



Joomla Multi Sites

User's Manual

August 2008

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Change Control

Version	Date	Description
1.0	11-july-2008	Initial version
1.0.3	4-aug-2008	Add a trouble shooting section
1.0.5	19-aug-2008	Add a section to describe the possible installation architecture. (Use a single database, or one database for the master and another one for the slave sites, or use as many databases than there are websites). Add also a section concerning the upgrade of Joomla and extensions

1. Introduction

Welcome to Joomla Multi Sites world.

This user manual describes the “Joomla Multi Sites” native 1.5 Joomla component.

“Joomla Multi Sites” is a component that extends Joomla 1.5 with the feature to manage multiple configuration and share the same Joomla installation.

With benefit of Joomla multiple configuration, you can share the Joomla installation to manage multiple database or the same database with multiple table prefix (other than jos_).

Each Joomla configuration file can be mapped to one or more domain name.

When Joomla Multi Sites receive a query for a special host (ie. www.domain1.com), it search if it corresponds a special Multi Sites configuration file. When the site is described, it uses the specific configuration file to connect the database.

Otherwise, it uses the default original configuration file.

The install/uninstall of component is also possible within a ‘slave’ site.

A slave site can only re-install an extension previously installed on the master site and that have exactly the same version number.

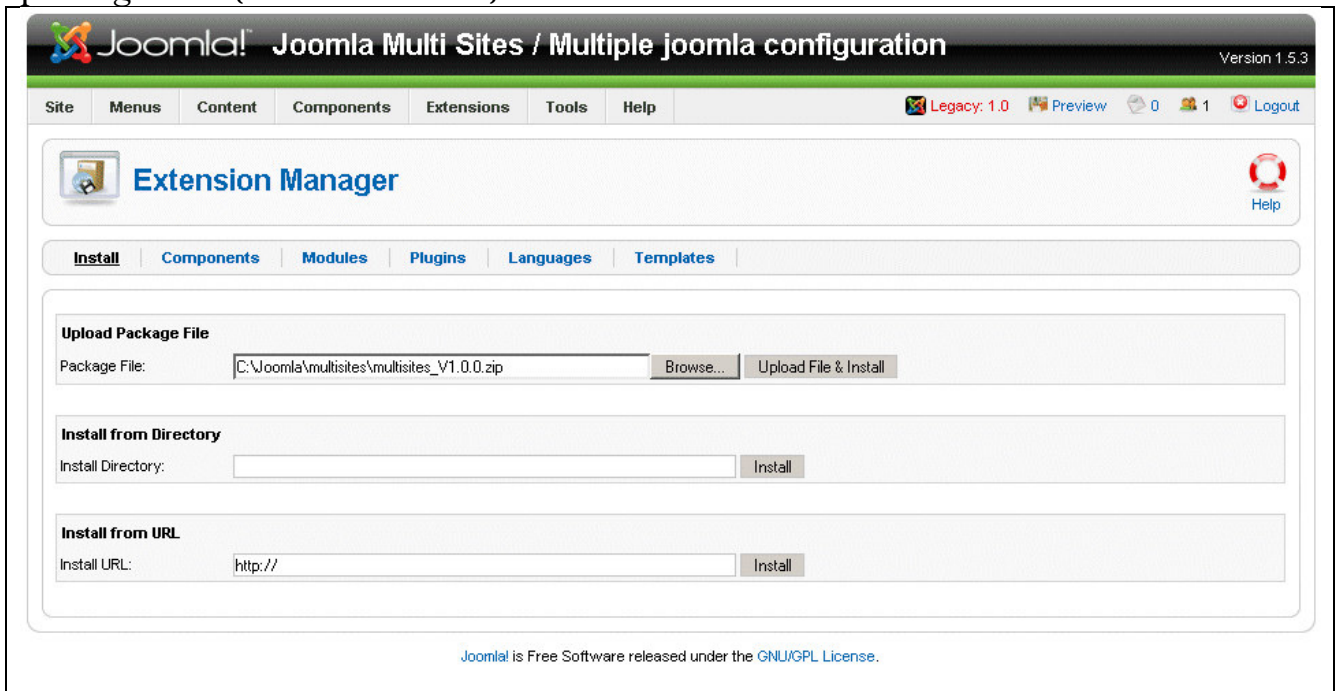
With the new Object Oriented Joomla 1.5 architecture, it is possible to reduce the number of places where the core Joomla files have to be patched.

A special menu is provided to let you supervise the files that are patched and check if the patches are correctly installed.

2. Installation

Joomla 1.5 provides a very simple installation interface.

The installation consists in setting the “Joomla Multi Sites” Zip file into the package field (as shown below).



