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Build a Blog in Drupal 8: Content types and Fields

By Ivan Zugec / Drupal / September 30, 2015 / 14 Comments

Drupal 8 Site Building: Content types and Fields

This tutorial is part of the "Build a Blog in Drupal 8" series:

1. *Content types and Fields*

2. *Adding Comments*

3. *Using Views*

4. *Managing Blocks*

With Drupal 8 on the horizon, now is a good time to start using it. The best way to learn the new version is to build something with it.

Over the next few weeks, I'll be publishing a series of tutorials teaching you how to create a blog in Drupal 8. The aim of the series is to help new comers, as well as experienced site builders, how to create a blog website using Drupal 8.

Throughout each tutorial, major changes between Drupal 7 and 8 will be highlighted. Even if you know Drupal 7, follow along and you'll learn what's new in Drupal 8.

In this first tutorial, you'll learn how to create a Blog content type and how to add custom fields. You'll also learn about the Taxonomy system by creating your own vocabulary to categorize blog posts.

Install Drupal

Before we begin, make sure you have installed Drupal 8 using the Standard installation profile. I won't go into details on installing it, but if you need to spin up a test site then check out simplytest.me. Just type in "Drupal core" into the project name field and select the latest Drupal 8 option from the drop-down list. Or click on this link.

Create Blog Content Type

When using the Standard installation profile, you'll get an Article content type. This content type is useful. It comes with an Image and Tags field. On a proper Drupal project you would use this content type for a blog section.

But to learn how they work, we'll need to create our own. So we'll create a Blog content type with the following fields:

- Body
- Image
- Tags
- Category

To save time we'll reuse the Image and Tags field which is already on the Article content type, but we'll need to create a Category field which will allow you to categorize blog posts.

1. Click on Structure in the toolbar, "Content types" and click "Add content type".

2. Enter in Blog into the Name field and enter "Used in the daily blog section." into the Description field.

Add content type ☆

Home » Administration » Structure » Content types

Individual content types can have different fields, behaviors, and permission:

Name *

| Blog | Machine name: blog [Edit] |

The human-readable name of this content type. This text will be displayed as pa

Description

Used in the daily blog section.

Describe this content type. The text will be displayed on the *Add content* page.

3. Below the Description, you'll see a group of vertical tabs. Here you can configure content type settings like "Publishing options" and "Display options" and more. These options can be changed at anytime, so we'll leave them as they are for now.

When you're ready click on "Save and manage fields".

Adding Fields

Once you've created a content type, you'll be redirected to the "Manage fields" page where you can create new fields and edit existing ones.

When a new content type's created Drupal will add a Body field. This is default functionality, if you don't want to use the field simply delete it.

As mentioned earlier, the Blog content type will have four fields: Body, Image, Tags and Category.

The Body is already on the content type, but we'll need to add Image and Tags. The Standard installation profile already created these fields and attached them to the Article content type. Let's just save time and reuse these fields.

1. From the "Manage fields" page click on "Add field".

2. From the "Re-use an existing field" drop-down, select "Image: field_image" and click on "Save and continue".

3. Leave the field settings as is for now and click on "Save settings".

4. Now repeat the steps to add the Tags field. Click on "Add field", select "Entity reference: field_tags" from "Re-use an existing field" and click on "Save and continue".

Add field ☆

Home » Administration » Structure » Content types » Blog » Manage fields

Add a new field

– Select a field type – ▼

or

Re-use an existing field

Entity reference: field_tags ▼

Label *

Tags

Save and continue

In the "Reference type" field-set, check Tags and "Create referenced entities if they don't already exist" under Vocabularies and click on "Save settings".

▼ REFERENCE TYPE

Reference method *

Default ▼

Vocabularies *

☑ Tags

☑ Create referenced entities if they don't already exist

Save settings   Delete

New in Drupal 8

Fields can't be shared across entity types.

In Drupal 7 you could share fields across entity types. For example, a field could be used on an Article content type as well as a Tags vocabulary.

In Drupal 8, fields can only be shared amongst bundles not entity types. So if you create an image field on the Article content type, it can only be

> *shared with other content types. You couldn't attach it to a vocabulary or user entity.*

For a more technical explanation on entities and fields, go to the link below:

https://drupalwatchdog.com/blog/2015/3/entity-storage-drupal-8-way

Form Displays

You may have noticed that we didn't select or configure a widget. In Drupal 7, when you create a field you also selected a widget. Now in Drupal 8, you manage the widgets from the "Manage form display" page.

