

Zen Cart™ Plain English Survival Guide for Newbies

by Lesli Richardson

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MadMumbler Designs
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If you mutilate, spindle, or mangle your store, it's your fault – you have been warned!

<http://shop.madmumbler.com>
<http://stores.lulu.com/madmumbler>

Errors, Additions, & Miscellaneous Things

It's not possible to include every possible question and answer about Zen Cart™ in one book. The book would be over 1,000 pages long, and it would cost a ton of money to sell. If you have a question/topic you really think should be included, send it to us. We might include it in a future edition. Or, we might add it to our website.

If you find errors or have suggestions, please send those too.

The website is: <http://www.leslirichardson.com> Click on the Zen Cart™ Survival Guide link under Bibliography/Technical Manuals. There, you'll find other questions, corrections, and miscellaneous things relating to this publication.

Acknowledgments

For my husband Warren, and my son Joey, who put up with me taking over the kitchen table for weeks on end while I'm writing, I thank you for your love, patience, and support.

A huge thanks to the Zen Cart™ programming team for putting together such awesome software and putting up with everyone on the user forum. You guys rock! And another huge thanks to my fellow Zen Cart™ users on the forum who spend time answering everyone's questions (even the same newbie ones, over and over – and over – again). You help make the software great by helping people learn how to use it and solving their problems.

And a big thanks to you, Gentle Reader (as Stephen King says), for buying this. My dogs especially appreciate it, because it helps put kibble in their bowls and keeps Animal Planet on the TV. And my family appreciates it because it keeps the lights and water turned on.

About the Author

Lesli Richardson is a snarky, stubborn Taurus freelance writer who usually ends up learning software because she needs it for some reason. Once she learns the software, she writes it down so she doesn't forget. Fortunately, she writes at a level higher than that of a rabid monkey with a typewriter, and discovered others will pay to buy what she writes. And everyone's happy. (She's also working on fiction projects, if you happen to know an agent...)

Starting out as a freelance journalist, her first forays into writing tutorials over eight years ago were for home embroidery software. Students asked to take her home after class to teach them, and since (of course) her husband wasn't too fond of that idea, she wrote lessons. One student suggested she sell them on her website – and the rest is history not quite worthy of its own Wikipedia entry.

She is a native, life-long Floridian who has (as of now) never seen real snow, and lives in southwest Florida with her husband, son, and a houseful of neurotic, misfit animals of various species.

Supporting the Zen Cart™ Project

Zen Cart™ is free software. Free meaning price, not effort. If you had to purchase an e-commerce solution, chances are it would cost you hundreds (if not thousands) of dollars.

The people who wrote Zen Cart™ have real lives and jobs outside of Zen Cart™. And the least you could do, if you're using Zen Cart™ and making money with it, is show a little appreciation. Donate to the project! The website they use costs real money to run. They donate their time and hard work to both the program code and helping newbies (and not-so-newbies) figure out their problems.

There are plenty of links and buttons on the Zen Cart™ support site leading to the donation page. Remember -- depending on where you are, you might be able to deduct your donation to the Zen Cart™ project as a legitimate business expense. (Ask your tax expert.) Even if you can only donate five or ten bucks, do it. Give up a cup of coffee or a lunch at a fast food restaurant.

Hey, they've made you money, right? The least you can do is show them a little appreciation. No, it's not required, but it's the right thing to do, and builds good karma!

Support Site Link

The Support Site link on the Admin panel takes you to the Zen Cart™ site. Some find it quickly becomes an invaluable resource for help troubleshooting problems.

| [Support Site](#)

Click the link to go to the official Zen Cart™ site. The help link at the top of their page takes you to the main FAQ/tutorials page. (The link to the user forum is at the top of that page.) Take time to go through the FAQ page, use the search feature. Try to be as specific as you can, not to mention spell your

search term **correctly!**

If you can't find the solution to your problem there, search the user forum. To post, registration is required (free).

However, before posting, take time to search for an answer on the forum. I cannot begin to count how many daily posts are made by newbies looking for answers clearly explained on the FAQ pages, usually in the All Time Favorites FAQs section. (Of course, I've also answered many of those questions in this guide.)

When you post on the support forum, your post will get a lot more responses if you follow a few simple rules:

- Put your post in the appropriate forum. Don't post a problem with a shipping module in the CSS forum. It will get help faster if it's located in a forum appropriate for the subject. Some members are more qualified to answer questions in certain areas and tend to haunt only those specific topics.
- Use a descriptive subject. Don't say HELP! Say something like, "Help needed with link color CSS code"
- Follow common Netiquette guidelines. Do not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS (which is the equivalent of screaming).
- Post your Zen Cart™, PHP, and MySQL versions and a link to your site (if available) or a screenshot of the problem (if you're working on a local machine).
- Try to be descriptive in your post. Too much information is better than not enough.
- Don't expect an immediate response. Depending on what time it is in your location, it might be the middle of the night where many of the heavy-duty support posters are located. It's considered very rude to constantly bump your post over the first few hours or days after you post, and could get your posting privileges revoked. It is very common to have a response in the first few hours, but remember that everyone on the forum is a VOLUNTEER. They are not paid to help. They have real lives and jobs, just like you. Also, don't forget the software is (monetarily) free. So don't be rude.
- Also, don't start new posts for the same problem. Keep it in the same thread. If you have trouble finding your previous post, click on the Search link

and look for your own posts by username.

- READ responses, and try them. If a poster asks you for more information, give it, don't reply without giving them the information requested. If you don't know how to obtain the information, ask the poster how you find that information.
- Be PATIENT.
- Again, be POLITE. Don't be RUDE just because you're frustrated.
- When you finally resolve your issue, post a final follow-up message stating it's solved, and if necessary, exactly what you had to do to resolve your problem. This is greatly helpful to other users who might have the same issue in the future.
- Most of the third-party downloads available on the Zen Cart™ site have their own discussion threads in the forum. If your problem concerns one of those downloads, seek out the appropriate thread, READ it (might answer your question), and if that doesn't help, then post in that discussion thread.

Forward

This "survival guide" is for Zen Cart™ version 1.3.8 (and will mostly work with 1.3.7 and some earlier versions). I cannot guarantee this tutorial will completely work with earlier versions, although in many cases there are similarities. For security purposes, you should use the most current version of Zen Cart™ available.

Zen Cart™ newbies frequently say, "I just want someone to explain this in plain English!" I am not a programmer, and I'm not affiliated with the software project. I am a user of the software (who happens to be a writer) and I wrote the kind of guide I wish was available when I started using the software.

People who will benefit from this tutorial are those who are new to the program, or who are struggling to set their Zen Cart™ program up to fit their needs. This is not meant for experienced users, although for some it might be a valuable reference. I created this guide in response to all of the "newbies" who have asked for a one-stop basic guide with extensive indexing, cross-references, and menu-item locations. This isn't a front-to-back manual. It's a "where the &^%\$ do I find this?" manual. Finding settings in the Zen Cart™ admin panel can be half the battle. Not only do I include an extensive index, but admin menu locations for many commonly hunted-for items, and charts for template pages and admin items and their corresponding pages in the guide. I also provide a list of some of the most commonly-asked questions.

While this tutorial includes information from most of my other tutorials, it also includes a lot of new information, both on basic features and template modification. (You can buy this tutorial and not buy our individual ones and still get the information you need.)

If you're looking for an answer, take a peek at the questions, index, and charts in the back. I made them as comprehensive as possible, while keeping this a basic manual. (Otherwise, it'd be 1,000 pages long!)

Knowing CSS (or having a good CSS primer) will really help you when you're

trying to set up a new template. It's not mandatory, but if you can, read through a CSS primer so you understand the CSS relationship to the template files and settings.

When I tell you to edit and save a file, if you've already created the custom template folder and file, then edit your custom version. I'm not telling you to create five or ten different versions of the same file.

Do NOT edit files with a word processor like Word or a program like Front Page! They can add extra characters to your files that can break the code. Use a plain-text or PHP editor.

Also, don't use spaces or weird characters in your file names or directory names. And make sure everything is the same case. **This** is not the same as **this** or **THIs**. Watch your filename spelling and file extension type. **background.gif** is not the same as **background.jpg**!

Learn to read the code comments. The programmers worked very hard to comment the code so people could understand it. Your answers may even be found in the code comments.

Do not customize the classic template or template_default files! Make your own template and copy the files into those appropriate directories! If you don't, when you upgrade, ALL your changes WILL be lost!

I cannot begin to tell you how many newbies think they can get away with simply modifying the Classic template. Do not do it! I speak from personal experience. I was one of those who thought, "Oh, I'll modify Classic!" And yes, the first upgrade totally wiped out my changes.

DO NOT MODIFY THE CLASSIC OR TEMPLATE_DEFAULT FILES! Use the template override system! If you are itching to modify your template, make sure you read through the warning at the beginning of the template section and make sure you understand the template override system used by Zen Cart™. And remember, many settings are NOT template settings -- they are admin control panel settings.

This tutorial will NOT cover issues with SSL conflicts in your template. Some of these can easily be resolved by loading duplicate files into the secure side of your site. (But if you're using SSL, most likely you know enough about it already to figure it out. If not, there are lots of help articles on the Zen Cart™ website.)

I strongly suggest creating a "test" store in a different directory with a separate

MySQL database to play with and not playing Dr. Frankenstein on your live store. I personally prefer developing a site "live" as opposed to on a local machine, because it will behave the same way it should live. (And it's less software to install, configure, and learn.) I do not use a "local" installation for working on Zen Cart™. All my test work is done on a "live" server in a sandbox area (a deep, deep directory). This way I can see exactly how my store will act and don't have to do twice the work debugging problems.

I decided not to cover installation and upgrades in great detail because that information is located on the Zen Cart™ website as well as included in the program documentation. With so many various possible configurations, server settings, software versions -- it's just too difficult to include every possibility.

If you bought this as a .pdf file, you will have color screenshot images. If you bought it as a printed book, it is in black and white.

I use Mozilla FireFox as my web browser. I recommend you install it, even if you don't use it, so you can compare your site in Internet Explorer (IE) and FireFox. Just because something works well in one browser doesn't mean it will work well in another. And get the Firebug plug-in -- it's great!

Another good program is WinMerge. It will help you compare files before you upload them. This is very helpful when conducting Zen Cart™ site upgrades.

Be warned -- some third-party, commercially available templates do not play well with standard installations of Zen Cart™! There are several threads on the Zen Cart™ support forum full of complaints about a few specific companies. Before purchasing any template, make sure it is completely compliant with all current Zen Cart™ standards. (In other words, take the time to poke your head into the Zen Cart™ support forum.)

Get into a habit of making copies of files, or keeping original files handy in case of serious goofs. I will frequently rename the original file on the server **OLDFILE_filename.php** or something similar. Then I can immediately restore the original version if something I changed doesn't work. (And with PHP it's very easy to goof up syntax and cause problems!)

***BACK UP ALL YOUR FILES, INCLUDING YOUR
STORE DATABASE, BEFORE YOU BEGIN!!***

I'll use different font styles to designate certain things:

includes/templates -- This refers to files and directories (folders) for your Zen Cart™ store or web urls for reference.

Configuration-->Attribute Settings -- This refers to Admin screen menu choices.

code snippet -- When I use this type of font, it's a snippet of code.

I'll tell you which file you need to make the required changes. So you might see something like this:

includes/templates/yourtemplate/css/stylesheets.css

This means the file will be located in the folder/directory where you installed Zen Cart™. If you installed Zen Cart™ in your "root" (or main) directory, then it would be:

<http://www.yourwebsite.com/includes/templates/yourtemplate/css/stylesheets.css>

If you installed Zen Cart™ in a sub-directory, like "catalog," it would look like this:

<http://www.yourwebsite.com/catalog/includes/templates/yourtemplate/css/stylesheets.css>

Everywhere you see "yourtemplate" or "custom" or something similar, I'm referring to your custom template. With your FTP software, you'd look in your website inside the folder/directory (I use those terms interchangeably) where you installed Zen Cart™ and find the directory **/includes** and inside that the directory **/templates** and inside that, the directory **/custom** and inside that the directory **/css** and then, the file named **stylesheet.css**.

If I tell you to go to **Configuration --> Attribute Settings** in the admin panel, that means you open up the admin screen of your Zen Cart™ software and you find in the horizontal menu bar that runs along the top of the screen the Configuration menu, then inside that menu you find the Attribute Settings option.

Zen Cart™ Admin Panel -- Where is it?

To find the Zen Cart™ admin panel, open your store site, and go to **<http://www.yourstoreurl.com/admin>** where you substitute your actual website address. If you installed Zen Cart™ in a directory other than the root directory, the access url would look like this: **<http://www.yourstoreurl.com/catalog/admin>** where you substitute the actual directory name for catalog. If you've already changed the name of the admin directory for security (recommended) then use whatever you changed it to instead of admin.

If you're looking to make changes to your store layout, before you buzz over to the section on templates, make sure you take the time to read and research and check out the index because the answer you seek might not be in the template -- it might be an admin panel switch.

Back up all your files and your store database before you begin! (Or use a test store so you won't wipe out your live site!)

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Part I: Introduction

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What is Zen Cart™ and how does it work?

Zen Cart™ is a dynamic online shopping cart driven by the PHP language and (usually) a MySQL database. You can visit their website at <http://www.zen-cart.com> to find out the current server requirements.

The least you need to know:

- You need a Linux-based server to run it. I've been told it can run on Windows and others if necessary, but I don't have a clue how to do it, and it's not handled in this tutorial. (For help on that, see the official Zen Cart™ site. Once you have it installed and running, you can use this tutorial.)
- You need FTP software to get files to and from the server to make changes. Some people use a built-in control panel interface provided by their server host, some use software like Filezilla or other software. You must know how to transfer files back and forth to your server host account.
- You need the ability to install a MySQL database and an administration software/interface like phpMyAdmin to maintain it and make database backups as needed. This will most likely be located in your server/host account control panel. Contact your server administrator if you have questions on how to access it.
- You need a plain-text editor, like Notepad (built into Windows) or the Mac equivalent, or a PHP editor that doesn't automatically insert extra code into a file to make edits. I know some people use Front Page or Word to edit, but be careful -- they can add extra characters that can cause issues with Zen Cart™ code. I strongly recommend NOT using Front Page or Dreamweaver to edit and upload files!

How does Zen Cart™ work? Magic! No, not really, it just seems like it. Using PHP, the pages are "layered" by delivering according to how the template is

constructed. A main page "calls" to different files based upon what it's been told to do depending upon admin settings, template construction, and customer input. This is what makes it "dynamic." The "data" displayed is delivered by the MySQL database. The way the data is displayed is controlled by CSS files in the template. There are also "language" files the user can edit to change different things that are not "dynamic data" (like section headers, shopping cart messages, and other text).

I cover this more in-depth in the template section, but seeing it laid out can help you better visualize how Zen Cart™ renders pages. Note: I am not a programmer, so some of my terminology might not be precise. My goal is to give you a visual aid so you can understand the software.

Some settings are controlled through the admin panel, some are controlled through template, language, and CSS files. While this is just a "rough outline" of Zen Cart™, it should help you understand what to look for while learning your cart.

Make sure you understand the template override system before you start mangling template files! Use a custom template -- do not modify the classic or template_default files.

You can use many different payment methods with Zen Cart™, like many popular credit card gateways, PayPal, checks/money orders, and others. You can also set up different shipping services like USPS, UPS, flat rate, rate charts, and others.

Zen Cart™ offers full control over quantity discounts, group pricing, coupons, newsletters, gift certificates, specials, offering featured products -- the list of features is too lengthy to get into here. (And frankly, I'm always discovering something new.) In fact, you might not utilize every feature provided.

The customer arrives at your store. They either register on your site before they order or during the order process. They add items to their shopping cart, and when ready, click the checkout button.

From there, they either register for an account or continue the checkout process. They pick the payment and shipping options of their choice depending on what you've set up. They can add comments to the order. They get a final chance to preview the order, then confirm it.

You get an email from your server (You've got orders!). Verify the payment. Package and ship the order. Unless it's a download file, and then you can sit back

and watch the money come in.

That's it!

The biggest issue most newbies have is with the template override system. Take time to learn it properly, and it will make your job a lot easier when you start to customize your template. Never, ever customize the core files! We'll go over that later. Also, take the time to research and see if what you want to do is a template issue or if it's an Admin control panel setting.

Zen Cart™ is a powerful program, suitable for individuals selling one product, or a corporation selling thousands of products. And everywhere in between. What you do with it depends on your needs and your skills (or ability to pay someone to make custom modifications for you). Without extra modifications (excluding the template) it's a very powerful program that meets most e-tailers' needs. There are already many mods, both free and for sale.

If you are installing your store from scratch, I strongly recommend installing the sample data. Many of the sample data products include information about them that will help you understand the software faster.

How do I upload/edit files on my website?

Normally, this isn't a chapter I would include in a Zen Cart™ tutorial. But lately a lot of newbies on the Zen Cart™ support site have used their server's automatic (or automagic!) tools to install their Zen Cart™ store and have no idea how to transfer files back and forth from their computer to their website.

FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol. Depending on how your server is configured, you might use a special url (for example, **ftp://www.mysite.com**) or need special permissions set up on your server, or you could use an FTP program. Some server control panels come with a built-in FTP or file manager interface allowing you to upload and download files.

Before you start anything, look in the documentation provided by your host, maybe in the form of a welcome letter you received when you opened your account with login information, or perhaps information FAQs or help files on the server itself. Depending on your host, they might already have tutorials for using their FTP system on their website, or have a FAQ they can email you. Look around on their main website, and also in your control panel for your account. See if you must create an FTP account through your control panel before you can use FTP. Some hosts will automatically create one for you upon creation of your account, and you can create new ones with different permissions as necessary.

Here are some other urls you can view for more help on FTP. I do not endorse any of them, they are provided for information only. Search for FTP primer or FTP help on any search engine for more instructions.

- <http://www.ftpplanet.com/ftpresources/basics.htm>
- <http://www.webmonkey.com/02/36/index4a.html>
- <http://filezilla-project.org/>
- <http://www.coreftp.com/>
- <http://www.smartftp.com/>
- <http://www.coffeecup.com/free-ftp/>

Most FTP software or built-in interfaces, depending on what you use with your host, allow you to see a "local" folder on your computer and the "remote" directory on your server. You should be able to create new folders on your remote directory.

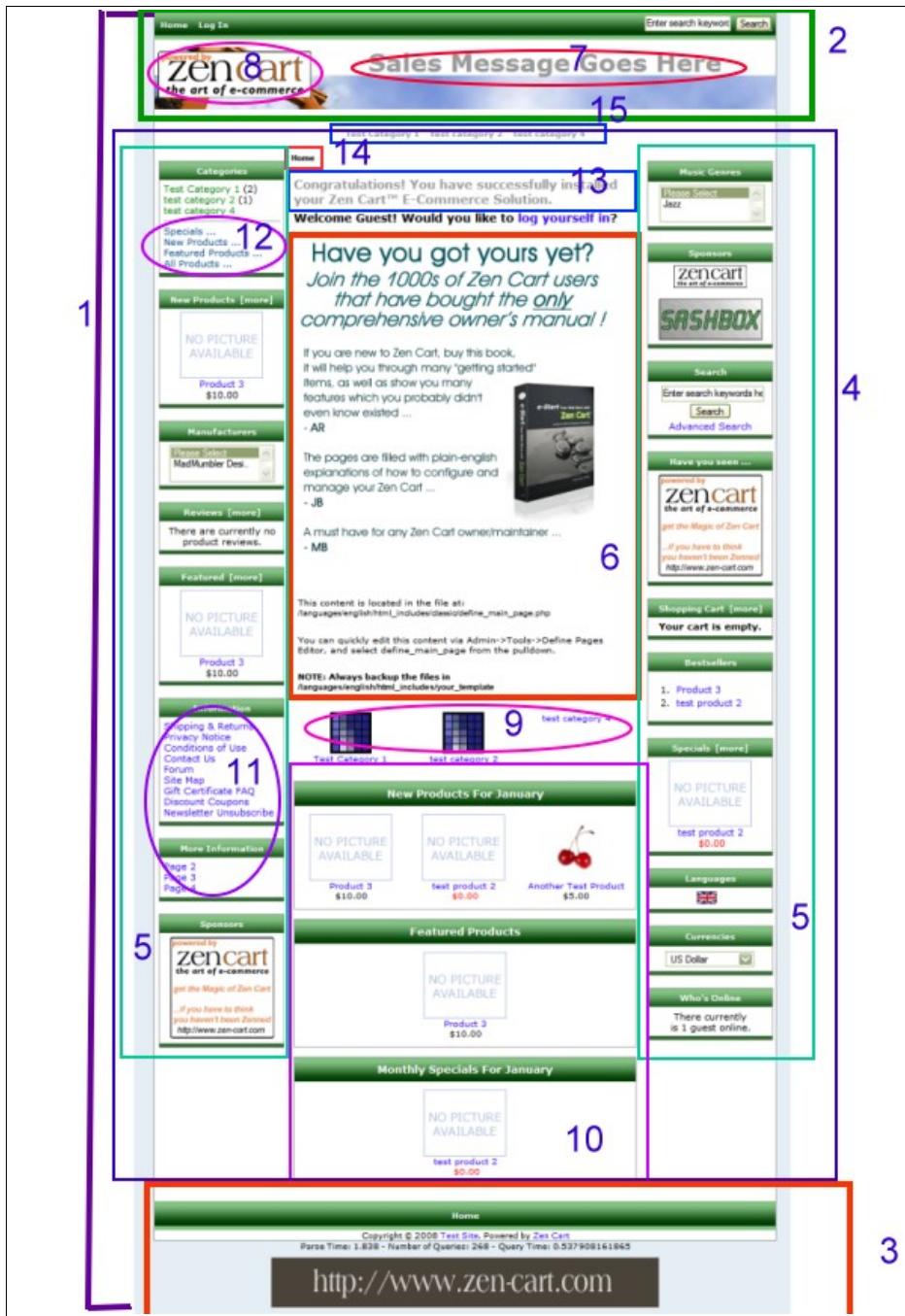
Creating new directories on the remote directory is similar to creating new files and folders on your hard drive. Depending on your software or interface, you might be able to "drag and drop" files or select them and use a button to send them to your server.

You'll see discussions on "file permissions." Some FTP software allows you to change file permissions with the software. Some FTP software allows you to do this, but your server settings might not. In those cases, you'll have to log into your server account and do it manually through a "file manager" or other interface.

I strongly recommend using a dedicated FTP program instead of a built-in interface inside another program like Front Page or Dreamweaver. There are many free FTP programs available (some in the links I provided) that offer trouble-free service.

You would also use your FTP interface to download files from your site as a back-up.

Zen Cart™ – Rough Overview



1. Zen Cart™'s main page is **index.php** but it pulls the page sections from many files. Open the **index.php** source file and read the opening code and you'll see some of the files used. And to add to the confusion, those files sometimes call additional files.

2. This is the **header.php** file located in the template. You should create a custom **header.php** file for your template. There are several elements inside this file, some controlled by the **stylesheet.css** file, some by language files, some by

template files, some by admin panel settings.

3. This is the **footer.php** file, and like the **header.php** file, some portions of it

are controlled by CSS, some by the admin panel, and some by the language and template files.

4. This whole entity is the **tpl_main_page.php** file found in the template files.

5. These are sideboxes. The position, width, and display content are controlled through the Admin panel. The style is controlled by the **stylesheet.css** file. The header text is controlled by language files. Each sidebox can be custom tailored and styled through template files. If you don't want three columns, you can turn off columns in the template and in the admin control panel. You can also configure the width of the columns and sideboxes via the admin control panel. Template overall width and alignment is controlled through the **stylesheet.css** file.

6. The content of this page is edited through the admin control panel (define pages editor). If you don't want it to appear at all, you can switch it off in the admin panel.

7. Sales Message Goes here/Tagline -- this is controlled through a language file (see the index for more information).

8. **logo.gif** -- you can change it to suit yourself, or delete it altogether. A combo of a template file and the **stylesheet.css** file.

9. Categories. You can choose to display them or not, with or without text with the pictures. Controlled through the admin control panel.

10. Center boxes for New, Featured, and Specials products. Configured through the admin panel. (Note: if you don't have any products designated as New, Featured, or Specials, these boxes won't show even if enabled.)

11. These links are mostly defined pages, and the link can be set to display or not through the admin panel. The actual text of the link can be changed in the language files. Most of the files can be edited through the define pages editor.

12. These links are configured through the admin control panel. Again -- the New, Featured, and Specials links won't display even if enabled if you don't have eligible products.

13. Congratulations...! message. Edited through a language file (see index).

14. Bread crumbs – display configured through admin control panel, style through the **stylesheet.css** file.

15. Category tab links - configured through admin control panel, style through the **stylesheet.css** file.

This is just a rough outline, of course. And yes, we discuss all of this in this guide. There are also files called such as **meta_tags.php** and others that you don't "see" which still help run the site. You can search for these items in the questions section or in the index to quickly find the information you need.

How do I install/upgrade Zen Cart™?

There are so many different server configurations, it would be impossible to cover all aspects of potential installation issues in this guide. If you have trouble installing Zen Cart™, make sure you visit the support website for more information and help. The information provided here is a basic guideline, and will helpfully demystify the process enough that you can get the software installed or at least track down problems.

READ the documentation in the **/docs** directory after you unzip the file, or refer to the Zen Cart™ website for more details and help.

Installation Tips

- Go to the Zen Cart™ website to ensure your server and MySQL versions are compatible with the most current version of Zen Cart™. If you use an "instant install" tool provided by your web host, make sure it will install the most current version of Zen Cart™ for security purposes.
- NOTE: Ask your server administrator if they are running phpsuexec. If they are, **before** you do anything, read this FAQ from the Zen Cart™ website: <http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?article=226> It will save you a lot of headaches. You must upload files in a certain way, and remove/change/add other files.
- Download the Zen Cart™ .zip from the Zen Cart™ site. Make sure you have the latest version and unzip it to a folder on your computer hard drive. It will create a file structure automatically when it extracts all the files to your computer.
- READ the files in the **/docs** folder!
- Using whatever interface is provided by your web host (usually a version of phpMyAdmin) create a MySQL database in your website hosting account. Make sure you note the username, password, and path (either localhost or

they will provide you a host address or ip address to use).

- Using an FTP program of your choice, upload the files to the directory on your website where you want Zen Cart™ to appear. If you want it to appear as your "front page" make sure it's in your "root" directory (usually something like html_public, httpdocs, or similar).
- Use your web browser to navigate to your store front page to begin the installation process.
- Follow the instructions in the automatic installer.
- When finished, make sure you follow the instructions to remove or rename the installation directory. (I recommend removing it.)

Alternate option: Some web host providers are using something called Fantastico (or a similar "automatic" option) to make installation "one-click." You can use this -- but verify before you install that it's the most current version of Zen Cart™ available. It's not uncommon for their version to be one or two releases behind the most current one. Also, make sure you note the database password and username that's automatically created for you, and the location of the database ("localhost" or a web address or IP address).

Upgrade Tips

Upgrading a store can be tricky depending on how far behind you are on upgrades. If you've kept your store version current, you'll find detailed upgrade information in the newest update package you download.

Why is it so important to upgrade? Security upgrades are often included in version upgrades. Not upgrading can leave you vulnerable to security risks. Also, newer versions fix bugs found in older versions. Why spend hours debugging an older version when the fix is usually included in the newest version?

I always recommend using a "test store" situation when upgrading. Duplicate your database, create a new database and import the data. Then copy your store files and put them in a "sandbox" (or deep) folder on your site. (For example, <http://www.mysite.com/sandbox/testing/storetest> or whatever you want.) Point the

configure.php files to the "new" database and use that configuration to install the upgrade. If all goes well, and you haven't made any new sales in your "real" store, you can either move the files, or you can upgrade your "real" store. Don't forget to use the maintenance mode built into Zen Cart™!

I frequently create a directory in the same level as the store I'm working on, and when I have the update completed and I'm sure it's working right, I'll simply rename the old store directory, rename the new one to match the original live store, and then change the **configure.php** files to reflect the changes. Then, once I'm sure all is well, I can delete the old files. (When you use this method, if there are any problems, all you have to do is switch the directory names back and you're still in business.)

Use whatever method works for YOU.

Ack! It's installed -- now what?

Well, now you need to log into the admin panel and take a look around and get familiar with the layout and settings.

The admin panel, if you haven't changed the folder name yet is located at:

<http://www.yourstore.com/admin> (or **<http://www.yourstore.com/catalog/admin>** if you installed in a lower directory -- substitute whatever directory you used for "catalog")

Don't be in a rush to take your store live if you can avoid it -- take at least a day or so to learn how to navigate and play with settings so you aren't scrambling (or pulling your hair out!). It doesn't mean you can't have your site online in hours -- you can have your site online in as much time as it takes you to get the files uploaded, products created, and your website name to appear.

That doesn't mean you should.

Familiarize yourself with the Admin control panel main page. You can always get back to it by clicking on the Admin Home link in the upper right corner of the screen. It will give you "quick stats" like the newest customers, newest orders, page hits, and other statistics you might find useful. Some of the displays are clickable links, like to customers and orders.

Admin Home

Don't be in a hurry to modify your store template! Many settings are actually controlled in the Admin panel, and by changing them in the code you could disable some functionality.

You need to set up a few things:

- Payment modules
- Shipping modules
- **Admin Panel: Configuration --> My Store** settings (like store name, address, etc.)
- **Admin Panel: Configuration --> E-Mail Options**
- **Admin Panel: Configuration --> Layout Settings**

- Taxes
- Currencies (or at least verify it's set up to use your particular system)
- System emails
- Categories
- Products (can't sell anything without them!)
- Modify language and define pages files
- Template (ONLY after you understand the template override system!)

Read through this guide to learn how to fine-tune your store to suit your needs. The template override system usually gets the most questions. Once you understand it you'll be able to fully customize your store. However -- and this is something I emphasize repeatedly -- many layout settings are not in the template, they are located in the Admin control panel. Carefully read through this guide, use the index, and look through the Zen Cart™ support site as needed before you start mangling your template files.

And always, always make backups!

Why should I change the name of my "admin" folder (and how do I do it)?

It's easy for someone to see if you're using Zen Cart™ as your online store. By changing the name of the admin folder, you are adding a layer of security because it is more difficult for a hacker to figure out where your admin login page is. If you don't change the admin folder name, they can go right to the admin login page and then try to figure out your username and password.

First, you need to decide what the new admin folder name will be. And change it. Then, you need to change your **/admin/includes/configure.php** file to reflect the new folder name.

If you get an error after doing this referring to sessions or cache, you may need to manually reset your cache key. You can do it manually, or you can download the Fix Cache Key tool from the Zen Cart™ support site download section, under Downloads -- Troubleshooting Tools.

If you want to do it manually, you must be comfortable editing your database with phpMyAdmin (or whatever you use to edit your database).

Run the following SQL query:

```
UPDATE configuration set  
configuration_value='home/mysite/public_html/cache' where  
configuration_key='SESSION_WRITE_DIRECTORY';
```

Notice the highlighted lines?

If you used a table prefix like zen_ when you installed your store, you'll need to change configuration (the name of the table) to zen_configuration (or whatever your table prefix is).

Also, for the configuration value, where it says

home/mysite/public_html/cache you need to substitute the real path on your server.

I need to move my store/change directories.

There are two main parts to your store – server files and the database. The database can be located wherever you want it to be, but for obvious reasons it's usually better if it's on the same server as everything else. If you're simply changing directories (because you created it in a “sandbox” and want it at top level) you won't need to move your database. All you have to do is copy all your Zen Cart™ server files, put them where you want them in the server file structure, and then change the file paths in the **includes/configure.php** and **admin/includes/configure.php** files. Make sure to change all of the appropriate entries in both files.

In **includes/configure.php** you need to change:

- DIR_WS_CATALOG
- DIR_WS_HTTPS_CATALOG
- DIR_FS_CATALOG
- DIR_FS_SQL_CACHE

In **admin/includes/configure.php** you need to change:

- DIR_WS_ADMIN
- DIR_WS_HTTPS_ADMIN
- DIR_FS_ADMIN

If you need to move to a new server, in addition to copying and uploading the site files and editing the two **configure.php** files, you'll need to export your database, create a new one on your new server, and then import the data into the database. (Make sure to change the database information in the two **configure.php** files as well as the server file path.)

You'll also need to log into the Zen Cart™ Admin panel to **Configuration --> Sessions** and change the **Sessions Directory** setting to reflect the new server path.

If you get the sessions/cache error (covered in the previous chapter) use the same procedure to fix it.

For more information, see: <http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?article=100>

How do I secure my store against hackers?

This is a subject that is way too complex to completely discuss here. It's a topic worthy of a full-length book of its own! Beyond the basics, such as using the most current version of Zen Cart™, installing upgrades immediately, making sure your admin password and username isn't easy to guess, and making sure you don't use the same username and password for your database as you do for your store, there are a lot of different things you can (and should) do.

First and foremost is scanning your computer for malware that can capture your password and username information. Then, make sure you use firewall or other software to protect your computer.

Of course, you also need to properly set your file permissions (also called CHMOD) for your two **configure.php** files through your FTP software or through your server control panel or interface. You should also have file permissions set properly for other vulnerable files and folders.

Depending on your server set-up, you should also contact your host or system administrator for other options to secure your site. They can vary depending on your particular situation.

Read [**/docs/important_site_security_recommendations.html**](#) as a starting point.

The best place to get the most up-to-date information is at the Zen Cart™ support site forums at: <http://www.zen-cart.com> There are several articles in the Wiki and FAQ/Tutorials section on securing your site, plus a section in the forum dedicated to it.

If your site is hacked, report it immediately to the Zen Cart™ site forum. There, the developers track all reports, try to help the store owner figure out how it happened, and can either create bug fixes or recommend courses of action to repair your site. There is also a good FAQ there on what to do to recover from a hack.

Most importantly, make frequent back-ups of your database and store files. This way, once you figure out how the hacker accessed your account, you can

quickly replace your store with minimal interruption. Also, make sure to copy all your custom template files.

If you are ever hacked, when you reinstall your store, make sure to first download a fresh copy of Zen Cart™ and use that to install the core files in case any of the ones you downloaded from your site were corrupted.

Please note that it's not uncommon for some webhosts to blame Zen Cart™ for the hack, then suggest you invest in their web commerce solution. Rest assured, Zen Cart™ (when properly installed, configured, and updated) will not allow people to hack into your server account. Usually, the problem lies either with malware on a computer you used to access your store's admin panel that captured your login information, or there was a problem with another hosting account on your shared server that allowed access.

Yes, servers don't like to admit their security can be breached! But extensive testing has proven Zen Cart™ alone is not a gateway to a security breach into a server account.

One thing you might want to do is (if it's not there already) edit your **/includes/application_top.php** file. Add the following code snippet starting at line 2 (line 1 is the opening php tag and must remain intact).

```
/**  
 * prevent hack attempts which waste CPU cycles  
 */  
if(stristr($_GET['main_page'], 'http') ||  
isset($_GET['autoLoadConfig'])) {  
    header('HTTP/1.1 406 Not Acceptable');  
    exit(0);  
}
```

What does this do? It prevents hacking attempts using a method that doesn't work on properly configured and updated Zen Carts, but still wastes time and resources. You can find an FAQ tutorial about this at: <http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?help=yes&article=320>

Also, for security, set **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Site Map – include My Account Links?** to No.

How do I use SSL with my store?

This depends on your host, the kind of certificate you have, whether it's shared or not, and many other things. In the best of all circumstances, you can simply designate SSL at install and everything works.

Unfortunately, this isn't always the case.

You can modify both the **includes/configure.php** and the **admin/includes/configure.php** files if you're adding SSL after the store is installed. If you have issues with errors in SSL because of "insecure" objects, double-check your site to make sure there are no "hard-coded" links to things like banner images, etc. causing the problem. Images properly loaded into the Zen Cart™ template system should not trigger this. However, in some cases, if your https directory is different from your http directory, you might have to load images into both directories to prevent the error.

Some hosts, unfortunately, are not equipped to provide SSL with Zen Cart™ installations. You should refer to the list of "certified hosts" on the Zen Cart™ site if you are looking for a hosting service. These providers have gone through screening with the Zen Cart™ team to make sure their set-up will completely support Zen Cart™ on their servers. That's not to say the host of your choice can't successfully run Zen Cart™ on for your site -- many can. There are quite a number, however, that use specific software or settings that can cause you problems with your Zen Cart™ installation when used with SSL. Ask for other opinions about your host of choice on the Zen Cart™ forums if you have questions. Before you invest in a new hosting account, search for them on the user forum and see if there are any comments – good or bad – about them.

Third-Party Modifications and Extensions

Just because you can't do something with Zen Cart™ out of the box, so to speak, doesn't mean the ability isn't there. Chances are, someone wanted to do the same thing you did, or something similar, and wrote a modification (sometimes called an "extension").

These downloads are available on the Zen Cart™ support site and elsewhere on the web. The ones on the Zen Cart™ site are free, and while they are use at your own risk, most have been thoroughly checked by either the Zen Cart™ programmers, other users, or both, and found to be safe (not guaranteed, but reasonably certain).

Please carefully review all information when looking at these downloads. Some are not for current versions of Zen Cart™. Most of the downloads also have their own discussion forum thread, so you might want to go through the forum, find it, and read it from start to finish before you install the download to make sure you won't have any problems.

Before you buy/download any third-party template, please review the template section on just that subject. It could save you a lot of money before you spend hundreds (or more) of dollars on a template that might not work properly.

Another note -- I can't tell you how to install the downloads. The code author will (usually) tell you this in the download. Download the file, unzip it to a folder on your computer, and read any "readme" or information files. Instructions should be located in there.

I'm not trying to be difficult -- but different extensions may require different instructions.

The usual procedure is to download the file, unzip it to your computer, and then upload the files to the appropriate directories on your website. Some might

require you to run MySQL queries directly through your phpMyAdmin interface, some might come with MySQL query files that do it for you.

WARNING: Make sure you make a FULL FILE BACKUP of all your Zen Cart™ files AND a FULL DATABASE BACKUP BEFORE you install any modifications!

Some modifications are for layout or template issues. Those are usually easy to install. However, especially for the ones that modify core code files, you MUST make a backup! Better yet, duplicate your site in a test server, try it there first, test it, then modify your "real" site after you have the bugs worked out.

The problem with third party modifications is sometimes the original code writer didn't update it for new versions of Zen Cart™. You are then left to figure it out yourself, drop the modification from your store so you can update, or pay someone to make the updates for you. The most popular modifications are usually updated on a regular basis for functionality, security, and to keep up with Zen Cart™ updates.

Any third party modifications you purchase from others are their sole responsibility to update and support.

If you are a programmer, you can write your own modifications. For more information on how to contribute them to the Zen Cart™ project for others to download for free, see the Zen Cart™ website for more information.

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Basic Store Configuration

Your store's installed. Now what?

Go to **Configuration --> My Store.**

My Store	
Title	Value
Store Name	Test Site
Store Owner	admin
Country	United States
Zone	Florida
Expected Sort Order	desc
Expected Sort Field	products_name
Switch To Default Language Currency	false
Language Selector	Default
Display Cart After Adding Product	true
Default Search Operator	and
Store Address and Phone	Store Name Address Country Phone

This is where you update all the basics -- store name, owner, country, address and phone number, etc. There are more options in this menu, which apply to things like shipping and tax zones, localizations, and more.

Zones

Zones allow you the ability to specify certain geographic areas so you can fine-tune things like taxes, shipping, and other localizations. In the US, a "zone" could be a state, or even a city if need be. For example, you could specify a zone for your state for free-shipping purposes. Or for special taxing purposes.

Zone can be defined/created in **Locations/Taxes --> Zones** and **Locations/Taxes --> Zone Definitions.**

I can't begin to go through all the possibilities for defining zones. There are too many possibilities to even begin to do this here. If you get stuck, you can search the Zen Cart™ site for more information.

Taxes

Because taxes can be a fairly complex issue, I won't get into them here. Some

users only need a simple sales tax, some need complex taxes based upon VAT and other taxes.

You can set tax calculations based upon origination or destination addresses.

Tax settings are found in the following Admin areas:

- ***Configuration --> My Store --> Tax Decimal Places***
- ***Configuration --> My Store --> Display Prices With Tax***
- ***Configuration --> My Store --> Display Prices With Tax in Admin***
- ***Configuration --> My Store --> Basis of Product Tax***
- ***Configuration --> My Store --> Basis of Shipping Tax***
- ***Configuration --> My Store --> Sales Tax Display Status***
- ***Locations/Taxes --> Zones Definitions*** (to create tax zones)
- ***Locations/Taxes --> Tax Classes***
- ***Locations/Taxes --> Tax Rates***
- ***Modules --> Order Total***
- ***Modules --> Shipping Modules***

You will need to set up zones based upon your specific situation. It's impossible for me to go through every conceivable tax set-up combination in a book like this. If you have trouble properly setting up taxes, consult the Zen Cart™ support site for more information.

You will also need to properly configure your shipping modules in case you are required to charge tax on shipping.

There are several FAQs relating to specific tax set-up and other issues on the Zen Cart™ support site. Go to the FAQ page and search for tax and you'll easily find them.

Currencies

Depending on where you and your customers live, you can make adjustments to the currencies you accept for your store. Settings are located under ***Localization --> Currencies*** in the Admin screen. You can also update the exchange rate by clicking the Update Currencies button on the Currencies screen. This is also the screen where you would update your default currency, or add a new one as needed.

There is also a Currency sidebox where customers can select to see their currency on your site. If you only accept one currency, it might be best to turn this

off so you don't confuse customers, but use whatever is best for your store.

Missing Page Check

If you want people who hit on invalid page links to be redirected to your main page, turned off for debugging purposes (so they show up in your server error log) or set to go to a Page Not Found page. **Configuration --> My Store --> Missing Page Check.**

If you opt for the Page Not Found setting, make sure to configure it through the **Tools --> Define Pages Editor** menu.

Missing Page Check Please make any necessary changes
Missing Page Check Zen Cart can check for missing pages in the URL and redirect to Index page. For debugging you may want to turn this off.
Default=On On = Send missing pages to 'index' Off = Don't check for missing pages Page Not Found = display the Page-Not-Found page
<input checked="" type="radio"/> On <input type="radio"/> Off <input type="radio"/> Page Not Found
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

Maintenance Mode

If you want to take your store offline for upgrades, for example, you can use the built-in maintenance mode. This allows you to specify your IP number so you can still work on the store, but customers will see a message telling them the store is in maintenance mode. You can also set it for advanced public notification.

Go to **Configuration --> Website Maintenance.**

Don't forget to add your IP address to the Down for Maintenance (exclude this IP-Address) field.

WEBSITE MAINTENANCE
Title
Down for Maintenance: ON/OFF
Down for Maintenance: filename
Down for Maintenance: Hide Header
Down for Maintenance: Hide Column Left
Down for Maintenance: Hide Column Right
Down for Maintenance: Hide Footer
Down for Maintenance: Hide Prices
Down For Maintenance (exclude this IP-Address)
NOTICE PUBLIC Before going Down for Maintenance: ON/OFF
Date and hours for notice before maintenance
Display when webmaster has enabled maintenance
Display website maintenance period
Website maintenance period

Spiders

Prevent Spider Sessions Please make any necessary changes
Prevent Spider Sessions Prevent known spiders from starting a session.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> True <input type="radio"/> False
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

To prevent spider programs from starting a session, you can use the **Configuration --> Sessions --> Prevent Spider Sessions.** NOTE: This won't necessarily stop all spiders, just known ones.

Developers Tool Kit (How do I change where it says____?)

A lot of people don't understand what this does. I mention it here because it's invaluable. Go to **Tools --> Developers Tool Kit**. Now, for example, say you want to change one header field in a language file, and you've changed several files and the change still doesn't take effect? You can look for the particular word or phrase using the Developers Tool Kit, find the file, and change it.

DEVELOPERS TOOL KIT

Look-up CONSTANT or Language File defines

Key or Name: Language File Look-ups:

NOTE: CONSTANTS are written in uppercase.
Language file, functions, classes, etc. lookups are performed when nothing has been found in the database tables, if selected in dropdown

Look-up Functions or things in Function files

Key or Name: Function File Look-ups:

NOTE: CONSTANTS are written in uppercase.
Language file, functions, classes, etc. lookups are performed when nothing has been found in the database tables, if selected in dropdown

Look-up Classes or things in Classes files

Key or Name: Classes File Look-ups:

NOTE: CONSTANTS are written in uppercase.
Language file, functions, classes, etc. lookups are performed when nothing has been found in the database tables, if selected in dropdown

Look-up Template things

Key or Name: Template File Look-ups:

NOTE: CONSTANTS are written in uppercase.
Language file, functions, classes, etc. lookups are performed when nothing has been found in the database tables, if selected in dropdown

Look-up in all files

Key or Name: All Files Look-ups:

NOTE: CONSTANTS are written in uppercase.
Language file, functions, classes, etc. lookups are performed when nothing has been found in the database tables, if selected in dropdown

It can perform detailed searches based upon what kind of item you're searching for (constant, classes, template items, etc.) and can search for them in both admin and catalog (main store) files.

Instead of "Developers Tool Kit" it should be called the "Really Handy Zen Cart™ Program Search Thingy" because that's basically what it is. I cannot tell you how many hours it's saved me when I needed to find a language file field.

Store Manager

The Store Manager interface provides several valuable tools. Go to **Tools --> Store Manager** to access it.

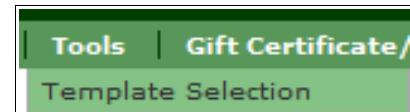
You can reset several statistics, like the Admin Activity log, counter, products view and ordered stats, change the Order ID, and more.

NOTE: if you change your Order ID, you can only go UP, not down.

There is also an Optimize Database feature to help clean up your database.

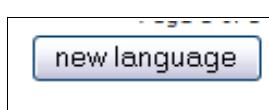
Template Selector

If you create, buy, or download a template, you must install it. To do this, go to **Tools --> Template Selection** and then click the Edit button.



Do not edit the Classic or template_default files! Create a new template and install it and work from that. Why? Because when you upgrade, your changes will be wiped out! Read through the

template section BEFORE you start any template work! For more information on templates, please see the template section of this guide.



If you need to install a new set of language files, upload your files to the appropriate folder and click the New Language button in this same screen.

Then you can associate the new files with the template in question.

You also have language settings in **Localization --> Languages**.



To allow customers to select a different language, make sure you have the language sidebox enabled through **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**.

You might need to adjust the **Configuration --> My Store --> Language Selector** setting depending on your specific needs.

Admin Users/Passwords

To add/edit admin users, go to **Tools --> Admin**

Settings. There you can add admin users, edit their settings, and reset their password.

As of version 1.3.8, any admin users have full access to all features. It is not possible to custom-tailor admin access permissions. For example, to give one admin user the ability to only edit customer information, or to only process orders.

So be very careful when you give someone admin access to your cart! There is a third-party modification available on the Zen Cart™ support site; use at your own risk.

If you lose/forget your admin password, first try using the Resend Password link on the admin login page. If that doesn't work, you can access your database and manually add a temporary admin account.

Note: if you're not comfortable working with your database, make sure you back up the database before you try this!

Using phpMyAdmin (or however you administrate your database) you'll need to run the following query.

```
DELETE FROM admin WHERE admin_name = 'Admin';
INSERT INTO admin (admin_name, admin_email, admin_pass,
admin_level)
VALUES ('Admin', 'admin@localhost',
'351683ea4e19efe34874b501fdbf9792:9b', 1);
```

Notice the highlighted code? That is a database table name. If you installed your Zen Cart™ using a prefix like zen_ for your table names, you need to change those references. For example, if your prefix is zen_, then you need to change the name to zen_admin for the table references.

This code will create an admin account with the following information:

Username: Admin (note the uppercase A)

Password: admin

Once you have logged in, reset your admin information. Then, delete this account using the **Tools --> Admin Settings** menu.



Showcase Settings

"I don't want people to purchase from my store, I just want it as an online catalog." Or, maybe you're going through an inventory and can't sell products during the process, or your store is closed for holidays or vacation and you don't want to take it down. Or, a variety of reasons. (Note: You should use the Define Pages Editor to note this on the front page of your store so customers know why they can't purchase online, or note the Contact Us or other file so they know how to purchase from you.)

This is called a "showcase." You can set your store to allow browsing but no purchasing, with or without prices.

This setting can be found in **Configuration --> My Store --> Store Status.**

Store Status Please make any necessary changes
Store Status What is your Store Status 0= Normal Store 1= Showcase no prices 2= Showcase with prices
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

Authorizing Customers

If you must approve your customers (for example, you sell only to people in your industry, or must verify customer age or information before they can purchase) you can enable this feature.

Customer Approval Status - Authorization Pending Please make any necessary changes
Customer Approval Status - Authorization Pending Customer must be Authorized to shop 0= Not required 1= Must be Authorized to Browse 2= May browse but no prices unless Authorized 3= Customer May Browse and May see Prices but Must be Authorized to Buy
It is recommended that Option 2 or 3 be used for the purposes of Spiders
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

Go to
Configuration --> Customer Details --> Customer Shop Status - View Shop and Prices
and configure as desired.

Customer Shop Status - View Shop and Prices Please make any necessary changes
Customer Shop Status - View Shop and Prices Customer must be approved to shop 0= Not required 1= Must login to browse 2= May browse but no prices unless logged in 3= Showroom Only
It is recommended that Option 2 be used for the purposes of Spiders if you wish customers to login to see prices.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

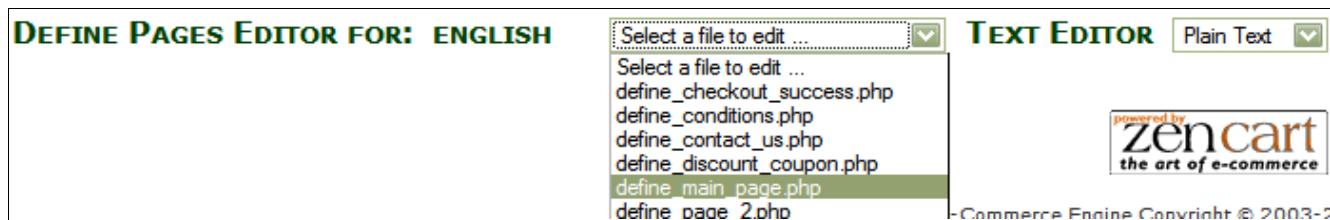
Then, go to **Configuration --> Customer Details --> Customer Approval Status - Authorization Pending** and set it as needed.

How do I edit the "home" page, Information box pages, or the checkout success/ coupon/ contact us, etc. pages? And can I disable them?

The content of these pages is controlled by the Define Pages Editor. You can put anything you want on them -- graphics, text, whatever you want.

To edit the page, go to **Tools --> Define Pages Editor** in the Admin screen.

From the drop-down menu of options, select the file for the page you want to edit.



You can also select from the Text Editor option Plain Text or HTML editor. (Do this before you select a page to edit or you'll have to select the page again.)

Also, in the Admin control panel, you can go to **Configuration --> Define Page Status** and switch the page off if you want. (Not sure why you'd want to turn off the main page, but you can.)

A screenshot of the Zen Cart Define Main Page Status form. It has a title bar 'Define Main Page Status' and a 'edit' button. Below that is a question 'Enable the Defined Main Page Link/Text?' followed by four options: '0= Link ON, Define Text OFF', '1= Link ON, Define Text ON', '2= Link OFF, Define Text ON', and '3= Link OFF, Define Text OFF'. At the bottom are two timestamped entries: 'Date Added: 05/27/2007' and 'Last Modified: 05/27/2007'.

If you see a file permissions error message on the top of the Define Pages Tool, you'll have to go into your server and change the file permissions (CHMOD) to allow editing.

How do I turn off/on the category links in the strip over the breadcrumbs and under the header?

These are called the "categories tabs."

They are accessed in the Admin control panel:

Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Categories-Tabs Menu ON/OFF

Click on the option and then edit as desired.

Categories-Tabs Menu ON/OFF
Please make any necessary changes

Categories-Tabs Menu ON/OFF
Categories-Tabs
This enables the display of your store's categories as a menu across the top of your header. There are many potential creative uses for this.
0= Hide Categories Tabs
1= Show Categories Tabs

0
 1

update **cancel**

How do I edit or turn off/on the bread crumbs?

The bread crumbs are controlled in the Admin panel.

Configuration--> Layout Settings.

There are two settings relating to bread crumbs -- **Bread Crumbs Navigation Separator** and **Define Breadcrumbs Status.**

The Navigation Separator means the character separating the links.

Bread Crumbs Navigation Separator
Please make any necessary changes

Bread Crumbs Navigation Separator
Enter the separator symbol to appear between the Navigation Bread Crumb trail
Note: Include spaces with the symbol if you want them part of the separator.
Default = ::

 :

update **cancel**

Define Breadcrumb Status
Please make any necessary changes

Define Breadcrumb Status
Enable the Breadcrumb Trail Links?
0= OFF
1= ON
2= Off for Home Page Only

0
 1
 2

update **cancel**

Define Breadcrumbs Status lets you turn it on, off, or off only for the home page.

How do I change from three to two columns?

The easiest way to do this is to use the Admin control panel and go to:

Configuration --> Layout Settings and turn off the Column Left or Column Right Global status setting (depending on what you want).

Then, you need to go to: **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** and change all your sideboxes so they don't display on the column you don't want. If you have a column turned off and you have the sidebox set to display in that column, the sidebox won't display. We also cover this in the template section.

Column Left Status - Global
Column Right Status - Global

How do I change the column and sidebox width?

This is controlled through the Admin control panel. Go to:

Configurations-->Layout Settings and change both the Column Width Left Boxes/Right Boxes and Column Width Left/Right settings as applicable.

If you change one setting and not the other, you can have problems with how the sideboxes display if they are larger than the column width.

Title
Column Width - Left Boxes
Column Width - Right Boxes

Column Width - Left
Column Width - Right

How do I change if a sidebox shows or where it appears?

Sideboxes are controlled through the Admin control panel. Go to **Tools-->Layout Boxes Controller** and you can set not only which column the box appears in, but the order in which it appears. You can also turn a sidebox off through this control.

Tools | Gift Certificate/
Template Selection
Layout Boxes Controller

Box File Name	LEFT/RIGHT COLUMN Status	LEFT or RIGHT COLUMN	LEFT/RIGHT COLUMN Sort Order	SINGLE COLUMN Sort Order	SINGLE COLUMN Status	Action	Selected Box: search_header.php
sideboxes/search_header.php	OFF	LEFT	0	0	ON	  Box Details: Box Name: search_header.php Left/Right Column Status: OFF Location: (Single Column ignores this setting) LEFT Left/Right Column Sort Order: 0 Single Column Sort Order: 0 Single Column Status: ON	 
sideboxes/categories.php	ON	LEFT	10	10	OFF		
sideboxes/whats_new.php	ON	LEFT	20	0	OFF		
sideboxes/manufacturers.php	ON	LEFT	30	20	ON		
sideboxes/reviews.php	ON	LEFT	40	0	OFF		
sideboxes/featured.php	ON	LEFT	45	0	OFF		
sideboxes/more_information.php	ON	LEFT	200	200	ON		
sideboxes/banner_box.php	ON	LEFT	300	1	OFF		

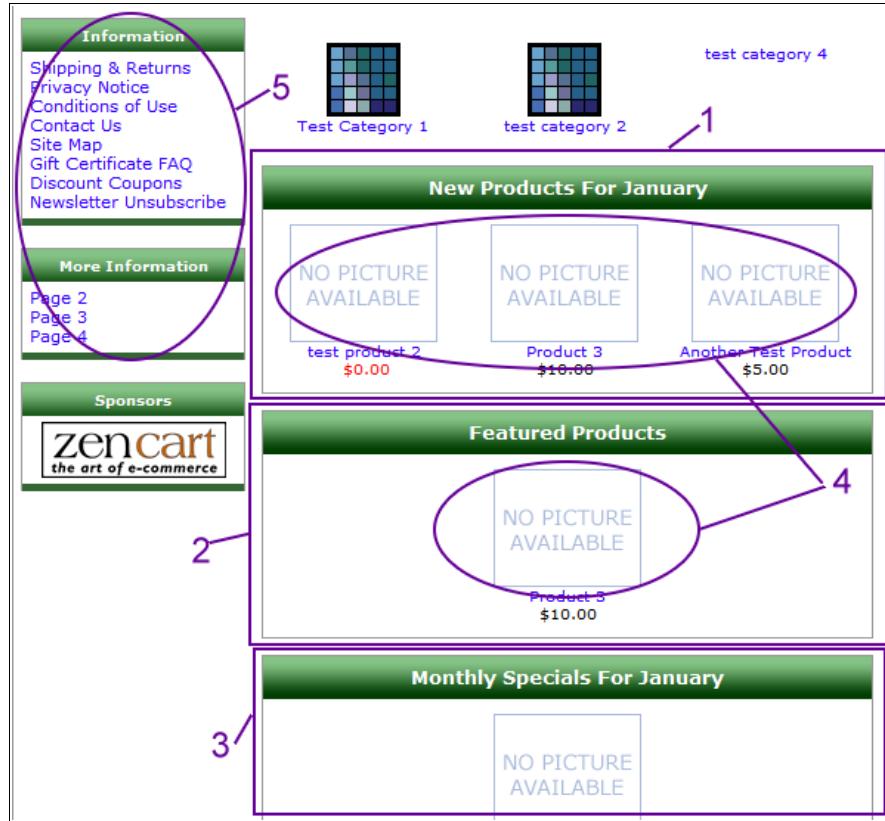
Front Page & Category Settings

A lot of people ask, "How do I change ____ on the front page?" Whether it's the New, Specials, and Featured product boxes, define pages links, banner boxes, or other, it's all in the Admin panel.

