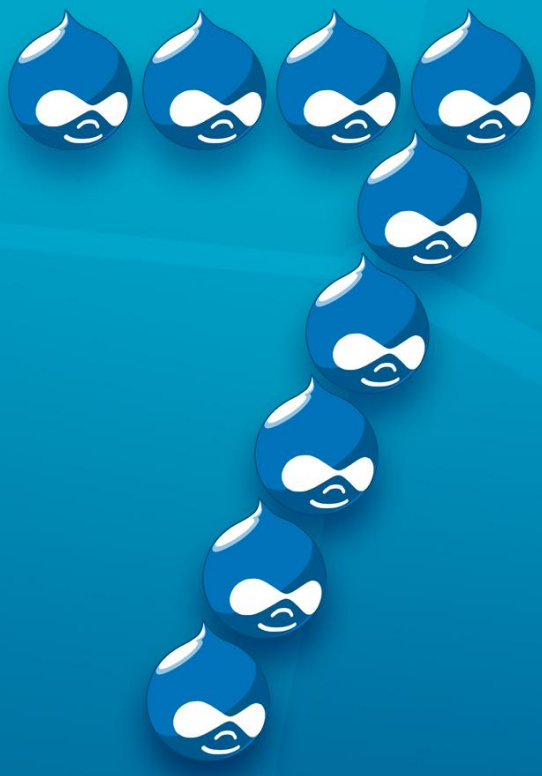

Master Drupal in 7 hours

Drupal Beginner Guide Tutorial

SYMPHONY THEMES

http://SymphonyThemes.com

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www.symphonythemes.com or www.tuthanh.com

ABOUT AUTHOR

My first name is Tuthanh (pronounced as two-thank) and my last name is Le. I am the founder of Symphony Themes, a premium Drupal theme provider. Working on a small business company, I usually take different roles but mostly as a product manager and a marketing specialist.

I am not a Drupal developer. Admittedly, I can not write a single piece of code. I do not intend to learn coding either. That's why I will be a Drupal beginner forever. Fortunately, I am backed up by my experienced developers.

The fun part of being a beginner is that, I refuse to absorb any advanced technical knowledge. When my developers try to teach me something which are too technical, I say NO. After I successfully learn a new stuff from them, I usually rewrite it so I can teach my customers. They are all beginners like me so I need to make it easy enough for them to understand.

I chose Drupal as my business platform since I started my company. I love to help beginners and small business owners to explore the greatness of Drupal, like I have built my online business with it.

In my personal life, I have a lovely wife and we are expecting our first child at the end of this 2012.

You can visit my blog at http://tuthanh.com or my Twitter @tuthanhle.

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INTRODUCTION

We have a lot of Drupal books for users and developers, from beginners to experts.

What this book makes the difference is that

It is written for Drupal beginners and written BY a Drupal beginner

Being a beginner, I know what all beginners fear. Just like I first learnt ball room dancing, it took me almost 2 months to move like a robot, to struggle with music rythm and sway at the same time. I had to overcome the temptation of quitting several times before I could actually progress and enjoy the dances. Some of my friends, unfortunately, took the quick path to just give it up. In ball room dancing, the entry barrier was high enough to knock out a majority of beginners who had been earilier very eager to learn a new thing.

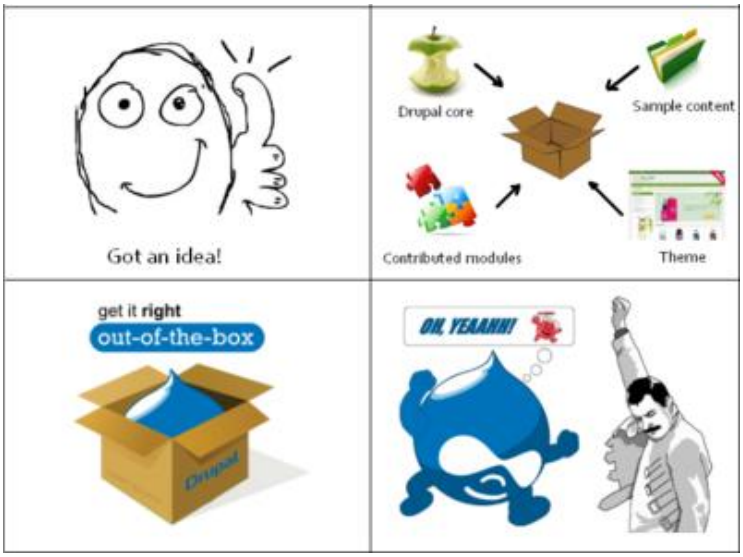
Drupal is similar, it is known as an exclusive playground of developers because of its high learning curve. The first time I had a try with Drupal, I had to struggle with installing it a few hours to get pretty much a blank site. Then what is next? No clue. I wanted to bang my head to walls.

We make it easier for beginners

I told my technical team: "Guys, I am dead with this stuff. Can you just make it easier for me? Can I do it in less than a day?"

I am not a developer, I can not write a single piece of PHP code. I just know some basic hosting and HTML knowledge. And I asked my team to get me to build a completed Drupal site in a day. Sounds a mission impossible?

But we were very interested in this idea. We set a target, within **7 hours** a newbie should be able to master Drupal. Why number 7? Because it is less than eight, a normal workday. We want every newbie can master a Drupal site in 7 hours and spend the last hour of the day to enjoy the first success.



Instead of writing a 300 page handbook so it looks thick enough, we want to give you this 90 page cookbook. First, it will look so much more encouraging when you start to read. Second, we want you to follow steps by steps and finish with an actual product that you can be proud of.

We cut all craps which are just to make up the number of pages. We removed any technical languages that may confuse. We tested and revised with our junior staffs and our customers. We put ourselves in your shoes to write tutorials that can bring most benefits.

Since I never develop myself to a Drupal developer (my primary job is online marketing), I always keep my mind as a Drupal novice and reject any difficult technical stuffs. So I believe that this guide will be easy for all Drupal beginners, as it is written by a beginner.

> *Again thanks a lot, this the first day on Drupal when I do not bounce my head against the table desk screaming nooooooooo.*

Who this book is for?

Maybe you are a business owner who wants to quickly build a Drupal site for your business. Maybe you are a Drupal novice struggling with learning Drupal. Do not worry, you can master a Drupal site in less than a working day using this book and other packages provided.

What this tutorial cover?

Hour 1: Installation, explains how to set up a Drupal site from our out-of-the-box packages. It comes with the wizard, so you can setup the site by just clicks.

Hour 2: Basic customization, covers all steps to upload your own content to the site. After that, you can launch it to public.

> *" This is actually the first tutorial that gives me the overview I as a beginner wanted."*

Hour 3: SEO, explores some basic rules before doing SEO and then Drupal SEO techniques.

Hour 4: Daily content management, gives you some best practice methods to keep producing content to your website.

Hour 5: Technical administration, shows how to keep your site healthy by status checking, backup, updating modules and cores.

Hour 6+7: Advanced customization, presents more advanced techniques if you want to further customize the site.

After finishing 7 hours of learning, you will achieve:

- Have a running Drupal site of your own
- Understand how to administrate a Drupal site
- Operate your Drupal site running smoothly with ease
- Establish a solid background to explore more features provided by Drupal.

Download the example code for this book

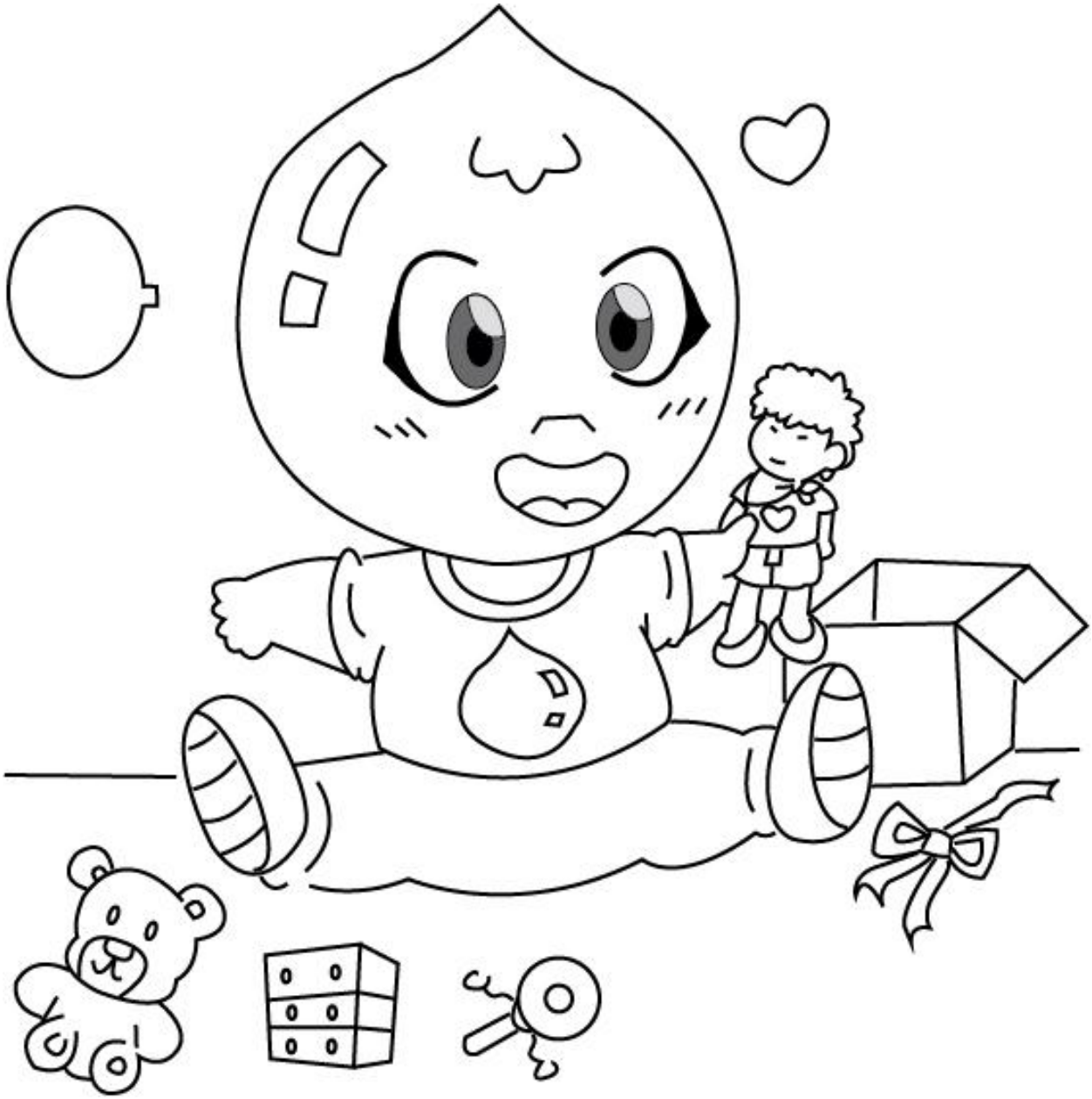
We provide you three free out-of-the-box Drupal packages including Drupal core, contributed modules, theme and sample content. You can pick one of those to download and install.

- For blog or magazine style: Alphorn
- For organization or non-profit style: Conch
- For more free themes check out our free Drupal themes resource.

Questions and Feedbacks

We need your comments to make this book better. We are appreciated your feedbacks to info@symphonythemes.com

HOUR 1: INSTALLATION



In this chapter, you will learn how to install the Drupal package provided with this book (refer to *Introduction: Download the example code for this book*). The packages include Drupal core, contributed modules, theme and sample content so you can have a completed site after installation.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENT – BEST CONFIGURATION

You may install in a local environment first or you can start with a hosting straight away. Drupal consumes more resources than other CMSes so do not pick a cheap hosting. We recommend this following hosting configuration:

- **Web server**: Apache 2.x on Linux hosting
- **Database**: MySQL 5.0.15 or higher with PDO enabled.
- **PHP**: 5.2.5 or higher with PHP memory limit of 32MB.

This hosting configuration is popular in any hosting providers. Drupal can also run in other web servers or database, but to avoid troubles when operating your Drupal site later, please use this best configuration.

More info on Drupal requirements is availabe at http://drupal.org/requirements

INSTALLATION

Step 1: Download the example code package with this book.

We provide you three free out-of-the-box Drupal packages including Drupal core, contributed modules, theme and sample content. You can pick one of those to download and install.

- For blog or magazine style: Alphorn
- For organization or non-profit style: Conch
- For more free themes check out our free Drupal themes resource.

Please extract the compressed files and choose the **fullsite_package.zip** file. The other zip file is the theme only package which is good for developers. In this book, we will use the fullsite_package.zip only because it is the most convenient.

Step 2: Upload to public_html folder and extract

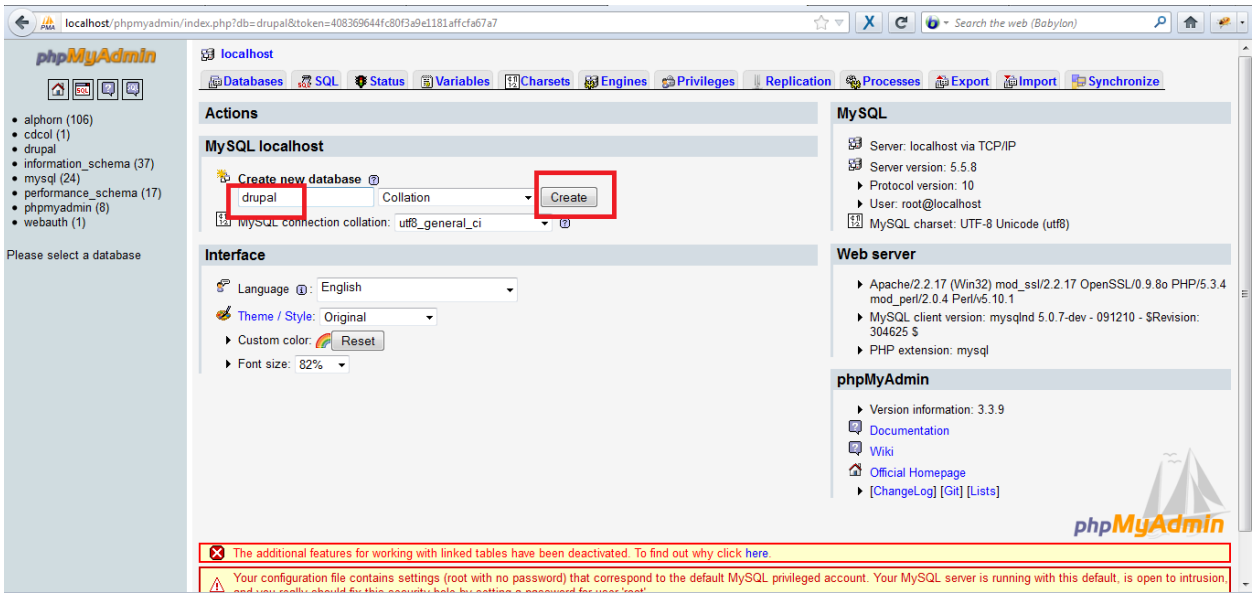
You can use a FTP client tool such as Filezilla or CuteFTP to upload **all files** inside the **fullsite_package.zip** package to your **public_html** folder on your hosting. This way, after the installation is completed, the script will appear once your type something like http://yourdomainname.com in your web browser.

Alternatively, you can create a subfolder under public_html and upload the content of fullsite_package.zip there. The Drupal installation will be available at: http://yourdomainname.com/subfolder.

Step 3: Create a new database

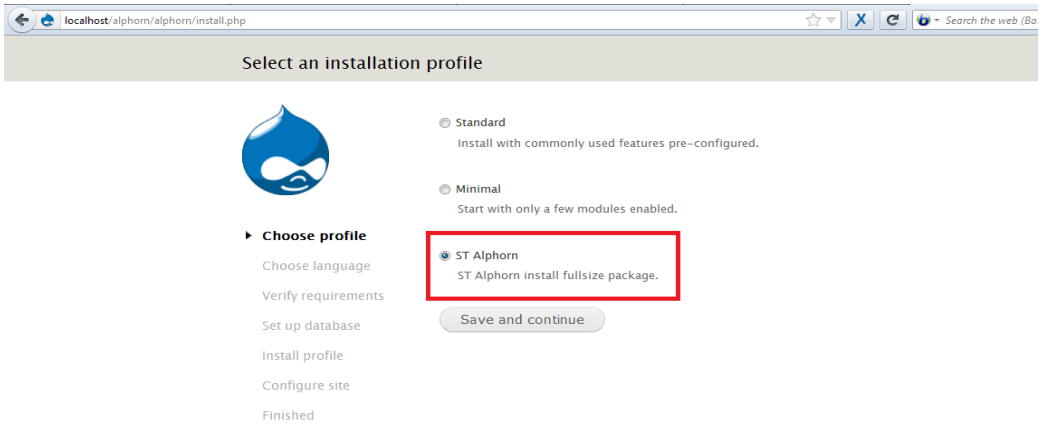
Create a new database through your hosting provider's control panel. Make a note of the database name.

Create a user, add that user to the database, and grant the user full rights on the database. Make a note of the username and password.



Step 4: Run the installation script

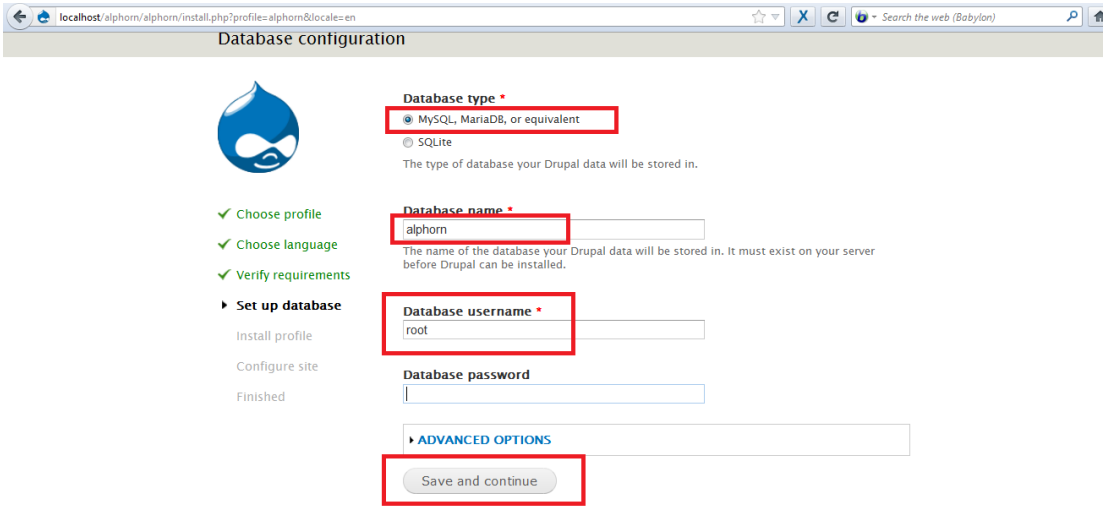
Using your web browser, navigate to the base URL of your new website. When you go to your new website, you should see the Drupal installation page. The installation wizard will guide you through the process of setting up your Drupal website. Select the Symphony's profile (in this case Alphorn) and click "Save and continue"



On the Choose language page, select English. Click Save and continue.

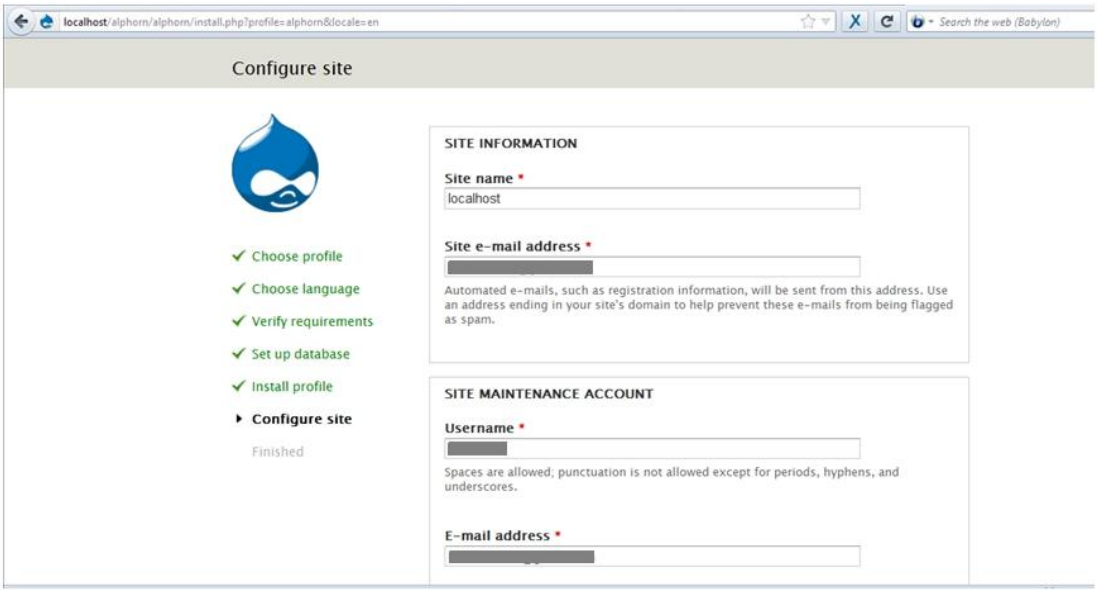
Step 5: Enter database details

On the Database configuration page, select MySQL or the type of database that you are using. Enter the database name, database user name and password which you have created in Step 3. Click on the "Save and continue". It will take 20-30 seconds; you just need to wait until it proceeds to the next screen.



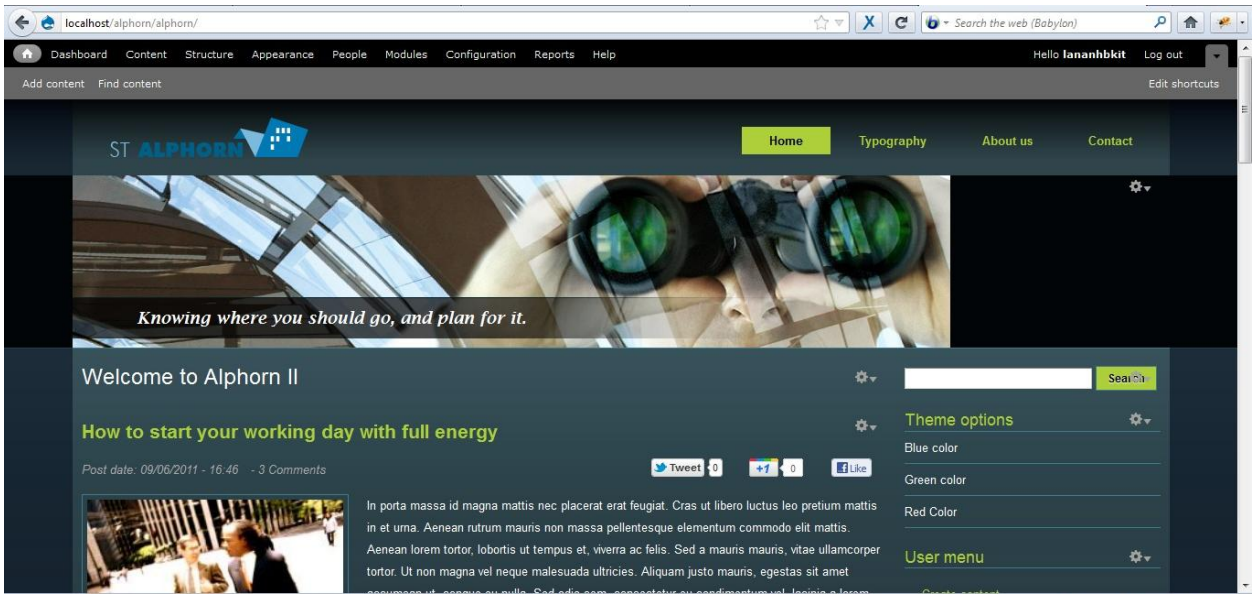
Step 6: Input your site information

In this section, the most important pieces of information are ***Username*** and ***Password*** of the administrator account. Other information can be filled arbitrarily and easily changed in the future.



Step 7: Done!

The installation is completed and you can navigate your first Drupal site now. This is how your site looks like when you choose the Alphorn package.



TROUBLE SHOOTING ISSUES

When troubleshooting problems for many customers, we found those issues are frequently met.

- **Memory limit**: Drupal consumes more memory than other sources. Therefore, you need have to increase memory limit for Drupal. http://drupal.org/node/207036
- **Clean URL**: if you see your image thumbnails do not display properly, and your URLs have many parameters, it is due to Clean URL. To use "Clean URLs" feature on an Apache web server, you will need the mod_rewrite module and the access permission to local .htaccess files.
- **PHP**: in rare cases, your hosting provides PHP4. Although Drupal can still runs with PHP 4.3.5, but many contributed modules will not work properly with PHP4. So you should ensure your PHP version is 5 and above.
- **Fatal error: Class 'PDO' not found**: you receive this message when PDO is not enabled in your hosting. Please configure your PHP setting to enable it.

HOUR 2: BASIC CUSTOMIZATION

INTRODUCE TO LAYOUT, ELEMENTS IN SYMPHONY SITE

Region #1: Header

- Logo
- Menu

Region #2: Top

- Slideshow

Region #3: Content

- Blog posts

Region #4: Sidebar

- Search
- Navigation
- User login
- HTML Block
- Poll
- Recent comments

Region #5: Postscript

- HTML Block 1
- HTML Block 2
- HTML Block 3
- HTML Block 4

Region #6: Footer

- Footer logo
- Footer menu

CHANGE LOGO AND FAVICON

First thing you need to do with the new website, change the website logo to yours, and the favicon.

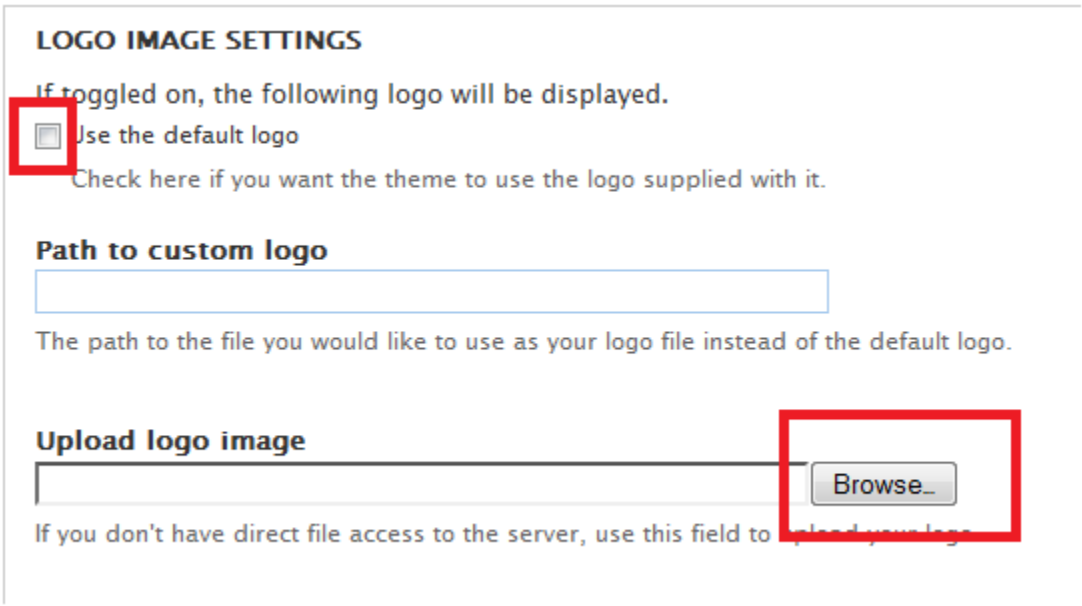
- **Logo**: the clickable site logo in the upper-left corner.
- **Favicon**: and the 16-by-16-pixel "shortcut" icon next to the URL in your browser's address bar.

Please go to the theme administration page at ***Admin > Appearance***, then select corresponding theme, in this case, either ***Alphorn*** or ***Conch***.

Change logo

Step 1: In the "***Toggle display***" section, make sure the "***Logo***" checkbox is checked.

Step 2: In the "***Logo image settings***" section, uncheck the "***Use the default logo***" checkbox.



Step 3: If you've already uploaded the graphic to your server, you can type in its path directly in the "***Path to custom logo***" box. Otherwise, click the ***Browse*** button, find the graphic you want to use on your computer, then scroll to the bottom of the screen and click "***Save configuration***".

