

ABA Discussion Board

User Guide

Version 3

Last Updated: October 16, 2006

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Introduction

This document was created for members, non-members and ABA staff who are interested in learning the basic functionality surrounding the new ABA discussion boards. Although this document will walk you through the basics of the application the best way to become familiar with the ABA discussion boards is to login to an existing board and begin using the new communication tool.

Before logging on to a discussion board you will need to have your ABA membership id number, sometimes referred to as a customer id or TIMSS id. Additional information regarding login ids and passwords can be found in the Getting Started section of this document.

The goal of this document is to provide you with the following information:

1. Minimum requirements needed to log on to the discussion board application
2. Overview of discussion board functionality
3. Support structure
4. Frequently asked questions

We hope you enjoy the new and much improved ABA discussion board tool. For additional information outside of this document contact your staff liaison. A list of staff liaisons can be found at the following website:

<http://www.abanet.org/directory/liaisonstaff.html>.

Getting Started

Browser Requirements

The suggested minimum software requirement for any machine that will be used to access the ABA discussion boards is having a browser installed that meets the standards listed below:

- Internet Explorer (IE) version 4 and higher
- Netscape version 4 and higher
- Opera version 5.12 and higher
- Firefox version 1.0 and higher (There are known display issues with this browser)

Login ID & Password

As a member of the ABA you have been assigned an ABA membership id. Your membership id is an eight-digit number that can be found on your membership card as shown in the image below:



The password you will use to login to the discussion boards is the same password you use to log on to MYABA. Click on the link below if you do not remember what you set your password to and a new password will be sent to your email on file. If you do not have an email associated with your member id profile you will need to contact the Service Center for further assistance at 1.800.285.2221.

<http://www.abanet.org/abanet/common/MyABA/home.cfm##detail.cfm>

Once you click on the link above you will find a link labeled “Forget Your ID/Password?” located under the image of the ID card. Click on it and follow the instructions to successfully reset your password.

The screen shot below shows you what you will see when you are asked to login to a discussion board. You will also see the “Forget Your ID/Password?” link in the same screen shot on the right hand side.

American Bar Association

Defending Liberty, Pursuing Justice

Log In to the ABA

ABA Members and Customers

ABA members automatically have an online account. Log in here. (See instructions at right.)

ABA Membership ID or Email Address:

Password:

Remember my ID and password on this computer.

New Customer

If you are not a member or do not already have an online account, and you want to buy a book or attend a meeting, create an account with the ABA for quick order processing.

Join the ABA

Experience our wide range of member programs, customized services, authoritative publications and discounted products. The ABA offers Lawyer, Associate, and Law Student enrollment options. [Learn more](#) about the benefits of membership.

For immediate assistance, please call the ABA Service Center at 1.800.285.2221. Customer Service Representatives are available from Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. Central USA Time. If you are outside the USA (sans Puerto Rico, Canada and Mexico), please call 1.312.988.5522

Membership ID

Log into *myABA* to view and update your information and manage your online profile.

Your Membership ID is an 8-digit number that can be found on your Membership card.



Forgot Your ID/Password? ←

If you have forgotten your ABA Membership ID or Password, we may be able to send your information to the email address in your membership record.

Requesting a Discussion Board

Members can request a discussion board by contacting and working directly through their staff liaison. Members can also check the discussion board landing page, <http://www.abanet.org/discussions/home.html>, and confirm whether or not a discussion board already exists for their entity. A list of staff liaisons can be viewed at the following location: <http://www.abanet.org/directory/liaisonstaff.html>.

Once a discussion board has been requested by a staff liaison or someone appointed by the liaison, a staff from Customer Care will contact the assigned board administrator and schedule a training session. The training session will cover board administrator responsibilities, default settings and other features the board administrator will have control over while the discussion board is active. Training sessions will usually take place every couple of weeks or on an individual basis when necessary.

After the training session requirement has been fulfilled, Customer Care will send the board administrator the link for the new discussion board. The link to an ABA discussion board will follow the format listed below:

<http://www.abanet.org/discussions/###>

The # symbol represents the unique discussion board name which will be assigned at the time the discussion board is created. The exact link will be sent to you via an email from the board administrator introducing you to the board once the board administrator has completed his or her training requirement.

Login Process

Once you have been given the URL to your entity's discussion board click on it. You will see the page shown below. Note: If you are already logged onto MYABA you will bypass the login process and go directly to the end user agreement.

Enter in your eight-digit ABA membership id or the email you have on file with your MYABA profile. Now enter in your password. If this is your first time logging onto MYABA your password may still be the default password of your last name. Remember the login information you are entering in below is the same information you would use to login to the MYABA section of the ABA website.

Click “Log In” once you have entered in your login information.

Log In to the ABA

ABA Members and Customers
ABA members automatically have an online account. Log in here.
(See instructions at right.)

