

Making Everything Easier!™

2nd Edition

Joomla![®]

FOR

DUMMIES[®]

Learn to:

- Use Joomla!'s preconfigured modules to create interactive Web sites
- Build sites with discussion boards, RSS feeds, and shopping carts
- Enable users to post comments and photos and participate in surveys
- Take advantage of new security features

Seamus Bellamy



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Joomla! For Dummies[®], 2nd Edition

Visit www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/joomla
to view this book's cheat sheet.

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[How This Book Is Organized](#)

[Part I: Getting Started with Joomla](#)

[Part II: Joomla at Work](#)

[Part III: Working with Joomla Modules and Templates](#)

[Part IV: Joomla in the Real World](#)

[Part V: The Part of Tens](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[What You're Not to Read](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

[Part I: Getting Started with Joomla](#)

[Chapter 1: Essential Joomla](#)

[What Joomla Can Do for You](#)

[Sample Joomla Sites](#)

[Oklahoma State University](#)

[NZMac.com](#)

[Royal Oak Public Library](#)

[Jenerate.com](#)

[All about Content Management Systems](#)

[Good: Web pages with CSS](#)

[Better: Dynamic Web pages via CMS](#)

[Reasons to Choose Joomla](#)

[Loyal users](#)

[Ease of use](#)

[Minimal learning curve](#)

[Other advantages](#)

[Where to Jump into Joomla](#)

[Chapter 2: Getting and Installing Joomla](#)

[Getting Joomla](#)

[Downloading the software](#)

[Unzipping the software](#)

[Checking minimum requirements](#)

[Installing Joomla on a Host Server](#)

[Uploading the Joomla files](#)

[Setting up MySQL](#)

[Installing the Joomla software](#)

[Installing Joomla on Your Own Computer](#)

[The hard way: Installing components](#)

[The easy way: Installing XAMPP](#)

[Installing the Joomla program](#)

[Looking at Your New Joomla Site](#)

[Ordering from the menus](#)

[Touring the modules](#)

[Controlling the action](#)

[Chapter 3: Mastering the Front Page](#)

[Dissecting the Front Page](#)

[In the Power Seat: Working with the
Administration Control Panel](#)

[Granting privileges](#)

[Logging in as administrator](#)

[Managing the managers](#)

[Creating Articles](#)

[Creating a new article](#)

[Tweaking article titles](#)

[Remodeling Modules](#)

[Navigating Module Manager](#)

[Removing and deleting modules](#)

Modifying Menus

Removing menus

Renaming menus

Strike That: Removing Articles

Viewing articles

Filtering articles

Unpublishing articles

Part II: Joomla at Work

Chapter 4: Adding Web Pages to Your Site

Understanding the Structure of Joomla Web Sites

Setting up categories

Neat freak: nested categories

Laying out the site

Working with Uncategorized Articles

Creating an uncategorized article

Finding uncategorized articles

Linking Articles to Menu Items

Creating a menu item

Linking the menu item to an article

Testing the new menu item

Organizing with Categories

[Creating a category](#)

[Organizing with Nested Categories](#)

[Creating a nested category](#)

[Adding articles to a new category or nested category](#)

[Choosing a Menu Structure](#)

[Option 1: Adding three menu items](#)

[Option 2: Adding a menu item that points to a category](#)

[Linking Menu Items to Categories](#)

[Creating Read More Links](#)

[Adjusting Article Order](#)

[Filtering articles](#)

[Reordering articles in Article Manager](#)

[Reordering articles in the Menu Items page](#)

[Who's on First?: Setting Menu Item Position](#)

[Reviewing the example site](#)

[Changing the order of menu items](#)

[Removing menu items](#)

[Chapter 5: Building Navigation into Your Site with Menus](#)

[Finding Out about Joomla Menus](#)

[Under and Over: Creating Submenu Items](#)

[Creating the category and nested category pages](#)

[Creating target Web pages](#)

[Creating the parent menu item](#)

[Creating the submenu items](#)

[Changing article order in list layout](#)

[Working with List Layout](#)

[Creating the category](#)

[Creating the articles](#)

[Creating the menu item](#)

[Changing the order of menu items](#)

[Viewing the list layout](#)

[Choice, Choices: Taking Advantage of Menu Manager's Parameter Panes](#)

[Required Settings pane](#)

[Category Options pane](#)

