

phpBB 4.0 *Triton* Documentation

Edited by Dominik Dröscher and Graham Eames

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by Dominik Dröscher and Graham Eames

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Abstract

The detailed documentation for phpBB 4.0 *Triton*.

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Chapter 1. Quick Start Guide

A quick guide through the first steps of installing and configuring up your very own phpBB 3.3 forum.

1. Requirements

phpBB has a few requirements which must be met before you are able to install and use it. In this section, these requirements are explained.

- A webserver or web hosting account running on any major Operating System with support for PHP
- A SQL database system, one of:
 - MySQL 4.1.3 or above (MySQLi required)
 - MariaDB 5.1 or above
 - MS SQL Server 2000 or above (via ODBC or the native adapter)
 - Oracle
 - PostgreSQL 8.3+
 - SQLite 3.6.15+
- PHP 7.2.0+ up to and including PHP 8.3 with support for the database you intend to use.
- `getimagesize()` function enabled
- The following PHP modules are required:
 - json
 - mbstring
 - XML support
 - Corresponding PHP module for the database system you intend to use
- The following PHP modules are optional, but will provide access to additional features.
 - zlib Compression support

- Remote FTP support
- GD support

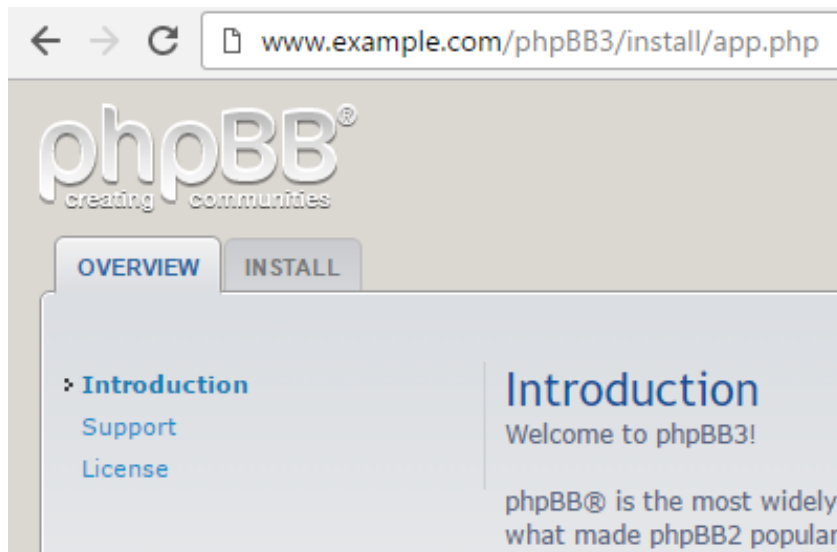
The presence of each of these required features will be checked during the installation process, explained in [Section 2, “Installation”](#).

2. Installation

phpBB has an easy to use installation system that will guide you through the installation process.

After you have decompressed the phpBB3 archive and uploaded the files to the location where you want it to be installed, you need to enter the URL into your browser to open the installation screen. The first time you point your browser to the URL (<http://www.example.com/phpBB3> for instance), phpBB will detect that it is not yet installed and automatically redirect you to the installation screen.

Figure 1.1. Introduction



The introduction page of the installation system.

Important

Make sure the `.htaccess` file in the root level of the phpBB3 folder is included in the upload.

2.1. Introduction

The installation screen gives you a short introduction into phpBB. It allows you to read the license phpBB 3.3 is released under (the [General Public License](#)) and provides information about how you can receive support. To start the installation, click the Install tab (see [Figure 1.1, “Introduction”](#)).

2.2. Requirements

Important

Please read the [section on phpBB3's requirements](#) to find out more about the phpBB 3.3's minimum requirements.

The requirements list is the first page you will see after starting the installation if you are missing any necessary PHP extensions or have a server setting misconfigured. phpBB 3.3 automatically checks if everything that it needs to run properly is installed on your server. In order to continue the installation, you will need to have PHP installed (the minimum version number is shown on the requirements page), and at least one database available to continue the installation. It is also important that all shown folders are available and have the correct permissions set. Please see the description of each section to find out if they are optional or required for phpBB 3.3 to run. If everything is in order, you can continue the installation by clicking the Start Install button.

2.3. Administrator details

Now you have to create your administration user. This user will have full administration access and he will be the first user on your forum.

2.4. Database settings

You now have to decide which database to use. See the [Requirements section](#) for information on which databases are supported. If you do not know your database settings, please contact your hosting company and ask for them. You will not be able to continue without them. You need:

- The Database Type - the database you will be using (e.g. MySQL, SQL server, Oracle)
- The Database server hostname or DSN - the address of the database server.
- The Database server port - the port of the database server (most of the time this is not needed).
- The Database name- the name of the database on the server.

- The Database username and Database password - the login data to access the database.

Tip

PostgreSQL Users: Use localhost to connect to the local server via UNIX domain socket and 127.0.0.1 to connect via TCP.

SQLite Users: Enter the full path (absolute) to your database file in the DSN field and leave the username and password fields blank. For security reasons, you should make sure that the database file is not stored in a location accessible from the web.

Figure 1.2. Database settings

Database Configuration

Database type:	MySQL with MySQLi Extension
Database server hostname or DSN: DSN stands for Data Source Name and is relevant only for ODBC installs.	localhost
Database server port: Leave this blank unless you know the server operates on a non-standard port.	
Database name:	joesforum
Database username:	joebloggs
Database password:	*****
Prefix for tables in database:	phpbb_

Proceed to next step

The database settings screen, please make sure to have all the required data available

You don't need to change the Prefix for tables in database setting, unless you plan on using multiple phpBB installations on one database. In this case you can use a different prefix for each installation to make it work.

After you have entered your details, you can continue by clicking the Submit button. Now, phpBB 3.3 will test and verify the data you entered.

If you see a "Could not connect to the database" error, this means that you didn't enter the database information correctly and it is not possible for phpBB to connect. Make sure that everything you entered is in order and try again. Again, if you are unsure about your database settings, please contact your host.

Tip

Remember that your database username and password are case sensitive. You must use the exact one you have set up or been given by your host

If you installed another version of phpBB before on the same database with the same prefix, phpBB will inform you and you just need to enter a different database prefix.

2.5. Configuration file

In this step, phpBB will automatically try to write the configuration file. The forum needs the configuration to run properly. It contains all of the database settings, so without it, phpBB will not be able to access the database.

Usually, automatically writing the configuration file works fine. But in some cases it can fail due to wrong file permissions, for instance. In this case, you need to upload the file manually. phpBB asks you to download the config.php file and tells you what to do with it. Please read the instructions carefully. After you have uploaded the file, click Done to get to the last step. If Done returns you to the same page as before, and does not return a success message, you did not upload the file correctly.

2.6. Advanced settings

The next several sections allow you to set some more advanced parameters of the board configuration. They are optional, and you can always change them later if you wish. So if you are unsure of what these settings mean, ignore them and proceed to the final step to finish the installation.

2.7. Final Steps

At the end of the installation, you can set the default language of your board, a title for your board, and a short description of it. In a vanilla (basic) phpBB 3.3 installation we only include English [GB]. You can download further languages from www.phpbb.com, and add them later.

After clicking Submit, a progress bar will appear and will be updated with the status of the board installation. Please be patient as this may take a few moments.

If the installation was successful, you can now use the ACP link to visit the Administration Control Panel. Congratulations, you have installed phpBB 3.3 successfully. But there is still a lot of work ahead!

If you are unable to get phpBB 3.3 installed even after reading this guide, please look at the [support section](#) to find out where you can ask for further assistance.

At this point if you are upgrading from phpBB 2.0 or phpBB 3.0, you should refer to the [upgrade guide](#) for further information. If not, you should remove the install directory from your server as you will only be able to access the Administration Control Panel whilst it is present.

2.8. Supporting the phpBB organization

When visiting the ACP for the first time after installing phpBB, a screen will be presented which provides ways for you to assist the phpBB organization.

- **Send Statistics** - Sends us information about your server, such as PHP version, selected database type, some PHP settings, etc... All sensitive information has been removed. Clicking the Show details link shows exactly what information will be sent. This information helps up make design decisions for future versions of phpBB.
- **VigLink** - This option adds referral codes to certain links which are posted on your board by your users. When certain actions are taken on these links (such as purchasing an item from a posted Amazon link), VigLink receives a commission, of which a share is donated to the phpBB project. These funds will be used to further the development of phpBB. You can also choose to use your own VigLink account by clicking Convert account under VigLink settings in the Board Configuration section of the Administration Control Panel.

Both of these actions are optional and will **not** be enabled without your explicit consent. Clicking away from this page without pressing Submit will deactivate the options. If you wish to enable or disable these options at a later time, this can be done through the Help support phpBB page of the Administration Control Panel under Server Configuration.

3. General settings

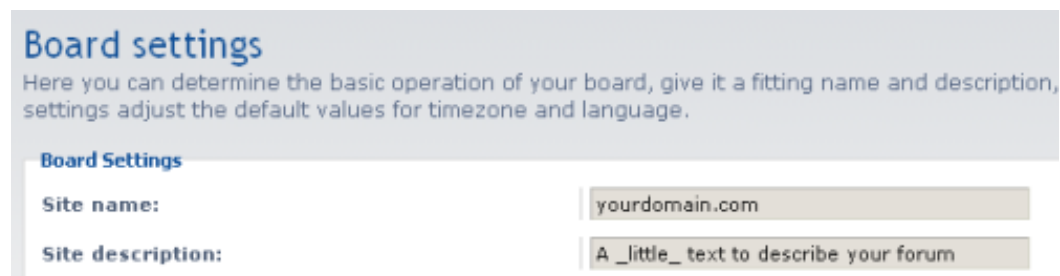
In this section you will learn how to change some of the basic settings of your new board.

Right after the installation you will be redirected to the so called "Administration Control Panel" (ACP). You can also access this panel by clicking the [Administration Control Panel] link at the bottom of your forum. In this interface you can change everything about your board.

3.1. Board Settings

The first section of the ACP you will probably want to visit right after the installation is "Board Settings". Here you can first of all change the name (Site name) and description (Site description) of your board.

Figure 1.3. Board Settings



Board settings
Here you can determine the basic operation of your board, give it a fitting name and description, settings adjust the default values for timezone and language.

Board Settings

Site name:

Site description:

Here you can edit the Site name and Site description of your board.

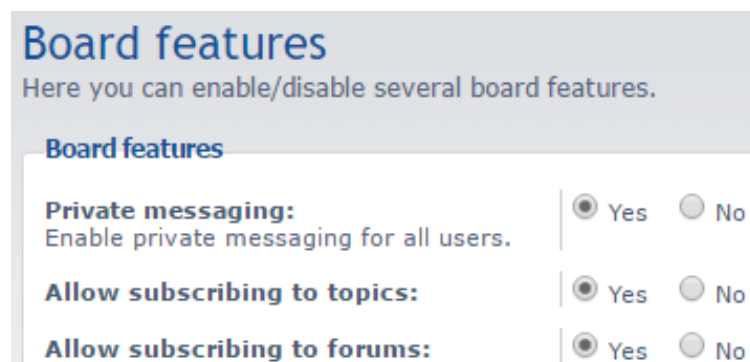
This form also holds the options for changing things like the main site URL as well as the date format used to render dates/times (Date format).

There you can also select a new style (after having installed it) for your board and enforce it on all members ignoring whatever style they've selected in their "User Control Panel". The style will also be used for all forums where you haven't specified a different one. For details on where to get new styles and how to install them, please visit the [styles home page](#) at phpbb.com.

If you want to use your board for a non-English community, this form also lets you change the default language (Default Language) (which can be overridden by each user in their UCPs). By default, phpBB3 only ships with the English language pack. So, before using this field, you will have to download the language pack for the language you want to use and install it. For details, please read [Language packs](#) .

3.2. Board Features

If you want to enable or disable some of the basic features of your board, this is the place to go. Here you can allow and disallow for example username changes (Allow Username changes) or the creation of attachments (Allow Attachments). You can even disable BBCode altogether (Allow BBCode).

Figure 1.4. Board Features

Board features
Here you can enable/disable several board features.

Board features

Private messaging: Enable private messaging for all users.	☒ Yes ☐ No
Allow subscribing to topics:	☒ Yes ☐ No
Allow subscribing to forums:	☒ Yes ☐ No

Enabling and disabling basic features with just 2 clicks

If disabling BBCode completely is a bit too harsh for your taste, but you don't want your users to abuse the signature field for tons of images? Simply set Allow use of IMG BBCode Tag in user signatures to "No". If you want to be a little bit more specific on what you want to allow and disallow in users' signatures, have a look at the "Signature Settings" form.

The "Board Features" form offers you a great way to control the features in an all-or-nothing way. If you want to get into the details on each feature, there is for everything also a separated form which let's you specify everything from the maximum number of characters allowed in a post (Max characters per post in "Post Settings") to how large a user's avatar can be (Maximum Avatar Dimensions in "Avatar Settings").

Important

If you disable features, these will also be unavailable to users who would normally have them according to their respective permissions. For details on the permissions system, please read [Section 5, "Setting permissions"](#) or the [in-depth guide in the Administrator Guide](#).

4. Creating and setting up forums

Forums are the sections where topics are stored. Without forums, your users would have nowhere to post! Creating forums is very easy.

Firstly, make sure you are logged in. Find the [Administration Control Panel] link at the bottom of the page, and click it. You should be in the Administration Index. You can administer your board here.

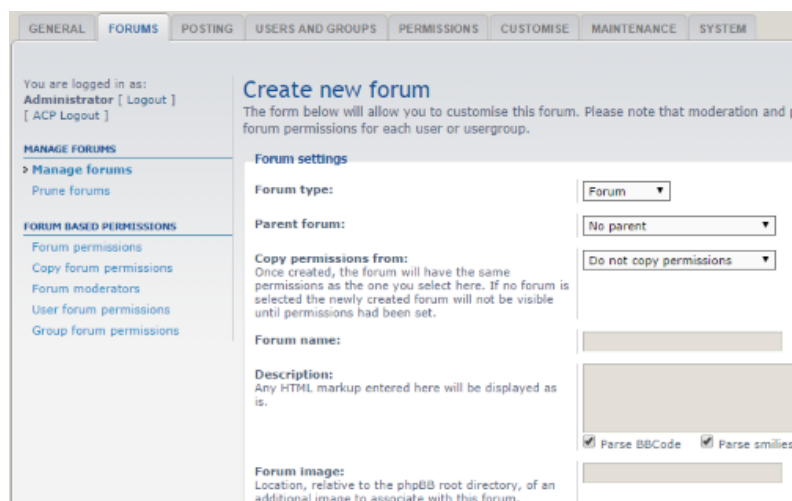
There are tabs at the top for the Administration Control Panel that will guide you to each category. You must get to the Forum Administration section to create a forum, so click the Forums tab.

The Forum Administration Index is where you can manage forums on your site. Along with being able to create forums, you are also able to create subforums. Subforums are forums that are located in a parent forum in a hierarchy. For more information about subforums, see the [administration guide on subforums](#).

Find the Create new forum button on the right side of the page. Type in the name of the forum you wish in the textbox located directly to the left of this button. For example, if the forum name was to be Test, in the text box put Test. Once you are done, click the Create new forum button create the forum.

You should see a page headed with the text "Create new forum :: Test". You can change options for your forum; for example you can set what forum image the forum can use, if it's a category, or what forum rules text will belong to the forum. You should type up a brief description for the forum as users will be able to figure out what the forum is for.

Figure 1.5. Creating a new forum

The screenshot shows the 'Create new forum' page in a forum administration interface. At the top, there are tabs for GENERAL, FORUMS (selected), POSTING, USERS AND GROUPS, PERMISSIONS, CUSTOMISE, MAINTENANCE, and SYSTEM. On the left, a sidebar shows the user is logged in as 'Administrator' and lists navigation options like 'MANAGE FORUMS' and 'FORUM BASED PERMISSIONS'. The main content area is titled 'Create new forum' and includes a sub-header 'Forum settings'. It contains several form fields: 'Forum type' (a dropdown menu set to 'Forum'), 'Parent forum' (a dropdown menu set to 'No parent'), 'Copy permissions from' (a dropdown menu set to 'Do not copy permissions'), 'Forum name' (a text input field), 'Description' (a larger text area with a note about HTML markup), and 'Forum image' (a text input field with a note about the image location). There are also two checkboxes, 'Parse BBCode' and 'Parse smilies', both of which are checked.

Here you can choose the name and the description of your a new forum.

The default settings are usually good enough to get your new forum up and running; however, you may change them to suit your needs. But there are three key forum settings that you should pay attention to. The Parent Forum setting allows you to choose which forum your new forum will belong to. Be careful to what level you want your forum to be in. (The Parent Forum setting is important when creating subforums. For more information on subforums, continue reading to the section on creating subforums) The "Copy Permissions" setting allows you to copy the permissions from an existing forum to your new forum. Use this if you want to keep permissions constant. The forum style setting allows you to set which style your new forum will display. Your new forum can show a different style to another. For more information on each forum setting, see the [Section 3, "Forum Admin"](#)

Once you're done configuring the settings of your new forum, scroll to the bottom of the page and click the Submit button to create your forum and its settings. If your new forum was created successfully, the screen will show you a success message.

If you wish to set permissions for the forum (or if you do not click on anything), you will see the forum permissions screen. If you do not want to (and want to use the default permissions for your new forum), click on the Back to previous page link. Otherwise, continue and set each setting to what you wish. Once you are done, click the Apply all Permissions button at the bottom of the page. You will see the successful forum permissions updated screen if it worked.

Important

If you do not set any permissions on this forum it will not be accessible to anyone (including yourself).

You have successfully updated your forum permissions and set up your new forum. To create more forums, follow this general procedure again.

For more information on setting permissions, see [Section 5, “Setting permissions”](#)

5. Setting permissions

After you created your first forum, you have to decide who has access to it and what your users are allowed to do and what not. This is what Permissions are for. You can disallow guests to post or hand out moderating powers, for instance. Almost every aspect of user interaction with phpBB can be adjusted with permissions.

5.1. Permission types

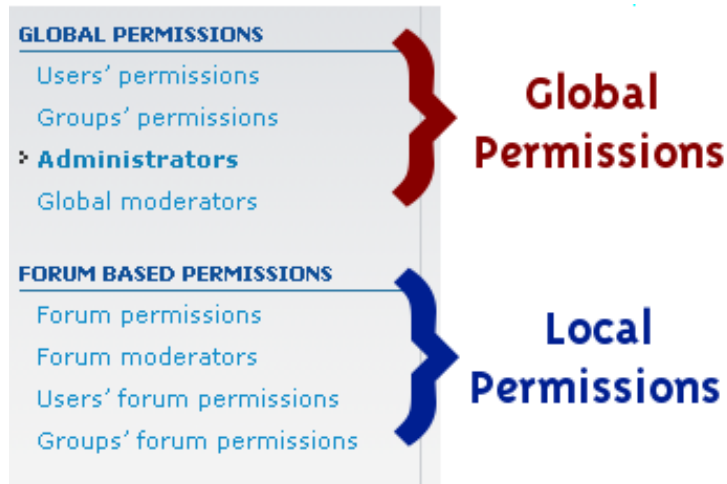
There are four different types of permissions:

1. User/Group permissions (global) - e.g. disallow changing avatar
2. Administrator permissions (global) - e.g. allow to manage forums
3. Moderator permissions (global or local) - e.g. allow to lock topics or ban users (only global)
4. Forum permissions (local) - e.g. allow to see a forum or post topics

Each permission type consists of a different set of permissions and can apply either locally or globally. A global permission type is set for your whole bulletin board. If you

disallow one of your users to send Private Messages, for instance, you have to do this with the global user permission. Administrator permission are also global.

Figure 1.6. Global and local permissions



Global and local permissions

On the other hand local permissions do only apply to specific forums. So if you disallow someone to post in one forum, for instance, it will not impact the rest of the board. The user will still be able to post in any other forum he has the local permission to post.

You can appoint moderators either globally or locally. If you trust some of your users enough, you can make them Global Moderators. They can moderate all forums they have access to with the permissions you assign to them. Compared to that, local moderators will only be able to moderate the number of forums you select for them. They can also have different moderator permissions for different forums. While they are able to delete topics in one forum, they may not be allowed to do it in another. Global moderators will have the same permissions for all forums.

5.2. Setting forum permissions

To set the permissions for your new forum we need the local Forum Based Permissions. First you have to decide how you want to set the permissions. If you want to set them for a single group or user, you should use the Group or User Forum Permissions. They will allow you to select one group or user, and then select the forums you want to set the permissions for.

But for this Quick Start Guide we will concentrate on the Forum Permissions. Instead of selecting a user or group, you select the forums you want to change first. You can select them either by selecting the forums manually in the top list, or by single forum and single forum plus subforums respectively in the lower pull down menus. Submit will bring you to the next page.

Figure 1.7. Select Groups

The screenshot displays a web interface for managing forum permissions, divided into two main columns: 'Users' and 'Groups'.

- Users Column:**
 - Manage Users:** A list box (currently empty) with a 'Select all users' checkbox below it.
 - Add Users:** A text area with the instruction 'Place each username on a separate line'. Below it is a 'Select anonymous user' checkbox and a '[Find a member]' link.
- Groups Column:**
 - Manage Groups:** A list box containing 'Administrators' with a 'Select all groups' checkbox below it.
 - Add Groups:** A list box containing 'Bots', 'Global moderators', 'Guests', and 'Registered users'.

At the bottom of each column are buttons for 'Remove permissions' and 'Edit permissions'. A single 'Add permissions' button is centered at the bottom of the entire interface.

Select Groups or Users to set Forum Permissions

The Forum Permissions page shows you two columns, one for users and one for groups to select (see [Figure 1.7, “Select Groups”](#)). The top lists on both columns labelled as Manage Users and Manage Groups show users and groups that already have permissions on at least one of your selected forums set. You can select them and change their permissions with the Edit Permissions button, or use Remove Permissions to remove them which leads to them not having permissions set, and therefore not being able to see the forum or have any access to it (unless they have access to it through another group). The bottom boxes allow you to add new users or groups, that do not currently have permissions set on at least one of your selected forums.

To add permissions for groups, select one or more groups either in the Add Groups list (this works similar with users, but if you want to add new users, you have to type them in manually in the Add Users text box or use the Find a member function). Add Permissions will take you to the permission interface. Each forum you selected is listed, with the groups or users to change the permissions for below them.

There are two ways to assign permissions: You can set them manually or use predefined Permission Roles for a simpler but less powerful way. You can switch between both approaches any time you want. You can skip the manual permission introduction and [jump directly into the section on "Permissions Roles"](#), if you are eager to get everything running as quickly as possible. But remember that permission roles do only offer a small bit of what the permission system has to offer and we believe that to be a good phpBB administrator, you have to fully grasp permissions.

Both ways only differ in the way you set them. They both share the same interface.

5.3. Manual permissions

This is the most important aspect of permissions. You need to understand this to properly work with them. There are three different values that a permission can take:

- YES will allow a permission setting *unless* it is overwritten by a NEVER.
- NO will be disallow a permission setting *unless* it is overwritten by a YES.
- NEVER will completely disallow a permission setting for a user. It *cannot* be overwritten by a YES.

The three values are important as it is possible for a user to have more than one set of permissions for the same setting through multiple groups. If the user is a member of the default "Registered Users" group and a custom group called "Senior Users" you created for your most dedicated members, both could have different permissions for seeing a forum. In this example you want to make a forum called "Good old times" only available to the "Senior Users" group, but don't want all "Registered Users" to see it. You will of course set the Can see forum permission to Yes for "Senior Users". But *do not* set the permission to Never for "Registered Users". If you do this, "Senior Members" will not see the forum as the Never overrides any Yes they have. Leave the setting at No instead. No is a weak Never that a Yes can override.

Figure 1.8. Manual permissions

Setting	Yes	No	Never
Can attach files	☒	☐	☐
Can disable word censors	☐	☒	☐
Can download files	☒	☐	☐
Can save drafts	☐	☒	☐
Can use signature	☒	☐	☐

The permissions and role defined for this item will only be applied to this item and all checked items.

Apply permissions

Setting permissions manually

5.4. Permissions roles

phpBB ships with a number of default permission roles, that offer you a wide variety of options for setting permissions. Instead of having to check each radio button manually, you can select a predefined role in the Rolepull down list. Each role has a detailed description, that will pop up when you hover your mouse over it. Submit your changes with Apply Permissions or Apply All Permissions when you are satisfied with them. That will set the permissions and you are done.

Figure 1.9. Permission roles

User roles
Here you are able to manage the roles for user permissions. Roles are effective permissions, if you change a role the items having this role assigned will change it's permissions too.

ROLE NAME	OPTIONS
Standard Features Can access most but not all user features. Cannot change user name or ignore the flood limit, for instance.	View assigned items
Limited Features Can access some of the user features. Attachments, e-mails, or instant messages are not allowed.	View assigned items
All Features Can use all available forum features for users, including changing the user name or ignoring the flood limit. Not recommended.	View assigned items
No Private Messages Has a limited feature set, and is not allowed to use Private Messages.	View assigned items
No Avatar Has a limited feature set and is not allowed to use the Avatar feature.	View assigned items

Create role: Use settings from:

Setting permissions with roles

But permission roles are not only a quick and easy way to set permissions, they are also a powerful tool for experienced board administrators to manage permissions on bigger boards. You can create your own roles and edit existing ones. Roles are dynamic, so when you edit a role, all groups and users that have the role assigned will automatically be updated.

5.5. Assign moderators to forums

A quite common use case for permissions and roles are forum moderation. phpBB3 makes assigning users as moderators of forums really simple.

As you might have already guessed, moderation of specific forums is a local setting, so you can find Forum Moderators in the section for Forum Based Permissions. First of all, you will have to select the forum (or forums) you want to assign new moderators to. This form is divided into two sections. In the first one, you can select multiple forums (select multiple by holding down the CTRL button on your keyboard, or cmd (under MacOS X)), where the moderator settings you will set in the following form will only apply to these exact forums. The second area allows you to select only one forum but your changes will apply not only to this forum but also all its subforums.

After selecting the forums and clicking Submit, you will be greeted by a form you should already be familiar with from one of the previous sections in this guide: [Figure 1.7, “Select Groups”](#). Here you can select the users or groups that should receive some kind of moderation ability over the selected forums. So go ahead: Select some users and/or groups and press the Set Permissions button.

In the next form you can choose, what moderator permissions the selected users/groups should receive. First of all, there are some predefined roles from which you can select:

Standard Moderator	A Standard Moderator can approve or disapprove, edit and delete posts, delete or close reports, but not necessarily change the owner of a post. This kind of moderator can also issue warnings and view details of a post.
Simple Moderator	A Simple Moderator can edit posts and close and delete reports and can also view post details.
Queue Moderator	As a Queue Moderator, you can only approve or disapprove posts that landed in the moderator queue and edit posts.
Full Moderator	Full Moderators can do everything moderation-related; they can even ban users.

Figure 1.10. The Forum Moderator's Permissions

Global Moderator permissions

Global moderators

Role: Full Moderator [Advanced Permissions](#)

☒ Post actions

Setting	Yes	No	Never
Can approve posts	☒	☐	☐
Can change post author	☒	☐	☐
Can delete posts	☒	☐	☐
Can edit posts	☒	☐	☐
Can close and delete reports	☒	☐	☐

The permissions and role defined for this item will only be applied to this item and all checked items.

Apply permissions

Set the moderator's permissions

When you're done simply hit Apply all Permissions. All the permissions mentioned here can also be selected from the right side of the form to give you more granular options.

5.6. Setting global permissions

Local Permissions are too local for you? Well, then phpBB3 has something to offer for you, too: Global Permissions:

1. Users Permissions
2. Groups Permissions
3. Administrators

4. Global Moderators

In "User Permissions" and "Group Permissions" you can allow and disallow features like attachments, signatures and avatars for specific users and user groups. Note that some of these settings only matter if the respective feature is enabled in the "Board Features" (see [Section 3.2, "Board Features"](#) for details).

Under "Administrators" you can give users or groups administrator privileges like the ability to manage forums or change user permissions. For details on these settings please read the [Section 7, "Permissions"](#).

The "Global Moderators" form offers you the same settings as the forum specific form (described in [Section 5.5, "Assign moderators to forums"](#)) but applies to all forums on your board.

6. Obtaining support

The [phpBB Team](#) provides many options for users to find support for their phpBB install. In addition to this very documentation, the [support forum on www.phpbb.com](#) has many answers that users like you are searching for. Therefore, we highly recommend the use of the search feature before asking a new question. If you are unable to find an answer, feel free to post a new topic asking for help. Be sure to be descriptive when explaining your problem! The more we know about what is happening, the faster we can provide you with the answer you are looking for. Be sure to fill out the [Support Request Template](#) with the information it asks for and provide it in your post.

In addition to the support forum on [www.phpbb.com](#), we provide a [Knowledge Base](#) for users to read and submit articles on common answers to questions. Our community has taken a lot of time in writing these articles, so be sure to check them out.

We provide realtime support in [#phpBB](#) on the popular Open Source IRC network, [Freenode](#). You can typically find someone from each of the teams in here, as well as fellow users who are more than happy to help you out. Be sure to read the [IRC rules](#) before joining the channel, as we have a few basic netiquette rules that we ask users to follow. At any given time, there can be as many as 60 users, if not more in the channel, so you are almost certain to find someone there to help you. However, it is important that you read and follow the IRC rules as people may not answer you. An example of this is that oftentimes users come in to the channel and ask if anybody is around and then end up leaving 30 seconds later before someone has the chance to answer. Instead, be sure to ask your question and wait. As the saying goes, "don't ask to ask, just ask!"

English is not your native language? Not a problem! We also provide an [International Support page](#) with links to various websites that provide support in Espanol, Deutsch, Francais, and more.

Chapter 2. Upgrade Guide

Do you want to upgrade your phpBB2 forum to version 3.3? This chapter will tell and show you how it is done.

1. Upgrading from 2.0 to 3.3

In order to allow administrators of phpBB2 boards to use phpBB3 and all of its features. There is a convertor packed with the default installation. The conversion framework is flexible and allows you to convert other bulletin board systems as well. Read more if you need help with converting your board to phpBB3

The process is in the form of a PHP file, similar to the update file found in phpBB 2.0.x. The file will take you through wizard-like screens until your phpBB is running 3.3.x. Basic instructions and troubleshooting for doing this conversion are [here](#).

