

## How to explain RSS the Oprah way

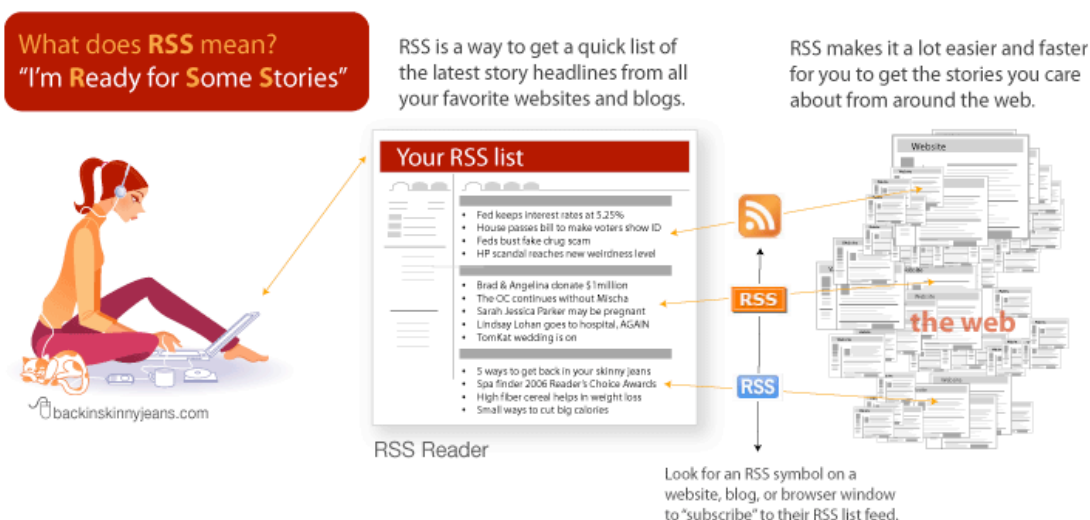
Today, I'm going to explain how RSS can help you live your best life online.

We all have busy lives with very little time. Web surfing is fun but can take hours going to visit every single website and blog you enjoy. Wouldn't it be fabulous if you could just get all the headlines of the most current stories from all your favorite websites and blogs in one place?

Well now you can, and it is called **RSS feed**.

**The Oprah definition** The **technical acronym for RSS** is "Really Simple Syndication", an XML format that was created to syndicate news, and be a means to share content on the web. Now, to geeks and techies that means something special, but to everyday folks like you and me, what comes to mind is, "Uh, I don't get it?"

So, to make RSS much easier to understand, in Oprah speak, RSS stands for: I'm "**Ready for Some Stories**". It is a way online for you to get a quick list of the latest story headlines from all your favorite websites and blogs all in one place. How cool is that?



Suppose you have 50 sites and blogs that you like to visit regularly. Going to visit each website and blog everyday could take you hours. With RSS, you can "subscribe" to a website or blog, and get "fed" all the new headlines from all of these 50 sites and blogs in one list, and see what's going on in minutes instead of hours. What a time saver!

That one place where your RSS list is created is called an RSS Reader, and it gathers all the headlines from all the websites and blogs you have subscribed to. In a moment, I will describe how to get an RSS Reader.

**Subscribing to RSS feeds** But first, to "subscribe" to a website or blog's RSS feed simply means that you are telling that website or blog, "Yes please. Send me your story headlines." It's like subscribing to a magazine or newsletter. Instead of getting a magazine or email, you will just get a list of headlines sent to your RSS reader. If the headline looks interesting to you, all you have to do is click on the headline and you'll be sent to the whole story.

In order to subscribe to a website or blog's RSS, all you have to do is click on an RSS symbol like

one of those shown in the diagram above, or a text link of the words “Subscribe to our RSS feed” on the website or blog. Typically, you can find these RSS symbols or text links in your browser window, on the sides of the website page, or on the bottom of the page. The publishers of the websites and blogs really want people to subscribe to their RSS, so they will make it very easy for you to find the subscription links.

