

# *a*Links

Plugin for WordPress



Plugin and Documentation written by Sean Hickey

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# 1. Warranty

BECAUSE THE PROGRAM IS LICENSED FREE OF CHARGE, THERE IS NO WARRANTY FOR THE PROGRAM, TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY APPLICABLE LAW. EXCEPT WHEN OTHERWISE STATED IN WRITING THE COPYRIGHT HOLDERS AND/OR OTHER PARTIES PROVIDE THE PROGRAM "AS IS" WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. THE ENTIRE RISK AS TO THE QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAM IS WITH YOU. SHOULD THE PROGRAM PROVE DEFECTIVE, YOU ASSUME THE COST OF ALL NECESSARY SERVICING, REPAIR OR CORRECTION.

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## 2. Acknowledgments

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# 3. Introduction

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## I. System Requirements

The aLinks plugin requires:

WordPress 1.5 and 2.0

PHP 4.3 or greater

MySQL 4.1 or greater

The ability to change file permissions on your web server directories.

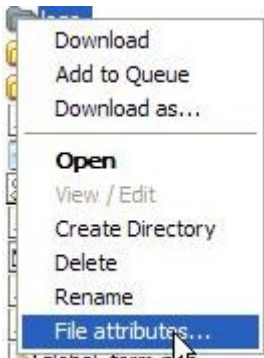
The aLinks admin menu will not work with the Safari web browser. Sorry. It's not my fault, I swear!

## II. WP 2.0 Installation

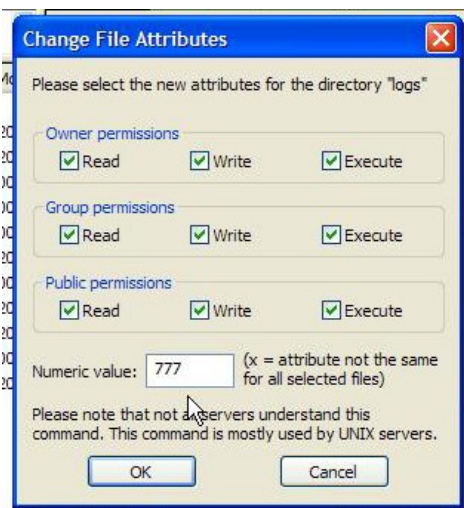
Installing aLinks begins with downloading the aLinks ZIP file from <http://www.headzoo.com>. Once you have the ZIP file, extract the contents to your local computer. Using your favorite FTP client (I recommend [Filezilla](#) for Microsoft Windows), upload the alinks directory to your WordPress plugins directory. Just put the whole directory into the /wp-content/plugins directory.

Now you need to change a few file permissions. Give write permissions to the directories /alinks/tmp, /alinks/modules, and /alinks/logs. Most of the time using the permission 777 does the trick. If you're using the Filezilla FTP client, you can change permissions on the three directories by right-clicking the directory icon, selecting File attributes, and then entering 777 in the Numeric value input box.

Right-click the directory icon and select File attributes...



Now enter 777 in the Numeric value field.



Once you've uploaded the alinks directory, and set write permissions on the required sub directories, log into your WordPress admin panel and activate the plugin via the Plugins sub menu.

### **III. WP 1.5 Installation**

The installation of aLinks on WordPress 1.5 is the same as 2.0. It should be noted that WordPress 1.5 users will be missing some minor features of aLinks, such as drag and drop menu elements, and collapsible elements. If you use a lot of keyphrase modules, the drag and drop elements are very useful, and you might want to consider upgrading to the more secure WordPress 2.0.

### **IV. Getting Support**

If something is not working , or if you've found a bug, or you just need help, there is a support forum setup at the [Headzoo website](#). There is also a [contact page](#) setup if you want to contact me directly.

Please do not post questions in the WordPress forums, since I do not check those forums very often.

# 4. Settings

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You can manage the settings that control the plugin's behavior from the Settings sub menu. There are nine settings that are standard with aLinks, but there may be more settings under this menu depending on which keyphrase modules you have installed. This documentation will only cover the nine standard settings. Check the keyphrase module's documentation for setting the module's settings.

## I. Image to display after links

You can display a trendy "external link" image next to each link created by aLinks by entering the full URL to a gif, jpeg, or png image in the field. The plugin comes with a default link image, and when you first install aLinks, the URL to that image will already be entered in the field. The default image looks like the blue arrows in the picture below.

great [WordPress](#) plugin named [aLinks](#)!

If you don't want to display an external link image, just leave the field blank.

## II. Open links in new window

Check this option to open clicked links in a new window or tab. The setting only affects links created by aLinks, and uses JavaScript instead of the target attribute. Using JavaScript ensures that your pages remain (X)HTML compliant.

