

DSpace How-To Guide

Tips and tricks for managing common DSpace chores

DSpace HOW-TO

Introduction

This short booklet is intended to introduce the commonest non-obvious customization-related tasks for newcomers to DSpace administration. It has been written against the current stable version 1.3.2 of DSpace.

We have tried to include instructions for different operating systems as required; most customizations, however, work identically cross-platform.

Before you start

Different parts of DSpace live in different areas on the DSpace server. Because each DSpace administrator decides where some parts of DSpace live, and operating systems have different ideas about where other parts live, we have employed *italics* to mark missing pieces of file paths. Some directories whose precise location varies among systems require special attention:

- *[dspace-source]* – The directory into which the DSpace administrator unpacks the downloaded DSpace code.
- *[dspace]* – The directory into which the Java `ant` command deposits compiled DSpace code. This location is set in DSpace’s configuration file, `dspace.cfg`, as `dspace.dir`
- *[tomcat]* – The directory where Apache Tomcat is installed. If you are not using Apache Tomcat, you may wish to customize some of these “how-to” documents to better match your servlet engine of choice (e.g. Jetty, Resin, etc).

Other DSpace resources

Although this “DSpace How-To Guide” introduces many common customizations currently available within DSpace, it should not be considered a stand-alone document. You should be aware of many other valuable DSpace resources, including:

- DSpace Homepage – <http://www.dspace.org>
- DSpace Installation and Technical Documentation - <http://dspace.org/technology/system-docs/>
- DSpace Wiki - <http://wiki.dspace.org>
- DSpace Technical FAQ - <http://wiki.dspace.org/TechnicalFaq>
- DSpace Community Mailing Lists - <http://dspace.org/feedback/mailing.html>

Other useful resources

This “DSpace How-To Guide” introduces many customizations which rely on some general knowledge of other technologies, including XHTML, CSS, and XML. If you need a refresher on any of these technologies, here are a few useful web resources (available as of June 2006):

- W3Schools Tutorials/Guides (<http://www.w3schools.com/>) – introductory tutorials, references, and examples for XHTML, CSS, XML, SQL, among many others.
- HTML Dog (<http://www.htmldog.com/>) – HTML and CSS References and tutorials for all levels of knowledge
- Holy CSS Zeldman! (<http://www.dezwozhere.com/links.html>) – all things CSS, with intermixed links to good HTML, Javascript, and web design sites.

Other useful skills

Many tasks that are cumbersome to manage through the DSpace web interface can be easily managed in the database with a little SQL. For example, withdrawing all the items in a particular collection takes quite some time in DSpace proper, but can be done in just one quick SQL query. However, you should always be sure to backup your database before running any SQL queries which will modify or remove a large number of items! Time spent learning SQL basics will reap rich returns in time saved.