Warning: Be sure to backup both the database and the files before attempting to upgrade.

2. Upgrading from 3.0 to 4.0

Warning

Upgrading to phpBB 4.0 will render previously installed MODifications and styles unusable. If you have a custom logo, it will need to be redone after the upgrade. See [Knowledge Base: How to Change your Board Logo](#).

phpBB 4.0 is not compatible with 3.0 and most of the previous files will need to be removed prior to upgrading.

To upgrade, perform the following steps:

1. Ensure that your server meets the requirements for running phpBB 4.0: [Section 1, "Requirements"](#)
2. **Make a backup of the original files**
3. **Make a backup of the database**
4. Deactivate all styles except for prosilver
5. Remove all MOD-related changes from the database. The [Support Toolkit's](#) Database Cleaner can be used for this.

6. Set British English as the only language pack
7. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Full Package](#) archive
8. Extract the contents of the archive to your computer and open the phpBB3 directory
9. Delete the following files from the package:
 - The config.php file
 - The files/ directory
 - The images/ directory
 - The store/ directory
10. On your website, delete all files from your board **EXCEPT** for:
 - The config.php file
 - The files/ directory
 - The images/ directory
 - The store/ directory
11. Upload the contents of the phpBB3 directory from your computer to your forum's directory. You may be prompted to overwrite the remaining *files*. If prompted to merge or overwrite *directories*, choose to merge them.
12. Update the database:

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- a. Using your web browser, visit install/ in your board's root. (e.g. <http://www.example.com/yourforum/install>)
- b. Click the Update tab
- c. Click the Update button
- d. Select "Update database only" and click Submit

- e. Wait for the progress bar to reach 100% and for a message indicating that the update has completed

13.Delete the install/ directory

Note

Ensure that the root level *.htaccess* file is included in the upload. Some FTP clients do not show files whose names start with a period and you may need to enable the display of hidden files.

Note

If your board made use of language packs other than British English, you will need to download a version that is compatible with phpBB 3.3 from <https://www.phpbb.com/languages/>

Important

When uploading the 3.3 files to your server, do **NOT** overwrite your config.php.

Important

When backing up your files, ensure that your FTP client is in binary mode or transfers files without extensions in binary mode.

For more information, see: [Knowledge Base: Transferring attachment files with Filezilla](#)

3. Upgrading from 3.1 to 3.3

Warning

Upgrading to phpBB 3.3 may cause some extensions to no longer work. All styles will need to be updated, even if they give the appearance of working.

If you have a custom logo, it will need to be redone after the upgrade. See [Knowledge Base: How to Change your Board Logo](#).

phpBB 3.3 is not completely backwards compatible with 3.1 and custom edits may no longer work. The easiest upgrade method is to remove all existing files prior to upgrading and re-applying custom changes after verifying their correctness.

To upgrade, perform the following steps:

1. Ensure that your server meets the requirements for running phpBB 3.3: [Section 1, “Requirements”](#)
2. **Make a backup of the original files**
3. **Make a backup of the database**
4. Deactivate all styles except for prosilver
5. Deactivate any extensions which are not compatible with phpBB 3.3. Check with the extension author to find out if an extension is compatible or not.
6. Set British English as the only language pack
7. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Full Package](#) archive
8. Extract the contents of the archive to your computer and open the phpBB3 directory
9. Delete the following files from the package:
 - The config.php file
 - The images/ directory
 - The files/ directory
 - The store/ directory
10. On your website, delete all files from your board **EXCEPT** for:
 - The config.php file
 - The ext/ directory
 - The images/ directory
 - The files/ directory

- The store/ directory

11.Upload the contents of the phpBB3 directory from your computer to your forum's directory. You may be prompted to overwrite the remaining *files*. If prompted to merge or overwrite *directories*, choose to merge them.

12.Update the database:

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- a. Using your web browser, visit install/ in your board's root. (e.g. <http://www.example.com/yourforum/install>)
- b. Click the Update tab
- c. Click the Update button
- d. Select "Update database only" and click Submit
- e. Wait for the progress bar to reach 100% and for a message indicating that the update has completed

13.Delete the install/ directory

Note

Ensure that the root level *.htaccess* file is included in the upload. Some FTP clients do not show files whose names start with a period and you may need to enable the display of hidden files.

Note

If your board made use of language packs other than British English, you will need to download a version that is compatible with phpBB 3.3 from <https://www.phpbb.com/languages/>

Important

When uploading the 3.3 files to your server, do **NOT** overwrite your config.php.

Important

When backing up your files, ensure that your FTP client is in binary mode or transfers files without extensions in binary mode.

For more information, see: [Knowledge Base: Transferring attachment files with Filezilla](#)

4. Upgrading from 3.2 to 3.3

Warning

Upgrading to phpBB 3.3 may cause some styles and extensions to no longer work. If you have a custom logo, it might need to be redone after the upgrade. See [Knowledge Base: How to Change your Board Logo](#).

phpBB 3.3 should be backwards compatible with 3.2, however some extensions and custom edits may no longer work. The easiest upgrade method is to remove all existing files prior to upgrading and re-applying custom changes after verifying their correctness.

To upgrade, perform the following steps:

1. Ensure that your server meets the requirements for running phpBB 3.3: [Section 1, “Requirements”](#)
2. **Make a backup of the original files**
3. **Make a backup of the database**
4. Deactivate all styles except for prosilver
5. Deactivate any extensions which are not compatible with phpBB 3.3. Check with the extension author to find out if an extension is compatible or not.
6. Set British English as the only language pack

7. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Full Package](#) archive
8. Extract the contents of the archive to your computer and open the phpBB3 directory
9. Delete the following files from the package:
 - The config.php file
 - The files/ directory
 - The images/ directory
 - The store/ directory
10. On your website, delete all files from your board **EXCEPT** for:
 - The config.php file
 - The ext/ directory
 - The files/ directory
 - The images/ directory
 - The store/ directory
11. Upload the contents of the phpBB3 directory from your computer to your forum's directory. You may be prompted to overwrite the remaining *files*. If prompted to merge or overwrite *directories*, choose to merge them.
12. Update the database:

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- a. Using your web browser, visit install/ in your board's root. (e.g. <http://www.example.com/yourforum/install>)
- b. Click the Update tab
- c. Click the Update button
- d. Select "Update database only" and click Submit

- e. Wait for the progress bar to reach 100% and for a message indicating that the update has completed

13.Delete the install/ directory

Note

Ensure that the root level `.htaccess` file is included in the upload. Some FTP clients do not show files whose names start with a period and you may need to enable the display of hidden files.

Note

If your board made use of language packs other than British English, you will need to download a version that is compatible with phpBB 3.3 from <https://www.phpbb.com/languages/>

Important

When uploading the 3.3 files to your server, do **NOT** overwrite your `config.php`.

Important

When backing up your files, ensure that your FTP client is in binary mode or transfers files without extensions in binary mode.

For more information, see: [Knowledge Base: Transferring attachment files with Filezilla](#)

5. Minor Updates Within 3.3.x

Note

phpBB aims to be backwards compatible within minor releases, but if you are using extensions, language packs, or custom styles, you should check them for updates prior to updating phpBB.

There are several update paths available depending on the types of edits you have made to your board:

1. [Section 5.1, “Full Package”](#)

If you have made no modifications to core files, this is the easiest approach.

2. [Section 5.2, “Changed Files”](#)

If you wish to only update the files that have changed between two releases, use this approach.

3. [Section 5.3, “Advanced Update \(Expert users\)”](#)

If you have made modifications to core files and do not want to manually re-apply them, use this approach.

4. [Section 5.4, “Patch Files”](#)

For those comfortable using the **patch** utility, patch files are available.

5.1. Full Package

This update method will remove most existing files and then put the new ones in place.

1. **Make a backup of the original files**

2. **Make a backup of the database**

3. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Full Package](#) archive

4. Extract the contents of the archive to your computer and open the phpBB3 directory

5. Delete the following files from the package:

- The `config.php` file
- The `files/` directory
- The `images/` directory
- The `store/` directory

6. On your website, delete all files from your board **EXCEPT** for:

- The `config.php` file
- The `ext/` directory

- The `files/` directory
 - The `images/` directory
 - The `store/` directory
 - The `styles/` directory
7. Upload the contents of the `phpBB3` directory from your computer to your forum's directory. You may be prompted to overwrite the remaining *files*. If prompted to merge or overwrite *directories*, choose to merge them.

The `docs/` folder is for your personal use and it is not necessary to upload it to your forum.

8. Update the database:

Important

If you have previously attempted to update using a different method, you will need to remove the following files from the server before updating the database:

- `store/install_config.php`
- `store/io_lock.lock`

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- a. Using your web browser, visit `/install/app.php/update` in your board's root (e.g. `http://www.example.com/yourforum/install/app.php/update`). You will see the following warning message: **No valid update directory was found, please make sure you uploaded the relevant files.** This is expected and not an error.
- b. Select "Update database only" and click Submit
- c. Wait for the progress bar to reach 100% and for a message indicating that the update has completed

Depending on your previous version this will make a number of database changes. You may receive FAILURES during this procedure. They should not be a cause for concern unless you see an actual ERROR, in which case the script will stop (in this case you should seek help via our forums).

9. Delete the `install/` directory on the server

Note

Ensure that the root level `.htaccess` file is included in the upload. Some FTP clients do not show files whose names start with a period and you may need to enable the display of hidden files.

Important

When backing up your files via FTP, ensure that the client is in binary mode. If using Filezilla, ensure that the "transfer files without extensions" setting is set to "binary mode".

For more information, see: [Knowledge Base: Transferring attachment files with Filezilla](#)

5.2. Changed Files

This method is meant for those wanting to only replace the files that were changed between a previous version and the latest version.

This package contains a number of sub-archives, each contains the files changed from a given release to the latest version. You should select the appropriate archive for your current version, e.g. if you currently have 3.3.0 and are updating to 3.3.1, you should select the `phpBB-3.3.0_to_3.3.1.zip/tar.bz2` sub-archive.

1. **Make a backup of the original files**
2. **Make a backup of the database**
3. Locally, perform for the following steps:
 - a. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Changed Files](#) archive
 - b. Extract the `install/` directory
 - c. Extract the `vendor/` directory

- d. Extract the contents of the desired sub-archive for your version
4. On your web server, delete the `vendor/` directory
5. Upload the `install/` directory
6. Upload the `vendor/` directory
7. Upload the contents of the selected sub-archive
8. Update the database:

Important

If you have previously attempted to update using a different method, you will need to remove the following files from the server before updating the database:

- `store/install_config.php`
- `store/io_lock.lock`

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- a. Using your web browser, visit `/install/app.php/update` in your board's root (e.g. `http://www.example.com/yourforum/install/app.php/update`). You will see the following warning message: **No valid update directory was found, please make sure you uploaded the relevant files.** This is expected and not an error.
- b. Select "Update database only" and click Submit
- c. Wait for the progress bar to reach 100% and for a message indicating that the update has completed

Depending on your previous version this will make a number of database changes. You may receive FAILURES during this procedure. They should not be a cause for concern unless you see an actual ERROR, in which case the script will stop (in this case you should seek help via our forums).

9. Delete the `install/` directory on the server

5.3. Advanced Update (Expert users)

This update method should only be used for installations with modifications to core phpBB files. If you simply use Extensions or custom Styles and have not modified core files, please use the Full Package update.

This update was renamed from Automatic Update to Advanced Update to more clearly state that it should only be used by advanced users.

This package detects changed files and merges in changes if needed. Since this type of update has a potential to cause issues while upgrading, it is not recommended being used for updates and/or upgrades.

A number of advanced update files are available, and you should choose the one that corresponds to the version of the board that you are currently running. For example, if your current version is 3.3.0 and you are updating to 3.3.1, you need the `phpBB-3.3.0_to_3.3.1.zip/tar.bz2` file.

1. **Make a backup of the original files**
2. **Make a backup of the database**
3. Locally, perform for the following steps:
 - a. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Advanced Update](#) archive
 - b. Extract the `install/` directory
 - c. Extract the `vendor/` directory
4. On your web server, delete the `vendor/` directory
5. Upload the `install/` directory
6. Upload the `vendor/` directory
7. Run the updater:

Important

If you have previously attempted to update using a different method, you will need to remove the following files from the server before updating the database:

- `store/install_config.php`

- `store/io_lock.lock`

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update the database via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- Using your web browser, visit `/install` in your board's root (e.g. `http://www.example.com/yourforum/install`).
- Click the Update tab
- Click Update
- Select "Update filesystem and database" and click Submit
- Depending on file ownership, there are several options available to perform this update:
 - **Download modified files in an archive:** This will generate an archive containing all of the updated files. After downloading it, you upload its contents to the server.
 - **Update files via FTP (Automatic):** You provide FTP credentials and file paths so that the server may FTP the files in place.
 - **Update files via direct access (Automatic):** If the web server has write permissions, the updater can write the changes directly to the files

If there are conflicts, you will be prompted to resolve them.

- Click Update Files
 - Click "Continue Update Process" to update the database
- Delete the `install/` directory on the server

5.4. Patch Files

This method is for advanced users who wish to use a patch/diff style update process. If you don't know what the **patch** utility is, this method is not for you.

A number of patch files are provided and you should choose the one that corresponds to the version of the board that you are currently running. For example, if your current version is 3.3.0 and you are updating to 3.3.1, you need the `phpBB-3.3.0_to_3.3.1.patch` file.

1. **Make a backup of the original files**
2. **Make a backup of the database**
3. Locally, perform for the following steps:
 - a. Download the phpBB 3.3 [Patch Files](#) archive
 - b. Extract the `install/` directory
 - c. Extract the `vendor/` directory
 - d. Extract the desired patch file for your version
4. On your web server, delete the `vendor/` directory
5. Upload the `install/` directory
6. Upload the `vendor/` directory
7. Upload the patch file to the parent directory containing the phpBB core files (i.e. `index.php`, `viewforum.php`, etc.). With this done you should run the following command: `patch -cl -d [PHPBB DIRECTORY] -p1 < [PATCH NAME]` (where `PHPBB DIRECTORY` is the directory name your phpBB Installation resides in, for example `phpBB`, and where `PATCH NAME` is the relevant filename of the selected patch file). This should complete quickly, hopefully without any `HUNK FAILED` comments.

If you do get failures, you should look at using the [Code Changes](#) page to update the files which failed to patch. Alternatively, if you know how, you can examine the `.rej` files to determine what failed where and make manual adjustments to the relevant source.
8. Update the database:

Important

If you have previously attempted to update using a different method, you will need to remove the following files from the server before updating the database:

- `store/install_config.php`

- `store/io_lock.lock`

Tip

For large boards, you may wish to update via the command line instead of using a web browser. From your board's root, execute the following command: `php ./bin/phpbbcli.php db:migrate --safe-mode`

- Using your web browser, visit `/install/app.php/update` in your board's root (e.g. `http://www.example.com/yourforum/install/app.php/update`). You will see the following warning message: **No valid update directory was found, please make sure you uploaded the relevant files.** This is expected and not an error.
- Select "Update database only" and click Submit
- Wait for the progress bar to reach 100% and for a message indicating that the update has completed

Depending on your previous version this will make a number of database changes. You may receive FAILURES during this procedure. They should not be a cause for concern unless you see an actual ERROR, in which case the script will stop (in this case you should seek help via our forums).

9. Delete the `install/` directory on the server

10. Delete the uploaded patch file from the server

6. Upgrading from any board software to phpBB3

In order to allow administrators of phpBB2 boards to use phpBB3 and all of its features. There is a convertor packed with the default installation. The conversion framework is flexible and allows you to convert other bulletin board systems as well. Read more if you need help with converting your board to phpBB3

Note

The convertor will not harm the database of the board software you are converting from. In case of a problem, your old board software will still be fully operational.

6.1. Requirements

In order for the conversion to be smooth as possible, check and prepare these items. You will need them to perform a successful conversion.

- An installation of phpBB3 has to be present on your server. See [Section 1, “Requirements”](#) for more information on how to install phpBB3.
- Prepare the connection details to the database where the old board was stored. If you are unsure, you can find these details in the config file.
- Make sure the old forum is still installed on your server alongside the phpBB3 installations. The files of the old board should be kept as is, some of them will be transferred to phpBB3 (e.g. avatars, attachments, smilies or ranks).
- The files and database need to be on the same server as the phpBB3 installation and the files need to be in the same domain. If you are using subdomains, the files need to be in the same subdomain.

6.2. Preliminary steps

phpBB3 needs to be installed. Once phpBB3 is installed, do *not* delete the `install` directory if you will be converting immediately. If you will be testing and setting up your phpBB3 board prior to the conversion and converting at a later time, rename the `install` directory to something like `_install`. This will allow you to use your phpBB3 board. You will be needing the `install` directory later for the conversion.

You will need specific convertor files for the board software you are converting from. The phpBB2 specific convertor files are included with the phpBB3 installation files. For other board softwares, you will need to get the convertor files from the appropriate phpBB3 convertor topic. These topics can be found in the [\[3.3.x\] Convertors forum](#) on phpBB.com

For converting from phpBB2, you only need to point your browser to `{phpBB3_root_directory}/install`, click the Convert tab and follow the instructions. For other board softwares, you will need to upload the convertor files to the appropriate directories. The convertor files you get will consist of two or three files, `convert_XXX.php`, `functions_XXX.php` and, optionally, `auth_XXX.php`. The `XXX` will generally be the name of the software you are converting from.

6.3. Conversion steps

After preparing everything, follow these steps to convert your board:

1. Install phpBB3. The old message board and the phpBB3 board need to be installed on the same server.

2. If you are converting from a board other than phpBB2, upload the convertor files which you downloaded from the appropriate topic in the [\[3.3.x\] Convertors forum](#).
3. Point your browser to {phpbb_root_directory}/install, click the Convert tab and select the appropriate convertor from the list of available convertors.
4. Next you will be asked for database information. The database information you are being asked for, is for the database that holds the tables for the board software you are converting from. You will be presented with an option for Refresh page to continue conversion. The default is set to Yes. Normally, you will want to leave it at Yes. The No option is mainly for test purposes.
5. After entering the database information and pressing the Begin conversion button, the convertor will verify that you have entered the correct information. If the information is confirmed, you will have another Begin Conversion button.
6. After you click the Begin Conversion button, the convertor will check the convertor files. If everything is okay, you will be presented with a Continue Conversion button.
7. The convertor will now proceed to convert your old board. Pages will be displayed informing you about the progress of the conversion.
8. When the convertor is finished, you will see a message that the Search Index has not been converted. You must go into the Administration Control Panel and build the Search Index. In the ACP, click the Maintenance tab and select Search Index from the submenu. The default search backend index is Fulltext native and will be marked active. This is normally the index that you want to use to create your search index. For more information about search indexing, see [Section 9.3, “Search Indexing”](#)
9. You should now check your phpBB3 board for proper operation, that permissions are set correctly and forums & posts are displaying correctly. Also make sure files got copied from the old location, for example avatars and smilies and attachments (if you have them.)

Chapter 3. Administration Guide

This chapter describes the phpBB admin controls.

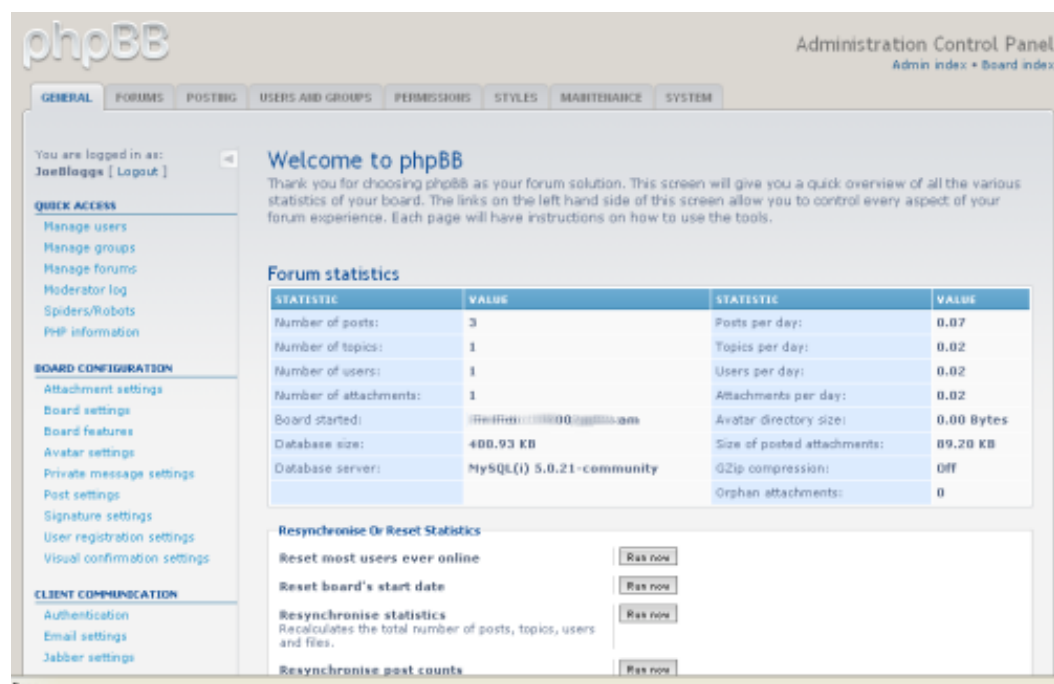
1. The Administration Control Panel

Even more so than its predecessor, phpBB is highly configurable. You can tune, adjust, or turn off almost all features. To make this load of settings as accessible as possible, we redesigned the Administration Control Panel (ACP) completely.

Click on the Administration Control Panel link on the bottom of the default forum style to visit the ACP.

The ACP has seven different sections by default with each containing a number of sub-sections. We will discuss each section in this Admin Guide.

Figure 3.1. Administration Control Panel Index



The Administration Control Panel Index, the home of managing your phpBB board. Administration functions are grouped into eight different categories: General, Forums, Posting, Users and Groups, Permissions, Styles, Maintenance, and System. Each category is a tab located at the top of the page.

Specific functions of the category you're in can be found in the left-hand sidebar of each page.

2. General Configuration and Front Page

The General section is the first screen you see each time you log into the ACP. It contains some basic statistics and information about your forum. It also has a subsection called Quick Access. It provides quick access to some of the admin pages that are frequently used, like [User Management](#) or [Moderator Logs](#). We will discuss its items later in their specific sections.

We will concentrate on the other three subsections: [Board Configuration](#), [Client Communication](#), and [Server Configuration](#).

2.1. Board Configuration

This subsection contains items to adjust the overall features and settings of the forum.

2.1.1. Attachment Settings

One of the many features in phpBB 3.3 is *Attachments*. Attachments are files that can be attached to posts, like e-mail attachments. Certain restrictions, set by the board administrator, control what users can attach. You can set these restrictions via the Attachment Settings page.

For more information, see the section on [configuring your board's attachment settings](#).

2.1.2. Board Settings

The Board Settings allow you to change many settings that govern your board. These settings include important things such as the name of your forum! There are two main groups of board settings: the general Board Settings, and Warnings settings.

Board Settings

- The very first board setting you can edit is perhaps the most important setting of them all: the name of your board. Your users identify your board with this name. Put the name of your site into the Site Name text field and it will be shown on the header of the default style; it will be the prefix to the window title of your browser.
- The Site Description is the slogan or tagline of your forum. It will appear below the Site Name on the default style's header.
- You can also use the Main website URL and Main website text fields to add a link to your home page in the breadcrumbs. The board's logo will also use this link.

- If you need to close your whole forum to do maintenance work, for instance, you can do it by using the Disable Board switch. To temporarily disable your board, select Yes. This will keep any members of your forum who are not administrators or moderators from accessing your board. They will either see a default message instead of the forum, or a message that you create. You can add your own custom message that will be displayed when your board is disabled in the text box below the Disable board radio buttons. Administrators and moderators will still be able to browse forums and use their specific control panels when the board is disabled.
- You also need to set the Default Language of your board. This is the language that guests will see when they visit your board. You can allow registered users to choose other languages. By default, the only language installed is English [GB], but you can [download more languages on the phpBB website](#) and install them on your board. Find out more about working with languages in the [section on Language Pack configuration](#).
- You can also configure your board's default date format. phpBB3 has a few basic date formats that you can set your board to use; if these are not sufficient and you would like to customise your board's date format, choose Custom from the Date format selection menu. Then, in the text box besides it, type in the format you would like to use. This is the same as the [PHP date\(\) function](#).
- Along with setting your board's default date format, you can also set your board's preferred timezone. The timezones available in the System timezone selection menu are all based on relative UTC (for most intents and purposes, it is GMT, or Greenwich Mean Time) times.
- You can also set your board's default style. The board will appear to your guests and members in the Default Style. In the standard phpBB installation, two styles are available: prosilver and subsilver2. You can either allow users to select another style than the default by selecting No in the Override User Style setting or disallow it. Please visit the [styles section](#) to find out how to add new styles and where to find some.

Warnings

- Moderators can send warnings to users that break the forum rules. The value of Warning Duration defines the number of days a warning is valid until it expires. All positive integers are valid values. For more about warnings, please read [Section 5, “The Moderator Control Panel \(MCP\)”](#).

2.1.3. Board Features

Through the Board Features section, you can enable or disable several features board-wide. Note that any feature you disable here will not be available on your forum, even if you give your users permissions to use them.

The Load Settings section allows you to disable some features which are computationally expensive if you are on shared or restricted hosting.

2.1.4. Avatar Settings

Avatars are generally small, unique images a user can associate with themselves. Depending on the style, they are usually displayed below the user name when viewing topics. Here you can determine how users can define their avatars.

There are several ways a user can add an avatar to their profile. The first way is through Gravatar. If this feature is enabled, users can choose to have the board load the Gravatar.com image associated with their email address.

The second way is through an avatar gallery you provide. Note that there is no avatar gallery available in a default phpBB installation. The Avatar Gallery Path is the path to the gallery images. The default path is `images/avatars/gallery`. The gallery folder does not exist in the default installation so you have to add it manually if you want to use it.

The images you want to use for your gallery need to be in a folder inside the gallery path. Images directly in the gallery path won't be recognised.

The third approach to avatars is through Avatar Uploading. Your members can upload an image from their local system which will be stored on your server. They will be uploaded into the Avatar Storage Path you can define. The default path is `images/avatars/upload` and does already exist after installation. You have to make sure that it is *server-writable*. The file format of the images has to be either gif, jpeg, or png, and the avatars will be automatically checked for their file and image size after the upload. You can adjust the Maximum Avatar File Size and images that are bigger than the allowed value will be discarded.

2.1.5. Private Messaging

Private Messages are a way for registered members to communicate privately through your board without the need to fall back to e-mail or instant messaging.

You can disable this feature with the Private Messaging setting. This will keep the feature turned off for the whole board. You can disable private messages for selected users or groups with [Permissions](#). Please see the [Permissions section](#) for more information.

phpBB allows users to create own personal folders to organise Private Messages. The Maximum private message folders setting defines the number of message folders they can create. The default value is 4. You can disable the feature with setting value to 0.

Max Private Messages Per Box sets the number of Private Messages each folder can contain. The default value is 50, Set it to 0 to allow unlimited messages per folder.

If you limit the number of messages users can store in their folders, you need to define a default action that is taken once a folder is full. This can be changed in the "Full Folder Default Action" list. The oldest message gets deleted or the new message will be held back until the folder has place for it. Note that users will be able to choose this for themselves in their PM options and this setting only changes the default value they face. This will not override the action a user chosen.

When sending a private message, it is still possible to edit the message until the recipient reads it. After a sent private message has been read, editing the message is no longer possible. To limit the time a message can be edited before the recipient reads it, you can set the Limit Editing Time. The default value is 0, which allows editing until the message is read. Note that you can disallow users or groups to edit Private Messages after sending through [Permissions](#). If the permission to edit messages is denied, it will override this setting.

The General Options allow you to further define the functionality of Private Messages on your board.

- Allow Mass PMs: enables the sending of Private Messages to multiple recipients. This feature is enabled by default. Disabling it will also disallow sending of Private Messages to groups.

Tip

See the [Groups section](#) for information on how to enable the ability to send a message to a whole group.

- By default, *BBCode* and *Smilies* are allowed in Private Messages.

Tip

Even if enabled, you can still disallow users or groups to use *BBCode* and *Smilies* in Private Messages through [Permissions](#).

- We don't allow attachments by default. Further settings for attachments in Private Messages are in the [Attachment Settings](#). There you can define the number of attachments per message for instance.

2.1.6. Spambot Countermeasures

phpBB 3.3 uses a plugin system to allow easy switching between different spambot countermeasures. Available plugins are automatically loaded from the includes/captcha/plugins directory in your installation.

phpBB ships with these plugins installed:

- GD 3D image: a graphical CAPTCHA using 3D characters on a wave.
- GD image: a graphical CAPTCHA, using floating 3D characters.
- Simple image: a simple 2D CAPTCHA that should work in any configuration.
- reCaptcha: The reCaptcha service. You have to sign up for reCaptcha before being able to use this plugin.
- Q&A: configurable questions and answers.

Note

CAPTCHA or "Completely Automated Public Turing Test To Tell Computers and Humans Apart" is a term for riddles that are supposedly easy for humans but hard for computers.

The page is split into two areas, the top area, "General Options", contains settings concerning where to use spambot countermeasures. The other area concerns itself with the selection, configuration and demonstration of the plugins.

Figure 3.2. Spambot Countermeasures

Spambot countermeasures

Here you can select and configure plugins, which are designed to block automated form submissions by spambots. These plugins typically work by challenging the user with a *CAPTCHA*, a test which is designed to be difficult for computers to solve.

General options

Enable spambot countermeasures for registrations:
Requires new users to pass the anti-spambot task to help prevent automated registrations. ☒ Enabled ☐ Disabled

Registration attempts:
Number of attempts users can make at solving the anti-spambot task before being locked out of that session.

Maximum number of login attempts per username:
The number of login attempts allowed for a single account before the anti-spambot task is triggered. Enter 0 to prevent the anti-spambot task from being triggered for distinct user accounts.

Enable spambot countermeasures for guest postings:
Requires guest users to pass the anti-spambot task to help prevent automated postings. ☒ Enabled ☐ Disabled

Allow users to refresh the anti-spambot task:
Allows users to request a new anti-spambot task if they are unable to solve the current task during registration. Some plugins might not support this option. ☒ Enabled ☐ Disabled

Available plugins

Installed plugins:
The dropdown holds the plugins recognised by the board. Grey entries are not available right now and might need configuration prior to use.

