Joomla

Content Management System

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About the Tutorial

Joomla is an open source Content Management System (CMS), which is used to build websites and online applications. It is free and extendable which is separated into front-end templates and back-end templates (administrator). Joomla is developed using PHP, Object Oriented Programming, software design patterns and MySQL (used for storing the data).

This tutorial will teach you the basics of Joomla using which you can create websites with ease. The tutorial is divided into sections such as Joomla Basics, Joomla Menus, Joomla Modules, Joomla Global Settings, and Joomla Advanced. Each of these sections contain related topics with screenshots explaining the Joomla admin screens.

Audience

This tutorial has been prepared for anyone who has a basic knowledge of HTML and CSS and has an urge to develop websites. After completing this tutorial you will find yourself at a moderate level of expertise in developing websites using Joomla.

Prerequisites

Before you start proceeding with this tutorial, we are assuming that you are already aware about the basics of HTML and CSS. If you are not well aware of these concepts, then we will suggest you to go through our short tutorials on HTML and CSS.

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Part 1: Joomla Basics

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1. INTRODUCTION

Joomla is an open source **Content Management System (CMS)**, which is used to build websites and online applications. It is free and extendable which is separated into front-end and back-end templates (administrator). Joomla is developed using PHP, Object Oriented Programming, software design patterns and MySQL (used for storing the data).

What is Content Management System (CMS)?

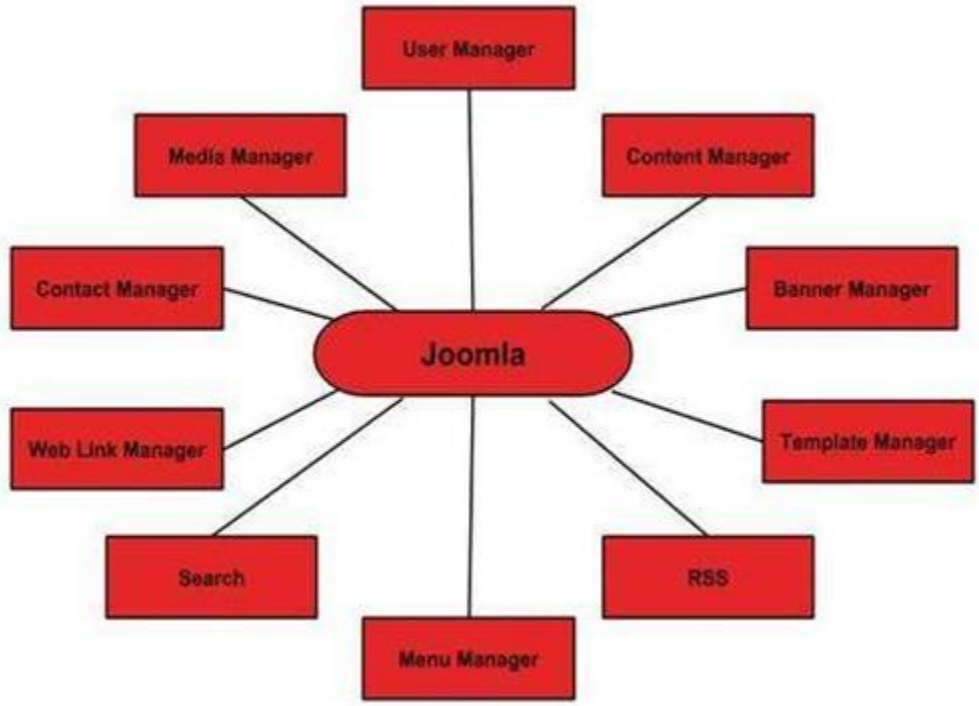
The **Content Management System (CMS)** is a software which keeps track of the entire data (such as text, photos, music, documents, etc.) which will be available on your website. It helps in editing, publishing and modifying the content of the website.

History

Joomla is based on **Mambo** CMS which was developed by an Australian company in 2001 and initially released on *August 17, 2005*. The official version of Joomla 1.0 was released on *September 22, 2005*.

Features

Joomla has its own powerful built-in features (core features).



- **User Manager:** It allows managing the user information such as permission to edit, access, publish, create or delete the user, change the password and languages. The main part of the user manager is *Authentication*.

- **Content Manager:** It allows managing the content using WYSIWYG editor to create or edit the content in a very simple way.

- **Banner Manager:** It is used to add or edit the banners on the website.

- **Template Manager:** It manages the designs that are used on the website. The templates can be implemented without changing the content structure within a few seconds.

- **Media Manager:** It is the tool for managing the media files and folder in which you can easily upload, organize and manage your media files into your article editor tool.

- **Contact Manager:** It allows to add contacts, managing the contact information of the particular users.

- **Web Link Manager:** The link resource is provided for user of the site and can be sorted into categories.

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- **Search:** It allows users to search the appropriate information on the site. You can use smart indexing, advanced search options, auto suggest searches to make Joomla search best.

- **Menu Manager:** It allows to create menus and menu items and can be managed subsequently. You can put menu in any style and in multiple places.

- **RSS:** It stands for Really Simple Syndication, which helps your site contents and RSS files to be automatically updated.

Advantages

- It is an open source platform and available for free.

- Joomla is designed to be easy to install and set up even if you're not an advanced user.

- Since Joomla is so easy to use, as a web designer or developer, you can quickly build sites for your clients. With minimal instructions to the clients, clients can easily manage their sites on their own.

- It is very easy to edit the content as it uses WYSIWYG editor (**W**hat **Y**ou **S**ee **I**s **W**hat **Y**ou **G**et is a user interface that allows the user to directly manipulate the layout of the document without having a layout command).

- It ensures the safety of data content and doesn't allow anyone to edit the data.

- By default, Joomla is compatible with all browsers.
- The templates are very flexible to use.

- Media files can be uploaded easily in the article editor tool.

- Provides easy menu creation tool.

Disadvantages

- It gives compatibility problem while installing several modules, extensions and plugins simultaneously.

- Plugins and modules are not free in Joomla.

- Development is too difficult to handle when you want to change the layout.

- Joomla is not much SEO (Search Engine Optimization) friendly.