### III. Use outbound click tracking

This option must be set if you plan to use the click statistics. Unlike previous versions of this plugin, this version uses JavaScript to track outbound clicks rather than a redirect. This ensures that search engines like Google have no problems indexing the links in your blog posts.

### IV. Log offset hours

The click tracking logs keep track of the time and date that links are clicked. By default that will be the time on your web server, and it's possible, and even likely, that your web server is in a different timezone than you. Use this setting so that your click logs show clicks in your timezone, not the timezone of your server.

If your server is two hours behind you, then enter ``-2``. If it is 2 hours ahead of you, then enter ``2``, and so on.

### V. Custom HTML/JavaScript to add to links

Whatever you enter in the field will be inserted into the created links. You can enter any HTML or JavaScript.

To demonstrate, I've entered the JavaScript event: `onmouseover="doSomeFunction();" ; "`

**add to links:**  

And the links created by aLinks will look something like this:

```
<a href="http://www.headzoo.com" onmouseover="doSomeFunction();" ; ">Headzoo.com</a>
```

What you put into the field is entirely up to you.

## VI. Custom CSS class

You can apply your own custom CSS class to each link created by aLinks. Enter only the name of the class, and no other markup. For example, if you want your links to have a fancy dotted underline, add this code to your themes stylesheet:

```
a.alinks_links {
    text-decoration: none;
    border-bottom: #0000FF 1px dotted;
}
```

And then enter `alinks_links` into the custom CSS class field. Of course the CSS you put into the stylesheet is entirely up to you. The above code is only a simple example.

## VII. Max links per keyphrase

Previous versions of this plugin only linkified keyphrases once per post. With this setting you can control the number of times the same keyphrase is linkified in the same post. Keep in mind this works on a per-post basis, and not the entire document. Leave the field blank, or enter -1 to linkify the same keyphrase an unlimited number of times.

## VIII. Keyphrases are case sensitive

By default keyphrases are case insensitive. That means if you define the keyphrase "wordpress", aLinks will linkify the words "WordPress", "Wordpress", and "wOrdPRess" in your post.

If you check this option keyphrase case will matter. That means if you define the keyphrase "WordPress", aLinks *will not* linkify the words "wordpress", "Wordpress", and "WorDPreSs" in your post.

## IX. Don't warn on keyphrase delete

By default, aLinks will warn you before deleting a keyphrase. Generally this is a good thing, since it prevents you from accidentally deleting keyphrases. It can be annoying though if you need to delete a lot of keyphrases at once. You can turn off the warnings with this setting.

# 5. Keyphrases

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Keyphrases are the meat and potatoes of aLinks. A keyphrase is one or more words -- a phrase -- that you want aLinks to linkify. The plugin searches through your posts looking for the keyphrases you defined, and turns them into links.

Keyphrases are managed from the Keyphrases sub menu. What you see on that menu depends a little bit on which modules you have installed, but there will always be the Toolbox, and the keyphrase data grid.

## I. The Toolbox

The toolbox contains a few tools to make it easier to manage your keyphrases.

### Search for keyphrase

With this tool you can find specific keyphrases from your defined list. You can enter a full keyphrase or part of a keyphrase. For instance, if you search for “word”, any keyphrase with “word” in it will be returned, such as “WordPress”, “word of mouth”, etc.

The search tool only searches keyphrases, not descriptions or any other data.

### Find and replace

This tool finds any string of text in you keyphrases, and replaces it with another string of text. For instance, if you have 10 keyphrases that contain the phrase “website”, and later on you decide you should have used “web site”, you can easily replace all occurrences of “website” with “web site” by using the find and replace tool. Just type “website” into the find field, and “web site” into the replacement field, and click Find & Replace.

The tool will replace any letter or string of letters in your keyphrases. You can replace every occurrence of the letter “a” with the letter “b” if you want. Because of that you should be careful when using this tool.

## Mass Delete Keyphrase

Use this tool to delete two or more of the same keyphrase at once. If you have dozens of keyphrases defined using the Amazon Basic module, and then you delete the Amazon Basic module, you can quickly delete all of the keyphrases for that module by using this tool. Be careful, as it will delete *every* keyphrase that you type in.

## Clipboard

The clipboard tool works just like your computer's cut & paste, except whatever you copy with the clipboard remains in the database until you replace it. You can copy a string of text with one of the copy buttons, and it will remain there for years, if you want, to paste into any text field.

This tool makes it convenient if you use the same long affiliate URL in keyphrases over and over, or the same description for keyphrases over and over. The copied text will always be there for your use.

To use the tool, select some text in one of the text fields on the keyphrases menu page, and then click one of the four copy buttons. You can now use the same number paste button to paste that same text into any of the text fields on the keyphrases menu.

## II. The Keyphrase Data Grid

The data grid is where you manage your defined keyphrases. It's where you edit already defined keyphrases, and where you delete keyphrases.