Configure plugins:
Change the settings for the selected plugin.

Preview

Preview:
The plugin as it would look like using the current selection.

Submit changes

The spambot countermeasure plugin selection ACP page.

Tip

Check the Extension database for new existing plugins.

How to select a plugin

- Click the "Installed plugins" dropdown and select the module you want to use. Do not let grayed out entries stop you, they only mean that you have to perform another step. If your intended module is not in the list, check whether the files are present in the plugin directory.

- Click the "Configure" button to see the module's ACP page. Many plugins need configuration prior to use. Note that plugins without configuration options will not show the button.
- Configure the plugin to meet your needs.
- After configuring the plugin, re-select your intended plugin from the dropdown. It should not be grayed out any more.
- Click "Submit".
- Congratulations, you're done.

2.1.7. Contact Page Settings

The contact page allows users to email the board administrators if they are experiencing problems with the site. This form is visible to all users, including guests.

You can enable or disable this feature, as well as set the message that you would like users to see when they visit the page. The message can contain BBcodes, smilies, and links, but not raw HTML.

2.2. Client communication

Other than its own authentication system, phpBB3 supports other *client* communications. phpBB3 supports authentication plugins (by default, the Apache, native DB, LDAP, and OAuth plugins), email, and *Jabber*. Here, you can configure all of these communication methods. The following are subsections describing each client communication method.

2.2.1. Authentication

phpBB3 offers support for authentication via plugins. By default, the Apache, DB, LDAP, and OAuth plugins are supported. Before switching from phpBB's native authentication system (the DB method) to one of these systems, you must make sure that your server supports it.

After choosing the authentication method from the dropdown menu, fill out any fields which appear to finalize configuration.

Apache Authentication

- There are no specific configuration items for this method. You will need to set up authentication in Apache so that your users will be able to access the board. The following documentation can help you set that up: [Apache: Authentication and Authorization](#).

DB Authentication

- This is the default authentication method and is configured in config.php.

LDAP Authentication

- LDAP server name: This is the name or IP address of the LDAP server.
- LDAP user: phpBB will connect to the LDAP server as this specified user. If you want to use anonymous access, leave this value blank.
- LDAP password: The password for the LDAP user specified above. If you are using anonymous access, leave this blank.

Important

This password will be stored as plain text in the database; it will be visible to everybody who can access your database.

- LDAP base dn: The distinguished name, which locates the user information.
- LDAP uid: The key under which phpBB will search for a given login identity.
- LDAP email attribute: this to the name of your user entry email attribute (if one exists) in order to automatically set the email address for new users. If you leave this empty, users who login to your board for the first time will have an empty email address.

OAuth Authentication

- OAuth requires a key and a secret. These are provided to you from the OAuth provider. Each provider may have a different name for the key and secret
- Bitly: Your token information can be found here: https://bitly.com/a/oauth_apps. Your key is the *Client ID* and your secret is the *Client Secret*.
- Facebook: You will need to [create an application](#) on Facebook to obtain your token information. The *App ID* is your key and the *App Secret* is your secret.
- Google: Visit the [Google Developers Console](#) to create a new OAuth Client ID. You can find it on the left side under "APIs and auth --> Credentials". Your *Client ID* will serve as the key and your *Client Secret* will serve as the secret. Additionally, you will need to create a "Consent screen" in the Developers Console as well. Specify the following Request URIs when you set up your client ID on the Google Developers Console:

- `http://{your_board_URL}/ucp.php?mode=login&login=external&oauth_service=google`
- `http://{your_board_URL}/ucp.php?i=ucp_auth_link&mode=auth_link&link=1&oauth_service=google`

The link ID may be different from your board. If it is, you will receive an error when attempting to link an account. Change the "1" to the number found in the request URI error that Google gives you.

- Twitter: Create a [Twitter App](#). Your *Consumer Key* will serve as the key and your *Consumer Secret* will serve as the secret.

2.2.2. Email settings

phpBB3 is capable of sending out emails to your users. Here, you can configure the information that is used when your board sends out these emails. phpBB3 can send out emails by using either the native, PHP-based email service, or a specified *SMTP* server. If you are not sure if you have an SMTP server available, use the native email service. You will have to ask your hoster for further details. Once you are done configuring the email settings, click Submit.

Note

Please ensure the email address you specify is valid, as any bounced or undeliverable messages will likely be sent to that address.

General Settings

- Enable board-wide emails: If this is set to disabled, no emails will be sent by the board at all.
- Users send email via board:: If this is set to enabled, a form allowing users to send emails to each other via the board will be displayed, rather than an email address.
- Email function name: If you are using the native, PHP-based email service, this should be the name of the email function. This is most likely going to be "mail".
- Email package size: This is the number of emails that can be sent in one package. This is useful for when you want to send mass emails, and you have a large amount of users.
- Contact email address: This is the address that your board's email feedback will be sent to. This is also the address that will populate the "From" and "Reply-to" addresses in all emails sent by your board.

- Return email address: This is the return address that will be put on all emails as the technical contact email address. It will always populate the "Return-Path" and "Sender" addresses in all emails sent by your board.
- Email signature: This text will be attached at the end of all emails sent by your board.
- Hide email addresses: If you want to keep email addresses completely private, set this value to Yes.

SMTP Settings

- Use SMTP server for email: Select Yes if you want your board to send emails via an SMTP server. If you are not sure that you have an SMTP server available for use, set this to No; this will make your board use the native, PHP-based email service, which in most cases is the safest available option.
- SMTP server address: The address of the SMTP server.
- SMTP server port: The port that the SMTP server is located on. In most cases, SMTP servers are located on port 25; do not change this value if you are unsure about this.
- Authentication method for SMTP: This is the authentication method that your board will use when connecting to the specified SMTP server. This only applies if an SMTP username and password are set, and required by the server. The available methods are PLAIN, LOGIN, CRAM-MD5, DIGEST-MD5, and POP-BEFORE-SMTP. If you are unsure about which authentication method you must use, ask your hoster for more information.
- SMTP username: The username that phpBB will use when connecting to the specified SMTP server. You should only fill this in if the SMTP server requires it.
- SMTP password: The password for the above specified username that phpBB will use when connecting to the specified SMTP server. You should only fill this in if the SMTP server requires it.

Important

This password will be stored as plain text in the database, visible to everybody who can access your database or who can view this configuration page.

2.2.3. Web Push settings

phpBB also has the ability to send notifications to users via *Web Push*. Your board can be configured to board notifications via Web Push.

Web Push settings

- **Enable Web Push:** Set this to Yes if you want to enable the use of Web Push for notifications.
- **Server identification public key:** The Voluntary Application Server Identification (VAPID) public key is shared to authenticate push messages from your site. You can set this manually or generate the key by clicking on the Generate Identification keys button.

Important

Caution: Modifying the VAPID public key will automatically render all Web Push subscriptions invalid.

- **Server identification private key:** The Voluntary Application Server Identification (VAPID) private key is used to generate authenticated push messages dispatched from your site. The VAPID private key must form a valid public-private key pair alongside the VAPID public key. You can set this manually or generate the key by clicking on the Generate Identification keys button.

Important

Caution: Modifying the VAPID private key will automatically render all Web Push subscriptions invalid.

- **Enable all user-based web push notification options by default:** When this setting is enabled, users who subscribe and allow browser notifications will start receiving them automatically. Users only need to visit the UCP Notification settings to disable any unwanted notifications. If this setting is disabled, users will not receive any notifications, even if they have subscribed, until they visit the UCP Notification settings to enable the specific notification options they wish to receive.
- **Show “Subscribe” button in notification dropdown:** Display a “Subscribe” button in the Notification dropdown, allowing users to easily subscribe to push notifications from anywhere in the forum.

2.3. Server configuration

As an administrator of a board, being able to fine-tune the settings that your phpBB board uses for the server is a must. Configuring your board's server settings is very easy. There are five main categories of server settings: Cookie settings, Server settings, Security settings, Load settings, and Search settings. Properly configuring these settings will help

your board not only function, but also work efficiently and as intended. The following subsections will outline each server configuration category. Once you are done with updating settings in each setting, remember to click Submit to apply your changes.

2.3.1. Cookie settings

Your board uses cookies all the time. Cookies can store information and data; for example, cookies are what enable users to automatically login to the board when they visit it. The settings on this page define the data used to send cookies to your users' browsers.

Warning

When editing your board's cookie settings, do so with caution. Incorrect settings can cause such consequences as preventing your users from logging in.

To edit your board's cookie settings, locate the Cookie Settings form. The following are four settings you may edit:

Cookie Settings

- **Cookie domain:** This is the domain that your board runs on. Do not include the path that phpBB is installed in; only the domain itself is important here.
- **Cookie name:** This is the name that will be assigned to the cookie when it is sent to your users' browsers and stored. This should be a unique cookie name that will not conflict with any other cookies.
- **Cookie path:** This is the path that the cookie will apply to. In most cases, this should be left as "/", so that the cookie can be accessible across your site. If for some reason you must restrict the cookie to the path that your board is installed in, set the value to the path of your board.
- **Cookie secure:** If your board is only accessible via SSL, set this to Enabled. If the board is not accessible only via SSL, then leave this value set to Disabled, otherwise server errors will result during redirections and users may experience difficulties remaining logged in.

When you are done editing your board's server settings, click Submit to submit your changes.

2.3.2. Server settings

On this page, you can define server and domain-dependent settings. There are three main categories of server settings: Server Settings, Path Settings, and Server URL Settings. The following describes each server settings category and the corresponding settings in

more detail. When you are done configuring your board's server settings, click Submit to submit your changes.

Warning

When editing your board's server settings, do so with caution. Incorrect settings can cause such consequences as emails being sent out with incorrect links and/or information, or even the board being inaccessible.

The Server Settings form allows you to set some settings that phpBB will use on the server level:

Server Settings

- **Enable GZip Compression:** Setting this value will enable *GZip* compression on your server. This means that all content generated by the server will be compressed before it is sent to users' browsers, if the users' browsers support it. Though this can reduce network traffic/bandwidth used, this will also increase the server and CPU load, on both the user's and server's sides.
- **Run periodic tasks from system cron:** When off, phpBB will arrange for periodic tasks to be run automatically when users visit the board. When on, phpBB will not schedule any periodic tasks by itself; a system administrator must arrange for *bin/phpbbcli.php cron:run* to be run by the system cron facility at regular intervals (e.g. every 5 minutes).

Next, the Path Settings form allows you to set the various paths that phpBB uses for certain board content. For default installations, the default settings should be sufficient. The following are the four values that you can set:

Path Settings

- **Enable URL Rewriting:** When enabled, URLs containing "app.php" will be rewritten to remove the filename (i.e. app.php/foo will become /foo). This will generally only be seen if you install extensions. This feature is currently limited to Apache web servers with `mod_rewrite` enabled.
- **Smilies storage path:** This is the path to the directory, relative to the directory that your board is installed in, that your smilies are located in.
- **Post icons storage path:** This is the path to the directory, relative to the directory that your board is installed in, that the topic icons are stored in.
- **Extension group icons storage path:** This is the path to the directory, relative to the directory that your board is installed in, that the icons for the [attachments extension groups](#).

- Rank image storage path: This is the path to the directory, relative to the directory that your board is installed in, that your [rank images](#) are located in.

The last category of server settings is Server URL Settings. The Server URL Settings category contains settings that allow you to configure the actual URL that your board is located at, as well as the server protocol and port number that the board will be accessed to. The following are the five settings you may edit:

Server URL Settings

- Force server URL settings: If for some reason the default settings for the server URL are incorrect, then you can force your phpBB board to use the server URL settings you specify below by selecting the Yes radio button.
- Server protocol: This is the server protocol (http:// or https://, for example) that your board uses, if the default settings are forced. If this value is empty or the above Force server URL settings setting is disabled, then the protocol will be determined by the cookie secure settings.
- Domain name: This is the name of the domain that your board runs on. Include "www" if applicable. Again, this value is only used if the server URL settings are forced.
- Server port: This is the port that the server is running on. In most cases, a value of "80" is the port to set. You should only change this value if, for some reason, your server runs on a different port. Again, this value is only used if the server URL settings are forced.
- Script path: This is the directory where phpBB is installed, relative to the domain name. For example, if your board was located at `www.example.com/phpBB3/`, the value to set for your script path is `/phpBB3`. Again, this value is only used if the server URL settings are forced.

When you are done editing your board's server settings, click Submit to submit your changes.

2.3.3. Security settings

Here, on the Security settings page, you are able to manage security-related settings; namely, you can define and edit session and login-related settings. The following describes the available security settings that you can manage. When you are done configuring your board's security settings, click Submit to submit your changes.

Allow persistent logins

This determines whether users can automatically login to your board when they visit it.

The available options are Yes and No. Choosing Yes will enable automatic logins.

Persistent login key expiration length (in days)

This is the set number of days that login keys will last before they expire and are removed from the database.

You may enter an integer in the text box located to the left of the word Days. This integer is the number of days for the persistent login key expiration. If you would like to disable this setting (and thereby allow use of login keys indefinitely), enter a "0" into the text box.

Session IP validation

This determines how much of the users' *IP address* is used to validate a session.

There are four settings available: All, A.B.C, A.B, and None. The All setting will compare the complete IP address. The A.B.C setting will compare the first x.x.x of the IP address. The A.B setting will compare the first x.x of the IP address. Lastly, selecting None will disable IP address checking altogether.

Validate browser

This enables the validation of the users' browsers for each session. This can help improve the users' security.

The available options are Yes and No. Choosing Yes will enable this browser validation.

Validate X_FORWARDED_FOR header

This setting controls whether sessions will only be continued if the sent X_FORWARDED_FOR header is the same as the one sent with the previous request. Bans will be checked against *IP addresses* in the X_FORWARDED_FOR header too.

The available options are Yes and No. Choosing Yes will enable the validation of the X_FORWARDED_FOR header.

Check IP against DNS Blackhole List:

You are also able to check the users' *IP addresses* against DNS blackhole lists. These lists are blacklists that list bad IP addresses. Enabling this setting will allow your board to check your users' IP addresses and compare them against the DNS blackhole lists. Currently, the DNS blacklist

services on the sites spamcop.net, dsbl.org, and spamhaus.org.

Check email domain for valid MX record

It is also possible to attempt to validate emails used by your board's users. If this setting is enabled, emails that are entered when users register or change the email in their profile will be checked for a valid [MX record](#).

The available options are Yes and No. Choosing Yes will enable the checking of MX records for emails.

Password complexity

Usually, more complex passwords fare well; they are better than simple passwords. To help your users try to make their account as secure as possible, you also have the option of requiring that they use a password as complex as you define. This requirement will apply to all users registering a new account, or when existing users change their current passwords.

There are four options in the selection menu. No requirements will disable password complexity checking completely. The Must be mixed case setting requires that your users' passwords have both lowercase and uppercase letters in their password. The Must contain alphanumerics setting requires that your users' password include both letters from the alphabet and numbers. Lastly, the Must contain symbols setting will require that your users' passwords include symbols.

Note

For each password complexity requirement, the setting(s) above it in the selection menu will also apply. For example, selecting Must contain alphanumerics will require your users' passwords to include not only alphanumeric characters, but also have both lowercase and uppercase letters.

Force password change

It is always ideal to change passwords once in a while. With this setting, you can force your users to change their passwords after a set number of days that their passwords have been used.

Only integers can be entered in the text box, which is located next to the Days label. This integer is the number of days that, after which, your users will have to change their passwords. If you would like to disable this feature, enter a value of "0".

Maximum number of login attempts

It is also possible to limit the number of attempts that your users can have to try to login. Setting a specific limit will enable this feature. This can be useful in temporarily preventing bots or other users from trying to log into other users' accounts.

Only integers can be entered for this setting. The number entered is the maximum number of times a user can attempt to login to an account before having to confirm his login visually, with the visual confirmation.

Allow PHP in templates

Unlike phpBB2, phpBB3 allows the use of PHP code in the template files themselves, if enabled. If this option is enabled, PHP and INCLUDEPHP statements will be recognized and parsed by the template engine.

2.3.4. Load settings

On particularly large boards, it may be necessary to manage certain load-related settings in order to allow your board to run as smoothly as possible. However, even if your board isn't excessively active, it is still important to be able to adjust your board's load settings. Adjusting these settings properly can help reduce the amount of processing required by your server. Once you are done editing any of the server load-related settings, remember to click Submit to actually submit and apply your changes.

The first group of settings, General Settings, allows you to control the very basic load-related settings, such as the maximum system load and session lengths. The following describes each option in detail.

General settings

- **Limit system load:** This option enables you to control the maximum load that the server can undergo before the board will automatically go offline. Specifically, if the system's one-minute load average exceeds this value, the board will automatically go offline. A value of "1.0" equals about 100% utilisation of one processor. Note that this option will only work with *nix-based servers that have this information accessible. If your board is unable to get the load limit, this value will reset itself to "0". All positive numbers are valid values for this option. (For example, if your server has two processors, a setting of 2.0 would represent 100% server utilisation of both processors.) Set this to "0" if you do not want to enable this option.
- **Session length:** This is the amount of time, in seconds, before your users' sessions expire. Valid values are positive integers greater than or equal to 60.
- **Limit sessions:** It is also possible to control the maximum amount of sessions your board will handle before your board will go offline and be temporarily disabled. Specifically, if the number of sessions your board is serving exceeds this value within a one-minute period, the board will go offline and be temporarily disabled. All positive integers are valid values. Set this to "0" if you want to allow an unlimited amount of sessions.
- **View online time span:** This is the number of minutes after which inactive users will not appear in the Who is Online listings. The higher the number given, the greater the processing power required to generate the listing. All positive integers are valid values, and indicate the number of minutes that the time span will be.

The second group of settings, General Options, allows you to control whether certain options are available for your users on your board. The following describes each option further.

General options

- **Enable dotted topics:** Topics in which a poster has already posted in will see dotted topic icons for these topics. To enable this feature, select, Yes.
- **Enable server-side topic marking:** One of the many new features phpBB3 offers is server-side read tracking. This is different from phpBB2, which only offered read tracking based on cookies. To store read/unread status information in the database, as opposed to in a cookie, select Yes.
- **Enable topic marking for guests:** It is also possible to allow guests to have read/unread status information. If you want your board to store read/unread status information for guests, select Yes. If this option is disabled, posts will be displayed as "read" for guests.

- **Enable online user listings:** The online user listings can be displayed on your board's index, in each forum, and on topic pages. If you want to enable this option and allow the online user listings to be displayed, choose Yes.
- **Enable online guest listings in viewonline:** If you want to enable the display of guest user information in the Who is Online section, choose Yes.
- **Enable display of user online/offline information:** This option allows you to control whether or not online/offline status information for users can be displayed in profiles and on the topic view pages. To enable this display option, choose Yes.
- **Enable birthday listing:** In phpBB3, birthdays is a new feature. To enable the listing of birthdays, choose Yes.
- **Enable display of moderators:** Though it can be particularly useful to list the moderators who moderate each forum, it is possible to disable this feature, which may help reduce the amount of processing required. To enable the display of moderators, select Yes.
- **Enable display of jumpbox:** The jumpbox can be a useful tool for navigating throughout your board. However, it is possible to control whether or not this is displayed. To display the jumpboxes, select Yes.
- **Show user's activity:** This option controls whether or not the active topic/forum information displayed in your users' profiles and *UCP*. If you want to show this user activity information, select Yes. However, if your board has more than one million posts, it is recommended that you disable this feature.
- **Recompile stale templates:** This option controls the recompilation of old templates. If this is enabled, your board will check to see if there are updated templates on your filesystem; if there are, your board will recompile the templates. Select Yes to enable this option.
- **Allow usage of third party content delivery networks:** If this setting is enabled, some files will be served from external third party servers (ajax.googleapis.com) instead of your server. This reduces the network bandwidth required by your server, but may present a privacy issue for some board administrators. In a default phpBB installation, this includes loading "jQuery" and the font "Open Sans" from Google's content delivery network.
- **Allow live searches:** When enabled, certain search fields (memberlist searches) will automatically prompt with search results as you type.

Lastly, the last group of load settings relates to Custom Profile Fields, which are a new feature in phpBB3. The following describes these options in detail.

Custom Profile Fields

- Allow styles to display custom profile fields in memberlist: This option allows you to control if your board's style(s) can display the custom profile fields (if your board has any) in the memberlist. To enable this, choose Yes.
- Display custom profile fields in user profiles: If you want to enable the display of custom profile fields (if your board has any) in users' profiles, select Yes.
- Display custom profile fields in viewtopic: If you want to enable the display of custom profile fields (if your board has any) in the topic view pages, choose Yes.

2.3.5. Search settings

Your board can be a well of information. Being able to effectively search through this information is very important, especially if you want to reduce the amount of redundant topics are posted on your board. Here, on the Search settings page, you can control what search backend your board's search functionality will use for indexing posts and searching, and set various options related to it. There are four main categories of search settings: General Search Settings, Search Backend, Fulltext mysql, and Fulltext native. The following describes each set of search settings in detail.

The first group of search settings are general and user-facing, meaning that they concern the users who use the search functionality directly.

General Search Settings

- Enable search facilities: Setting this option to Yes will enable the search functionality for your users; member-searching functionality will also be enabled.
- User search flood interval: This value indicates the number of seconds that your users have to wait between consecutive searches. This value is checked independently for each user. All positive integers are valid values. If you want to disable checking for search intervals for users, set this value to "0".
- Guest search flood interval: This is the number of seconds between searches that guest users must wait. This value is shared for all guest users, if one guest searches, the others will have to wait until this interval passes. All positive integers are valid values. If you want to disable checking for search intervals for guests, set this value to "0".
- Search page system load limit: You can also limit the amount of load your system will undergo for searches. If the system load exceeds this value, your board will go offline and be temporarily disabled. All numbers between 0 and 1.0 (inclusive) are valid values. A value of "1.0", for example, represents about 100% utilisation of a single processor; if the system load exceeds this value, the board will go offline. Note that this feature only works for *nix-based servers.

- **Min author name characters:** Users have to enter at least this many characters of the name when performing a wildcard author search. If the author's username is shorter than this number, your users can still search for the author's posts by entering the complete username. All positive integers are valid values.
- **Search result cache length:** phpBB3 can also cache search results. These cached search results will expire after this number of seconds. All positive integers are valid values. Set this value to "0" if you want to disable search caching.

The next group of search settings actually only contains one setting: choosing what backend your board's search facilities, if enabled, will use. The following details this option.

Search Backend

- **Search backend:** This option specifies the backend that your board's search facilities will use if it is enabled. The backend is essentially the system/method that is actually responsible for conducting searches based on the queries it is given. There are four available options: MySQL Fulltext, phpBB Native Fulltext, PostgreSQL Fulltext, and Sphinx Fulltext.

Note

If you choose to change your board's current search backend, you will have to create an index of your board's content for the new search backend. If you know for sure that you're not going to use the index that was used with your old, previously chosen search backend, you can also delete it in order to free up some of your system's resources. To learn more about maintaining your board's search indices, see [Section 9.3, "Search Indexing"](#).

MySQL Fulltext will make your board use MySQL's fulltext search as its search backend. This causes the SQL server to perform the searches, rather than building our own search tables. The settings shown are informational only and require the server's system administrator for changes to be made.

Fulltext mysql

- **Support for non-latin UTF-8 characters using PCRE:** This tells you if your system supports searching for non-Latin UTF-8 characters. This is only available in *PHP* versions 4.4 and above, and 5.1 and above. This is only relevant if you actually want your users to have the ability to search for non-Latin characters.
- **Support for non-latin UTF-8 characters using mbstring:** If your system doesn't support UTF-8 characters using PCRE (as indicated in the setting above), the MySQL fulltext search backend will try to use mbstring's regular expression engine. Again, this is only relevant if you actually want your users to have the ability to search for non-Latin characters.

phpBB Native Fulltext is the default option, which is phpBB's own native fulltext search.

Fulltext native

- **Enable fulltext updating:** This option allows you to control whether or not your board's search index will update when posts are made. If you would like to enable this, choose Yes. Note that this setting is not relevant if your board's search functionality is disabled entirely.
- **Min characters indexed by search:** You can also control the minimum number of characters words must contain in order to be included in your board's search index. It is recommended that you not set this too low in order to have a quality search index. All positive integers are valid values.
- **Max characters indexed by search:** Just like the above setting, you can also control the maximum number of characters words must contain in order to be included in your board's search index. If a word has more than this number of characters in it, it will not be included in the search index. All positive integers are valid values.
- **Common word threshold:** Like phpBB2's stopwords feature, you can prevent the use of common words that you specify. However, this feature is expanded upon in phpBB3. You can now control the threshold that a word can have; this means that if a word is contained in more than a certain percentage of posts on your board, it will be deemed as a common word, and will be ignored in search queries. All positive integers are valid values, and represent the percentage of posts on your board words can be contained in. If you would like to disable this threshold and thereby allow searches using all words, even if they can be common, set this value to "0". This setting only applies if your board has more than 100 posts.

PostgreSQL Fulltext is similar to MySQL Fulltext, but for sites running on a PostgreSQL database.

PostgreSQL Fulltext

- **PostgreSQL version:** This indicates if you are running a version of PostgreSQL that supports Fulltext searches. This feature is available in PostgreSQL 8.3 and above.
- **Text search Configuration Profile:** If your database server has multiple search configurations created, you can choose between them here. The default is *simple*, though a language specific one may be more appropriate if your board contains non-Latin text.
- **Minimum word length for keywords:** You can also control the minimum number of characters words must contain in order to be included in your board's search index. It is recommended that you not set this too low in order to have a quality search index. All positive integers are valid values.
- **Maximum word length for keywords:** Just like the above setting, you can also control the maximum number of characters words must contain in order to be included in your

board's search index. If a word has more than this number of characters in it, it will not be included in the search index. All positive integers are valid values.

Sphinx Fulltext makes use of a special search server called [Sphinx](#). Sphinx will need to be installed prior to configuring it here. If you have a large board with hundreds of thousands of posts or more, you will most likely want to use Sphinx.

Sphinx Fulltext

- Path to data directory: The absolute path to the data directory where Sphinx should store its indices and log files. The path should have a slash at the end.
- Sphinx search daemon host: The hostname or IP address of the search server. Leave blank for localhost.
- Sphinx search daemon port: The port which the search server is operating on. Leave blank for its default port 9312.
- Indexer memory limit: The amount of memory the search server is allowed to use. This value should be less than the maximum amount of available memory on the system.
- Sphinx config file: The generated output for your sphinx.conf file for the search server.

After submitting the form, a Sphinx search table will be created in the database. The search indexers must still be started manually before the indices are created. The exact commands needed to do that and more can be found in the server guide: [Sphinx search configuration](#).

3. Forum Admin

The Forum section offers the tools to manage your forums. Whether you want to add new forums, add new categories, change forum descriptions, reorder or rename your forums, this is the place to go.

3.1. Explanation of forum types

In phpBB 3.3, there are three forum types. A forum can be a normal forum where people can post in, a category that contains forums, or it can be a simple link.

Forum	In a forum people can post their topics.
Link	The forum list displays a forum link like a normal forum. But instead of linking to a forum, you can point it to a URL of your choice. It can display a hit counter, which shows how many times the link was clicked.
Category	If you want to combine multiple forums or links for a specific topic, you can put them inside a category. The forums will appear below the category

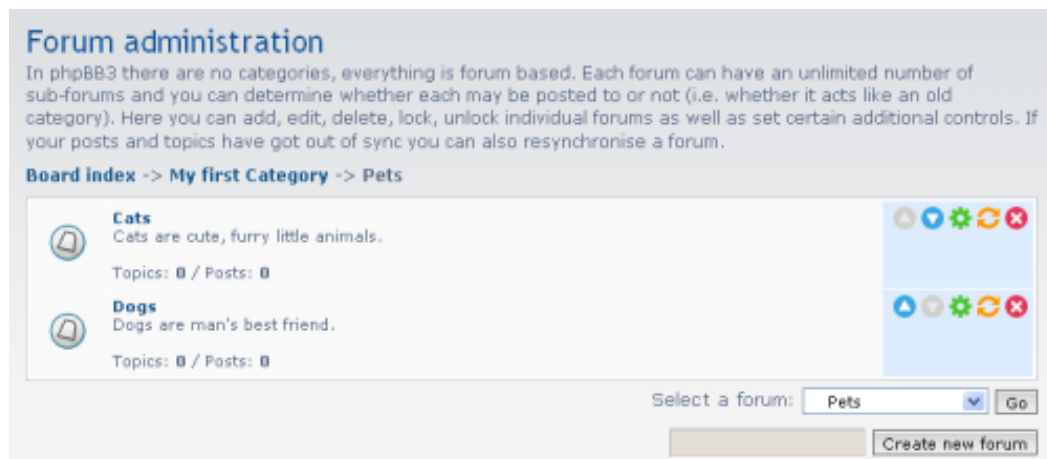
title, clearly separated from other categories. Users are not able to post inside categories.

3.2. Subforums

One of the features in phpBB is *subforums*. Especially bulletin boards with a high number of forums will benefit from this. In the simple flat category and forum approach in phpBB 2.0, all forums and categories were listed on the forum index. In phpBB you can now put as many forums, links, or categories as you like inside other forums.

If you have a forum about pets for instance, you are able to put subforums for cats, dogs, or guinea pigs inside it without making the parent "Pets" forum a category. In this example, only the "Pets" forum will be listed on the index like a normal forum. Its subforums will appear as simple links below the forum description (unless you disabled this).

Figure 3.3. Creating subforums



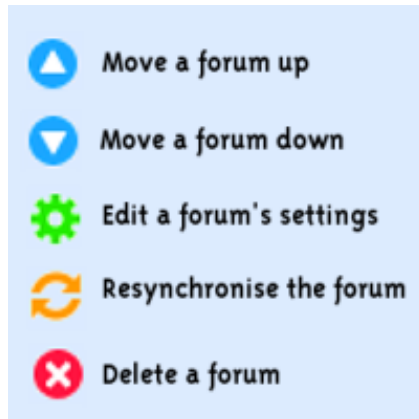
Creating subforums. In this example, the subforums titled "Cats" and "Dogs" belong in the "Pets" parent forum. Pay close attention to the breadcrumbs on the page, located right above the list of the subforums. This tells you exactly where you are in the forums hierarchy.

