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Comment Plugin

The Comment Plugin lets users quickly post comments to a page without an edit/preview/save cycle.

Related topics: CommentPluginTemplates, CommentPluginExamples

Features

Inserts an edit box into the page that allows users to type in and save comments. Comments can be made

- in different formats (as defined by a template),
- in both forward and reverse chronological order,
- signed or unsigned, dated or undated (as defined by a template),
- in other topics, or other positions within the current topic.

Syntax

Write `%COMMENT{attributes}%` anywhere in a TWiki topic.

- A `%COMMENT%` without parameters shows a simple text box.
- A `%COMMENT{ }%` can handle the following parameters:

Parameter	Description	Default
type	This is the name of the template to use for this comment. Comment templates are defined in a TWiki template - see customization. If this attribute is not defined, the type is whatever is defined by COMMENTPLUGIN_DEFAULT_TYPE, either in this topic or in your WebPreferences.	"below"
default	Default text to put into the textarea of the prompt.	
target	Name of the topic to add the comment to	the current topic
location	Regular expression specifying the comment location in the target topic. Read <i>carefully</i> the CommentPlugin documentation!	
mode	For compatibility with older versions only, synonymous with type	
nonotify	Set to "on" to disable change notification for target topics	"off"
noform	Set to "on" to disable the automatic form that encloses your comment block - <i>remember</i> to insert <code><form></code> tags yourself! See CommentPluginExamples#noform for an example.	"off"
nopost	Set to "on" to disable insertion of the posted text into the topic.	"off"
remove	Set to "on" to remove the comment prompt after the first time it is clicked.	"off"
button	Button label text	"Add comment"
emailto	Send comment by email. Use comma "," to separate multiple email addresses. This feature is disabled by default. To enable this feature, please set up <code>"\$TWiki::cfg{Plugins}{CommentPlugin}{EmailEnabled} = 1;</code>	

(See also additional attributes)

Positioning the comment

`%COMMENT` supports several ways to specify *where* a comment should be inserted in the target topic. This is referred to as the *location* of the comment.

Location relative to `%COMMENT` tag

The default *location* is the `%COMMENT` tag itself. For example:

```
%COMMENT{type="below"}%
```

will add comments in the current topic, directly below the `%COMMENT` tag.

Location relative to a TWiki anchor

The `target` attribute may specify a web, and may also specify an anchor within the target topic; for example,

```
%COMMENT{type="above" target="%USERSWEB%.PersonalRemarks#InsertHere"}%
```

This uses a standard TWiki in-topic anchor as the insertion location. See `TextFormattingRules` for more about TWiki anchors.

Location relative to an arbitrary text string

Getting more sophisticated, you can also specify a regular expression for the target location using the `location` parameter. The target topic is searched for the regular expression, and the comment inserted relative to the string that the search matched. For example,

```
%COMMENT{type="above" location="Flights of Fancy"}%
```

will place comments above the first occurrence of the string `Flights of Fancy` in the current topic.

Warning of course, if a user's comment contains the string "Flights of Fancy" they may end up *changing the location* for the next comment! Also, if you use a tag in the location, then you've just inserted another tag in the page that contains the `%COMMENT!` So be very careful how you specify the RE for `location`. Note that the RE is matched using perl "multiple line" mode, so `^` and `$` match the start of a line and the end of a line respectively.

Also note that you cannot have the text `location="` just before the location.

I look forward to someone leveraging this feature to create - for example - threaded conversations using `%COMMENT`.

If you specify an anchor *and* a `location`, the anchor will be ignored.

Default templates

Templates are used to define the "comment style" i.e. how comments appear in the page. The default is to add comments in "Blog like" style using bulleted lists, with the most recent comment at the top, but many other styles are available such as tables or Wiki thread mode comments. It is easy to define your own customer styles as well.

A set of default comment templates are shipped with the plugin - see also `CommentPluginTemplates`:

Template type	Description
top	Comments, signed and dated (server time), added at top of the topic (the anchor is ignored)
bottom	Comments, signed and dated (server time), added at end of the target topic (the anchor is ignored)
above	Comments, signed and dated (server time), added immediately before the target anchor, or

	the %COMMENT if no anchor is specified
below	Comments, signed and dated (server time), added immediately below the target anchor, or the %COMMENT if no anchor is specified
belowthreadmode	Comments, signed and dated, added recurse after comment box
threadmode	Wiki thread mode comment, signed and dated (server time)
tableprepend	Comments, signed and dated (server time), formatted as an HTML table row, added below the anchor (which must be in an HTML <table>)
tableappend	Comments, signed and dated (server time), formatted as an HTML table row, added above the anchor (which must be in an HTML <table>)
action	Action added to action table directly above comment box (see Plugin Installation Instructions below for important notes)
table	Tablerows adding on end
toctalk	Talk using TOC adding on end
bookmark	Create a list of annotated bookmarks
return	Post to a different topic and return

Your local installation may add more template types as well - see Customization, below.