The screenshot shows the Joomla! Extension Manager interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Joomla! logo and the text "Joomla Multi Sites / Multiple joomla configuration". The version "Version 1.5.3" is displayed in the top right corner. Below the navigation bar, there are several tabs: "Site", "Menus", "Content", "Components", "Extensions", "Tools", and "Help". The "Extensions" tab is currently selected. In the top right corner of the interface, there are icons for "Legacy: 1.0", "Preview", "0", "1", and "Logout".

The main content area is titled "Extension Manager" and includes a "Help" icon. Below this, there are several tabs: "Install", "Components", "Modules", "Plugins", "Languages", and "Templates". The "Install" tab is selected.


The "Install" section contains three main options:

- Upload Package File:** A text input field for "Package File:" containing the path "C:\Joomla\multisites\multisites_V1.0.0.zip". To the right of the input field are two buttons: "Browse..." and "Upload File & Install".
- Install from Directory:** A text input field for "Install Directory:" followed by an "Install" button.
- Install from URL:** A text input field for "Install URL:" containing "http://" followed by an "Install" button.

At the bottom of the interface, there is a small text line: "Joomla! is Free Software released under the GNU/GPL License."

When the installation is completed, you are informed that a backup of some core Joomla files is performed in case where you decide to uninstall the component. You are also invited to register the application. It is not mandatory. If you reject the registration, the application will work perfectly and you will receive ads in the administration of the multi sites.

[Install](#)
[Components](#)
[Modules](#)
[Plugins](#)
[Languages](#)
[Templates](#)

 **Install Component Success**

Joomla Multi Sites.
Single Joomla installation using multiple configurations.
With benefit of multiple configuration files, it is possible to connect on multiple databases or use the same database with different table prefix.

It is strongly recommended to never use 'jos_' as table prefix. Even for the master site.
We have notice that standard Joomla installation process can delete the users present in jos_users table.

A backup directory 'c:\inetpub\scripts\PHP\w\creditcard\administrator\components\com_multisites\backup_on_install' is created.
 This directory contain ALL the Joomla core files that will be patched.
 The installation of the patches can be performed by using the MultiSites administration.


This component is not registered.
 Please consider to register this component.
 If you have purchased this component, it will be asked that you enter the registration code sent by email.
 If you are a new user, it will be proposed to buy this component.
 If you don't want to register this component now, ads will be displayed during the administration of this component
 Go to the about menu if you want register this component later.

Register





Upload Package File

Package File: Browse... Upload File & Install


When the registration is completed, you are redirected to the administration of the multiple sites.




Site Manager

 Delete
 Edit
 New
 Help

[Manage sites](#)
[Check patches](#)
[User's Manual](#)
[About us](#)

 **Thank you for the registration.**
It is completed SUCCESSFULLY.

 **Some patches are not installed.**
Please check patches and proceed with patch installation to allow multisites working properly.

- Select server -
- Select db -

#	<input type="checkbox"/>	ID	Site name	domains	db server	DB	Prefix	User
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	test01	Slave site Test 01	test_01	localhost	dbmaster	test01_	joomla

Display # 20

3. Administration of the multiple sites

The administration is mainly divided into two parts:

- **Manage Sites:** The administration of the ‘Slave’ sites
This part consists in giving a ‘symbolic’ name to a slave site and in giving the list of domain name associated to this site.
- **Check patches:** The administration of the ‘Master’ site.
This part consists in the checking the patches installations and uninstallation.

[Manage sites](#)

[Check patches](#)

[User's Manual](#)

[Check for Updates](#)

[About us](#)

The other options gives access to the lastest version of this manual, some patches definition update and information about the component.

3.1. Check patches

When the component is installed, the first operation to perform consist in the installation of the patches.

Each time you acces the management of the site, a verification is performed and a potential warning message is displayed to informs on a possible issue.

Check patches scan several files and directory to verify if the patches are installed. For each files or directory, a diagnosis with a short description of the corrective action is reported. The permission of the files and directory is also checked to report the users on potential problem during the patches installation. This should help the user to know where he has to update the rights before installing the patches.

 **Check patches installation**

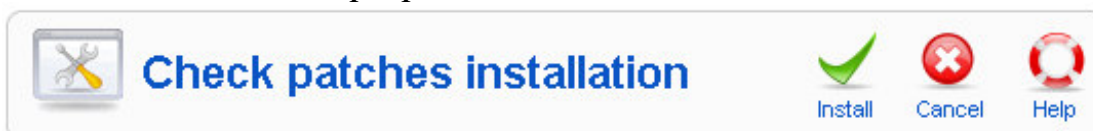
Files	Status
administrator/i...:php	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Not OK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multisites definition not present Configuration redefinition not possible Installation redefinition not possible <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 1 line Update 2 lines
includes/i...:php	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Not OK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multisites definition not present Configuration redefinition not possible Installation redefinition not possible <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 1 line Update 2 lines
includes/defines_multisites.php	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Not OK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> File Not Found <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add the file
installation	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Not OK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [NOK]Directory Not Found <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rename / Restore the directory
installation/i...:php	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Not OK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> File Not Found
xmlrpc/i...:php	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Not OK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multisites definition not present Configuration redefinition not possible Installation redefinition not possible <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 1 line Update 2 lines

Notes:
Some files needs to be patched.
Press the 'install' button to update your system.

