



# Basics of Joomla! 1.7

MAKING SENSE OF YOUR CMS

EfnWeb LLC

FRANK NILSEN

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**Making sense of your CMS**

**Frank Nilsen**

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# Basics of Joomla! 1.7: Making sense of your CMS

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## About the Author

**Frank Nilsen** is a Web Site Developer based in California, United States. He's been developing web sites since 1999, and since 2004 has served as President & CEO and Principal Web Developer/Designer of his own firm, EfnWeb, LLC, <http://efnweb.com>. EfnWeb has been building Joomla! CMS web sites since version 1.0. Projects have included new sites, upgrades between major versions and taking over maintenance and enhancement of existing Joomla! CMS web sites built by others. EfnWeb also consults with web site owners and their staff on how to use Joomla! CMS.

*Basics of Joomla! 1.7: Making sense of your CMS* is Frank's first official book and training guide. The project was born out of a need that Frank discovered while working with his clients. He found that many clients did not need nor want to know absolutely everything about Joomla! CMS. Through his years of training—even helping clients create training videos for their staff—Frank noticed a pattern of the most sought after aspects of Joomla! CMS that his clients wanted to know. This book is a compilation of those topics.

Frank was born in Norway but as a teenager moved with his parents to California, where he has been residing ever since. He currently lives and works in Ventura County.

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## **Preface**

### **About the book**

It's been said that, "less is more," but in our information-overload world, there is no shortage of resources for learning about whatever subject one desires. It can be tedious sorting through the mountains of content we're often confronted with when simply trying to learn a few key steps of how to do something. As with learning any computer application, learning Joomla! CMS can also be tedious because, though there's a lot of information out there, at times, it's perhaps a bit too much information.

That's the inspiration for this book. While Joomla! CMS is a sophisticated web application with far-reaching capabilities, it's not necessary to learn everything about Joomla! in order to carry out some basic tasks of content management. This book seeks to help you sort through Joomla!'s basic and advanced features and guide you on the fundamentals to get you started managing your web site's content quickly.

### **Who this book is for**

This book assumes you already have a Joomla! web site installed, and you just need a little guidance getting up to speed quickly for carrying out basic tasks, like adding pages, content, setting up menu items and understanding global parameters. Consider this book a *Who, What, Where* lowdown with a smidgen of detail for added bonus, but without bogging you down in endless details.

If you own a Joomla! web site or are charged with maintaining content in one, but you are not a web site designer or developer, then this book is for you. If you don't write HTML and CSS and prefer to avoid having to learn, then this book is a good fit. If you've had some exposure to Joomla! but get confused using the admin area, exhale, this is your book.

### **What this book is not**

This book is not an in-depth guide to Joomla!. This book does not cover things like installing Joomla!, setting up the database, debugging errors, third-party applications, template

customization or system configuration. Most likely you have a web site developer in-house or on retainer who deals with the higher-level tasks and debugging when things go wrong.

Advanced topics are covered in overview only, just to help give you a general understanding of how some of Joomla!’s functionality is “hooked together.”

### **What else this book is not**

This book is not a set of tutorials in that the chapters lead to building a web site step-by-step. There are plenty of resources online and in print for that type of learning. This book takes an approach of understanding that your first few times encountering the Joomla! Admin site can seem overwhelming. This book aims to cut through the clutter and show you the most basic areas of the Admin that you need to know in order to add, edit and show content on your web site.

### **How this book is structured**

Each section in this book is about one functional area of the Joomla! Admin. The sections are structured in a **Who**, **What**, **Where** and **Details** fashion:

**Who** tells which user levels have access to the functional area described.

**What** gives a brief description of the functional area.

**Where** describes how to navigate to the functional area.

**Details** is an expanded description that may include step-by-step instructions or example workflows.

**Tips** are related side notes that offer additional information, but are not critical to understanding the topic of the section.

This book uses **bold** and *italicized* text. **Bold** text generally refers to control items or functional areas (i.e. **Article Manager**; **Menu Manager**). *Italicized* text generally denotes the name of interface items (the *Options* button), field attributes (Featured: *Yes*; Status: *Published*) or items with multiple levels or settings (the *Administrator* user; the *Archived* state). Joomla! screenshots relating to the topics described are found at the end of each section.

## **User access requirements**

To get the most out of this book, you should have a user profile registered in your Joomla! site so that you can log in to the administration area. Your user level must be at least *Manager*, but preferably *Administrator* or *Super User*. If you do not have a user profile with at least one of these access rights, ask your web site's administrator to create a user for you.

Be sure to review the *Glossary* so that you understand some of the terminology used in this book.

## **Reader feedback**

The very idea for this book was born out of a need in the Joomla! user community to have a “down-and-dirty” guide to some Joomla! basics. As such, we welcome your feedback on the topics covered in this book and any other topics you would like to have covered. You may contact us at the book's dedicated web site, <http://basicsofjoomla.com>.

## Glossary

<b>CMS</b>	Content Management System.
<b>Joomla!</b>	A free, open-source Content Management System written in PHP and MySQL. The exclamation point is part of the name, “Joomla!”
<b>1.7</b>	Joomla! version described in this book. (Older versions are 1.0, 1.5 and 1.6.)
<b>URL</b>	Universal Resource Locator (a web site address).
<b>Address bar</b>	The field in your web browser where web site URLs display.
<b>Back-end</b>	Joomla! term for the administrative area of Joomla! CMS, <i>The Admin</i> .
<b>Front-end</b>	Joomla! term for the main web site portion of Joomla! CMS, <i>The Site</i> .
<b>Article</b>	Joomla! term for a content item that contains text, images and other media.
<b>Featured Articles</b>	Joomla! term for Articles published to the “home” page.
<b>Nav/Navbar</b>	Web development terms for a menu that allows site navigation.
<b>Menu Item</b>	Joomla! term for items in a menu.
<b>Parent/Child</b>	Computer term describing a hierarchical relationship between items/objects.
<b>Modal window</b>	A window that displays within the current page while it remains displayed faded out in the background. In the Joomla! Admin, modal windows often contain a dialog box.
<b>Published</b>	Joomla! term for displaying items, usually in relation to Article and Menu Items, and Modules.
<b>Unpublished</b>	Joomla! term for hiding items, usually in relation to Article and Menu Items, and Modules.
<b>Enabled</b>	Joomla! term for running extensions, usually Plug-ins.
<b>Disabled</b>	Joomla! term for stopping extensions from running, usually Plug-ins.
<b>Asset(s)</b>	Web development term(s) for item(s) on a web page (i.e. text, images, videos, etc.).

## ***Chapter 1: The Basics***

In this chapter we introduce some concepts of Joomla!, including a brief description of Joomla!’s structure of “two sites in one” and a couple of Admin-site interface items, the Control Panel and the Joomla! Toolbar.

## What is Joomla!

Joomla! (the exclamation mark is part of the name) is a free, open-source content management system and a development framework for building web sites. Joomla! can be used in a very basic way to display pages of text and images, or be developed into a sophisticated web application with advanced functionality. Joomla! is available for download at <http://www.joomla.org>.

## Two sites in one

One of the most fundamental things to understand about Joomla! is that it's actually two sites in one—the *front-end* site that you show to the world, and the *back-end* Administration site where you manage the front-end site's content and functionality.

Under a standard Joomla! install, the front-end site is found at <http://yoursite.com> (where *yoursite* corresponds to your web site's domain name), and the administration site is found by adding */administrator* to the end of your site's URL (i.e. <http://yoursite.com/administrator>).

## The Control Panel, your “home base”

### Who

Managers, Administrators, Super Users

### What

The Control Panel is the main “dashboard” where various areas of the Administration site can be accessed, and where basic demographics and site activity are displayed.

### Where

If not logged in: Administration site > Log in

If logged in: Site > Control Panel. Or via the *Administration* heading link

### Details

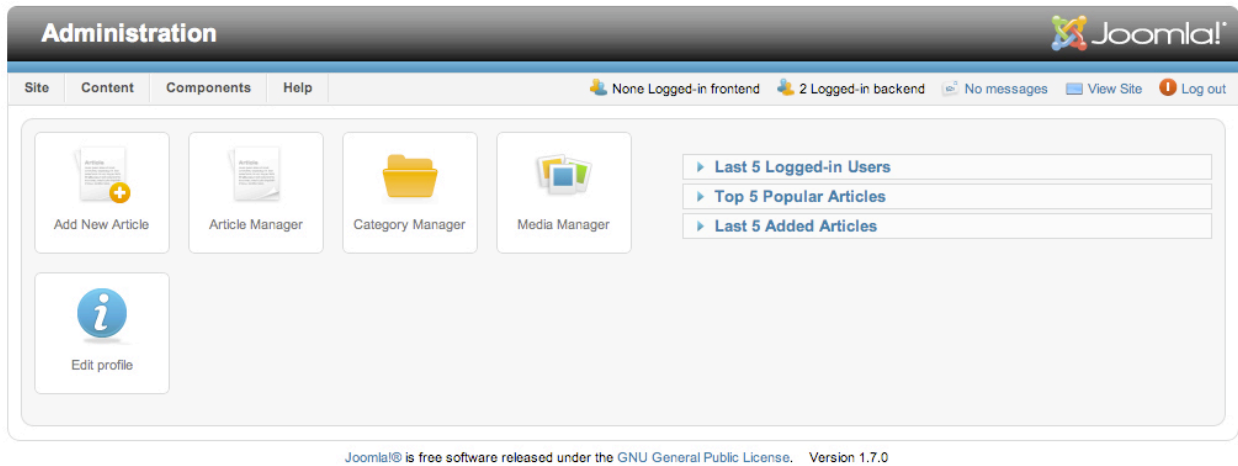
The **Control Panel** is the first screen you see after logging into your Joomla! Administration site and serves as your “home base.” Once logged in, it can always be accessed via the *Site* menu or by clicking the *Administration* heading in the top left of most Admin screens.

As your “home base,” the Control Panel provides shortcut icons to some of the main areas of the Administration site to manage content or adjust global settings. The Control Panel also displays basic site demographics and activity, including a list of logged in users, the most popular content, and the most recent content added and by whom.

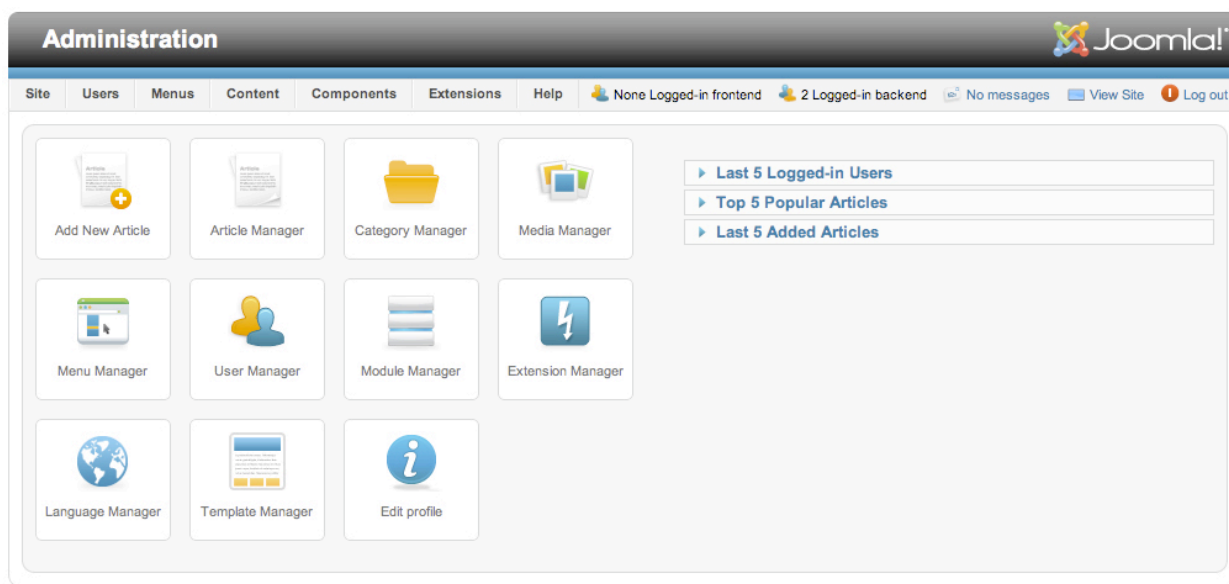
Depending on your user level, *Manager*, *Administrator* or *Super User*, determines what you have access to and how many shortcut icons you see.

For instance, if your user level is *Manager*, you will have shortcut icons to the **Article Manager**, **Category Manager** and **Media Manager**, but will not have access to **system settings**, **templates** or **languages**. If your user level is *Administrator*, you will see shortcut icons to some of these more advanced areas. If you are a *Super User*, your access is unrestricted. Super Users have rights to manage high-level system areas, like **Global Configuration** settings and all user accounts—even user accounts of other Super Users.

