

Chapter 30 – Automatic Search Engine Updates with Google XML Sitemaps

Google XML Sitemap

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Google XML Sitemap Features

- Version: 3.1.0.1
- [Other Versions »](#)
- Last Updated: 2008-5-27
- Requires WordPress Version: 2.1 or higher
- [Author Homepage »](#)
- [Plugin Homepage »](#)
- [Donate to this plugin »](#)
- [Plugin and sitemaps FAQ](#)
- [Support Forum](#)

Download Link: <http://downloads.wordpress.org/plugin/google-sitemap-generator.3.1.0.1.zip>

This plugin creates a Google sitemaps compliant with the XML-Sitemap standard for all of your WordPress blog posts. Each time you update a post a new sitemap will be created and the search engines will be notified to come and get the new information automatically.

Once you have a sitemap setup in Google Webmaster Tools you will be able to notify Google to index the sitemap automatically.

The plugin will notify the following search engines:

- ASK.com
- Google
- MSN Search
- YAHOO

8 Steps to Setup Google Automatic Search Engine Updates

1. Download and Unzip Google Sitemap Generator for WordPress - <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/google-sitemap-generator/>
2. Upload the google-sitemap-generator folder into your **wp-content/plugins** directory.
3. Use your FTP program to create two files in your WordPress directory named **sitemap.xml** and **sitemap.xml.gz** and make them writable via **CHMOD 666**.
4. Login to WordPress as **Admin** and select **Plugins**. Locate the **Google XML Sitemaps** plugin and select **Activate** to start the plugin.
5. Select **Settings, XML-Sitemap** to configure the plugin. If you get a permission error, check the file permissions of the sitemap files you made. Build the sitemap for your site by selecting **Click here** in the **Status** window.
6. The status window will update when the sitemap is built and sent to Google, MSN and Ask.com.
7. The plugin will automatically update your sitemap with your published posts.
8. Go to the 9 Steps for Setting Up Google Sitemap Tracking below to finish your setup.

Step 5 – Building a Sitemap

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General Writing [Reading](#) Discussion Privacy Permalinks Miscellaneous FeedBurner Google Analytics

WP-o-Matic [XML-Sitemap](#)

WordPress 2.6.1 is available! [Please update now.](#)

XML Sitemap Generator

Build the Sitemap.

Status

- The sitemap wasn't built yet. [Click here](#) to build it the first time.
- If you encounter any problems with the build process you can use the [debug function](#) to get more information.

Basic Options

Sitemap files: [Learn more](#)

- Write a normal XML file (your filename)
- Write a gzipped file (your filename + .gz)

Building mode: [Learn more](#)

- Rebuild sitemap if you change the content of your blog
- Enable manual sitemap building via GET Request [?](#)

Update notification: [Learn more](#)

- Notify Google about updates of your Blog
No registration required, but you can join the [Google Webmaster Tools](#) to check crawling statistics.
- Notify MSN Live Search about updates of your Blog
No registration required, but you can join the [MSN Live Webmaster Tools](#) to check crawling statistics.
- Notify Ask.com about updates of your Blog
No registration required.
- Notify YAHOO about updates of your Blog
Your Application ID:
Don't you have such a key? [Request one here!](#) ([Web Services by Yahoo!](#))
- Modify or create robots.txt file in blog root which contains the sitemap location.
File permissions: OK, robots.txt doesn't exist but the directory is writable.

About this Plugin:

- [Plugin Homepage](#)
- [Suggest a Feature](#)
- [Notify List](#)
- [Support Forum](#)
- [Report a Bug](#)
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Sitemap Resources:

- [Webmaster Tools](#)
- [Webmaster Blog](#)
- [Site Explorer](#)
- [Search Blog](#)
- [Webmaster Tools](#)
- [Webmaster Center Blog](#)
- [Sitemaps Protocol](#)
- [Official Sitemaps FAQ](#)
- [My Sitemaps FAQ](#)

Recent Donations:

- Rasmus Soerensen
- Dustin Lausch

Step 6 – Submitting a Sitemap

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General Writing Reading Discussion Privacy Permalinks Miscellaneous FeedBurner Google Analytics

