

**PART TWO THE TEXTPATTERN
INTERFACE**

3 SITE ADMINISTRATION



Use plugins? No Yes

Attach titles to permalinks? No Yes

Allow form override? No Yes

Articles use excerpts? No Yes

Store after how many days?

Author display e-mail address? No Yes

Comment means site updated? No Yes

Hide e-mail in Atom feeds? No Yes

Text (default is article body)? No Yes

Hide words in article titles? No Yes

Import from ?

Section to import into ?

Default article status ?

Default comments invite ?

Database Data

Database name ?

Mysql user ?

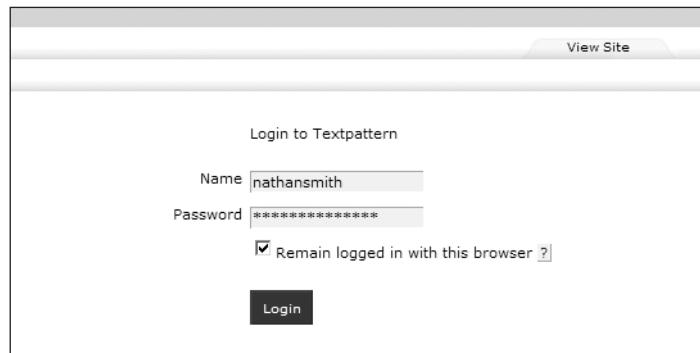
Mysql password ?

Mysql host ?

Now that you have completed Chapter 2, you should have a working installation of Textpattern set up on either your local computer or a live server. This chapter looks at all aspects of the Administration area of Textpattern, briefly covering what each part does so that you will have a reference point for later chapters that will go into further detail. In particular, you will find that enhancing functionality with plugins will become an essential part of building out any Textpattern site.

Logging in

Notice that when you are not logged in, there really is not much to the Textpattern interface—not even the version number. There is only one tab, labeled View Site, with a Login to Textpattern area below, as shown in Figure 3-1. This is for good reason because you certainly would not want nonapproved users to see more of the content management capabilities than they are entitled to. Go ahead and enter the username and password that you specified during the setup process. If you are using your own private computer, you might want to click the checkbox labeled Remain logged in with this browser, which will save you from having to retype your details every time you want to use Textpattern. If you are logging in from a public setting such as an Internet cafe, it is wise to leave the checkbox empty so that those using the computer after you do not have full administrative access to your website.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Textpattern login interface. At the top right, there is a tab labeled "View Site". Below this, the page title is "Login to Textpattern". The form contains the following elements:

- A "Name" input field containing the text "nathansmith".
- A "Password" input field containing masked characters "*****".
- A checkbox that is checked, with the label "Remain logged in with this browser ?" and a small question mark icon.
- A dark "Login" button at the bottom of the form.

Figure 3-1. Textpattern login screen

Pre-flight check

After logging in, the first thing you should do is check the Diagnostics tab in the Admin area to make sure that there were not any hiccups in the installation process. When all is as it should be, there will be a message displayed in green text that reads All checks passed!

Assuming that everything went according to plan, you should see a screen that looks like Figure 3-2. This Diagnostics section lists all the information about your hosting configuration. You can choose the level of detail that is reported—either High or Low—by using the drop-down menu below the text area. If you are having difficulties or making errors aside from those covered here, please post a detailed description of the problem on the Textpattern forum.

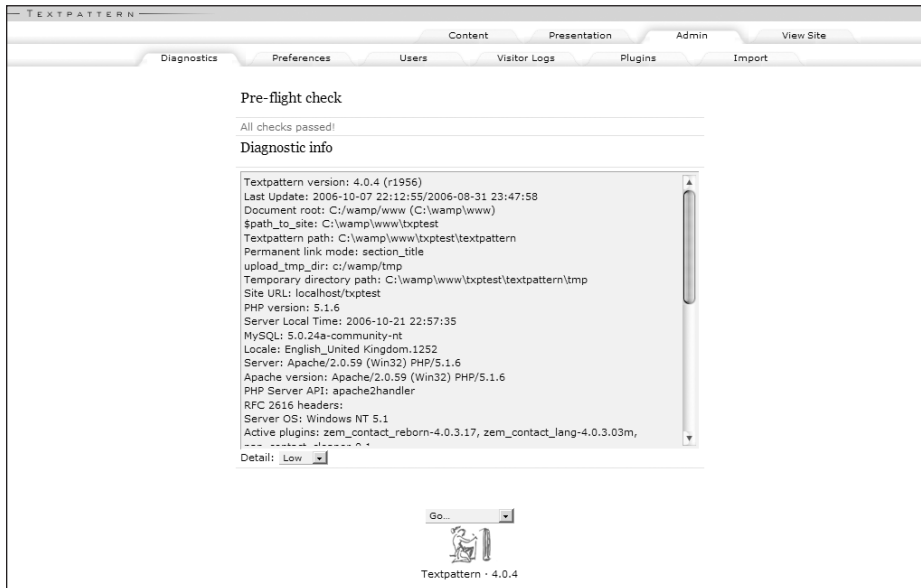


Figure 3-2. Pre-flight check passed

If you see the message as depicted in Figure 3-3 (. . . \textpattern\setup\ still exists), you need to make sure that you delete this directory. If someone knew that you were running Textpattern, they could type in the address `www.example.com/textpattern/setup/`. While this is not necessarily a huge security hole, it is something that can be easily avoided, so you should make sure to take the necessary precautions and delete this directory after your setup is complete.

Two other errors you might see are Apache module `mod_rewrite` is not installed and Clean URL test failed. The combination of these two errors probably means that your host does not have `mod_rewrite` enabled on the Apache servers. If you are running Textpattern in a local testing environment, refer to Chapter 2 for instructions on how to enable this setting. If you are seeing this warning on a live host, you might want to check with your server's administrator to see whether this is something that they can accommodate. Don't worry if this is not available with your hosting package because you can still run Textpattern; you just have to use "messy" URLs instead (this is covered a bit later in this chapter).