This system theoretically allows unlimited levels of subforums. You can put as many subforums inside subforums as you like. However, please do not go overboard with this feature. On boards with five to ten forums or less, it is not a good idea to use subforums. Remember, the less forums you have, the more active your forum will appear. You can always add more forums later.

Read the [section on forum management](#) to find out how to create subforums.

3.3. Manage forums

Here you can add, edit, delete, and reorder the forums, categories, and links.

Figure 3.4. Managing Forums Icon Legend

This is the legend for the icons on the manage forums page. Each icon allows you to commit a certain action. Pay close attention to which action you click on when managing your forums.

The initial Manage forums page shows you a list of your top level forums and categories. Note, that this is not analogue to the forum index, as categories are not expanded here. If you want to reorder the forums inside a category, you have to open the category first.

4. Posting Settings

Forums are nothing without content. Content is created and posted by your users; as such, it is very important to have the right posting settings that control how the content is posted. You can reach this section by clicking the Posting navigation tab.

The first page you are greeted with after getting to the Posting Settings section is BB-Codes. The other available subsections are divided into two main groups: Messages and Attachments. Private message settings, Topic icons, Smilies, and Word censoring are message-related settings. Attachment settings, Manage extensions, Manage extension groups, and Orphaned attachments are attachment-related settings.

4.1. BBCodes

BBCodes are a special way of formatting posts, similar to HTML. phpBB 3.3 allows you to create your own BBCodes very easily. On this page, you can see the custom BBCodes that currently exist.

Adding a BBCode is very easy. If done right, allowing users to use your new BBCode may be safer than allowing them to use HTML code. To add a BBCode, click Add a new BBCode to begin. There are four main things to consider when adding a BBCode: how you want your users to use the BBCode, what HTML code the BBcode will actually use (the users will not see this), what short info message you want for the BBCode, and

whether or not you want a button for the new BBCode to be displayed on the posting screen. Once you are done configuring all of the custom BBCode settings, click Submit to add your new BBCode.

Figure 3.5. Creating BBCodes

BBCodes « Back

BBCode is a special implementation of HTML offering greater control over what and how something is displayed. From this page you can add, remove and edit custom BBCodes.

BBCode usage

Here you define how to use the BBCode. Replace any variable input by the corresponding token (see below).

Examples:

```
[highlight={COLOR}]{TEXT}[/highlight]
[font={SIMPLETEXT1}]{SIMPLETEXT2}[/font]
```

HTML replacement

Here you define the default HTML replacement. Do not forget to put back tokens you used above!

Examples:

```
<span style="background-color: {COLOR};">
{TEXT}</span>
<span style="font-family: {SIMPLETEXT1};">
{SIMPLETEXT2}</span>
```

Creating a new BBCode. In this example, we are creating a new [font] BBCode that will allow users to specify the font face of the specified text.

In the BBCode Usage form, you can define how you want your users to use the BBCode. Let's say you want to create a new font BBCode that will let your users pick a font to use for their text. An example of what to put under BBCode Usage would be `[font={SIMPLETEXT}]{TEXT}[/font]`. This would make a new [font] BBCode, and will allow the user to pick what font face they want for the text. The user's text is represented by TEXT, while SIMPLETEXT represents whatever font name the user types in.

In the HTML Replacement form, you can define what HTML code your new BBCode will use to actually format the text. In the case of making a new [font] BBCode, try `<span style="font-family: {SIMPLETEXT}">{TEXT}</span>`. This HTML code will be used to actually format the user's text.

The third option to consider when adding a custom BBCode is what sort of help message you want to display to your users if they choose to use the new BBCode. Ideally, the helpline message is a short note or tip for the user using the BBCode. This message will be displayed below the BBCode row on the posting screens.

Note

If the next option described, Display on posting, isn't enabled, the helpline message will not be displayed.

Lastly, when adding a new BBCode, you can decide whether or not you want an actual BBCode button for your new BBCode to be displayed on the posting screens. If you want this, then check the Display on posting checkbox.

It is important to choose appropriate tokens when creating your custom BBCodes. The tokens limit the type of input that they will accept. If you want to only allow URLs, use the URL token. If you only want to allow numbers, use the NUMBER token.

BBCode Tokens

{TEXT}	Any text, including foreign characters, numbers, etc. You should NOT use this token in HTML element attributes (e.g.). Always use the most restrictive token possible.
{SIMPLETEXT}	Characters from the latin alphabet (A-Z), numbers, spaces, commas, dots, minus, plus, hyphen, and underscore. Does not include apostrophes or quotation marks.
{INTTEXT}	Unicode letter characters, numbers, spaces, commas, dots, minus, plus, hyphen, underscore, and whitespaces. Does not include apostrophes or quotation marks.
{IDENTIFIER}	Characters from the latin alphabet (A-Z), numbers, hyphen, and underscore. Does not include most punctuation marks.
{NUMBER}	Any series of digits.
{EMAIL}	A valid email address.
{URL}	A valid URL using any protocol (http, ftp, etc. cannot be used for javascript exploits). If none is given, "http://" is prefixed to the string.
{LOCAL_URL}	A local URL. The URL must be relative to the topic page and cannot contain a server name or protocol, as links are prefixed with "http://yourdomain/forum/".
{RELATIVE_URL}	A relative URL. You can use this to match parts of a URL, but be careful: a full URL is a valid relative URL. When you want to use relative URLs of your board, use the LOCAL_URL token.
{COLOR}	A HTML colour, can be either in the numeric form #FF1234 or a CSS colour keyword such as fuchsia or InactiveBorder.

If you need to use the same type of token more than once, you can differentiate between them by adding a number as the last character between the braces, e.g. {TEXT1}, {TEXT2}.

4.2. Private message settings

Many users use your board's private messaging system. Here you can manage all of the default *private message*-related settings. Listed below are the settings that you can change. Once you're done setting the posting settings, click Submit to submit your changes.

General settings

- Private messaging: You can enable to disable your board's private messaging system. If you want to enable it, select Yes.
- Max private message folders: This is the maximum number of new private message folders your users can each create.
- Max private messages per box: This is the maximum number of private messages your users can have in each of their folders.
- Full folder default action: Sometimes your users want to send each other a private message, but the intended recipient has a full folder. This setting will define exactly what will happen to the sent message. You can either set it so that an old message will be deleted to make room for the new message, or the new messages will be held back until the recipient makes room in his inbox. Note that the default action for the Sentbox is the deletion of old messages.
- Limit editing time: Users are usually allowed to edit their sent private messages before the recipient reads it, even if it's already in their outbox. You can control the amount of time your users have to edit sent private messages.

General options

- Allow sending of private messages to multiple users and groups: In phpBB 3.3, it is possible to send a private message to more than user. To allow this, select Yes.
- Allow BBCode in private messages: Select Yes to allow BBCode to be used in private messages.
- Allow smilies in private messages: Select Yes to allow smilies to be used in private messages.
- Allow attachments in private messages: Select Yes to allow attachments to be used in private messages.
- Allow signature in private messages: Select Yes to let your users include their *signature* in their private messages.
- Allow print view in private messages: Another new feature in phpBB 3.3 is a printer-friendly view. Select Yes to allow your users to view any of their PMs in print view.

- Allow forwarding in private messages: Select Yes to allow your users to forward private messages.
- Allow use of [img] BBCode tag: Select Yes if you want your users to be able to post inline images in their private messages.
- Allow use of [flash] BBCode tag: Select Yes if you want your users to be able to post inline Macromedia Flash objects in their private messages.
- Enable use of topic icons in private messages: Select Yes if you want to enable your users to include topic icons with their private messages. (Topic icons are displayed next to the private messages' titles.).

Tip

If you want to set any of the above numerical settings so that the setting will allow unlimited amounts of the item, set the numerical setting to 0.

4.3. Topic icons

A new feature in phpBB3 is the ability to assign icons to topics. On this page, you can manage what topic icons are available for use on your board. You can add, edit, delete, or move topic icons. The Topic Icons form displays the topic icons currently installed on your board. You can add topic icons manually, install a premade icons pack, export or download an icons pack file, or edit your currently installed topic icons.

Your first option to add topic icons to your board is to use a premade icons pack. Icon packs have the file extension **pak**. To install an icons pack, you must first download an icons pack. Upload the icon files themselves and the pack file into the `/images/icons/` directory. Then, click Install icons pak. The Install icons pak form displays all of the options you have regarding topic icon installation. Select the icon pack you wish to add (you may only install one icon pack at a time). You then have the option of what to do with currently installed topic icons if the new icon pack has icons that may conflict with them. You can either keep the existing icon(s) (there may be duplicates), replace the matches (overwriting the icon(s) that already exist), or just delete all of the conflicting icons. Once you have selected the proper option, click Install icons pak.

To add topic icon(s) manually, you must first upload the icons into the icons directory of your site. Navigate to the Topic icons page. Click Add multiple icons, which is located in the Topic Icons form. If you correctly uploaded your new desired topic icon(s) into the proper `/images/icons/` directory, you should see a row of settings for each new icon you uploaded. The following has a description on what each field is for. Once you are done with adding the topic icon(s), click, Submit to submit your additions.

- Icon image file: This column will display the actual icon itself.

- **Icon location:** This column will display the path that the icon is located in, relative to the `/images/icons/` directory.
- **Icon width:** This is the width (in pixels) you want the icon to be stretched to.
- **Icon height:** This is the height (in pixels) you want the icon to be stretched to.
- **Display on posting:** If this checkbox is checked, the topic icon will actually be displayed on the posting screen.
- **Icon order:** You can also set what order that the topic icon will be displayed. You can either set the topic icon to be the first, or after any other topic icon currently installed.
- **Add:** If you are satisfied with the settings for adding your new topic icon, check this box.

You may also edit your currently installed topic icons' settings. To do so, click **Edit icons**. You will see the Icon configuration form. For more information regarding each field, see the above paragraph regarding adding topic icons.

Lastly, you may also reorder the topic icons, edit a topic icon's settings, or remove a topic icon. To reorder a topic icon, click the appropriate "move up" or "move down" icon. To edit a topic icon's current settings, click the "settings" button. To delete a topic icon, click the red "delete" button.

4.4. Smilies

Smilies or emoticons are typically small, sometimes animated images used to convey an emotion or feeling. You can manage the smilies on your board via this page. To add smilies, you have the option to either install a premade smilies pack, or add smilies manually. Locate the Smilies form, which lists the smilies currently installed on your board, on the page.

Your first option to add smilies to your board is to use a premade smilies pack. Smilies packs have the file extension `pak`. To install a smilies pack, you must first download a smilies pack. Upload the smilies files themselves and the pack file into the `/images/smilies/` directory. Then, click **Install smilies pak**. The **Install smilies pak** form displays all of the options you have regarding smilies installation. Select the smilies pack you wish to add (you may only install one smilies pack at a time). You then have the option of what to do with currently installed smilies if the new smilies pack has icons that may conflict with them. You can either keep the existing smilies (there may be duplicates), replace the matches (overwriting the smilies that already exist), or just delete all of the conflicting smilies. Once you have selected the proper option, click **Install smilies pak**.

To add a smiley to your board manually, you must first upload the smilies into the `/images/smilies/` directory. Then, click on **Add multiple smilies**. From here, you

can add a smilie and configure it. The following are the settings you can set for the new smilies. Once you are done adding a smiley, click Submit.

- Smiley image file: This is what the smiley actually looks like.
- Smiley location: This is where the smiley is located, relative to the `/images/smilies/` directory.
- Smiley code: This is the text that will be replaced with the smiley.
- Emotion: This is the smiley's title.
- Smiley width: This is the width in pixels that the smiley will be stretched to.
- Smiley height: This is the height in pixels that the smiley will be stretched to.
- Display on posting: If this checkbox is checked, this smiley will actually be displayed on the posting screen.
- Smiley order: You can also set what order that the smiley will be displayed. You can either set the smiley to be the first, or after any other smiley currently installed.
- Add: If you are satisfied with the settings for adding your new smiley, check this box.

You may also edit your currently installed smilies' settings. To do so, click Edit smilies. You will see the Smiley configuration form. For more information regarding each field, see the above paragraph regarding adding smilies.

Lastly, you may also reorder the smilies, edit a smiley's settings, or remove a smiley. To reorder a smiley, click the appropriate "move up" or "move down" icon. To edit a smiley's current settings, click the "settings" button. To delete a smiley, click the red "delete" button.

4.5. Word censoring

On some forums, a certain level of appropriate, profanity-free speech is required. Like phpBB2, phpBB3 continues to offer word censoring. Words that match the patterns set in the Word censoring panel will automatically be censored with text that you, the admin, specify. To manage your board's word censoring, click Word censoring.

To add a new word censor, click Add new word. There are two fields: Word and Replacement. Type in the word that you want automatically censored in the Word text field. (Note that you can use wildcards (*).) Then, type in the text you want the censored word to be replaced with in the Replacement text field. Once you are done, click Submit to add the new censored word to your board.

To edit an existing word censor, locate the censored word's row. Click the "edit" icon located in that row, and proceed with changing the censored word's settings.

4.6. Attachment Settings

If you allow your users to post attachments, it is important to be able to control your board's attachments settings. Here, you can configure the main settings for attachments and the associated special categories. When you are done configuring your board's attachments settings, click Submit.

Attachment Settings

- Allow attachments: If you want attachments to be enabled on your board, select Yes.
- Allow attachments in private messages: If you want to enable attachments being posted in private messages, select Yes.
- Upload directory: The directory that attachments will be uploaded to. The default directory is `/files/`.
- Attachment display order: The order that attachments will be displayed, based on the time the attachment was posted.
- Total attachment quota: The maximum drive space that will be available for all of your board's attachments. If you want this quota to be unlimited, use a value of 0.
- Maximum filesize: The maximum filesize of an attachment allowed. If you want this value to be unlimited, use a value of 0.
- Maximum filesize messaging: The maximum drive space that will be available per user for attachments posted in private messages. If you want this quota to be unlimited, use a value of 0.
- Max attachments per post: The maximum number of attachments that can be posted in a post. If you want this value to be unlimited, use a value of 0.
- Max attachments per message: The maximum number of attachments that can be posted in a private message. If you want this value to be unlimited, use a value of 0.
- Enable secure downloads: If you want to be able to only allow attachments to be available to specific *IP addresses* or hostnames, this option should be enabled. You can further configure secure downloads once you have enabled them here; the secure downloads-specific settings are located in the Define allowed IPs/Hostnames and Remove or un-exclude allowed IPs/hostnames forms at the bottom of the page.
- Allow/Deny list: This allows you to configure the default behaviour when secure downloads are enabled. A whitelist (Allow) only allows *IP addresses* or hostnames to access downloads, while a blacklist (Deny) allows all users except those who have an *IP address* or hostname located on the blacklist. *This setting only applies if secure downloads are enabled.*

- Allow empty referrer: Secure downloads are based on referrers. This setting controls if downloads are allowed for those omitting the referrer information. *This setting only applies if secure downloads are enabled.*
- Check attachment files: Some browsers can be tricked to assume an incorrect mime-type for uploaded files. This option ensures that such files likely to cause this are rejected. *It is recommended that you leave this setting enabled.*

Image Category Settings

- Display images inline: How image attachments are displayed. If this is set to No, a link to the attachment will be given instead, rather than the image itself (or a thumbnail) being displayed inline.
- Create thumbnail: This setting configures your board to either create a thumbnail for every image attached, or not.
- Maximum thumbnail width in pixels: This is the maximum width in pixels for the created thumbnails.
- Maximum thumbnail filesize: Thumbnails will not be created for images if the created thumbnail filesize exceeds this value, in bytes. This is useful for particularly large images that are posted.
- Maximum image dimensions: The maximum size of image attachments, in pixels. If you would like to disable dimension checking (and thereby allow image attachments of any dimensions), set each value to 0.
- Image link dimensions: If an image attachment is larger than these dimensions (in pixels), a link to the image will be displayed in the post instead. If you want images to be displayed inline regardless of dimensions, set each value to 0.

Define Allowed/Disallowed IPs/Hostnames

- IP addresses or hostnames: If you have secure downloads enabled, you can specify the *IP addresses* or hostnames allowed or disallowed. If you specify more than one *IP address* or hostname, each *IP address* or hostname should be on its own line. Entered values can have wildcards (*). To specify a range for an *IP address*, separate the start and end with a hyphen (-).
- Exclude IP from [dis]allowed IPs/hostnames: Enable this to exclude the entered IP(s)/hostname(s).

4.7. Manage extensions

You can further configure your board's attachments settings by controlling what file extensions attached files can have to be uploaded. It is recommended that you do not allow

scripting file extensions (such as php, php3, php4, phtml, pl, cgi, py, rb, asp, aspx, and so forth) for security reasons. You can find this page by clicking Manage extensions once you're in the *ACP*.

To add an allowed file extension, find the Add Extension form on the page. In the field labeled Extension, type in the file extension. Do not include the period before the file extension. Then, select the extension group that this new file extension should be added to via the Extension group selection menu. Then, click Submit.

You can also view your board's current allowed file extensions. On the page, you should see a table listing all of the allowed file extensions. To change the group that an extension belongs to, select a new extension group from the selection menu located in the extension's row. To delete an extension, check the checkbox in the Delete column. When you're done managing your board's current file extensions, click Submit at the bottom of the page.

4.8. Manage extension groups

Allowed file extensions can be placed into groups for easy management and viewing. To manage the extension groups, click Manage extension groups once you get into the Posting settings part of the *ACP*. You can configure specific settings regarding each extension group.

To add a new file extension group, find the textbox that corresponds to the Create new group button. Type in the name of the extension group, then click Submit. You will be greeted with the extension group settings form. The following contains descriptions for each option available, and applies to extension groups that either already exist or are being added.

Add Extension Group

- **Group name:** The name of the extension group.
- **Special category:** Files in this extension group can be displayed differently. Select a special category from this selection menu to change the way the attachments in this extension group is presented within a post.
- **Allowed:** Enable this if you want to allow attachments that belong in this extension group.
- **Allowed in private messaging:** Enable this if you want to allow attachments that belong in this extension group in private messages.
- **Upload icon:** The small icon that is displayed next to all attachments that belong in this extension group.

- **Maximum filesize:** The maximum filesize for attachments in this extension group.
- **Assigned extensions:** This is a list of all file extensions that belong in this extension group. Click [Go to extension management screen](#) to manage what extensions belong in this extension group.
- **Allowed forums:** This allows you to control what forums your users are allowed to post attachments that belong in this extension group. To enable this extension group in all forums, select the **Allow all forums** radio button. To set which specific forums this extension group is allowed in, select the **Only forums selected below** radio button, and then select the forums in the selection menu.

To edit a current file extension group's settings, click the "Settings" icon that is in the extension group's row. Then, go ahead and edit the extension group's settings. For more information about each setting, see the above.

To delete an extension group, click the "Delete" icon that is in the extension group's row.

4.9. Orphaned attachments

Sometimes, attachments may be orphaned, which means that they exist in the specified files directory (to configure this directory, see the section on [attachment settings](#)), but aren't assigned to any post(s). This can happen when posts are deleted or edited, or even when users attach a file, but don't submit their post.

To manage orphaned attachments, click on **Orphaned attachments** on the left-hand menu once you're in the **Posting settings** section of the *ACP*. You should see a list of all orphaned attachments in the table, along with all the important information regarding each orphaned attachment.

You can assign an orphaned attachment to a specific post. To do so, you must first find the post's post ID. Enter this value into the **Post ID** column for the particular orphaned attachment. Enable **Attach file to post**, then click **Submit**.

To delete an orphaned attachment, check the orphaned attachment's **Delete** checkbox, then click **Submit**. Note that this cannot be undone.

5. Users Management

5.1. Manage Users

Users are the basis of your forum. As a forum administrator, it is very important to be able to manage your users. Managing your users and their information and specific options is easy, and can be done via the *ACP*.

To begin, log in and reach your ACP. Find and click on Users and Groups to reach the necessary page. If you do not see User Administration, simply find and click on Manage Users in the navigation menu on the left side of the page.

To continue and manage a user, you must know the username(s) that you want to manage. In the textbox for the "Find a member:" field, type in the username of the user whose information and settings you wish to manage. On the other hand, if you want to find a member, click on [Find a Member] (which is below the textbox) and follow all the steps appropriate to find and select a user. If you want to manage the information and settings for the Anonymous user (any visitor who is not logged in is set as the Anonymous user), check the checkbox labeled "Select Anonymous User". Once you have selected a user, click Submit.

There are many sections relating to a user's settings. The following are subsections that have more information on each form. Each form allows you to manage specific settings for the user you have selected. When you are done with editing the data on each form, click Submit (located at the bottom of each form) to submit your changes.

5.1.1. User Overview

This is the first form that shows up when you first select a user to manage. Here, all of the general information and settings for each user is displayed.

Username	This is the name of the user you're currently managing. If you want to change the user's username, type in a new username between three and twenty characters long into the textbox labeled Username:
Registered	This is the complete date on which the user registered. You cannot edit this value.
Registered from IP	This is the IP address from which the user registered his or her account. If you want to determine the IP hostname, click on the IP address itself. The current page will reload and will display the appropriate information. If you want to perform a whois on the IP address, click on the Whois link. A new window will pop up with this data.
Last Active	This is the complete date on which the user was last active.
Posts	This number indicates how many posts the user has posted on the board.
Warnings	This is the number of warnings the user currently has.

For more information about warnings, see [???](#).

Founder

Founders are users who have all administrator permissions and can never be banned, deleted or altered by non-founder members. If you want to set this user as a founder, select the Yes radio button. To remove founder status from a user, select the No radio button.

Email

This is the user's currently set email address. To change the email address, fill in the Email: textbox with a valid email.

Confirm email address

This textbox should only be filled if you are changing the user's email address. If you are changing the email address, both the Email: textbox and this one should be filled with the same email address. If you do not fill this in, the user's email address will not be changed.

New password

As an administrator, you cannot see any of your users' password. However, it is possible to change passwords. To change the user's password, type in a new password in the New password: textbox. The new password has to be between six and thirty characters long.

Important

Before submitting any changes to the user, make sure this field is blank, unless you really want to change the user's password. If you accidentally change the user's password, the original password cannot be recovered!

Confirm new password

This textbox should only be filled if you are changing the user's password. If you are changing the user's password, the Confirm new password: textbox needs to be filled in with the same password you filled in in the above New password: textbox.

Quick Tools

The options in the Quick Tools drop-down selection box allow you to quickly and easily change one of the user's options. The available options are Delete Signa-

ture, Delete Avatar, Move all Posts, Delete all Posts, and Delete all attachments.

5.1.2. User Feedback

Another aspect of managing a user is editing their feedback data. Feedback consists of any sort of user warning issued to the user by a forum administrator.

To customise the display of the user's existing log entries, select any criteria for your customisation by selecting your options in the drop-down selection boxes entitled Display entries from previous: and Sort by:. Display entries from previous: allows you to set a specific time period in which the feedback was issued. Sort by: allows you to sort the existing log entries by Username, Date, IP address, and Log Action. The log entries can then be sorted in ascending or descending order. When you are done setting these options, click the Go button to update the page with your customisations.

Another way of managing a user's feedback data is by adding feedback. Simply find the section entitled Add feedback and enter your message into the FEEDBACK text area. When you are done, click Submit to add the feedback.

5.1.3. User Profile

Users may sometimes have content in their forum profile that requires that you either update it or delete it. If you don't want to change a field, leave it blank. The following are the profile fields that you can change:

- ICQ Number has to be a number at least three digits long.
- AOL Instant Messenger can have any alphanumeric characters and symbols.
- MSN Messenger can have any alphanumeric characters, but should look similar to an email address (joebloggs@example.com).
- Yahoo Messenger can have any alphanumeric characters and symbols.
- Jabber address can have any alphanumeric characters, but needs to look like an email address would (joebloggs@example.com).
- Website can have any alphanumeric characters and symbols, but must have the protocol included (ex. <http://www.example.com>).
- Location can have any alphanumeric characters and symbols.
- Occupation can have any alphanumeric characters and symbols.
- Interests can have any alphanumeric characters and symbols.

- Birthday can be set with three different drop-down selection boxes: Day:, Month:, and Year:, respectively. Setting a year will list the user's age when it is his or her birthday.

5.1.4. User Preferences

Users have many settings they can use for their account. As an administrator, you can change any of these settings. The user settings (also known as preferences) are grouped into three main categories: Global Settings, Posting Defaults, and Display Options.

5.1.5. User Avatar

Here you can manage the user's *avatar*. If the user has already set an avatar for himself/herself, then you are able to see the avatar image.

Depending on your avatar settings (for more information on avatar settings, see [Avatar Settings](#)), you can choose any option available to change the user's avatar: Upload from your machine, Upload from a URL, or Link off-site. You can also select an avatar from your board's avatar gallery by clicking the Display gallery button next to Local gallery:.

Note

The changes you make to the user's avatar still has to comply with the limitations you've set in the avatar settings.

To delete the avatar image, simply check the Delete image checkbox underneath the avatar image.

When you are done choosing what avatar the user will have, click Submit to update the user's avatar.

5.1.6. User Rank

Here you can set the user's *rank*. You can set the user's rank by selecting the rank from the User Rank: drop-down selection box. After you've picked the rank, click Submit to update the user's rank.

For more information about ranks, see [Section 5.6, "Managing ranks"](#).

5.1.7. User Signature

Here you can add, edit, or delete the user's *signature*.

The user's current signature should be displayed in the Signature form. Just edit the signature by typing whatever you want into the text area. You can use *BBCode* and any other special formatting with what's provided. When you are done editing the user's signature, click Submit to update the user's signature.

Note

The signature that you set has to obey the board's signature limitations that you currently have set.

5.1.8. Groups

Here you can see all of the *usergroups* that the user is in. From this page you can easily remove the user from any usergroup, or add the user to an existing group. The table entitled Special groups user is a member of lists out the usergroups the user is currently a member of.

Adding the user to a new usergroup is very easy. To do so, find the pull-down menu labeled Add user to group: and select a usergroup from that menu. Once the usergroup is selected, click Submit. Your addition will immediately take effect.

To delete the user from a group he/she is currently a member of, find the row that the usergroup is in, and click Delete. You will be greeted with a confirmation screen; if you want to go ahead and do so, click Yes.

5.1.9. Permissions

Here you can see all of the permissions currently set for the user. For each group the user is in, there is a separate section on the page for the permissions that relates to that category. To actually set the user's permissions, see [Section 7, “Permissions”](#).

5.1.10. Attachments

Depending on the current attachments settings, your users may already have *attachments* posted. If the user has already uploaded at least one attachment, you can see the listing of the attachment(s) in the table. The data available for each attachment consist of: Filename, Topic title, Post time, Filesize, and Downloads.

To help you in managing the user's attachment(s), you can choose the sorting order of the attachments list. Find the Sort by: pull-down menu and pick the category you want to use the sort the list (the possible options are Filename, Extension, Filesize, Downloads, Post time, and Topic title. To choose the sorting order, choose either Descending or Ascending from the pull-down menu besides the sorting category. Once you are done, click Go.

To view the attachment, click on the attachment's filename. The attachment will open in the same browser window. You can also view the topic in which the attachment was posted by clicking on the link besides the Topic: label, which is below the filename. Deleting the user's attachment(s) is very easy. In the attachments listing, check the checkboxes

that are next to the attachment(s) you want to delete. When everything you want has been selected, click Delete marked, which is located below the attachments listing.

Tip

To select all of the attachments shown on the page, click the Mark all link, which is below the attachments listing. This helps especially if you want to delete all of the attachments shown on the page at once.

5.2. Inactive Users

Here you are able to view details of all users who are currently marked as inactive along with the reason their account is marked as inactive and when this occurred.

Using the checkboxes on this page it is possible to perform bulk actions on the users, these include activating the accounts, sending them a reminder email indicating that they need to activate their account or deleting the account.

There are 5 reasons which may be indicated for an account being inactive:

Account deactivated by administrator	This account has been manually deactivated by an administrator via the user management tools . More details on who performed this action and the reasons may be available via the User Notes.
Profile details changed	The board is configured to require user activation and this user has changed key information related to their account such as the email address and is required to reactivate the account to confirm these changes.
Newly registered account	The board is configured to require user activation and either the user or an administrator (depending on the settings) has not yet activated this new account.
Forced user account reactivation	An administrator has forced this user to reactivate their account via the user management tools . More details on who performed this action and the reasons may be available via the User Notes.
Unknown	No reason was recorded for this user being inactive; it is likely that the change was made by an external application or that this user was added from another source.

5.3. Users' permissions

Along with being able to manage users' information, it is also important to be able to regularly maintain and control permissions for the users on your board. User permissions include capabilities such as the use of avatars and sending private messages. Global moderator permissions including abilities such as approving posts, managing topics, and managing bans. Lastly administrator permissions such as altering permissions, defining custom BBcodes, and managing forums.

To start managing a user's permissions, locate the Users and Groups tab and click on Users' Permissions in the left-side navigation menu. Here, you can assign global permissions to users. In the Look Up User. In the Find a user field, type in the username of the user whose permissions you want to edit. (If you want to edit the anonymous user, check the Select anonymous user checkbox.) Click Submit.

Permissions are grouped into three different categories: user, moderator, and admin. Each user can have specific settings in each permission category. To facilitate user permissions editing, it is possible to assign specific preset roles to the user.

Important

For the following permissions editing actions that are described, there are three choices you have to choose from. You may either select Yes, No, or Never. Selecting Yes will enable the selected permission for the user, while selecting No will disallow the user from having permission for the selected setting, *unless another permission setting from another area overrides the setting*. If you want to completely disallow the user from having the selected permission *ever*, then select Never. The Never setting will override all other values assigned to the setting.

To edit the user's User permissions, select "User permissions from the Select type selection menu, then press Go. Select the role to apply to the user. If you would like to use the advanced form that will offer more detailed permission configuration, click the Advanced Permissions link. A new form will pop up below the Role selection menu. There are four categories of permissions you may edit: Post, Profile, Misc, and Private messages.

To edit the user's Moderative permissions, select "Moderator permissions from the Select type selection menu, then press Go. Select the role to apply to the user. If you would like to use the advanced form that will offer more detailed permission configuration, click the Advanced Permissions link. A new form will pop up below the Role selection menu. There are three categories of permissions you may edit: Post actions, Misc, and Topic actions.