The data grid is Ajax enabled, and will get your list of keyphrases, or update your keyphrases, without refreshing the page.

### Editing & Deleting a Keyphrase

To edit or delete a keyphrase, double click the keyphrase's row in the data grid. When you do, the grid will become a form that you can use to edit the keyphrase. Once you've made changes to the keyphrase, click the Update Keyphrase button.

There is also a delete button on that same form. Click that button to delete the keyphrase. Once a keyphrase has been deleted, it is gone forever, so be careful.

### III. Adding a New Keyphrase

How a new keyphrase is added is somewhat decided by the module for that keyphrase, so please check the documentation that may be included with the keyphrase module.

All keyphrases, regardless of the module, will have a keyphrase and a description form field. All keyphrases will also have an Update Keyphrase button.

The only field that is required is the keyphrase field. If you enter a description for the keyphrase, the description will be used in the link's TITLE attribute, and will appear as a pop-up tool tip when your website visitors move their mouse cursor over the link.

Once you've finished filling out the form fields for a new keyphrase, click the Update Keyphrase button to add it to the data grid.

# 6. Statistics

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You have the option to turn out outbound click tracking. When this option is turned on, aLinks will keep a log of aLinks created links that are clicked by your website visitors, and you'll be able to view the logs in an easy to read manner, which includes visual graphs.

You must turn on the option Use outbound click tracking from the aLinks Settings menu to use this feature.

## I. How it Works

Unlike previous versions of this plugin, the new click tracking uses a little JavaScript magic to track outbound clicks, rather than redirects. That makes your links more SEO friendly, but also means if a visitor to your website doesn't have JavaScript enabled, the links they click won't be logged. That shouldn't be a concern, since the vast majority of people surfing the web are using JavaScript.

## II. The Statistics Page

The statistics page is broken up into six parts.

### Summery

This section gives you a "in a nutshell" view of your clicks, and contains the following sections:

**Total Clicks** - This is a total of all keyphrases clicked since you started using click tracking.

**Total Unique Clicks** - This is the total unique keyphrase clicks since you started using click tracking. The uniqueness of a click is based on a visitor's IP address.

**Total Clicks in the Past Hour** - The total links clicked in the past 60 minutes.

**Total Unique Clicks in the Past Hour** - The total unique clicks in the past 60 minutes.

**Total Clicks in the Past 24 Hours** - Total links clicked in the past 24 hours. That is from the moment you are looking at the stats page, to 24 hours before.

**Total Unique Clicks in the Past 24 Hours** - Total unique clicks in the past 24 hours.

**Total Clicks in the Past Week** - Total link clicks in the past 7 days. That is from the moment you are looking at the stats page, to 7 days before.

**Total Unique Clicks in the Past Week** - Total unique clicks in the past 7 days.

**Total Clicks in the Past Month** - The links clicked in the past 30 days. That is from the moment you are looking at the stats page, to 30 days before.

**Total Unique Clicks in the Past Month** - Total unique clicks in the past 30 days.

## **Top 20 Keyphrases in the Past 30 Days**

This part shows you the top 20 keyphrases that have received the most clicks in the past month, and how many times the keyphrase link has been clicked.

## **All Keyphrases in the Past 30 Days**

Shows you every single keyphrase link that was clicked in the past 30 days, and how many times they were clicked.

## **Past 24 Hours**

This graph shows you visually how many links were clicked in the past 24 hours. It will show you which times of the day get the most clicks, and let you visually see if the number of link clicks are going up, or down.

## **Past 7 Days**

This will show you visually how many links were clicked in the past 7 days. It will show you which day of the week are getting the most clicks, and let you visually see if the number of link clicks are going up, or down.

## **Past 30 Days**

This will show you visually how many links were clicked in the past 30 days. It will give you a good idea of whether the number of link clicks are going up, or going down.

# 7. Modules

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Modules are to aLinks what plugins are to WordPress. Modules extend the functionality of aLinks, by extending it's support for keyphrases. The original versions of this plugin supported two types of keyphrases: General and Amazon. This version of the plugin doesn't support any kind of keyphrase, all it's keyphrase support comes from the modules you have installed.

The most basic kind of keyphrase is a general keyphrase. With a general keyphrase you tell aLinks the phrase, and the URL belonging to that phrase. When aLinks finds that keyphrase in your post, the plugin will turn the phrase into a link for the URL you defined.

To make your blogging easier, aLinks can do much more than that. For instance you can use the Amazon Basic keyphrase module. With this module installed (it is by default), you don't have to give aLinks a URL for the keyphrase, you just give it a search term and product type. aLinks will then turn that keyphrase into a link for Amazon.com search results, using your Amazon Associates ID.