WP-o-Matic XML-Sitemap

WordPress 2.6.1 is available! [Please update now.](#)

XML Sitemap Generator for WordPress 3.1.0.1

Status

- Your [sitemap](#) was last built on **August 25, 2008 1:08 pm.**
- Your sitemap ([zipped](#)) was last built on **August 25, 2008 1:08 pm.**
- Google was **successfully notified** about changes.
- MSN was **successfully notified** about changes.
- Ask.com was **successfully notified** about changes.
- The building process took about **0.95 seconds** to complete and used 9.02 MB of memory.
- If you changed something on your server or blog, you should [rebuild the sitemap](#) manually.
- If you encounter any problems with the build process you can use the [debug function](#) to get more information.

Sitemap was built and Google, MSN, and Ask.com were notified.

- ✉ [Notify List](#)
- W [Support Forum](#)
- 🔥 [Report a Bug](#)
- 💰 [Donate with PayPal](#)
- 📦 [My Amazon Wish List](#)

Sitemap Resources:

Setup for Google Sitemaps Program

You need to setup an account on Google for storing your site information. This also tells Google where your sitemap is stored. The sitemap file stores all the link and pages for your site. Google will download the file and then update its search engine with the new content.

Accounts are free to setup and only take a few minutes.

7 Steps for Setting Up Google Sitemap Tracking

1. Go to [Google Webmaster Tools](https://www.google.com/webmasters/sitemaps/) (<https://www.google.com/webmasters/sitemaps/>) to sign up for a free account.
2. Add your site **URL** to the Sites field.
3. Click on the “**Verify your site**” link.
4. Select the “**Choose verification method ...**” window and select either “**Add a meta tag**” or “**Upload an HTML file**” option. For this example I will use the “Add a meta tag” option.
5. Add a Meta Tag Option
 - a. Copy the meta tag string from Google. It should look something like this:
 - i. `<meta name="verify-v1" content="9999999999.....=" />`
 - b. Login to **WordPress** as **Admin** and select **Presentation, Theme Editor** and select the **header.php** file. Copy the **meta tag string** from Google **below the first <head> tag**.

- c. **Save** the changes in WordPress. This will copy the meta tag data to the header of the web page. This will not be visible to your users but Google will be able to read it.
6. Go back to the **Google Sitemap** window and click the “**Verify**” button. Google will “look” for the meta tag in your web page. This is how Google validates that this is your site and not someone else’s.
7. Your site is now verified by Google for tracking. Google will start collecting you sitemap file.

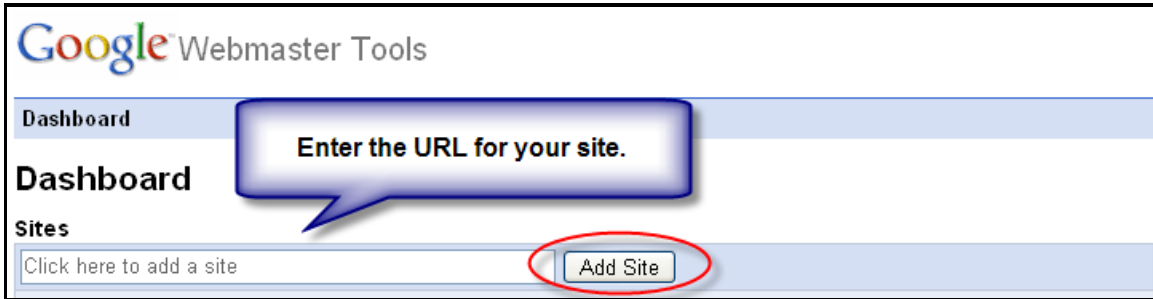
In the next section will cover how you setup WordPress to automatically post update to Google.

Choose verification method

Upload an HTML file – requires a text editor and FTP program to create a blank file and name it with the Google code they provide. This requires several steps.

Add a meta tag – I can add this to the Header.php file in WordPress. This does not require additional programs and can be done within WordPress Admin. I use this method most of the time for my sites.