1 - The New Products box is switched at **Configuration --> Index Listing --> Show New Products on Main Page**

2 - The Featured Products box is switched at **Configuration -->Index Listing--> Show Featured Products on Main Page**

3 - The Specials Products box is switched at **Configuration -->Index Listing --> Show Special Products on Main Page**



NOTE: If you don't have any New, Featured, or Special products defined, even if you switch these boxes on, they will not show. You must have products defined for them to appear.

4 - You can control how many columns appear in the boxes at **Configuration -->Index Listing** and there is a separate control for each of the boxes. You can control how many products total appear in these boxes at **Configuration --> Maximum Values.**

5 - The links in the Information and More Information boxes are Define Pages. They are switched at **Configuration --> Define Page Status**. To edit the content of the pages of the links, go to **Tools --> Define Pages Editor**. The names (page 2, etc.) are edited in the **includes/languages/english.php** file (save as a custom file!). To change the pages themselves, look here: <http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?article=242>

Another note: You can make the New, Specials, and Featured products boxes

appear on category and product pages. These switches are located at **Configuration --> Index Listing**. You can filter what products appear (all or just ones for that category) with the **Configuration --> Index Listing --> Filter Product Listing for Current Top Level Category When Enabled**.



These are all sideboxes. To switch them off or on, or control their location, go to: **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**.

1 - Banner box, content controlled via **Tools --> Banner Manager**.

2 - Search box

3 - Bestsellers box. You can control how many links appear in this box via **Configuration --> Maximum Values --> Best Sellers for Box**.

4 - Specials box -- follows same rules as centerboxes and links -- if no Specials are defined, the box will not appear, even if set to display.

Note: The Reviews, New, Featured, and Specials sideboxes have settings at **Configuration --> Maximum**

1 - This is a banner box. You can move or deactivate the box via **Tools--> Layout Boxes Controller**. To control/change what appears in it (including adding your own banner) go to **Tools --> Banner Manager** and in **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Banner Display Groups...**

2 - This box is a sidebox. You can move or deactivate sideboxes via **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**.



Values to control how many products rotate through the sideboxes.

To moderate Reviews, go to **Catalog --> Reviews**.

The links at the bottom of the Categories sidebox are controlled through the **Configuration --> Layout Settings** menu.

- **Categories Box - Show Specials Link**
- **Categories Box - Show Products New Link**
- **Categories Box - Show Featured Products Link**
- **Categories Box - Show Products All Link**



If you don't want the divider line between the categories and the links at the bottom, you can change that through **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Categories Separator between Links Status**.

When you turn it off, this is what it looks like.



Another commonly desired change is the spacer designating sub-categories. You can change the characters used and the indent.

Go to **Configuration --> Layout Settings--> Categories Separator between the Category Name and Sub Categories**. There you can change the setting to whatever you want.

Categories Separator between the Category Name and Sub Categories
Please make any necessary changes

Categories Separator between the Category Name and Sub Categories
What separator do you want between the Category name and Sub Category Name?
Default = `|_`

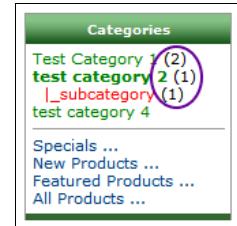
Categories SubCategories Indent
Please make any necessary changes

Categories SubCategories Indent
What do you want to use as the subcategories indent?
Default= ` `

You can change the indent at **Configuration --> Layout Settings--> Categories SubCategories Indent**. You can change the setting as desired.

If you want to turn off the category count numbers next to your categories, go to **Configuration --> My Store --> Show Category Counts** and adjust as necessary.

Turning the counts off can help speed up your site if you have a lot of products in your catalog.



To remove the dash and parentheses, go to **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Category Count Prefix**, **--> Categories Separator between the Category Name and Count**, and **--> Category Count Suffix**.

Home

Congratulations! You have successfully installed your Zen Cart™ E-Commerce Solution.

Welcome Guest! Would you like to [log yourself in?](#)

Have you got yours yet?
Join the 1000s of Zen Cart users that have bought the [only](#) comprehensive owner's manual!

If you are new to Zen Cart, buy this book, it will help you through many "getting started" items, as well as show you many features which you probably didn't even know existed ...
- AR

The pages are filled with plain-english explanations of how to configure and manage your Zen Cart ...
- JB

A must have for any Zen Cart owner/maintainer ...
- MB

How do you change the front page text? You can edit this at **Tools --> Define Pages Editor**.

What about the category tabs at the top of the page? If you don't have a lot of categories, you might want to use them. If you don't want them, you can deactivate them.

Go to
Configuration --> Layout
Settings --> Categories-
Tabs Menu ON/OFF.

There you can toggle the setting as desired.



Page Parse Times



When the page parse/query information displays on your site, it can slow the site down a little. To remove this notice, go to **Configuration --> Logging --> Display the Page Parse Time** and set it to false.

IP Address

You can disable the IP address display at the bottom of the page. To do this, go to **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Footer - Show IP Address status** and set to off.

The screenshot shows a configuration form for the footer. The title is "Footer - Show IP Address status" with a note "Please make any necessary changes". The main section is titled "Footer - Show IP Address status" with the sub-instruction "Show Customer IP Address in the Footer". It includes a dropdown menu with options "0= off" and "1= on", and a question "Should the Customer IP Address show in the footer?". Below the dropdown are two radio buttons: one checked (blue outline) labeled "0" and one uncheckable (grey outline) labeled "1". At the bottom are "update" and "cancel" buttons.

Footer - Show IP Address status

You can set it to display or not. An advantage to turning it off is it can help speed up your website a little bit, especially if you have a lot of people hitting your website all at once.

Pounds to Kilograms

If you need your store to reflect kg instead of lbs for the weight, this is easy to change.

Find the file on your server called **includes/languages/english.php** and change the two lines:

```
define('TEXT_PRODUCT_WEIGHT_UNIT','lbs');  
and  
define('TEXT_SHIPPING_WEIGHT','lbs');
```

Change where it says lbs to kg and then save the file as **includes/languages/CUSTOM/english.php** (where CUSTOM is your custom template file – see the template section for more information).

Admin Screen Setting – Display of Products/Customers/Orders/Categories

Tired of scrolling through pages of products in Admin? You can change how many are listed at a time by going to **Configuration --> Maximum Values**.

There are several settings in this page for both the Admin and customer side, controlling displays of orders, products, etc. Adjust as necessary for your needs.

Customer Order History List Per Page
Maximum Display of Customers on Customers Page
Maximum Display of Orders on Orders Page
Maximum Display of Products on Reports
Maximum Categories Products Display List
Products Attributes - Option Names and Values Display
Products Attributes - Attributes Controller Display
Products Attributes - Downloads Manager Display
Featured Products - Number to Display Admin
Maximum Display of Featured Products - Main Page
Maximum Display of Featured Products Page
Products Listing- Number Per Page

Customer Management

Basics

To access the list of customers for your store, go to **Customers --> Customers**. There, you will see all the customers registered for your store.

A few notes before we continue:

- As of version 1.3.8, it is not possible with a default installation to allow "guest" check-out for orders. (There are some third-party mods you can download, but you must use them at your own risk.) Customers must create an account to make a purchase in your store. If for whatever reason this will upset your customers, you can change the customer welcome message and language files to reflect other terminology, such as "Customer Details" or "Order Details" instead of "Registration."
- You cannot create new customers through the Admin panel. They must be created through the customer Log In/Register screen in the online catalog.
- You cannot access customers' passwords through the Admin screen. You can through the database, but they are encrypted. If they lose their password, you will have to instruct them to use the password retrieval feature. (You can change their email address if they need to update it.)
- You cannot create orders through the Admin screen. They must be done through the catalog as a regular order.
- Never use the customer screen to force-subscribe a customer to your newsletter! This is a violation of SPAM laws in many places. (And it's just plain rude!)

How do you control which fields appear in the customer registration and account screen?

Go to **Configuration --> Customer Details**.

Everything in this screen relates to the customer account information. You can set which fields are required for registration, among other things.

Configuration	C
My Store	
Minimum Values	
Maximum Values	
Images	
Customer Details	

CUSTOMER DETAILS

Title
Email Salutation
Date of Birth
Company
Address Line 2
State
State - Always display as pulldown?
Create Account Default Country ID
Fax Number
Show Newsletter Checkbox
Customer Default Email Preference
Customer Product Notification Status
Customer Shop Status - View Shop and Prices
Customer Approval Status - Authorization Pending
Customer Authorization: filename
Customer Authorization: Hide Header
Customer Authorization: Hide Column Left
Customer Authorization: Hide Column Right
Customer Authorization: Hide Footer
Customer Authorization: Hide Prices
Customers Referral Status

Email Salutation is the Mr./Ms. title.
Date of Birth is obvious.

Company adds an extra field for your commercial customers. Address Line 2 adds an optional address line, helpful if your customers use an apartment or suite number, or if they live in a country where the extra line is needed for address information.

State-Always display as pulldown?

allows you to set whether or not the state field is a drop-down menu box or a text field where they can type their information. Depending on your needs, you might prefer the text field to the drop-down because

having it as a text field can impact your local tax settings.

Fax number is self-explanatory.

Show Newsletter Checkbox means they can opt into your newsletter. If you're not utilizing the newsletter feature, you can disable this, or you can toggle it to show or show checked. NOTE: Showing it already checked (opt-out versus opt-in) may be illegal in some areas as a violation of SPAM laws!

Customer Default Email Preference means their option defaults to either Text or HTML emails.

Customer Product Notification Status refers to the checkout process asking the customer if they want to receive product updates regarding certain products. This is a great marketing tool.

Customer Shop Status - View Shop and Prices refers to whether or not you require customers be logged in to view prices and shop in your store, or if it's a showroom only. While the instructions recommend option 2 (May browse but no prices unless logged in) as a method to thwart spiders, I personally don't recommend it for most stores. Not to say you can't or shouldn't use it, but most customers don't want to have to log in just to browse and see prices.

Customer Approval Status - Authorization Pending is a setting you can use to require customers be authorized before they can do certain things like browse, see prices, and purchase. This can be useful in some circumstances, for example, wholesalers who don't sell to the general public, or sites that must verify information such as age before they can sell to a client (adult items, legal pharmaceuticals, sites selling alcoholic beverages, etc.).

Customer Authorization: filename
Customer Authorization: Hide Header
Customer Authorization: Hide Column Left
Customer Authorization: Hide Column Right
Customer Authorization: Hide Footer
Customer Authorization: Hide Prices

The next several settings all relate to approving customers before they can do certain things.

They allow you to hide certain website components unless a customer is authorized.

The last option, Customers Referral Status, is used when you have a referral coupon/discount program in place.

It's necessary for you to understand the customer registration and account management features. If you don't, how can you explain them to a customer who needs assistance with them?

To manage customers, go to **Customers-->Customers**.

You'll see a list of all registered customers in your store. You can left click on the customer row to select them and either click a second time to enter the edit screen, or click the Edit button on



CUSTOMERS													Search:
ID#	Last Name	First Name	Company	Account Created	Last Login	Pricing Group	GV Balance	Authorized	Action	ID#2 Test Customer	edit	delete	
Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	Asc Desc	orders	email	
2 1 of 1 Customer	Test			01/02/2008	--none--		\$0.00						
1 1 of 2	Richardson	Lesli		08/23/2007	12/19/2007	--none--	\$3.00						
Displaying 1 to 2 (of 2 customers)													Account Created: 01/02/2008
Page 1 of 1													

the far right end. Then you can edit their information.

NOTE: While there is an Authorized column, unless you are using the

authorization system (enabled through **Configuration --> Customer Details**) you cannot use the "button" to quick-disable/enable a customer from this main screen. You can do it through the customer edit screen though. So if you click the green button and nothing happens, it probably means you do not have authorization enabled in your store. (Which is fine -- you probably don't need it.)

Personal	
Customers Authorization Status	<input type="button" value="Approved"/> Approved <input type="button" value="Pending Approval - Must be Authorized to Browse"/> Pending Approval - Must be Authorized to Browse <input type="button" value="Pending Approval - May Browse No Prices"/> Pending Approval - May Browse No Prices <input type="button" value="Pending Approval - May browse with prices but may not buy"/> Pending Approval - May browse with prices but may not buy <input type="button" value="Banned - Not allowed to login or shop"/> Banned - Not allowed to login or shop
First Name:	<input type="text"/>
Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail Address:	<input type="text"/>

To disable/ban a customer from your store, enter the customer edit screen. The first option is the Authorization Status. If

you don't see the Banned - Not allowed to login or shop option you are probably not using version 1.3.8 and up. This was a feature added in 1.3.8.

Everything else in here is self-explanatory. Let me point you to the bottom of the screen.

Again, I repeat, do not use this feature to force-subscribe people to your newsletter. And if someone emails asking you to remove them from the newsletter, this is where you do it.

If you create special pricing groups, this is where you can apply them to the customer.

Customer Referral is something we'll get into later.

It's really not complicated. I know it's a lot to absorb, but once you take a few minutes to look through it, you'll see it's easy.

If you make changes to a customer's information, make sure to click the Update button at the bottom right corner of the screen!

From the main Customer screen in the admin panel, you can also see all of a customer's orders by selecting their name and clicking the Orders button.

Options	
Email Format Pref:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> HTML <input type="radio"/> TEXT-Only
Newsletter:	<input type="button" value="Subscribed"/>
Discount Pricing Group	<input type="button" value="none"/>
Customer Referral	<input type="button" value="1st Discount Coupon"/>

Action	ID#2 Test Customer
	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/> <input type="button" value="orders"/> <input type="button" value="email"/>

This will take you to the Orders screen where you will see a list of the customer's orders you can manipulate like any other order.



Clicking the Email button allows you to easily email the customer through your Zen Cart™ program.

And, of course, the Delete button removes the customer from your store.



Odds and Ends:

- Date of birth issues when edited: <http://www.zen-cart.com/forum/showthread.php?t=83839>

Customer Screen Appearances

When your customer creates an account, they will see the following message.

Your Account Has Been Created!

Congratulations! Your new account has been successfully created! You can now take advantage of member privileges to enhance your online shopping experience with us. If you have **ANY** questions about the operation of this online shop, please email the [store owner](#).

A confirmation has been sent to the provided email address. If you have not received it within the hour, please [contact us](#).

Primary Address

Test Customer

Test Customer
123 Any Street
Mytown, FL 00000
United States

[edit](#) [delete](#)

continue ➔

Notice the hot links in the text for "store owner" and "contact us?" This is why you must have your email configured correctly before taking your store live.

You can edit the content of this message through the language files. Note: you

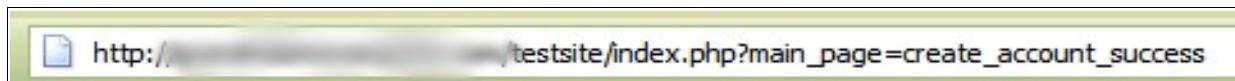
need to use the template override system and create and install a custom template. Do not edit the classic or default template and language files! If you do, they will be overwritten during updates and you'll lose your changes.

Look in **includes/languages/english/create_account_success.php** and you'll see some of the headings in this example. You can change those as desired, and upload the file as **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/create_account_success.php**

This will override the default files and customize the message your customer sees.

How did I know that was the correct file to edit? Let me give you a quick hint. Doesn't work in all cases, but usually it's a fast way to find the file you need.

When I look at my browser bar, I see this link:



The last section, the **=create_account_success** is the key. When I looked at the default language files, I saw a corresponding page. When I made changes and uploaded the file to a custom template folder, it changed.

You can customize this message to reflect your store's personality and needs. You can even delete the link fields for the email and contact us portions of the message.

NOTE: If you don't know PHP be very careful! Some characters must be "escaped" properly or you will break the code. Don't add extra ' (for example) without escaping them (like this \'). So if you wanted to use the word "don't" you would write it "don\'t" so it won't break your PHP code.

Another note: NEVER delete the '' from a field if you want to prevent the field from displaying. Simply delete everything between the two '' and leave it.

When a customer is logged in, they will see a My Account link in the upper left corner of the screen (unless you've installed a custom template that's moved it somewhere else).

They can click the My Account link to edit their account and view order information. This is very important if you sell downloadable merchandise.



My Account Information

My Account

- View or change my account information.
- View or change entries in my address book.
- Change my account password.

Email Notifications

- Subscribe or unsubscribe from newsletters.
- View or change my product notification list.

When they click the My Account link, they see a list of options that looks like this if they haven't placed any orders. (This is the Classic green template without changes.)

If they have placed an order, the screen will resemble this.

If you want to make changes, start with the

includes/languages/english/account.php file. Then save as **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/account.php** to make those changes take effect.

[Home](#) : [Checkout](#) : Success - Thank You

Thank You! We Appreciate your Business!

Your Order Number is: 3

Checkout Success Sample Text ...

A few words about the approximate shipping time or your processing policy would be put here.

This section of text is from the Define Pages Editor located under Tools in the Admin.

This file is located in /languages/english/html_includes/classic/

NOTE: Always backup the files in /languages/english/html_includes/your_template

Thank you for shopping. Please click the Log Off link to ensure that your receipt and purchase information is not visible to the next person using this computer.

[log off](#)

Please notify me of updates to these products

test product 2

[update](#)

You can view your order history by going to the [My Account](#) page and by clicking on "View All Orders".
Please direct any questions you have to [customer service](#).

Thanks for shopping with us online!

[Home](#) : [My Account](#)

My Account Information

[\(show all orders\)](#)

Previous Orders

Date	No.	Ship To	Status	Total	View
01/02/2008	# 3	Test Customer United States	Pending	\$0.00	view

My Account

- View or change my account information.
- View or change entries in my address book.
- Change my account password.

Email Notifications

- Subscribe or unsubscribe from newsletters.
- View or change my product notification list.

And don't forget to edit your check out success page! You don't want your customer to see this when they check out.

Which is exactly what customers see on many stores. Don't forget to edit the files! In this case, the file can be found at: **Tools-->Define Pages Editor** in the Admin panel. That makes it easy to change. Follow the instructions on the page and make sure you backup the files in your custom template languages folder!

If you want to change the headers on the checkout success page, find and edit:

includes/languages/english/create_account_success.php

and save as **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/create_account_success.php** to make changes take effect.

When you make changes to any of the defined pages through Admin, make sure you back them up!

Tools	Gift Certificate
Template Selection	
Layout Boxes Controller	
Banner Manager	
Send Email	
Newsletter and Product Notifications Manager	
Server/Version Info	
Who's Online	
Admin Settings	
Email Welcome	
Store Manager	
Developers Tool Kit	
EZ-Pages	
Define Pages Editor	

DEFINE PAGES EDITOR FOR: ENGLISH Select a file to edit ... TEXT EDITOR HTMLArea

Note: you should always edit the files located in your current template override directory, Example: /languages/english/html_includes/ Be sure to make backups after changing your files.

Editing file: /testsite/includes/languages/english/html_includes/define_checkout_success.php

Arial 1 (8 pt) Heading 1 B I U S x x² T S ? i

Checkout Success Sample Text ...

A few words about the approximate shipping time or your processing policy would be put here.

This section of text is from the Define Pages Editor located under Tools in the Admin.

This file is located in /languages/english/html_includes/classic/

NOTE: Always backup the files in /languages/english/html_includes/your_template

If you'll look at the screen when you edit, Zen Cart™ tells you the exact file path. Make sure to back up that directory.

I know it can be confusing. Take the time to go through the language files and see what needs to be changed for your store.

Another frequently-overlooked page isn't specifically a customer page, but you

should know about it anyway.

Add a product to your shopping cart.

Does your shopping cart text look like this?

Whoops.

The page even tells you which file to change.

Your Shopping Cart Contents [help (?)]

You may want to add some instructions for using the shopping cart here. (defined in includes/languages/english/shopping_cart.php)

Total Items: 1 Weight: 0lbs Amount: \$0.00

Qty.	Item Name	Unit	Total
1	test product 2 NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	\$0.00	\$0.00

* size - med

Sub-Total: \$0.00

back to shopping go to checkout

estimate shipping

includes/languages/english/shopping_cart.php

Edit the file, then save it to your server as

includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/shopping_cart.php

Don't feel bad if your site is live and has been for a while and you missed that page -- a lot of people do.

However -- if you do a lot of customizing to your login files and suddenly encounter a problem logging in, you need to review the following FAQ post on the Zen Cart™ website: <http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?article=312>

Multiple Ship-To Addresses

To allow/limit how many addresses your customers can have in their account, go to **Configuration --> Maximum Values --> Address Book Entries** and change it to suit your needs.

Customers | Lo

Customers

Orders

Group Pricing

Group Pricing

Depending on your specific business, you might need group pricing. The most common use is when a

business sells to wholesale customers as well as the public and needs two (or more) different pricing structures.

Group pricing is easy to set up.

In the Admin screen, go to **Customers --> Group Pricing**.

Depending on your store, you might or might not have anything in the list.

GROUP PRICING			
ID	Group Name	% Discount	Action
Displaying 0 to 0 (of 0 pricing groups)			

In mine, I don't have anything. I'll click the Insert button to create one.

It asks for a Group Name and Percentage Discount.

Enter your settings and click Save.

New Pricing Group

Please fill out the following information for the new group

Group Name:
Test Group1

Percentage Discount:
10%

The group will appear in your list.

ID	Group Name	% Discount	Action	Test Group1
1	Test Group1	10.00	e x ▶	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>
Displaying 1 to 1 (of 1 pricing groups)				

Then you can go back to the **Customers --> Customers** screen and edit the customer(s) you want to add to this group.

When you go to the Discount Pricing Group drop-down menu, the new

Discount Pricing Group	<input type="text" value="-none-"/>
Customer Referral	<input type="text" value="-none-"/>
1st Discount Coupon	<input type="text" value="Test Group1 10.00%"/>

group should appear in the list.

Home : Checkout - Step 1 : Payment Method - Step 2

Step 2 of 3 - Payment Information

Billing Address:

Test Customer
123 Any Street
Mytown, FL
00000
United States

change your address

Your billing address is shown to the left. The billing address should match the address on your credit card statement. You can change the billing address by clicking the Change Address button.

Your Total

Sub-Total:	\$10.00
Store Pickup (Walk In):	\$0.00
Group Discount:	-\$1.00
FL TAX 7.0%:	\$0.63
Total:	\$9.63

The discount will not show up until Step 2 of the checkout process. So if you use group discounts, you may want to add a note to your shopping cart text telling your customers that group discounts will not be reflected in their order total until they get to step 2 of checkout.

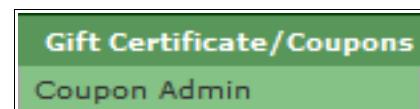
That's all there is to it!

Customer Referral Coupons

What exactly are customer referral coupons used for? Basically, to track how a customer arrived at your store. Whether through a marketing campaign or a sales person or however you get the word out about your store, you can ask new customers to enter a referral coupon code to help you track where they come from. Then you can run a report to see how effective the coupons are.

If you've never used coupons before, they aren't complicated. Before we can set up customer referral coupons, we need to know how to create a coupon.

In the Admin screen, go to ***Gift Certificate/Coupons***
Certificate/Coupons --> Coupon Admin.



DISCOUNT COUPONS

Coupon Name	Coupon Amount	Coupon Code	Status	Starts	Expires	Action
Displaying 0 to 0 (of 0 coupons)						

Status : Active Coupons

Text Editor : HTMLArea

Page 0 of 0

Action

Coupon Name ::
Coupon Amount :: \$0.00
Start Date ::
End Date ::
Uses per Coupon :: Unlimited
Uses per Customer :: Unlimited
Valid Product List :: --none--
Valid Categories List :: --none--
Date Created ::
Date Modified ::
Coupon Zone Restriction: ::
who -

Click the Insert button to create a new coupon.

The edit screen will appear. Fortunately, there is a lot of help text on the screen to walk you through the process.

First, enter a name. This can be anything you want. Then in the edit window, enter a description. Again, this can be anything you want.

The coupon amount can be a dollar amount or a percentage. Enter amounts as 5.00 (for example) or 10% (again, as an example.)

Coupon minimum order is self-explanatory. It means how much the customer's order must equal before the coupon is valid. Leave blank for no minimum order requirement.

The free shipping option means it eliminates shipping charges for an item. You can use this in conjunction with the minimum order setting. (For example, only orders of \$50 or more can get free shipping.)

Coupon Code	<input type="text"/>
Uses per Coupon	<input type="text"/>
Uses per Customer	<input type="text"/> 1
Start Date	3 January 2008
End Date	3 January 2009
Coupon Zone Restriction:	-none-
<input type="button" value="preview"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>	

The coupon code can be anything you want, or you can leave it blank and let the program auto-generate one. If you make the code yourself, I recommend something short and easy for your customer to enter.

Uses per coupon restricts how many times the coupon can be used overall. For example, if you want to run a promo offering the first twenty people to respond free shipping, you could set this to 20 and only those first twenty people to use the code would get the promo. Leave blank to not restrict this.

Uses per customer means how many times a customer can use this particular coupon. If you want the customer to be able to use it only one time per customer, enter 1 in this field. If you want no limit, leave it blank. If you want them to be able to use it up to 5 times, enter 5, etc.

Start date and end date are self-explanatory.

Coupon zone restriction is helpful if you're offering a promo only for people in your immediate area. For example, if you sell large products that normally are



expensive to ship long distances but you can easily deliver for free locally, you could create a free shipping coupon and restrict it to your zone.

Note: When you enter all this information, if a customer has a coupon code and you have the Discount Coupons feature enabled in the More Information box, they can check the code and see the information. This is why it's important to put at least a little information in the text entry area for the description.

When finished, click the Preview button.

Review the information on the next screen and click the Confirm button to continue.

Once you have your coupon set up, you must go in and set Zen Cart™ to track referrals.

Go to **Configuration --> Customer Details --> Customers Referral Status**.

You have two options available (three if you count off as an option).

You can set Zen Cart™ to track a customer based on the first coupon they use with an order. Or you can set it to allow the customer to enter a code during the account creation or edit process.

If you use option 2 so the customer can enter the code during account creation, they cannot change it. It can only be changed by editing the customer's information in the Admin panel. And they still have to enter the coupon code at checkout to receive the discount. And, it won't be tracked by the report feature unless or until they actually use the coupon.

If you use option 1, they cannot view their code in their profile, and it will be captured automatically by Zen Cart™ when they first use the coupon code at checkout.

To view the report, go to **Reports --> Customers Referral** and then you can select the coupon code from the drop-down list and select a date range. Then you can view individual

Customers Referral Status
Please make any necessary changes

Customers Referral Status
Customers Referral Code is created from
0= Off
1= 1st Discount Coupon Code used
2= Customer can add during create account or edit if blank

NOTE: Once the Customers Referral Code has been set it can only be changed in the Admin Customer

0
 1
 2

update **cancel**

Reports Tools
Products Viewed
Products Purchased
Customer Orders-Tot
Products Low Stock
Customers Referral

orders and order details.

Note: Unless or until they use the code during check-out, it will not appear in the reports.

The customer referral code is not a required field, and in a default installation you cannot "force" a customer to enter it, either on account creation or checkout. If you are proficient with PHP, you can make edits forcing the customer to enter it. Search the Zen Cart™ user forum for more information.

Tell A Friend feature

Unfortunately, spammers can use your site to send out unwanted emails unless you have the Tell A Friend feature set to prevent guest access. Meaning to use it, they have to register for an account and log in. Not a failsafe, but an extra step.

This setting is found at: **Configuration --> E-Mail Options --> Allow Guest To Tell A Friend.**

By setting it to false you have a way of locking out spammers.

If you decide you don't want to use the feature at all, simply disable the sidebox under **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** and the product button. Then, go to **Catalog-->Product Types** and edit the **Product - General** (or whatever type you're using) layout. Set **Show Product Tell A Friend Button** to false.

For extra monitoring, you might want to use the copy feature for Tell A Friend emails: **Configuration --> E-Mail Options --> Send Copy of Tell a Friend Emails To - Status.** But that means you'll get more email. So it's a trade-off.

Reviews

Reviews are a valuable way for customers to add their input about a product and/or your services. To get email notification about pending reviews in the queue, adjust the setting in **Configuration --> E-Mail Options --> Send Notice of Pending Reviews Emails To - Status** and set the email you want to use to receive them.

To hold reviews for authorization, go to **Configuration --> Product Info --> Product Reviews Require Approval** and set it to on.

If you don't want to use Reviews, you can go to **Catalog-->Product Types** and

edit the **Product - General** (or whatever type you're using) layout. Set **Show Product Reviews Button** to false, then disable the sidebox under **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**

Limiting Customer Access by Location

Unfortunately, some areas of the world are known for rampant fraud. Many store owners choose not to sell to those locations, or because of the nature of their products and/or shipping requirements, only wish to sell to customers within their country/region.

You can go to **Locations--> Countries** and delete all countries you do not wish to sell to. Click on the country name and then the Delete button.

You can always add/replace them if you need to. Click the New Country button at the bottom of the screen and follow the instructions. ISO codes can be found on the Internet.

Be careful! For example, the United States has many territories, such as Puerto Rico, that can be sold to with similar USPS postal rates or other regulations. You might not want to lose that potential customer pool.

Order Management

Order management is one of the easiest things to do in Zen Cart™. Assuming you have your payment and shipping modules configured, when you're notified by the server you have an order, if it's a shippable item (as opposed to a service or download) you need to prepare the order for shipping.

Depending on your method of payment (especially if dealing in downloads) you need to make sure you configure your order status settings in the payment modules you use. In other words, you don't want a download order being accessible if payment isn't confirmed or completed.

You can also set the default order status through **Localization -> Orders Status**.



To access orders, you can click on the newest orders through the links on the Admin Home screen, or go to **Customers -> Orders** to view them.

The screenshot shows the 'ORDERS' section of the Zen Cart Admin interface. At the top, there's a legend indicating a 'Billing and Shipping does not match'. Below this, a table lists one order:

ID	Payment	Shipping	Customer	Action
7	freecharger	freeoptions	Lesli Richardson	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/> <input type="button" value="invoice"/> <input type="button" value="packing slip"/>

Details for the order are shown on the right side of the screen:

- Order ID:** [7] 02/12/2008 14:07:29
- Status:** All Orders
- Date Created:** 02/12/2008
- IP Address:** 66.212.111.108 - 66.212.111.108
- Payment Method:** The Zen Cart FREE CHARGE CARD
- Shipping:** Free Shipping Options (Free Shipping)
- Products Ordered:** 1
1 x test product 2
- size: med

The orders screen will give you an overview of the information, status, and allow you to print an invoice or packing slip directly from that screen. You can click the Edit button to view the full order.

You can also see the IP address the order originated from. (Note – I'm not a security expert, but I do know IP addresses can be forged, so do not rely on this as a failsafe security feature.)

Date Added	Customer Notified	Status	Comments
02/12/2008 14:07:29	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pending	

Comments

Status:

Notify Customer: Append Comments:

You can add comments to a customer's order, then change the Status drop down menu and click the Update button. A good use of this is any delays in shipping, or even providing the tracking number. If the Notify Customer box is checked, when you update the order, the customer will receive an email.

As you make updates or change the status, this will be noted in the table above the Comments box, as well as whether or not the customer was notified about the update.

On the main order screen, you can search for orders in a variety of ways, by order number, item, customer name, status, etc.

Search:

Search by Product Name or ID:XX or Model

Order ID:

Status:

I warned you it was easy. That's not to say you won't have issues configuring payment and shipping modules. But taking care of an order once you have everything properly configured is a piece of cake.

Modules

Shipping Modules

Shipping

There are far too many shipping options to discuss here. To find the shipping modules, go to **Modules --> Shipping**. The most-commonly used ones are located on the page. You can download more from the Zen Cart™ website.



SHIPPING MODULES		Sort Order
Modules		
Flat Rate	flat	0 ●
Free Shipping Options	freeoptions	●
FREE SHIPPING!	freeshipper	0 ●
Per Item	item	0 ●
Per Unit	perweightunit	●
Store Pickup	storepickup	0 ●
Table Rate	table	●
United Parcel Service	ups	●
United States Postal Service	usps	●
Zone Rates	zones	●

You have to install and configure modules for them to work. It is important to configure your store location information correctly to calculate correct shipping charges. It's also important to configure each product's weight correctly.

Under **Configuration --> Shipping/Packaging** you'll find more settings.

SHIPPING/PACKAGING	
Title	Value
Country of Origin	United States
Postal Code	33947
Enter the Maximum Package Weight you will ship	50
Package Tare Small to Medium - added percentage:weight	0:3
Larger packages - added packaging percentage:weight	10:0
Display Number of Boxes and Weight Status	3
Order Free Shipping 0 Weight Status	0
Shipping Estimator Display Settings for Shopping Cart	1
Display Order Comments on Admin Invoice	2
Display Order Comments on Admin Packing Slip	1

If you find your shipping weights are calculated incorrectly, take a look at the **Package Tare Small to Medium -- added percentage:weight** and **Larger packages - added packaging percentage: weight** settings. This might be the answer to your problem.

Free Shipping Options

If you want to offer free shipping, you can configure this in the **Modules --> Order Total --> Shipping, Modules --> Shipping --> Free Shipping Options** and **Modules --> Shipping --> FREE SHIPPING**. You can specify the amount, and whether it's for national orders, international orders, or both.

The screenshot shows the 'Shipping' module configuration page. At the top, it says 'This module is installed'. There are two radio buttons for 'true' and 'false'; 'true' is selected. A 'Sort Order' field contains the value '200'. Below that is a section titled 'Allow Free Shipping' with the question 'Do you want to allow free shipping?'. It has two radio buttons: 'true' (selected) and 'false'. Underneath is a section titled 'Free Shipping For Orders Over' with the sub-instruction 'Provide free shipping for orders over the set amount.' and a field containing '50'. Another section titled 'Provide Free Shipping For Orders Made' with the sub-instruction 'Provide free shipping for orders sent to the set destination.' has three radio buttons: 'national' (selected), 'international', and 'both'. At the bottom right are 'update' and 'cancel' buttons.

Other Shipping Options

There are so many variables it's impossible to explain all the shipping options in a basic guide like this. You can find the other shipping modules at **Modules --> Shipping** as well as modify shipping on a product-by-product basis through use of **Catalog-->Attributes Controller**.

Also, there is a forum on the Zen Cart™ support site dedicated to the discussion of shipping and payment modules.

Payment Modules

Payment Options

Regardless of which options you use, you can enable the modules through **Modules --> Payment**. There are more available for download through the Zen Cart™ website.

Credit Cards

You will need some sort of payment processor, either online or a terminal at

your business to process orders manually.

You can show customers which cards you take by enabling the display through **Configuration --> Credit Cards** and toggling which ones you take.

This does NOT turn on the feature, however, to accept those cards and process them for payment. It just displays the logo.

To enable payment processing, you must use the **Modules --> Payment** menu and enable the forms of payment you take. If your credit card processor is not listed, you can visit the Zen Cart™ website and see if there is a third part extension available, or contact your credit card processing company and ask them for more information.

PAYMENT MODULES		
Modules	Sort Order	Orders Status
Authorize.net (SIM)	authorizenet	●
Authorize.net (AIM)	authorizenet_aim	●
Authorize.net - eCheck	authorizenet_echeck	●
Credit Card - Offline Processing	cc	0 ● default
Cash on Delivery	cod	●
The Zen Cart FREE CHARGE CARD	freecharger	0 ● default
Linkpoint/YourPay API	linkpoint_api	●
Check/Money Order (not configured - needs pay-to)	moneyorder	0 ● default
Nochex APC	nochex_apc	●
PayPal IPN - Website Payments Standard	PayPal	0 ● Processing
PayPal Website Payments Pro	PayPal	●
PayPal Express Checkout	PayPal	●

NOTE: If you take credit card numbers through your website, it is HIGHLY recommended you enable SSL on your site for security!

Another note: If you use PayPal exclusively for your credit card and payment processing, PayPal's secure website takes the customer's financial information. In this case, SSL is optional, because the only information you have is the customer's name, address, phone number, and email.

Check/Money Order

If you sell downloadable products and accept checks and money orders for payment, make sure you configure this method properly! Otherwise, someone could order from you and

Check/Money Order
Enable Check/Money Order Module
Do you want to accept Check/Money Order payments?
<input checked="" type="radio"/> True
<input type="radio"/> False
Payment Zone
If a zone is selected, only enable this payment method for that zone.
-none-
Set Order Status
Set the status of orders made with this payment module to this value
Pending [1] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
default
Pending [1]
Processing [2]
Delivered [3]
Update [4]
Make Payable to:
Who should payments be made payable to?
Store Owner
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

download their products without sending payment.

Go to **Modules --> Payment --> Check/Money Order** and click the edit button.

Where it says Set Order Status make sure it's set to Pending [1]. This way, when they place their order, they won't be able to immediately download their products until you receive and verify payment.

NOTE: Don't mark their order as Processing until their payment has cleared your bank account! Depending on the circumstances, this can take anywhere from a couple of days to several weeks! Talk to your local bank for more information.

Another note: in the Make Payable to: field, make sure you specify exactly how payments must be made out.

Yet another note: Sometimes it's easier to restrict payment types by zone. For example, if you only want to accept checks and money orders from people in your state, use the Payment Zone setting to restrict who can use the method.

PayPal

Depending on your business and the type of PayPal account you have, you might need to configure your PayPal settings a certain way. Please see the Zen Cart™ support site and PayPal documentation if you have problems setting up PayPal to work with Zen Cart™.

Order Total Modules

The Order Total Modules are located under **Modules --> Order Total**. They are used for a variety of things, like coupons, group discounts, etc. Sometimes you'll have to edit these, sometimes you won't, depending on your store set-up.

ORDER TOTAL MODULES	
Modules	
COD Fee	ot_cod_fee
Discount Coupon	ot_coupon
Group Discount	ot_group_pricing
Gift Certificates	ot_gv
Low Order Fee	ot_loworderfee
Shipping	ot_shipping
Sub-Total	ot_subtotal
Tax	ot_tax
Total	ot_total

Module Directory: /home/grandmas/public_html/testsite/includes/modules/order_total/

Products & Categories

Categories

Categories allow you to keep your products organized. Even if you don't "need" categories because you have very few products, you still need to use at least one category to organize your products.

Adding products to the "main" level of your store, without being contained by a category, will cause problems with the store and actually disable certain functions. Some people who have one or just a few products choose to call their category "Products" or something similar. But products must be contained within a category.

In the Admin control panel, go to **Catalog --> Categories/Products**. This screen will mix products and categories together once you have created them. The products will appear under the category you place them in.

Click the New Category button.

Fill out the information in the next screen, adding an image if you choose (not required), the sort order (where you want the category to display in relation to other categories) and when finished, click the Save button.



Because of the way Zen Cart™ is set up, when you create a category, you can either add sub-categories to it, or you can add products to it, but you cannot add products and sub-categories to a category at the same time.

For example, if you sell downloadable music files, you might have categories for music style, artists, and record labels. Within each of these categories, you might have sub-categories for each one. Within the category of music style, you might have country, jazz, classical, rock, etc.

But, within the category of music style, you could NOT have products listed AND have sub-categories. You can make categories as deep as you want (keep in mind the deeper the category levels, the trickier it is to get everything indexed by search engines), or you can add as many products as you want to a category, but

you can't have products and categories mixed at the same "level." In fact, you'll see a little message about it on the category screen.

A "sub-category" is simply a category contained within another category. To create or edit a sub-category, the process is identical to creating a "top level" category. However, when you create a sub-category, you need to navigate to the category where you want to create the sub-category first, and that category cannot have any products in it already.



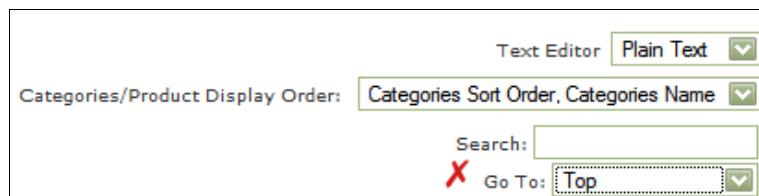
Likewise, if you are in a category where there are already products created, you won't see the new category button. Instead, you'll see the option to create products.



If you're in a category where there are no products and no categories already created, you'll have the option to create either.



On the category/product screen, there are several options on the upper right side of the screen.



You can decide what kind of editor to use, how to display the categories and products, search for a specific item, or use the Go To menu to quickly jump to a specific category.

Under this, in the Action column, are options next to each category.

If you hover your mouse over each one, a pop-up label will identify it for you.

The green e is Edit. You can click on it to edit the



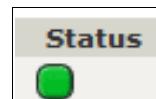
category information, such as name and description, sort order, etc.

The red X is the delete button. This will totally remove the category and products inside it. Use very carefully! Sometimes it's better to deactivate a category rather than delete it, especially if you want to preserve the sales record of the items inside it.

The purple M is to move categories. You can move a category into another category that already contains products. Do not do this! It will cause you problems with your store!

The little "haz-mat" symbol will either be black or orange. It tells you whether or not you have meta tags defined. Click it to set the title, keywords, definition, and more. Black means they are undefined, orange means they are defined. (Please see the section on meta tags.)

You can also toggle the category to activated or deactivated. Under the Status column, click the green button to deactivate the category (or red button to activate it, depending on the column's current status).



Products

The process of adding a product to your store is nearly identical to adding a category. There are more fields and options in the product screen, but the same rules apply. You cannot add a product to a category that contains sub-categories, and you cannot add a sub-category to a category that already has products added. Don't forget to specify which kind of editor you want to use (text or HTML) before you start.

Click the New Product button.

The product type should be Product-General by default.

<input type="button" value="new product"/>	<input type="button" value="Product - General"/> 
--	--

You'll see the title will show the product in whatever category you're creating it. The master category id will be listed.

PRODUCT IN CATEGORY: "TEST CATEGORY 3"

Product Master Category: ID# 4 test category 3
NOTE: Master Category is used for pricing purposes where the product category affects the pricing on linked products, example: Sales

Products Status: In Stock Out of Stock

Date Available: (YYYY-MM-DD)

Products Manufacturer: -none-

Products Name: United Kingdom

Product is Free: Yes No

Product is Call for Price: Yes No

Product Priced by Attributes: Yes No

You can choose the product status -- in or out of stock, and the date available.

You can select the manufacturer. (If you haven't set this up yet, don't worry, you can go back later and change it after the product is created.)

Enter a product name. Avoid using all capital letters, and make sure

you spell it correctly so search engines properly index it!

Then you can set if the product is free, if it's call for price (meaning instead of a price, the customer will see the call for pricing info), and if the product is priced by attributes. (This means the product total is derived from how much the attributes are priced.)

Tax Class:	<input type="text"/> -none-
Products Price (Net):	<input type="text"/>
Products Price (Gross):	<input type="text"/> 0
Product is Virtual:	<input type="radio"/> Yes, Skip Shipping Address <input checked="" type="radio"/> No, Shipping Address Required
Always Free Shipping:	<input type="radio"/> Yes, Always Free Shipping <input checked="" type="radio"/> No, Normal Shipping Rules <input type="radio"/> Special, Product/Download Combo Requires a Shipping Address
Products Quantity Box Shows:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes, Show Quantity Box <input type="radio"/> No, Do not show Quantity Box
Product Qty Minimum:	<input type="text"/> 1
Product Qty Maximum:	<input type="text"/> 0
Product Qty Units:	<input type="text"/> 1
Product Qty Min/Unit Mix:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

You can set the tax class and the price. (You can set what the price will be before or after taxes, depending on how you want the customer to see it.)

Product is Virtual refers to whether or not it's a downloadable product. The Always Free Shipping can be set several ways (if you've got downloads and shippables, I strongly recommend using the Special setting so shipping is calculated

on the shippables if they are ordered at the same time.)

Products Quantity Box Shows means you can turn off the box by the Add to Cart button allowing the customer to enter a quantity. Especially helpful if selling digital downloads (they only need one).

There are also controls relating to this setting in:

- **Configuration --> Product Info --> Product Quantity Box Status - Adding New Products**

- **Configuration --> Product Listing --> Display Product Add to Cart Button**
- **Configuration --> Product Listing --> Display Multiple Products Qty Box**

Status and Set Button Location

You can also set multiple quantities, restrict how many a person can purchase, and other combinations depending on your specific needs.

The description field is pretty self-explanatory.

Products Quantity:	<input type="text"/>
Products Model:	<input type="text"/>

Quantity and Model should also be self-explanatory. If you don't want it to say "Model" but want it to say something else, like "Part Number" or "SKU," you can change that in the language files.

This screenshot shows the 'Products Image' section of the Zen Cart admin interface. It includes fields for 'Products Image' (with a 'Browse...' button), 'Image Name' (set to 'NONE'), 'Upload to directory' (set to 'Main Directory'), and two radio buttons for 'Delete Image?' (No is selected) and 'Overwrite Existing Image on Server?' (Yes is selected). There is also a field for selecting an existing image file from the server.

Images can throw some people. There are ways to add multiple images to a product (that's discussed in another section). Double check the upload directory destination. (You can manually create new directories with your FTP or file manager program in the main **/images/** Zen Cart™ folder and they will show up in this drop-down menu.)

If there's already an image for the product (if you're editing the product) you can choose to overwrite the existing image. You can also apply an existing image file.

Products URL: (without http://)	 <input type="text"/>
Products Shipping Weight:	<input type="text"/>
Sort Order:	<input type="text" value="0"/>

The product url field is for cases when you have a manufacturer's website you can refer people to for more information. If you leave this blank, it will not appear on the product. Include a shipping weight only if the product is shippable. Sort order means the order the product will appear within that category.

Click the Preview button at the bottom of the screen when you're ready to continue.

In the next screen, you can click Back to make changes, or Insert to add the product, or Cancel to delete what you've done and return to the category page.



The Action column has more options than it does for categories. E, X, and M mean the same -- Edit, Delete, and Move.

The blue C means Copy. You can use this to copy a product into more than one category. The light blue A is the attribute features toggle, and is black with a white A if no attributes are defined.

The green dollar sign is the link to the Products Price Manager.

Manufacturers

You can set up manufacturers by going to **Catalog --> Manufacturers** and clicking the Insert button.

The fields are self-explanatory. Click Save when you're finished, and then if you've already created

New Manufacturer	
Please fill out the following information for the new manufacturer	
Manufacturers Name:	<input type="text"/>
Manufacturers Image:	<input type="text"/> Browse...
Upload to directory:	<input type="text" value="manufacturers"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Or, select an existing image file from server, filename:	
<input type="text"/>	
Manufacturers URL:	 <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="save"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>	

products, you can go back and edit them and change the manufacturer information. You can also set the sidebox to display or not.

Product Information Page

A lot of people want to customize the product information page. The product information page is what displays when a product name is clicked. (Don't confuse this with a product listing display, which is what you see for things like category or all product listings.) Many users want to eliminate some of the fields commonly displayed. This is controlled in the **Catalog--> Product Types** menu. Find the product type you want to change (usually Product - General), select it, and click the Edit Layout button.

Note: Changes made in this section universally change all products of that product type.

The following fields are found in the **Catalog-->Product Types --> Product-General --> Edit Layout area**. (There are differences between the product types, so make changes as necessary.) You can toggle them off or on.

1 - Show Model Number

2 - Show Weight

3 - Show Quantity in Stock

4 - Show Manufacturer

5 - Show Product Reviews

Button

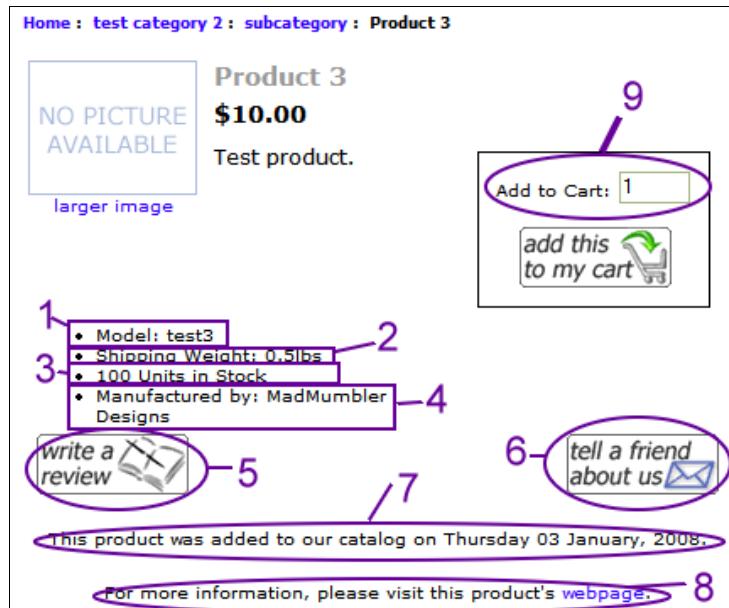
6 - Show Product Tell a

Friend Button

7 - Show Date Added

8 - Show Product URL (Note:

This won't display if you do not enter an URL in the product's information page.)



The next one is found on the product information page -- **Catalog -->**

Categories/Products (create a new product) and can be controlled individually on a

product-by-product basis.

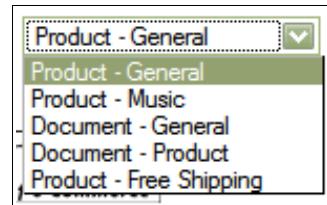
9 - Products Quantity Box Shows

To actually rearrange the physical layout of the product information page, see the template section of this tutorial.

What are Product Types?

Product types sometimes confuse people. There are different pre-defined product types you can use.

Unless you want the specifics of the music type, you can usually get away with using the general type for most of your products. At this time, there's no way to easily create new product types, but you can edit them.



You can restrict categories to certain product types. For example, if you sell music, you can restrict a category to only contain the Product-Music product type.

This is a category listing containing two test products. Notice how one has an Add box, and the other doesn't?

This is because the one that doesn't have a quantity box has attributes specified, meaning you have

Displaying 1 to 2 (of 2 products)		
Product Image	Item Name	Price
NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	Another Test Product Another test product.	\$5.00
NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	test product 2 test product 2	\$0.00 ... more info
Displaying 1 to 2 (of 2 products)		
(add selected products to cart)		



to select something in the product page, and cannot use the quick buy feature.

When there are attributes specified, you cannot "quick add" a product to the cart from the product index pages. Attributes are things like size and color options, downloadable files, etc.

I'll make a change and look what happens.

Now, the product with the quick add box has a buy now button. What did I do to change that?

I went into the **Catalog --> Categories/Products** screen and edited the product's information screen by changing the Products Quantity Box Shows setting from Yes to No. Why turn off the quantity box? If you sell downloads and only want them to be able to add one to their cart, it's a helpful feature to prevent accidental double purchases.

Product Image	Item Name	Price
NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	Another Test Product Another test product.	\$5.00 buy now
NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	test product 2 test product 2	\$0.00 ... more info

Displaying 1 to 2 (of 2 products)

Products Price Manager

The Products Price Manager is located at **Catalog --> Products Price Manager** and is simply a tool allowing easy access to changing product pricing information without having to drill down through the regular product and category screens.

To use it, select the product you want to change and make changes to it. It's that easy. Click the Edit button after you select your product, then click Update after making changes.



Products Price Manager - Test Category 1
Select a Category with Products ... Or move between the Products
Products: 1/2

previous	Test Category 1*	next
Select a Product to View and Press Display ...		
Another Test Product (\$5.00) [TP3] - ID# 8 display test product 2 (\$0.00) [3] - ID# 6		
details edit product Attribute Controller VIEW DETAILS EDIT PRODUCT EDIT ATTRIBUTES Multiple Categories Link Manager		

Meta Tags & Site Title

Having good meta tags can make or break your site in regards to search engine placement. But people often don't understand how to change these.

With Zen Cart™, you actually have two different types of meta tags. You can define category and product meta tags through the Admin panel on a category or product-by-product basis. So



instead of having every single keyword entered in your main site meta tags, use the category and product meta tags. Go to **Catalog --> Categories/Products** and you can click the icon in the Action column for both Categories and Products to adjust the meta tags.

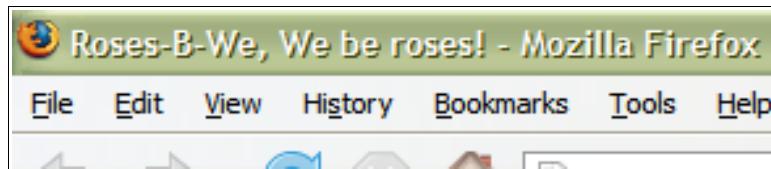
The site-wide file (where you can also change how your site title displays in the browser -- and you SHOULD change this!) is located at:

includes/languages/english/meta_tags.php

Open this file and edit it. Save it as

includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/meta_tags.php and upload to your server.

Refresh to see changes (to the title, for example).



Product Listing, All, Featured, New, Special, & Upcoming Products

If you click the All Products link in the Categories box on the front page, you'll get a list of all active products. The display is configurable through the **Configuration --> All Listing** menu.

Pictured is just one possible configuration. For example, if you want the Add Selected Products to Cart button to appear at the top and bottom, or just at the top, you can use the **Display Multiple Products Qty Box Status and Set Button Location** option. You can also turn the option off, which means turning off the quantity box as well, but it adds Buy Now buttons to any products without attributes. If you want neither, set **Display Product Buy Now Button** to 0.

Let's back up and look at the

The screenshot shows a product listing page titled "All Products". The sorting is set to "Product Name". There are three products displayed:

- Another Test Product**: No picture available. Buy Now button. Model: TP3. Price: \$5.00.
- Product 3**: No picture available. Add: 0. Model: test3. Price: \$10.00.
- test product 2**: No picture available. ... more info. Model: 3. Price: \$0.00.

At the bottom, it says "Displaying 1 to 3 (of 3 products)".

options available in this screen. They confuse many people.

Most of these options can be set to display or not. A value of 0 usually means the option is off.

Display Product Display - Default Sort Order

Please make any necessary changes

Display Product Display - Default Sort Order
What Sort Order Default should be used for All Products Display?
Default= 1 for Product Name

1= Products Name
2= Products Name Desc
3= Price low to high, Products Name
4= Price high to low, Products Name
5= Model
6= Date Added desc
7= Date Added
8= Product Sort Order

1
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7
 8

ALL LISTING	
Title	
Display Product Image	
Display Product Quantity	
Display Product Buy Now Button	
Display Product Name	
Display Product Model	
Display Product Manufacturer Name	
Display Product Price	
Display Product Weight	
Display Product Date Added	
Display Product Description	
Display Product Display - Default Sort Order	
Default Products All Group ID	
Display Multiple Products Qty Box Status and Set Button Location	

The **Display Product Display - Default Sort Order** allows you to control how the products display in the All Listing page. You can pick from a variety of options depending on what works best for your particular store.

Display Product Description controls how many characters of the description appear in this listing. The default is 150. If the description is longer than 150 characters, it will break and a ...more link will appear for a customer to click on. You can make this longer or shorter as needed, or turn it off entirely.