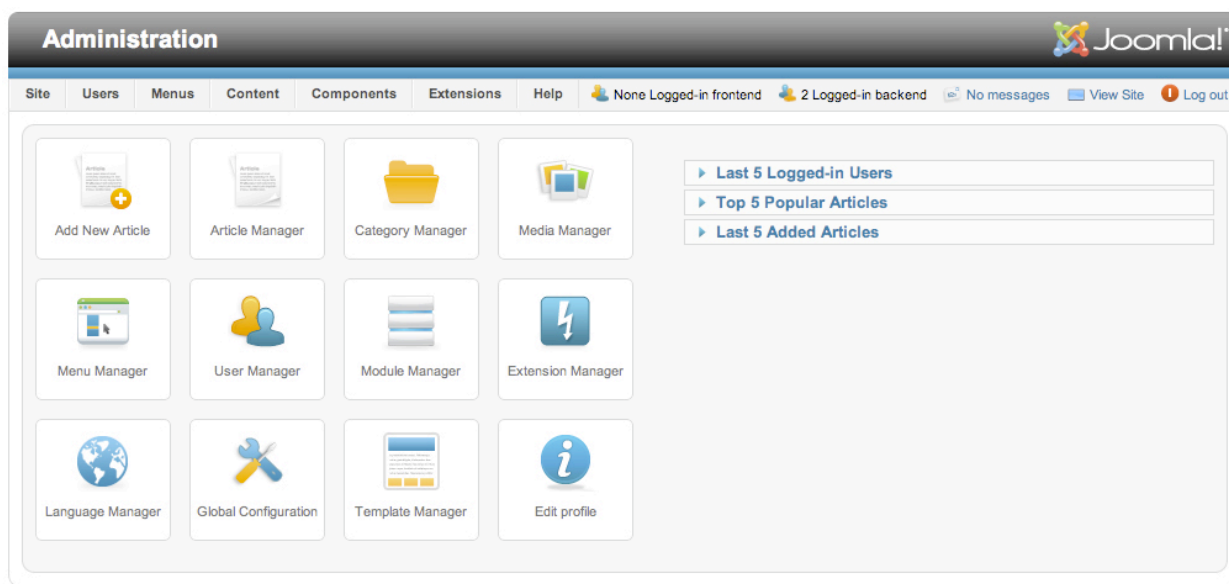
**Figure 1.1:** *Control Panel with Manager access level*



**Figure 1.2:** Control Panel with Administrator access level



**Figure 1.3:** Control Panel with Super User access level



## The Joomla Toolbar

### Who

Managers, Administrators, Super Users

### What

A large toolbar of icons

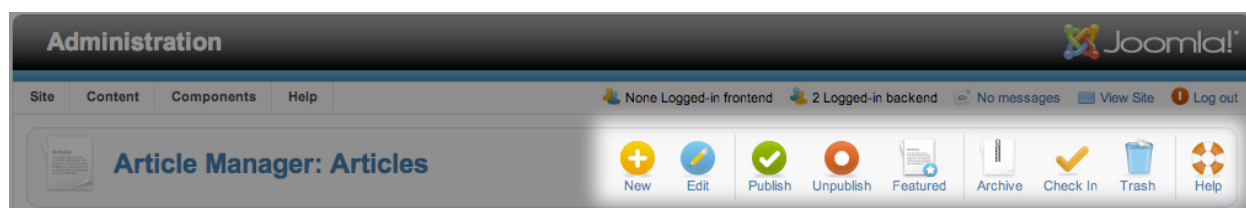
### Where

Top right of most Admin site screens

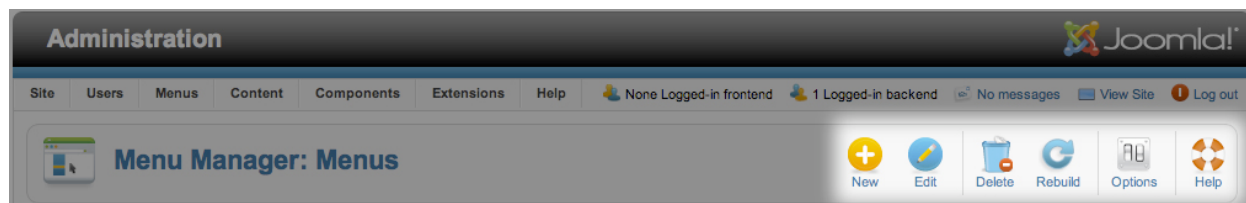
### Details

All Admin screens except for the Control Panel contain the **Joomla! Toolbar**. This is a toolbar of colorful icons in the top right. The toolbar buttons are specific to the functional area where you are currently working, and specific to your user type (i.e. *Manager*, *Administrator*, *Super User*). Some control items that are common on many screens include **New**, **Edit** and **Publish**.

**Figure 1.4:** *Article Manager: Articles toolbar (Manager level view)*



**Figure 1.5:** *Menu Manager: Menus toolbar (Super User level view)*



## ***Chapter 2: Managing Content and Menus***

In this chapter we get describe how to add, edit and display content on your web site. In the most basic terms, Joomla! content has two sides to it:

- 1) The actual page where your text and images reside.
- 2) Navigation menus with links to the pages that contain your text and images.

In this chapter we cover not only your site's pages and menu links but also how to organize your pages in to **Categories**, and how to use **Global Check-in** to “unlock” locked items.

## Global Check-in

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Check-in and “unlock” checked-out “locked” items.

### Where

Site > Maintenance > Global Check-in

### Details

One often overlooked function in Joomla! that can save a lot of headaches and frustration is the **Global Check-in**.

In Joomla!, only one user at a time can edit an item. For instance, if *user1* is editing an Article, no other user will be able to edit that Article at the same time. Other users will simply see an icon of a locked padlock at the item’s title, indicating that the item is not available, or **Checked out** by the user who is editing it.

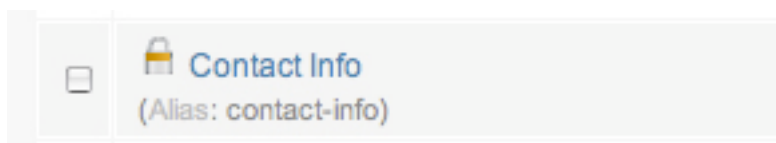
In order for the Article to be available for another user to edit, *user1* must **Check in** the Article by exiting it in a way that Joomla! approves—by clicking either *Save and Close*, *Save and New* or *Close*. If a Joomla! item is not exited in one of those ways, it will remain locked, much to the chagrin of other users, who may need to edit the item.

An item is exited improperly when a user who is editing it simply closes the browser window or otherwise navigates away from the editing screen other than by **saving** or **closing** the item. If this happens, there are only two ways to unlock the item:

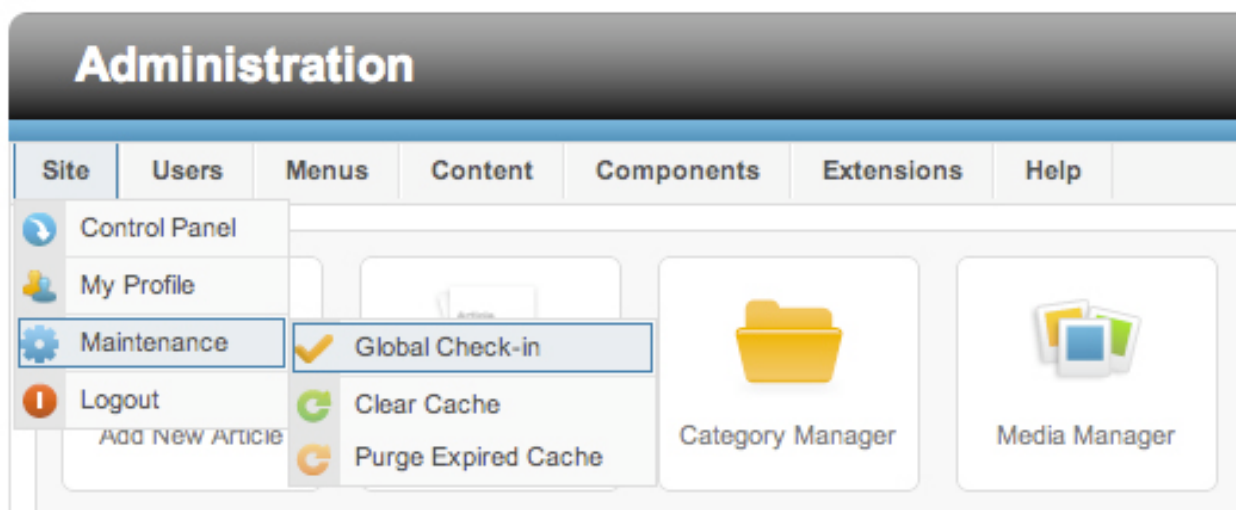
- 1) Find the user who last edited the item, ask him or her to log in to the admin, enter that item and properly **save** or **close** it.

- 2) **Global Check-in!** *Administrators and Super Users* can **check in** all items that are **checked out** by other users. On the *Site* menu, navigate to **Maintenance > Global Check-in**. That's it! Once you click that menu item, a command is sent to Joomla! that will check-in and unlock any items that are checked-out.

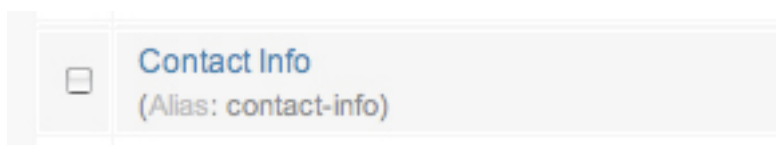
**Figure 2.1:** Checked out (locked) item



**Figure 2.2:** Accessing *Global Check-in* via menu navigation



**Figure 2.3:** Checked-in (unlocked) item



## Categories

### Who

Managers, Administrators, Super Users

### What

Organizes Articles into groups (similar to the way files are organized into folders)

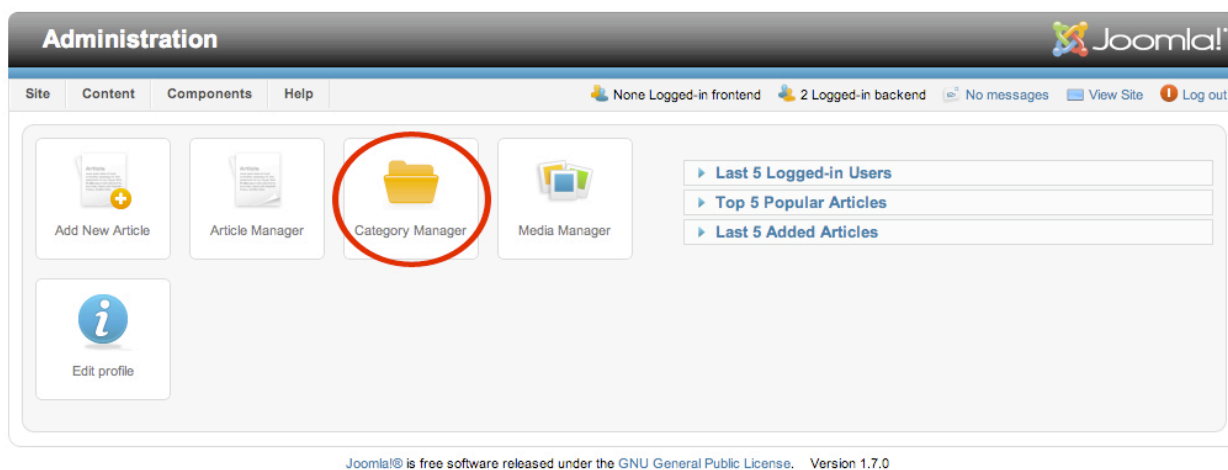
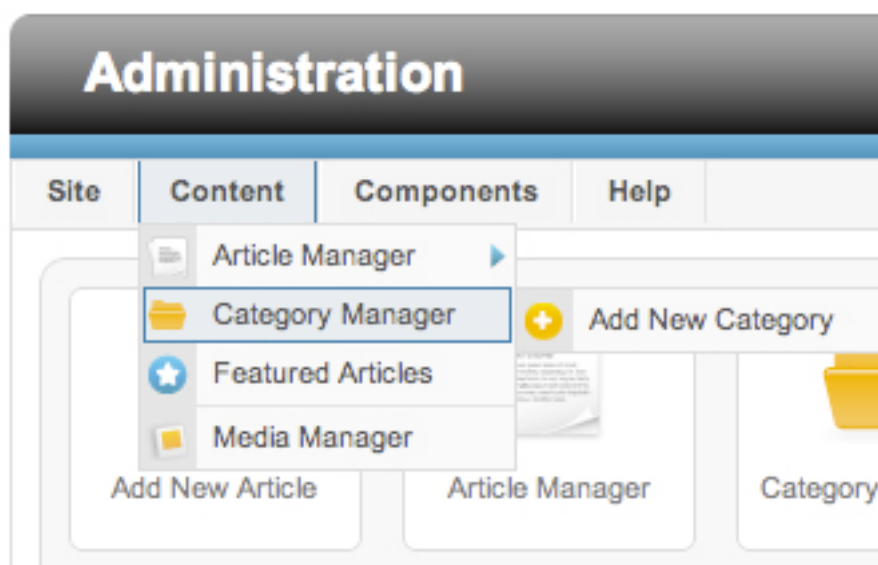
### Where

Content > Category Manager

### Details

All Joomla! Articles must live in **Categories**. You can create as many categories as you like by navigating to Content > Category Manager > Add New Category, or by clicking the *New* button from the *Category Manager: Articles* screen.

Whether creating new categories or editing existing categories, you can specify whether the category should be a **parent** or **child** of another category. This is analogous to “nesting” folders—organizing folders inside of other folders.

**Figure 2.4:** *Category Manager* access via Control Panel (*Manager* level view)**Figure 2.5:** *Category Manager* access via menu navigation

## Articles

### Who

Managers, Administrators, Super Users

### What

A Joomla! item that contains content, text, images, etc.

### Where

Content > Article Manager

### Details

The most basic web page in Joomla! is an **Article**, where you can add paragraphs of text, insert images and other forms of media. (Note: adding advanced media, such as Flash, videos or advanced scripting objects may be limited to your particular site's settings or hosting environment.)

### How to create a new Article

To create a new Article, simply navigate to the Article Manager and click the *New* button in the toolbar. The Article editing screen asks for some information that's relatively self-explanatory. For more information about the various fields in the Article editing screen, hover the mouse pointer over the field labels and Joomla! shows you a "tool tip" description of the fields' usages.

**Title:** This is a human-readable title for your article. It also serves as the headline of the article when viewed on your web site.

**Alias:** This is a browser-readable version of the Article's title that can be used as part of the URL to the article (with SEF URLs turned on in the Global Configuration). The alias should not contain any spaces. Use dashes or underscores in place of spaces. Mixed case is ok, but all lower case is preferable. You may leave the alias blank and Joomla! will insert an alias for you based on your title. You can come back and edit the alias later.