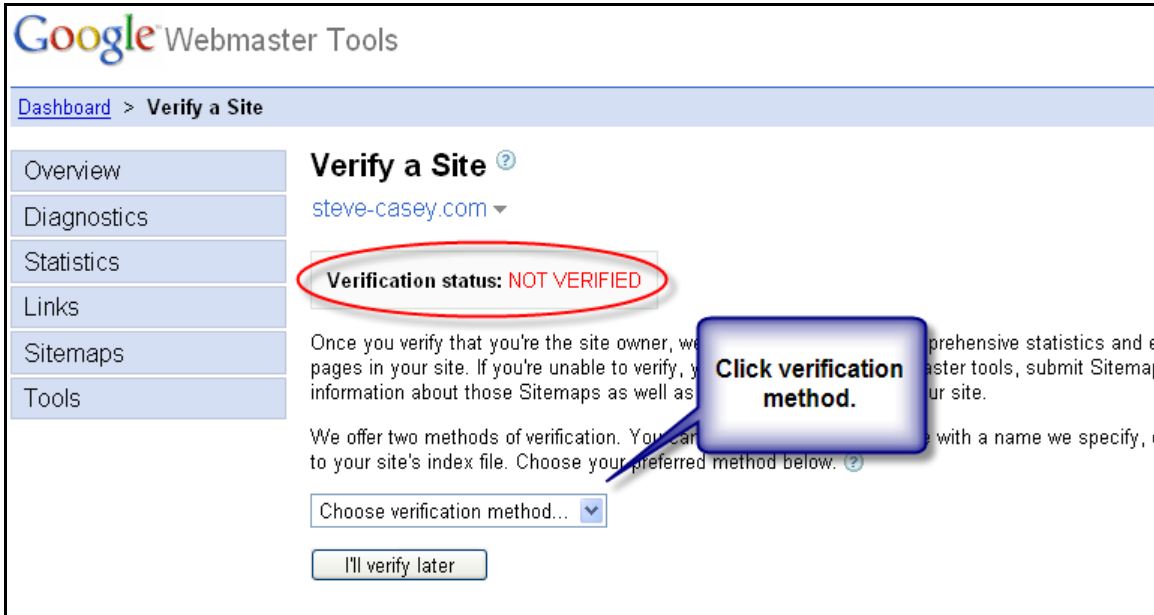
Step 2 - Enter Your Site Address



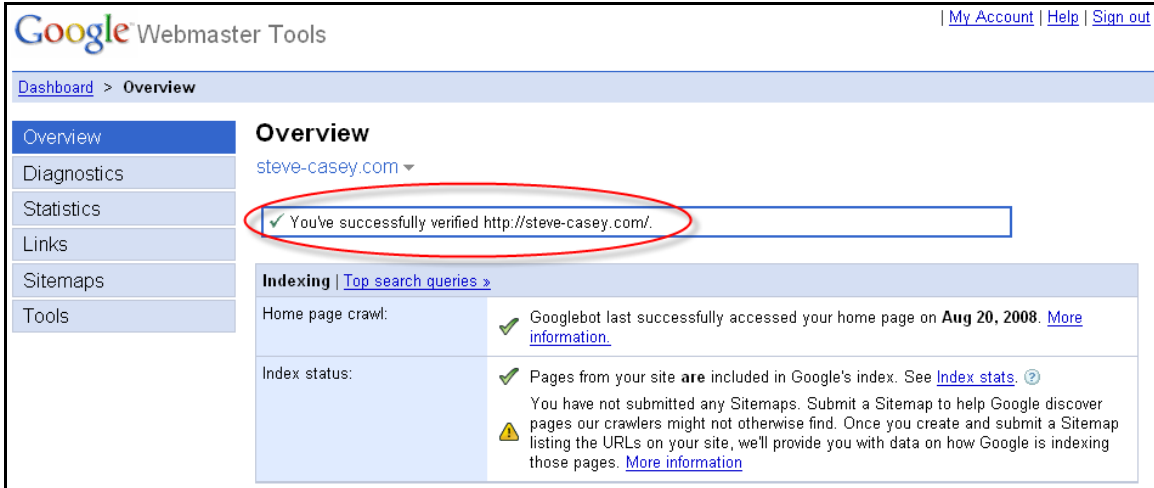
Step 3 - Verify Your Site



Step 4 - Choose Verification Method



Step 7 - Enter Your Site Address

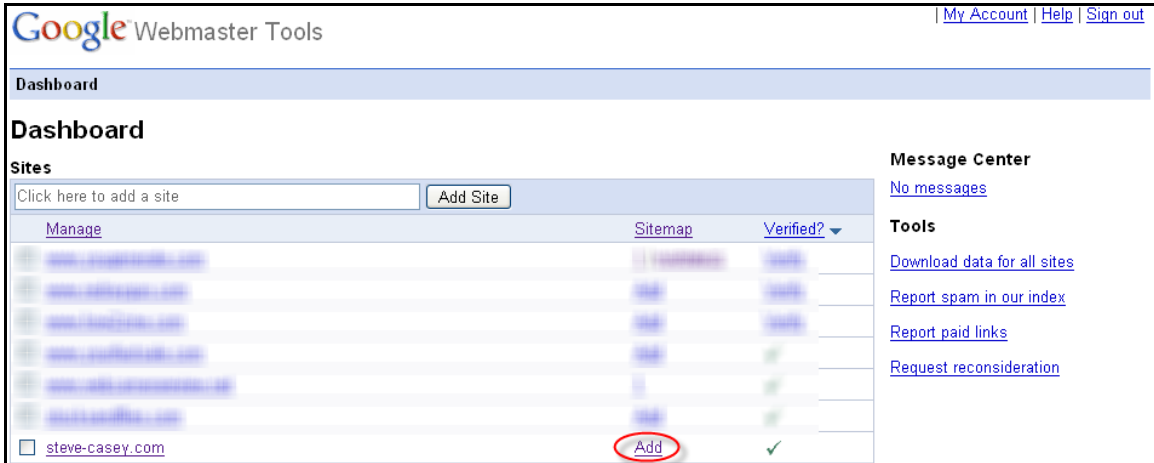


5 Steps for Adding a Sitemap to Google Webmaster Tools

1. In **Google Webmaster Tools** select your web site and then select the **Add** button to add a sitemap to your profile.
2. Locate the **URL** for your domain. Select the **Add** link to add a sitemap.

3. Select **Add General Web Sitemap**, then you will need to submit the location of the sitemap. This should be the **www.<yoursitename>.com/sitemap.xml**. If you change the options in the Sitemap generator then correct the path for the sitemap file and insert it here.
4. Select **Add Web Sitemap** button.
5. The sitemap information will be sent to Google for indexing. The sitemap will be pending for a few hours before it updates. You are all done now!

Step 1 – Adding a Sitemap



Step 3 – Entering and Submitting a Google Sitemap

Google Webmaster Tools steven.m.casey@gmail.com | [My Account](#) | [Help](#) | [Sign out](#)

[Dashboard](#) > [Sitemaps](#) > **Add Sitemap**

Add Sitemap [?]
 steve-casey.com ▾

You can add a Sitemap to your account to provide us with additional information about your site. We will process your Sitemap and provide information on any errors in the Sitemaps section.

▾

Lists pages that are meant to be accessed by desktop browsers.

- I've created a Sitemap in a supported format. [?]
- I've uploaded my Sitemap. [?]
- My Sitemap URL is:

Example: sitemap.xml
 Example: directory/other_sitemap.xml

Step 5 – Sitemap Submitted

Google Webmaster Tools | [My Account](#) | [Help](#) | [Sign out](#)

[Dashboard](#) > **Sitemaps**

Sitemaps [?]
 steve-casey.com ▾

✓ You have added http://steve-casey.com/sitemap.xml. Reports may take several hours to update. Thank you for your patience!

Submit a Sitemap to tell Google about pages on your site we might not otherwise discover. [More information about creating and submitting Sitemaps.](#)

Sitemap stats
 Total URLs: 0
 You have recently submitted one or more Sitemaps for this site. Processing Sitemaps may take some time. Check again later to see if pages from your Sitemaps are included in Google's index.

[Add a Sitemap](#) 1 - 1 of 1

Filename	Format	Last Downloaded	Status	URLs submitted
<input type="checkbox"/> sitemap.xml	--	--	Pending	--