- It makes website heavy to load and run.

Real World Examples of What Joomla Can Create?

- Corporate web sites or portals
- Corporate intranets and extranets
- Online magazines, newspapers, and publications
- E-commerce and online reservations
- Government applications
- Small business web sites
- Non-profit and organizational web sites
- Community-based portals
- School and religious web sites
- Personal or family homepages

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2. INSTALLATION

System Requirements for Joomla 3.x

- **Database:** MySQL 5.1 +
- **Web Server:**
    - WAMP (Windows)
    - LAMP (Linux)
    - XAMP (Multi-platform)
    - MAMP (Macintosh)
    - Nginx
    - Microsoft IIS
- **Operating System:** Cross-platform
- **Browser Support:** IE (Internet Explorer 7), Firefox, Google chrome
- **SSL (Secure Socket Layer):** A valid security certificate is required for HTTPS
- **PHP Compatibility:** PHP 5.4+ or PHP 5.3.10+

Download Joomla

When you open the link http://www.joomla.org/download.html, you will get to see a screen as below:

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Download the Joomla zip file from the official site or if you want to update the files of your previous version, then click on Upgrade Package option.

Create Store Database

- Joomla requires MySQL database. So create a new empty database and user/password (for e.g. User as "root" and password as "root" or else you can set as per your convenience) for Joomla.

- After following the above step, you can continue with the installation process.

Set Up Wizard

It's very easy to set up Joomla into your system. The following steps describe how to set up Joomla locally on your system.

Step (1): Extract the downloaded Joomla folder and upload it on your web server or localhost.

Step (2): Open your browser and navigate to your Joomla file path, then you will get the first screen of the Joomla installer as shown in the following screen. In our case the path is **localhost/< Your_joomla_folder >**.

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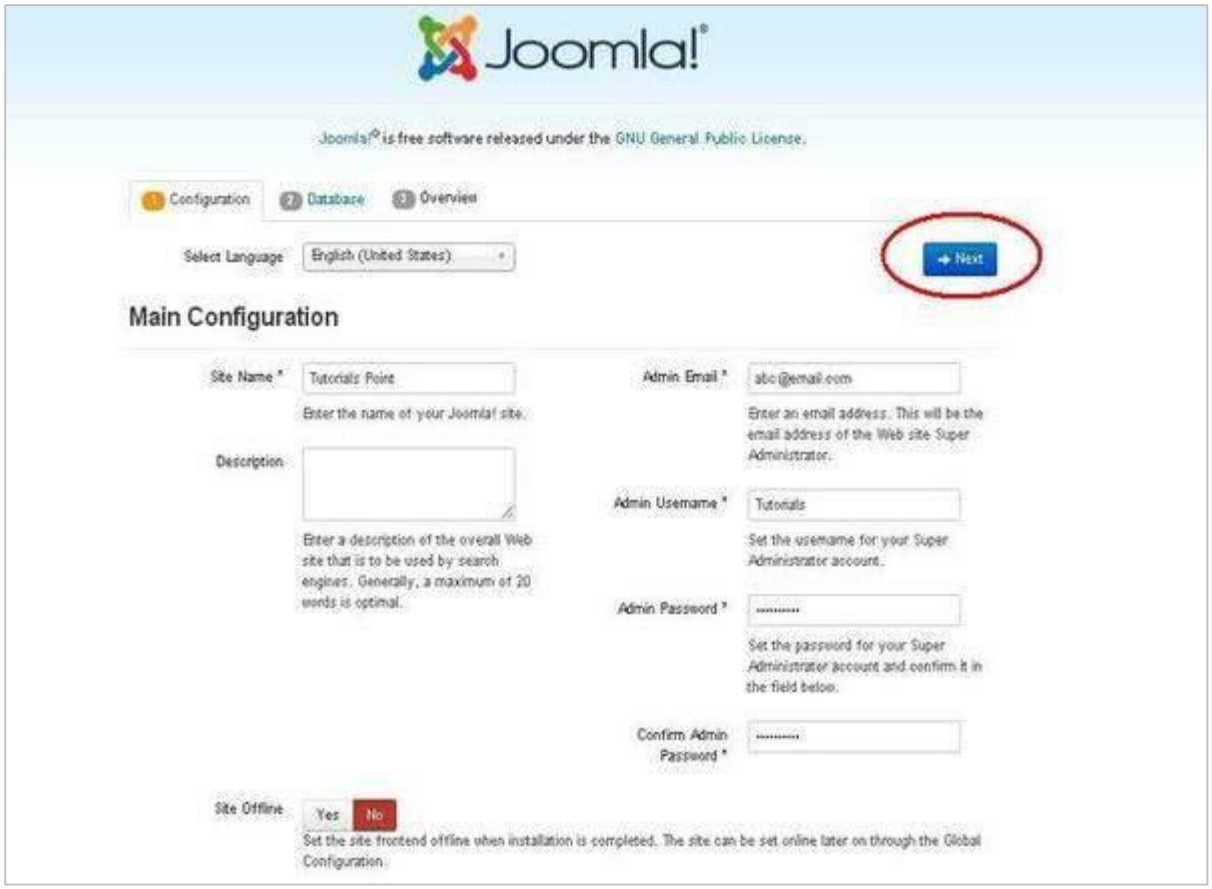

It contains the following fields:

- **Site Name**: Enter the name of the site which you are going to create in Joomla.
- **Description**: Add a small description about your site.
- **Admin Email**: Enter your email address which helps to recover our password or any update.
- **Admin Username**: Enter the username as per your choice while logging into Joomla.
- **Admin Password**: Enter password to protect your site.
- **Site Offline**: It specifies whether your site should be offline or online after completion of installation by clicking on Yes/No.

After filling all the information, click on the Next button.

Step (3): Here, you have to enter the information about the MYSQL database as seen in the screen below.

- **Database Type:** Select your database type. By default it will be MySQLi.
- **Host Name:** Write the host name, by default it will be localhost.
- **Username:** Enter the user name of your MySQL database.
- **Password:** Enter the password which you had set for MySQL Database.
- **Database Name:** Enter the database name which you have created in MySQL database for Joomla.
- **Table Prefix:** It is used to add prefix in the database tables which helps to run multiple sites on the same database. It takes the default value.
- **Old Database Process:** It gives two options **Backup** or **Remove**. If you had already created a database then you can either remove it or select the backup option to create a backup of your whole database information.