For example, when you define an Amazon Basic keyphrase, you might define the keyphrase "books", using the search term "harry potter", and the product type "Books". When aLinks finds the word "books" in your post, the plugin will turn the word into a link for Amazon.com. When your website visitors click on the link, they will be sent to a page on Amazon.com showing all the books from the Harry Potter series.

The links will use your Amazon Associates ID, so you will get a commission if the website visitor buys something from Amazon.

Lots of other modules can be installed, and they make it easier to create links. For instance you can install the Wikipedia module which creates links to Wikipedia articles. You can install the Myspace module which creates links to Myspace user pages. There is also an iTunes module that creates links to the iTunes music store using your LinksShare affiliate ID.

There are lots of modules you can install, and you can download some of them from <http://www.headzoo.com/modules>. You can also write your own modules.

## **I. The Modules List**

The modules list on the Modules page shows a list of all modules you have installed, much in the same way that the plugins page shows a list of all plugins you have installed for WordPress. Some modules come with their own documentation, and if it does, a link will appear in the modules description saying View Module Help. You can click on the link to get additional help for that module.

## **II. Installing Modules**

Installing a module is as simple as attaching a file to an email. First download the module ZIP file from a website. Go to the Modules page in the WordPress admin area, under the aLinks page. Using the file browser on that page select the ZIP file on your computer's hard drive, and then click Install Module.

That's all there is to it. The module you installed will appear in the modules list. A new keyphrase type will also appear on the Keyphrases page, and depending on the module, some new settings will appear on the Settings page.

## **III. Deleting a Module**

On the modules list, next to each module, is a link to delete the module. You click this link to delete the module. Once you've deleted a module, it is gone for good, and any keyphrases defined using that module will no longer work, although the keyphrases themselves won't be deleted.

# 8. Import / Export

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The Import / Export page lets you export your keyphrases, settings, and modules to a file that you can save for later importing. You can use the exported .ale (for aLinks Export) to backup your keyphrase in case of a database crash. You can also share the files with other people, or use to them to manage the keyphrase lists of multiple blogs.

## I. Exporting

When exporting to an ale file, you have a couple options. The first is whether to export all your keyphrases, or only the keyphrases defined since the last time you exported your keyphrases.

When exporting only the keyphrases defined since the last time you exported, the ale file will include only those keyphrases. If you export your keyphrases on Monday, define 10 keyphrases on Tuesday, and export on Wednesday, the exported ale file will only contain those 10 keyphrases.

This is useful for a couple reasons. The first is your ale files will be reasonably small. Second it makes it easier to manage multiple blogs. If you are adding keyphrases from one main blog, and importing the keyphrases into your other blogs, there is no reason to import every single keyphrase every time.

The second option when exporting is to include your settings. When you check this option, your keyphrases and your settings will be included in the ale file. This is handy when you need to import your keyphrases after a database crash. This also makes it easier to manage multiple blogs, as once again, you can manage your keyphrases and settings from one main blog, and import everything into the other blogs.

The final option is to include your installed keyphrase modules in the ale file. When you check this option, each module that you have installed will be included in the ale file. Once again that makes it easier to recover from a database crash, and makes it easier to manage multiple blogs from one main blog.

## II. Importing

To import an ale file, simply select the ale file from your computer's hard drive using the file browser on the Import / Export page. Once selected, click the Import button.

Like the exporting, you have a couple options here. The first is to include any settings found in the ale file. Just because you chose to include settings when exporting to an ale file, doesn't mean you have to import them. If you don't check this option, any settings in the ale file will be ignored. If you check the option, any settings in the ale file will be imported.

The second option for importing is to import any modules in the ale file. Like the settings, you don't have to import modules if they are found in the ale file. If you don't check this option, any modules found in the ale file will be ignored. If you do check this option, modules found in the ale file will be imported, overwriting any modules that you currently have installed.

If you have a module installed, and import the same module, that's not a big deal. Even though the imported module will overwrite the existing module, it will simply overwrite it with the same module.

## III. Sharing

Creating a good keyphrase list can take some work, so you might want to consider sharing your ale files. If you have a good list going, share it with other people. If other people have a good list going, hopefully they will share it with you.

When exporting an ale file for sharing, **do not** include your settings or modules. You don't want to take the chance of overwriting the settings or modules of another person's blog.

# 9. FAQ

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## Q. Can I define multiple keyphrases with the same phrase?

A. Yes. As long as each keyphrase has different values for the other settings. For instance if you can define 20 keyphrases as "book" using the Amazon Basic module, and each one can have different search terms, and different product types.

## Q. What order are keyphrase links displayed?

A. When you have multiple keyphrases using the same keyphrase, like "book", the order that they are used is chosen at random. For instance, if you have two keyphrases defined using the Amazon Module, each using the term "book", but one using the search term "harry potter", and the other using the search term "ray charles", and in a post you use the term "book", sometimes the Harry Potter link will be first, and sometimes the Ray Charles link will be first. The randomness ensures that each keyphrase has a chance to be used.