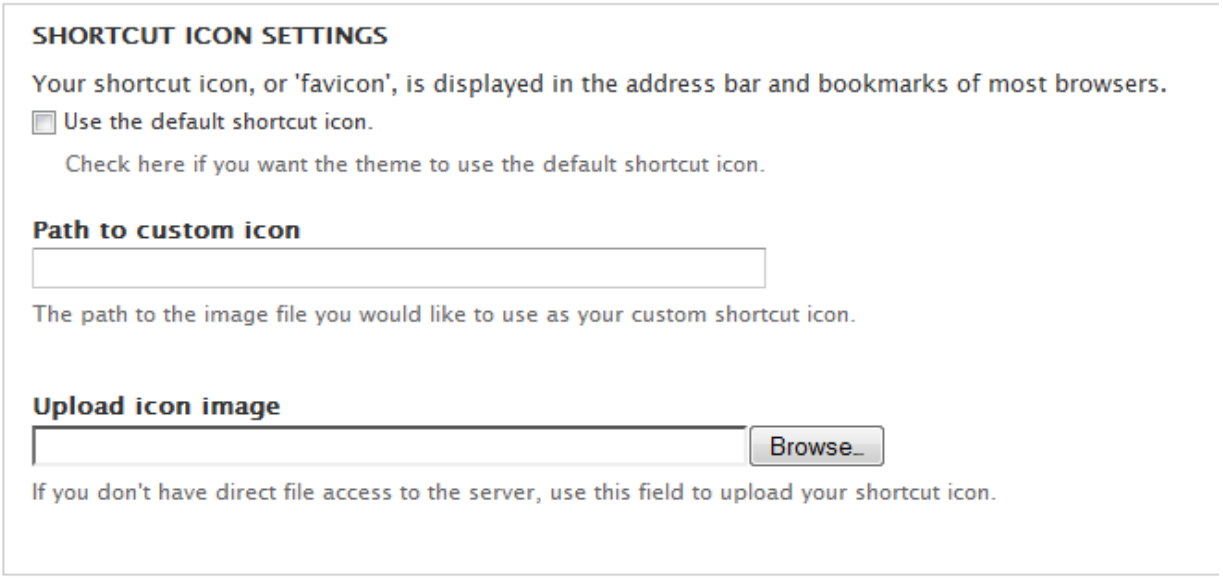
Don't immediately see a change? Try doing a "power refresh" (holding Ctrl + F5) in your browser to throw away the old version in your browser's cache.

Change Favicon

Step 1: In the "Shortcut icon settings" section, uncheck the "Use the default shortcut icon" checkbox.

Step 2: If you've already uploaded the graphic to your server, you can type in its path directly in the "***Path to custom icon***" box. Otherwise, click the Browse button, find the graphic you want to use on your computer, then scroll to the bottom of the screen and click "***Save configuration***". (PNG and GIF graphics are best, as some versions of Internet Explorer don't recognize JPG shortcut icons.)

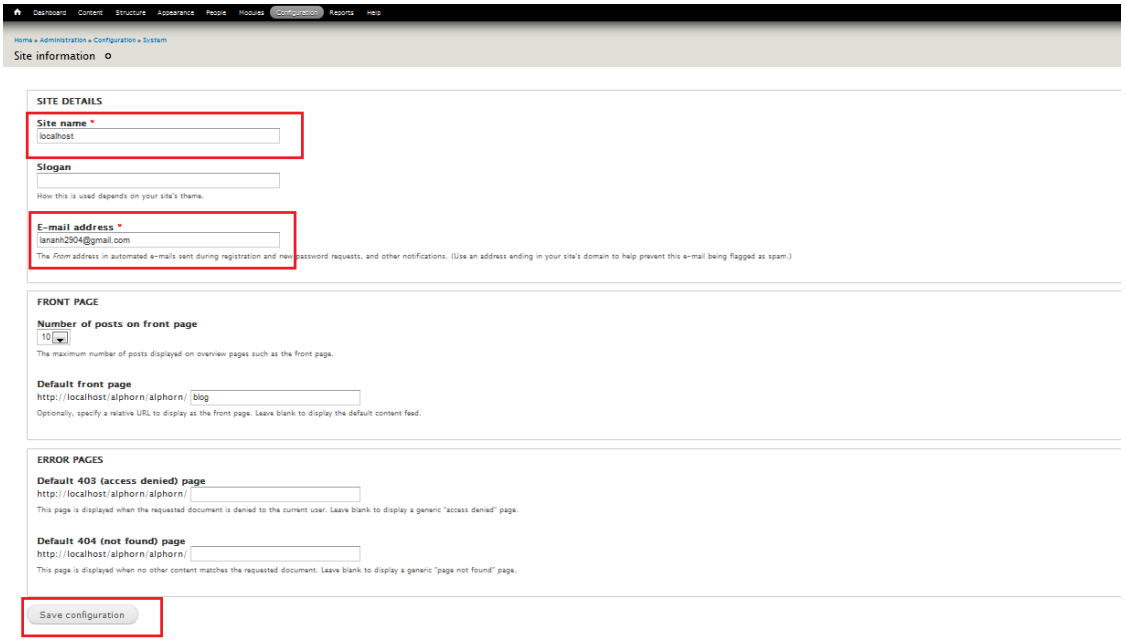
Don't immediately see a change? Try doing a "power refresh" in your browser to throw away the old version in your browser's cache.



SITE INFORMATION

Step 1: Now, let's change the site information to yours. Please go to ***Admin > Configuration > Site Information***

Step 2: In addition to Site name, which was set during install, you can also add a ***slogan***, ***mission***, and ***footer***. Other options include setting a name for anonymous users and changing the default front page setting.

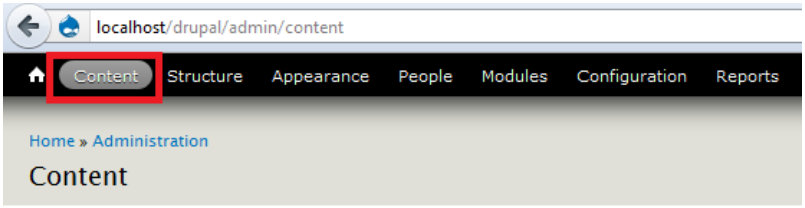


MANAGE CONTENT

It is time for you to create the first content of your site. In our install profile, we create sample content with dummy text. This is for demonstration only. You have to publish your own content. This section shows how to manage content in Drupal.

Create content

Step 1: Go to ***Admin*** > ***Content*** > ***Add content***

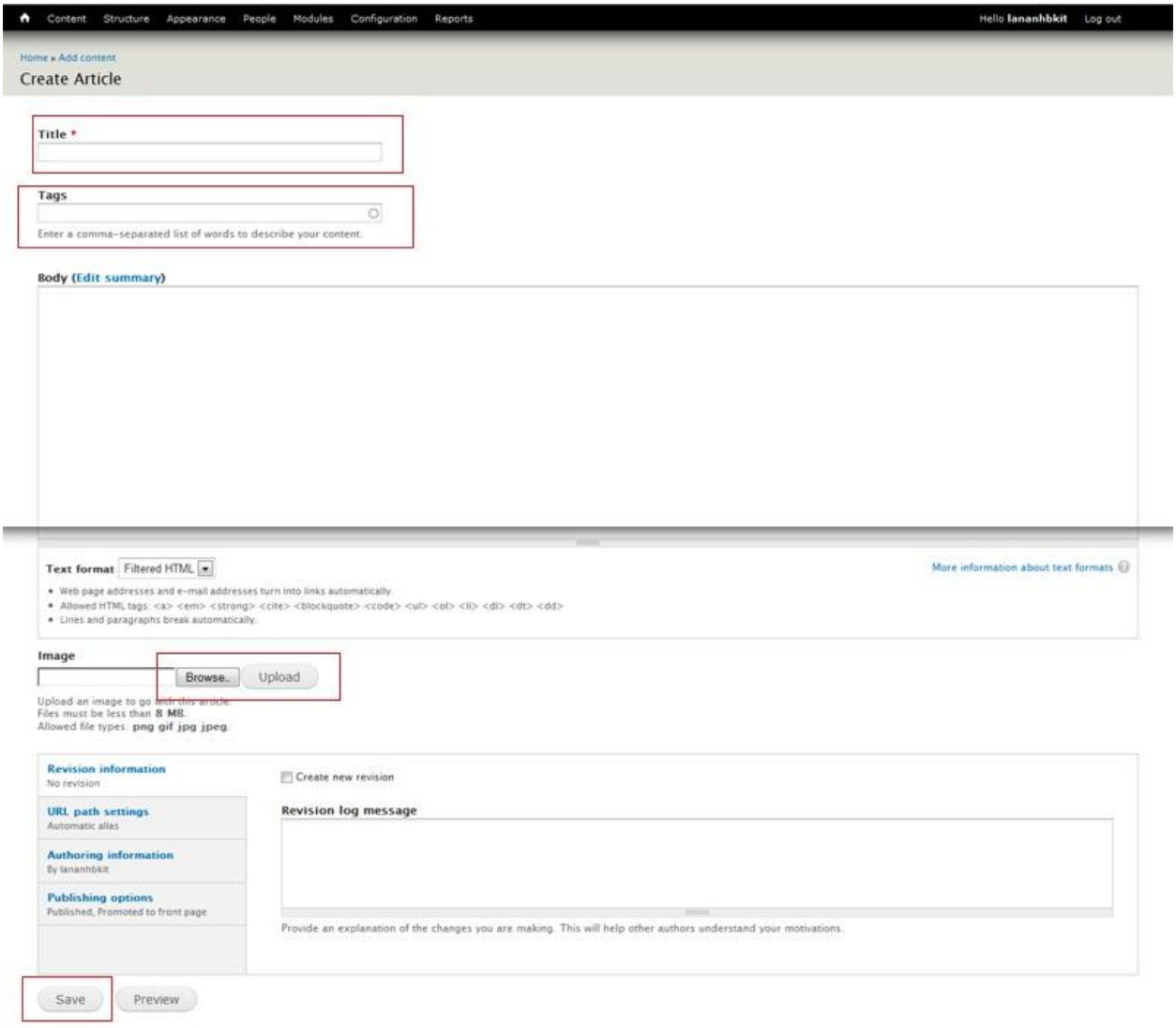


Step 2: Choose a content type that you need. There

are three common content types:

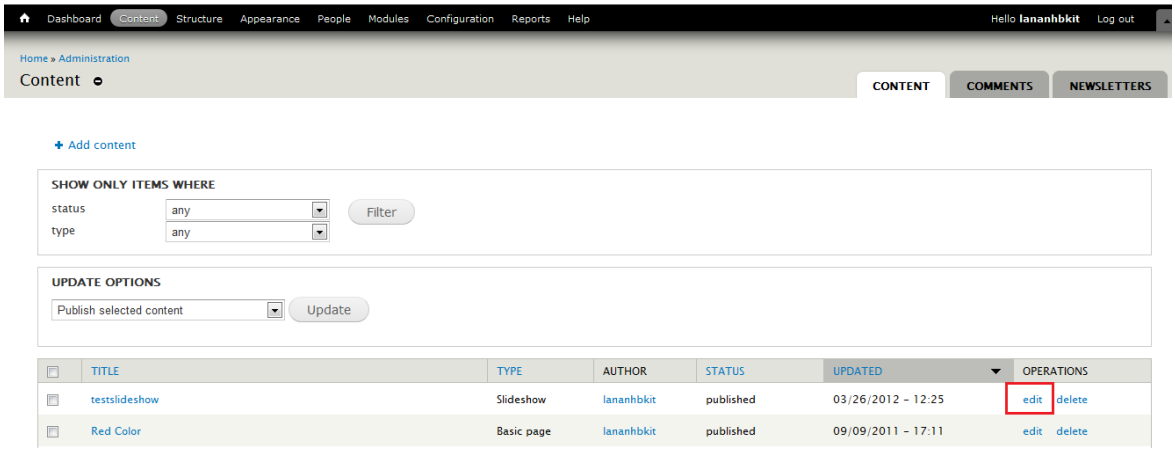
- ***Article***: when you create some new information such as press releases, site announcements and blog entries, you can choose "Article" content type.
- ***Page***: is used for information that rarely changes, such as "About us".
- ***Newsletter***: is the newsletter issue to be sent to your subscribing readers.

Step 3: Input all the necessary information for your article. You can use the CKEditor to write text instead of a plain one by clicking on ***Text format*** and choose ***Full HTML***. Click ***Save*** to end editting.



Edit content

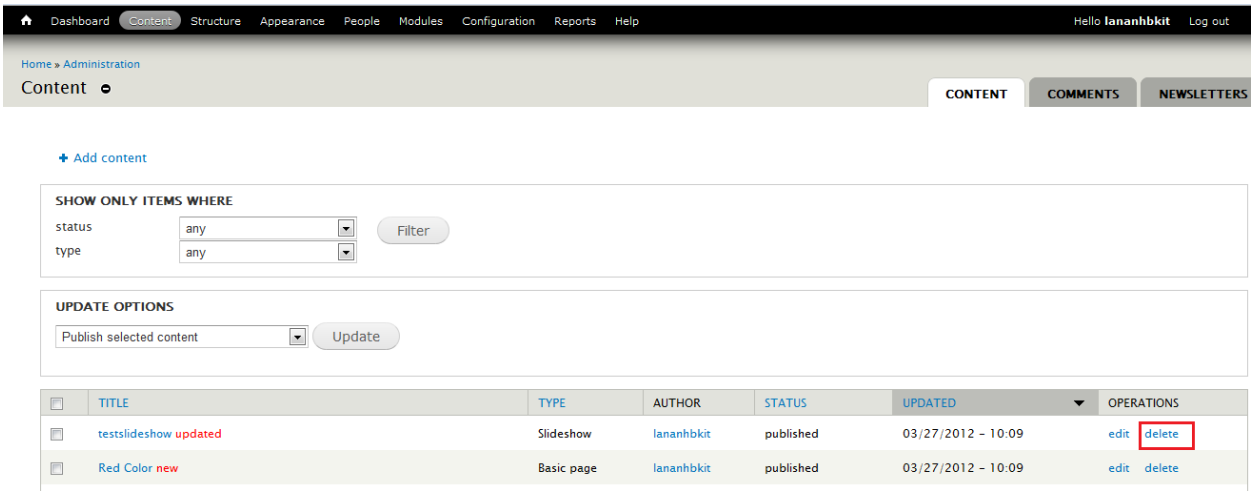
Step 1: Go to ***Admin*** **>** ***Content***, select the node that you want to edit, then click to ***Edit*** link.



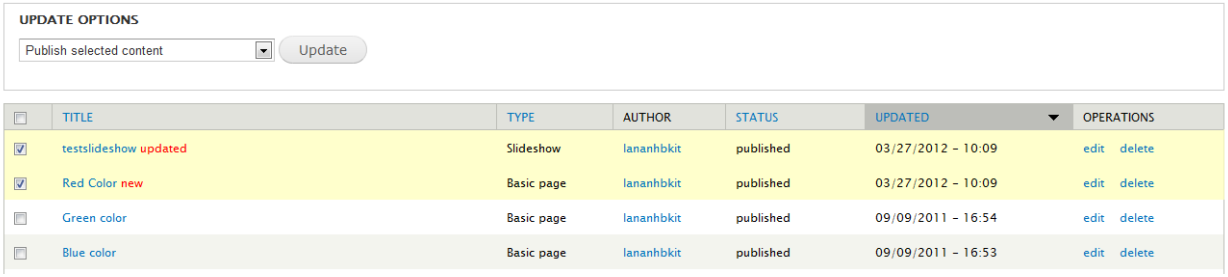
Step 2: Edit the information such as Intro text, Body, Image and so on, then click on Save.

Delete content

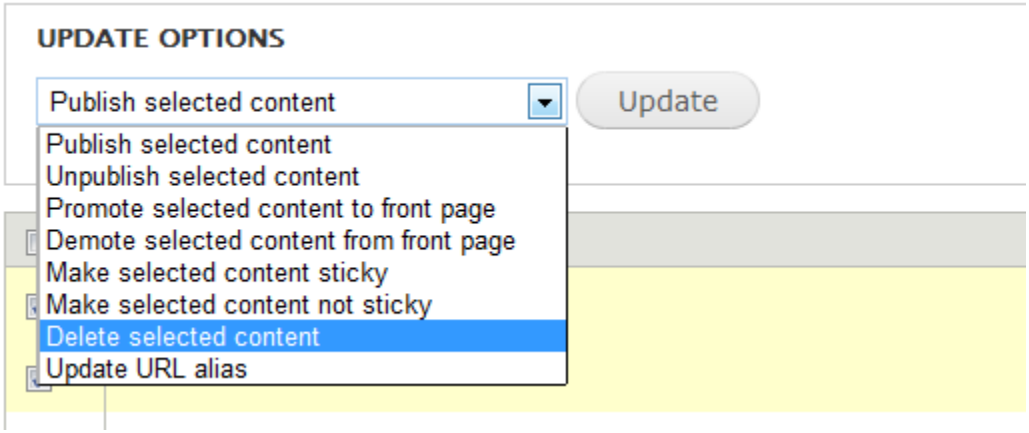
Step 1: Go to ***Admin*** **>** ***Content***. If you want to delete only a specific content, just click on the ***Delete*** link.



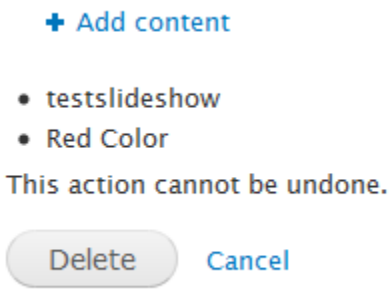
Step 2: If you want to delete some nodes at the same time, please check the box of the left of each node



Step 3: In the "***Update options***" drop down box select "***Delete selected content***", then click on ***Update*** button.

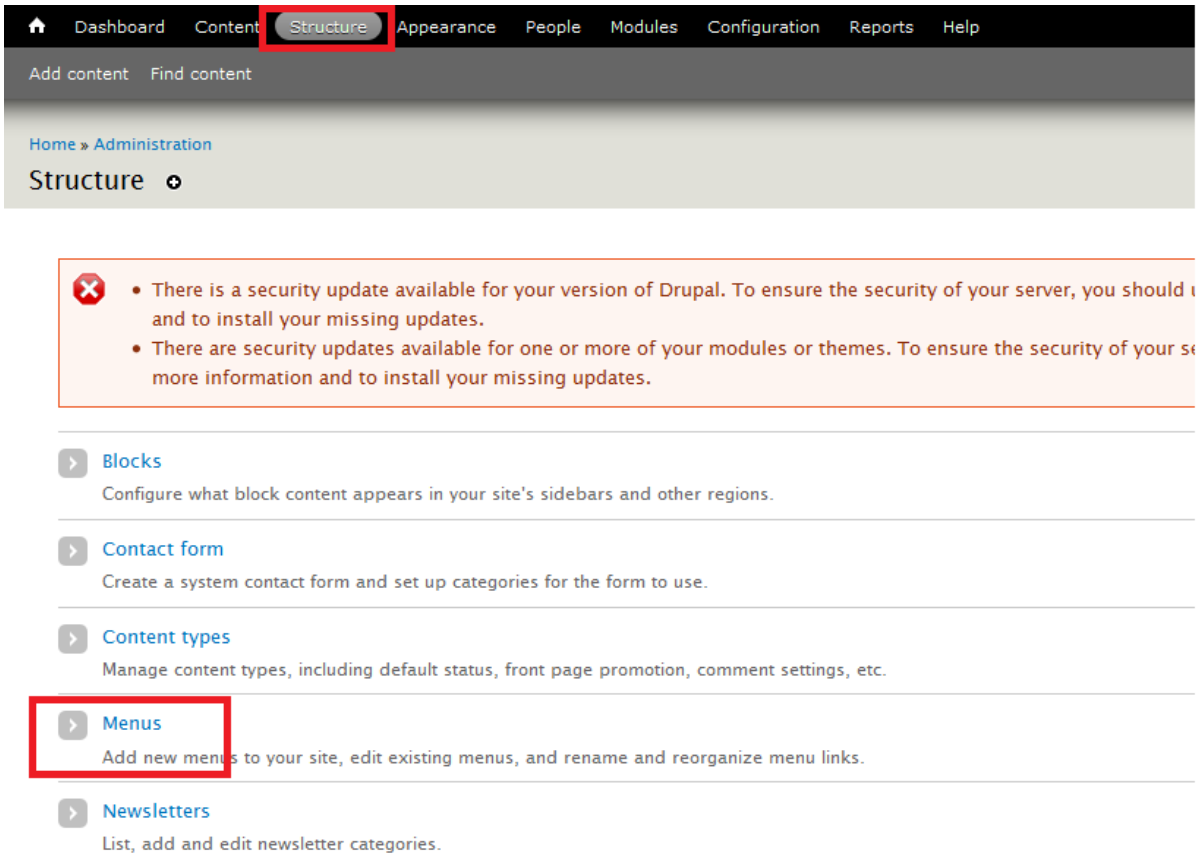


Step 4: Confirm that you want to delete.



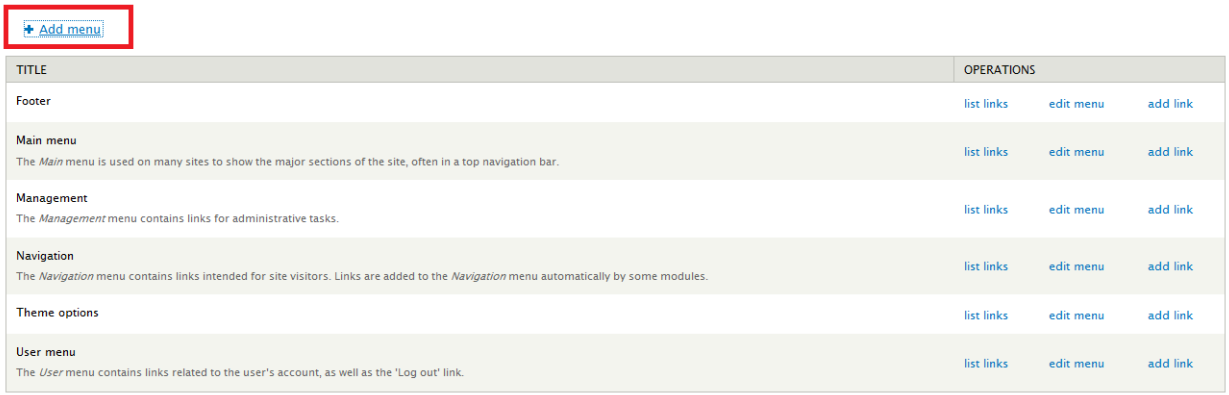
MANAGE MENU

After creating some pages or articles, you may want to add links to them in the menu. To manage menu, we should go to ***Admin > Structure > Menus***

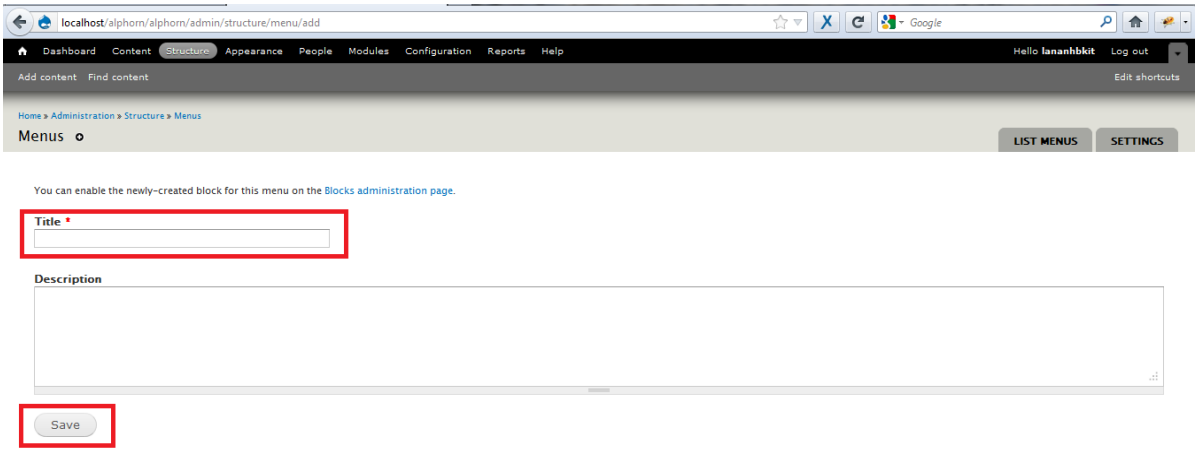


Create menu

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Menus***, click on ***Add menu***



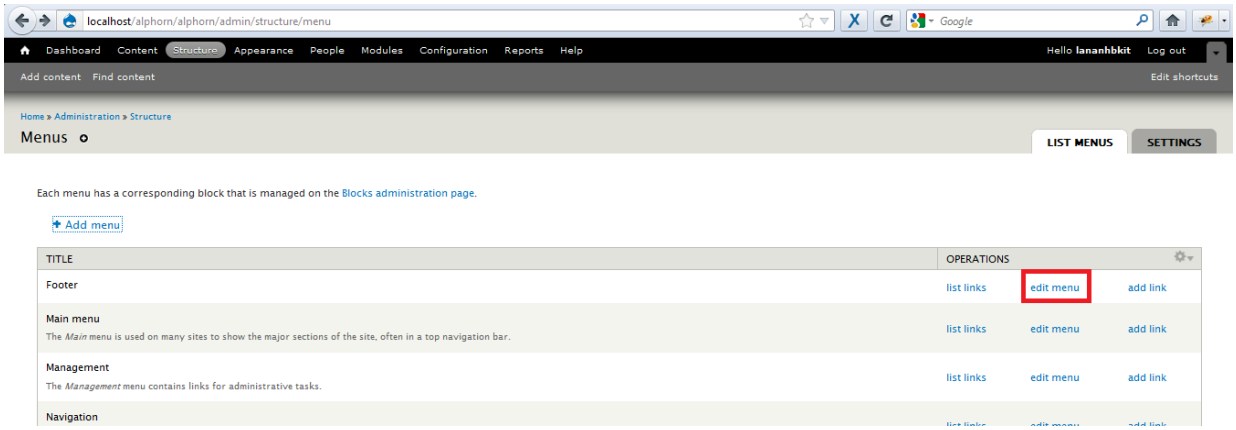
Step 2: Please declare all the necessary information for your menu. Finally click on Save.



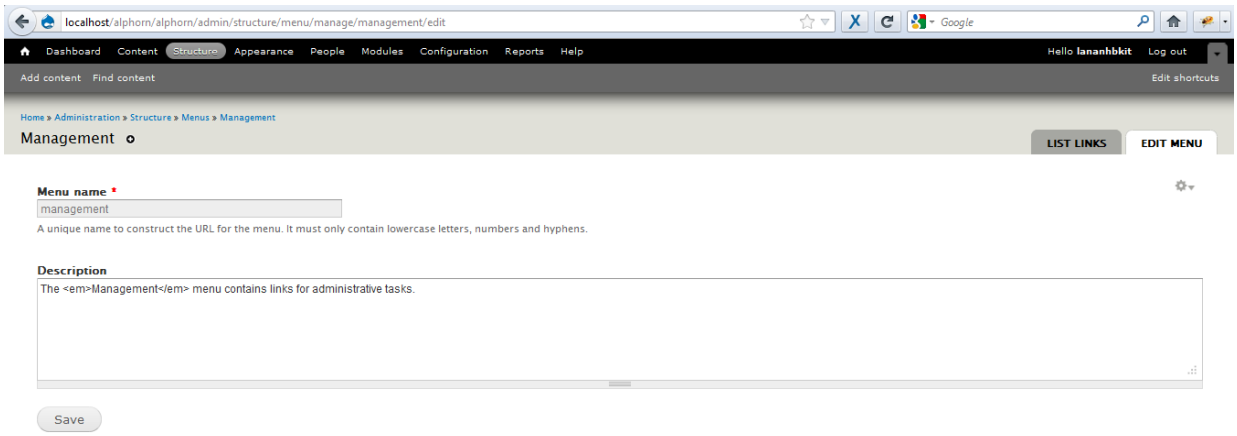
- Path: the path this menu item links to. It can be an internal Drupal path such as ***node/82*** or an external URL such as http://drupal.org. Enter ***<front>*** to link to the front page.
- Menu link title: the link text corresponding to this item that should appear in the menu.
- Enabled: enable or disable this menu item
- Expanded: if this option is selected and the menu item has children, it will always appear as expanded.
- Parent item and weight: choose parent item for current item, and weight is the order of appearance.

Edit menu

Step 1: In the menu page, click to ***Edit*** link to edit a menu item.

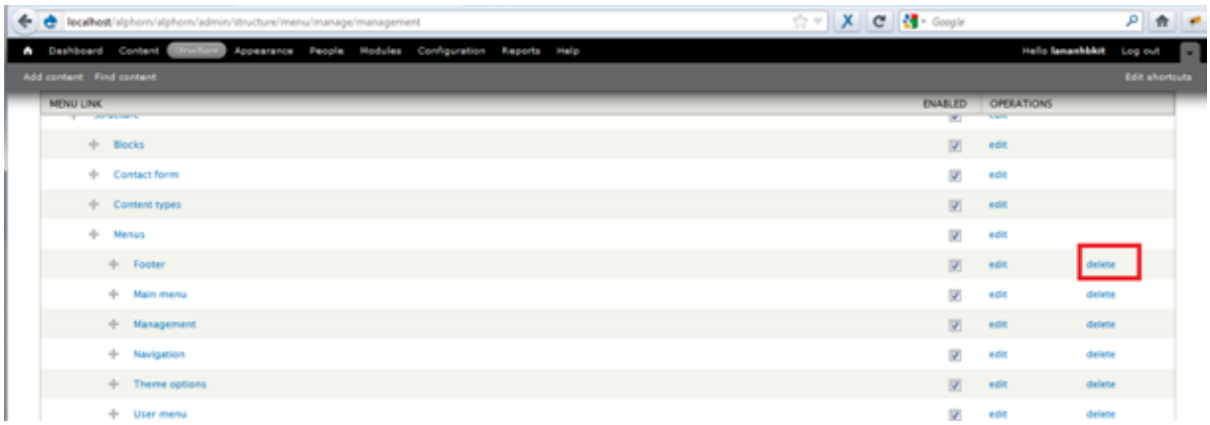


Step 2: Edit the information then click on save.



Delete menu

Step 1*:* In the menu page, click to ***Delete*** link to delete a menu item.