[Article Options pane](#)

[Setting Some Powerful Menu Options](#)

[Turning article titles into links](#)

[Setting menu access](#)

[Opening articles in new windows](#)

[Hiding author names](#)

[Showing article-to-article links](#)

[Setting Default Menu Items](#)

[Creating Menu Separators](#)

[Chapter 6: Mastering Web Page Creation](#)

[Working with Article Options](#)

[Parameters - Publishing Options](#)

[Parameters - Article Options](#)

[Article Permissions](#)

[Metadata Options](#)

[Getting to Know Your Editor](#)

[Dressing Up Your Articles with Emoticons and Images](#)

[Smile!: Adding emoticons](#)

[Adding images](#)

[Working with Media Manager](#)

[Organizing with folders](#)

[Uploading a picture](#)

[Inserting an image](#)

[Formatting Articles with HTML Tags](#)

[Working with Tables and Columns](#)

[Creating a table in an article](#)

[Formatting a table](#)

[Creating a Table of Contents](#)

[Back \(And Forth\) to the Future: Publishing at Different Times](#)

[Publishing articles in the future](#)
[Stopping publishing in the future](#)
[Unpublishing now](#)

[See You Later, Alligator: Taking the Site Offline](#)

[Part III: Working with Joomla Modules and Templates](#)

[Chapter 7: Getting Started with Modules](#)

[All about Modules](#)
[Banner Component](#)

[Banners](#)
[Categories](#)
[Clients](#)
[Tracks](#)

[The Banners Module](#)

[Touring the module](#)
[Putting it all together](#)

[The Archive Articles Module: A Sense of History](#)

[Archiving articles](#)
[Displaying lists of archived articles](#)

[The Breadcrumbs Module: Like Hansel and Gretel](#)
[Doing It Yourself: The Custom HTML Module](#)

[Creating a Custom HTML module](#)

[The Feed Display Module: Getting RSS Your Way](#)

[Chapter 8: More Modules: Who, What, and Where](#)

[The Login Module: Getting Users on Board](#)
[Most Read Content](#)

[The Random Image Module: Adding a Little Art](#)

[The Articles — Related Articles Module: Unlocking the Keywords](#)

[The Search Module: Finding a Needle in a Haystack](#)

[Using the search controls](#)

[Making search more user-friendly](#)

[The Articles Categories Module: Great for Overviews](#)

[The Syndication Feeds Module: Creating RSS Feeds](#)

[The Who's Online Module: Anyone There?](#)

[The Wrapper Module & Menu Item: Displaying Other Sites](#)

[Part IV: Joomla in the Real World](#)

[Chapter 9: Laying Out Your Web Pages with Joomla Templates](#)

[Formatting Joomla Sites with Templates](#)

[Template Central: Template Manager](#)

[Working with the Styles tab](#)

[Working with the Templates tab](#)

[Changing the Default Template](#)

[Editing a Built-In Template](#)

[Customizing a template](#)

[Editing a template's code](#)

[Working with New Joomla Templates](#)

[Finding and downloading a new template](#)

[Installing a new template](#)

[Chapter 10: Managing Your Web Site's Users](#)

[Introducing the Wonderful World of Joomla Users](#)

[Managing Users with User Manager](#)

[Creating registered users](#)

[Creating Authors](#)

[Sample content: Shop suppliers & customers](#)

[Creating Editors](#)

[Creating Publishers](#)

[Creating Managers](#)

[Creating administrators](#)

[Creating Super Users](#)

[Building a Contact Page](#)

[Adding contacts to your site](#)
[Organizing Contacts with Contact Manager](#)
[Creating a contact category](#)
[Creating a contact page](#)

[Managing Site E-Mail](#)
[Allowing Users to Manage Themselves](#)

[Creating user-management pages](#)
[Allowing users to edit their accounts](#)

[Chapter 11: Driving Traffic to Your Web Site with Search Engine Optimization](#)

[Understanding Search Engines and Spiders](#)
[Making Joomla URLs Search Engine Friendly](#)

[Using mod_rewrite to configure URLs](#)
[Working with Aliases](#)

[Unlocking the Secrets of Keywords](#)

[Finding keywords to use](#)
[Adding keywords as metadata](#)
[Entering other metadata](#)

