

Ramblers-Webs - run by volunteers for volunteers



Updating Joomla 3 web sites

This document sets out how Joomla 3 sites can be updated.

It is good practice to run the latest versions of Joomla software as these should be the most secure. As with any software things can go wrong, so it is important that a backup of a site is taken prior to updating any software.

There are two types of software that should be updated

- 1 the core Joomla software
- 2 extensions that have been added to the Joomla web site

Note that some of the extensions Ramblers-Webs uses are purchased copies and must only be used for Ramblers sites, also some have to be updated by a Ramblers-Webs administrator as a user name and password have to be supplied. In the latter case please contact Ramblers-Webs support. See Updating Ramblers-Webs paid for extensions.

Note: Ramblers-webs started out with a hand full of web sites, mainly Derbyshire and London sites. We now support some 200 web sites and it is getting difficult to keep them all up to data. For Joomla 3 web sites we are therefore asking that web masters to please update their own sites. This does seem to be an easy process. So if you have a Joomla 3 web site please update it yourself. A Ramblers-webs administrator will always give help and support if needed and do contact us if an update has a detrimental effect on your site.

1 Backing up a Joomla site

We use software called Akeeba Backup Pro to back up our Joomla sites. It is **highly recommended** that you back up your site prior to adding or updating any software. As with any software changes while they improve the web site, bugs can also sneak in.

If the regular weekly backup has been completed then another backup should not be necessary. Also most of our sites have Akeeba set up to do a backup prior to an update. Remember it is always better to have two backups rather than none!

1.1 To take a backup

Go to **Components > Akeeba Backup**

Select **Backup Now** from the options.

If you wish you can now add comments (Backup comments) so you can identify it in the future. Once you are ready select **Backup Now** to start the backup process.

Once the backup is underway **DO NOT navigate away** from this screen unless it

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completes or there is an error.

Once the back up is complete it is normally stored in a folder within your web site. Go to **Manage Backups** (within Akeeba Backup) to view or download backup files.

It is good practice to occasionally download a backup to your PC (say every few months or before/after a major change).

Note Downloading a backup file using your web browser usually gives a warning message but I have never had an issue with a file downloaded in this way.

2 Updating Joomla 3 Web Sites

Both Joomla itself and many of its extensions are constantly being improved. When new releases of software are made available it is wise to update your site. There are two types of update that can be applied.

- Updating Joomla itself
- Updating extensions used by the web site

2.1 Notification of new versions

Joomla and most extensions that your web site uses will notify you when a new version is available. Our sites use an extension that is set to email you once a week if any updates are available. These emails will look something like below

Update for: Admin Tools Core version: 3.5.0 Found

To apply the update login into your website:: <http://new.watfordand3riversramblers.org.uk/> and go to extension->extension manager->updates

Next notification will be in 1 week.

This email is automatically sent from a plugin on your website. If you don't want to receive anymore emails, login into the backend of your website and disable the plugin: 'System - Update Notifications'

Warning: If any updates have a version number than ends in RCn, where n will be a number, do not update this extension. RC stands for Release Candidate and is a test version of the software prior to its final release. It is therefore likely to still have some bugs.

2.2 Updating Joomla itself

With Joomla 3 it is very easy to update Joomla. Go to **Components > Joomla! Update**

It should be obvious what to do. Just wait for it to complete. Note any message telling you NOT TO NAVIGATE away from the page before is completes.

WARNING: do not use this feature to update from Joomla 2.5 to Joomla 3 as this may break your web site

NOTE: If you don't see a new version that you expected then try using the clear cache option.

NOTE: You may also need to clear the cache in your web browser for the site to display correctly.

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2.3 Extensions used by the web site

2.3.1 Updating extensions when you have been notified

Go to administrator area of your site and then go to **Extensions - > Extension Manager** and then select the **Update** option/tab.

This should list the Joomla extensions that have updates available.

If the extensions are not listed then try using the **Clear Cache** and **Find Updates** button.

Select the item you wish to update and then select the **Update** button.

2.3.2 Update servers

2.3.2.1 Updating where Joomla looks for updates

The extensions that can be updated in the manner above use what are called Update Servers. These are servers that specify the latest version of an extension.

There is a new option in Joomla 3.6. This allows Joomla to update the list of server it checks to see if there are software updates. Since our Ramblers extensions have been moved in the past it would be useful to update this list. To do this:

Got to **Extensions > Manage > Update Sites** and then use the **Rebuild**

2.3.2.2 Check that they are enabled

It seems that Joomla sometimes disables an update server.

