



The Handbook

Codex

<http://codex.wordpress.org/Gravatar>

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Using Gravatars

What is a Gravatar?

Gravatars are **Globally Recognized Avatars**. An avatar or gravatar is an icon, or representation, of a user in a shared virtual reality, such as a forum, chat, website, or any other form of online community in which the user(s) wish to have something to distinguish themselves from other users. Created by Tom Werner, gravatars make it possible for a person to have one avatar across the entire web. Avatars are usually an 80px by 80px image that the user will create themselves.

A Gravatar is essentially the same thing, but they are all hosted on a single server and are called up by encrypting the users' email address via the MD5 algorithm. So instead of having one avatar on one forum you visit, and another at a blog you visit, you could have the same avatar at both.

Gravatars can easily be used within WordPress in the `index.php`, `comments.php` and `comments-popup.php` [template files](#).

How a Gravatar is Constructed

A Gravatar is a dynamic image resource that is requested from a server. The request URL is presented here, broken into its segments. The URL always begins with:

```
http://www.gravatar.com/avatar.php?
```

A mandatory parameter named `gravatar_id` follows this. Its value is the hexadecimal MD5 hash of the requested users' email address with all whitespace trimmed. The value is case insensitive.

```
gravatar_id=279aa12c3326f87c460aa4f31d18a065
```

An optional `rating` parameter may follow with a value of [G | PG | R | X] which determines the highest rating (inclusive) that will be returned.

```
&rating=R
```

You can check how a Gravatar is rated [here](http://gravatar.com/rating.php) (<http://gravatar.com/rating.php>)

An optional `size` parameter may follow that specifies the desired width and height of the Gravatar. Valid values are from 1 to 80 inclusive. Any size other than 80 will cause the original Gravatar image to be downsampled using bicubic resampling before output.

```
&size=40
```

An optional `default` parameter may follow that specifies the full [URL](#), encoded URL, protocol included, of a GIF, JPEG, or PNG image that should be returned if either the requested email address has no associated gravatar, or that Gravatar has a rating higher than is allowed by the `rating` parameter.

```
&default=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.somesite.com%2Fsomeimage.jpg
```

An optional `border` parameter may follow that specifies the hexadecimal value of a 1px

border to be overlaid on the Gravatar. The supplied value may be either the full six character hex string (e.g. FF0000 for red) or the abbreviated three character hex string (e.g. F00 for red).

&border=FF0000

Using Gravatars in WordPress



An example of a Gravatar

For most people, encrypting an email address with MD5 is no easy task, most of the time requiring javascript, or another form of scripting. Several [WordPress Plugins](#) have been created to help with this task, such as the [Gravatar's Official Plugin](#) (http://www.gravatar.com/implement.php#section_2_2) and [Skippy's Gravatars](#) (<http://www.skippy.net/blog/2005/03/24/gravatars/>).

Official Gravatars Plugin

Install the plugin and activate it. That is all that needs to be done, it is installed and ready for use, awaiting the plugin's template tag to initiate the Gravatar on your site. Place the following function tag inside of the [WordPress Loop](#).

```
<?php gravatar(); ?>
```

This function, however, only calls and prints the URL for the Gravatar, so you have to include it within a image tag like:

```

```

If you wanted this implemented into your comments, edit your current theme's `comments.php`. Each [WordPress Theme](#) may be a little different. In the Default WordPress Theme, look for this:

```
<li class="<?php echo $oddcomment; ?>" id="comment-<?php comment_ID() ?>">
<cite><?php comment_author_link() ?></cite> Says:
```

and change it to include the link to the Gravatar like this:

```
<li class="<?php echo $oddcomment; ?>" id="comment-<?php comment_ID() ?>">
  <a href="http://www.gravatar.com/" title="Get your avatar">
    
  </a>
<cite><?php comment_author_link() ?></cite> Says:
```



Default Gravatar for an unsigned user

This is styled so that the Gravatar will float to the left of the commentors name as an example, but you can add a class to the section to incorporate the style for displaying the Gravatar within your style sheet.

If you want to customize the Gravatar more, you can use CSS, adding some classes to the code, and you can also use some of Gravatars settings [listed below](#).

