Adding Markdown

Let’s improve the user experience by adding Markdown to our text areas. You will see it’s very easy and simple.

First, let’s install a library called **Python-Markdown**:

pip install markdown

We can add a new method to the Post model:

from django.db import models

from django.utils.html import mark\_safe

from markdown import markdown

class Post(models.Model):

# ...

def get\_message\_as\_markdown(self):

return mark\_safe(markdown(self.message, safe\_mode='escape'))

Here we are dealing with user input, so we must take care. When using the markdown function, we are instructing it to escape the special characters first and then parse the markdown tags. After that, we mark the output string as safe to be used in the template.

Now in the templates **topic\_posts.html** and **reply\_topic.html** just change from:

{{ post.message }}

To:

{{ post.get\_message\_as\_markdown }}

From now on the users can already use markdown in the posts:

Markdown Editor

We can also add a very cool Markdown editor called [SimpleMD](https://simplemde.com/).

Either download the JavaScript library or use their CDN:

<link rel="stylesheet" href="https://cdn.jsdelivr.net/simplemde/latest/simplemde.min.css">

<script src="https://cdn.jsdelivr.net/simplemde/latest/simplemde.min.js"></script>

Now add the following css and Javascript in your template:

**template.html**

{% extends 'base.html' %}

{% block stylesheet %}

<link rel="stylesheet" href="{% static 'css/simplemde.min.css' %}">

{% endblock %}

{% block javascript %}

<script src="{% static 'js/simplemde.min.js' %}"></script>

<script>

var simplemde = new SimpleMDE();

</script>

{% endblock %}

By default, this plugin will transform the first text area it finds into a markdown editor. So just that code should be enough.