Configure SSO with Google Workspace

Last Modified on 01/22/2026 2:00 pm EST

If you have an internal knowledge base and use Google Workspace as a shared login, integrate KnowledgeOwl with Google Workspace SSO so your employees can log into the knowledge base using their Google credentials. This feature is available on **select plans.**

In order to set up your knowledge base to use SSO with Google Workspace (formerly G Suite and/or Google Apps), you'll need to:

- In Google Workspace, create a SAML app for SSO and add some KnowledgeOwl info.
- Update info in KnowledgeOwl to capture that SAML app info.

## Step 1: Create a Google SAML app for SSO

When in doubt, check Google's docs for this section
These instructions are adapted from the Google Workspace instructions to create your own custom SAML app in Google Workspace. We don't actively maintain the Google steps of these instructions; when in doubt, review Google's own documentation: **Set up your own custom SAML application**

1. In Google Workspace Admin Console, go to **Apps > Web and mobile apps.**

2. Select **Add app.**

3. Select **Add custom SAML app.**
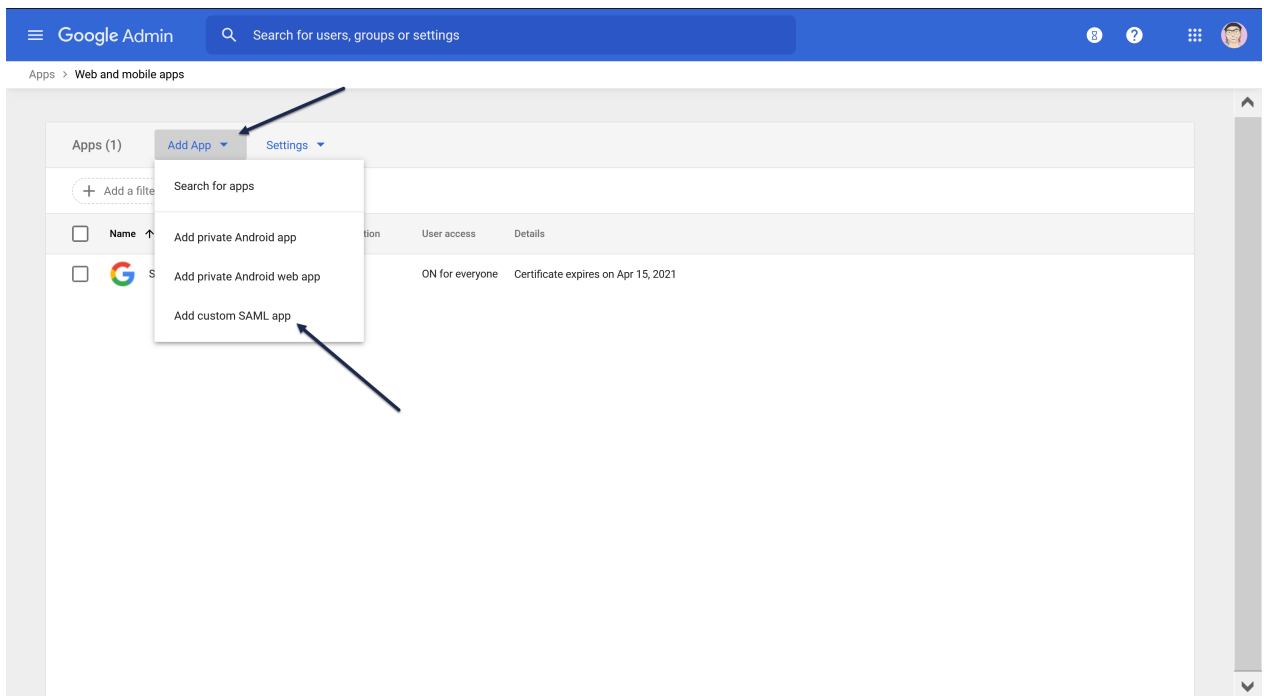
4. In the **App name** field, add a name that will help you identify this SAML app as belonging to your knowledge base, like KnowledgeOwl SSO. Here, we use Sample KB:
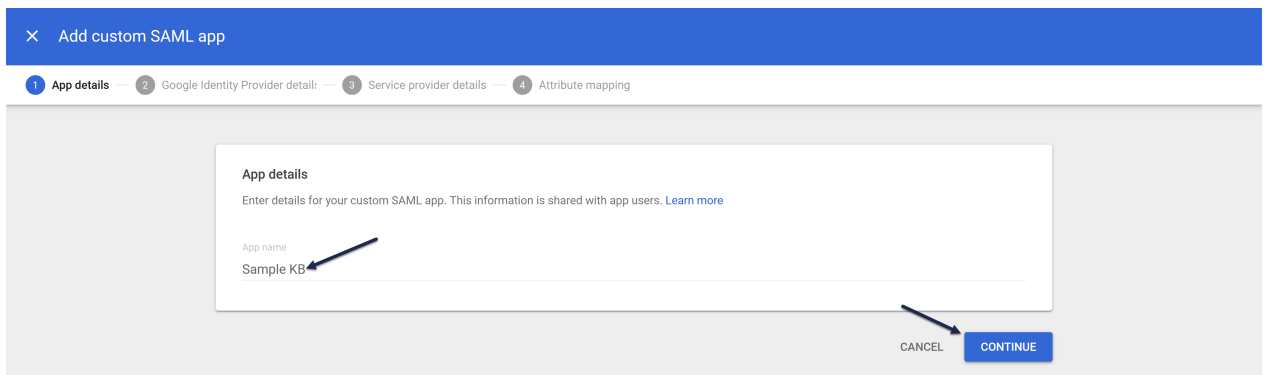
5. Then select **Continue**.

