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Site Tools

Utilities for searching, navigation, and monitoring site activity

Site Tools include utilities for navigating, searching and keeping up with site activity.

In particular, you have two highly configurable, automated site monitoring tools, **WebNotify**, to e-mail alerts when topics are edited, and **WebStatistics**, to generate detailed activity reports.

WebNotify - recent changes alert

Notification Help

Each Foswiki web has an automatic e-mail notification service that sends you an e-mail with links to all of the topics modified since the last alert.

Users subscribe to email notifications using their WikiName or an alternative email address, and can specify the webs/topics they wish to track, Whole groups of users can also be subscribed for notification.

The general format of a subscription is:

three spaces `*` *subscriber* [`:` *topics*]

Where *subscriber* can be a WikiName, an E-mail address, or a group name. If *subscriber* contains any characters that are not legal in an email address, then it must be enclosed in 'single' or "double" quotes.

topics is an optional space-separated list of topics:

- ... **without** a *Web.* prefix
- ...that exist in this web.

Users may further customize the specific content they will receive using the following controls:

- **Using wild-card character in topic names** - You can use `*` in a topic name, where it is treated as a wildcard character. A `*` will match zero or more other characters - so, for example, `Fred*` will match all topic names starting with `Fred`, `*Fred` will match all topic names *ending* with `Fred`, and `*` will match *all* topic names.
- **Unsubscribing to specific topics** - Each topic may optionally be preceded by a '+' or '-' sign. The '+' sign means "subscribe to this topic". The '-' sign means "unsubscribe" or "don't send notifications regarding this particular topic". This allows users to elect to filter out certain topics. Topic filters ('-') take precedence over topic includes ('+') i.e. if you unsubscribe from a topic it will cancel out any subscriptions to that topic.
- **Including child-topics in subscription** - Each topic may optionally be followed by an integer in parentheses, indicating the depth of the tree of children below that topic. Changes in all these children will be detected and reported along with changes to the topic itself. *Note* This uses the Foswiki "Topic parent" feature.

- **Subscribing to entire topic ("news mode")** - Each topic may optionally be immediately followed by an exclamation mark ! and/or a question mark ? with no intervening spaces, indicating that the topic (and children if there is a tree depth specifier as well) should be mailed out as **complete topics** instead of change summaries. ! causes the full topic to be mailed every time *even if there have been no changes*, and ? will mail the full topic only if there have been changes. One can limit the content of the subscribed topic to send out by inserting %STARTPUBLISH% and %STOPPUBLISH% markers within the topic. Note that the script mailnotify can be run with the options -nochanges or -nonews so that you can run the two mode on different schedules (see details).

Examples: Subscribe Daisy to all changes to topics in this web.

```
* daisy.cutter@flowers.com
```

Subscribe Daisy to all changes to topics that start with `Web`.

```
* daisy.cutter@flowers.com : Web*
```

Subscribe Daisy to changes to topics starting with `Petal`, and their immediate children, WeedKillers and children to a depth of 3, and all topics that match start with `Pretty` and end with `Flowers` e.g. `PrettyPinkFlowers`

```
* DaisyCutter: Petal* (1) WeedKillers (3) Pretty*Flowers
```

Subscribe StarTrekFan to changes to all topics that start with `Star` **except** those that end in `Wars`, `sInTheirEyes` or `shipTroopers`.

```
* StarTrekFan: Star* - *Wars - *sInTheirEyes - *shipTroopers
```

Subscribe Daisy to the full content of NewsLetter whenever it has changed

```
* daisy@flowers.com: NewsLetter?
```

Subscribe buttercup to NewsLetter and its immediate children, even if it hasn't changed.

```
* buttercup@flowers.com: NewsLetter! (1)
```

Subscribe GardenGroup (which includes Petunia) to all changed topics under AllnewsLetters to a depth of 3. Then unsubscribe Petunia from the ManureNewsLetter, which she would normally get as a member of GardenGroup?:

```
* GardenGroup: AllNewsLetters? (3)
* petunia@flowers.com: - ManureNewsLetter
```

Subscribe `IT:admins` (a non-Foswiki group defined by an alternate user mapping) to all changes to Web* topics.

```
* 'IT:admins' : Web*
```

A user may be listed many times in the WebNotify topic. Where a user has several lines in WebNotify that all match the same topic, they will only be notified about *changes* that topic *once* (though they will still receive individual mails for news topics).