**Category:** The category where you want your Article to reside. Select a previously created category with the drop-down menu. You can move articles to other categories later if you wish. Articles can live only in one category at a time.

**Status:** Joomla! offers several *states* for your Article.

*Published:* The article is accessible for viewing on the web site.

*Unpublished:* The article is not accessible for viewing on the web site.

*Archived:* This is a special state that moves the Article to the Archives, where it is still searchable and viewable.

**Access:** This lets you specify whom may see the article. You have three choices

*Public:* Everyone.

*Registered:* Registered site users when logged in.

*Special:* Higher level users when logged in.

**Permissions:** This is an advanced topic and generally is not needed for basic Joomla! usage. Leave it set to *Set Permissions* and don't worry any about this until you are more comfortable with some of Joomla!'s advanced features.

**Featured:** If you want your article to appear on the home page of your site, set this to *Yes*. Otherwise leave it set to *No*.

**Language:** This is a somewhat advanced topic. Let's assume your site is using only one language—the language chosen when your site was installed. In that case you can leave **Language** set to *All*.

**ID:** This is the unique numeric database ID automatically assigned to your article. You cannot change this number. It's displayed for your reference.

**Article Text:** This is where you add your page's content.

**Publishing Options:** This simply gives you some basic demographic information about your article. You can change all values here except for **Revison** and **Hits**.

### Tip

**Publishing Options** lets you set custom dates for Joomla! to start and end publishing your articles.

**Article Parameters:** Here you are offered a variety of settings that you may want to include with your published article. The default settings are *Use Global*. Go ahead and leave that setting unless you want to override the global publishing parameters that you have set for all articles in *Article Manager Options* (covered in the next section).

Leave the **Read More** value blank so that Joomla! can use its default text.

Leave **Alternative Layout** set to *Use Global*. This is an advanced topic that basic content management need not be concerned with.

**Metadata Options:** refers to content seen and responded to mainly by search engines. The values used here will not be seen by regular site users under normal viewing conditions. For instance, you can add some keywords and a short description of your content in the respective fields. There is no harm in leaving the fields blank and *Use Global* until you are more comfortable with these settings.

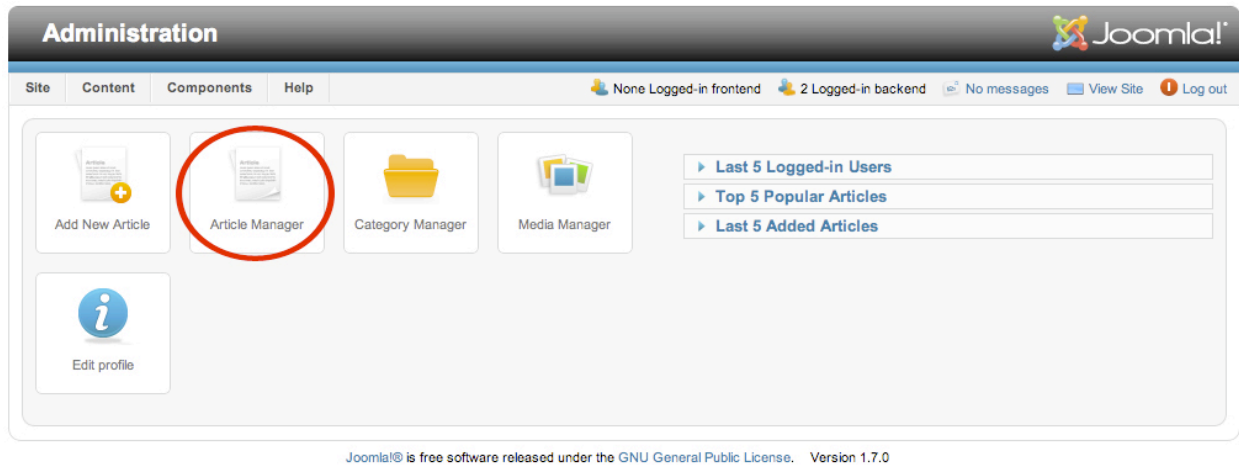
### Saving and Closing your Article

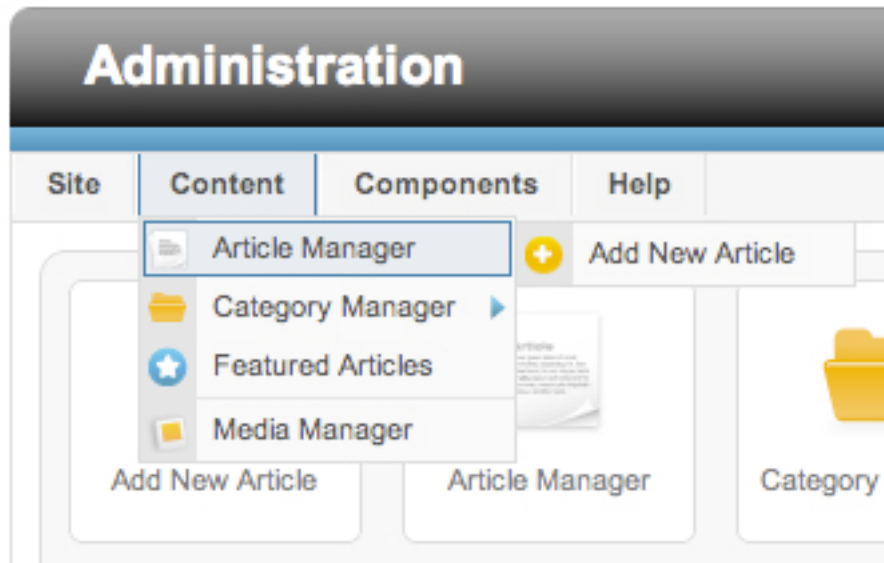
One thing a lot of new Joomla! users often ask is: What is the difference between *Save*, *Save & Close*, *Save & New* and *Cancel* buttons in the Joomla! toolbar? You will usually encounter these options when editing Articles and Menu Items.

- *Save*: simply saves any changes you've made while letting you remain in the editing screen.
- *Save & Close*: saves your changes, exits you out of the item and returns you to the main listing.

- *Save & New*: saves your changes, exits you out of the item and opens a new editing window (i.e. you are in the process of adding several Articles at a time).
- *Cancel*: exits you from the editing screen without saving any changes.

**Figure 2.6:** *Article Manager* access via Control Panel (*Manager* level view)



**Figure 2.7:** *Article Manager* access via menu navigation**Figure 2.8:** *Article Manager: Add New Article* screen

 A screenshot of the Joomla! Administration interface showing the "Add New Article" screen. The top header is "Administration" with the Joomla! logo on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with tabs for "Site", "Content", "Components", and "Help". The "Content" tab is active, and a dropdown menu is open, showing options: "Article Manager" (highlighted with a blue border), "Category Manager", "Featured Articles", and "Media Manager". To the right of the dropdown, there is a yellow plus icon and the text "Add New Article". Below the navigation bar, there are three main content areas: "Add New Article", "Article Manager", and "Category Manager". The "Add New Article" screen is the main focus, showing a form with fields for "Title", "Alias", "Category", "Status", "Access", "Featured", "Language", and "ID". There is also a "Publishing Options" section with fields for "Created by", "Created by alias", "Created Date", "Start Publishing", and "Finish Publishing". The "Article Text" section is at the bottom, featuring a rich text editor with a toolbar and a text area.

**Figure 2.9:** *Article Manager: add/edit article, Article Options pane*

<b>▶ Publishing Options</b>	
<b>▼ Article Options</b>	
Show Title	Use Global ⇅
Linked Titles	Use Global ⇅
Show Intro Text	Use Global ⇅
Show Category	Use Global ⇅
Link Category	Use Global ⇅
Show Parent	Use Global ⇅
Link Parent	Use Global ⇅
Show Author	Use Global ⇅
Link Author	Use Global ⇅
Show Create Date	Use Global ⇅
Show Modify Date	Use Global ⇅
Show Publish Date	Use Global ⇅
Show Navigation	Use Global ⇅
Show Icons	Use Global ⇅
Show Print Icon	Use Global ⇅
Show Email Icon	Use Global ⇅
Show Voting	Use Global ⇅
Show Hits	Use Global ⇅
Show Unauthorised Links	Use Global ⇅
<hr/>	
Read More Text	<input type="text"/>
Alternative Layout	Use Global ⇅
<b>▶ Metadata Options</b>	

## Featured Articles

### Who

Managers, Administrators, Super Users

### What

Joomla! Articles that are published to the home page

### Where

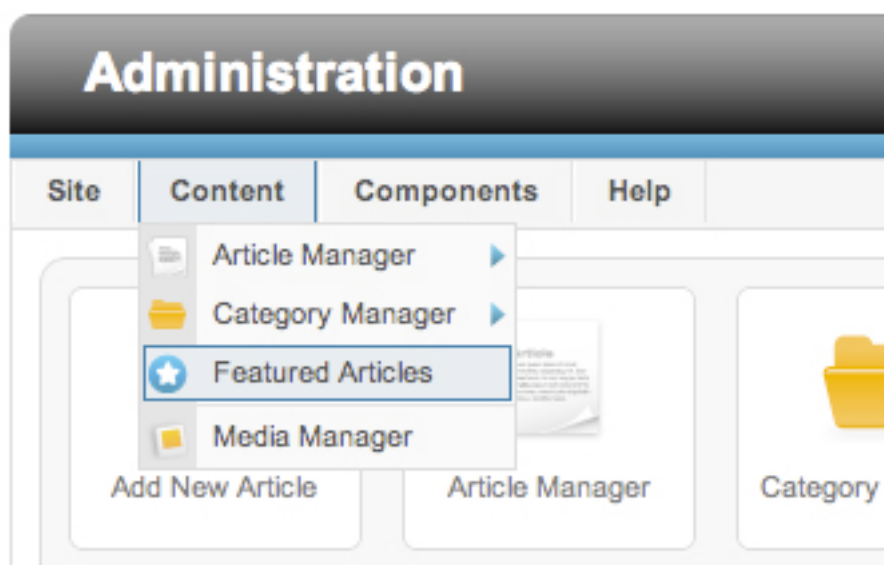
Content > Featured Articles

### Details

**Featured Articles** are nothing more than Articles that have been told to display on the home page. Displaying Articles to the home page can be done in one of two ways:

- 1) In the Article editing screen, set **Featured** to *Yes* and click *Save*.
- 2) On the *Article Manager: Articles* screen (Content > Articles), click the grey circle icon in the *Featured* column. The grey circle will change to a white star on a blue circle background giving you visual feedback that the article is displaying on the home page.

**Figure 2.10:** *Featured Articles* access via menu navigation



## Article Manager Options

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

A modal window that contains global settings for how and what will display with your articles

### Where

Content > Article Manager > Options

### Details

The **Article Manager Options** is a dialogue box where you can conveniently set global options for all Articles in one fell swoop. This is a good place to start setting up how you want your articles to display. For instance, by default Joomla! displays a few demographic pieces of information about an article, such as its author, date and time of the article's creation, and its parent category. Maybe you don't want to display this information. The Article Manager Options lets you hide these items for all Articles on your site. Keep in mind that the options you set globally in the Article Manager Options can all be overridden on an article-by-article basis in the *Edit Article* screen. The options can be customized further still in the *Menu Manager*. (We'll cover the Menu Manager in a subsequent chapter.)

### Tip

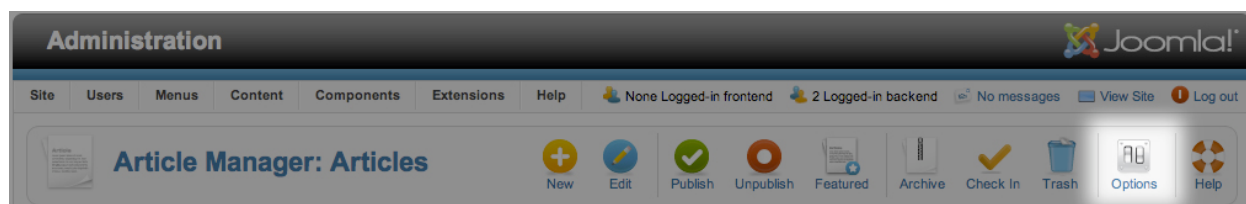
The main thing to understand here is that just because you specify certain settings globally in the Article Manager Options, you are never locked into those settings. Joomla! lets you customize settings for individual articles or groups of articles in other areas of the Admin.

Since, as promised, this book is not an in-depth guide to Joomla!, let's not get burdened with every detail of the Article Manager Options. It contains several tabs where you can set global settings until your heart is content. To get things done quickly and move on, we will focus only on the *Articles* tab. You can leave the default settings in the other tabs: *Category*, *Categories*, *Blog/Feature Layouts*, *List Layout*, *Shared Options*, *Integration*, *Text Filters*, *Permissions*.