After filling all information, click on Next button.

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Step (4): In this step, you will be on last page of the installation process.

Here you can view all the information added to Joomla.

Choose **Default English (GB) Sample Data** as an example to build your website and click on **Install** button.

Step (5): Next, you can see that Joomla starts the installation process on your machine.

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Step (6): After a few minutes, after installation is successful and you will get a screen of the Joomla web installer as shown below.

Next, click on the "Remove installation folder" button which will help you to protect your site, so that no other person can re-install your site.

Note: If your installation gets stuck and does not get completed for more than an hour, then do some changes as shown below.

Go to Joomla folder -> installation -> sql folder -> mysql folder Open joomla.sql file and find the following term: "ENGINE=InnoDB". Replace this term with "ENGINE=MyIsam" and save the file.

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Before MySQL 5.5.5, MyISAM is the default storage engine. (The default was changed to InnoDB in MySQL 5.5.5.)

Then your installation will begin.

Admin Panel

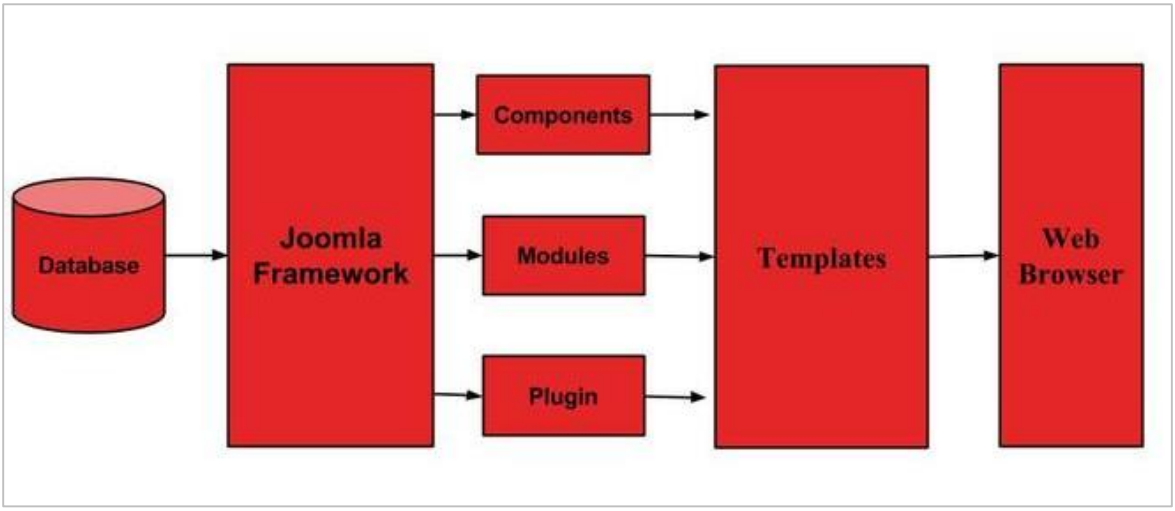
After installing Joomla you are able to login to your Joomla Admin Panel as described below:

Step (1): To access Joomla administrative panel, open the browser and type the URL as **http://localhost/< Your_joomla_folder >/administrator/index.php**, then you will get the screen as shown below:

Step (2): Enter the username and password which you had mentioned during installation as shown in the step 3 of Set Up Wizard section and click on the login button.

3. ARCHITECTURE

Joomla is a Model-View-Controller web application. In this chapter, we are going to discuss about the architectural style of Joomla. The following diagram shows the architecture of Joomla.



The architecture of Joomla contains following layers:

- Database
- Joomla Framework
- Components
- Modules
- Plugin
- Templates
- Web Server

Database: Database is a collection of data and can be stored, manipulated and organized in a particular manner. The database stores the user information, content and many more required data of the site. It is used to store the administrative information to manage the Joomla site. Using Joomla database layer, it ensures maximum flexibility and compatibility for extension.

Joomla Framework: Framework is a collection of open source software, where the Joomla CMS is built. It is developed for more flexibility and breaks the framework into single modular packages which helps each package to develop more easily.

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Components: Components are considered as mini applications. It consists of two parts i.e. *Administrator* and *Site*. Whenever a page gets loaded, component is been called to render the body of main page. The Administrator part manages different aspects of the component and the site part helps in rendering the pages when request is made by site visitor. Components are main functional unit of Joomla.

Modules: Modules is an extension which is used to render the pages in Joomla. It is also used to display the new data from the component. It frequently looks like boxes such as login module. In Joomla administrator the modules are managed by the module manager. It displays the new content and images when module is linked to Joomla components.

Plugin: This is also a kind of Joomla extension, it is very flexible and powerful for extending the framework. It contains a bit of codes that is used to execute the particular event trigger. It is commonly used to format the output of a component or module when a page is built. The plugin function which are associated with event are executed in a sequence when a particular event occurs.

Templates: Template determines the look of the Joomla website. There are two types of templates used i.e. **Front-end** and **Back-end**. The Back-end template is used to control the functions by the administrator whereas the Front-end template is a way to present the website to users. Templates are easy to build or customize your site. It provides maximum flexibility to style your site.

Web Browser: It is a server where the user interacts. It delivers the web pages to the client. The HTTP (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol) is used to communicate between the client and the server.