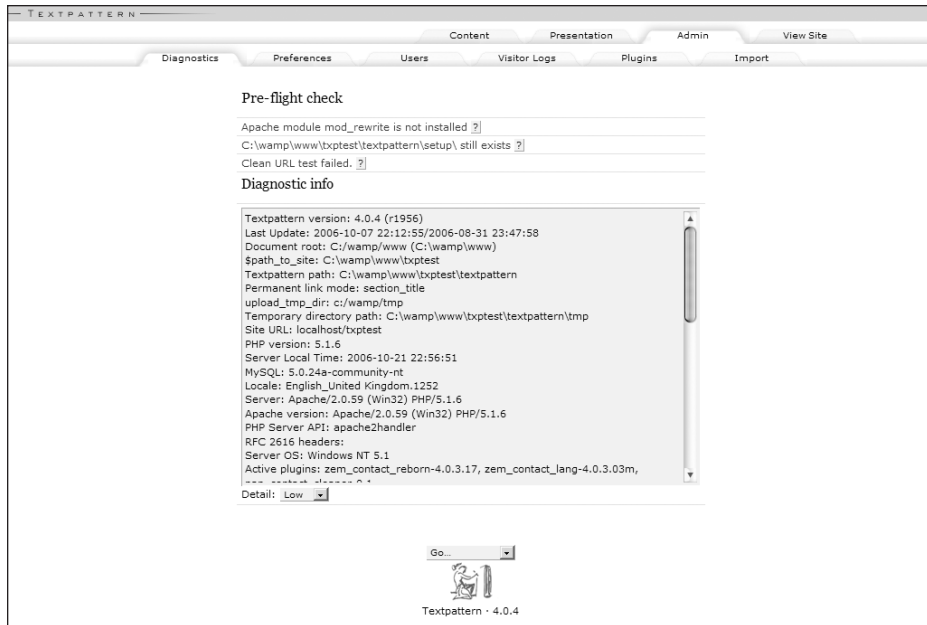


Figure 3-3. Pre-flight check warnings

Preferences

What would life be without options? You can have regular or decaf coffee, with or without cream and sugar, or with or without artificial creamer and sweetener. There are full-service or self-service gas stations, each offering different types of gasoline in a variety of octane ratings. Shopping for toothpaste can be a chore because after you pick your brand, you have to narrow down the field of options: original flavor, cool mint, cinnamon, tartar control, or extra whitening? Even orange juice comes with pulp or no pulp, hand-squeezed or processed, and with or without added calcium! You get the picture. I could go on and on, but the point is that people like to have choices, and everyone has preferences. So it is only logical that the next thing you need to do is specify your preferences. Use the Preferences tab, which is located right next to the Diagnostics tab. Basic preferences, shown in Figure 3-4, enable you to control a number of aspects that relate to your site.

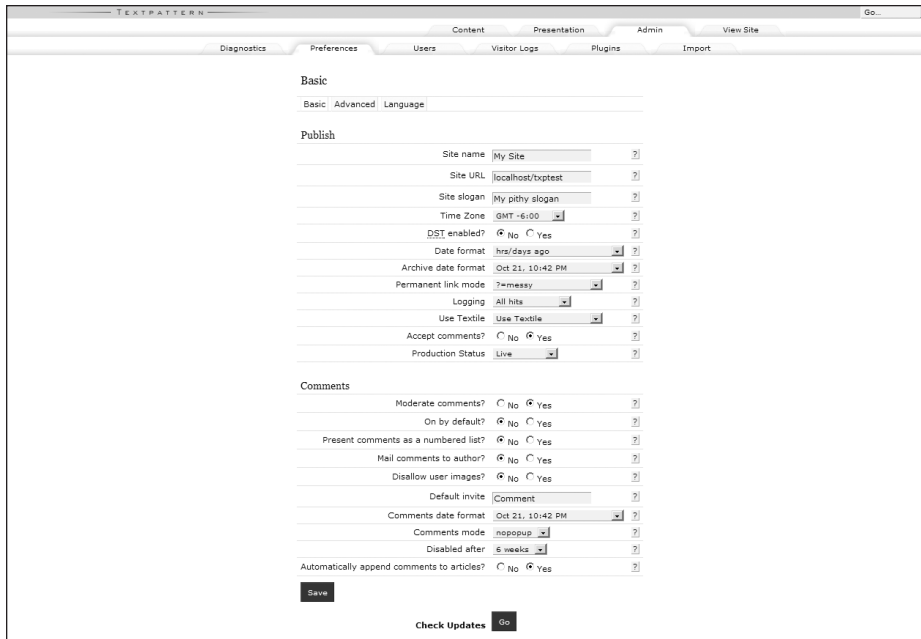


Figure 3-4. Basic preferences

When you click the Preferences tab, you should see three buttons labeled Basic, Advanced, and Language with the Basic button selected, indicating that you are in that part of the Preferences area. Resist the urge to click either of the other two buttons (you will visit them in a few minutes). For now, focus your attention on the list of choices underneath the heading labeled Publish.

Publish

Following is a listing of each choice in the Publish section and what exactly each one does:

- Site name:** This setting is just what it says—the name of your site. By default, it appears in the title area of your browser. It also goes out via Atom and Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds and is visible to your subscribers, so it should be set accurately. Within your pages, the site name can be displayed in one of two ways. By using the TXP tag `<txp:sitename />`, only the site name will be displayed. By using `<txp:page_title />`, though, you can output the name of your site, along with the current article title. Further use of these tags will be covered in later chapters, as well as in the tag manual.
- Site URL:** This setting is also pretty straightforward; it needs to be set to the area from which you want to run Textpattern. The fact that you are using Textpattern means that it is set up correctly. Just make sure that you leave it as is, so that the links within your site all work well together. If you are developing your site on a localhost with the intent of porting it over to a live server, you will need to change this setting when you make the switch.

- **Site slogan:** For whatever reason, this setting is something that people often forget to change (perhaps because they do not want to have a witty one-liner describing their site). Like Site name, Site slogan is also broadcast via the Atom and RSS feeds, and it doubles as a description of your site for feed aggregator services. I cannot help but chuckle when I subscribe to the Atom or RSS feed of a respected site that uses Textpattern, only to see it labeled My pithy slogan in my feed reader. Be sure not to make that mistake. Also, note that it can be quite a bit longer than the actual text field might indicate. Personally, I use it solely as a description for syndicated content and do not actually make use of it anywhere on my site. By default, it is displayed using the TXP tag `<txp:site_slogan />`.
- **Time Zone:** Set the time zone according to the region of the world in which you live. GMT refers to Greenwich Mean Time, which is the time zone for Greenwich, England, and is the location from which all other time zones are measured. If you are unsure how far an offset your time zone is from GMT, you can just check it on your local computer. If you are using Windows, double-click the time in the lower-right corner of your screen, which displays the Date and Time Properties window (Time Zone is the second tab). You should see something that looks like Figure 3-5. If you are on a Mac, click the time in the upper-right corner of your screen and choose Open Date & Time from the drop-down menu. Click the Time Zone button, and you should see a window like Figure 3-6.
- **DST enabled:** This setting enables you to specify whether or not daylight savings is in effect for your area. Not all time zones observe daylight savings time, so it might not be relevant for your particular location.
- **Date format:** This setting is the date format used when you are not on an individual article's page. As a general rule of thumb, it can be thought of as being used when there is more than one article displayed. I tend to keep this option the same as Archive date format for consistency, but that is just a matter of personal preference.