As you can see, a very limited number of patches are required to extends joomla with multiple sites functionality. With benefit of the new Joomla Object Oriented architecture, it is now possible to have the control of some part of Joomla and in particular to perform some pre-processing without changing joomla itself.

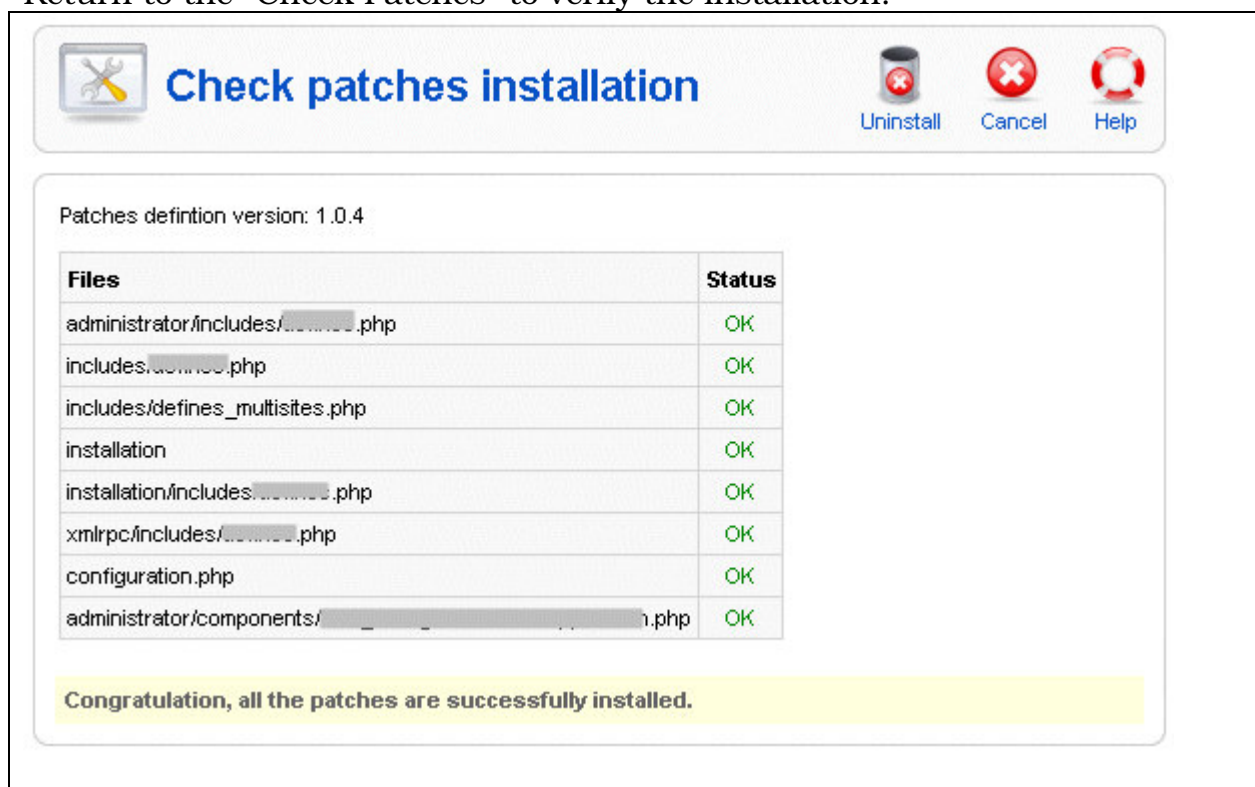
3.1.1. Install the patches

When the checking of the patches detect that some patches are no installed, the “Install” button is proposed.



The installation will execute all the action reported by the “Check patches”. When the patches are installed, it is possible you need to re-login the administration.

Return to the “Check Patches” to verify the installation.



Files	Status
administrator/includes/.....php	OK
includes/.....php	OK
includes/defines_multisites.php	OK
installation	OK
installation/includes/.....php	OK
xmlrpc/includes/.....php	OK
configuration.php	OK
administrator/components/.....php	OK

Congratulation, all the patches are successfully installed.

3.1.2. Uninstall the patches

When at least one patch is installed, the “Uninstall” button is available. This button allow to restore all files that was saved during the installation of the patches.