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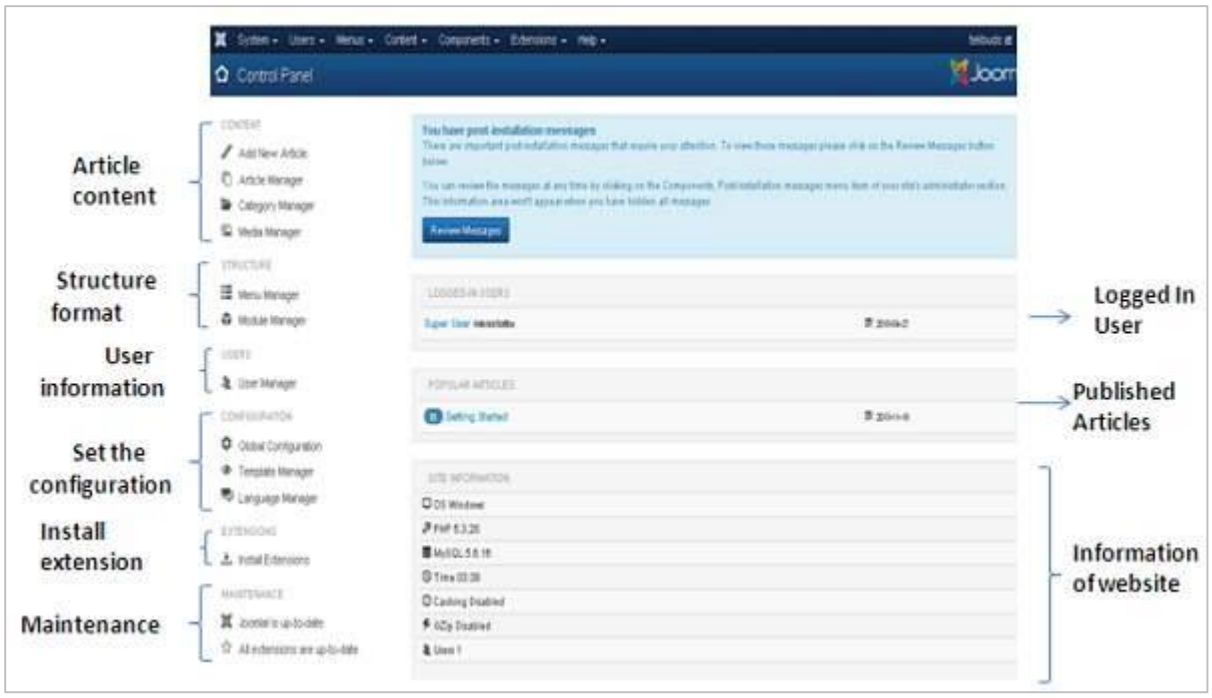
4. CONTROL PANEL

The **Control Panel** provides default features and functions of Joomla to access through clickable icons, menu bar etc. When you login to the Joomla administrative panel, you will get the screen as shown below. Important icons of control panel and their functions are marked in the following screen:



Article Content

There are four icons under the **CONTENT** section as shown below:

- **Add New Article:** It creates a new article page.
- **Article Manager:** It manages all your present articles.
- **Category Manager:** It creates new categories and helps in publishing/unpublishing the categories.
- **Media Manager:** It manages the files by uploading various new files or deleting the existing ones on your web server.

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Structure Format

In **STRUCTURE** section, there are two groups of icons:

- **Menu Manager:** Menu manager allows creating custom menus for your website and navigating through your website.
- **Module Manager:** It manages the modules such as location and function of modules that are installed on site.

User Information

Under **USERS** section, there is one icon located:

- **User Manager:** It manages the user information, which allows creating or deleting the user, changing passwords, time and languages. You can also assign the user to *User Groups*.

Set the configuration

Three icons are located under the **CONFIGURATION** section as given below:

- **Global Configuration:** This is an important part in the Joomla back-end. Any changes made in this configuration, will affect the entire website.
- **Template Manager:** It manages the templates used in the website.
- **Language Manager:** It manages installed language by setting the default language for your site.

Install Extension

There are many Extensions available in Joomla. You can install different types of extensions to extend the functionality of the site.

Maintenance

In **MAINTENANCE** section, there are two icons located:

- **Joomla is up-to-date:** It views the current update status of the Joomla installation.
- **All extensions are up-to-date:** It views the current update status of the Joomla extension.

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Logged-In User

It shows the administrator name who has logged in to the Joomla site.

Published Articles

It shows the published articles and also shows the present article, that you have published.

Information of Sites

It displays the details of the site such as OS name, version of PHP and MySQL etc. and also shows the number of users that are using this site.

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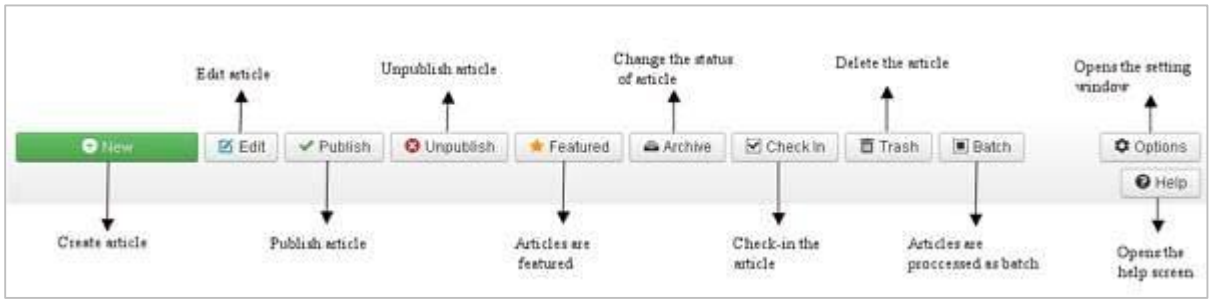
5.TOOLBAR

In this chapter we will study about the various **toolbar** options in Joomla. Given below is a list of toolbars:

- Article Manager Toolbar
- Category Manager Toolbar
- Media Manager Toolbar
- Menu Manager Toolbar
- Module Manager Toolbar
- User Manager Toolbar
- Global Configuration Toolbar
- Template Manager Toolbar

Article Manager Toolbar

Click on **Content --> Article Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. In Article Manager, you can create the standard pages that consist of images, text and hyperlinks. The following figure depicts the Article Manager Toolbar.



- **New:** Create a new article.
- **Edit:** Edit any specific article.
- **Publish:** Publish the article to the user on the website.
- **Unpublish:** Unpublish the article to the user on the website.
- **Featured:** Selected article is featured. Multiple articles can also be featured.