ABA Membership ID or Email Address:

Password:

Remember my ID and password on this computer.

→

New Customer
If you are not a member or do not already have an online account, and you want to buy a book or attend a meeting, create an account with the ABA for quick order processing.


Join the ABA
Experience our wide range of member programs, customized services, authoritative publications and discounted products. The ABA offers Lawyer, Associate, and Law Student enrollment options. [Learn more](#) about the benefits of membership.

For immediate assistance, please call the ABA Service Center at 1.800.285.2221. Customer Service Representatives are available from Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. Central USA Time. If you are outside the USA (sans Puerto Rico, Canada and Mexico), please call 1.312.988.5522

Membership ID

Log into *myABA* to view and update your information and manage your online profile.

Your Membership ID is an 8-digit number that can be found on your Membership card.



The image shows a sample ABA membership card. It features the ABA logo at the top left, with the text 'member 2005-2006' and 'American Bar Association' to its right. Below the logo, it says 'SAMPLE A SAMPLE'. The card displays a membership ID '87654321' and a 'SAMPLE PAYMENT CARD NUMBER' '01564543213'. It also shows 'MEMBER SINCE 2005' and '2005' at the bottom right.

Forgot Your ID/Password?
If you have forgotten your ABA Membership ID or Password, we may be able to send your information to the email address in your membership record.

The Terms of Service Agreement

Once you successfully login to the discussion for the first time you will be presented with a standard discussion board terms of service agreement. Read through the agreement, scroll down to the bottom of the page and if you agree with the terms click on the “I Accept” option. You will not be allowed to proceed if you decide not to accept the terms of service agreement terms.

Most users: You will only be prompted to accept the usage agreement once.

Technical users: If you manually go into your browser settings and clear your cookies, you will be prompted with the agreement again.








Defining Terms & Sample Screen Shots:

Defining Terms:

Term	Description
Category	Categories are folders of collected topics relating to a specific aspect of that discussion board. Categories are at the highest level of the folder structure and can only be created by a discussion board administrator. The initial categories are usually setup prior to a discussion board going live and added by the administrator as the discussion board grows.
Topic	Topics are threads / discussions created within a category. Multiple topics can exist within one category. Topics can be created by anyone logged onto the discussion board.
Message	A message or many messages make up a topic. Anyone that has logged onto the discussion board can post or reply to a message.
Discussion board	A discussion board is made up of categories, topics and messages. In previous systems discussion boards were referred to as forums, Webboards or conferences.
Subscription	By subscribing to a topic or category you will be notified by email if any new messages are posted to the topic or category you have subscribed to each time there is activity.
Digest	The digest is similar to the subscription feature except you will only receive one email with all of the messages for the day versus multiple emails throughout the day.
Discussion board profile	The discussion board profile is where you as an end user would configure the following if you decide the default settings are not adequate for you. In most cases outside of the time zone, the default settings should work for you. -Time zone -Determine your email and profile visibility -Determine the order of your messages -Determine how many days back to view topics for -Select how many topics per page -Select a default view for your messages -Determine the number of messages to view per page -Select an editor type (WYSIWG vs. HTML (default)) -Block a category from showing up on your home page -Subscribe to a category or digest.
ABA TIMSS customer / membership id	Eight digit number located on a member's ABA identification card.
WebBoard	Legacy ABA discussion board system no longer in use.

Defining Icons:

The following icons have been used throughout the discussion board to help facilitate navigating throughout the board.

Icon	Description
	Represents a category with no associated topics.
	Represents a category with one or more topics associated under it.
	Represents a locked category. For access contact the board administrator
	Represents a new topic.
	Represents a previously viewed topic.
	Represents the print message function.
	Represents the trash can.

Discussion board home page:

TEST BOARD Discussion Board

Latest News: [testing news title feature](#)

[Discussion Board Home](#) | [Search Discussion Board](#) | [Profile](#) | [latest topics](#) | [statistics](#)

Discussion board administrators will update this area with contact information for this discussion board. Participants of this discussion board are to contact the board administrator assigned to this board with any questions and comments.

Category Listing

	Name	RSS	Topics	Last Post
	Sample Category 1 Sample Description		2	08/31/2006 02:16 PM by Javier Sanchez >
	Sample Category 2 Sample Description		0	Discussion Board is empty
	Sample Category 3 Sample Description		0	Discussion Board is empty

Statistics

There are currently **1 users** logged in.

Use of these Discussion Boards constitute acceptance of our [Terms of Service for Discussion Board](#) and [Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy](#).

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Search Screen

TEST BOARD Discussion Board

Latest News: [testing news title feature](#)

[Discussion Board Home](#) | [Search Discussion Board](#) | [Profile](#) |

Categories:
Select
[latest topics](#) | [statistics](#)

Discussion board administrators will update this area with contact information for this discussion board. Participants of this discussion board are to contact the board administrator assigned to this board with any questions and comments.