3.2. Manage Sites

The management of the sites is very simple and consist in the declaration of the domain name or sub-domain you want that share the master joomla installation.

Before describing the creation of 'slave' sites, we present possible architecture and organisation.

3.2.1. Multi sites architecture

Joomla multi sites mainly consist in using separate configuration files for each individual websites.

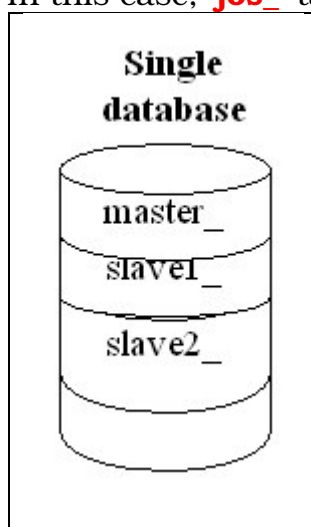
To separate the content of each websites, it is important to use different database or the same database with different table prefix.

A limitation discovered in the standard joomla installation concern the 'jos_users' table that have all its records deleted during the standard joomla installation whatever the table prefix the user has decided during this installation.

To prevent the deletion of the 'jos_users' records created by another website, it is mandatory to never user the 'jos_' table prefix as soon the database is shared by multiple sites.

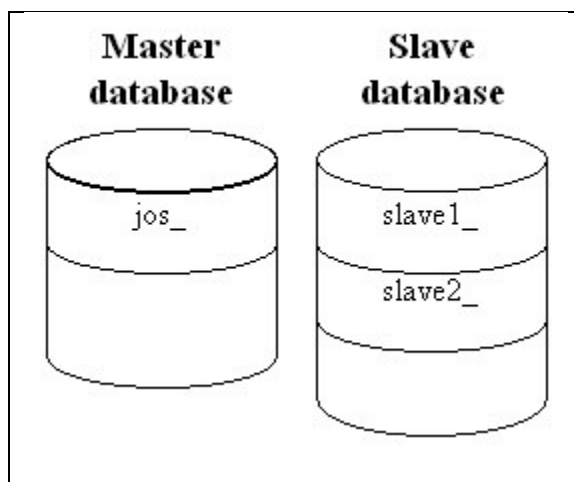
This lead to the following possible architecture:

- **Single database** to store the information of all the websites (master and slave sites); In this case, 'jos_' table prefix is **forbidden**.

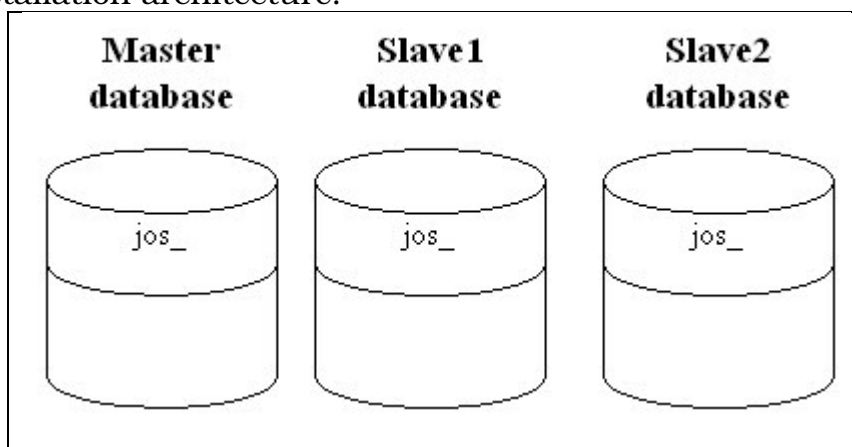


- Use **one** database for the **master** site and **one** database for the **slave** sites. In this case, 'jos_' table prefix is **allowed** for the **master database** and is **forbidden** for the **slave database**.

This architecture is interesting when you install Joomla Multi Site on an existing website and that you have a limitation on the number of database you can create.