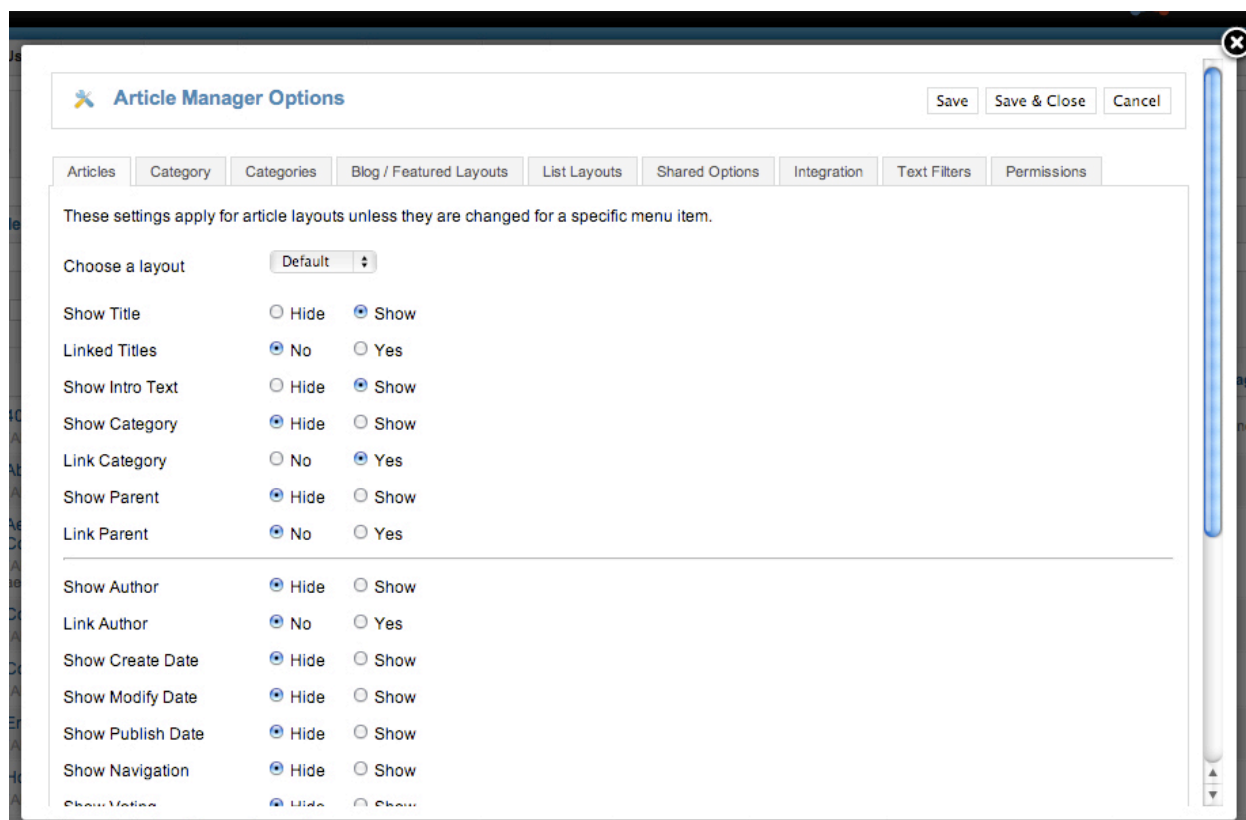
Select the *Articles* tab and adjust the settings to your preference. If you are unsure of any setting, leave it as is. As you can do in most areas of the Joomla! admin, if you hover the mouse pointer over the field labels, a tool tip will display to help you understand what each field is about. Again, you are not locked into any setting. On an individual article basis, you can override the settings you are selecting in the Article Manager Options.

Once you are satisfied with your setting choices, click the *Save & Close* button at the top of the dialog box. To exit without saving any changes, click *Close*.

**Figure 2.11:** *Article Manager Options* toolbar button



**Figure 2.12:** *Article Manager Options > Articles* tab dialogue box in modal window



## Media Manager

### Who

Managers, Administrators, Super Users

### What

A storage location and file browser for images and other media

### Where

Content > Media Manager

### Details

The **Media Manager** is an area of Joomla! reserved for storing files, most notably images. You can upload your own files to the Media Manager and then organize them according to folders that you create. After you upload images, you can reference them in Articles and Modules for display on your Joomla! web pages.

### Tip

Depending on which content editor is in use on your Joomla! web site determines how you insert images. If you're using Joomla!'s default editor, TinyMCE, there is a toolbar button for adding images. A popular third-party editor is the JCE Content Editor, available via the Joomla Extensions Directory, <http://extensions.joomla.org>. You can globally manage editors in the **Global Configuration**.

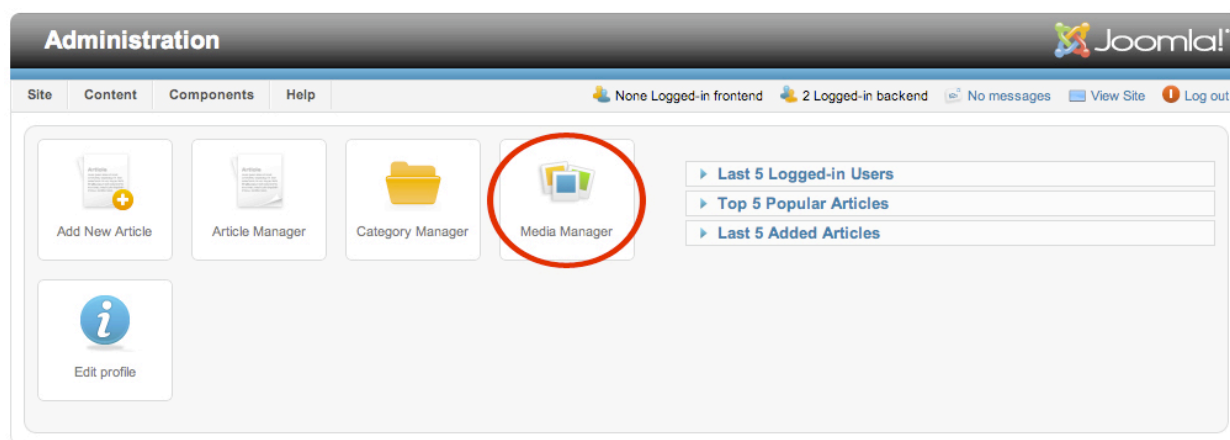
It's worth noting that the Media Manager has two views, *Thumbnail View* and *Detail View*. The default is *Thumbnail View* but many Joomla! users find the *Detail View* easier to use because it displays folders and files in a list rather than as thumbnails, which makes the view easier to scan and navigate. *Thumbnail View* truncates long file and folder names and uses more screen real estate.

The Media Manager has an *Options* area, but for basic Media Manager usage, you can leave the default settings.

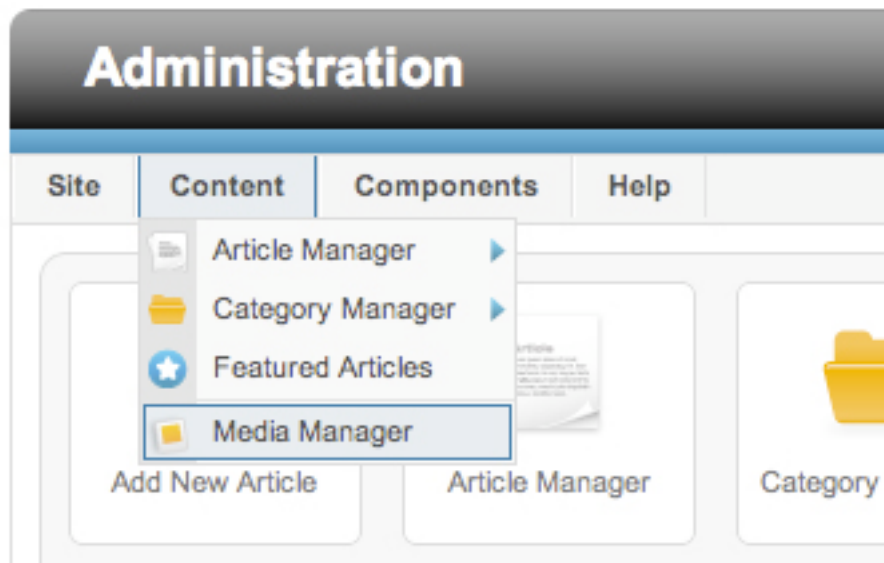
Uploading a file with the Media Manager is fairly self-explanatory. You'll find an *Upload Files* parameters area near the bottom of each screen that allows you to browse files on your local computer. The maximum file-size you can upload is also displayed (i.e. 10 MB). This limit depends on your site settings and server restrictions, so it can vary from site to site.

Before you upload a file, you'll want to already be in the folder where the file you are uploading should reside. Note the file path field value just above the *Create Folder* button. This path is the full *server path* of your Joomla! install, from the server root all the way to the folder you are currently viewing. That path will vary from host to host. The part of the path that's important for you is from the *images* folder and everything to the right of it. In a default Joomla! install, the *images* folder is in the web site root, so anything to the left of *images* refers to folders that are outside of Joomla! itself.

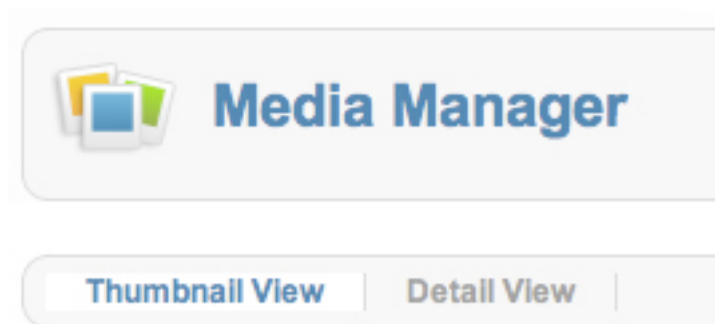
**Figure 2.13:** *Media Manager* access via Control Panel (*Manager level view*)



**Figure 2.14:** *Media Manager* access via menu navigation



**Figure 2.15:** *Media Manager* view options toggle



## Menus

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Menus that you build to provide users a way to navigate your web site

### Where

Menus > Menu Manager

### Details

Joomla! **Menus** are a special kind of Module where you build links to the various content items in Joomla! The Menu Manager controls all of your front-end site menus. A lot of the heavy lifting in displaying content on your web site's pages is handled by the Menu Manager.

**Menu Items** are the individual links in a menu. When you create new Menu Items, Joomla! gives you lots of options and choices. Depending the choices you make in the **Menu Manager** determines in large part how your target pages display.

Notice that when you display the *Menus* menu, you can browse to either the **Menu Manager** or directly to specific menus (i.e. *Main Menu*). One of the existing menus should have a star icon in it. The star indicates the "default" or "primary" menu on your site.

### How to create a Menu Item that targets an Article

To add a **Menu Item** that targets an Article that you've created, simply navigate to the menu that should display a link to your Article and click the *New* button in the Joomla! Toolbar.

The resulting editing screen presents you with several field and decisions. Let's go over the most important ones for adding a Menu Item that targets one of your Articles.

In the *Details* pane the first thing you must do is choose a **Menu Item Type**. Click the *Select* button to begin.

In the *Select a Menu Item Type* dialogue box, choose **Single Article** under the *Articles* section. Clicking **Single Article** tells Joomla! that the type of Menu Item you want to create is one that will link to an Article. Clicking **Single Article** also immediately returns you to the Menu Item editing screen so that you can continue setting up your Menu Item.

Selecting the Menu Item Type is probably the single most important step when creating new menu items. Depending on the Menu Item Type you choose, determines what other parameters and choices are available to you. As you saw when selecting *Single Article*, there are many different Menu Item Types. In time you will learn more about the other types. This exercise is intended to merely introduce you to working with menus and their items in an effort to show you the connection between Menu Items and what Joomla! displays on your web site.

Back in the *New Menu Item* editing screen we can continue setting the rest of our field values:

**Menu Title:** this is the human-readable name that will display in your menu. Try to keep the title short (*About Us, News, Sales Staff*, etc.).

**Alias:** this is a browser-readable string based on your Menu Item's name that can be used as part of the URL. The alias should not contain any spaces. Use dashes or underscores in place of spaces. Mixed case is ok, but all lower case is preferable. You may leave the alias blank and Joomla! will insert an alias based on your Menu Title. You can come back and edit the alias later.

**Note:** is an internal description for the Menu Item. You may leave this blank.

**Link:** should already be populated with something that starts with *index.php?* followed by some text and symbols. This is what's called the "Joomla! raw link" to your article. Although Joomla!

displays the link for you, it cannot be edited. Changing the link would cause your new Menu Item to break when followed.

**Status:** tells Joomla! if your Menu Items should be visible, *published*, or hidden, *unpublished*, on the site. If you want to delete the Menu Item, choose “Trashed” to send it to the Menu Trash. You can retrieve the Menu Item from the trash later.

**Access:** determines who can see your Menu Item: everyone, *Public*, registered site users once logged in, *Registered*, or higher-level users, *Special*.

**Menu Location:** tells Joomla! in which menu your Menu Item should appear.

**Parent Item:** lets you decide if the Menu Item should be a sub-menu item or not.

**Target Window:** should be set to *Parent* so that your link will open in the same browser window. If you wish to have the Menu Item open your content in a new browser window, choose one of the other settings.

**Default Page:** Set this to *Yes* if you want the Article you’re linking to be the site’s home page.

**Language:** can be set to *All* (or choose a specific language).

**Template Style:** can be set to *Default*.

**ID:** cannot be changed. This is the unique numerical reference to this item in the database.

In the *Required Settings* pane, you must choose an Article to target. When you click the *Select/Change* button, Joomla! opens a listing of all of your existing articles in a modal window. Locate the Article you want this Menu Item to target and click the Article’s name.

**Article Options:** lets you override the global settings for Articles when your Article is accessed through this menu link. This is a powerful feature of Joomla! You may want your article to contain demographic data or display certain information only when accessed through this Menu Item. If you are unsure, leave all settings to *Use Global* so that your settings in the *Article Manager Options* prevail. (See the *Article Manager Options* section for more details on configuring global Article settings.)

All remaining options can be left alone for now. Feel free to look at the various options for, *Link Type Options*, *Page Display Options*, *Metadata Options*, and *Module Assignment* for this Menu Item, but don't feel compelled to change anything about those settings for basic usage of the *Article Menu Item Type*.

