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Answering questions on the Support Forum

It's easy to get started answering support forum questions. Don't worry, you don't have to be a Firefox expert to make a difference. Most questions are already answered by a [Knowledge Base article](#) and you can just post a link. If you have questions about the support process, just ask us in the [Contributors forum](#) or in the [#sumo IRC channel](#).

Below are some tips on becoming a question-answering pro.

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Help wanted

Android helper
Currently we are looking for contributors who have access to Firefox Mobile on an Android smartphone. We added Firefox Mobile to the Android market place and many many people started using Firefox Mobile for the first time. If you want to help us answering their questions and pointing out what needs to be documented in the KB, please send an email to atopal (at) mozilla dot com

Firefox Home helper
Firefox Home is the Firefox Sync app for iOS. Tens of thousands of people

are using it already, but we are just starting to build a community to support it in our forums. If you are interested in helping out you can join the developers in answering user questions and finding out what needs to be improved or better documented in Firefox Home. Please send an email to atopal (at) mozilla dot com and I'll get you started.

Finding questions

As mentioned above, use the thread list to find users in need. Pay special attention to threads that have no replies or where the last poster wasn't another regular contributor (top 10 contributors are reported below their usernames). If you're on Mac (Mac OS X 10.4, Mac OS X 10.5, Mac OS X 10.6, or Mac OS X 10.7) or Linux, watch out for users on the same OS; they may have questions that Windows users wouldn't be able to answer.

Finding answers

Rather than trying to figure out the user's problem by yourself every time, first search to see if it's come up before. Try to use the Knowledge Base articles before anything else. These articles have been quality reviewed and have info for all supported systems. Remember, you're not only helping the person who's asking the question, you're helping people who read the thread in the future.

To link to an article in the Knowledge Base, put the article's name in double brackets. [[Safe Mode]] becomes Safe Mode. Don't separate words with + signs; use spaces instead.

If the Knowledge Base doesn't have your answers, you can use any other source you want. Some good ones:

- Forum threads
- mozillaZine Knowledge Base
- mozillaZine Forums
- Bugzilla

To link to a URL, put the URL in single square brackets, with a space separating the URL from the text. [http://www.getfirefox.com Download Firefox] becomes Download Firefox.

If you find yourself using external resources, consider adding their information to an existing article or proposing a new article – see How the Knowledge Base works. Because this site is the first line of Firefox support and a Knowledge Base search is the first thing most users will do, having the info in a Knowledge Base article will let the user find the info more easily by themselves.

Doing investigation

If you can't find previous cases of the issue happening, here are some tips on figuring out the problem yourself.

- Consider the user's OS and Firefox version.
- Take a look at the user's extensions and plugins. In particular, watch for outdated plugins, and extensions that are known to cause problems.
- Try to isolate the cause of the problem.
  - Does the problem happen on your computer? This is useful for determining whether it's a problem with the user's set up or with Firefox or a website in general.
  - Does the problem happen in [Safe Mode](#)?
  - Does the problem happen in a [new profile](#)?
  - Does the problem happen when security software is temporarily disabled?
  - Does the problem happen in IE as well? If so, it's a problem on the system, not Firefox.
- In case of crash, see [Helping with crashes](#).

Again, if you find out the solution, consider adding it to the Knowledge Base.

Posting replies

- Be nice. It's not your job to defend yourself, others, or even Firefox or Mozilla. Users may just be venting because their problems are frustrating. The best thing to do is to help the user get his or her answer. If you feel that a post has crossed the line, report it to a moderator by using the "Report Abuse" link.
- Make a judgment on a user's experience based on their posts. For example, not all users know how to get to about:config. When in doubt, err on the side of explaining more.
- Look at what OS the user is using and cater your reply to that. For example, Linux users won't have a C:\Program Files and Mac users may not be able to right-click.
- For problems appearing after a Firefox update, try first to solve the issue. In case there are no solutions, provide a link to the [last version still maintained](#). If the user insists to have the previous version, add a warning below the link stating that the version is [insecure](#) and can potentially compromise the confidentiality, integrity or availability of personal information.

Following up

The answers you give may not be correct, or the user may have some follow up questions for you. In either case, it's useful to both you and the user that your conversation continues. Consider clicking "Get email updates" and checking "Send an e-mail when anybody replies" on

threads you post in so you know about any replies. You may also find [the list of threads you posted in](#) useful.

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