[Optimizing Pages with Templates](#)
[Maximizing Your Site for Search Engines](#)
[Telling Search Engines about Your Site](#)
[Putting Up Road Signs: Redirect Manager](#)

[Chapter 12: Extending Joomla](#)

[Taking a Look at Plug-Ins, Components, and Modules](#)

[Making a splash with modules](#)

[Working with components](#)

[Plugging away with plug-ins](#)

[Searching for Joomla Extensions](#)

[Using the search box](#)

[Browsing by categories](#)

[Browsing by links](#)

[Choosing an Extension](#)

[Picking the right platform](#)

[Knowing what you're getting](#)

[Checking the ratings](#)

[Downloading a Joomla Extension](#)

[Installing a Component](#)

[Finding and Installing a Module](#)

[Installing a Plug-In](#)

[Life Made Easy: Installation Packages](#)

[Part V: The Part of Tens](#)

[Chapter 13: Blast From The Past: Ten Top Joomla 1.5 Extensions](#)

[VirtueMart](#)

[Google Maps Module or Plug-in](#)

[Joom!Fish](#)

[JCE Editor](#)
[Attachments for Content Articles](#)
[Akeeba Backup Core](#)
[Projectfork](#)
[hwdVideoShare](#)
[Phoca Gallery](#)
[JEvents Events Calendar](#)

[Chapter 14: Ten Ways to Get Help on Joomla](#)

[Joomla Help Site](#)
[Joomla Official Documentation Wiki](#)
[Joomla Forums](#)
[Joomla Community Portal](#)
[Joomla User Groups](#)
[Joomla Translation Teams](#)
[Joomla Quick Start Guides](#)
[Joomla Quick Start Videos](#)
[Joomla Tutorials](#)
[Joomla Beginners](#)

[Chapter 15: Ten Top Joomla Template Sites](#)

[SiteGround](#)
[Joomla-Templates.com](#)
[Joomlashack](#)
[Joomla24.com](#)
[JoomlaShine](#)
[JoomlaTP.com](#)
[Template Monster](#)
[Best of Joomla](#)
[JoomlArt.com](#)

[Compass Designs](#)

[Glossary](#)

[Cheat Sheet](#)

Joomla! For Dummies[®], 2nd Edition

by Seamus Bellamy



Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Joomla! For Dummies[®], 2nd Edition

Published by

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

www.wiley.com

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Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2010943060

ISBN: 978-0-470-59902-0

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Author

Seamus Bellamy is a writer, web designer, and scofflaw educated at the University of King's College in Halifax. His diverse resume includes time spent working in the intelligence community, private sector security, and as a journalist. His work is published on a regular basis both domestically and internationally, most notably in *Mac/Life Magazine* and *Irish Music Magazine*. Seamus is a proud Gaelic speaker, a technology enthusiast, and has been known to play a mean bodhran and bouzouki — although not at the same time.

Dedication

Many thanks to Lynn Beighley for the moral and technical support, and of course, to my family — thank you for enduring over three decades of fountain pens, skullduggery, and laptops.

Author's Acknowledgments

I'd like to thank Kathy Simpson, Beth Taylor, Eric vanBok, and Kyle Looper of Wiley for their tireless efforts on this book, as well as the Joomla community for its invaluable assistance in filling in many of the details.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

Joomla (the exclamation point *Joomla!* won't be used in the text of this book, for the sake of making it more readable,) gives you total control of your Web site — the layout, the navigation menus, the text, everything. In turn, this book gives you total control of Joomla.

Today, users are demanding more from Web sites. It's not enough to have static text on your Web site — not if you want a steady stream of visitors. You've got to update your pages continually, making your site fresh and keeping it new. You've got to have an attractively, professionally formatted site. You've got to have tons of extras: polls and e-mail signups and newsflashes and menus, and more.

Who can afford the time to maintain a site like that and write the content too?

Now *you* can. Content Management Systems (CMSes) like Joomla allow people put together spectacular sites with very little work.

Want to publish a new article on your site? No problem. Want to let users rate your articles with a clickable bar of stars? Also no problem. Want to link your articles with a cool system of drop-down menus? Joomla's got you covered. Interested in allowing people to log into your site to gain special privileges? You can do that too. Have you wanted to let users search every page on your site? Yep — no problem at all.