Display Product Description

Please make any necessary changes

Display Product Description
How many characters do you want to display of the Product Description?

0= OFF
150= Suggested Length, or enter the maximum number of characters to display

As far as the other values go, what do the different numbers mean?

ALL LISTING

Title	Value
Display Product Image	1102
Display Product Quantity	0
Display Product Buy Now Button	2100
Display Product Name	2012
Display Product Model	2201
Display Product Manufacturer Name	0
Display Product Price	2502
Display Product Weight	0
Display Product Date Added	0

There are four digits in the Value column that mean different things. Usually, a value of 0 means the setting will not display.

Let's look at the **Display Product Image** setting. A setting of 1102 produces the pictured result.

- 1 - Image is on the left
- 10 - Sort order of the setting in relation to the other settings is 10
- 2 - There are 2 line breaks after the image

Make sense?

Let's change it and you'll see what happens.

If I change it to 2102, I get the following result. It shifts the image to the right, but the other settings are already set to the right, so we need to change them too.

Display Product Image
Please make any necessary changes

Display Product Image
Do you want to display the Product Image?

0= off
1st digit Left or Right
2nd and 3rd digit Sort Order
4th digit number of breaks after

1102

update **cancel**

[add selected products to cart](#)

Displaying 1 to 3 (of 3 products)

Another Test Product

[buy now](#)

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Model: TP3
Price: \$5.00

Another test product.

The screenshot shows the 'All Products' page with three items listed:

- Another Test Product**: Model: TP3, Price: \$5.00. Includes a 'buy now' button.
- Product 3**: Model: test3, Price: \$10.00. Includes a 'buy now' button and an 'Add' quantity input field set to 0.
- Test product.**: No details shown.

At the top right, there is a link to 'add selected products to cart'.

Changing the other fields moved them to the left side of the screen.

You can turn off fields if you want.

What happens with the other value settings?

This is what it looks like with the following settings:

- Display Product Image: 1012
- Display Product Buy Now Button: 2010
- Display Product Name: 2102
- Display Product Model: 2201
- Display Product Price: 2402

The screenshot shows the 'All Products' page with the same three items, but the layout has changed:

- Another Test Product**: Model: TP3, Price: \$5.00. Includes a 'buy now' button.
- Product 3**: Model: test3, Price: \$10.00. Includes a 'buy now' button and an 'Add' quantity input field set to 0.
- Test product.**: No details shown.

The 'buy now' button and the descriptive text ('Model: TP3', 'Price: \$5.00') are now positioned to the left of the product names.

In this case, the sort (display) order is as follows:

- Buy Now Button: 01
- Name: 10
- Model: 20
- Price: 40

What happens when you rearrange them?

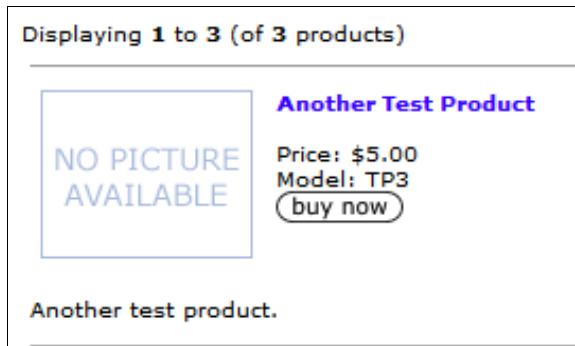
- Display Product Buy Now Button: 2500

The screenshot shows the 'All Products' page with the same three items, but the layout has changed again:

- Another Test Product**: Model: TP3, Price: \$5.00. Includes a 'buy now' button.
- Product 3**: Model: test3, Price: \$10.00. Includes a 'buy now' button and an 'Add' quantity input field set to 0.
- Test product.**: No details shown.

The 'buy now' button and the descriptive text ('Model: TP3', 'Price: \$5.00') are now positioned to the right of the product names.

- Display Product Name: 2102
- Display Product Model: 2201
- Display Product Price: 2152



What if I want to decrease the space between the price and model? If I change the Display Product Price setting to 2151 I get the pictured result.

Play with the settings and find the adjustment that works best for your layout.

Note: When you click the New Products and Featured Products links in the Categories box (the links only show if you have products designated as New or Featured) you'll get similar displays. These settings are configured in similar ways through the **Configuration --> New Listing** and **Configuration --> Featured Listing** menus.



The Specials products do not have a menu option allowing the same type of configuration.

To show New, Featured, Special, and Upcoming products on an empty shopping cart page, go to **Configuration --> Stock**. Adjust the following as desired:

- **Show New Products on empty Shopping Cart Page**
- **Show Featured Products on empty Shopping Cart Page**
- **Show Special Products on empty Shopping Cart Page**

Show New Products on empty Shopping Cart Page
Show Featured Products on empty Shopping Cart Page
Show Special Products on empty Shopping Cart Page
Show Upcoming Products on empty Shopping Cart Page

• **Show Upcoming Products on empty Shopping Cart Page**
You can adjust whether or not they show and the

order in which they display.

How do I change the time settings for what designates "New" products?

In the Admin control panel, go to:

New Product Listing - Limited to ...

edit

Limit the New Product Listing to
0= All Products
1= Current Month
7= 7 Days
14= 14 Days
30= 30 Days
60= 60 Days
90= 90 Days
120= 120 Days

Date Added: 05/27/2007

New Product Listing - Limited to ...

Configuration --> Maximum Values

Yes, I know, it doesn't make sense, but that's where it is.

Find the: **New Product Listing - Limited to ...** setting. Change it to suit your needs.

Remember: When you start a store, especially if you import a lot of items, all the items will appear to be "new" at first. You might want to disable this function at first, or set it to the shortest setting, to avoid confusing your customers.

How do I control if/where/how the New, Featured, Specials, and Upcoming links, products, and sideboxes appear?

I wish I could tell you there's one location for you to change all these settings. Unfortunately, there's not. It's scattered among several menus.

First let me say that if you don't have any new, featured, or specials products, even if you have settings enabled for them to display, they won't. (Can't display what's not there.) So if you have enabled these settings and nothing shows, make sure you have products that are new, featured, or specials.

Note: If you have the Featured sidebox set to appear but have no Featured products designated, the sidebox still will not appear. This also applies to the Specials, New Products, and other sideboxes. Also, make sure the column where you want the sidebox to appear is activated.

Edit Box

Please make any necessary changes

Box Name: categories.php

Left/Right Column Status:
 ON OFF

Location: (Single Column ignores this setting)
 LEFT RIGHT

Left/Right Column Sort Order:
10

Single Column Sort Order:
10

Single Column Status:
 ON OFF

update cancel

Category Box Links

These are controlled through **Configuration-->Layout Settings**.



The settings are:

- **Categories Box - Show Specials Link**
- **Categories Box - Show Products New Link**
- **Categories Box - Show Featured Products Link**
- **Categories Box - Show Products all Link**

Click on each option, there is a true/false switch you can toggle.

Main Page

This is separate from the sideboxes. This setting is for the block of products that appears on the front page.

Go to: **Configuration --> Index Listing**. There you can edit several settings.

- **Show New Products on Main Page**
- **Show Featured Products on Main Page**
- **Show Special Products on Main Page**
- **Show Upcoming Products on Main Page**

You can toggle the boxes off/on, and set the order they display in relation to each other.

Product Page

This is separate from the sideboxes. **Configuration --> Index Listing**. There you can edit several settings.

- **Show New Products - below Product Listing**
- **Show Featured Products - below Product Listing**
- **Show Special Products - below Product Listing**
- **Show Upcoming Products - below Product Listing**

You can toggle the boxes off/on, and set the order they display in relation to each other.

Filtering the Products

You can also use **Configuration -->Index Listing-->Filter Product Listing for Current Top Level Category When Enabled** to set a filter that will limit the displayed products to items in that category or display items from any category. For example, if you toggle the filter on, if your customer is in the Music category, they will only see Featured/New/Specials from the Music category. If you toggle the filter off, they will see Featured/New/Specials from any category where they exist.

Columns Per Row

You can use **Configuration -->Index Listing** to control how many columns display for each block of products. Edit the following settings as desired:

- New Products Columns Per Row
- Featured Products Columns Per Row
- Special Products Columns Per Row

Assigning Products as Featured

A Featured product will appear in the various locations for Featured products – if you have them set to display. A Featured Product is simply that – one you want your customers to see for whatever reason. A Featured Product can also be one that's designated as Special or New, or both, or neither. A Featured Product can be set to display indefinitely, or set to display only for a certain date range.

To assign a product as Featured, go to

Catalog --> Featured Products.

Click the New Product button.

From the Product drop down window, select a product. If you want the Featured product to only be available for a certain date range, use the Available Date (start) and Expiry Date (finish) fields. If you want the product to start immediately, you don't

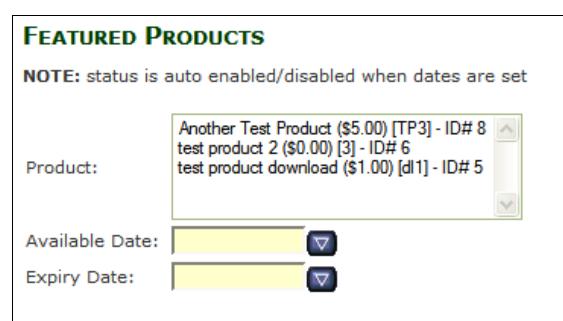
FEATURED PRODUCTS

NOTE: status is auto enabled/disabled when dates are set

Product:

Available Date:

Expiry Date:



need to fill in the Available Date. Only use that if you want to schedule a Featured product in advance. If you want to manually cancel the Featured product, don't use the Expiry Date field.

Click the Insert button at the lower right corner and that's it!

You'll see the Featured Product appear in the list on the Featured Product page.

To delete a Featured Product from the list, click the delete icon in the Action column. This does NOT delete the product from the catalog! It only deletes it as a Featured Product.

The screenshot shows a web-based administration interface for managing featured products. At the top, there is a search bar labeled 'Search:'. Below it, a note says 'NOTE: status is auto enabled/disabled when dates are set'. A 'new product' button is located in the top right of the main content area. The main table has columns: ID#, Products, Model, Available, Expires, Status, and Action. The table contains two rows: '7 Product 3' and '6 test product 2'. The 'test product 2' row is currently selected, indicated by a green background. In the 'Action' column for this row, there are four icons: a green circle with an 'e', a red circle with an 'x', a blue circle with a question mark, and a blue triangle pointing right. To the right of the table, a detailed view for 'test product 2' is displayed. It includes fields for 'Date Added' (02/05/2008), 'Last Modified', 'No Image Exists', 'Available On' (--none--), 'Expires At' (--none--), and 'Status Change'. Buttons for 'edit product' and 'select' are also present. A note at the bottom states 'Product ID to be Manually Added as a Featured'.

Assigning Products as Specials

The procedure to assign products as Specials is nearly identical as Featured, with one additional step of specifying the discounted price.

Go to **Catalog --> Specials**.

Click the New Product button.

SPECIALS

NOTE: status is auto enabled/disabled when dates are set

Product:	<input style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px; width: 150px; height: 15px;" type="button" value="Another Test Product (\$5.00) [TP3] - ID# 8"/> <input style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px; width: 150px; height: 15px;" type="button" value="Product 3 (\$10.00) [test3] - ID# 7"/> <input style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px; width: 150px; height: 15px;" type="button" value="test product download (\$1.00) [dl1] - ID# 5"/>
Special Price:	<input type="text"/>
Available Date:	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="▼"/>
Expiry Date:	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="▼"/>

Specials Notes:

- ◆ You can enter a percentage to deduct in the Specials Price field, for example: **20%**
- ◆ If you enter a new price, the decimal separator must be a '.' (decimal-point), example: **49.99**
- ◆ Leave the expiry date empty for no expiration

Select the product. Specify the price – either in percentage or value. (See the Specials Notes at the bottom of that page for the format.) The date fields work exactly the same as for Featured products.

Remember that unless you specifically restrict a coupon from not working on a particular Specials product, your customer can get an additional discount by using a coupon.

And one more time – even if you have Featured, Special, and New products set to display, if you don't have any of those kinds of products specified, they still won't display. (In other words, it won't display "empty" sections.) So if you're trying to get those areas to work and can't, make sure you have at least one of those kinds of products specified.

Shopping Cart Box

This is separate from the sideboxes. There are several settings you can apply to control how and when the shopping cart displays. Note: If you have the shopping cart sidebox turned off, or set to display in a non-existent column, it won't show regardless of whatever settings you have.

- **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Shopping Cart Status.** This allows

you to set whether the shopping cart box always shows, shows only when full, or shows only when full when not viewing the shopping cart.

- **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Shopping Cart – Show Totals.** This changes what the customer sees at the top of the shopping cart when they have an item in the cart – nothing, number of items/weight/dollar amount, number of items/weight/dollar amount (but no weight if the weight is 0), and number of items/dollar amount.
- **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller.** This is where you control which column and in what order the shopping cart box appears (if at all).
- **My Store --> Display Cart After Adding Product.** If you want the shopping cart to automatically open for the customer after they add a product, use this setting. Set to false to return the customer to where they were when they added the product.

SaleMaker

There are various ways to discount products. As you've already learned, marking a product as a "special" is one way to do it. But if you want to put everything in your store on sale, that would be tedious. One way of doing this is using the SaleMaker feature. **Catalog --> SaleMaker.**

It's fairly straightforward to use. Click the New Sale button and it takes you to the screen. You can then enter the sale based upon your needs. It's possible to set it to start and end in advance of the date, the type of discount, weeding out products already on special, and which products will be included.

NOTE: If you are trying to use SaleMaker and it won't properly apply discounts to your products, check the product master_category_id because if you have a linked (or improperly imported) product, if the master_category_id doesn't match the category on sale, or if it says it's "invalid," SaleMaker can't apply the sale.

The screenshot shows the SaleMaker configuration page. It has fields for SaleName, Deduction (Type: Deduct amount), Products Pricerange, Start Date, and End Date. There are checkboxes for 'Ignore Specials Price - Apply to Product Price and Replace Special' and 'Check this box if you want the sale to be applied to all products'. Below these are checkboxes for categories: 'Test Category 1', 'test category 2', 'subcategory', 'test category 3', and 'test category 4'.

This is a common problem with importing inventories into Zen Cart from other software systems. There is a forum dedicated to specials and SaleMaker at:
<http://www.zen-cart.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=34>

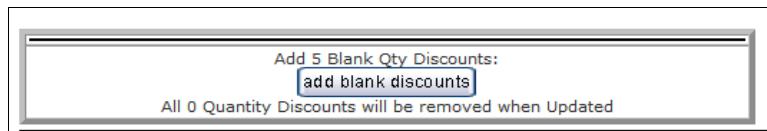
Quantity Discounts

Quantity discounts can be applied to products. One way to do this is to use product attributes. For example, if your product is set up using attributes to make the selection (different sizes of widgets) and you want to offer bulk pricing. If you're having trouble enabling quantity discounts through attributes, go to **Configuration --> Attribute Settings** and make sure **Enable Qty Price Discount** is set to true.

To add a quantity discount to a product without using the attributes, you can use the **Catalog --> Products Price Manager**.

Select the product to edit and click the Display button to view it. Then, click the Edit button to make changes.

Click the Add Blank Discounts button to access the quantity discounts menu.



<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No Add 5 Blank Qty Discounts: <input type="button" value="add blank discounts"/>					
All 0 Quantity Discounts will be removed when Updated					
Product Discount Info	Discount Type: <input type="button" value="None"/>		Discount Priced from: <input type="button" value="Price"/>		
Discount Levels	Minimum Qty	Discount Value	Calculate Price:	Extended Price:	
Discount 1	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0.0000"/>	\$0.00	x 0 = \$0.00	
Discount 2	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0.0000"/>	\$0.00	x 0 = \$0.00	
Discount 3	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0.0000"/>	\$0.00	x 0 = \$0.00	
Discount 4	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0.0000"/>	\$0.00	x 0 = \$0.00	
Discount 5	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0.0000"/>	\$0.00	x 0 = \$0.00	

You can set up your discounts as needed. When finished, click the Update button on the screen to save your changes.

Make sure you test quantity discounts. Keep in mind how you set up your product's quantity minimum, maximum, and unit settings can impact quantity discounts.

If you want more than five at a time, change the **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Product Discount Quantities - Add how many blank discounts?** setting.

Product Options & Attributes

Zen Cart™ has the ability and flexibility to allow the user to set up more than one "kind" of product depending on the item being sold. For instance, if you look at the admin interface, under **Catalog --> Product Types**, by default you can find several pre-defined "types" of products.

A product can be sold "as-is" or you can add things to it. Whether it's allowing for different size or colors of shirts to be sold, personalizing an item, or different file formats for downloads, you can use options and attributes to specify them.

To break it down into the most simple way to look at it, you have to create a "type" of option. For example, if you're selling shirts and want the customer to be able to purchase a certain size of their choice, you need a "size" option.

This is called the "Option Name."

If you allow them to choose sizes, you have to allow them to pick which size: small, medium, large, muu-muu, etc. and assign it to that Option Name you created. These assigned sizes (in our example) would be called "Option Values."

So, to create options the customer can choose from, you have to:

1. Create an Option Name (ie. size, color, file format)
2. Create Option Values and assign them to the Option Name (ie. small/medium/gargantuan, blue/red/neon green, .zip/.pdf/.jpg)

Not only do you create an Option Name, you have to decide what kind of format the name is. This can confuse some people. You can figure it out like this: Do you want the customer to be able to choose more than one option? Do you want them to only be able to choose one option? Do they need to be able to fill in their own information (for personalized items, etc.)? When you create the Option Name, you also pick the TYPE of name it is -- checkbox (more than one option can be chosen), radio button (only one option can be chosen), drop-down menu box (one option is selected by default), text (personalization), etc.

Not to add to the confusion, but you can also specify an additional charge for an item based upon the option selected. You can also set a product so it is priced by its attributes and not by a set price. Or a combination of both. (For example, shirts are commonly priced the same from sizes small - extra-large, but anything over extra-large is an extra charge.) You can apply more than one option to a product. (Size and color for clothing items, for example.)

Once you create Option Names and Option Values, you use the Attribute Controller to assign them to a particular product. While more than one product can use different Option Names and Option Values, you cannot assign an Option Value to an Option Name other than the one it was created for, although they can be duplicated.

For example, say you picture frames and you want people to be able to select different frame styles. You can create an Option Name of Frame Color and create Option Values for it of: blue, green, black, grey.

However, if you also sell shirts, you cannot create an Option Name of Shirt Color and then try to assign the Frame Color Option Values to it.

Confused?

I thought so.

If you create a set of Option Values for one particular Option Name, you have to use those Option Values WITH that Option Name, NOT with any other Option Name.

You can use an Option Name and its matching Option Values with more than one product. So if you sell shirts, you only have to create ONE Option Name of Color and then apply a set of Option Values to that Option Name (blue, black, red, white, etc.).

What if you sell different types of shirts and they don't all come in the same colors? That's okay too -- you do NOT have to use all of the Option Values for a particular Option when you apply them to a product.

So, for one shirt that only comes in black and blue, it would look something like this:

Option Name: Color

Option Values: Blue, Black

For a different shirt that comes in a bunch of colors, it would look something like this:

Option Name: Color

Option Values: Red, White, Blue, Pink, Black, Yellow, Green

See what I mean?

I know it doesn't make a lot of sense now, but it will in a few minutes. Let's see how we apply this knowledge to setting up a product's attributes/options.

There is a lot more to attributes (or options, if you want to call them that -- the term is interchangeable) than simply applying them to a product. You can use them to control the price, weight (which means shipping charges) of an item, discounts, and more.

Let's start with the basics, the least you need to know, so the rest will make sense.

Option Names

If you don't have one already, create a category in your test store. Go to the admin interface of your test store. **Catalog --> Categories/Products.**

Create a test product in this test category. (You should not have a product in the "top level" of your store -- always use categories or it will cause you headaches.) Use the Product - General type. Call it whatever you want, don't worry about a description or picture. Give it a price of whatever and save it.

You should now have at least one test product located in one test category of your store.



Navigate in the admin interface to **Catalog --> Option Name Manager.**

This is where we first need to create our Option Name -- the "type" of attribute or option we're going to apply to our product.

Depending on how your test store was installed, you might or might not see some pre-included data. Your screen might look like mine in the screenshot.

The screenshot shows the 'Attribute Controller' section with the 'option values' tab selected. The 'Display Global Features - ON' checkbox is checked. A note at the top right says 'NOTE: Edit Product Options Name for additional settings'. Below it is a table for 'PRODUCT OPTIONS' with one row. The row has columns for ID (1), Option Name (en), Option Type (Dropdown), Sort Order (10), Size (dropdown menu), Max (dropdown menu), and Action (insert button). A warning message at the bottom says 'WARNING: ALWAYS MAKE PROPER BACKUPS OF YOUR DATABASE BEFORE MAKING GLOBAL CHANGES'.

If it does, fine. If you see a lot of extra stuff, or nothing, that's okay too. Look for the drop-down menu box to the right of the Attribute Controller and and Option Values button. Set it so it says Display Global Features - OFF.

The screenshot shows the 'Attribute Controller' section with the 'option values' tab selected. The 'Display Global Features - OFF' checkbox is checked. A note at the top right says 'NOTE: Edit Product Options Name for additional settings'. Below it is a table for 'PRODUCT OPTIONS' with one row. The row has columns for ID (1), Option Name (en), Option Type (Dropdown), Sort Order (10), Size (dropdown menu), Max (dropdown menu), and Action (insert button). A green message at the bottom says 'ALL GLOBAL COPY, ADD AND DELETE FEATURES STATUS IS CURRENTLY OFF'.

You can always turn it back on later if you want, but it will simplify things for now.

We need to create an Option Name. For the sake of argument, follow along and do what I do.

In the text box under the column where it says Option Name, type Widget Type. Don't worry about the **en** -- that means English.

Order is the sort order. You can put a 10 in here for sake of argument.

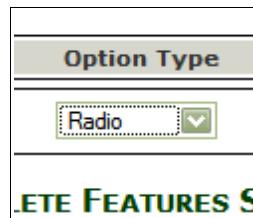
The screenshot shows the 'PRODUCT OPTIONS' table with two rows. The first row is the pre-existing entry from the previous screenshots. The second row has ID 1, Option Name 'Widget Type', and Order 10. A green message at the bottom says 'All Global'.

The screenshot shows the 'PRODUCT OPTIONS' table with two rows. The first row is the pre-existing entry from the previous screenshots. The second row has ID 1, Option Name 'Widget Type', and Order 10. The 'Display Global Features - ON' checkbox is checked.

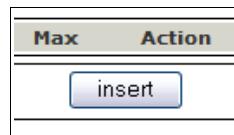
Now we need to decide what "type" of option this is going to be. For the sake of argument, we'll make this one a radio button, meaning that only one option can be chosen. (The type of option you choose can make a

difference depending on your particular circumstances. If you're offering custom-made computers and want them to be able to select more than one option, you would use check boxes, so they could choose more than one option.)

So under the column where it says "Option Type" make sure Radio is selected in the drop-down menu box.



Look for the Insert button to the far right of this line and click it.



You should now see your Widget Type option name. It might not have an ID number of 1, depending on whether or not you have test data. If you have test data, you might have to hunt through a few pages to find your Widget Type. That's okay.

Attribute Controller		Options Values		Display Global Features - OFF	NOTE: Edit Product Options Name for additional settings				
PRODUCT OPTIONS				Option ID					
ID	Option Name	Option Type		Sort Order	Size	Max	Action		
1	Widget Type	Radio		10	32	32	edit	delete	
2	en:	Order:	Dropdown				insert		

What difference does it make if it's a drop-down menu, radio button, or checkbox?

If it's a drop-down menu, something is selected by default, no matter what. You could use this and default it to the most commonly-sold option. A radio button is similar, just looks different, and you can also set one of the options to be default. Unlike with a drop-down menu, you do not have to specify an option selected by default, so you could use it for an option that is truly optional and not required for purchase.

With a checkbox, the customer can choose more than one option. They can also un-select an option, whereas with a radio button, once they choose one they cannot "un-choose" it later. Also, with the radio buttons and check boxes, you can

show images with the selections, whereas with the drop-down menu, you cannot. So drop-down menu would be appropriate for things like sizes, whereas if you need to display an image of a product or color swatch, pick one of the others.

Now we need to assign option values to our Widget Type option name.

Option Values

There are two ways to get to the Option Values Manager screen -- the button on the Option Names Manager page, or by using the admin interface menu to navigate to **Catalog --> Option Value Manager** page.

Make SURE if you navigate with the menu you go to the Option Value Manager page, NOT the Option Value Sorter page!

On the Option Values page, you should see your Widget Type option name. (Again, if you have test data installed for your store you might have to hunt for it.)

ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order	Action
1	Widget Type	en: Wacket	Order:	<input type="button" value="insert"/>

ALL GLOBAL COPY, ADD AND DELETE FEATURES STATUS IS CURRENTLY OFF

In the above example, you can see the Widget Type option name I created listed in the drop-down menu in the Option Name column. (If you have more than one Option Name listed, make sure you have the Widget Type selected.)

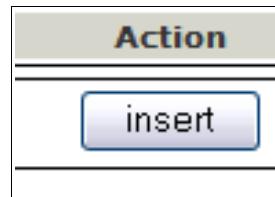
In the text field where it says Option Value, enter **Wacket**.

ID	Option Name	Option Value
1	Widget Type	en: Wacket

ALL GLOBAL COPY, ADD AND DELETE FEATURES STATUS IS CURRENTLY OFF

Now, in the sort order, I want this to show up first. How you number your option names and values in real-life is up to you, but I like to go by 5's or 10's so I have some gaps to work with. I want you to enter **10** in the Order field.

Then click the Insert button.



You should now have something resembling what I have. The ID numbers

might be different if you have other option names and values already listed.

ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order	Action
1	Widget Type	Wacket	10	<button>edit</button> <button>delete</button>
2	Widget Type	en: <input type="text"/>	Order: <input type="text"/>	<button>insert</button>

I want you to go through the same steps and create another option value, this time called **Wicket**, with an Order of **20**. So it should look something like this before you hit the Insert button.

ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order	Action
1	Widget Type	Wacket	10	<button>edit</button> <button>delete</button>
2	Widget Type	en: Wicket	Order: 20	<button>insert</button>

Then when you hit the Insert button, you should have something resembling mine.

OPTION VALUES				
ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order	Action
1	Widget Type	Wacket	10	<button>edit</button> <button>delete</button>
2	Widget Type	Wicket	20	<button>edit</button> <button>delete</button>
3	Widget Type	en: <input type="text"/>	Order: <input type="text"/>	<button>insert</button>

I want you to create one more -- **Wocket**, with an order of **30**. Insert it.

Then when you finish, you should have something resembling mine. Three option values for the Option Name Widget Type.

ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order
1	Widget Type	Wacket	10
2	Widget Type	Wicket	20
3	Widget Type	Wocket	30
4	Widget Type	en: <input type="text"/>	Order: <input type="text"/>

If you don't understand what we just did, go back and repeat it. If you're lost now, it will only get worse.

If you did understand, keep reading.

We can now allow our customers to select the Widget Types of Wacket, Wicket, or Wocket when they buy our test product. But how do we tie this to the product?

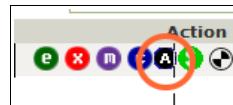
The Attributes Controller menu. You can access this in three different ways, through the Attribute Controller button on the same page--



...or by using the **Catalog --> Attributes Controller** menu option...



...OR, by going to **Catalog --> Categories/Products**, and finding the product in its category and clicking the Attribute Features icon to the right of the product name in the listing. It's the black circle with the A in it. If you hover your cursor over it, a pop-up text label will say Attribute Features.



Let's review:

1. We created a category and put a product in it.
2. We created an Option Name and assigned a type (radio button, checkbox, etc.) to it.
3. We created Option Values and assigned them to the Option Name we created.

Again, if you are lost now, go BACK and repeat this section until it clicks! You might see slight differences in your screen if you're working on your "real" store with many products and categories and options already listed.

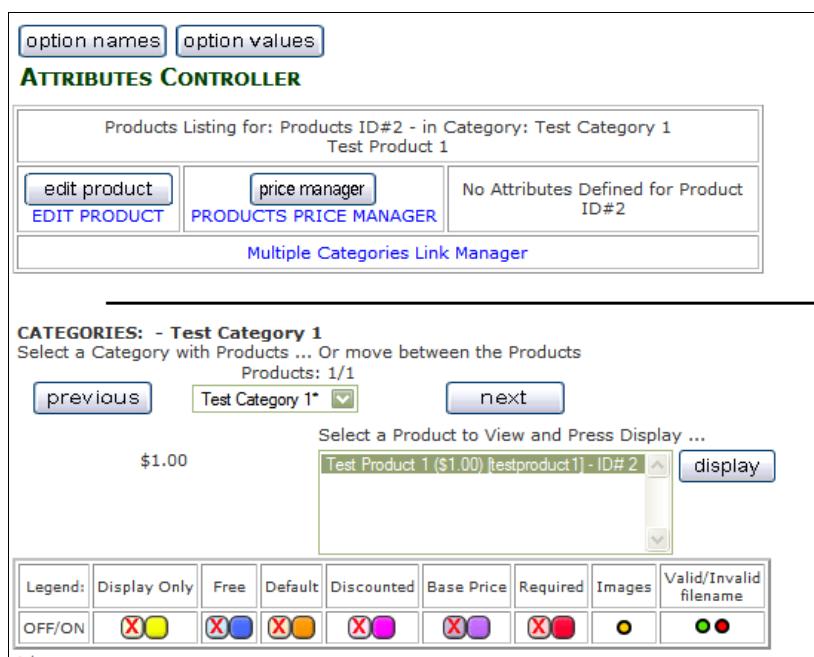
Now to the Attributes Controller. This is where all the names and values are not only linked to each other, but to the product.

Attributes Controller

The Attributes Controller screen looks confusing until you understand what happens here. You pick the product you want to apply an option (attribute) to, the Option Name (or names) you want to apply to your product, then you pick the Option Value(s) you want to apply to the Option Name. (Needless to say, you have to create your Option Name and Option Values before you can get to this phase. Since we just did that, we're okay.)

You can also apply different aspects to an option name/value, such as extra postage, charges, discounts, etc.

I only have one product in my test store, so it shows me that product by default. If you didn't navigate to the Attributes Controller through the icon next to the product's name, you will have to use the



category drop-down box to navigate to the category (if you have more than one -- in your real store you will most likely have more than one) and then find the product in the drop-down menu box where it says Select a Product to View and Press Display.

So make sure your product is selected, and click the Display button.

If you don't do this, you won't be able to apply options to it! See where it says No Attributes Defined for Product ID#2 Testproduct1 - Test Product 1?

Below that, in the grey area, under the Adding New Attributes features, you'll have two drop-down menu boxes, side-by-side. Do they look familiar? They should!

You might have more option names and values listed than I do, but you should find in the Option Name drop-down menu where it says Widget Type [Radio] and click it to select it.

ADDING NEW ATTRIBUTES	
1	TEST PRODUCT 1 - (TESTPRODUCT1)
Option Name	Option Value
Widget Type [Radio]	TEXT [RESERVED] Wacket [WIDGET] Wicket [WIDGET T] Wocket [WIDGET]

Now you need to pick an Option Value to go with it. Click on Wacket to select

CATEGORIES: - Test Category 1
Select a Category with Products ... Or move between the Products
Products: 1/1

previous Test Category 1* next

Select a Product to View and Press Display ...
\$1.00 Test Product 1 (\$1.00) [testproduct1] - ID# 2 display

Legend: Display Only | Free | Default | Discounted | Base Price | Required | Images | Valid/Invalid filename
OFF/ON: (X) (Y) (Z) (A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F) (G) (H) (I) (J) (K) (L) (M) (N) (O) (P) (Q) (R) (S) (T) (U) (V) (W) (X) (Y) (Z)

No ATTRIBUTES DEFINED FOR PRODUCT ID#2 TESTPRODUCT1 - TEST PRODUCT 1

ADDING NEW ATTRIBUTES Define the Attribute Settings then press Insert to apply insert

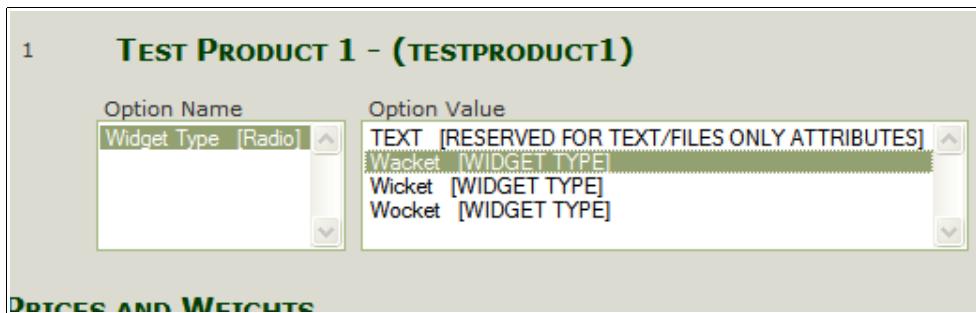
1 TEST PRODUCT 1 - (TESTPRODUCT1)

ID	Option Name	Option Value	Prefix Price	Prefix Weight	Order	Legend:	Total	Disc:	Onetime:	Action
No ATTRIBUTES DEFINED FOR PRODUCT ID#2 TESTPRODUCT1 - TEST PRODUCT 1										

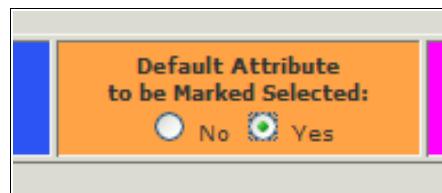
Option Name: Widget Type [Radio] Option Value: TEXT [RESERVED FOR TEXT/FILES ONLY ATTRIBUTES]
Wacket [WIDGET TYPE]
Wicket [WIDGET TYPE]
Wocket [WIDGET TYPE]

PRICES AND WEIGHTS

it. Notice how next to our three values it says [WIDGET TYPE]? That means if we had another Option Name in the list, for example, Doodad Type, you could NOT apply Wacket, Wicket, and Wocket to Doodad Type, only to Widget Type.



In this example, we are not going to add any price changes to the attributes. Our Widget Type option name will be the same no matter what. But, for the sake of argument, let's say we sell a LOT of the Wacket type of Widgets, and we want that type to be selected by default. Scroll down to the table with the different-colored headings where it says Attribute Flags. Look for the orange one where it says Default Attribute to be Marked Selected and click the Yes button.



Click the Insert button to the right of the page. (There are two of them, one towards the top in the grey area, and another towards the bottom. It doesn't matter which one you click.)



You should now see something like what I have pictured.

ID# 2 TESTPRODUCT1 - TEST PRODUCT 1															
delete	WIDGET TYPE	Widget Type	Wacket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0						\$0.00	\$0.00	edit	delete
1															

The Widget Type of Wacket is set as an attribute, and you see the little colored squares? There's a symbol key legend on the page to tell you what they mean. For

example, the orange square means it's set to be the default-selected option.



Now we need to repeat MOST of the steps we just did to apply the Wicket and Wocket option values to the product. I say MOST because you can only have one default selection. (You don't have to have any default selection if you don't want to. However, if you do this, I STRONGLY suggest creating another option value that says something like "Pick one of the below options" and set it to be 1 in the sort order and set it to be the default so the customer knows they're supposed to pick one.)

So select Widget Type and Wicket and then Insert.

Option Name	Option Value
Widget Type [Radio]	TEXT [RESERVED FOR TEXT/FILES ONLY] Wacket [WIDGET TYPE] Wicket [WIDGET TYPE] Wocket [WIDGET TYPE]

You should have something resembling what I have.

ID# 2 TESTPRODUCT1 - TEST PRODUCT 1								
Widget Type								
1	Widget Type	Wacket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	\$0.00 \$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>
2	Widget Type	Wicket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	\$0.00 \$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>

Let's do it one more time, for the Wocket value.

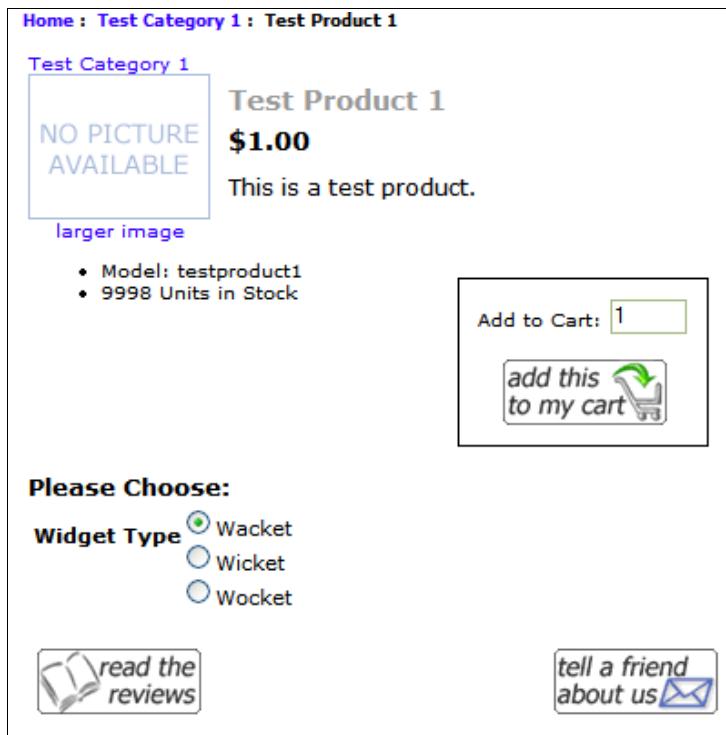
TEST PRODUCT 1 - (TESTPRODUCT1)								
Widget Type								
3	Widget Type [Radio]	TEXT [RESERVED FOR TEXT/FILES ONLY ATTRIBUTES] Wacket [WIDGET TYPE] Wicket [WIDGET TYPE] Wocket [WIDGET TYPE]						

And this is what it looks like now.

Widget Type								
1	Widget Type	Wacket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	\$0.00 \$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>
2	Widget Type	Wicket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	\$0.00 \$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>
3	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	\$0.00 \$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>

1. First, we had to create a category and product (if we didn't already have one).
2. Then we needed to create an Option Name. (For example: Size, Color, Widget Type.)
3. Then we had to create Option Values to apply to the Option Name we created. (In this case, Wacket, Wicket, Wocket.)
4. Then we used the Attributes Controller to attach the Option Name and Option Values we created to a particular product.

What does our product look like when we view it?



That's fine. But, what if a Wacket is no extra cost, but it's an extra \$1 for a Wicket, and an extra \$5 for a Wocket? (Those Wockets are hard to get sometimes!)

We can go back and edit the attributes (which is what you call the Option Names and Option Values you've applied to a product).

You can create them from scratch if you want, but we already have them, so let's just edit what we have.

Go back to the Attributes Controller.

Widget Type									
	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Widget Type	Wicket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDING NEW ATTRIBUTES					Define the Attribute Settings then press Insert to apply				
<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/> <input type="button" value="insert"/>									

Click the Edit button next to the Widget Type - Wicket attribute.

Notice the table where it says Prices and Weights? Under Price, enter 1.00 in the price box and make sure there's a + in the box to the left of it. (If it's CHEAPER to order a particular option value, you could change that to a -. Or, if you don't want a + sign to show, you can omit it. For a "negative" value, you could simply put -1.00 or whatever the price is in the Price box and it will deduct the price. HOWEVER, it will only show \$1.00 or whatever price you input, not a +/- sign, which can confuse your customer. Play with the combinations and see what works best for you.)

PRICES AND WEIGHTS

Price +	1.00	Weight +	0	Order 0	One 0.00
Attributes Qty Price Discount:					

When you make the change, click the Update button. Now look at the Wicket option price column. You'll see the change reflected there.

Widget Type									
	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Widget Type	Wicket	+ 1.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Repeat for the Wocket, but make it \$5.00.

Widget Type									
	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Widget Type	Wicket	+ 1.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Widget Type	Wocket	+ 5.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

When I refresh my product catalog page, I see a change.

Home : Test Category 1 : Test Product 1

Test Category 1

Test Product 1
Starting at: \$1.00
 This is a test product.

[larger image](#)

- Model: testproduct1
- 9998 Units in Stock

Add to Cart: 1

[add this to my cart](#)

Please Choose:

Widget Type

- Wacket
- Wicket (+\$1.00)
- Wocket (+\$5.00)

And if I add a Wicket or a Wocket to my shopping cart, I will see the difference in price due to those attributes being selected reflected in the price.

Total Items: 3 Weight: 0lbs Amount: \$9.00					
Qty.	Item Name	Unit	Total		
1	NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	Test Product 1	\$1.00	\$1.00	
		• Widget Type - Wacket			
1	NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	Test Product 1	\$2.00	\$2.00	
		• Widget Type - Wicket			
1	NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	Test Product 1	\$6.00	\$6.00	
		• Widget Type - Wocket			

You can also change the weight of an option -- if a Wocket weighs more than a Wicket, you can go back and edit the attributes page to reflect that as well so the shipping will be accurate.

You can apply more than one option name to a product. You would have to repeat the steps we went through here. For example, if you sell shirts, you want the

customer to pick the size and the color. So you can apply an option name of size with its related values, and an option name of color with its related values.

If at any time you want to edit an attribute, remember, you can go back to the Attributes Controller and use the edit feature (look for a button next to the option you want to edit) and change it.

Here's a hint -- those squares for each option value, representing the flag settings? You can click on them to toggle them on and off without having to use the edit buttons.



Let's look at more features.

More Attribute Settings

What if you want to sell personalized products? Monogrammed towels or customized art prints? That's easy to do.

First, go to **Configuration --> Attribute Settings** and make sure you have **Enable Text Pricing By Word or Letter** set to **True**. NOTE: if you don't want them to have to pay for spaces, go to **Configuration --> Attribute Settings** in the admin control panel and make sure you have the **Text Pricing - Spaces are Free** setting set to 1 (meaning on).

Create another test product -- I called mine Personalized Widget. Call yours whatever you like. Save it.

Go to the **Catalog --> Option Name Manager** in the admin panel.



Create a new option name called Monogram, order 50, of the text type. Click Insert.

4	en: Monogram	Order: 50	Text <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------	-----------	--

Normally, you would think you'd go to the Option Value Manager screen and add something, right?

But if you go to the Option Value Manager screen, you won't see the Monogram option name you created.

Let's go to the Attributes Controller.

Find your new product and select it so it's displayed. Now look at the list of option names and values. Find the Monogram [Text] option name and select it. Then, in the option value menu, find the TEXT option value.

ADDING NEW ATTRIBUTES

Define the Attribute Settings then press the Add button.

PERSONALIZED WIDGET - (WIDGET1)

Option Name	Option Value
Monogram [Text]	A [WOOKET STYLE] B [WOOKET STYLE] TEXT [RESERVED FOR TEXT/FILES ONLY ATTRIBUTES]
Widget Type [Radio]	Wacket [WIDGET TYPE]
Wodget Format [Dropdown]	Waggy [WODGET FORMAT]
Wooket Style [Checkbox]	

[Process this Widget](#)

With both of these selected, move down to the next section. We need to price the monogram.

Price Per Word: - Free Words:	Price Per Letter: - Free Letters:
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

Since this is a monogrammed widget, not one they can put a whole phrase on, I'm going to use the price per letter section. I'll let them have two free letters, but anything after that, they'll have to pay \$1.00 each letter.

s:	Price Per Letter: - Free Letters:
	<input type="text"/> 1.00 <input type="text"/> 2

With that taken care of, I'll click the Insert button.

The screenshot shows the Zen Cart Attributes Controller interface. At the top, it says "ID# 4 WIDGET1 - PERSONALIZED WIDGET". Below that, there's a table with one row. The row contains the word "MONOGRA" in bold, followed by "Monogram" and "TEXT". To the right of the text type, there are several color swatches (red, blue, green, yellow, purple) and a "delete" button. The total price is listed as "\$0.00 \$0.00".

If you're not sure if it took, go to your product in the active catalog and check it out.

The screenshot shows a product page for a "Personalized Widget". The product name is "Personalized Widget" and the price is "\$2.00". A description states "This is a personalized widget.". On the left, there's a placeholder for "NO PICTURE AVAILABLE" with a link to "larger image". On the right, there's an "Add to Cart" button with a quantity input set to 1 and a "add this to my cart" button. Below the product details, there's a section titled "Please Choose:" with a dropdown menu set to "Monogram ABC". It also notes "Price per letter: \$1.00 Letter(s) free 2".

With this example, I'm putting in three letters for the monogram -- ABC. This means that with a base price of \$2.00 and having to pay \$1.00 for the third letter, my cost should be \$3.00

So I'll add one to my cart and see what it says.

The screenshot shows a shopping cart summary. It has columns for "Qty.", "Item Name", "Unit", and "Total". There is one item in the cart: "Personalized Widget" with a quantity of 1. The unit price is \$3.00 and the total is \$3.00. To the right of the item, there's a "Remove" button. Below the item, it says "Monogram - ABC". At the bottom, it shows a "Sub-Total: \$3.00".

Hey, what do you know, it worked!

But the problem is, they can add it to the cart without a monogram. What if it's something you want to force them to add personalization to?

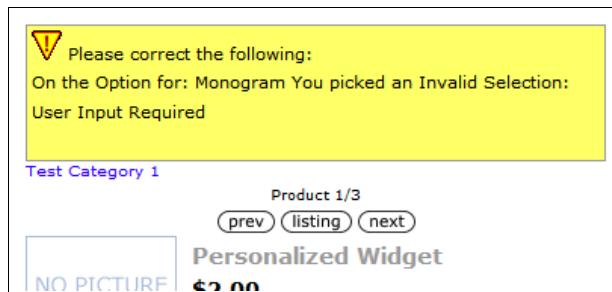
Go back to the Attributes Controller menu and edit the attribute we just created.

Look for the red Attribute Required for Text flag and set it to yes and click the Update button.

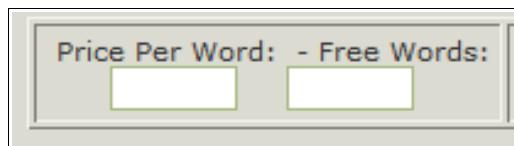
Refresh your browser and now go back to your product and try to add it to the cart without



adding a monogram to it. You should have received an error similar to the one shown in the example.



And if you want them to add a phrase instead of just letters, simply use the Price Per Word section.



What if you want to add images to your option values? For example, if we had different monogram styles to choose from, or different colors for a style of shirt, we could add those images to the choices to make it easier for the customer to see what it will look like.

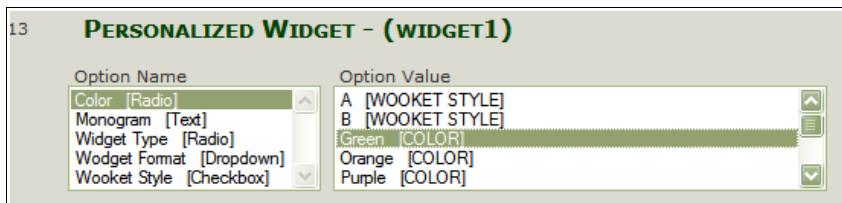
First, you need to create your images. Make sure you aren't using horribly large images (in physical dimensions or file size) for the samples.

Then, make sure in **Configuration --> Attribute Settings** you have the **Enable Attribute Images** option set to **true**. Otherwise, it won't work!

Use the Option Name Manager and Option Value Manager to create a name and matching values for your colors. I've created an option name of Color, radio dial type, with matching option values of green, orange, and purple. I have already created my color swatch graphics and have them ready on my computer. Now I'm going to apply this new set of attributes (option name and values) to my

Personalized Widget product.

If you don't remember how to create option names



and values, go back and repeat the section until you understand it! Remember:

- Create the Option Name first, and assign it a "type" (radio button, drop-down menu, etc.)
- Create the matching Option Values and apply them to that Option Name. Be careful when creating the values that you apply them to the correct name!
- Once you have an option name and matching values, you can then use the Attributes Controller to apply it to the product you want to modify.

I'll apply the option name Color and the value of Green to my Personalized Widget. But I want to include the color swatch.

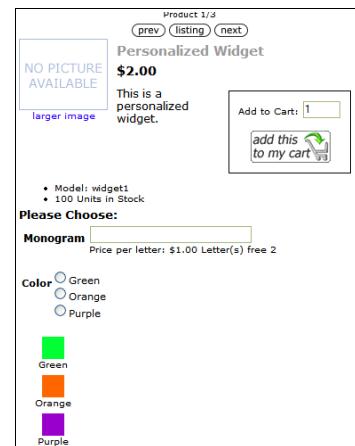
I need to move down the Attributes Controller screen until I find the Image Swatch section. I can browse for the file and then once it's selected, use the Insert button.



And I see it's now showing up on the Attributes Controller screen.



Now I'll repeat that for the orange and purple swatches.



When I preview the product, it's not exactly what I had in mind. The color swatches aren't where I want them.

Let's fix that.

You might need to make changes to the **Configuration --> Product Info** screen option of **Product Info - Show Option Values Name Below Attributes Image**. Make sure this is set the way you want it -- 0 is off and 1 is on.

If that is set the way you want, then go to the **Catalog --> Option Name Manager** screen.

Click on the Edit button for the Color option name.

The screenshot shows a software interface for managing catalog options. At the top, there's a header with the number '5' and the word 'Color'. Below the header, there are several input fields: 'Order: 55', 'Radio' (selected), and three numerical fields '55', '32', '32'. To the right of these is a blue 'edit' button. The main area contains a form for editing the 'Color' option. It includes fields for 'en: Color' (with 'Order: 55'), 'Comments' (empty), 'Rows: 0', 'Display Size: 32', 'Maximum length: 32', 'Attribute Images per Row: 0', and 'Attribute Style for Radio Buttons/Checkbox: 0'. A note at the bottom says 'NOTE: Rows, Display Size and Max Length are for Text Attributes Only'. Below this is a section titled 'Image Styles' with a list of styles numbered 0 to 5.

A new screen will open.

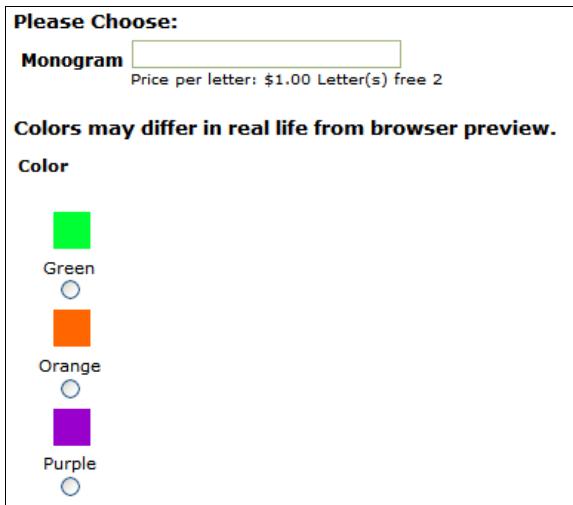
This screenshot shows the 'edit' screen for the 'Color' option name. The top part is identical to the previous screenshot. The main area has a note about text attributes and includes fields for 'Comments' (empty), 'Rows: 0', 'Display Size: 32', 'Maximum length: 32', 'Attribute Images per Row: 0', and 'Attribute Style for Radio Buttons/Checkbox: 0'. Below these is a section titled 'Image Styles' with a detailed list of styles:

- 0= Images Below Option Names
- 1= Element, Image and Option Value
- 2= Element, Image and Option Name Below
- 3= Option Name Below Element and Image
- 4= Element Below Image and Option Name
- 5= Element Above Image and Option Name

This is where you can change how the images display with the option names. You can set how many images can appear per row (in case you have a lot of previews) and you can set the style and number of rows. Also, you can add extra comments. I want the swatches to be over the name and the radio button (element).

This screenshot shows the 'edit' screen for the 'Color' option name again. The top part is identical. In the main area, the 'Attribute Style for Radio Buttons/Checkbox' field is now set to '4'. The rest of the interface remains the same, including the note about text attributes and the 'Image Styles' section.

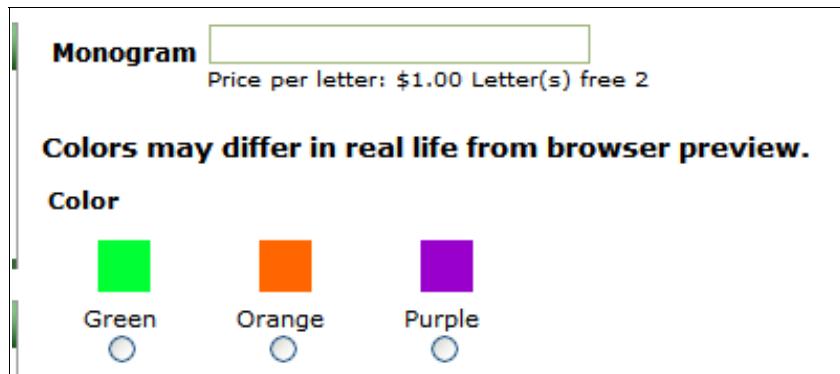
I wonder what it's going to look like?



Whoops. I wanted the swatches to be in a row, not a vertical line. I'd better change the Attribute Images Per Row setting.

This screenshot shows the "Attributes" section of the Zen Cart admin panel. It displays a form for a color attribute. The "en: Color" field has an "Order: 55" dropdown set to "Radio". Below the form is a note: "NOTE: Rows, Display Size and Max Length are for Text Attributes Only: en: Comments: Colors may differ in real life from browser preview." Underneath, there are fields for "Rows: 0", "Display Size: 32", "Maximum length: 32", "Attribute Images per Row: 3", and "Attribute Style for Radio Buttons/Checkbox: 4". At the bottom, a "Image Styles:" section defines six styles: 0= Images Below Option Names, 1= Element, Image and Option Value, 2= Element, Image and Option Name Below, 3= Option Name Below Element and Image, 4= Element Below Image and Option Name, and 5= Element Above Image and Option Name.

Now let's see what it looks like.



That's better! You can specify the number of swatches you have for the Images Per Row setting, or if you have a lot, too many to fit in one row, you can specify how many rows you have and how many per row. For example, if you want a uniform

appearance and you have twenty swatches, you could specify four rows of five, or five rows of four, depending on your preference.

There are other settings in the Attributes Controller you can apply to products.

Used for Display Purposes Only means just that -- the customer can't select it, it's just for display or information.



Attribute is Free When Product is Free. For example, if you were giving away a



shirt and offered monogramming on it, but you wanted the monogramming to be charged to the customer, you would want this set to No. If the monogramming would also be free since the shirt is free, you would set it to Yes.

Apply Discounts Used by Product Special/Sale means if you put the product on sale, should the same discount applied to the product also be applied to the attribute? If you offer monogramming on a shirt and the shirt is on sale for %50 off, but you don't want the monogramming to be discounted, set this to No. If you also want the monogramming to be discounted, set this to Yes.



Include in Base Price When Priced by Attributes means that instead of the price of your product saying \$2.00 and showing your attribute options as extra, it would say Starting at... and the lowest price of your base price (in this case, \$2.00) PLUS your lowest-priced attribute. So if you had a lowest-priced attribute of \$3.00, it would say Starting at \$5.00 instead of a price of \$2.00.

Or, for example, if you sell a widget that comes in two styles, and one is more expensive than the other, but you only want to offer it as one product entry, you can create the product entry with a price of \$0.00 and then use the attributes to specify the final price of the product. (So if one option is \$50 and one option is \$60, you could use this option so the price of the product says, "Starting at \$50.00" instead of a price of \$0.)

You must also have the corresponding Product Priced by Attributes field on that particular product set to yes for this to take effect.

Product Priced by Attributes:



Yes



No

*Display price will include lowest group attributes prices plus price

The flags can all be set to a default setting in the **Catalog --> Product Types** menu in the admin screen for each product type (click the Edit Layout button for the product type and make the necessary changes) if you find yourself making the same changes over and over again. (You can of course change them on a per-product basis as needed.)

You can also get into some fairly complex pricing and shipping cost calculations using attributes, but because there too many possibilities to get into, we won't discuss them in this tutorial.

Configuring Downloadable Products

Downloadable products can be any file type, from .zip to .jpg or .mp3, whatever. You can set the product to be free or for sale.