**Figure 2.16:** Menu Manager access via Control Panel (*Administrator* level view)

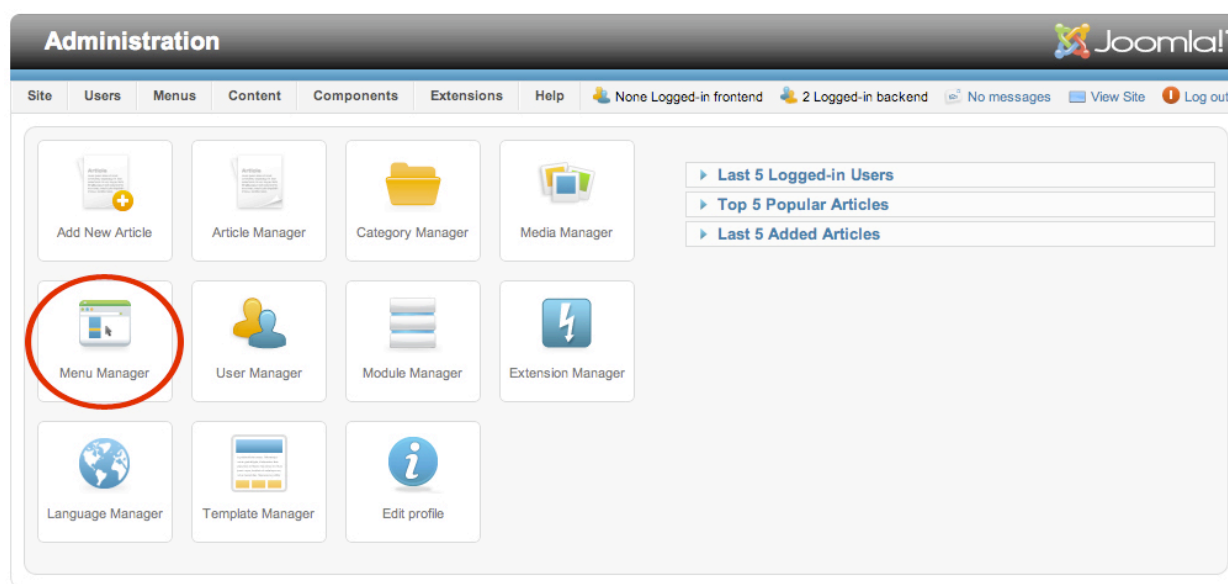


Figure 2.17: *Menus* menu

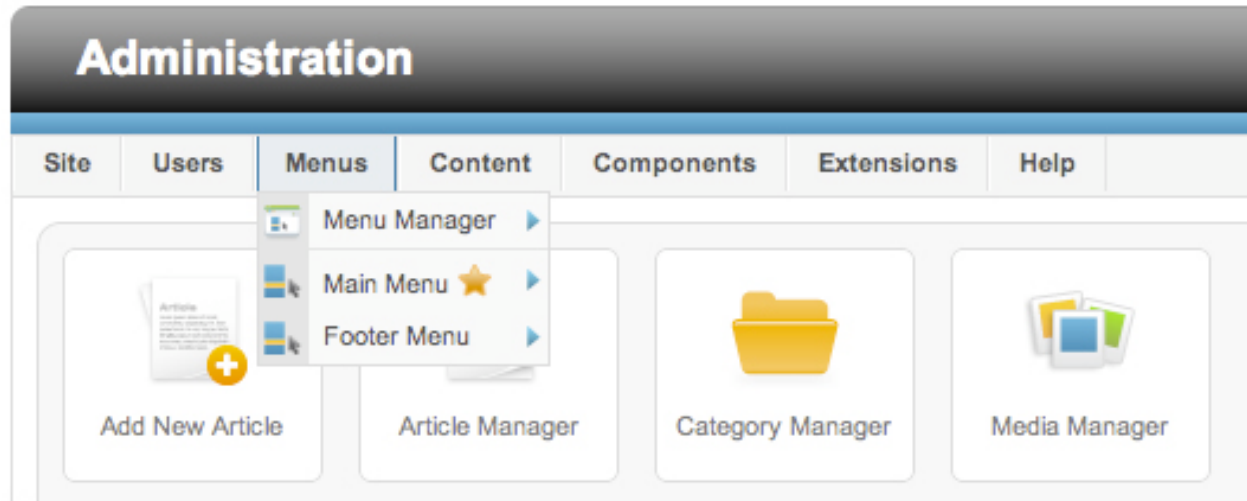


Figure 2.18 Add a new Menu Item to a specific menu

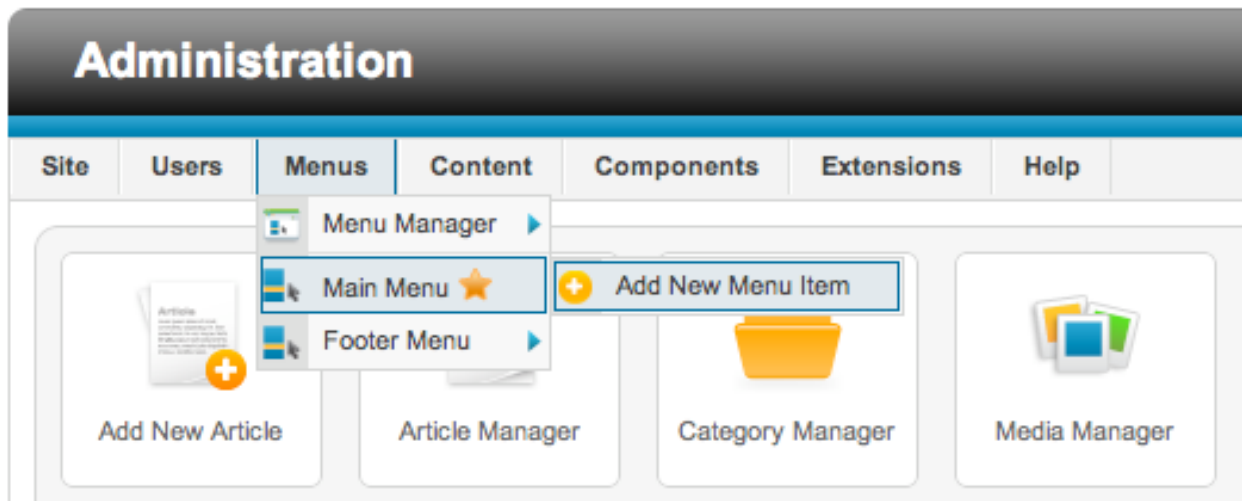


Figure 2.19: Menu Manager: New Menu Item main screen

**Administration** Joomla!

Site Users Menus Content Components Extensions Help None Logged-in frontend 2 Logged-in backend No messages View Site Log out

### Menu Manager: New Menu Item

Save Save & Close Save & New Cancel Help

#### Details

Menu Item Type *	<input type="text"/> Select
Menu Title *	<input type="text"/>
Alias	<input type="text"/>
Note	<input type="text"/>
Link	<input type="text"/>
Status	Published
Access	Public
Menu Location *	Main Menu
Parent Item	Menu Item Root
Target Window	Parent
Default Page	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
Language	All
Template Style	- Use Default -
ID	0

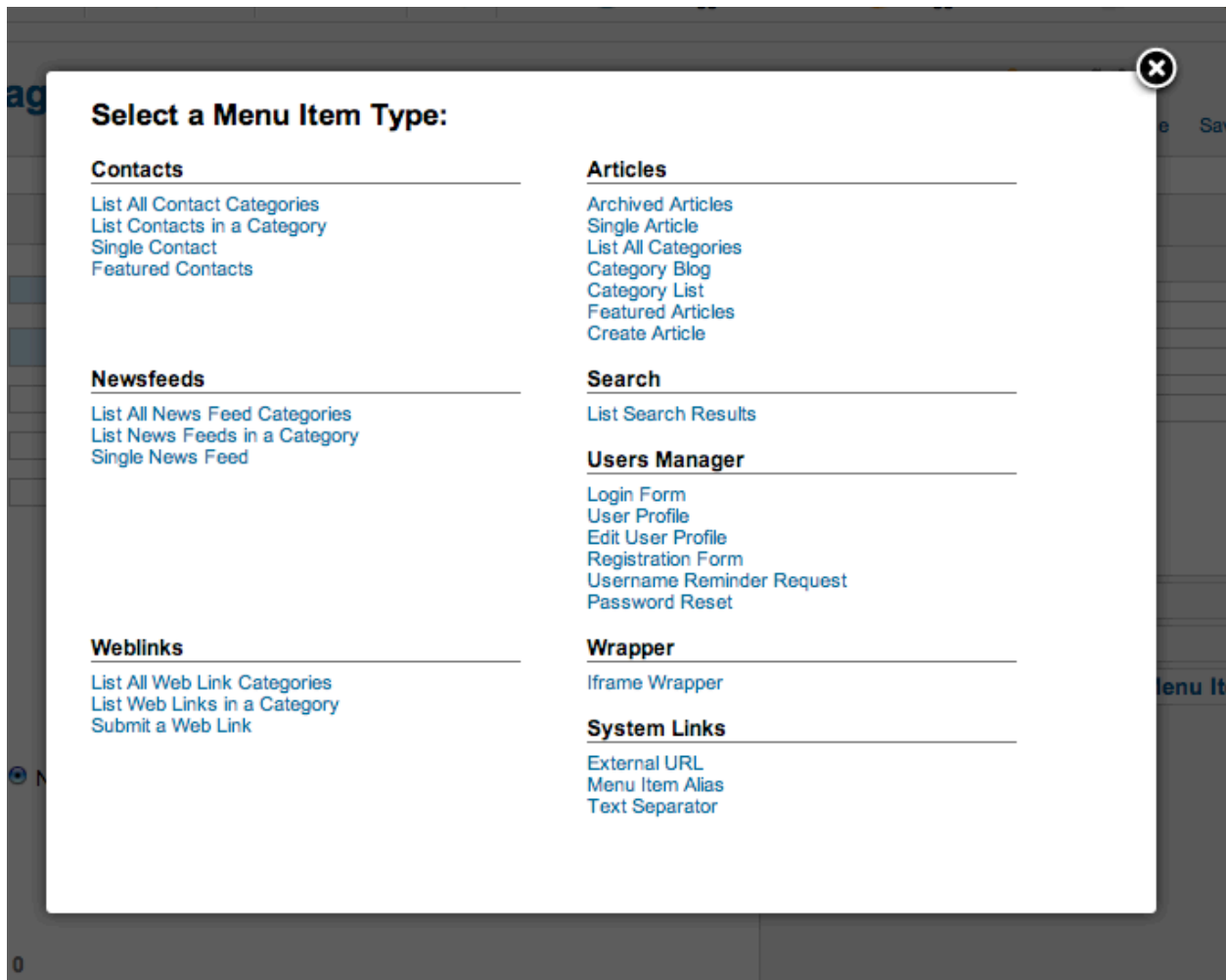
#### Link Type Options

Link Title Attribute	<input type="text"/>
Link CSS Style	<input type="text"/>
Link Image	<input type="text"/> Select Clear
Add Menu Title	<input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes

#### Page Display Options

#### Metadata Options

#### Module Assignment for this Menu Item

Figure 2.20: *Select a Menu Item Type* modal windowFigure 2.21: *Single Article* menu-item type selection

**Articles**

---

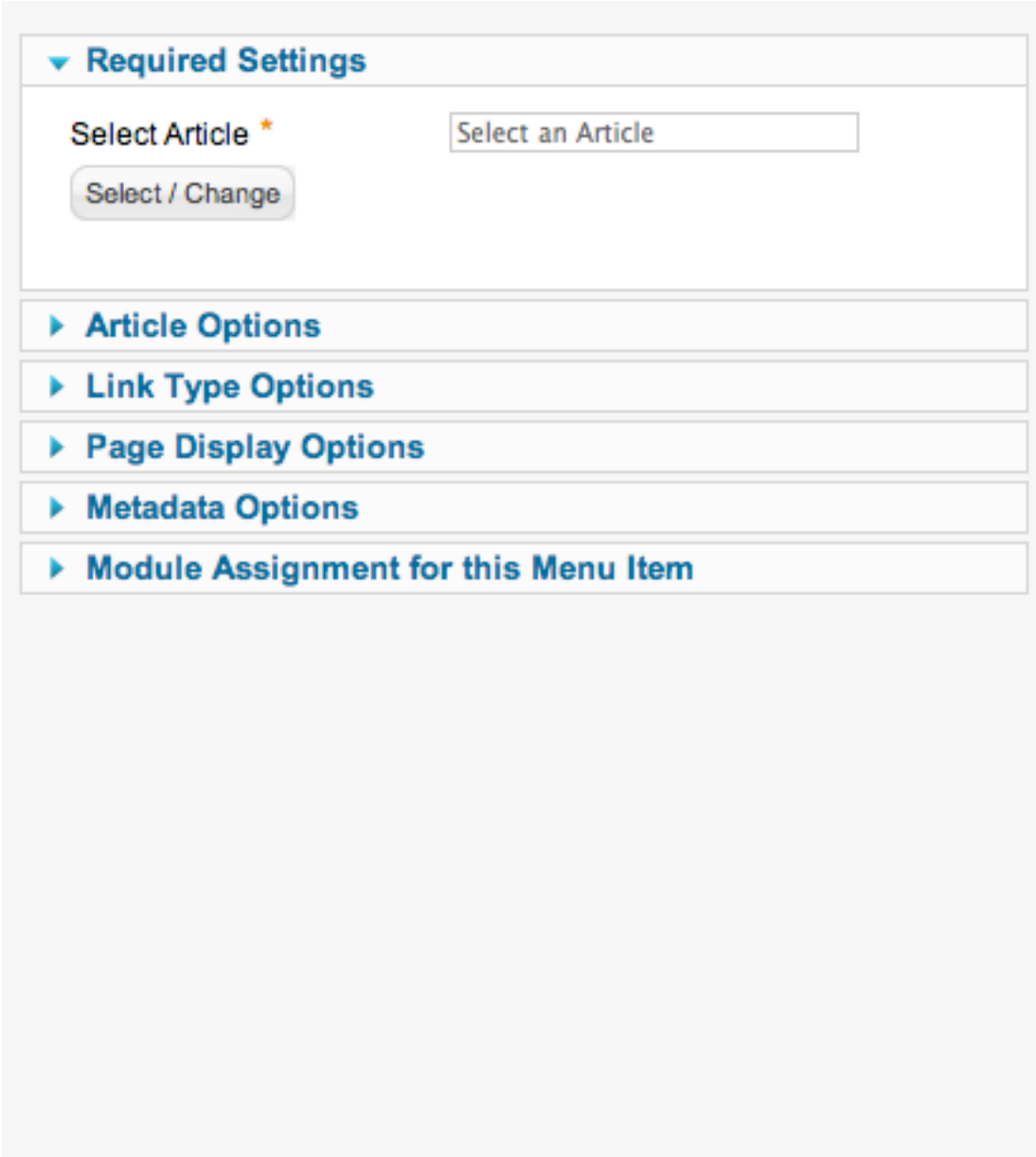
- Archived Articles
- Single Article
- List All Categories
- Category Blog
- Category List
- Featured Articles
- Create Article

Display a single article.

