

Handout: Text editors

If Excel (or Google Spreadsheets) is the #1 tool used by journalist working with data, a good text editor is >#1. It's the basics of basic.

The best text editors are really built for programming. There are TONS of different ones out there, but let me assure that Microsoft Word is NOT one of them. MS Word is a good word processor, but it will muck up your data by converting quotes, adding embedded formatting and all kinds of other mess you don't want.

So, here are the text editors I recommend as of January, 2015. As with any app, quality and recommendations are subject to change with one bad update or one good product release cycle. Most are free, some are not.

[Sublime Text](#) (Badgerware*)

Sublime is what I use. It is cross-platform (Mac, Windows and Linux). It has syntax highlighting (coloring code), code completion (helping you write HTML and other code), has powerful regular expression editing, can search and replace across multiple files at once and can work in folders. It has a robust community extending it with new plugins and tools. *Sublime Text is free to try for as long as you like, but you'll be prompted to buy (\$70) often. If you really want free, try Atom.

[Atom](#) (Free)

Built by GitHub. Cross-platform. Does just about everything Sublime does. I would use this if I hadn't already bought and learned Sublime. It's fairly new on the block. Maybe a little slower, but you won't notice unless you are doing benchmark tests.

[Text Wrangler](#) (Free) and [BBEdit](#) (\$50)

Text Wrangler is the Mac-only text editor little brother of BBEdit. It does syntax highlighting, regular expression search and replace and all the basics. BBEdit offers built-in FTP, which you don't really need for this class. [Compare features](#). Maybe a little easier more intuitive than Sublime/Atom, but that's debateable.

[Notepad++](#) (Free)

A very good Windows code editor with all the the basics and built-in FTP.

[vi](#) (Free)

This is really a joke to see if anyone is listening. It's actually a *very* powerful *nix command-line text editor, but has a hell of a learning curve.