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# Meta data

*Additional topic data, program-generated or from DataForms, is stored embedded in the topic text using `META:` tags*

## Overview

By default, topics are stored in files on disk, in a really simple and obvious directory structure. The big advantage of this approach is that it makes it really easy to manipulate topics from outside, and is also very safe; there are no complex binary indexes to maintain, and moving a topic from one installation to another is as simple as copying a couple of text files.

To keep eveything together in one place, meta-data (program-generated or from DataForms) is embedded directly in topics. It does this using `META:` tags.

`META:` data includes program-generated info like FileAttachment, topic movement data and user-defined information from DataForms.

## Meta data syntax

- Format is the same as in macros, except all fields have a key.
  - `%META:<type>{key1="value1" key2="value2" ...}%`
- Order of fields within the meta-data is not defined, except that if there is a field with key `name`, this appears first for easier searching (note the order of the data themselves is defined).
- Each meta-datum is on one line.
- Values in meta-data are URL encoded so that characters such as \n can be stored.

**Example of Format**

```
text of the topic
```

## Meta data specifications

The current version of Meta Data is 1.0, with support for the following syntax.

### META:TOPICINFO

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| version | Same as SVN version |

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| date | integer, unix time, seconds since start 1970 |
| author | last to change topic, is the REMOTE_USER |
| format | Format of this topic, will be used for automatic format conversion |

## META:TOPICMOVED

This is optional, exists if topic has ever been moved. If a topic is moved more than once, only the most recent META:TOPICMOVED meta datum exists in the topic, older ones are to be found in the rcs history.

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| from | Full name, i.e., web.topic |
| to | Full name, i.e., web.topic |
| by | Who did it, is the REMOTE_USER, not WikiName |
| date | integer, unix time, seconds since start 1970 |

Notes:

- at present version number is not supported directly, it can be inferred from the SVN history.
- there is only one META:TOPICMOVED in a topic, older move information can be found in the SVN history.

## META:TOPICPARENT

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| name | The topic from which this was created, typically when clicking on a `?` questionmark link, or by filling out a form. Normally just `TopicName`, but it can be a full `Web.TopicName` format if the parent is in a different Web. |

## META:FILEATTACHMENT

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| name | Name of file, no path. Must be unique within topic |
| version | Same as SVN revision |
| path | Full path file was loaded from |
| size | In bytes |
| date | integer, unix time, seconds since start 1970 |
| user | the REMOTE_USER, not WikiName |
| comment | As supplied when file uploaded |
| attr | `h` if hidden, optional |

Extra fields that are added if an attachment is moved:

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| movedfrom | full topic name - web.topic |
| movedby | the REMOTE_USER, not WikiName |
| movedto | full topic name - web.topic |

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| moveddate | integer, unix time, seconds since start 1970 |

### META:FORM

| Key | Comment |
|---|---|
| name | A topic name - the topic represents one of the DataForms. Can optionally include the web name (i.e., web.topic), but doesn't normally |

### META:FIELD

Should only be present if there is a META:FORM entry. Note that this data is used when viewing a topic; the form definition is not read.

| Key | Name |
|---|---|
| name | Ties to entry in DataForms template, is title with all bar alphanumerics and . removed |
| title | Full text from DataForms template |
| value | Value user has supplied via form |

### Recommended sequence

There is no absolute need for Meta data to be listed in a specific order within a topic, but it makes sense to do so for a couple of good reasons:

- form fields remain in the order they are defined
- the `diff` function output appears in a logical order

The recommended sequence is:

- `META:TOPICINFO`
- `META:TOPICPARENT` (optional)
- text of topic
- `META:TOPICMOVED` (optional)
- `META:FILEATTACHMENT` (0 or more entries)
- `META:FORM` (optional)
- `META:FIELD` (0 or more entries; FORM required)

## Viewing meta data in page source

When viewing a topic the **`[View raw text]`** link can be clicked to show the text of a topic (i.e., as seen when editing). This is done by adding `raw=on` to URL. `raw=debug` shows the meta data as well as the topic data, ex: debug view for this topic

# Rendering meta data

Meta data is rendered with the %META% macro. This is mostly used in the `view`, `preview` and `edit` scripts.

You can render form fields in topic text by using the FORMFIELD macro. Example:
`%FORMFIELD{"TopicClassification"}%`
For details, see VarFORMFIELD.

Current support covers:

| Macro usage: | Comment: |
|---|---|
| `%META{"form"}%` | Show form data, see DataForms. |
| `%META{"formfield"}%` | Show form field value. Parameter: **`name="field_name"`**. Example: `%META{ "formfield" name="TopicClassification" }%` |
| `%META{"attachments"}%` | Show attachments, except for hidden ones. Options:<br>**`all="on"`**: Show all attachments, including hidden ones. |
| `%META{"moved"}%` | Details of any topic moves. |
| `%META{"parent"}%` | Show topic parent. Options:<br>**`dontrecurse="on"`**: By default recurses up tree, at some cost.<br>**`nowebhome="on"`**: Suppress WebHome.<br>**`prefix="..."`**: Prefix for parents, only if there are parents, default `""`.<br>**`suffix="..."`**: Suffix, only appears if there are parents, default `""`.<br>**`separator="..."`**: Separator between parents, default is `" > "`. |

SEARCH can also be used to render meta data, see examples in FormattedSearch and SearchPatternCookbook.

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**Related Topics:** DeveloperDocumentationCategory, UserDocumentationCategory
Edit | Attach | Print version | History: %REVISIONS% | Backlinks | Raw View | More topic actions
Topic revision: r1 - 12 Sep 2009 - 04:07:24 - ProjectContributor


- . System
- Log In

- **Toolbox**
- Users
- Groups
- Index
- Search
- Changes
- Notifications
- RSS Feed
- Statistics
- Preferences

- **User Reference**
- BeginnersStartHere
- TextFormattingRules

- Macros
- FormattedSearch
- QuerySearch
- DocumentGraphics
- SkinBrowser
- InstalledPlugins

- **Admin Maintenance**
- Reference Manual
- AdminToolsCategory
- InterWikis
- ManagingWebs
- SiteTools
- DefaultPreferences
- WebPreferences

- **Categories**
- Admin Documentation
- Admin Tools
- Developer Doc
- User Documentation
- User Tools

- **Webs**
- Public
- System

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