## Q. Will importing keyphrase overwrite my existing keyphrases?

A. That depends. When a keyphrase is defined, it's given a unique ID. That ID will be used when importing keyphrases. If you're importing an ale file with the keyphrase "book" in it, it will overwrite an existing keyphrase on your list that uses "book" if the IDs match. If the IDs don't match, the keyphrase in the ale file will be added to your keyphrase list as a new keyphrase.

**Q. Why isn't a keyphrase being linkified an unlimited number of times when I select the unlimited setting?**

A. The Max links per keyphrase setting is still limited by the number of times a keyphrase is defined. If you use the word "book" 5 times in a post, but only have it defined 3 times, only 3 instances of the word will be linkified in your post. The Max links per keyphrase setting will keep a keyphrase from being linkified the number of times you have it defined. If you use the word "book" 20 times in a post, and you have the keyphrase defined 20 times, this setting will let you linkify that keyphrase all 20 times (unlimited), or only once or twice. In a nutshell, unlimited doesn't really mean unlimited.

**Q. Can keyphrases in my sidebar, header, and other areas be linkified?**

A. No. aLinks only looks for keyphrases in your posts. That is a limitation built into WordPress, and there is no way around it.

**Q. Why does this-or-that plugin stop working when I activate aLinks?**

A. I don't know. WordPress lets you install a lot of different plugins, and there is plenty of opportunity for those plugins to clash, and mess up each other. There is nothing I can do about that. If the plugin that stops working when activating aLinks is an insanely popular plugin, I might take a look at the source code and figure out why the two plugins are clashing. Beyond that I can't debug every single plugin that doesn't play nicely with aLinks. Sorry.

**Q. Can I keep aLinks from turning a keyphrase into a link?**

A. No, not yet. If a keyphrase is in your keyphrase list, aLinks will linkify it when it's found in a post.

**Q. What version of WordPress does aLinks work with?**

A. The plugin has been designed using WordPress 2.0, and tested using 2.0 and 1.5. Some minor features will not be available to WordPress 1.5 users.

**Q. If I upgrade from a previous version of aLinks, will I lose my keyphrases list or settings?**

A. No. The plugin will perform a silent upgrade, and that includes upgrading your keyphrases list and settings.

# 10. Hacks

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## I. Tracking links other than aLinks generated links

You can have aLinks track outbound clicks on links other than the ones created by aLinks. To do so, simply add this JavaScript event to the links:

```
onclick="return alinks_click(this);"
```

An example link would look like this:

```
<a href="http://www.google.com" onclick="return alinks_click(this);"
title="Google">Google</a>
```

## II. Using link cloaking

If you don't want the URL of your links to show up in the browser's status bar, add this to the Custom HTML/JavaScript to add to links setting:

```
onmouseover="window.status='Search here'; return true"
onmouseout="window.status=''"
```

Keep in mind that many people frown on this practice, and newer browser with either ignore the JavaScript, or flag it as a security risk.

# 11. Querying the Log Files

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An advanced feature of aLinks is the ability to perform queries on the click statistics log files, using a type of light-weight SQL. aLinks uses the querying internally to manage the log files, and the feature is available for you to use. At the bottom of the Statistics sub menu is a text area for you to enter queries, and the results of those queries will be displayed in the menu after submitting the query form.

You are not required to query the log files... ever. This is an advanced feature that some users familiar with SQL might find useful. It's important to note that aLinks uses files to store click statistics, not the database, and the SQL used to query those log files is not full-blown SQL. It is a light-weight form of SQL based on the SQL used by MySQL. There is limited number of queries that can be used, and they must be used in a strict manner.

You can chain multiple queries together by separating each one with a semi-colon `;`, and the queries can span multiple lines. Anyone familiar with querying databases, specifically MySQL, should feel right at home using the aLinks brand of SQL.

The aLinks' brand of SQL uses the term `table` to refer to log files. This is done to keep the custom SQL as close to regular SQL as possible. I will also refer to the log files in this documentation as tables. Each log file ends in the .log extension, but that extension is not used in the SQL statements. It's automatic.

Each table has 3 columns: `keyphrase`, `timestamp`, and `ip`. The `keyphrase` column is the keyphrase link that was clicked by a web site visitor. The `timestamp` column is a Unix timestamp for the date and time the link was clicked, and the `ip` column is the visitor's IP address.

Although aLinks stores the date and time of the link click as a Unix timestamp, which is an integer like 134438848, the timestamp will be returned in the date and time format specified in WordPress' options menu. You can also use plain date and time formats in your queries, such as 'july 2006', 'April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005', 'Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006', or even '2006'. aLinks will translate that into a Unix timestamp.