**RSS Readers** Now, because nothing is ever standard on the web like dealing with different operating systems, Mac vs. PC, and different flavored browsers like Internet Explorer, AOL, Safari, and Firefox, the way to get an RSS reader will be dependent on what browser you like to use, and how accessible you’d like your RSS list(s) to be.

Just like there are flavors of web browsers, you may see and hear of different flavors of RSS XML feeders like RSS 1.0, RSS 2.0, and Atom. Again, the flavors are only important if you want to get techie. If you stick to looking for an RSS symbol like I have shown you in the diagram, you will be just fine.

If you’d like your RSS list to be accessible from any computer or mobile device you may have like a PDA, laptop, or cell phone, some popular RSS readers include (and almost all are FREE):

MyYahoo

MyMSN

MyAOL

MyGoogle

**Bloglines**

**FeedDemon** (this one costs money)

**NewsGator** (there is a cost for mobile accessibility)

**NetVibes**

**PageFlakes**

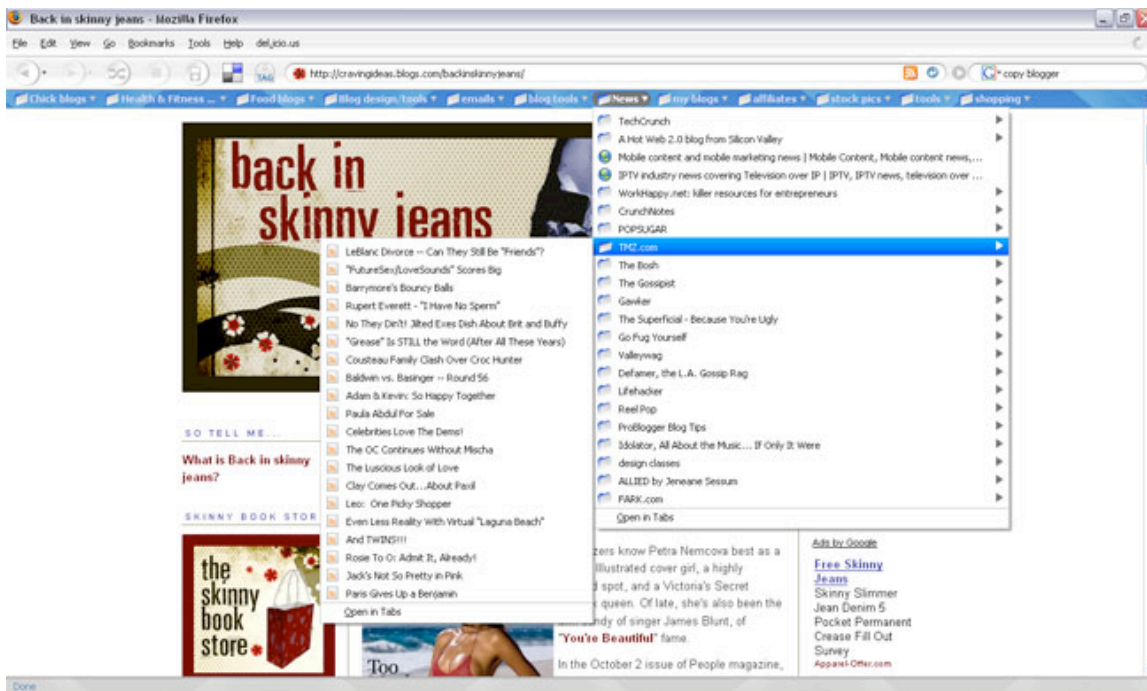
**Shrook** (For Mac users. Free trial and then there's a cost.)