Step 2: Click to ***Confirm*** button.

MANAGE BLOCKS

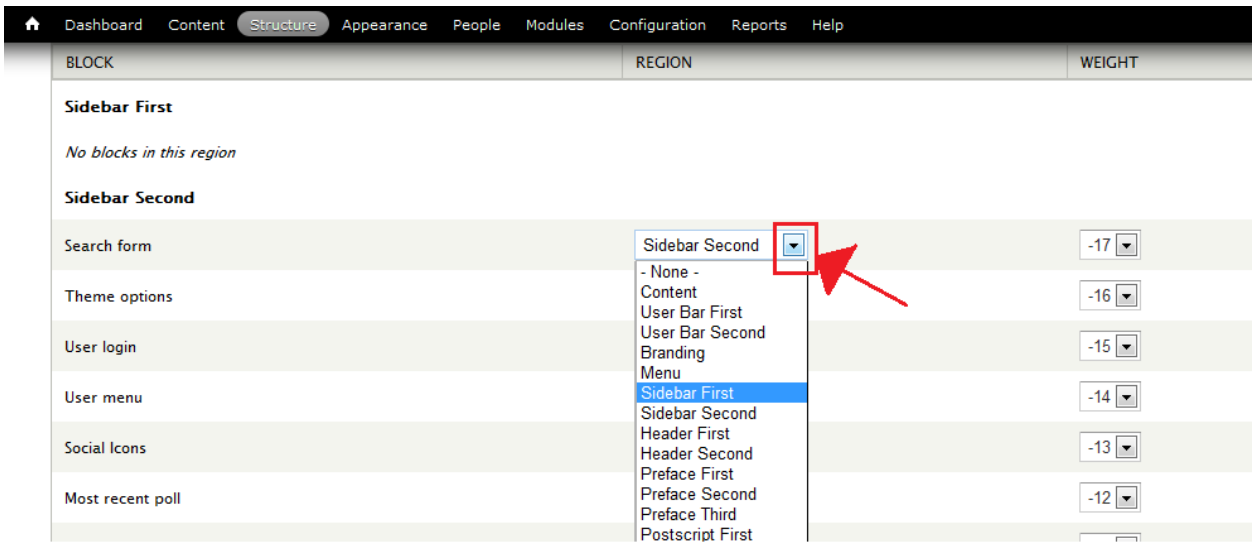
As you have seen in the "Introduce to layout, element in a Symphony site" page, there is a home page layout, which has many **blocks** like “Recent news”, “Polls”, “User login”, “Who's new” and so on. Blocks are the boxes of content that can be displayed in regions (such as footer or sidebar) on your page.

Change block position

There are many blocks that you may not want to display, or you may want to display them in different places. Please follow theses steps:

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Blocks***, a list of blocks in the site will appear.

Step 2: Select a block that you want to change position then click on the select box to select position for it.



If you do not want to display a certain block, just select ***None***.

You can also drag-and-drop blocks into different regions as well as reorder the blocks within a region.

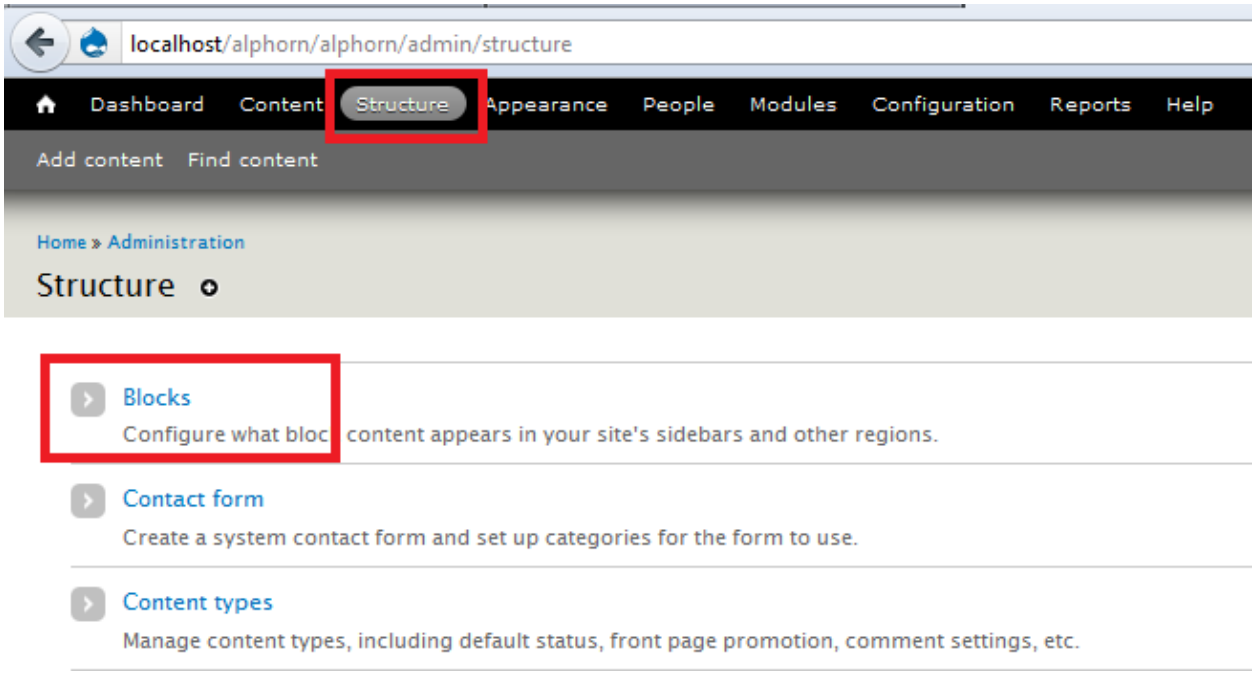
Step 3: Remember to click on ***Save*** before you end editting.

Create a custom HTML block

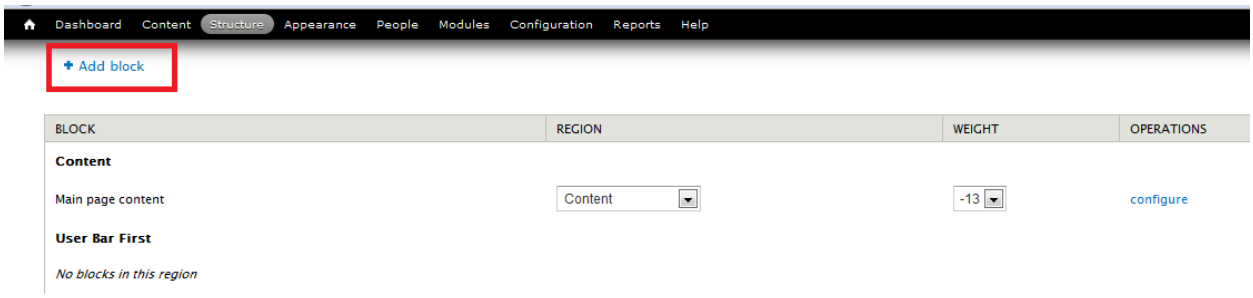
Most of the time, blocks are created by enabling modules. For instance, enabling the core "***Poll***" module makes the "Most Recent Polls" block available. You can then modify its appearance, shape, size and position - or which pages it appears on.

How about creating a custom block of your own, for example, an ***About me*** block so you can introduce yourself to the world. Please follow these steps:

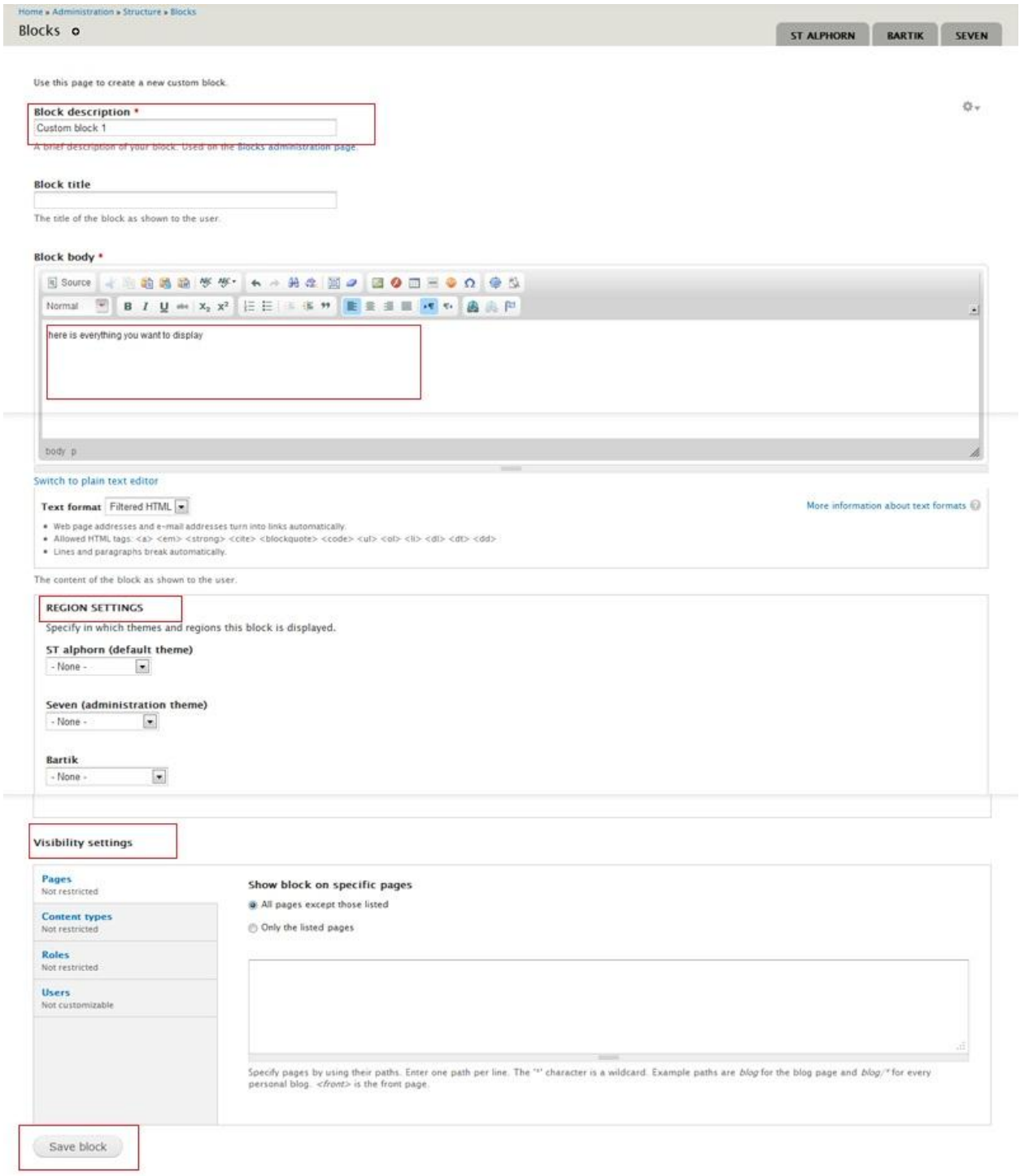
Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Block***



Step 2: Click on "***Add Block***".



Step 3: Please declare all the necessary information for your block.



- Insert a Block description, ***Block - About me*** for example, which will be displayed on the block overview page so you can find it easily later.
- Insert a Title for the block, ***About me*** for example.

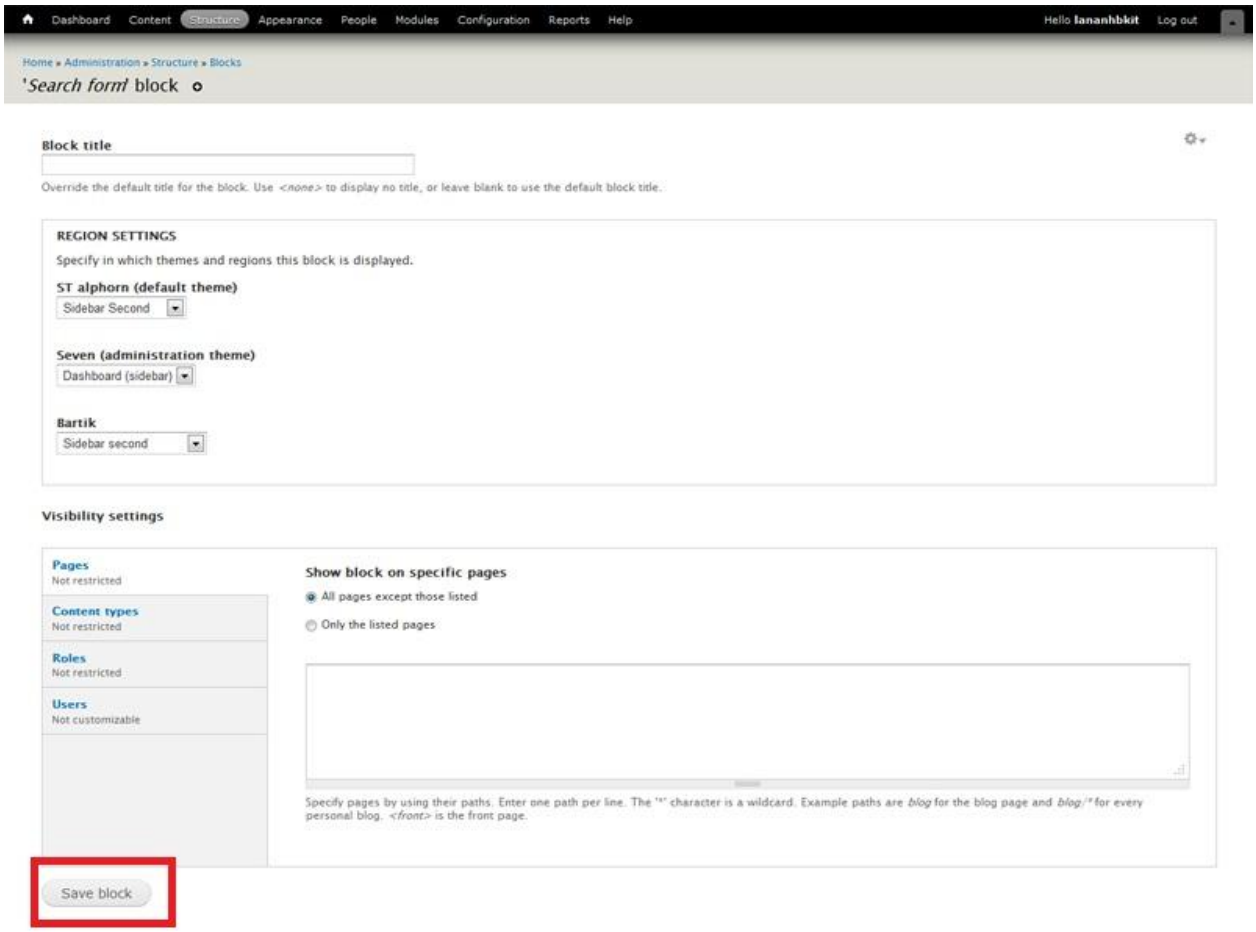
- Insert the body content for the block. Please write some lines to introduce yourself.
- *Set User*, *Role*, and *Page specific visibility settings*: you may skip it for now. I will have a more detailed guide in the next section "Edit block".

When you click on ***Save***, the block is created but not placed in a region by default. You will need to drag and drop it into a region in order for it to show up on the site.

Edit block

Step 1: Go to the Blocks overview page (***Admin > Structure > Block***) to configure the blocks on your site.

Step 2: Next to each block you can click ***Configure*** to change the specific block settings to edit that specific block.



- Block title: Allows you to override the default title for the block
- Block content: if it is a custom HTML block, you can edit the content of this block.

Step 3: Visibility settings

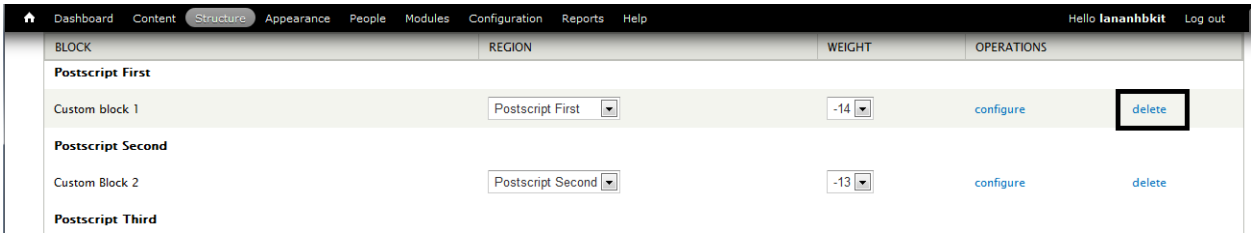
If you want this block to appear on any page, you do not need to do anything with this setting. When you want this block to show on certain pages and not on other pages, please see some settings below:

- Pages: you can set this block to show either on "All pages except those listed" or "Only the listed pages". For example, if you want the slideshow to show on the front page only, just select "*Only the listed pages*" and enter *<front>* to the textbox below.
- Content types: similarily, you can set the block to show for certain content types only.
- Roles: you can show the block to certain types of users: anonymous, authenticated or administrator.

Delete/disable blocks

You can only delete a custom content block created by you using the following method above. Blocks created by modules can not be deleted using this method.

On the Block overview page (***Admin > Structure > Block***), blocks that can be deleted will have a "delete" link beside them. Clicking this link will present a confirmation page, and clicking the Delete button will remove the block.



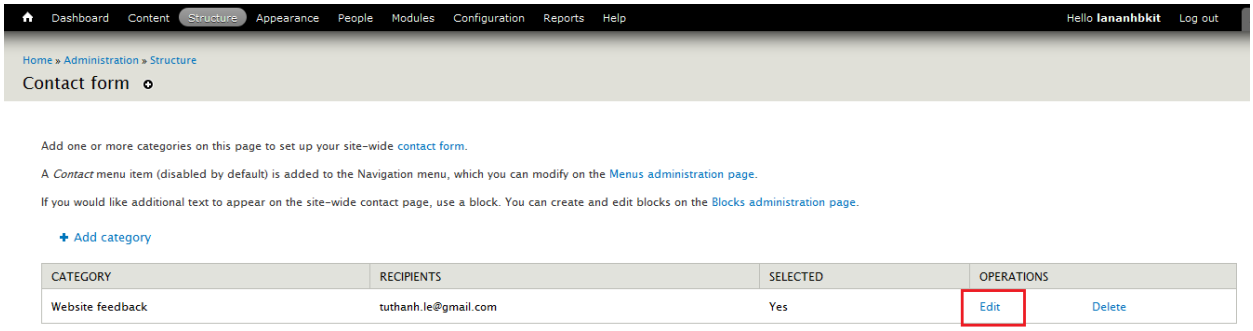
If you just want the block to disappear, please select its ***region*** to ***None*** and click on Save. You can always enable it in the future by changing its region.

CONTACT MAIL

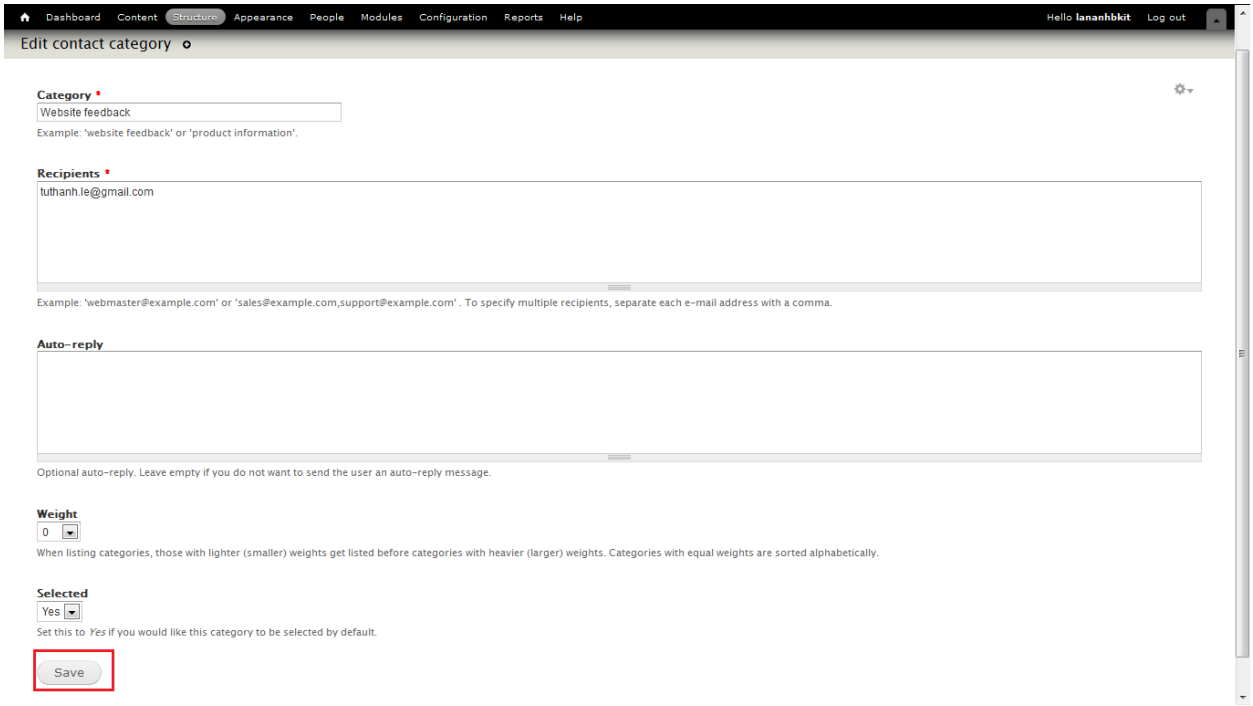
The package provides you a built-in contact form. You can change the email of the contact form to yours by:

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Contact email***

Step 2: Click to the ***Edit*** link.



Step 3: Please change the information you need, then click on" ***Save***".



PERFORMANCE

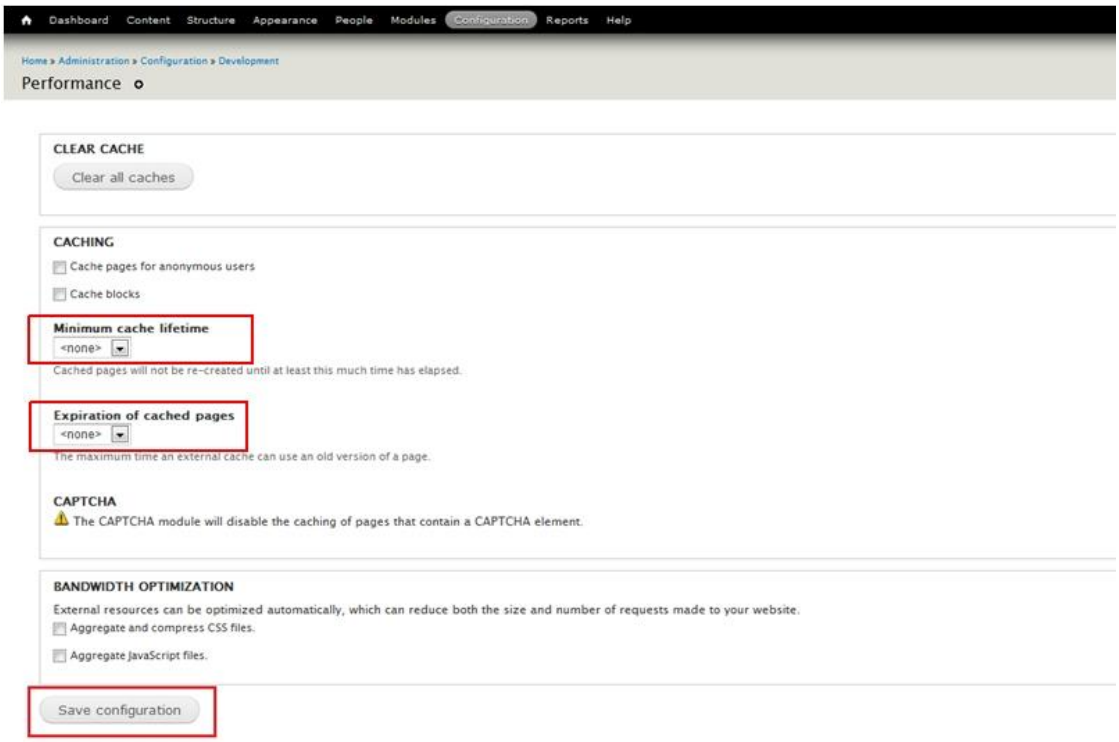
Pretty much done! If you feel it is time to launch the site, you can turn on the cache.

Cache: Caches are used to improve the performance of your Drupal site. When a user visits a page on your site, Drupal builds the new page by default. After that, another user goes to your site, Drupal have to build it twice. When you turn on the Cache mode, Drupal will build pages, save them and return to other users instead of rebuilding again and again.

During development, caching should be disabled (default). Once the site is ready for production you can turn on the caching.

Step 1: Please go to ***Administer > Configuration > Performance***

Step 2: Turn on caching by setting these two variables: ***minimum cache lifetime*** and ***expiration of cached pages***. Since your website is new, you can set the *minimum cache lifetime* to ***12 hours*** and *expiration of cached pages* to ***1 day***. It is good enough.



More complex site will need different values for these two variables. Also, it needs more advanced caching techniques. It is another story that we do not need to care much yet now.

HOUR 3: SEO - SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search engine optimization, as we all know, is vital to a business because 90% of all online traffic is achieved through the various search engines. You will not find a secret weapon to get your Drupal site to the top of Google search results here. SEO is a huge and changing topic that takes a lot of time and experiences to learn.

I am not an SEO expert. I have small budget for advertising, so I have to figure out how to do SEO with lower costs but still have good results. I can not spend huge money on off-site SEO like buying ads. It is too expensive and risky. Therefore, I'd rather focus on on-site SEO, ie, making my content attractive and let Google knows about it. Fortunately, Drupal provides many great tools to help me with on-site SEO.

Pick a niche to compete

First, **choose keywords** which you want your page to rank high in search results. You can use Google Keyword External tool to get a better ideas of keywords. There are two factors that you need to consider: search **frequency** and **competition**.

- If you choose a keyword that has huge interest but also fierce competition (laptops or health insurance for example), your chance to get high ranking is very low.
- On the other hand, picking a keword with low competition but no one cares does not bring you to anywhere.

Therefore, it is up to you to select keywords that you can potentially compete and get reasonable amount of traffic.

Google Insight for Search is another great tool to find the interest of your keywords over time so you can predict the future. It also layout which regions are most interested in the topic that you pick and some raising related keywords.

You must have a great content

Second, you should have **great content** for your readers. Content is king. No one would visit your site if you have crappy stuffs. They come to you because you have some great things that they want to see. No SEO techniques will help you to go further if you do not have a good content.

Now, SEO in Drupal

I hope to show some basic techniques using Drupal that you can use to improve your overall web site optimization. We have already configured on-site SEO for this theme including path auto, page title and megatag editor. Follow this section to have a complete view of them.

URL ALIASES

If you see a website link like this http://yourdomain.com/node/83, it is 99.99% powered by Drupal. The link pattern of node/[number] is the default pattern of Drupal content links. However, if it looks like http://yourdomain.com/about-us, it will look more readable to human being.

Drupal has a feature called "URL Alias" that allows you to provide a more understandable name to the content. As far as browsers, servers, and search engines go, it is not required. But for humans, it is nearly mandatory.

You can administer the URL Aliases directly on the node edit or add forms, or by going to ***Admin > Configuration > URL Aliases***

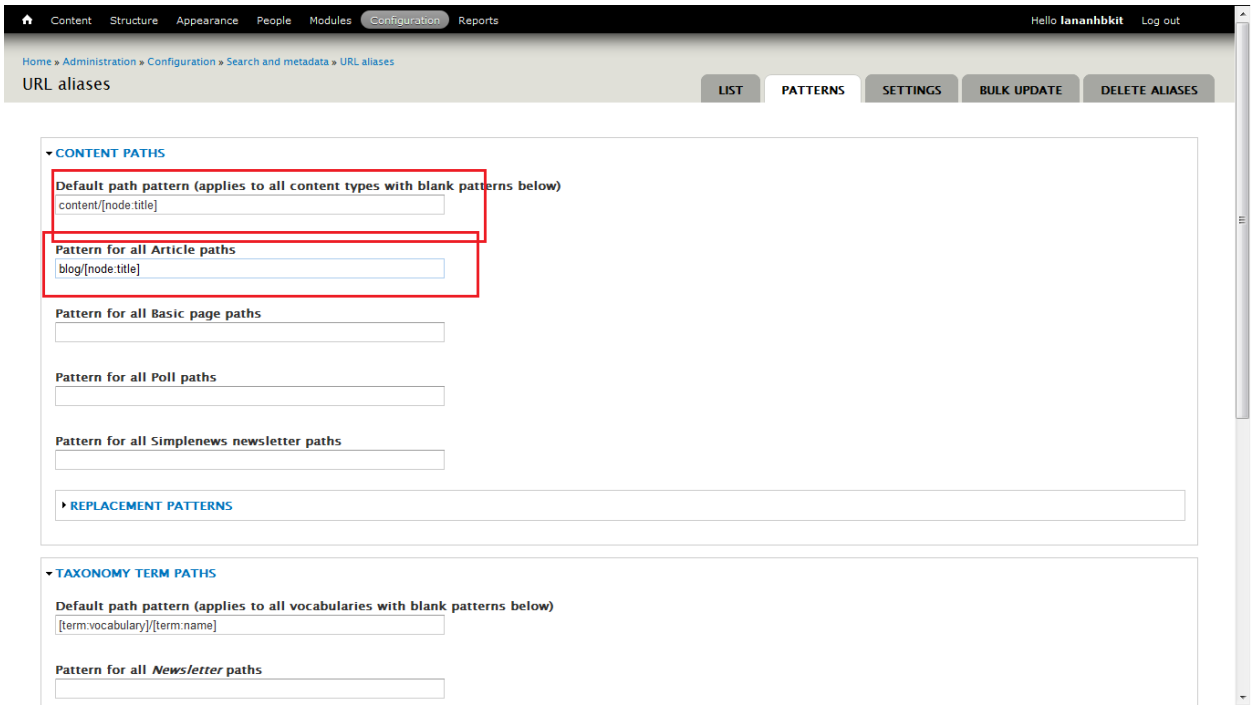
Automatic setting aliases

I recommend defining all URL patterns beforehand. Please spend sometime to think through your Drupal pathauto URL aliases settings before creating a bunch of content so you do not have to worry about the aliases changing. For example:

- Your product nodes may look like: /product/[node-title]
- Your images may look like: /image/[node-title]
- Your blog posts may look like: /blog/[node-title]

To do it, please click on the **Pattern** tab.

