

Alfred App Community Forum → Alfred v2 Workflows → Workflow Help & Questions



[How To] Get frontmost tab's url and title of various browsers

Started by Vitor , Apr 16 2013 12:02 AM

how to, applescript, browser,

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Vitor

Posted 16 April 2013 - 12:02 AM

I've been seeing a lot of workflows that need to interact with a browser via AppleScript (usually to get a page's url), but most of them seem to settle on a single browser (usually Safari), which is a shame. I can certainly understand — applescript is a pain, and since each browser implements this functions however they want, finding the best way to do it with each one can be difficult, so here's the code for some of them.

You can find the latest version [as a gist \(https://gist.github.com/vitorgalvao/5392178#file-get_title_and_url-applescript\)](https://gist.github.com/vitorgalvao/5392178#file-get_title_and_url-applescript)

*# Keep in mind that when asking for a `return` after another, only the first one will be output.
This example is meant as a simple starting point, to show how to get the information in the simplest available way.*

Google Chrome

tell application "Google Chrome" to **return** URL of active tab of front window

tell application "Google Chrome" to **return** title of active tab of front window

Google Chrome Canary

tell application "Google Chrome Canary" to **return** URL of active tab of front window

tell application "Google Chrome Canary" to **return** title of active tab of front window

Chromium

tell application "Chromium" to **return** URL of active tab of front window

tell application "Chromium" to **return** title of active tab of front window

Safari

tell application "Safari" to **return** URL of front document

tell application "Safari" to **return** name of front document

Webkit

tell application "Webkit" to **return** URL of front document

tell application "Webkit" to **return** name of front document

*# This example will return both the URL and title for the frontmost tab of the active browser, separated by a newline.
Keep in mind that by using `using terms from`, we're basically requiring that referenced browser to be available on the system
(i.e., to use this on "Google Chrome Canary" or "Chromium", "Google Chrome" needs to be installed).
This is required to be able to use a variable in `tell application`. If it is undesirable, the accompanying example should be used instead.*

tell application "System Events" to **set** frontApp to name of first process whose frontmost **is true**

if (frontApp = "Safari") **or** (frontApp = "Webkit") **then**

using terms from application "Safari"

tell application frontApp to **set** currentTabUrl to URL of front document

tell application frontApp to **set** currentTabTitle to name of front document

end using terms from

else if (frontApp = "Google Chrome") **or** (frontApp = "Google Chrome Canary") **or** (frontApp = "Chromium") **then**

using terms from application "Google Chrome"

tell application frontApp to **set** currentTabUrl to URL of active tab of front window

```

tell application frontApp to set currentTabTitle to title of active tab of front window
end using terms from
else
  return "You need a supported browser as your frontmost app"
end if

return currentTabUrl & "\n" & currentTabTitle

```

This will output the relevant information. If you want it to be set as a variable, change **return** to **set theVariable to**.

You'll notice Firefox is absent. That's because with it, even though it's possible to get the window's title, it's not possible to get it's URL. There are some hacky ways that consist of sending keystrokes, but those can be very unreliable, so I prefer to leave them out (resources on the web are full of hacky ways for every browser, and I want this to only show the "correct", reliable ones).

Opera is also absent now, since it seems they no longer support AppleScript.

Edited by Vítor, 11 August 2015 - 01:17 AM.

David Ferguson

Posted 16 April 2013 - 01:37 AM

Vítor, on 15 Apr 2013 - 7:02 PM, said:

I've been seeing a lot of workflows that need to interact with a browser via AppleScript (usually to get a page's url), but most of them seem to settle on a single browser (usually Safari), which is a shame. I can certainly understand — applescript is a pain, and since each browser implements this functions however they want, finding the best way to do it with each one can be difficult, so here's the code for some of them.

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```

# Browser
# applescript to get frontmost tab's url
# applescript to get frontmost tab's page title

# Google Chrome
tell application "Google Chrome" to return URL of active tab of front window
tell application "Google Chrome" to return title of active tab of front window
# Google Chrome Canary
tell application "Google Chrome Canary" to return URL of active tab of front window
tell application "Google Chrome Canary" to return title of active tab of front window
# Safari
tell application "Safari" to return URL of front document
tell application "Safari" to return name of front document
# Webkit
tell application "Webkit" to return URL of front document
tell application "Webkit" to return name of front document
# Opera
tell application "Opera" to return URL of front document
tell application "Opera" to return name of front document
# Camino
tell application "Camino" to return URL of current tab of front browser window
tell application "Camino" to return name of current tab of front browser window

```

This will output the relevant information. If you want it to be set as a variable, change **return** to **set theVariable to**.

You'll notice Firefox is absent. That's because with it, even though it's possible to get the window's title, it's not possible to get it's

URL. There are some hacky ways that consist of sending keystrokes, but those can be very unreliable, so I prefer to leave them out (resources on the web are full of hacky ways for every browser, and I want this to only show the "correct", reliable ones).

I thought that Firefox didn't support AppleScript. Apparently I was wrong. Nice work though, thanks for sharing.

Vítor

Posted 04 July 2013 - 03:53 PM

Updated the list.

Removed support for Camino. As a reference, it was