Enter a keyword to perform a search.

Search Criteria

All of these words	<input type="text"/>	Forum Categories * Sample Category 1 Sample Category 2 Sample Category 3	To select categories, hold the CTRL key down (Apple key on a Mac) while clicking the categories using your mouse.
Any of these words	<input type="text"/>		
These exact words	<input type="text"/>		
None of these words	<input type="text"/>		
Author	<input type="text"/>		

Order by topic rating Ascending Descending

Search what

Display results as messages topics

Only messages posted by me

Which messages?

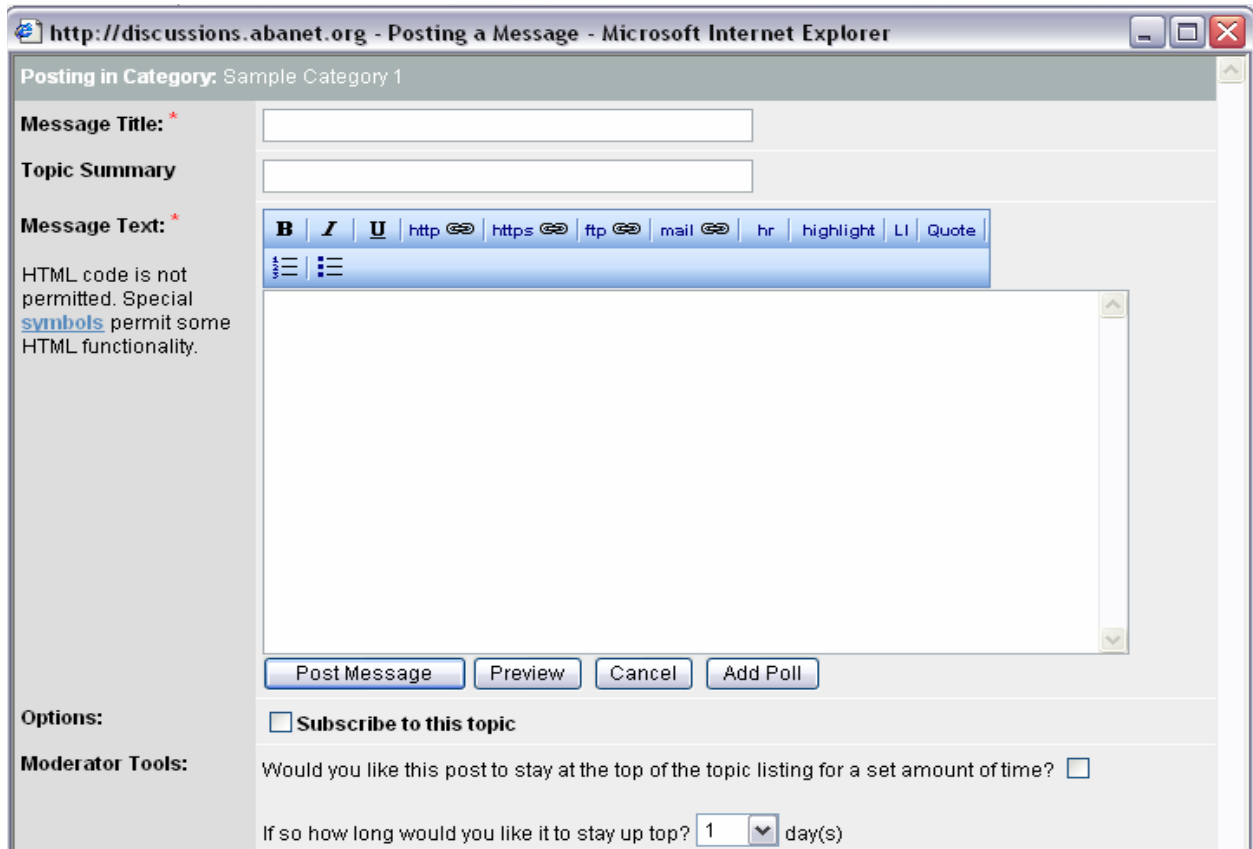
Only search topics that have been answered

Filtering

Search for messages posted in the last day(s).

Start Date **End Date**

Posting a Topic:



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window titled "http://discussions.abanet.org - Posting a Message". The page content is as follows:

Posting in Category: Sample Category 1

Message Title: *

Topic Summary

Message Text: *

HTML code is not permitted. Special [symbols](#) permit some HTML functionality.

