

# Phorum User Reference Manual

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# Introduction

This is the Phorum user reference manual for Phorum version 5.2.x and up. It is not intended for use with older versions of Phorum, although a lot of information will apply.

Please keep in mind that this manual is neither complete, nor final. If you have any remarks about it, please let us know in the development forum on our website. With your contribution, we hope to make this manual a useful tool for Phorum users in understanding and working with our software.

*The Phorum development team*

[Phorum.org](http://Phorum.org)

# Chapter 1

## Forums and Phorum - An introduction

### 1.1 What is a forum?

A forum is an online system which allows a group of users to communicate. Users can then post threads (essentially a starting point for a conversation) in a number of separate sub forums (each one usually covering a different topic).

A simple example forum structure would be as follows:

- Announcements
- General Discussion
- Entertainment
- Technology

In this way, users can discuss numerous topics amongst themselves in a centralized community, in a more convenient way than other communication methods (e.g. email) can facilitate. Many websites have forums as a way for visitors to meet and discuss site content, and some sites are purely based around their forums. A number of administrators and/or moderators are also usually present on forum systems, making sure the forum runs smoothly and the users adhere to the rules specific to that forum.

### 1.2 What is Phorum?

Phorum is one of many forum scripts available that internet users can upload to their webpace. Started in 1999, it was designed to be as flexible as possible so as to meet the varying needs of different websites. It is extensively customisable, fast and stable, with a large ever-growing number of modules available to extend its functionality.

There are many forum scripts available for users to download, and while most of them focus on particular needs (some are feature packed, some are minimalistic, some

are designed specifically to be lightweight and fast), most of them also adhere to the same basic forum system outlined in the opening section of this guide; they use a structure of multiple categories/sub forums, in each of which users can post and reply to threads.