Customization

Customization of the comment plugin requires

- familiarity with HTML forms
- some familiarity with the TWiki templating language.

To define a comment type, you have to provide two simple template definitions in the template file; one for the prompt box, and one for the generated output. If we have a template type "mytype", these are named `PROMPT:mytype` and `OUTPUT:mytype` respectively. See `comments.tmpl` in the templates directory for examples.

The plugin picks up these template definitions from a standard TWiki template file, `templates/comments.tmpl`. This allows different templates to be defined for different TWiki skins.

Defining custom templates

By default, `templates/comments.tmpl` includes the topic `CommentPluginTemplate`, which contains all the shipped standard templates and in turn includes `TWiki.UserCommentsTemplate` that can include non-standard customizations.

This allows for several levels of customization:

1. To **override all default templates, everywhere**, change `comments.tmpl` to include a different topic (this customization will be lost next time you upgrade, though).
2. To add **site-wide local template customizations**, add them to `UserCommentsTemplate` (create if it does not exist yet). You can redefine the standard templates here if you want, and your definitions will override the standard definitions.
3. To override templates on a **web-by-web basis**, add a topic `UserCommentsTemplate` to the web (this will replace `TWiki.UserCommentsTemplate`)
4. To override templates **for a specific skin**, add them to `TWiki.UserComments<Skin>Template` (where `<Skin>` is the name of the skin with the first letter capitalized, e.g. `Pattern`)

Per topic custom comment template

You can also define a **comment template in a topic**, by passing the topic location with a `templatetopic` parameter. For example:

```
%COMMENT{type="blogpost" templatetopic="BlogPostCommentTemplate" target="%TOPIC%" button="Add comment"}
```


`templatetopic` accepts `topic` or `web.topic` syntax. See an example in [CommentPluginExamples#TemplateTopic](#).

If you use any topic other than `UserCommentTemplate`, it is critically important that you include this line at the end of your comment template topic:

```
%TMPL:INCLUDE{"%SYSTEMWEB%.CommentPlugin"}%
```

Without this line your templates will not be picked up.

 Templates are picked up by following the standard TWiki rules for locating template files. Note that you can use `%TMPL:INCLUDE%` to include other files of templates.

 Note that from TWiki release 4.1.0 leading and trailing whitespace is no longer stripped. This means that when you upgrade to TWiki 4.1.X you may need to remove the first line break in your custom comment templates. See [TWikiReleaseNotes04x01](#) for more information.

Customization example

Provide both a `PROMPT` and an `OUTPUT` definition:

```
%TMPL:DEF{PROMPT:myComment}%%TMPL:P{promptbox}%%TMPL:END%
%TMPL:DEF{OUTPUT:myComment}%%TMPL:P{outputoneline}%%POS:TOP%
%TMPL:END%
```

Call your custom comment with:

```
%COMMENT{type="myComment"}%
```

The `PROMPT` template

The `PROMPT` template defines the contents of an HTML form that is used to capture the comment. This form invokes the comment generator when submitted. Parameters to the comment generator are defined using standard HTML input fields, such as `input`, `textarea` and `select`. The user enters values for these parameters, and these are then available when the `OUTPUT` template is expanded, in the form of `%URLPARAM%`s.

Note that you must define a "submit" button if you want the form to work!

Only the input fields of the form need be defined. The plugin automatically generates the `<form>` and `</form>` tags, with these two exceptions:

1. The `COMMENT` has a `noform="on"` parameter. In this case, the `PROMPT` template has to specify the form tags and some additional hidden input fields. See [CommentPluginExamples#noform](#) example.
2. The `PROMPT` template contains `%COMMENTFORMSTART%` and `%COMMENTFORMEND%`, which gives control over where to add the form tags and the hidden input fields:
 - ◆ `%COMMENTFORMSTART%` - HTML form start tag
 - ◆ `%COMMENTFORMEND%` - hidden input fields and HTML form end tag

The latter feature can be used to define a `PROMPT` template that contains more than one form, such as a comment plugin prompt form, and a second form with a "notify authors" button (see [TWiki:Plugins.NotifyAuthorsPlugin](#)).