Figure 2.22: Menu item *Details* pane

**Details**

Menu Item Type *	Single Article <input type="button" value="Select"/>
Menu Title *	<input type="text"/>
Alias	<input type="text"/>
Note	<input type="text"/>
Link	<input type="text" value="index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=articl"/>
Status	Published <input type="button" value="↓"/>
Access	Public <input type="button" value="↓"/>
Menu Location *	Main Menu <input type="button" value="↓"/>
Parent Item	Menu Item Root <input type="button" value="↓"/>
Target Window	Parent <input type="button" value="↓"/>
Default Page	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
Language	All <input type="button" value="↓"/>
Template Style	- Use Default - <input type="button" value="↓"/>
ID	0

**Figure 2.23:** *Single Article* menu item type *Required Settings* pane

The image shows a settings pane for a 'Single Article' menu item. It features a 'Required Settings' section with a dropdown menu for 'Select Article' and a 'Select / Change' button. Below this are several expandable sections: 'Article Options', 'Link Type Options', 'Page Display Options', 'Metadata Options', and 'Module Assignment for this Menu Item'.

**▼ Required Settings**

Select Article \*

Select / Change

**▶ Article Options**

**▶ Link Type Options**

**▶ Page Display Options**

**▶ Metadata Options**

**▶ Module Assignment for this Menu Item**

**Figure 2.24:** *Single Article* menu item type *Article Options* pane

▶ **Required Settings**

▼ **Article Options**

Show Title	Use Global ▾
Linked Titles	Use Global ▾
Show Intro Text	Use Global ▾
Show Category	Use Global ▾
Link Category	Use Global ▾
Show Parent	Use Global ▾
Link Parent	Use Global ▾
Show Author	Use Global ▾
Link Author	Use Global ▾
Show Create Date	Use Global ▾
Show Modify Date	Use Global ▾
Show Publish Date	Use Global ▾
Show Navigation	Use Global ▾
Show Voting	Use Global ▾
Show Icons	Use Global ▾
Show Print Icon	Use Global ▾
Show Email Icon	Use Global ▾
Show Hits	Use Global ▾
Show Unauthorised Links	Use Global ▾

▶ **Link Type Options**

▶ **Page Display Options**

▶ **Metadata Options**

▶ **Module Assignment for this Menu Item**

### ***Chapter 3: Components, Modules and Plug-ins a.k.a. “Extensions”***

Joomla! **Extensions** are sub-programs that perform specific tasks, and are the heart and soul of how Joomla! works. In addition to Joomla!’s “core extensions” that ship and install with Joomla!, third-party extensions can be installed to enhance your site’s functionality. Visit the Joomla! Extensions Directory (JED) to see a complete listing of third-party extensions available for your site, <http://extensions.joomla.org>.

## Plug-ins

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Mini programs inside Joomla!

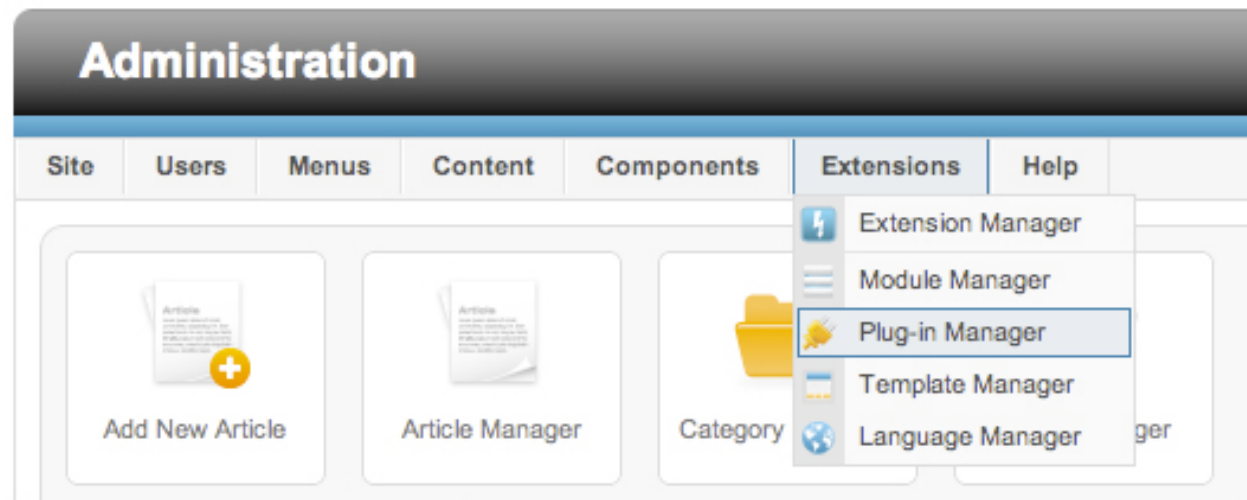
### Where

Extensions > Plug-in Manager

### Details

**Plug-ins** are a special kind of mini program that extends the functionality of Joomla! Plug-ins are sometimes “seen” and sometimes not. What this means is that Plug-ins can control both visible assets in your web site, or may provide some script that simply runs in the background supporting modules, components or other areas of your Joomla! site. Plug-ins can be enabled or disabled.

**Figure 3.1:** *Plug-in Manager* access via menu navigation



## Modules

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

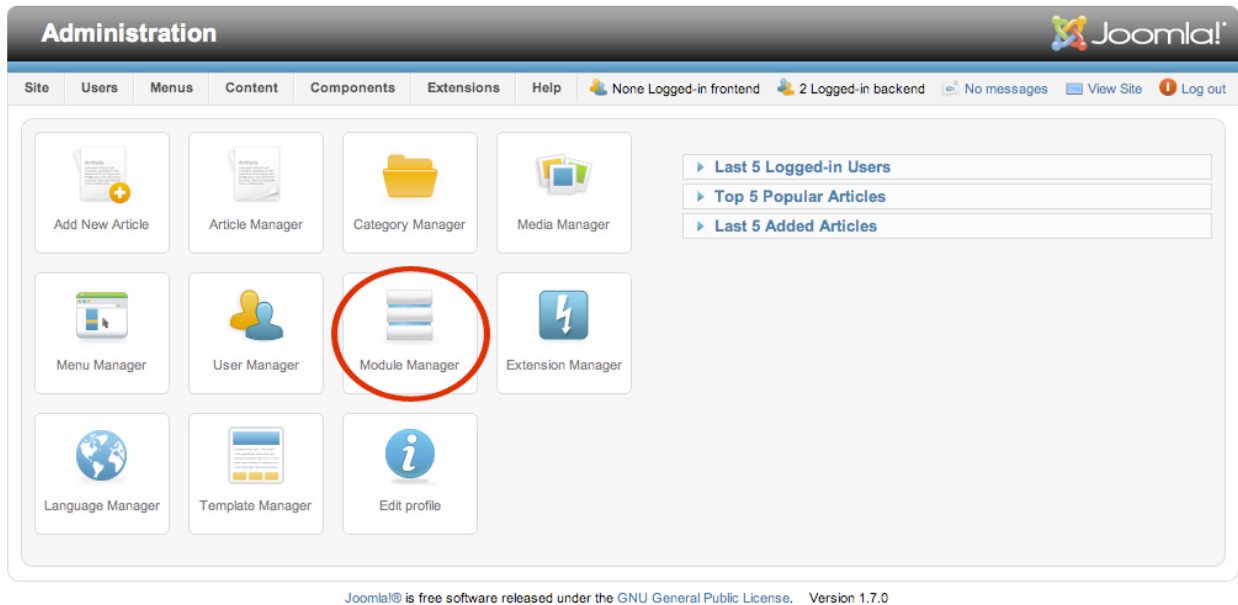
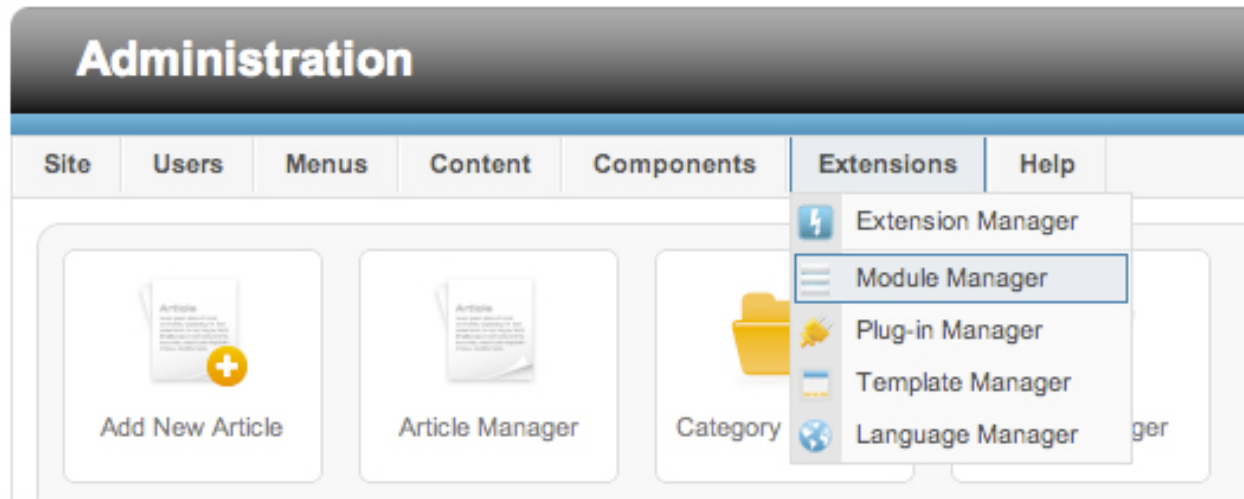
Small chunks of functionality or content that are assigned to various locations on your site

### Where

Extensions > Module Manager

### Details

**Modules** are Joomla! extensions that let you display small pieces of content, i.e. a “feature box,” or offer functionality, such as a login form or search-site field. Modules are assigned *Template Positions*” that determine where on a page to display. In addition, Modules can be assigned to specific pages based on *menu assignment*.

**Figure 3.2:** *Module Manager* access via Control Panel (*Administrator* level view)**Figure 3.3:** *Module Manager* access via menu navigation

## Components

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Sub-programs within Joomla! that provide major functionality

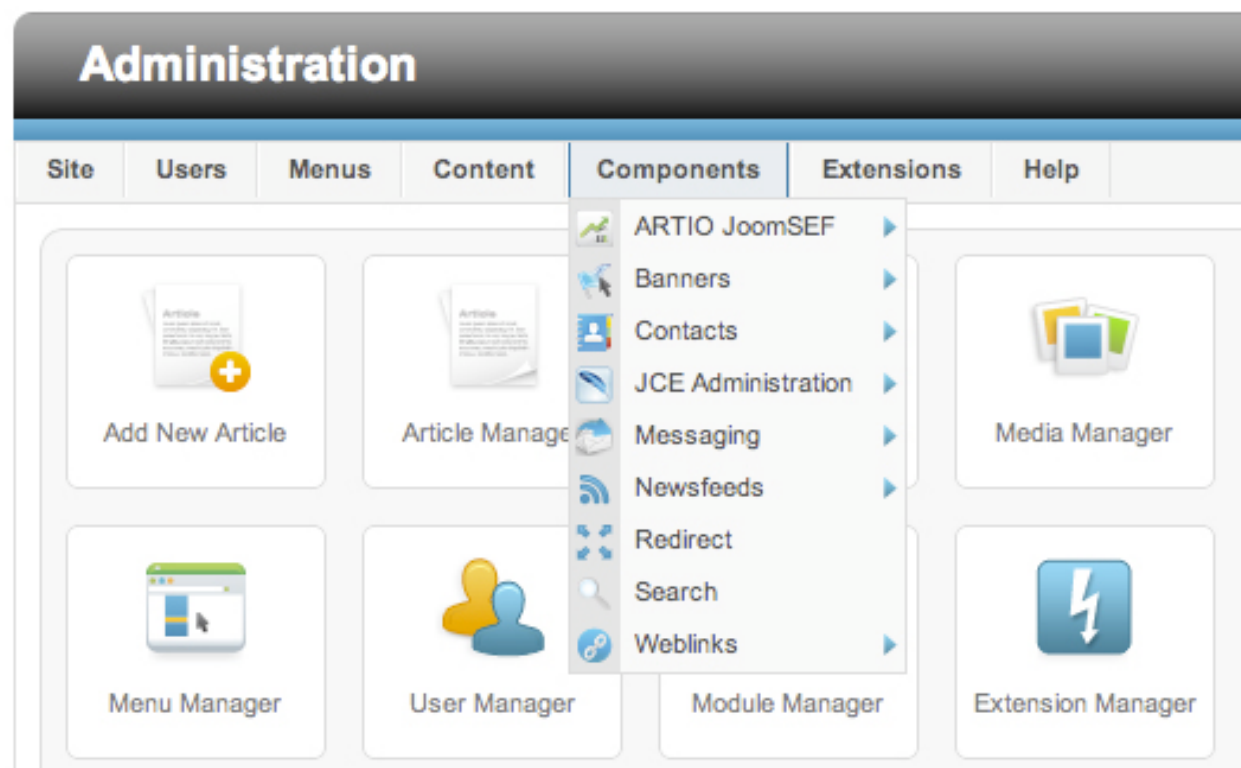
### Where

Components > [Component Name]

### Details

Larger and more versatile than Plug-ins or Modules, **Components** are full-blown programs that can vastly extend the features of your web site. Components can be small, like the Web Links component, one of Joomla!'s core components, or they can be large and let your site have advanced functional areas, such as a forum, social network or a shopping cart.