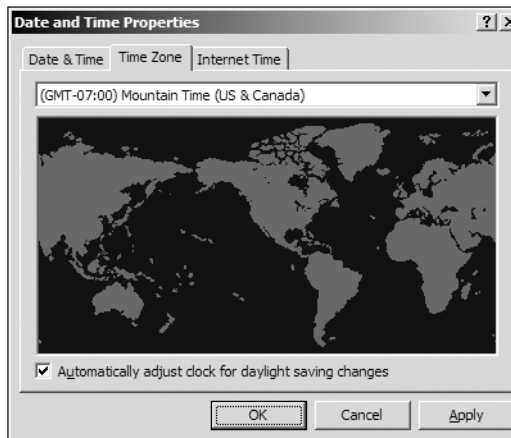


Figure 3-5. Time Zone on Windows

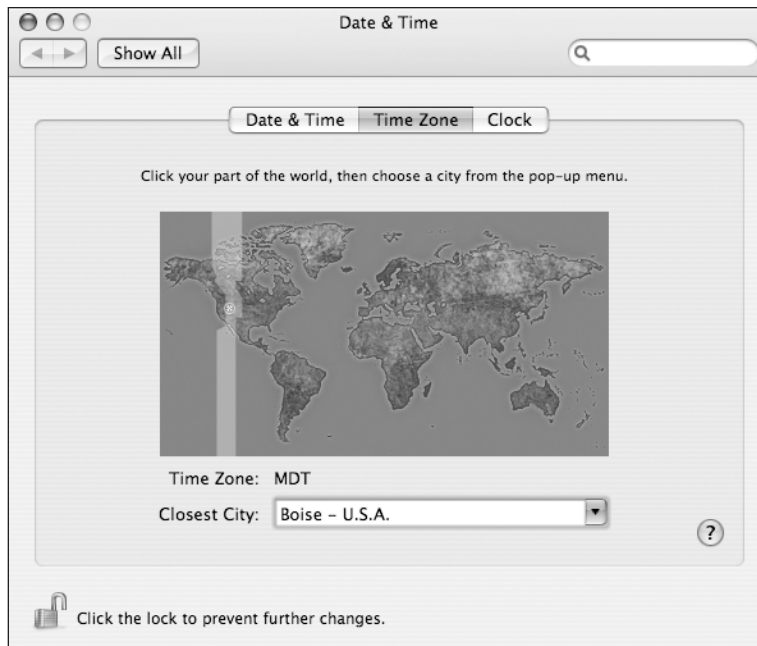


Figure 3-6. Time Zone on Mac OS X

- Archive date format:** This setting enables you to choose how you want the date displayed on your individual articles. It defaults to the number of hours or days it has been since an article was posted. Personally, I do not care for this format because it is not very informative. The person reading the date cannot easily ascertain at a glance when the article was published. Not only that, but the more time that goes by, the longer the string of digits grows. If your layout is designed to support a certain amount of numbers in a pseudo-calendar of sorts, this can be problematic. It is really just a matter of personal preference, though—you can pick whichever format you like.
- Permanent link mode:** By default, this setting is set to `?=messy` since that is the universally compatible mode. In this mode, your articles will look like this: `www.example.com/index.php?id=101`, and your sections will look like this: `www.example.com/index.php?s=article`. As you can see, it is not the prettiest solution—hence the name *messy*. However, the URL is still quite manageable and is still fairly short, even in this mode.

Settings other than `messy` require Apache's `mod_rewrite` module to be enabled. If you see a green `All checks passed` message on the Diagnostics tab, you can choose any of the other methods available. I tend to use the `/section/title` format because it most closely resembles a real directory structure (meaning that if someone were to cut off `/title` in the URL, there would still be a `/section` available because of the way `Textpattern` handles sections and articles). The other URL schemes are simply for readability and to keep people from writing similarly titled articles that conflict with each other.

For instance, with the `/id/title` structure someone could write an article entitled “My Summer Vacation” and then a year later write another article with the same title. The ID of the article would keep each entry unique, like so: `www.example.com/101/my-summer-vacation` and `www.example.com/201/my-summer-vacation`. If this were done with `/section/title`, both URLs would be identical: `www.example.com/article/my-summer-vacation`. The `/year/month/day/title` format is helpful for showing the user exactly when the article was written (for example, `www.example.com/2006/12/25/merry-christmas`). The drawback of using this type of format is that it does not resemble a true directory structure. So if users were to navigate to `www.example.com/2006/`, they would not find all the articles for 2006; they would be redirected to a 404 page. If this is something your site requires, plugins are available that can emulate this structure.

- **Logging:** No, this setting does not have to do with deforestation. By default, it is set to All hits, but this can have a detrimental effect on your site’s performance because it will write visitor info to the MySQL database for each person who comes to your site. While it might be interesting to see what ISP people are using, such data is not entirely relevant or applicable and quickly gets boring. The most logical choice is Referrers only because it lets you know which sites are linking to you and which of those links people are clicking to get to your site. This still involves actively writing information to the database, though, and the referrer logs are somewhat limiting in the amount of data they present. One popular alternative is to set logging to None and instead use something like Google Analytics, which is not only far more robust but also free. This is a more feasible solution because Google deals with tracking the hits instead of your database. For high-traffic sites, overhead can be reduced significantly by just leaving logging off altogether.
- **Use Textile:** Textile (text-style, get it?) is part of what makes Textpattern so great. It is the text formatting minilanguage/syntax that converts pseudocode into usable XHTML. For instance, if you want to make something bold, all you need to type is `*this text is bold*`; likewise, to make something italicized, you can type `_this text is italicized_` (which generates the XHTML output `this text is bold` and `this text is italicized`, respectively). Note that even when using Textile, real XHTML can still be intermixed. Any single line breaks add `
` to break the line, and double line breaks create paragraphs using the `<p>...</p>` code structure. This line break handling is included in the Use Textile and Convert linebreaks modes. If you choose Convert linebreaks, it will do just that, while not responding to other text formatting syntax; whereas if you choose Leave text untouched, no autoformatting is applied. This can be helpful for articles in which you want to feature snippets of code and you need the code to remain unaltered. This can be handled on a per-article basis, though, so it is best to just leave Use Textile enabled by default. A more in-depth look at full Textile formatting will come later in Chapter 4.
- **Accept Comments?** This setting is pretty self-explanatory. It simply enables you to choose whether or not you want to accept feedback from users in the form of comments on your articles. If your Textpattern-driven site will not have any blogging element to it, feel free to pick No for this option. This choice will cause the bottom portion of the preferences page under Comments to be hidden, as those options are not relevant without comments enabled.

- **Production Status:** This setting has three modes: Debugging, Testing, and Live. By default, the production status is set to Testing, but you will want to change it to Live before making your site public. Debugging is a great way to help you as a developer to identify problems in templates, plugins, and raw PHP code. Testing is used primarily for setting up a site in preparation for making it live. In both modes, the **runtime** is displayed in the code, which is the amount of time taken to build the page. They also show the number of MySQL queries executed and the estimated memory usage. In Debugging mode, all TXP tags encountered while building the page are also visible in the XHTML source code. While this is all very fascinating, it is not at all relevant to your site's users, so be sure to flip the switch to Live before showing it off to the world.

Comments

Assuming that you left the `Accept comments?` option set to `Yes`, you can now move on to the next set of criteria. Most of these settings are pretty easy to figure out, but some are a little more cryptic. Here is the list of the options that are available:

- **Moderate comments?** This option changes whether or not comments appear on your site immediately after they are submitted, or if they will be held in a queue for you to approve (or disapprove) of manually. By default, it is set to `Yes`, although most users will expect instant feedback when entering a comment, so you might consider setting it to `No`. You do not forfeit your right to moderate comments by doing so. As the site owner, you have veto power and can always go back through and prune comments you do not want.
- **On by default?** You might have this question: "Wait, this is just the same option as `Accept Comments`, is it not?" If so, you are right to wonder. The settings are very similar, but here is the difference: with `Accept Comments` set to `No` there are no comments, ever; with `Accept Comments` set to `Yes`, but `On by default?` set to `No`, you still have the option of enabling comments on a per-article basis (which can be helpful in some situations). For instance, if you are writing an editorial column for a newspaper site, you are usually simply expressing your opinion and are not soliciting feedback. However, from time to time you might want to request write-in responses from your readers, in which case you could enable comments for that one article.
- **Present comments as a numbered list?** By default, all your comments will be contained within an ordered list. Semantically speaking, this is probably the most accurate way to display comments because the list items are enumerated sequentially. If this option is set to `No`, each comment will be wrapped in a `<div>...</div>` instead of a list item. While this is not quite as semantically rich, it can make for easier styling if for some reason you do not want to style `<ol class="comments">...`. By using the `wraptag` and `breaktag` attributes, you can, of course, present your comments with any tags you want. These types of attributes will be covered later in Chapter 5.

