



Managing your school web site

Joomla roles: Registered, Author, Editor, Publisher, Manager, Administrator, Super Administrator

Managers must belong to Administrator or Super Administrator groups and Login to the backend to edit the structure of their site. They may also edit content from the frontend in the same manner as a Publisher. Minimum requirements: Windows XP or Mac OS X 10.2.8; Firefox 1.5+, IE 7+, or Safari 2+

What you *CAN* do from the backend: virtually anything (Super Administrator.)

What you *CANNOT* do: change the type of a link or menu item once it's saved (you can in v1.5); edit certain CSS files (use FTP access).

What you *SHOULDN'T* do: touch anything you don't thoroughly understand.

Glossary: refer to the appended Contributor's pages for basics.

Content - in Joomla-speak, articles assigned to a category and section. We use the term more liberally to refer to all basic units of information on the site. Article and item are used interchangeably.

Component - an extension utilizing the underlying architecture of Joomla to accomplish additional features and functions. Components are often bundled with modules and may also require bots (plugins). Specific components may be version-specific and have dependencies or conflicts with other features.

Mambot (bot) - a helper program which integrates with the Joomla programming architecture to support extended functions. Examples include editors and site search engines. Called plugins in v1.5.

Module - an instance of a component, menu or custom content associated with a position on a page.

Page - a collection of content displayed in a screen defined by the creation of a menu item. This is counter-intuitive for the traditional web page author. Creating a new menu item instantiates a page. For simplicity's sake, we'll refer to page and screen interchangeably.

Position - a location on a page where modules are displayed. Positions are page regions defined in the active template. Examples of common positions are: left and right (columns), header, footer, inset, and various user positions. Not all positions displayed in a module edit screen are available in some templates. The order of modules within a position is managed within the Module Manager.

Global - default settings for the site's display and editing features. Many can be overridden in other backend menus.

Template - skin or theme controlling the layout and style of your web pages. It is independent of your content.

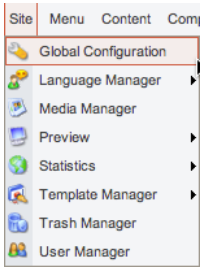


If you are preparing a new site or reorganizing your existing one, it is wise to request a development site from ITS. Don't waste time on the appearance of your site until you have first created a content outline with items organized under categories and categories grouped under sections.



Logging in

Your administrative access to the "backend" is through <http://your.site.guhsd.net/administrator> Never, EVER, under any circumstances share backend access with a non-employee or student.



Site

Global Configuration: Most can be left alone.

Recommend user self-registration and activation be “No” Debug site, also “No”

Default editor: if more than one is installed, selection can be overridden in the Site User Manager.

Content tab:

Do you want the # of hits and the modification date for items displayed? Do you want the PDF, Print and Email icons to display next to every item by default? Can be overridden at the item level.

Database and Server tabs: leave alone

Cache tab: No

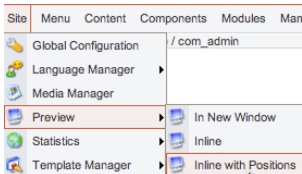
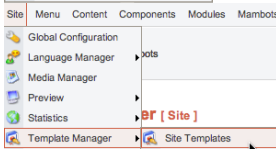
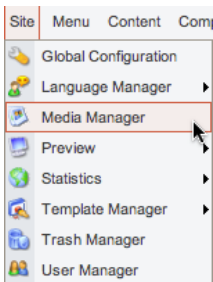
Statistics tab: logging OK but not by date. You’ll fill the server with log files.

SEO tab: search engine friendly OK to say “Yes”.

Media Manager

The stories directory is the default location browsable from most editors and components

This is the easiest way to get images onto the site. The JoomlaFCK editor will upload pictures to the “image” subdirectory and other file types to the “file” subdirectory. The server file size limit is 8 MB. Trying to set it higher in Joomla won’t work.



Site Templates



You can assign a template to specific pages. All others assume the Default skin.



Only if you’re convinced you know what you’re doing! You can disable positions and simplify templates here.



