Obtaining Joomla!

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Getting hold of Joomla! could not be easier; simply point your mouse to the Main Joomla! page http://joomla.org and click the latest release identified in the special Module in the left-hand menu â€“ referenced by the box highlighter. You will note that both the Joomla! 1.0.x and the latest Joomla! 1.5.x releases are available - but we are only interested in the 1.5.

Joomla! Main page displaying the download Module

Click the 1.5 icon and you will be redirected to the download page for the Joomla! Project within the http://joomlacode.org developer repository.

You will be presented with a screen similar to the following:

Joomla! Code project page displaying the download options for the latest Joomla! version.

The box highlighter is showing the .zip variant of the three available compression types of download; in addition there are .tar.gz and .tar.bz2 types. Just select the one appropriate for your operating system.

A download pop-up will appear, and you should save the file to an appropriate location on your hard drive.

Joomla! Code screen with download pop-up displayed

Open the file on your local hard drive using the appropriate compression program for the type of file. If you do not already have such a program there are many open source programs available for free, download from different locations such as Source Forge. In this instance we are using the 7-ZIP File Manager, but they all operate in much the same way at least on Windows. On Linux systems the same tasks can be achieved from the command line, or once again, through the use of a separate program. Mac OSX has a number of options, also including the command line, and The Unarchiver has a good reputation or the default, built-in utility BOMArchiveHelper.app.

7-Zip File Manager displaying the files contained within the Joomla! 1.5 core compressed file.

Uncompress (Extract) the package to a suitable location - it is not important where this happens to be, so long as you can find the files again when it comes to installing them onto your web server. The resulting list of directories and files that you will have within your joomla_root/ directory will be similar in appearance to the following:

The uncompressed Joomla! 1.5 distribution file pack

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Nightly Build and SVN

Whilst Joomla! 1.5 is
still in its development stages (currently RC3)
changes are made to the code to correct bugs and to improve stability
on an almost hourly basis sometimes. The following methods (other than
the "Fresh Installation" do require some considerable patience at times
to get working properly and should not be followed unless you are sure
you want or need the latest versions available.

Nightly BuildÂ

We strongly recommend therefore that as a minimum you keep right up-to-date by using the latest Nightly Build.

Be
aware that the Nightly Build is an automated process. It is created at
the same time each day. The Nightly Build does not include an automatic
updater program. Nor can you link directly into the Nightly Build and have it add itself to your installation.

Before overwriting any of your files or making any
related changes you should backup your existing database, directory,
and file structure so that you have a rollback point if things go
wrong! You must make a copy of your configuration.php file and any .htaccess or php.ini files together with images, media, documents and other files you may have added and reintroduce these where appropriate.

Â You have a number of choices when using the Nightly Build as to how to use it:

Fresh InstallationYou simply download the lates Nightly Build and
install it as you would the "standard" Joomla! package from Joomla!
Code. If you are working on a local test environment it is a good idea
to use this method as you can always refer back to other installations
if checking what has changed, and it is ultimately possible to install
as many versions as your computer has space for!Overwrite the existing installationYou download the Nightly Build and unpack it from
the compressed (zip) file, remove the installation directory as it is
not required and copy the remaining directories and files over you
existing joomla_root/ directory tree. This method is fine but has a
number of drawbacks.

- You will lose any manual changes you have made
to the core code,

- You might cause problems with any Extentions such
as Components or Templates you have added where these will only
function with the original code.

- There may also be issues with regard to any files, images, other media, or documents that have been uploaded and theseÂ

- Care needs to be taken when using this
method as any files that may have been removed from the core package
due to them becoming redundant will be left behind and may well
cause problems if left in situ.

This method does allow you to continue to use the database
already created as part of the RC3 original installation where
appropriate.Delete the current directory/file tree and upload the new directory/file treeYou delete the existing directory and file structure in
joomla_root/ directory and, having uncompressed the package and deleted
the installation directory, you simply upload/copy the directories and
files from the Nightly Build into the joomla_root/ directory. You then return the backup copies of your configuration.php, .htaccess,
php.ini, images, media, documents and other files that you created as per the warning above, and you should
be good to go. Obviously this is the most disruptive method if you have
already installed Extensions or made adjustments to the core code as

these will all need to be added back in.

This method also allows you to continue to use the database already created as part of the RC3 original installation where appropriate.
Â SVN

This is not recommended for novice Users. It is a Development tool and has the complexities to match!

If you are looking to develop Joomla! Extensions, learn the ins-and-outs of precisely how Joomla! is put together, or are working on a particular project that demands the absolute latest version of Joomla!, and for those helping test Jooma! to assist with the development and Quality and Testing process then we recommend using Subversion (SVN).

You will find full details of the setting up of your local repository and access to the SVN downloads on the Developer Site and accordingly we shall not repeat them here.