With Zen Cart™, you can set downloadable products to always be available, or only available for download for a certain amount of time, downloadable a certain number of times, or a combination of the two.

I have found from my experience, if you offer a free downloadable product you will have a lot of time invested in processing orders. If your site will have a lot of traffic, I recommend offering "free" downloads in a different manner. For one free download I offered, I had over one hundred "orders" in the space of an hour! Good for traffic, but a pain in the butt to process all those "orders" on the back end.

If you don't understand product attributes, back up and review the previous chapter first. Downloads will make a lot more sense if you do that first.

How it Works

First, you must configure your Zen Cart™ store to use downloadable products. Then you create a product, upload the file to your server, and link the file to the product.

The customer places an order for the downloadable product and the order is processed as normal. Depending on your site check-out set-up, once the order is marked paid or processed, or payment has cleared, the customer can then download the product. If payment is cleared at check-out (free item, credit card, PayPal, gift certificate, etc.), the customer is taken to a page at the end of the ordering process where they can access the download link.

Some customers close their browser too soon and miss this page. (Or, they might have a browser like AOL that sometimes doesn't play well with others and skips the page.) So if you plan to offer downloads, you should have clearly marked instructions somewhere on your ordering pages and website to tell them how to get

back to their order links.

The customer can also log into their store account, access their order history, and find the links that way.

To understand how to set up a downloadable product, you must understand how the Attributes Controller works. The two are linked.

The Attributes Controller



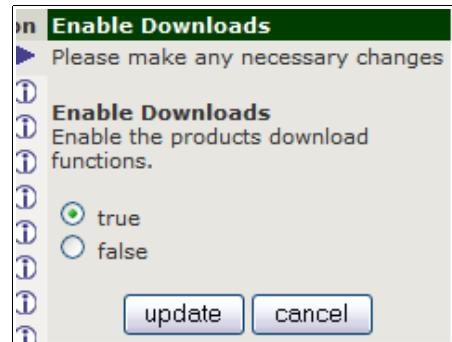
To offer Downloadable products, you MUST have the downloads option turned on. (Once you do this, you don't have to do it again.) To do this, from the Zen Cart™ Admin Home screen, go to **Configuration-->Attribute Settings**.

Make sure the option

Enable Downloads says True under Value. If it doesn't, left click ON the option name and it will open the edit box on the

right side of the screen.

Mark True and click the Update button.

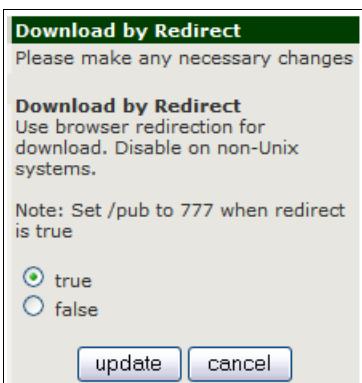


ATTRIBUTE SETTINGS

Title	Value	Action
Enable Downloads	true	

The next available option in the Attribute Settings menu is Download by Redirect.

Download by Redirect	true
----------------------	------



Read the message in the Download by Redirect box. I have it set to True, but my host account is on a Linux server. If you don't have a Linux server, troll the Zen Cart™ support forum for advice.

"Set **/pub** to 777" means you need to set the **/pub** directory of your website read/write permission (CHMOD) to 777.

The next option in the Attribute Settings menu is Download by Streaming. On my installation, it's set to False.

Download by streaming	false
-----------------------	-------

Download by streaming
Please make any necessary changes

Download by streaming
If download-by-redirect is disabled, and your PHP memory_limit setting is under 8 MB, you might need to enable this setting so that files are streamed in smaller segments to the browser.

Has no effect if Download By Redirect is enabled.

true
 false

update **cancel**

You need to click this option and read the information box to see if it applies to your installation. If it does, enable it and check your other settings. If not, leave it set to False.

Download Expiration (Number of Days)	7
Number of Downloads Allowed - Per Product	5

Download
Expiration and

Number of Downloads Allowed are self-explanatory options. Changing this setting will not effect downloadable products already loaded in your store. It only effects new ones. And you can override this setting when you create a new downloadable product. Once a product is created, to edit this setting, you must go back to the Attributes Controller and edit the individual product.

Downloads Controller Order Status Value >= lower value	2
Downloads Controller Order Status Value <= upper value	4

You need to set the
Downloads Controller
Order Status upper and

lower values. This value means the order status is marked pending, processed, etc. So you don't have people with pending orders getting downloads, etc. (I have mine set to the program defaults.)

Note: You can change the names of these options to whatever you want if you go to the **Localization--> Orders Status** menu. So instead of Delivered, for example, you could change it to say Completed or Finalized or Shipped or Done or whatever you want.

Orders Status
Pending (default)
Processing
Delivered
Update

Another Note: When you have downloadable products and accept "instant" payment like PayPal, you might want to have the payment order status for those

payment types set to Processing so the customer can automatically get their download without waiting for you to manually change the order status in the back end.

I have found PayPal will mark eCheck orders as Pending by default until the funds clear, then update and mark them Processing -- as long as everything is working properly. This way, the customer can't get the item before the payment has cleared. All other PayPal orders, where funds are immediately available (account balance, credit cards) are marked Processing. Older versions of Zen Cart™ did not have this automatic update feature.

That part is done. We will create new option names and values for downloads in a few minutes.

Creating a Sample Item

Let's create a sample item to get the hang of how this works.

Open your Zen Cart™ admin page. Go to

Catalog-->Categories/Products.



If you installed the sample data when you installed Zen Cart™, you'll see a bunch of stuff in there already. Pick a category to use. If you don't have any categories set up, click the New Category button and create one.

Left click on the name of the category you will use. This will open the category. (You can go back and delete this item later, so it really doesn't matter where you put it.)

Scroll down to the bottom of the screen (if there's a long list of sub-categories) and find the button row where it says Back | New Category | New Product | and the drop-down menu box. Click the New Product button. We are going to make a virtual product.



Start filling in the blanks with test data. Set your price to \$.00 for the test.

Product is Virtual:	<input type="radio"/> Yes, Skip Shipping Address <input checked="" type="radio"/> No, Shipping Address Required
Always Free Shipping:	<input type="radio"/> Yes, Always Free Shipping <input checked="" type="radio"/> No, Normal Shipping Rules <input type="radio"/> Special, Product/Download Combo Requires a Shipping Address

You must pay attention to the Product is Virtual and Always Free Shipping options. What does this mean?

You can set a virtual product (downloadable) to Yes. If you forget and set it to no, that's okay, it just requires them to enter their shipping address.

The Always Free Shipping option will bite you in the hind end if you ignore it now. Ask me how I know! Even if you don't currently sell shippable items and don't plan on selling shippable items, mark this as Special, Product/Download Combo Requires a Shipping Address.

If you upgraded from an older version of Zen Cart™, you might want to go back and set all your virtual products to this setting, or at the very least, thoroughly test orders that combine shippables and downloads.

Why?

I sell shippables and downloads. Several versions ago, when I upgraded my store to a newer version, I realized when people ordered downloads AND shippables in the same order, it didn't figure shipping for any of the order. Because my downloads were set to Yes, Always Free Shipping.

It overrode the shipping charges! So yes, some of my customers got free shipping on shippables until I figured it out.

Depending on how your store is set up for shipping, you may need to adjust these settings. (For example, if all orders get a flat-fee shipping or processing charge, etc.)

There are too many combinations to go through here – you can figure it out by playing with it. Depending on the combination you use, it may give you a red “error” message when you hit Preview.

You can set the Products Quantity Box Shows to No, unless for some reason you want your customer to be able to buy multiples of your virtual product.

Finish filling in all your test product data.

Products Quantity Box Shows:	<input type="radio"/> Yes, Show Quantity Box <input checked="" type="radio"/> No, Do not show Quantity Box
------------------------------	--

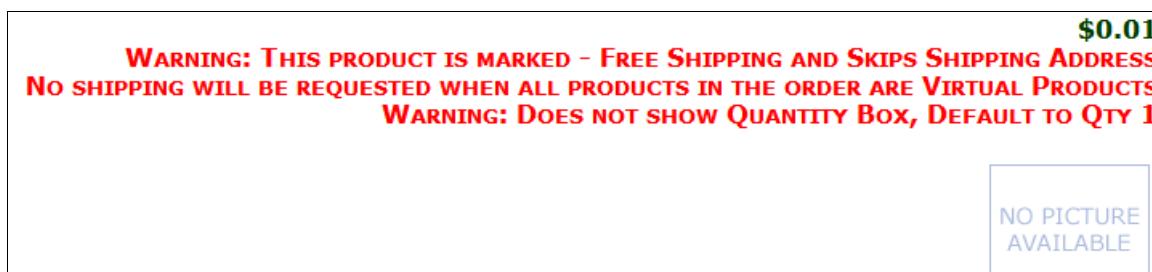
to whatever you want. (Some people don't use quantities for downloads, but I like to.)

Make sure your weight is set to 0.

Products Model is your part number (or whatever you use). Personally, I start all my downloadable products with a DL (for download). Use whatever numbering system works for you.

Don't worry about an image unless you want one. (This works the same as for any other product in your store.)

Hit the Preview button at the bottom right corner of the screen.



Don't let this message scare you. It's telling you the product is marked for Free Shipping, and that if the customer places an order with this product, as long as all the items in the order area also marked virtual, it won't require shipping. Also, it's telling me I have the Quantity Box set not to display.

If I hit the Back button, I'll see the warning on the page.



That's the error messages I warned you about. I ignore them. Hit the Insert button.

ID Categories / Products	Model	Price/Special/Sale	Quantity	Status	Sort	Action
1 Test Download Product	DL-test	\$0.01	9999	Green	0	

Okay, so we have an item. Now we want to link a downloadable file to it. There are different ways to do this, depending on how you want to set up the item. In my

case, I frequently sell embroidery files as a single .zip file with all the different individual file formats contained in one .zip file, so I don't need options for different files. But what if you need to offer your customers a choice between a .doc and a .pdf file, for example?

Changing/Deleting the "Choose One" Label

As of now, there is no way to make a “selectionless” single product option. By that I mean if you only have one file type for them to download, you still need to set up the item so that file is linked to the item by default with the attributes.

In my case, with my single .zip file, I still have to set it up with a radio button or drop-down box with the .zip file option. And the Choose One: option label will appear on the product screen. Which can be confusing to customers.

You can set your single option to be selected by default. However, you can get rid of the “Choose One” label. But, when you do this, it will change all the products in your store that have attributes (options) defined. If you have other products where the customer has to choose, you’ll lose that label.

You can overcome this with a drop-down menu option, something like “Choose from List.” Or you can reword the Choose One label to say something like, “Item Specifics” or something generic that will universally apply to your entire online catalog. (Again, you have to figure this out for your particular store.)

To change the label, use a text/file editor of your choice. (Do NOT use Word -- if you don't have a PHP file editor, use Notepad.) Find the file **includes/languages/english/product_info.php** in your store files. (I suggest saving the old version on the server first as something like **product_info_old.php** before uploading the new one! Then you have a quick way to restore if you goof up!)

```
15 define('TEXT_ALSO_PURCHASED_PRODUCTS', 'Customers who bought');
16 define('TEXT_PRODUCT_OPTIONS', '|');
17 define('TEXT_PRODUCT_MANUFACTURER', 'Manufactured by: '');
```

It might not be on the same line as mine is. But look for where it says ‘TEXT_PRODUCT_OPTIONS’. I’ve deleted everything between the apostrophes. (You MUST leave the apostrophes! Otherwise, it will throw an error.) If you want it to say something else, like Product Information, or Save the Whales, knock yourself out.

Remember PHP rules about escaping certain characters, and yes, you can

apply .html to change color, font, etc.

Save and upload to your server via FTP to your custom template languages directory (**includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/product_info.php**). Instead of CUSTOM, of course, you substitute the directory name of your custom template.

Okay, where are we at?

1. We've set our store so the download option is activated and configured.
2. We've created a test product we're going to apply a download attribute to.
3. We know how and where to change the file specifying "Please Choose" on our product page in case it's not what we want it to say.



Attributes Controller & Options

In the Zen Cart™ admin panel, navigate to **Catalog-->Attributes Controller**. (If you aren't familiar with this, please see the Attributes Controller chapter of this tutorial.)

We are going to create Option Names and Values two different ways. The first way is for people like me who sell one format of a file to a customer. We will create a single option for the product, apply the download file, and add it to the product. In other words, a product with only one available file type that is selected by default.

Then we will create the option of multiple file choices and apply that. It is a similar procedure, but can be confusing.

First, open your text file editor. Create a file called testdownload1.txt and type the following: **This is my test file 1.**

That's it.

Save it on your computer (where you can find the thing, please), use a .zip program to zip it and save it as **testdownload1.zip**, and then use your FTP program to upload it to the **/download** directory on your server where your store files are.

Name	Size
Parent Folder	
.htaccess	173 bytes
christmas_pal...	33.1 KB
index.html	118 bytes
ms_word_sam...	133 bytes
pdf_sample.zip	133 bytes
penguin1.zip	160 KB
test.zip	148 bytes
test2.zip	148 bytes
testdownload1...	223 bytes
unreal.zip	148 bytes

If you still have test data, you will see a few other files, maybe some of the same ones in my download directory.

MAKE SURE YOU NOTE EXACTLY HOW YOU SPELLED THE FILE NAME, INCLUDING CASE!!! File names are case-sensitive!

This is **very** important!!!

You'll see why. Stay with me and don't get lost.

Now we need to define an Option Name.

Go to **Catalog-->Option Name Manager**.



Attribute Controller		option values	Display Global Features - ON	NOTE: Edit Product Options Name for additional settings					
PRODUCT OPTIONS				Option ID					
ID	Option Name	Option Type		Sort Order	Size	Max	Action		
1	en:	Dropdown		Order:	1	32	32	insert	

WARNING: ALWAYS MAKE PROPER BACKUPS OF YOUR DATABASE BEFORE MAKING GLOBAL CHANGES

This is the Option Name Manager. If you have sample data installed, you might already have some Option Names populated in the list.

In the column where it says Option Name, in the text box on the far left, type:

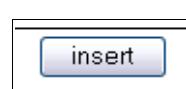
ID	Option Name
1	en: File Type

File Type

Order doesn't matter for now. That is the sort order, where it will display in the list of Option Names.

Under Option Type, make sure Radio is selected.

When finished, click the Insert button at the far right.



You should now see the Option Name you created in the list. (If you already have Option Names in your list, look for it.)

Attribute Controller		option values	Display Global Features - ON	NOTE: Edit Product Options Name for additional settings					
PRODUCT OPTIONS				Option ID					
ID	Option Name	Option Type		Sort Order	Size	Max	Action		
1	File Type	Radio		0	32	32	edit	delete	
2	en:	Dropdown		Order:	1	32	32	insert	

WARNING: ALWAYS MAKE PROPER BACKUPS OF YOUR DATABASE BEFORE MAKING GLOBAL CHANGES

Now you can either click the Option Values button on that screen, or you can go to the **Catalog-->Option Value Manager** menu option.



I currently have no Option Values.

If I had more than one Option Name available, I could select it from the drop-down menu under Option Name. (If you already have more than one Option Name,

Option Value	
en:	.zip file

Attribute Controller		option names	Display Global Features - ON	Edit Product Options for additional settings	
OPTION VALUES					
1	ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order	Action
	1	File Type	en: .zip file	Order: []	<input type="button" value="insert"/>

make sure the File Type Option Name we just created is selected!)

Under the Option Value column, in the text field, type: **.zip file**

Click the Insert button at the far right when finished.

It should now be available in the list.

Attribute Controller		option names	Display Global Features - ON		
OPTION VALUES					
1	ID	Option Name	Option Value		
	1	File Type	.zip file		



Now you can either click the Attribute Controller button, or you can go to **Catalog-->Attributes Controller** menu option, OR, you can find the test product you created (under the **Catalog-->Categories/Products** menu option) and click the black circle with the A in it to open the Attribute Controller menu.

CATEGORIES / PRODUCTS - TECUMSEH						Search: <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="X"/>	Go To: <input type="text" value="Tecumseh"/>
ID Categories / Products	Model	Price/Special/Sale	Quantity	Status	Sort	Action	
1 Test Download Product	DL-test		9997	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0	<input type="button" value="E"/> <input type="button" value="X"/> <input type="button" value="n"/> <input type="button" value="C"/> <input type="button" value="A"/> <input type="button" value="S"/> <input type="button" value="O"/>	

In my test store, you can see what my Attributes Controller menu looks like.

option names	option values																											
ATTRIBUTES CONTROLLER																												
Products Listing for: Products ID#5 - in Category: test category 4 test product download																												
edit product EDIT PRODUCT	price manager PRODUCTS PRICE MANAGER																											
No Attributes Defined for Product ID#5																												
Multiple Categories Link Manager																												
CATEGORIES: - test category 4 Select a Category with Products ... Or move between the Products Products: 1/1 previous test category 4* next Select a Product to View and Press Display ... test product download (\$0.00) [d1] - ID# 5 display																												
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Legend:</td> <td>Display Only</td> <td>Free</td> <td>Default</td> <td>Discounted</td> <td>Base Price</td> <td>Required</td> <td>Images</td> <td>Valid/Invalid filename</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OFF/ON</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 </td> <td colspan="8"></td> </tr> </table>		Legend:	Display Only	Free	Default	Discounted	Base Price	Required	Images	Valid/Invalid filename	OFF/ON									1								
Legend:	Display Only	Free	Default	Discounted	Base Price	Required	Images	Valid/Invalid filename																				
OFF/ON																												
1																												

Under the Categories section, there's a drop-down menu box with all my categories listed. The little * next to test category 4 means there are active products in that category. In fact, you can see my test product in the display window. Click your test product to select it and click the Display button if it's not already highlighted.

As you can see, it says I have no attributes defined for the product.

Legend:	Display Only	Free	Default	Discounted	Base Price	Required	Images	Valid/Invalid filename								
OFF/ON																
1																
ID Option Name Option Value Prefix Price Prefix Weight Order Legend:																
No ATTRIBUTES DEFINED FOR PRODUCT ID#5 d1 - TEST PRODUCT DOWNLOAD																

Where it says Adding New Attributes, I see my new Option Name and Option Value. Left click on those to highlight them. Make sure to highlight both of them. Do NOT click Insert yet!

ADDING NEW ATTRIBUTES

Define the Attribute Settings then press Insert

1 TEST PRODUCT DOWNLOAD - (DL1)

Option Name File Type [Radio]	Option Value zipfile [FILE TYPE] TEXT [RESERVED FOR TEXT/FILES ONLY ATTRIBUTES]
----------------------------------	---

PRICES AND WEIGHTS

Scroll down further on the screen.

Attribute Flags:	Used For Display Purposes Only: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Attribute is Free When Product is Free: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Default Attribute to be Marked Selected: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Apply Discounts Used by Product Special/Sale: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Include in Base Price When Priced by Attributes: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Attribute Required for Text: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes
------------------	--	--	---	--	---	---

Attributes Image Swatch: Attributes Image Directory: Overwrite Existing Image on Server: No Yes

Downloadable products: Filename: Expiry days: (0 = unlimited) Maximum download count:

See the orange box in the Attribute Flags section where it says Default Attribute to be Marked Selected? Make SURE you check the Yes radio button.

In the text field where it says Filename, type your exact filename. You do NOT have to type the entire path. Just the name (including the file extension). If you want to adjust the Expiry Days and Maximum Download Count settings, you can. (Remember I said you could override them?)

Once all this is done, then you can click the Insert button. (There is more than one Insert button -- it doesn't matter which one you click.)

Legend:	Display Only	Free	Default	Discounted	Base Price	Required	Images	Valid/Invalid filename	
OFF/ON	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
1	ID	Option Name	Option Value	Prefix Price	Prefix Weight	Order	Legend:	Total Disc: Onetime:	Action
ID# 5 DL1 - TEST PRODUCT DOWNLOAD									
<input type="button" value="delete"/> FILE TYPE 17 File Type .zip file + 0.0000 + 0 0 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> \$0.00 \$0.00 <input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/> ● Filename: testdownload1.zip Days: 7 Max: 5									

Your result should resemble mine. If the dot next to the filename is red instead of green, you goofed. Either you mistyped the filename or didn't upload it, or

didn't upload it to the right directory. Use Edit or Delete to start over. The colored squares are explained in the little table right over that section. The orange one means you have the default feature activated.

On to the storefront!
Find your test product in
your catalog. This is what
mine looks like.

Add the test product to
your cart and check out. If

you have your payment module set to allow completed payments to trigger the downloads, you should see the download link on the last page of the order.

If not, go into the Admin screen, set the order you just made to completed, then on the front end, log into your "customer" account and

access your order history.

Confirm the file downloaded correctly.

One common problem is improper file permissions settings for the **/pub** directory. Go back and adjust your settings as needed until it works.

Note: Some customers with pop-up blockers or versions of AOL might have trouble with this link. If they do, tell them to try a different browser outside AOL, or tell them to disable their pop-up blocker and log into their account for the

download. If they say they get an "index.html" page, it most likely means they have an IE browser issue. In those cases, suggest they either upgrade to a newer IE version, or that they use Mozilla Firefox to download their files.

If you get a server error, I have to refer you to the Zen Cart™ site help forums, because that's beyond the scope of this tutorial.

Okay, let's work on the other option, creating a download with two different option values.

Use your text editor to create another simple text file called **testdownload2.txt** and .zip it, call the zip file **testdownload2.zip**. Upload it to the download directory on your server – the same one you uploaded the other file to.



Now, go back to the **Catalog->Option Name Manager**.

We're going to repeat what we did the last time, only this time, we are going to call it **File Format Choices** and select the **Dropdown** option (it should be the default in the drop-down box.) Click Insert.

PRODUCT OPTIONS			
1	Option ID	Option Type	Sort Order
ID	Option Name	Option Type	Sort Order
1	File Type	Radio	
2	File Format Choices	Dropdown	

Verify it's in your list.

Navigate to **Catalog-->Option Value Manager**.

Again, we're going to create values to go with the option name we just created. This time, we're going to make our options. (It doesn't matter if there are already Values in the list that are the same. They can be duplicates of other Values in the list, but they have to be paired with the Name you just created.)

OPTION VALUES		
ID	Option Name	Option Value
1	File Type	.zip file
2	File Format Choices	en: [text input field]

In the Option Names column drop-down menu box, select the File Format Choices option.

Type your first option value in the text field. Call it File Option 1. Click Insert.

Repeat the procedure and call the other one File Option 2. Or call them Beans and Franks, or Cheese and Wine for all I care. But make two

OPTION VALUES		
ID	Option Name	Option Value
1	File Type	.zip file
2	File Format Choices	en: File Option 1

different option values and match them to the File Format Choices Option Name.

When you are done, navigate to **Catalog-->Attributes Controller**.

Find your test product and delete the attribute you applied to it in the last step. When you click the Delete button next to the attribute, it will ask you to confirm the deletion.

OPTION VALUES			
ID	Option Name	Option Value	Default Order
2	File Format Choices	File Option 1	0
3	File Format Choices	File Option 2	0
1	File Type	.zip file	0
4	File Format Choices	en: <input type="text"/>	Order: <input type="text"/>

Now we need to add the new attributes. Find the File Format Choices Option Name and select it. Then select the first Option Value you created.

ADDING NEW ATTRIBUTES Define the Attribute Settings the

1 TEST PRODUCT DOWNLOAD - (DL1)

Option Name File Format Choices [Dropdown] File Type [Radio]	Option Value .zip file [FILE TYPE] File Option 1 [FILE FORMAT CHOICES] File Option 2 [FILE FORMAT CHOICES] TEXT [RESERVED FOR TEXT/FILES ONLY ATTRIBUTES]
--	---

Apply this to the **testdownload1.zip** file. Make it the default.

Attribute Flags:	Used For Display Purposes Only: <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes	Attribute is Free When Product is Free: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Default Attribute to be Marked Selected: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	Apply Discounts Use by Product Special/Sale: <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes
Attributes Image Swatch: <input type="text" value="testdownload1.zip"/> <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> Attributes Image Directory: <input type="text" value="attributes"/> <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> <div style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Overwrite Existing <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes</div>				

Click Insert.

ID	Option Name	Option Value	Prefix Price	Prefix Weight	Order	Legend:	Total Disc:	Onetime:	Action
ID# 5 DL1 - TEST PRODUCT DOWNLOAD									
FILE FORMAT CHOICES									
19	File Format Choices	File Option 1	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	\$0.00	\$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>

You should now have it in your list.

Repeat what you just did, only this time apply it to the **testdownload2.zip** file and do NOT mark it as the default.

ID# 5 DL1 - TEST PRODUCT DOWNLOAD									
FILE FORMAT CHOICES									
19	File Format Choices	File Option 1	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	\$0.00	\$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>
20	File Format Choices	File Option 2	+ 0.0000	+ 0	0	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	\$0.00	\$0.00	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="delete"/>

See the difference in the flag icons? The first option has an orange square, but the second has a red X through the orange square, meaning it's not default.

Go place two test orders, one for each option!

This is what my product looks like.

test category 4



NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

[larger image](#)

• Model: dl1

File Format Choices

[write a review](#) 

test product download

[add this to my cart](#) 

[tell a friend about us](#) 

If you want to have more than two choices, simply create more option values. And that's it!

You can adjust your product display layout depending on where you want the "add to cart" and attributes to display. You might want to set it up so the add to cart button displays lower than the attribute selections so people don't miss them.

Also, when you have multiple choices, make your most popular seller the default option. If you sell a file that comes in .doc, .rtf, .pdf and .pdf is the best seller, make it the default. It will make your life easier and help reduce the number of "oopsie" orders by people.

If you need to have multiple files downloaded for one product (for example, very large file that must be broken into sections), you'll have to play around with creating multiple option names and values and applying them to the same product as multiple attributes. (This can get very confusing, and while I haven't done it myself, I've been told it's do-able.)

Downloads Manager

You can navigate to **Catalog-->Downloads Manager** to easily see and edit your downloads.



The Downloads Manager allows you to quickly access your downloadable products so you can do things like adjust the download time, download count, and filename. Also, you can quickly access the Attribute Controller for that product

DOWNLOADS MANAGER											Search:
Attr ID	Prod ID	Product Name	Model	Option Name	Option Value Name		Days	Count	Attribute Controller	Edit	
					Missing filename	Valid filename					
19	5	test product download	dl1	File Format Choices	File Option 1	testdownload1.zip	7	5			
20	5	test product download	dl1	File Format Choices	File Option 2	testdownload2.zip	7	5			

through the Downloads Manager. This saves you from having to hunt and find your download products through the **Catalog-->Categories/Products** menu option.

Don't forget to make sure you clearly specify your returns policy on your

website! I don't claim to be a lawyer, but if you don't have a returns (or in the case of downloads, NO returns policy!) you will have a problem defending yourself against chargebacks.

If you find you have problems getting the test order file to open after download, even though it looks like it downloaded, check your folder permissions on your server.

If you have a problem not addressed here, I have to refer you to the Zen Cart™ forums. Do a search and the answer is either there, or if it doesn't come up in a search, post about your problem and someone will probably know how to help you diagnose and solve it.

Images

Basics

Zen Cart™ comes with an ingenious image system. The trick is learning how to use it and where all the appropriate settings are located. Zen Cart™ comes with the ability to display multiple images for a product without any additional modifications necessary. However, you have to configure the software to utilize this capability and upload additional images to the proper directories and use the proper file naming format.

You can change default image display sizes in **Configuration --> Images**.

If your images are distorted, go into **Configuration --> Images** and set either the height or width setting to what you want, and the other setting to 0. Then set **Configuration --> Images --> Calculate Image Size** to true and **Configuration --> Images --> Use Proportional Images on Products and Categories** to on. (I know the note in the setting says don't use a 0 setting, but the FAQ on the Zen Cart™ site says you can do it, and from personal experience I've done it.)

Buttons

Images for buttons are contained in the template directory. For example,
includes/templates/template_default/buttons/english

If you want to change the buttons, make sure you make new ones and save them with the same file names (make sure to use the same graphic file format!) to:
includes/templates/CUSTOM/buttons/english (where CUSTOM is your template folder).

Add a copy of **includes/languages/english/button_names.php** to your **includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/button_names.php** folder. If you want to use button files with different names, make sure you go through and edit them in this file.

CSS Buttons

If you want to use CSS buttons, you can do that too. First, you need to enable it in the Admin panel under **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> CSS Buttons**.

You can configure and save the CSS button stylesheet to your custom template folder. Use **includes/templates/classic/css/stylesheet_css_buttons.css** and save it to your custom template folder as **includes/templates/CUSTOM/css/stylesheet_css_buttons.css** so Zen Cart™ recognizes it.

What are the advantages of using CSS buttons over images? That's up to you. Some people prefer to use CSS buttons over images.

Additional Images for Products

First, make sure the additional images setting is enabled. You have to check each product type you utilize, for example, Product - General or Product - Music.

Let's do Product - General. **Go to Catalog --> Product Types --> Product - General** and click the Edit Layout button.

Scroll down to **Show Product Additional Images** and click it to edit.

Make sure it's set to true. Click the Update button.

Show Product Additional Images
Please make any necessary changes
Show Product Additional Images
Display Additional Images on Product Info 0= off 1= on
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> True
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

There is another setting you may want to change if you plan on having a lot of additional images and want them to display in a certain way. For example, if you want four images per row.

Product Info - Number of Additional Images per Row
Please make any necessary changes
Product Info - Number of Additional Images per Row
Product Info - Enter the number of additional images to display per row Default = 3
<input type="text" value="3"/>
<input type="button" value="update"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>

Go to **Configuration --> Images --> Product Info - Number of Additional Images Per Row**.

Default is 3 -- set it however you want.

Note: Keep in mind your template width. If you put too many images in a row, it will make your store screen widen and could possibly cause some displays on narrower screen

resolutions to flow off the right side of the screen, forcing your customer to scroll sideways to see the whole page. And that's not good.

When you add additional images, you can add small and large images. There is also a medium image size, but it's only used once per product -- for the main product image.

Also:

- Additional images must all be the same file format (ie. .jpg, .gif, etc.).

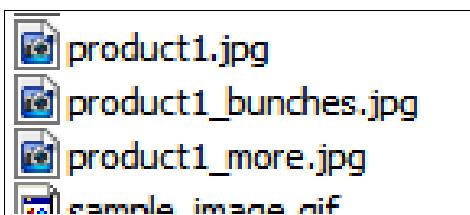
You cannot mix a .jpg file with .gif files and have them display properly.

- Stick to alpha-numeric characters for file names. Don't use symbols like \$ and [] in your file names.
- The file name for the "main" picture shown on the product information page is the "base name" for the additional images. For example, **product1.jpg**
- Use an underscore _ between the "base name" and the rest of the file name for the additional images. For example, **product1_back.jpg**, **product1_side.jpg**

So for my test product, I'll use a main image called **product1.jpg** and this will become the "base name" image name for my additional images. I'll use the product information screen to add the **product1.jpg** image to my product.

The screenshot shows a product page for "Another Test Product". At the top, there are navigation links: "Home : Test Category 1 : Another Test Product", "Product 1/2", "prev", "listing", and "next". Below this is the product title "Another Test Product" and the price "\$5.00". A description follows: "Another test product.". To the left of the description is a thumbnail image of two cherries. To the right are several buttons: "add this to my cart" (with a shopping cart icon), "write a review" (with a pen icon), and "tell a friend about us" (with an envelope icon).

My other two images are called **product1_more.jpg** and **product1_bunches.jpg** and I must FTP them to the SAME folder as **product1.jpg**. So if you have custom folders for your products, for example, by category, make sure it goes in the correct folder.



Again, you must FTP the additional pictures to your server, into the SAME folder the original image went to. If you don't put them in the same folder, Zen Cart™ can't associate them

with the main image and product.

You can see from my example that my two additional images are successfully linked to my main product.

Another point to mention is if you want the images to display in a certain order, you need to name them appropriately because Zen Cart™ sorts them alphabetically. For example, **product1_bunches.jpg** will display before **product1_more.jpg** because alphabetically, **_bunches.jpg** comes before **_more.jpg**.

If I wanted **product1_more.jpg** to display first, I would need to change the names to something like **product1_1.jpg** and **product1_2.jpg** for them to display in the order I want.

Here's a warning regarding naming your images -- if you use the main **/images** directory for all your products, if you have two different products and the image names start the same, they will all be tagged to the first product to use the image!

Home : Test Category 1 : Another Test Product

Product 1/2
prev listing next

Another Test Product
\$5.00

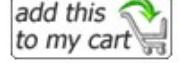
Another test product.


[larger image](#)


[larger image](#)


[larger image](#)

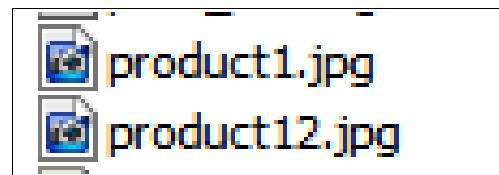
[write a review](#) 

[add this to my cart](#) 

[tell a friend](#) 
[about us](#) 

Detailed description: This screenshot shows a Zen Cart product page for 'Another Test Product'. The page title is 'Home : Test Category 1 : Another Test Product'. It displays the product name 'Another Test Product' and price '\$5.00'. A brief description says 'Another test product.'. There are three images: a main cherry image, a fruit bunch image, and another cherry image. Below each image is a link to 'larger image'. At the bottom left is a 'write a review' button with a review icon. On the right are buttons for 'add this to my cart' (with a shopping cart icon) and 'tell a friend about us' (with an email icon).

What do I mean by that?



If you have an image called **product1.jpg** and another image called **product12.jpg**, BOTH images will end up linked to the first product where **product1.jpg** is the "main" image!



Pictured is my sample image with **product1.jpg** as the main image, but Zen Cart™ has picked up **product12.jpg** as an additional image for this product, even though it wasn't supposed to!

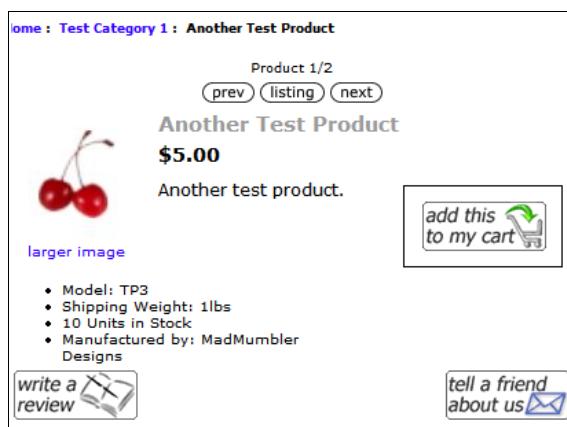
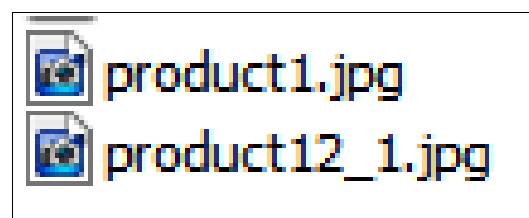
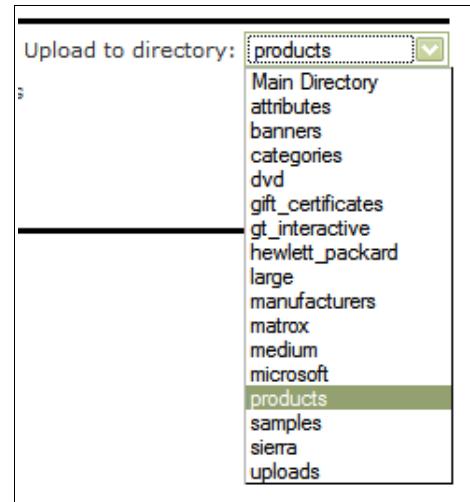
This can wreak some major havoc with your image displays if you have a lot of images that have similar names. Even if you name it **product12_01.jpg** for a whole new product, Zen Cart™ will still see it as an image for the same product.

The easiest way to bypass this issue

is to use the underscore `_` in your image names AND make use of subdirectories, NOT the main **/images** directory for product images. To place an image in a subdirectory, just make sure to select it during the product creation/editing process. You can add your own subdirectories.

Remember -- these are in the main **/images** directory, NOT the **includes/template...** image directory! These images are OUTSIDE the template area, and are independent of the templates.

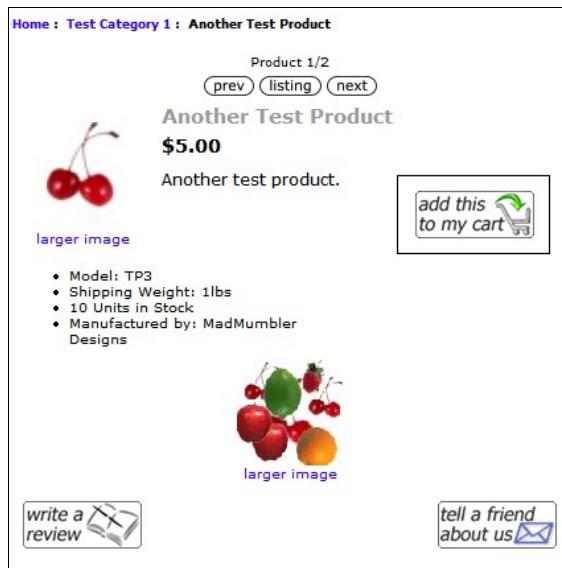
Now if I delete the original images from my test product and create a **/products**



subdirectory under images, I can show you how this works.

With **product1.jpg** and **product12_1.jpg**, only the main image, **product1.jpg** shows. Because it's a subdirectory of the main

/images folder.



If I rename **product12_1.jpg** to **product1_21.jpg** it will, however, reappear.

If that didn't make sense, go back and play with it and try it in your own store.

- Remember to use subdirectories for product images whenever possible.
- If you can't use subdirectories your image names must be totally unique or Zen Cart™ will try to assign them to the same product.
- The "base name" of the images for a product are derived from the image uploaded through the product information screen.
- Use an underscore _ to separate the "base name" from the rest of the image name.
- Zen Cart™ displays the images in an alphanumeric order. So number/name them in the order you want them to appear.
- If you have additional images appearing in the wrong product, you need to go back and change your file names or use a subdirectory (like **images/products**) and use the underscore naming convention. The additional images are being called because of the similarity in file names.

Medium and Large Images

Unless you understand the basics of multiple images, this section won't make any sense. If you need to, re-read the previous section before you tackle this one.

If you have a large Zen Cart™ site with many items, especially many items

using multiple images, it can cause issues with pages loading slow for customers. Keep in mind many people still use dial-up for their online connection, and large pages full of images can really slow down the load time (and lose you potential customers in the process). This can also cause you a hit in the bandwidth your site uses.

An image with a large file size, even if displayed in a thumbnail size, still loads slowly and drains bandwidth because it still takes the same time to load. The best solution is using multiple file sizes.

You can use medium and large images, which is confusing, because you only designate one image as medium, and that's the main product image.

If you use medium and large images, they must be uploaded to the **images/medium** and **images/large** directories. If you use a subdirectory -- for example, let's say a subdirectory called products -- they must be uploaded to the **images/medium/products** and **images/large/products** (where you substitute the actual name of the subdirectory you're using for "products").

You must add an extra suffix to the image. For example:

- **product1_back_LRG.jpg**
- **product1_side_LRG.jpg**

Your medium images, while "medium" in size and uploaded to the "medium" directory (or subdirectory) do NOT use the _MED suffix. The ONLY image you would upload with the _MED suffix would be the main image for your product. For example, **product1_MED.jpg** would be uploaded to the **images/medium** (or **images/medium/products**) directory.

So here's how you would load the images. Let's say you are using a subdirectory called **images/products** for your product images. These three files would go in **images/products**.

- **product1.jpg** (Uploaded from the product information screen.)
- **product1_back.jpg** (Uploaded via FTP.)
- **product1_side.jpg** (Uploaded via FTP.)

This file would go in **images/medium/products**.

- **product1_MED.jpg** (Uploaded via FTP.)

These files would go in **images/large/products**.

- **product1_back_LRG.jpg** (Uploaded via FTP.)
- **product1_side_LRG.jpg** (Uploaded via FTP.)

If you have a lot of images to process, see if your image program has a batch file processing feature.

If, for some reason, you don't want to use _MED and _LRG as the suffix, you can change them in **Configuration --> Images**.

Attribute Images

To add images to attributes -- color swatches, for example -- please see the section on Attributes.

Shopping Cart, Checkout Settings

Basics

There are Admin settings for the shopping cart.

To turn off or change the totals at the top of the shopping cart, go to

**Configuration --> Layout Settings -->
Shopping Cart - Show Totals.**

Your Shopping Cart Contents

You may want to add some instructions for using the shopping cart here. (defined in includes/languages/english/shopping_cart.php)

Qty.	Item Name	Unit	Total
1	Product 3  NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	\$10.00	\$10.00 

Sub-Total: \$10.00

Shopping Cart - Show Totals

Please make any necessary changes

Shopping Cart - Show Totals
Show Totals Above Shopping Cart?
0= off
1= on: Items Weight Amount
2= on: Items Weight Amount, but no weight when 0
3= on: Items Amount

0
 1
 2
 3

update **cancel**

You have several settings to choose from depending on your preference.

If you want the shopping cart sidebox to appear even if there is nothing in it, first make sure it's activated in the **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** panel. Then, go to **Configuration --> Layout Settings --> Shopping Cart Box Status** and change as desired.

Shopping Cart Box Status

Please make any necessary changes

Shopping Cart Box Status
Shopping Cart Shows
0= Always
1= Only when full
2= Only when full but not when viewing the Shopping Cart

0
 1
 2

update **cancel**

[Home : The Shopping Cart](#)

Your Shopping Cart Contents [\[help \(?\)\]](#)

You may want to add some instructions for using the shopping cart here. (defined in includes/languages/english/shopping_cart.php)

Total Items: 1 Weight: 0.5lbs Amount: \$10.00

Qty.	Item Name	Unit	Total
1	Product 3	\$10.00	\$10.00

Sub-Total: \$10.00

[back to shopping](#) [go to checkout](#)

[estimate shipping](#)

To change the delete button/box setting, go to **Configuration --> Stock --> Show Shopping Cart - Delete Checkboxes or Delete Button**. You can choose to use the button, checkbox, or the button and checkbox (as pictured).

The update button can be adjusted in that same menu. **Configuration --> Stock --> Show Shopping Cart - Update Cart Button Location**.

You can choose between next to each product, below all products, or both (shown).

Check stock level
Please make any necessary changes

Check stock level
Check to see if sufficient stock is available

true
 false

[update](#) [cancel](#)

[Home : The Shopping Cart](#)

Your Shopping Cart Contents [\[help \(?\)\]](#)

You may want to add some instructions for using the shopping cart here. (defined in includes/languages/english/shopping_cart.php)

Total Items: 1 Weight: 0.5lbs Amount: \$10.00

Qty.	Item Name	Unit	Total
1	Product 3	\$10.00	\$10.00

Sub-Total: \$10.00

[back to shopping](#) [go to checkout](#)

[estimate shipping](#)

Stock, and Configuration --> Stock--> Allow Checkout
(set to false).

Mark product out of stock
Please make any necessary changes

Mark product out of stock
Display something on screen so customer can see which product has insufficient stock

[update](#) [cancel](#)

To prevent sales of out-of-stock items, you need to change three settings.

Configuration --> Stock --> Check Stock Level,

(set to true), **Subtract**

Allow Checkout
Please make any necessary changes

Allow Checkout
Allow customer to checkout even if there is insufficient stock

true
 false

[update](#) [cancel](#)

You can specify which products are out of stock at **Configuration --> Stock --> Mark product out of stock** and the software will display a

symbol of your choice.

To automatically deactivate an out-of-stock product, go to **Configuration --> Stock --> Products status in Catalog when out of stock should be set to**. This will prevent customers from seeing out-of-stock products.

Show Sold Out Image in place of Add to Cart
Please make any necessary changes

Show Sold Out Image in place of Add to Cart
Show Sold Out Image instead of Add to Cart Button

0= off
1= on

0
 1

update **cancel**

Products status in Catalog when out of stock should be set to

Please make any necessary changes

Products status in Catalog when out of stock should be set to

Show Products when out of stock

0= set product status to OFF
1= leave product status ON

- 0
 1

update

cancel

To turn off the shipping estimator, go to **Configuration --> Shipping/Packaging --> Shipping Estimator Display Settings for Shopping Cart**.

Home : The Shopping Cart [help (?)]

Your Shopping Cart Contents

You may want to add some instructions for using the shopping cart here. (defined in includes/languages/english/shopping_cart.php)

Total Items: 1 Weight: 0.5lbs Amount: \$10.00

Qty.	Item Name	Unit	Total
1	Product 3 NO PICTURE AVAILABLE	\$10.00	\$10.00

Sub-Total: \$10.00

back to shopping **go to checkout**

estimate shipping

Privacy and Terms & Conditions Notices

Depending on your location, you might not need or want the privacy and terms and conditions notices enabled. To disable them, go to: **Configuration --> Regulations** and set them as desired.

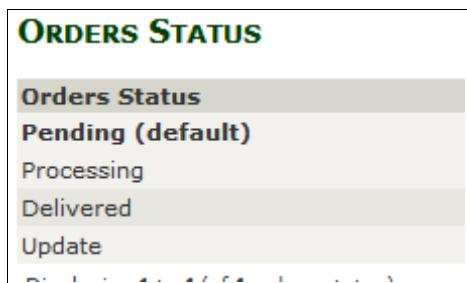
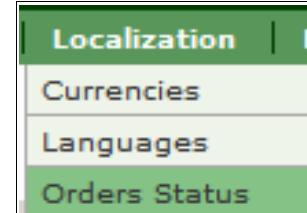
REGULATIONS

Title

Confirm Terms and Conditions During Checkout Procedure
Confirm Privacy Notice During Account Creation Procedure

Orders Status

When someone pays for an order, you can specify whether it's pending, processing, etc. Some people do not like the default "delivered" option available. You can change the terminology for these settings. **Go to Localization --> Orders Status.**



For example, if you want to change "Delivered" to say "Shipped" or "Completed" you can do that here.

Click the option you want to change to select it and click the

Edit button.

Make the change and click Update.



Best Sellers

You can toggle the display and location of the Best Sellers sidebox through **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller.**

Settings for what goes in the Bestsellers box are located at:

- **Configuration --> Minimum Values --> Best Sellers**
- **Configuration --> Maximum Values --> Best Sellers for Box**
- **Configuration --> Layout Settings.**

Also Purchased

Also Purchased is a good function to have because it might help customers add more products to their cart based upon what other customers have purchased. Settings for this are located at:

- **Configuration --> Minimum Values --> Also Purchased Products**
- **Configuration --> Maximum Values --> Also Purchased Products**

Contact Us, Customer Settings, Emails

Depending on your situation, you might not want your store contact information appearing on the Contact Us page. For example, if you run your website out of your home, but have a different physical location. If you don't want your store address and phone number appearing on the Contact Us page, go to **Configuration --> E-Mail Options--> Contact Us - Show Store Name and Address.**

The screenshot shows the 'Contact Us' configuration page. It includes a note about backup files, a 'Contact Us' section with fields for Full Name, Email Address, and Message, and a note about required information.

Note: Always backup the files in /languages/english/html_includes/your_template

Contact Us

Full Name: * Required information

Email Address: *

Message: *

The screenshot shows the 'Contact Us' page with a dropdown menu for 'Send Email To' containing options like Orders, Tech Support, Advertising, and Sales. A note indicates that these are required fields.

Contact Us

Send Email To: * Required information

Full Name: *

Email Address: *

Message: *

E-Mail Options --> Set "Contact Us" E-Mail Dropdown List.

In the edit box, specify the name and emails as explained. It must be in a **Name <emailaddress@email.com>** format for it to appear correctly. Use a comma between emails.

Using this feature helps emails quickly get to the appropriate department/person,

If you'd like to customize your Contact Us page to provide customers a greater choice in contact options, for example, specifying different employees or departments, you can add a drop-down menu.

To do this, go to **Configuration-->**

The screenshot shows the 'Set "Contact Us" Email Dropdown List' configuration screen. It contains a note, a text area for email addresses, and update/cancel buttons.

Set "Contact Us" Email Dropdown List

Please make any necessary changes

Set "Contact Us" Email Dropdown List

On the "Contact Us" Page, set the list of email addresses , in this format: Name 1 <email@address1>, Name 2 <email@address2>

Orders <email1@email.com>, Tech Support <email2@email.com>, Advertising <email3@email.com>, Sales <email4@email.com>

update cancel

rather than all Contact Us emails going to one email address.

The screenshot shows the 'Contact Us' page. At the top, it says 'Home : Contact Us'. Below that is a section titled 'Contact Us Sample Text ...' which contains instructions about the Define Pages Editor. It includes a note about removing the text, a file path, and a backup note. Below this is a 'Contact Us' form with fields for 'Full Name', 'Email Address', and 'Message'. A red asterisk indicates required information.

You can customize the information on your Contact Us page. It's a defined page, edited through **Tools --> Define Pages Editor**. You might want to include commonly requested information in this page to prevent repetitive emails from customers, such as hours of operations, a map, etc. You can also use this to include contact information if your main store contact information differs from your physical store location.

If you want to toggle the Newsletter Unsubscribe link (for example, if you don't use the newsletter feature) you can switch it in **Configuration --> E-Mail Options --> Display**

"Newsletter" Unsubscribe Link? Note: If you use the Newsletter feature, you may be required by local laws to have a clearly posted Unsubscribe link.



The screenshot shows the 'Login' page. It starts with a 'Welcome, Please Sign In' message and a 'Returning Customers: Please Log In' section with fields for 'Email Address' and 'Password'. Below that is a 'Forgot your password?' link and a 'login' button. The next section is 'New? Please Provide Your Billing Information', which includes a note about creating a login profile. It has sections for 'Company Details', 'Address Details' (with fields for First Name, Last Name, Street Address, Address Line 2, City, State/Province, Post/Zip Code, and Country), 'Additional Contact Details' (with a Telephone field), and 'Login Details'.

To change most of the fields appearing in the customer account sign-up screen, go to **Configuration --> Customer Details**. There, you can set which fields appear in your screen.

For the newsletter part of the screen, set it at **Configuration**
--> **Customer Details --> Show**

Newsletter Checkbox.

Newsletter and Email Details	
<input type="checkbox"/> Subscribe to Our Newsletter.	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> HTML	<input checked="" type="radio"/> TEXT-Only

Show Newsletter Checkbox
Please make any necessary changes

Show Newsletter Checkbox
Show Newsletter Checkbox
0= off
1= Display Unchecked
2= Display Checked
Note: Defaulting this to accepted may be in violation of certain regulations for your state or country

0
 1
 2

update **cancel**

NOTE: Be very aware of local laws regarding spam. You might not be allowed to have the checkbox automatically checked (opt-out). You might be required to leave it unchecked (opt-in).

Use **Configuration --> Customer Details --> Customer Default Email Preference** to set whether or not HTML or Text is the default format selected. (The customer can change it.)

Customer Default Email Preference
Please make any necessary changes

Customer Default Email Preference
Set the Default Customer Default Email Preference
0= Text
1= HTML

0
 1

update **cancel**

Emails

To send emails to a customer or group of customers, go to **Tools --> Send Email**. (You can also select a customer through **Customers --> Customers** and click the Email button there.)

Remember to obey all applicable spam laws when using the email features.

SEND EMAIL TO CUSTOMERS

Customer:

From:

Subject:

Rich Text Message:

Text

Newsletters & Product Notifications -- Overview

Zen Cart™ has a great feature built into it that many newbies to the software never utilize -- the ability to send newsletters and product notifications to customers.



What's the difference? They use the same basic interface, don't they?

Yes -- and no.

Newsletters are just that -- you can send them out to customers based on a variety of parameters.

Newsletters, when used properly, are a great tool for keeping your customers informed about what's going on at your online store. Your content can be whatever you want it to be. I find if I send out a notice about specials, new products, and coupons it will create an immediate surge in web traffic (and sales) to my site.

NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER

Please select the audience for this newsletter mailing:

Please Select

All Newsletter Subscribers (0)
Dormant Customers (>3months) (Subscribers) (0)
Active customers in past 3 months (Subscribers) (0)
Active customers in past 3 months (Regardless of subscription status) (1)
Administrator (1)
Customers who have never completed a purchase (0)

If you can send out informational emails, such as tips and tricks, recipes -- whatever is pertinent to your site content -- your customers will be more likely to stay subscribed to your newsletter. Offer special coupons they can only get through the newsletter, customer referral incentives -- anything to encourage them to stay subscribed and get the word out about your site.

Product Notifications are sent regarding specific products you've selected -- unless you use the Global option -- and then only to customers who have signed up to receive those notifications. This is a great feature in case you update products or add additional related products to your catalog. Also great if you decide to run a sale on certain items and want to try to increase sales by notifying specific customers who have shown past interest in those items.

When I add new products to my catalog, I like to send out product notifications to those customers who have requested them on similar or related products. That way, I can let them know about other items they might be interested

in.

And that can mean more sales.

Warning -- adhere to all applicable spam laws. Do not abuse the ability to send newsletters to your customers who have not signed up to receive them! You'll end up making them mad. And do not auto-subscribe customers to your newsletter. In some places, laws require you to include unsubscribe information in each email sent, or even that you cannot use a subscribed by default (must opt-out versus opting-in) feature for your newsletter. I also recommend making sure customers can easily find the unsubscribe link on your main Zen Cart™ page. By default, it's included in the Information sidebox.

At this time, customers must register for an account in your store to sign up for the newsletter. But, you can send a newsletter to them even if they haven't purchased from you before (as of version 1.3.8). Which can be very helpful for sending coupon codes or other incentives to try to convert them into sales.

Before you do anything, you have to make sure your Zen Cart™ email options are properly set up and working.

In the admin panel, go to **Configuration --> E-Mail Options**. Go through all the email options and confirm you have the correct address entered and the proper server settings. Not all settings will work for all server configurations, so you will have to find out what works for you. If you have trouble, contact your server administrator to find out what settings to use.

You also might want to enable the HTML editor feature so it shows by default when you compose a newsletter or product notification message. You can do this by going to **Configurations --> My Store** and changing the HTML Editor option from none to HTMLAREA. You can also override this in the newsletter screen, but it's an extra step.

Customers can always log into their account to manage their newsletter and product notification preferences and subscriptions. They can also change their preference for HTML or text messages.

Newletters

Creating a newsletter with Zen Cart™ doesn't get much easier. You sometimes have to pay to send out newsletters through other services. Free services, such as Yahoogroups, require members to sign up for a separate site and compete for your customer's money by including their own ads in emails and on the site.

Not what you want!

With Zen Cart™, you get an email newsletter system you can target specifically to different groups of customers based upon their subscription and purchase history. And better yet, it's totally integrated with the Zen Cart™ software, so no separate extensions to configure and tweak.

Your email can be as simple or elaborate. Keep in mind, however, sometimes simpler is better. If you want to create something very elaborate, it might get kicked out by a customer's spam filters. For special occasions where you want to put in everything including the kitchen sink, create a basic newsletter and refer customers to another page on your site, such as an EZ-Page link, to view the entire message.

You can opt to send your email as HTML or as text. (I recommend using both.)

You can also opt whether or not to display the Newsletter Unsubscribe link in the Information sidebox. (I recommend leaving it unless you will create an easily accessible link elsewhere on the page.) To toggle the unsubscribe link, go to

Configuration --> E-Mail Options.

Down towards the bottom, find the Display "Newsletter Unsubscribe" Link? option. Make sure it's set the way you want it.

Display "Newsletter Unsubscribe" Link?

Yes, your customers can always unsubscribe by logging into their customer account and changing the option there. But if you make them hunt for the link, they won't be happy about it!

The next option below that one is the Audience-Select Count Display. This is an admin setting, not applicable to your customers. What it does is give you a number of how many people the newsletter or product notification will go out to. If you have a large number of customers, this might slow down your server performance, so in that case you might want to turn it

Audience-Select Count Display

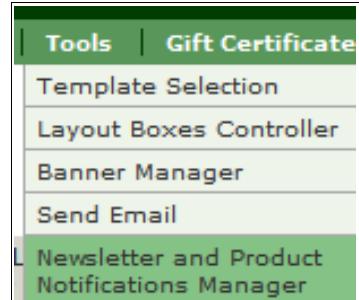
off.