- **Mail comments to author?** With this option enabled, the author of the article receives an email every time someone makes a new comment on your site. This process can be a great way to keep on top of things, but can be quite tedious to keep up with. Another way to handle new comments is to simply set one of your browser's home page tabs to your Comments area in Textpattern. This still lets you see the most recent comments and keeps your inbox comparatively less crowded: www.example.com/textpattern/index.php?event=discuss.
- **Disallow user images?** By default, this option enables user images because the answer to the question Disallow user images? is No. Once you get past the fact that it is a double negative, it actually is quite a handy feature. If it is set to Yes, all user images will be stripped out, and those leaving comments can only add text, not graphics.
- **Default invite:** This is the default phrasing used on your site, which lets people know that commenting is enabled. You can specify this invitational wording globally here and can override it later on a per-article basis.
- **Comments date format:** This option is just like the aforementioned Date format and Archive date format options, except that it applies to the date on which people leave comments. This information can be output along with names and feedback, letting others know how current the discussion is.
- **Comments mode:** This setting has only two choices: popup or nopopup. By default, it is set to nopopup, which is probably for the best. The other option is dependent on JavaScript to create a new miniwindow. Some users have popup blocking enabled in their browsers, whereas others might be viewing your site on a mobile device or using some other technology that does not support JavaScript. It is recommended that you leave this option set at nopopup.
- **Disabled after:** This option enables you to specify a preset amount of time for which comments will be accepted after you post your article. If set to never, people can comment indefinitely. Alternatively, you can have the commenting period autoexpire in increments of one week up until six weeks after the article was first posted. This setting can be overridden on a per-article basis if you need to disable comments sooner. You might override a particular article in which commenting gets out of hand or if you are simply making a short announcement that does not require any user feedback.
- **Automatically append comments to articles?** The default is Yes, which causes the comment form and any comments to appear after the body of your article. If it is set to No, you can still make use of comments, but will have to hard-code the comment form to appear in your template using the `<txp:comments />` tag. This can be useful for instances in which you want the comment form somewhere other than immediately following your article in the source code (it could be used to make the form appear on the other side of the page, for instance). This topic will be covered later when we look at templating.

Advanced Preferences

Now you will visit the buttons that we skipped over before. When you click the first button, Advanced, you are taken to the Advanced Preferences page. That button is replaced by a link labeled Basic, which leads back to the screen you were just looking at. What you should now see resembles Figure 3-7. When I think of preferences, I tend to visualize simple choices such as regular or decaf. When I hear “advanced” preferences, I think of more miniscule nuances such as espresso or French roast. However, the Advanced Preferences in Textpattern are quite essential for the functioning of your site and should not be overlooked or considered to be something that only connoisseurs care about. So, let’s run down the list and see what these Advanced Preferences are all about.

3

TEXTPATTERN

Content Presentation Admin View Site

Diagnostics Preferences Users Visitor Logs Plugins Import

Advanced

Basic | **Advanced** | Language

Admin

How many articles should be included in feeds? ?

Send "Last-Modified" header? No Yes ?

Image directory ?

Maximum file size of uploads (in bytes) ?

Temporary directory path ?

File directory path ?

Use ISO-8859-1 encoding in e-mails sent (default is UTF-8)? No Yes ?

Plugin cache directory path ?

Comments

Require user's name? No Yes ?

Require user's e-mail address? No Yes ?

Style

Use raw editing mode by default? No Yes ?

Custom Fields

Custom field 1 name ?

Custom field 2 name ?

Custom field 3 name ?

Custom field 4 name ?

Custom field 5 name ?

Custom field 6 name ?

Custom field 7 name ?

Custom field 8 name ?

Custom field 9 name ?

Custom field 10 name ?

Figure 3-7. Advanced Preferences

Admin

In this portion of *Advanced Preferences*, you can change the details of your site to match your server configuration. For the most part, you need to change these settings only if you are switching between hosting providers, and the absolute path to your site is different on the server. Even so, have a look at what each of the criteria does.

- **How many articles should be included in feeds?** This option controls how many recent articles go out as XML to your Atom and RSS subscribers. The default is five, but you can set it to whatever you like—it really depends on the frequency with which you post.
- **Send "Last-Modified" header?** If this setting is set to *Yes*, when someone visits your site, Textpattern asks the visitor's browser if your site has already been visited by reading its HTTP *If-Modified-Since* header. It then compares this with the date when your site was last modified. If the visitor has been to your site fairly recently, and nothing has changed since then, Textpattern tells the browser to use the version of the site that is in its cache by sending the *Last-Modified* header response. This saves having to load your site from the database every time and cuts down on bandwidth and server overhead.
- **Image directory:** This is the directory to which images will be uploaded from the *Images* area (under the *Content* tab) of Textpattern. The default is `images`, which refers to `www.example.com/images/`, but you can change it to whatever you like. Unless you have a specific reason for the change, it can be left as the default. Be sure to have full read and write permissions set by browsing your site structure via FTP, right-clicking the directory, and typing in the number `777` in the text field. It should be labeled something like *Numerical value* or *Octal*, depending on your FTP program.
- **Maximum file size of uploads (in bytes):** This option enables you to set a limit on the file size that authors are allowed to upload. The default is 2000000 bytes, which is approximately 2 megabytes. If that size is too small for the type of files you anticipate uploading, feel free to change it to whatever suits your needs. Be aware that the server's PHP configuration setting has the final authority for maximum file size on uploads. If you need capacity greater than what your server allows, you might need to contact your hosting company. Alternatively, you can simply FTP the file to the server, and "claim" it via Textpattern in the *Files* area by choosing an *Existing file* from the drop-down menu and then clicking *Create*.
- **Temporary directory path:** The *Temporary* directory is where files, images, and plugins are written to while they are waiting to be sorted into the correct place. If you view this directory via FTP at `www.example.com/textpattern/tmp/`, it is empty because nothing is stored there permanently. Still, it is an important part of how TXP functions, so be sure to have full read and write permissions set to `777`, just as with the `images` directory.

- **File directory path:** As with the `images` directory, the `file` directory exists as a place to store files uploaded via the `Textpattern` interface. It should also be set to full read and write permissions `777`, just like the `tmp` directory and `images` directory.
- **Use ISO-8859-1 encoding in e-mails sent (default is UTF-8)?** This option has to do with the type of character encoding with which emails are sent. The Latin-1 (ISO-8859-1) encoding used to be the standard, but has since been retired because it pertained mainly to a Western context. Unicode Transformation Format (UTF-8), on the other hand, has encoding for many more characters and thus can handle more languages. It has all the capabilities of ISO-8859-1 and then some. So unless you have a specific need to use ISO-8859-1, leave this option set to `No` so that you are using the newer UTF-8 standard.
- **Plugin cache directory path:** This directory is used for holding plugins while they are still in development. Unless you are writing a plugin that specifically requires a plugin cache directory to be created, you can just leave this field blank. If you do need to create a directory, log in via FTP, make a directory, and then point to it here in the Admin area.

Comments

Following is a listing of each choice in the `Comments` section and what exactly each one does:

- **Require user's name?** This option enables you to control whether or not the `Name` field is required when leaving a comment. For the most part, you should always have at least a name and a message so that there is someone to attribute the comment to. Unless you are building a site with some sort of anonymous commenting system, it is best to leave this set as a requirement for posting.
- **Require user's e-mail address?** There seems to be some debate among bloggers whether a user's email address should be required to post comments. Some feel that it helps lend more accountability because people have to give you their address before they can post anything. However, it has been my experience that if they do not want to divulge their email addresses, users will just use a fake one. For my own site, I have it available as an optional field because people will often post web-related questions and might want an email response from me. For those who do not wish to divulge their personal information, it affords them the luxury of a little more anonymity.