You can really only edit template_css.css here. You’ll have to use FTP or SSH/VIM to access the handful of CSS files that control your site’s look. (Access to all is available in v1.5)

Install templates via Installers > Templates – Site **When shopping for templates, make sure the one you like supports enough positions. Add ?tp=1 after the index.php in the URL to reveal most positions or Site > Preview > Inline with Positions.**

Customizing

Before making significant changes, it is wise to backup the index and css files for your template located in /yourrootfolder/templates/templatename/index.php and

/yourrootfolder/templates/templatename/css respectively. You can do this via FTP (Dreamweaver, Transmit, CuteFTP, Fetch, etc.)

Unless you’re a PHP whizkid, it is not advisable to do any more than comment out un-needed portions of a page with <!-- --> for HTML and /* */ for PHP within index.php, or add code for graphics or text.

Assigning

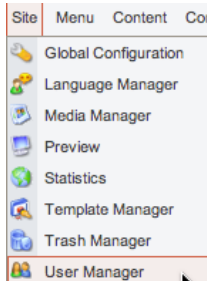
You can assign different templates to different pages but should avoid deviating drastically from the overall style of your site. You should also make certain that assigned templates support at least those positions as in your default template.

New Default Templates

Changing templates is potentially a major endeavor. Request a development installation of your site from ITS. This will be a copy of your existing site that you can play with without risking your live site. This is also the best way to pursue an upgrade to v1.5

TIP:

If you are in a backend screen that indicates the file you are attempting to edit is UNWRITEABLE, you may need to contact ITS to temporarily change permissions. When a change doesn't "stick", this is one of the first things to suspect. V1.0.15 fixes a number of security issues in earlier versions of Joomla but clamps down harder on file permissions. Better inconvenienced than hacked.



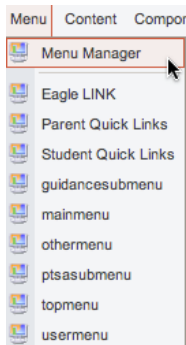
As tempting as it may be to assign easy usernames and passwords, please stick to Performance Profile credentials as these will be used for single sign-on access to all online district resources in the future, including Internet access. While v1.0.x does not support LDAP, v1.5 does, which will make user management much easier down the road.

Author – appropriate if the user will manage existing articles assigned to them and they will not need to add any new ones.

Publisher – the lowest level of access that will permit a user to add new items without requiring approval. Exceptions: content managed by a component, e.g., the calendar component can be configured to let any registered user add events. The trade-off is that the Publisher can edit items site-wide, not just within an assigned category, section or page.

Parameters > User Editor



-Select Editor- will allow the user to select their preferred editor. If you select one for them, they will not be able to override your selection.



Menus


With the exception of the default mainmenu, only those menus you create appear.



When you create a new menu, a new module is automatically created as well. See the Module Manager to assign a menu to a position. Temporarily hiding an entire menu is accomplished by unpublishing it within the Module Manager. (You can only add or delete menus within the Menu Manager.) Hiding menu items is accomplished by unpublishing under the specific menu. Use the   arrows within the specific menu administration page to reorder menu items.



This only edits the name of a specific menu.

To add a new menu item, select the specific menu and click . When doing so, there are a few important points to remember:

- A menu item creates a new "page" or view of a prescribed item or collection of items. The content must exist before you create the menu item. In other words, you can't create the link before you have the stuff to link to, as you can with regular HTML web sites.
- If the type of link changes (say from a collection of blog-style articles in a specified category to a URL link to somewhere out on the Internet), you must delete and recreate the link (changed in v1.5).

Menu item types (see Help within Joomla for other menu types)

Blog – Content Item : displays a single article from a list of all blog-style articles from all categories and sections

Blog – Content Category : displays all articles from a category. (Command-click (Mac) or Ctrl-Click (Windows) to select multiple categories.

Blog – Content Section displays all articles from all categories within selected section(s)

List – Content Section : same as above but creates a link index showing a listing of categories and the number of items published within each. Similar to the display used by threaded discussion lists.

• [Latest News \(9 items \)](#) This is a good choice for dropdown (suckerfish) menus when you don't want a click on the heading to return an empty page.

Table – Content Category : displays a linked index of items within a category.