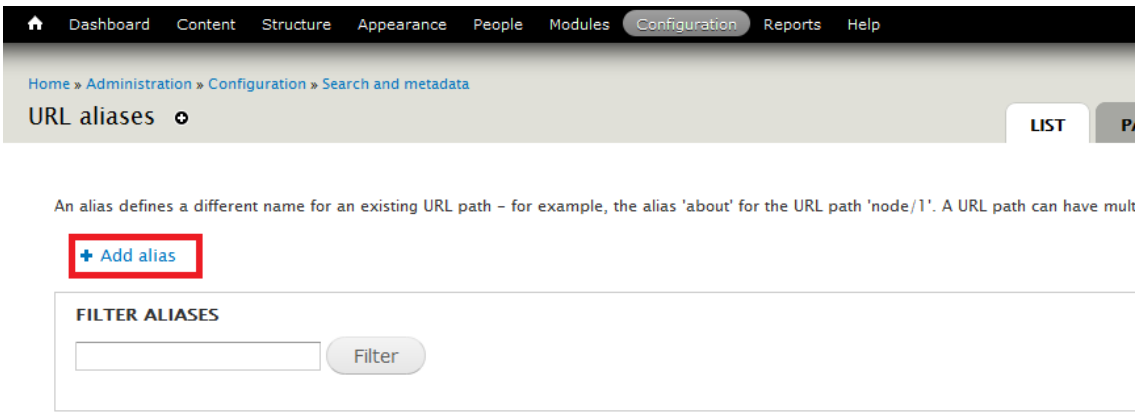
For example, if you want all blog posts to start with "blogs" and include the user id and title, you could use: **blogs/[user-raw]/[title-raw]**

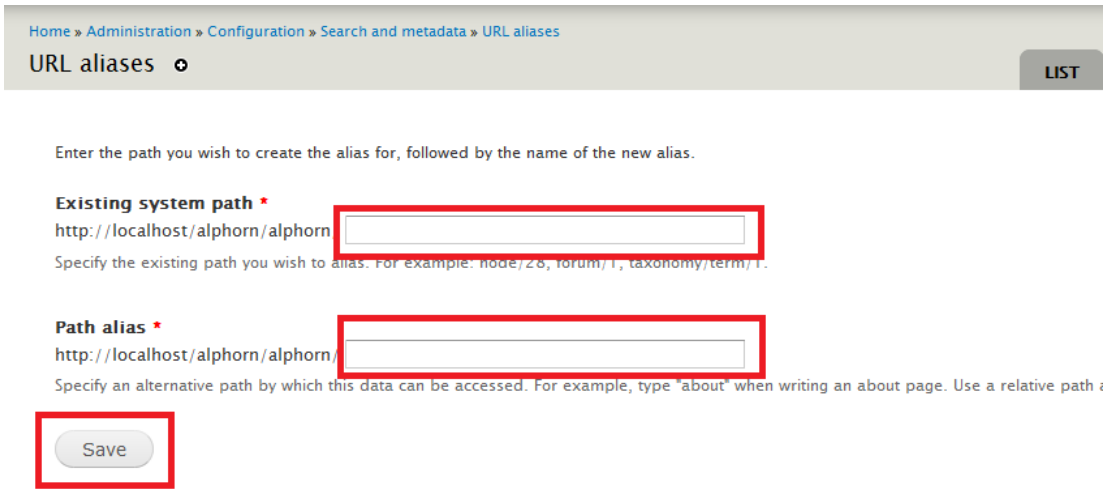


You can also look at the *Replacement Patterns* and decide what pieces you want to use in your URLs for different content types.

Add/remove/edit alises

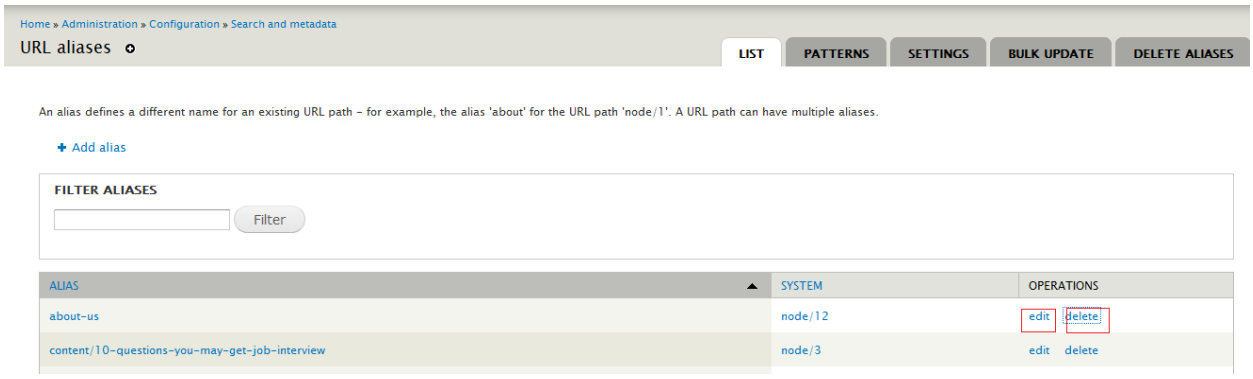
You can also manually add an URL alias by clicking on the ***Add alias*** link. Please note that you do not have to add, remove or edit any aliases right now. It is just a guide for you to do it later when you want.





- ***Existing system path***: Specify the existing path you wish to alias. For example: node/28, forum/1, taxonomy/term/1+2.
- ***Path alias***: Specify an alternative path by which this data can be accessed. For example, type "about" when writing an about page. Use a relative path and don't add a trailing slash or the URL alias won't work.

To edit or delete URL Aliases, please click on the corresponding links beside the alias.



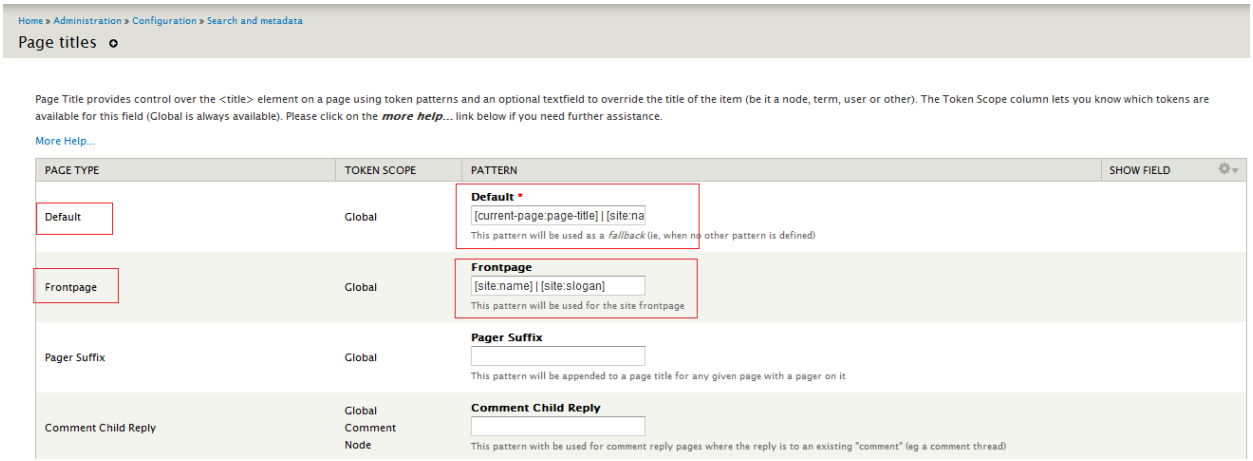
PAGE TITLE

Page title is mandatory for human reading and SEO. Using specific and unique keywords in page titles make your pages more descriptive. Search engines also use page titles as a major weight to determine the relevance and rank. There fore, you should have unique page title or every page on your site.

Please go to ***Admin > Configuration > Page title*** control the page titles. Administrators can configure patterns for how the title should be structured.

The default title pattern is: **[page-title] | [site-name]**.

For example, if your site name is "*Great book for cooks*", your ***About us*** page will have the title as "*About us | Great book for cooks*".

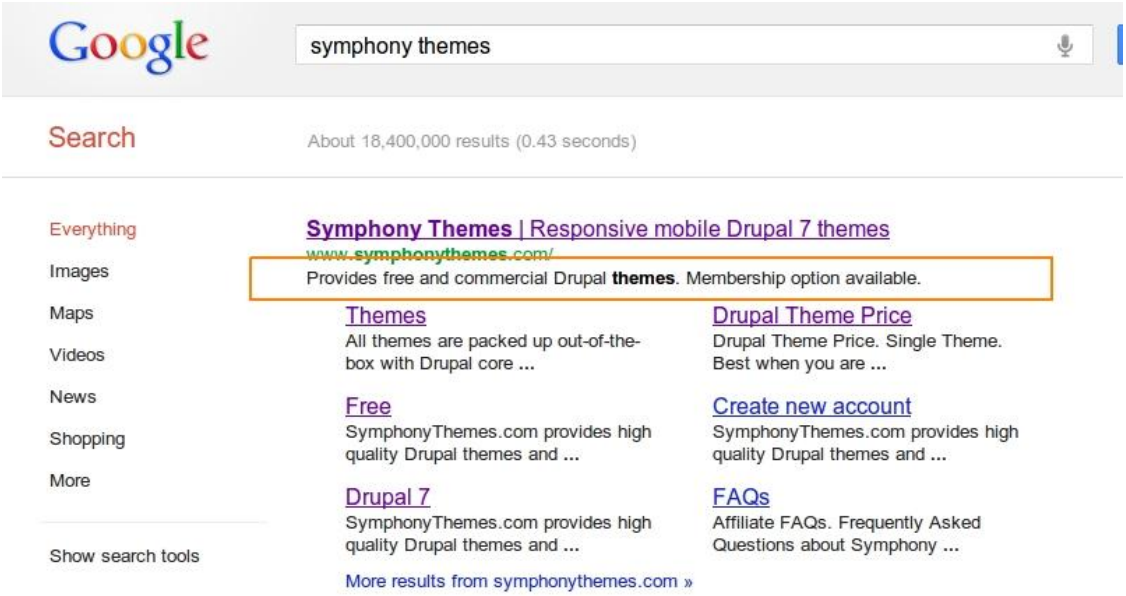


At the end, please click on the ***Save configuration*** button.

META TAG

Meta tags are meta data of a HTML page which supply additional information for search engines. The most important tags in SEO practices are **description** and **keywords**.

- **Description**: describes what your page is about. When you search via Google and your pages are listed on the search results, Google will use this tag as the description, like the image below.



- **Keywords**: help search engines to categorize your site. You should provide some concise keywords for your site. Together with other techniques, it can help to boost your site ranking.

Configure meta tags

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Meta tags***

Step 2: On the ***Meta tags to show on edit*** form, you should check ***Description*** and ***Keywords***. If you are experienced in SEO, you can select other parameters.

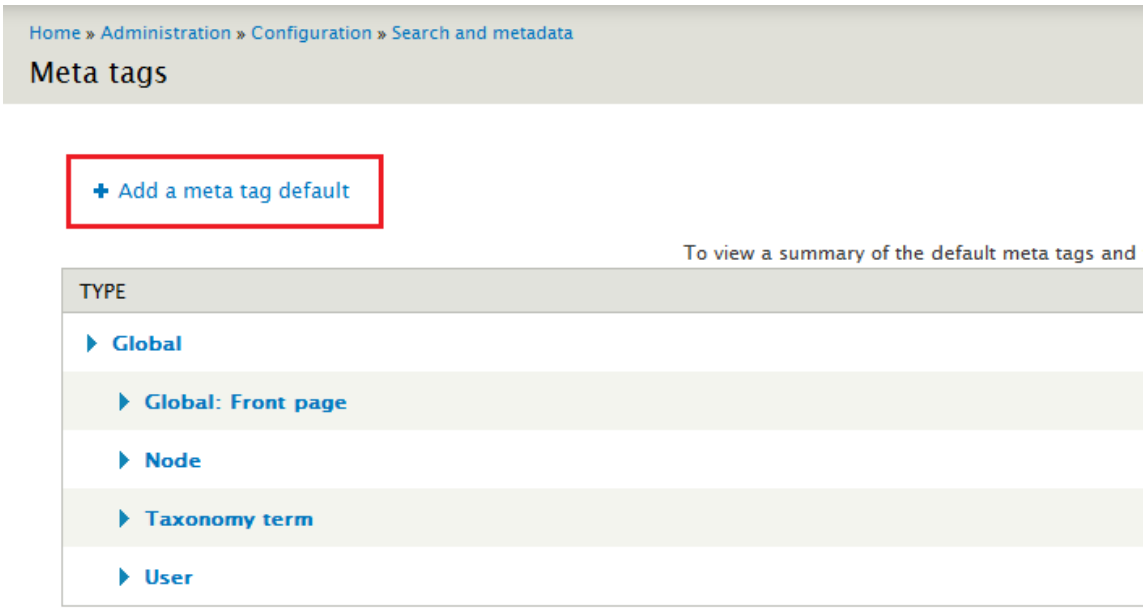
Step 3: On the Meta tags to output in HTML, you should also check ***Description*** and ***Keywords***.

Those are the most important settings. More options are available below, you can play around them later.

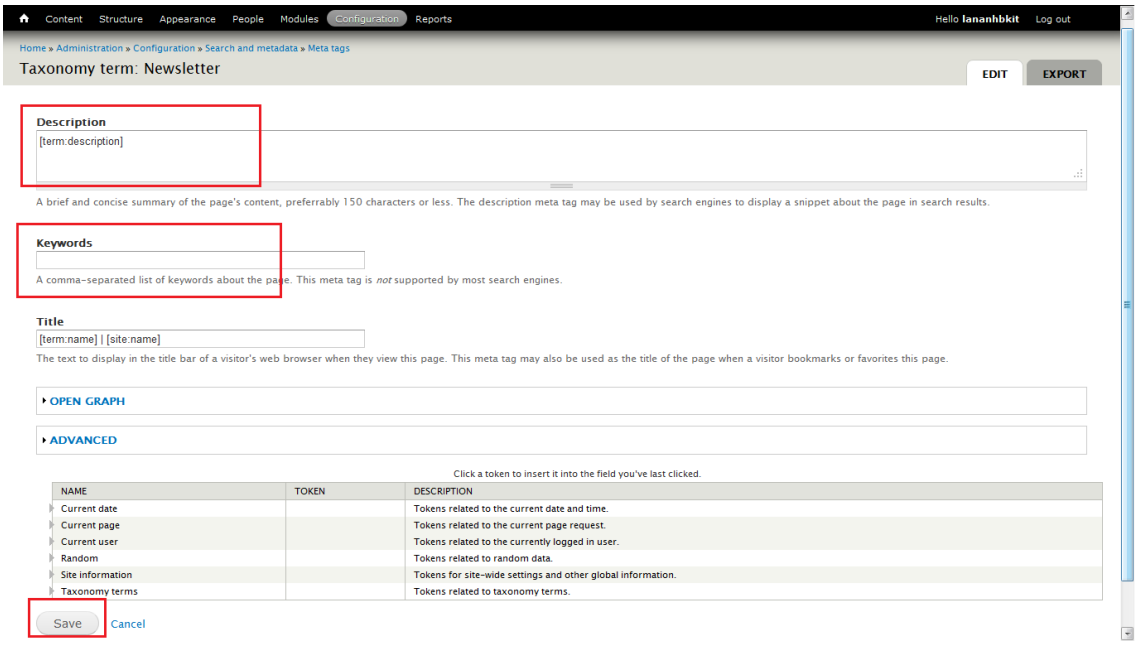
Add a new Meta tags

Definitely, you should create meta tags for the front page. It is mandatory.

Step 1: Please click on ***Default and specific meta tags*** tab, and then select ***Front page***.

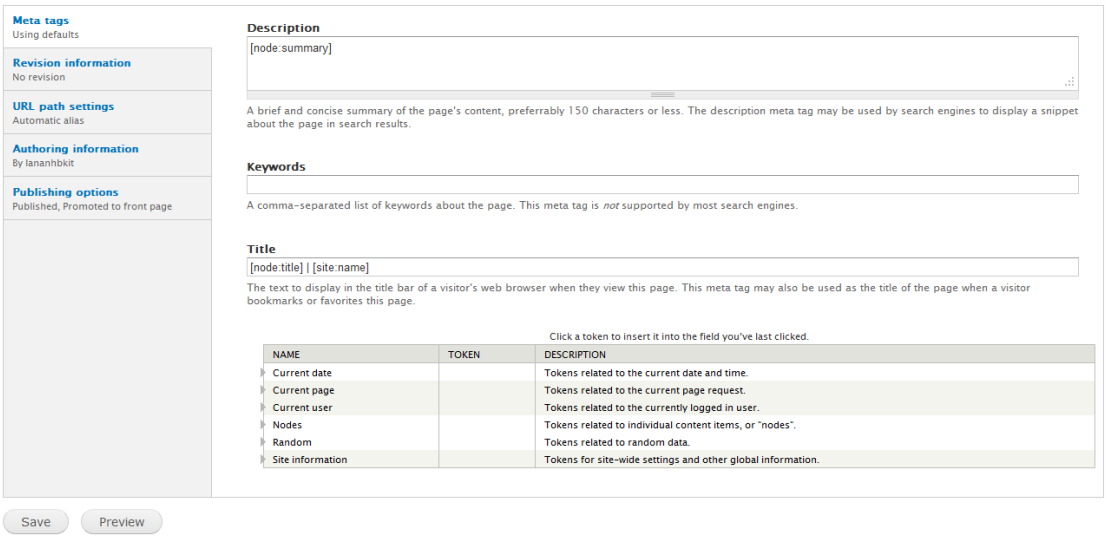


Step 2: Enter the ***Description*** and ***Keywords*** for your front page.



Meta tags for each node

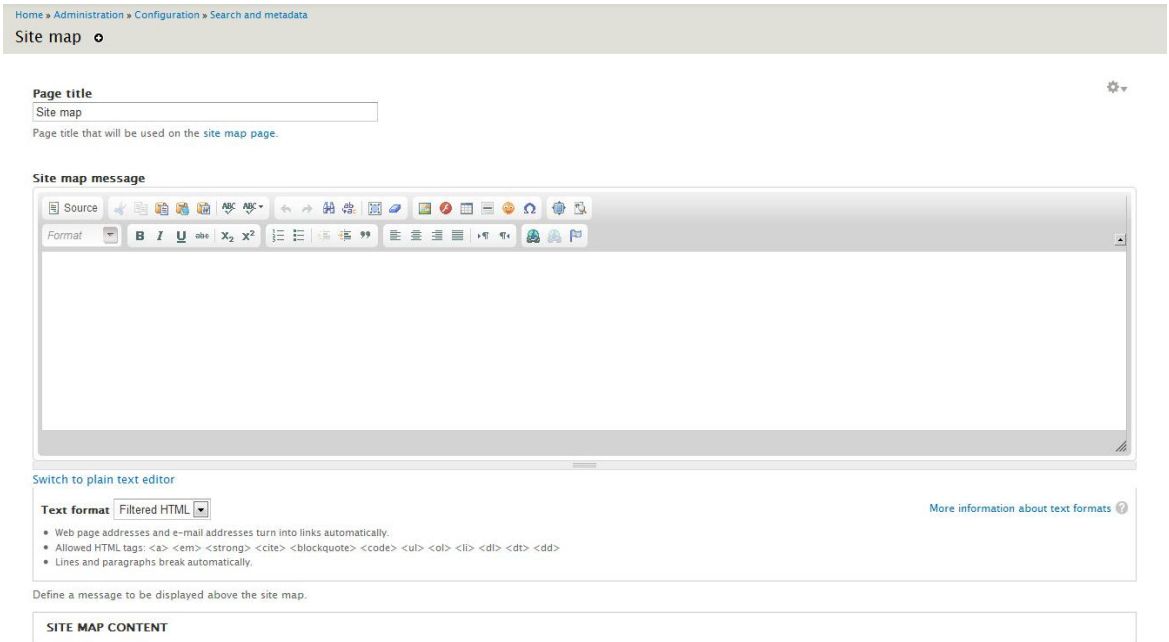
You can also edit meta tags for each node (blog articles or pages). When creating or editing a node, please find the **Meta tags** section and fill out necessary information. The most important tags again, should be ***description*** and ***keywords***.



SITE MAP

Sitemap is important when your site is complex. It allows your audience to understand the structure of your site. Moreover, you should submit your sitemap to Google Webmaster so Google can understand your site.

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Sitemap*.**



This module provides a site map that gives visitors an overview of your site. It can also display the RSS feeds for all blogs and categories. Play around with all settings.

The sitemap is available at http://yourdomain.com/sitemap.

HOUR 4: DAILY SITE CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Your new site is like your baby. You need to take a good care of her. You need to teach her well so the more she grows, the more she knows about the world and

she becomes a good girl. So does your website. This section provides you a detailed guide to manage your Drupal site daily.

CONNECT TO GOOGLE ANALYTIC

A very essential step is to connect your site to Google Analytics to monitor the site traffic.

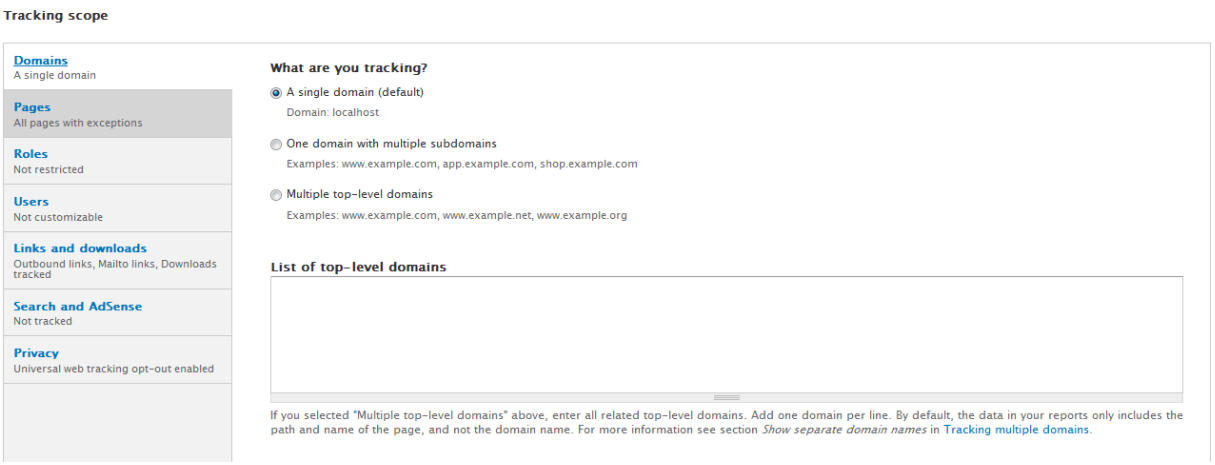
Step 1: You should first go to Google Analytics, create a profile for your site, and get the account number (smth like UA-xxxx-x).

Step 2: Then go to ***Admin > Configuration > Google Analytic***.

Step 2: Paste your Google Analytics account number to the first text box.

The module allows you to add the following statistics features to your site:

- Select tracking.
- Selectively track certain users, roles and pages.
- Monitor what type of links are tracked (downloads, outgoing and mailto).
- Monitor what files are downloaded from your pages.
- Cache the Google Analytics code on your local server for improved page loading times.
- Track user segmentation from Drupal profile data.
- Site Search support.
- AdSense support.



Don't forget click ***Save*** configuration button.

After that, you can monitor the traffic to your site at Google Analytics.

WRITING BLOG

Writing blog is the best way to communicate with your audience and to provide interesting content to your website. You may be told about bloggers who can earn a lot of money by just blogging. You are probably not a famous blogger now, but nothing stops you to become one, as long as you have some great for your audience. And you can start it now by creating your first blog post.

In **Hour 2 – Basic customization, Manage content** section, you already know how to create new content. We extend this part by providing your a few tips for good SEO.

1. Choose a keyword to write about. You have something in mind to write about, now you need to pick the right keyword. Please go to Google Keyword External and do some research. Remember to look for a keyword with reasonable amount of traffic and low competition; you are more likely to rank higher.
2. Insert keyword to your blog title. It is very important.
3. Write your blog post long enough (300 – 500 words) and insert keywords on your content. Also, tag your blog posts with important keywords.

Google will craw your posts automatically. Hopefully, your article may stand in the first page of your targeted keywords.

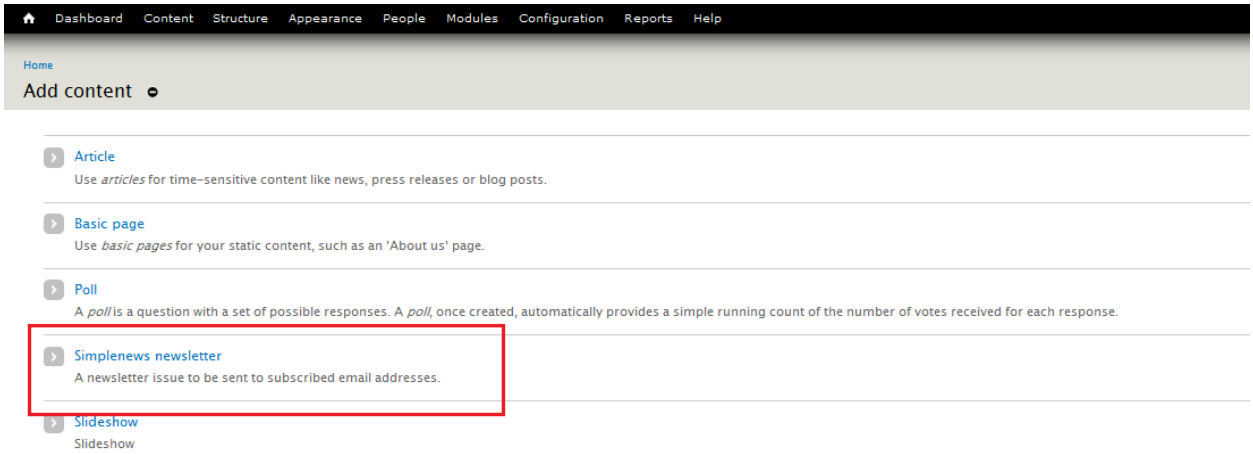
NEWSLETTER

Newsletter is a good way to keep your audience loyalty. When you have interesting stuffs to tell, you can create a newsletter and send to people who subscribed to you.

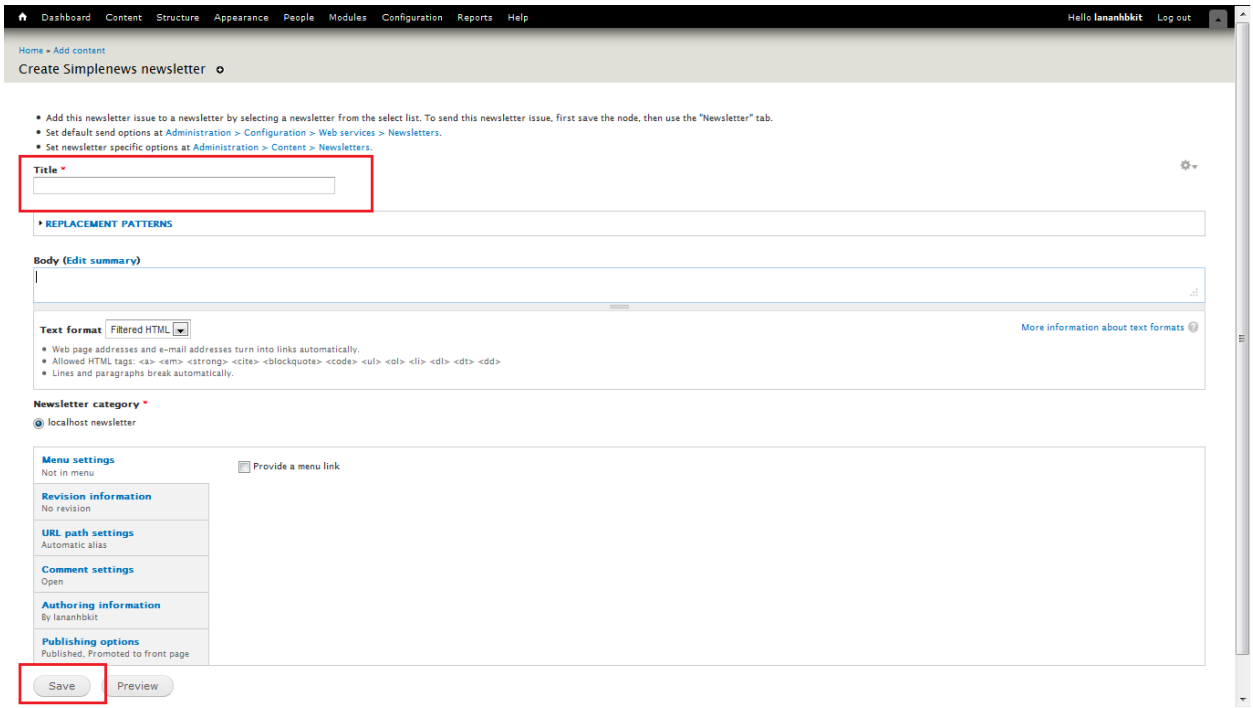
We use **simplenews** module to publish and send newsletters to lists of subscribers. Both anonymous and authenticated users can opt-in to different mailing lists.

