



The Handbook

Codex

http://codex.wordpress.org/Importing_from_Movable_Type_to_WordPress

Version Date

6 August 2005

Importing from Movable Type to WordPress

Introduction and Synopsis

So you want to see what it is about [WordPress](#) that makes it Movable Type's equal? This guide will help you with all the information you need to migrate your weblog from Movable Type (MT) or TypePad to WordPress (WP). We will use MT's exporter to export all the entries and comments in your MT blog and then import them using WP's **import-mt.php** importer. Finally, we will look at some issues concerning the preservation of links to articles ([permalinks](#)) after the import, and other issues that you may have. This guide will leave you feeling good, warm, and hopefully looking forward to a new life full with [open source](#) goodness. If you are a TypePad user, then read "TypePad" wherever this guide talks about "Movable Type". The process of exporting entries from a TypePad blog will be different, and you should contact the TypePad support folks if you are in doubt.

Overview

To begin with, the following are assumed:

- You have already [installed WordPress](#) on your server, so if you have not, please do so before continuing.
- <http://example.com/wordpress/> is the url of your WordPress installation.
- "admin" is the login you use to login as the administrator of the WordPress blog.
- "mtuserX" is the name of author X, in the MovableType blog.

The steps involved in the migration are as follows:

1. Exporting from Movable Type
2. Editing the WordPress importer
3. Importing into WordPress
4. Tying up loose ends, if any

Exporting from MovableType

1. Login to your MovableType blog. You will see a screen that looks like Figure 1.
2. From the main menu, click on the "Configuration" link for the blog whose entries you want to export, as shown by the red arrow in Figure 1.
3. That link should bring you to a page similar to that shown in Figure 2. Click the "Import/Export" button on the left menu, as shown by the red arrow in Figure 2.
4. On the page that ensues, Click the "Export Entries from <your weblog's name>" link as shown by the red arrow in Figure 3. Don't worry, the comments are exported too.
5. Now you should see readable text, split over several lines, in your browser. If the text is one long, running line, and if you are using any version of Internet Explorer, then you have a problem. Internet Explorer sometimes treats plaintext as html. To avoid this problem do one of the following:
 - Use a Gecko-based browser, such as Netscape, Mozilla, or FireFox. Save the page you see in your browser, with all the entries in text, as a text file with the name

- "import.txt", on your computer.
- If you do not want to use another browser, then in Internet Explorer, copy all the text you see in the browser, open WordPad, or Notepad (a simple text editor), but definitely **not** MS Word, and paste the text in. Then save the file in the text editor with the name "import.txt".
 - If you are exporting from MovableType Version 3.0D, then the [bug fix for AM/PM problem](http://www.movabletype.org/support/index.php?act=ST&f=8&t=40987) (<http://www.movabletype.org/support/index.php?act=ST&f=8&t=40987>) is essential.
 - WordPress uses UTF-8 as the default encoding. So if your MT blog uses ISO 8859-1 or Latin - 1 to encode posts, convert the posts to UTF-8 before importing, to ensure that all characters display properly. Optionally you could also set an Option (Option -> Reading -> Character Encoding) in WordPress to set the Charset for the WP weblog to ISO 8859-1 before importing the posts.



Figure 1: Logged into Movable Type



Figure 2: Movable Type - Weblog Configuration Screen



Figure 3: Movable Type - Import/Export Entries Screen

Editing import-mt.php

1. Open the file "import-mt.php" in your favourite text editor. You will find it in the directory "wp-admin" in your WordPress installation . For this, you have to download it first.
2. On line number 2 of import-mt.php, find `define('MTEXPORT',);` and change that to `define('MTEXPORT', 'import.txt');`
3. Save import-mt.php and upload it to the "wp-admin" directory on your server, overwriting the existing "import-mt.php".
4. Upload the "import.txt" file you had saved earlier after the export to the "wp-admin" directory on your server.