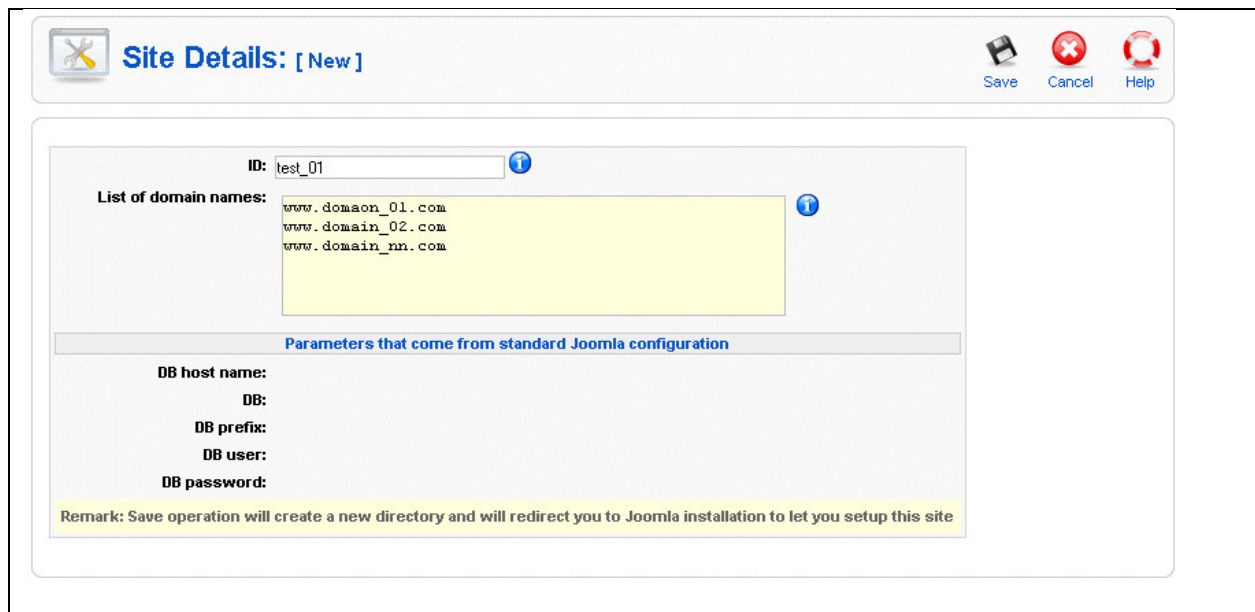
- Use **as many databases** than there are **websites**.
In this case the “**jos_**” table prefix is **allowed** for all the websites.
When your hosting provider does not limit the number of databases you can use this architecture to work with the joomla default installation architecture.



3.2.2.Create a new 'Slave' site

When you want to create an new website, you just have to give:

- an **identifier**: The identifier is used as directory name where joomla will store the new configuration.php file created by the joomla standard installation.;
- a **List of domain name**: This is the list of domain name that must be routed to the specific joomla configuration file.



The other parameters are retrieved from the Joomla configuration files once you have proceeded with the standard Joomla installation. They are provided to have an overview of the database connection and table prefix.

3.2.3. Configure the 'Slave' site

The configuration of a new site is very simple as it consists in using the standard Joomla installation. If you have the intention to use the same database for multiple web sites, we recommend you perform a backup before installing the new website.

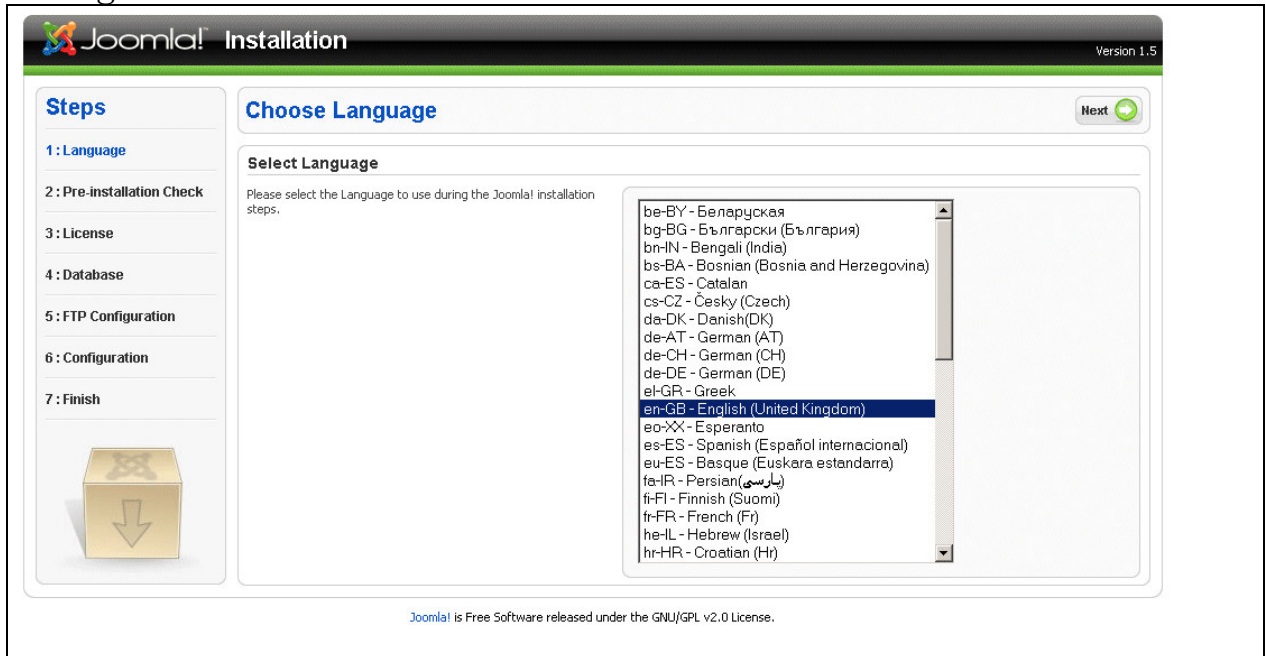
We assume that you have declared all the domains on your server and that you have routed them to the same Joomla installation.