Create a newsletter

Step 1: To create a newsletter, choose ***Admin > Content > Add Content***, then choose ***Simplenews newsletter***

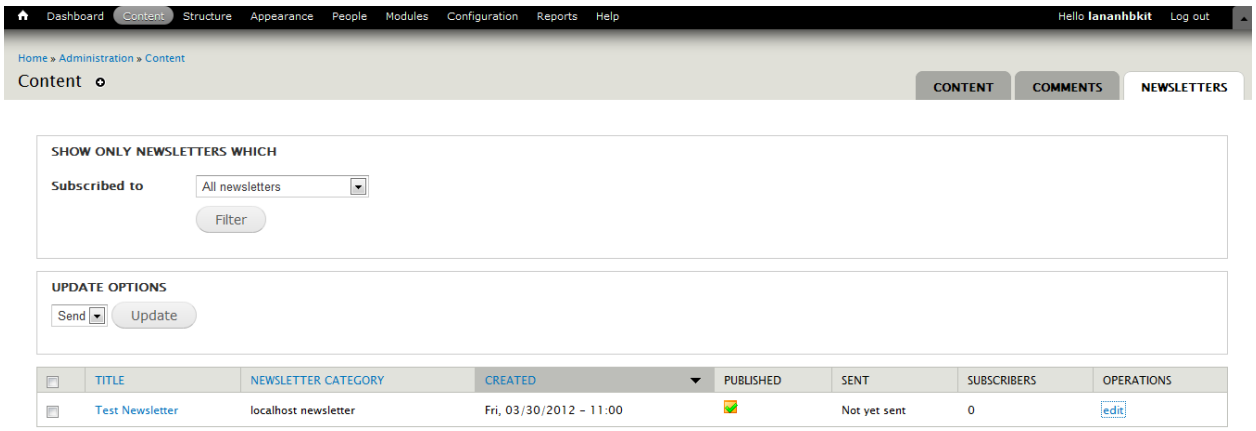


Step 2: Input all the necessary information for your article and click ***Save***.



Manage newsletter

Go to ***Admin > Content > Newsletters***. There are alot of options for you to manage your newsletters.



MAGAGE COMMENT

Spammers may comment on your site to distribute their annoying content. They try hard, but you only need a several clicks to wipe them out.

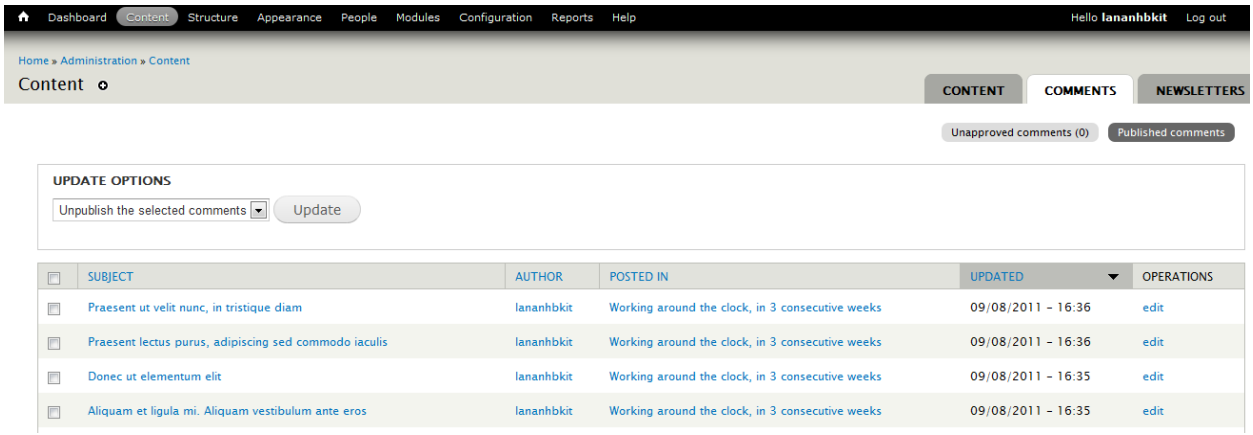
You can display a list view of all comments. From the list you can choose to publish or unpublish one or more comments.

Step 1: Click ***Admin > Content > Comments***.

Step 2: Select one or more comments.

Step 3: From the dropdown list select Published or Unpublished.

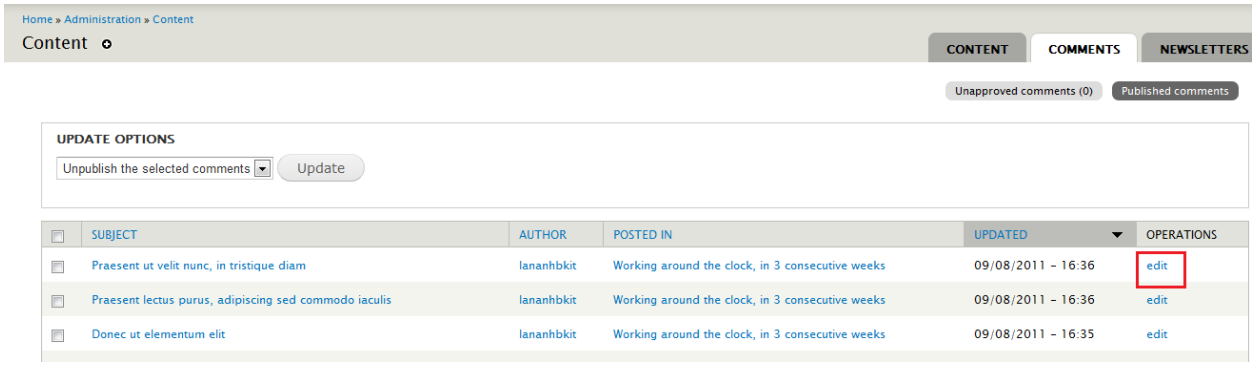
Step 4: Click Update.



Manage comment setting for each node

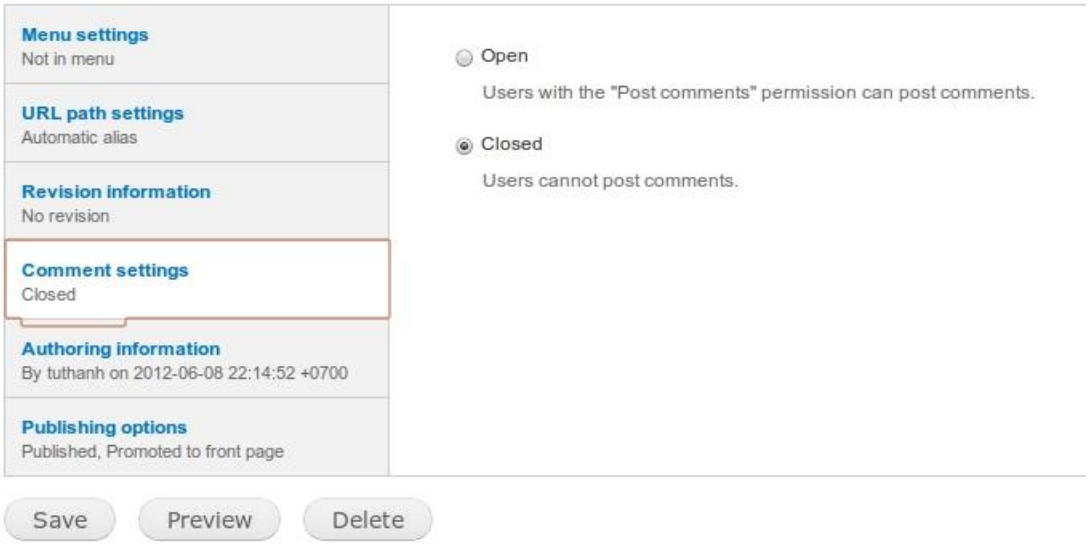
You may want to disable comments for a particular node, for example, your “About us” page. Please follow these steps.

Step 1: Choose the article that you should comment, go to ***Admin > Content > Edit***



Step 2: You find and click on the ***Comment settings*** to set the properties.

- "***Closed***" is to completely close comment section.
- "***Open***" gives them both rights to read and write comments.



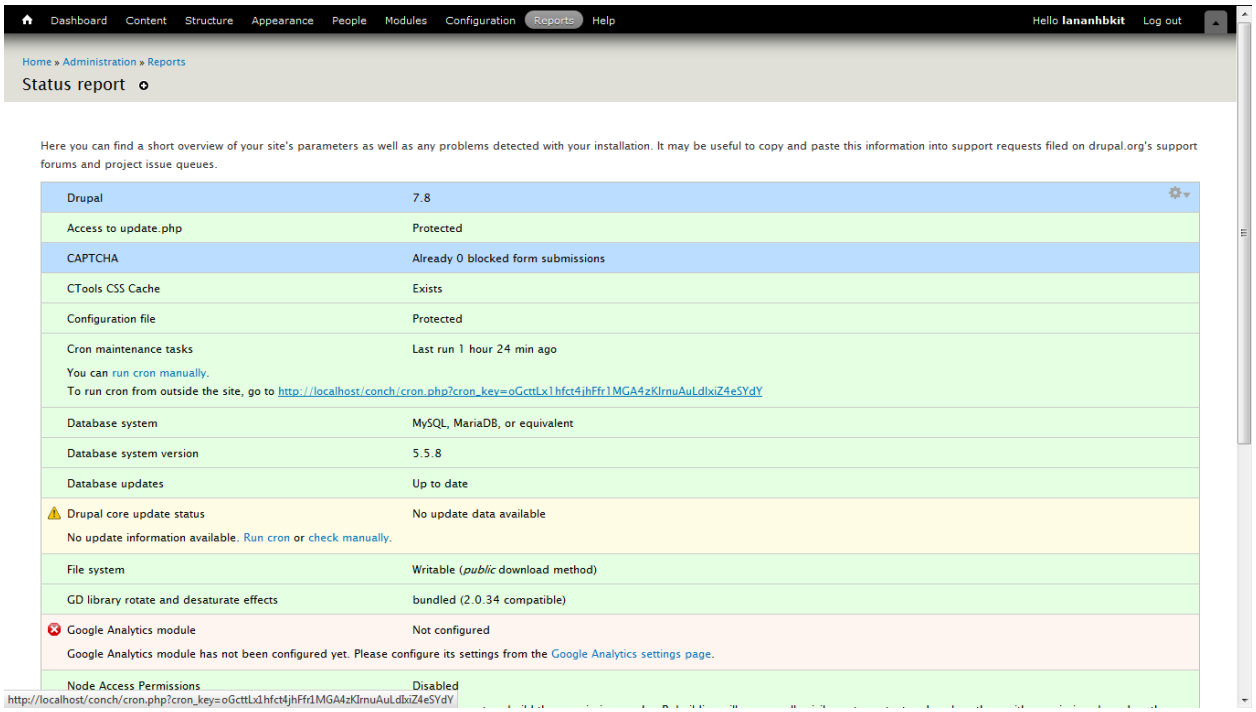
HOUR 5: TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATION

While the previous chapter “Daily content management” is like giving teaching to your babies, this chapter “Technical administration” is more like taking care of their healths. While they grow up, they may get sick, so you need to keep an eye on them.

REPORTS

Like your medical check reports, the Drupal status report is where you can find a short overview of your site's parameters as well as any problems detected with your running Drupal site.

The status report is available at ***Admin > Reports> Status reports***



When everything is ok, the report will just have blue and green. If you have some red marks, there should be problems with your site.

Usually, you will receive red warning signs when your Drupal site needs to be updated. We will talk about it in the next section.

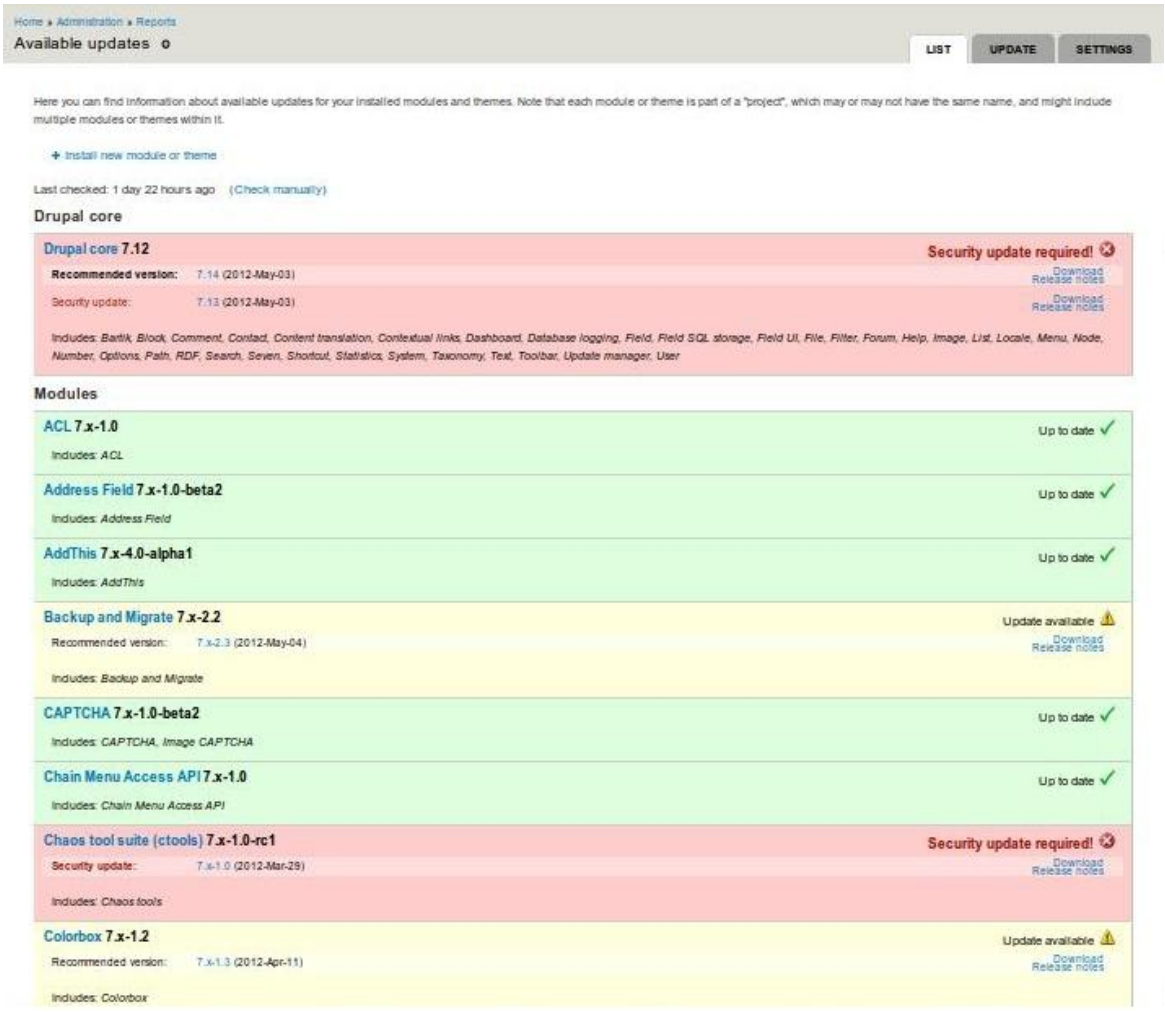
AVAILABLE UPDATES

You need to separate two words: ***update*** and ***upgrade***, they mean two different actions.

- **Updating** refers to bring your site up to a latest Drupal minor release, for example, from *Drupal 7.2* to *Drupal 7.8*.
- **Upgrading**, however, is a complex task of moving your site from one major Drupal release to another, such as from *Drupal 6* to *Drupal 7*.

In this section, I only show you how to ***update*** your Drupal site. Upgrading is a complicated job which you need helps from professional Drupal developers.

Please go to ***Admin > Reports > Available updates***, you will find a list of your modules with update status.



Green rows are alright. Yellow rows indicate update available. Red rows are security updates, it is important and you need to update it soon. In the image above, we have both Drupal core updates and module updates available.

- **Update modules**: a Drupal site may have many contributed modules. When those modules have new versions, you should update them. But you do not have to update a module right after its new version is released. I do module upgrading once per month and it is good enough.
- **Update Drupal core**: when a new Drupal core is released, it is necessary to update because the new core may contain security fixes.

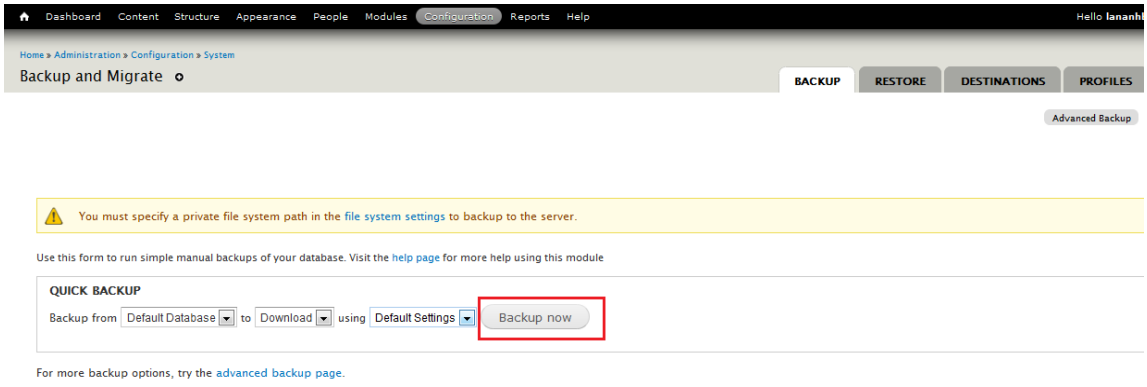
BACKUP AND MIGRATE

Before updating your Drupal site, let's do a backup. It is also a good habit to backup your site regularly. I have seen many people crying because their websites disappear because of their misconfigurations or defective hostings. Don't let this scenario happen to you. At least, do a ***monthly backup***.

Backup and Migrate module simplifies the task of backing up and restoring your Drupal database or copying your database from one Drupal site to another. With Backup and Migrate you can dump some or all of your database tables to a file download or save to a file on the server, and to restore from an uploaded or previously saved database dump.

Backup

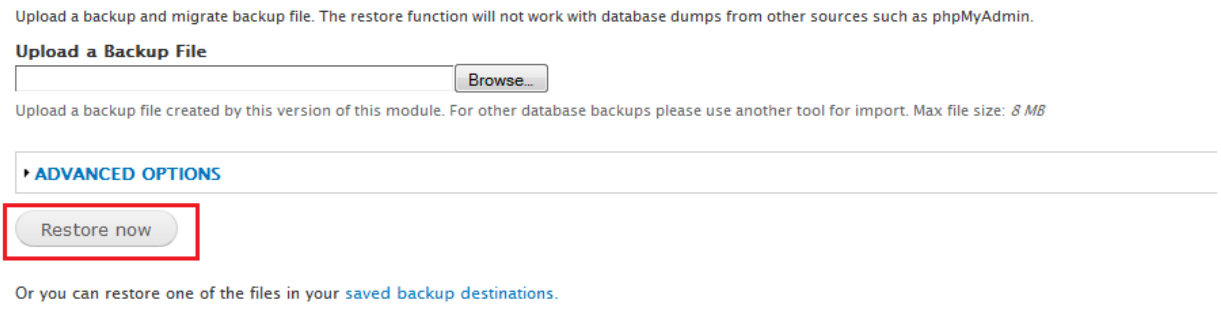
Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Backup and migrate*** and click ***Backup now***.



Restore

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Backup and migrate*** and click on the ***Restore*** tab.

Step 2: Browse the backup file you have created ealier, upload it and click to ***Restore*** button.



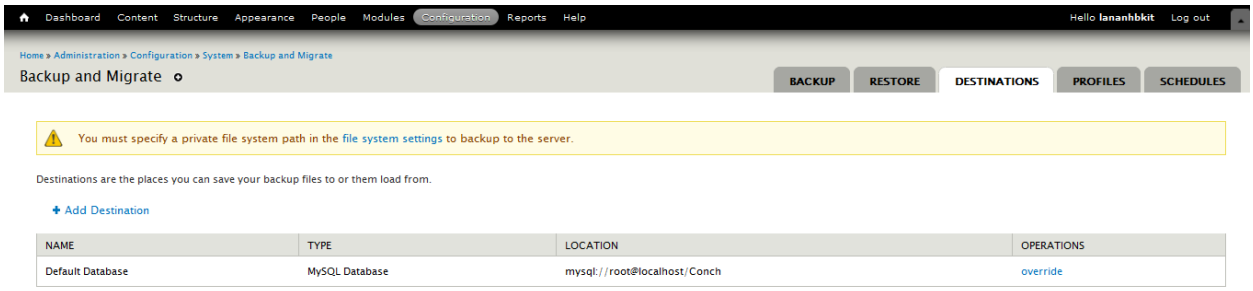
Automatic backup

Scheduled backups are a great tool for important sites. Using this function, you can create automatic schedules to backup your site. It eases the pain of manual work or missing backup schedules.

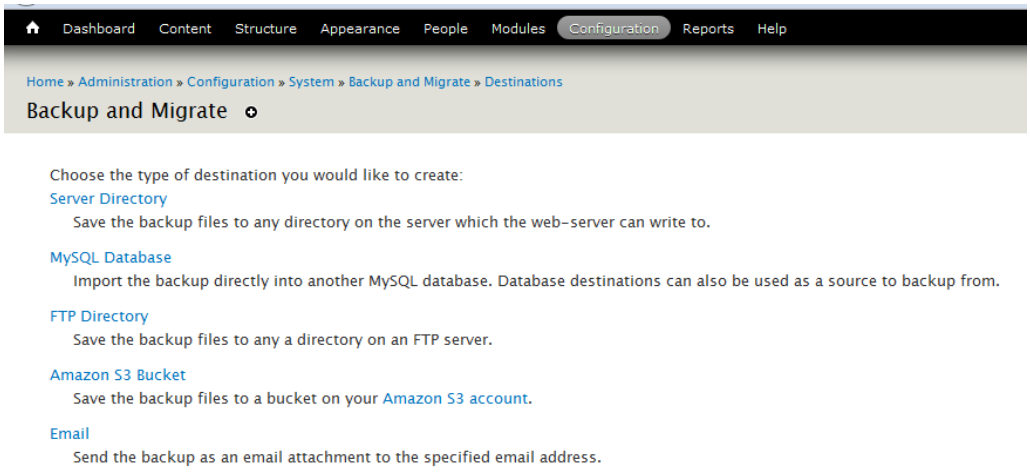
To set up a schedules backup, you need to follow those steps:

Step1: Create backup destination

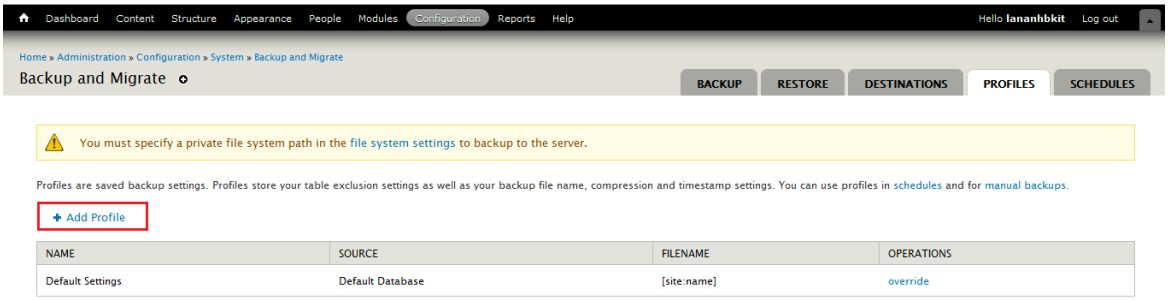
Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Backup and migrate > Destination***

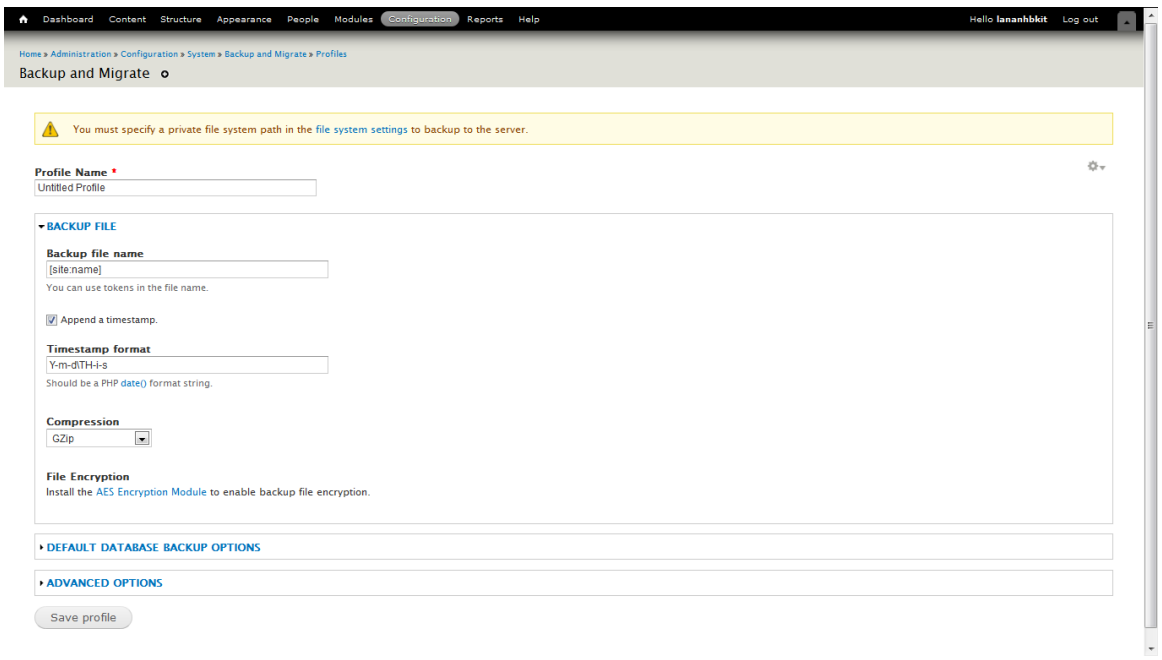


Click on the ***Add Destinations*** link and then choose the type of destination you would like to create and complete information for each type.

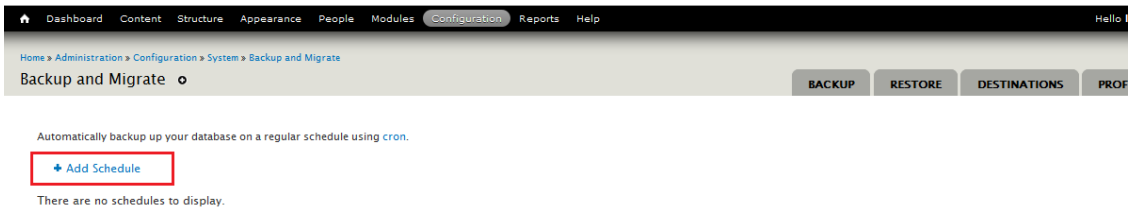


Step 2: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Backup and migrate > Profiles*** and create a new profile



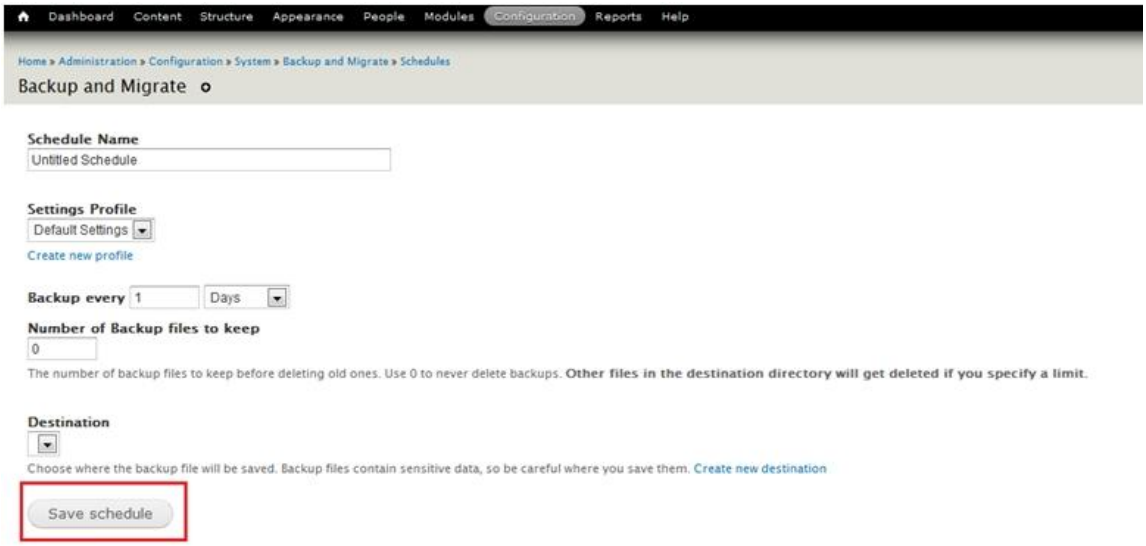


Step 3: Go to **Admin > Configuration > Backup and migrate > Schedules** to create **Schedule**



Step 4: Create a new schedule, using the ***Profiles*** and ***Destination*** that you have created above.