Under **Configuration --> Customer Details**, check the **Show Newsletter Checkbox** and **Customer Default Email Preference** settings and make sure they are set properly.

Show Newsletter Checkbox
Customer Default Email Preference

I'm assuming you've tested your system and you know the email is working properly. The next step is create your newsletter.

Go to **Tools --> Newsletter and Product Notifications Manager**.



Click the New Newsletter button.

If you didn't already and you want the functionality, click the Text Editor drop-down to select HTMLAREA as your editor. (This will kick you back out to the main screen and you'll have to click the New Newsletter button again.)

Because this is going to be a newsletter, you can leave the Module option set to Newsletter.



Page 0 of 0

new newsletter

Text Editor	HTMLArea
NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER	
Module:	newsletter
Subject:	*
Rich Text Content:	Arial 1 (8 pt) Heading 1 B I U

Subject is required, and can be anything you want. Everyone has their own way of sending out emails to their clients. I like to identify my store and put the date in the subject line, as well as something like Sale or Discount Coupon or whatever will help catch their interest. The subject is required -- if you don't put something in there, Zen Cart™ won't let you send it.

You can just put Test in there for now if you want, because we can send ourselves a test message.

Rich Text Content:

This is my test email.
I can format it using the HTML tools included.
So you can make good use of formatting for your emails!

Then you can put whatever you want in the Rich Text Content area. This means if your customer has selected to receive HTML mail, they'll see what you format in this window.

You should copy and paste the text of your email into the bottom of the Text-Only Content

window. This is the content your text email customers will see.

Text-Only Content:

This is my test email.
I can format it using the HTML tools included.
So you can make good use of formatting for your emails!

When finished, click the Save button at the bottom right corner of the window.

This will take you back to the main Newsletter window.

NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER

Newsletters	Size	Module	Sent	Status	Action	Test
Test	489 bytes	newsletter	X			
Displaying 1 to 1 (of 1 newsletters)				Page 1 of 1 <input type="button" value="new newsletter"/>		
				<input type="button" value="preview"/> <input type="button" value="send"/>		
Date Added: 12/20/2007						

Your newsletter will show up with the subject, the message size, the type of message it is (newsletter or notification), whether or not it's sent (the red X means not sent), status, and several options.

To Edit the newsletter, click Edit. To Preview it, click Preview. To Delete it...

You get the point.

Let's send it to ourselves. Click Send.

We want to send it only to Administrator, so select that from the drop-down menu box.

Click the Select button.

NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER

Please select the audience for this newsletter mailing:

NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER

Customers receiving newsletter: 1

Test

This is my test email.

I can format it using the HTML tools included.

So you can make good use of formatting for your emails!

This is my test email.

I can format it using the HTML tools included.
So you can make good use of formatting for your emails!

This will take you to the final screen before sending. You can cancel or send the newsletter from here.

You can see what it looks like and if you need to make changes, click Cancel. If ready to send, click Send Mail.

NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER

Please wait .. sending emails ..

Please do not interrupt this process! ✓

FINISHED SENDING E-MAILS!

1 emails processed. (Each checkbox indicates 1 recipient. Hover over the checkbox to see the email address.)

Watch your mail box (me@leslirichardson.com) for:

- ◆ a) bounce-back messages
- ◆ b) email addresses that are no longer good
- ◆ c) removal requests.

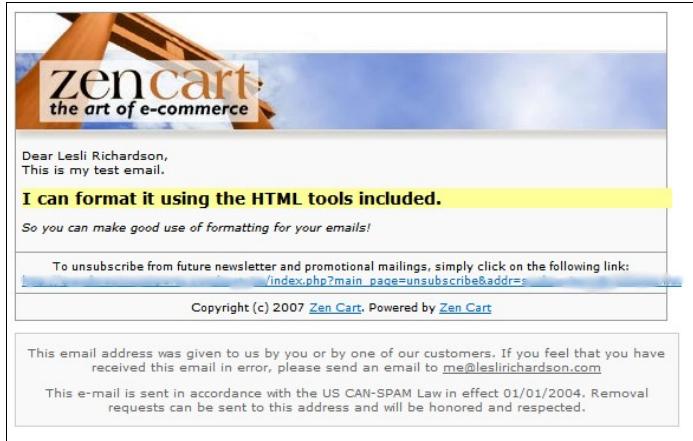
Removals can be processed by editing Customer records in the Admin | Customers menu.

Once it finishes, you'll see this screen.

Once it's finished, you can click the Back button. And now it shows as being sent. (The green check in the Sent column.)

That's all there is to it!

Newsletters	Size	Module	Sent
Test <small>Dienstag, 17. Februar 2009 11:45 (nicht veröffentlicht)</small>	489 bytes	newsletter	✓



Let's see what it looks like in my email program. (I use Thunderbird.) To get the pictured example, I actually sent it to myself as a newsletter subscriber, NOT as administrator. (I know, confusing -- I'll explain why.)

A few notes:

- Always send HTML and text formatted messages. That way, no customers are left out.
- If you send it to yourself as Administrator, you will ONLY see it in plain text, regardless of how you format it.
- If you send it to yourself as a newsletter subscriber and don't see the HTML formatting, check your subscription option as a customer to make sure HTML is enabled.
- If that still doesn't correct it, go to **Configuration --> E-Mail Options** and change the **Use MIME HTML When Sending Emails** option to True. (Then test to make sure it still works!)
- When you send yourself a newsletter as Administrator, you will not see the unsubscribe and US CAN-SPAM notice on the email.
- To change the email logo, look in your server files in the /email directory. There should be an image there called "**header.jpg**" -- this is the image you need to change. Delete it and upload your own image with the same **header.jpg** name.

Product Notifications

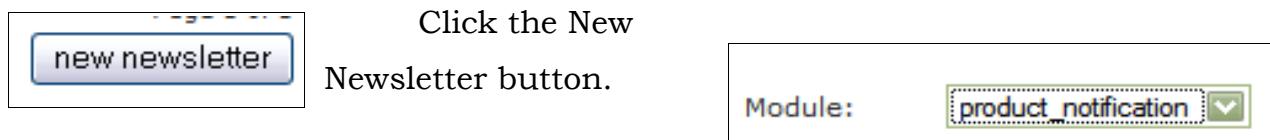
To send Product Notifications, the process is nearly identical to the Newsletter.

First, go to **Configuration --> Customer Details** and set the **Customer Product Notification Status** to what you want. I recommend setting it to "1" for Ask, so the software will ask the customer if they want to sign up for a notification when they check out.

This does not, however, control whether or not the sidebox displays. If you want to use Product Notifications, make sure you have the Product Notifications sidebox activated and displayed.

Otherwise, customers cannot make use of this option. This is available through the **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** menu in the admin panel. If you have one of your columns turned off, make sure this box is moved to the other column and placed where customers can easily see it.

To send a product notification, use the **Tools--> Newsletter and Product Notifications Manager** tool.



Click the New Newsletter button.

Module:

On the next screen, where it says Module, make sure you select the product_notification option instead of the newsletter option. Fill in the Subject and other fields the same way you do for a newsletter.

The main difference occurs when you click the Send button in the main

A screenshot of the 'Newsletter and Product Notifications Manager' interface. The title bar says 'NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER'. On the left, there's a list box labeled 'Products' containing 'test product download'. On the right, there's a list box labeled 'Selected Products' which is currently empty. Between the two lists are several buttons: 'Global', '">>>>', '<<<', 'Submit', and 'Cancel'. There are also scroll bars on both sides of the product lists.

screen.

This screen allows you to pick which product(s) are included in the product notifications email. Because I only have one product in my test store, it's the only one that shows up. You left click on the item(s) to highlight them and then use the right arrow button on the screen to move them to the Selected Products column. (If you add a product by mistake, select it in the Selected Products column and use the left arrow button to remove it.) But you can add more than one product, or you can use the Global button, which will send a notification to everyone who has signed up for product notifications.

Click the Submit button after adding products or clicking the Global button.

The screenshot shows a web-based application window titled "NEWSLETTER AND PRODUCT NOTIFICATIONS MANAGER". Below the title, a red header bar displays the text "Customers receiving this Product Notification: 1". The main content area contains three horizontal text input fields, each labeled "Test product notification.". The first field contains the text "Test product notification.", the second "Test product notification.", and the third "Test product notification.". At the bottom of the window are three blue rectangular buttons labeled "send", "back", and "cancel".

Again, this works the same as the newsletter.

Remember that newsletters and product notifications are wonderful tools to keep in touch with your customers. Use them wisely and well -- never abuse them by force-subscribing customers or spamming them.

Default E-mail Messages

It's natural you'd want to edit the default system emails Zen Cart™ sends out for things like new customer registration, order confirmation, etc. To change these, use the Developers Tool Kit feature to search for a snippet of text from the specific email you wish to change. Copy it from the email and paste it to the All Language Files option, and it will help you locate the file and location of the code.

Make sure to save the language file you change to your custom template file.

You can also make changes to the HTML templates for the emails, but be warned, with so many different email programs out there, just because you set it to

look one way doesn't mean that's how your customer will see it.

View the article: <http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?article=113> on the Zen Cart™ website for more information.

E-mail Problems

If you have problems sending/receiving emails and newsletters, you need to check a few things.

- Configuration --> E-Mail Options. Do you have everything set properly? Contact your server host for more information on what your specific settings are. You may need to experiment with a variety of settings to make sure you have what works best for your particular set-up.
- Valid e-mail address? This sounds stupid, but make sure you didn't accidentally mis-type your e-mail address in the settings. This is very easy to do.
- Valid e-mail account? Make sure the e-mail account is set up and activated with your server host, or through the email service you're using.
- Problem sending newsletters or product notifications, but you can send individual emails? Most likely an issue with how your server sends out mail in large quantities. Check the Zen Cart™ support forum or with your host for information.

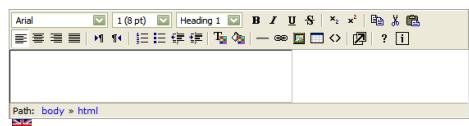
Coupons

Discount coupons are a valuable way to improve sales. It encourages customers to shop and if used as a referral code, can allow you to track where new customers come from.

Go to ***Gift Certificate/Coupons --> Coupon Admin*** to create or edit a coupon.

 Click the Insert button to create a new coupon.	Gift Certificate/Coupons Coupon Admin
---	--

The Discount Coupons creation page is pretty self-explanatory. There are plenty of information tips to help you through the process. Fill out all the information, and when finished, click the Preview

DISCOUNT COUPONS	
Coupon Name: <input type="text"/>  Coupon Description (Customer can see):  Path: body > html 	A short name for the coupon A description of the coupon for the customer
Coupon Amount: <input type="text"/> Coupon Minimum Order: <input type="text"/> Free Shipping: <input type="checkbox"/>	The value of the discount for the coupon, either fixed or add a % on the end for a percentage discount. The minimum order value before the coupon is valid The coupon gives free shipping on an order. Note. This overrides the coupon_amount figure but respects the minimum order value.
Coupon Code: <input type="text"/> Uses per Coupon: <input type="text"/> Uses per Customer: <input type="text"/> Start Date: <input type="text"/> February 2008	You can enter your own code here, or leave blank for an auto generated one. The maximum number of times the coupon can be used, leave blank if you want no limit. The date the coupon will be valid from
End Date: <input type="text"/> February 2009	The date the coupon expires
Coupon Zone Restriction: <input type="text"/>	Coupon Zone Restriction are optional.
<input type="button" value="preview"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>	

[5] 22222 Coupon Name :: test Coupon Amount :: \$0.50 Start Date :: 02/12/2008 End Date :: 02/12/2009 Uses per Coupon :: Unlimited Uses per Customer :: 1 Valid Product List :: --none-- Valid Categories List :: --none-- Date Created :: 02/12/2008 Date Modified :: 02/12/2008 Coupon Zone Restriction: :: 0		
<input type="button" value="email"/> <input type="button" value="restrictions"/>	<input type="button" value="edit"/> <input type="button" value="Report"/>	<input type="button" value="delete"/> <input type="button" value="copy"/>

button.

The next page will allow you to preview the coupon. Click the Confirm button when ready.

After you create the coupon, you can edit it, or add restrictions.

You can use the Restrictions feature once you create the coupon to limit it on a product/category

basis, both allowing and disallowing use for certain products/categories. It's very flexible.

You can remove the Discount Coupons link from the Information box if you don't wish it to appear. Go to **Configuration --> Define Page Status** and switch it.



To edit the content of the Discount Coupons page, go to **Tools --> Define Pages Editor**.

Why edit the text? Well, to remove the default text, for one thing. I like to post current coupon codes on this page. They do not automatically appear, although if a customer had a coupon code they can enter it to see if it's still valid and the applicable terms.

Note: You still have to create the coupon through the ***Gift Certificate/Coupons --> Coupon Admin*** menu.

You can set up a coupon code to be delivered automatically to new customers who register for your store. First, create the coupon. Then, go to **Configuration --> GV Coupons --> New Signup Discount Coupon ID#**. You can select the coupon to send automatically to new customers.



Home : Discount Coupon

Discount Coupon

Discount Coupon Sample Text ...

This section of text is from the Define Pages Editor located under Tools in the Admin.

To remove this section of the text, delete it from the Define Pages Editor.

This file is located in /languages/english/html_includes/classic/

NOTE: Always backup the files in /languages/english/html_includes/your_template

Look-up Discount Coupon ...

Your Code:

Gift Certificates

Gift certificates can confuse people when they try to set them up. They are not like coupons in that they have a unique code that cannot be duplicated between gift certificates. They can be purchased by a customer, or they can be issued manually by the store owner, or they can be set up to issue automatically to people who sign up for a new account at your store. You cannot restrict them, however, like you can coupons. Gift certificates are equivalent to money.

There is a handy built-in Gift Certificate FAQ included with Zen Cart™. I strongly recommend leaving the link to it on your main page, even if you don't use the Information box, make sure to replace it somewhere customers can easily find and access it.

There are a couple of steps to use gift certificates:

- Configure the module in Zen Cart™ to allow them.
- Create a gift certificate product (or products). AND/OR...
- Manually create and email a gift certificate to a customer. AND/OR...
- Configure Zen Cart™ to automatically send a gift certificate to new customers who sign up for your store.
- The customer uses/redeems the gift certificate.

Customers can also purchase a gift certificate and send part or all of the total to one or more people. For example, they might purchase a gift certificate for \$50 and send \$10 to five different people. Or they might send \$25 to someone and keep the balance in their own account. It is very flexible.

To configure the module, go to **Modules --> Order Total --> Gift Certificates** and make sure it's installed. There will be a green circle to the right of the sort order column if it is, and a red one if it's not. If it's not, click the Install button.

Click the Edit button to access and modify settings.

An important setting is the Queue Purchases option. If set to true, it means any gift certificates purchased by customers in your store must be approved by you before they can be credited to the customer's account. You do this in the ***Gift Certificate/Coupon --> Gift Certificates Queue*** menu. Why is it so important? Because it's a fraud prevention measure. If you sell a lot of gift certificates and don't have a large concern about fraud, then you can set it to false. It's always possible for someone to make a huge purchase on their credit card and then cancel it later, meaning you've been scammed out of merchandise. Again, if you don't have a lot of problems with fraud in your online store, then set it to false for it to automatically process to the customer's account.

To create a gift certificate product, use the Product-General type and create it the way you'd create any other product. Take care to use these settings:

- Product is Virtual: YES
- Always Free Shipping: YES
- Model: The model number MUST start with GIFT- For example, if you want to sell the gift certificates in pre-determined amounts as separate items instead of with a attribute to select different amounts, use GIFT-10 for \$10 (or whatever code you want to use. But the first five digits of the model number MUST be GIFT- or else Zen Cart™ won't recognize it as a gift certificate. Your model number could look like any of the following and be valid: GIFT-10, GIFT-100, GIFT-5, GIFT-CERTIFICATE, GIFT-foryou
- Shipping Weight: 0

Save it the way you'd save any other product.

If you have gift certificates set to queue, you can manage them in the ***Gift Certificate/Coupons --> Gift Certificates Queue*** menu.

If you want to manually send a customer a gift certificate, you can do this in the ***Gift Certificate/Coupons --> Mail Gift Certificate*** menu.

The fields are self-explanatory. Zen Cart™ will automatically create the gift certificate code when it mails it to the customer. You can pick a customer from the Customer field, or you can manually enter an email address in the Email To: field.

SEND GIFT CERTIFICATE TO CUSTOMERS

Customer: [x]

Email To: Use this for sending single emails, otherwise use dropdown above

From:

Subject:

Amount

Rich Text Message:

Arial
1 (8 pt)
Heading 1
B
I
U
S
x²
|
File
Format
Image
Table
Page
Help

We're pleased to offer you a Gift Certificate

You can input your own text in the message fields. (Make sure to copy text into the Plain Text section if you use HTML.)

Click the Send Mail button at the bottom right corner of the screen when finished.

New Signup Gift Voucher Amount	
Please make any necessary changes	
New Signup Gift Voucher Amount	
Leave blank for none	
Or enter an amount ie. 10 for \$10.00	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="button" value="update"/>	<input type="button" value="cancel"/>

To automatically send new customers a gift certificate, go to ***Configuration --> GV Coupons --> New Signup Gift Voucher Amount***.

Banners

Banners are a great tool to help boost sales and ad revenue on your site.

There are a couple of components to configuring and using banners properly: the banner graphic, the banner position, activating the banner position, configuring the banner and assigning it to a group.

Banner settings are located in several places in the Zen Cart™ Admin page:

- ***Tools --> Banner Manager***
- ***Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller***
- ***Configuration --> Layout Settings***

Banners can be images or HTML code, and Zen Cart™ includes a nifty statistics feature to track them for you. You can link banners to products or sites outside your site (for affiliate sales, for example) in addition to links within your site. You can also set up banners for use with SSL, or to disable them from appearing in SSL pages to prevent certificate errors.

If you don't have all the steps properly completed/configured, the banner won't show. For example, you could have the banner graphic uploaded, set to show, set for the correct position – but if you don't have that particular banner sidebox set to display, it won't matter. Or, if you delete the code from your template files when editing the footer, etc. the banner won't show no matter what. Or if you don't have a banner group assigned to a banner position in the Layout Settings menu, it won't display. Also, keep in mind you should not try to put a 300 pixel wide banner into a sidebox position that's only 150 pixels wide! Make the banner size appropriate to the location.

There are several banner locations located in the template by default besides the sidebox banners. NOTE: If you modify your template, or if you purchase a third-party template, some of this functionality may be disabled. If you have problems applying banners, switch back to the Classic template and see if you can apply them. If so, then the problem is with your template, and you'll have to repair your code to allow the banner placement.

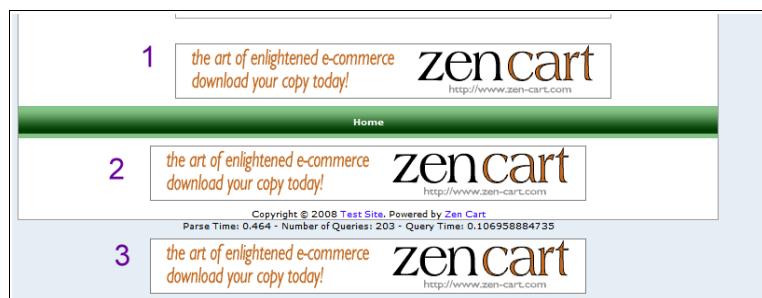
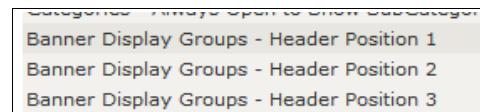
In this example, you can see banner header positions 1, 2, and 3. If you look in **Configuration --> Layout Settings**, you'll see where

you can apply which groups of banners to display in these locations (if you use them).

You do not have to use all of the banner display positions. Or you can use all of them. As you can see by my example, make sure your banners won't cause problems with your template layout!

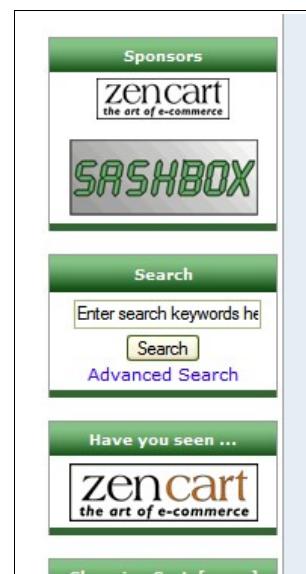
Of course, by default, the footer positions are displayed here as well.

And again, make sure your banner size doesn't mess up your template layout.



By default, there are three banner sideboxes, called `banner_box`, `banner_box_all`, and `banner_box2`.

When I look at the sample data installed in my test store, I see in the right column I have two boxes, one called Sponsors and one called Have You Seen... When I look at the left column, I see I have one there also called Sponsors.



```

// banner_box
define('BOX_HEADING_BANNER_BOX', 'Sponsors');
define('TEXT_BANNER_BOX', 'Please Visit Our Sponsors ...');

// banner_box 2
define('BOX_HEADING_BANNER_BOX2', 'Have you seen ...');
define('TEXT_BANNER_BOX2', 'Check this out today!');

// banner_box - all
define('BOX_HEADING_BANNER_BOX_ALL', 'Sponsors');
define('TEXT_BANNER_BOX_ALL', 'Please Visit Our Sponsors ...');

```

You don't have to use these box names. You can rename them something else by modifying the **english.php** file and saving the modified file to your

custom template folder. How do you tell which is which?

When I look at **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** I see where the banner boxes are, and what they're called. These are the ones in the right sidebox

sideboxes/banner_box_all.php	ON	RIGHT	5
sideboxes/search.php	ON	RIGHT	10
sideboxes/banner_box2.php	ON	RIGHT	15

column. So I know if I want to change the heading labels in the right column, I change the `banner_box_all` and `banner_box2` defines in the **english.php** file.

No, it's not rocket science.

Obviously, if you don't want to use sidebox banners, you can disable those sideboxes in the **Layout Boxes Controller** and they won't show up.

Start by creating a banner graphic that works for your site. In my test site, my sidebox columns are 150 pixels wide. I'll create a banner graphic for the sidebox that's 140 pixels wide, just to be safe. (Experiment for what works best for your store.)

So I have my new banner image. I want to apply it to the Have You Seen... box, which is the `banner_box2` position. Off to the **Tools --> Banner Manager** screen.



BANNER MANAGER							
LEGEND:		Status OFF	Show SSL	New Window			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If you have to think ... you haven't been Zenned!		Wide-Banners	152 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0 ↗ ▶
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sashbox.net - the ultimate e-commerce hosting solution		BannersAll	468 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	20 ↗ ⓘ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sashbox.net - the ultimate e-commerce hosting solution		Wide-Banners	105 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0 ↗ ⓘ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start Accepting Credit Cards For Your Business Today!		Wide-Banners	121 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0 ↗ ⓘ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zen Cart		Wide-Banners	120 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0 ↗ ⓘ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zen Cart the art of e-commerce		BannersAll	468 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	10 ↗ ⓘ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zen Cart the art of e-commerce		SideBox-Banners	464 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0 ↗ ⓘ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zen Cart the art of e-commerce		SideBox-Banners	464 / 0			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	0 ↗ ⓘ
Displaying 1 to 8 (of 8 banners)							
Page 1 of 1							
new banner							

Last 3 Days

Banner	Clicks
Wide-Banners	2
SideBox-Banners	1

The Banner Manager allows you to create new banners and manage existing banners, as well as view statistics about your banners. Let's take a moment to look at this screen so you understand what's going on.

Notice the Groups column? There are some pre-defined groups available. Or you can create new groups. This allows you to tell Zen Cart™ what banners you want to go in certain positions. Banner groups can be displayed in more than one position. For example, if you create a group called sidebox-books to highlight books you sell, and you want those banners to be available in more than one sidebox, you can. Don't get too hung up on this right now, it'll make sense soon.

I know from looking at my **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** menu that the left column sponsor box is called `banner_box`.

To create a new banner, I'll click the New Banner button. The Banner Manager screen is pretty self-explanatory. Make sure your images directory has write permissions if you're uploading an image, and pay attention to the **Image Target (Save To)** field if you're uploading an image. Don't forget to type the directory you want it to go to (for example, it's recommend you use **banners/** as the directory but you have to add that, otherwise the banner image goes to your main images directory).

If you want to create a new banner group, don't forget to enter the name in the Banner Group field. (Otherwise, pick one from the drop-down menu.) I don't recommend using spaces in your group name.

I created a new group called `testbanners`.

If you're using an image, you don't need to worry about HTML code.

Also, if you're not using the `banner_box_all` sidebox, you don't need to worry about sort order. Click Insert when you're finished.

Now I need to apply this group to the correct banner box position. In **Configuration --> Layout Settings** I'll change the `sidebox_banner_box` group setting to `testbanners`.

Banner Display Groups - Side Box banner_box

Please make any necessary changes

Banner Display Groups - Side Box banner_box

The Banner Display Groups can be from 1 Banner Group or Multiple Banner Groups

For Multiple Banner Groups enter the Banner Group Name separated by a colon :

Example: Wide-Banners:SideBox-Banners
Default Group is SideBox-Banners

What Banner Group(s) do you want to use in the Side Box - banner_box?

Leave blank for none

`testbanners`

update **cancel**

When I click Update and refresh my storefront, I see the change has taken effect. And as you can see from the Banner Display Groups setting box, you can use more than one group in a position. Just separate the group names with a colon. If I create a second banner graphic and add it to the testbanners group, it will cycle through displays with the first banner graphic.

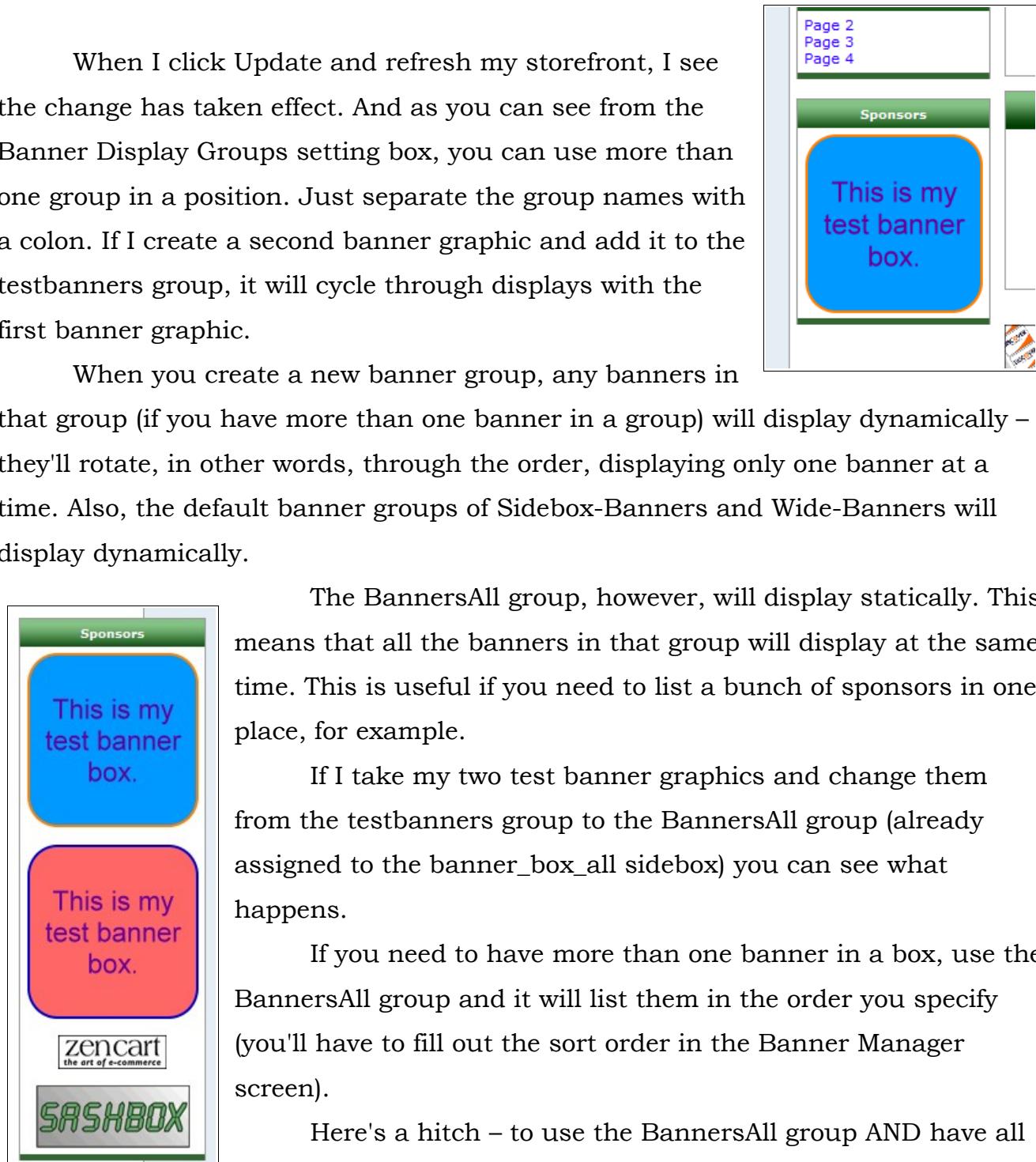
When you create a new banner group, any banners in that group (if you have more than one banner in a group) will display dynamically – they'll rotate, in other words, through the order, displaying only one banner at a time. Also, the default banner groups of Sidebox-Banners and Wide-Banners will display dynamically.

The BannersAll group, however, will display statically. This means that all the banners in that group will display at the same time. This is useful if you need to list a bunch of sponsors in one place, for example.

If I take my two test banner graphics and change them from the testbanners group to the BannersAll group (already assigned to the banner_box_all sidebox) you can see what happens.

If you need to have more than one banner in a box, use the BannersAll group and it will list them in the order you specify (you'll have to fill out the sort order in the Banner Manager screen).

Here's a hitch – to use the BannersAll group AND have all the banners display at once (as in the example) you MUST apply the BannersAll group to the banner_box_all sidebox. You do this in the



Configuration --> Layout Settings menu. If you apply the BannersAll group to any other location, it will display them dynamically, not statically.

Just to emphasize that – if you want a sidebox to display multiple banners at

the same time (as in the above example) you MUST do the following:

- assign the banner to the BannersAll group (**Banner Manager**)
- make sure the BannersAll group is assigned to banner_box_all sidebox (**Layout Settings**)
 - make sure the banners_box_all sidebox is set to display (**Layout Boxes Controller**)

Those three things must happen for you to display multiple banners in one sidebox.

The other banner positions and banner groups (default and ones you create) are all dynamic. Creating a wide banner for the header or footer positions is identical. If for some reason you must change the template and move the header or footer position banner code, I suggest commenting it out instead of deleting it altogether. You may one day find you want to include it.

So a few hints about banners:

- Don't use spaces in the banner group names.
- Double-check your group spelling when entering group names into the display groups position fields.
- Don't use banners with a physical size that will throw your layout off.
(For example, a wide banner in a sidebox position.)
- Don't delete banner code from the template files. Either don't use it, or comment it out.
- The easiest way to disable a banner position is to remove all group notations from it in the **Layout Settings** menu.

EZ-Pages

What are EZ-Pages, exactly?

EZ-Pages allows you to add content to your site either through links to other pages (within or outside your existing Zen Cart™ site) or by creating content pages or groups of content pages for your site.

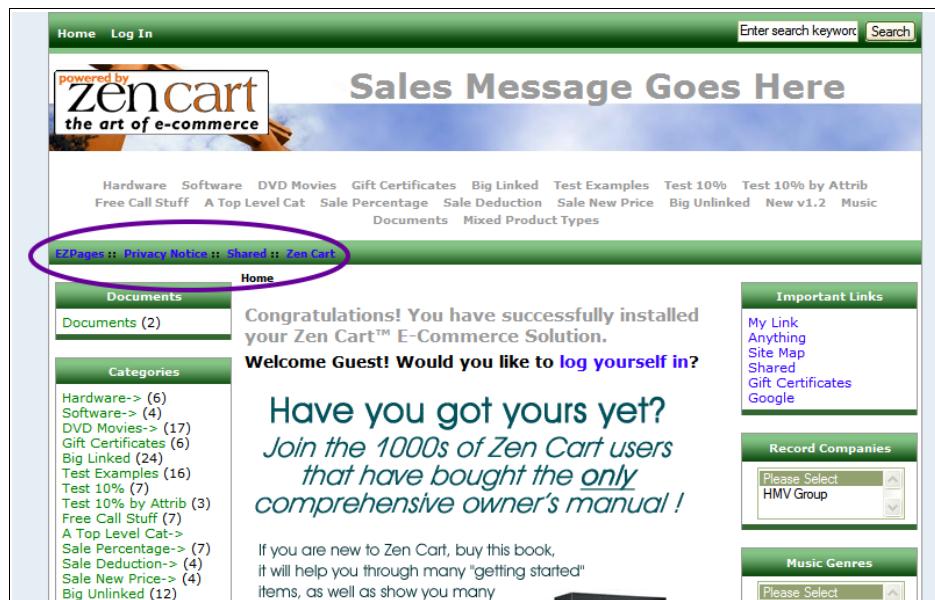
So, for example, if you already have a website and are using Zen Cart™ for the e-commerce portion of it, you can link to portions of your non-store site by using EZ-Pages links instead of hard-coding links into your template files. You can also create additional pages for your e-commerce site, like extra information or instruction pages, without having to hard-code these pages outside of Zen Cart™.

You can make a fully integrated website using just Zen Cart™ in conjunction with the EZ-Pages feature. If, that is, you don't have a highly dynamic site (like an online magazine or blog) where the content changes frequently and you have a lot of content (or multiple people editing your content requiring varying levels of permissions access). If your site is fairly static (doesn't change or update a lot except for adding or modifying merchandise) then yes, you could use just EZ-Pages with your site. If, however, you have a very dynamic site and use a CMS (content management system) to make frequent changes, you might want to consider integrating Zen Cart™ with your site and not use Zen Cart™ for the content portion of your site. Why?

Because while the average user won't have an issue adding/modifying EZ-Pages, if you have a site that requires lots of content changes on a regular basis, especially by multiple users, you might find it easier to integrate the two sites instead of relying on Zen Cart™ to shoulder the content burden.

One of the drawbacks to using EZ-Pages is you are limited (unless you are proficient at coding) in where you can place the links. One of the benefits is you don't have to know a thing about coding to use EZ-Pages because all the switches are located in the Admin control panel in the back end of Zen Cart™!

In this screenshot, you can see I've circled the EZ-Pages header links included in the default installation. One immediate drawback is they are not very visible because they are blue on a green background.



This is quickly corrected by tweaking the link color stylesheet CSS code. But what if you don't want them there at all?

In the Admin control panel, go to **Configuration --> EZ-Pages Settings** to turn them off (and change a lot of other things too).

Click on **EZ-Pages Display Status - HeaderBar** and change the setting to 0. This will turn off the link bar in the header.

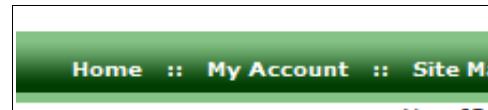
The same applies for the **FooterBar** and **Sidebox** links.

You can also set them to display only for the Admin IP address and not to the general public. Why? Well, if you need to do testing or modifications and don't want the public to see them while you're working on them, or if you need to have links only the administrators of your site can see (such as admin login, although I don't recommend using them for this purpose) you can set it to admin only.

If you use this setting, make SURE you also go into **Configuration --> Website Maintenance** and add your IP address. If you use more than one computer, make sure to add all your IP addresses. If you frequently use a public computer, that might not be a good idea!

If you don't like the little double colons (::) used as spacers for the links, you can also change that in the **Configuration --> EZ-Pages Settings** menu. The header and footer link separators can be independently changed depending on the look you want for your site.

What if you have certain EZ-Pages where you do not want to display some of



your site elements, like the header, footer, or columns? You can also control this in the EZ-Pages Settings menu.

Why would you want to disable columns, the header, or footer? Well, if you're using those particular EZ-Pages for content and want the extra room, or if you use special coding to create those pages and those elements conflict with how the page displays, you might want to turn them off. Who knows why you'd want them off -- but you can set them on a page-by-page basis. We'll cover that later.

Click on the EZ-Pages link in the header bar (if you have sample data installed and haven't turned off the header bar links) and you'll see what a table of contents looks like.

We'll cover that later.

The screenshot shows the EZ-Pages admin interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'EZPages :: Privacy Notice :: Shared :: Zen Cart' and 'Home :: EZPages'. Below the navigation is a sidebar with 'Documents' (2) and 'Categories'. The 'Categories' section lists various product categories with their counts: Hardware-> (6), Software-> (4), DVD Movies-> (17), Gift Certificates (6), Big Linked (24), Test Examples (16), Test 10% (7), Test 10% by Attrib (3), Free Call Stuff (7), A Top Level Cat->, Sale Percentage-> (7), Sale Deduction-> (4), Sale New Price-> (4), Big Unlinked (12), New v1.2-> (20), Music (1), Mixed Product Types (5). Below the categories are links for 'Specials ...', 'New Products ...', and 'Featured Products ...'. To the right of the sidebar is a main content area titled 'EZPages'. It features a 'Table of Contents' box with a 'continue' button and navigation arrows ('prev' and 'next'). The 'Table of Contents' box contains a bulleted list: * EZPages, - What is EZPages?, - A New Page, - Another New Page. Below the 'Table of Contents' box, there are several descriptive paragraphs about page linking and chapter settings. On the far right, there's a vertical sidebar with icons for 'My Lir', 'Anyth', 'Site N', 'Share', 'Gift C', 'Googl', 'Re', 'Ple HM', 'Ple Jazz Roc', and a large green square icon.

The **Table of Contents for Chapter Status** setting is one you might or might not use depending on how you set up your EZ-Pages. We'll get to that.

There are also other EZ-Pages controls in the **Tools --> EZ-Pages** admin menu. This is where you create and link EZ-Pages.

And, you can control the EZ-Pages sidebox under **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**. On my sample installation, this box shows up as the Important Links box in the top of the right column. I could change the title of this box in the template, and I can change its location with the **Layout Boxes Controller** menu settings.

That all seems fairly straightforward -- you would think.

Unfortunately, EZ-Pages is one of those features that seems to have people swearing or singing with little middle ground.

Let's get a few things out of the way right now:

- If you are using a different language pack (something other than English) you might have issues and have to do some custom-coding of your EZ-Pages. There is a third-party contribution for this purpose you can download from the Zen Cart™ website.
- Links set up for EZ-Pages do not currently show up in the Site Map. There is a third-party extension you can download for free from the Zen Cart™ website to add this functionality.
- Content pages you create with EZ-Pages are limited by the database's ability to store just a hair under 65,000 characters in a field. If you have a lot of text/information you want to include, you might be better off using an external link to another page, otherwise your information may be truncated.
- You can hard-code changes into your template for how and where EZ-Pages display. That, however, is beyond the scope of this tutorial. We are covering the functionality of EZ-Pages in this tutorial, not templating issues.
- If you use EZ-Pages to link to a page within your site, make SURE you do NOT include the zenid code at the end of the link! This can pose a serious security issue for your store!

Once you see how EZ-Pages work, it will make sense and you'll finally be able to use this confounding feature. For some, who aren't comfortable with template modification, you can use EZ-Pages in conjunction with logos and some basic CSS changes to "merge" your Zen Cart™ site with your existing site. It might not be perfect, but for those who either can't or don't want to do massive site overhauls, it might provide an easy answer.

When you create an EZ-Pages item (link or content page), you can set it to display in different places (header, footer, sidebar, or in a table of contents). What sometimes confuses people is not only do you have to create the EZ-Pages item, but you also have to set it to display, AND make sure the place it's set to display in is also set to display.

Huh?

If you set a link to display in the header, yet you have the header links set to off and NOT display, the link you create won't display.

Does that make sense?

Okay, look at it this way. For example, if you set your links to display in a sidebox, but you have the sidebox set to NOT display, the links can't be displayed because the sidebox isn't active.

In addition to making sure the EZ-Pages item is created, set to display, and the place it's set to display is set to display (or turned on), you also have to make sure the sort order value isn't set to 0. Unlike other items in Zen Cart™, if you set an EZ-Pages item to a sort order value of 0 (or leave the order box blank, which is a default of 0), it won't display.

I know -- that is confusing.

So here's a quick list to make sure they display:

- Create the EZ-Pages link/page.
- Make sure it's not set to a 0 sort order value.
- Make sure it's set to display somewhere.
- Make sure the display location is also set to display.

Every EZ-Pages link you create must have a title. It will not display if it doesn't have a title. The title you assign the EZ-Pages link is what will appear as the link text.

The easiest EZ-Pages link you can create is an external link. If you have the sample data installed, you can see an example of this.

Under **Tools --> EZ-Pages** look at the Google example. Left click on the Google line and then left click on the Edit button that appears next to it. (If you have a black and white preview, the square buttons in the columns are either red or green.)

EZ-PAGES SELECT A PAGE ...										Display Order:	Chapter/TOC	Text Editor	Plain Text
ID	Page Title	Open New Window:	Page is SSL:	Header:	Sidebox:	Footer:	Chapter:	TOC:	Title: Google Prev/Next Chapter: 0				
12	Action DVDs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0	60	0	0	  Internal Link URL: --none--	 			
5	Anything	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	20	0	0	0	  External Link URL: http://www.google.com	 			
11	Gift Certificates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	60	0	0	0	 	 			
13	Google	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	70	0	0	0	  HTML Content:	 			
7	My Account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0	10	0	0	 	 			
4	My Link	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	10	0	0	0	 	 			
9	Privacy Notice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30	0	40	0	0	 	 			

At the top of the next screen, you can see a few settings.

EZ-PAGES SELECT A PAGE ...

Page Title: * Required

Open New Window: Yes No

Page is SSL: Yes No

Header: Yes No Order:

Sidebox: Yes No Order:

Footer: Yes No Order:

Chapter: TOC: Yes No Order:

The link has a title. It is set to open a new browser window when it's clicked. (When linking to an outside site, this is important because if your customer navigates off your site, you might lose them and a sale!) The page is not SSL. The link doesn't display in the header. It does display in the sidebox (and a sort order is specified). No to the Footer display, and it's not a chapter (we'll cover chapters later). These yes and no switches correspond to the red and green boxes on the main **EZ-Pages** menu, if you hadn't noticed.

That's all pretty straightforward.

Let's move on.

Scrolling down the page, we'll see more options. There is a text-entry window for HTML content. In this case (as is the case with all internal and external links) we will NOT be using the HTML content window.

Below the text entry window are more options.

Internal Link URL:

If specified, the page content will be ignored and this INTERNAL alternate URL will be used to make the link
 Example to Reviews: index.php?main_page=reviews
 Example to My Account: index.php?main_page=account and mark as SSL

External Link URL:

If specified, the page content will be ignored and this EXTERNAL alternate URL will be used to make the link
 Example to external link: http://www.sashbox.net

This isn't an internal link, so we won't use that. The full link (including the http://) is included in the external link field. If we made changes, we'd click the Update button.

Creating an internal page link is nearly identical to creating an external page link, except you don't need the **http://www.mystore.com/** part of the url. (See the example on the page for format.) A key point to remember is internal links are for links within your Zen Cart™ store (a product, reviews, about us, etc.). Also, NEVER post a zenid code at the end of a link! This can pose a serious security issue for your store!

Here's a note -- you are not limited to displaying a link/component only in one place. You can have the link display in more than one place at a time, or even in all available locations at the same time. It's up to you.

Here's another note -- if you want to quickly switch a location on or off, you can click on the red and green buttons in the main EZ-Pages menu. However -- if a location is "off" and you switch it "on" and no sort order is specified, it still will not display. You MUST go into the edit screen and manually add a sort order location.

If you have an existing site, you can use the external link feature to link to important pages on your existing site from your Zen Cart™ site.

Let's create an external link from scratch.

Go to: **Tools --> EZ-Pages** in the admin screen.

At the bottom of the list of links (if you don't have a list because you didn't use sample data, just look for the button) click the New File button.

I know it's not a file, but Zen Cart™ calls it one even though it's a link. Yes, that's confusing.

You have to have a title. If you don't, the program won't let you create the link. (I know it says Page Title.) We'll link to the Lulu.com site and I'll type Lulu.com for my title. This is what will display as the link.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled 'new file'. At the top are two buttons: 'insert' and 'cancel'. Below them is a 'Page Title:' label followed by a text input field containing 'Lulu.com'. To the right of the input field is a red asterisk followed by the text '* Required'. At the bottom of the dialog are two small buttons: 'Open New Window...' and 'Open in SSL...'.

I want it to open a new browser window, and no it's not an SSL page.

I want it to display in the Header and Sidebox, both with a sort order of 100, but not the Footer and not as a chapter. I pulled the sort orders out of my rear, so to speak!

The screenshot shows a section of the dialog box with two sets of options. On the left is a group labeled 'Open New Window:' with two radio buttons: 'Yes' (selected) and 'No'. On the right is a group labeled 'Page is SSL:' with two radio buttons: 'Yes' and 'No' (selected).

Header: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Order: <input type="text" value="100"/>	Sidebox: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Order: <input type="text" value="100"/>	Footer: <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Order: <input type="text"/>	Chapter: <input type="checkbox"/> TOC: <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Order: <input type="text"/>
---	--	---	---

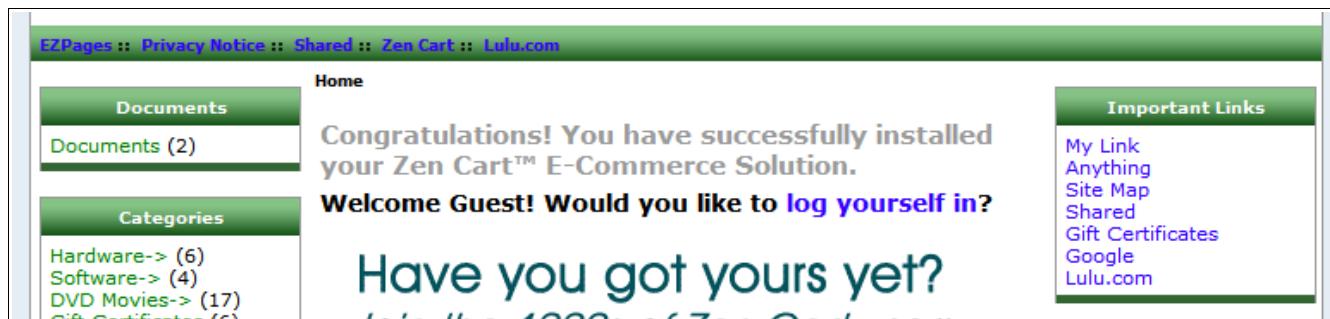
Because it's a link, we don't need to worry about HTML content.

It's an external link, so I'll enter Lulu.com's web address (<http://www.lulu.com>)

Internal Link URL: <input type="text"/>	If specified, the page content will be ignored and this INTERNAL alternate URL will be used to make the link Example to Reviews: index.php?main_page=reviews Example to My Account: index.php?main_page=account and mark as SSL
External Link URL: <input type="text" value="http://www.lulu.com"/>	If specified, the page content will be ignored and this EXTERNAL alternate URL will be used to make the link Example to external link: http://www.sashbox.net
<input type="button" value="insert"/> <input type="button" value="cancel"/>	

Then click Insert when finished.

A quick look at my front page shows the changes have taken effect.



Did it not show up on your site? Did you put in a sort order? Are the areas you set the link to display also set to display?

Remember, make sure the sections are set to display in **Configuration --> EZ-Pages Settings** or else it won't show up! If it's the sidebox, also make sure it's turned on in the **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** menu.

Yes, I know, some of you are complaining, "Why isn't it all on one place? That doesn't make sense!"

That's the way it was set up in the program. Whether you agree with it or not is a moot point -- it's the way it is.

Remember these points:

- The EZ-Pages link must be created and set to display with a sort order other than 0.
- The location where the EZ-Pages link will display must also be activated.

Practice creating an internal link. It works the same way as creating an external link. You can find the link address by going to your store and clicking where you want the link to be (for example, a particular product). Look at the example given on the EZ-Pages Settings menu for internal links, and format your link the same way.

DO NOT ADD THE ZENID AT THE END OF THE LINK IF IT'S PRESENT!

By this time you should be comfortable creating and manipulating a link. Right? Let's do something else.

Creating a content page with EZ-Pages isn't that hard. Let's create a basic page and I'll show you what I mean.

Go back to the **Tools --> EZ-Pages** menu. Click the New File button.

For title, call it My Blog Page. Set it to open a new window, no to SSL, no to header, yes to sidebox (sort order 90), no to footer and chapter/TOC.

The dialog box has two buttons at the top: 'insert' and 'cancel'. The 'Page Title:' field contains 'My Blog Page' with a red asterisk and the text '* Required' to its right. Below this, there are four sections with radio buttons: 'Open New Window:' (Yes selected), 'Page is SSL:' (No selected), 'Header:' (No selected), and 'Sidebox:' (Yes selected, sort order 90). There are also sections for 'Footer:' (No selected) and 'Chapter:' (empty) and 'TOC:' (No selected).

So yours should look like mine.

In the HTML Content window, type a very simple sentence. It doesn't matter what you type, something like, "This is my blog page."

The 'HTML Content:' field contains the text 'This is my blog page.'

At the bottom, click the Insert button.

When you refresh your front page, the link should show up in your sidebox, and when you click on it, it should open a new browser window and look something like mine.

The screenshot shows a basic blog page structure. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'Home :: My Blog Page'. The main content area has a title 'My Blog Page' and a single line of text: 'This is my blog page.' On the right side, there's a sidebar titled 'Important Links' containing links such as 'My Link', 'Anything', 'Site Map', 'Shared', 'Gift Certificates', 'Google', 'My Blog Page', and 'Lulu.com'.

Very easy.

But what if you want it to look a little spiffier than that?

If you haven't changed this setting already, go back to the **Tools --> EZ-Pages** menu. Towards the top of the page, on the far right, you'll see a Text Editor option with a drop-down menu. Select HTMLArea and then go back into the page you just created.

The screenshot shows the 'EZ-PAGES SELECT A PAGE ...' interface. It features a toolbar at the top with options for 'Display Order' (set to 'Chapter/TOC') and 'Text Editor' (set to 'HTMLArea'). Below the toolbar is a rich text editor toolbar with various formatting options like font, size, bold, italic, underline, etc. The main content area contains the text 'This is my blog page.'

You can use the plain text editor if you want and paste HTML code into the screen -- that's up to you. Some people prefer to do that, some prefer to use the built-in editor. It's a personal preference.

If you are a little more experienced, you could conceivably insert different scripts and/or widgets into your webpage. What do I mean by scripts and widgets? If you don't know what a script or widget is, you probably shouldn't mess with them. Scripts and widgets are little code snippets you can use to add functionality to a site. For example, you can embed code snippets into a MySpace or Blogger site to add features to the page.

Please note: I cannot vouch for what scripts and widgets will and won't work with your site. Test them carefully, and ask around in the Zen Cart™ site forum to

make sure they won't pose a security risk to your site!

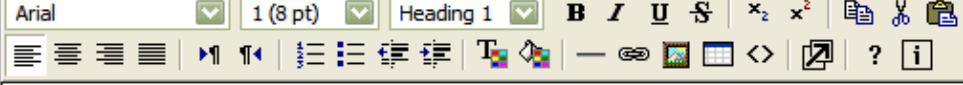
If you are more experienced with code, using a page like this is also a place you can play with merging your Zen Cart™ site with your existing website, calling in elements from your existing site.

What if you want to make a table of contents (TOC) page? Why would you want to make a TOC page?

What if you want to post a regular blog or update feature on your website? A main TOC page is a great way to organize this so your customers can easily find the latest information.

Another use would be instructions for a project broken down into different pages. Or a recipe. Or... anything you can think of, I'm sure.

Let's revisit the blog page we created. Go back into the EZ-Pages menu and select the blog page we created and click the edit button.

Header: <input type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="0"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	Sidebox: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="90"/> <input type="radio"/> No	Footer: <input type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="0"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	Chapter: <input type="text" value="15"/> TOC: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="10"/> <input type="radio"/> No
Header Sort Order used while generating pages in single row for the header; Sort order should be greater than zero to enable it. Sidebox Sort order is used when pages are listed in vertical links; Sort order should be greater than zero to enable it in vertical list. Footer Sort Order used while generating pages in single row footer; Sort order should be greater than zero to enable this. TOC (Table of Contents) Sort Order used while generating pages that are customized as either a single row (header/footer) or a chapter. Chapters are used with TOC (Table of Contents) Sort Order for the display on Previous/Next. Links in the TOC will consist of the chapter title and a link to the chapter page.			
TML Content:  My blog page sample. This is the first and main page of the blog.			

Change the TOC setting to Yes, set the order to 10, and for Chapter, put 15. (You can put any number for Chapter -- again, I pulled the number out of my rear end. Whatever number you use as the chapter, it needs to be the SAME number you use for subsequent chapters you want to appear in the TOC.)

Click Update.

On the EZ-Pages menu, click New File and create another page.

For title, call it Blog Page 2.

Set the header, footer, and sidebox to NO, set the TOC to YES, with the Chapter number 15 and order number 20.

Header: <input type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="15"/>	Sidebox: <input type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="15"/>	Footer: <input type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="15"/>	Chapter: TOC: <input type="text" value="15"/> <input type="radio"/> Yes Order: <input type="text" value="20"/> <input type="radio"/> No
---	--	---	---

Header Sort Order used while generating pages in single row for the header; Sort order should be greater than zero.
 Sidebox Sort order is used when pages are listed in vertical links; Sort order should be greater than zero to enable this page in the listing.
 Footer Sort Order used while generating pages in single row footer; Sort order should be greater than zero to enable this page in the listing.
 Chapters are used with TOC (Table of Contents) Sort Order used while generating pages that are customized as either a single row (header/footer) or a multi-row (sidebox).
 Chapters are used with TOC (Table of Contents) Sort Order for the display on Previous/Next. Links in the TOC will be numbered sequentially.

HTML Content:

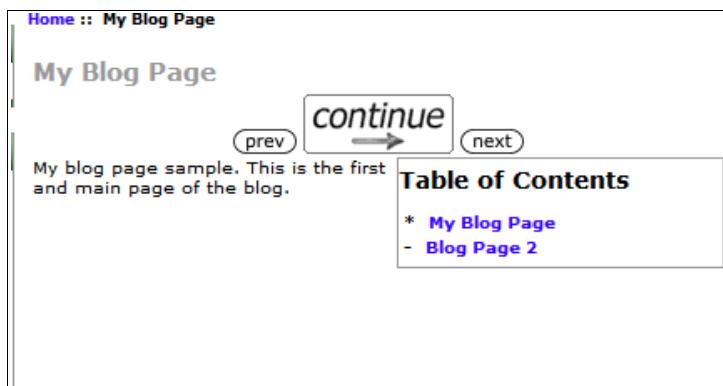
Arial 1 (8 pt) Heading 1 **B** *I* U **S** | ^x _{x²} | <> | ?

This is page 2 of the blog.|

In the HTML content area, type anything.

Click Update.

Now, when you refresh your front page and click on the My Blog Page link, you should see something similar to mine.



Congratulations! You now have a multi-paged table of contents. If you click on the Blog Page 2 link, you'll see the second page.

You can use any chapter number you want. BUT, the chapter number must be unique for each group of pages you want in the table of contents. For example, if you have one page with a chapter of 10 and one with a chapter of 20, they won't be joined together. They both must have the same chapter number.

The sort order you specify will decide what order the pages display. I suggest using gaps between numbers (like counting by 5, 10, or even 20) to allow for new pages without having to totally re-edit the sort order of all the pages in your table of contents.

If for some reason you cannot make the TOC work, double-check your settings in **Configuration --> EZ-Pages Settings**. Make sure the Table of Contents for

Chapters Status setting is 1 (on). If this is not on, it won't work.

You can also control how the Continue/Next buttons do (or don't) display in this menu. This setting is the **Prev/Next Buttons** menu option.

What, if for some reason, you want one of the TOC pages to appear as its own link somewhere. Can you do that?

Yes. Simply set the position you want it to appear to yes, and add the sort order. It will appear in the TOC as well as in the position you designate.

That's most of the information there is about EZ-Pages. Let's tie up one last loose end.

