

Introduction

Welcome to fishkeeping.co.uk's guide to using the forums. Forums allow members to give and receive help in an organised way.

We recommend printing this document to make it easier to follow the instructions while using the forums.

Using the forums

Postings in a forum are organised into three subdivisions:

Post A post is a piece of information submitted by a single user. It may be a new post, which starts a new topic, or a reply to an existing post. Posts are typically a sentence, paragraph, or a few paragraphs.

Topic A topic is a collection of posts. The posts are organized in chronological order. A topic starts with a new post, any replies to this first post continue to be part of this topic. Topics (sometimes known as threads) are sort of like conversations, allowing many people to state their opinions about an idea, or debate an issue.

Forum A forum is a container for topics. For example fishkeeping.co.uk has eight forums 2 for each of the main sections (Coldwater, Tropical, Marine and Pond.). The forums contain many topics and a topic may contain many posts. There is a test post in the Coldwater - Setting up and Health forum if you wish to see this in practice.

Finding help in the forums can be done by;

a) Starting at the main forum page (found by clicking on the Forum button in the left hand menu), choosing one of the forums by clicking its title and then choose any topics from the list. Topics are by default sorted in chronological order by the most recent post in each topic.

b) Searching for a keyword or phrase using the search box near the bottom of the main forum page page (found by clicking on the Forum button in the left hand menu). Enter the words to search for into the search box and press return on the keyboard.

Or, if you can't find the information you require, by creating a new post.

Posting

There are two primary ways to create a post. In either the Forum or Topic pages, you may click 'New Topic'. This will take you to the posting form, and, when you have posted, will create a new topic with your post as the first one in the topic.

In the Topic page, you may also click 'Reply'. This will take you to the posting form, and, when you have posted, it will add your post to the topic you replied to.

Posting Form

When you choose to post a new topic or post a reply, you are taken to the posting form to enter your message. The form contains the following sections;

Subject The subject of your post. If this is a new post, a subject is required. Using a subject that is short and relevant to your post works best (This is similar to the subject field in an email). If the post is replying to another post, the subject is not required, but may be added, and will be shown at the top of the post.

Message Body This is where you write your message for your post. Just type away in this section but try to give all the information you can.

Advanced users may like to use special formatting. Links, smilies (emoticons), images, etc. may be added through the use of Smilies, BBCode and/or HTML.

Smilies Smilies (also called emoticons) can be added to posts.

BBCode BBCode allows you to add special formatting to your posts.

HTML You may use HTML to format your posts.

Signature You may add a signature to your post. To do this, check the box next to 'Attach Signature'. You may change your signature by editing your profile.

Reply Notification When you post, you may be interested in knowing when that topic is replied to. If so, you may check 'Notify me when a reply is posted'.

Uploading Images

Please see the separate tutorial to find out how to upload an image for your post.

For More Advanced Users

BBCode

BBCode is a system that will allow you to format your posts in special ways. The BBCode system uses tags in a way nearly identical to HTML. The primary difference between BBCode and HTML is that BBCode uses square brackets [and] instead of angle brackets < and >.

Here is a list of sample BBCode and its output:

[b]Bolded Text[/b]
Bolded Text

[i]Italicized Text[/i] yields
Italicized Text

[u]Underlined Text[/u]
Underlined Text

[color=red]Red Text[/color] or **[color=#FF0000]Red Text[/color]**
Red Text

[size=24]Bigger Text[/size]
Bigger Text

[quote]This cheese is delicious[/quote]

[quote="The Cheese Man"]This cheese is delicious.[/quote]

[code]if (\$cheese == "tasty") {return true; }[/code]

[list]
[*]Cheddar Cheese
[*]Limburger Cheese
[*]Cottage Cheese
[/list]
Cheddar Cheese
Limburger Cheese
Cottage Cheese

[list=1]

```
[*]Cheddar Cheese
[*]Limburger Cheese
[*]Cottage Cheese
[/list]
1. Cheddar Cheese
2. Limburger Cheese
3. Cottage Cheese
```

```
[list=a]
[*]Cheddar Cheese
[*]Limburger Cheese
[*]Cottage Cheese
[/list]
a. Cheddar Cheese
b. Limburger Cheese
c. Cottage Cheese
```

```
[url=http://www.fishkeeping.co.uk/]Visit fishkeeping.co.uk![/url]
```

```
[url]http://www.fishkeeping.co.uk[/url]
```

```
[email]hello@fishkeeping.co.uk[/email]
```

```
[img]http://www.fishkeeping.co.uk/images/xxxxx.gif[/img]
```

Smilies

Smilies are small images that appear in posts. Usually they are small images of faces, and are often used to show emotion.

To use smilies in your posts, you need to enter a series of characters. Common character series are :) for a happy face , :(for a sad face , etc. Another common style for smilie character sequences is *:emotion:* (i.e. the emotion the smilie shows, with a colon ":" before and after this). Examples of this are :wink: for a winking face , :lol: for a laughing face , etc.

Quoting Messages

Quoting messages allows you to include other's posts in your own. It is useful for showing that you are replying to a post, or part of a post.

To quote all of someone's post, look at the top right corner of their post and click 'Quote'. This will take you to the posting form, and will allow you to reply to the post. It will also automatically add the appropriate BBCode to your post to quote the post you are replying to.

The proper syntax to quote a post is:

```
[quote="<name to quote>"]<text to quote>[/quote]
```

<name to quote> is the source of your quote, and *<text to quote>* is what you are quoting. So to quote the user *Cheese Man* saying "Power the behold of cheese."

```
[quote="Cheese Man"]Power the behold of cheese[/quote]
```

Editing Posts

Editing posts allows you to go back and fix errors, remove incorrect information, or add new information to your posts. To edit a post, look at the lower right corner of your post and click 'Edit'. You will be taken to the posting form to edit your post, after editing click 'Submit' make the changes. If you edit a post after it has been replied to, a small message will appear at the bottom of it indicating how many times it has been edited, and when and by whom the last edit occurred.

To delete a post, click 'Edit' and check 'Delete this Post'. Click 'Submit' to finish deleting the post. You may not delete a post if it has been replied to (i.e. it is not the last post in the topic)

Private Messages

Private messages allow users on a forum to contact each other out of the public eye. Private messages can be described as a cross between email, instant messaging, and a forum posting. Private Messages (PM) are great for 'Off Forum' conversation but shouldn't be used for a reply to a general post which would mean other members would not get the benefit of any advice given.

To use private messaging, you must be logged in to the board.

Sending

To send a private message click on the poster's username in the forum you will be taken to their profile page and from here click the 'PM' button.

The posting form is identical to the normal posting form with the following exception:

Username The username of the person you want to receive the message. If you are replying to a PM, or clicked the 'PM' link in someone's profile, this field will be automatically filled for you.

Receiving

If you receive a PM (personal message) the Inbox button on your User Menu will change colour. Click the button to read your message.

You may delete messages by selecting them and clicking 'Delete'.

Watching Topics

You may subscribe to topics in the forums. When a topic you are subscribed to is replied to, you will be notified by the notification method you have chosen. The email will contain a link to the topic that has been replied to. You will only receive one email per topic until the next time you log in to the board.

Avatars

Avatars are small pictures that members may use to represent themselves on the board. Each member may choose his/her own avatar. However, permission to allow users to have avatars is controlled by the board administrator.

Gallery Avatars You may choose your avatar from a gallery of avatars. To select an avatar from the gallery, click on view account on the left hand menu and then click the avatar button.