Step 2: Add Google IdP details to KnowledgeOwl and enable SAML SSO

After you complete Step 1 above, Google directs you to the **Google Identity Provider detail** page. Google offers two options for getting the IdP info KnowledgeOwl will need; we'll use **Option 2: Copy the SSO URL, entity ID, and certificate.**

For each of these steps, you'll be adding data from Google into KnowledgeOwl, in the **Security and access > Single sign-on** page on the **SAML Settings** tab, the **Identity provider metadata** section:

1. Copy the Google Apps **SSO URL** and paste it into the KnowledgeOwl **IdP login URL**.

2. Copy the Google Apps **Entity ID** and paste it into the KnowledgeOwl **idP entityID**.

3. Download the **Certificate** from Google.

4. Upload it to KnowledgeOwl by selecting the **Upload certificate** link under **IdP certificate**:

5. In KnowledgeOwl, scroll up to the **SAML settings** section.

6. Select **Enable SAML SSO reader logins**.

7. **Save** your KnowledgeOwl changes and select **Continue** in Google.

Step 3: Add your KnowledgeOwl service provider details into Google

This is for the step(s) related to **Service Provider Details** in the Google instructions.

This references fields in KnowledgeOwl in **Security and access > Single sign-on** in the **SAML Settings** tab > **Service provider metadata** section:

1. Copy the KnowledgeOwl **SP login URL** and paste it into the Google **ACS URL** field.

2. Copy the KnowledgeOwl **SP entity ID** and paste it into the Google **Entity ID** field.

3. Select EMAIL in the **Name ID Format,** ensure **Name ID** is set to **Basic Information > Primary email,** and select **Continue** in Google.

Step 4: Attribute mapping and enable Google app

In order for KnowledgeOwl to get information about your readers to properly log them in, you need to map attributes from Google to KnowledgeOwl. There are two required fields and several optional:

1. In Google, on the **Attribute mapping** page, select **Add another mapping** to map additional attributes.

2. Choose **Basic Information > Primary Email** as the **Google Directory attribute** and enter `ssoid` as the **App attribute.**

> **Don't forget your SSO ID!**
> If you don't set up SSO ID, you'll receive a warning in your **Single sign-on** pages that it's missing. Refer to Missing SSO ID mapping warning for more info.