Then click on ***Save schedule***. Now you have a periodic backup schedule for your site.



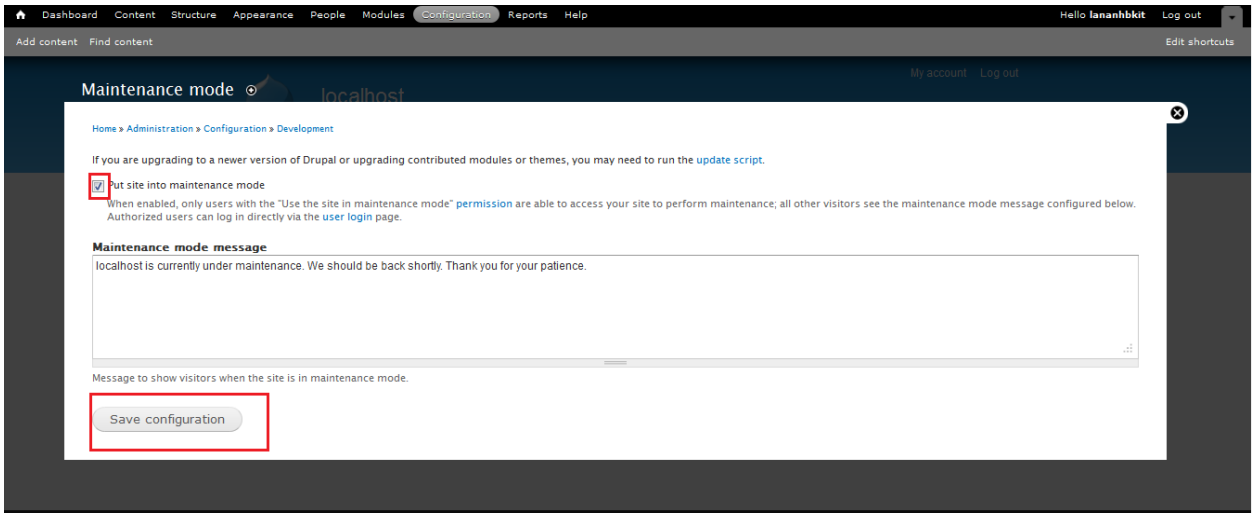
MAINTENANCE MODE

Before you are updating your Drupal site, you should put it into ***Maintenance Mode*** so that no problems occur for you or visitors. Here is how to turn on Maintenance Mode in Drupal 7:

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Maintenance mode***

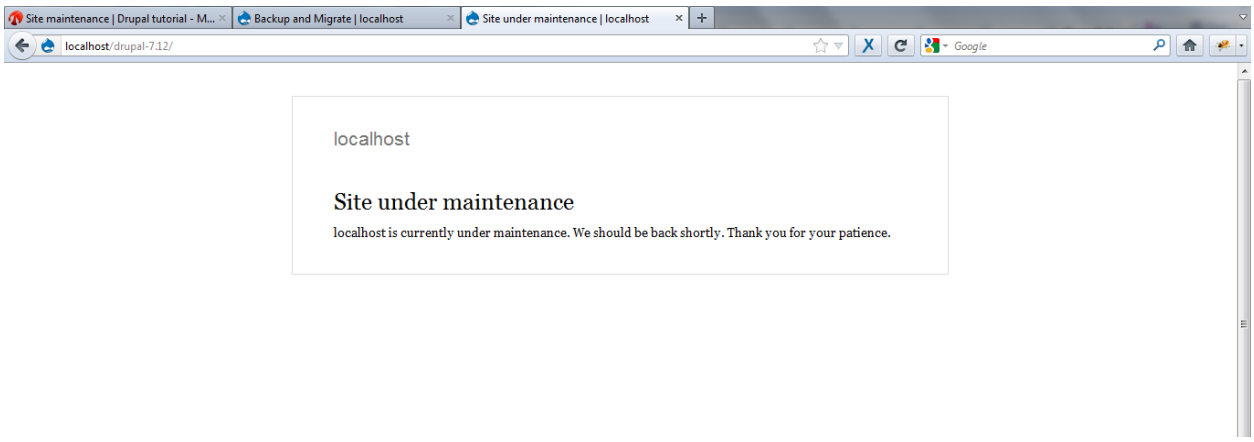
Step 2: Make sure the "***Put site into maintenance mode***" box is checked

Enter the message you want visitors to see during the interruption then click on "***Save configuration***".



Step 3: You'll now see a message saying "*The configuration options have been saved*".

Step 4: You will be able to browse around your site without problems but visitors will see a blank site with the message below.

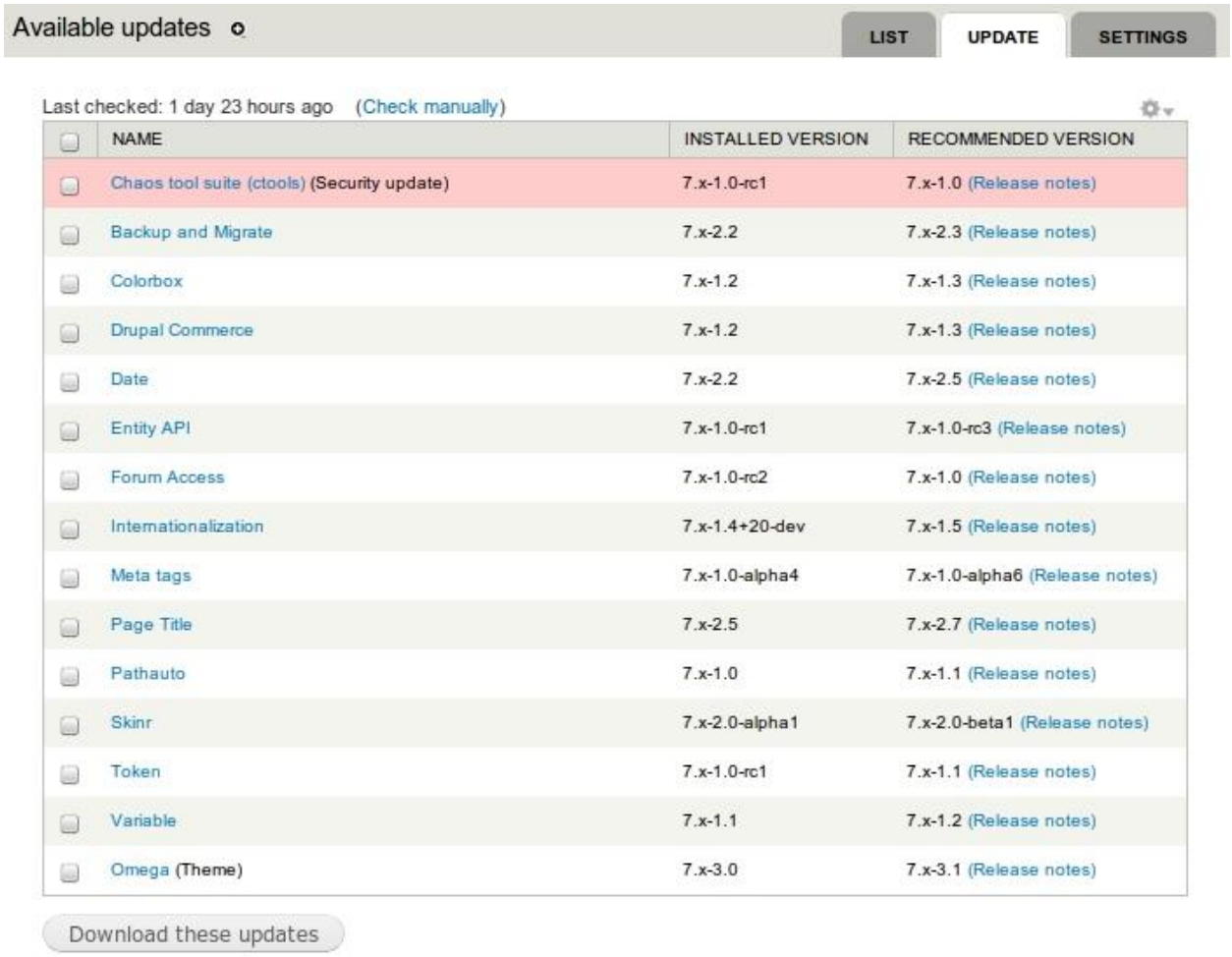


Note: If you log yourself and can't get back in, just add ***/?q=user*** after your site address and you'll be back to the user login page.

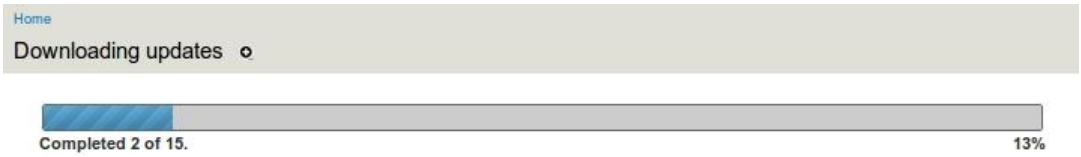
UPDATE MODULES

Since Drupal 7, module updating is very convenient. Unlike Drupal 6 when you have to manually download each module, unzip and upload to your hosting, now you can do it just by a few clicks.

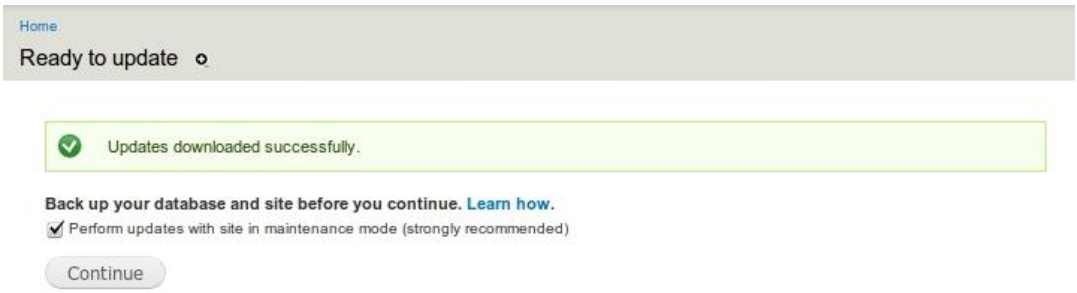
Step 1: Please go to ***Admin – Reports – Available updates***, and click to the tab ***Update***.



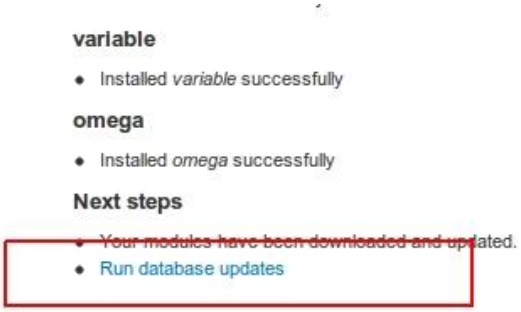
Step 2: Check all modules you want to update, and click on the button ***Download these updates***, a status bar will appear.



Step 3: After updates are downloaded successfully, please click on the ***Continue*** button.

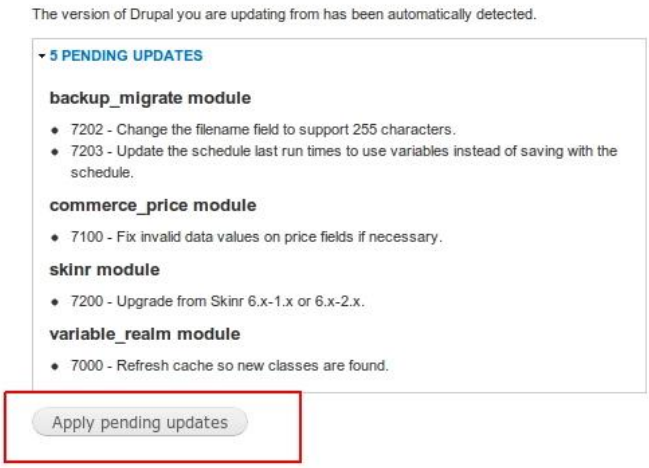


Step 4: The installation process will continue and provide you a report. Scroll down to the bottom and click on ***Run database updates***.

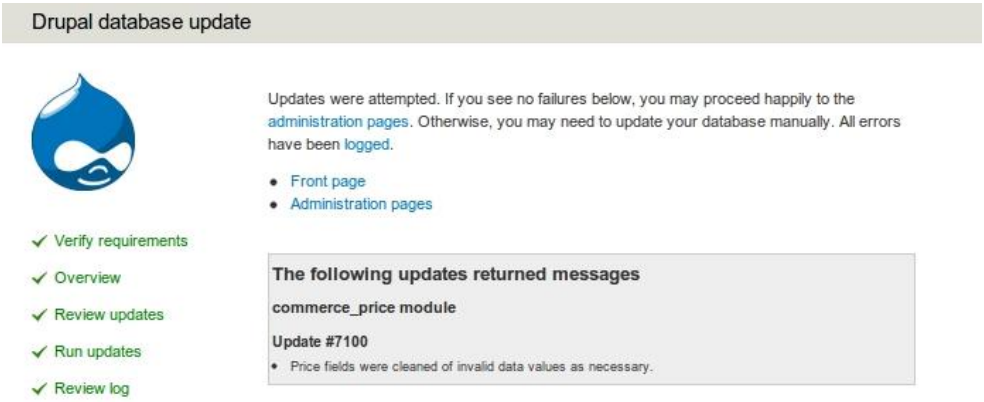


You will see a warning of backing up your site and put it in maintenance mode. We have already done these, so just click "***Continue"***.

Step 5: Review your updates and click on "***Applying pending updates***"



Step 6: The update script will run and proceed to the result page. If everything is ok, you can now turn on your site and work as usual. All modules are updated.



UPDATE DRUPAL CORE

For Drupal core updating, automatic update via admin interface is not supported at the moment. You have to do it manually.

Step 1: Backup your existing site and database.

Step 2: Place the site in "off-line" mode (via ***Administer > Configuration > Maintenance***).

Step 3: Download and unzip the new Drupal core files at http://drupal.org/project/drupal and carefully review the information and instructions available in the file UPGRADE.txt (located in the root of your installation directory).

Step 4: Upload the new Drupal files to your hosting, overwrite all Drupal core existing files.

Step 5: Run the ***update.php*** script, just like updating modules, at ***http://yoursitename.com/update.php***

If everything works, your Drupal site is now updated to the latest core.

HOUR 6 + 7: ADVANCED CUSTOMIZATION

After finishing ***Chapter 2: Basic customization***, your site is good enough to be launched to public. This section presents more advanced customization options. It is not necessary, but if you want to play around with the web looking a little bit, these are some techniques you can use:

- Install/uninstall modules
- Create category for Blog
- Change theme
- Responsive settings
- Add CSS class for block
- Introduction to Views

INSTALL/UNINSTALL DRUPAL MODULES

In our package which you are using with this book, we have installed many essential modules such as Sitemap, URL alias, Image Cache, Newsletter … They are all contributed modules from the Drupal community.

Drupal.org community has more than 10'000 contributed modules submitted by developers all over the world. If you need to extend and customize Drupal functionalities, almost anytime, you can find a module which suits your needs there. All Drupal contributed modules are hosted at: http://drupal.org/project/Modules/

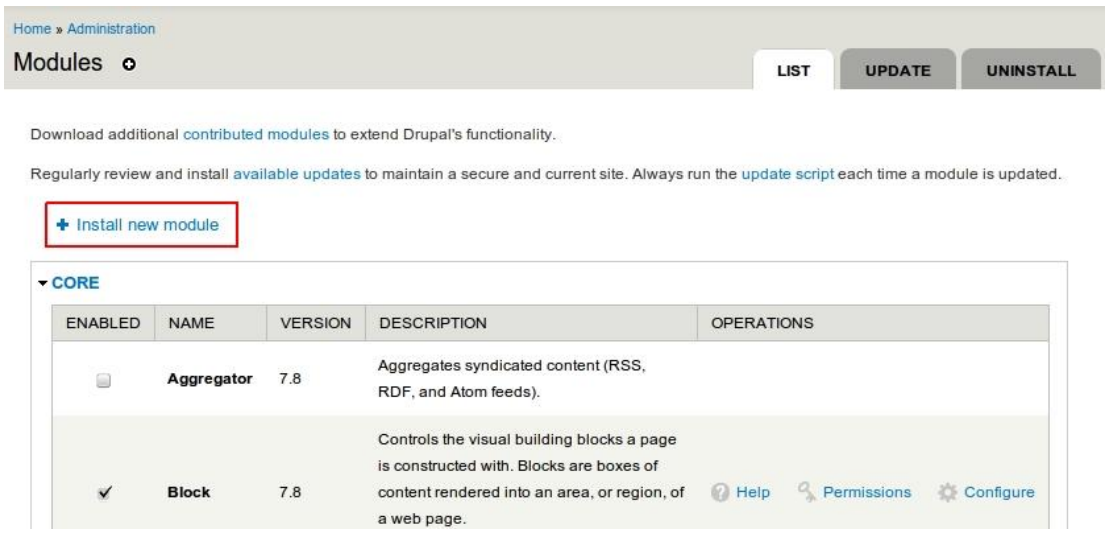
Install via admin interface

Step 1: Please go to Drupal.org to find your desired modules. For example, let's install the ***Simple News*** module, available at http://drupal.org/project/simplenews. This module enables you to send newsletters to your subscribers.

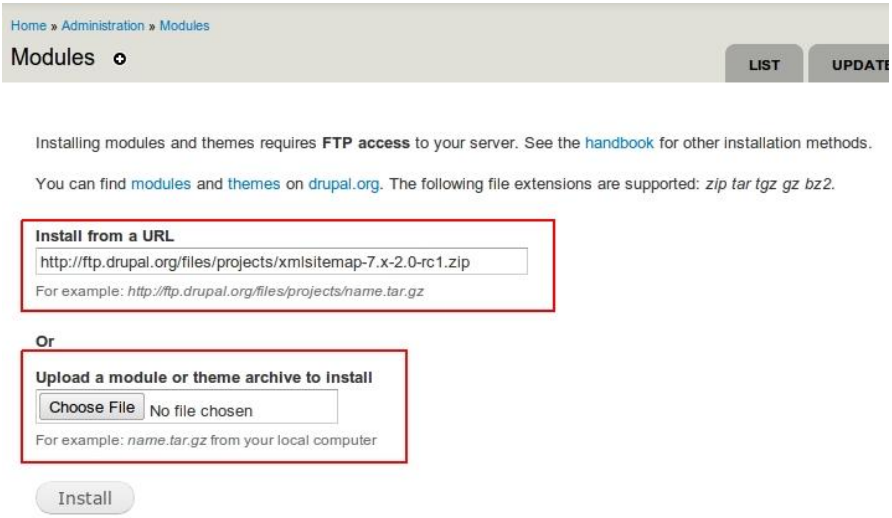
You need to either

- ***Copy*** the download link of your desired version, such as, http://ftp.drupal.org/files/projects/simplenews-7.x-1.0-rc1.zip
- Or you can ***download*** the archive of this module

Step 2: Go to ***Admin > Modules*** and choose ***Install new module***

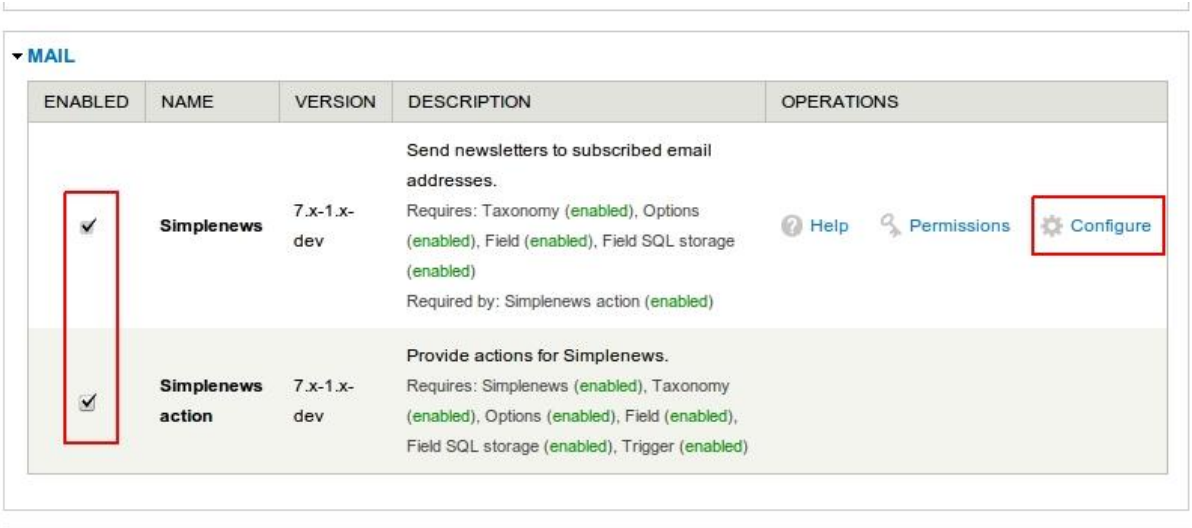


Step 3: Enter the archive file link and click on ***Install***. If it does not work, please use the second method: browse and upload the archive file, then click on ***Install***.



Sometimes, both methods are not working because of file permission. Then you have to upload the module folder manually via FTP (using FTP client such as Filezilla) to /sites/all/modules.

Step 4: The module is now installed, but not yet enabled. You have to go to ***Admin*** > ***Modules*** to enable it by ticking on the corresponding modules and then hit "***Save Configuration***" button.



Step 5: Now you can use the module. You can click on the "Configure" link beside the module or you can go to Admin > Configuration > Simple News

Uninstall a Drupal module

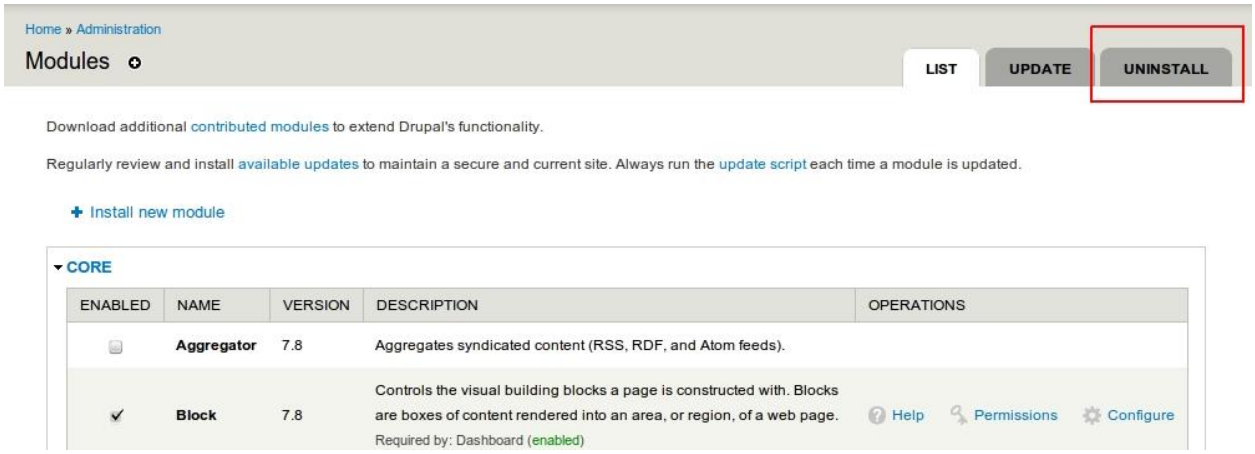
When particular modules are no longer in need, you can uninstall them.

Step 1: Disable module.

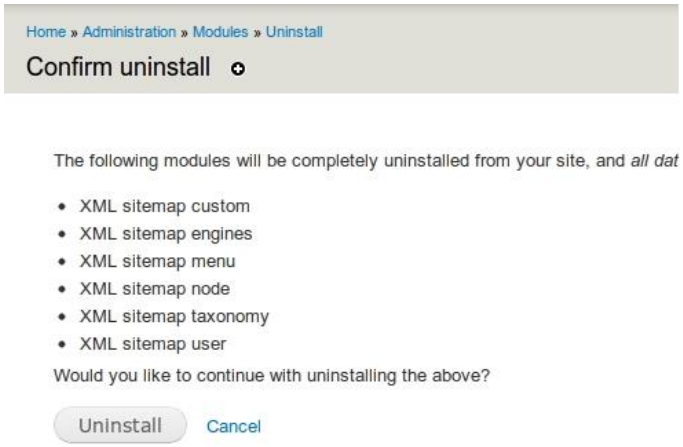
You have to go to ***Admin > Modules*** and untick the modules that you want to uninstall, and then click on Save Configuration.

Step 2: Uninstall module

In Step 1, the module is disabled, but still exists on your website. You can enable them when you need. But if you want to completely remove it, please go to ***Admin > Modules*** and click on the "***Uninstall***" tab. Then select the modules that you want to remove and click "Uninstall".



Then confirm to uninstall and that's all.



Be careful about the dependancies, ie, module A is required by other modules B and C. In that case, you should disable and uninstall the other dependant modules B and C first, then you can disable and uninstall module A.

CREATE CATEGORY FOR BLOG

If you want to have many categories under your Blog, for example, Technology, Entertainment, Politics, Economy and so on, this section shows you how to do it.

In Drupal, Taxonomy is a method that administrators use to organize website content. You can set up a taxonomy that allows users to add terms (also known as tags or metadata) to content.

Taxonomy is created from 'Vocabularies' that contain related 'Terms'. A vocabulary is a set of terms and terms are just another word for categories. For example:

- “Country” is a ***vocabulary***; “US”, “Canada”, “Germany”, “England” and so on are ***terms***, belonging to “Country” vocabulary.
- “Music genre” is a ***vocabulary***; “Pop”, “Rock”, “Rap”, “R&B” and so on are ***terms***, belonging to “Music genere” vocabulary.

If you want to understand the basic concepts of taxonomy, I have written a blog article "Taxonomy Drupal tutorial - Basic concepts" on this issue.

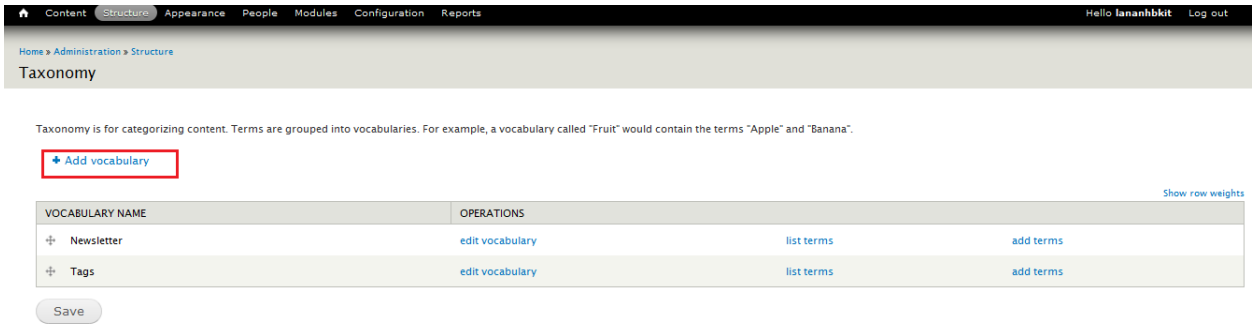
Now we want to make some categories for Blog entry, so:

- Technology, Entertainment, Policitcs and Economy are ***terms***.
- Those terms are all blog categories. Therefore, the ***vocabulary*** here is "Blog category".
- The making of "Blog category" and its children Technology, Entertainment and so on is called ***Taxonomy***.

Is it easier now? We can move on to the next steps, creating vocabularies and terms.

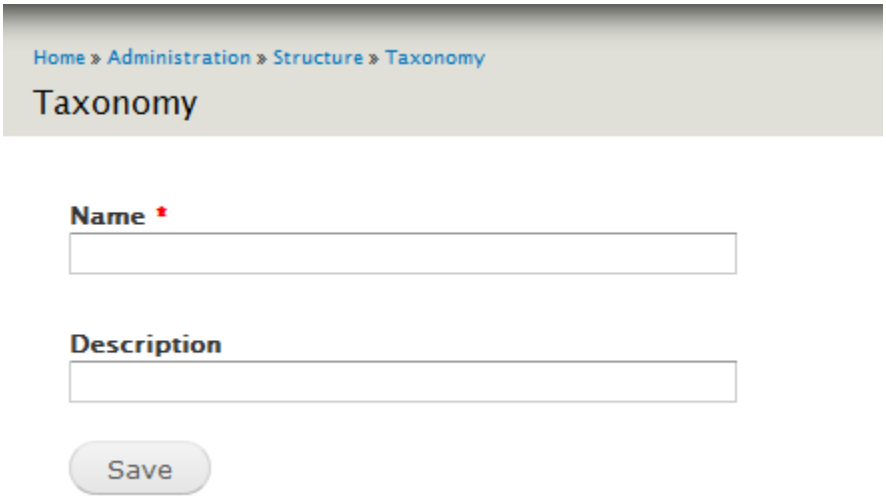
Creating a vocabulary

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Taxonomy***, and then click on ***Add vocabulary*** link.