> *What's a widget?*
>
> *A widget is a form element used to enter data into a field. A text field, select box, checkboxes all of these are widgets.*
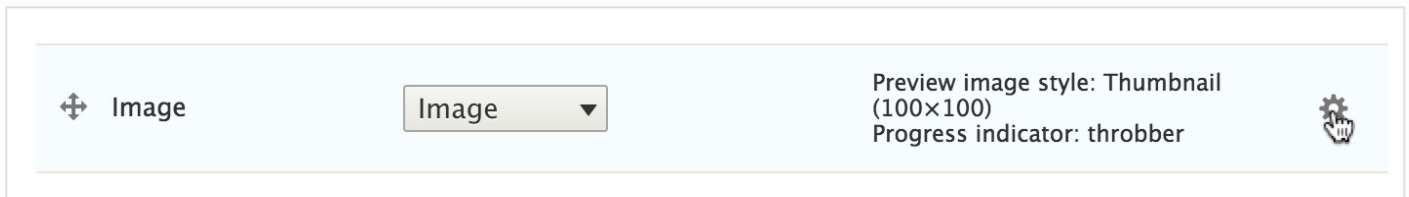
Manage form display ☆

Edit	Manage fields	**Manage form display**	Manage display

Home » Administration » Structure » Content types » Blog

Content items can be edited using different form modes. Here, you can define which field are displayed in each form mode.

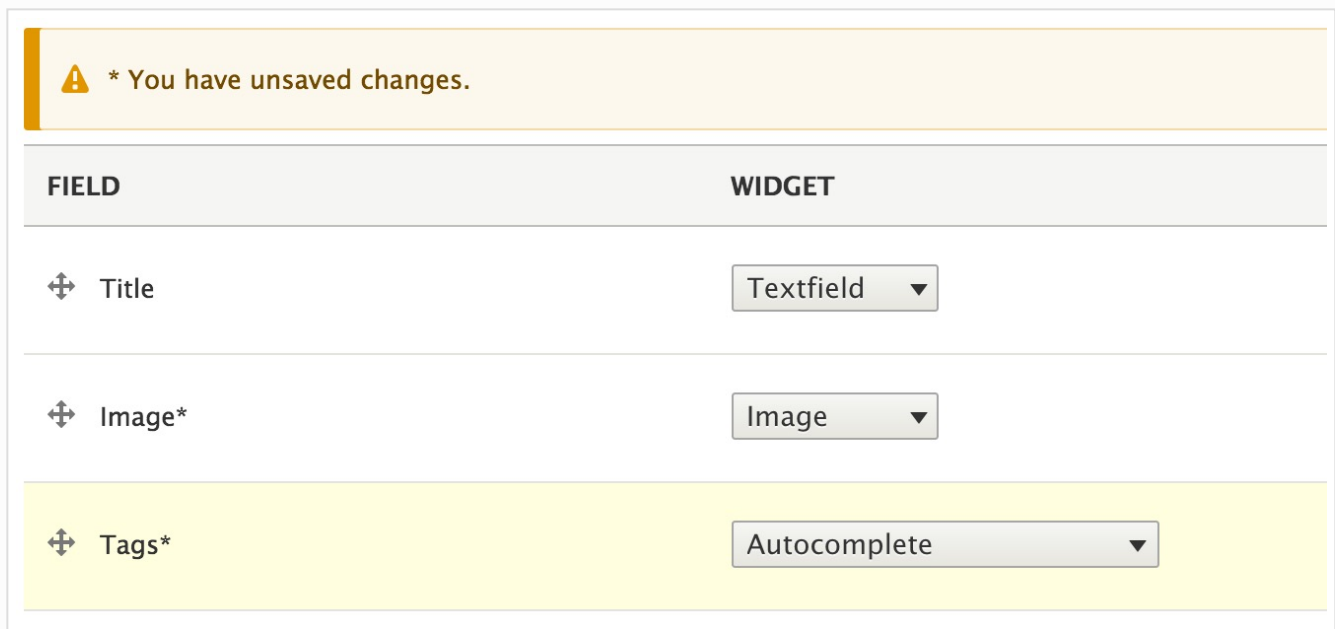| FIELD	WIDGET
✛ Title	Textfield ▼
✛ Authored by	Autocomplete ▼

You can choose a different widget by selecting one from the drop-down. You can also reorder them by dragging them up or down. To configure one click on the cogwheel, similar to how formatters are managed in Drupal 7 and still in Drupal 8.

For now, just reorder the fields to the top of the page.

1. On the "Manage form display" page, move the Image field below the Title and Tags below Image, then click on Save.

At this point, the Blog content type has a Body, Image and Tags field. The only one missing is the Category field. But before we can create it, we'll need to create a Category vocabulary.

Create Category Vocabulary

1. Click on Structure, Taxonomy and click on "Add vocabulary".

Taxonomy ☆

Home » Administration » Structure

Taxonomy is for categorizing content. Terms are gro

+ Add vocabulary

VOCABULARY NAME
Tags

2. Enter "Category" as the Name and "Used to categorize blog posts." as the Description, then click on Save.

Add vocabulary ☆

Home » Administration » Structure » Taxonomy

Name *

Category   Machine name: category [Edit]

Description

Used to categorize blog posts.

Save

3. Enter in a few category items by clicking on "Add term". I entered in the following:

NAME
✛ Drupal
✛ Joomla
✛ WordPress

Save   Reset to alphabetical

Now that the vocabulary has been created, let's jump back to the "Manage fields" page and create the Category field.