Example `PROMPT` template with two forms:

```
%TMPL:DEF{PROMPT:two_form_demo}%
%COMMENTFORMSTART% <!-- form start tag -->
<textarea %DISABLED% rows="%rows|5%" cols="%cols|80%" name="comment"></textarea>
<input %DISABLED% type="submit" value="%button|Add comment%" class="twikiButton" />
%COMMENTFORMEND% <!-- hidden input fields and form end tag -->
%NOTIFYAUTHORS% <!-- second form with notify authors button -->
%TMPL:END%
```

Providing attribute values

If an attribute is given to the `%COMMENT` tag that is not one of the standard attributes, then that attribute is taken as the name of a parameter to be expanded in the `PROMPT` template. Expressions in the template of the form `%param|default` (e.g. `%rows|3%`, `%button|Push me%`) are expanded to the values given in the `%COMMENT`. For example, if the `PROMPT` template 'example' contains:

```
<textarea rows=%rows|3% cols="%cols|50%" value="%tval|Rubbish%">
```

and the `%COMMENT` tag is:

```
%COMMENT{type="example" cols="75"}%
```

then the template will be expanded as

```
<textarea rows="3" cols="75" value="Rubbish">
```

Special variables

As well as support for all the usual TWiki variables in templates, the following special variables are supported in the `PROMPT` definition:

Variable	Description
<code>%DISABLED%</code>	Set to 'disabled' when you cannot comment (e.g. in preview mode).
<code>%MESSAGE%</code>	The text specified by <code>default</code> . This may be overridden by a helpful message when the prompt is <code>DISABLED</code> .

EXPERT Note that when a comment is saved, the TWiki `save` script is invoked on the target topic, with a number of parameters provided by the comment form. Normally the CommentPlugin will provide these fields in the form, but experts can also provide the fields themselves in order to get finer control over what is submitted, or you might want to define your own HTML forms that do comment submission. The parameters that the CommentPlugin recognises are as follows:

CGI parameter	Description
<code>comment_action</code>	Must be <code>save</code> to get the CommentPlugin to perform
<code>comment_type</code>	Type of the <code>OUTPUT</code> template
<code>comment_index</code>	Zero-based index of the <code>%COMMENT</code> in the source topic. Used to place a post relative to an existing <code>%COMMENT</code> .
<code>comment_anchor</code>	Anchor taken from the <code>target spec</code>
<code>comment_location</code>	As passed to <code>%COMMENT</code>
<code>comment_nonotify</code>	As passed to <code>%COMMENT</code>

comment_remove	Zero-based index of a %COMMENT to remove from the target topic
comment_nopost	As passed to %COMMENT
comment_templatetopic	As passed to %COMMENT

Note that `comment_location` overrides `comment_anchor`, and both override `comment_index`. Example, shows an "I Approve" button that adds your approval signature to the end of the topic:

```
<form method="post" action="%SCRIPTURL{save}%/%WEB%/%TOPIC%">
<input type="submit" value="I Approve" />
<input type="hidden" name="comment_action" value="save" />
<input type="hidden" name="comment_type" value="bottom" />
<input type="hidden" name="comment" value="I Approve" />
</form>
```

Customization example with custom form template

Write a custom form in a topic.

- In the form set the location of the prompt with `%COMMENTPROMPT%`; the prompt will be positioned here.
- In `%COMMENT` use parameter `noform="on"`
- In `%COMMENT` use parameter `templatetopic` to point to the topic with the form template

Example form:

```
%TMPL:DEF{FORM:example}%
<form method="post" action="%SCRIPTURL{save}%/%BASEWEB%/%BASETOPIC%" enctype="application/x-www-f
<input type="hidden" name="redirectto" value="%BASEWEB%.%BASETOPIC%" />
%COMMENTPROMPT%
</form>
%TMPL:END%
```

Example comment:

```
%COMMENT{noform="on" type="example" templatetopic="Sandbox.CommentPluginTemplateExample" target="
```

The OUTPUT template

The `OUTPUT` template defines the format for the text that actually gets embedded into the topic. All the usual TWiki variables are available in the `PROMPT` definition, but note that they get expanded *when the comment is inserted in the text*, so time, date and username will refer to the time and date when the comment was made, and the user who made it.