Item Title
 Survey and Focus Group Findings
 Vahalla PTO Board: 2008-2009
 From the Desk of Superintendent Robert Collins
 Parent Portal
 March/April Vahalla Line
 Vahalla Fire Relief
 Vahalla Honored as California Distinguished School
 Vahalla Foundation
 School Lunch Accounts

<< Start < Prev 1 Next > End >>

Link – URL : link to an Internet page. Can also be a link to an internal resource like a specific DocMan folder, e.g., `index.php?option=com_repository&Itemid=32&func=select&id=3`

Link – Component : creates a link to the interface of a specific component, e.g., a calendar page (Jevent component) or a document library (DocMan).

Wrapper – embeds the content of another web page (often external to your site) within your page. You may experience some limitations if the embedded page is also using “wrapper” technology.

Home	School Info	Events	Students	Staff	Athletics	Links	Site Map
Home	News	Daily Bulletin	Downloads	Principal's Newsletter	Teacher Web Sites	Web Store	El Capitan Theatre
Home > Staff > Phones & Email							
Phones & Email							
Name	Title	Phone	eMail				
Terry Adams	Special Education Aide	(619) 938-9253	tadams@quhsd.net				
Diana Aguayo	Teacher	(619) 938-9241	daguayo@quhsd.net				
Abigail Anders	Teacher	(619) 938-9215	aanders@quhsd.net				
John Anderson	Teacher	(619) 938-9210	janderson@quhsd.net				
Michael Andrews	Teacher	(619) 938-9209	mrandrews@quhsd.net				
Loretta Apparito	Teacher	(619) 938-9255	lapparito@quhsd.net				
Teresa Arikian	Food Service Assistant I	(619) 938-9177					
Therina Barber	Food Service Assistant I	(619) 938-9177					
Ann Barnes	School Finance Technician	(619) 938-9137	abarnes@quhsd.net				
Michelle Barnett	Teacher	(619) 938-9207	mbarnett@quhsd.net				
Jan Beaton	Teacher	(619) 938-9201	jbeaton@quhsd.net				
Lynette Bennett	Computer Lab Facilitator	(619) 938-9160	lbennett@quhsd.net				

Wrapper example: the page is Joomla but the list comes from a separate district data source.

New Menu Item

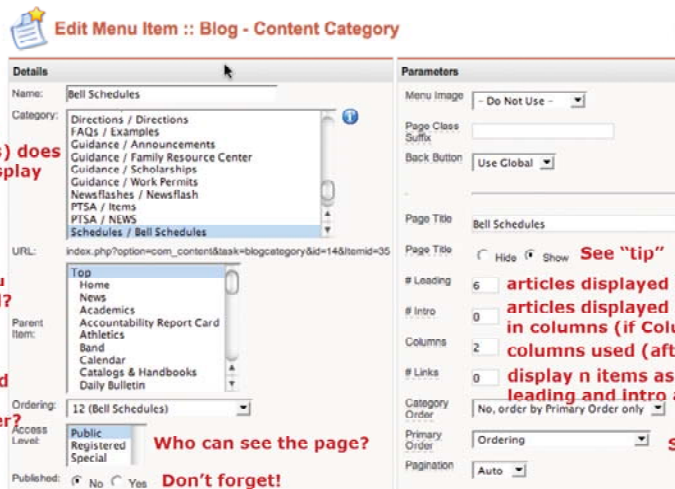
* Note that some menu types appear in more than one grouping, but they are still the same menu type.

<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blog - Content Category Blog - Content Category Archive Blog - Content Section Blog - Content Section Archive Link - Content Item Link - Static Content List - Content Section Submit - Content Table - Content Category 	<p>Components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Component Link - Component Item Link - Contact Item Link - Newsfeed Table - Contact Category Table - Newsfeed Category Table - Weblink Category
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separator / Placeholder Wrapper 	<p>Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link - Component Item Link - Contact Item Link - Content Item Link - Newsfeed Link - Static Content Link - Url
<p>Submit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit - Content 	

Menu item type screen

Page layout

For blog – section or category pages, the display of items in the center region is controlled within the editing screen for the specific menu item.