Create Category Field

1. Go to Structure, "Content types" and click on "Manage fields" on the Blog row. Then click on "Add field".

2. From the "Add a new field" drop-down, select "Taxonomy term". Enter Category into Name and click on "Save and continue".

3. On the "Fields settings" page, leave "Allowed number of values" limited to 1. We only want to allow a single category to be selected on a blog post. Then click on "Save field settings".

4. In the "Reference type" field-set, select Category under Vocabularies and click on "Save settings".

Configure Category Widget

We've added the field, now let's configure the widget like we did for the others.

1. Click on the "Manage form display" tab, move the field so it sits above the Body field. Then change the widget to "Select list". Scroll to the bottom then click on Save.

✛ Category		Select list ▼
✛ Body		Text area with a summary ▼

Configure Blog Formatters

We've spent all our time building out the fields and configuring the widgets. Now let's configure the field formatters. The "Manage display" page isn't that different in Drupal 8.

1. Click on the "Manage display" tab. All we'll really do is reorder the fields.

2. Move Links right to the bottom and move Image so it sits above the Body field. It should look like the image below:

FIELD	LABEL	FORMAT
✛ Image	– Hidden – ▼	Image ▼
✛ Body	– Hidden – ▼	Default ▼
✛ Tags	Above ▼	Label ▼
✛ Category	Above ▼	Label ▼
✛ Links		Visible ▼
Disabled		

Once you've reordered the fields, don't forget to click on Save at the bottom of the page.

Create Blog Post

Now go to Content, "Add content" and click on Blog. Fill out the form and click on "Save and publish".
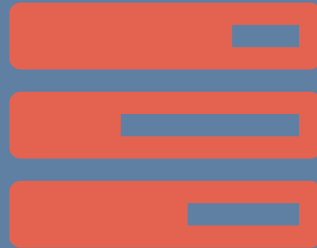

Summary

The site building experience isn't drastically different than in Drupal 7. Which in a way is good. You won't have to learn any crazy new concepts. The UI in Drupal 8 for managing content types and fields has been streamlined and feels a lot nicer.

In the next tutorial, we'll look at adding comments to the Blog content type.

About Ivan Zugec

Ivan is the founder of Web Wash and spends most of his time consulting and writing about Drupal. He's been working with Drupal for 10 years and has successfully completed several large Drupal projects in Australia.

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NICK

Thanks for this article. I'd like to see more of Drupal 8 articles like this.

Reply

IVAN
OCTOBER 2, 2015 AT 8:38 PM

Thanks. More are coming.

Reply

PIERRE
OCTOBER 5, 2015 AT 8:49 PM

Thanks Ivan

Reply

IVAN
OCTOBER 6, 2015 AT 7:36 AM

Thanks.

Reply

ANGIE
DECEMBER 2, 2015 AT 9:16 AM

Hi Ivan,

Do you know if there is a way to upload heaps of images and have the option to add a tag to each image in Drupal 8?

Cheers..

IVAN
DECEMBER 2, 2015 AT 9:02 PM

Hi Angie,

Good question. I don't think this is supported by Drupal core. It is something which'll be handled with "File Entity" (https://www.drupal.org/project/file_entity).

Ivan

HEIKO
FEBRUARY 12, 2016 AT 7:04 AM

Very helpful article! I was a bit unsuccessful to build a blog the way i want it.
Now i learned a lot and have a working starting point.
Drupal can be so easy 🙂

QB
MAY 5, 2016 AT 2:05 PM

Thank you Ivan,
I found the article helpful. I am curious how I would pull the stats into the blog display so that a user could see the total number of views?
Thank you,
QB

IVAN
MAY 5, 2016 AT 8:57 PM

Hi QB,

Install the Statistics module which comes with Drupal core. That'll track views on each content page.

Cheers,
Ivan

Reply

BRUCE CLARK
SEPTEMBER 12, 2016 AT 5:55 AM

I have subscribed. Its great to find someone who is up to date with Drupal 8 (Gosh it's come out in rhyme!) and also free from unnecessary jargon – thanks again 🙂

Reply

DAVID MC
FEBRUARY 3, 2018 AT 2:47 AM

Good stuff, Ivan! This process seems way more manual than what I recall from Drupal 7. Am I right?

Reply

IVAN ZUGEC
FEBRUARY 5, 2018 AT 8:47 AM

Hi David,

Thanks.

The site building experiences in Drupal 8 is very similar to Drupal 7.

Cheers,

Ivan

Reply

DOUGY
SEPTEMBER 20, 2018 AT 5:20 AM

Is there a way to add commenting to this blog content type?

Reply

IVAN ZUGEC
SEPTEMBER 20, 2018 AT 2:19 PM

Hi Dougy,

Look at part 2 in the series. I cover that exact thing, https://www.webwash.net/?p=245

Cheers,

Ivan

Reply

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