CMSes are all the rage on the Internet these days: They give you the complete framework of a Web site and allow

you to manage it professionally with a few clicks. All you have to do is provide the content — such as text, images, and videos — that you want to display. Using a CMS is as easy as typing in a word processor (in fact, one way to think of CMSes is as word processors for the Web) but a lot more fun.

The CMS of choice these days is Joomla, which is what this book is all about. Joomla is free and dramatically powerful. Want a site that looks as though a Fortune 500 company is behind it? With Joomla, you can whip one up in no time at all. You're going to find that not only is Joomla free but it's also remarkably trouble free.

In the old days, you had to build your own site from scratch using HTML. Now, Joomla takes care of all the details for you, allowing you to concentrate on the content of your site instead of struggling with the details of how that content is presented.

Welcome to the new era of web publishing.

How This Book Is Organized

Joomla is a big topic. Here are the various parts you're going to see coming up.

Part I: Getting Started with Joomla

In Part 1, you get a grasp for the basics. You'll be given an overview of Joomla and see where it's been put to work in Web sites both nationally and internationally.

You also see how to get Joomla (for free) and install it. This process can take a little doing, so Chapter 2 is devoted to the topic.

Finally, Part 1 illustrates how you can jump right into Joomla, customizing the home page (called the *front page* on Joomla sites) by installing your own logo, adding text, modifying navigation menus, and more.

Part II: Joomla at Work

This part gives you the skills you need to put Joomla to work every day. We start this part with a chapter on the most basic of Web-site skills: creating your own pages and customizing them with text and images.

In this part, you also see how to work with menus. Menu items are very powerful in Joomla. Believe it or not, a Web page can't even exist on a Joomla site unless a menu item points to it — and menu items actually determine the layout of the Web pages they point to.

Part III: Working with Joomla Modules and Templates

Joomla comes packed with dozens of built-in modules that give you extraordinary power. These modules include search, polls, menus, newsflashes, and banners.

This part is where you see how to use all the modules that come with Joomla.

Part III also looks at how to work with Joomla templates. Templates create the actual layout of your pages: what goes where, how modules are positioned, where the page content is displayed, what images and color schemes are used, and more. Although Joomla comes with only a few templates, thousands more are available on the Internet.

Part IV: Joomla in the Real World

This part takes you into the real world, dealing with real people. Joomla supports eight levels of users, and in this part, we show you how to manage them.

We also take a look at how to get users to come to your site through search engine optimization — the process of making your site friendly to search engines to get a high ranking. This topic is a big one in Joomla.

Finally, we discuss how to extend Joomla with extensions. Although the software is very powerful out of the box, thousands of extensions are just waiting to be installed — everything from games to complete shopping-cart systems, from site-map generators to multilingual content managers.

Part V: The Part of Tens

In Part V, we list ten top Joomla extensions, ten places to get Joomla help online, ten top sources of Joomla

templates, and ten places to find Joomla tutorials.

Foolish Assumptions

We don't assume in this book that you have a lot of Web-site design experience. You don't need to know any HTML or Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) code to read and use this book.

We do assume that you have a Web site and that you can upload files to it, however. You're going to need that skill to create a Joomla site, so if you're unfamiliar with the process of uploading files to your Internet service provider, ask your provider's tech staff for help.

That's all you need, though. Joomla takes care of the rest.

Conventions Used in This Book

Some books have a dozen dizzying conventions that you need to know before you can even start. Not this one. All you need to know is that new terms are given in italics, *like this*, the first time they're discussed.

Icons Used in This Book

You'll find a few icons in this book, and here's what they mean.



This icon marks an extra hint for more Joomla power.



This icon marks something you should remember to make sure you're getting the most out of Joomla.



This icon means that what follows is technical, insider stuff. You don't have to read it if you don't want to, but if you want to become a Joomla pro (and who doesn't?), take a look.



This icon warns you of things to be super-careful about!

What You're Not to Read

You don't have to read some elements if you don't want to — that is, Technical Stuff elements. Technical Stuff paragraphs give you a little more insight into what's going on, but you can skip reading them if you want to. Your guided tour of the world of Joomla won't suffer at all.

Where to Go from Here

You're all set now, ready to jump into Chapter 1. You don't have to start there, though; you can jump in anywhere you like. Joomla for Dummies is written to allow you to do just that. But if you want to get the full Joomla story from the beginning, start with Chapter 1, which is where all the action starts.

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Part I

**Getting Started with
Joomla**