



Message Board User's Guide

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Getting Started

What is a message board?

A Message Board is an application that allows users to post and reply to messages from other users and review the flow of a discussion. A Message Board is also known as a discussion group, discussion board, or bulletin board.

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Organization of the message board

The message board can contain multiple forums. Each forum can contain multiple threads (or "topics"). Each thread can contain multiple replies (or posts).

The hierarchy of a message board is as follows:

Message Board

Category: Fruits

Forum: Apples

Thread: What are your favorite types of apples?

Posts: I am not sure.

Thread: Do you like apples?

Forum: Oranges

Thread: Orange talk

Category: Cars

Forum: Car Discussion

Thread: I love Honda

Post: I love Merc rather than Honda

Thread: My car broke down!

Forum: Car Picture Post

Thread: Check out my car!

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Your Account

Registering for an account

Most of the pages on the message board should have a “Register” link that can be clicked to create a new account.

If you do not see the Register link, one of the instruction sets below can get you to the page where the Register link is. If you are still unable to locate the Register link, the message board may not have member registration available.

- If you see a Logout link, click that to logout of an account you are already logged into.
- If you are asked for the message board password that means the message board is Password Protected. No one without that password is allowed to enter the message board. If you do not know the password, you will need to contact the owner of the message board.

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Logging into your account

Most of the pages on the message board should have a “Login” link that can be clicked to login to the message board account.

If you do not see the Login link, one of the instruction sets below can get you to the page where the Login link is. If you are still unable to locate the Logout link, the message board may not have member registration available.

- If you see a Logout link, click that to logout of an account you are already logged into.
- If you are asked for the message board password that means the message board is Password Protected. No one without that password is allowed to enter the message board. If you do not know the password, you will need to contact the owner of the message board.

If you get an error that the account does not exist, make sure the account is listed on the Members List and if the account is not on the Members List, you should register a new account.

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Logging out of your account

Most of the pages on the message board should have a Logout link that can be clicked to logout from your message board account.

You will see a “Logout” link only if you are already logged into the message Board.

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Confirming your email address

When you register for the message board, an email will automatically be sent to the email address you gave when signing up. The email will contain a link that you must click to confirm that the email address you provided is valid. You will not be able to use your account until you have confirmed your email address.

If you do not receive the confirmation email, please check your Spam folder. The confirmation email can be resent by clicking the "Resend email confirmation" link in your profile.

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The account approval process

Your account may go into pending mode after registration. While your account is in pending mode you may not be able to use certain message board features.

A representative of the message board will review your registration and notify you via email of the approved or declined status of your account.

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Managing your profile

You can change your email address, password, signature, avatar, and other information associated with your message board account by editing your profile. To edit your profile, please follow the instructions below:

1. Login to your message board account.
2. Click on the "Control Panel" link.

Or

1. Login to your Message Board account
2. Click the "Members List" link located toward the bottom of the main page of the message board.
3. Browse for your profile.
4. Click the "Edit" link in your profile to edit your account.

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Managing your preferences

You can manage your message board preferences by following the directions mentioned below:

1. Login to your message board account.
2. Click on the "Control Panel" link.

Or

1. Login to your message board account
2. Click the "Members List" link located toward the bottom of the main page of the message board.
3. Browse for your profile.
4. Click the "Edit" link in your profile to edit your account.

The preferences available for your account have been outlined below:

1. **Change Time Zone:** The GMT time zone that you live in. Please note that the time zone will need to manually be updated for Daylight Savings Time.
2. **Enable invisible mode:** This feature allows you to surf the message board without appearing in the "Logged-In Users" list.
3. **Move updated topics to top:** This feature allows you to view the topics that have new replies at the top of the list.
4. **Allow members to send me email:** If this option is enabled, other members will be able to use an online form to send you email. Your email address will not be publicly revealed.
5. **Allow members to send me private messages:** If this option is enabled, other members will be able to send to you Private Messages.
6. **Show new private message notification popup:** If you are browsing the message board when you receive a new private message, the system can pop-up a notification box informing you of the new message.