Lorem ipsum

laskdfj ;adlsaksdfj ajkjdkld; d sdfdkjuhle ehkjlkhe
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 lskjldfjfd dkcdioee,xigimbb scan see your way to edxt

<p>Attention Seniors</p> <p>alskfjkjlkjldsj lk alalk lk sa the reuann in Span falls lkcd kdll ldldld ld ld lalall ald mainly on trbe plain if you alsdkddk kdcd ldld;,,, ssdd et ibido sans valor a eeio lskjldfjfd dkcdioee, mbb scan see your way t o edxtn alskfjkjlkjldsj lk alal k lk sa the reuann \in Spa n falls</p>	<p>Registration</p> <p>alskfjkjlkjldsj lk alalk lk sa the reuann in Span falls lkcd kdll ldldld ld ld lalall ald mainly on trbe plain if</p> <p>Library Fines</p> <p>alskfjkjlkjldsj lk alalk lk sa the reuann in Span falls lkcd kdll ldldld ld ld lalall ald mainly on trbe plain if you alsdkddk kdcd ldld;,,, ssdd et ibido sans valor a eeio lskjldfjfd dkcdi- oee,</p>
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This Week

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 ald mainly on trbe plain if

more

- thisandthat
- that and this

Example:

Leading: 1
 Intro: 4
 Columns: 2
 Links: 2

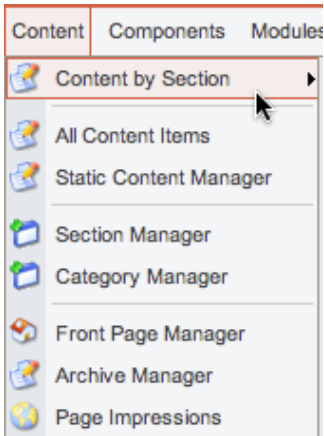
TIP:

If a category contains only one item by the same name, you can avoid repeating the display of the name by setting Page Title: Hide

Category Order and Primary Order

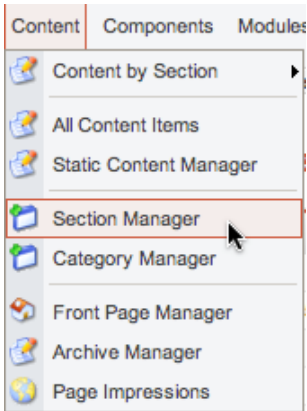
The order that items are displayed on a page is controlled both in the menu item parameters and, in the case of a blog – category or section page, within the list of categories or category items. Ordering lets the order you specifically assign items take precedence. This isn't helpful for Publishers who do not have ordering privileges but makes sense when the number of items on a page is normally static and just the items themselves are edited. The menu parameters can override the settings for the content category from which the page's items come, or can accept that order: Primary order. Category order is only important where a page is comprised of content from multiple categories. News pages / categories should probably assume a chronological order (most recent first).

To further complicate things, the front page manager (Content > Front Page Manager) allows one to assign a specific of items for that page alone. This order supercedes all others on the home page.



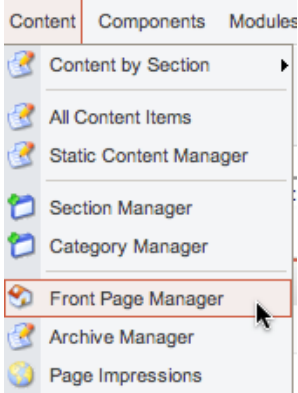
Content

Selecting from lists of content items broken down by Section is helpful as the number of articles on your site mushrooms. Can't remember which section an article is in? Select All Content Items. See contributor's guide for details regarding managing articles.



Section and Category Management

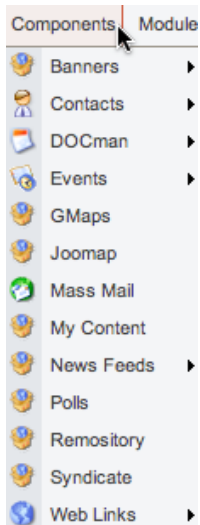
New sections and categories are defined here. You can also change their names. Again, starting with a good site outline will help keep you organized.



Front Page

As mentioned earlier, this screen let's you set a unique order for published items on the home page alone.

Note: when a Publisher checks Show on Front Page for an item, by default that item appears at the top of the list on the home page. To reorder, use the Front Page Manager.



Components

Standard installed components include Banners, Contacts, Mass Mail, News Feeds, Polls, Syndicate and Web Links, several of which are virtually worthless to a school web site. Your list will also include additional installations that meet your needs.

