

Chrome Extensions

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Lightweight customization of your web experience

(they're way easier than you'd think)

The Basics

You need:

- a manifest file

<http://developer.chrome.com/extensions/manifest>

Decision time!

- browser action?
- page action?
- background script?
- content script?
- page override?

<http://developer.chrome.com/extensions/manifest>

Browser Action

- If you have something you want accessible regardless of page
- Specify an icon, html file
- Essentially a mini webpage

<https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/browserAction>

Page Action

- If you have something that affects individual pages
- No badge, but a button on the side
- Can make it show only for certain pages

<https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/pageAction>

Background Script

- .js file(s) you want to run without affecting your browsing
- can also create a background .html page
- event pages are much less wasteful, non-persistent

https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/event_pages

Content Script

- .js file(s) that interact directly with websites
- give you direct access to the DOM
- can talk to background scripts through “message passing”

https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/content_scripts

Page Override

- change from default bookmark manager, history, or new tab
- only one override per extension
- can replace these with your own html

<https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/override>

chrome.* APIs

- Change the way the browser works
- chrome.tabs allows you to manipulate tabs
- chrome.history gives access to user's history
- chrome.bookmarks gives access to user's bookmarks
- chrome.events listens for browser events
- chrome.omnibox allows you to add keywords to the search box
- chrome.storage gives you local data storage within the extension
- alarms, commands, cookies, notifications, permissions, windows, and others

https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/api_index

Permissions

- Not all features are usable without certain permissions from user
- Requesting them in manifest asks user at install time
- permissions API allows you to ask later

https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/declare_permissions

Options Page

- Chrome takes an html page and displays it nicely
- Full page with “options_page”
- Overlay with “options_ui” (preferred)

<https://developer.chrome.com/extensions/optionsV2>