To edit the user's Administrative permissions, select "Admin permissions" from the Select type selection menu, then press Go. Select the role to apply to the user. If you would like to use the advanced form that will offer more detailed permission configuration, click the Advanced Permissions link. A new form will pop up below the Role selection menu. There are six categories of permissions you may edit: Permissions, Posting, Misc, Users & Groups, Settings, and Forums.

5.4. Users' forum permissions

Along with editing your users' user account-related permissions, you can also edit their forum permissions, which relate to the forums in your board. Forum permissions are different from user permissions in that they are directly related and tied to the forums. Users' forum permissions allows you to edit your users' forum permissions. When doing so, you can only assign forum permissions to one user at a time.

To start editing a user's forum permissions, start by typing in the user's username into the Find a member text box. If you would like to edit the forum permissions that pertain to the anonymous user, check the Select anonymous user text box. Click Submit to continue.

Figure 3.6. Selecting forums for users' forum permissions

The screenshot displays the 'Users' forum permissions' interface. At the top, the title 'Users' forum permissions' is followed by the instruction 'Here you can assign forum permissions to users.' Below this, there are two distinct selection sections. The first section, titled 'Select A Forum', includes the text 'You are able to select more than one forum' and a 'Select a forum:' label. It features a multi-select dropdown menu with the following options: 'My first Category', 'Pets', 'Cats', 'Dogs', and 'Birds'. The 'Cats' and 'Dogs' options are highlighted in blue. Below the dropdown is a checkbox labeled 'All forums'. To the right of this section is a 'Submit' button. The second section, also titled 'Select A Forum', includes the text 'The forum you select here will include all subforums into the selection' and a 'Select a forum:' label. It features a single-select dropdown menu with the option 'My first Category [+Subforums]'. To the right of this section is another 'Submit' button.

Selecting forums to assign forum permissions to users. In this example, the "Cats" and "Dogs" subforums (their parent forum is "Pets") are selected. The user's forum permissions for these two forums will be edited/updated.

You should now be able to assign forum permissions to the user. You now have two ways to assign forum permissions to the user: you may either select the forum(s) manually with a multiple selection menu, or select a specific forum or category, along with its

associated subforums. Click Submit to continue with the forum(s) you have picked. Now, you should be greeted with the Setting permissions screen, where you can actually assign the forum permissions to the user. You should now select what kind of forum permissions you want to edit now; you may either edit the user's Forum permissions or Moderator permissions. Click Go. You should now be able to select the role to assign to the user for each forum you selected previously. If you would like to configure these permissions with more detail, click the Advanced permissions link located in the appropriate forum permissions box, and then update the permissions accordingly. When you are done, click Apply all permissions if you are in the Advanced permissions area, or click Apply all permissions at the bottom of the page to submit all of your changes on the page.

5.5. Custom profile fields

One of the many new features in phpBB3 that enhance the user experience is Custom Profile Fields. In the past, users could only fill in information in the common profile fields that were displayed; administrators had to add MODifications to their board to accommodate their individual needs. In phpBB3, however, administrators can comfortably create custom profile fields through the ACP.

To create your custom profile field, login to your ACP. Click on the Users and Groups tab, and then locate the Custom profile fields link in the left-hand menu to click on. You should now be on the proper page. Locate the empty textbox below the custom profile fields headings, which is next to a selection menu and a Create new field button. Type in the empty textbox the name of the new profile field you want to create first. Then, select the field type in the selection menu. Available options are Numbers, Single text field, Textarea, Boolean (Yes/No), Dropdown box, and Date. Click the Create new field button to continue. The following describes each of the three sets of settings that the new custom profile field will have.

Add profile field

- **Field type:** This is the kind of the field that your new custom profile field is. That means that it can consist of numbers, dates, etc. This should already be set.
- **Field identification:** This is the name of the profile field. This name will identify the profile field within phpBB3's database and templates.
- **Display profile field:** This setting determines if the new profile field will be displayed at all. The profile field will be shown on topic pages, profiles and the memberlist if this is enabled within the load settings. Only showing within the users profile is enabled by default.

Visibility option

- **Display in user control panel:** This setting determines if your users will be able to change the profile field within the UCP.

- **Display at registration screen:** If this option is enabled, the profile field will be displayed on the registration page. Users will be able to change this field within the UCP.
- **Required field:** This setting determines if you want to force your users to fill in this profile field. This will display the profile field at registration and within the user control panel.
- **Hide profile field:** If this option is enabled, this profile field will only show up in users' profiles. Only administrators and moderators will be able to see or fill out this field in this case.

Language specific options

- **Field name/title presented to the user:** This is the actual name of the profile field that will be displayed to your users.
- **Field description:** This is a simple description/explanation for your users filling out this field.

When you are done with the above settings, click the Profile type specific options button to continue. Fill out the appropriate settings with what you desire, then click the Next button. If your new custom profile field was created successfully, you should be greeted with a green success message. Congratulations!

5.6. Managing ranks

Ranks are special titles that can be applied to forum users. As an administrator, it is up to you to create and manage the ranks that exist on your board. The actual names for the ranks are completely up to you; it's usually best to tailor them to the main purpose of your board.

Note

When assigning a special rank name to a user, remember that no permissions are associated. For example, if you create a "Support Moderator" rank and assign it to a user, that user will not automatically get moderator permissions. You must assign the user the special permissions separately.

To manage your board's ranks, login to your ACP, click on the Users and Groups tab, and then click on the Manage ranks link located in the left-hand menu. You should now be on the rank management page. All current existing ranks are displayed.

To create a new rank, click on the Add new rank button located below the existing ranks list. Fill in the first field Rank title with the name of the rank. If you uploaded an image you want to attribute to the rank into the `/images/ranks/` folder, you can select an

image from the selection menu. The last setting you can set is if you want the rank to be a "special" rank. Special ranks are ranks that administrators assign to users; they are not automatically assigned to users based on their postcount. If you selected No, then you can fill in the Minimum posts field with the minimum number of posts your users must have before getting assigned this rank. When you are done, click the Submit button to add this new rank.

To edit a rank's current settings, locate the rank's row, and then click on its "Edit" button located in the Action column.

To delete a rank, locate the rank's row, and then click on its "Delete" button located in the Action column. Then, you must confirm the action by clicking on the Yes button when prompted.

5.7. User Security

Other than being able to manage your users on your board, it is also important to be able to protect your board and prevent unwanted registrations and users. The User Security section allows you to manage banned emails, IPs, and usernames, as well as managing disallowed usernames and user pruning. Banned users that exhibit information that match any of these ban rules will not be able to reach any part of your board.

5.7.1. Ban emails

Sometimes, it is necessary to ban emails in order to prevent unwanted registrations. There may be certain users or spam bots that use emails that you are aware of. Here, in the Ban emails section, you can do this. You can control which email addresses are banned, how long a ban is in effect, and the given reason(s) for banning.

To ban or exclude one or more email addresses, fill in the Ban one or more email addresses form. Once you are done with your changes, click Submit.

Ban one or more email addresses

- **Email address:** This textbox should contain all the emails that you want to ban under a single rule. If you want to ban more than one email at this time, put each email on its own line. You can also use wildcards (*) to match partial addresses.
- **Length of ban:** This is how long you want the email address(es) to be banned for. The available options include some common durations, such as number of hours or days. You may also set a date for which the email address(es) will be banned until; to set this, select Until -> from the selection menu, and specify a date in the format "YYYY-MM-DD" in the textbox located below the selection menu.
- **Exclude from banning:** You should enable this if you want to exclude the entered email address from all current bans.

- Reason for ban: This is a short reason for why you want to ban the email address(es). This is optional, and can help you remember in the future why you banned the email address(es).
- Reason shown to the banned: This is a short explanation that will actually be shown to the users with the banned email address(es). This can be different from the above Reason for ban.

Other than adding emails to be banned, you can also un-ban or un-exclude email addresses from bans. To un-ban or exclude one or more email addresses from bans, fill in the Un-ban or un-exclude emails form. Once you are done, click Submit.

Un-ban or un-exclude emails

- Email address: This multiple selection menu lists all currently banned emails. Select the email that you want to un-ban or exclude by clicking on the email in the multiple selection menu.

Tip

To select more than one email address, you have to use the appropriate combination of mouse and keyboard commands. The most common way to do this is to press and hold down the CTRL button on your keyboard, and then click all of the emails you want to select. Let go of the CTRL button once you are done.

- Length of ban: This is an uneditable information box that shows the length of the ban for the currently selected email. If more than one email address is selected, only one of the ban lengths will be displayed.
- Reason for ban: This is an uneditable information box that shows the reason for the ban for the currently selected email. If more than one email address is selected, only one of the ban reasons will be displayed.
- Reason shown to the banned: This is an uneditable information box that shows the reason shown to the banned for the currently selected email. If more than one email address is selected, only one of the shown ban reasons will be displayed.

5.7.2. Ban IPs

Sometimes, it is necessary to ban *IP addresses* or hostnames in order to prevent unwanted users. There may be certain users or spam bots that use IPs or hostnames that you are aware of. Here, in the Ban IPs section, you can do this. You can control which IP addresses or hostnames are banned, how long a ban is in effect, and the given reason(s) for banning.

To ban or exclude one or more IP addresses and/or hostnames, fill in the Ban one or more email addresses form. Once you are done with your changes, click Submit.

Ban one or more IPs

- **IP addresses or hostnames:** This textbox should contain all of the IP addresses and/or hostnames that you want to ban under a single rule. If you want to ban more than one IP address and/or hostname at this time, put each IP address and/or hostname on its own line. You can also use wildcards (*) to match partial addresses.
- **Length of ban:** This is how long you want the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) to be banned for. The available options include some common durations, such as number of hours or days. You may also set a date for which the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) will be banned until; to set this, select Until -> from the selection menu, and specify a date in the format "YYYY-MM-DD" in the textbox located below the selection menu.
- **Exclude from banning:** You should enable this if you want to exclude the entered IP address(es) and/or hostnames from all current bans.
- **Reason for ban:** This is a short reason for why you want to ban the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s). This is optional, and can help you remember in the future why you banned the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s).
- **Reason shown to the banned:** This is a short explanation that will actually be shown to the users with the banned IP address(es) and/or hostname(s). This can be different from the above Reason for ban.

Other than adding IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) to be banned, you can also un-ban or un-exclude IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) from bans. To un-ban or exclude one or more IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) from bans, fill in the Un-ban or un-exclude IPs form. Once you are done, click Submit.

Un-ban or un-exclude IPs

- **IP addresses or hostnames:** This multiple selection menu lists all currently banned IP address(es) and/or hostname(s). Select the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) that you want to un-ban or exclude by clicking on the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) in the multiple selection menu.

Tip

To select more than one IP address and/or hostname, you have to use the appropriate combination of mouse and keyboard commands. The most common way to do this is to press and hold down the CTRL button on your keyboard, and then click all of the IP address(es) and/or hostname(s) you want to select. Let go of the CTRL button once you are done.

- **Length of ban:** This is an uneditable information box that shows the length of the ban for the currently selected IP address or hostname. If more than one IP address or hostname is selected, only one of the ban lengths will be displayed.
- **Reason for ban:** This is an uneditable information box that shows the reason for the ban for the currently selected IP address or hostname. If more than one IP address or hostname is selected, only one of the ban reasons will be displayed.
- **Reason shown to the banned:** This is an uneditable information box that shows the reason shown to the banned for the currently selected IP address or hostname. If more than one IP address or hostname is selected, only one of the shown ban reasons will be displayed.

5.7.3. Ban Users

Whenever you encounter troublesome users on your board, you may have to ban them. On the Ban usernames page, you can do exactly that. On this page, you can manage all banned usernames.

To ban or exclude one or more users, fill in the Ban one or more users form. Once you are done with your changes, click Submit.

Ban one or more usernames

- **Username:** This textbox should contain all of the usernames that you want to ban under a single rule. If you want to ban more than one username at this time, put each username on its own line. You can also use wildcards (*) to partially match usernames.
- **Length of ban:** This is how long you want the username(s) to be banned for. The available options include some common durations, such as number of hours or days. You may also set a date for which the username(s) will be banned until; to set this, select Until -> from the selection menu, and specify a date in the format "YYYY-MM-DD" in the textbox located below the selection menu.
- **Exclude from banning:** You should enable this if you want to exclude the entered username(s) from all current bans.
- **Reason for ban:** This is a short reason for why you want to ban the username(s). This is optional, and can help you remember in the future why you banned the user(s).
- **Reason shown to the banned:** This is a short explanation that will actually be shown to the banned user(s). This can be different from the above Reason for ban.

Other than adding users to be banned, you can also un-ban or un-exclude usernames from bans. To un-ban or exclude one or more users from bans, fill in the Un-ban or un-exclude usernames form. Once you are done, click Submit.

Un-ban or un-exclude usernames

- Username: This multiple selection menu lists all currently banned usernames. Select the username(s) that you want to un-ban or exclude by clicking on the username(s) in the multiple selection menu.

Tip

To select more than one username, you have to use the appropriate combination of mouse and keyboard commands. The most common way to do this is to press and hold down the CTRL button on your keyboard, and then click all of the usernames you want to select. Let go of the CTRL button once you are done.

- Length of ban: This is an uneditable information box that shows the length of the ban for the currently selected username. If more than one username is selected, only one of the ban lengths will be displayed.
- Reason for ban: This is an uneditable information box that shows the reason for the ban for the currently selected username. If more than one username is selected, only one of the ban reasons will be displayed.
- Reason shown to the banned: This is an uneditable information box that shows the reason shown to the banned for the currently selected username. If more than one username is selected, only one of the shown ban reasons will be displayed.

5.7.4. Disallow usernames

In phpBB3, it is also possible to disallow the registration of certain usernames that match any usernames that you configure. (This is useful if you want to prevent users from registering with usernames that might confuse them with an important board member.) To manage disallowed usernames, go to the ACP, click the Users and Groups tab, and then click on Disallow usernames, which is located on the side navigation menu.

To add a disallowed username, locate the Add a disallowed username form, and then type in the username in the textbox labeled Username.

Tip

You can use wildcards (*) to match any character. For example, to disallow any username that matches "JoeBloggs", you could type in "Joe*". This would prevent all users from registering a username that starts with "Joe".

Once you are done, click Submit.

To remove a disallowed username, locate the Remove a disallowed username form. Select the disallowed username that you would like to remove from the Username selection menu. Click Submit to remove the selected disallowed username.

5.7.5. Prune users

In phpBB3, it is possible to prune users from your board in order to keep only your active members. You can also delete a whole user account, along with everything associated with the user account. Prune users allows you to prune and deactivate user accounts on your board by post count, last visited date, and more.

To start the pruning process, locate the Prune users form. You can prune users based on any combination of the available criteria. (In other words, fill out every field in the form that applies to the user(s) you're targeting for pruning.) When you are ready to prune users that match your specified settings, click Submit.

Prune users

- **Username:** Enter a username that you want to be pruned. You can use wildcards (*) to prune users that have a username that matches the given pattern.
- **Email:** The email that you want to be pruned. You can use wildcards (*) to prune users that have an email address that matches the given pattern.
- **Joined:** You can also prune users based on their date of registration. To prune users who joined before a certain date (be careful with this setting), choose Before from the selection menu. To prune users who joined after a certain date, choose After from the selection menu. The date must be in the format YYYY-MM-DD.
- **Last active:** You can also prune users based on the last time they were active. To prune users who were last active before a certain date (be careful with this setting), choose Before from the selection menu. To prune users who were last after a certain date (this is useful to prune users who have disappeared from your board), choose After from the selection menu. The date must be in the format YYYY-MM-DD.
- **Posts:** You can prune users based on their post count as well. The criteria for post count can be above, below, or equal to, a specified number. The value you enter must be a positive integer.
- **Prune users:** The usernames of the users you want to prune. Each username you want to prune should be on its own line. You can use wildcards (*) in username patterns as well.
- **Delete pruned user posts:** When users are removed (actually deleted and not just deactivated), you must choose what to do with their posts. To delete all of the posts that belong to the pruned user(s), select the radio button labeled Yes. Otherwise, select No and the pruned user(s)' posts will remain on the board, untouched.

- Deactivate or delete: You must choose whether you want to deactivate the pruned user(s)' accounts, or to completely delete and remove them from the board's database.

Warning

Pruning users cannot be undone! Be careful with the criteria you choose when pruning users.

6. Group Management

Usergroups are a way of grouping users. This makes it easier to set permissions to many people at the same time. phpBB 3.3 has six pre-defined groups: Administrators, Bots, Global Moderators, Guests, Registered Users, and Registered COPPA Users.

6.1. Group types

There are two types of groups:

Pre-defined groups

These are groups that are available by default in phpBB 3.3. You *cannot* delete them, as the board needs them for various features. You can still change their attributes (description, colour, rank, avatar, and so forth) and group leaders. Users that register to your board are automatically added to the predefined group "Registered Users", for instance. Do not try to remove them manually through the database, or your board will no longer function properly.

Administrators

This usergroup contains all of the administrators on your board. All founders are administrators, but not all administrators are founders. You can control what administrators can do by managing this group.

Bots

This usergroup is meant for search engine bots. phpBB 3.3 has the ability to overcome the com-

mon problems that search engine spiders encounter when spidering your board. For more information on managing settings for each bot, see the Spiders and Bots section.

Global Moderators

Global moderators are moderators that have moderator permissions for every forum in your board. You can edit what permissions these moderators have by managing this group.

Guests

Guests are visitors to your board who aren't logged in. You can limit what guests can do by managing this usergroup.

Registered Users

Registered users are a big part of your board. Registered users have already registered on your board. To control what registered users can do, manage this usergroup.

Registered COPPA Users

Registered COPPA users are basically the same as registered users, except that they fall under the COPPA, or Child Online Privacy Protection Act, law,

meaning that they are under the age of 13 in the U.S.A. Managing the permissions this usergroup has is important in protecting these users. COPPA doesn't apply to users living outside of the U.S.A. and can be disabled altogether.

User defined groups

The groups you create by yourself are called "User defined groups". These groups are similar to groups in 2.0. You may create as many as you want, remove them, set group leaders, and change their attributes (description, colour, rank, avatar, and so forth).

The Manage Groups section in the ACP shows you separated lists of both your "User defined groups" and the "Pre-defined groups".

6.2. Group attributes

A list of attributes a group can have:

Group name

The name of your group.

Group description

The description of the group that will be displayed on the group overview list.

Display group in legend:

This will enable the display of the name of the group in the legend of the "Who is Online" list. Note, that this will only make sense if you specified a colour for the group.

Group able to receive private messages

This will allow the sending of Private Messages to this group. Please note, that it can be dangerous to allow this for Registered Users, for instance. There is no permission to deny the sending to groups, so anyone who is able to send Private Messages will be able to send a message to this group!

Group private message limit per folder

This setting overrides the per-user folder message limit. A value of "0" means the user default limit will be used. See the [section on user preferences](#)

	for more information about private message settings.
Group colour	The name of members that have this group as their default group (see Section 6.3, “Default groups”) will be displayed in this colour on all forum pages. If you enable Display group in legend , an legend entry with the same colour will appear below the "Who is Online" listing.
Group rank	A member that has this group as the default group (see Section 6.3, “Default groups”) will have this rank below his username. Note, that you can change the rank of this member to a different one that overrides the group setting. See the section on ranks for more information.
Group avatar	A member that has this group as the default group (see Section 6.3, “Default groups”) will use this avatar. Note that a member can change his avatar to a different one if he has the permission to do so. For more information on avatar settings, see the userguide section on avatars .

6.3. Default groups

As it is now possible to assign attributes like colours or avatars to groups (see [Section 6.2, “Group attributes”](#)), it can happen that a user is a member of two or more different groups that have different avatars or other attributes. So, which avatar will the user now inherit?

To overcome this problem, you are able to assign each user exactly one "Default group". The user will only inherit the attributes of this group. Note, that it is not possible to mix attributes: If one group has a rank but no avatar, and another group has only a avatar, it is not possible to display the avatar from one group and the rank from the other group. You have to decide for one "Default group".

Important

Default groups have no influence on permissions. There is no added permissions bonus for your default group, so a user's permissions will stay the same, no matter what group is his default one.

You can change default groups in two ways. You can do this either through the user management (see [Section 5, “Users Management”](#)), or directly through the groups man-

agement (Manage groups) page. Please be careful with the second option, as when you change the default group through a group directly, this will change the default group for *all* its group members and overwrite their old default groups. So, if you change the default group for the "Registered Users" group by using the Default link, all members of your forum will have this group as their default one, even members of the Administrators and Moderators groups as they are also members of "Registered Users".

Important

If you make a group the default one that has a rank and avatar set, the user's old avatar and rank will be overwritten by the group.

6.4. Group positions

When groups are set to be shown in the legend, you can change their order on this page. They can be automatically sorted by name or manually by setting their order with the Up and Down arrows. If a group is not shown on the list, a dropdown menu is available to add it to the legend.

It is also possible to change which groups are shown on the Team page. There are three options available for choosing how members are listed on the Team page.

- First membership only: Of the groups selected to be shown on the team page, members will only appear in their first group in the list.
- User's default group only: Of the groups selected to be shown on the team page, members will only appear in their default group.
- All memberships: Users will be shown in each group that is selected to appear on the team page, if they are a member of that group.

You may also choose to show which forums each team member is a moderator for.

Categories can be created to affiliate members of multiple user groups with a common title.

Finally, you are able to choose which groups are considered Team positions and should be shown on the Team page.

7. Permissions

On your board, you will need to control what users can and cannot do, and what they can and cannot see. With the flexible and detailed system that phpBB provides, you have an extensive ability to manage permissions. There are five types of permissions in phpBB:

- Global User permissions
- Global Moderator permissions
- Global Administrator permissions
- User Forum permissions
- Forum Moderator permissions

The three Global permissions are ones which apply to every forum or are unrelated to forums altogether.

The two Forum permissions are ones which apply to only one forum at a time.

Any of these five permission types may be assigned to individual users or to usergroups.

When setting permissions, you will encounter three possible values - NO, YES and NEVER, with NO as the default value for each permission. If you set a YES, it overrides the NO, however, if the permission is set to NEVER, you cannot override it by setting it to YES in another place. If you still have problems understanding this system, see the [Permissions Masks](#) section.

To understand how to set permissions and to know how to use the interface, it is important to recognize the different types of permissions and tools that the Permission tab in the ACP provides:

7.1. Global Permissions

These affect the whole board and are not bound to specific forums. They include user permissions, which limit the use of the UCP, searching, private messaging, using of avatars/signatures/etc. Administrator permissions are also set here, as they are Global.

7.1.1. Global User Permissions

Global User permissions are those permissions which apply to all forums, such as permissions to attach or download files or use a signature, or permissions which are unrelated to a forum, such as permissions relating to profiles, private messages, and email.

Although Global User permissions can be assigned to users by click Users' Permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user, and then selecting User permissions from the Select type dropdown, it is generally far preferable to avoid using User permissions and use Group permissions instead. This will make it easier to manage permissions in the future and to assign permissions to users in the future. The only practical difference between User permissions and Group permissions is that User permissions require you to set permissions for each user individually, where Group permission let you create a

Group and assign its members a set of permissions. Then, if you wish other users to have the same permissions, you can just add them to the Group.

Global user permissions can be assigned to user groups by clicking Groups' permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user group, and then selecting User permissions from the Select type dropdown.

In either case, you will be allowed to select a stock User Role in the dropdown, or you can click Advanced Permissions to customise the permissions. However, the better way to customise one of the stock Roles is to create a new User role based on the settings of an existing Role. You can also create a new User role from scratch. Roles use fewer resource than if you make modifications by editing the Advanced permissions.

7.1.2. Global Moderator Permissions

Global Moderator permissions are those permissions which apply to editing, deleting, or otherwise affecting other users' topics and posts, or to affect other users through reports, warnings, or bans. Permissions given here will apply to any forum the user or user group can see.

Global Moderator permissions can be assigned to users by clicking Users' permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user, and then selecting Global moderator permissions from the Select type dropdown.

Global Moderator permissions can be assigned to user groups by clicking Groups' permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user group, and then selecting Global moderator permissions from the Select type dropdown.

Global Moderator permissions can also be assigned to both users and user groups by clicking Global Moderators from your ACP Permissions tab. This option will display all of the users and user groups who are currently assigned Global Moderator permissions. You can add, edit, or delete users and user groups from this option.

In either case, you will be allowed to select a stock Moderator Role in the role dropdown, or you can click Advanced Permissions to customise the permissions, or, preferably, create a new Role having the permissions set you desire.

7.1.3. Global Administrator Permissions

Global Administrator permissions are those permissions which apply to maintaining your board through the Administration Control Panel. They include permissions for maintaining forums, users, and user groups, maintaining and assigning permissions, changing board configuration settings, and other such board maintenance tasks.

Global Administrator permissions can be assigned to users by clicking Users' permissions from your ACP permissions tab, selecting a user, and then selecting Global admin permissions from the Select type dropdown.

Global Administrator permissions can be assigned to user groups by clicking Groups' permissions from your ACP permissions tab, selecting a user group, and then selecting Global admin permissions from the Select type dropdown.

Global Administrator permissions can also be assigned to both users and user groups by clicking Administrators from your ACP Permissions tab. This option will display all of the users and user groups who are currently assigned Administrator permissions. You can add, edit, or delete users and user groups from this option.

In either case, you will be allowed to select a stock Admin Role in the role dropdown, or you can click Advanced Permissions to customise the permissions, or, preferably, create a new Role having the permissions set you desire.

7.2. Forum Permissions

These permissions are set for each forum/user or group combination individually. They can be divided into two types: User permissions and Moderator permissions. The first control if a user or group can see the forum, post in it, and so on, while the Moderator permissions control if the user or group can do moderator-related actions in it.

7.2.1. User Forum Permissions

User Forum permissions are those which apply to creating and editing ones own posts in a particular forum and printing and reporting topics. They also determine whether posts require approval or increment the post counter as well as some other user capabilities in a particular forum.

User Forum permissions can be assigned to users by clicking Users' forum permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user, selecting one or more forums from the list, and then selecting Forum permissions from the Select type dropdown.

User Forum permissions can be assigned to user groups by clicking Groups' forum permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user group, selecting one or more forums from the list, and then selecting Forum permissions from the Select type dropdown.

User Forum permissions can also be assigned to both users and user groups by clicking Forum permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, and then selecting one or more forums from the list. This option will display the all of the users and user groups who are currently assigned User Forum permissions for that forum. You can add, edit, or delete users and user groups from this option.

In either case, you will be allowed to select a stock Forum Role in the role dropdown, or you can click Advanced Permissions to customise the permissions, or, preferably, create a new Role having the permissions set you desire.

7.2.2. Forum Moderator Permissions

Forum Moderator permissions are those which apply to editing, deleting, or otherwise affecting other users' topics and posts in one particular forum, or to affect other users through reports, warnings, or bans.

Forum Moderator permissions can be assigned to users by clicking Users' forum permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user, selecting one or more forums from the list, and then selecting Moderator permissions from the Select type dropdown.

Forum Moderator permissions can be assigned to user groups by clicking Groups' forum permissions from your ACP Permissions tab, selecting a user group, selecting one or more forums from the list, and then selecting Moderator permissions from the Select type dropdown.

Forum Moderator permissions can also be assigned to both users and user groups by clicking Forum Moderators from your ACP Permissions tab, and then selecting one or more forums from the list. This option will display all of the users and user groups who are currently assigned Forum Moderator permissions for that forum. You can add, edit, or delete users and user groups from this option.

In either case, you will be allowed to select a stock Moderator Role in the role dropdown, or you can click Advanced Permissions to customise the permissions, or, preferably, create a new Role having the permissions set you desire.

7.3. Permission Roles

To ease setting of permissions, you can create roles that have a pre-defined set of permissions and which you can then assign to users or groups. phpBB already prepared some predefined roles for you to use - e.g., in forum based permissions, you can make each user a Standard Moderator, Full Moderator or Limited Moderator, etc.

There are four types of Permission Roles:

- Admin Roles, used with Global Administrator permissions
- User Roles, used with Global User permissions
- Moderator Roles, used with Global Moderator permissions and Forum Moderator permissions
- Forum Roles, used with User Forum permissions

Permission Roles can be maintained by clicking the corresponding link on the ACP Permissions tab. Roles provide a convenient permissions template to use when assigning

permissions to either users or user groups. A Role's permissions settings can be viewed or edited by clicking the green-gear for that role.

Most standard Roles use combinations of Yes and No, meaning that if one user is assigned two different roles from being a member of two different groups, for instance Limited Access and Regular Access, the Yeses will override the Nos and leave the user with Regular Access.

The Exceptions are the ones with Never settings, such as the User Roles No Avatar , No PMs and Newly Registered User Features, and the Forum Role On Moderation Queue. These four Roles use Never settings, and therefore override the Yes settings that would have been granted by other roles.

You should never use one of these four roles, or any other Never settings with your Registered Users group. Doing so will take those permissions away from everyone, including yourself.

If a Role's permission settings are not quite right for your forum -- for instance, you don't want anyone to be able to hide their online status -- you can add or subtract a permission to or from a standard Role. Then wherever that role is used, that permission will be changed.

You can also create your own custom roles by typing a new name into the Create role box, selecting a role to copy from in the Use settings from dropdown, and click submit. Then you can customise your new role and use it for assigning those permissions.

Using such custom roles is simpler than editing the advanced permissions for multiple forums and should reduce the resources required by your forum when checking permissions.

7.4. Permission Masks

In this section, you do not set or change anything, but you can view the final permissions a user or group has based on the combined result of the permissions a user has from his user permissions or group memberships. This feature is particularly useful when you need to debug your permissions and for example, you cannot find out why someone doesn't have the permission you want him to have. Permission masks is a tool for viewing the permission settings for all five permissions types for both users and user groups.

Each link on the Permissions Masks section of the ACP Permissions tab corresponds to one of the five permission types:

- View administrative permissions for Global Administrator permissions
- View user-based permissions for Global User permissions

- View global moderation permissions for Global Moderator permissions
- View forum moderation permissions for Forum Moderators permissions
- View forum-based permissions for User Forum permissions

Any of these five links will take you to a page listing the users and user groups that are assigned those Global or Forum permissions.

Selecting one or more user groups will display the permissions for those user groups, the same way they are shown in the permissions edit pages, so there is no added utility in running the masks on group names. Permissions masks are most useful when run on a username, and not a group name, since the latter will give you only the same information provided by viewing that group's permissions.