There's not a whole lot more to EZ-Pages. I did mention you could customize the EZ-Pages in the **Configuration --> EZ-Pages Settings** menu.

Actually, depending on how much coding and template customizing you want to do, you can do a lot of customizing.

Let's take our Blog Page (the first one) we created and turn off the header. First, we need to know the ID number of the page, and that can be obtained in the **Tools --> EZ-Pages** menu.

3 Another New Page
16 My Blog Page
17 Blah Blah

The ID number is the far left column, and in this case, it's 16. (Yours might be different.)

Back to the **Configuration --> EZ-Pages Settings** menu.

I'll left click on the **EZ-Pages Pages to Disable Headers** menu option and click the Edit button.

In the edit window, I'll type 16 and click Update.

Action **EZ-Pages Pages to disable headers**

Please make any necessary changes

EZ-Pages Pages to disable headers

EZ-Pages "pages" on which to NOT display the no "header" for your site.

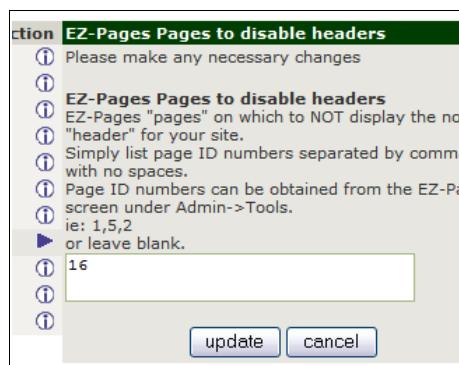
Simply list page ID numbers separated by comma with no spaces.

Page ID numbers can be obtained from the EZ-Pages screen under Admin->Tools.

ie: 1,5,2
or leave blank.

16

update cancel



Now when I go and look at the page, the header is gone.

Home :: My Blog Page

My Blog Page

My blog page sample. This is the first and main page of the blog.

continue →

Table of Contents

- * [My Blog Page](#)
- [Blog Page 2](#)

Documents

Documents (2)

Categories

- Hardware-> (6)
- Software-> (4)
- DVD Movies-> (17)
- Gift Certificates (6)
- Big Linked (24)
- Test Examples (16)
- Test 10% (7)
- Test 10% by Attrib (3)
- Free Call Stuff (7)
- A Top Level Cat->
- Sale Percentage-> (7)
- Sale Deduction-> (4)
- Sale New Price-> (4)
- Big Unlinked (12)
- New v1.2-> (20)
- Music (1)
- Mixed Product Types (5)

Specials ...

Important Links

- My Link
- Anything
- Site Map
- Shared
- Gift Certificates
- Google
- My Blog Page
- Lulu.com

Record Companies

Please Select
HMV Group

Music Genres

Please Select
Jazz
Rock

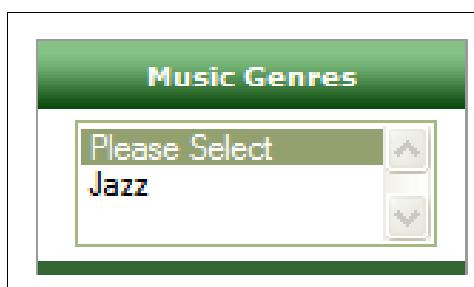
It's not gone for all my pages, just for this one when I click on the link. (It could just have easily been the sideboxes or footer I turned off.)

Again, why would you use this feature? That's up to you. Everyone is different -- you might never need to use this feature.

Once you become proficient at manipulating and customizing sideboxes and major template modifications, you can do even more with this module. For now, it can help you add static content to your Zen Cart™ site and possibly give you enough flexibility you can combine your sites and use just Zen Cart™ for your needs.

Miscellaneous Items

Music Genre



If you want to use the Music Genre box, first you must specify at least one genre. (If you don't, it won't appear.) Do this through **Extras --> Music Genre**.

You can control where and how the box displays through **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**.

Version/Server Information



If you request help through the Zen Cart™ user forum, usually you'll be asked what version of Zen Cart™ you're running, your PHP and MySQL program versions, and other information. You can easily find this by clicking on **Tools --> Server/Version Info**.

phpBB Forum link

If you add a phpBB forum to your website after your Zen Cart™ store is installed, you can change the setting in this menu. Go to **Configuration --> My Store --> Enable phpBB**

A screenshot of a configuration dialog box. The title bar says "Enable phpBB linkage?". The main text asks "Please make any necessary changes". Below that is another question: "Should Zen Cart synchronize new account information to your (already-installed) phpBB forum?". There are two radio buttons: "true" (unchecked) and "false" (checked). At the bottom are "update" and "cancel" buttons.

linkage? and change the setting.

If you didn't link your phpBB forum when you installed your Zen Cart™ store, you might have problems getting them to recognize each other. There are many posts about this on the Zen Cart™ support forum.

As of this writing, the version of phpBB you use matters when trying to link to Zen Cart™. So make sure you take the time to visit the Zen Cart™ support forum and search for "phpBB" with the search feature. Read through the posts, try the listed suggestions, and if that doesn't work, either post to a thread similar to your problem or create a new thread.

Reports

Zen Cart™ has a few built-in report features, found under the **Reports** menu.

If you need more detailed reports than these, there are a few third-party contributions available for download on the Zen Cart™ site. Use at your own risk.

Reports	Tools	Gift
Products Viewed		
Products Purchased		
Customer Orders-Total		
Products Low Stock		
Customers Referral		

To reset the counter history seen on the Admin main page, go to **Tools --> Store Manager** and you'll find it there, as well as the ability to reset other statistics.

PayPal IPN info is located at **Customers --> PayPal IPN**.

Who's Online

The Who's Online feature is handy to see who is on your site at any given time, but don't go crazy wasting time watching it!

Go to **Tools --> Who's Online** to use it.

If there is anyone currently on your store, you'll

see information

Tools	Gift Certific
Template Selection	
Layout Boxes Controll	
Banner Manager	
Send Email	
Newsletter and Product Notifications Manager	
Server/Version Info	
Who's Online	

about them, including if they have anything in their shopping cart or not.

WHO'S ONLINE				
REFRESH LIST Legend: ● Active cart ● Inactive cart ● Active no cart ● Inactive no cart Inactive is Last Click >= 180s Inactive since arrival > 540s will be removed				
Online	ID	Full Name	IP Address	
		Asc Desc	Asc Desc	A
Currently there are 0 customers online Duplicate IP Addresses: 0 Total Unique Users: 0.				

Error Messages

This is far from a complete list of error messages you could run into using Zen Cart™. Fortunately, they are some of the most common and -- luckily -- easily solved.

Why do I have a red message on the front of my store telling me to change my "permissions?" How do I do this?

Depending on the FTP software you use, you might be able to change the read/write/execute (or CHMOD or permissions) setting for your directories and files. Sometimes, you will have to log into the cPanel (control panel) your host provides for accessing your hosting account. NOT the Zen Cart™ admin panel -- your WEBSITE control panel on the server where your site is hosted.

There, you should find a file management type of interface with an option to allow you to change the settings for files and directories. Again, depending on your software/interface, this could be called CHMOD, file permissions, or something similar. Depending on your host, you might be able to use a number (like 777, 755, 666, 444, etc.) or letters like r-w-x,r,r.

These settings allow you to specify who can do what to which files and folders. You may have to change settings not just for files, but for directories/folders to get the individual file settings to change.

I can't edit the pages in the Define Pages Editor tool.

This is the same fix as for above, only you need to allow writing of the file. The message on the Define Pages Editor tool will tell you exactly what directory/files needs the permissions changed to allow editing.

I can't upload images through the product and category pages.

Again, this is most likely a file permissions situation. You will need to make sure your main image directory has the correct permissions to allow images to be uploaded.

Error: Catalog images directory is not writeable.

You need to set the /images directory and all of its subdirectories to a CHMOD permission setting of 777 to allow write access for Zen Cart™. Once you get your store set up and don't need to update any images, you can reset this for security purposes.

Parse error: parse error, unexpected T_STRING in /var/www/myaccount/public_html/includes/languages/...

This is a PHP syntax error. Most likely you've edited one of the "language" files (the file name will be listed in the error) and you didn't properly insert an apostrophe/single quote.

You may have entered something like this: Don't forget to escape your quote.

The proper way is: Don't forget to escape your quote.

A good primer on PHP syntax will help you.

0 DB_ERROR_NOT_CONNECTED

This means Zen Cart™ cannot connect to your MySQL database. This can be caused by several things, including a corrupted **configure.php** file, problems with the MySQL server the database resides on, or a corrupted database.

Use your server control panel or phpMyAdmin or other method to access your MySQL database and make sure it's okay. You may have to contact your server host administrator for help.

Reset Admin Activity Log

This is normal – don't panic. This will show up on your Admin home page every so often. Simply click the link you see on your admin page and it'll take you to the Store Manager page. Also available through **Tools --> Store Manager**.

Part III: Database

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Changing Product Name Length	202

CAUTION!!

I cannot emphasize this enough -- before you attempt to do any of this on your live store, make sure you try it on a practice (or sandbox) store first. Then, before you try it on your live store, make SURE you do a full site back-up of both your database files and your store files! Use this information at your own risk! If you damage your database, you can ruin your entire store!

You need to have access to your store database with phpMyAdmin (or similar program) to make these changes. The screenshots I'm using are from the phpMyAdmin software -- your screen might look different depending on your software.

If you don't have phpMyAdmin, check with your hosting service, they might have a proprietary software interface they use to allow you to view and change the database and tables. You must know how to access and make changes to your database for these exercises.

What does the Database Do?

Zen Cart™ uses a combination of PHP files to render what you see on the screen, pulling some of the data from static "language" files and other data from the MySQL database. (Or whatever database you're using.)

Information you create in your store -- such as products, categories, customers, orders, manufacturers, attributes, define pages, etc. are contained in tables in the database. If you lose your database, essentially, you lose your store. (Images are not stored in the database, but links to what images are used are stored there.)

This is why you should back your database up frequently. Daily, or at the very least, weekly, depending on your situation. If you lose your PHP files, you can always restore your store to a default installation if you have a complete database back up. But if you lose your databases information, your store is GONE.

Depending on your hosting set-up, you might be able to create automatic back ups on a regular basis. But you can always manually back up your database by exporting it from phpMyAdmin.

Back up your server files using your FTP interface.

Database Back-up

Depending on the program interface you use to access your database, you may have different instructions. This is for phpMyAdmin software.

You have to open phpMyAdmin and select your Zen Cart™ store database, so you are viewing all the tables. (Do this FIRST, before doing anything else.)

Find and select the Export tab.



You will have to make sure the correct settings are checked.

Your setting field names might vary slightly, but you want to select/use the following settings:

- Structure
- Add DROP TABLE
- Add AUTO_INCREMENT value
- Enclose table and fieldnames with backquotes
- Data
- Complete Inserts
- Extended Inserts
- Use hexadecimal for binary (or blob) fields
- Export Type (drop down menu usually): insert
- File type: SQL
- Save as File (make sure you note WHERE you save this file!)
- File name template: __DB__
- Compression – use whatever you want. For large databases, gzipped will provide a smaller file.
- Make sure in the Export window on the left side of the Export tab that all the tables are selected! Otherwise, they won't all export.

To restore your back-up, go to phpMyAdmin and select the database. Find the Import tab. (If you don't have an import tab, you might have to use the SQL tab.)

Use Browse to find the file and click Go.

Installing More Than One Store in a Database

Some people are only allowed one database with their hosting account. If this is the case, you can use the same database to install your Zen Cart™ software. However, be VERY careful and double-check your settings so you don't accidentally overwrite your original store! Back up your database FIRST!

When you install your store, you'll be asked for a table prefix. For example, if your original installation uses a prefix of zen_ for the tables, then use something like newzen_ for the prefix. Or whatever works for you. The configuration files will reflect this difference. Then you can still use the same database, confident the data is going to the correct tables.

This does not, however, allow you to merge check-outs between two stores. It only allows them to share a database, but they will operate independently. While some users have reported merging two stores to share a common checkout, this is not currently a standard feature and will require some store code modification.

Changing the Length of a Category Name

To change the length of the category name:

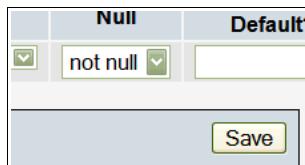
1. Open phpMyAdmin (or whatever program you use to manage your database) for your Zen Cart™ database.
2. Find the zen_categories_description table. (NOTE: if you installed your database with a different prefix than zen_, yours will say whatever your prefix is besides zen_ with categories_description after.) Make sure you're editing the structure -- you don't want to browse it.
3. Open the table.
4. Find the categories_name field and click the Change or Edit icon. In this case, it's the Change icon and looks like a little pencil.

	Field	Type	Collation	Attributes	Null	Default	Extra	Action
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>categories_id</u>	int(11)			No	0		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>language_id</u>	int(11)			No	1		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>categories_name</u>	varchar(50)	latin1_swedish_ci		No			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>categories_description</u>	text	latin1_swedish_ci		No			

5. Where it says Length/Values, change the value to whatever you want. I changed it from 32 to 50 in this example.

Field	Type	Length/Values ¹	Collation	Attributes
categories_na	VARCHAR	50	latin1_swedish_ci	

6. Click the Save button.



7. Try to make a category in your Zen Cart™ store with a longer name. You should now be able to do so. (Note: You don't want a New Category window open while you're making the database changes.)

Once you're confident with making changes in your test store, you can proceed to make them in your "live" store. AGAIN, make SURE you back-up your database before making any changes! You can totally ruin your store if you do the wrong thing! Always have a fresh back-up of all database and store files ready before you make store changes!

Changing Product Name Length

Changing product name length is very similar to changing category name length. However, there's a little more to it. You need to follow the same steps as you did for changing the category length, but there are more places to change it. You

have to change all the values in all the tables.

These are the following tables where you have to make changes to the product name length. Again, if you use a different prefix for your tables other than zen_ you would substitute that prefix.

The default for the products_name field is 64 characters -- change to whatever you need to suit your purposes. You must change the products_name field in each table where it occurs:

- zen_products_description
- zen_orders_products
- zen_customers_wishlist

So this is how you would do it.

1. Open phpMyAdmin (or your program) and open your store database.
2. Open the table (one of the three listed above) where you want to make the changes. Make sure you're changing structure and not in browse mode.
3. Find the products_name field and click the Change/Edit icon (depending on your software).

4. Where it says Length/Values, change that number to whatever you

	Field	Type	Collation	Attributes	Null	Default	Extra	Action
<input type="checkbox"/>	products_id	int(11)			No		auto_increment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	language_id	int(11)			No	1		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	products_name	varchar(64)	latin1_swedish_ci		No			
<input type="checkbox"/>	products_description	text	latin1_swedish_ci		Yes	NULL		
<input type="checkbox"/>	products_url	varchar(255)	latin1_swedish_ci		Yes	NULL		
<input type="checkbox"/>	products_viewed	int(5)			Yes	0		

want it to be.

Field	Type	Length/Values ¹	Collation	Attributes
products_name	VARCHAR	64	latin1_swedish_ci	

5. Click the Save button.
6. Repeat for the other two tables. It is very important you make the change to all the tables where the products_name field occurs! If not, it will cause problems with your orders!
7. Go into your store and try to create a product with the longer name. Also, complete a test order with that product to make sure it shows up properly.

That's it -- you're done.

If you find you need to make changes to other field values, like attribute lengths, urls, etc. you can use the same method. You must make sure you make all the changes in all the tables with that field name, however. If not, it can cause problems. Not all the fields will appear in more than one table, but you will have to research to make sure.

Part IV: Templates

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How does the template override system work?

Zen Cart™ uses a template system to dynamically render pages to someone shopping in your online store. This means instead of manually having to code individual pages for products, you can set the template files to render the pages the way you want them to look. Instead of having to make changes to every page, you can make changes to a few files which will render across your entire site. This means less work maintaining your website.

The Zen Cart™ software consists of core system files that run the software, a database that stores the "dynamic" content like product, category, customer, and sales information; template files that control the graphics, layout, colors, font styles of the site; and language files that contain static content like field names, labels for headers, and other items that are changeable, but flexible so they can be displayed across templates.

Another nice feature of the templating system is it allows a shopkeeper to make different templates for different uses. For example, if you want seasonally-themed templates (Christmas, spring, Mother's Day, etc.) you can go into the admin panel and "flip a switch" to change templates. (Of course, the template must be built and installed first.)

Third Party Templates

Be aware – there are some companies selling templates that, while they look pretty, they are functionally incompatible with the core Zen Cart™ code. Oh, they'll work, but the people who develop them literally mangle the code, insert custom code, and then some of the Admin control panel code doesn't work.

I won't name them here, but one company in particular has a very negative reputation and there is even a thread on the Zen Cart™ forum dedicated to getting the word out about them. Do your research on template companies before you buy a third party template. (Note: Many companies are reliable and sell excellent templates. But before you buy, buyer beware.) If you have purchased a third party template, installed it, and now cannot edit your site through Admin settings, chances are you have purchased a "bad" template. And they will have to be the ones who fix it for you.

Why can't I just change the "Custom Classic Green" template or template_default files?

If you just play around and change the "default" files, the next time there is an upgrade or bug fix, you'll be scrambling to re-change files or figure out what got changed and what didn't with the upgrade! Why go through that aggravation? Use the template override system -- even if all you do is go through the site and copy everything that says "classic."

Remember: Classic template files WILL be overwritten in an upgrade. Your custom template files will NOT.

Everywhere you see "classic" as a folder in the Zen Cart™ structure, you can also create a folder for your "custom" template. Make sure to use the same folder name throughout the site! If you spell it Custom in one place, cUstom in another, and CUSTOM in another, the server may see them as totally different and break your template. Do not use spaces, and avoid underscores if you can. Stick to alpha/numeric characters, all lower-case. The simpler, the better.

The other big reason not to modify your classic template is you need the "control" aspect of it. Not as in controlling the site -- control as in the science experiment definition.

If you build a custom template and something doesn't work right, one of the first things someone on the Zen Cart™ forum will ask is, "What happens when you switch back to the classic template? Does it still do it?"

If you say, "Uh...I modified the classic template," you'll get some tsk-tsk responses and usually a, "Go reload the classic files from a clean download and see if it still does it, then create a custom template and try it."

It is far easier to diagnose template issues when you have a "clean" classic template to refer to. Also, you can copy files from classic you know work, and drop them into your custom template when you have a problem.

You also need the classic template as your back-up in case of fatal template errors. You can revert to it in an emergency so your store isn't offline while you try to diagnose a problem! How would you like to lose a bunch of sales because you didn't have a back-up template?

The template override system is not difficult to learn. But like anything else, if

you try to rush through it on a tight deadline, you will multiply your frustration and mistakes.

It's not just the "look" of the site you can change. You can specify custom field labels and static text for your site through "language" files. (I'll usually refer to the "english" version of the file, but if you're using a different language, just make the substitution for whatever you're using.) So it's very important to understand and correctly implement these changes so you don't lose hours (or days) of work when you upgrade your site.

For newbies to PHP and CSS -- I need to mention you shouldn't use View/Page Source in your browser and print the code and work from that to build your template. Because of the dynamic nature of PHP pages, that isn't a good thing to do. The resulting "source code" you see when the site is displayed is actually a compilation of many different files, including CSS that renders as HTML "code" when viewed as a page source. You need to get yourself out of that habit. You must work with the actual source files.

Don't assume what you want to do must be a hard-coded change in the template files! Remember, many settings are configured through the Admin control menus, and if you change how they're hard-coded in the template, you may break Admin control panel functionality.

Before you mangle your template code into oblivion, make sure what you want to do isn't available as an Admin configuration panel switch. Refer to the Index if you have more questions.

Zen Cart™ is made up of "core" system files that run the program, including some "default" template files used when there are no "override" files to choose from. By installing and selecting a template, you are telling Zen Cart™, "Use these files here."

The template override files are located in the **/includes** directory. Look under **/includes/templates** and **/includes/languages** and you'll find them.

Everywhere you see a "classic" folder, you can create overrides. One file that confuses people is **/includes/languages/english.php**. To override that file, create a folder called **/includes/languages/yourtemplate/** and put the **english.php** file there. AND, there's also an **/includes/languages/english/yourtemplate** folder, where other

override files go.

The "language" files are those that don't change very often, and they label things like display box headers, field names, shopping cart and checkout process info, and other "static" content.

Creating a New Template – Overview

So let's say we create a template called **yourtemplate**. Every place you have to create a template folder, it needs to be the same -- Yourtemplate is not the same as yourtemplate and it's not the same as yourTemplate. Keep spelling and case exactly the same, and you also need to make sure you do not use spaces.

The very least you need are template and language files. You can copy these from the classic or template_default files to put in your template.

Create the following folders (substitute whatever your template name is for **yourtemplate**)

- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/**
- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/css/**
- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/common/**
- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/images/**
- **includes/languages/yourtemplate/**
- **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/**

In these folders, you need the following files:

- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/template_info.php** (Which is what the Zen Cart™ software looks at to name the template. If you copy the classic file, make sure you change the info to reflect your new template or it will get confusing.)
- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/css/stylesheet.css** (This is the main file Zen Cart™ uses to display fonts and colors, etc. When I refer to the **stylesheet.css** I'm referring to this file for your custom template.)
- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/images/logo.gif** (You don't have to use this file if you plan on eliminating the **logo.gif** image altogether. Or if you want to use something different, rename it but make sure you change the name of

the logo image in the **header.php** file!)

- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/common/tpl_header.php** (You don't have to use this file, but most people make some sort of customization to their header file.)

- **includes/templates/yourtemplate/common/tpl_footer.php** (Again, not required, but many people change it.)

- **includes/languages/yourtemplate/english.php** (Carefully note the location of this one! This is the "main" override file, but there are quite a few items overridden at lower levels.)

- **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/index.php**
- **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/header.php** (If you use a different logo image, or if you want to eliminate the image, you'll need this file.)

- **includes/languages/english/yourtemplate/meta_tags.php** (This is where you can change some of the meta tag info. The rest is changed/controlled by each category/product individually.)

I use Mozilla FireFox as my web browser. I recommend you install it, even if you don't use it, so you can compare your site in Internet Explorer (IE) and FireFox. Just because something works in one browser doesn't mean it will in another. And get the Firebug plug-in -- it's great!

Also, pay attention to your monitor resolution settings. If you have a widescreen monitor, just because your store looks great on your monitor doesn't mean it will look good on someone else's monitor. And there's nothing more annoying than going to shop at an online store and half of it hangs off the right side of the screen! So make sure to test your store on a different computer or adjust your monitor resolution settings accordingly. Special note: I use a widescreen notebook, and I found out even when I adjust my resolution, a template will still look different on a "regular" monitor. So now I test all my templates on both my laptop as well as my desktop computer.

One more caution -- when uploading graphics and modifying code files, make sure you don't accidentally change the code to reflect to the local installation of your graphic. And when you modify code, do NOT delete punctuation like ' or ; when it's there to start with, or you will have nasty syntax errors to debug.

Read the code comments in the files. They will help you figure out what page elements are coming from which files.

The override system allows you to create your own pages from scratch and create "constants" you can define and apply to the template.

There are four different categories of files in the "language system" Zen Cart™ uses. There are global files that change the entire site. There are page-specific files that control individual pages. There are extra definition pages you can create to further customize your site. And there are defined (or complete) pages that are "defaults" (like privacy and shipping pages) and can be edited (or new ones created) as necessary.

The more you work with these files you will see how they interact with your site and learn to add and change custom template files rather than modifying default template files.

Many people have a "main" website and their Zen Cart™ store is an addition to it, not the primary website. Depending on how your main site is constructed, you can work to match your Zen Cart™ set-up with the main website. If you use CSS code on your other site, look through the stylesheets and compare the codes. How do you do this exactly? I can't tell you that because there are just too many variables.

Obviously, if your primary site is a static site and not a dynamic site, it's easier to make the main site match your Zen Cart™ store. You can also try downloading free templates from the Zen Cart™ site and play with them, modify them, and see if you can make them work for your application.

This is the default Classic Contemporary Green template style. This is obviously not the entire page, but you get the idea.

The default store page is a combination of graphics



and CSS code files, producing what you see. If you are unfamiliar with CSS (cascading style sheets) it means you define different variables in a separate file, which the main template files call upon to produce the desired results. For example, you can define the text as being one font size and type, the headings as another font size and type, links -- all the different code tags that make up the finished page (like <p> <hr> <H3> and so on). You can even define different conditions that would make these tags look different depending how and where they are used. That's not a very detailed explanation, but for those of you who don't know CSS, it's as much as you need to know right now.

If you look at the Zen Cart™ files (you can look at these on your hard drive if you want, rather than on the server) you'll see in the top level of the site the **index.php** file. If this was a static site, you would have all your content, style tags, graphics, and everything else defined in this file.

However, because this is a dynamic site, the file actually "calls" to other files and pulls information in from those files.

If you don't know PHP, you will definitely want a program to help you view the code. That way if you accidentally enter a character in a way you shouldn't, you

```

1 <?php
2 /**
3 * index.php represents the hub of the Zen Cart MVC system
4 *
5 * Overview of flow
6 * <ul>
7 * <li>Load application_top.php - see {@tutorial initSystem}</li>
8 * <li>Set main language directory based on $_SESSION['language']</li>
9 * <li>Load all *header_php.php files from includes/modules/pages/PAGE_NAME/<li>
10 * <li>Load html_header.php (this is a common template file)</li>
11 * <li>Load main_template_vars.php (this is a common template file)</li>
12 * <li>Load on_load scripts (page based and site wide)</li>
13 * <li>Load tpl_main_page.php (this is a common template file)</li>
14 * <li>Load application_bottom.php</li>
15 * </ul>
16 *
17 * @package general
18 * @copyright Copyright 2003-2005 Zen Cart Development Team
19 * @copyright Portions Copyright 2003 osCommerce
20 * @license http://www.zen-cart.com/license/2_0.txt GNU Public License V2.0
21 * @version $Id: index.php 2942 2006-02-02 04:41:23Z drbyte $
22 */
23 /**
24 * Load common library stuff
25 */
26 require('includes/application_top.php');
27
28 $language_page_directory = DIR_WS_LANGUAGES . $_SESSION['language'] . '/';
29 $directory_array = $template->get_template_part($code_page_directory, '^head');
30 foreach ($directory_array as $value) {
31 /**
32 * We now load header code for a given page.

```

won't screw up your template!

Notice in the above screenshot, you'll see line 19 credits part of the copyright to osCommerce. You'll see this a lot in Zen Cart™ code. It's because Zen Cart™ originally was based on the osCommerce platform. In this snippet of code, in the **index.php** file, you can see where they added comments telling the user what files are called by the page.

```
31 /**
32 * We now load header code for a given page.
33 * Page code is stored in includes/modules/pages/PAGE_NAME/directory
34 * 'header_php.php' files in that directory are loaded now.
35 */
36     require($code_page_directory . '/' . $value);
37 }
38 /**
39 * We now load the html_header.php file. This file contains code that would appear within the HTML <head></head> code
40 * it is overridable on a template and page basis.
41 * In that a custom template can define its own common/html_header.php file
42 */
43     require($template->get_template_dir('html_header.php',DIR_WS_TEMPLATE, $current_page_base,'common'). '/html_header.ph
44 /**
45 * Define Template Variables picked up from includes/main_template_vars.php unless a file exists in the
46 * includes/pages/(page_name)/directory to override. Allowing different pages to have different overall
47 * templates.
48 */
49     require($template->get_template_dir('main_template_vars.php',DIR_WS_TEMPLATE, $current_page_base,'common'). '/main_te
50 /**
51 * Read the "on_load" scripts for the individual page, and from the site-wide template settings
52 * NOTE: on_load_*.js files must contain just the raw code to be inserted in the <body> tag in the on_load="" parameter
53 * Looking in "/includes/modules/pages" for files named "on_load_*.js"
54 */
```

More comments, referring to more pages being called.

And at the bottom of the page:

```
87 //ensure we have just one ';' between each, and at the end
88 $zv_onload = str_replace(';;',';', $zv_onload.';');
89
90 // ensure that a blank list is truly blank and thus ignored.
91 if (trim($zv_onload) == ';') $zv_onload='';
92 /**
93 * Define the template that will govern the overall page layout, can be
94 * or using a default template. The default template installed will be .
95 * template also loads the page body code based on the variable $body_c
96 */
97     require($template->get_template_dir('tpl_main_page.php',DIR_WS_TEMPLA
98 ?>
99 </html>
00 <?php
01 /**
02 * Load general code run before page closes
03 */
04 ?>
05 <?php require(DIR_WS_INCLUDES . 'application_bottom.php'); ?>
```

That's all fine and well, you say, but what does it mean?

It means that unless you have a very darn good reason, you don't go changing this page! In fact, changing this page might break your site. Don't mess with this page unless or until you're told to do so or know what you're doing.

Think of your site like one of those remote control cars where you can remove

the exterior body parts and wheels and put new ones on. You can even, in some cases, change out suspension pieces. But the basic car -- the electric motor and battery compartment -- remains the same and unchanged.

Does that make sense?

So forget about this file unless or until I tell you to mess with it, okay? Don't add meta tags, don't add ad server or banner codes, don't do anything to it.

Let's take a look at CSS. The default template directory is located in **includes/templates/classic**

There is a CSS folder there. Open the file **CSS_read_me.txt** and take a moment to go through it. This file explains why you should use the available CSS files to configure your site instead of hard-coding style tags in the files. The Zen Cart™ programmers take the time to create these Read Me files. So read them! And there's a lot of good information in them.

One thing you might have noticed, if you weren't aware of it already, is you can set the template so individual pages have their own styles. (We'll get to that.)

```
673 .productListing-rowheading {  
674     background-color: #abbbd3;  
675     background-image: url(..../images/tile_back.gif);  
676     height: 2em;  
677     color: #FFFFFF;  
678 }  
679
```

Another thing about CSS is it can control images as well as style tags. So instead of trying to hard-code background and other images into your store files, you can use CSS to display them. Meaning instead of changing all your template image files on every page when you want to update, you simply create a new template and do it that way.

The template files tell the Zen Cart™ software how to display the store. They define the images shown (for the template, not the products or categories), the style tags, and text seen on the site with language ("english") files.

When you make changes to the store template files, you will make copies of "default" files and put them into your "new" template folders. This way, the Zen Cart™ software knows to use your template files instead of the default files.

However, it also means you don't need to copy every single thing into your new template directory. (You can if you want, but it's not necessary.) You only have to make changes to the files you want to change and copy those new files to the appropriate directory in your new template directory.

As you already read, Zen Cart™ uses a template override system in conjunction with CSS, PHP and MySQL to render dynamic pages. This means that, unlike a standard "static" HTML page where you "hard code" the style tags (`<h3><p>` etc.) you define CSS stylesheet files to tell the program how to display certain elements in certain locations.

There are "language" files defining different values for things like sidebox labels, and there are "template" files that define structure of the site. (This is a VERY simplified explanation and while not exactly a full explanation, it's enough to get you started.)

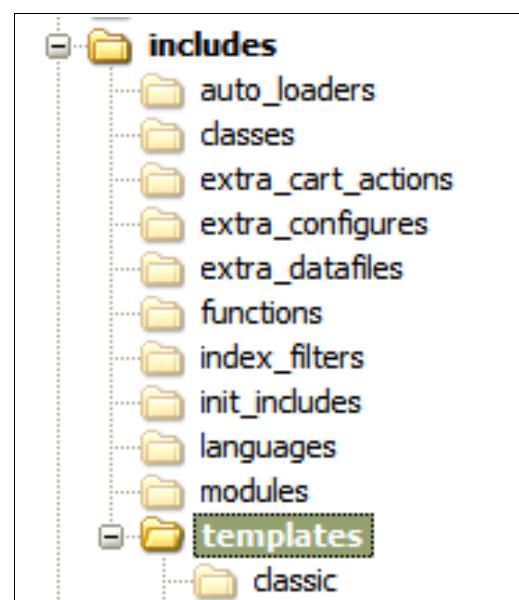
In addition to the stylesheet files and PHP files, you can also set many elements within the Zen Cart™ Admin control panel. Examples of this are setting sideboxes to display, where they display (left, right, or single column), the order they display in relation to each other, width of the side boxes, how products look and act, and a lot more. You can also create custom "EZ-Pages" and use the Define Page Editor to display pages on your site.

Before you start mangling your template, investigate all of these settings (we've already covered them earlier in this book). They are located in the Zen Cart™ Admin panel.

When you install a new template in the Zen Cart™ program, that new template has its own set of directories and custom files.

The "core" of the template starts with (in this case) the **includes/templates/classic** folder.

To work with your custom template, call your "new" template **CUSTOM** (as opposed to the default **classic**). Substitute your template name for **CUSTOM**. Do NOT use spaces! And keep it as short as you can. You will also need a **template_info.php** file in the



main **CUSTOM** folder. Copy the one from **classic** and modify. This way you can install your **CUSTOM** template.

Anywhere inside the Zen Cart™ installation where you see a **classic** folder, you can install a **CUSTOM** folder. You will have to add modified pages to these folders as well.

There is also a **template_default** folder. These are files that are not modified, but some of them can be modified. They are used as "defaults" throughout the store when nothing **CUSTOM** is specified.

Make sure your template has matching folders and files if you want them to override the default settings.

How do I change/install a template?

Installing a Template

First, download the template. There are many free templates available on the Zen Cart™ site. Any templates available for download from the Zen Cart™ site will work with the version of Zen Cart™ they were made for, unlike some third-party templates. (Again, double-check the version posted on the template.)

Unzip the template to a directory on your computer, and read any read me files included. Some templates will require changes to your Admin settings, but they should state in the template documentation what they are.

Upload the files to the appropriate directory on your server using your FTP program. Depending on how the template was created, you might be able to upload the files as they are, or you might first have to create new directories on your server and then upload the files.

Once all the files are uploaded, go to the Zen Cart™ Admin screen, and navigate to: **Tools --> Template Selection.**



TEMPLATE SELECTION					
Template Language	Template Name	Template Directory	Action	Classic Contemporary Green	
Default(All)	Classic Contemporary Green	classic	►	edit	
Displaying 1 to 1 (of 1 template associations)					
Page 1 of 1					
Template Author : Zen Cart Team (c) 2006					
Template Version : Version 1.3.5					
Template Description This template set is designed to be easily modified using only the style sheet to change colors, fonts, and the store logo. Three images are required; logo.jpg, header_bg.jpg, and tile_back.gif.					

There, you'll be able to see a list of templates you already have installed, the current template in use, and you'll see an edit button you can click to find your new template from the list and install.

One of the great things about the template override system is if you have a problem with your template, you can switch back to the classic template and see if that cures the problem. If it does, you know it's your new template, not a core Zen Cart™ file.

How do I change/resize the header background image?

This information is contained in/controlled by the
includes/templates/yourtemplate/css/stylesheets.css file.

Find this snippet of code:

```
#logoWrapper{  
    background-image: url(..../images/header_bg.jpg);  
    background-repeat: repeat-x;  
    background-color: #ffffff;  
    height: 75px;  
}
```

And change it to suit your needs. Make sure to save the file to your custom template folder.

If you are using a modified template, you might not have this section in your stylesheet file. You'll have to find the div (or create one) in your
includes/templates/yourtemplate/common/header.php file that controls this section.

Your background image doesn't have to be called **header_bg.jpg**, but make sure whatever you call your image you upload it to your
includes/templates/yourtemplate/images folder.

How do I change the background image in the heading boxes?

The default green background behind the heading boxes that appears in the classic template is controlled by the **stylesheet.css** file.

If you are using a copy of the classic template, use the **stylesheet.css** file and look for the following code:

```
background-image: url(..../images/tile_back.gif);
```

Everywhere you see that, that's a background image. (If you're using a different template, you'll have to look for something similar controlling how they display.)

You can either create your own background image and upload it, overwriting the original, or create one with a different name and change the **stylesheet.css** file.

You don't have to use a background image -- you can delete the image name in every instance it's referred to and instead use a background color.

How do I change the color of the page background or add a background image?

This is controlled by the **stylesheet.css** file.

Look for the code that looks like this:

```
body {  
    margin: 0;  
    font-family: verdana, arial, helvetica, sans-serif;  
    font-size: 62.5%;  
    color: #000000;  
    background-color: #e5edf5;  
}
```

I highlighted the default color. You can change the background color, or replace it with an image.

To replace it with an image, you would create the image and upload it to your **includes/templates/yourtemplate/images** folder and add this line of code to the above section, inside the closing bracket:

```
background-image: url(..../images/background.gif);
```

The image, of course, will be whatever you call it.

How do I change the page width/change the page from fixed width to flexible?

This is controlled by the **stylesheet.css** file.

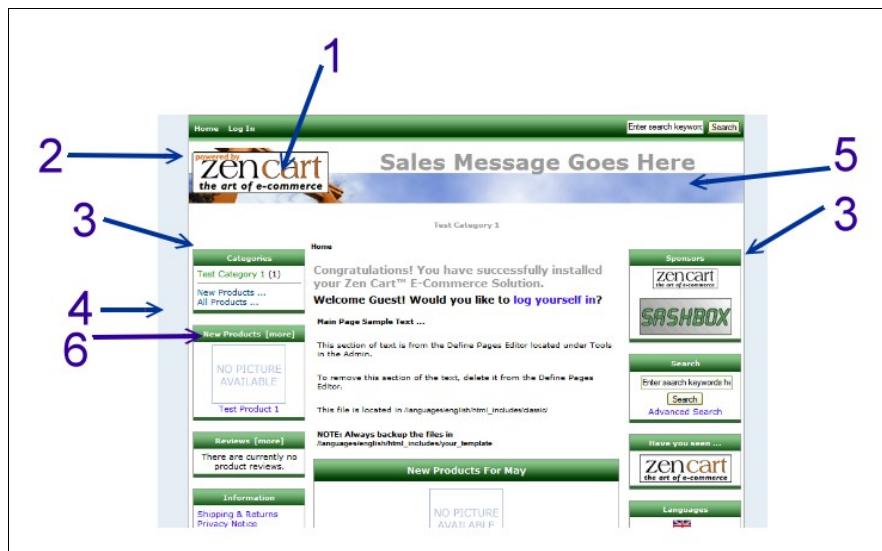
Remember – when changing your page width settings, you need to keep in mind what kind of header image/background image you're using, and how wide you need your page to display for the best result. Also, remember people with smaller/older monitors might still be using a narrower page width, and if you make your page too wide it will force users to scroll to the right -- which is very annoying.

```
/*wrappers - page or section containers*/
#mainWrapper {
    background-color: #ffffff;
    text-align: left;
    width: 750px;
    vertical-align: top;
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;
}
```

Where it says width, you can change that to a percentage to make it flexible (like 95% for example), or a different number of pixels to change the fixed width. This changes the width of the entire page, not just the middle portion (main column) of your store. You can change the width of the sideboxes and columns in the Admin control panel. The center column width is derived automatically from the difference between the two column widths added together subtracted from the defined width. So using 750 pixels as an example, if your two columns are 150 pixels wide each, that equals 300 pixels. Which means your center column will only be 450 pixels wide.

Template Elements

1) **logo.gif** --> You can remove or edit the size/file name.
To remove it, use the



includes/templates/template_default/common/tpl_header.php file. Comment out the section of code where it displays. Find the section of code that reads:

```
<div id="logo"><?php echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .  
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-  
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,  
$current_page_base, 'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,  
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div>
```

We need to change this section of code.

```
<!-- <div id="logo"><?php // echo '<a href="' .  
HTTP_SERVER . DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-  
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,  
$current_page_base, 'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,  
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div> -->
```

Notice where I highlighted the tags I added? We added `<!--` to the front of the code, `-->` to the end of the code, and a `//` between `php` and `echo`.

This will comment out the entire logo section and it will not appear on the front page.

To change the logo: If you change the logo size, make sure you reflect these changes in the file or else it won't display properly.

Find the file: **includes/languages/english/header.php**

Find the following code snippet:

```
// added defines for header alt and text
define('HEADER_ALT_TEXT', 'Powered by Zen Cart™ :: The
Art of E-Commerce');
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', 'TagLine Here');
define('HEADER_LOGO_WIDTH', '192px');
define('HEADER_LOGO_HEIGHT', '64px');
define('HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE', 'logo.gif');
```

Make your changes and save this new file as:

includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/header.php

And if you make a new logo image file with a different file name, make sure to change the file name in the code as well. Save the new image file into your **includes/templates/CUSTOM/images/** file.

2) **tpl_header.php** -->

includes/templates/template_default/common/tpl_header.php You will need to create a **CUSTOM/common/** folder if you don't have one already, and save your modified **tpl_header.php** file to it.

3) sideboxes --> Admin controls, CSS, and other files

4) background --> **includes/templates/classic/css/stylesheet.css** you can change color or specify an image (make sure to put it in **includes/templates/CUSTOM/images** and modify your **includes/templates/CUSTOM/css/stylesheet.css** file to reflect the image file instead of a background color.

Look for this code:

```
body {
    margin: 0;
    font-family: verdana, arial, helvetica, sans-serif;
    font-size: 62.5%;
    color: #000000;
    background-color: #e5edf5;
}
```

and you can change the highlighted line to reflect whatever color you want. To insert an image, you need to change your code accordingly.

```
body {  
    margin: 0;  
    font-family: verdana, arial, helvetica, sans-serif;  
    font-size: 62.5%;  
    color: #000000;  
    background-color: #e5edf5;  
    background-image: url(..../images/background.gif);  
}
```

See the highlighted line? Make sure your image goes into your **includes/templates/CUSTOM/images/** directory. (You can name it whatever you want, just make sure the file name and the **stylesheet.css** designation are the same.)

5) **bg_header.jpg** --> Located in the **includes/templates/classic/images/** folder.

To replace with your own in your custom template, save the new image with the same file name and dimensions to: **includes/templates/CUSTOM/images/**

6) **tile_back.gif** --> The controller for this is located in several places in the **includes/templates/classic/css/stylesheet.css** file. The actual file is located in the **includes/templates/classic/images/** folder. Make your own, save it to **includes/templates/CUSTOM/images/** with the same file name. If you change the file name or size, you'll need to make changes to your **stylesheet.css** file.



1) Sales Message Goes Here (or Tagline Here) message: Depending on how your template is set up, this is the 'HEADER_SALES_TEXT' field located in: **includes/**

languages/english/header.php or includes/languages/english/classic/header.php

Find the **includes/languages/english/header.php** file and open it. Find the snippet of code:

```
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', 'Tagline Here');
```

OR

```
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', 'Sales Message Goes Here');
```

What you see will depend on whether you're editing a copy of the classic or default template file. Change the text between the ' ' to what you want it to say. If you don't want anything there, delete all the text between the '' but LEAVE them there. Otherwise, you'll see an error on the page that looks something like HEADER_SALES_TEXT because the software is expecting to see something, even if it's an empty field, in the file.

Save the file as **includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/header.php** to reflect your custom template.

2) Congratulations! You have successfully installed... message:

includes/languages/english/index.php

Change the code snippet where it says:

```
// This section deals with the "home" page at the top  
level with no options/products selected  
/*Replace this text with the headline you would like for  
your shop. For example: 'Welcome to My SHOP!'*/  
define('HEADING_TITLE', 'Congratulations! You have  
successfully installed your Zen Cart&trade; E-Commerce  
Solution.');//  
} elseif ($category_depth == 'nested') {  
// This section deals with displaying a subcategory  
/*Replace this line with the headline you would like for  
your shop. For example: 'Welcome to My SHOP!'*/  
define('HEADING_TITLE', 'Congratulations! You have  
successfully installed your Zen Cart&trade; E-Commerce  
Solution.');//  
}
```

Notice there are two different places to change it?

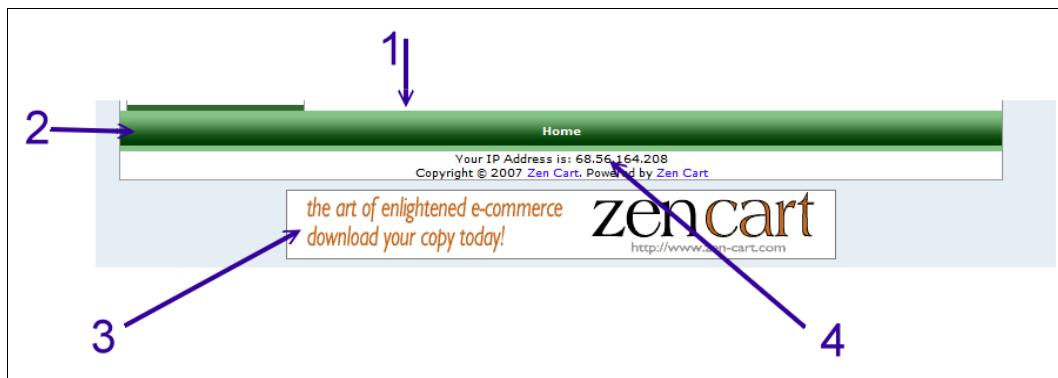
You can even delete all the text between the ' and ' and leave it empty if you desire.

Save the file as:

includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/index.php

and upload it to your server.

3) Main Page Sample Text...(et al) --> Make sure your CUSTOM template is installed. In the Admin panel, go to **Tools-->Define Pages Editor** and you can change it (and other pages) there.



This is from the bottom of the page.

1) footer section --> Found in the **includes/templates/template_default/common/ tpl_footer.php** file. You can make your changes and save your file to **includes/templates/CUSTOM/common/ tpl_footer.php** so it applies to your template. Also, you can add more navigation links where the Home link is.

2) **tile_back.gif** --> Again, controlled in the **template/CUSTOM/css/stylesheets.css** file. You should have one for your **CUSTOM** template by this point.

3) banner - controlled in several places in the Admin panel, including **Configuration --> Layout Settings** and **Tools-->Banner Manager**. The actual position is placed in the code in the **includes/templates/template_default/common/ tpl_footer.php** file.

4) Footer text --> you can switch the IP address on or off in the Admin control panel under **Configuration-->Layout Settings**.

The copyright depends on how your site is set up. First of all, the question is, "Can I change the copyright notice?"

If you are using a default Zen Cart™ template, including Zen Cart™ graphics (background, header tile image, buttons, etc.) you must leave the copyright notice. You can add to it, but you need to have the Zen Cart™ information because you are using their graphics for your site.

If you use a totally custom template (including buttons) you can remove/change it.

But -- note this -- if you remove the stock "Powered by Zen Cart™" information and try to get your site submitted to the Zen Cart™ showcase page, they'll reject it. There's no harm having that information on your page.

To change the information, you need to edit the **includes/languages/english.php** file and save it (if you haven't already) as **includes/languages/yourtemplate/english.php**

The section of code you'll edit looks like this:

```
define('FOOTER_TEXT_BODY', 'Copyright © 200* <a href="http://www.zen-cart.com" target="_blank">Zen Cart</a>. Powered by <a href="http://www.zen-cart.com" target="_blank">Zen Cart</a>');
```

The highlighted section is what you can change. (Again, if you change the Powered by Zen Cart™ section, it will make your site ineligible for the Zen Cart™ Showcase page.)

You cannot and should not remove the Zen Cart™ and osCommerce copyright information located at the top of most of the program files in the header. You are using Zen Cart™ software, and even though this code isn't "visible" to your user, it needs to remain in place.

By this point you should be accumulating **CUSTOM** template folders and files. Remember, anywhere there's a **classic** folder, you can (and should) make a **CUSTOM** folder for your custom template.

These are just some of the main folders/directories you'll end up with.

includes/templates/CUSTOM/...
includes/languages/CUSTOM/...
includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/...

This is a test product I added to my test store.

The screenshot shows a Zen Cart test store interface. At the top, there's a green header bar with 'Home' and 'Log In' links, and a search bar. The main title 'Sales Message Goes Here' is displayed prominently. On the left, there's a sidebar with categories like 'Categories', 'Test Category 1 (1)', 'New Products [more]', and 'Reviews [more]'. The main content area shows 'Test Product 1' with a message 'This is a test product.' and a note about it being a new product. There are buttons for 'Add to Cart' and 'write a review'. On the right, there are sections for 'Sponsors' (with logos for 'zencart' and 'SASHBOX'), 'Search' (with a search bar and link to 'Advanced Search'), and 'Have you seen ...' (with a 'zencart' logo). A footer note at the bottom states 'This product was added to our catalog on Monday 28 May, 2007.'

The buttons are also customizable. The default button directory is:

includes/templates/template_defaults/buttons/english

And yes, you need to copy it (and the contents) to your directory.

includes/templates/CUSTOM/buttons/english

You can upload your own. If you customize or make them different file names, you need to do more editing.

Find the file:

includes/languages/english/button_names.php

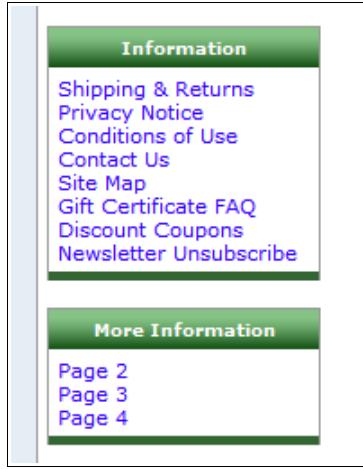
Make your changes.

Save the file as:

includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/button_names.php

Upload to your server. You might also need to edit the

includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/css/stylesheet_css_buttons.css file if you use those.



To change the order of the links in the Information and More Information boxes, find the

includes/modules/sideboxes/information.php file. Change it and save it to your custom template at

includes/modules/sideboxes/CUSTOM/information.php .

To remove any of them, use the **Configuration --> Define Pages Status** menu.

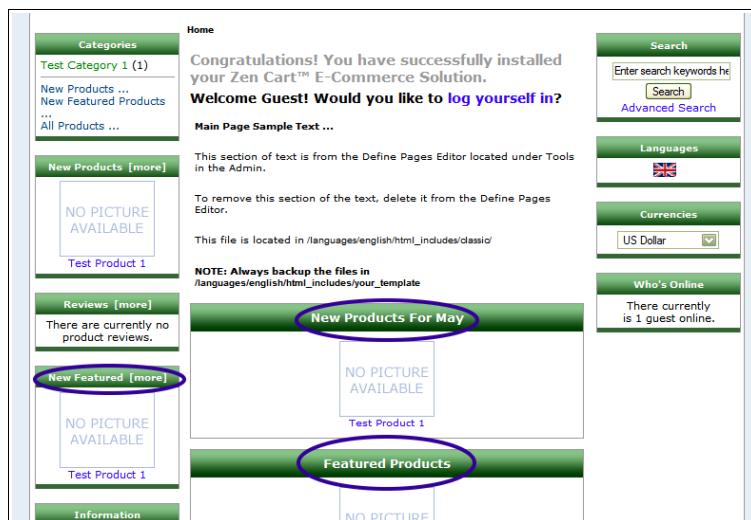
To rename them, use the

includes/languages/english.php file (which then gets saved to your custom template as the **includes/languages/CUSTOM/english.php** file.)

To turn off the More Information box altogether, you can use the Admin panel **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** screen. To turn off certain pages, go to

Configuration --> Define Page Status. To edit the content of those pages, go to **Tools --> Define Pages Editor**. To find where certain terms are located (like field labels, etc.) use the **Tools --> Developers Tool Kit** and search for them. Every file where they are located will show up (make sure to search with the right search tool!) and you can find and edit the files and then save them to your custom template. This also applies to box headings.

Some of the box titles (circled) can also be edited in the **english.php** file.



Part of what you see in your finished store also depends on how you have

your browser set up. If you have your browser set to override how a site displays (for font size and type, for example) you might not see what you want.

This is something you need to keep in mind when building templates -- you can make it look perfect, but someone else might not be able to see it because of their specific set-up.

Also (as you already learned) some of what you might want to do is actually controlled through Admin menu panel switches and not by changing the hard code of the template. Investigate all of those options thoroughly before changing template files!

Basic Changes

To create a custom template file you need to create a new directory with the name of your template. This new directory should be located in the **includes/templates** directory. For the sake of this tutorial, we'll call it **testtemplate1**. (You can create this directory structure on your computer and then upload it to your server.)

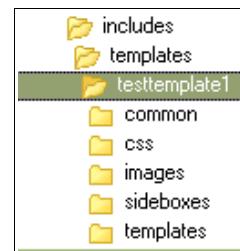
You will also need an images directory. So create:

testtemplate1/images

You should create the following directories: **common, sideboxes, templates, css**

Your file structure should look like this:

testtemplate1/
common
css
images
sideboxes
templates



Now we need to add a file telling the Zen Cart™ program a little about your custom template. We will simply copy the file we need from the classic template folder. So find:

includes/templates/classic/template_info.php from the Zen Cart™ files. Copy it, and paste it into your **testtemplate1** directory.

If you look in the **template_default** directory you will see a lot more directories

there. Don't worry about them for now. Many of them we won't worry about customizing, although as you advance you might find you need to.

We need to change this file to reflect the fact that it's our custom template. This is what it looks like as-is:

```
<?php
/**
 * Template Information File
 *
 * @package templateSystem
 * @copyright Copyright 2003-2006 Zen Cart™ Development
Team
 * @copyright Portions Copyright 2003 osCommerce
 * @license http://www.zen-cart.com/license/2_0.txt GNU
Public License V2.0
 * @version $Id: template_info.php 4226 2006-08-24
02:23:25Z drbyte $
 */
$template_name = 'Classic Contemporary Green';
$template_version = 'Version 1.3.5';
$template_author = 'Zen Cart™ Team (c) 2006';
$template_description = 'This template set is designed to
be easily modified using only the style sheet to change colors,
fonts, and the store logo. Three images are required; logo.jpg,
header_bg.jpg, and tile_back.gif.';
$template_screenshot = 'scr_template_default.jpg';
?>
```

Notice in the `template_description` line it tells you what images you need for this template?

Change your **template_info.php** file so it looks like mine:

```
<?php
$template_name = 'testtemplate1';
$template_version = 'Version 1.0';
$template_author = 'yourname';
$template_description = 'Test template number 1.';
$template_screenshot = '';
?>
```

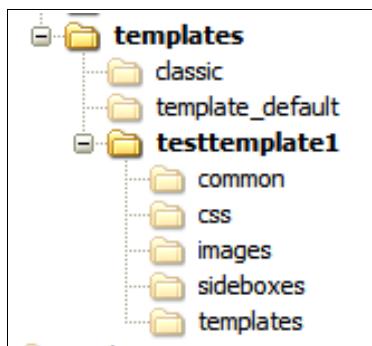
Obviously, where it says `yourname` you need to put YOUR name.

The screenshot is where a screenshot image of your template would go if you offered it up for others to use. Since we don't have one yet, just leave it as-is.

Next, go to the **classic/images** folder and copy the files there to your **testtemplate1/images** folder.

Then, go to the **classic/css** folder and copy the files there to your **testtemplate1/css** folder.

Upload the entire file structure and contents to your server so it is located under: **includes/templates/testtemplate1...**



This is what the file structure looks like when it's uploaded to my server.

Once you do that, go to **Tools --> Template Selection**.

Classic Contemporary Green

[edit](#)

Template Author : Zen Cart Team (c) 2006

Template Version : Version 1.3.5

Template Description
This template set is designed to be easily modified using only the style sheet to change colors, fonts, and the store logo. Three images are required; logo.jpg, header_bg.jpg, and tile_back.gif.

Templates Installed

[preview](#) Classic Contemporary Green

[preview](#) testtemplate1

When you look at where it says Templates Installed, you'll see your new template listed.

Click the Edit button.

From the drop-down list, select the new template and click Update.

What happens when you preview the site?

Home Log In

powered by **ZenCart** the art of e-commerce

TagLine Here

Home

Congratulations! You have successfully installed your Zen Cart™ E-Commerce Solution.

Welcome Guest! Would you like to [log yourself in?](#)

Main Page Sample Text ...

This section of text is from the Define Pages Editor located under Tools in the Admin.

To remove this section of the text, delete it from the Define Pages Editor.

Home

Your IP Address is: 68.56.164.208

Copyright © 2007 Zen Cart. Powered by Zen Cart

Whoa! What happened to all the sideboxes?

We need to set the switches in the Admin panel.

Go to **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller**.

You might have a list of files at the top, with a pink background, telling you that boxes were found. That's okay.

At the bottom of the page, click the Reset button. Then go back and refresh your front page and view your store.