3. Choose **Basic Information > Primary Email** as the **Google Directory attribute** and enter `username` as the **App attribute.**

Attributes

Add and select user fields in Google Directory, then map them to service provider attributes. Attributes marked with * are mandatory. Learn more

Google Directory attributes		App attributes	
Basic Information > Primary email	→	ssoid	✕
Basic Information > Primary email	→	username	✕

4. **Repeat for any of the optional attributes you'd like to use:**

   a. **First Name**

   Choose **Basic Information > First Name** as the **Google Directory attribute** and enter `first_name` as the **App attribute.**

Basic Information > First name	→	first_name	✕

   b. **Last Name**

   Choose **Basic Information > Last Name** as the **Google Directory attribute** and enter `last_name` as the **App attribute.**

Basic Information > Last name	→	last_name	✕

   c. **Picture / Icon**

   For the **Google Directory attribute,** choose the category and attribute containing the URL to the user icon (this is usually **Custom > Icon** but depends on your configuration). Enter `icon` as the **App attribute.**

Custom > Icon	→	icon	✕

   d. **Groups**

   For the **Google Directory attribute,** choose the category and attribute containing the group or groups (this is usually **Custom > Groups** but depends on your configuration). Enter `reader_roles` as the **App attribute.**

Custom > Groups	→	reader_roles	✕

   - In order for this mapping to work, KnowledgeOwl must have **Reader Groups** with names that exactly match the group names as they appear in Google.

   - To assign a reader to multiple reader groups, put a comma-separate list of groups in the attribute with no spaces after the comma.

   e. **Custom Fields 1-5**

      If you're using Custom Fields for your readers, use the **Google Directory attribute** that makes sense, and enter `custom_1` , `custom_2` , `custom_3` , `custom_4` , **or** `custom_5` for each of the custom fields in the **App attributes**, respectively.

Employee Details >
Department → custom_1 ✕

5. Select **Finish**.

6. In KnowledgeOwl, go to **Security and access > Single sign-on**.

7. Open the **SAML attribute map** tab.

8. Enter the same values here that you entered in your Google app. Enter ssoid for **SSO ID**, username for **Username / email**, first_name for **First name**, last_name for **Last name**, reader_roles for **Reader groups**, and custom_1, custom_2, etc., for the respective custom fields.

Step 5: Enable Google app

With all your mappings set up, it's time to enable your Google app. In Google:

1. In **Apps > Web apps**, select your SAML app.

2. Select **User access**.

3. Most likely, you'll want to turn the app **ON for everyone**; review Google's documentation on **enabling it for specific organizational units**.

4. In an Incognito window or tab, test logging in using the **SP Login URL** in KnowledgeOwl and your Google credentials

   a. If you've set everything up successfully, login will work. If login doesn't work properly, refer to the Troubleshooting section below.

Step 6: Optional KnowledgeOwl settings

With your SAML SSO login working, you can now review two additional options:

- To make it so that SAML SSO is the only access method for your knowledge base, go to **Security and access > Single sign-on > SAML settings tab**, select **Require all readers to log in via SAML SSO**, and **Save**. This overrides the **Content authentication** selection in **Security and access > Security settings**.
- If you'd like to use the SAML SSO as your only or primary reader authentication mechanism, go to **Security and access > Security settings**. In the **Unauthenticated access behavior** subsection, select **Redirect them to your SAML login URL** and **Save**.

Refer to SSO options for different knowledge base setups for more information.

Troubleshooting Google issues

Issue	Possible Resolution
Error app_not_configured_for_user when trying to log in	This can mean you have the wrong Entity ID in your SAML app for SSO. It should be `https://app.knowledgeowl.com/sp` – no need to replace anything.
Redirected to the KnowledgeOwl login screen after authentication	This can mean you have the wrong ACS URL in your G Suite SAML app for SSO. It should look like the URL below, with the highlighted section replace with your KnowledgeOwl subdomain: https://gsuite.knowledgeowl.com/help/saml-login. View and customize your subdomain under KB settings > Domain.
Redirected to the Google login screen after authentication	This can mean you have an incomplete ACS URL. It might be missing "/help/saml-login". It should look like the link below, with the highlighted portion replaced with your KO subdomain: https://gsuite.knowledgeowl.com/help/saml-login

Review Google's documentation for help with additional errors: https://support.google.com/a/answer/6301076?hl=en&ref_topic=7559288