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Changing your username

There is currently no way to change the username for your message board account. You would have to delete your current message board account and then create a new one.

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Deleting your account

You can delete your account by following the directions mentioned below:

1. Login to your message board account.

2. Click on the "Control Panel" link.
3. Click the "View your profile" link.
4. Click the "Delete" link.

Or

1. Login to your message board account.
2. Click the "Members List" link located toward the bottom of the main page of the message board.
3. Browse for your profile.
4. Click the "Delete" link in your profile.

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Threads

What is a thread?

A series of linked messages forming a discussion within a message board that is all on the same subject. A thread is also termed as a topic in a message board on which different members comment. Threads are usually categorized under a forum. For example, let's say there is a forum called fruits in a message board. Under this forum you may find different threads like apples, mangoes, bananas etc. Members can post their replies called "posts" for the topic "apples" or "bananas".

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Creating a new thread

Follow the steps below to create a new thread in a forum.

1. If the message board contains multiple forums, select the forum for which you want to create a new thread, otherwise skip this step.
2. Click on the "New Topic" link located toward the top of the page.
3. Enter the information you would like to post.
4. Click the "Post Message" button.

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Deleting a thread

Follow the steps below to delete a thread in a forum:

1. Login to your message board account
2. If the message board has multiple forums, click the forum link in which the desired thread is located.
3. Click the subject of the thread you would like to delete.
4. Click the "Delete" link located to the left side of the first post in the thread.

Notes:

- You can only delete threads you have created.
- Deleting a thread will delete all posts within that thread as well.
- You can only delete a thread if the message board allows you to register an account.

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Editing a thread

You can edit a thread by following the directions below:

1. Login to your message board account.
2. If the message board has multiple forums, click the forum link in which the desired thread is located.
3. Select the thread you would like to edit.
4. Click the "Edit" link located to the left side of the first post in the thread.

Notes:

- You can only edit threads you have created.
- You can only edit a thread if the message board allows you to register an account.

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Printing a thread

1. If the message board has multiple forums, click on the forum link in which the desired thread is located.
2. Select the thread you want to print.
3. Click the "Thread Tools" link.
4. Select the "Show Printable Version" option.
5. Click the "Print" option in your browser window located under the "File" menu or press Ctrl+P on your keyboard.

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Searching for a thread

1. Login to your message board account.
2. Click the "Search" link located toward the top of most of the message board pages.
3. You can search using "Search by Keyword" or if you know the username of the person who posted the thread, you can also search using "Search by Username".
4. You can also use the "Advanced" option under the "Search by Keyword" section to specify more search criteria.

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Subscribing to a thread

1. Login to your message board account if that option is available.
2. If the message board has multiple forums, click on the forum link in which the desired thread is located.
3. Select the thread you want to subscribe to.
4. Click the "Thread Tools" link.
5. Select the "Subscribe to this Thread" option.

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Un-subscribing from a thread

1. Login to your message board account if that option is available.
2. If the message board has multiple forums, click on the forum link in which the desired thread is located.
3. Select the thread you want to unsubscribe from.
4. Click the "Thread Tools" link.
5. Select the "Unsubscribe from this Thread" option.

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What is a forum?

The message board can contain multiple forums. Each forum can contain multiple threads (or "topics"). Each thread can contain multiple replies. Categories are used to simply organize the forums.

For example: You can have a forum called "Apples" where users would chat about different kinds of apples, a forum called "Oranges" where they would chat about different kinds of oranges, and a forum called "Bananas" where they would chat about different kinds of bananas.

You could then create a Category called "Fruits" and put all those forums into that category. The category would just be used to organize those forums. Categories are very helpful when you have many forums. It allows the user to easily choose the forum that is appropriate for their discussion.

Message Board

Category: Fruits

Forum: Apples

Thread: What are your favorite types of apples?

Thread: Do you like apples?