Style

Unless you are one of the few people on the planet who is a fan of black, size 16, Times New Roman font, you will probably be interested in adding a little style to your website. Depending on your preference of how you like to edit Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), this is where you make that choice.

- **Use raw editing mode by default?** When this option is set to Yes, you simply see a full view of your CSS files by default, enabling you to scroll through and edit them as you would in any HTML textarea. If it is set to No, you see your CSS in Textpattern's unique editor, which provides a tabular layout view of your style selectors and values. It is quite an interesting approach to managing CSS, one that is not seen in very many coding programs. As such, feelings tend to be polarized. Some people love it, while others opt to use their trusty hand-coding program—cutting and pasting between there and the TXP interface. Alternatively, you can just upload your static CSS files via FTP and skip the style manager altogether.

Custom fields

Custom fields are a powerful and versatile part of Textpattern and are what make it so easy to repurpose for different uses or add additional functionality to what already exists. Custom fields will be covered at length in later chapters. For now, all you need to know is that they will open up many doors of opportunity as you learn to develop more robust and fully featured websites.

Figure 3-8 shows the Links and Publish options available.

Links

Textile link descriptions by default? No Yes [?](#)

Publish

Permalink title-like-this (default is TitleLikeThis)? No Yes [?](#)

Use DNS? No Yes [?](#)

Use admin-side plugins? No Yes [?](#)

Apply rel="nofollow" to commenters' website URL? No Yes [?](#)

Use e-mail address to construct feed ids (default is site URL)? No Yes [?](#)

Maximum URL length (in characters) [?](#)

Spam blacklists (comma-separated) [?](#)

Allow PHP in articles? No Yes [?](#)

Allow PHP in pages? No Yes [?](#)

Allow raw php? No Yes [?](#)

Ping textpattern.com? No Yes [?](#)

Ping ping-o-matic.com? No Yes [?](#)

Show comment count in feeds? No Yes [?](#)

Use plugins? No Yes [?](#)

Attach titles to permalinks? No Yes [?](#)

Allow form override? No Yes [?](#)

Articles use excerpts? No Yes [?](#)

Logs expire after how many days? [?](#)

Never display e-mail address? No Yes [?](#)

New comment means site updated? No Yes [?](#)

Include e-mail in Atom feeds? No Yes [?](#)

Syndicate article excerpt (default is article body)? No Yes [?](#)

Prevent widowed words in article titles? No Yes [?](#)

[?](#)



Figure 3-8. Links and Publish settings

Links

- **Textile link descriptions by default?** If you want your Links section to be run through a lightweight version of Textile, choose Yes here. Straight quotation marks and apostrophes will be changed into their curly counterparts for better readability and typographical appeal. Also, freestanding single dashes (-) will be turned into the HTML encoded equivalent `–`, which is a slightly longer variant used in typesetting. It is up to you, but I recommend turning Textile on for as much as possible, as it really helps spruce up otherwise standard-looking text and properly encodes HTML character entities such as `&`.

Publish

- **Permalink title-like-this (default is TitleLikeThis)?** This setting applies only if clean URLs are enabled. Along the same lines as the previous setting, this option automatically grabs the text in your article title and converts it to a URL. By changing this setting, the aforementioned article would have this URL as its address: `www.example.com/article/WhatIDidLastSummer`. As you can see, it is not as easily readable.
- **Use DNS?** If you are making use of visitor logs and want Textpattern to make an attempt to convert IP addresses into human-readable addresses such as `my-isp.example.com`, switch this setting to Yes. Note that this option takes slightly more processing overhead, so if you notice that it starts to slow things down, you might want to switch it off. If that is a factor, though, you will probably save more system resources on your server if you just turn off logging altogether.
- **Use admin-side plugins?** Like the previous plugins option, this setting can just be left on unless you find that you are experiencing problems using the Textpattern admin interface, in which case it might help you troubleshoot. One excellent admin plugin is the database manager by Rob Sable, one of this book's authors. It enables you to make one-click backups of your entire site and also enables advanced users to run SQL queries against the database directly. For such plugins, this option must be enabled.
- **Apply rel="nofollow" to commentators' website URL?** A favorite method of spammers is to go on unsuspecting blogs and leave comments littered with links to other sites. They do this for two reasons. First, it is a desperate attempt to get people to click these links, find their products or services, and purchase them. Second, these links unfortunately serve as silent leeches on your site, using your site's search engine ranking to boost the relevancy ranking of their own sites. While search engines vary, one constant is that they all attribute more importance to sites with more incoming links. The `rel="nofollow"` attribute / value essentially tells search engines to ignore those links. Enabling this setting can help curb unwanted spam.
- **Use e-mail address to construct feed ids (default is site URL)?** Much like the Include e-mail in Atom feeds option, this setting gives people another way to gather information about you. Since your site is already publicly known, anyway, leave this option set to No. The Atom and RSS feeds will then use your domain name to uniquely identify your website.

- **Maximum URL length (in characters):** This option is a security feature to help protect your site against buffer overflow attacks, by which someone can submit an exceedingly long URL to your site and cause a memory access exception. The object of such an attack is an attempt to crash your site. The default is set at 200 characters, after which Textpattern ignores the rest of the text in the URL.
- **Spam blacklists (comma-separated):** To help prevent comment spam, there are sites devoted to compiling the Internet Protocol (IP) address of offenders. You can think of this option as a "neighborhood watch" of sorts, reporting the digital license plate numbers of known offenders. When your website receives a spam comment and you mark it as such, the IP address is sent to the blacklists you specify. When someone else receives a comment originating from this address, it is flagged as spam, saving the next person the hassle. This also works reflexively, so the diligent spam reporting of others can serve to benefit you. By default, the only address entered is `sbl.spamhaus.org`. You can find a longer list of maintained blacklists at DMOZ, which is short for DirectoryMOZilla, since the Mozilla Foundation originally maintained this list (www.directory.mozilla.org). This list now lives on at <http://dmoz.org/Computers/Internet/Abuse/Spam/Blacklists/>.
- **Allow PHP in articles?** If you want to use PHP from within your actual articles, this option enables you to do it. It is not recommended, however, because most of the programming logic should be kept at a higher level and probably should not make its way down into individual articles. That said, if you have a specific need for it, go right ahead, but it is usually safe to leave this setting off.
- **Allow PHP in pages?** If this option is enabled, you can make use of raw PHP in your page templates and forms by typing it within the `<txp:php>...</txp:php>` tags. By restricting the usage to the TXP tags, it helps keep things more secure. That being said, if you know PHP already, you can do just about anything you want. Simply use Textpattern's opening and closing PHP tags instead.

As of Textpattern version 4.0.4, the `<?php ... ?>` tags should no longer be used because of security vulnerabilities in which lesser-privileged site contributors could potentially compromise the Textpattern installation.

- **Allow raw PHP?** This option is available only to enable older sites that still make use of raw `<?php ... ?>` tags to continue to function properly. As mentioned before, there is nothing to be gained by using these tags instead of the ones that TXP provides. So unless you are upgrading from an older version of Textpattern and have already made use of raw PHP, start by doing things the right way and leave this setting off.
- **Ping textpattern.com?** If you want to phone home to the mother ship and let Textpattern.com know that your site is up and running, you can set this option to send a ping every time your site is updated. This pinging helps to let the Textpattern development team know that you appreciate and are using their software. Additionally, it allows for updates to be displayed in real time à la Blogger.com if the TXP team decides to do so.