You can go into the **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** menu and turn on or off different sideboxes as you need them. You can also adjust where they display.

Now we need to look at changing the template graphics.

Use your graphics program of choice to open the template graphics from your computer (not the live ones from the server). (I shouldn't have to tell you to make copies of the graphics files before we start!) The graphics are in the **testtemplate1/images** directory of your files.

The **header_bg.jpg** file is 760x110 pixels in size. You can either make a copy of the original and work on that, or you can create a new .jpg file in the same dimensions and make a new one from that. Adjust the height in the **stylesheet.css** file.



The **logo.gif** file is 192x64 pixels. This logo is also located in the Admin back panel at **/admin/images/logo.gif** which is where you have to change it if you want it to appear on your invoices.



NOTE: The only template override you can make to the admin control panel at this time is changing the Admin logo. There is currently no template override for admin, although there are third-party downloads on the Zen Cart™ site.

The **tile_back.gif** file is the background stripe behind the headers and sideboxes. It is 11x30 pixels.

Why do you need to make the new graphics the same size? For this template

you do, because all we're doing is swapping out images. If you were making your own template from scratch, you could make the images whatever size you wanted because you could define them in the template pages. (This is also why they have to be the EXACT same name, including file extension type!). But if you made a logo image that was 250x 76 pixels and tried to use it in place of the default **logo.gif**, the code would smoosh it and make it look weird.

And you don't want that.

For now, let's just change these items and go from there.

I'm in the mood for red. You can be in the mood for whatever color you want. I'm going to make my graphics in variations of red. I cannot tell you how to do this with your graphics program -- that's something you have to figure out. Make sure you save your graphics so they aren't memory hogs! Use your program to save them in the smallest file size you can and still preserve image quality.

What a difference! (I pulled Roses-B-We out of my hat. I have no idea if there really is such a website. If there is, sorry!)

The screenshot shows a Zen Cart e-commerce website with a red rose-themed design. The header features a red background with a rose pattern. On the left, there's a sidebar with categories like 'All Products ...' and reviews. The main content area has a 'Welcome Guest!' message and a 'Main Page Sample Text ...'. On the right, there are sections for 'Sponsors' (zencart, SASHBOX) and 'Search' (with a search bar and advanced search link). A 'Languages' section at the bottom right shows the British flag.

Home Log In

Enter search keyword

Roses-B-We

TagLine Here

Home

Congratulations! You have successfully installed your Zen Cart™ E-Commerce Solution.

Welcome Guest! Would you like to log yourself in?

Main Page Sample Text ...

This section of text is from the Define Pages Editor located under Tools in the Admin.

To remove this section of the text, delete it from the Define Pages Editor.

Categories

All Products ...

Reviews [more]

There are currently no product reviews.

Information

Shipping & Returns
Privacy Notice
Conditions of Use
Contact Us
Site Map
Gift Certificate FAQ
Discount Coupons
Newsletter Unsubscribe

More Information

Page 2
Page 3
Page 4

Sponsors

zencart
the art of e-commerce

SASHBOX

Search

Enter search keywords

Have you seen ...

zencart
the art of e-commerce

Languages

Okay, so that light blue background sort of takes away from the effect. We can

change that.

And did you try this with a lighter colored tile background, and now you can't see the sidebox titles? We can fix that. Also, some of you might not want the logo image. You might want to make the background your logo. We can fix that too.

Let's look at the background first.

On your computer, in your new template, look for **testtemplate1/css/stylesheets.css** and open it with your editor.

Towards the very top of the page, you'll find a snippet of code that looks like this:

```
body {  
    margin: 0;  
    font-family: verdana, arial, helvetica, sans-serif;  
    font-size: 62.5%;  
    color: #000000;  
    background-color: #e5edf5;  
}
```

Find that code.

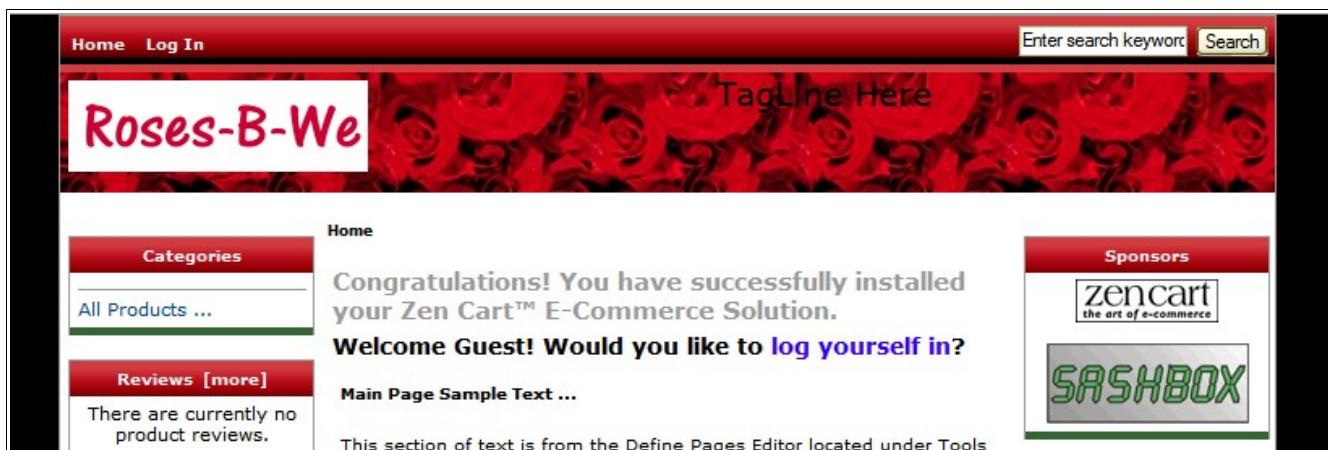
Where it says `background-color: #e5edf5;` change it to say:

```
background-color: black;
```

Make SURE you keep the semi-colon at the end!

Save the file and upload it to the same folder on your server. Refresh the front page and you should see the change.

Much better!



You could also change that to a background image setting and make sure it's uploaded to your template images folder.



How did I do that?

I added one line of code to this section:

```
body {  
    margin: 0;  
    font-family: verdana, arial, helvetica, sans-serif;  
    font-size: 62.5%;  
    color: #000000;  
    background-color: black;  
    background-image: url(..../images/background.gif);  
}
```

And then I created a small .gif image called **background.gif** and uploaded it to my **testtemplate1/images** directory.

See the line I added?

In this body of code you can also play with the font-family and font color settings. For colors, you can use the color name or the number. Sometimes I'm lazy (like now) and just use the color name.

Remember, not all browsers will recognize all colors; when you start getting beyond basic colors (black, white, red, yellow, blue, green, etc.) verify the color number you use is "web safe" and will work on a wide number of browsers.

There is an excellent primer and color chart on CSS colors at:

http://www.w3schools.com/css/css_colors.asp

To change the font color on the header boxes, find all the instances of it in the CSS code and change it.

HINT: Look for everywhere you see

`background-image: url(..../images/tile_back.gif);`

called in the code look for a font color tag in that same grouping of code. Change it, save your file, and upload it. Refresh your page and it should take effect. That graphic is the background for the different sideboxes, and you will have to change the font color tag in more than one place. You can also change or override font type, weight, style, and size with these codes. For example, if you want some of your side boxes to be a different font type, you can add the line to change it for that particular

area.

You will probably have to change some of the color codes for links, because some of the text that appears in the headers and footers are actually links. You could also search for all instances of the original line color code and replace them. But that might change some you don't want to change.

There is a lot you can do with CSS to change a site. It might seem like a lot of work to learn it, but it beats having to individually code different pages and change them all when you want to update your site!

To change the logo in the Admin screen (so it appears on invoices and on the Admin control panel) you must upload the logo to the admin folder for your site:

admin/images

It's also called **logo.gif** in the Admin area. You can go in and modify the code, but right now, we're not going to worry about that. Try uploading the logo you just made to that folder in admin and then refresh your Admin screen. You should see the new logo in your screen.

NOTE: If you upload a logo file that is larger than the one included by default, you will have to change the Admin header code to reflect this or else the larger logo can really make your Admin panel expand on your screen!!

There is an article on the Zen Cart™ site at:

<http://tutorials.zen-cart.com/index.php?article=256> covering this topic.

If you want to change the template so you don't have a logo displayed on the front page (because you want the **header_bg** file to be your "logo" or because you want just the **header_bg** and use text generated by Zen Cart™) you can change that easily.

On your computer, find the file:

includes/templates/template_default/common/tpl_header.php

and open it.

Find the section of code that reads:

```
<div id="logo"><?php echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .  
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-  
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,  
$current_page_base, 'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,  
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div>
```

We need to change this section of code.

```
<!-- <div id="logo"><?php // echo '<a href="' .  
HTTP_SERVER . DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-  
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,  
$current_page_base, 'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,  
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div> -->
```

Notice where I highlighted the tags I added? We added <!-- to the front of the code, --> to the end of the code, and a // between php and echo.

This will comment out the entire logo section and it will not appear on the front page.

Save this file as **testtemplate1/common/tpl_header.php**

and upload it to the server.

Refresh your front page, and you should see the changes.

What if you want the logo, but you want it to be a different size?

First, you need to make a new directory on your computer.

In your store files, make a new folder called:

includes/languages/english/testtemplate1

Again, if you aren't using "english" make sure you substitute as appropriate for your site.

Open the file: **includes/languages/english/header.php**

Find the following snippet of code:

```
// added defines for header alt and text  
define('HEADER_ALT_TEXT', 'Powered by Zen Cart™ :: The  
Art of E-Commerce');  
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', 'TagLine Here');  
define('HEADER_LOGO_WIDTH', '192px');  
define('HEADER_LOGO_HEIGHT', '64px');  
define('HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE', 'logo.gif');
```

See the header_logo definitions for size and file name? Change those as necessary. Also, you can see here is where you can change two of the most common annoyances for new Zen Cart™ store owners -- the TagLine Here message and the Powered by Zen Cart™... message. Change as desired (or delete them altogether -- LEAVE the fields, but you can delete between the ' and '.

Save the file as **includes/languages/english/testtemplate1/header.php**

and upload the directory structure to your server in the correct place. (NOT inside your template file! This is a separate directory controlling other things!)

Another component of customizing your site is changing the buttons to match your site design.

Copy the **includes/templates/template_defaults/buttons/english** folder and its contents to your **includes/templates/testtemplate1/buttons/english** directory. (Create the **/buttons** directory.)

Use your graphics program to make changes. For now, I suggest making the buttons the same size as the default ones and keeping the file names the same. (As you get more comfortable with the template code, you can start modifying them as you want.)

For example, I customized my back button to look more like the site theme.

But what if you already have a button set. Say you moved from a different shopping cart and want the same buttons, or already have buttons, but they aren't the same file names as the default buttons?

Or if you want to change the ALT tags so they read what you want them to read. Then what?

Make SURE you upload all the new image files to your **includes/templates/testtemplate1/buttons/english/** folder first.

Find the file:

includes/languages/english/button_names.php

Make all your changes.

Save the file as:

includes/languages/english/testtemplate1/button_names.php

Upload to your server. You might also have to edit the **includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/css/stylesheet_css_buttons.css** file.

As we dig into the templating system, you'll understand it better. Another file you need to duplicate is the main **english.php** file. If you work off the default file, when you upgrade, it will wipe out your changes!

So find and open:

includes/languages/english.php

And you can make changes to it. Note the comments in the page referring you

To remove this
Editor.

Back

to other files for changes!

Save this file as:

includes/languages/testtemplate1/english.php

Yes this means making a NEW directory. Upload it to your server. This is where you can make changes to the labels on many of the side boxes and other things.

So now we have the following custom template directories:

includes/languages/testtemplate1/

includes/languages/english/testtemplate1/

includes/templates/testtemplate1/

Yes, it can get confusing. But not as confusing as a site upgrade wiping out a lot of custom work! Make sure when you modify files you upload them to the proper corresponding folder! A general rule of thumb is if there is a "classic" folder there, then you can override the files with your own template file. I can't guarantee you this is always the case, but it's pretty reliable.

If editing one "main" file doesn't change something, look for a more specific file further down the template foodchain and edit it there. If that more specific file wasn't there, the higher level file would control it.

For example, if you want to edit the product information page, you might notice if you change where it says Model to something else, like Part Number, it does NOT change on your site.

You need to find file:

includes/languages/english/product_info.php

And change it there.

Save it as:

includes/languages/english/testtemplate1/product_info.php

And upload to the server.

Refresh your pages and you'll see the change take effect.

Editing the language files doesn't change the structure of the site. It only changes "labels" applied to the site.

If it doesn't look like anything changed at first, make sure you saved the

modified file correctly, uploaded it to the correct custom template directory, AND refreshed your browser. Sometimes you need to use the Shift button in addition to reload/refresh. If it still doesn't work, it means it's overridden at a "lower" level file. Which can also be customized.

Or, you can also try deleting the server file and then re-uploading the newer version. Sometimes, uploading a file to the server might not "take" for whatever reason and you have to physically delete the old file first before uploading the newer version.

Another key point -- if you want to delete something so it doesn't show at all instead of just editing it, then do NOT remove the whole field! If you do, Zen Cart™ will display the "constant name" instead.

For example, when we made the changes to HEADING_TITLE a little while ago, you would delete everything between the ' and the ' -- NOT the whole line!

There is more to it, but for now, those are the basics. The more you learn, the more sense it will make.

Modifying the Header and Footer

Now, what if you want to do something like add extra navigation links to your header and footer? For example, links to specific pages on your site, or links from your store site to your main site? (This is also where you'd edit/delete existing links, such as Home and Log In.)

Open your **testtemplate1/common/tpl_header.php** file. That's the file we messed with earlier when we were talking about the logo.

Look for this code:

```
<!--bof-navigation display-->
<div id="navMainWrapper">
<div id="navMain">
    <ul class="back">
        <li><?php echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">'; ?><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_CATALOG; ?
></a></li>
```

You can add external links or links back to store pages.

Add the new links below the code quoted above.

For example, I'll add a link to my Lulu.com storefront page.

```
<li><a href="http://stores.lulu.com/store.php?  
fAcctID=725520">Zen Cart™  
Tutorials</a></li>
```

Save, upload to the server, refresh the front page.

This is what it looks like.

If you wanted it to be after the Log In link, you could move it directly after this line of code:

```
<li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_LOGIN, '',  
'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_LOGIN; ?></a></li>
```

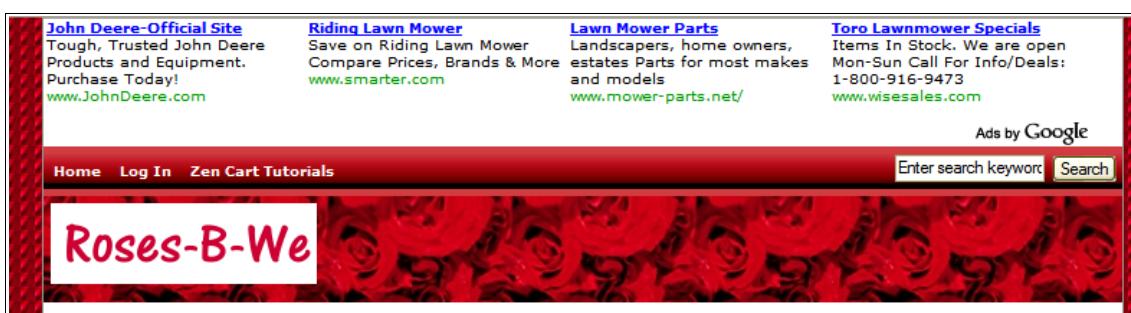
What if you want to add something like Google AdSense code to the site?

One possible idea is to put it in the header. I added code above the highlighted line. Make sure you don't interfere with any PHP code. I added this (with the ad_client number changed, of course) to the test site:

```
<script type="text/javascript"><!--  
google_ad_client = "pub-000000000000";  
google_ad_width = 728;  
google_ad_height = 90;  
google_ad_format = "728x90_as";  
google_ad_type = "text_image";  
google_ad_channel = "";  
//-->  
</script>  
<script type="text/javascript"  
src="http://pagead2.googlesyndication.com/pagead/show_ads.js">  
</script>  
  
<!--bof-header logo and navigation display-->
```

And this is what it looked like.

And it would be a similar process to modify the footer file, only you would



start out with the **template_default/common/tpl_header.php**

file and modify it, saving it to your custom directory and uploading to the server. And it doesn't have to be just something like that -- you can put a logo, table -- almost anything you want in there.

You can also use the EZ-Pages to modify your store. But as I said, that's a whole tutorial in and of itself.

What if you want to change the names of the links already in the header and footer? Go to the **includes/languages/english/header.php** and **footer.php** files (make sure you put them in your **includes/languages/english/testtemplate1/** folder!), make changes, and upload them to your store.

Browser Icon

What if you want to change the little browser icon people see next to the url address when they come to your store? (It's neat to change this, because it will show up in their bookmarks list!) Your graphics program must be able to save in an .ico file format. Make a new image called **favicon.ico**, and make sure it's 16x16 pixels in size, and upload it to your root directory of your web server.

That should take care of it.

Welcome Guest Message/Customer Greeting

There are two ways to change the Welcome Guest! message you see on the front page.

The first is to disable it completely by going to **Configuration --> Layout Settings** and turning it off.

If you want it to display, but want to edit it, go to the: **includes/languages/english/testtemplate1/index.php** file and change the **TEXT_GREETING_GUEST** field to suit you.

Customizing Templates

If you feel comfortable and confident editing the existing default template, maybe even customizing it beyond the basics, you're ready for the next step -- to build your own template.

There are two ways to create a "custom" template: modify an existing template or create a template from scratch. And when I mean modify an existing template I mean more than just changing graphics and CSS color codes. If you modify an existing template, you are still subject to the original copyright placed on that template by the original creator!

Either way, you can use existing template code to springboard your creativity, or help you if you get stuck.

What the heck is this?

This is what the **classic** template looks like when I remove the **stylesheet.css** file. It strips away all formatting (except the logo image, which is referred to in the **includes/languages/english/header.php** file). It's still functional, it's just not pretty.

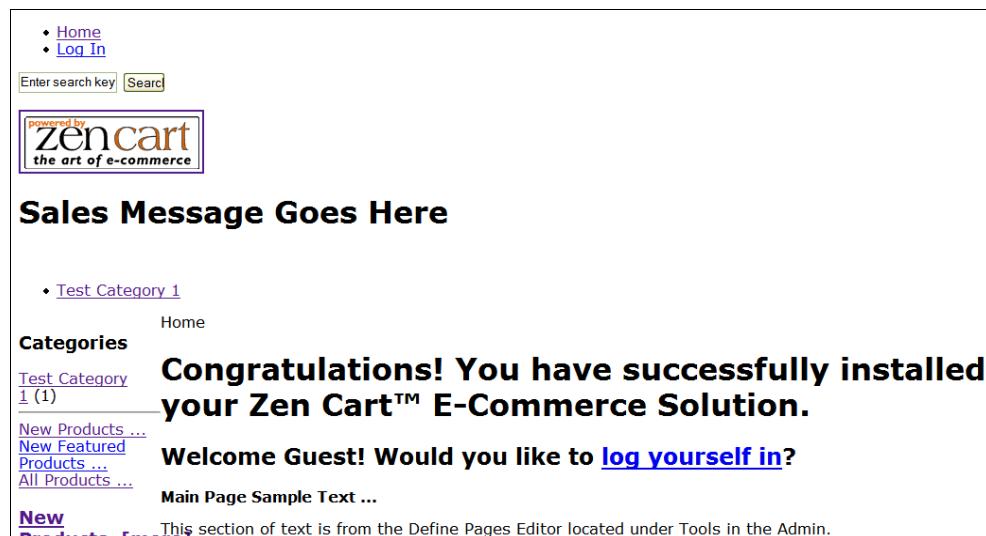
The **classic** template stylesheet, obviously, plays a tremendous part in defining how the site looks.

If you have an existing site and want your store to complement your current site, you can modify the Zen Cart™ template to reflect your existing site's style. Or you can modify both your existing site template and Zen Cart™ template to closely match.

Take time to draw out a rough draft of what you want your store to look like. Bookmark stores you like (copyright laws apply!) and make notes of elements you want your store template to have.

When you're working with templates and have a problem, keep this in mind:

- Is your new template installed via the admin panel?



- Were the correct files edited?
- Are there any syntax errors in the edited files?
- Were the edited files uploaded to the correct custom template directory?

When trying to diagnose a template problem, sometimes it's easier to take the **classic** template and compare your new template to the **classic** template files. It can show you where you might have missed something or have a code syntax error.

Before you start creating your template, go through the Admin panel controls and thoroughly learn them! I've seen lots of help messages posted to the Zen Cart™ forum where people thought they had a template problem when the answer was actually an Admin control panel switch. This is especially true of the **Catalog --> Product Types** menu, banner, EZ-Pages, and sidebox controls.

No matter how you create your template, when you're ready to start, you need to create custom folders. Remember, everywhere there's a **classic** folder in the Zen Cart™ files, you can insert a **CUSTOM** template folder. Those aren't the only folders you can create, but they are a start. A look at the

includes/templates/template_default directory will guide you to more.

I'm going to call my template **orange**, because the template is going to have an orange theme. If you want to call yours the same thing, go ahead. If not, just substitute your template name wherever I put **orange**. (Do not use spaces, remember it's CaSe SeNsItIve, and avoid hyphens or underscores.)

On my computer, I'll create the following folders/directories:

includes/templates/orange/css
includes/templates/orange/images
includes/templates/orange/common
includes/templates/orange/buttons/english
includes/templates/orange/templates
includes/templates/orange/sideboxes
includes/languages/orange
includes/languages/english/orange
includes/languages/english/html_includes/orange
includes/languages/english/extr_definitions/orange

That's just to start. And we might not use all of them. Whatever we don't use, we can delete.

You must create a file Zen Cart™ can use to identify the template. This file will be saved as: **includes/templates/orange/template_info.php** and the code should look like this:

```
<?php  
$template_name = '';  
$template_version = '';  
$template_author = '';  
$template_description = '';  
$template_screenshot = '';  
?>
```

This should be pretty self-explanatory. For name, between the " put the name of the template. Version can be whatever you want -- I'm going to use 1.0. Author is you. Description -- keep it short and sweet. Screenshot can be left blank for now. Once you finish you can make a screenshot, upload it to the **includes/templates/orange/images** folder and then enter the file name.

Here's what mine looks like when I finish.

```
<?php  
$template_name = 'orange';  
$template_version = '1.0';  
$template_author = 'Lesli Richardson (c) 2008';  
$template_description = 'This is an orange-themed  
template.';  
$template_screenshot = '';  
?>
```

Save it as **includes/templates/orange/template_info.php** (or your custom template folder).

This is the bare minimum you need to allow Zen Cart™ to install and recognize your template. Whatever files it doesn't find in your custom template files (like in the languages files, for example), it will pull from the default files.

Let's start with fully modifying the classic template. I mean take it down to bare-bones and start over with a new stylesheet and graphics.

Well, not totally new graphics. We'll use the same buttons, or at least most of them. Time to break out the graphics software!

When looking at graphics for Zen Cart™, people often ask why is there a separate **logo.gif** file in addition to the **header_bg.jpg** file for the top of the page?



Remember, the logo is also used in the backend by the Admin control panel and for printing invoices and packing slips. You could use a separate backend logo if you want, just remember to upload it and change the correct file so it displays properly.

And some people want a constant background, but they want a logo they can easily change. Some people turn the logo off and make their background image their logo. It's personal preference.

In other words, pick what works for you.

If you have an existing site that's pretty complex, it might be difficult to fully integrate the Zen Cart™ template until you're comfortable working with the stylesheet and template files. It might be easier to modify your existing site to fit Zen Cart™. Sometimes it's easier to get it close enough and leave it alone unless you want to pay someone to tackle it.

I'm going to modify the classic template in this example. First, I'm going to change the **header_bg.jpg** file to a custom file that will replace the **logo.gif** file altogether. The existing file is 760x110 pixels. Make your own.

Here's my new **header_bg.jpg** file. I'll save it to my **includes/templates/orange/images/** folder.



Now I need to make some changes to my template files.



This is what it looks like before I make any other changes.

I went into the **includes/languages/english/header.php** file and made changes to the following code block:

```
// added defines for header alt and text
define('HEADER_ALT_TEXT', '');
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', '');
define('HEADER_LOGO_WIDTH', '');
define('HEADER_LOGO_HEIGHT', '');
define('HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE', ''');
```

This is what it looks like after the changes, of course. Saving the file as **includes/languages/english/orange/header.php** and uploading it to my server gave me the following result. (By the way, I'm not going to keep repeating I'm uploading the files to the server. That should be obvious by this point.)



Better!



However, if I preview in IE, look what I see. I need to go into the code a little deeper, I think.

I need to edit

includes/templates/template_default/common/tpl_header.php and make some changes to the code. Otherwise, this won't look good on our finished site! Find the section of code that looks like this.

```
<div id="logo"><?php echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,
$current_page_base,'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div>
```

Change it to match the following. Note the highlighted changes.

```
<!-- <div id="logo"><?php // echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,
$current_page_base,'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div>-->
```

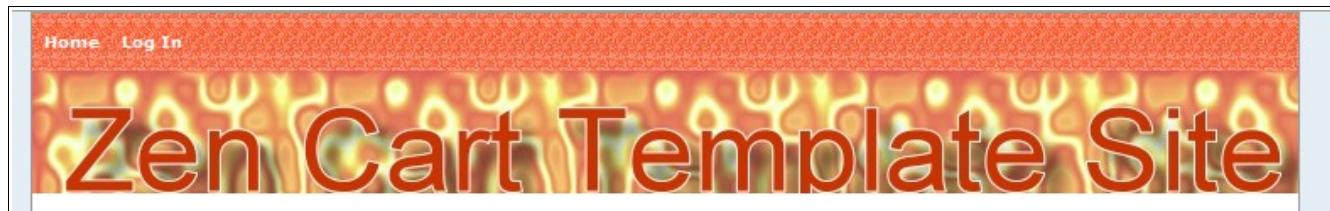
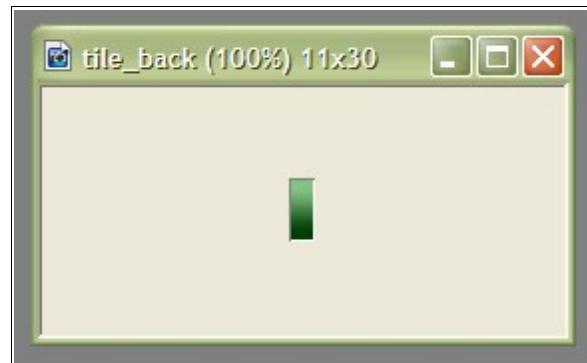
Save it to your templates folder as:

includes/templates/orange/common/tpl_header.php and refresh your screen.

I have two more things I want to do right now, and that's change the green background for the bars and create a background image to replace the default blue color.

The **tile_back.gif** file is small, only 11x30 pixels. I think I'll keep it the same size for now, but I definitely want a different look.

I like that!



Now for my background image. Yes, I'm going for an orange theme, but I think a contrast is in order so it's not overpowering.

I named my background image **background.gif** (how imaginative!) and saved it to my **includes/templates/orange/images/** folder. Then I took the **includes/templates/classic/css/stylesheet.css** file and saved it as **includes/templates/orange/css/stylesheet.css**

I found the following code and inserted the highlighted line.

```
body {  
margin: 0;  
font-family: verdana, arial, helvetica, sans-serif;  
font-size: 62.5%;  
color: #000000;  
background-color: #e5edf5;  
background-image: url(..../images/background.gif);  
}
```

If you just wanted to change the background color from the default light blue to something else, simply change the background-color setting to another color.

That's a nice contrast -- I like that! (I know it looks like a solid color, but it's actually very thin pinstripe lines.)

Now what?

For now, we need to tackle the **stylesheet.css** file and make changes there.



If you've never worked with a CSS file before it can look intimidating. But once you learn to understand what you're looking at, it gets better. This isn't a CSS tutorial, but you'll pick up some knowledge if you're a total newbie to it.

Before we go any further, if you haven't already, use the reset button in the Admin panel in **Tools --> Layout Boxes Controller** to bring all your sideboxes back (if necessary).

A screenshot of the Zen Cart Template Site homepage. The header features a red and orange abstract background with the text 'Zen Cart Template Site'. The top navigation bar includes 'Home' and 'Log In' links, and a search bar with 'Enter search keyword' and 'Search' buttons. The main content area has a title 'Test Category 1' and a 'Home' link. A sidebar on the left contains a 'Categories' section with 'Test Category 1 (1)' and links to 'New Products ...', 'New Featured Products ...', and 'All Products ...'. A 'New Products [more]' link is also present. On the right, there are 'Search' and 'Languages' sections. The footer contains a message about the Define Pages Editor.

You already have your own **stylesheet.css** file for your template. (We just did that in the last section when we created the background.) Let's take a look at it.

I wanted to change the grey header text where it says Congratulations!... (and you should know how to remove that message if you went through our basic tutorial) to a dark blue.

Yes, something like that!

And how did I do that?

A screenshot of the Zen Cart homepage. The header text 'Congratulations! You have successfully installed your Zen Cart™ E-Commerce Solution.' is displayed in a dark blue color. The rest of the page follows the original template design.

In the **stylesheet.css** file there are different controlling values. And sometimes

one value will actually override several others, so you'll have to specify different values for different tags. This particular code is located towards the top of the page, not too far from the body tag we worked with earlier.

I changed the highlighted value in the code sample below.

```
h1 {  
    font-size: 1.5em;  
    color: #000099;  
}
```

That wasn't too hard, was it?

One thing you might have noticed was the **header_bg.jpg** image looks like it's chopped off along the bottom. How do you fix that?

Back to the stylesheet!

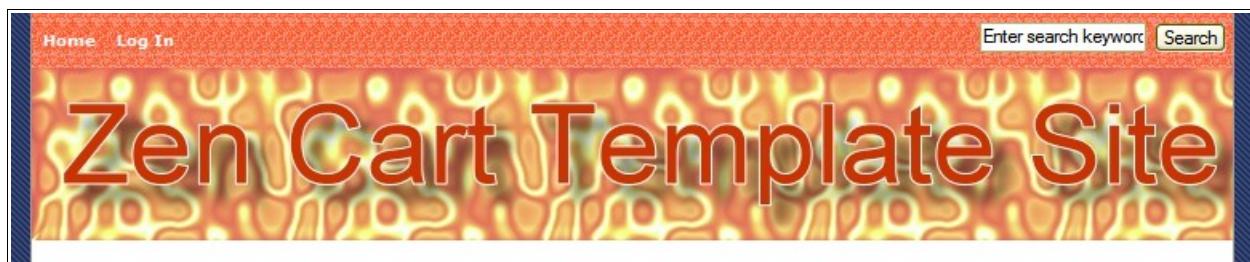
(Again, by this point, you should be working with your custom **stylesheet.css** file for your new template, not the default installation.)



Go find the block of code in the **stylesheet.css** file that looks like the following.

```
#logoWrapper{  
    background-image: url(..../images/header_bg.jpg);  
    background-repeat: repeat-x;  
    background-color: #ffffff;  
    height: 75px;  
}
```

Change the height (highlighted) to a different size. (I changed mine to 110 to match the graphic.)



That fixed it. So now what?

Well, what happens if I move the navigation links and search box down on top of the logo and get rid of that top bar altogether? I can do that, right?

Sure you can.

The whole section where the navigation links (Home and Log In plus the search bar at the far right side) are a combination of the **tpl_header.php** file (for position) and **stylesheet.css** (for style).

From the **tpl_header.php** file (before changes are made):

```

<div id="headerWrapper">
<!--bof-navigation display-->
<div id="navMainWrapper">
<div id="navMain">
    <ul class="back">
        <li><?php echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '"'; ?><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_CATALOG; ?
></a></li>
        <?php if ($_SESSION['customer_id']) { ?>
            <li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_LOGOFF,
'', 'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_LOGOFF; ?></a></li>
            <li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_ACCOUNT,
'', 'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_MY_ACCOUNT; ?></a></li>
        <?php
            } else {
                if (STORE_STATUS == '0') {
?
                <li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_LOGIN,
'', 'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_LOGIN; ?></a></li>
                <?php } } ?>

        <?php if ($_SESSION['cart']->count_contents() != 0) { ?>
            <li><a href="<?php echo
zen_href_link(FILENAME_SHOPPING_CART, '', 'NONSSL'); ?>"><?php
echo HEADER_TITLE_CART_CONTENTS; ?></a></li>
            <li><a href="<?php echo
zen_href_link(FILENAME_CHECKOUT SHIPPING, '', 'SSL'); ?>"><?php
echo HEADER_TITLE_CHECKOUT; ?></a></li>
        <?php } ?>
    </ul>
</div>
<div id="navMainSearch"><?php require(DIR_WS_MODULES .
'sideboxes/search_header.php'); ?></div>
<br class="clearBoth" />
</div>
<!--eof-navigation display-->
```

So what does that mean? I admit it's a little tricky to decipher looking at it like this. Find the code in your own file and look at it, and follow along with me.

At the very top of this section is the `<div id="headerWrapper">` attribute. What does it do? It's calling from the **stylesheet.css** file, directing you to the id

selectors in the file. Any time you see a `<div id="">` tag it means it's calling something from the **stylesheet.css** file. Let's go look at it. We find it, along with several other tags, in this list:

```
#headerWrapper, #contentMainWrapper, #logoWrapper,  
#cartBoxListWrapper, #ezPageBoxList, #cartBoxListWrapper ul,  
#ezPageBoxList ul, #mainWrapper, #popupAdditionalImage, #popupImage {  
    margin: 0em;  
    padding: 0em;  
}
```

Those other selectors can be found elsewhere in the code. We're concerned with the `#headerWrapper` selector. But it doesn't tell us much. You'll have to look at the other id selectors in the code and see what's defined, look through the **stylesheet.css** file. And if we don't see what we want there, we must go up the code to see what else is controlling the section -- or define our own.

Back to the **tpl_header.php** file.

We need to move stuff around. This is what my code looked like after I did.

```
<div id="headerWrapper">  
    <!--bof-branding display-->  
    <div id="logoWrapper">  
        <div id="navMain">  
            <ul class="back">  
                <li><?php echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER . DIR_WS_CATALOG .  
'"/'; ?><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_CATALOG; ?></a></li>  
                <?php if ($_SESSION['customer_id']) { ?>  
                    <li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_LOGOFF, '',  
'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_LOGOFF; ?></a></li>  
                    <li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_ACCOUNT, '',  
'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_MY_ACCOUNT; ?></a></li>  
                <?php  
                    } else {  
                        if (STORE_STATUS == '0') {  
                            ?>  
                            <li><a href="<?php echo zen_href_link(FILENAME_LOGIN, '',  
'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo HEADER_TITLE_LOGIN; ?></a></li>  
                            <?php } } ?>  
                            <?php if ($_SESSION['cart']->count_contents() != 0) { ?>  
                                <li><a href="<?php echo  
zen_href_link(FILENAME_SHOPPING_CART, '', 'NONSSL'); ?>"><?php echo  
HEADER_TITLE_CART_CONTENTS; ?></a></li>  
                                <li><a href="<?php echo  
zen_href_link(FILENAME_CHECKOUT SHIPPING, '', 'SSL'); ?>"><?php echo  
HEADER_TITLE_CHECKOUT; ?></a></li>  
                            <?php } ?>  
                        </ul>      </div>
```

```
<div id="navMainSearch"><?php require(DIR_WS_MODULES .  
'sideboxes/search_header.php'); ?></div>  
    <!--     <div id="logo"><?php // echo '<a href="' . HTTP_SERVER .  
DIR_WS_CATALOG . '">' . zen_image($template-  
>get_template_dir(HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE, DIR_WS_TEMPLATE,  
$current_page_base, 'images') . '/' . HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE,  
HEADER_ALT_TEXT) . '</a>'; ?></div> -->  
    <?php if (HEADER_SALES_TEXT != '') || (SHOW_BANNERS_GROUP_SET2 !=  
'' && $banner = zen_banner_exists('dynamic',  
SHOW_BANNERS_GROUP_SET2))) { ?>  
        <div id="taglineWrapper">  
        <?php  
            if (HEADER_SALES_TEXT != '') {  
        ?>  
            <div id="tagline"><?php echo HEADER_SALES_TEXT; ?></div>  
        <?php  
            }  
        ?>  
        <?php  
            if (SHOW_BANNERS_GROUP_SET2 != '' && $banner =  
zen_banner_exists('dynamic', SHOW_BANNERS_GROUP_SET2)) {  
                if ($banner->RecordCount() > 0) {  
            ?>  
                <div id="bannerTwo" class="banners"><?php echo  
zen_display_banner('static', $banner); ?></div>  
                <?php  
                    }  
            }  
        ?>  
        </div>  
    <?php } // no HEADER_SALES_TEXT or SHOW_BANNERS_GROUP_SET2 ?>  
    </div>  
    <br class="clearBoth" />  
    <!--eof-branding display-->  
    <!--eof-header logo and navigation display-->
```

And this is what I have when I finish. No, it's not pretty, but it works. I can tweak it as I go.



Okay, it's not perfect. You can't really read the navigation text. Back to the **stylesheet.css** file to find a fix for that. (And of course, making changes like this, you need to go through your site and ensure other parts still work and don't throw

errors when you make changes -- yet another reason to have your sideboxes and EZ-Pages set up before you do any of this.)

Looking at the **tpl_header.php** code, I see my navigation links are contained in the following div: <div id="navMain">

That's where I'll look in the **stylesheet.css** file.

I find this code, for starters:

```
a:hover, #navEZPagesTOC ul li a:hover, #navMain ul li a:hover,  
#navSupp ul li a:hover, #navCatTabs ul li a:hover {  
    color: #FF0000;  
}
```

So what is it and what do I do with it? Notice the **ul** designation? If you look in the **tpl_header.php** code, you'll see the links are set up as a list. If you dig further into the **stylesheet.css** file, you'll see the setting to make that list display horizontally rather than vertically.

```
#navMain ul li, #navSupp ul li, #navCatTabs ul li {  
    display: inline;  
}
```

Neat, huh?

Back to the link color. Let's start with the hover, since we found it first. We need to separate it from that group of code and give it its own section. When you're finished, you should have a section of code that looks like this.

```
a:hover, #navEZPagesTOC ul li a:hover, #navMain ul li a:hover,  
#navSupp ul li a:hover, #navCatTabs ul li a:hover {  
    color: #FF0000;  
}  
  
#navMain ul li a:hover {  
    color: #000000;  
}
```

See the highlighted changes? I deleted the section of code in the first grouping (where it's struck through) and broke it out to its own section immediately beneath

the original code section. Let's see what it does.

When I hovered over Home it changed to black instead of red. That's a start! (It also changed the Log In link as well, but I'm only showing you the one screenshot.)



Next, we need to change how the link normally displays.

One thing to keep in mind -- when you're driving yourself nuts trying to make a link color change and it doesn't seem to change, remember if you've already clicked on that link, it will always show as "visited" to you regardless of how you're trying to set the color. You'll have to clear your browser cache and history totally and refresh to see what it looks like.

Here's my code. I've highlighted the changes. Notice I did change the hover color to blue instead of black. That way the customer can see when they mouseover the link.

```
a:link, #navEZPagesTOC ul li a {
    color: #3300FF;
    text-decoration: none;
}

#navMain ul li a:link {
    color: #000000;
}

a:visited {
    color: #3300FF;
    text-decoration: none;
}

#navMain ul li a:visited {
    color: #000000;
}

a:hover, #navEZPagesTOC ul li a:hover, #navSupp ul li a:hover,
#navCatTabs ul li a:hover {
    color: #FF0000;
}

#navMain ul li a:hover {
    color: #0000FF;
}
```

I had to "break out" the #navMain ul li designations separately so the CSS

would control them correctly.

And they look fine now, except they're still too small. I want them larger. And the trick is I want to make sure I change only what I need to change, the "lowest" level div in the hierarchy that will make the changes I want. Otherwise, if I add stuff in later, it could cause me more headaches trying to track down where I made changes.

Don't hesitate to comment your own code.

If you'll look, you'll notice the bottom of the page is still unchanged -- you'll have to look at the **tpl_footer.php** code and find the correct section in the **stylesheet.css** file to change, but it will be the same technique as what we just did.

I found this snippet of code:

```
#navMain ul, #navSupp ul, #navCatTabs ul {  
    margin: 0;  
    padding: 0.5em 0em;  
    list-style-type: none;  
    text-align: center;  
    line-height: 1.5em;  
}
```

And changed it to this:

```
#navSupp ul, #navCatTabs ul {  
    margin: 0;  
    padding: 0.5em 0em;  
    list-style-type: none;  
    text-align: center;  
    line-height: 1.5em;  
}  
  
#navMain ul {  
    margin: 0;  
    padding: 0.5em 0em;  
    list-style-type: none;  
    text-align: center;  
    font-weight: bold;  
}
```

See what I did? And it helped with the bold, but I tried several ways to change the font size and it wouldn't change. Meaning I have to go up the food chain, so to speak.

I found the following snippet of code and commented out the highlighted line:

```
#navMainWrapper, #navSuppWrapper, #navCatTabsWrapper {  
margin: 0em;  
background-color: #abbbd3;  
background-image: url(..../images/tile_back.gif);  
padding: 0.5em 0.2em;  
font-weight: bold;  
color: #ffffff;  
/* height: 1%; */  
}
```

Then I went back to my navMain code and added the highlighted line:

```
#navMain ul {  
margin: 0;  
padding: 0.5em 0em;  
list-style-type: none;  
text-align: center;  
font-size: 12px;  
font-weight: bold;  
}
```

And it fixed the problem.

However, if I find elsewhere on the site I'm having issues with commenting out that line, I will need to separate the `#navMainWrapper` section and uncomment the line for the other sections.



Why did I choose to comment it out instead of just deleting it? Because if I do find there's a problem elsewhere in the site, I'll see it there and know to separate out the section and uncomment the line.

Are you starting to see the correlation between the PHP files and the **stylesheet.css** file? If you're totally new to CSS it can be a nightmare. And I'll let you in on a secret -- I am NOT a CSS expert. But the fact that I can figure this stuff out is proof that if I can do it, you can do it. You don't have to be a programmer or an expert to create a custom look.

This was a really long section, but I think we covered some important things. You learned how to relate the stylesheet to the PHP code, and how to separate stylesheet code for different elements to get the result you want.

Always keep in mind there is frequently more than one way to accomplish something with stylesheet code. If you are very proficient in CSS and can see a way to make it easier, go for it. Some people are not good with CSS and need a quick and dirty way to make necessary changes, and they might not use the knowledge again.

Don't be afraid to experiment -- that's what the undo feature is for!

Something you should have noticed by now is I am not changing style tags in the PHP code. I'm doing it all in the stylesheet. Yes, I manipulated code in the **tpl_header.php** file, but I did it for the physical construction of the site.

CSS controls format (and some layout); PHP and HTML are for structure, layout, and content.

I like to make one change at a time, save the file, then upload it and refresh my browser. That way, I can immediately see when a change does what it should (or breaks the site!) and if it isn't right, I can use the undo feature in my software to reverse the change, save the file, and upload the corrected version.

I strongly recommend newbies to CSS use this method, rather than using a WYSIWYG program, doing it all off-line, and then uploading. The time you think you're saving by writing it in advance might be eaten away by the time you spend debugging and fixing things. If you do it one step at a time, you get immediate results, good or bad.

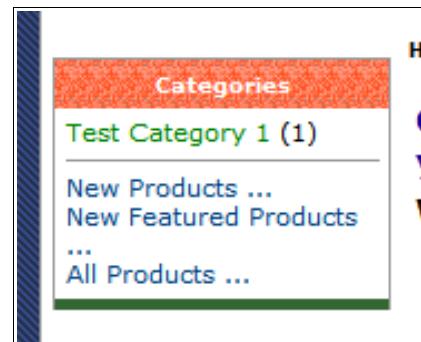
If you create a stylesheet totally from scratch, I also recommend the one-step method for stylesheet creation. Then you can see exactly what's going on as you create the site.

As we chip away at the stylesheet code, we're learning how to make changes to the site. Maybe not huge changes, but they all contribute to the site's overall appearance and feel.

Let's take a look at the sideboxes. Now that we've changed the color scheme, the green link color (where it says Test Category 1) and the green spacer at the bottom of the box don't work very well. We need to make changes.

Look in the stylesheet file for the following code snippet:

```
.leftBoxContainer, .rightBoxContainer {  
    margin: 0em;  
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;  
    border-bottom: 5px solid #336633;  
    margin-top: 1.5em;  
}
```

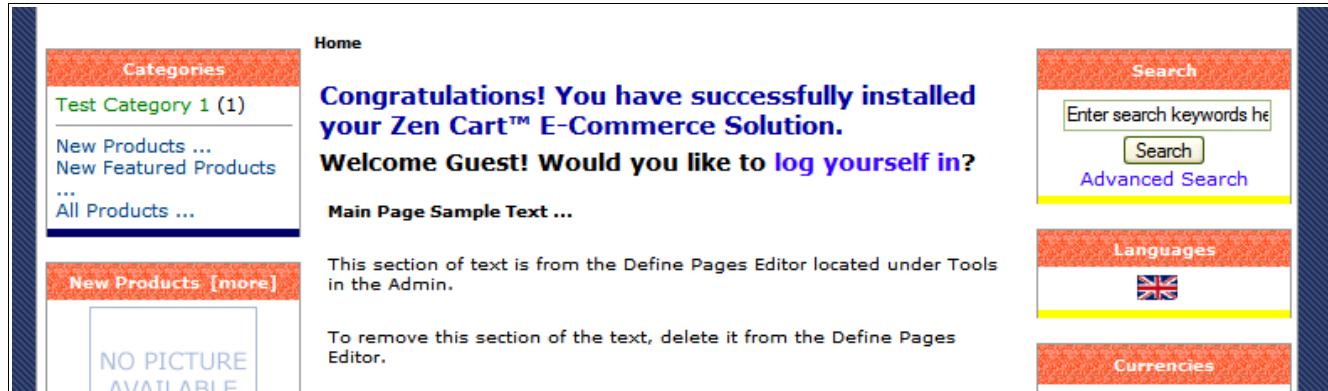


Notice the border-bottom setting? Change the color. I changed mine to a dark blue to match the background.

```
.leftBoxContainer, .rightBoxContainer {
    margin: 0em;
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;
    border-bottom: 5px solid #000066;
    margin-top: 1.5em;
}
```



This is what my code now looks like. Preview to make sure all the boxes were changed. And as you can see, there is a left and right box setting. You could change them separately if you wanted, by breaking out the `.rightBoxContainer` div and making different changes to it.



Why? Well, that's up to you, isn't it? What if it suits your template to have different colors? I have no idea how your site is set up. But this is how you can make those changes.

The code for the above example (with yellow for the right boxes) looks like this:

```
.leftBoxContainer {
    margin: 0em;
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;
    border-bottom: 5px solid #000066;
    margin-top: 1.5em;
}

.rightBoxContainer {
    margin: 0em;
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;
    border-bottom: 5px solid yellow;
    margin-top: 1.5em;
}
```

Not difficult.

What if you wanted a thicker or thinner border at the bottom? Or eliminate it altogether?

This is what the box looks like with the border-bottom setting changed to 10px instead of 5px.



If you don't want a bottom border area at all, change your code like this:

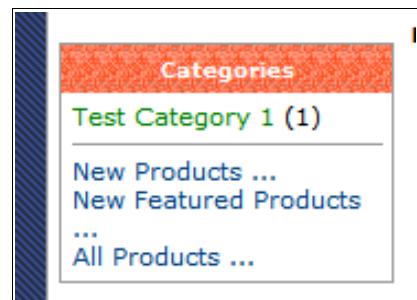
```
.leftBoxContainer, .rightBoxContainer {  
    margin: 0em;  
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;  
border-bottom: 5px solid #000066;  
    margin-top: 1.5em;  
}
```

Delete the highlighted, struck-through section of code and save to your site and you will have just the thin border around your box.



If you want to replace the colored bottom with a background image, you can do that too. Let's say you want the header image to repeat along the bottom of the box. You would change your code to look like the following.

```
.leftBoxContainer, .rightBoxContainer {  
    margin: 0em;  
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;  
padding-bottom: 15px;  
background-image: url(..../images/tile_back.gif);  
background-position: bottom center;  
background-repeat: repeat-x;  
    margin-top: 1.5em;  
}
```



The highlighted lines are the code I added. You could adjust the bottom padding setting accordingly. If you want to have a solid image that doesn't repeat, set the background-repeat to no-repeat and adjust the position accordingly.

Remember, the width of the sideboxes is controlled in the admin panel, under **Configuration-->Layout Settings**. If you don't want your bottom box image to repeat, you need to create an image the correct size and make adjustments to the box width accordingly.



You can also change the color, style, and width of the borders. Or eliminate them altogether.

How did I turn my line from solid grey to dashed black?

```
.leftBoxContainer, .rightBoxContainer {  
    margin: 0em;  
    border: 1px dashed black;  
    border-bottom: 5px solid #000066;  
    margin-top: 1.5em;  
}
```

There's the code. You try it. There are all sorts of things you can do with CSS code!

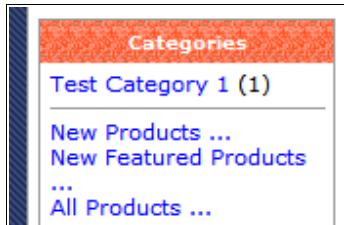
What about the category link color? Where do we change that?

Look for a section of code in the stylesheet that looks like this:

```
/* categories box parent and child categories */  
A.category-top, A.category-top:visited {  
    color: #008000;  
    text-decoration: none;  
}  
A.category-links, A.category-links:visited {  
    color: #004080;  
    text-decoration: none;  
}  
A.category-subs, A.category-products, A.category-subs:visited, A.category-products:visited {  
    color: #FF0000;  
    text-decoration: none;  
}
```

It's down towards the bottom of the file. In my stylesheet, it was around line 620, but it could be a different line number in yours. Start making changes to suit

you, and again, you can break out different elements as needed to customize your site.



I changed mine to blue. Change yours to whatever you want.

Again, if you use FireFox and the Firebug plug-in, finding these elements is a LOT easier.

And you might want to make your links different colors or even different weights so people realize they are links when they mouseover. A change in color or weight will help them see the link easier.



I can even change the font styles if I want. Notice it's now bold? I accomplished this by adding one line of text.

```
/* categories box parent and child categories */
A.category-top, A.category-top:visited {
    color: blue;
    text-decoration: none;
    font-weight: bold;
}
```

See how easy this is once you understand how the stylesheet works in relation to the code?

And keep in mind that with IE, not all CSS will work. What does and doesn't work? I honestly can't tell you. There is a lot of documentation both on the Zen Cart™ support site and elsewhere on the internet about this. If you can make a change take effect in FireFox but not in IE, start researching to see if there's a workaround.

What if you want to change how the center boxes appears? It's the same process. If you look through the stylesheet, you'll see specific divs for different

center boxes. That means you can change one and not the others, or you can apply changes universally across the template. You have to locate the code, make changes, and see what works and what doesn't.

What if you wanted to change the background color of the side boxes? Again, easy!

```
.sideBoxContent {  
    background-color: #ffff66;  
    padding: 0.4em;  
}
```

I changed the highlighted color code.



Be careful when changing backgrounds for boxes. Make sure it's not difficult to read the text. Use contrasts that are easy on the eyes. Remember your intended audience and don't forget that just because you like something and think it's cool, it doesn't mean your customers will like it or find it easy to read! If a customer can't easily read your site, they won't stick around to buy from you! Avoid busy backgrounds behind text. If you must use a background image behind large areas of text, make sure to fade it so it doesn't interfere with the text.

Making Your Own Template

What if I want to get a little more radical? What if I want to make more drastic changes to the look and layout of my store?

Let's start from scratch and make a whole "new" site template. I mean really start from scratch.

Let's call our new template **plainblue**. Why? Just because.

This part will be a repeat of what we did earlier for the orange template. On your computer, create new directories for the new template.

```
includes/templates/plainblue/css  
includes/templates/plainblue/images  
includes/templates/plainblue/common  
includes/templates/plainblue/buttons/english  
includes/templates/plainblue/templates  
includes/templates/plainblue/sideboxes
```

```
includes/languages/plainblue
includes/languages/english/plainblue
includes/languages/english/html_includes/plainblue
includes/languages/english/extra_definitions/plainblue
```

Got it? This part is all review. If you're struggling, go back to the beginning of this section and repeat it until it makes sense.

Create your **includes/templates/plainblue/template_info.php** file.

If you don't remember the code you need, here it is:

```
<?php
$template_name = 'plainblue';
$template_version = '1.0';
$template_author = 'Lesli Richardson (c)2008';
$template_description = 'This is a blue-themed template.';
$template_screenshot = '';
?>
```

Remember, put your name, and for description, put whatever you want.

Next, I want you to create a **includes/templates/plainblue/css/stylesheet.css** file. I want you to make the code look like this:

```
/**
 * Main CSS Stylesheet
 *
 * @package templateSystem
 */
```

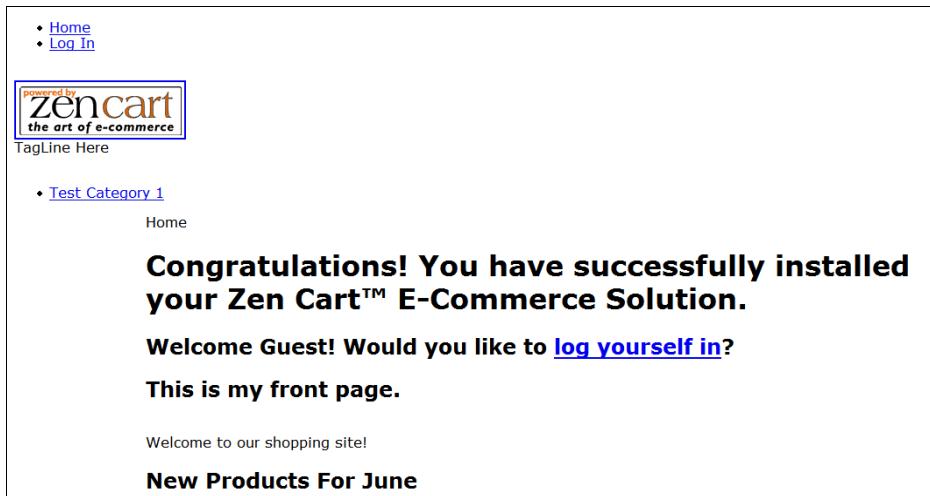
That's it. Nothing else. As you start to add stuff from other stylesheets, you'll need to credit those stylesheets in your comments.

Why this simple? Because we're going to build the template from the ground up. Don't worry -- we'll add to it, but I want you to see how the stylesheet controls the site.

Upload the new directories and the stylesheet and template info files to your server. You can copy over the **print_stylesheet.css** and **stylesheet_css_buttons.css** files, but nothing else.

Install the template.

Your front page should resemble what I have pictured. In other words, not much.



Keep in mind search engines like Google see your page like this. They don't care what it looks like -- they read text only. This is why content is VERY important! Many cell phones see websites like this. And so do visually impaired persons who use screen readers.

Zen Cart™ also pulls from the **template_default** directory to display anything not defined by your **plainblue** template.

In the Admin control panel, go into the **Tools-->Layout Boxes Controller** menu and use the reset feature if necessary.

We'll create a two-column site. This means deactivating the right column and using only the left and center boxes. We will do this before we "pretty up" the site.

Using the Layout Boxes Controller in the Admin control panel, either turn off all right sideboxes or set them to display on the left.

Then you need to copy the **template_default tpl_main_page.php** file to your **includes/templates/plainblue/common/** directory.

Towards the TOP of the file, make the following code change to this section:

```
* <br />
* $flag_disable_header = true;<br />
* $flag_disable_left = true;<br />
* $flag_disable_right = true;<br />
* $flag_disable_footer = true;<br />
```

and make it look like this:

```

* $flag_disable_header = true; <br />
* $flag_disable_left = true; <br /> */
$flag_disable_right = true;
/* $flag_disable_footer = true; <br />
* <br />
```

You have to uncomment the disable line, but you have to make sure you re-comment the rest of the section. Otherwise, ugly things can happen.