When describing the SQL syntax in this documentation, statements in [ ] are optional, and statements in [ ] brackets separated by the pipe `|` symbol have different values to choose from.

'alinks' is the "main" table. That means when a link is clicked, it is logged in the alinks.log file. At other times rows will be moved from that main log file to archive log files.

## I. SELECT

The SELECT statement will probably be the most useful to people, as it allows you to get specific rows from the log files. The SQL used by aLinks does not support LIMIT clauses, or GROUP BY clauses, and it supports only one AND clause. The DISTINCT statement is also a little on the experimental side.

### The Syntax:

```
SELECT [ DISTINCT ] column_names
FROM table_name
[ WHERE column_name [ = | < | > | <= | >= | != ] "value" ]
[ AND column_name [ = | < | > | <= | >= | != ] "value" ]
[ ORDER BY column_name [ ASC | DESC ] ]
```

The SELECT statement has 4 parts, and is shown on 4 different lines above. The first line is the SELECT keyword, followed by an optional DISTINCT statement, and then the columns you want returned by the query.

The next part, and the second line above, is the FROM keyword and the name of the table to query.

To get all the rows from the alinks table, you would this query:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks
```

The `\*` symbol is a shortcut meaning "all columns". If you only want specific columns returned, you would use a query like this:

```
SELECT keyphrase, timestamp FROM alinks
```

And that query will return all of the keyphrase and timestamp columns from the alinks table.

The third part is optional, and is a condition the table row must meet to be returned. Often you don't want *every* row in the table, but only rows that meet certain criteria. To get every row in the alinks table that has the keyphrase 'wordpress', you would use the following query:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE keyphrase = 'wordpress'
```

Although quote characters are optional for column and table names, they are mandatory for the condition value, in this case 'wordpress'. You can use either single or double quotes.

To get all of the keyphrases before a certain date, you would use a query like this:

```
SELECT keyphrase FROM alinks WHERE timestamp <= 'may 2006'
```

The ``<=`` symbol means less-than or equal-to. The above query returns the keyphrases that were logged before, or on, May 2006.

If you know your IP address is 165.34.234.01, you can get all rows except for link clicks made by you, by using a query like this:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE ip != '165.34.234.01'
```

The ``!=`` symbol means does-not-equal. The query returns all rows where the ip address does not equal 165.34.234.01.

The fourth part defines how the return results should be sorted. By default results are returned in alphabetical order, using the keyphrase column. You can change that using the ORDER BY syntax like in this example:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks ORDER BY keyphrase DESC
```

The return results will be ordered by the keyphrase column, in descending order. The DESC means descending. To get all the keyphrases and timestamps from a log file, and have the return results ordered by the timestamp from lower to greater, you would use a query like this:

```
SELECT keyphrase, timestamp FROM alinks ORDER BY timestamp ASC
```

ASC stands for ascending, which is the default sort order.

You can put all 4 parts together to get just the rows you want. Here are some examples:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE keyphrase = 'wordpress' ORDER BY timestamp DESC
```

The query will return all columns from the alinks table where the keyphrase equals 'wordpress', and the return results will be ordered by the timestamp descending.

```
SELECT ip FROM backup WHERE timestamp < 'Wednesday, May 3rd, 2006' ORDER BY ip ASC
```

The query will return the ip column from the backup table, where the timestamp is before Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006, and will be ordered by the ip column ascending.

You can use the AND clause to further refine your queries:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE timestamp > 'april 10 2006'  
AND timestamp < 'may 10 2006'
```

The query will return all rows where the timestamp is greater than April 10th, 2006, and less than May 10th, 2006. To find out how many times the keyphrase 'wordpress' has been clicked, but exclude your own clicks using your IP address, you would use a query like this:

```
SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE keyphrase = 'wordpress'  
AND ip != '123.34.3.45'
```

## II. INSERT

The INSERT statement lets you add new rows to a log file. You either specify the values in the query, or use the INSERT statement in conjunction with a SELECT statement.

### The Basic Syntax:

```
INSERT INTO table_name  
VALUES('keyphrase', 'timestamp', 'ip')
```

There are two parts to the basic INSERT query. The first part are the INSERT INTO keywords, followed by the name of the table to insert new rows.

The second part is the VALUES keyword, followed by the values to insert. None of the values can be null. Here is an example:

```
INSERT INTO alinks VALUES('wordpress', 'may 23 2006', '123.43.24.54')
```

The query inserts into the alinks table the keyphrase 'wordpress', clicked on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006, by a visitor with the IP address 123.43.24.54.