```
# Camino
tell application "Camino" to return URL of current tab of front browser window
tell application "Camino" to return name of current tab of front browser window
```

firesofmay

Posted 16 July 2013 - 06:59 PM

Thanks for sharing this.

firesofmay

Posted 17 July 2013 - 08:21 PM

A simple code to get the url of whatever browser the user is in.

Note firefox code is hacky at its best.

```
tell application "System Events"
  set myApp to name of first application process whose frontmost is true
  if myApp is "Google Chrome" then
    tell application "Google Chrome" to return URL of active tab of front window
  else if myApp is "Opera" then
    tell application "Opera" to return URL of front document
  else if myApp is "Safari" then
    tell application "Safari" to return URL of front document
  else if myApp is "Firefox" then
    tell application "System Events"
      keystroke "l" using command down
      keystroke "c" using command down
    end tell
    delay 0.5
    return the clipboard
  else
    return
  end if
end tell
```

Vítor

Posted 17 July 2013 - 09:16 PM

firesofmay, on 17 Jul 2013 - 3:21 PM, said:

A simple code to get the url of whatever browser the user is in.
Note firefox code is hacky at its best.

You'll see on the first post that's the reason I decided to not include Firefox in the list — it's not a reliable method. This is supposed to be a list that includes the shortest, easiest to comprehend, most effective ways of getting that information, which is why Firefox is absent — like you said, it needs a hack. Camino was removed because it was discontinued.

I do something similar to that script on my [PinAdd \(http://www.alfredforum.com/topic/1230-pinadd-%E2%80%94-takes-arguments-as-tags-and-adds-your-browser%E2%80%99s-frontmost-tab-as-a-pinboard-bookmark/\)](http://www.alfredforum.com/topic/1230-pinadd-%E2%80%94-takes-arguments-as-tags-and-adds-your-browser%E2%80%99s-frontmost-tab-as-a-pinboard-bookmark/) workflow (if the user picks “depends” as the browser), but I use bash to call the relevant information. The goal of this post is not to use applescript, but much to the contrary, to show how to use it to the absolute minimum just to get the relevant information you need to, from each browser, so you can call it from your language of choice.

firesofmay

Posted 17 July 2013 - 09:28 PM

Vitor, on 17 Jul 2013 - 4:16 PM, said:

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I agree with you. It's not really a solution. But I had to figure out how to do that.
To save others time I shared that script. If someone wants to use it can use it.

Thanks again 😊

Vitor

Posted 24 September 2013 - 05:28 PM

Updated the list.

Removed Opera support, since it seems they no longer support AppleScript.

BsdHelper

Posted 12 December 2013 - 05:33 AM

Found this post searching Google. I've been trying to mess around with a script to use as a app on my dock that when clicked will save the returned URL as a file on my desktop with the proper ".webloc" extension. In reading the Applescript dictionary for Google Chrome I see there is support for "id", "title" and "URL" to save as a bookmark but, is there any way to just save it to the desktop or a specific folder? Forgive me if this is thread jacking in any way. Just thought it would be helpful attached here at the bottom if anyone else was searching for it too.

David Ferguson

Posted 12 December 2013 - 11:58 AM

BsdHelper, on 12 Dec 2013 - 12:33 AM, said:

Found this post searching Google. I've been trying to mess around with a script to use as a app on my dock that when clicked will save the returned URL as a file on my desktop with the proper ".webloc" extension. In reading the Applescript dictionary for Google Chrome I see there is support for "id", "title" and "URL" to save as a bookmark but, is there any way to just save it to the desktop or a specific folder? Forgive me if this is thread jacking in any way. Just thought it would be helpful attached here at the bottom if anyone else was searching for it too.

I doubt there would be a way to just save it off as a webloc built in to the AppleScript dictionary for it but may I ask what the end goal is for this? why do you want to save them as webloc? Are you wanting to be able to search through saved items or something? Also, it's been a little while since I've done it but, webloc files are just xml so you could grab the data you want, create a little xml string (in applescript or however you're doing it) and write that to a file. Wouldn't think it would be too difficult.

BsdHelper

Posted 12 December 2013 - 01:22 PM

TBH the end goal is for me satisfy my need to make Applescript do something weird and learn as I go. I'm a visual learner so reading syntax from man pages is about as confusing as algebra.....and I REALLY don't get algebra. :-P So I scour the internet at night searching for the most random of code snippets to tear down and learn from. As far as my previous post I guess the initial goal is to just have the ability to surf the net and when I'm on a page I want to read later I can simply click my icon in the dock and it will create a file on the desktop (.webloc) that shortcuts to that URL. Perhaps I can save it to my Dropbox path and have it available to all of my other Mac's or just for archival purposes. I'm an avid user of Chrome out side of work and Firefox at work, both browsers offering a bookmark syncing service but this would be my of doing it, again mainly just to learn some new Applescript as I go.

What I put together this morning..