If a *group* is listed for notification, the group will be recursively expanded to the e-mail addresses of all members.

__ Warning: Because an email address is not linked to a user name, there is no way for Foswiki to check access controls for subscribers identified by email addresses. A subscriber identified by an email address alone will only be sent change notifications if the topic they are subscribed to is readable by guest users. You can limit what email addresses can be used in %NOTIFYTOPIC%, or even block use of emails altogther, using the `{MailerContrib}{EmailFilterIn} setting in =configure`.

Tip: List names in alphabetical order to make it easier to find the names.

Note for System Administrators: Notification is supported by an add-on to the Foswiki kernel called the MailerContrib. See the MailerContrib topic for details of how to set up this service.

Note: If you prefer a news feed, point your reader to WebRss (for RSS 1.0 feeds) or WebAtom (for ATOM 1.0 feeds). Learn more at WebRssBase and WebAtomBase, respectively.

Related topics: WebChangesAlert, Main.WikiUsers, UserRegistration

WebSearch - search the site

WebSearch is a flexible search facility, part of the core feature set. WebSearchAdvanced offers more options, including:

- topic title or full-text search
- regular expressions
- query search over form data
- search within web or site-wide
- index-style A-Z alphabetical listing sorted topic title
- many more

See also: SearchHelp for help; Macros and FormattedSearch for including hard-coded searches in text.

WebChanges - what's new

To check for the most recently edited topics while on-site, use the WebChanges link, usually located in the toolbar. It lists the most recently modified topics, newest first, along with the first couple of lines of the page content.

This is simply a preset `SEARCH`. The number of topics listed by the `limit` parameter.:

```
%SEARCH{ ".*" web="System" type="regex" nosearch="on" order="modified"
reverse="on"  limit="50" }%
```

WebRss and WebAtom - news feeds on recent changes

You can point your news reader at WebRss and WebAtom to find out what is new in a web. WebRssBase and WebAtomBase have the details. Like WebChanges, this is based on a `%SEARCH{}%`.

WebIndex - list of topics

WebIndex lists all web topics in alphabetical order, with the first couple of lines of text. This is simply a preset SEARCH:

```
%SEARCH{ "\.*" scope="topic" type="regex" nosearch="on" }%
```

WebStatistics - site statistics

You can generate a listing manually, or on an automated schedule, of visits to individual pages, on a per web basis. Compiled as a running total on a monthly basis. Includes totals for Topic Views, Topic Saves, Attachment Uploads, Most Popular Topics with number of views, and Top Contributors showing total of saves and attachment uploads. Previous months are saved.

- You can create a WebStatistics link using **%STATISTICSTOPIC%**

Configuring for automatic operation

- You can automatically generate usage statistics for all webs. To enable this:
  - Make sure configure settings **{Log}{view}**, **{Log}{save}** and *{Log}{upload} in are set in configure. This will generate log file entries (see below).
  - The WebStatistics topic must be present in all webs where you want to have statistics. You can use the topic in the Main web as a template.
  - Call the `bin/statistics` script from a cron job, once a day is recommended. This will update the WebStatistics topics in all webs.
  - **Attention:** The script must run as the same user as the CGI scripts are running, which is user `nobody` on many systems. Example crontab entry:
    `0 0 * * * (cd /path/to/bin; ./statistics >/dev/null 2>&1)`
  - There is a workaround in case you can't run the script as user `nobody` : Run the utility `tools/geturl.pl` in your cron job and specify the URL of the `bin/statistics` script as a parameter. Example:
    `0 0 * * * (cd /path/to/tools; ./geturl.pl mydomain.com /urlpath/to/bin/statistics >/dev/null 2>&1)`
  - **NOTE:** `geturl.pl` will do a CGI request as the WikiGuest user, so if you use this workaround, the WebStatistics topics you are updating will have to be writable by WikiGuest.