In Apache, you can configure the “httpd.conf” file to declare multiple virtualhost entry pointing to the same directory.

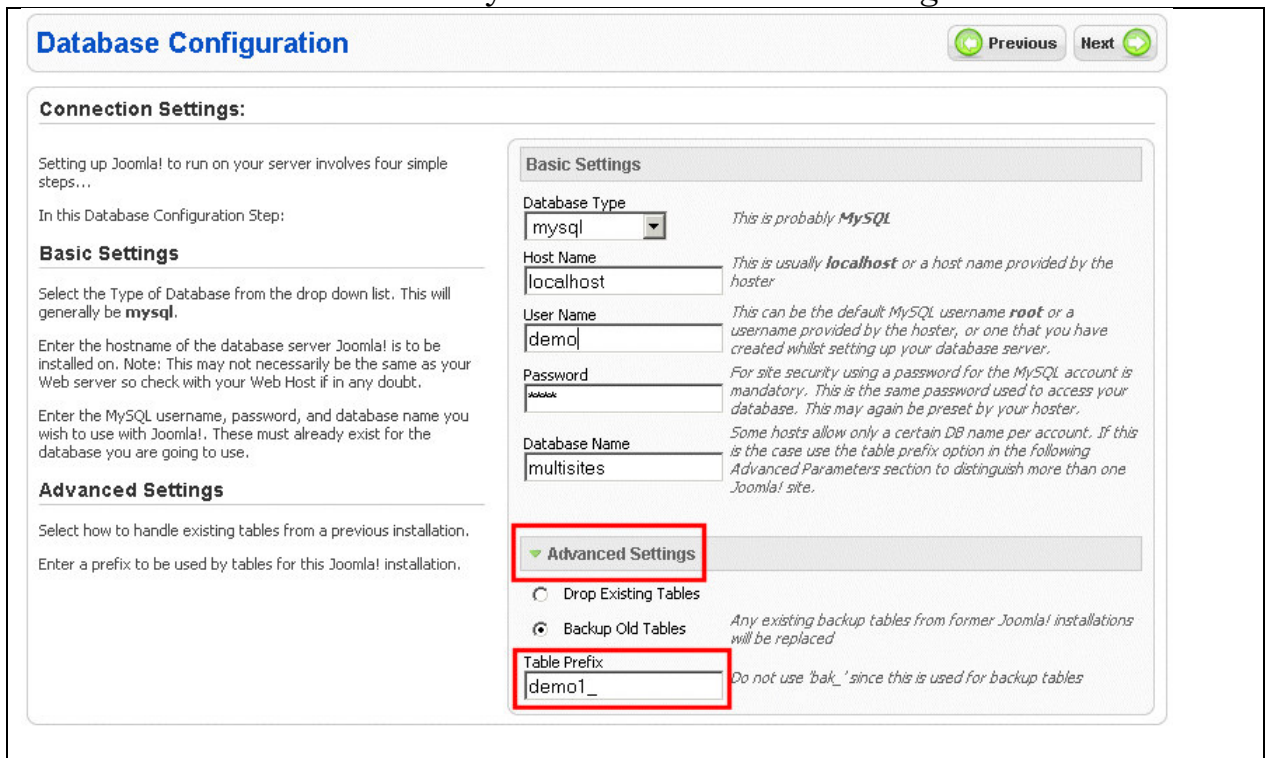
```

<VirtualHost *>
    ServerName domain_01.com
    ServerAlias *. domain_01.com
    DocumentRoot /var/www/html/php/MultiSites
    User apache
    Group apache
</VirtualHost>
<VirtualHost *>
    ServerName domain_02.com
    ServerAlias *. domain_02.com
    DocumentRoot /var/www/html/php/MultiSites
    User apache
    Group apache
</VirtualHost>
    
```

When the new domain name are correctly routed to your Joomla directory, the rest is performed by Joomla Multi Sites. It uses the domain name to retrieve the Multi Sites identifier and check if the Joomla configuration is present. If this is the first time you access the domain, it redirect you to the standard Joomla installation that allows you to describe the new configuration.



Continue the installation until you arrive to database configuration.



The most **important** here is to correctly select the appropriate **database name** and the **table prefix**. See the possible architecture in previous section.