## The Select Syntax:

```
INSERT INTO table_name
SELECT *
FROM table_name
[ WHERE column_name [ = | < | > | <= | >= | != ] "value" ]
[ AND column_name [ = | < | > | <= | >= | != ] "value" ]
[ ORDER BY column_name [ ASC | DESC ] ]
```

A INSERT query coupled with a SELECT statement lets you move rows from one table to another. An query might look something like this:

```
INSERT INTO alinks_2005_backup SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE timestamp <= '2005'
```

This query puts all the rows from the alinks table from before or on 2005, in the alinks\_2005\_backup table. Please note that you must use the `\*` all columns symbol when using a SELECT statement with an INSERT statement.

## III. DELETE

The DELETE statement lets you delete rows from a table.

### The Syntax:

```
DELETE FROM table_name
[ WHERE column_name [ = | < | > | <= | >= | != ] "value" ]
```

Although the WHERE clause is optional, if you don't include one, you will be deleting *all* rows from the table, leaving you with a blank log file. In some instances that is desired.

To delete all rows from the alinks table where the keyphrase is 'wordpress', you would use this query:

```
DELETE FROM alinks WHERE keyphrase = 'wordpress'
```

And to delete all rows from the alinks table that have your IP address, you would use a query statement like this:

```
DELETE FROM alinks WHERE ip = '123.45.32.12'
```

## IV. CREATE

The CREATE statement is used to create a new table (log file).

### The Syntax:

```
CREATE TABLE 'table_name'
```

The CREATE syntax is pretty simple. Just the CREATE TABLE keywords, followed by the name of the new table. Here is an example to create a new table named 'alinks\_backup':

```
CREATE TABLE 'alinks_backup'
```

There's not much more to it.

## V. SHOW

The SHOW statement returns a list of existing tables (log files).

### The Syntax:

```
SHOW TABLES [LIKE table_name]
```

To get a list of all tables in your logs directory, you would use the following query:

```
SHOW TABLES
```

You can use the LIKE keyword to find out if a particular table exists, like this:

```
SHOW TABLES LIKE 'alinks_backup'
```

If the table 'alinks\_backup' exists, it will be returned.

## VI. Conclusion

Don't forget that more than one query can be used at a time. Just separate each one with a semi-colon. Here is an example:

```
CREATE TABLE 'alinks_backup';SHOW TABLES LIKE 'alinks_backup'
```

Also queries can span multiple lines like this:

```
CREATE TABLE 'alinks_2005_archive';
INSERT INTO alinks_2005_archive SELECT * FROM alinks WHERE timestamp <= '2005';
DELETE FROM alinks WHERE timestamp <= '2005'
```

This query creates a new table named 'alinks\_2005\_archive'. It then moves all rows from the alinks table that were created before or on 2005 to that table. Finally it deletes all rows from the alinks table that were created before or on 2005. This is basically the exact query that aLinks uses to move old statistics into archived log files.

Some of the syntax familiar to MySQL users can be used in the queries when it comes to quotes. For instance, this is a valid query in aLinks:

```
SELECT `keyphrase`, `ip` FROM `alinks` WHERE `keyphrase` = "wordpress"
```

Using all upper case for keywords is also optional. This is a valid query:

```
delete from `alinks` where `keyword` != 'headzoo'
```

Anyone not familiar with SQL will be a bit put-off by queries. Remember, this is an advanced feature, and you do not have to use it, if you don't want to.

# 12. XML-RPC

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## I. Introduction

XML-RPC is a remote procedure call protocol which uses XML to encode its calls and HTTP as a transport mechanism. In the blogging world, XML-RPC is the technology that makes trackbacks and pings possible, and it's the underlying technology used by programs like [w.blogger](#), that let you edit your blog using desktop software.

aLinks has been built to take advantage of the XML-RPC protocol, so third-party applications can be used to manage your keyphrase list. Although I haven't written any applications to use the methods, this chapter describes the aLinks XML-RPC API so that other developers can write those programs.

## II. Keyphrases, Descriptions, and Defines

Before diving into the API, it would help to know a little bit about how aLinks stores keyphrases, because many of the return values from the XML-RPC methods will come straight from the database.

All keyphrases are stored in the `wp_alinks_keyphrases` table in the WordPress database, and there are 7 columns.

The columns are:

- id
- keyphrase
- description
- defines
- module
- created
- hash

The id is the standard auto\_increment column. The keyphrase column is the defined keyphrase. The description column is the keyphrase's description. I'm going to skip the defines column for a moment and to the module column, which is the name of the keyphrase module that controls the keyphrase. The created column is MySQL timestamp that, despite it's name, is the last time the keyphrase was modified. And the hash column is a unique MD5 hash for the keyphrase that never changes once the keyphrase has been created.

Now the defines column is a PHP serialized array of data belonging to the keyphrase. Each keyphrase module defines the web form to display under the keyphrases sub menu. What kinds of input elements to use, the name of each element, default values, etc. When the user submits the form, the values from the form input elements are put into an array, using the name of the input element as the keys for the array. That array is serialized and becomes the keyphrase's "defines". When links are being created, the keyphrase's defines will be unserialized and passed back to the module object.