When running from the command line or a cron job, you can pass parameters to the script like this:

```
./statistics -logdate 200605 -webs Userweb,Sandbox
```

Generating statistics manually by URL

- The `bin/statistics` script can also be executed as a CGI script, just enter the URL in your browser. Examples:

- Update current month for all webs you have access to:
  `/bin/statistics`
- Update current month for Main web only:
  `/bin/statistics/Main`
- Update Nov 2026 for Main web:
  `/bin/statistics/Main?logdate=202611`
- Update Nov 2026 for the ProjectX, ProjectY and ProjectZ webs:
  `/bin/statistics?logdate=202611;webs=ProjectX,ProjectY,ProjectZ`

Log Files

Foswiki generates monthly log files which are used by the statistics script

- The log file is defined by the **{LogFileName}** setting in configure
- The file name is `log<year><month>.txt`
- Example path name: `logs/log202611.txt`
- Each access gets logged as:
  `| <time> | <wikiusername> | <action> | <web>.<topic> | <extra info> | <IP address> |`
- Example log entry:
  `| 28 Nov 2026 - 02:00 | WikiGuest | view | WebRss |  | 66.124.232.02 |`
- Actions are logged if enabled in configure by the **{Log}{*action*}** flags
- Logged actions:

Script	Action name	Extra info
attach	`attach`	when viewing attach screen of previous uploaded attachment: `filename`
changes	`changes`	
edit	`edit`	when editing non-existing topic: `(not exist)`
rdiff	`rdiff`	higher and lower revision numbers: `4 3`
register	`regstart`	WikiUserName, e-Mail address, LoginName: `user attempts to register`
register	`register`	E-mail address: `user successfully registers`
register	`bulkregister`	WikiUserName of new, e-mail address, admin ID
manage	`rename`	when moving topic: `moved to Newweb.NewTopic`
manage	`move`	when moving attachment: `Attachment filename moved to Newweb.NewTopic`
manage	`renameweb`	when renaming a web: `oldweb moved to newweb`
save	`save`	when replacing existing revision: `repRev 3` when user checks the minor changes box: `dontNotify` when user changes attributes to an exising attachment: `filename.ext`
save	`cmd`	special admin parameter used when saving
search	`search`	search string
upload	`upload`	filename
view	`view`	when viewing non-existing topic: `(not exist)` when viewing previous topic revision: `r3`

E-mail

Configuring outgoing mail

Outgoing mail is required for UserRegistration and for recent changes alert.

Foswiki will use the **`Net::SMTP`** module if it is installed on your system. Set this with the **`SMTPMAILHOST`** preference setting.

The notify e-mail uses the default `changes.tmpl` template, or a skin if activated by a preference setting.

mailnotify also relies on two hidden files in each `data/Web` directory: `.changes` and `.mailnotify`. Make sure both are writable by your web server process. `.changes` contains a list of changes; go ahead and make this empty. `.mailnotify` contains a timestamp of the last time notification was done.

You can use an external mail program, such as **`sendmail`**, if the `Net::SMTP` module is not installed. Set the program path in **`{MailProgram}`** in configure.

! * Net::SMTP can be easily disabled (if there is an installation error) by setting the **`SMTPMAILHOST`** preference setting to an empty value.

- You can set a separate **`SMTPSENDERHOST`** preference setting to define the mail sender host (some SMTP installations require this).

Setting the automatic e-mail schedule

For Unix platforms: Edit the `cron` table so that `mailnotify` is called in an interval of your choice. Please consult `man crontab` of how to modify the table that schedules program execution at certain intervals. Example:

```
% crontab -e
0 1 * * * (cd /path/to/bin; ./mailnotify -q)
```

The above line will run mailnotify nightly at 01:00. The `-q` switch suppresses all normal output.

For ISP installations: Many ISPs don't allow hosted accounts direct cron access, as it's often used for things that can heavily load the server. Workaround scripts are available.

On Windows: You can use a scheduled task if you have administrative privileges.

Site Permissions

- AccessControl describes how to restrict read and write access to topics and webs, by users and groups
- SitePermissions lists the permissions settings of the webs on this site

Help with crontab

The crontab command is used to schedule commands to be executed periodically.

- Wikipedia.org:Crontab - crontab documentation
- pycron - crontab for Windows

Related Topics: AdminDocumentationCategory, AdminToolsCategory

Edit | Attach | Print version | History: %REVISIONS% | Backlinks | Raw View | More topic actions

Topic revision: r1 - 09 Jan 2009 - 13:00:00 - ProjectContributor

- . System

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