There are also four position tags that are used to indicate where the comment should be placed, relative to the `location` defined in the `%COMMENT` tag:

%POS:TOP%	If present, comments will be inserted at the top of the topic i.e. before any other text
%POS:BOTTOM%	If present, comments will be inserted at the end of the topic i.e. after all existing text
%POS:BEFORE%	If present, comments will be inserted immediately before the %COMMENT% tag
%POS:AFTER%	If present, comments will be inserted immediately after the %COMMENT% tag

Note that these position tags are obviously mutually exclusive. If you define more than one, the result is undefined. If none is present, the default is taken from the plugin setting `COMMENTPLUGIN_DEFAULT_TYPE`

%COMMENTPROMPT%	Use with a custom form. If present, the comment prompt will be positioned here.
-----------------	---

All the usual TWikiVariables that can be used in a topic template can also be used in an `OUTPUT` template. See TWikiVariables for details.

Plugin Settings

Show details Hide details

Plugin settings are stored as preferences settings. Do *not* change the settings here, they are here only for illustration purposes showing the default values. Define the settings in `Main.TWikiPreferences`, in a `WebPreferences` or in individual topics. For example, to customize the `COMMENTPLUGIN_DEFAULT_TYPE` setting, add a `* Set COMMENTPLUGIN_DEFAULT_TYPE = ...` bullet in `Main.TWikiPreferences`.

- Name of file in the `twiki/templates` directory that contains the comment templates. The default 'comments.tpl' automatically includes user templates from `TWiki.CommentPluginTemplate`, which in turn includes `TWiki.UserCommentsTemplate`.
 - ◆ Set `COMMENTPLUGIN_TEMPLATES = comments`
- Default template type (above or below) :
 - ◆ Set `COMMENTPLUGIN_DEFAULT_TYPE = above`

Plugin Installation Instructions

This plugin is pre-installed. TWiki administrators can upgrade the plugin as needed on the TWiki server.

Show details Hide details

- For an *automated installation*, run the configure script and follow "Find More Extensions" in the in the *Extensions* section.
 - ◆ See the installation supplement[?] on TWiki.org for more information.
- Or, follow these *manual installation* steps:
 - ◆ Download the ZIP file from the extension home on twiki.org (see below).
 - ◆ Unzip `CommentPlugin.zip` in your twiki installation directory.
 - ◆ Set the ownership of the extracted directories and files to the webserver user.
 - ◆ Install the dependencies (if any).
- Plugin *configuration and testing*:
 - ◆ Run the configure script and enable the plugin in the *Plugins* section.
 - ◆ Configure additional plugin settings in the *Extensions* section if needed.
 - ◆ Test if the installation was successful using the examples provided.

Note that if you want to use the `action` template then you must also:

1. Install the `TWiki:Plugins/ActionTrackerPlugin?`;
2. Put the `CommentPlugin` **before** the `ActionTrackerPlugin` in the `{PluginsOrder}` configuration option (in `configure`)

Plugin Info

- Set `SHORTDESCRIPTION = Quickly post comments to a page without an edit/preview/save cycle.`