This will totally "remove" the right column from your layout. (Yes, you can turn it off in your Admin panel too.)

Next, let's turn off that **logo.gif** file. We did that earlier -- if you don't remember how, go back. This means creating a **tpl_header.php** file in your **includes/templates/plainblue/common/** directory and uploading it. And again, you should be able to do that.

Okay, the logo is gone. Now what?

Let's do some easy stuff.

In your **stylesheet.css** file, add the following code:

```

body {
    margin: 4;
    font-family: Verdana, arial, sans-serif;
    font-size: 14px;
    color: #000066;
    background-color: #0099ff;
}
```

And save it to your server. When you refresh, your text should be a dark blue and the left column should no longer be jammed tight against the left side of the screen.

Oh yeah, your whole page is blue. *LOL*

What? You don't want your whole page to be blue? Okay, we'll fix that.

Add the following code to your stylesheet:

```
#mainWrapper {
    background-color: #ffffff;
    text-align: left;
    width: 100%;
    vertical-align: top;
}
```

And that should take care of your "blues."

- [Home](#)
- [Log In](#)

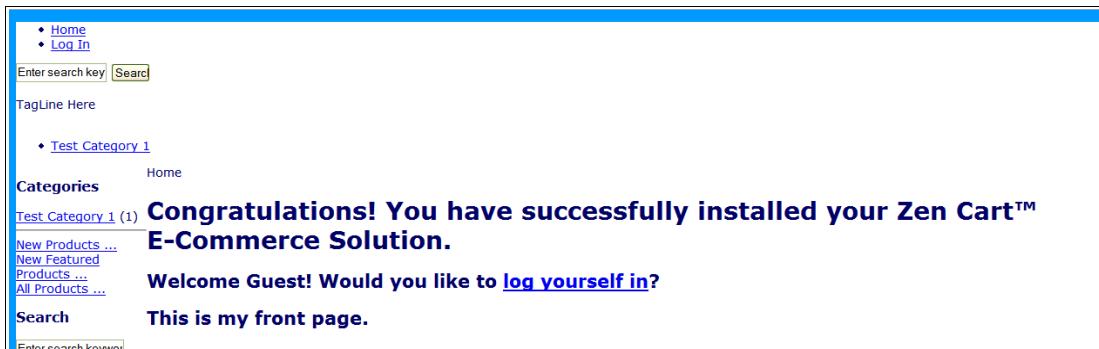
TagLine Here

- [Test Category 1](#)

Home

Categories

Sorry, couldn't resist! You should have something that resembles mine.



What now? This is pretty sucky, isn't it?

Create a graphic that's 500x100 pixels in size. Use a plain white background and make it a text-only graphic. Something like what I have pictured.

Yes, there's a reason I offset the text so it's towards the bottom of the image!

Save it as **header_bg.jpg** and upload it to your **plainblue/images** template folder.

Add the following code to your stylesheet file:

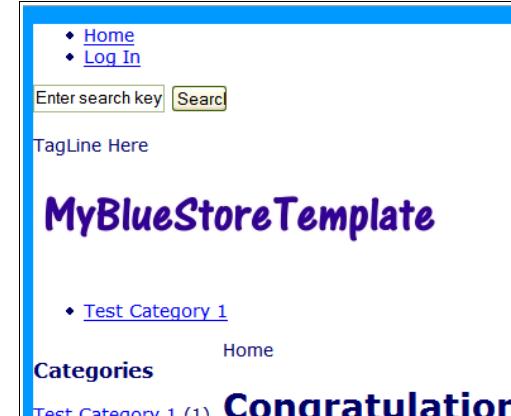
```
#logoWrapper{  
    background-image: url(../images/header_bg.jpg);  
    background-repeat: no-repeat;  
    background-color: #ffffff;  
    height:100px;  
}
```

And you should have something that looks like mine.

Do you remember how to remove the TagLine Here message? You'll have to create a custom file. It's the **includes/languages/english/header.php** file. And you need to make a copy of that file and save it as **includes/languages/english/plainblue/header.php** so you have an override for your template.

Change this section:

A white rectangular box with a thin black border, intended to hold a graphic image.



```

// added defines for header alt and text
define('HEADER_ALT_TEXT', 'Powered by Zen Cart™ :: The Art of
E-Commerce');
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', 'TagLine Here');
define('HEADER_LOGO_WIDTH', '192px');
define('HEADER_LOGO_HEIGHT', '64px');
define('HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE', 'logo.gif');

```

So it reads like this:

```

// added defines for header alt and text
define('HEADER_ALT_TEXT', 'My Blue Template');
define('HEADER_SALES_TEXT', '');
define('HEADER_LOGO_WIDTH', '');
define('HEADER_LOGO_HEIGHT', '');
define('HEADER_LOGO_IMAGE', '');

```

Well, it doesn't have to have anything in the `header_alt_text` line if you don't want. But you get the idea.

I offset my logo to make room for the navigation links and search box. I left the background white so I wouldn't have to fuss around with making a tiling background to match the logo.

How do we make that work though?

You can either use the Firebug tool or go into the **tpl_header.php** code and see what div codes are called from the stylesheet.

I can also make it easy on you and tell you what to add to your stylesheet.

```

#navMainWrapper {
    margin: 0;
    padding: 2px 2px;
    font-weight: bold;
}

#navMain ul, #navMain ul li {
    margin: 0;
    list-style-type: none;
    text-align: left;
    font-size: 12px;
    font-weight: bold;
    display: inline;
}

#navMainSearch {

```

```
float: right;  
}
```

This should give you something like what I have pictured.



We are creating a scalable template, one that should work regardless of the browser resolution setting and screen width.

Let's move the navigation and search box down so they are overlapping the image. We did this earlier. (Now you understand why I showed you some of those tricks.) You have to change the **tpl_header.php** file.



It's not a huge difference -- I can always go back and adjust the logo to make the text larger if I want. Or I can make the navigation text larger. Like this.



That's better.

Let's work on the sidebox column next. We need to make some changes. Because right now, we have no boxes!

I spent some time tweaking the stylesheet and ended up with this. No, we're not done yet. Here's the code I added to my stylesheet to get what I have up to this point.

First, you need to add this snippet of code up high, under the body section.



```
h3 {  
    font-size: 11px;  
}
```

This takes care of the headings in the boxes. (I know that stylistically, it's more proper to use the em tags, but I'm an old-fashioned girl.)

Then, under the last section we added to the stylesheet, at the bottom, add this:

```
.leftBoxHeading, .centerBoxHeading {  
    margin: 0em;  
    color: #ffffff;  
    background-color: #000066;  
    padding: 5px 5px;  
}  
  
.leftBoxContainer {  
    margin: 3px;  
    padding: 3px;  
    border: 2px dashed #000066;  
    margin-top: 2px;  
}  
  
.sideBoxContent {  
    background-color: #ffffff;  
    padding: 2px;  
}  
  
h3.leftBoxHeading a:hover, h3.leftBoxHeading a {  
    color: #ffffff;  
    text-decoration: none;  
}  
  
.centerColumn {  
    padding-left: 15px;  
}
```

And save it to your server. (If you want your headers to have a background image instead of a color, you should be able to change that. We did it earlier in this tutorial -- go find the code, make your background graphic, and change as desired.)

The breadcrumb navigation is buried. We need to fix that.

One thing I'm noticing as I use Firebug is my center column is actually



overlapping my left column (which is why the breadcrumb navigation looks weird). We need to fix that.

You can try the hit-and-miss method, or you can use Firebug to find what you need to fix.

In your stylesheet, under the `#mainWrapper` code section, add the following:

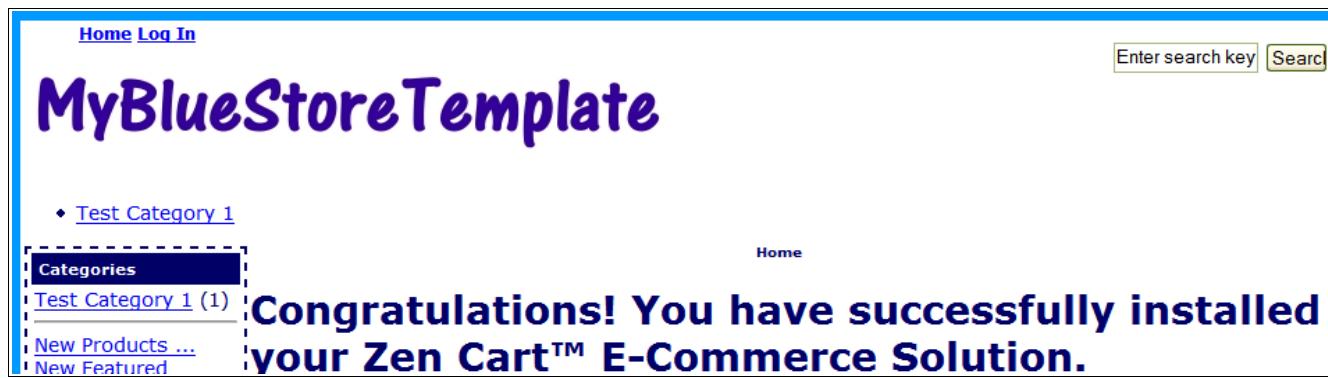
```
#navColumnOneWrapper, #navColumnTwoWrapper, #mainWrapper {  
    margin: auto;  
}  
#navColumnOneWrapper, #navColumnTwoWrapper {  
    margin-left: 5px;  
    margin-right: 15px;  
}
```

(And if you wanted, you could change the breadcrumb to center instead of left. Or you can turn it off altogether.)

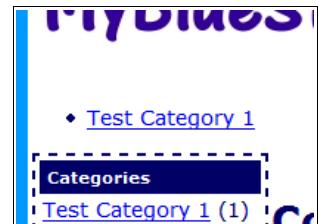
Add this code to the bottom of your stylesheet file:

```
#navBreadCrumb {  
    font-size: 10px;  
    font-weight: bold;  
    text-align: center;  
}
```

And save it to your server. When you refresh, your screen should resemble mine.



Notice the extra link above the categories box? This is the Categories Tab and is an Admin panel setting. If you only have a couple of categories, you might elect to use this tab setting instead of the regular categories box. That's up to you. In this case, we're turning it off.



In the Admin panel, go to **Configuration-->Layout Settings**. Down towards the bottom of that menu, you'll see the **Categories-Tabs**

Menu ON/OFF setting. Change it to off and refresh your page.



Have you noticed that so far, everything we've changed has either been in the Admin control panel or a template override file. We

have made absolutely NO changes to core (classic) files.

I don't like how the center box background goes all the way across the window. It's okay for the three-column layout, but I don't like the way it looks. Let's change that.



I know I had you combine the left and center box heading codes earlier. We're going to separate them.

You should have this now:

```
.leftBoxHeading, .centerBoxHeading {
    margin: 0em;
    color: #ffffff;
    background-color: #000066;
    padding: 5px 5px;
}
```

We're going to change it to this:

```
.leftBoxHeading {  
    margin: 0em;  
    color: #ffffff;  
    background-color: #000066;  
    padding: 5px 5px;  
}  
  
.centerBoxHeading {  
    color: #000066;  
    text-align: center;  
}
```

See how the center boxes now have their own heading codes?

We really need to define the center boxes. You don't have to, but I want to.

Let's add this above the `#centerBoxHeading` code:

```
.centerBoxWrapper {  
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;  
    margin: 15px;  
}
```

This will give us a solid border around our boxes.



But our product looks weird aligned to the left like that. Let's center it.

Add the highlighted line to the code:

```
.centerBoxWrapper {  
    border: 1px solid #9a9a9a;  
    margin: 15px;  
    text-align: center;  
}
```



When we look at the bottom of the template, we see the footer presents the same problem as the header.



You need a copy of **tpl_footer.php** file copied to your new template folder's **common** directory, just like we did with the **tpl_header.php** file.

Well, okay, you don't have to copy it, but a lot of people want to do things like add Google or other ad banners, and it's easy to do it in this file.

You can also use the file (if you don't have Firebug) to figure out the stylesheet codes you need to edit.

Add the highlighted code to your stylesheet file under the existing code below:

```
#navMain ul, #navMain ul li {  
    margin: 0;  
    list-style-type: none;  
    text-align: left;  
    font-size: 12px;  
    font-weight: bold;  
    display: inline;  
}  
  
#navSupp ul, #navMain ul li {  
    margin: 0;  
    list-style-type: none;  
    text-align: center;  
    display: inline;  
}
```

This will make your navigation links appear inline in the center of the footer.

If you have the IP address set to display, you can change that and the site copyright info to display in the center of the page. Add this to the bottom of your stylesheet.

```
#siteinfoLegal,  
#siteinfoIP {  
    text-align: center;  
}
```

[Home](#)
Your IP Address is: 68.56.164.208
Copyright © 2007 Zen Cart. Powered by Zen Cart

I don't like the blaring message at the top of the page. I'm going to change that font style.

Add the following highlighted code to your stylesheet in the indicated position.

```
h1 {  
    font-size: 14px;  
}  
  
h3 {  
    font-size: 11px;  
}
```

And your front page is now "styled!"

The screenshot shows a Zen Cart storefront. At the top, there's a header bar with 'Home' and 'Log In' links, and search fields. The main title 'MyBlueStoreTemplate' is prominently displayed. On the left, there's a sidebar with a 'Categories' section containing links to 'Test Category 1 (1)', 'New Products ...', 'New Featured Products ...', and 'All Products ...'. Below this is a 'Search' section with a search input field. The main content area features a success message: 'Congratulations! You have successfully installed your Zen Cart™ E-Commerce Solution.' It also includes a guest welcome message: 'Welcome Guest! Would you like to [log yourself in?](#)' and a bold statement: 'This is my front page.'

No, it's not perfect. There are lots of other style tags you need to tweak, not just for the main display, but for things like the shopping cart, payment and shipping modules, etc.

How do you merge your existing site and Zen Cart™? Well, there's no easy

answer to that question. A lot of it depends on your existing site. There are so many different configurations and possibilities, I cannot tell you a solution that will work for everyone. My suggestion is to follow this list of ideas:

- If your existing site is already constructed with CSS, see where you can merge the stylesheets and use similar settings.
- Gather information on your color and graphic scheme. If your current logo will not work with Zen Cart™, you'll have to modify it or create a similar logo that will work. Create matching buttons -- now you know how to modify the sideboxes, you can easily blend existing graphics on your current site to match your Zen Cart™ site. Don't forget backgrounds.
- Match font styles and sizes.
- Match layout -- you can just as easily turn off the left column and set the sideboxes to display to the right. Or use a three-column layout. It's up to you.
- Include similar top and bottom navigation menus. You know how to edit the navigation menu in Zen Cart™ in the header file, so match it to your existing site, and vice versa.
- Depending on how your current site is constructed, and depending on your level of expertise, you might not be able to get a perfect clone of your existing site with Zen Cart™ without paying an expert. If you're willing to experiment, you can probably get it close enough so your customers don't notice the difference.

You should now be able to sit down with your existing site, go through it, and see where you can use certain elements in Zen Cart™ to make the two sites match. Add some EZ-Pages links and you can have navigation that bounces back and forth between your Zen Cart™ site and your existing site.

If you are using a CMS or blogging software for your current site, you might be able to translate some of the look into your Zen Cart™ store (or vice-versa). If you are not using a dynamic website system (plain HTML) you can easily tweak your existing site to more closely match your Zen Cart™ site. (And sometimes, it's easier to do that.)

If you find an existing Zen Cart™ template you like, you can "deconstruct" it like we did here. You can peel it apart and use what you want and discard the rest. (Copyright laws apply!) You might even have to merge elements from several different templates to achieve the result you want if your programming skills are average. (But it might be cheaper to buy two or three templates and merge them to make your own than to pay an expert for several hours of work to make a custom template!)

And don't forget that while Zen Cart™ has its own idiosyncrasies, it's still CSS-based. This means you can investigate neat CSS tricks and apply them to your site. You might have to add extra div tags to the template files (don't forget to use override files!) and create new styles in the stylesheet, but I've seen some pretty neat things done with CSS. And if you're looking to create a store that in no way resembles the original Zen Cart™ classic template, that's the route you might want to explore.

Other Template Changes

When you start making template changes, you need to keep in mind how the override system is set up. There aren't just template files, there are also (usually) "functional" files, and language files. And you have to remember whether or not something is also controlled through the Admin panel.

Some template changes can be made on template files, some on functional files, some on language files, etc. Some functional files can also be overrode as a custom file for your template.

Rearranging Page Layouts

What you can do with Zen Cart™ is limited only by your skills and imagination. Keep in mind when you upgrade to newer versions of Zen Cart™, you should read the change log and compare the new files to your custom files to see if there are any functionality changes. If you're simply rearranging the location of elements, you may be okay.

For example, what if you wanted to reconfigure the product information page?

Remember -- the code is commented. Use the comments to help you figure out what you're looking at! The following is from the **tpl_product_info_display.php** file. I pulled it from the **includes/templates/template_default/templates** folder. You would save it as **includes/templates/CUSTOM/templates/tpl_product_info_display.php** so Zen Cart™ uses it instead of the default file.

For example, this is from the file.

```
<!--bof Product date added/available-->
<?php
    if ($products_date_available > date('Y-m-d H:i:s')) {
        if ($flag_show_product_info_date_available == 1) {
?>
        <p id="productDateAvailable" class="productGeneral
centeredContent"><?php echo sprintf(TEXT_DATE_AVAILABLE,
zen_date_long($products_date_available)); ?></p>
```

```

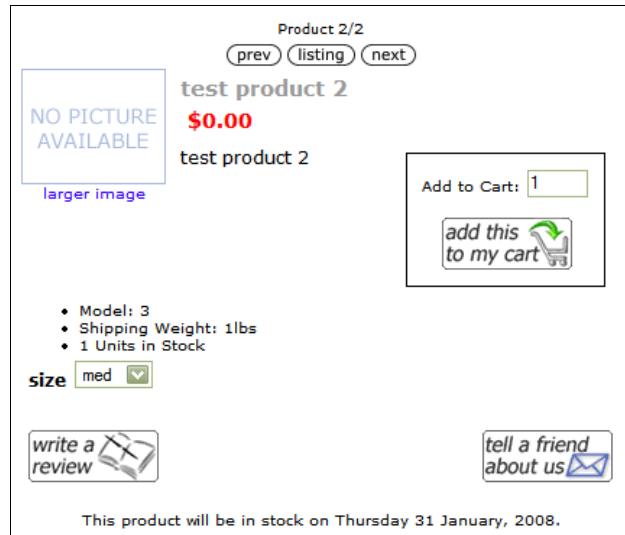
<?php
    }
} else {
    if ($flag_show_product_info_date_added == 1) {
?>
    <p id="productDateAdded" class="productGeneral
centeredContent"><?php echo sprintf(TEXT_DATE_ADDED,
zen_date_long($products_date_added)); ?></p>
<?php
    } // $flag_show_product_info_date_added
}
?>
<!--eof Product date added/available -->

```

Notice the bof and eof tags in the comment sections? Beginning of and End of tags. So you know this entire section contains the date added/available code information. If you "pre-sell" a lot of products, you might want this line of code to appear earlier in the file. (You do not want to comment it out altogether -- this is one of the settings you can switch in the admin Product Type menu.)

This is what the product information screen looks like normally.

But what if you want the date to appear at the top for better visibility?



So I'll move it in the code and put it so it's right below the previous/next navigation.

Now it's more visible. And I can use CSS to modify the font size and style to make it even more visible.

Wasn't that easy?

So if you want your add to cart code at the top of the page instead of the bottom, you can do that too. Simply find the block of code, then cut and paste it where you want. Test it in a variety of browsers to

ensure the display is what you want.

One caution -- if you are dealing with fields that have sort orders defined in the admin control panel, try rearranging them there first. If you start moving code around in template files, it could break admin panel functionality.

Sideboxes - Display Only if Logged In

There are a lot of different things you can do with sideboxes, and I'm sure this section won't deal with all of the possible questions.

One of the biggies is people want some sideboxes to show only if customers are logged in. We can do this, but it requires overriding all of the sidebox files you want to have this feature.

Look in **includes/modules/sideboxes** to find the files. These are the function files, NOT the template files. Download the files you want to edit.

Create a folder called **includes/modules/sideboxes/CUSTOM** (where you substitute your custom folder name for CUSTOM). After you edit the files, upload them to this folder.

What if you want specials visible only to those customers who are logged in? You can turn off the category box link and center column boxes in admin, leaving just the sidebox. Then you need to edit the **includes/modules/sideboxes/CUSTOM/specials.php** file. This is what the file looks like before I edited it.

What I need to add is a statement to check whether or not the customer is logged in. I'll replace line 13 (in my example) with the

```
11 // test if box should display
12 // $show_specials= false;
13 // $show_specials= false;
14
15 if (isset($_GET['products_id'])) {
16   $show_specials= false;
17 } else {
18   $show_specials= true;
19 }
20
21 if ($show_specials == true) {
22   //random specials sidebar product ...
```

```
12 // test if box should display
13 // $show_specials= false;
14
15 // test if box should display
16 if (!$_SESSION['customer_id']) {
17   $show_specials= false;
18 } else {
19   $show_specials= true;
20 }
```

following. Notice I commented out the original lines?

Note: This will work for any sidebox. You must replace where it says \$show_specials with the appropriate sidebox, such as

`$show_featured` or whatever.

When I save this and upload it to my custom file, the sidebox still shows, even when logged out. This is because there is another statement overriding my check statement, and that's the next section.

Comment out the following lines and check the functionality. If you know PHP you can add a conditional statement to check for both settings before allowing the box to display.

NOTE: You need to have products in the specials section! Otherwise, the box won't show no matter what.

```

11 // test if box should display
12 // $show_specials= false;
13
14
15 // test if box should display
16 if (!$SESSION['customer_id']) {
17 $show_specials= false;
18 } else {
19 $show_specials= true;
20 }
21
22 // if (isset($_GET['products_id'])) {
23 // $show_specials= false;
24 // } else {
25 // $show_specials= true;
26 //}
27
28 if ($show_specials == true) {
29 $random_specials_sidebox_product_query

```

Another note: depending on the sidebox, you might or might not have another section of code to comment out like I did. If you add the login check and the box still shows, look to see what other statements might be overriding your check and experiment with commenting them out.

Customizing the Category Sidebox

Some of these modifications can be applied to other sideboxes.

The file you'll need for this is in the **includes/templates/template_default/sideboxes/tpl_categories**.

If you don't have that directory (sideboxes) in your custom template folder, create it now. Then you can just copy all the files from the **template_default/sideboxes** folder into it.

Keep an original copy of the **tpl_categories.php** file on your hard drive. This is the one you will NOT edit. (Yes, you'll still have it in the template_default directory, but why risk overwriting it?)

There are third-party modifications to change the category sidebox display

properties. But some people find those tricky to use or would rather make their own changes because they only want to change one or two things and not a whole variety of things.

The category sidebox layout is controlled by the **tpl_categories.php** file. How that file is displayed is also controlled, in part, by the **stylesheet.css**.

Use your text or PHP editor to open the **tpl_categories.php** file on your computer and take a look at the code. My notes to you in the code are highlighted like this.

```
<?php
/**
 * Side Box Template
 *
 * @package templateSystem
 * @copyright Copyright 2003-2006 Zen Cart Development Team
 * @copyright Portions Copyright 2003 osCommerce
 * @license http://www.zen-cart.com/license/2_0.txt GNU Public
License V2.0
 * @version $Id: tpl_categories.php 4162 2006-08-17 03:55:02Z
ajeh $
 */
$content = "";
```

This line applies the div id used by the **stylesheet.css** file. If you wanted a different style for the categories box, you could create it in the **stylesheet.css** file and apply it here.

```
$content .= '<div id="' . str_replace('_', '-', $box_id .
'Content') . '" class="sideBoxContent">' . "\n";
for ($i=0;$i<sizeof($box_categories_array);$i++) {
    switch(true) {
```

Explanation on how to make a specific category link stand out differently by using css and the **stylesheet** to change it. Prime reason why you should read the programmers' comments in the code.

```
// to make a specific category stand out define a new class in
the stylesheet example: A.category-holiday
// uncomment the select below and set the cPath=3 to the cPath=
your_categories_id
// many variations of this can be done
//      case ($box_categories_array[$i]['path'] == 'cPath=3'):
//          $new_style = 'category-holiday';
//          break;
//      case ($box_categories_array[$i]['top'] == 'true'):
//          $new_style = 'category-top';
//          break;
```

```

        case ($box_categories_array[$i]['has_sub_cat']):
            $new_style = 'category-subs';
            break;
        default:
            $new_style = 'category-products';
        }
    if
(zen_get_product_types_to_category($box_categories_array[$i]['path'])
== 3 or ($box_categories_array[$i]['top'] != 'true' and
SHOW_CATEGORIES_SUBCATEGORIES_ALWAYS != 1)) {
    // skip if this is for the document box (==3)
} else {

    This line starts the "link" to display the category.
    $content .= '<a class="' . $new_style . '" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT, $box_categories_array[$i]['path']) .
'">';

    if ($box_categories_array[$i]['current']) {
        if ($box_categories_array[$i]['has_sub_cat']) {
            $content .= '<span class="category-subs-parent">' .
$box_categories_array[$i]['name'] . '</span>';
        } else {
            $content .= '<span class="category-subs-selected">' .
$box_categories_array[$i]['name'] . '</span>';
        }
    } else {
        $content .= $box_categories_array[$i]['name'];
    }

    if ($box_categories_array[$i]['has_sub_cat']) {
        $content .= CATEGORIES_SEPARATOR;
    }
    $content .= '</a>; The closing tage of the category link.

```

This section checks to see if the category counts setting is set to display or not.

```

    if (SHOW_COUNTS == 'true') {
        if ((CATEGORIES_COUNT_ZERO == '1' and
$box_categories_array[$i]['count'] == 0) or $box_categories_array[$i]
['count'] >= 1) {
            $content .= CATEGORIES_COUNT_PREFIX .
$box_categories_array[$i]['count'] . CATEGORIES_COUNT_SUFFIX;
        }
    }

```

The following line adds a break after each line.

```

    $content .= '<br />' . "\n";
}
}
```

The following section checks to see if the New, Featured, all, and Specials are set to display, and if they are, display them and place a horizontal line between the sections.

```

        if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_SPECIALS == 'true' or
SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_NEW == 'true' or
SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_FEATURED_PRODUCTS == 'true' or
SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_ALL == 'true') {
    // display a separator between categories and links
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_SEPARATOR_LINK == '1') {
        Default horizontal line that separates the category list from
other links in the box.
        $content .= '<hr id="catBoxDivider" />' . "\n";
    }
    Specials section
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_SPECIALS == 'true') {
        $show_this = $db->Execute("select s.products_id from " .
TABLE_SPECIALS . " s where s.status= 1 limit 1");
        if ($show_this->RecordCount() > 0) {
            Notice the links class for the stylesheet.css file is defined?
            You could change it by creating a new one and placing it in the
            stylesheet.css file. This applies to all the "sections."
            $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_SPECIALS) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_SPECIALS . '</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
        }
    }
    New Products section
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_NEW == 'true') {
        // display limits
        // $display_limit = zen_get_products_new_timelimit();
        $display_limit = zen_get_new_date_range();

        $show_this = $db->Execute("select p.products_id
                                    from " . TABLE_PRODUCTS . " p
                                    where p.products_status = 1 " .
$display_limit . " limit 1");
        if ($show_this->RecordCount() > 0) {
            $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_PRODUCTS_NEW) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_WHATS_NEW . '</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
        }
    }
    Featured Products section
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_FEATURED_PRODUCTS == 'true') {
        $show_this = $db->Execute("select products_id from " .
TABLE_FEATURED . " where status= 1 limit 1");
        if ($show_this->RecordCount() > 0) {
            $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_FEATURED_PRODUCTS) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_FEATURED_PRODUCTS . '</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
        }
    }
    All Products listing link
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_ALL == 'true') {

```

```

$content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_PRODUCTS_ALL) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_PRODUCTS_ALL . '</a>' . "\n";
}
}
$content .= '</div>';
?>

```

This is why you need to know a little about HTML, PHP, and CSS to make changes to code files. If you know a little, you'll be able to pick out things like the closing `` tag, the `</div>` tag, etc. in the code.

You can start shuffling code around to make things display differently in the box if you want to. We'll get to that. But for now, I wanted you to see how the file was constructed to display the category links.

So when it displays normally, the category sidebox looks something like this:

Does it make a little more sense now? I don't have any specials defined in my test store, so that link doesn't display.

Make sure when editing code you don't forget to close single-quote sets, don't forget to add a `.` where called for (that's to add a section to an existing line, sort of like using an `&` in a sentence to join two things), and don't forget to put code inside a `;` when called for. This can really mess you up! That's why it's not a bad idea to use a PHP editing program that can highlight syntax issues (like not putting a closing `'` where it's needed!).

I'll refer to approximate line numbers in the code. My line numbers might differ from yours, depending on the software you're using. It's okay if they're not exactly the same line numbers!

Also, keep in mind I'm going to edit files in their default state -- meaning files that have not previously been edited. If you have already installed any third-party mods that made changes to your category display, your files might not look like my examples. That's why I recommend starting with a copy of your default file, so you have a "clean" copy to work from. And also so if you "break" your code, you can immediately upload a default file to your site so it's back in working order! (Yet another reason to play with a "test" store first rather than a live one.)

Don't forget -- some settings are available in the Zen Cart™ admin panel.



Don't go scrambling your code to change things that can be changed with admin panel settings!

Adding Horizontal Lines

Many people want to add horizontal lines to their category box to break up how the categories are listed. This is a very simple modification to the code. It will make our default category list change in appearance from this:



To this.

This is a very easy hack.

Around lines 51-57, look for the following code snippet:

```
if (SHOW_COUNTS == 'true') {
    if ((CATEGORIES_COUNT_ZERO == '1' and
$box_categories_array[$i]['count'] == 0) or $box_categories_array[$i]
['count'] >= 1) {
        $content .= CATEGORIES_COUNT_PREFIX .
$box_categories_array[$i]['count'] . CATEGORIES_COUNT_SUFFIX;
    }
}

$content .= '<br />' . "\n";
```

Make the highlighted change.

```
if (SHOW_COUNTS == 'true') {
    if ((CATEGORIES_COUNT_ZERO == '1' and
$box_categories_array[$i]['count'] == 0) or $box_categories_array[$i]
['count'] >= 1) {
        $content .= CATEGORIES_COUNT_PREFIX .
$box_categories_array[$i]['count'] . CATEGORIES_COUNT_SUFFIX;
    }
}

$content .= '<br />' . '<hr>' . "\n";
```

That is, replace the `
` tag with `<hr>` to create the horizontal line. It'll

create an extra horizontal line above the section links. You can change this by turning it off in the Zen Cart™ admin panel under **Configuration -->Layout Settings --> Categories Separator between links Status.**

Rearranging the Category Box

What if you want the links to New, Featured, Specials, etc. to appear above the category links? This is also easy to do.

Not only will you have to rearrange the links to the sections, you'll also have to move the code snippet that places the horizontal line between the links and the categories.

You also have to be careful where you place your code snippets. one misplaced or missing } can break your code and cause ugly errors.

Let's move the section links first. We have to be careful we place the code snippet in the right place so it's located inside the div tag. Otherwise, the CSS won't properly control how it displays.

Look for the following snippet of code between lines 66-92.

```

if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_SPECIALS == 'true') {
    $show_this = $db->Execute("select s.products_id from " .
TABLE_SPECIALS . " s where s.status= 1 limit 1");
    if ($show_this->RecordCount() > 0) {
        $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_SPECIALS) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_SPECIALS . '</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
    }
}
if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_NEW == 'true') {
// display limits
//      $display_limit = zen_get_products_new_timelimit();
//      $display_limit = zen_get_new_date_range();

$show_this = $db->Execute("select p.products_id
                           from " . TABLE_PRODUCTS . " p
                           where p.products_status = 1 " .
$display_limit . " limit 1");
    if ($show_this->RecordCount() > 0) {
        $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_PRODUCTS_NEW) . '">' .

```

```

CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_WHATS_NEW . '</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
}
}
if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_FEATURED_PRODUCTS == 'true') {
    $show_this = $db->Execute("select products_id from " .
TABLE_FEATURED . " where status= 1 limit 1");
    if ($show_this->RecordCount() > 0) {
        $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_FEATURED_PRODUCTS) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_FEATURED_PRODUCTS . '</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
    }
}
if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_ALL == 'true') {
    $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_PRODUCTS_ALL) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_PRODUCTS_ALL . '</a>' . "\n";
}

```

This code needs to be selected and cut from the file and pasted FOLLOWING line 13:

```

$content .= '<div id="' . str_replace('_', '-', $box_id .
'Content') . '" class="sideBoxContent">' .
"\n";
PASTE CODE SNIPPET HERE!

```

Drop the code snippet AFTER this line.
You'll notice it might render like this:

Okay, not bad, but we need a line break
and need to move the <hr> so it displays after the
section links.

First, the <hr>. Find the following code snippet (originally between lines 61-67, but with the modified file will now be down lower in the file near the bottom):

```

if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_SPECIALS == 'true' or
SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_NEW == 'true' or
SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_FEATURED_PRODUCTS == 'true' or
SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_ALL == 'true') {
    // display a separator between categories and links
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_SEPARATOR_LINK == '1') {
        $content .= '<hr id="catBoxDivider" />' . "\n";
    }
}

```



Don't miss those two closing brackets! This code needs to be selected, cut

from the file, and pasted between the following lines:

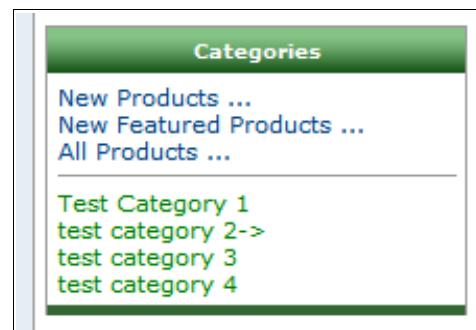
```
    }
    if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_ALL == 'true') {
        $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .
zen_href_link(FILENAME_PRODUCTS_ALL) . '">' .
CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_PRODUCTS_ALL . '</a>' . "\n";
    }
```

PASTE CODE SNIPPET HERE

```
for ($i=0;$i<sizeof($box_categories_array);$i++) {
    switch(true) {
```

When you refresh your screen, you should see this:

Notice it took care of the line break issue?



If you don't

want the horizontal line to display at all, that can be changed in the Admin control panel under **Configuration --> Layout Settings** by editing the **Categories Separator between links Status** setting.



Adding Bullet Characters

Some people want to define their category names with a little * or other character, sort of like a list displays. That's very easy to do.

Remember, I'm working with a default version of the **tpl_categories.php** file. Find the following line of code:

```
if (zen_get_product_types_to_category($box_categories_array[$i]
['path']) == 3 or ($box_categories_array[$i]['top'] != 'true' and
SHOW_CATEGORIES_SUBCATEGORIES_ALWAYS != 1)) {
    // skip if this is for the document box (==3)
} else {
```

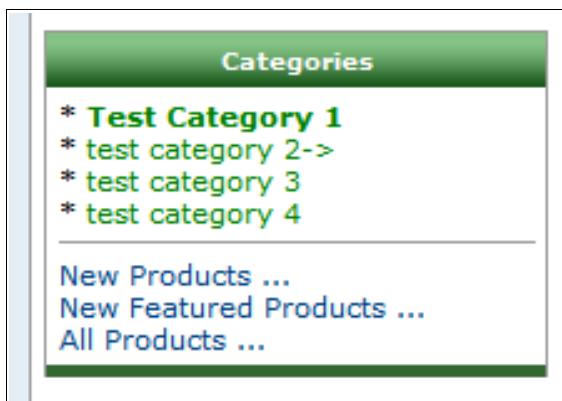
```
$content .= '<a class="' . $new_style . '" . href="' .  
zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT, $box_categories_array[$i]['path']) .  
'">';
```

And make the following change:

```
if  
(zen_get_product_types_to_category($box_categories_array[$i]['path'])  
== 3 or ($box_categories_array[$i]['top'] != 'true' and  
SHOW_CATEGORIES_SUBCATEGORIES_ALWAYS != 1)) {  
    // skip if this is for the document box (==3)  
} else {  
    $content .= '*' . '<a class="' . $new_style . '" .  
href="' . zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT, $box_categories_array[$i]  
['path']) . '">';
```

I added an asterisk and a space between the pair of single quotes, and the period to add it to the display.

As you see, it puts a * and a space before each line.



If you click on the category with a sub-category, you'll see how it displays:

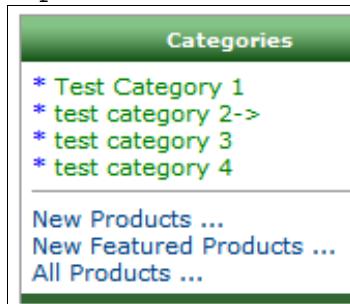


If you don't want Zen Cart™ to display the |_| for the sub-category, you can

change that in the Admin panel by going to: **Configuration --> Layout Settings** and changing the **Categories Separator between the Category Name and Sub Categories** setting.

Notice the asterisks display as black? The links are controlled by the link class defined in the stylesheet. They will change color based upon how you've defined them in their active, hover, and visited states. You can easily define the color and weight of the character you add in the code, with normal HTML code.

```
$content .= '<font color="blue">* </font>' . '<a class="" .  
$new_style . '" . href="' . zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT,  
$box_categories_array[$i]['path']) . '">';
```



That's the "quick and dirty" way to display it. Or you can work with CSS and create a separate define for it that way and embed the div code. It's up to you. (Personally, I prefer the quick and easy hack if it works!)

Adding Links

If you wanted to do away with the Information and More Information sideboxes and add links in the Category box, you can do that as well. Depending on your level of expertise, you might choose to "hard-code" the links in HTML or use PHP to call from the Zen Cart™ software.

HOWEVER: When you code links, make SURE there is NOT a zenid number at the end of the link!!! This is a security issue!

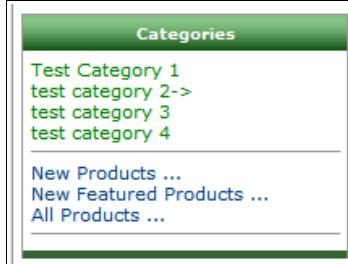
First, personally, I want to add another horizontal line below the section links. I'll simply copy the horizontal line from higher up in the code and paste it inside the code, down at the bottom of the page, as shown below:

```
if (SHOW_CATEGORIES_BOX_PRODUCTS_ALL == 'true') {  
    $content .= '<a class="category-links" href="' .  
zen_href_link(FILENAME_PRODUCTS_ALL) . '"> ' .
```

```

CATEGORIES_BOX_HEADING_PRODUCTS_ALL . '</a>' . "\n";
    }
}
$content .= '<hr id="catBoxDivider" />' . "\n";
$content .= '</div>';
?>

```



That places a new horizontal line below the section links.

When you know what you're looking at in the code, it gets easier to decipher exactly where it should be located.

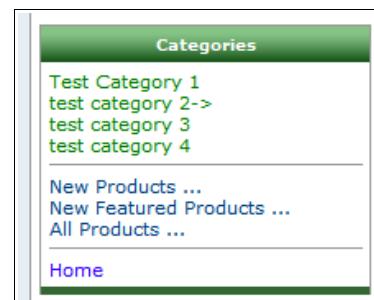
This places the horizontal line inside the same div and applies the same style to it. If you want a different style, you could place it after the div, and then define a new one for it and the new links.

I can add a Home link to take the user back to the front page.

```

$content .= '<hr id="catBoxDivider" />' . "\n";
$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=>Home</a>' . "\n";
$content .= '</div>'

```



Resulting in the following:

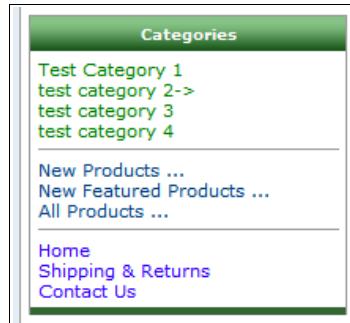
I could add links for Contact Us, Shipping, or whatever I want.

```

$content .= '<hr id="catBoxDivider" />' . "\n";
$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=>Home</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=shippinginfo">Shipping & Returns</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=contact_us">Contact Us</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
$content .= '</div>';
?>

```

Notice I added line breaks to the code?



Of course, using the methods we already discussed, I could put these at the top of the categories box, only I would make sure they were located inside the div tags.

```
$content = "";

$content .= '<div id="' . str_replace('_', '-', $box_id .
'Content') . '" class="sideBoxContent">' . "\n";

$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=>Home</a>' . '<br />' .
"\n";
$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=shippinginfo">Shipping
& Returns</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
$content .= '<a href="index.php?main_page=contact_us">Contact
Us</a>' . '<br />' . "\n";
$content .= '<hr id="catBoxDivider" />' . "\n";
for ($i=0;$i<sizeof($box_categories_array);$i++) {
    switch(true) {
```



So you can get as creative as you want. It's easy to custom-tailor the contents to specifically fit your needs.

Adding Bullet Images

What if you want to add a bullet image to your menu? That's easy to do.

First, create the image to the size you want it to display. Then, upload it to your main images folder. Not your **includes/template/custom/images** folder. It needs to be the main-level Zen Cart™ images folder.

For my purposes, I called my image **bullet_1.gif**.

In the **tpl_categories.php** file, find the following code snippet:

```
$content .= '<a class="' . $new_style . '" href="" .  
zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT, $box_categories_array[$i]['path']) .  
'">';
```

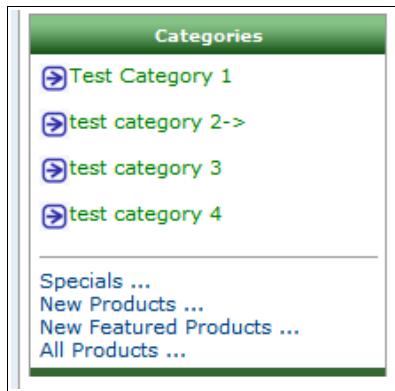
Make the following addition, substituting YOUR file name for the one I used. Again, make SURE you've uploaded your image to your main Zen Cart™ images folder, NOT the one inside your template folder.

```
$content .= '' . '<a class="' .  
$new_style . '" href="" . zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT,  
$box_categories_array[$i]['path']) . '">';
```

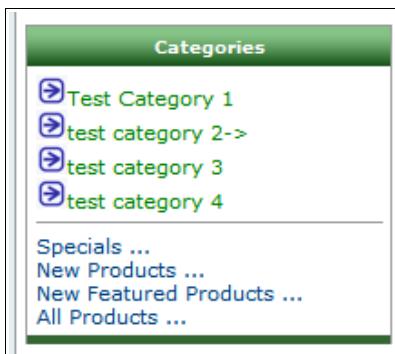
And this is what I get. Yes, the image is too big for this example, but that's not the point. The point is, I get a bullet-style image for each line.



Or how about this look with a more appropriate image.



It's a more appropriately sized image, but when I added it at first, it looked like this.



I didn't like the way it looked, it was a little smooshed and not aligned.

I added an align="left" to the image, and then it aligned the image with the text the way I wanted, but the text was "stacked" in a way I didn't want!

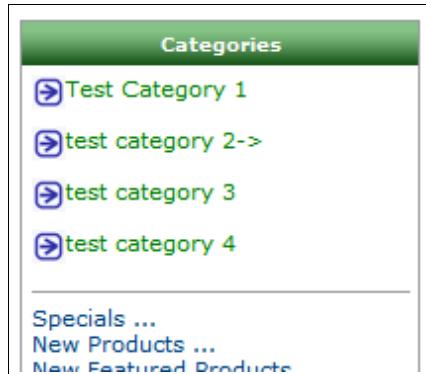
```
$content .= '' . '<a class="" . $new_style . '" href="' . zen_href_link(FILENAME_DEFAULT, $box_categories_array[$i]['path']) . '">';
```



Ooops! That's easy to fix with a line break.

```
if ($box_categories_array[$i]['has_sub_cat']) {
    $content .= CATEGORIES_SEPARATOR;
}
$content .= '</a>' . '<br />';
```

And then it looks the way I want.



That wasn't difficult, was it? If you are skilled in CSS, you can use that too.

Defining Category Link Classes

Notice in **tpl_categories.php** you'll see this section of code:

```
// to make a specific category stand out define a new class in
the stylesheet example: A.category-holiday
// uncomment the select below and set the cPath=3 to the cPath=
your_categories_id
// many variations of this can be done
// case ($box_categories_array[$i]['path'] == 'cPath=3'):
//     $new_style = 'category-holiday';
//     break;
```

What does it mean, exactly? And how do you apply it?

For example, if I wanted to get this result --



I would need to uncomment part of the section, change it to apply to my site, and then create a matching section in my **stylesheet.css** file.

```
// to make a specific category stand out define a new class in
the stylesheet example: A.category-holiday
// uncomment the select below and set the cPath=3 to the cPath=
your_categories_id
// many variations of this can be done
case ($box_categories_array[$i]['path'] == 'cPath=3'):
```

```
$new_style = 'category-two';
break;
```

In my above example, the cPath of my category was already 3 (find this by hovering your cursor over the category link and looking at the url in your web browser), so I didn't have to change that. I called my new class category-two and defined it as such in my **stylesheet.css** file.

```
A.category-two {
    color: #000000;
    text-decoration: underline;
}
```

And then uploaded the modified files to my site.

Or, if I wanted to highlight the line I could add a background color.



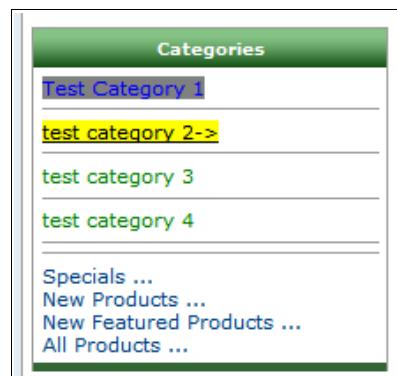
```
A.category-two {
    color: #000000;
    text-decoration: underline;
    background-color: yellow;
}
```

See how easy that is? You can do more, of course. You're only limited by your knowledge of CSS.

You can define more than one by adding it to the code.

I created this example by adding the following code to the **tpl_categories.php** file:

```
case ($box_categories_array[$i]['path']
== 'cPath=1') :
    $new_style = 'category-three';
    break;
```



See where I changed the cPath and style? And I added the following to the **stylesheet.css** file:

```
A.category-three {  
    color: blue;  
    text-decoration: bold;  
    background-color: gray;  
}
```

...and on and on.

So yes, you could make each category link look different if you wanted.

You can implement one or more of the hacks to change how your category box displays. If you're more experienced with code, you might find these hacks help you develop even more advanced changes to make your site truly your own.

More on Stylesheets

I mentioned you can custom-tailor stylesheets on a category and product level. This isn't hard when you understand how it works. Go to the **/docs** folder and read the **readme_css_system.html** file. (Hint: use the Open/File feature in your browser to open and read it.)

I know it might not make much sense now, but it soon will.

When you create a category and product in Zen Cart™, the software automatically assigns it a unique ID number. You can view this number by going to **Catalog --> Categories/Products** in your admin control panel. You'll need this.

When you have this number, you can create a custom stylesheet for that category or specific product.

The first stylesheet that loads is the **stylesheet.css** file, which is a site-wide file. This file should include the bulk of your selectors. When you create override stylesheets, do not duplicate the entire **stylesheet.css** file! Only include the overrides you want to use. For example, if you only want a different background image on a specific product page, include only that selector. This will make the page load faster. The "language" files load only if you've specified another language can be used, like Spanish or French, etc.

The stylesheets load in this order:

- **stylesheet.css**
- **style*.css**
- **language_stylesheet.css** - language-specific file (ex. Spanish)
- **page_name.css** - example **page_2.css**

CATEGORIES / PRODUCTS - TOP

ID	Categories / Products
1	Test Category 1
3	test category 2
4	test category 3
5	test category 4

CATEGORIES / PRODUCTS - TEST

ID	Categories / Products
8	Another Test Product
6	test product 2

Categories: 0
Products: 2

- **language_page_name.css**
- **c_.css** - category
- **language_c_?.css**
- **m_.css** - manufacturer
- **language_m_?.css**
- **p_.css** - product
- **language_p_?.css**
- **print*.css** - printing

You do not use the ? in the file name. That simply designates where you would put the ID number (as we already discussed) for the category, product, or manufacturer (as the case may be). A lot of newbies make that mistake, adding the ? to the file name.

And if you have more than one type of stylesheet to load, product or category pages, for example, they will load in alphabetical order.

So let's put this into practical use. For example, if I want my Test Category 1 pages to have a pink (yuck!) background, I would create a new stylesheet file for that.

Blech.

Obviously, I would need to make sure the category tabs and breadcrumbs backgrounds were changed as well.

Here's what the file looked like. I named it **c_1.css** and



```

1 /*wrappers - page or section containers*/
2 #mainWrapper {
3     background-color: #FF00FF;
4 }

```



uploaded it to the **/css** template directory.

Maybe it would be better to just change the background instead of the main body?



Yes, like that.

Get the idea?

You could change

```
1 body {  
2     background-color: #FF00FF;  
3 }
```

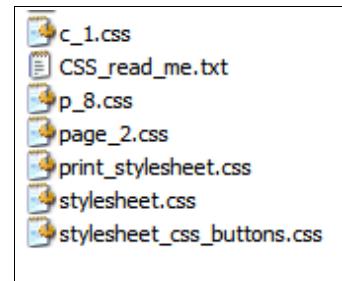
every category as much or

as little as you want. You could have totally different box headers, font styles, colors, backgrounds -- whatever you want.

If you change a category, all the products in that category will change unless you override individual products.

So if I change category 1, but then want one of the products in category 1 to be different, I would need to create an individual stylesheet for that product.

Let's say that I want product ID 8 to have a yellow background instead of the same pink background other products in category 1 have. I would need to create a stylesheet called **p_8.css** and specify the background color and upload it to my **/css** folder.



And my product is changed. So if you want a different background image for a specific category, you can do that. If you sell seasonal items that are split among holidays, or different brands, or maybe baby clothes and you want different backgrounds for boys' clothes than you do for girls' clothes...



Are you seeing the possibilities?

And you can change those stylesheets on the fly simply by uploading new stylesheets. In other words, if you like the site layout the way it is, but want to change your site for different seasons, or even for different days of the week, you can do that simply by uploading new stylesheets (and graphics, if needed). You could even create different templates and do nothing but specify different stylesheets and use the template installer to switch templates as desired.

If you've ever had a static HTML site where changes required going through each page and updating the code manually, you'll immediately see the benefits of the template override system.

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Most Commonly Asked Questions

These are some of the most commonly asked questions about the software. After each question is a page number for the answers. The answer might be in more places than just the page number indicated, so don't forget to take a look at the index for more information.

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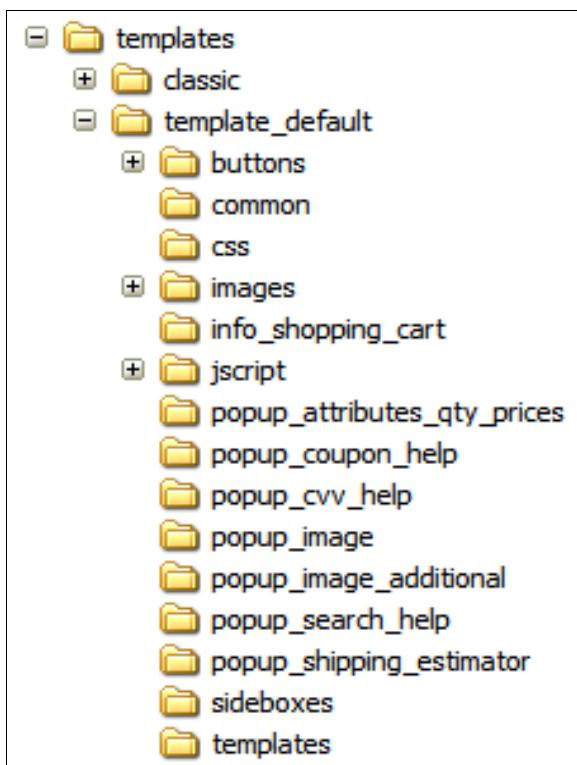
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Template Charts

The template override system uses a series of files to define how the site looks. By default, everywhere there is a “classic” folder, you can overwrite those files. You can also duplicate the template_default folders and make a custom template at the same “level” to overwrite files. Never modify the template_default and classic files! Make a custom template and install it and change that. You don’t have to duplicate every file – the ones you don’t overwrite will automatically be pulled from the template_default files (for the template) or from system files (languages, modules). The following reference chart will show you what can be overridden.



Let's start with the includes/templates directory. Do NOT modify the template_default files! However, you CAN copy the directories and files and paste them into your custom directory. So you could create an includes/templates/CUSTOM directory and within that create sub-directories like what are in the template_default directory.

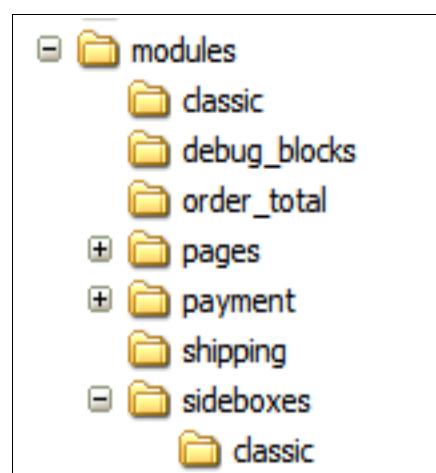
A good rule of thumb is wherever there is a classic directory, you can create a CUSTOM directory.

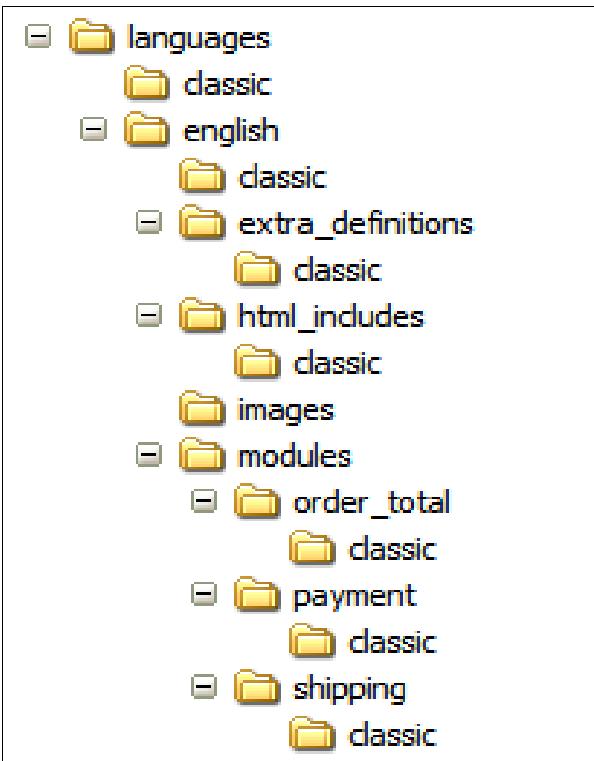
Don't forget – to install your custom directory, you'll need a CUSTOM/template_info.php file so you can install your template! (See pages 244 and 263 for more information.)

If you wanted to, you could completely duplicate the template_default directory and rename it to your CUSTOM name (whatever that is).

If you do this, make SURE you change the information in the template_info.php file before you install.

You can use the includes/modules directory overrides too. Again, where you see a classic folder, you can create a CUSTOM folder at that same level. So you could create an includes/modules/CUSTOM directory.





The includes/languages directory gets used a LOT. One common source of confusion is the english.php file.

There is a languages/english.php file. If you customize it, you save it as includes/languages/CUSTOM/english.php

HOWEVER, there is also an english folder. You will also have the folder includes/languages/english/CUSTOM/ in your directory.

So pay attention when creating custom folders that you don't put the english.php file in the wrong place.

I know this can be confusing. The template_default files are only located in the includes/templates directory. Other than that, you can look for everywhere there is a classic directory and create a CUSTOM directory to put your files.

REMEMBER – you MUST install the new template BEFORE the overrides will take effect! You can create a languages/CUSTOM/english.php file and change it all you want, but it won't take effect unless and until you've installed your CUSTOM template through the admin interface tool!

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