing agent for your school or district.

Logging in to FOSSweb. Once your account is set up, go to FOSSweb and log in. The first time you log in, you have an opportunity to set up your profile and customize your homepage so that your courses and modules are included in your list in My FOSS Courses. The first time you log in, you should set up your profile so that Planetary Science Course is in your list of courses.

Familiarize yourself with the layout of the site and the additional resources available by using your account login. From your course page, you will be able to access teacher masters, assessment masters, notebook sheets, multimedia, and other digital resources. Explore the Resources by Investigation section, as this will help you plan. It lists the multimedia, notebook sheets, teacher masters, and readings for each investigation part.
Setting up class pages and student accounts. To enable your students to log in to FOSSweb to access the multimedia and see class assignments, set up a class page and generate a user name and password for the class. To do so, log in to FOSSweb and go to your homepage. Under My Class Pages, follow the instructions to create a new class page and to leave notes for students.

FOSSweb Technical Requirements
To use FOSSweb, your computer must meet minimum system requirements and have a compatible browser and recent versions of Flash® Player, QuickTime™, and Adobe® Reader. The system requirements are subject to change. It is strongly recommended that you visit FOSSweb to review the most recent minimum system requirements.

When using FOSSweb, you can test your browser to confirm that it has the minimum requirements to support the multimedia. You can do so by accessing the Test Browser page on FOSSweb.

Preparing your browser. FOSSweb requires a supported browser for Windows or Mac OS with a current version of the Flash Player plug-in, the QuickTime plug-in, and Adobe Reader, or an equivalent PDF reader program. You may need administrator privileges on your computer in order to install the required programs and/or help from your school’s technology coordinator.

By accessing the Test Browser page on FOSSweb, you can check compatibility for each computer you will use to access FOSSweb, including your classroom computer, computers in a school computer lab, and a home computer. The information at FOSSweb contains the most up-to-date technical requirements.

Support for plug-ins and reader. The Flash Player and Adobe Reader are available on www.Adobe.com as free downloads. QuickTime is available free of charge from www.Apple.com. FOSS does not support these programs. Please go to the program’s website for troubleshooting information.
Mapping Services Program
In order to complete some of the Planetary Science activities, you must have Google Earth™ installed. Version 5 or higher is highly recommended; however, the minimum requirement is version 3.0 or higher. Note that versions 3 and 4 might not be able to successfully run all activities in the course.

FOSS does not support Google Earth™, although helpful tips for using Google Earth™ in this course are described on FOSSweb. The program is free and can be downloaded online. A link to the program download site and specific instructions for setup and use can be accessed through FOSSweb.

Accessing FOSS Planetary Science Digital Resources
When you log in to FOSSweb, the most useful way to access course materials on a daily basis is the Resources by Investigation section of the Planetary Science Course page. This section lists the multimedia, student and teacher sheets, readings, and focus questions for each investigation part. Each of these items is linked so you can click and go directly to that item.

Students will access digital resources from the Resource Room, which looks like an observatory, accessible from the class page you’ve set up. Explore where the activities reside in the Resource Room, particularly the binders. The binders contain a database of images and animations organized into course topics. At various points in the course, students will access the binders to view images or animations.
Other Technology Considerations

Firewall or proxy settings. If your school has a firewall or proxy server, contact your IT administrator to add explicit exceptions in your proxy server and firewall for these servers:

- fossweb.com
- kh.Google.com
- maps.Google.com
- auth.keyhole.com

Classroom technology setup. FOSS has a number of digital resources and makes every effort to accommodate users with different levels of access to technology. The digital resources can be used in a variety of ways and can be adapted to a number of classroom setups.

Teachers with classroom computers and an LCD projector, an interactive whiteboard, or a large screen will be able to show multimedia to the class. If you have access to a computer lab, or enough computers in your classroom for students to work in small groups, you can set up time for students to use the FOSSweb digital resources during the school day. Teachers who have access to only a single computer will find a variety of beneficial resources on FOSSweb that can be used to assist with teacher preparation and materials management.

Displaying multimedia content. You might want to digitally display the notebook and teacher masters during class. In the Resources by Investigation section of FOSSweb, you’ll have the option of downloading the masters “to project” or “to copy.” Choose “to project” if you plan on projecting to the class. These masters are optimized for a projection system and allow you to type into them while they are displayed. The “to copy” versions are sized to minimize paper use when photocopying for the class.

If this projection technology is not available to you, consider making transparencies of the notebook and teacher masters for use with an overhead projector when the Getting Ready section indicates a need to project these sheets.

NOTE
FOSSweb activities are designed for a minimum screen size of 1024 × 768. It is recommended that you adjust your screen resolution to 1024 × 768 or higher.
TROUBLESHOOTING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you experience trouble with FOSSweb, you can troubleshoot in a variety of ways.

1. First, test your browser to make sure you have the correct plug-in and browser versions. Go to FOSSweb and select the “Test Browser” page to review the most recent system requirements and test your browser.

2. Check the FAQs on FOSSweb for additional information that may help resolve the problem.

3. Try emptying the cache from your browser and/or quitting and relaunching it.

4. Restart your computer, and make sure all computer hardware turns on and is connected correctly.

If you are still experiencing problems after taking these steps, send FOSS Technical Support an e-mail at support@FOSSweb.com. In addition to describing the problem, include the following information about your computer: Mac or PC, operating system, browser and version, plug-ins and versions. This will help us troubleshoot the problem.