You can check if this has happened by using the **Update Sites** option. If any of the servers listed are disabled then try enabling them.

2.3.3 Updating Ramblers-Webs paid for extensions

We have purchased some extensions that may be used on your site, some of these need a userid and password to be entered, prior to the update. The main ones are

- JSN Imageshow
- JSN Uniform

You can see if these need updating by going to their **About** options.

If you want them updating then please raise a support request.

If you use the **Joomla Extensions > Manager > Updates** option and use the **Find Updates** option you may get a warning message for these two extensions. These can be ignored.

A typical message is

Warning

Update: Could not open update site #55 "imageshow", URL:

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http://test.thepioneers.org.uk/administrator/index.php?option=com_imageshow&task=checkUpdate&file=update.xml

2.3.4 Updating extensions when you have no notification

If you use an extension that does not use the Update Server system then you can visit their web site to see if there is a new version. Follow their instructions on how to update your site.

2.3.5 Ramblers-Webs Extensions

We have a few extensions that we have written to support Ramblers web sites.

These are

- RA-Footer - customised footer module
- RA-Header - customised header module
- ra-images - library of Ramblers images
- System Ramblers - plugin that enables the use of the Ramblers Library
- Ramblers Library - a library of code to display walks finder feeds

We have also implemented update servers for these extensions.

You can check what the latest version of these extensions are by looking at the site <https://github.com/ramblerswebs/tree/master/updates/downloads>

This lists all the versions for each of our extensions. Look to see the latest version number.

You can check the version of software installed on your web site by going to **Extensions > Manage** and then clicking on the **Manager** option. This option lists all the extensions on your site. This list is long, try putting "ra" into the search field. This will shorten the list and include all of our extensions.

You should then see the version number of our extensions. If you want to update one of these then download the zip file using the above link. Then go to the **Install** option and use the **Upload Package File** option to install the zip file.

3 Testing the Web Site

You should now go to your web site and **check that it is all working**. If there are any problems then you may wish to contact a Ramblers-Webs' administrator to help correct the site or restore the site using from a backup. **You should also notify us if an update breaks your site so we can warn others.**

CLEAR BROWSER CACHE: After an update you should clear the cache in your browser. Some of the cached files may not be compatible with the updated system.

If you have any problems with your site then clear the browser's cache and try it again.

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4 Restoring a web site from a backup file

How to restore a web site will be added to this document at a later date!

While this is not a very complex process one does have to be careful when recreating a site from a backup. Up to now we have not had to do this more than once or twice.

5 Update Issues

From time to time there will be problems when updating specific software. We will try and list these issues here and how to overcome them.

5.1 Akeeba

For most sites Akeeba updates without any issues but for some it does not. If the update fails then please raise a support issue.

5.2 Joomla

For some reason we are getting notifications that Joomla itself needs updating when it is already at its latest release. When this happens it seems that an extension has an update available. The email notification fails to list the extension but lists Joomla itself.

Check if there are any updates pending. If you use JSN Uniform or JSN Imageshow then check these by going to their **About** page.

5.3 Ramblers Extensions

5.3.1 Ramblers Library

Our Ramblers Library extension does not currently seem to update correctly, we are still looking into this. The result can be that it updates to the latest version but Joomla thinks the previous version is still there. The system will then tell you the extension still needs to be updated. A temporary fix to this issue is to check if Joomla thinks there are two versions and to **Uninstall** the older version.

You can check the version of software installed on your web site by going to **Extensions > Manage** and then clicking on the **Manager** option. This option lists all the extensions on your site. This list is long, try putting "ra" into the search field. This will shorten the list and include all of our extensions.

5.3.2 Ramblers Images

Version 1.1.0 of these files used an update server that we have now deleted. If your site uses this version you will get an error message similar to the following

```
Warning
Update: Could not open update site #84 "Ramblers Images", URL:
http://updates.ramblers-webs.org.uk/raimages.xml
```

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If this is the case then update your site to the next version. Use the **Extensions > Manage > Install** option and then select **Install from URL** option and enter the following URL.

<https://raw.githubusercontent.com/ramblerswebs/updates/master/updates/downloads/ra-images-v1.2.0.zip>

6 Support

The current support email address is support@ramblers-websites.zendesk.com

Please remember to tell us which web site your are having problems with.