Importing Entries into WordPress

1. Log into your WordPress installation as the user `admin`
2. Visit the page <http://example.com/wordpress/wp-admin/import-mt.php> (Of course, please visit the corresponding page on your WordPress blog, this link is just an example).
3. Click on the link that says "let's go!"
4. On the next page, you will see all the authors in the Movable Type weblog, and for each of these authors, you can choose either an existing WordPress user from the dropdown list, or type a username for a new user to be created in WordPress. You can use this to "map" users on your Movable Type weblog to users in the WordPress weblog, if in case the names of the author(s) are different in your

WordPress blog, and you want to change the authors' names. For example, the Movable Type user "mtuserX" might correspond to the "admin" user on your WordPress installation. If you do not wish to change the names of the MT authors, just leave the corresponding entries blank, and new WP authors will be created with the same name as the MT authors. Make the changes you desire, and when you are done, click the "Submit" button.

5. Now you will see a number of lines informing you of the progress of the import, as it happens. When it is all over, you will be asked to "Have Fun".
6. Go ahead, have fun - the import of posts, comments, pingbacks and trackbacks is complete!
7. If any new authors were created in WordPress during the import process, according to your wishes, the password for those users/authors is **changeme**. You can use this password to log in as that user. Please change the password the first time you log in after the import, since everyone who's read this guide knows the password!

Odds and Ends

Importing a Huge Number of Posts

If you don't have administrative control of the server (root access), then [Importing a Large Number of Posts](http://wordlog.com/archives/2004/07/29/importing-large-movabletype-text-files/) (<http://wordlog.com/archives/2004/07/29/importing-large-movabletype-text-files/>) has relevant links and help. This should be helpful if your import process dies before completing the import. The php installation on your webserver may have a low script timeout, or if the file is too large, your server may run out of memory. This is what's happening when you see a blank, white page, during the import, or your browser says "Done" before WordPress says "Have Fun!" after the import.

If you do have root access to the server, edit php.ini and increase the maximum memory setting. For a large import (e.g. 5MB), increase the script memory to 100MBs and restart apache. When the import is complete, restore the limit to what it was originally and restart apache again.

Preserving Permalinks

Search Engines such as [Google](http://google.com) (<http://google.com>) will still link to the old Movable Type generated [URLs](#) when linking to your articles. This is true of other websites too, that may have linked to your posts or articles. It is in your best interests to preserve those links, to prevent visitors following those links from seeing a "404: article not found" error page. The following steps will help you preserve the links, depending on how the permalinks were configured on your Movable Type weblog.

Using an MT Individual Entry Template for Redirection

Alex King's solution provides a [Movable Type template for individual entries](http://www.alexking.org/software/wordpress/mt-wp-redirect.zip) (<http://www.alexking.org/software/wordpress/mt-wp-redirect.zip>), which you can use to generate pages that will redirect visitors to the corresponding WordPress pages. However, this method requires that you maintain the Movable Type installation, as also the

pages generated by it, which will do the redirection.

Using .htaccess for redirection

Matt's method uses the [.htaccess](#) file for redirection.

Create a Movable Type template like the following, have it output to `redirect.php` in your WP root directory:

```
<?php
require('wp-config.php');
header('Content-type: text/plain');
?>
<MTEntries lastn="999999">
Redirect Permanent /archives/<$MTEEntryID$>.html
http://www.example.org/archives/<$MTArchiveDate format="%Y/%m/%d"$>/
  <?php echo sanitize_title("<$MTEEntryTitle$>"); ?>
</MTEntries>
```

If your entry IDs in MovableType are padded with zeroes (0), then change the line above to

```
Redirect Permanent /archives/<$MTEEntryID pad="1"$>.html
http://www.example.org/archives/<$MTArchiveDate format="%Y/%m/%d"$>/
  <?php echo sanitize_title("<$MTEEntryTitle$>"); ?>
```

Also, if you used the "dirify" option, for example, when in MT, if you had:

- Archive Type: Individual,
- Archive File Template: <MTEEntryTitle dirify="1">.php,
- quotes in title etc,