Viewing a user's permissions is much different. If you type a user's name into the Find a member box for any of the five permission types and click View permissions it will display that user's resulting permissions, taking into account all of the user's groups' permissions. Also, the forum moderation mask will take into account global moderation permissions as well.

Each individual permission will have a circle-arrow which is a link to display all of that user's groups and which groups grant or deny that permission.

Figure 3.7. Permission Masks

USER	SETTING	TOTAL	INFORMATION
Default	No	No	By default can be overridden
Ministry of Technology	Yes	Yes	This group's total value is
Registrants	No	Yes	The permission total value is
Members	No	Yes	The permission total value is
Ministers	No	Yes	The permission total value is
Brf	Never	Never	The user's previous
Brf (global)	Yes	Yes	The forum in overrides the
Trace result		Yes	Resulting permission

The screens you will see when tracing permissions with the Permission Masks tool.

Note

In this example you see how a Global Moderation Yes overrides a Forum Moderation Never. This is one exception to the rule about Nevers overriding Yeses. The other exception is Founders. If a user is marked as a Founder

on their User Administration Overview page, they will be granted All of the Global Administrator permissions, overriding any No or Never settings given to that user or his user groups.

7.5. Other Shortcuts

The shortcuts on the ACP Permissions tab are sprinkled around other spots in the ACP.

- The Users' permissions, Users' forum permissions, Groups' permissions, and Groups' forum permissions links are duplicated on the ACP User and Groupstab
- The Forum permissions, Forum moderators, Users' forum permissions, and Groups' forum permissions links are duplicated on the ACP Forums tab
- On the Manage Users page, after selecting a User, you can select Permissions on the Select form dropdown:
 - The three Global permissions Masks are shown by default
 - The Select a forum dropdown will display the two Forum permissions masks
 - Set users permissions link leads to update the three Global Permissions
 - Set users forum permissions link leads to update the two Forum Permissions

7.6. Permissions Quick Start

The following permissions can be set to help start a new forum.

7.6.1. Global Administrator Permissions

- By default the Administrators user group has the Standard Admin role. This will prevent anyone but the Founder from assigning any other Administrators, editing Roles, and installing any language packs, styles or modules into your forum.
- By default the Standard Admin Role cannot use other's permissions. This makes maintaining permissions more difficult, so I would recommend editing the Standard Admin Admin role and adding the permission Can use others permissions.

7.6.2. Global Moderator Permissions

- By default the Global Moderators user group has the Standard Moderator role. This allows them to moderate any forum they can see, but does not allow them to change a post's author or ban users.

- Add the Standard Moderator or Full Moderator Role to the Administrators user group. This will allow your Administrators to moderate any forum, without having to add them to the Global Moderators user group.

7.6.3. Global User Permissions

- Administrators and Global Moderators user groups start with All Features User role, which is fine.
- Registered Users start with Standard Features User role, which gives them most normal user rights, but does not allow them to change their username or default user group and a few other things.
- Standard Features User role allows users to hide their online status. You may want to edit this Standard Features role and set this permission to No.
- Guests start with custom Global User permissions that only allow downloading and searching.

7.6.4. Forum Moderator Permissions

- Administrators and Global Moderators would have Global Moderator permissions, so it is unnecessary to assign them as Forum Moderators.
- If you will have junior moderators who will moderate individual forums, add those users to those forums' moderator lists, or create moderator user groups for those moderators and add the user groups here. Assign the users or user groups appropriate Moderator Roles.

7.6.5. User Forum Permissions

- For most forums, give your Administrators and Global Moderators user groups the Full Access Forum Role. This will allow them to make Stickies and Announcements.
- Give your Registered Users user group the Standard Access Forum Role for any forums except your admin/mods only forums or other hidden forums.
- Give Read Only Access Forum Role to the Guests user group for forums you want un-registered guests to be able to read.
- Add the Bot Access Forum Role for the Bots user group for the same forums you want guests to read, so webcrawler searchbots can index those forums.
- The No Access Forum Role would be more useful with Never permissions than its current Nos. Edit the No Access Forum Role and change Can see forum and Can read

forum from No to Never. This will allow you to use this role to block access to a forum for a small group.

7.7. Quick Answers

Nobody can see any of my new forums

By default, new forums have no permissions assigned. You have to assign forum permissions, or copy them from another forum before anyone can see them.

I have Full Administrator permissions. Why can I not see my new forums?

Administrator Permissions have nothing to do with Forum Permissions. You have to assign Forum Permissions for yourself or your user group before you can see or post in a forum.

I have added permissions to my new forums, but I still cannot see them.

You also have to add permissions to your forums' parent categories.

I have added a new category, with proper permissions, but I cannot see it.

Categories will not show unless there are viewable forums under them.

How can I allow my moderators to create Sticky or Announcement Topics?

Sticky and Announcement permissions are in Forum Permissions. Assigning a Full Access forum role will allow them to make Stickies and Announcements.

I set a sub-forum to copy permissions from its parent forum, but when I changed the permissions for the parent, the sub-forum did not change.

Copy permissions is an action, not a setting. When you select to Copy permissions it copies the permissions when you click Submit. It will not copy any future changes unless you select to copy them again in Manage Forums, Edit.

I created a private forum with a special group that has permissions to see the forum. Now, even members of that group cannot see that forum.

You probably set Never permissions for the Registered Users group. Since members of your special group are also members of Registered Users, that Never permission is overriding the Yes permission assigned by the new user group. You should be deleting the Registered Users group from that forum's Forum Permissions list, rather than assigning Never permissions.

8. Customise

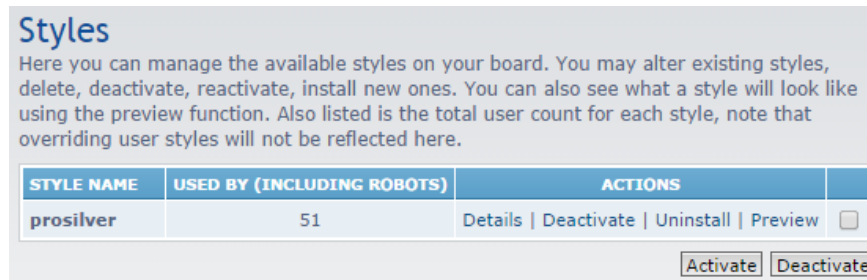
phpBB 3.3 allows you to customise its appearance and interactions in several ways:

Styles	The appearance of your board can be changed by installing new styles or modifying the default style.
Extensions	Extensions allow you to easily add new functionality to your board.
Language Packs	If your board users speak a language other than English, you can install a language pack to translate the system text (not the board's content) to another language.

8.1. Styles

Styling is one aspect of this customisability. Being able to manage the styles your board uses is important in keeping an interesting board. Your board's style may even reflect the purpose of your board. Styles allows you to manage all the styles available on your board.

Figure 3.8. Styles overview



Styles		
Here you can manage the available styles on your board. You may alter existing styles, delete, deactivate, reactivate, install new ones. You can also see what a style will look like using the preview function. Also listed is the total user count for each style, note that overriding user styles will not be reflected here.		
STYLE NAME	USED BY (INCLUDING ROBOTS)	ACTIONS
prosilver	51	Details Deactivate Uninstall Preview ☐
		Activate Deactivate

This is a list of the styles that are installed on the board. You can see the number of users using the style and you can follow the links to change the style's details.

Creating a style is not an easy task and it takes quite a lot of time. Skilled designers from the phpBB community create styles that are available publicly and anyone can download them. This is a good place to start if you want to download and install a new style and you cannot afford to create your own, for any possible reason. The first place where you should stop is the [Styles section on phpBB.com](#), you will find a list of useful links for places like the:

[Styles Demo](#)

The styles demo allows you to display each style on a live forum and see how each part of the board looks like using the specified style. You can browse through the styles until you find one that suits you and/or your board. The styles demo provides links to download the style and see its entry in the styles database.

[Styles Database](#)

The Style Database contains all the styles that were validated by the phpBB.com Styles Team. All styles are validated to ensure they are safe to use, work correctly and do not have any other caveats. You can filter styles by parameters like version, color

or category to easily find a style that you would like. Each style entry in the database contains a link to the Style Demo, to show a live example of the style in use.

8.1.1. Installing and managing styles

After you choose a style and you are ready to install it, unpack it on your PC and upload the directory with the style to your board's server. Make sure that the directory you upload to the server's `styles` contains the `template` and `theme` directories, as well as a `style.cfg` file. The only exception is when a style has its template or theme based on another one, you will however be informed of that when you download the style. Having the dependent style component installed is required to install such a style.

Since you have uploaded all the necessary files, you can continue to install your style. Go to the Customise tab in the ACP and click the Install Styles link. You should see a table containing a list of your uploaded styles. If you want to install your downloaded style, click the Install style link next to its title.

At this moment, you should know how to install a new style. However, there are some links and features on the Styles overview page that we have missed. They are:

- **Details:** This link will take you to the details of style, where you can change its name, set if the style is active or not, as well as if it should be the board's default style.
- **Activate/Deactivate:** Pretty clear without an explanation, this link allows you to switch the style on and off very quickly and easily.
- **Uninstall:** If you or your users do not like the style anymore, use this link. When you uninstall a style, the users of that style will be switched to the board's default style. You also have the option of completely deleting the style as well if you check the Delete from filesystem box. This will uninstall the style and delete its files, this cannot be undone.
- **Preview:** This is a very useful and powerful feature for administrators. If you click this link, you will be taken to the board and the style you have selected will be applied - this is great when you want to see if the style looks good on your board and you want to make sure you should activate it. This feature can be used even with deactivated styles. The style ID is passed through the URL, so you can browse through the board and see any page you need.

8.2. Extensions

Extensions are self-contained packages which are uploaded to your board's `ext` directory. Using the Extensions Manager, you can install and manage the extensions running on your board.

Figure 3.9. Extensions overview

Extensions Manager

The Extensions Manager is a tool in your phpBB Board which allows you to manage all of your extensions statuses and view information about them.

Re-Check all versions • Settings

EXTENSION NAME	CURRENT VERSION	OPTIONS	ACTIONS
Disabled Extensions			
Board Announcements	1.0.0-RC1	Details	Enable
UPDATING AN EXTENSION			
1. Disable the extension 2. Delete the extension's files from the filesystem 3. Upload the new files 4. Enable the extension			
COMPLETELY REMOVING AN EXTENSION FROM YOUR BOARD			
1. Disable the extension 2. Delete the extension's data 3. Delete the extension's files from the filesystem			

This is a list of the extensions that are activated or are ready for use on your board.

After uploading the extension, it will appear in the Extension Manager, where you simply need to click the Enable link to activate the extension. Once an extension is activated, an Extensions tab will appear in the Administration Control Panel if the extension has any configuration settings. The Details link shows you information about the extension, such as its authors, home page, description, and version requirements. The Current Version column indicates if you have the latest version of the extension. The Settings link at the top of the screen allows you to check for updates on pre-release extensions that are not yet considered to be stable. Your board will periodically check to see if you are running the latest extensions, but you can click the Re-Check all versions link to force a re-check of your extensions' versions.

If a newer version of your extension is available, you can update it by following these steps:

1. Disable the extension by clicking the Disable link in the Actions column.
2. Delete the extension's files from the board's `ext` directory. Only delete the folder that corresponds to the extension you wish to update.
3. Upload the latest version of the files to the `ext` directory.
4. Enable the extension by clicking the Enable link in the Actions column.

If you wish to completely remove an extension from your board, follow these steps:

1. Disable the extension by clicking the Disable link in the Actions column.

2. Delete any data added by the extension by clicking the Delete data link in the Actions column.
3. Delete the extension's files from the board's `ext` directory. Only delete the folder that corresponds to the extension you wish to update.

8.3. Language Packs

In phpBB, you can upload several language packs for your users to use. Every text string displayed by the system should be translated after you upload a new language pack. Using a different language pack does not change the contents of posts, as translating them is not possible due to the various content they can have and the limits of computer translation.

Language packs can be downloaded from the [Downloads](#) page on phpbb.com.

To add a language pack, unzip the downloaded file and upload the contents, that is the `language` and `styles` directories, to the root directory of your board. The board's `language/` directory should then contain an additional directory with the name of the ISO code of the added language, for example, if French is added in addition to the default British English pack, the `en/` directory, there will also be a `fr/` directory. After you upload the files to the system, the pack should show in the Uninstalled language packs list. Click Install to add it to the board and make it available for users.

Once the language pack is installed users can select it in User Control Panel » Board preferences » Edit global settings.

Note

To make a language pack the default language of the board, you need to change the [Board Configuration](#).

In case you have more language packs installed and you select another language pack than the default one, you will see a list of untranslated variables if the packs are not synchronised. This is useful when you install MODs for one language and you cannot find what language strings you are missing in the other ones for example.

Important

Language packs, other than the default British English, are not automatically updated when the board is updated. If you have installed other language packs you will need to update those as well.

9. Board Maintenance

Running a phpBB 3.3 board is a very important job that is up to the administrator(s). Maintaining the board to make sure it runs as cleanly and properly as possible is the administrator's job.

Board Maintenance is a section in the ACP that allows you to keep track of internal phpBB information, such as logs, as well as maintaining your database (which holds your phpBB-related data), such as backing up and restoring data.

9.1. Forum Logs

The Forum Log section of the ACP provides an overview of what has been happening on the board. This is important for you, the administrator, to keep track of. There are four types of logs:

Admin Log	This log records all actions carried out within the administration panel itself.
Moderator Log	This logs records the actions performed by moderators of your board. Whenever a topic is moved or locked it will be recorded here, allowing you to see who carried out a particular action.
User Log	This log records all important actions carried out either by users or on users. All email and password changes are recorded within this log.
Error Log	This log shows you any errors that were caused by actions done by the board itself, such as errors sending emails. If you are having problems with a particular feature not working, this log is a good place to start. If enabled, additional debugging information may be written to this log.

Click on one of the log links located in the left-hand Forum Logs section.

If you have appropriate permissions, you are able to remove any or all log entries from the above sections. To remove log entries, go to the appropriate log entries section, check the log entries' checkboxes, and then click on the Delete marked checkbox to delete the log entries.

9.2. Database backup and restore

phpBB uses a database to store all the data used on the board, including users, posts, topics etc. Backing up the database can be useful as a protective measure in case of any

accidents which could cause data loss or damage to the database. If any accident like this would occur, you would have a possibility to restore the database to a previous state from the backup. You can use the backup tool to move your board to another host - you will make a backup on your current server and restore it on the new one to keep all data.

Database backup

- Backup type: You can backup the whole database or you can either backup the structure or data. The structure only contains the hierarchy in which the data is stored, on the other side, if you only backup the data, you will need a pre-prepared structure when restoring/importing data.
- File type: Depending on your server setup, you can save the backup in several formats. The Text option saves the backup in plain text, other options compress the file to decrease the filesize of the dump.
- Table select: You can either Select all tables or you can select individual tables to backup. When backing up a large database, you can exclude the search tables (do not forget to restore their structure) and recreate the search index on the new server.

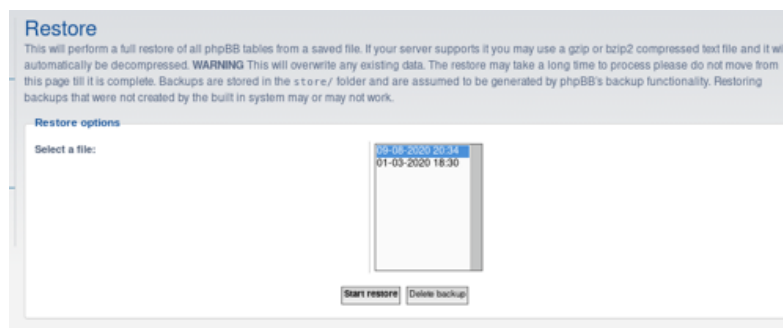
Tip

Use the CTRL and Shift keys together with your mouse to select individual tables.

Database restore

- File select: You will be offered a list of database backups which are saved in the store folder. Select the one you want to restore and click Start restore. The restoration might take some time and it will overwrite any existing data on the board.

Figure 3.10. List of backups available



In this list, located on the Restore page, you can find a list of backups made through the phpBB ACP which can be selected and restored.

Note

The ability to download backups from the ACP was removed in 3.2.6. Backups will need to be downloaded from the server using FTP, SCP, or another mechanism.

9.3. Search Indexing

phpBB 3.3 provides you with a powerful search system which can be used to search throughout your board. The main controls for the search features are located in the [Search settings](#) section. Here you can manage the search index, which is used to hold the data necessary for quick and precise search results, it's something like an giant table of contents. By default, two search backends are available - fulltext native, which is included in the phpBB code and works on all *DBMSs*, and fulltext mysql, which uses the built-in MySQL fulltext searching feature. The first one offers more flexible configuration, while the second one doesn't take too much space in the database and the index is created much faster.

Note

Creating a search index can take a very long time, a new window will pop up and refresh itself while creating the necessary search table entries. Please be patient, the process can take several hours on large boards.

The fulltext native backend works like this: it uses two tables, one containing the words, which are used on the board and which have a numeric ID assigned and a second table, which links post IDs to word IDs. This system is very fast when you need to search a specific word(s) in the whole database, the following statistics, which are offered on the Search Index page, describe how many words and relations the system holds:

Total number of indexed words

This setting is quite self-explanatory, it is the number of different words that have ever been posted to your board. Only words that match the criteria for indexing, set in the [Search settings](#), are considered.

Total number of word to post relations indexed

As described above, the second search table holds a list of relations between the posts and words. For example if someone would post "airplane" in two different posts, the system would add the word once and it would add to relations, one to each post.

Total number of indexed posts

This statistic is shown for the mysql fulltext backend, where the search is done by a internal mechanism of the Database system. It tells you how many posts on the board were indexed.

10. System Configuration

Controls which affect the whole board and which are a key part of configuring and running phpBB are located in the System section. Most of these settings require more attention from the administrator and are not so easy to configure, fortunately you will probably not be changing them too often. This includes keeping your installation up-to-date, managing the board's languages or editing the structure of phpBB's control panels.

10.1. Checking for updates

The phpBB 3.3.x branch is usually updated every couple of months as necessary. Bugfixes, new features and other changes are included in these updates. The minor version number gets incremented each time. It is strongly recommended keeping your phpBB installation up to date. Updating from older versions is more difficult, and you will have a hard time finding solutions to possible conflicts. You should use the Full Package Update to update your board, especially if your board does not have any modifications to core files. Alternatively expert users may want to update with the Advanced Update Package, which is able to merge modifications to core files.

You will be notified in your ACP if a new version is released, you will also have a link to the newest release announcement, which will brief you on the added features and the overall changelog.

Updating with the Full Package is very simple. First, you will go to the linked [phpBB.com](#) downloads page and download the full package of the latest version. You will extract the contents on your PC, remove config.php, the images/, files/, and store/ directory from the extracted package, and upload them to the root directory of your board, overwriting any old files and merging directories. The board will be offline for normal users for the moment. Then simply go to the `install/` directory and select the Update tab, continue with updating your board by clicking on "Update database only".

Please have a look at the more detailed instructions for the [Full Package Update](#)

10.2. Managing Search Robots

phpBB 3 introduced a new system for managing search indexer and bot accounts. It allows you to identify these automated bots by their IP or a part of their user-agent, which is a setting that normally identifies the browser of a user. After you add a bot and it is recognized, phpBB does not treat the session as anonymous, but uses the created

bot account. Bots use permissions set by the predefined Bots group. Identifying bots is important so that phpBB can serve them content which is more appropriate for search engines - dead links to pages without content are omitted, e.g. posting pages, report post pages etc. Bots never receive a session ID in the URL, which should not appear in the search results. You can also assign a specific style and language to bots.

You can easily track if a specific search indexer visited your site recently by checking the Last Visit column on the botlist page.

Note

Bots do not use permissions from the Guest group, but permissions from the Bots group. For more about predefined groups, please read [Section 6.1, "Group types"](#)

Adding a bot

- Bot name: This is the title of the bot that will be used on the forum. You will see it in the list of bots in the ACP and in the Who is Online lists.
- Bot style: You can select the style served to the bot from the list of installed styles on the board.
- Bot language: You can do the same with the language. The bot will use the language selected here.
- Bot active: The bot session will be created only if a bot is active, if not, the data for a bot set in this form will not be used anywhere.
- Agent match: You can match a bot by either its user-agent or its IP. You can specify a part of the user-agent to be looked for. For example, the Google search indexer has "Googlebot" in its user-agent, so you would enter it here to identify when Google crawls your board.
- Bot IP address: This field is also used to identify the bot. If a bot cannot be recognized by the user-agent, you can specify what *IP address* should be used to identify it. Partial matches are allowed, that means you can include only the first two or three octets of the IP if the rest dynamically changes. You can also enter multiple IPs separated by a comma.

Note

If you enter both a user-agent and an *IP address*, both have to match to identify the bot.

10.3. Mass email

phpBB allows you to send an e-mail or message to every user on the board, which allows it in his [board preferences](#). The message can serve as a newsletter, notification about changes on the board etc. You can choose whether to send the e-mail to all users, a specific group or a list of specific users. The e-mail is sent from the administrator's e-mail address and all recipients are included in a BCC - Blind Carbon Copy.

On some hosts, sending a mass e-mail can be a problem, since sometimes the hosting company limits the number of e-mails that can be sent out at once. phpBB includes only 50 recipients per e-mail and sends another one for the next batch to prevent this, however, if you still are not able to send a mass e-mail, consult the situation with your hosting provider.

Composing a mass e-mail

- **Send to group:** Select the group you want to send the e-mail too. The Registered Users group contains all the users on the board.
- **Send to users:** You can also specify a list of users. Entering any usernames in this field will override the first setting. Each username should be on a new line.
- **Subject:** This is the subject of the message, which you are used to enter when sending an e-mail.
- **Your message:** This field contains the message, you can only enter plaintext. *BBCode* or HTML will be encoded in HTML entities and shown as is without formatting the text when the user receives the e-mail.
- **Mail priority:** This is the priority of the e-mail sent with the e-mail headers.
- **Mail banned users:** By default, banned users will not receive mass e-mails. Check this box if you would like to include those users in the mail mailing.
- **Send immediately:** You can choose whether to send the e-mail immediately or pass the messages to the cache system and let them be sent gradually.

Note

Sending e-mails to all users on the board or a large group can be a lengthy process. Wait until the script confirms that the e-mails have been sent.

10.4. PHP Information

This option will provide you with information about the version of PHP installed on your server, along with information on loaded modules and the configuration applicable to

the current location. This information can be useful to phpBB team members in helping you to diagnose problems affecting your installation of phpBB. The information here can be security sensitive and it is recommended that you only grant access to this option to those users who need access to the information and do not disclose the information unless necessary.

Please note that some hosting providers may limit the information which is available to you on this page for security reasons.

10.5. Manage reasons for reporting and denying posts

phpBB has a feature that allows you to put new posts in queue, where the post waits until it is approved or denied by a moderator, this can be set with permissions or in the Post settings for users which do not have enough posts. If a moderator chooses to deny a post in the queue, he has an option to specify a reason for the denial. The predefined options from which he can choose are specified here. These reasons are also offered to users reporting a post on the board.

For more information about queue moderation, see [Section 5.1, “Moderation queue”](#).

Figure 3.11. Report/denial reasons page

REASON		USED IN REPORTS	OPTIONS
Warez The post contains links to illegal or pirated software.	Reason has been localized.	☐	
Spam The reported post has the only purpose to advertise for a website or another product.	Reason has been localized.	☐	
Off-topic The reported post is off topic.	Reason has been localized.	☐	
Other * The reported post does not fit into any other category, please use the further information field.	Reason has been localized.	☐	
Duplicate content The content of the post is duplicate.	Reason has not been localized.	☐	

This is the page from which you can manage reasons shown when denying or reporting a post. Four default reasons present in a standard phpBB installation are shown. The fifth one is added manually and is not localised, this can be achieved by specifying an identifier in the Reason title containing only letters and underscores and then adding localised titles and reasons in the language file called `mcp.php` located in the `language/` directory. The predefined reasons are at the bottom of the file, you need to add your reason in the same way as the others are saved. When you localise a reason, it is shown in the correct translation for each language pack used on the board.

10.6. Module Management

Modules are used the form the structure and content of the UCP, MCP and ACP. Individual modules can be optionally disabled and it is possible to reorganize them into a

different structure. Modules for the User Control Panel and the Moderator Control panel have a Category » Module two-level structure, while the Administration modules have three levels: Category (tabs at the top) » Category (headers on the left-hand side) » Module (individual sections).

Very often, extensions that have controllable features add modules to the ACP to allow comfortable editing of various settings.

To create a module category, use the text field next to the Create new module button. Enter the category title, click the button and on the next page ensure that the Module type is Category, the module is enabled and that the Module parent is set correctly. After you create a category, you can browse to it through the list of modules and add a specific module that is saved in a file. Modules are saved in the appropriate directory (acp/, mcp/ or /ucp) contained in the `includes/` directory.

Warning

By disabling the Module Management module, it is possible to cut yourself off from the ACP and other control panels. Be careful when you are editing modules.

Adding a module

- **Module language name:** This should be set to the language constant that holds the module name in the different languages, which are used on the board. You can also specify a normal title here, if you do not have the module title translated.
- **Module type:** You can add a category or a module. As stated above, categories hold another level of categories or modules, they are used to organize the control panels.
- **Parent:** This setting defines under which category the module or category will be displayed.
- **Module enabled:** If a module is disabled, it will not be accessible at all, you will have to enable it to use it.
- **Module displayed:** If the module is enabled, but not displayed, you will be able to access it with a direct URL but it will not show in the menus. This setting is shown only if the Module type is set to Module.
- **Choose module:** Individual module files contain the various control panels. Similar modules are grouped into one file and are called by specifying a mode. Here you select the file in which the specific module you want is located. This setting is shown only if the Module type is set to Module.

- Choose module mode: Here you set the what mode should be used in the module file selected above. The final contents of the module are based on this setting. This setting is shown only if the Module type is set to Module.

Chapter 4. Moderator Guide

This chapter describes the phpBB 3.3 forum moderation controls.

1. Editing posts

Moderators with privileges in the relevant forums are able to edit topics and posts, even if the forum is locked. You can usually view who the moderators are beneath the forum description on the index page. A user with moderator privileges is able to select the edit button beside each post. Beyond this point, they are able to:

Delete posts	This option removes the post from the topic. Remember that it cannot be recovered once deleted.
Change or remove the post icon	Decides whether or not an icon accompanies the post, and if so, which icon.
Alter the subject and message body	Allows the moderator to alter the contents of the post.
Alter the post options - disabling BBCode/Smilies parsing URLs etc.	Determines whether certain features are enabled in the post.
Lock the topic or post	Allows the moderator to lock the current post, or the full topic.
Add, alter or remove attachments	Select attachments to be removed or edited (if option is enabled and attachments are present).
Modify poll settings	Alter the current poll settings (if option is enabled and a poll is present).

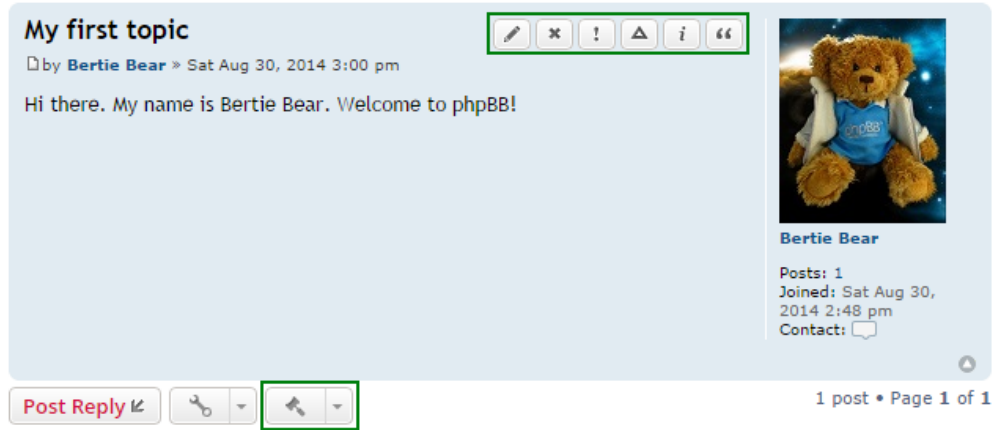
If, for any case the moderator decides that the post should not be edited, they may lock the post to prevent the user doing so. The user will be shown a notice when they attempt to edit the post in future. Should the moderator wish to state why the post was edited, they may enter a reason when editing the post.

2. Moderation tools

Beneath topics, the moderator has various options in a dropdown box which modify the topic in different ways. These include the ability to lock, unlock, delete, move, split, merge and copy the topic. As well as these, they are also able to change the topic type

(Sticky/Announcement/Global), and also view the topics logs. The following subsections detail each action on a topic that a moderator can perform.

Figure 4.1. Quick Mod Tools



The quick moderator tools. As you can see, these tools are located at the end of each topic at the bottom of the page, before the last post on that page. Clicking on the mallet icon will show you all of the actions you may perform.

2.1. Locking a topic or post

This outlines how a moderator may lock whole topics or individual posts. There are various ways a moderator may do this, either by using the [Moderator Control Panel](#) when viewing a forum, navigating to the selection menu beneath the topic in question, or editing any post within a topic and checking the relevant checkbox.

Locking a whole topic ensures that no user can reply to it, whereas locking individual posts denies the post author any editing permissions for that post.

2.2. Deleting a topic or post

If enabled within the [Administration Control Panel](#) permissions, a user may delete their own posts when either viewing a topic or editing a previous post. The user may only delete a topic or post if it has not yet been replied to.

To delete other user's posts, one must have appropriate moderator forum-based permission - Can delete posts. Using the selection menu beneath topics allows quick removal. The [Moderator Control Panel](#) allows multiple deletions of separate posts.

When deleting a topic or post, you will be prompted to provide a reason for its deletion. This message will appear in the moderator logs. Additionally, if you have the Soft Delete moderator permission, you will be asked if you would like to permanently delete the topic/post or not. If you choose not to, it will only be hidden from view with the option to restore it.

Tip

Please note that if you choose to permanently delete a topic or post, it cannot be undone.

2.3. Restoring a topic or post

If a topic or post has been deleted, it may be possible to restore it. If a user chose not to permanently delete the topic or post, it will be listed with an icon next to it indicating that it is eligible for restoration.

If a user has selected to permanently delete a post or topic, it cannot be recovered.

