



The Handbook

Codex

[http://codex.wordpress.org/Next and Previous Links](http://codex.wordpress.org/Next_and_Previous_Links)

Version Date

6 August 2005

Next and Previous Links

The **next** and **previous** post links guide your visitor through your WordPress site. When it comes to creating [strong site navigation](#), some of the most powerful tools for moving your visitor around are these link tags.

Two sets of tags move the visitor through your WordPress site: `posts_nav_link()` and the combination pair of `previous_post()` and `next_post()`. Let's look at how each of these two sets works and how to make yours much more interesting.

The `posts_nav_link`

The first set of these site navigation links is featured only on the non-single/non-permalink web pages, such as categories, archives, searches, and the index page. It is the template tag [posts_nav_link\(\)](#). This tag creates two links at the bottom of the page within the [WordPress Loop](#) to display the **next** and **previous** pages in chronological order.

By default, the `posts_nav_link` looks like this:

[« Previous Page](#) — [Next Page »](#)

It is often found in a paragraph code or a division like this:

```
<div class="navigation"><p><?php posts_nav_link(); ?></p></div>
```

The parameters of the tag are as follows:

```
<?php posts_nav_link('separator','prelabel','nextlabel'); ?>
```

Each of these parameters can be used to generate a *string* or any text or HTML or CSS tags. Let's see what we can do to make these post navigation links more interesting.

Keeping things simple, we could just change the look of the tag results [using CSS](#). Let's go farther and also change the content within the tag's parameters.

Let's make the text bold and use the `font-variant: small-caps` to make it look interesting, and then make the *separator* the [infinity symbol](#) and add some words to the labels.

```
<div class="navigation"><p><?php posts_nav_link('&#8734;', 'Go Back In Time', 'Go Forward in Time'); ?></p></div>
```

And it might look like this:

[Go BACK IN TIME](#) ∞ [Go FORWARD IN TIME](#)

Let's not stop there, let's add more [character entities](#) to really get the visitor's attention so they understand that there is more to your site than what they see on this page.

```
<div class="navigation"><p><?php posts_nav_link('&#8734;', '&laquo; &laquo; Go Back In Time', 'Go Forward in Time &raquo; &raquo;'); ?></p></div>
```

And it might look like this:

[« « Go BACK IN TIME ∞ Go FORWARD IN TIME » »](#)

We've just uncovered the surface, but you can let your imagination and web page design skills create these any way you like, adding borders, background images, stylized text, and more.

The Next and Previous Posts

The other set of navigational aids for moving through your site control the **next post** and **previous post** links typically found at the bottom of your single/permalink post, such as any single post or article you have published on your site. These direct the user to move to the next or previous post in chronological order.

The template tags are [previous_post\(\)](#) and [next_post\(\)](#).

The default usage of these tags are:

```
<?php previous_post(); ?>      <?php next_post(); ?>
```

And it looks like this:

[previous post: A Story for One and All](#) [next post: A Story for Only One](#)

The parameters for both of these tags are:

format

Text used in combination with the '%' to represent the permalink to the post. The default is the permalink.

text

Text displayed before the permalink. The default is "next post" and "previous post".

title

This turns "on" and "off" the use of the post title to be used as the link text. By default, is it "yes". If set to "no", then only the text set in the *text* parameter and *format* would show.

Let's put these into action.

The following example displays the next and previous post titles with [arrows](#) to emphasis the direction the user may choose. You will notice that we have not set the *text* parameter, so it will be blank.

```
<?php previous_post('&laquo; &laquo; %', '', 'yes'); ?>
| <?php next_post('% &raquo; &raquo;', '', 'yes'); ?>
```

[« « A Story for One and All](#) | [A Story for One » »](#)

Wrap these two tags with CSS and you can do even more with these tags:

```
<div class="navigation">
<div class="alignleft">
<?php previous_post('&laquo; &laquo; %',
    'Toward The Past: ', 'yes'); ?>
</div>
<div class="alignright">
<?php next_post('% &raquo; &raquo; ',
    'Toward The Future: ', 'yes'); ?>
</div>
</div> <!-- end navigation -->
```

And it might look like this:

[« « TOWARD THE PAST: A STORY FOR ONE AND ALL](#) [TOWARD THE FUTURE: A STORY FOR ONE » »](#)

This is just an introduction on how to use these tags and do fun things with them, but you can do so much more by adding borders, background images, interesting fonts and colors - it's up to you! Have fun!