



# Web Site Mini-Guide: Password-Protected Area

You can create a password-protected area of your site for private documents. This guide describes how to:

- Assign passwords
- Create password-protected parts of your site

## Overview

The password-protected system works in a very simple way. You simply create a Web page, but don't link to it from anywhere else. Then you assign one or more passwords leading to that page.

Typically, you will have a "Members Only" login page on your site, similar to this:

### Members' Area

This section of the Web site is reserved for NSASA members.

Please enter your password below and click "Go" to proceed.

By typing in the correct password, a member is taken to a private page.

## Administration

This is an E-Service facility, so log in from the E-Service site [fsplugins.com](http://fsplugins.com).

**Note:** Depending on where your site is installed, you might have to change fsplugins.com to www.eservice.com.au. If you're not sure, please check with First Step.

You can set passwords in the "Password Access to Pages" section of the administration page:

### Password Access to Pages

- [View passwords \(Add a password\)](#)
- [View list of passwords used \(click here for old version\)](#)
- [HTML for drop-down menu](#)
- [HTML for password box](#)

## Existing Passwords

Click the "View passwords" button to view and change existing passwords.

### ***Special Passwords***

You'll see two special passwords in the list - "blank" and "wrong". This redirects people to a certain page on your site if they leave out the password or type a wrong password, respectively.

Please ensure that you have appropriate pages on your site to display error messages in these circumstances, and that these page addresses are set up correctly in the password list. If the message is general, the same page can be used for both blank and wrong passwords.

Here's an example of such a page:

<http://www.firststep.com.au/no-access.html>

If we have access to your Web site, we might have created a similar page for you already. If not, you will have to do so yourself, and then assign it to the passwords "blank" and "wrong".

## Adding passwords

From the administration page, click "Add a password".

Fill in the form as follows:

- **Password:** The password that you would like them to use. This is not case-sensitive (so "Fred" is the same as "fred"). Also, anything except letters, digits and underscores are ignored (so "joe bloggs" is the same as "joebloggs", "joe-bloggs" and "JoeBloggs").
- **Web Page:** The Web address where you would like the user to go when they type that password. This is usually a page on your Web site, though it can in fact be any Web page at all (or even any other URL, such as, say, a downloadable PDF file).
- **Hide URL:** Set this to Yes to hide the Web page's URL from the user, which prevents them from bookmarking the page and returning to it later without the password. But see the notes directly below.

**Note:** If the Web page URL is a PDF file or other type of document (i.e. not a Web page), set Hide URL to No.

### ***Hiding URLs***

Ideally, when you set up a password-protected page, you'd like people to be able to get to it only with the password. This allows you to keep the real page address secret, which means:

- Users can't bookmark the page;

- When you remove the password, the page can't be accessed.

You can make this happen by setting the "Hide URL" field to Yes, as described above.

(Alternatively, you can also leave it blank or set it to No. In this case, when somebody uses the password, they are redirected to the page, but they'll see the page address in their browser. This is not as good, because they can bookmark the page and get back to it later without the password. But it does avoid the possible extra work described below.)

This only works if the page is designed in such a way that all the images and links on the page are absolute, not relative. In other words, it must be designed in such a way that it works when moved to a different location (because that's effectively what happens).

Almost all the sites designed by First Step do work this way, but some other sites don't. To find out whether yours does, just try it: Set a password with Hide URL set, and see whether the page is displayed correctly. If it appears with no pictures and/or the links aren't working, it doesn't work.

There are two ways to fix this:

1. Add a <base> tag in the header part of your page, like this:  
`<base href="http://www.example.com/">`
2. OR Use full path names to all images and links in the page.

## Removing passwords

Simply delete a password to remove it from the list. This stops anybody from using that password in the future.

If the "Hide URL" field has been set to Yes, it also stops them from visiting the protected page. On the other hand, if it hasn't been set to Yes, people could have bookmarked the protected page, and can still get to it directly.

## Adding password access to your Web site

After setting up the required list of passwords, you have to add a password box on your Web site for people to type in the password.

### ***Basic functionality***

You can add a password box to any pages of your site. To get the correct code for it, click the "HTML for password box" link on the administration page. This will give you the exact HTML code to paste into your Web pages.

### ***Asking for other information***

If you know how to create HTML forms, you can also ask for other optional information when they enter their password (e.g. their name and/or e-mail address). This information is saved in the password log for later retrieval.

To do this, create any number of fields in the form. Each field must start with a capital letter (i.e. "First Name" rather than "first name"). Here's an example:

```
First Name: <input type=text name="First Name">
```

Also add a hidden field called "fields", which is a comma-separated list of all the fields you've added, like this:

```
<input type=hidden name=fields value="First Name,Last Name,Country">
```

### ***Enrolling in courses***

As a special case of the above, if you also have the E-Service CourseBot module, you can ask for their name and e-mail address, and then automatically enrol them in one of your courses.

To do this, ask for three fields "First Name", "Last Name" and "E-Mail Address" (make sure you get the spelling exactly the same as this).

Then add a checkbox field for the course. For example, if the course is named "Newsletter", add the field like this:

```
<input type=checkbox name="course-Newsletter"> Yes, please enrol me.
```

Then, if the person provides their name and e-mail address and checks the box, they will be enrolled in that course automatically.