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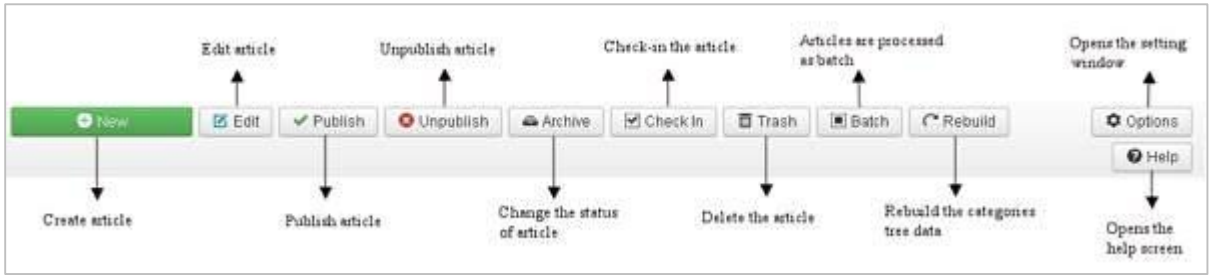
- **Archive:** It can change the status of the articles to published or unpublished by selecting archived in the select status filter.
- **Check In:** Check-in the selected article. Multiple articles can be checked-in.
- **Trash:** Delete the selected article permanently.
- **Batch:** Selected articles are processed by batch.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

Category Manager Toolbar

Click on **Content --> Category Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages to create categorize the articles which allows to group your content better. The following figure depicts the Category Manager Toolbar.



- **New:** Add a new category.
- **Edit:** Edits an existing category.
- **Publish:** Publish the categories to the user on the website.
- **Unpublish:** Unpublish the categories to the user on the website.
- **Archive:** It can change the status of the categories to published or unpublished by selecting archived in the select status filter.
- **Check In:** Check-in the particular selected category. Multiple categories can be checked-in.
- **Trash:** Delete the selected category permanently.
- **Batch:** Selected categories are processed by batch.
- **Rebuild:** It is used to rebuild the categories tree data.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.

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- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

Media Manager Toolbar

Click on **Content --> Media Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages the files by uploading a new file or deleting the existing ones on your web server. Given below is a snapshot of the Media Manager Toolbar.

- **Upload:** Upload images from your system.
- **Create New Folder:** Create a new folder on Joomla server.
- **Delete:** Deletes the selected item/images permanently.
- **Help:** This opens the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

Menu Manager Toolbar

Click on **Menus --> Menu Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages the menu items. Here new menus are created, deleted or menus are managed subsequently. Given below is a snapshot of the Menu Manager Toolbar.

- **New:** It creates a new menu item.
- **Edit:** Edits the selected menu item.
- **Delete:** Deletes the selected menu item permanently.
- **Rebuild:** It rebuilds or refreshes the relevant menu items present.

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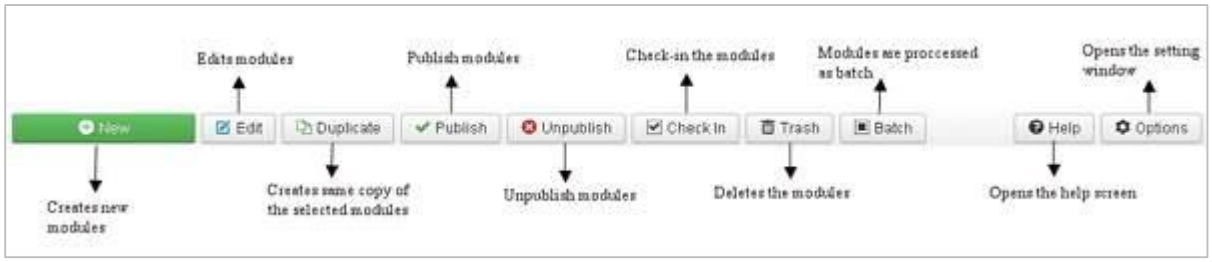
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

Module Manager Toolbar

Click on **Extension --> Module Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages the modules location and functions that are installed. The following figure depicts the Module Manager Toolbar.



- **New:** It creates new modules.
- **Edit:** It edits the selected modules.
- **Duplicate:** A copy of the selected module can be created using this button.
- **Publish:** Publish the selected modules to the user on the website.
- **Unpublish:** Unpublish the selected modules to the user on the website.
- **Check In:** Check-in the particular selected modules. Multiple modules can be checked in.
- **Trash:** Delete the selected modules permanently.
- **Batch:** Selected modules are processed by batch.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

User Manager Toolbar

Click on **Users --> User Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages all the user information such as Username, Email, Last Visit Date and Registration Date. Given below is the snapshot of the User Manager Toolbar.

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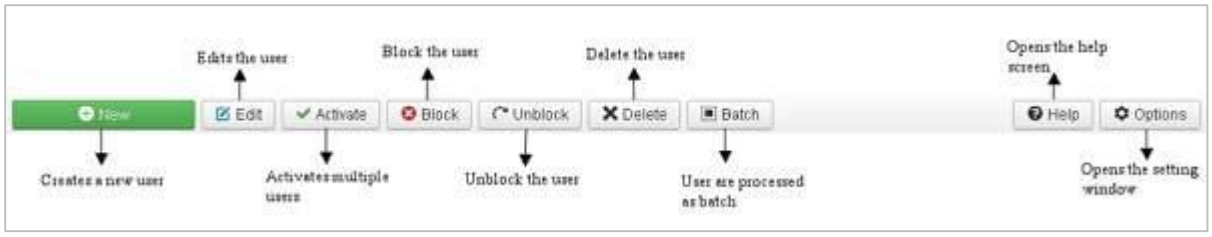

- **New:** It creates a new user.
- **Edit:** It edits the selected user.
- **Activate:** It activates multiple users.
- **Block:** It blocks the selected user.
- **Unblock:** It unblocks the selected users.
- **Delete:** It deletes the particular users.
- **Batch:** Selected users are processed as a batch.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

Global Configuration Toolbar

Click on **System --> Global Configuration** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages the global setting of the Joomla site. Given below is a snapshot of the Global Configuration Toolbar.