Use:

```
Redirect Permanent /archives/<MTEEntryTitle dirify="1">.php
http://www.example.com/index.php?s=<$MTEEntryTitle encode_url="1"$>
```

or if the extension for the pages were ".html", instead of the ".php" above, use:

```
Redirect Permanent /archives/<$MTEEntryID$>.html
http://www.example.com/index.php?s=<$MTEEntryTitle encode_url="1"$>
```

Using .htaccess and mod_rewrite for redirection

Apache 1.3 and above have a module, called `mod_rewrite`, that allows URL to be seamlessly rewritten on the fly by the server. This can be used to preserve the previous permalinks from a MovableType installation. To use `mod_rewrite`, the module must be installed and the `FollowSymLinks` option must be enabled for your blog directory. If these two conditions are true, then it's as easy as creating a `.htaccess` file with the following lines in it:

```
RewriteEngine on
RewriteRule archives/0*(\d+).html /uri/to/blog/index.php?p=$1
RewriteRule index.rdf /uri/to/blog/index.php?feed=rdf
RewriteRule index.rdf /uri/to/blog/index.php?feed=rss
RewriteRule index.xml /uri/to/blog/index.php?feed=rss2
```

- Note that this will also preserve RSS and RDF feeds that may be being used by third party sites.

Preserving the Numerical Post Ids

If you want your imported posts in WordPress to have the same numerical post ids as in Movable Type, use [Kathy's MT-Numeric-Id Importer](http://site-essential.com/wpstuff/mt-numeric-import.zip) (<http://site-essential.com/wpstuff/mt-numeric-import.zip>). Note that this might not work very well, if you had "padded" numeric ids in Movable Type. However, a peek into the code, and a little familiarity with PHP should help you fix this, if required.

Another option is to use [Dr. Bacchus' Solution](http://drbacchus.com/wordpress/index.php?p=611) (<http://drbacchus.com/wordpress/index.php?p=611>) for the same problem.

See also: <http://scott.yang.id.au/2004/06/wordpress-migration-notes/>

User Experiences

The following are a bunch of links to posts by users describing their MT to WP move. This might be handy to see if someone has faced the sinister problems you are facing (God Forbid!) :

1. [Carthik's notes, complete with links](http://blog.carthik.net/vault/2004/05/14/movabletype-to-wordpress/) (<http://blog.carthik.net/vault/2004/05/14/movabletype-to-wordpress/>)
2. [Dan Hersam on converting links](http://dan.hersam.com/archives/2004/10/05/convert-links-from-mt-to-wordpress/) (<http://dan.hersam.com/archives/2004/10/05/convert-links-from-mt-to-wordpress/>)
3. [PapaScott's Notes - a few gotchas](http://www.papascott.de/archives/2004/05/16/mt-to-wordpress/) (<http://www.papascott.de/archives/2004/05/16/mt-to-wordpress/>)
4. [BurningBird's List of Links](http://weblog.burningbird.net/archives/2004/05/16/additional-links-for-moving-from-mt-to-wordpress/) (<http://weblog.burningbird.net/archives/2004/05/16/additional-links-for-moving-from-mt-to-wordpress/>)
5. [Dr. Bacchus' Solution to Preserving Links](http://drbacchus.com/wordpress/index.php?p=611) (<http://drbacchus.com/wordpress/index.php?p=611>)
6. [David's tips for redirection](http://www.cs.northwestern.edu/~ayman/blog/index.php?p=71) (<http://www.cs.northwestern.edu/~ayman/blog/index.php?p=71>)
7. [Narendra's experience migrating from TypePad to WP 1.5.1.2 \(6/05\)](http://www.nosoapradio.org/?p=36) (<http://www.nosoapradio.org/?p=36>)
8. [SquareFree Switching From Movable Type to WordPress](http://www.squarefree.com/2005/03/13/switching-from-movable-type-to-wordpress/) (<http://www.squarefree.com/2005/03/13/switching-from-movable-type-to-wordpress/>)
9. [Blau on issues when migrating a large site and the solution used](#)