- **Ping ping-o-matic.com?** If you want to alert search engines and subscription services that your site has been updated, make sure to set this option to Yes. If you want your site to gather attention, go ahead and flip the switch to broadcast mode here. On the other hand, if you want to keep your site relatively private, simply choose the other option.
- **Show comment count in feeds?** If this setting is on, the number of comments will be displayed in your Atom and RSS feeds as part of the title: Article name here [17].
- **Use plugins?** For the most part, you can leave this setting on all the time. The only instance in which you might want to switch it off is if you are having unfamiliar errors or problems with your site. By setting this option to No you might be able to determine whether indeed it was a plugin causing the problem or whether there is something wrong with Textpattern itself.
- **Attach titles to permalinks?** This option is a handy way to let Textpattern create URLs for you based on your article title. It applies only if clean URLs are enabled, and you have chosen a Permanent link mode of /section/id/title, /id/title, or /year/month/day/title. If you choose /title or /section/title, titles are *always* attached to permalinks. For instance, an article entitled “What I did last summer” would have a URL that looks like this: www.example.com/article/what-i-did-last-summer.
- **Allow form override?** If this option is enabled, you can choose a custom format on a per-article basis. Say you have a hybrid photo blog along with a regular one and want to be able to switch things up without actually putting blog articles into a different site section. This option provides the perfect way to do that because you can have it default to one format, but then can use form override for days when you are feeling particularly contrary or just want to post some sort of unique content.
- **Articles use excerpts?** If this setting is used, there is a box for an excerpt below the main article field when writing articles from the Content area. This option is intended to be used for a summary paragraph about your article, but it can really be used for just about anything. I have seen sites use it for pull quotes or for different portions of a page, such as an image spread. If you are lazy like me, there are a few plugins out there that autogenerate pseudoexcerpts based on the first number of words you choose. In that case, you can turn excerpts off and that textarea will not take up space in your article writing area.
- **Logs expire after how many days?** This option sets the number of days that your referrer logs remain in the Textpattern database. Note that if you do not check your logs regularly, they will continue to back up and add to the database size, albeit at a very gradual pace. This setting pertains to how many days the logs remain saved before they are expunged. If you do not plan to check your logs very often, you should adjust this setting accordingly.
- **Never display e-mail address?** If you do make user email a required field to post or even if you simply provide it as an option, it is common courtesy to hide users’ addresses from public view. Unless you are running a site called Spam “Я” Us, which enables poor schmucks to sign up in order to see who can get the most misspellings of Viagra emailed to them per day, be a gracious host and do not display user email addresses. Oddly enough, this setting is a double negative, so answering No actually means you *will* display them. So, make sure it is set to Yes, or else people might just stop commenting on your site altogether.

- **New comment means site updated?** If you have the Send “Last-Modified” header enabled, this option causes the cache to be rebuilt each time there is a comment added, ensuring that as users leave comments, they see them appear on the site (assuming that they are not moderated first). Also, this setting updates your recent comments if you are outputting a list somewhere on your site—in your sidebar for instance.
- **Include e-mail in Atom feeds?** This has always seemed like a pointless option because broadcasting your email address seems like a great way to get spammed. However, since Atom feeds are capable of including an author’s email address, this setting lets you dig your own grave in that regard. I recommend that you leave your email out of the Atom feed and simply provide a contact page from your actual site. If you like getting messages about herbal remedies and bogus stock IPOs, be my guest and leave it set to Yes.
- **Syndicate article excerpt (default is article body)?** This option enables you to choose between sending out excerpts of your articles or sending the full text via Atom and RSS. It is up to you which one you want to use. There seems to be an ongoing debate about whether excerpts help to get people interested enough in an article to visit the actual site. Really, this is a factor only if you are displaying paying advertisements on your site and fear that providing full articles will somehow hinder your efforts to generate revenue. While I will not take sides on this issue, I will say that you should write about what interests you, not only to make money.
- **Prevent widowed words in article titles?** Basically, this option keeps article titles from line-breaking with only a single word occupying the second line. Textpattern checks for the last word in a title; if there is more than one word in the title, it adds a nonbreaking space between the last and second-to-last words. When a web browser sees the nonbreaking space character encoding ` `, it treats the two adjacent words as a single chunk, thus causing the text to break to the next line with two words instead of one. A single lonely word is called a **widow** in typesetting for print (and is a faux pas when creating a page). Textpattern can prevent widows for sites that operate as web magazines, or the feature can just be left off.

Manage languages

The other subsection of the Preferences area is Language, as pictured in Figure 3-9, which closely resembles the language choices you were given when first installing Textpattern. If you need to add additional language support for a possibly multilingual site, this area is where you do that. The left column lists all your language choices, while the right column lists the installation links for the corresponding languages. Also of note is the date below each link, letting you know when each language file was last updated. You can compare this date with the date listed for the version of the language file you are currently using. If you so desire, you can then install the newer version to keep up to date. For the most part, though, if you are using English, these files do not change very often.

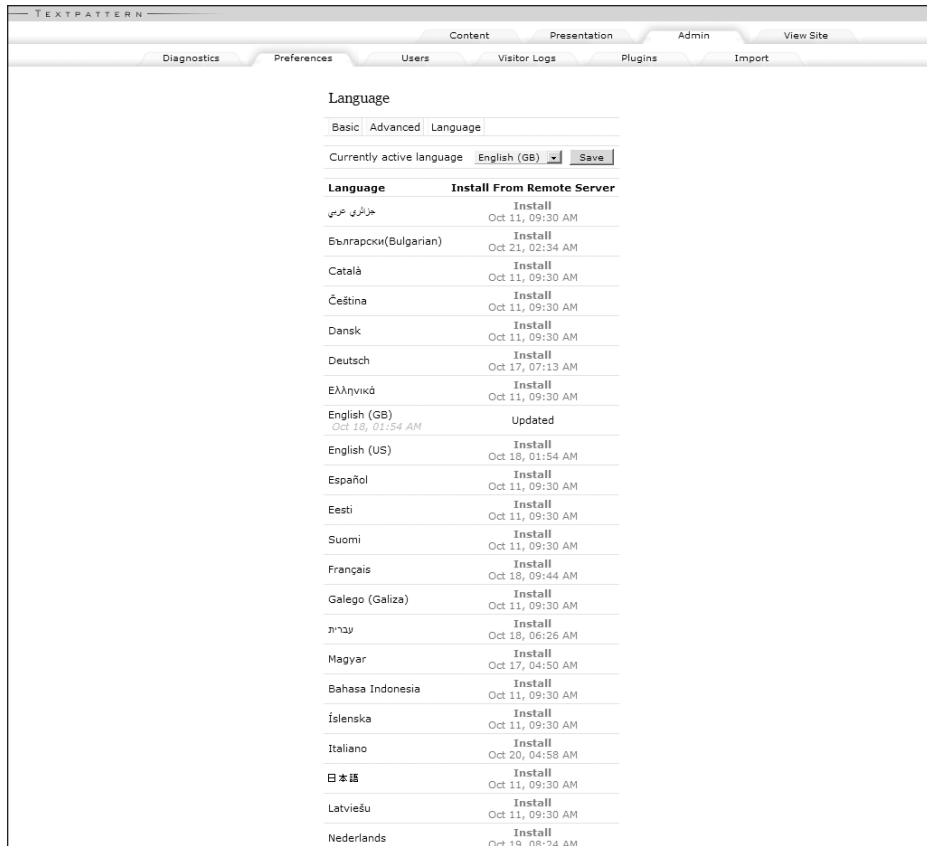


Figure 3-9. Manage languages

At the bottom of the page is a link that says [Install From File \(experts only\)](#), which enables you to upload your own language file via FTP and overwrite the existing settings in the database with your newly uploaded version. While this might seem a little intimidating, if you download one of the language files from rpc.textpattern.com/lang/ and open it in a text editor, you will see that it is pretty straightforward. I like to edit my language file to change the error messages for my comment form, as well as change the button phrasing from Submit to Publish. This is really just a matter of preference and pickiness, however. The standard language file should be just fine for most users.

