

# HowTo: the 'extensions/' directory

## What is this document?

This document describes how to activate the 'extensions/' directory. This directory is a feature introduced in **Pivot** version 1.20b3. The document describes the installation, the different uses, and provides information on limits and restrictions.

## How to activate the 'extensions/' directory

In the Administrative pages go to "Administration >> Configuration". About two-thirds of the way down the page you will find a form field entitled "Extensions directory". This is the place where you can provide the name for your 'extensions/' directory. There will be a suggested name of 'extensions/' which may appear localised if you have configured **Pivot** to use a language other than English for the administration. You can change this name to any name which is valid for the filesystem where your **Pivot** site is being hosted. If you so wish, you can even prefix the directory name with path information. Whatever changes you make, please remember to keep the trailing slash; after all, this is a directory that is being referenced.

The directory will be created after you validate the different configuration options by clicking the "Save Settings" button at the bottom of the page. When the directory is created, an empty 'index.php' file will be placed inside it; this will protect this directory from casual snoopers.

**Please note:** if you blank this field, then no directory will be created, and so you cannot use this feature.

## Why use the 'extensions/' directory?

By default, this directory is deliberately outside of the scope of **Pivot**. It is destined to hold the files and code that you wish to add to **Pivot**. In this way, you should be able to extend **Pivot** without having to touch the source code, and without having to store files in **Pivot's** directories. And so, when you update **Pivot** you will stand a lesser risk of losing your changes.

## How to use the 'extensions/' directory

There is a new template tag '`[[extensions_dir]]`' that you can use in your templates to call in and include files from this directory. For example, if you wish to include in the header of a page, a JavaScript file, named 'javascript.js', that you have uploaded using your FTP client to the 'extensions/' directory use the following code in your page template:

```
<script language="JavaScript" src="[[extensions_dir]]javascript.js" type="text/javascript"></script>
```

A suggestion from Bob; create a temporary file 'javascript.js' file, containing just the following code:

```
alert('pling');
```

When you regenerate the page and display it, you should get the alert. This will confirm that the 'extensions/' directory is correctly installed in **Pivot**. You can now replace this temporary file with your good one.

That's all. Now, if at some future date, you need to replace or to update **Pivot's** 'pivot/includes/js/' directory, you can. With no risk of replacing a homegrown file that you might have placed there.

## More uses

From version 1.20b3 onwards, **Pivot** also searches for a file named 'snippets.php' inside the 'extensions/' directory. This file can be used to hold any new code snippets that you wish to use in **Pivot** to extend the existing snippets. Provided that these are correctly programmed, they will be incorporated into **Pivot**'s functionality exactly as if they were in the 'module\_snippets.php' file.

Here is a sample snippets file, to show you how easy it is.

```
<?php

function snippet_fortune() {
    $f = array(
        'This threatens to be something frightfully droll
        and witty - but don\'t worry, it only threatens','me',
        '\`Oh, them as makes the endings don\'t get them,\`
        said Granny.','Terry Pratchett -- Maskerade',
        'Getting an education was a bit like a communicable
        sexual disease. It made you unsuitable for a lot of jobs
        and then you had the urge to pass it on.','Terry Pratchett -- Hogfather',
        'There are three kinds of people in this world,
        ones you can count on, and ones that can\'t count.','Anon.',
        'The truly paranoid administrator may wish to place motion detectors
        in the air ducts.','Practical UNIX & Internet Security, 2nd Edition',
        'Friends don\'t let Friends drive Naked.','Anon.',
        'Granddad was superstitious about books. He thought that if you had
        enough of them around, education leaked out,
        like radioactivity.','Terry Pratchett -- Johnny and the Dead',
        'NT and security should not be used in the same sentence without
        negation.','Anon.',
        'Mental backup in progress - Do Not Disturb!','Anon.',
        'Although it\'s never fun getting one year older, it sure beats the
        alternative!','Anon.',
        'Those who do not learn from Dilbert are doomed to repeat it.','Anon.',
        'There are many reasons for being friends with someone. The fact
        that he\'s pointing a deadly weapon at you is among the top
        four.','Terry Pratchett -- The Last Continent',
        'For every action, there is an equal and opposite criticism.','Anon.',
    );
    $rand = rand( 0,(count( $f )/2 )-1 );
    $output = '<div class="fortune"><cite>'.$f[2*$rand];
    $output .= '</cite><br />&#8212;'.$f[1+2*$rand].'\</div>';
    return $output;
}

?>
```

By including the above content in a 'snippets.php' file, inside your 'extensions/' directory, you will have access to your very own '[[fortune]]' template tag. This new tag can be used to insert randomish fortune cookie messages where you wish on your **Pivot** Pages.

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