

# Realtime map shows Wikipedia changes worldwide

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(Phys.org) —The show of shows: A realtime map that you can watch, and watch, which displays where in the world people are editing articles for Wikipedia. We are almost tempted to issue a warning here that the map we are about to discuss could be the most addictive Internet go-to you have experienced, and to please view with caution. Two programmers, Stephen LaPorte and Mahmoud Hashemi, the latter a "Wikipedian and Pythonist," have created a method to display changes to Wikipedia, changes that are marked up on a world map in realtime. Their work is called the Wikipedia Recent Changes Map. This is an open source work available on github.

They wrote that their map displays the approximate location of unregistered users and the articles that they edit. The map, being "live," is an entertaining data dalliance as no other. Each time an edit is made, a map shows where it was made from and text reveals which article was edited. Someone in Jordan edited French Open. Someone in LA edited Haym Solomon. Someone in [Copenhagen](#) edited Alcatraz Island. Therein lies at least one facet of the magnetic draw, as the map shows how people's interests go beyond their own locales. The site only maps the contributions made by unregistered [Wikipedia](#) users. When such a user makes an edit, they are identified only by IP address. Unregistered users make only 15 percent of the contributions to the English Wikipedia so the map represents a small portion of the total edit activity. When an unregistered user makes a contribution to Wikipedia, that contribution is identified by IP address and the IP address is translated to the contributor's approximate [geographic location](#). Components used in LaPorte and Hashemi's [map](#) include the JavaScript libraryD3 (Data Driven Documents); datamaps-world.js; and freegeoip.net.

D3.js is a JavaScript library for manipulating documents based on data. DataMaps are interactive [maps](#) for data visualizations, bundled into a single Javascript file. freegeoip.net is a public web service for searching the geolocation of IP addresses and host names. freegeoip.net began as a web server research project in 2009 hosted at Google's App Engine. A year later it moved to its own server infrastructure.

Wikipedia needs little introduction as the world's crowdsourced encyclopedia, maintained by users who are constantly making edits to articles. While traditional encyclopedias edited the world, the world edits Wikipedia.

**More information:** [blog.hatnote.com/post/49342528 ... a-recent-changes-map](http://blog.hatnote.com/post/49342528...a-recent-changes-map)  
[hatnote.com/#en](http://hatnote.com/#en)

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