

Joomla sh404SEF Component

The sh404SEF Plugin makes Joomla SEO easy and make Joomla sites work better in Google.

Allows Search Engine Friendly URLs for Apache (and possibly but unsupported, IIS). You can also setup your own, custom URLs if you don't like those automatically built. Builds page title and meta tags, and insert them into page. Title and tags can be manually set as well. Provides security functions, by checking the content of URL and visitor IP against various security check lists, plus an anti-flooding system.

It has a caching system, to reduce database queries and enhance page loading time when using URL rewriting. sh404SEF can operate with or without mod_rewrite (that is with or without .htaccess file). Url are the same, except there is an added /index.php/ bit in them when not using .htaccess. This is now the default setting, as it is much easier to use.

You may want to adjust your ErrorDocument as 404 errors will no longer be processed by Joomla when operating without a .htaccess file.

The integrated tool to manage your META tags, shCustomTags is a module that will rewrite Title, Description, Keywords, Robots and Language meta tags to your liking, on any page of your site. It has a plugin system to accomodate any component, and a Virtuemart and a regular content plugin are provided to automatically generate these tags.

Plus, you'll be able to manually set any tags you like on a page by page basis (a page is identified by its URL). Plus you'll be able to set content title within h1 tags, and remove Generator = Joomla tags, plus perform various text replacement operations on your page. There is no hack of Joomla, just a module.

shCustomTags has been installed automatically with sh404SEF, but it not published initially. You must publish it and review instructions in its backend. Both sh404SEF and shCustomTags have been tested only using Joomla 1.012 and VirtueMart 1.0.10 (should work with previous version of Joomla – don't know about previous versions of VirtueMart). Simple tests ahve been done with Joomla 1.0.13, so sh404SEF should not cause any problem there

sh404SEF Install Documentation & Instructions

IMPORTANT : if you plan to use mod_rewrite (.htaccess) rewriting :

1. BEFORE making any attempt to activate this component and use its URL rewriting functions, your Joomla installation should already be compatible with URL rewriting. This is not required if you select no .htaccess rewrite mode in sh404SEF advanced parameters (but this mode may not always work as well, depending on your server settings).
2. Remember : if you are having difficulties with this, it is unlikely to be a Joomla problem, but most likely something related to your server setup. For instance, many times, you will be faced with 404 errors or Internal server errors 500 display. This indicates that there is something in your .htaccess file that is not compatible with your Apache server setup.
3. If you face this kind of errors, I will suggest you contact your hosting company for assistance.

If your .htaccess is not compatible with your Apache server, or hosting company, there is no point in trying to use sh404SEF – or any other similar component like ARTIO Joomsef, OpenSEF or Advanced SEF – as they will simply not work. You will have first to fix your installation, paying particular attention to the existence and the content of your .htaccess file. However, one of the first things to control : verify that mod_rewrite is loaded by PHP. To do this, in Joomla backend, go to System menu, then System information. On the PHP tab, just run a search for the word 'rewrite'. If you don't find anything, then mod_rewrite is not loaded and nothing will work. You need to change your Apache web server httpd.conf file, or contact your system administrator or shared host company to do this for you.

More advice on .htaccess:

1. Joomla standard .htaccess is very FINE. It will work with most hosting companies. You should use it unmodified, at least to start with. Just remember it comes named as htaccess.txt, so you need to rename it to .htaccess before anything.
2. Joomla standard .htaccess comes configured for Joomla standard SEF system (which makes sense!). To use it with sh404SEF (or OpenSEF, Artio JoomSEF, SEF Advance), you must open it up in an editor, and make the few changes explained in it:
3. If you scroll down towards the end of the file, you'll see two sections, one marked Begin – Joomla! core SEF Section, and just next to it another marked : ##### Begin – 3rd Party SEF Section
4. Now the tricky part : you should type # at the beginning of each line of the first section, and remove those # in front of those in the second section, so that the whole thing looks like :

```
##### Begin – Joomla! core SEF Section
##### Use this section if using ONLY Joomla! core SEF
## ALL (RewriteCond) lines in this section are only required if you actually
## have directories named 'content' or 'component' on your server
## If you do not have directories with these names, comment them out.
#
#RewriteCond %{REQUEST_FILENAME} !-f
#RewriteCond %{REQUEST_FILENAME} !-d
#RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} ^(\/component\/option,com) [NC,OR] ##optional – see
notes##
#RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} (\/|.htm|.php|.html|\/[^\.]*)$ [NC]
#RewriteRule ^(content\/|component\/) index.php
#
##### End – Joomla! core SEF Section
##### Begin – 3rd Party SEF Section
##### Use this section if you are using a 3rd party (Non Joomla! core) SEF extension
– e.g. OpenSEF, 404_SEF, 404SEFx, SEF Advance, etc
#
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} ^(\/component\/option,com) [NC,OR] ##optional – see notes##
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} (\/|.htm|.php|.html|\/[^\.]*)$ [NC]
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_FILENAME} !-f
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_FILENAME} !-d
RewriteRule (.*) index.php
#
##### End – 3rd Party SEF Section
```