**Figure 3.4:** Joomla! core and third-party components access via the *Components* menu



## ***Chapter 4: Introduction to a few Advanced Topics***

As promised, this book is not an in-depth guide to Joomla! The point of this book is not to bog you down in highly technical explanations or lengthy tutorials about Joomla!. However, it is helpful even for content managers to understand, at least in overview, the technical context of the content you're managing. For instance, your content has a certain "look and feel" that is determined by your site's *Template*. Your web site's pages might have sophisticated behavior that's controlled by sub-programs that are managed with the *Extensions Manager*. And whether you are managing content or controlling system settings, you must be a Joomla! *User*. Last but not least, how your Joomla! site behaves, indeed even its title, is dependent on settings specified in the *Global Configuration*. This chapter introduces these concepts to enrich your understanding of Joomla!'s advanced features.

## Templates

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Management of web site look-and-feel design and interface behavior

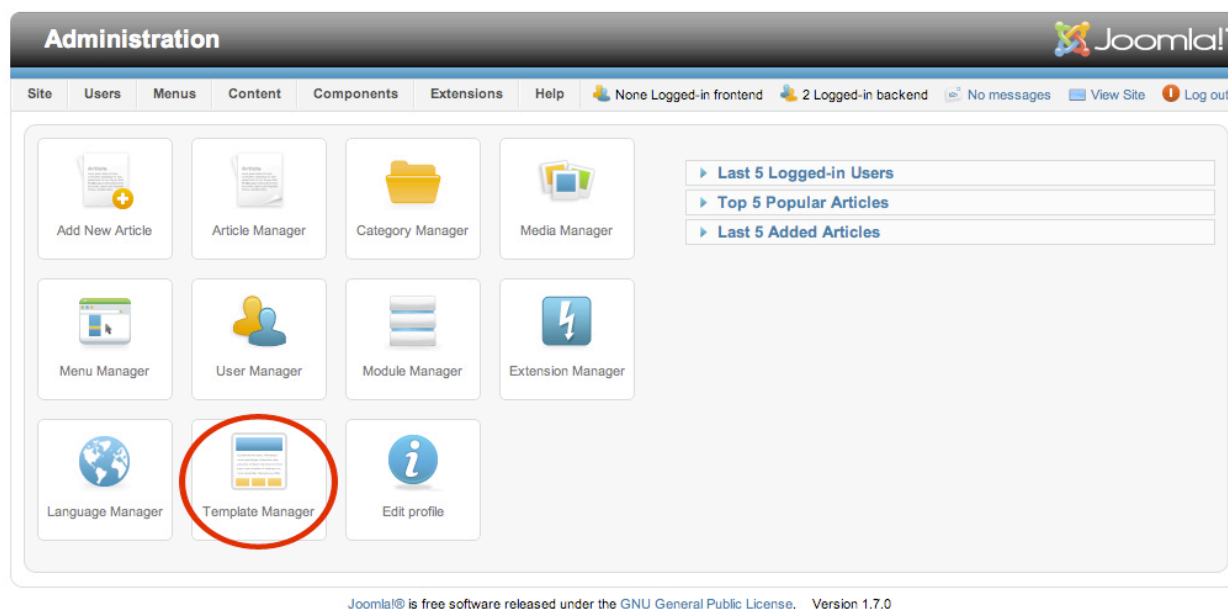
### Where

Extensions > Template Manager

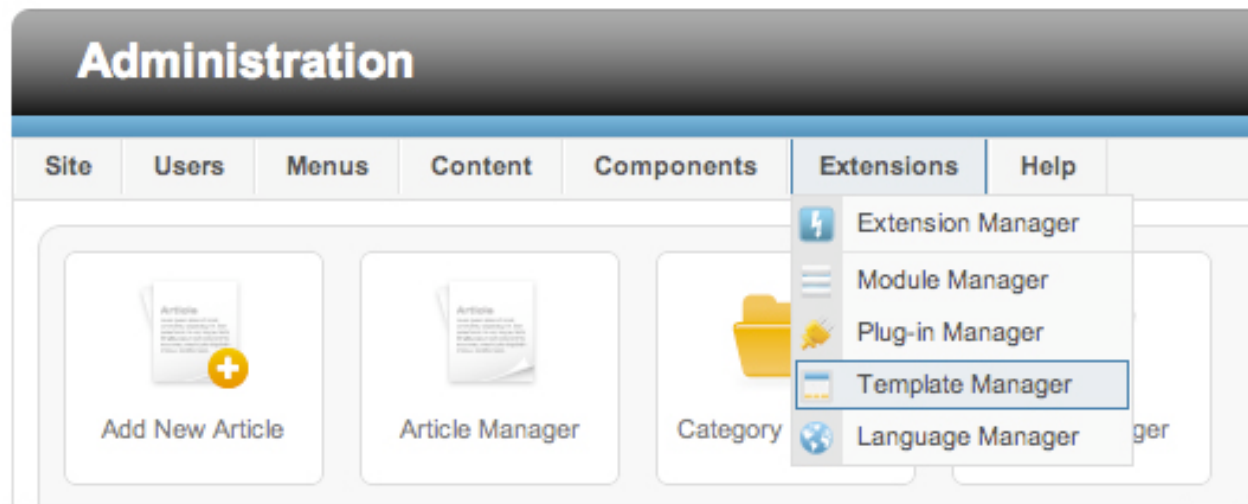
### Details

**Templates** determine the look and feel of your web site. It's the actual "design" of the site, but templates can be more than that. Templates can offer additional functionality to your site, and many templates do. Fundamentally, Templates control your site's look-and-feel and let you adjust certain aspects of it, like font colors, background textures, and so on.

**Figure 4.1:** *Template Manager* access via Control Panel (*Administrator* level view)



**Figure 4.2:** *Template Manager* access via menu navigation



## Install/Uninstall and Managing Extensions

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Allows installation and un-installation of templates and extensions

### Where

Extensions > Extensions Manager

### Details

The **Install/Uninstall** area of the Joomla! admin is where you can upload and install extensions and templates. This area also lets you **uninstall** templates and extensions. The *Extensions Manager: Install* screen is the first one you see when you access the *Extensions Manager*, but this screen contains several other areas to view, *Update*, *Manage*, *Discover* and *Warnings*. The only other one we'll introduce at this point is the *Manage* screen. Click its name and the *Extensions Manager* shows you every extension installed on your Joomla! site. From this screen you can change an extension's status, and even remove extensions all together. Feel free to view the other screens to see the type of information the *Extensions Manager* has available for you. To exit the *Extensions Manager*, simply browse back to the Control Panel via Site > Control Panel, or click the *Administration* heading above the menu bar.

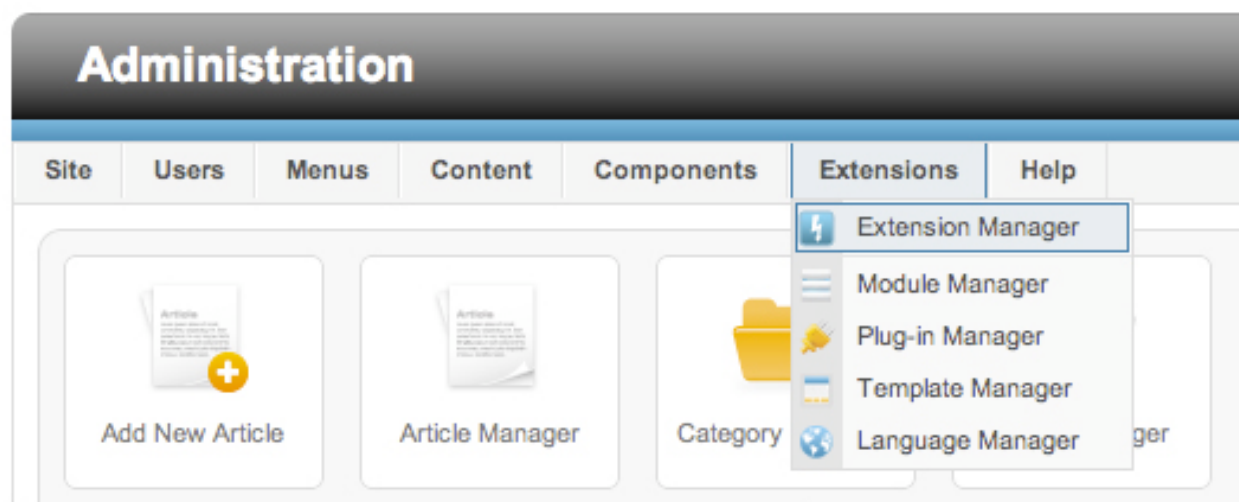
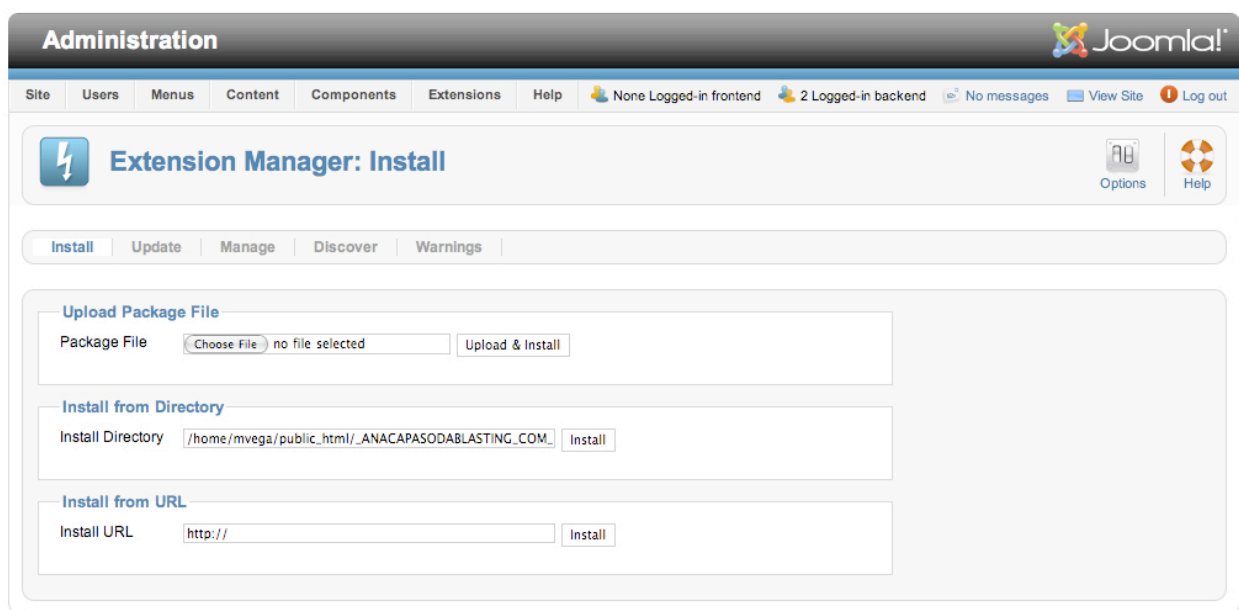
**Figure 4.3:** *Extensions Manager* access via menu navigation**Figure 4.4:** *Extensions Manager: Install* screen

Figure 4.5: Extensions Manager: Manage screen

Administration Joomla!

Site Users Menus Content Components Extensions Help None Logged-in frontend 2 Logged-in backend No messages View Site Log out

**Extension Manager: Manage** Enable Disable Refresh Cache Uninstall Options Help

Install Update **Manage** Discover Warnings

Filter: Search Clear Hide protected extensions - Select Location - - Select Status - - Select Type - - Select Folder -

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Location	Status	Type	Version	Date	Author	Folder	ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Administrator Menu	Administrator	✓	Module	1.7.0	March 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	305
<input type="checkbox"/>	Admin sub-Menu	Administrator	✓	Module	1.7.0	Feb 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	310
<input type="checkbox"/>	Admin - System Infos	Administrator	✓	Component	1.7.0	April 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Archived Articles	Site	✓	Module	1.7.0	July 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	200
<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles	Administrator	✓	Component	1.7.0	April 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	22
<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles Categories	Site	✓	Module	1.7.0	February 2010	Joomla! Project	N/A	221
<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles Category	Site	✓	Module	1.7.0	February 2010	Joomla! Project	N/A	220
<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles - Newsflash	Site	✓	Module	1.7.0	July 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	210
<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles - Related Articles	Site	✓	Module	1.7.0	July 2004	Joomla! Project	N/A	212
<input type="checkbox"/>	ARTIO JoomSEF	Administrator	✓	Component	4.0.8	9. July 2010	ARTIO s.r.o.	N/A	10013
<input type="checkbox"/>	atomic	Site	✓	Template	1.7.0	10/10/09	Ron Severdia	N/A	500
<input type="checkbox"/>	Authentication - Gmail	Site	⊘	Plugin	1.7.0	February 2006	Joomla! Project	authentication	400
<input type="checkbox"/>	Authentication - Joomla	Site	⊘	Plugin	1.7.0	November 2005	Joomla! Project	authentication	401

## Users

### Who

Administrators, Super Users

### What

Allows management of Joomla! users

### Where

Users > User Manager > [User Name]

### Details

The **User Manager** allows management of all Joomla! users in your system, including a user's *Name, Login Name, Password* and *Email*. Two settings that are particularly interesting are *Receive System Emails* and *Block User*.