Rich text editor toolbar: **B** | **I** | **U** | http | https | ftp | mail | hr | highlight | LI | Quote

Rich text editor icons: [List Bulleted] [List Numbered]

Buttons: Post Message | Preview | Cancel | Add Poll

Options:

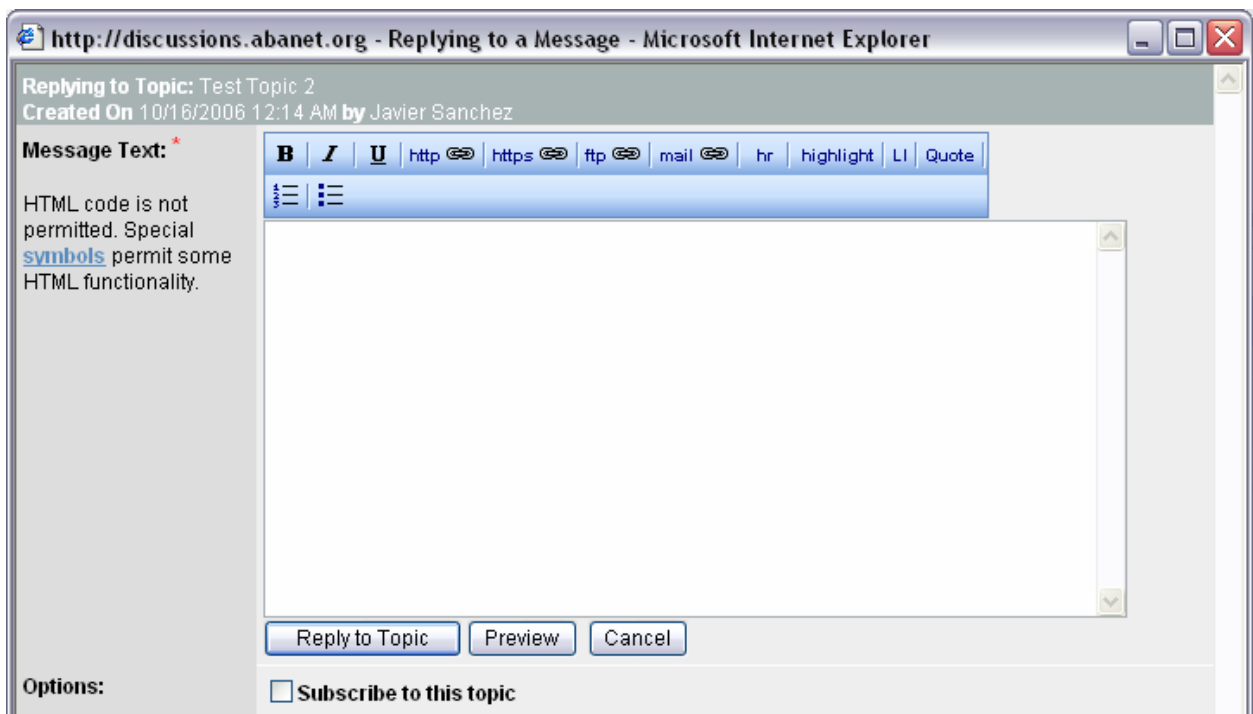
Subscribe to this topic

Moderator Tools:

Would you like this post to stay at the top of the topic listing for a set amount of time?

If so how long would you like it to stay up top? 1 day(s)

Replying to a Message:



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window titled "http://discussions.abanet.org - Replying to a Message". The page content is as follows:

Replying to Topic: Test Topic 2

Created On 10/16/2006 12:14 AM by Javier Sanchez

Message Text: *

HTML code is not permitted. Special [symbols](#) permit some HTML functionality.

Rich text editor toolbar: **B** | **I** | **U** | http | https | ftp | mail | hr | highlight | LI | Quote

Rich text editor icons: [List Bulleted] [List Numbered]

Buttons: Reply to Topic | Preview | Cancel

Options:

Subscribe to this topic

Profile screen:

Establish your Forums profile below.	
Location/Time Zone	
Time Zone:	(GMT-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada) ▼
Time Zone Adjust:	-06.0
Discussion Board Profile Visibility:	<input type="radio"/> On <input checked="" type="radio"/> Off
Discussion Board E-mail Visibility:	<input type="radio"/> On <input checked="" type="radio"/> Off
Message Display Order	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Ascending <input type="radio"/> Descending
Days back to view topics for:	365
Topics Per Page:	25 ▼
Default topic view	Linear ▼
Messages Per Page:	100 ▼
Editor Type:	<input type="radio"/> WYSIWYG Editor <input checked="" type="radio"/> HTML Editor
Please choose your preferred language:	English ▼
Category Blocking: To select categories, hold the CTRL key down (Apple key on a Mac) while clicking the categories using your mouse.	Sample Category 1 Sample Category 2 Sample Category 3 Trash Bin Private Topics
Category Subscription: To select categories, hold the CTRL key down (Apple key on a Mac) while clicking the categories using your mouse.	Sample Category 1 Sample Category 2 Sample Category 3
Category Digest To select categories, hold the CTRL key down (Apple key on a Mac) while clicking the categories using your mouse.	Sample Category 1 Sample Category 2 Sample Category 3
<input type="button" value="Update Profile"/>	

FAQ - Login:
How do I login into a discussion board?