Step 2*:* Choose a name for your vocabulary, for example, ***Blog category***.

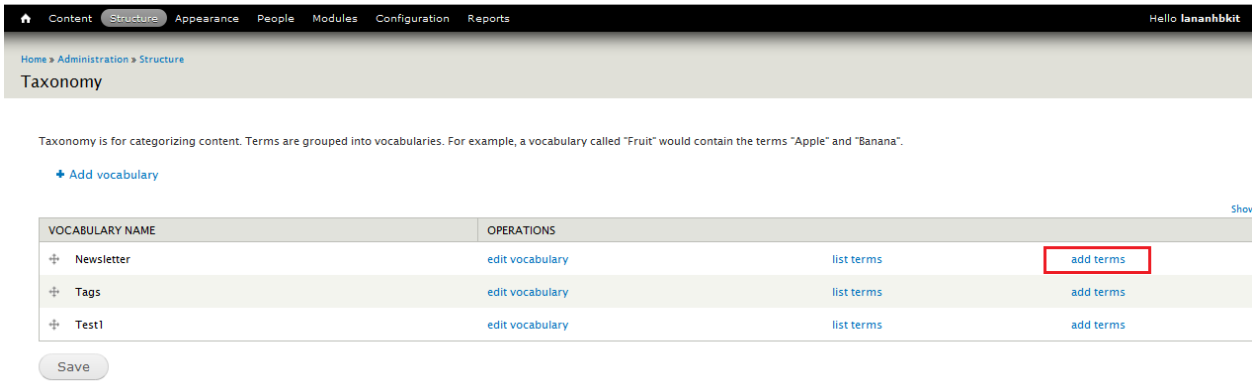
Step 3*:* Add a description and click ***Save*** button.



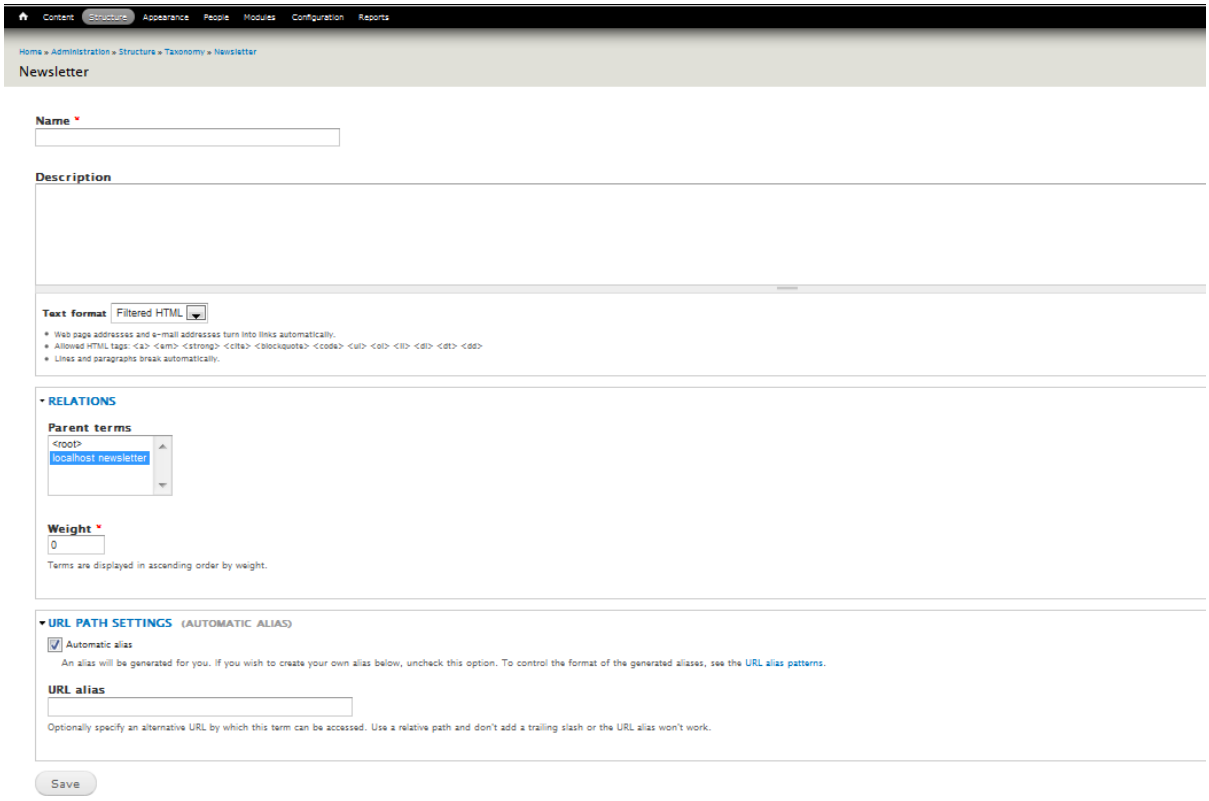
Creating Terms

After creating a Blog category vocabulary, you will now need to define categories like Technology, Sport or Politics. These are called terms.

Step 1: Please go to ***Admin > Structure > Taxonomy***, then click on the ***Add terms*** link beside the corresponding vocabulary.



Step 2: Enter details for the new term



1. Assign your term a name.
2. Choosing the term's "parent", if this term is a sub of another term.
3. Select term to be related (you can select multiple terms by using the standard conventions of your operating system, like shift-click and control-click).
4. List synonyms for your term.

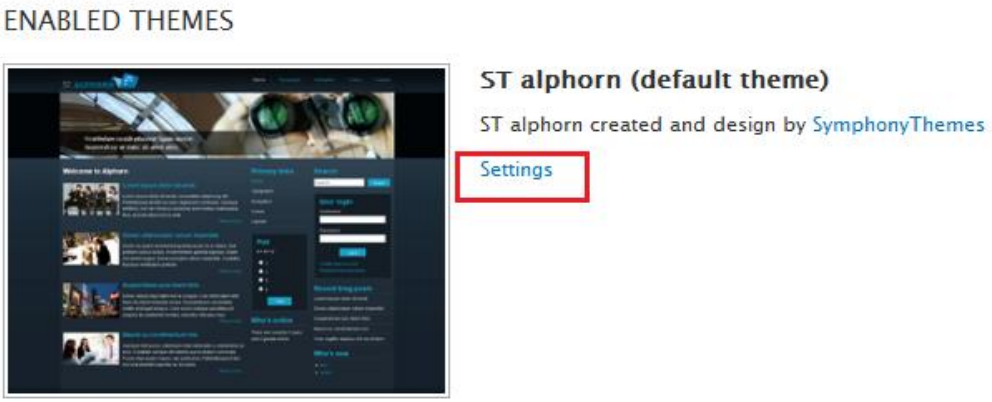
5. Add weight for term.
6. Finally click on **Save**.

To view or manage the terms of each vocabulary, click on its list terms link. On the list terms page you can edit each term by clicking the edit link.

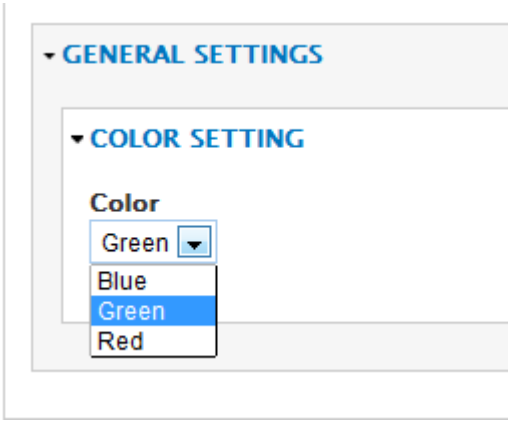
CHANGE THEME COLOR

Our theme has many options such as text size, font family and color and more. Follow the instruction bellow to customize theme for your Drupal site:

Visit ***Admin > Appearance***, then click "***Setting***" next to your theme to go to that theme's configuration page.



Then select the color that you want. We have provided several built-in colors with this package.



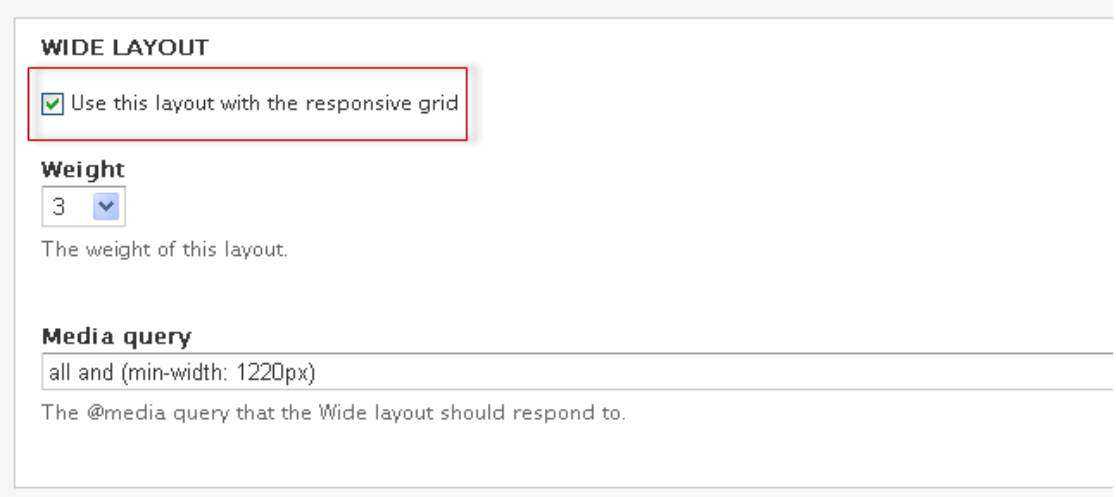
LAYOUT CONFIGURATION

Sometimes you may want disable responsive, or disable wide screen or reset the width of screens, or disable some of javascript or css file, or change region of the site. You can do it at ***Admin > Appearance > Themes***, then click "***Setting***" next to your theme to go to that theme's configuration page.

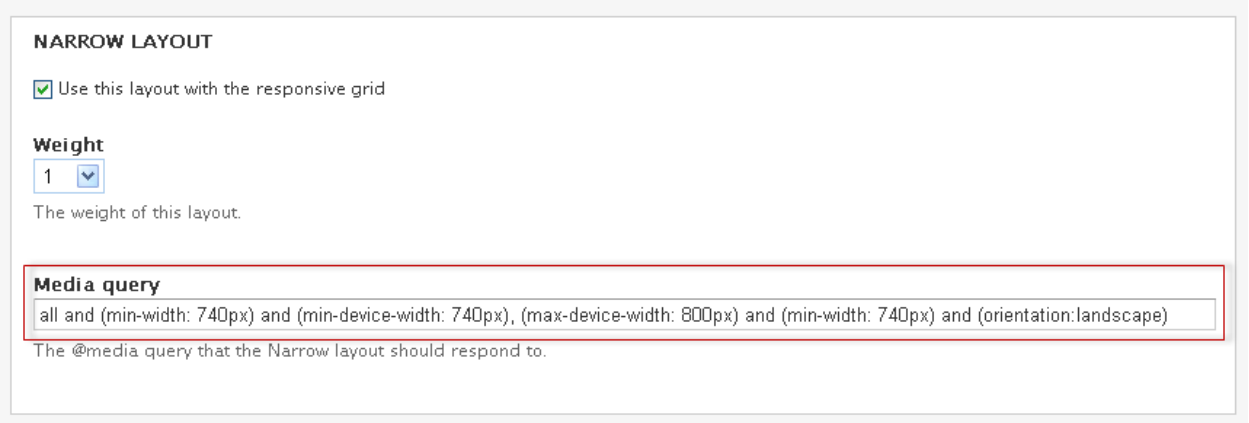
Responsive Setting

In general, the website support wide screen, normal screen, narrow screen adm mobile screen. Sometimes you may want disable responsive, or disable wide screen or reset the width of screens.

- To enable or disable responsive, check to ***Enable the responsive*** grid to enable or disable responsive.
- To disable wide/normal/narrow screen, At wide/normal/narrow setting, check or uncheck to ***Use this layout with the responsive grid*** option

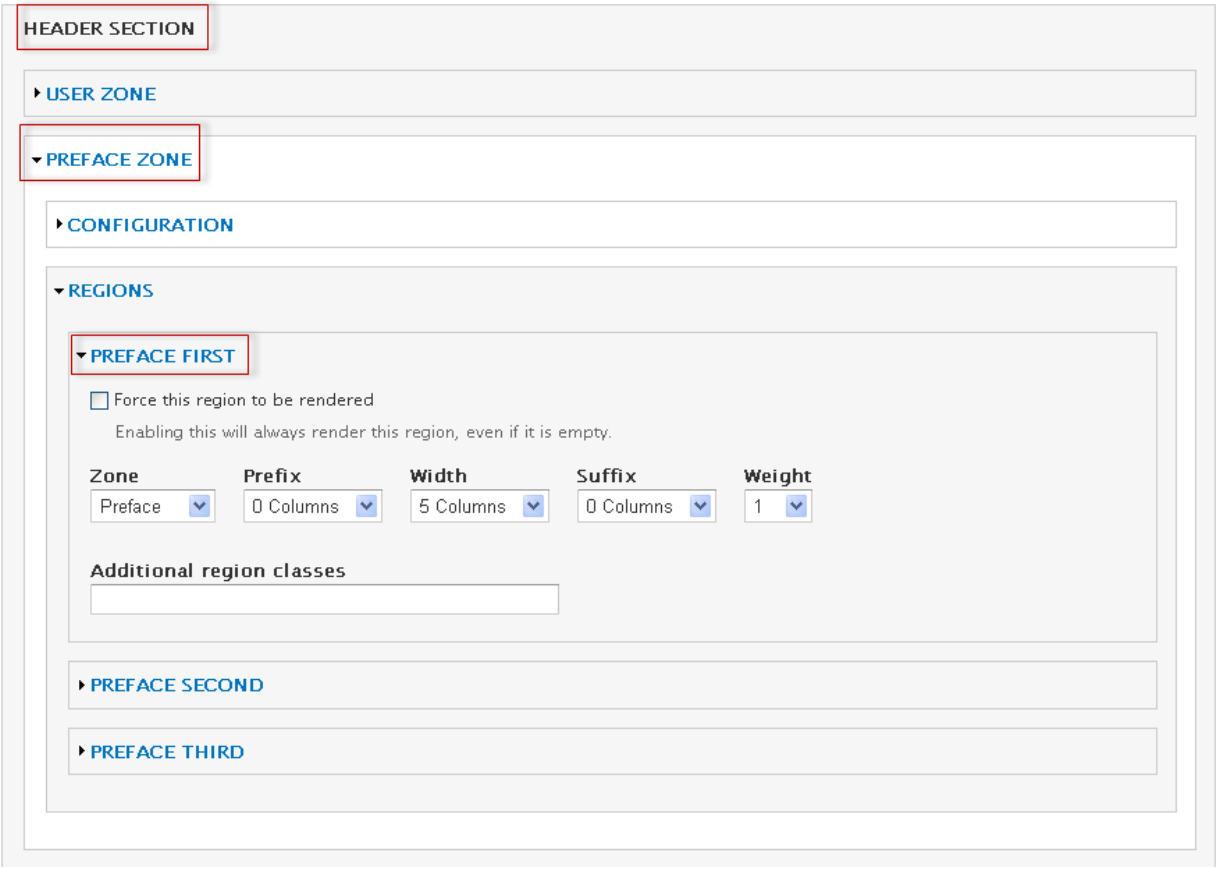


- To change the width of screen, edit value of Media query box

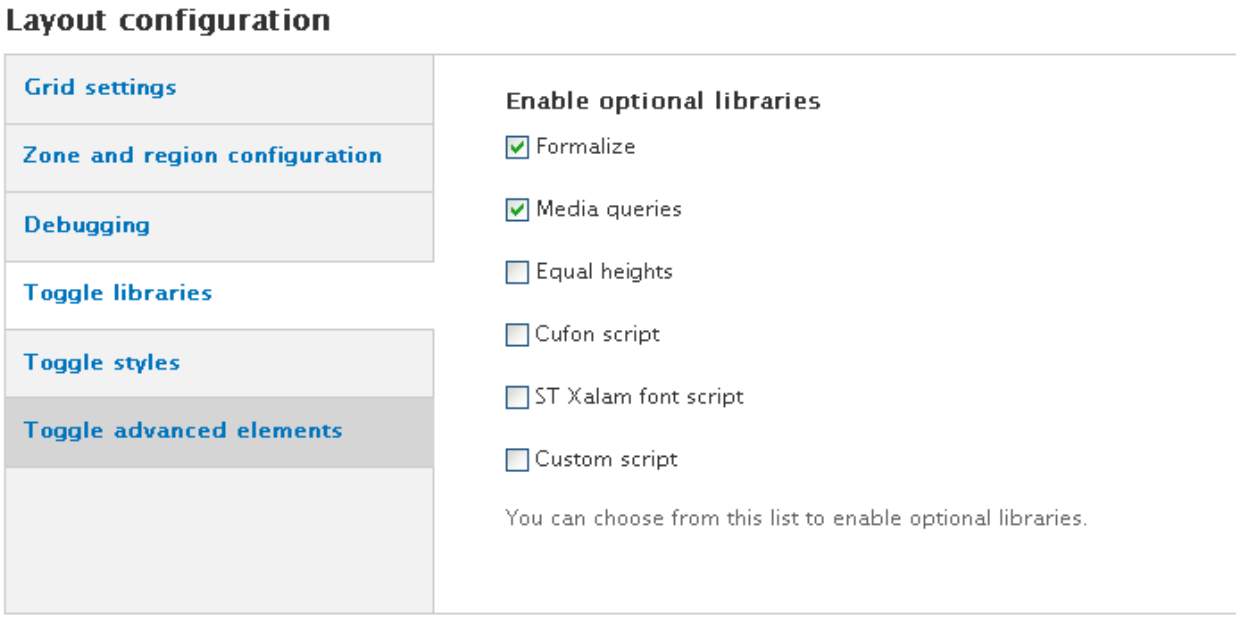


Region setting

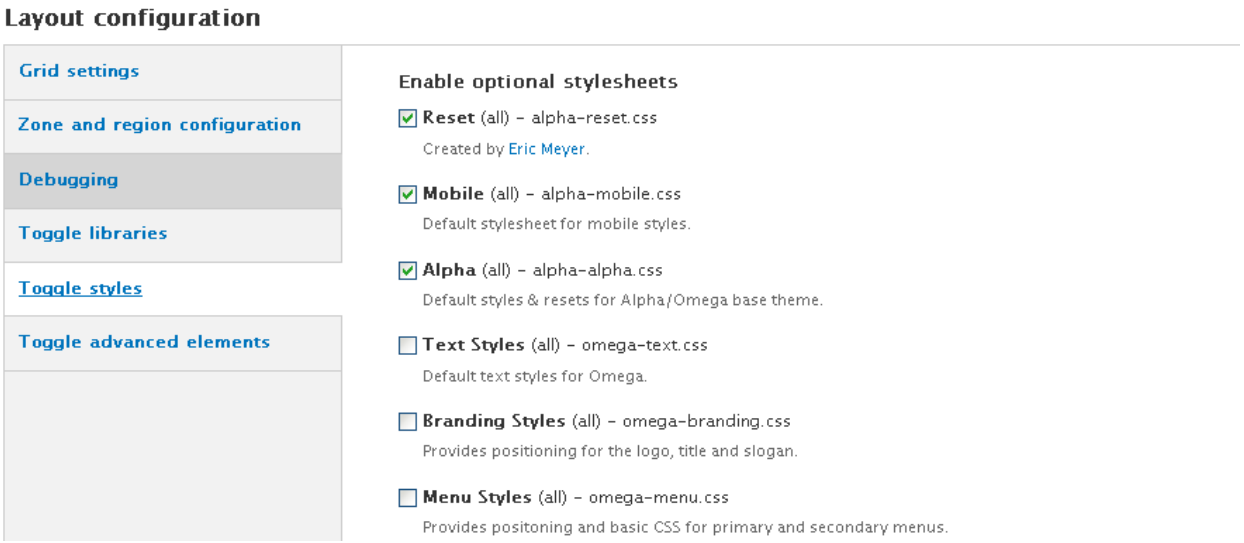
At this tab, you can change the section of zone, zone of region and change width/weight/prefix/suffix of region.



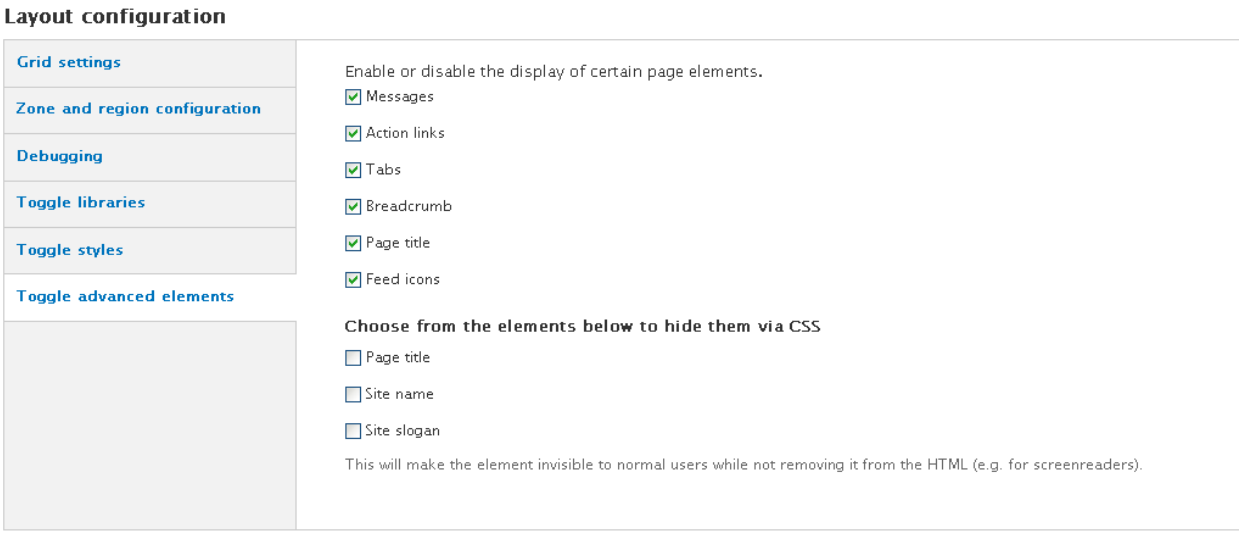
- At toggle libraries, check or uncheck to Javascript name to enable or disable Javescript.



- At toggle styles, check or uncheck to CSS name to enable or disable CSS file.



- At advanced elements, check or uncheck to elements to enable or disable the display of certain page elements.



INTRODUCTION TO DRUPAL VIEW

View is the heart of displaying content in Drupal. You have your own content like blog posts, photos, products and so on. Now you want to display them, in alphabetic order for example, that is when you need views.

View is the most powerful tool in Drupal, but also not pleasant to manage it at all. I leave views at the very end of this book, because I do not want you to jump into this hard part first and lose all of your enthusiasm right from the beginning. After you have gone through 5 previous chapters, I am sure you are now confident enough to conquere it.

In this tutorial, I present you how to create a Blog page, ie, a list of blog entries. Although it has been implemented in the package you have downloaded, I will show you how to do it by your own.

Blog is where you can post entries. Drupal has a built-in content type called “Article” to support writing blog/news article. An example of a blog page can be found here:

http://demo.symphonythemes.com/drupal7/shamisen/blog

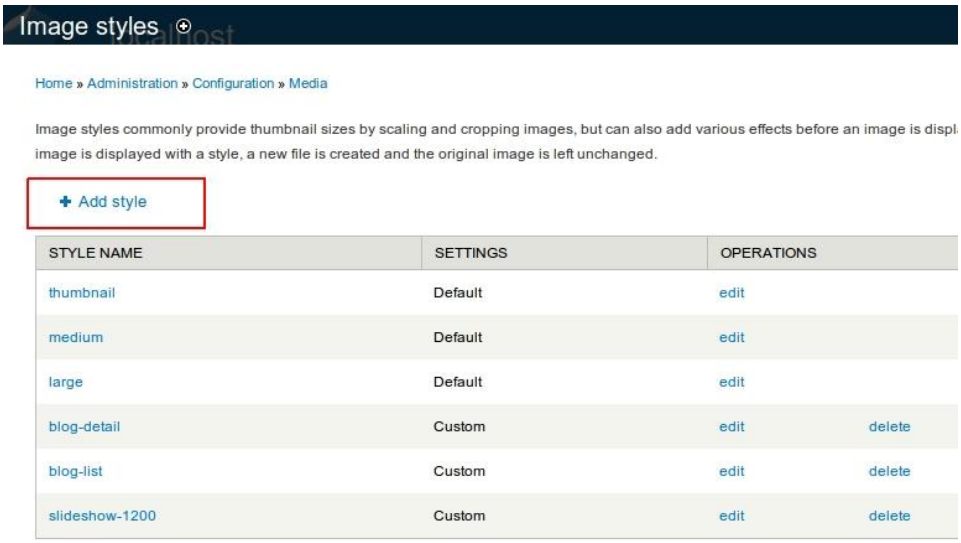
Anatomy of the blog page

1. The ***blog page*** is a list of blog article in a ***short format***. Each short format has: a title, post date, image, intro text and the Read more link.
2. The ***blog detail page*** is the article in ***full format*** which has the title, post date, image, intro text, body, tags and comment forms.

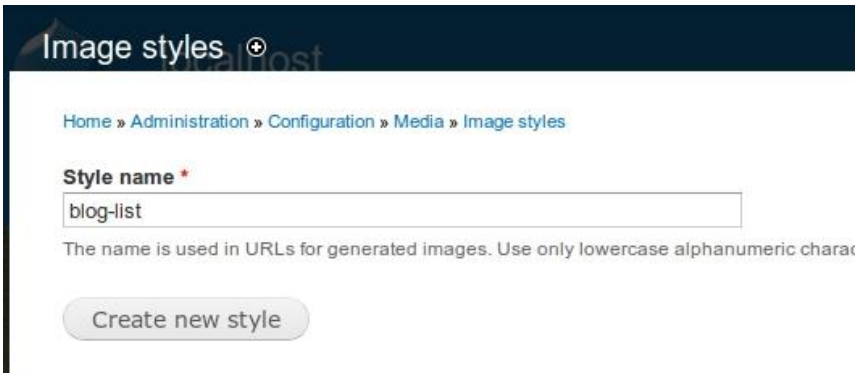
First, create image presets

Image presets are predefined styles for images. Because your uploading images will be at different size, so if you don't create a common style, they will display as orginal sizes and your blog page will look messy. When the presets are made, uploaded images will be resized to a single correct size.

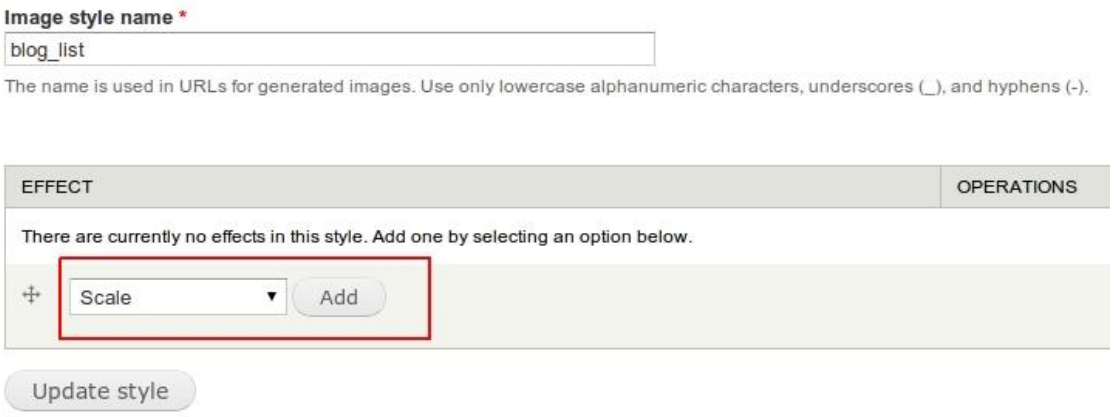
Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Configuration > Image Styles*** (admin/config/media/image-styles), and choose ***Add style***



Step 2: Create a ***blog-list*** style



Step 3: On the next page, you will need to create the effect



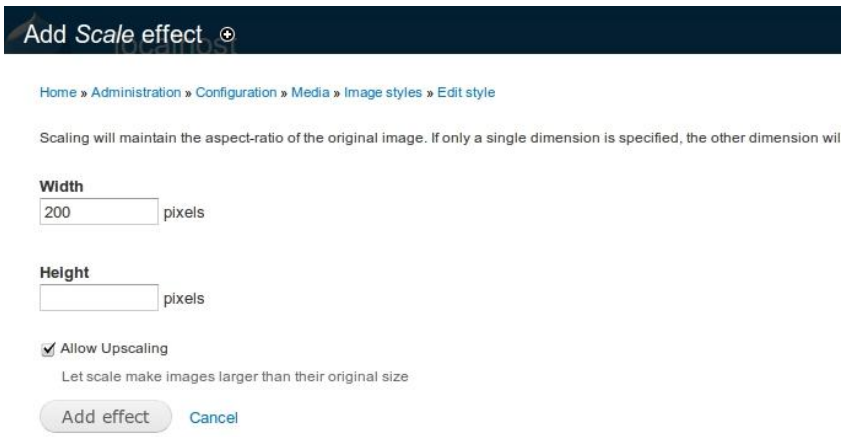
There are 3 main effects: Scale, Resize and Crop. They are described as the table below

Effects	Description	Example
Scaled to 50%	Keep the aspect ratio	
Resized to 60x20	Exact size, even if distoring the image	
Cropped to 50%x50%, both offsets set to top	Display only a part of the image	

More info on the effects can be found at: http://drupal.org/node/163561

Here we want to keep the ratio of the blog images, so we will add a **Scale** effect.