To avoid destroying another site, it is important to choose carefully the database name and prefix. In particular when you choose an existing database.

WARNING:

Our test show us that prefix “jos_” CAN NOT BE USED when multiple sites share the same database. This is due to a problem we noticed during the standard joomla installation procedure. In fact, Joomla always delete the jos_users records whatever the table prefix chosen that make the administration of the site using the “jos_” prefix impossible. If by error you have a table jos_users where all the records are deleted, you need to restore its content from a backup. Normally, the standard joomla installation perform a backup of the jos_users where you can retrieve the users.

Therefore, it is **strongly recommended** never use a database having table with “jos_” prefix.

Don't remove the installation directory:

At the end of the installation of the new site, Joomla ask you to delete the installation directory.

With joomla multisites, it is not required and strongly not recommended to remove the joomla installation directory. Joomla Multi Sites is able to detect if the installation is already completed and to give access to the administration or the front-end.

If you delete the installation directory, you will have to restore it each time you will want re-create a new 'slave' site. It is possible to restore the installation directory from the “Check Patches” menu. Joomla Multi Sites is delivered with a copy of this installation directory.

3.2.4.Install an extension

To maintain the consistency between all the websites sharing the same joomla installation, it is also required that each 'slave' websites share the same extensions coming from the 'master' website. The master website can be seen as a repository for all the slave sites.

As many extensions are available on internet and it is difficult to know exactly the database table and other parameters they use then we have decided to allow each 'slave' website to re-install the extensions previously installed by the 'master' site.

'Slave' site can only re-install an extension having exactly the same name and same version number.

A consequence of the re-installation is that all files present on th disk for this extension are overwritten and therefore a possible configuration file used by the extension.

When you re-install an extension (in particular components) it is therefore recommended to re-configure them exactly the same way for all websites.

This procedure only affect components, modules and plugins. Languages and templates are not concerned as they are automatically shared by all the websites. The re-installation of Languages and templates is disabled.

3.2.5. Uninstall an extension

It is possible to remove an extension from a ‘slave’ site. In fact, the uninstall of an extension from a ‘slave’ site only consists in deleting the entries that describes the extension in the database. This also call the “uninstall” queries present in the extension manifest. The other specific uninstall processing defined by the extension are not called because it is not possible to know if some files will be destroyed on disk. Therefore this part of the uninstallation of an extension is disable. This also could result in database ghost table.

Therefore, we do not recommend to uninstall an extension that could lead to ghost database tables.

3.3. User's manual

The user’s manual is available online. It gives a direct access to this document. A special feature is implemented to always give access to the latest version of this manual that matches your Joomla Multi Sites version. The helps screen are also available online.

3.4. Check for Update

“Check for Update” is a functionality to allows to download update automatically the patches definitions. This allow us to add patches definition for the extensions that could require a modification to be compatible with Joomla Multi Sites. This “check for update” does not upgrade the Joomla Multi Sites kernel. Only the list of patches is updated. If a user identify a problem with a specific extension he can report us and if we can provide a solution with a patch, this is the chanel we will used to distribute the patch to the user community.

3.5. About us and registration

The about menu display the version of the extension and possibly shows you a registration button when you have not yet registrered the component. The registration is a mechanism that we use to determine if the user has pay a feed for the download of this product and if he can have access “check for update”.

[Manage sites](#)[Check patches](#)[User's Manual](#)[About us](#)

Multisites for Joomla! 1.5.x

Version 1.0.0

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Belgium

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www.jms2win.com

This component is not registered.

Please consider to register this component.

If you have purchased this component, it will be asked that you enter the registration code sent by email.

If you are a new user, it will be proposed to buy this component.

If you don't want to register this component now, ads will be displayed during the administration of this component

Go to the about menu if you want register this component later.

[Register](#)

4. Language and internationalisation

The current component uses the standard Joomla language mechanism to display most of the messages.

It is delivered english messages located in “/administrator/languages/en-GB/en-GB.com_multisites.ini”.

If you have installed this component in another language than “english”, you probably need to create another file for the appropriate language and a translate all entries.

5. System requirements

“Joomla Multi Sites” has been tested with “Joomla 1.5.3, 1.5.4, 1.5.5 and 1.5.6 stable”.

It has been developed on PHP 4.3.3 with MySQL 4.0.15.

We also tested the component on PHP 4.4.8 with MySQL 5.0.32.

6. Joomla upgrade, extension upgrade, ...

This section describe you the element to take in consideration when Joomla or and extension have an update that must be installed.

6.1. Core Joomla upgrade

Concerning Joomla itself, the upgrade can be performed only once. In general the upgrade concern files that are not modified by Joomla Multi Sites.