Click on the link sent to you by your staff liaison. Enter in your ABA customer / membership id and password when presented with the login screen. Accept the terms of service agreement and you are ready to begin.

What is my login id and password?

Every ABA member was assigned an ABA customer id also known as an ABA membership id. The id appears on the identification card which each member should have received when they became members of the ABA.

Non-members will need to click on the new customer button and complete the form when prompted to obtain an ABA customer id.

New Customer
If you are not a member or do not already have an online account, and you want to buy a book or attend a meeting, create an account with the ABA for quick order processing.

Join the ABA
Experience our wide range of member programs, customized services, authoritative publications and discounted products. The ABA offers Lawyer, Associate, and Law Student enrollment options. [Learn more](#) about the benefits of membership.

What if I don't know my id?

If you do not remember your id but you do remember the email address you have associated with your account, you can enter that in along with your password to gain access to the discussion board.

Log In to the ABA

ABA Members and Customers
ABA members automatically have an online account. Log in here. (See instructions at right.)

ABA Membership ID or Email Address:

Password:

Remember my ID and password on this computer.

Log In


What if I don't know my password?

Click on the “forgot your id/password” link and follow the prompts. The URL to begin this process is: <http://www.abanet.org/abanet/common/MyABA/home.cfm##detail.cfm>

Membership ID

Log into **myABA** to view and update your information and manage your online profile.

Your Membership ID is an 8-digit number that can be found on your Membership card.



Forgot Your ID/Password? ←

If you have forgotten your ABA Membership ID or Password, we may be able to send your information to the email address in your membership record.

Am I required to have an email address associated with my id to login?

Yes. The new discussion board system requires that every user have an email associated with their account. An email is required to take advantage of the subscription and digest based features.

How do I add an email to my ABA customer account?

If you know your id and password you can click on the following link to log onto MYABA.

<http://www.abanet.org/abanet/common/MyABA/home.cfm>

Upon successful login, verify whether or not an email account exists within your profile. If an email account exists you will need to contact the Service Center to troubleshoot the issue. If an email does not exist, click on the edit button and enter in an email address.

Profile

Javier Sanchez
Member ID:
Password: [Change Password](#)
American Bar Association
321 N Clark St
Chicago, IL 60610-4714
O: (312) 988-
E-mail: [.@staff.abanet.org](#)

[edit](#) [?](#) ←

←

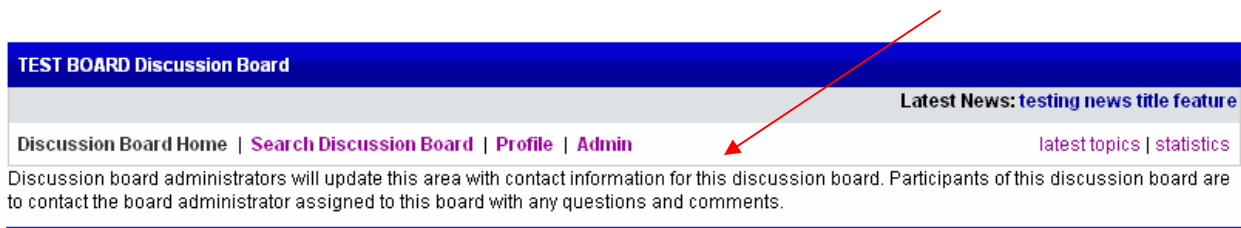
Is there someone I can contact for additional information?

For immediate assistance, please call the ABA Service Center at 1.800.285.2221. Customer Service Representatives are available from Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. Central USA Time. If you are outside the USA (sans Puerto Rico, Canada and Mexico), please call 1.312.988.5522.

FAQ – Categories:

How do I create a category?

Discussion board administrators are the only users that can create a category. Standard end users can create topics but not categories. If you would like to see additional categories added to your discussion board, contact the discussion board administrator. Contact information for the discussion board should be listed in the header of the board.



The screenshot shows the header of a discussion board. At the top is a dark blue bar with the text "TEST BOARD Discussion Board" in white. Below this is a light gray bar with "Latest News: testing news title feature" on the right. A navigation bar contains links: "Discussion Board Home", "Search Discussion Board", "Profile", "Admin", "latest topics", and "statistics". A red arrow points from the top right towards the "Admin" link. Below the navigation bar is a paragraph of text: "Discussion board administrators will update this area with contact information for this discussion board. Participants of this discussion board are to contact the board administrator assigned to this board with any questions and comments."