2.4. Moving a topic into another forum

To move a topic to another forum, navigate to the Quick MOD Tools area beneath the topic and select Move Topic from the selection menu. You will then be met with another selection menu of a location (another forum) to move it to. If you would like to leave a [Shadow Topic](#) behind, leave the box checked. Select the desired forum and click Yes.

2.4.1. Shadow Topics

Shadow topics can be created when moving a topic from one forum to another. A shadow topic is simply a link to the topic in the forum it's been moved from. You may choose whether or not to leave a shadow topic by selecting or unselecting the checkbox in the Move Topic dialog.

To delete a shadow topic, navigate to the forum containing the shadow topic, and use the [Moderator Control Panel](#) to select and delete the topic.

Note

Deleting a shadow topic will *not* delete the original topic that it is a shadow of.

2.5. Duplicating a topic

Moderators are also allowed to duplicate topics. Duplicating a topic simply creates a copy of the selected topic in another forum. This can be achieved by using the Quick MOD Tools area beneath the topic you want to duplicate, or through the [Moderator Control Panel](#) when viewing the forum. From this, you simply select the destination forum you wish to duplicate the topic to. Click Yes to duplicate the topic.

2.6. Announcements and stickies

There are various types of topics the forum administrators and moderators (if they have the appropriate permissions) can assign to specific topics. These special topic types are: Global Announcements, Announcements, and Stickies. The [Topic Type](#) can be chosen when posting a new topic or editing the first post of a previously posted topic. You may choose which type of topic you would prefer by selecting the relevant radio button. When viewing the forum, global announcements and basic announcements are displayed under a separate heading than that of stickies and normal topics.

2.7. Splitting posts off a topic

Moderators also have the ability to split posts from a topic. This can be useful if certain discussions have spawned a new idea worthy of its own thread, thus needing to be split from the original topic. Splitting posts involves moving individual posts from an existing topic to a new topic. You may do this by using the Quick MOD Tools area beneath the topic you want to split or from the [Moderator Control Panel](#) within the topic.

While splitting, you may choose a title for the new topic, a different forum for the new topic, and also a different icon. You may also override the default board settings for the amount of posts to be displayed per page. The Splitting from the selected post option will split all posts from the checked post, to the last post. The Splitting selected posts option will only split the current selected posts.

2.8. Merge topics

In phpBB3, it is now possible to merge topics together, in addition to splitting topics. This can be useful if, for example, two separate topics are related and involve the same discussion. The merging topics feature allows existing topics to be merged into one another.

To merge topics together, start by locating selection menu beneath the topic in question, which brings you to the [Moderator Control Panel](#). From here, you need to enter the topic ID of the topic you want to move the posts to. You can click Select topic to see a list of the topics available and specify which. Checking the Mark all section will select all the posts in the current topic and allow moving to the existing topic. The posts merged into the new topic will retain their existing timestamp (e.g. they will not appear at the end of the topic they are being merged to, but will be sorted based on their timestamp).

2.9. Merge posts into another topic

Rather than just merging topics together, you can also merge specific posts into any other topic.

To merge specific posts into another topic, start by locating the selection menu beneath the topic, and get to the [Moderator Control Panel](#). From here, you need to enter the topic

ID of the topic you want to move the posts to. You can click [Select topic](#) to see a list of the topics available and specify which. Select the posts which you wish to merge from the current topic, into the existing topic. The posts merged into the new topic will retain their existing timestamp (e.g. they will not appear at the end of the topic they are being merged to, but will be sorted based on their timestamp).

3. What is the “Moderation queue”?

The Moderation Queue is an area where topics and posts which need to be approved are listed. If a forum or user’s permissions are set to moderator queue via the [Administration Control Panel](#), all posts made in that forum or by this user will need to be approved by an administrator or moderator before they are displayed to other users. Topics and posts which require approval can be viewed through the [Moderator Control Panel](#).

When viewing a forum, topics which have not yet been approved will be marked with an icon, clicking on this icon will take you directly to the Moderator Control Panel where you may approve or disapprove the topic. Likewise, when viewing the topic itself, the post requiring approval will be accompanied with a message which also links to the post waiting approval.

If you choose to approve a topic or post, you will be given the option to notify the user of its approval. If you choose to disapprove a topic or post, you will be given the option to notify the user of its disapproval and also specify why you have disapproved the post, and enter a description.

For further information regarding the Moderator Control Panel, see [Section 5, “The Moderator Control Panel \(MCP\)”](#).

4. What are “Reported posts”?

Unlike phpBB2, phpBB3 now allows users to report a post, for reasons the board administrator can define within the [Administration Control Panel](#). If a user finds a post unsuitable for any reason, they may report it using the Report Post button beside the offending message. This report is then displayed within the Moderator Control Panel where the Administrator or Moderators can view, close, or delete the report.

When viewing a forum with post reports within topics, the topic title will be accompanied by a red exclamation icon. This alerts the administrator(s) or moderators that there a post has been reported. When viewing topics, reported posts are accompanied by a red exclamation and text. Clicking this icon or text will bring them to the Reported Posts section of the Moderator Control Panel.

For further information regarding the Moderator Control Panel, see [Section 5, “The Moderator Control Panel \(MCP\)”](#).

5. The Moderator Control Panel (MCP)

Another new feature in phpBB3 is the Moderator Control Panel, where any moderator will feel at home. Similar to the Administration Control Panel, this area outlines any current moderator duties that need to be acted upon. After navigating to the MCP, the moderator will be greeted with any posts waiting for approval, any post reports and the five latest logged actions - performed by administrators, moderators, and users.

On the left side is a menu containing all the relevant areas within the MCP. This guide outlines each individual section and what kind of information they each contain:

Main	This contains pre-approved posts, reported posts and the five latest logged actions.
Moderation queue	This area lists any topics or posts waiting for approval. It also lists topics and posts that have been soft-deleted.
Reported posts	A list of all open or closed reported posts.
User notes	This is an area for administrators or moderators to leave feedback on certain users.
Warnings	The ability to warn a user, view current users with warnings and view the five latest warnings.
Moderator logs	This is an in-depth list of the five latest actions performed by administrators, moderators or users, as shown on the main page of the MCP.
Banning	The option to ban users by username, IP address or email address.

5.1. Moderation queue

The moderation queue lists topics or posts which require moderator action. The moderation queue is accessible from the [Moderator Control Panel](#). For more information regarding the moderation queue, see [Section 3, “What is the “Moderation queue”?”](#).

5.2. Reported posts

Reported posts are reports submitted by users regarding problematic posts. Any current reported posts are accessible from the [Moderator Control Panel](#). For more information regarding reported posts, see [Section 4, “What are “Reported posts”?”](#).

5.3. Forum moderation

When viewing any particular forum, clicking Moderator Control Panel will take you to the forum moderation area. Here, you are able to mass moderate topics within that forum via the dropdown box. The available actions are:

- Delete: Deletes the selected topic(s).
- Restore: Restores the selected soft-deleted topic(s).
- Move: Moves the selected topic(s) to another forum of your preference.
- Copy: Creates a duplicate of the selected topic(s) in another forum of your preference.
- Lock: Locks the selected topic(s).
- Unlock: Unlocks the selected topic(s).
- Resync: Resynchronise the selected topic(s).
- Change topic type: Change the topic type to either Global Announcement, Announcement, Sticky, or Regular Topic.

You can also mass-moderate posts within topics. This can be done by navigating through the MCP when viewing the forum, and clicking on the topic itself. Another way to accomplish this is to click the MCP link whilst viewing the particular topic you wish to moderate.

When moderating inside a topic, you can: rename the topic title, move the topic to a different forum, alter the topic icon, merge the topic with another topic, or define how many posts per page will be displayed (this will override the board setting).

From the selection menu, you may also: lock and unlock individual posts, delete the selected post(s), merge the selected post(s), or split or split from the selected post(s).

The Post Details link next to posts also entitle you to alter other settings. As well as viewing the poster's *IP address*, profile and notes, and the ability to warn the poster, you also have the option to change the poster ID assigned to the post. You can also lock or delete the post from this page.

Note

Depending on the specific permissions set to your user account, some of the aforementioned options and abilities may not be available to you.

Chapter 5. User Guide

This chapter is targeted at the forum users. It explains all user facing functions that are needed to use phpBB 3.3

1. How user permissions affect forum experience

phpBB3 uses permissions on a per-user or per-usergroup basis to allow or disallow users access to certain functions or features which software offers. These may include the ability to post in certain forums, having an avatar, or being able to communicate through private messages. All of the permissions can be set through the Administration Panel.

Permissions can also be set allowing appointed members to perform special tasks or have special abilities on the bulletin board. Permissions allow the Administrator to define which moderation functions and in which forums certain users or groups of users are allowed to use. This allows for appointed users to become moderators on the bulletin board. The administrator can also give users access to certain sections of the Administration panel, keeping important settings or functions restricted and safe from malicious acts. For example, a select group of moderators could be allowed to modify a user's avatar or signature if said avatar or signature is not allowed under a particular forum's rules. Without these abilities set, the moderator would need to notify an administrator in order to have the user's profile changed.

2. Registering on a phpBB3 board

Registering an account on a phpBB3 board is typically a simple and straight forward procedure.

Figure 5.1. The Typical Registration Page

Username:
Length must be between 3 characters and 20 characters.

Email address:

Password:
Must be between 5 characters and 30 characters.

Confirm password:

Language: English [GB]

My timezone: GMT-05:00 - 21 Sep 2014, 17:17
America/Atikokan

This is what you should expect to see on a typical registration page.

After clicking the Register link, the terms and conditions of registering will be displayed, which you must accept to proceed. Some websites will ask you to select whether you are under the age of thirteen in order to comply with COPPA (the United States' Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998; more details can be found at <http://www.coppa.org>). If you are younger than thirteen years of age, your account will stay inactive until it is approved by a parent or guardian. You will receive an e-mail in which the next steps required for your account activation are outlined.

Beyond accepting the terms and conditions, you need to fill out some important details such as selecting a username, entering your e-mail address and desired password. You can also select your timezone and language.

If you see in the form where you can specify your username, password etc. a graphic with some odd-looking characters, then you are seeing the so-called *Visual Confirmation*. Many boards will have this, otherwise known as a CAPTCHA, which is an image with distorted letters and numbers which you must then type into an adjacent box. The reason for this is to ensure that you are a legitimate user registering (as opposed to a spam robot performing an automated registration). Simply enter the characters you see into the Confirmation code field and proceed with the registration. If you cannot understand the code, refresh the page to get a new code.

Figure 5.2. The Visual Confirmation Object



This is an example of a visual confirmation code you might see.

Another option available is the account activation. Here, the administrator can make it a requirement that you have to follow a link mailed to you after registering before your account is activated. In this case you will see a message similar to this one:

Your account has been created. However, this forum requires account activation, an activation key has been sent to the e-mail address you provided. Please check your e-mail for further information

It is also possible that the administrator himself/herself has to activate the account.

Some boards will have custom profile fields. If the administrator has elected to display custom profile fields on the registration screen, these will also appear. In some cases, these custom profile fields will also be required fields, meaning they must not be left blank.

Once you have completed all of the fields on the registration page, clicking the Submit button will complete the process. If you wish to clear all fields, clicking the Reset button will do this for you. After clicking Submit, you will be advised of your next step. In most cases, you will be sent an e-mail to the address you specified with a link to finalise the registration. Other options also include being able to login immediately (i.e. there are no further actions for the registration process) or waiting until an administrator reviews your registration and accepts it, in which case you will be notified by e-mail.

3. Orienting Yourself in the User Control Panel

The User Control Panel (*UCP*) allows you to alter personal preferences, manage posts you are watching, send and receive private messages, and change the way information about you appears to other users. To view the UCP, click the 'User Control Panel' link that appears after logging in.

The UCP is separated into six tabs: Overview, Private Messages, Profile, Preferences, Friends and Foes, and Groups. Within each tab are several sub pages, accessed by clicking the desired link on the left side of the UCP interface. Some of these areas may not be available depending on the permissions set for you by the administrator.

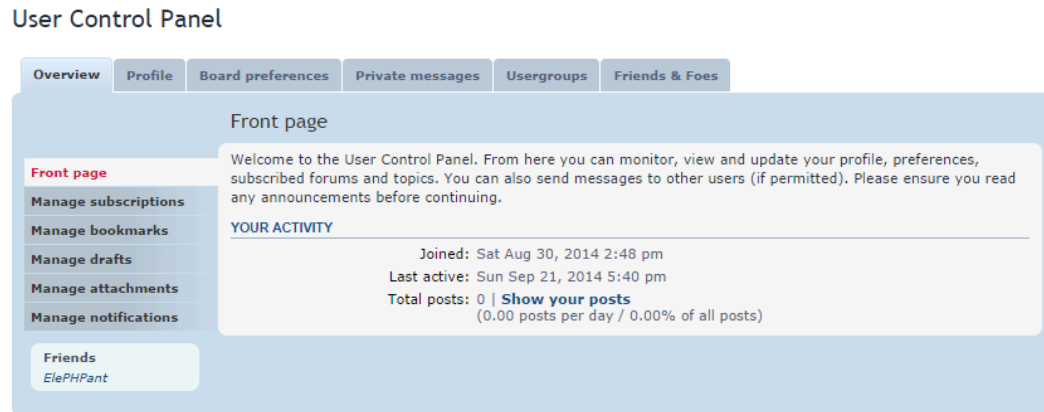
Every page of the UCP displays your Friends List on the left side. To send a private message to a friend, click their user name.

Private Messaging is discussed more in depth in [Section 5, “Communicate with Private Messages”](#).

3.1. Overview

The Overview displays a snapshot of information about your posting habits such as the date you joined the forum, your most active topic, and how many total posts you have submitted. Overview sub pages include Subscriptions, Bookmarks, and Drafts.

Figure 5.3. User Control Panel Overview (Index)



The *UCP* Overview section

3.1.1. Subscriptions

Subscriptions are forums or individual topics that you have elected to watch for any new posts. Whenever a new post is made inside an area you have subscribed to, an e-mail will be sent you to informing you of the new addition. To create a subscription, visit the forum or topic you would like to subscribe to and click the 'Subscribe' link located at the bottom of the page.

To remove a subscription, check the box next to the subscription you would like to remove and click the 'Unsubscribe' button.

3.1.2. Bookmarks

Bookmarks, much like subscriptions, are topics you've chosen to watch. However, there are two key differences: 1) only individual topics may be bookmarked, and 2) an e-mail will not be sent to inform you of new posts.

To create a bookmark, visit the topic you would like to watch and click the 'Bookmark Topic' link located at the bottom of the page.

To remove a bookmark, check the box next to the bookmark you would like to remove and click the 'Remove marked bookmarks' button.

3.1.3. Drafts

Drafts are created when you click the 'Save' button on the New Post or Post Reply page. Displayed are the title of your post, the forum or topic that the draft was made in, and the date you saved it.

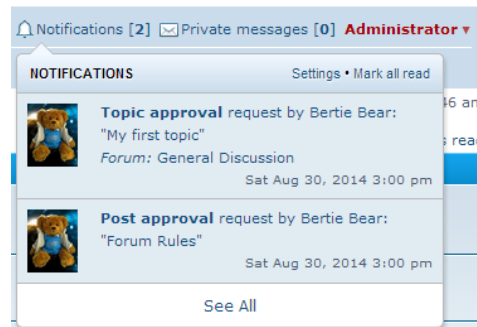
To continue editing a draft for future submission, click the 'View/Edit' link. If you plan to finish and post the message, click 'Load Draft'. To delete a draft, check the box next to the draft you wish to remove and click 'Delete Marked'.

3.1.4. Notifications

Notifications alert you to events that have taken place on the board. They will appear in the Notifications menu at the top of your screen. Events include:

- New Private Message has arrived
- New topic was created in a subscribed forum
- New post was created in a subscribed topic
- A new post is awaiting moderation
- A post has been reported
- Your topic/post has been approved/disapproved
- You have been quoted in a post

Figure 5.4. Notifications Menu



The *Notifications* menu

3.2. Profile

This section lets you set your profile information. Your profile information contains general information that other users on the board will be able to see. Think of your profile as a sign of your public presence. This section is separated from your preferences. (Preferences are the individual settings that you set and manage on your own, and control your forum experience. Thus, this is separated from your profile settings.)

3.2.1. Personal settings

Personal settings control the information that is displayed when a user views your profile.

- Facebook: Your unique username/page name associated with the [Facebook](#) service.
- Twitter: Your username associated with the [Twitter](#) service.
- Skype: Your username associated with the [Skype](#) service.
- Website: Your website's address. Must be prepended with the appropriate protocol reference (i.e. http://)
- Location: Your physical location. Note that this is generally displayed along with your user information with every post, so standard caution regarding releasing personal information on the Internet should apply.
- Occupation: Your occupation. The information entered will appear only on the view-profile page.
- Interests: Your personal interests. The information entered here will appear only on the viewprofile page.
- Birthday: Your birthday. This information is used for displaying your username in the Birthday section of the Board Index. If year is specified, your age will be displayed in your profile.

3.2.2. Signature

Your signature appears, at your option, below every post you make. Signatures may be formatted using [BBCode](#). The board administrator may specify a maximum length for signatures. You can check this limit by noting the line There is a x character limit. above the signature editing textbox, where x is the currently set limit.

3.2.3. Avatar

Your avatar is an image the displays with every post you make. Depending on board settings, avatars may be completely disabled, or may appear in one (or more) of three forms: "Upload from your machine", "Upload from a URL", and "Link off-site."

- Gravatar: If you use the Gravatar.com avatar service, you can specify your Gravatar e-mail address here to use your Gravatar image as your avatar.
- Upload from your machine: You may upload an avatar from your machine to be hosted on the board's server.
- Upload from a URL: You may specify the URL of an existing image. This will cause the image to be copied to the board's server and hosted on it.
- Link off-site: You may specify the URL of an existing image. This will not cause the image to be hosted on the board's server, but rather hotlinked to its current location.

Additionally, a board administrator may opt to provide an avatar gallery for users to make use of. These images are pre-selected by the administrator and are able to be used by any of a board's members.

3.2.4. Login Keys

If you choose to have the board log you in automatically when you visit (the "Remember Me" check box), you are given a login key for your browser to use when you visit the site. As long as your browser has this key, you will be automatically logged in. When you log out, the key is only deleted from your browser and not from the board.

This section allows you to view all of the login keys associated with your account, when they were created, and from what IP address. You can delete login keys from this page as well.

Note

Deleting a login key that you are currently using will log you out of the board.

3.2.5. External Accounts

If the board administrator has enabled [OAuth authentication](#), you will be able to login with your account from OAuth providers such as Bitly, Facebook, and Google.

Click the Link button for each service to link your accounts to the board. You will be prompted to log in again. Use your login credentials for the board. **DO NOT** use your external account yet. When you log in, you will be sent to your account page which will show that an ID has been generated for your external account.

Once an account has been linked, you can unlink it from the same page.

After linking the account, you can now use it to log into the board. Just click the appropriate service button on the login page.

3.3. Preferences

Preferences allow you to dictate various behaviours of the phpBB software in regards to your interaction with it.

3.3.1. Global

Global settings control various overall interactions with the phpBB software.

- Users can contact by e-mail: If Yes is selected, users can e-mail you via the "e-mail" button in your profile.
- Administratos can email me information: If Yes is selected, you will receive mass-emails sent out by the board administrator.
- Allow users to send you private messages: If Yes is selected, users can send you private messages via the board.
- Hide my online status: If Yes is selected, your online status will be hidden to users. Note that administrators and moderators will still be able to view your online status.
- My board style: Allows you to specify what style the board utilizes. This setting may not be available if the board administrator has selected to override users' styles.
- My language: Allows you to specify what language pack the board utilizes. Note that this setting applies only to board language strings; posts will be rendered in the language they were written.
- My timezone: Allows you to specify what timezone board times should appear in.
- My date format: Controls what format times are rendered in. You may select one of the options in the dropdown box -- advanced users may select "Custom" and input a custom format (in the format of the [php.net date function](#)).

3.3.2. Posting

Posting settings control the default settings of the posting editors when you create a post. Note that these options are controllable on an individual basis while posting.

- Enable BBCode by default: When Yes is selected, BBCode is enabled within the post editor.
- Enable smiles by default: When Yes is selected, smiles will be rendered within your posts.
- Attach my signature by default: When Yes is selected, your signature will be appended to your posts.
- Notify me upon replies by default: When yes is selected, you will be notified by email when a reply to your post is made.

3.3.3. Display

Display settings control how posts and topics are rendered in the various board views.

The following settings control how the contents of posts and private messages are rendered.

- Display images within posts: When Yes is selected, images will be displayed.
- Display Flash animations: When Yes is selected, Flash animations will be rendered.
- Display smilies as images: When Yes is selected, smilies will be rendered as images instead of as their text equivalent.
- Display signatures: When yes is selected, user signatures will be displayed.
- Display avatars: When yes is selected, user avatars will be shown.
- Enable word censoring: When yes is selected, the text of posts and private messages will be censored according to the [word cesnor list](#) defined by the administrator.

The following settings control how topics are displayed in the forum view.

- Display topics from previous days: This setting limits the age of topics which should be displayed. By default, all topics are shown.
- Display topics ordering by: This setting changes the order of how topics are shown. Topics can be ordered by author, post time, number of replies, subject, or number of views.
- Display topic order direction: Topics can be displayed in either ascending or descending order.

The following settings control how posts are displayed in the topic view.

- Display posts from previous days: This setting limits the age of posts which should be displayed. By default, all posts are shown.
- Display posts ordering by: This setting changes the order of how posts are shown. Posts can be ordered by author, post time, number of replies, subject, or number of views.
- Display topic order direction: Posts can be displayed in either ascending or descending order.

3.3.4. Notifications

Notification settings control which events will trigger a notification and how you will receive the notification.

The following settings control events related to posting.

- Someone replies to a topic you have bookmarked: A user has posted a reply to a topic which you have bookmarked.
- Someone replies to a topic to which you are subscribed: A user has posted a reply to a topic which you have subscribed to.
- Someone quotes you in a post: A post you made has been quoted by another user.
- Someone creates a topic in a forum to which you are subscribed: A user has posted a new topic in a forum which you have subscribed to.

The following settings control events related to moderation.

- A post or topic needs approval: A user has made a new post or topic which requires approval.
- Someone reports a post: A user has reported a post.

The following settings control various other events.

- Someone requests to join a group you lead: A user has requested to join a usergroup which you are a leader of.
- Someone sends you a private message: You have received a private message.

3.4. Friends and Foes

Users can be marked as a Friend or a Foe in order to allow for filtering of their messages. If a style supports it, posts made by users on your Foe list will be hidden from view and posts from users on your Friend list will be highlighted. Private Message rules can make use of the Friend and Foes list for filtering incoming PMs.

3.5. Attachments

The attachment section of the UCP shows a list of all attachments that you have uploaded to the board. Each entry contains a link to the message in which the attachment is contained, the size of the attachment, the number of times it has been downloaded, and the time at which it was uploaded. Through this page, you can delete attachments from the board. Inline references to a deleted attachment will still remain in the original post, but the attachment will not be rendered in any way other than the file name.

3.6. Usergroups

Usergroup membership can be managed through the Usergroups section of the UCP. The page lists groups for which the user is a member of, a leader of, and all other usergroups.

Groups which are open for membership have a radio button allowing the user to request membership. Users may also remove themselves from groups in which they hold membership. If a user has the Can change default usergroup, they can choose which group to be their default here. The default usergroup dictates the user's username color which is shown throughout the board.

Users who are designated as a group leader are able to manage the group's membership. Users can be added, removed, pending join requests can be approved or denied, and have their default usergroup changed here.

4. Mastering the Posting Screen

Posting is the primary purpose of bulletin boards. There are two main types of posts you can make: a topic or a reply. Selecting the New Topic button in a forum button will take you to the posting screen. After submitting your post, a new topic will appear in that forum with your post as the first displayed. Other users (and you as well) are now able to reply to your topic by using the Post Reply button. This will once again bring you to the posting screen, allowing you to enter your post.

4.1. Posting Form

You will be taken to the posting form when you decide to post either a new topic or reply, where you can enter your post content.

Figure 5.5. Posting Form

The screen presented while creating a new topic.

- **Topic/Post Icon:** The topic/post icon is a small icon that will display to the left of your post subject. This helps identify your post and make it stand out, though it is completely optional.
- **Subject:** If you are creating a new topic with your post, the subject is required and will become the title of the topic. If you are replying to an existing topic, this is optional, but it can be changed.
- **Post Content -** While not being labeled, the large text box is where your actual post content will be entered. Here, along with your text, you may use things like [Smilies](#) or [BBCode](#) if the board administrator has them enabled. Content entered as HTML will be rendered as text, HTML input is not supported.

- Smilies - Smilies, or emoticons, are small images which can be inserted into your post to add expression emphasis. If Smilies are enabled, you will see the text "Smilies are ON" to the righthand of the Post Content box. Otherwise, you will see the text "Smilies are OFF." See [Posting Smilies](#) for further details.
- BBCode - BBCode is a type of formatting that can be applied to your post content if BBCode has been enabled by the board administrator. If BBCode is enabled, you will see the text "BBCode is ON" to the righthand of the Post Content box. Otherwise, you will see the text "BBCode is OFF." See [Posting BBCode](#) for further details.

4.2. Smilies

Smilies, or emoticons, are small images which can be inserted into your post to add expression emphasis. To use Smiles, certain characters are put together to get the desired output. For example, typing :) will insert 😊, ;) will insert 😉, etc. Other smilies require the format :texthere: to display. For example, :roll: will insert smiley whose eyes are rolling: 🤪, and :cry: will insert a smiley who is crying: 😭.

In many cases you can also select which smiley you'd like to insert by clicking its picture on the right side of the Post Content text box. When clicked, the smiley's characters will appear at the current location of the cursor in the text box.

If you wish to be able to use these characters in your post, but not have them appear as smilies, please see [Posting Options](#).

4.3. BBCodes

BBCode is a type of formatting that can be applied to your post content, much like HTML. Unlike HTML, however, BBCode uses square brackets [and] instead of angled brackets < and >. Depending on the permissions the board administrator has set, you may be able to use only certain BBCodes or even none at all.

For detailed instructions on the usage of BBCode, you can click the BBCode link to the righthand of the Post Content text box. Please note that the administrator has the option to add new and custom BBCodes, so others may be available to you which are not on this list.

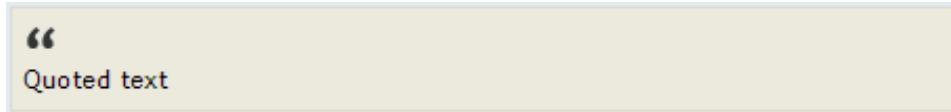
Basic BBCodes and their outputs are as follows:

[b]Boldface text[/b]: **Boldface text**

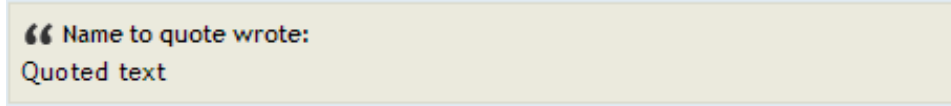
[i]Italicised text[/i]: *Italicised text*

[u]Underlined text[/u]: Underlined text

[quote]Quoted text[/quote]:



[quote="Name to quote"]Quoted text[/quote]:



[url]https://www.phpbb.com[/url]: <https://www.phpbb.com>

[url=https://www.phpbb.com]Linked text[/url]: [Linked text](https://www.phpbb.com)

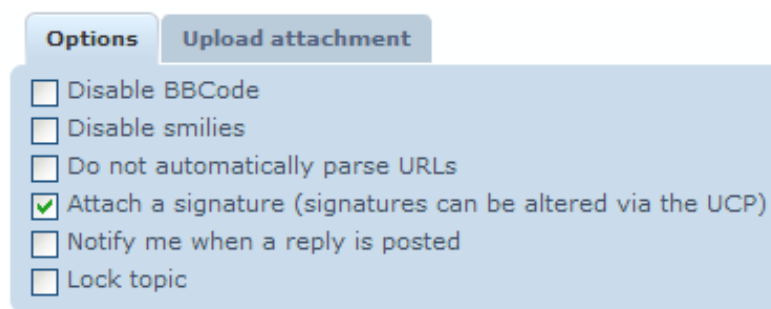
[flash=width,height]Path to flash[/flash] will play the flash animation with the specified dimensions.

For more detailed instructions on the usage of BBCode and the many other available BBcodes, please click the BBCode link to the righthand of the Post Content text box.

4.4. Post Options

When posting either a new topic or reply, there are several post options that are available to you. You can view these options by selecting the Options tab from the section below the posting form. Depending on the permissions the board administrator has assigned to you or whether you are posting a topic or reply, these options will be different.

Figure 5.6. Posting Options



The options presented while creating a reply.

The default status of these options will depend on your [Posting Defaults](#) settings on the User Control Panel's Board Preferences page.

- **Disable BBCode:** If BBCode is enabled on the board and you are allowed to use it, this option will be available. Checking this box will not convert any BBCode in your post content into its respected output. For example, [b]Bolded text[/b] will be seen in your post as exactly [b]Bolded text[/b].

- **Disable Smilies:** If Smilies are enabled on the board and you are allowed to use them, this option will be available. Checking this box will not convert any of the smilie's characters to their respected image. For example, ;) will be seen in your post as exactly ;).
- **Do not automatically parse URLs:** When entering a URL directly into your post content (in the format of `http://....com` or `www.etc.com`), by default it will be converted to a clickable string of text. However, if this box is checked when posting, these URLs will stay as a standard string of text.
- **Attach a signature** (signatures can be altered via the UCP): If this box is checked, the signature you have set in your profile will be attached to the post provided signatures have been enabled by the administrator and you have the proper permissions. For more information about signatures, please see [UCP Signatures](#).
- **Send me an email when a reply is posted:** If this box is checked, you will receive a notification (either by email, Jabber, etc) every time another user replies to the topic. This is called subscribing to the topic. For more information, please see [UCP Subscriptions](#).
- **Lock topic:** Provided you have moderation permissions in this forum, checking this box will result in the topic being locked after your reply has been posted. At this point, no one but moderators or administrators may reply to the topic. For more information, please see [Locking a topic or post](#).

4.4.1. Topic Types

Provided you have the right permissions, you have the option of selecting various topic types when posting a new topic by using Post topic as. The four possible types are: Normal, Sticky, Announcement, and Global. By default, all new posts are Normal.