**LektoraAttensa** (more for enterprise, and there's a cost)

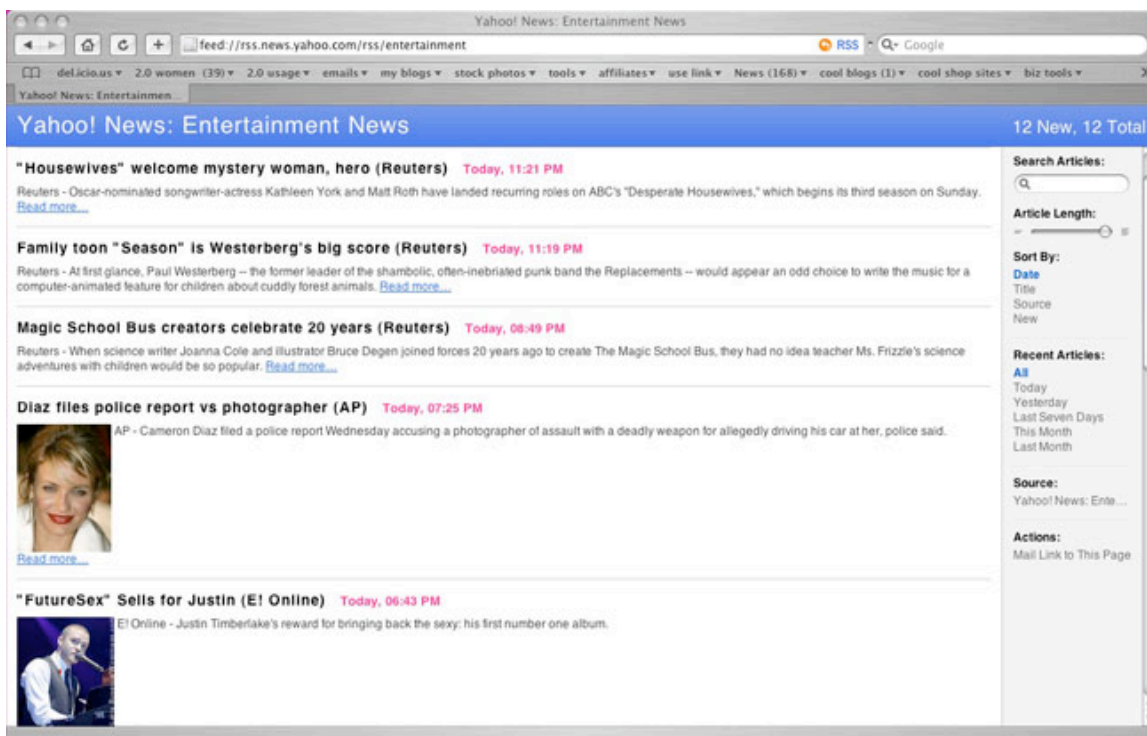
As you can see, there are a plethora of choices for you. All are good RSS readers, so your choice will simply come down to the style that appeals most to you.

**RSS as Live Bookmarks** Browsers like Safari and Firefox allow you to subscribe to RSS feeds through the browser, and it’s called “live bookmarking”. Currently, you can only do live bookmarking in Internet Explorer if you have IE7 which is still in Beta. Oprah translation: Non-geeks cannot do live bookmarking in Internet Explorer because it’s not done yet. The limitation with using RSS in live bookmark form is that you only have access to your RSS list from the computer you created the bookmarks on. If you want the flexibility of complete accessibility, then I recommend going the RSS Reader route.

Here’s an example of an RSS live bookmark feed for the celebrity gossip site **TMZ.com** using the Firefox browser on a PC.



Here's an example of RSS live bookmark feed for the **Yahoo Entertainment Celebrity** page using the Mac Safari browser.



So there you have it. Are you now Ready for Some Stories? Enjoy!

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\*Taken from: [http://www.backinskinnyjeans.com/2006/09/how\\_to\\_explain\\_.html](http://www.backinskinnyjeans.com/2006/09/how_to_explain_.html)