Plugin Author:	TWiki:Main.CrawfordCurrie [?] http://www.c-dot.co.uk[?] inspired by the work of TWiki:Main.DavidWeller [?] and TWiki:Main.PeterMasiar [?]
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License:	GPL (GNU General Public License)
Plugin Version:	2018-07-05
Show Change History <input type="checkbox"/> Hide Change History <input type="checkbox"/>	
2018-07-05:	TWikibug:Item7841 : Copyright update to 2018
2016-01-08:	TWikibug:Item7708 : Copyright update to 2016
2015-01-10:	TWikibug:Item7604 : Switch to GPL v3
2013-02-10:	TWikibug:Item7141 : Control over where to add the form tag in comment PROMPT template -- TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny
2013-02-06:	TWikibug:Item7139 : Use BUBBLESIGNATUREFORMAT if defined, showing nice bubble boxes around default comments -- TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny
2013-01-09:	TWikibug:Item7123 : Use TWISTY in plugin settings section, installation instructions and change history
2013-01-04:	TWikibug:Item7115 : Configurable signatures with profile pictures - use SIGNATUREFORMAT setting in default comment box signature -- TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny
2012-11-16:	TWikibug:Item7039 : Adapting it to the enhanced TWiki::Func::getScriptUrl() -- TWiki:Main.HideyoImazu
2012-11-12:	TWikibug:Item6967 : Better layout of default comment box -- TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny
2012-11-11:	TWikibug:Item7020 : Categorize TWiki Variable COMMENT -- TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny
2012-09-26:	TWikibug:Item6945 : Send comment to multiple email addresses.
2012-09-26:	TWikibug:Item6944 : Get script URL with TWiki::Func::getMasterWebScriptUrl.
2011-06-16:	TWikibug:Item6754 : Fix for action comment template missing %ENDACTION% -- TWiki:Main.JohnRouillard
2011-06-12:	TWikibug:Item6725 : Change global package variables from "use vars" to "our"; adding NO_PREFS_IN_TOPIC in plugin package -- TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny
2011-03-28:	TWikibug:Item6672 - doc improvements: Adding link to HIDE
2010-12-11:	TWikibug:Item6530 - doc improvements -- TWiki:Main.ScottGutman
2010-05-16:	TWikibug:Item6433 - doc improvements
2010-03-19:	TWikibug:Item6404 Use \$br in newline parameter for break tag instead of turning off encoding -- TWiki:Main/PeterThoeny
2010-02-27:	TWikibug:Item6276 Cannot specify percentBRpercent for newline value -- TWiki:Main/SopanShewale
2009-01-21:	TWikibug:Item6163 Fix for Comment Plugin losing data if target anchor is missing -- TWiki:Main/TimotheLitt and TWiki:Main/SopanShewale
03 Aug 2008	The TWiki 4.2.1 release version
11 Apr 2008	TWikibug:Item5518 corrected the template definition for bulletabove
5 Sep 2007	TWikibug:Item3689 corrected location handling TWikibug:Item4181 added VarCOMMENT TWikibug:Item4402 corrected access check
22 Jun 2007	Removed the long-deprecated %TIME (use %GMTIME instead). Minor doc changes
14021	TWikibug:Item3755 Fixed incorrect handling of line terminators when targeting an anchor
13311	Added option to define a comment template in any topic. Pass the topic location with <code>templatetopic</code> (either <code>topic</code> or <code>web.topic</code>). See an example in CommentPluginExamples:templatetopic .
12822	TWikibug:Item3598 minor doc fixes
12750	TWikibug:Item3510 added a note about the changed template spec in TWiki 4.1.0. Code remains unchanged
11358	TWikibug:Item2802 moved SHORTDESCRIPTION to .pm. Coded up TWiki:Main/PankajPant 's suggestions as <code>nopost</code> and <code>remove</code> . Added default text for the

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	%COMMENT as requested by TWiki:Main.AndyGlew
11118	TWikibug:Item2322 removed span tag around oneliner bullet output
8788	TWikibug:Item1465 Item1577: reverted 8433 to fix inclusion of correct user templates
8787	TWikibug:Item1573 renamed standard templates topic to avoid naming clash on Windows, where filenames are case-insensitive
8433	TWikibug:Item1465 Fix 'TWiki.' to '%TWIKIWEB%.'; also fixed include 'UserComments' to 'UserCommentsTemplate' (at least that is what the doc suggests)
7427	TWikibug:Item845 removed duplicate date in default comments; stick with server time
7251	TWikibug:Item810 fix for user template inclusion; reorganised templates to make customisation easier
5906	TWikibug:Item143 apache warning from comment plugin when CommentsTmpl.txt not found
5519	CommentPluginOnAnchorsBroken: incorporated JacobEisinger's fix
5518	CommentPluginOnAnchorsBroken: incorporated OlivierBerger's fix
5455	On Niels Kodslo's prompting, removed the global recursion prevention that I believe is no longer needed.
5280	Removed templates, and some minor fixes
5250	Removed newlines from prompt box
4902	Changed to use viewauth. Moved templates into user topics.
4901	Added templates in user webs support
4897	Fixes for disabling during preview; re-enabled old legacy parameters
4889	Chopped down from PeterMasiar version, removing several parameters, savecomment script, changing way templates are done. Major rewrite, atcherly.
4882	Update from PeterMasiar's 2.0 version, plus documentation and small code improvements.
4745	06 Mar 2002 initial commit
Plugin Home:	http://TWiki.org/cgi-bin/view/Plugins/CommentPlugin
Feedback:	http://TWiki.org/cgi-bin/view/Plugins/CommentPluginDev
Appraisal:	http://TWiki.org/cgi-bin/view/Plugins/CommentPluginAppraisal

Related Topics: [CommentPluginTemplates](#), [CommentPluginExamples](#), [TWikiPreferences](#), [TWikiPlugins](#)

This topic: [TWiki > CommentPlugin](#)

Topic revision: r1 - 2018-07-06 - [TWikiContributor](#)



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Ideas, requests, problems regarding TWiki? Send feedback

Note: Please contribute updates to this topic on TWiki.org at [TWiki:TWiki.CommentPlugin](#)