Notes : this is from the .htaccess that comes with Joomla 1.0.12. If you are using a more recent version of Joomla, in the 1.0.x series, use the latest version of the file instead of this one.

- If you get 404 errors or Internal error 500, or similar, when clicking on a rewritten URL, then you should try adding another # at the beginning of this line (near the top of the file):
Options FollowSymLinksso that it looks like:#Options FollowSymLinks
- If that does not work, and if your Joomla site is in a sub-directory, you should look for the line that looks like:

```
#RewriteBase /
```

and replace it with : RewriteBase /sub_directory_of_your_joomla_install

- On some servers, even if your site is not in a sub-directory, you may want to try replacing

#RewriteBase /

by

RewriteBase /

- Try changing only one thing at a time, and check the result before moving to next step

sh404SEF Configuration

- sh404SEF configuration is generally easy. For more information on each item hover your mouse over the blue (i) images when you are in the configuration screen. When you save the configuration it will remove all your URL's from the database.

- If you have a high traffic site it may be wise to put it offline before saving sh404SEF config or purging the database. After doing that, you should use an online tool to build automatically a sitemap or check for broken links. Those spiders will go through all of your site, and therefore all of your links, so they will be all automatically placed in the cache, thus speeding access for your next visitors.

- The caching system of sh404SEF is transparent, and will be rebuild automatically whenever required. Using the cache will vastly speed up the page load time, by dramatically reducing the number of database queries. Beware that URL caching uses up a lot of memory though. Its size can be limited using the appropriate parameter, and it can also be turned off completely.

- If you have a multi-lingual site, you can turn on or off URL translation. Normally, URL elements will be translated into the user language. However, it sometimes better not to translate, such as when using non-latin characters based languages. On such occasions, default site language will always be used

You may want to purge the 404 log before creating fresh urls.

Modifying URL's

You can modify Joomla URL's to your liking and make them seo friendly.

- Go into Joomla Admin, then sh404SEF Control Panel and click ' View/Edit SEF Urls'.
- Select the URL you wish to modify.
- If you click the check box labeled 'Save as Custom Redirect' it will place this URL into the 'Custom Redirect' area which you can navigate to from the sh404SEF Control Panel.
- When you click 'View/Edit Custom Redirects' you will see your URL in here now instead. These urls will not be removed when you save the config. You can modify these and save them as you wish.
- This is particularly useful if you are updating from an old site because any URL's that are no longer available will be logged.
- You can view these URL's by clicking 'View/Edit 404 Logs' in the sh404SEF Control Panel.
- You can redirect visitors to the new page by selecting the URL you wish to modify and entering the new url.

Backing up data

- You can import and export your URL to a text file, using the corresponding button on Joomla sh404SEF control panel.
- You can also import and export Joomla URL's from the Custom Redirect area. In this case, only the manually defined URL will stored in the export file.
- The import file is a simple text file, where URL are listed in rows. This is well suited to be imported into a spreadsheet software if some heavy text processing is to be done on redirections for instance.
- If you want to import back your urls, go to the same screen, browse to the file and click the 'Import Custom URLs' button.
- Manually defined meta tags in Joomla can be exported/imported in very much the same way. The export/import link is located at the top of the Meta Tags screen, accessed from the main control panel.

Download & Further Information

[Download sh404SEF](#)

Personal Experience

As a Joomla template customization company, we always aim to make Joomla sites SEO friendly. sh404SEF is one of the best Joomla SEO plugins we have used. Make Joomla SEO friendly with this easy to install and use plugin. It's simple to setup if you are familiar with Joomla, htaccess, and have a basic knowledge of SEO.

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