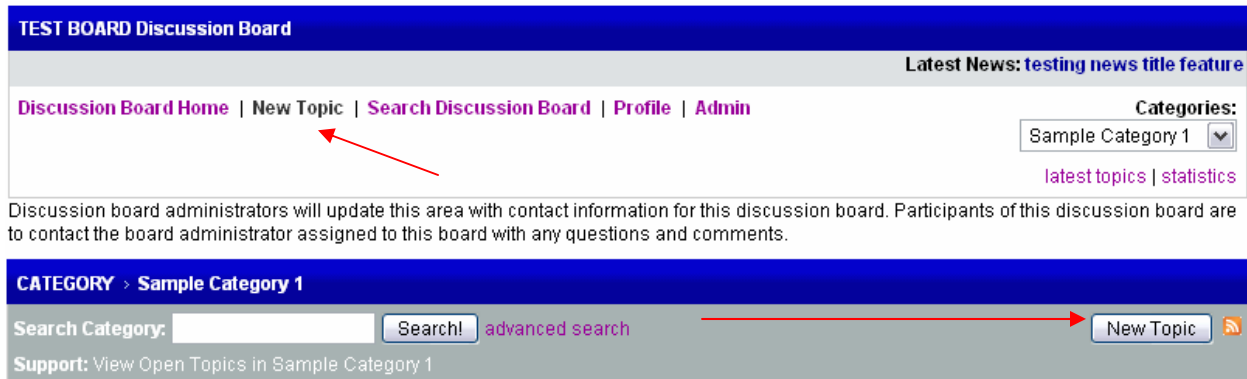
FAQ – Topics and Messages:

How do I create a new topic?

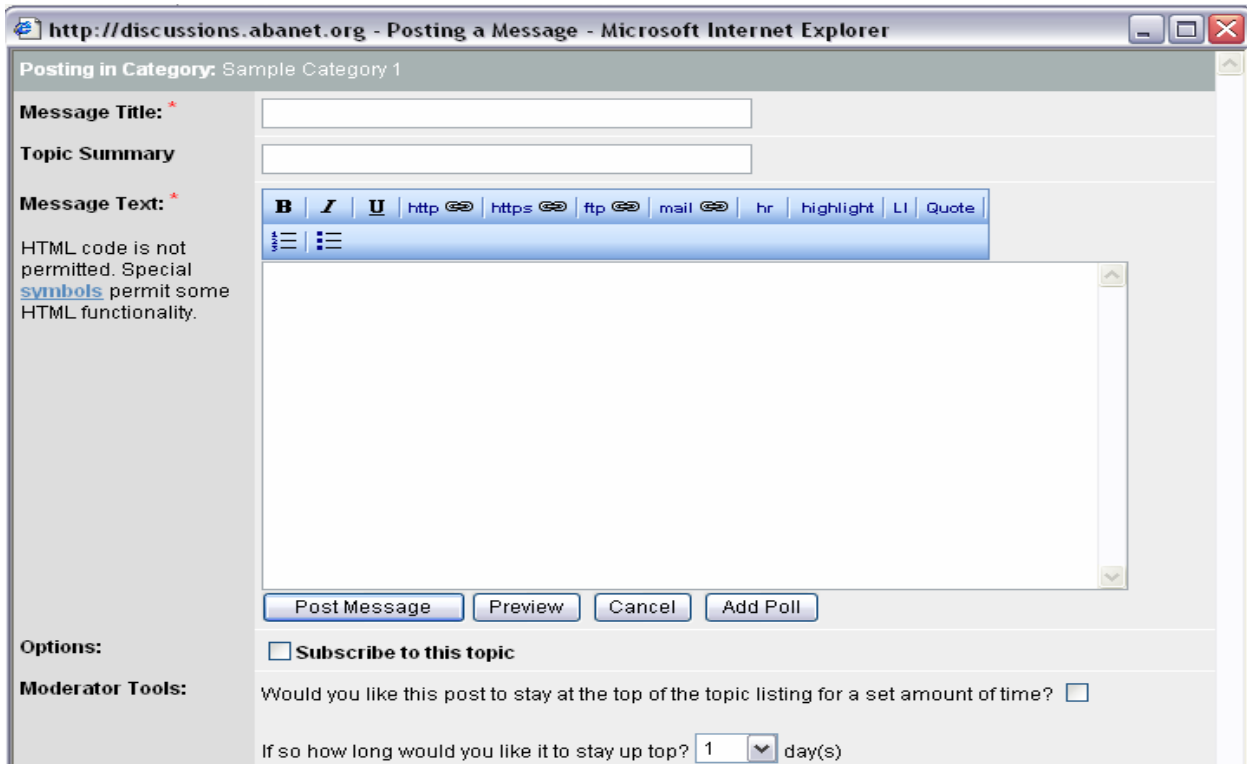
The first step is to select a category in which you would like to create a new topic in. Simply click on one of the existing categories within the board. Remember categories can be identified by the following two icons:



Once a category has been selected you will notice that a new menu option, new topic, appears in the main menu. Select “new topic” and a new window will appear giving you the ability to add a new topic. See screen shots below.