```

1. tell application "Google Chrome"
2.     get URL of active tab of first window as text
3. end tell
4.
5. tell application "Finder"
6.     set goHome to (path to home folder as text)
7.     set nextLvl to goHome & "Dropbox:Weblocs" as alias
8.     set fullPath to quoted form of POSIX path of nextLvl
9.     set fileName to POSIX path of (nextLvl & fileName & ".webloc")
10. end tell

```

It's missing pieces, like the definition of "fileName" but I'm getting things together. Assuming I can turn the URL into plain text and append .webloc on the end, saving it as a file in my Dropbox. Make sense?

Jono

Posted 09 May 2014 - 07:00 AM

I guess they changed something. I now get a problem trying to get the 'active tab' for Google Chrome. Anyone know how to do that now?

Vitor

Posted 09 May 2014 - 03:39 PM

No problem here whatsoever (Chrome 34.0.1847.131). What version are you running?

Jono

Posted 12 May 2014 - 10:16 AM

Strange. Mine is the 35.0.1916.99 beta

Vitor

Posted 12 May 2014 - 09:53 PM

Not at all. If you're using a beta, some things are expected to break. This works in the latest [canary](https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/canary.html) (<https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/canary.html>), though, so what you're seeing is likely an anomaly. You could always [file an issue](https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/95315?hl=en) (<https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/95315?hl=en>).

Jono

Posted 12 May 2014 - 10:40 PM

I downloaded the standard stable build and still get the same problem 🙄

Vitor

Posted 12 May 2014 - 11:23 PM

The problem won't be related to the code itself, then, but to something you're doing and/or some configuration you have. How are you trying to execute the code?

Carlos-Sz

Posted 13 May 2014 - 06:02 AM

Firefox

Below a code and an AppleScript example to get Firefox frontmost tab URL. However, it is known to not be 100% accurate. Try it and see if it fits your needs or no. 🙄

[Download Now](http://dl.getdropbox.com/u/127623/firefox_url.zip) (http://dl.getdropbox.com/u/127623/firefox_url.zip)

Jono

Posted 14 May 2014 - 02:23 PM

Vitor, on 12 May 2014 - 6:23 PM, said:

The problem won't be related to the code itself, then, but to something you're doing and/or some configuration you have. How are you trying to execute the code?

If I try to compile the following code from above in AppleScript Editor it won't compile:

tell application "Google Chrome" to return URL of active tab of front window

It highlights the 'active tab' part and the error message says:

Syntax Error

A property can't go after this identifier

Here's a script that I used to use that used to work OK for, but now won't compile, giving the same error message:

tell application "Google Chrome" to set TransferURL to URL of active tab of first window

tell application "Safari" to open location TransferURL

tell application "Safari" to activate

Vítor

Posted 14 May 2014 - 04:14 PM

It's extremely likely the problem lies on your end. Just tried that code and it worked as expected, and I can't seem to find anyone else with your problem, searching for it.

I suggest you ask about your issue on [stackoverflow \(http://stackoverflow.com/\)](http://stackoverflow.com/), [askdifferent \(http://apple.stackexchange.com/\)](http://apple.stackexchange.com/), or [the chrome forums \(https://productforums.google.com/forum/#!forum/chrome\)](https://productforums.google.com/forum/#!forum/chrome) (if the problem does lie somewhere with chrome, which is unclear). That way you'll have the attention of way more eyes and minds. The problem is not related to Alfred, so there's no reason to ask about it only here.

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