Users

Now that we have covered the myriad of preferences that Textpattern caters to, let us move on to the [Users](#) tab, which is shown in Figure 3-10. This area is comparatively simple, offering a few basic choices. It enables you to change your password and email yourself a

copy. Also, it enables you to create new users and assign them various privileges: Publisher, Managing Editor, Copy Editor, Staff Writer, Freelancer, Designer, and None. I am not sure in which instance you would want to actually create a new user and yet assign no privileges. None is available in case you need to revoke user privileges while not entirely disabling the account. Hopefully, this will not be necessary, but in the case of a news magazine site, if someone makes an off-the-cuff-remark in an editorial, it might need to be dealt with.

Change Your Password

New password Mail it to me

Change Your E-mail Address

New e-mail

Authors

Real Name	Login	E-mail	Privileges	
<input type="text" value="Nathan Smith"/>	<input type="text" value="nathansmith"/>	<input type="text" value="nathansmith@example."/>	<input type="text" value="Publisher ?"/>	<input type="button" value="Save"/>
<input type="text" value="Joe Schmoie"/>	<input type="text" value="joeschmoie"/>	<input type="text" value="joeschmoie@example.c"/>	<input type="text" value="Managing Editor ?"/>	<input type="button" value="Save"/> <input type="button" value="x"/>

Add New Author

A message will be sent with login information.

Real Name

Login

E-mail

Privileges

?

Reset author password

A new password will be e-mailed

Go...

Textpattern · 4.0.4

Figure 3-10. User administration

At any rate, here are the levels of privileges for each potential role:

- **Publisher:** A Publisher can create, edit, or remove articles, as well as manage links and user comments. A Publisher can take an article out of live circulation by changing its status, enabling it to be edited before being republished. A Publisher can edit site preferences and has access to the entirety of the site design, as well as all sections and categories. A Publisher can also create and delete users, as well as change any user's privileges, including those of other Publishers.
- **Managing Editor:** A Managing Editor can do everything a Publisher can do except create, delete, or edit privileges for other users.
- **Copy Editor:** A Copy Editor can make changes to any article, link, or user-submitted comment, and can also make changes to page templates and TXP forms.
- **Staff Writer:** Staff Writers can create, edit, publish, and delete only articles that they have created; have the ability to upload accompanying images; but cannot affect the work of other authors.

- **Freelancer:** Freelancers can create and edit articles for which they are the author, and can change those articles from draft to pending status. These articles do not appear live on the site until approved by someone with Managing Editor or Publisher status.
- **Designer:** A Designer has access to the site's XHTML page templates, TXP forms, as well as CSS. However, a Designer does not have the ability to contribute to site content, so the Designer role is restricted to editing the appearance of the site.

The user account names mimic the structure of a newspaper or magazine editorial office. If your site requires different nomenclature, a bit of Textpattern hacking enables you to change both the user account names (for instance, Publisher to Overlord) and their permission levels. However, this is fairly technical, and requires editing the `txp_admin.php` and `admin_config.php` files, so it is beyond the scope of this book. For full details, consult the TextBook article entitled “Modifying User Account Roles and Privileges.”¹

Visitor Logs

Now that you learned how to create and manage new users, it is time to move on to Visitor Logs, which should look something like Figure 3-11. This area is pretty self-explanatory. In the far-left column is the date and time of the visit, followed by the name of the ISP/host, and then the URL of the page hit by the visitor. This, along with the Referrer, will probably be of most interest to you, because it shows which pages people are visiting, and, almost more importantly, who is linking to your website.

At the top center is a search box that enables you to filter through your logs to find something in particular. You can search by IP, host, page, referrer, method, and status. At the bottom left of the page is a checkbox that enables you to see more detail about your visitors, such as their IP addresses. In the far right column and at the bottom right, you can select entries to delete. This is helpful when cleaning up logs you have already viewed instead of waiting for them to expire after the preset number of days specified in Advanced Preferences.

1. http://textpattern.net/wiki/index.php?title=Modifying_User_Account_Roles_and_Privileges

Textpattern							
		Content	Presentation	Admin	View Site		
		Diagnostics	Preferences	Users	Visitor Logs	Plugins	Import
Time	Host	Page	Referrer				
10/20 12:45 pm	nicholasville-terayon1-67-20-58-66.irono... h.adelphia.net		sonspring.com/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 12:23 pm	d199-126-215-148.abhsia.telus.net	blog/things-your-dentist-should-never-say	google.ca/search?hl=en&q=fillings+are+too+... close+to+the+nerve&meta=	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 11:26 am	66.151.6.2		sonspring.com/journal/removing-dotted-links	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 10:35 am	ip-83-147-173-46.dub-3rk1.metro.digiweb... ie		sonspring.com/journal/slideshow-alternative	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 10:01 am	71.30.203.251		sonspring.com/journal/meridian-communications	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 7:36 am	cdif-cache-3.server.ntli.net	blog/little-monsters-nightmare	uk.ask.com/web?q=nightmare+monsters&src=08... ;o=0&l=dir&dm=all	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 6:29 am	70.57.78.193		sonspring.com/journal/jquery-sort	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/20 6:15 am	209.167.50.22	blog/on-my-mind	live.com	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 4:26 pm	254-141-165-209.gci.com		sonspring.com/journal/jquery-portlets	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 4:15 pm	cache-rtc-ae01.proxy.aol.com	blog/operation-veins	google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&ie=ISO-885... 9-1&q=drawing+blood+bruise+arm	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 11:14 am	209.251.144.14		sonspring.com/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 9:33 am	206.173.159.62		sonspring.com/journal/meridian-communications	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 8:42 am	167.234.12.79	blog/nightmare	bloglines.com/myblogs_display?sub=210321138... ;site=3555872	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 8:32 am	69.50.161.18	blog/rain-on-my-face-and-sara-b	live.com	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 8:29 am	sl-ifpa-1-0.sprintlink.net		sonspring.com/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 7:33 am	202.137.26.91	blog/welcome-to-estonia	search.yahoo.com/search?ei=utf-8&fr=slv8-8... p=night%20life%20in%20estonia	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 7:21 am	webproxy4x.mitre.org	blog/operation-veins	google.com/search?hl=en&lr=RNWE,RNWEi;2005... -50,RNWEi;en&sa=X&oi=spell&resnum=0&... ;ct=result&cd=1&q=Vein+In+Hand+Hurts&s... pell=1	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/19 4:18 am	CPE0050ba503cfc-CM014370023369.cpe.net.c... able.rogers.com		sonspring.com/journal/hoverbox-image-gallery	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 9:43 pm	user-1120nd0.dsl.mindspring.com		sonspring.com/portfolio/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 8:48 pm	adsl-70-241-245-208.dsl.okcyok.swbell.ne... t		sonspring.com/portfolio/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 8:46 pm	adsl-70-241-245-208.dsl.okcyok.swbell.ne... t		sonspring.com/portfolio/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 7:17 pm	63.167.255.231	blog/inside-the-criminal-mind	google.com/search?q=understanding+the+criminal... +mind&hl=en&lr=&start=40&sa=N	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 2:17 pm	ip24-252-30-155.om.cox.net	blog/operation-veins	google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&q=small+ve... ins+draw+blood+drink+water	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 1:03 pm	webcacheb01a.cache.pol.co.uk		sonspring.com/journal/hoverbox-image-gallery	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 12:30 pm	n126x09.cis.ksu.edu	blog/operation-veins	google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&q=arm+hurt... s+after+blood+draw&btnG=Search	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 10:46 am	24-107-194-182.dhcp.stls.mo.charter.com		sonspring.com/journal/hoverbox-image-gallery	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 8:46 am	71.216.212.158		sonspring.com/portfolio/	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/18 3:34 am	71.86.206.97	blog/operation-veins	google.com/search?q=veins,+iv,+hospital,+pain,... arm,bloodclot&hl=en&lr=&start=10&sa=N	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10/17 11:45 pm	69.111.115.131	blog/greek-gods-and-self-esteem	google.com/search?hl=en&safe=off&sa=X&... amp;oi=spell&resnum=0&ct=result&cd=1&a	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Figure 3-11. Referral logs