- **Save:** Saves the configuration and stays on the same screen.
- **Save & Close:** Saves the configuration and closes the screen.
- **Cancel:** Cancels the configuration changes and returns to the previous screen without saving.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.

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Template Manager Toolbar

Click on **Extension --> Template Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages the templates that you use in the website. The following picture shows the Template Manager Toolbar.

- **Default:** Sets the particular selected style as default.
- **Edit:** Edits the template pages.
- **Duplicate:** Creates a duplicate template.
- **Delete:** Deletes the template.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

Language Manager Toolbar

Click on **Extension --> Language Manager** in Joomla administrator control panel. It manages the languages that you use in the website. The following picture shows the Language Manager Toolbar.

- **Default:** Sets the particular selected language as default.
- **Install Language:** Install the required language.
- **Help:** Help button is used to open the help screen.
- **Option:** It opens the setting window where you can change the setting of the articles.

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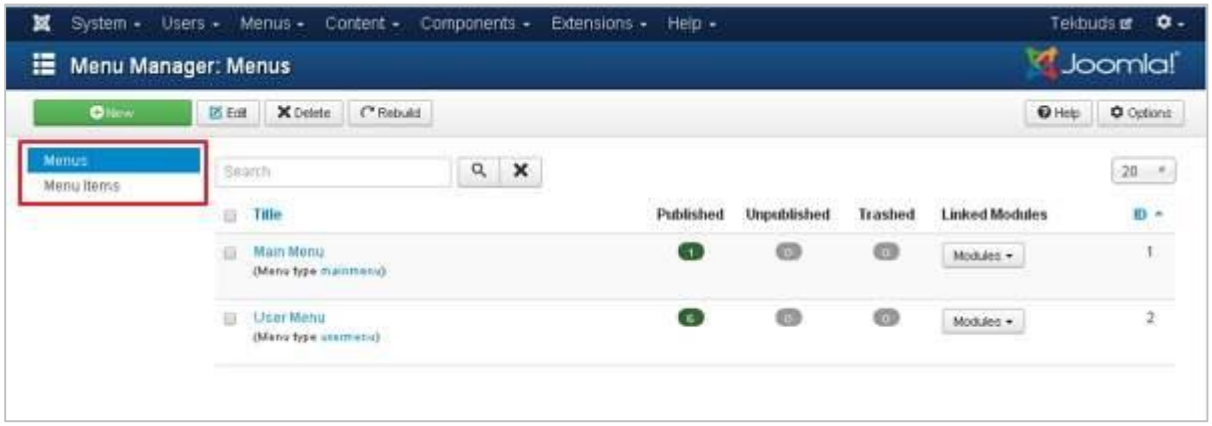
6. MENUS

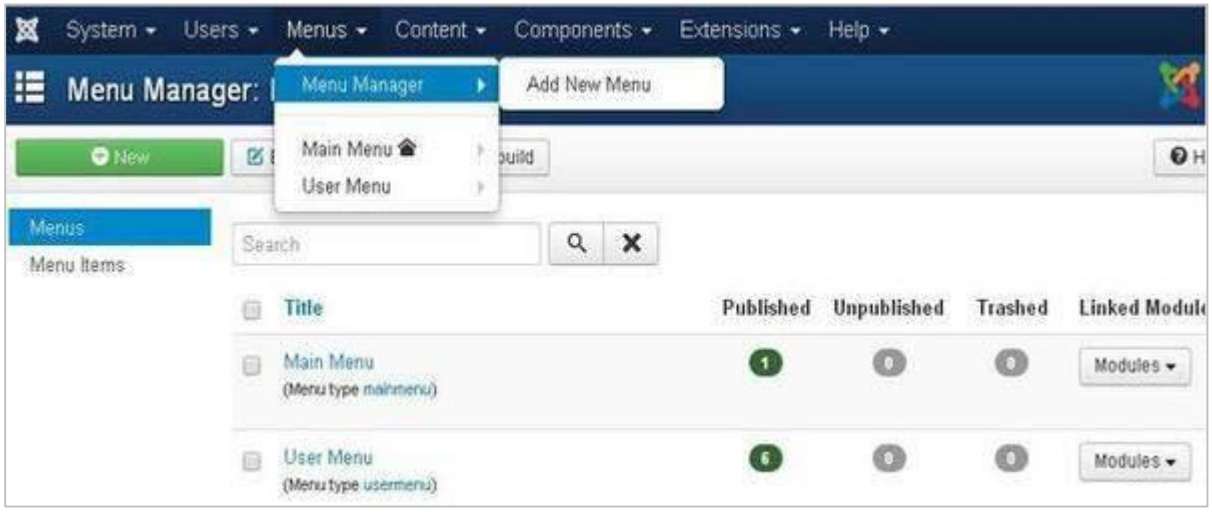
Menu manager allows creating custom menus for your website and allows navigation through your website.

Step (1): Click on **Menus** -> **Menu Manager** in Joomla administrator, you will get the following screen:

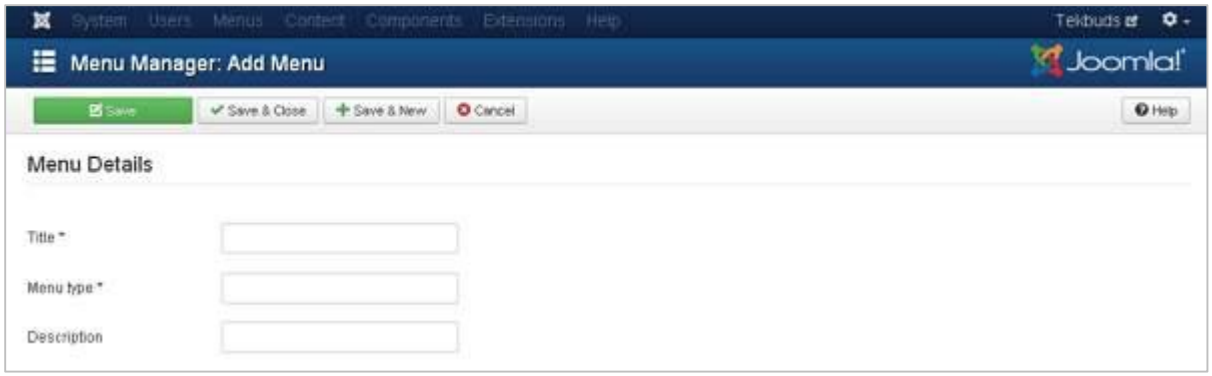


You can see the menu and menu items point to logical page on the website.