If the Joomla upgrade restore a file that is patched by JMS, the installation the patch will have to be re-applied.

Perhaps Joomla will restore a file that will require that the installation directory must be removed to access the administration. In this case, you will have to rename or delete the installation directory to get the administration login and be in a position to access Joomla Multi Sites.

If you want to know if Joomla upgrade can restore a file that is patched by Joomla Multi Sites, you can explore the Joomla upgrade distribution (zip, tar.gz, ...) and search if there are files in their distribution that will replace one or more files that are part of Joomla Multi Sites patch list.

6.2. Extension upgrade

The upgrade of a foreign extension depend on the kind of upgrade.

To know if the upgrade must be replicated on each web sites, the question you have to answer concern the update of the database.

Does this extension update impacts the database definition. If not, you can install the update on the master site and it will be automatically available for all the slave sites.

If the extension update impacts the database definition (ie. Add table, add fields, add values, ...) you will have to repeat the upgrade of the extension on each slave sites to apply this database upgrade.

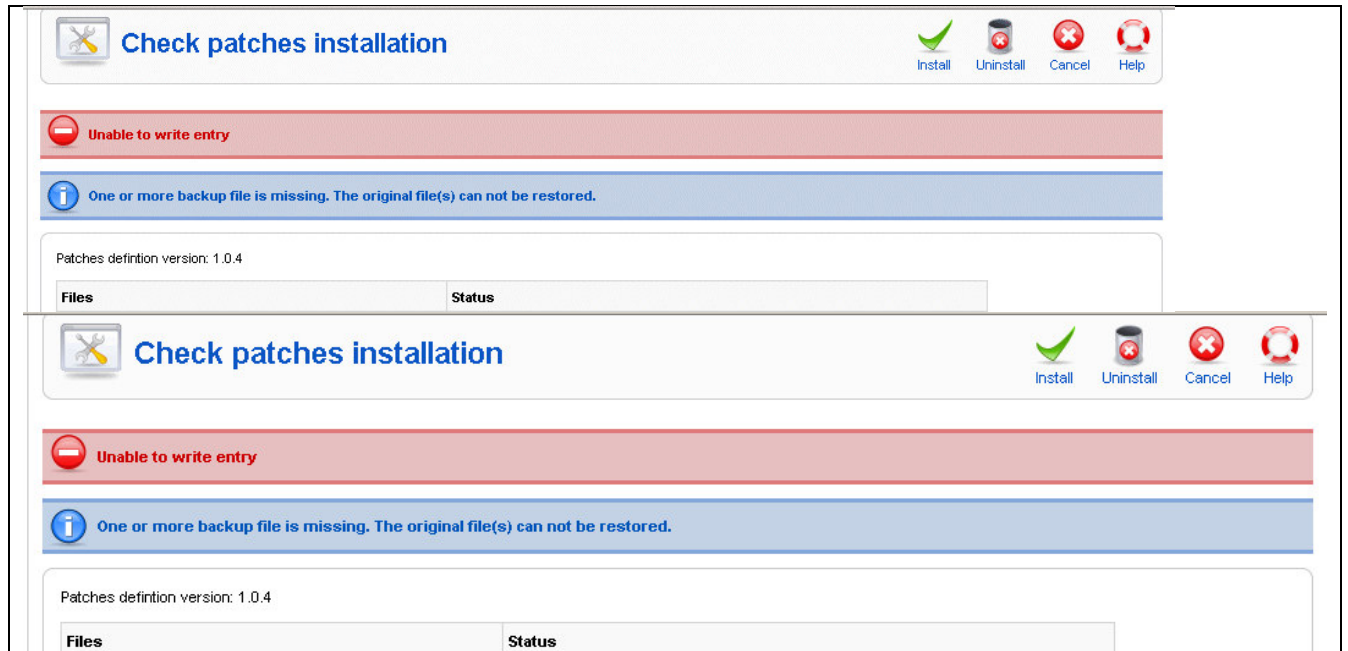
In general a bug fix does not concern the database and can therefore be applied only once on the master website.

6.3. Joomla Multi Sites upgrade

Concerning the upgrade of Joomla Multi Sites itself, as it does not save any information into the database, it is designed to overwrite the file of a previous installation. So there is no need to un-install a previous Joomla Multi Sites to upgrade or install a new Joomla Multi Sites.

7. Trouble shooting

7.1. Unable to write entry



When an error message “Unable to write entry” appears, this means that one or more files to patch are read only or the files pertain to another owner.

To help user identify the files that have potential permission problem, the “check patches” function give a report on each files and directory that could be problematic. It pertain to the user to correct the permission of the files and/or directories to allow patches deployment.

This can be done using a unix prompt or other tools.

In unix, the command `chmod` and `chown` can be used to change the permission and the owner of a files/directories.

8. License & copyrights

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