Plugins

When you first go to this section of the Admin interface, it looks quite sparse (see Figure 3-12) simply because Textpattern does not come with any plugins preinstalled. As your site develops, however, this area will probably grow with the plugins you choose to give additional functionality to your website. To install a plugin, copy the text from within the plugin file that you have downloaded, paste it into the Install plugin text area, and then click Upload.

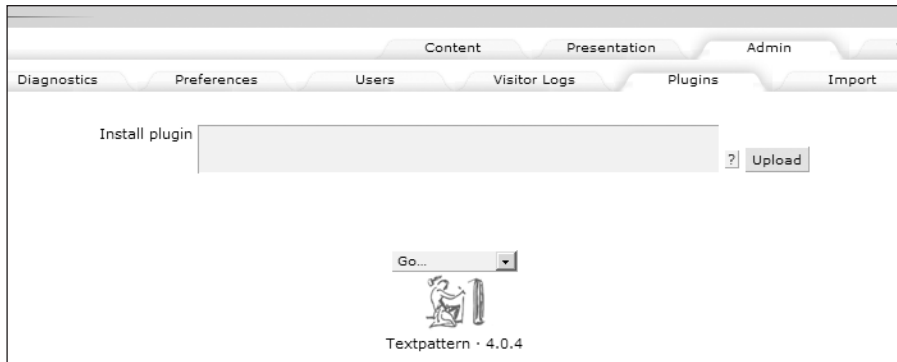


Figure 3-12. Plugins area

You now see a screen with a preview of that plugin's PHP code, as well as the accompanying help file and usage instructions, as shown in Figure 3-13. After you look things over, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click Install.



Figure 3-13. Plugin preview

After you install your plugin (or perhaps several plugins), this section of the Admin area starts to look like Figure 3-14. You see that there are typically four links pertaining to each plugin. The first is the author's name with a link to the website. This can be a good way to check on updates to plugins by periodically visiting the author's site, or perhaps subscribing to the Atom or RSS feeds. The next link is in the column labeled Active. You need to actually make each plugin officially active after installation, so make sure that you click on all the No words to change them to Yes. Likewise, when uninstalling a plugin, make sure to deactivate it before just jettisoning it into the void.

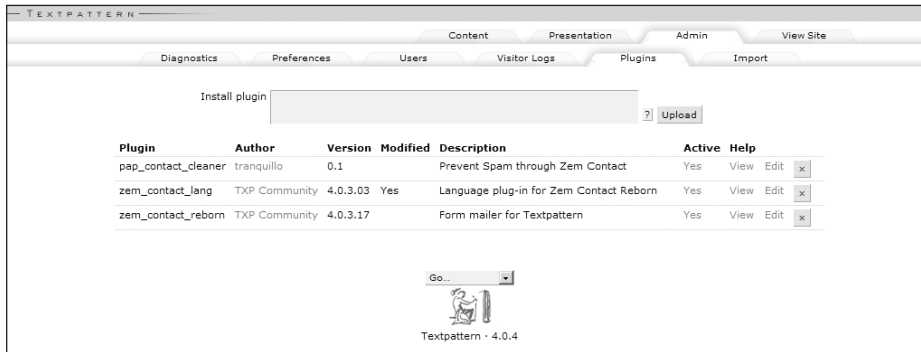


Figure 3-14. Plugin listing

We won't go into more detail here because Chapter 13 covers plugins in much more depth.

Import

This section does just what it says and not a whole lot more, as you can see in Figure 3-15. If you already have a site running using a different content management system (CMS), and it shares the same database host, all you need to do is enter the relevant info. There is a drop-down menu labeled Import from with a few selections: Movable Type (file), Movable Type (SQL DB), Blogger, B2, and WordPress. For the sake of this example, I have set up WordPress on localhost alongside my Textpattern installation. If you are migrating from another system, check with the corresponding vendor about how to export your database.

The screenshot shows the 'Import' page in the Textpattern CMS. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Content, Presentation, Admin, and View Site. Below these are sub-tabs: Diagnostics, Preferences, Users, Visitor Logs, Plugins, and Import. The main content area is titled 'Import content from other publishing tools'. It contains several form elements:

- 'Import from': A dropdown menu with 'WordPress' selected.
- 'Section to import into': A dropdown menu with 'article' selected.
- 'Default article status': A dropdown menu with 'Draft' selected.
- 'Default comments invite': A text input field containing 'Comments'.
- 'Database Data' section:
 - 'Database name': Text input field with 'wordpress'.
 - 'Mysql user': Text input field with 'nathansmith'.
 - 'Mysql password': Text input field with 'password4wordpress'.
 - 'Mysql host': Text input field with 'localhost'.
 - 'Tables prefix (if any)': Text input field with 'wp_'.
- 'Continue': A dark button at the bottom center.

Figure 3-15. Importing from WordPress

The second drop-down menu enables you to pick the Section to import into. This is somewhat limiting, considering that you could be importing from a multisectioned CMS. However, you can always go back through and reassign each article to the correct TXP section. The third drop-down menu enables you to set the Default article status. If you are doing this on a live server, you should probably have it set to Draft, so your new articles don't go out to the world until you have looked them over. If you are doing this on a local-host, it really does not matter. You can also set the Default comments invite in the text field provided.

Finally, make sure to fill out the database details for your other CMS. It is easy to make the mistake of filling in your Textpattern database data, in which case you are telling Textpattern to import itself. After you finish, fill in any applicable table prefixes if you are importing from WordPress or the Weblog ID if you are importing from a Movable Type database. Then hold your breath and click Continue. If everything went according to plan, you should see something like Figure 3-16. Note that if you have a large amount of articles stored in the other CMS, the database import can take awhile. For my example, I just imported a brand new WordPress installation on my own computer, so it was instantaneous.



Figure 3-16. Import is complete

Summary

Well, that about covers it for the Admin area of Textpattern. Hopefully, you have not yet started using this book as a doorstop because the upcoming chapters will be much more interesting. Configuration is the least glamorous part of any web development–related topic, but it is a necessary part of the process. Now that you have solidified the groundwork for Textpattern, it is time to move on to the Content area and start putting virtual pen to paper to share your thoughts with the world. It will then be time to delve into the Presentation area, in which you learn the tools that will transform this default and nondescript website into a thing of unique elegance and beauty. Okay, so maybe we cannot promise beauty, but at the very least you will be more comfortable changing the way your site looks, and it will be a reflection of your creativity.