Step (2): To add a new menu to your website, go to **Menus** -> **Menu Manager** -> **Add New Menu** as shown in the following screen:

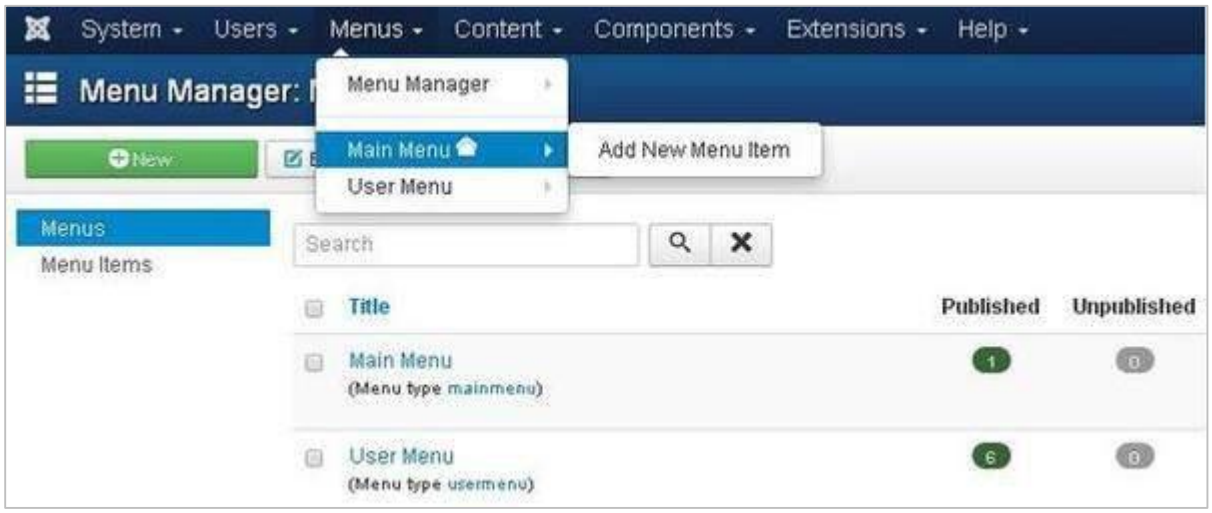


After clicking on **Add New Menu**, you will get the screen as shown below. Here you can create a new menu.



- **Title:** Title of the menu.
- **Menu Type:** Type of menu.
- **Description:** Brief description about the menu.

Step (3): To create a new menu item, go to **Menus** -> **Name of the Menu** -> **Add New Menu Item** as shown in the following screen:



You can also add new menu item via *User Menu*. All the steps described below applies to menu item creation via this method.

When you open the page of a New Menu Item, you will get the following screen:

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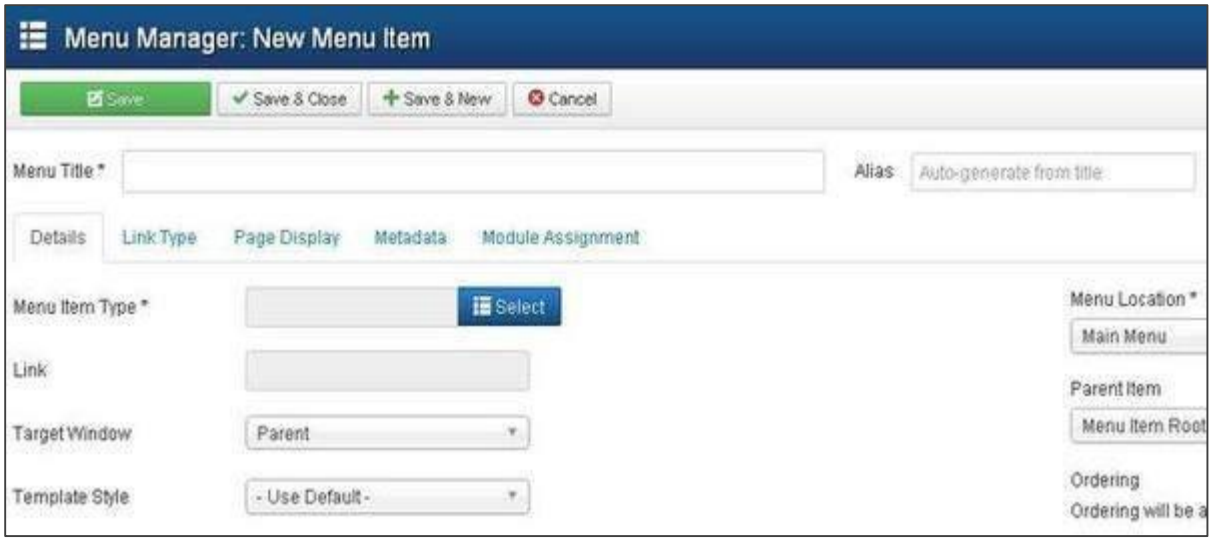

There are two main sections under New Menu Item:

- **Menu Title**: It displays the title of the menu item in the menu.
- **Alias**: It is used as SEF url. Joomla will automatically fill the value of the title. It will produce UTF-8 aliases; it does not allow spaces and underscores.