Forum: Oranges

Thread: Orange talk

Category: Cars

Forum: Car Discussion

Thread: I love Honda

Thread: My car broke down!

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Posts

What is a post?

A post is a single message from a user. A post is also termed as a reply to previous discussions going on in the thread.

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Creating a new post

1. If the message board has multiple forums, click on the link for the forum in which the thread is located.
2. Click on the thread in which you want to post a reply.
3. Click on the "Reply" link available at the top of the message board screen.
4. Type your message.
5. Click the "Post Message" button.

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Editing a post

You can edit a post by following the directions below:

1. Login to your message board account.
2. If the message board has multiple forums, click on the link for the forum in which the thread is located.
3. Click on the thread in which the post is located.
4. Click the "Edit" link next to the post.

Notes:

- You can only edit posts you have created.
- You can only edit a post if the message board allows you to register an account.

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Deleting a post

1. Login to your message board account.
2. If the message board has multiple forums, click on the link for the forum in which the thread is located.
3. Click on the thread in which the post is located.
4. Click the "Delete" link next to the post.

Notes:

- You can only delete posts you have created.
- Deleting the first post in a thread will delete all posts within that thread as well.
- You can only delete a post if the message board allows you to register an account.

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Members

Searching for a member

You can search for a member in the message board by following the directions below:

1. Click the "Members List" link located toward the bottom of the main page of the message board.
2. Click the "Member Search" link.
3. Fill the search criteria options available and then click on the "Search" button.

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Emailing a member

You can e-mail a member of the message board by following the directions below:

1. Click the "Members List" link toward the bottom of the main page of the message board.
2. Browse for the member's profile.
3. View the member's profile.
4. Click the "E-mail" link.

Or

You may also be able to e-mail a member from within the post a user has written. You may find an "E-mail" icon located toward the top-right side of the post.

Note: If you do not find these options then there is a possibility that this facility is not available on this message board or the member has not allowed other members to send him/her email. The e-mail addresses of other members are not publicly revealed.

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What is a moderator?

A moderator is a person who monitors the quality of a comment posted on a message board. The purpose is to prevent trolling, abuse of the comment system, and ultimately ensure that posts are not clearly antagonizing others. Moderators also may have administrative privileges over other members of the message board.

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Private Messages

What is a private message?

A private message is a message that you can send to a specific member without displaying it publicly on the message board. It is like an email system built into the message board.

Note: This option is only available if the message board allows you to register an account.

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Sending a private message

You can send a private message to a member of the message board by following the directions below:

1. Click the "Members List" link toward the bottom of the main page of the message board.
2. Browse for the member's profile.
3. View the member's profile.
4. Click on the "Private message" link.

Or

You may also be able to send a private message from within the post a user has written. You may find a "Private message" icon toward the top-right side of the post.

Note: If you do not find these options then there is a possibility that this facility is not available on this message board or the member has not allowed other members to send him/her private messages. You can check whether this member accepts private messages or not by clicking the on the "Accepting PMs?" link on the private message composition page.

You can use the "Request an email receipt" or "Request a private message receipt" options to be notified by email or private message when your message has been read by the member. However, please note that the member always has an option to deny your receipt.

You can save a copy of the private message you are sending in your Sent folder by checking the "Save a copy" option.

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Receiving a private message

You can view your private messages by following the directions mentioned below:

1. Login to your message board account.
2. Click the "Control Panel" link located toward the top-right of the page.

3. Click the “Private Messages” link.

Note: The “Allow members to send me private messages” option should be checked in your profile in order to receive private messages. You can also select the option “Show new private message notification popup” in your profile to receive a pop-up notification for a new private message while browsing the message board.

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Managing your private messages

You can manage your private messages by following the directions mentioned below:

1. Login to your message board account.
2. Click the “Control Panel” link located toward the top-right of the page.
3. Click the “Private Messages” link.
4. Select the check boxes beside the private messages that you want to change.
5. You can select an appropriate action from the “Select an action” drop down box.

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