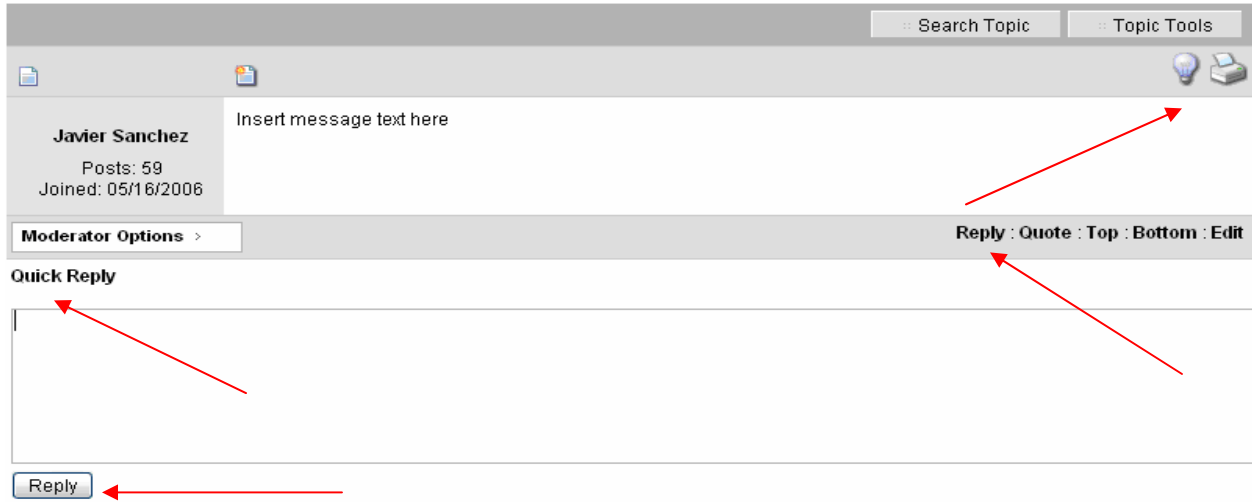
Editor – This window will appear as a pop-up after you select “new topic” from the menu above.



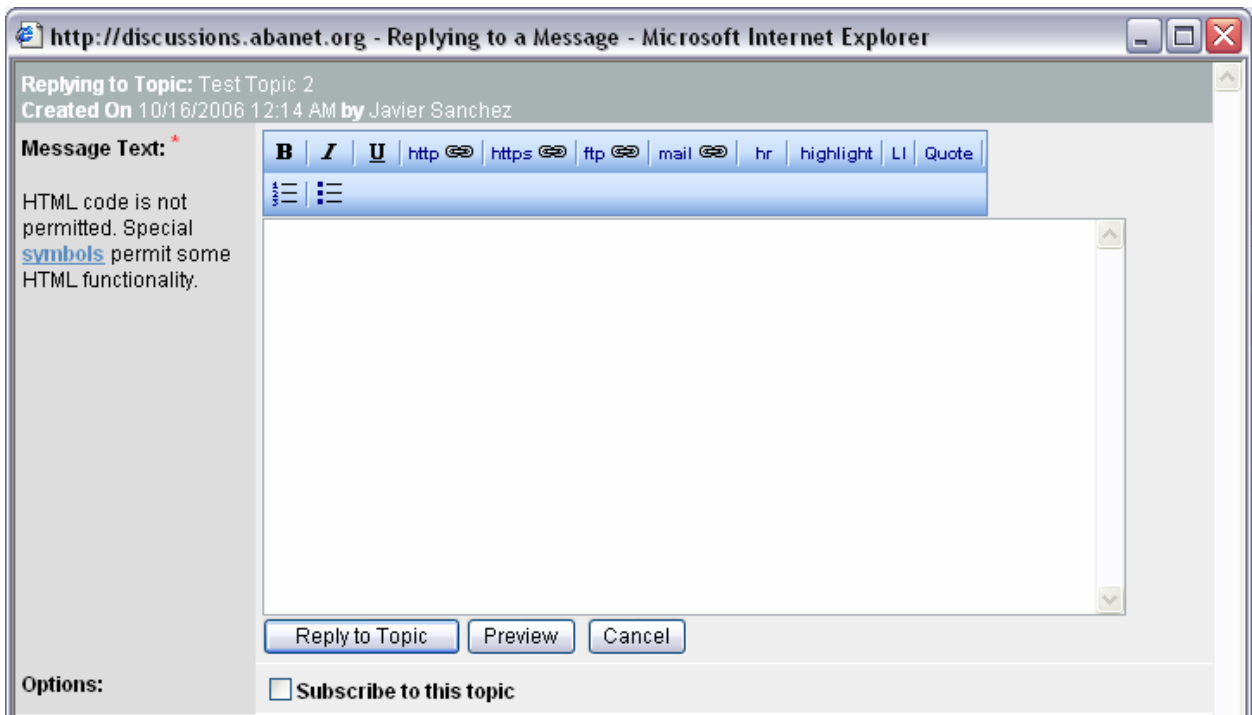
How do I reply to a message?