## III. The API

### **alinks.getKeyphrases**

Returns an array of all defined keyphrases, along with the keyphrase's description, defines, and module name.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password

### **alinks.getKeyphraseById**

Returns a single keyphrase, which is specified by passing the keyphrase's id to the method. Also returns the keyphrase's description, defines, and module name.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password
3. The keyphrase ID

### **alinks.getModuleType**

Passed the ID of a keyphrase, the method returns the name of the module that controls the keyphrase.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password
3. The keyphrase ID

### **alinks.newKeyphrase**

Creates a new keyphrase. This method should be used with care. If the defines passed to the method don't match up with the format expected by the module that controls the keyphrase, it could cause a WordPress crash.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password
3. The keyphrase
4. The descriptions
5. The defines
6. The name of the module that controls the keyphrase

### **alinks.updateKeyphrase**

Updates an existing keyphrase. Only the keyphrases keyphrase, description, and defines can be change. Once a keyphrase has been created it's module type can't be changed.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password
3. The new keyphrase
4. The new description
5. The new defines

### **alinks.deleteKeyphrase**

Deletes a keyphrase by passing the keyphrase's ID to the method.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password
3. The keyphrase ID

### **alinks.queryLogs**

Queries the log files. Read the chapter on querying log files for the correct syntax.

#### **Parameters:**

1. The user's WordPress admin username
2. The user's WordPress admin password
3. The query

### **alinks.ping**

Just a simple method that takes no parameters, and is used to make sure aLinks is responding to method request. Always returns `pong`.

# 13. Change Log

## **v1.0rc1 May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006**

- A complete rewrite of the entire plugin
- Change the name from Auto Links to aLinks
- Uses a new module system instead of built in keyphrases
- Added import export capabilities
- Added XML-RPC support
- Added built in help
- Changed the settings
- Improved the logging features
- Built in support for different languages
- And a lot more

## **v0.94.1 October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

- Fixed a bug where your Amazon Associates ID wasn't being used when keyword tracking is turned on.

## **v0.94 October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005**

- Now has an option for Amazon Associates from different countries, including The United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Germany, and France.
- Fixed bug with the custom HTML. Thanks [www.quakemachine.com/blog/](http://www.quakemachine.com/blog/).
- Made it more clear, in the docs, what file permissions are needed for each script and directory.
- Cleaned up code
- Made admin help easier to read
- Broke script up into a few different include files

**v0.93.1 August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

- Added the <addkeyword></addkeyword> tag so you can add keywords to your general keywords list on the fly, meaning while you're writing the post.

**v0.93 August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005**

- Completely re-coded the admin panel. It's now much more organized and easier to use.
- Rewrote some of the code making Auto Links faster.

**v0.92 August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005**

- Finally have a new and improved version of the keyword tracking logs viewer.
- Made small changes to the code here and there.

**v0.91 August 18th, 2005**

- Auto Links now has built in support for Amazon associates searches.

**v0.9.3 August 17th, 2005**

- The plugin won't linkify two or more keywords that share the same link. If 'Wal-Mart' and 'Walmart' share the same link — [www.walmart.com](http://www.walmart.com) — only the first keyword gets turned into a link.

**v0.9.2 August 17th, 2005**

- Rewrote a good deal of the code to make it faster and more streamlined.

**v0.9.1 August 15th, 2005**

- Removed 'alt' attribute from 'a' tag.
- Won't linkify keywords that are part of bigger words, i.e. won't linkify "intel" in 'intelligence'.
- Links have been tested to be valid XHTML 1.0 Transitional.

**v0.9beta August 14th, 2005**

- Added keyword logging.
- Added 5 options to the admin menu.
- Fixed bugs.

**v0.8beta August 9th, 2005**

- Complete rewrite of the code to make it more efficient.
- More tweaking of the regular expression by Sam.
- Adding much better admin menu. Now you can add and remove keywords.

**v0.7.6beta August 8th, 2005**

- Fixed regular expression so keywords found within tags don't get turned into links.
- Changed it so that comments don't get linkified.

**v0.7.5beta August 8th, 2005**

- Made the whole thing more efficient with better regular expressions. Big thanks to Samble for the help!

**v0.7beta August 8th, 2005**

- The plugin can now be configured through the admin panel. There is no longer any need to edit the code within the scripts.
- All options and keywords are stored in the WordPress database.

**v0.6beta August 7th, 2005**

- Script now handles punctuation after keywords.
- Keywords are no longer case sensitive. Google and google are treated the same.
- Moved the keywords array to an external script. That way you can update the main script without loosing all your keywords.

**v0.5beta August 6th, 2005**

- Threw the whole thing together in an afternoon.

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