**Receive System Emails:** can be set to *yes* for administrators who are responsible for monitoring site activity. This will allow the administrator to receive notification if someone registers for the site and other system messages that Joomla! may be configured to send.

**Block User:** does exactly what the title says. It disables a user. Sometimes it may be desired to simply disallow a user to access your site instead of deleting the user. An example of this might be if you've hired a contractor for a short time. You can allow or disallow the contractor access to your site based on the time that s/he is in your employ. This is a simpler workflow than deleting and re-creating the contractor's account.

**Assigned User Groups:** This is where you determine what access a user should have. There are two main groups of users, those who have access to the Admin site, "back-end" or "admin-site users," and those who have access only to the "front end" web site.

User Groups and a brief description of what each type can do:

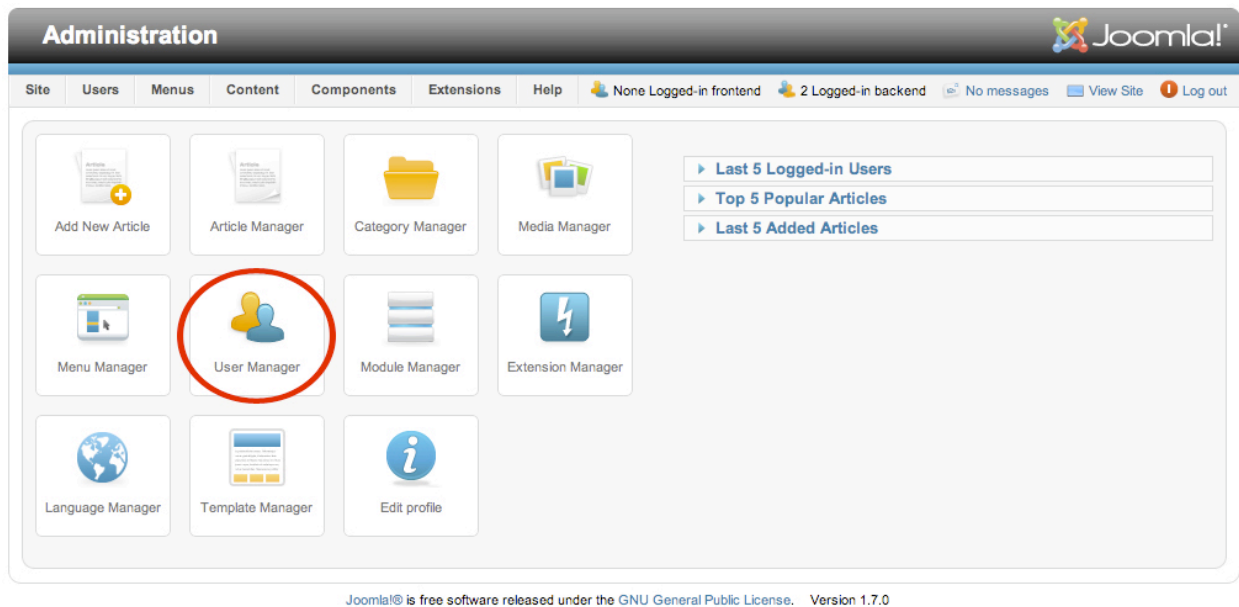
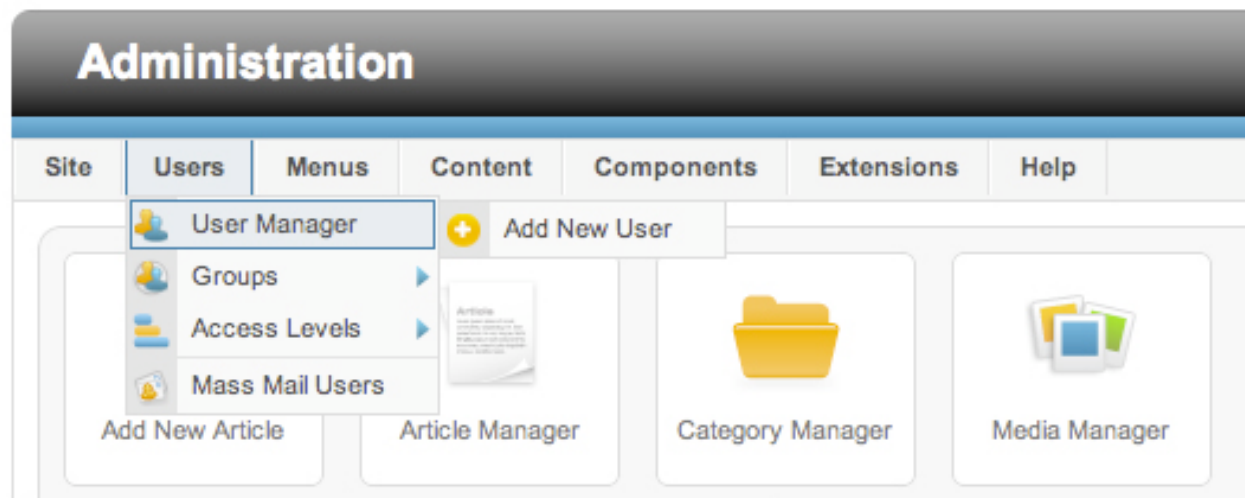
- *Manager:* Can access the Admin site and manage content-related items only.

- *Administrator*: Can access the Admin site and manage everything except system items.
- *Super User*: Can access the Admin site and manage everything including system items.
- *Registered*: Regular site user who has a basic profile and log-in on your site's front-end. When logged in Registered users can be served content that is not available to everyone ("guests"). Registered users cannot add, edit or publish content, and cannot access Admin site.
- *Author*: Cannot access Admin site, but is allowed to author content via the front-end site after logging in.
- *Editor*: Cannot access Admin site, but is allowed to edit content via the front-end site after logging in.
- *Publisher*: Cannot access Admin site, but is allowed to edit and publish or unpublish content via the front-end site after logging in.

**Basic Settings:** can be left alone for the purposes of basic Joomla! user management.

Note that assigning users to groups is possible only to the level of the user doing the changing. In other words, Administrators can manage and reassign other Administrators and lesser groups. Administrators cannot manage Super Users, but an Administrator can elevate a Registered user to Administrator.

Super Users can manage all users in any group—including other Super Users. This is a very powerful feature, so you should only grant Super User privileges to individuals that you trust explicitly.

**Figure 4.6:** *User Manager* access via Control Panel (*Administrator* level view)**Figure 4.7:** *User Manager* access via menu navigation

**Figure 4.8:** *User Manager: Edit Profile* screen

The screenshot displays the Joomla! Administration interface for editing a user profile. The top navigation bar includes 'Administration' and the Joomla! logo. Below it, a secondary navigation bar shows 'Site', 'Users', 'Menus', 'Content', 'Components', 'Extensions', and 'Help'. A status bar indicates 'None Logged-in frontend', '1 Logged-in backend', 'No messages', 'View Site', and 'Log out'.

The main content area is titled 'User Manager: Edit Profile' and features several sections:

- Account Details:** A form with fields for Name (Super User), Login Name, Password, Confirm Password, Email, Registration Date, and Last Visit Date. It also includes radio buttons for 'Receive System emails' (No selected) and 'Block this User' (No selected), and a field for 'ID' (42).
- Assigned User Groups:** A list of user groups with checkboxes: Public, Manager, Administrator, Registered, Author, Editor, Publisher, and Super Users (checked).
- Basic Settings:** A section with dropdown menus for Backend Template Style, Backend Language, Frontend Language, Editor, Help Site, and Time Zone, all set to '- Use Default -'.

At the top right of the main content area, there are icons for 'Save', 'Save & Close', 'Save & New', 'Close', and 'Help'.

## **Global Configuration**

### **Who**

Super Users

### **What**

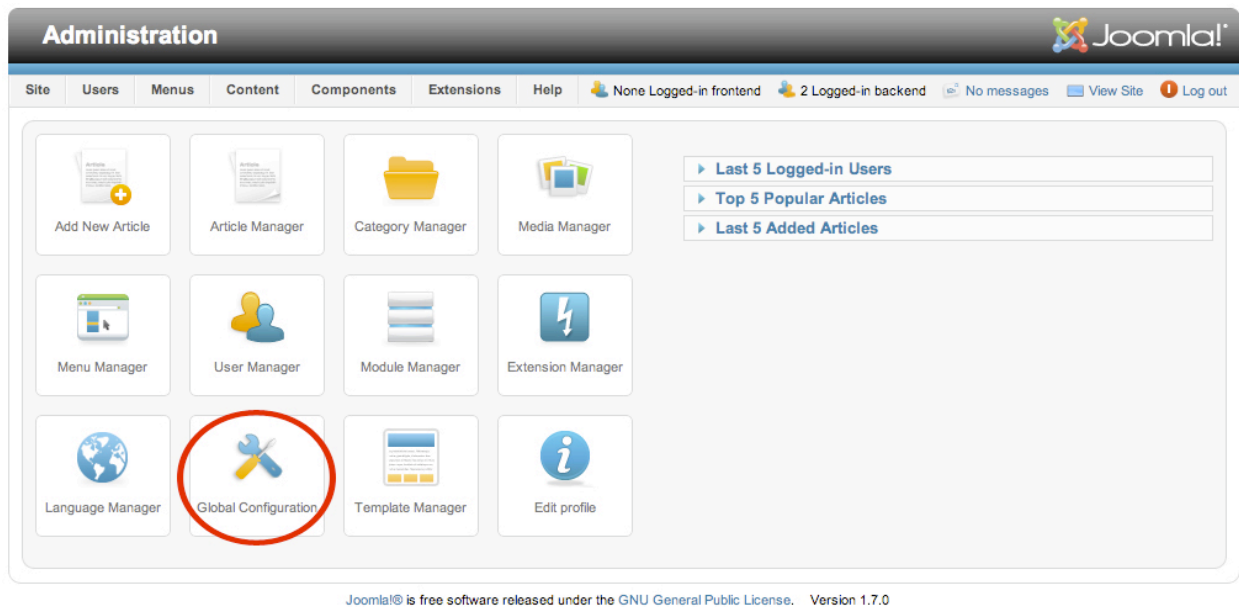
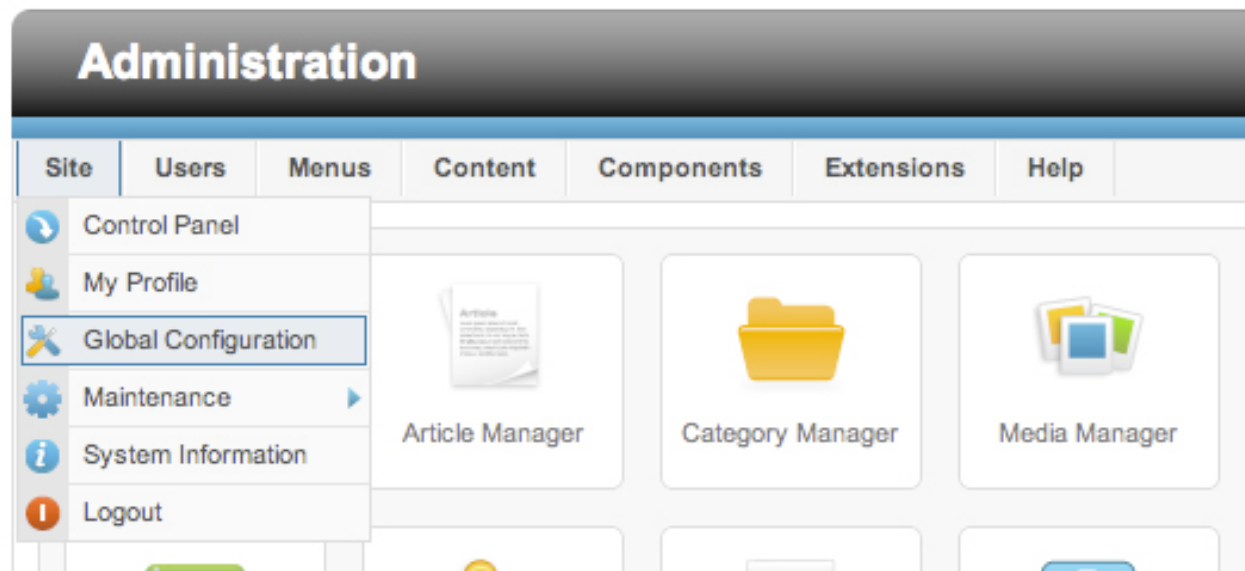
Allows editing of the global configuration file via a graphical user interface (GUI)

### **Where**

Site > Global Configuration

### **Details**

Critical site settings are managed from the **Global Configuration**, which is why only Super Users have access to this area. The Global Configuration manages settings that affect everything from the site name to session settings to permissions to database connection details. Most new users of Joomla!—and certainly users whose main role is to manage content—should not need access to the Global Configuration.

**Figure 4.9:** *Global Configuration* via Control Panel (*Super User* level view)**Figure 4.10:** *Global Configuration* via menu navigation

## **Conclusion**

At this point you should have enough of an understanding of Joomla! to add, edit and display content on your web site. We encourage you to continue exploring and learning Joomla! CMS. With its wide use and popularity, you will find a lot of community support and more detailed sources for learning Joomla! to any level you like.

## **Resources for support and continued learning**

Joomla! documentation's site. Best source for detailed instructions: .....<http://docs.joomla.org>

Joomla! main site: .....<http://joomla.org>

Joomla! forums: .....<http://forum.joomla.org>

*lynda.com* video tutorials: .....<http://lynda.com>

*YouTube!* Yes, *YouTube* has an array of Joomla! "how to" videos: .....<http://youtube.com>