Customizing Your Gravatars

There are several settings to customize the Gravatars just a little more. Breaking down the settings for `gravatar()` are as follows.

```
<?php gravatar("rating", size, "default", "border"); ?>
```

rating

The highest rating of Gravatar to be shown. The values are G, PG, R, and X.

Showing only Gravatar's with a rating higher than PG can be accomplished with the following code:

```
<?php gravatar("PG"); ?>
```

size

Default Gravatars are 80px by 80px, so eliminating this option will result in all Gravatars being 80px by 80px. If that size is to big for you, then you can add the size value in the function. The size you enter is for both sides, so for example, if you use 40, the Gravatar will be 40px by 40px. So with a maximum rating of PG, and size of 40px by 40px you would have the function as:

```
<?php gravatar("PG", 40); ?>
```

default

There are still some users without Gravatars out there, and in such a case, Gravatar's servers will return a 1px by 1px transparent GIF image instead. You can override this with your own custom image. This file can be PNG, JPG, or GIF.

```
<?php gravatar("PG",40,"/images/no_gravatar.gif"); ?>
```

border

To add a border, use the `border` function. It will add a 1px wide border around the Gravatar of the color that you choose. By default there is no border. The following is an example of a Gravatar that will be no higher than a PG rating, be 40px by 40px, have a default image if no Gravatar is present, and have a 1px red border:

```
<?php gravatar("PG",40,"/images/no_gravatar.gif","FF0000"); ?>
```

Skippy's Gravatars Plugin

Skippy's Gravatars Plugin is slightly different from the official plugin, and requires you to supply the email address (or website URL) of the commenter. The entire thing is wrapped in an `if function_exists()` check so that you can disable the plugin without breaking your blog.

```
if (function_exists('gravatar')) {
    if ('' != get_comment_author_url()) {
        // the commenter supplied a website URL
        echo "<a href='$comment->comment_author_url' title='Visit $comment-
>comment_author'>";
    } else {
        // the commenter did not supply a website, so link to gravatars.com
        echo "<a href='http://www.gravatar.com' title='Create your own
gravatar at gravatar.com!'>";
    }
    echo "<img src='";
    if ('' == $comment->comment_type) {
        // this is a regular comment, so use the commenter's email address
        echo gravatar($comment->comment_author_email);
    } elseif ( ('trackback' == $comment->comment_type) || ('pingback' ==
$comment->comment_type) ) {
        // this is a pingback or trackback, so use the commenter's website URL
        echo gravatar($comment->comment_author_url);
    }
    echo "' alt='' class='gravatar' /></a>";
} ?>
```

Customizing Your Gravatars

Skippy's Gravatar plugin includes a robust management interface for setting most of the options for your gravatars. You can select:

- a maximum acceptable rating
- the default size
- optional border,
- default image used for commenters without a gravatar
- whether to cache gravatars locally (and for how long)
- whether to allow registered users to override their default gravatar image for this blog
- whether to support the use of gravatars inside the body of posts

The actual gravatar image uses a CSS class on the `img` tag:

```
.gravatar {
    float:left;
    padding: 3px;
    margin-bottom: 5px;
    background: #fff;
}
```

Insert that block into your theme's `style.css`, and adjust as necessary.

If you enable the use of avatars in the body of posts, you'll need an additional CSS class:

```
.postgrav {  
    float: left;  
    padding: 3px;  
    margin-right: 5px;  
    margin-left: 5px;  
    background: #fff;  
}
```

Insert that block into your theme's `style.css`, and adjust as necessary.

Resources

- [Gravatar](http://www.gravatar.com/) (<http://www.gravatar.com/>)
- [WordPress Plugins](#)
- [Gravatars Implement Page](http://www.gravatar.com/implement.php) (<http://www.gravatar.com/implement.php>)
- [Gravatar Signup Plugin](http://txfx.net/code/wordpress/gravatar-signup/) (<http://txfx.net/code/wordpress/gravatar-signup/>) (allows commenters to sign up for a Gravatar as they leave a comment on your site)
- [Live Gravatar Preview Hack](http://fecklessmind.com/main/7/live-comment-preview-now-with-live-gravatars) (<http://fecklessmind.com/main/7/live-comment-preview-now-with-live-gravatars>)