From a security and performance standpoint, you should uninstall any unused components.

<http://extensions.joomla.org> references over 3000 available components.

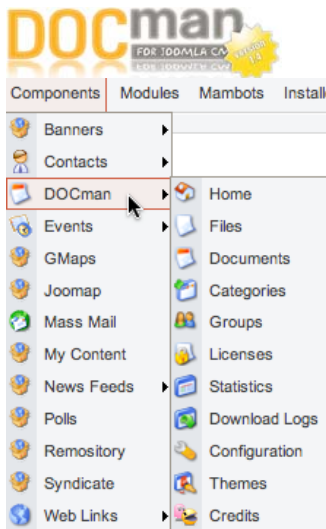
When considering an addition to your site, consider:

Does it do what you need?

Is it native for v1.0?

Is it highly rated by other users?

What dependencies or conflicts does it present? Is the component itself and add-on to another component? Are there known conflicts with other components? Must it be installed with an additional mambot or module?



DocMan – document management (public license)

Many sites were set up using Remository because it was easy to configure. From a user's perspective, it is not clean, requiring extra clicks to get at documents, and Publishers get frustrated because they can't delete documents without admin intervention.

DocMan is a cleaner tool for end users and frontend managers. In DocMan-speak, a file is nothing more than that. A document is a file united with a title and description, metadata and a folder to call home. Multiple documents can share the same file.

You can use DocMan and Remository concurrently but they cannot share a mutual front-end presence.

DocMan requires an additional mambot for search capability and modules for added features. No native version for v1.5 at this writing



Categories (Folders)



Categories can include full article descriptions and nested sub-categories. They can serve as an alternative to a blog-category when the primary information to communicate is in document form.



Configuration

Default behaviors:

Front-end: default order, allowed file types, docs per page, whether or not to include an email link to group members for discussion. Can probably ignore Extra Document Information.

Permissions:

Who will have permission to upload from the frontend? Who will you allow to assign privileges to others?

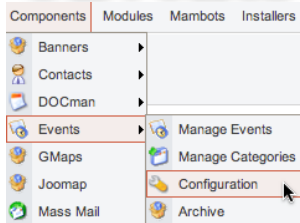
Upload:

There is a hard-set size limit of 8 MB per file on the server. Dial in your Acrobat Pro settings for web output. Media-rich PowerPoints may be down-sampled or broken into smaller chunks. Please do not remove any of the included file types from the Reject filenames list.



Groups comprised of registered users can be delegated privileges for specific categories of documents

JEvents



JEvents – calendaring (public license)

Basic calendar lacking some of the features that WebEvent had but well-integrated for Joomla, including support for listing coming events, color-coding events and embedding a mini-calendar. Consists of a component, multiple modules and optional mambots and modules.

- No native version for v1.5 at this writing. Runs in legacy mode.
 - Editing existing events from the frontend doesn't present the day of the month in the listing.
 - Cannot make time/place/detail exceptions within repeating events.
- + Customizable through CSS as well as the component's configuration page.

Control the listing of latest or coming events in the Latest Events module. Here you can restrict a listing to specific categories of events as needed.

Optional installs include a search feature and linking to photo galleries, etc., after an event has passed.

You can cram more into a monthly calendar by modifying the CSS. Copying it and pasting it into a new Dreamweaver CSS document will let you quickly identify color definitions you want to change, too. Modify and paste in the replacement.

```
/* *****  
* Calendar style  
***** */  
.cal_table {  
  border: 1px solid #000000;  
}  
.cal_td_daysnames {  
  border-bottom: 1px solid #000000;  
  height: 25px !important;  
  line-height: 25px;  
  background-image: url("images/evback.jpg");  
  background-repeat: repeat-x;  
  background-position: top left;  
  color: #0000CC;  
  background-color: #FFE150;  
  font-weight: bold;  
  text-align: center !important;  
}  
.cal_td_daysnames .sunday {  
  color: red;  
}  
.cal_td_daysnames .saturday {  
}  
.cal_daysnames {  
  font-family: Arial;  
  font-size: 12px;  
  font-style: normal;
```

Modifying the Latest Events tab controls what and when; modifying Latest Events in Modules controls where.

A few others:

Community Builder – extends user management and is requisite for a number of other components that work with user information.