There are some tabs present while creating menu items as shown in the following screen:

Details

The *Details* tab in *Add New Menu Item*, is as shown below:

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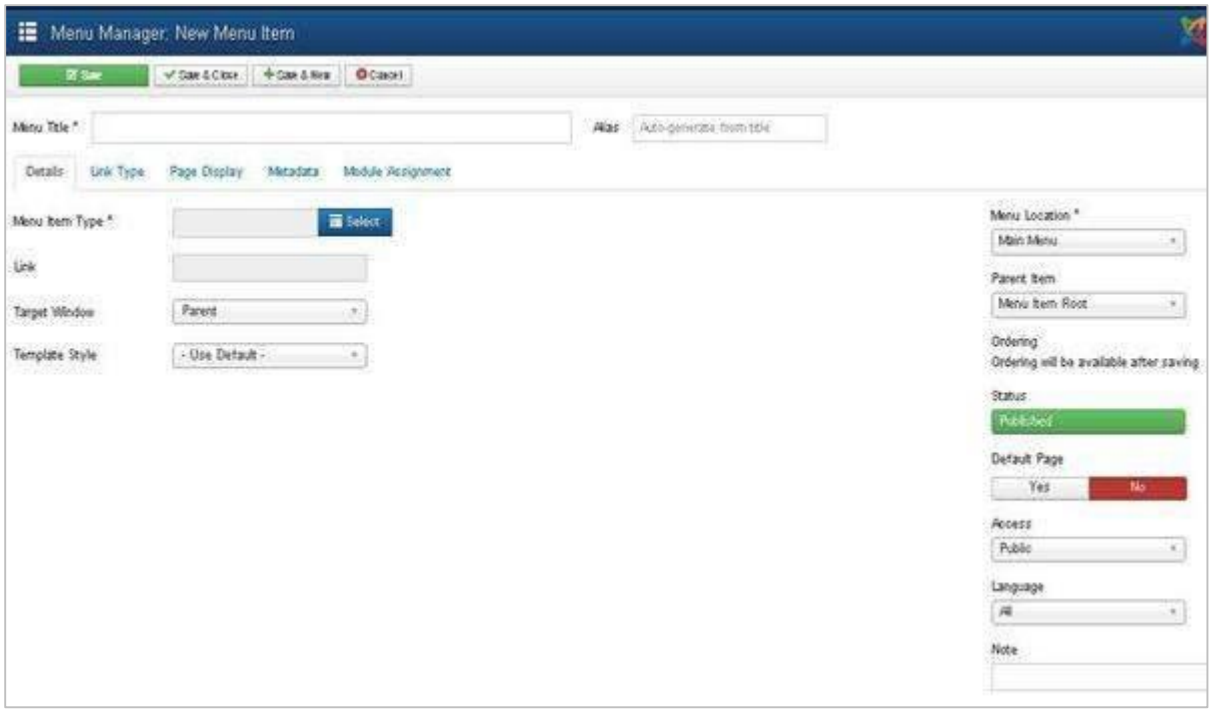

It contains the following options:

- **Menu Item Type**: It specifies the type of menu item such as articles, tags, web links, system links, contacts etc.
- **Link**: It determines the link in the menu.
- **Target Window**: It provides three options: *Parent*, *New Window with Navigation* and *New without Navigation* which targets the browser window when a menu item is clicked.
- **Template Style**: You can select a template style for your website by clicking dropdown menu which gives *Beez3 - Default* and *protostar - Default* styles or provides default templates for your website.
- **Menu Location**: It specifies which menu link will appear; either the *Main Menu* or *User Menu*.
- **Parent Item**: This helps you select a parent item by selecting either *Menu Item Root* or *Home*.
- **Status**: It displays the status of the article. Status such as *Published*, *Unpublished* and *Trashed*.
- **Default Page**: It provides *Yes* or *No* options to set the menu item as default or home page of the site.

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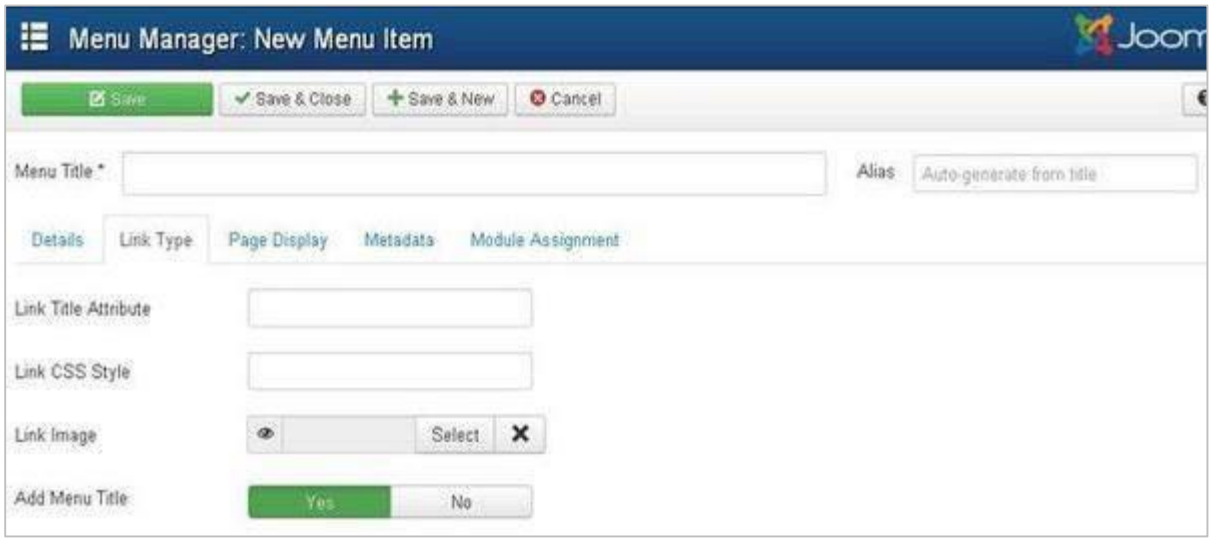
- **Access**: Only the selected option from this dropdown list such as *Guest*, *Public*, *Super Users*, Registered and *Special* can view the site.
- **Language**: It specifies the language of the site. It provides either *ALL* or *English (UK)* options.
- **Note**: It is used to enter the text information.

Link Type

The next tab is *Link Type* in *Add New Menu Item*, as shown below:



- **Link Title Attribute**: It specifies a description for the title attribute of the given hyperlink.
- **Link CSS Style**: It applies a custom CSS style to the hyperlink.
- **Link Image**: It uses an image to be used with hyperlink.
- **Add Menu Title**: It provides *Yes* or No options and adds the menu title next to the image. The default is *Yes*.

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