- **Normal:** By selecting normal, your new topic will be a standard topic in the forum.
- **Sticky:** Stickies are special topics in the forum. They are "stuck" to the top of the first page of the forum in which they are posted, above every Normal topic.
- **Announcement:** Announcements are much like Stickies in that they are "stuck" to the top of the forum. However, they are different from stickies in two ways: 1) they are above Stickies, and 2) they appear at the top of *every* page of the forum instead of only the first page of topics.
- **Global:** Global, or Global Announcements, are special types of Announcements which appear at the top of every page of every forum on the board. They appear above every other type of special topic.

You also have the ability to specify how long the special (stickies, announcements, and global announcements) keep their type. For example, an announcement is created and

specified to stay "stuck" for 4 days. After the 4 days are over, the announcement will automatically be switched to a Normal topic.

4.5. Attachments

Attachments allow users to upload files and attach them to their post. The ability to attach and download attachments is determined by the "Can attach files" and "Can download files" permissions respectively.

To add an attachment, find the Attachments section of the posting page and click the Add files button. A comment may be placed in the File comment text box. Clicking Add the file will upload and attach the file to the post. To upload multiple files, repeat the process. Attachments may also be uploaded by dragging and dropping a file onto the message area of the posting screen.

To delete an attachment, find the attachments list at the bottom of the Attachments section of the posting page and click the Delete file button for the desired attachment.

Attachments can be displayed within the post text by clicking the Place inline button for the desired attachment. When an attachment is placed inline, text similar to a BBCode is inserted into the post text so that it may be moved. If an attachment is not placed inline, it will be displayed at the end of the post.

Attachments are controlled by a set of restrictions, namely file size and file type.

- File Size: The maximum file size for uploaded files is set by the Administrator. The default is 256KiB.
- File Type: The types of files allowed for upload are restricted by their file extension. The allowed extensions are set by the Administrator.

For more information on changing attachment settings, please see [ACP Attachment Settings](#).

4.6. Polls

Polls allow users to use a topic to vote about an idea or issue. Polls can only be created in the first post of a topic. The ability to create and vote in polls is determined by the "Polls" set by the administrator.

- Poll question - This is the idea or issue that is being voted on in the poll. This is required to start a poll.
- Poll options - These are the allowed answers to the poll question. When entering a poll option, each should be placed on a separate line of the textbox. At least two poll options are required.

- Options per user - This is the number of options each user may select when voting. When a user is allowed more than one option, a series of checkboxes replaces the radio buttons of the standard poll.
- Run poll for - This is the number of days in which users can vote in the poll. Once the time has passed, no more votes can be made and the results will be displayed.
- Allow revoting - If this is chosen, users will be able re-cast their votes.

4.7. Drafts

When creating a post, it can be saved or loaded using the drafts feature. If the board permissions allow drafts to be saved, then Save and Load buttons will appear on the posting page.

- Save - Saves a post as a draft. When a draft is saved, only the subject and message of the post are stored. Topic icons, attachments, etc... will be lost.
- Load - Loads a saved draft. When clicked, a listing of available drafts will appear. Click the title of the desired post to load the draft. Any information in the current post will be lost and replaced with that of the draft.

Once a draft is used, it is removed. For more information on managing drafts, please see [UCP Drafts](#).

Note

If there are no drafts available, the Load button will not appear.

5. Communicate with Private Messages

phpBB 3.3 allows its users to communicate privately by using Private Messages. To visit the Private Messages section, you either can click on the [X new messages] link on the left hand side below the forum header, or you can directly access it through the [User Control Panel](#).

Depending on the communication methods allowed by the board administrator, there can be 3 ways of being notified of a new Private Message's arrival:

1. By receiving an e-mail or Jabber message
2. An entry will appear in the notifications menu
3. The Private Messages [X] link will show the number of currently unread messages

You can set the options to your liking in the [Preferences section](#).

You can choose to not receive Private Messages by other users in your [Preferences](#). Note, that moderators and administrators will still be able send you Private Messages, even if you have disabled them.

Note

These features are only available to registered users who have the correct permissions.

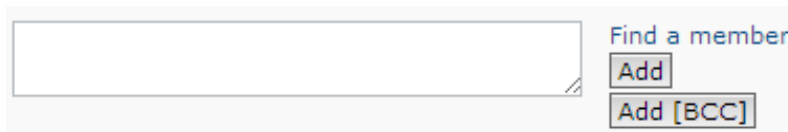
5.1. Message display

The Inbox is the default incoming folder, which contains a list of your recently received Private Messages.

5.2. Composing a new message

The screen presented while composing a Private Message is nearly identical to the screen for creating a new post. The main difference is the addition of an address field for adding recipients.

Figure 5.7. Private Message Fields



Fields for adding recipients to a Private Message.

Username(s) should be entered into the text area and then either the Add or Add [BCC] used to add the user to the appropriate recipient list. If you are unsure of a user's name, you can use the Find a member link to search the memberlist for the user. Place a check next to the desired user(s) in the memberlist and press Select marked to add the user to the recipient field.

5.3. Message Folders

Just like in your e-mail client, all *private messages* are stored in folders. Working with folders is similar to working with forums in phpBB 3.3. The Inbox is your default incoming message folder. All messages you receive will appear in here.

Sent messages will appear in either the Outbox or the Sent messages folder. As long as the recipient(s) have not yet read the message, it will stay in the Outbox. As soon as someone reads the message it will be archived to the Sent messages folder. If the administrator allows it, you can edit messages after sending them as long as they are in the Outbox and the recipients have not yet read them.

Each folder, including Sent messages and Outbox, can hold a board-defined amount of messages. This is a global setting that only a board administrator can change. An info text displays the current number of allowed messages and the current percentage of space your messages are using at the top of each folder. If no restriction is displayed, you are allowed unlimited messages in each folder.

Note

Please note that the total amount of messages allowed is a per-folder setting. You can have multiple folders which each allow 50 messages for instance. If you have 3 folders, your actual global limit is 150 messages, but each folder can only contain up to 50 messages by itself. It is not possible to merge folders and have one with more messages than the limit.

5.3.1. Custom Folders

If the administrator allows it, you can create your own custom *private message* folders in phpBB 3.3. To check whether you can add folders, visit the Edit options section of the private message area.

To add a new folder, enter the folder's name into the Add folder input box. If creation was successful, your new folder will appear at the bottom of the folder list. You can then use it like a normal message folder and move messages into it or set a filter (see the section on [Private Message Rules](#) for more information about filters) to automatically do it for you.

5.3.2. Moving Messages

It wouldn't make sense to have custom folders if you weren't able to move messages between them. To do exactly that, visit the folder from which you want to move the messages away. Select the messages you want to move, and use the Moved marked pull-down menu to select the destination folder.

Note

Please note that if after the move, the destination folder would have more messages in it than the message limit allows, you will receive an error message and the move will be discarded.

5.3.3. Message Markers

Messages inside folders can have colour markings. Please refer to the Message colours legend to see what each colour means. The exact type of colouring depends on the used theme. Coloured messages can have four different meanings:

Marked message	You can set a message as marked with the Mark as important option from the pull-down menu.
Replied to message	If you reply to a message, the message will be marked as this. This way, you can keep hold of which messages still need your attention and which messages you have already replied to.
Message from a friend	If the sender of a message is in your friends list (see the section on Friends & Foes for more information), this colour will highlight the message.
Message from a foe	If the sender of a message is one of your foes, this colour will highlight this.

Note

Please note that a message can only have one label, and it will always be the last action you take. If you mark a message as important and reply to it afterwards, for instance, the replied to label will overwrite the important label.

5.4. Message rules

Private Messages can be filtered by creating rules that perform actions on the message based on its metadata. When a Private Message arrives, it can be automatically sorted into specific folders, deleted, or highlighted.

Note

Private Message rules cannot be edited. If a rule needs to be changed, you will need to delete the current rule and make it again.

5.4.1. Matchable fields

Messages can be filtered based on the following fields:

- Subject - The subject of the message.
- Sender - The username of the message sender.
- Message - The content of the message.
- Message status - Whether a message has been replied to or forwarded.
- Sent to - Whether the message was sent directly to you or to a usergroup you are a member of.

5.4.2. Matching conditions

Several conditions are available for filtering the fields. Not all of the conditions listed below are available for every field. The following is the full list of conditions available:

- Is like - The field contains the supplied string.
- Is not like - The field does **not** contain the supplied string.
- Is - The field matches the supplied string exactly.
- Is not - The field's content is **not** the same as the supplied string.
- Begins with - The field begins with the supplied string.
- Ends with - The field ends with the supplied string.
- Is friend - If the sender is on your Friend list.
- Is foe - If the sender is on your Foe list.
- Is user - The sender's name matches the supplied string.
- Is in usergroup - The sender belongs to the specified usergroup.
- Answered - Whether the message has been replied to.
- Forwarded - Whether the message has been forwarded.
- To my default usergroup - Whether the message has been sent to your usergroup.
- To me - Whether a message has been sent directly to you.

The following list shows which conditions are available for each field:

Subject	Is like, Is not like, Is, Is not, Begins with, Ends with
---------	--

Sender	Is like, Is not like, Is, Is not, Begins with, Ends with, Is friend, Is foe, Is user, Is in usergroup
Message	Is like, Is not like, Is, Is not
Message status	Answered, Forwarded
Sent To	To my default usergroup, To me

5.4.3. Rule action

Once a message has been matched, an action can be performed on the message. The available actions are:

- Place into folder -> X - Places the message into the specified folder.
- Mark as read - The message is immediately marked as read. Notifications still inform you of a new message, but the message will already be marked as read when you view your Private Message list.
- Mark message - The message is marked as important and highlighted in your Private Message list.
- Delete message - The message is deleted instead of being shown. A message will be shown informing you that messages were received and deleted according to your message rules. Messages sent from board administrators and moderators will **not** be deleted.

6. Search - How to Find What You are Looking For

As the board grows and accumulates posts, it becomes difficult to find specific content quickly. To aid in finding posts, phpBB contains a search utility. Common searches are offered in the form of links on the index (new posts, unanswered posts, etc.), keyword searches can be performed from the header, forum view, and topic view (in supported styles), and custom search queries can be created using the Advanced Search feature.

6.1. Predefined searches

phpBB comes with several predefined searches to easily perform certain types of queries.

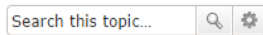
- View your posts - Returns a list of topics that you have posted in, sorted by the time of the last post in the topic.

- View unanswered topics - Returns all topics which contain no replies.
- View unread posts - Returns a list of topics containing posts which you have yet to read.
- View new posts - Returns a list of topics containing posts which have been made since the last time you logged in.
- View active topics - Returns a list of topics which have been posted in during the last few days. The number of days can be changed after loading the search page.

6.2. Forum and topic search

Some styles provide search fields on the forum view and the topic view. These fields allow you to perform a keyword search within the forum or within the current topic.

Figure 5.8. Search within topics



Search field within a topic.

6.3. Advanced search

In addition to the predefined searches provided by phpBB, it is possible to create your own search queries. Searches can be based on keywords, author, and forum selections.

6.3.1. The search query

In order to perform a search of the board, you must specify what it is that you would like to search for. You can specify keywords to search for as well as a post author. Two query options are provided for performing the search:

- Search for all terms or use query as entered - If multiple keywords are provided, **all** keywords must be found in the result. Alternatively, you can provide a query using special identifiers.
- Search for any terms - If multiple keywords are provided, then results containing **any** of the provided keywords will be returned.

6.3.1.1. Keywords

In addition to supplying keywords, special identifiers can be used to add or detract from the importance of certain words.

Identifiers

- + When placed before a keyword, that keyword must be found in the result text.
- When placed before a keyword, that keyword must not be present in the result text.

Examples

+dog -cat Returns results which contain the word "dog", but not "cat".

- | This token can be used to separate a list of keywords, of which at least one of the keywords should be found in the text. Words may be placed inside of parentheses and combined with a + or - to indicated that at least one of the words must or must not appear in each result.

Examples

dog|cat Returns results which contain either the word "dog" or the word "cat".

-(dog|cat) Returns results which contain neither the word "dog" nor the word "cat".

- * An asterisk in a keyword allows for partial keyword matches.

Examples

cat* Returns results which begin with the word "cat", such as "cats" and "catastrophe".

6.3.1.2. Author

The search query can be further refined by providing the author of the post. If an author is specified, then only posts made by that author which meets the query requirements will be returned. The author field allows for the use of wildcards (*) to perform partial matches on the author name.

6.3.2. The search options

Searches can be further restricted to specific forums or specific parts of the topics.

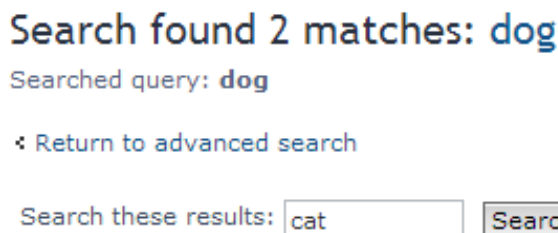
- Search in forums - Here you can select specific forums in which the search should be performed. Multiple forums can be selected by holding down the "control" or "command" key.
- Search in subforums - If this option is selected, then any subforums of the selected forums will be searched as well.

- Search within - This allows you to specify which part of the posts should be searched.
 - Post subjects and message text - Both the post subject and the post body will be searched.
 - Message text only - Only the body of the posts will be searched and not its title.
 - Topic titles only - Only the topic titles will be searched.
 - First post of topics only - The first post of each topic will be searched and no other posts in the topic.
- Display results as - This option formats the search results to only show either the post contents or just topic titles.
- Sort results by - Orders the results based on either author, post time, forum, topic title or post subject. The results can be displayed in ascending or descending order.
- Limit results to previous - Limits the results to posts made in specific time frame.
- Return first - Formats the results to only contain a specific number of characters of the matching posts.

6.3.3. Further refinement

On the result page, it is possible to further refine your search by providing more search terms.

Figure 5.9. Search refinement



Refining the search results to include the word "cat".

7. The Memberlist - More Than Meets the Eye

phpBB3 introduces several new ways to search for users.

Figure 5.10. Sorting the memberlist

The screenshot shows a web interface for a memberlist. At the top, there's a 'Board index' link. Below it, a search bar labeled 'Username begins with:' with a dropdown arrow and a 'Display' button. A table lists members with columns: #, Username, Joined, Posts, Rank, and Message. A dropdown menu is open over the 'Joined' column, showing options: Username, Location, Joined date (highlighted), Post count, Website, ICQ, AIM, MSNM/WLM, YIM, Jabber, E-mail, Last active, and Rank. At the bottom, there's a 'Select sort method:' dropdown (set to 'Joined date'), an 'Order' dropdown (set to 'Ascending'), and a 'Submit' button. The footer says 'Page 1 of 1 [3 users]'.

#	Username	Joined	Posts	Rank	Message
1	JoeBloggs	Mon Nov 23, 2009 5		Site Admin	pm
2	Jane	Sat Dec 05, 2009 5			pm
3	John	Sun Apr 11, 2010 5			pm

Choosing an option to sort the memberlist by.

Sort By Username

If you want to find all members whose usernames start with a certain letter, then you may select the letter from the list of letters shown at the top of the memberlist. For instance, clicking "A" will display all usernames beginning with the letter A, while clicking "B" will list all usernames beginning with B. Clicking the hash (#) will display a list of usernames that do not begin with one of the twenty-six letters: in other words, numbers and other characters.

Sort By Column Headers

Each of the column headings are also sort links. That means you can click Username, Rank, Posts, Website, Location, >Joined, or Last Active to sort by that group. Upon clicking this for the first time, the lists will be sorted in ascending order (meaning that usernames would be listed A to Z and joined date would be listed earliest to most recent.) If you want to order the list in descending order, wait until the page has loaded in ascending order and click the column heading you wish to order by for a second time.

Sort By Other Options

You may also sort the memberlist by using the dropdown boxes on the bottom of the page.

Find a Member Search Tool

You can narrow down your search results using the Find a member search function. This feature allows you to find members by their username, ICQ number, AIM, YIM, MSN Messenger/Windows Live Messenger address, join date,

last active date, number of posts, IP address, and usergroup membership(s). All dates should be entered in the format YYYY-MM-DD (such as 2004-02-28 to represent February 28, 2004). The asterix (*) can be used as a wildcard for partial matches, such as entering "Ar*" into the username field to find all usernames beginning with Ar. Press the Submit button to begin the search, or the Reset button if you wish to clear all fields and start the search again.

Note

The availability of the sort method selection boxes varies by style.

Chapter 6. Server Guide

This chapter describes the server configuration related to phpBB.

1. Sphinx search configuration

Sphinx fulltext search allows using the [Sphinx Open Source Search Server](#) for phpBB 3.1 search. Using Sphinx will improve the performance of searching as well as indexing particularly in boards with large databases. Sphinx server being both flexible and fast, provides a better alternative as a search backend.

1.1. Minimum Requirements

The minimum requirements for using Sphinx are as follows:

- Sphinx Search server >2.0.1 && <3.0
- phpBB 3.1+
- MySQL or PostgreSQL Database

1.2. Installation Instructions

1.2.1. Sphinx Installation

Follow the [Instructions](#) to install sphinx. Only the actual installation is required, no need to follow "Sphinx Quick Usage Tour" for phpBB search.

1.2.2. Sphinx Configuration

Sphinx configuration file data can either be generated through ACP and then copy pasted into the `sphinx.conf` or the [Sphinx Sample Config](#) can be manually edited and used. Following folders/files need to be created and defined in the `sphinx.conf`:

- Config directory which will have `sphinx.conf` and `stopwords.txt` (If defined).
- Data directory which will have binary and index files.
- Log directory as a sub directory of Data directory which will save all logs related to sphinx search server.

1.2.3. Creating Required Directories

- Data directory

```
mkdir -p {DATA_PATH}
```

- Log directory

```
mkdir -p {DATA_PATH}/log
```

1.2.4. Indexing

Board administrator needs to select **Sphinx Fulltext Search** as the search backend and **Create Search Index** through the ACP UI. This will create a **SPHINX_TABLE** in the database. Then the sphinx indexer should be manually run from the shell.

- Index Main

```
indexer --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf index_phpbb_{SPHINX_ID}_main >> {DATA_PATH}/log/indexer.log 2>&1 &
```

- Index Delta

```
indexer --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf index_phpbb_{SPHINX_ID}_delta >> {DATA_PATH}/log/indexer.log 2>&1 &
```

- Re-index

```
indexer --rotate --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf index_phpbb_{SPHINX_ID}_delta >> {DATA_PATH}/log/indexer.log 2>&1 &
```

1.2.5. Test Sphinx

Test whether sphinx is working. The following command will return the search result.

```
search --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf search string
```

1.2.6. Incremental Updates

Crontab file on most Unix Systems can be edited by

```
crontab -e
```

Add this line to update the delta index every five minutes

```
*/5 * * * * indexer --rotate --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf index_phpbb_{SPHINX_ID}_delta >> {DATA_PATH}/log/indexer.log 2>&1 &
```

Add this line to set up cron job for full index once every night

```
0 3 * * * indexer --rotate --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf  
index_phpbb_{SPHINX_ID}_main >> {DATA_PATH}/log/indexer.log  
2>&1 &
```

1.2.7. Start Searchd

Start sphinx daemon.

```
searchd --config {CONFIG_PATH}/sphinx.conf >> {DA-  
TA_PATH}/log/searchd-startup.log 2>&1 &
```

1.2.8. Troubleshooting

Log files present in the {DATA_PATH}/log/ directory can be checked for errors. See [Sphinx Documentation](#) for details.

1.3. Manual Configuration

Sample Sphinx config file for phpBB sphinx search backend is available [here](#). It has many options which include database details as well as the directory details for sphinx data and config folders.

1.3.1. Database Details

Database details on which sphinx daemon and the board are running.

- **type** - database type , default mysql.
- **sql_host** - hostname, default localhost
- **sql_user**
- **sql_pass**
- **sql_port** - database port, default 3306 for mysql
- **db_name**

1.3.2. Searchd Details

- **listen** - IP address : Sphinx Daemon port, default 127.0.0.1:3312
- **read_timeout** - Network client request read timeout in seconds, default 5

- **max_children** - Maximum amount of children to fork (concurrent searches to run in parallel), default 30
- **max_matches** - the number of search hits to display per result page, default 20000

1.3.3. Wildcard searching

By default, wildcard searching is DISABLED and use of * operator will not work. To enable wildcard searching, consider configuring the following parameters:

- **ignore_chars** - characters (in Unicode format) ignored and truncated in search index. default none. `ignore_chars = U+00AD, U+002D` will truncate hyphenated words into single word eg "re-establish" will be indexed as "reestablish". Ignored characters cannot be listed in `charset_table`.
- **min_prefix_len** - minimum prefix length to index. Value greater than 0 will enable partial word match using `wordstart*` wildcard, default 0 (wildcards disabled). Suggested value 3 (`tes*` will find test, tested, testing etc)
- **min_infix_len** - minimum infix length to index. Value greater than 0 will enable partial word match using `'start*`, `'*end'`, and `'*middle*'` wildcards, default 0 (wildcards disabled). Suggested value 3 (`*est*` will find test, tested, testing, estimated, shortest etc).

Note

Only use one of either `min_prefix_len` or `min_infix_len`, not both. The unused parameter should be set as 0. Enabling wildcard indexing will increase search index size.

1.3.4. Stopwords

Sphinx config file provides an option for specifying a file containing search stop words. Stop words are those common words like 'a' and 'the' that appear commonly in text and should really be ignored from searching. A somewhat complete list of English stop words can be found [here](#). These words can be copied into a text file and added to `sphinx.conf` under `index_phpbb` section as

```
stopwords = path/to/stopwords.txt
```

Chapter 7. Glossary

A guide to the terms used in the phpBB Documentation and on the forums.

1. Terms

There are quite a few terms that are commonly used throughout phpBB and the support forums. Here is some information on these terms.

ACP	The ACP , which stands for "Administration Control Panel", is the main place from which you, the administrator, can control every aspect of your forum.
ASCII	ASCII, or "American Standard Code for Information Interchange", is a common way of encoding data to transfer it to a different computer. FTP clients have ASCII as a mode to transfer files. All phpBB files (files with the file extensions .php, .inc, .sql, .cfg, .htm, and .tpl), except for the image files, should be uploaded in ASCII mode.
Attachments	Attachments are files that can be attached to posts, like e-mail attachments. Certain restrictions, set by the board administrator, control what users can attach.
Avatar	Avatars are small images that are displayed next to a username. Avatars can be changed in your profile and settings (such as allow/disallow uploading) edited from the ACP.
BBCode	BBCode is a special way of formatting posts that offers great control over what and how something is displayed. BBCode has a syntax similar to HTML.
Binary	Within phpBB, "binary" usually refers to another common way of encoding data for transfer (the other being ASCII. This is often found as a mode in an FTP clients to upload files. All of phpBB's images (found mainly in the images/ directory and the style's directories) should be uploaded in binary mode.
Cache	Cache is a way of storing frequently-accessed data. By storing this data, your server will have less load put on it, allowing it to process other tasks. By default, phpBB caches its templates, when they are compiled and used, and common static SQL queries.

Category	A category is a group of any sort of similar items; for example, forums.
chmod	chmod is a way of changing the permissions of a file on a *nix (UNIX, Linux, etc.) server. Files in phpBB should be chmodded 644. Directories should be chmodded to 755. Avatar upload directories and templates cache directories should be chmodded to 777. For more information regarding chmod, please consult your FTP client's documentation.
Client	A client is a computer that accesses another computer's service(s) via a network.
Cookie	A cookie is a small piece of data put onto the user's computer. Cookies are used with phpBB to store login information (used for automatic logins).
Database	A database is a collection stored in a structured, organized manner (with different tables, rows, and columns, etc.). Databases provide a fast and flexible way of storing data, instead of the other commonly used data storage system of flat files where data is stored in a file. phpBB 3.3 supports a number of different DBMSs and uses the database to store information such as user details, posts, and categories. Data stored in a database can usually be backed up and restored easily.
DBAL	DBAL, or "Database Abstraction Layer", is a system that allows phpBB 3.3 to access many different DBMSs with little overhead. All code made for phpBB (including MODs) need to use the phpBB DBAL for compatibility and performance purposes.
DBMS	A DBMS, or "Database Management System", is a system or software designed to manage a database. phpBB 3.3 supports the following DBMSs: Microsoft SQL Server, MySQL, Oracle, PostgreSQL, and SQLite.
Event	Events are injection points in the core phpBB code, similar to an anchor. When the event is triggered a <i>listener</i> in an <i>extension</i> that is subscribed to the event will inject code at that point, but without editing the core file.
Extension	Is the successor to a <i>MOD</i> . Like MODs they are to add or remove features or functionality, or in some other way modify behaviour of the standard software. They differ from MODs in that they are contained in their own directories and do not

	make changes to the core software. Instead they make use of <i>Events</i> and <i>Listeners</i> .
FTP	FTP stands for "File Transfer Protocol". It is a protocol which allows files to be transferred between computers. FTP clients are programs that are used to transfer files via FTP.
Founder	A founder is a special board administrator that cannot be edited or deleted.
GZip	GZip is a compression method often used in web applications and software such as phpBB to improve speed. Most modern browsers support this on-the-fly algorithm. Gzip is also used to compress an archive of files. Higher compression levels, however, will increase server load.
IP address	An IP address, or Internet Protocol address, is a unique address that identifies a specific computer or user.
Listener	A listeners are triggered by an <i>event</i> . They can be used by an <i>extension</i> to process incoming data and manipulate variables in the scope of the event. So they can change phpBB's behaviour, add or remove functionality or if used in the context of templates, modify the output. An alternative name for a listener is a "hook".
MCP	The MCP, or Moderation Control Panel, is the central point from which all moderators can moderate their forums. All moderation-related features are contained in this control panel.
MD5	MD5 (Message Digest algorithm 5) is a commonly-used hash function used by phpBB. MD5 is an algorithm which takes an input of any length and outputs a message digest of a fixed length (128-bit, 32 characters). MD5 is used in phpBB to turn the users' passwords into a one-way hash, meaning that you cannot "decrypt" (reverse) an MD5 hash and get users' passwords. User passwords are stored as MD5 hashes in the database.
MOD	A MOD is a code modification for phpBB that either adds, changes, or in some other way enhances, phpBB. MODs are written by third-party authors; as such, the phpBB Group does not assume any responsibility for MODs.
Notifications	When users perform certain actions on the board notifications will be generated to the affected users. For example, moder-

ators can select to be notified when a post requires approval. Notification methods include board notification and email notification.

PHP

PHP, or "PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor", is a commonly-used open-source scripting language. phpBB is written in PHP and requires the PHP runtime engine to be installed and properly configured on the server phpBB is run on. For more information about PHP, please see the [PHP](#) home page.

phpMyAdmin

phpMyAdmin is a popular open-source program that is used to manage MySQL databases. When MODding phpBB or otherwise changing it, you may have to edit your database. phpMyAdmin is one such tool that will allow you to do so. For more information regarding phpMyAdmin, please see the [phpMyAdmin project home page](#).

Private Messages

Private messages are a way for registered members to communicate privately through your board without the need to fall back to e-mail or instant messaging. They can be sent between users (they can also be forwarded and have copies sent) that cannot be viewed by anyone other than the intended recipient. The user guide contains more information on [using phpBB3's private messaging system](#).

Rank

A rank is a sort of title that is assigned to a user. Ranks can be added, edited, and deleted by administrators.

Note

When assigning a special rank name to a user, remember that no permissions are associated. For example, if you create a "Support Moderator" rank and assign it to a user, that user will not automatically get moderator permissions. You must assign the user the special permissions separately.

Server-writable

Anything on your server that is server-writable means that the file(s) or folder(s) in question have their permissions properly set so that the server can write to them. Some phpBB3 functions that may require some files and/or folders to be writable by the server include caching and the actual installation of phpBB3 (the config.php file needs to be written during the installation process). Making files or folders server-writable, however, depends on the operating system that the server is

running under. On *nix-based servers, users can configure file and folder permissions via the *CHMOD* utility, while Windows-based servers offer their own permissions scheme. It is possible with some *FTP* clients to change file and folder permissions as well.

Session	A session is a visit to your phpBB forums. For phpBB, a session is how long you spend on the forums. It is created when you login and deleted when you log off. Session IDs are usually stored in a cookie, but if phpBB is unable to get cookie information from your computer, then a session ID is appended to the URL (e.g. <code>index.php?sid=999</code>). This session ID preserves the user's session without use of a cookie. If sessions were not preserved, then you would find yourself being logged out every time you clicked on a link in the forum.
Signature	A signature is a message displayed at the end of a user's post. Signatures are set by the user. Whether or not a signature is displayed after a post is set by the user's profile settings.
SMTP	SMTP stands for "Simple Mail Transfer Protocol". It is a protocol for sending email. By default, phpBB uses PHP's built-in mail() function to send email. However, phpBB will use SMTP to send emails if the required SMTP data is correctly set up.
Style	A style is made up of a template set, image set, and stylesheet. A style controls the overall look of your forum.
Sub-forum	Sub-forums are forums that are nested in, or located in, other forums.
Template	A template is what controls the layout of a style. phpBB 3.3 template files have the .html file extension. These template files contain mostly HTML (no PHP, however), with some variables that phpBB uses (contained in braces: { and }).
Twig	phpBB uses the Twig template engine to combine data and <i>template</i> files to generate dynamic web pages on demand.
UCP	The UCP, or User Control Panel, is the central point from which users can manage all of the settings and features that pertain to their accounts.
UNIX Timestamp	phpBB stores all times in the UNIX timestamp format for easy conversion to other time zones and time formats.

Usergroup	Usergroups are a way of grouping users. This makes it easier to set permissions to many people at the same time (e.g. create a moderator group and give it moderating permissions to a certain forum instead of giving lots of individual people moderating permissions separately). A usergroup has a usergroup moderator (a leader, essentially), who has the ability to add or delete users from the group. Usergroups can be set to hidden, closed or open. If a usergroup is open, users can try requesting membership via the proper page within the group control panel . phpBB 3.3 has six pre-defined usergroups.
Web Push	Web Push notifications are messages sent by a website to a user's browser, even when the user is not actively browsing the site. They deliver notifications to all subscribed devices in real-time. For more information on Web Push notifications in phpBB, see Section 2.2.3, “Web Push settings” .