Step 4: Please add a number for the width, **200** for example.



You can enter the width only, so all uploaded blog images will scale to a common width of 200 px. The height will change proportionally as the image ratio is kept.

You can also tick on the "Allow Upscaling" option. This option will resize images whose widths are less than 200px. The results will be blur images but your blog will be neat and clean.

Step 5: Click on ***Add effect***, go back to the main style window and click on ***Update style*.**

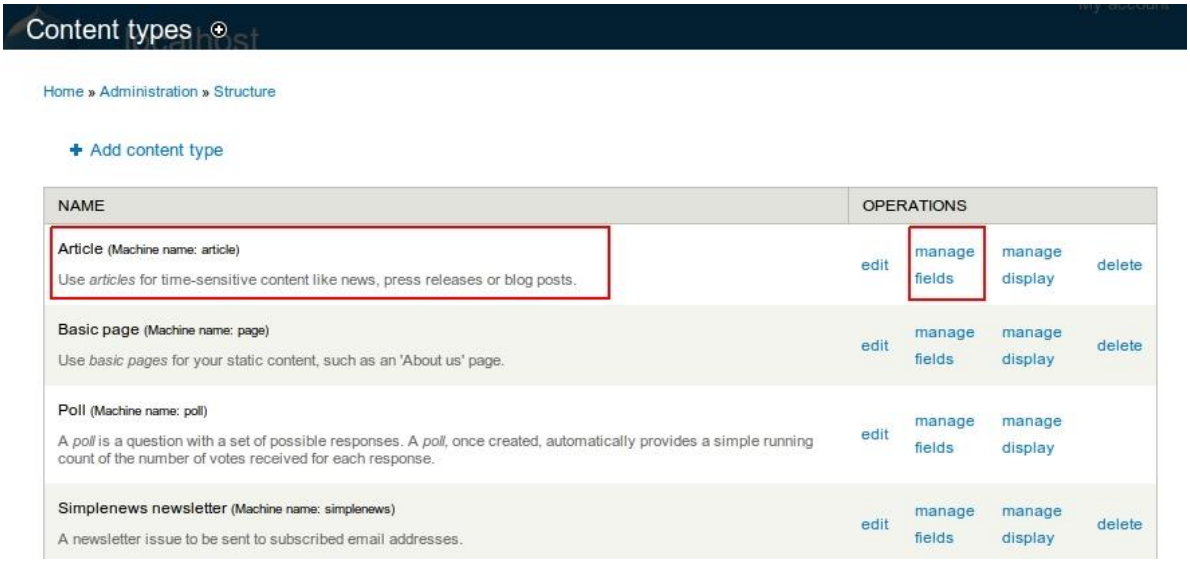
The "***blog-list***" style has been created. Please follow these above steps to create a second style called "***blog-detail***". That is the image style for the blog detail page. You can set a wider width, 300 or 400px, it is totally upto you.

Second, create or edit the Article content type

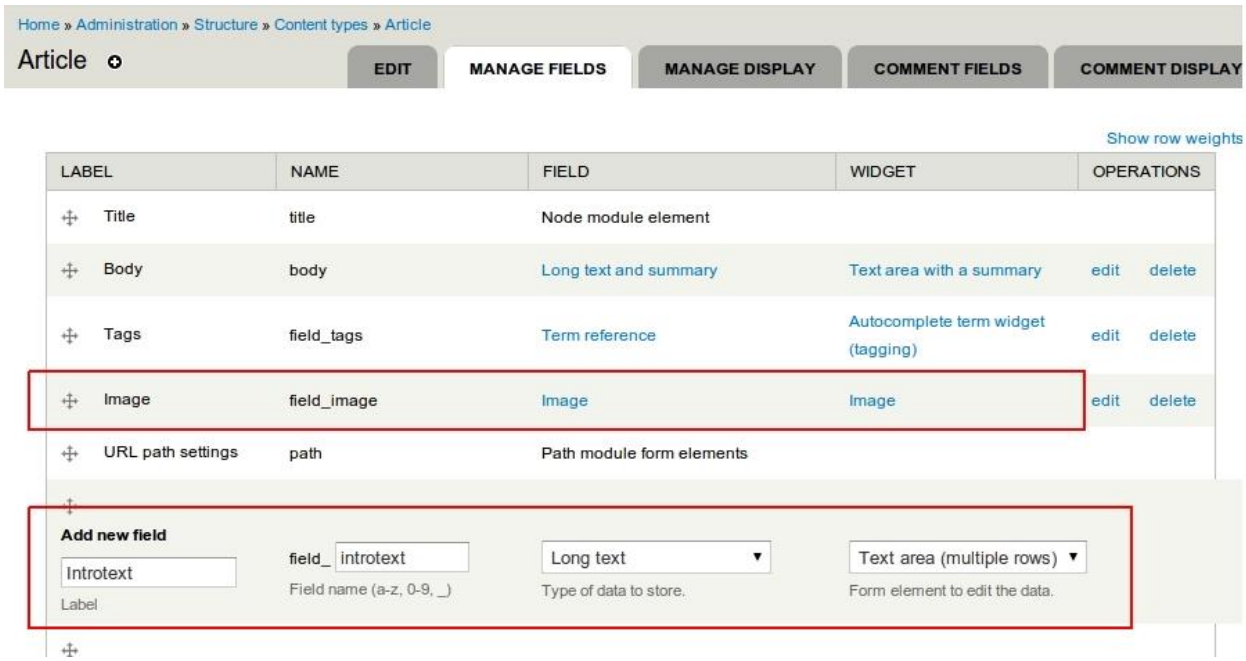
Drupal has a built in content type called "***Article***". Just go and check if it has enough fields that we want:

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Content types*** (admin/structure/types).

Step 2: You will see all content types available on your site. Please click on the "***manage fields***" of the "Article" content type.

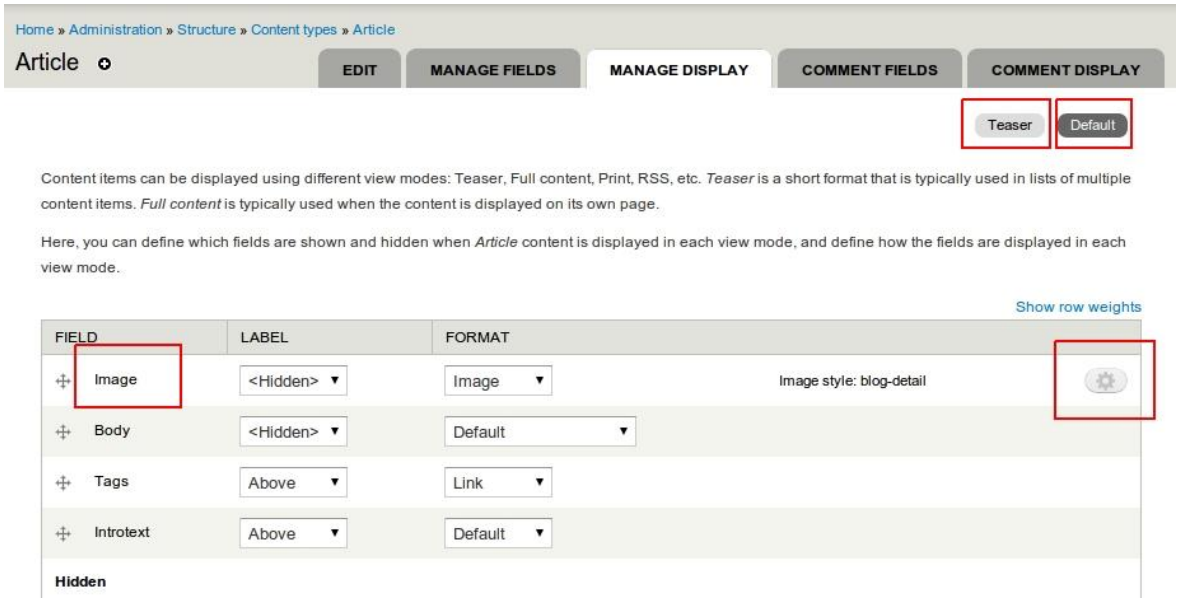


Step 3: Add the ***Introtext*** field, type: ***Long text*** and subtype: ***Text area*** (multiple rows), the click on Save, as the image below



Step 4: Here we see that the ***Image*** field is available by default. But if it does not exist, you can repeat these steps to create the ***Image*** field.

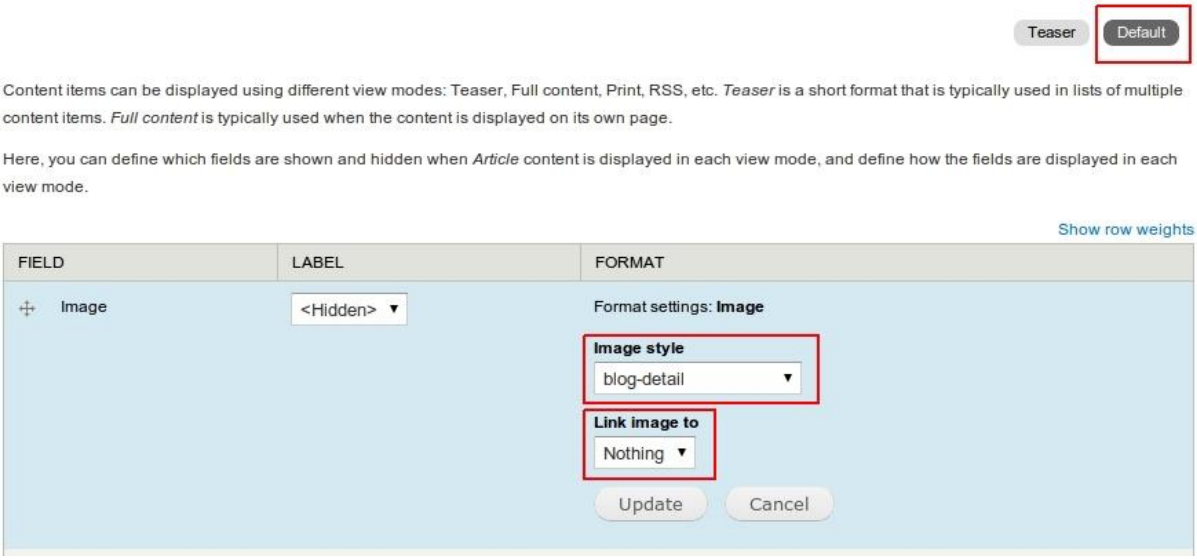
Step 5: Now we need to add the image style "***blog-detail***" that we have created to this Article content type. So when you view an Article node, the image will display at the predefined size. Please click on the "***Manage Display***" tab.



Please pay attention to the two small icons named "***Teaser***" and "***Default***".

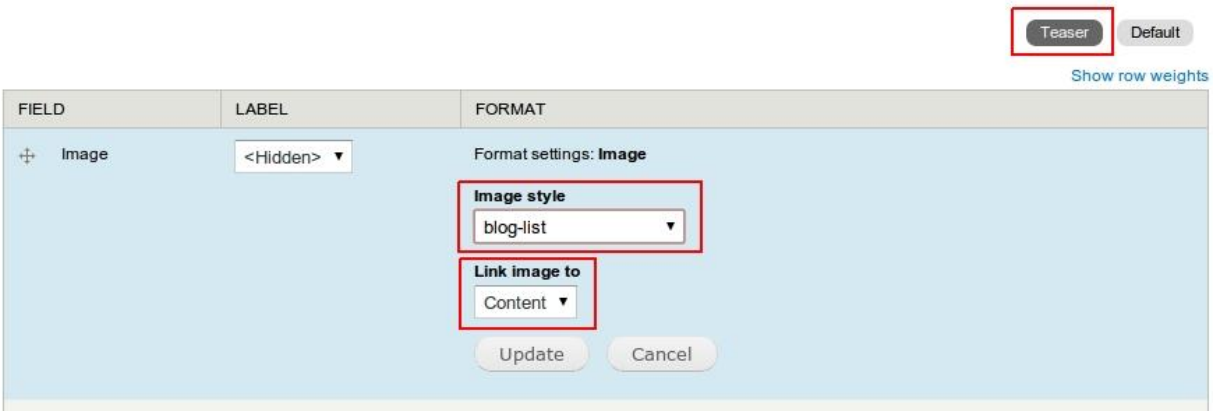
- ***Teaser***: a short format of the article node, used in lists of multiple content items. We will add the "blog-list" image style here.
- ***Default***: full content, when the content is displayed on its own page. We will add the "blog-detail" image style there.

Step 6: We are now at the Default tab, please click on the wheel icon on the very right of the Image field. It will pop down like this:



Then choose Image style as "***blog-detail***" and Link image to "***Nothing***". Then click **Update**. Then go back to the main ***Manage Display*** window and click ***Save***.

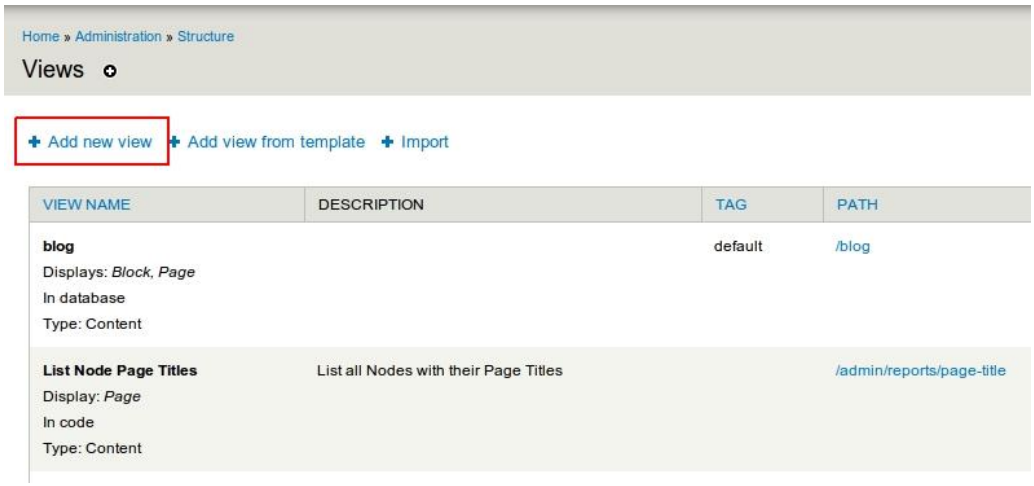
Step 7: Please go to the ***Teaser*** tab, and apply the "***blog-list***" style for the image. Also select to link the image to "***Content***". Click on ***Update*** and then ***Save***.



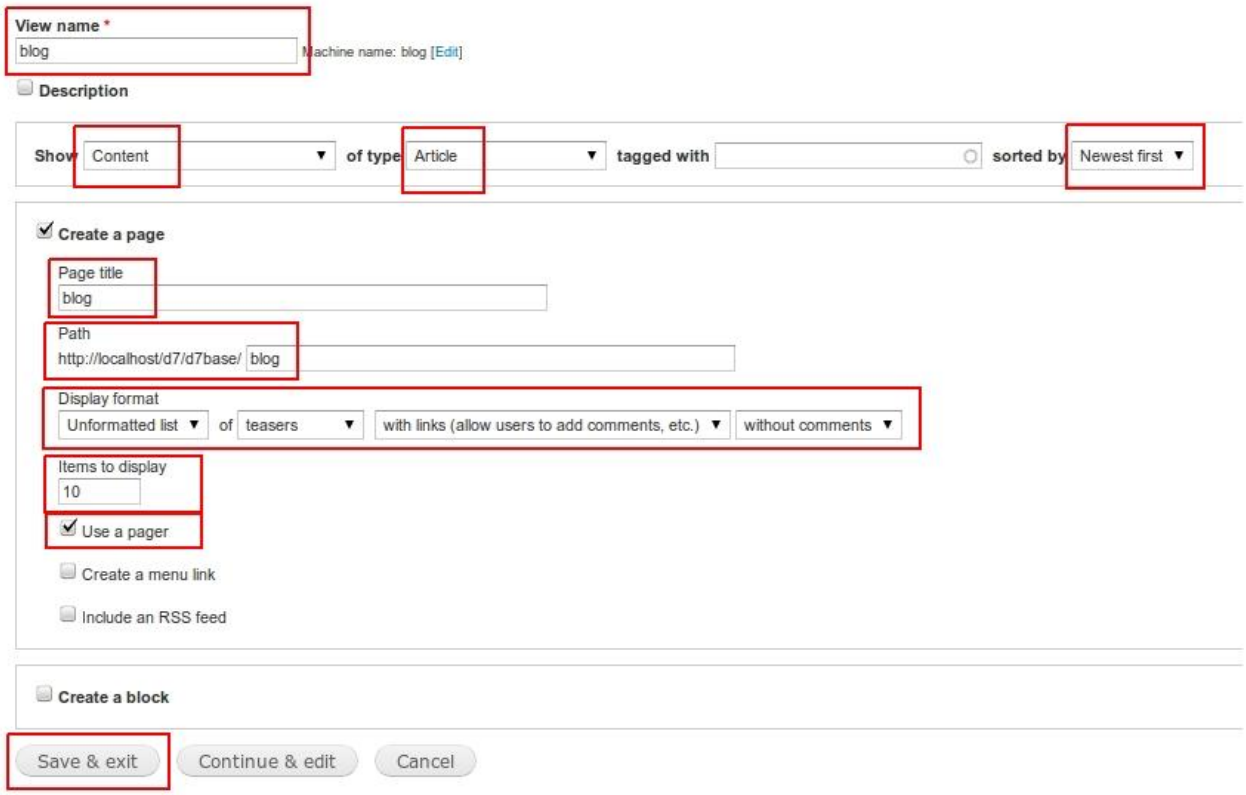
Third, create the view

Now we will create a view to display the list of all Article nodes.

Step 1: Go to ***Admin > Structure > Views*** and choose ***Add a new view***



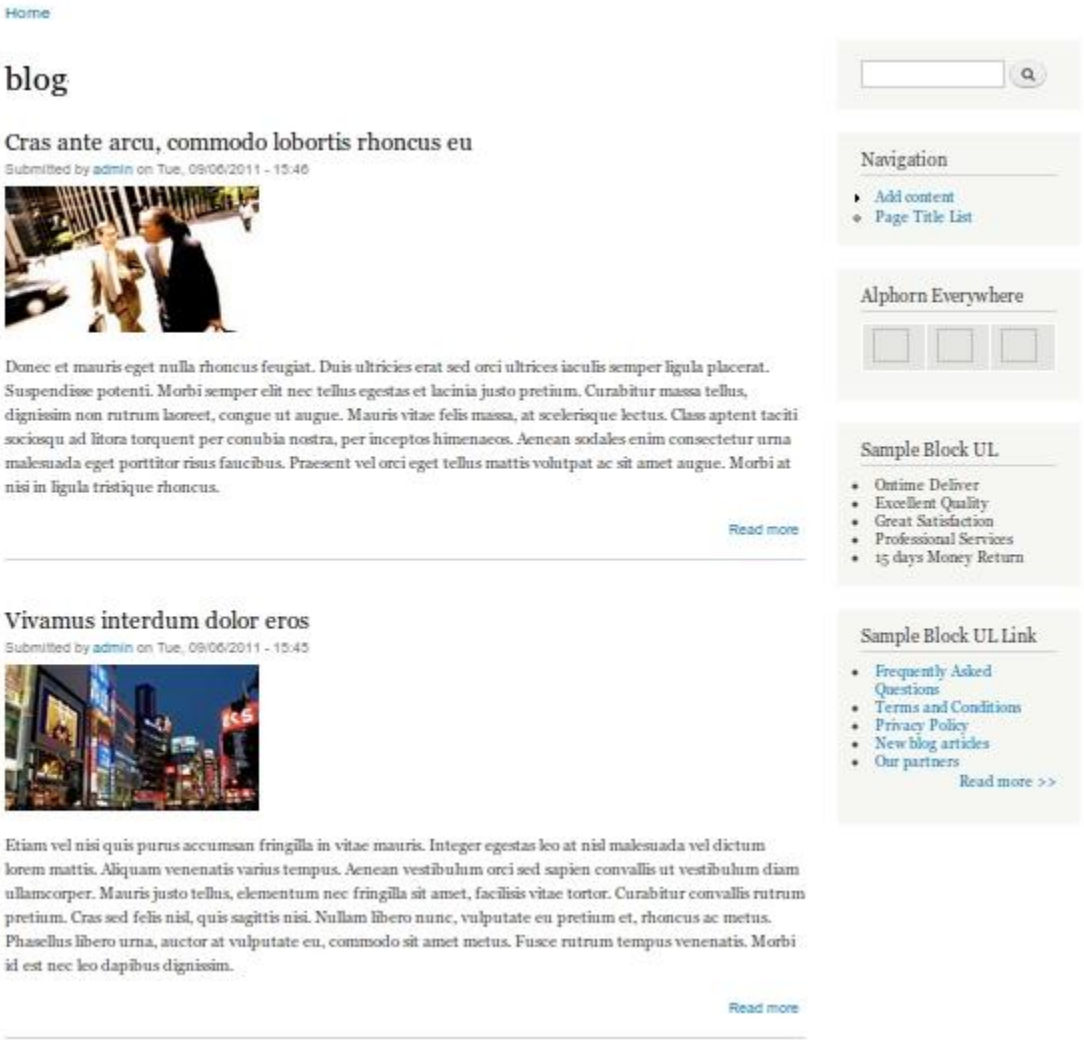
Step 2: Enter the following information:



- View name: blog
- Show: Content of type Article, sorted by Newest first

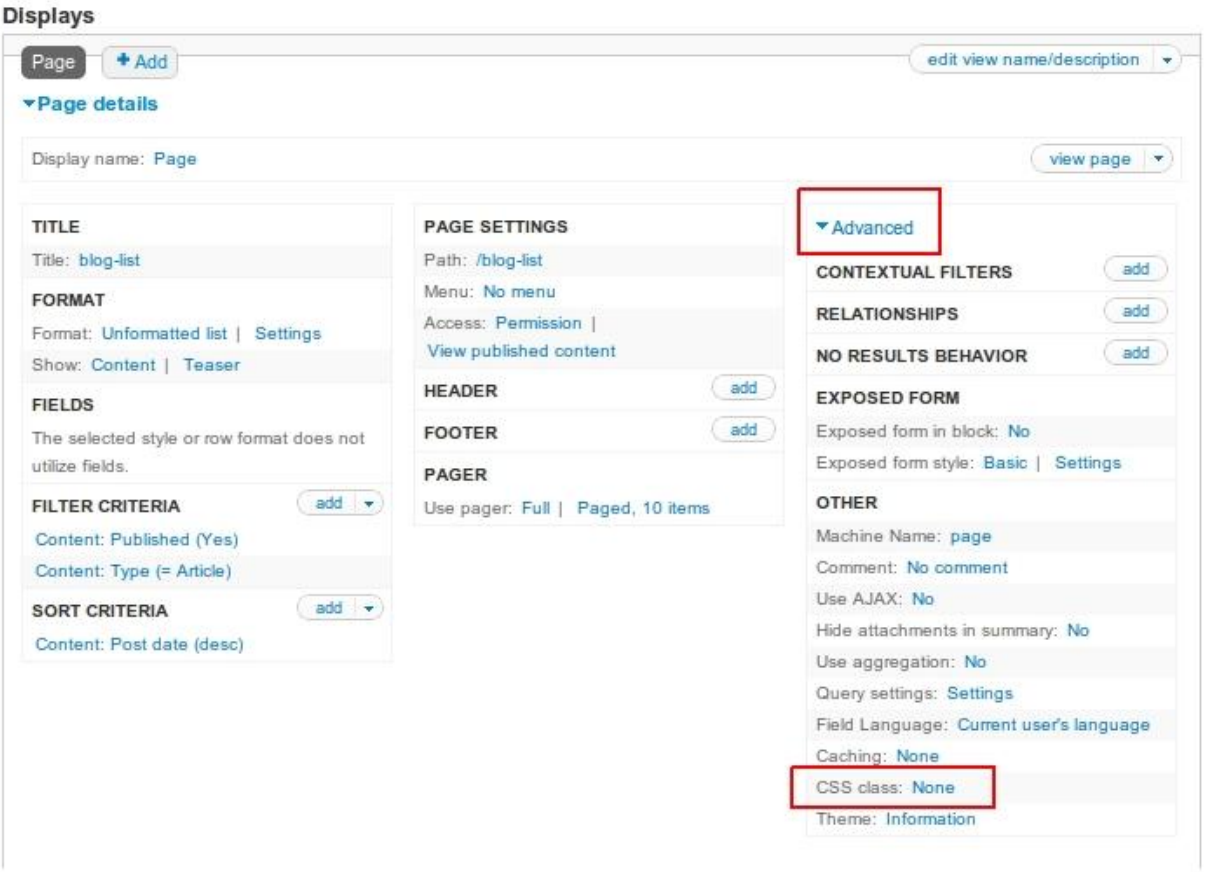
- Tick on Create a page and enter:
- Page title: Blog
- Path: /blog
- Display format: Unformatte list of Teaser with Links without Comments.
- Item to display: 10 (or 5, it is upto you)
- Tick on "Use a pager" so if you have more than 10 blog posts, there will be a pager at the end of the page so you can browse older posts.

Click on ***Save*** and ***Exit***, it will browse you to your new blog page

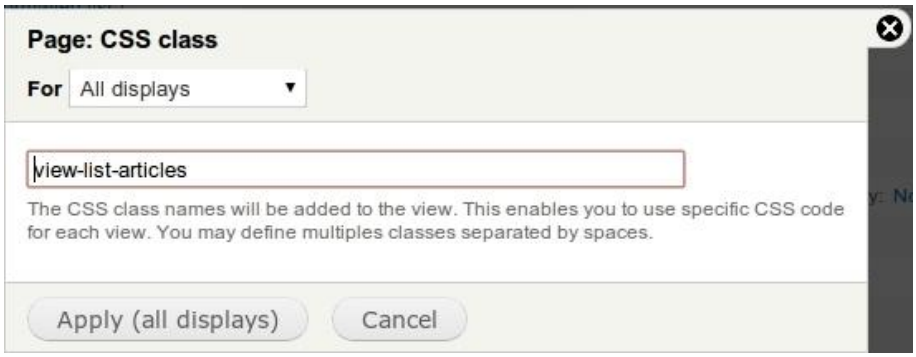


Step 5: You can always go back and change other settings by going to ***Admin*** **>** ***Structure*** **>** ***Views*** and click on Edit button of the view you have created.

Step 6: Apply predefined CSS style for this view



And enter "***view-list-articles***". It is a predefined CSS style which we have built for this theme package. If it does not work, please try "***view-list-blog***".



This tutorial shows you a basic view configuration only. There are alot of things which we are unable to cover within this book. If you want to enhance your

knowledges with Drupal views, I have listed some resources at the last chapter of this book.

THANK YOU

Congratulation! You have made through 7 hours of this Drupal tutorial. I hope you are much more comfortable with your new Drupal site than you first start. That will much encourage you to learn more about Drupal. There are more difficulties to come, but when you get yourself familiar with it, you will enjoy the power of this great CMS.

What to do next?

At Symphony Themes, we provide Drupal themes of various categories: shopping, newspaper, organization, photography, business, travel etc ...

If you are a business owner, you can stop here and concentrate on adding more content value to your site which is good for your business. You have learned all basic techniques to mange your site succesfully.

- You need more **Drupal themes** for your busines site, please go to Symphony Themes resources, we have a lot of themes in various topics: newspaper, ecommerce, travel, organization, business and etc.
- You need to add more advanced features, please seek helps from Drupal developers. The Drupal community is a great place to ask for helps.

If you want to develop yourself as a Drupal developer, this book has given you a good start. You will need to learn alot more. There are some resources that my developers used to go to:

- ***Drupalize.me***: you can find video tutorials for all Drupal subjects here. Drupalize.me is from Lullabot, a welknown Drupal training company since the first period of Drupal.
- ***Packtpub***: Packtpub provides Drupal books and other open source books. It is one of the biggest publishers for open source community.

Feedbacks

When you feel some parts of this book dragged your down, please kindly send me your opinions via info@symphonythemes.com. I appreciate your feedbacks as the main source to make this book more relevant and useful.

If you have problems with the free Drupal themes provided with this book, please raise an issue to our support forum.

Also, please follow the Symphony Themes Twitter at @symphonythemes. We frequently publish new articles about Drupal tutorials and themes.

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Version

This version was created on August 2012 and it was based on the best experiences and information available at that time. You can check for updates on my website:

- My blog: http://tuthanh.com/master-drupal-in-7-hours
- Symphony Themes: http://www.symphonythemes.com/master-drupal-in-7-hours

We will continue update this course with more information. We hope to have comments from you.

Thanks for reading and good luck!