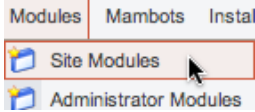
FireBoard – a threaded discussion forum

Gmap – incorporates a Google map into a directions page

Joomap – creates a site index based on your menu structure and/or sections and categories

My Content – Provides a comprehensive frontend list of all editable items available to a registered user.

See <http://extensions.joomla.org> for more.



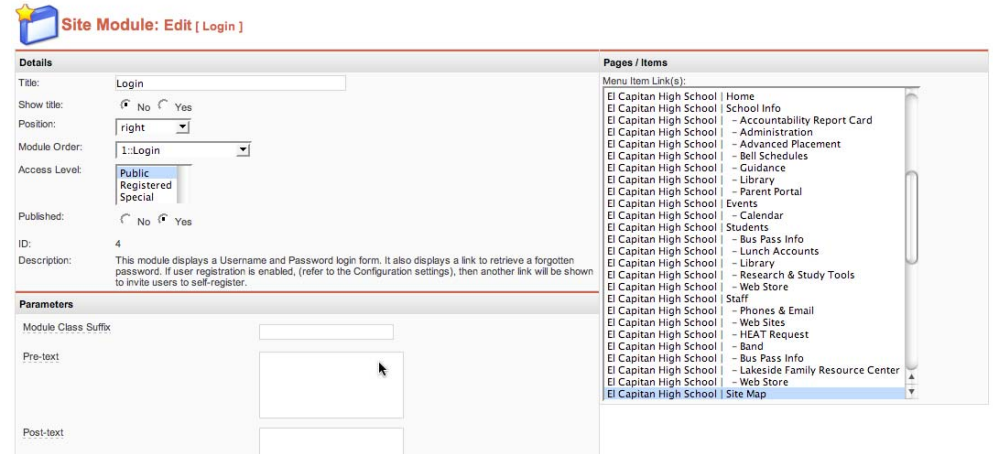
Modules

Modules are instances of content or functions associated with specific locations (positions) on specific pages.

Modules occupy the rest of the screen space not devoted to the central content of a page.

Templates differ from one another in how many positions they support, affecting where you can place a module. Appending `?tp=1` to the Joomla 1.0 site URL will reveal available positions within the current template, e.g., `http://elcapitan.guhsd.net/index.php?tp=1`.

Creating a menu automatically creates a module for that menu. Modules > Site Modules lists all modules ordered by position. Selecting a module lets you edit its position, which pages it appears on, whether its title is displayed or not, privileges and any other parameters unique to that module.



Suppose you didn't want the login to appear on the home page. You can open the login module and assign it to the Site Map page, as in the example above.

You can make a copy of most modules and differentiate the copies as needed, renaming them, etc., but this should only be done when trying to accomplish something that can't be handled another way, e.g., ordering A over B on page X while ordering B over A on page Y.

TIP:

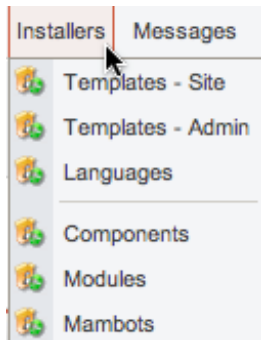
If you employ a custom menu extension with your template, be sure to unpublished the old instance. Example: your mainmenu can be assigned as an extended dropdown in some templates. If you choose to do so, unpublished the standard mainmenu module when you publish the extended menu.



Create a new module for any content features you wish to display outside of the standard content areas. Example: a graphic link to the Parent Portal appearing in the left or right position.

Mambots

The only time you may need to visit this area is when you become aware that an unused bot is causing problems or the order of execution may need to be changed. Almost never. More often, you'll be installing them from the Installers menu.



Installers

A pretty straightforward area. The various install types are unified in one screen in v1.5.

Checklist:

- Before installing anything, make sure your site meets any prerequisites, e.g, version number, dependencies on other components, modules, permission settings. Read reviews to see if there are any known conflicts.
- Install packages are always zip files. Some require an initial unzip in order to load individual packages in correct order or on an as-needed basis.
- If updating an installation, determine whether the old one needs to be uninstalled first and whether there are any backups needed to preserve existing data.
- Configure the addition immediately after installation to avoid potential security holes.