Click on a topic and the screen displayed below will appear. You can reply to a message in one of two ways: 1) Begin typing your message in the text box located under the “quick reply” text. Once you are done with your message, select the reply button located on the bottom left of the box. 2) Select the reply option on the right hand side and use the editor to submit a reply.



The following editor will appear if you choose option 2. As you can see you have more formatting options versus the quick reply option.

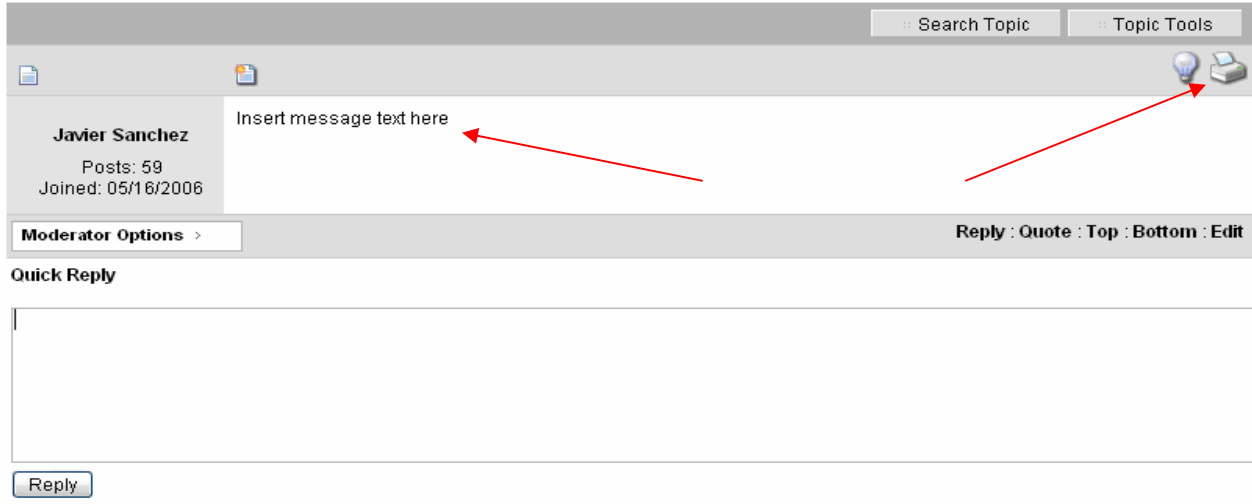


Print Functionality:

How do I print a message?

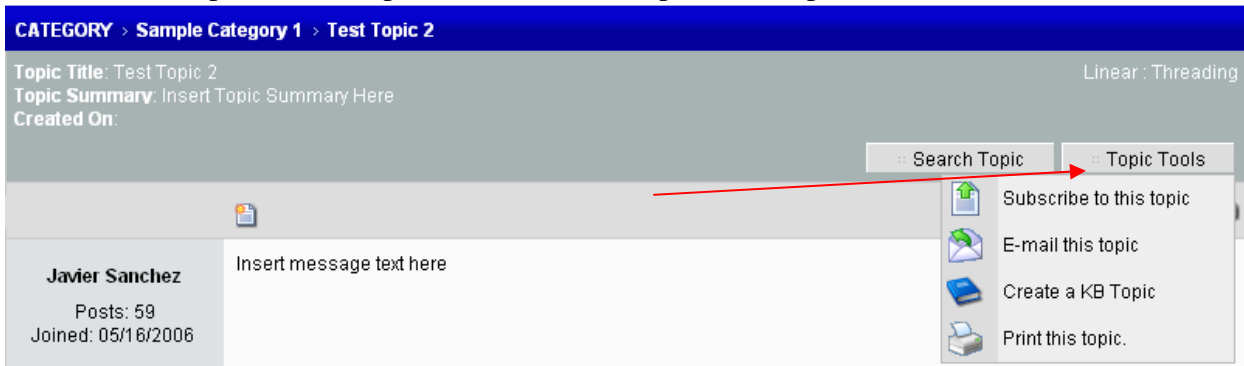


Select the print icon shown in the screen shot below to print the message displayed in the same frame

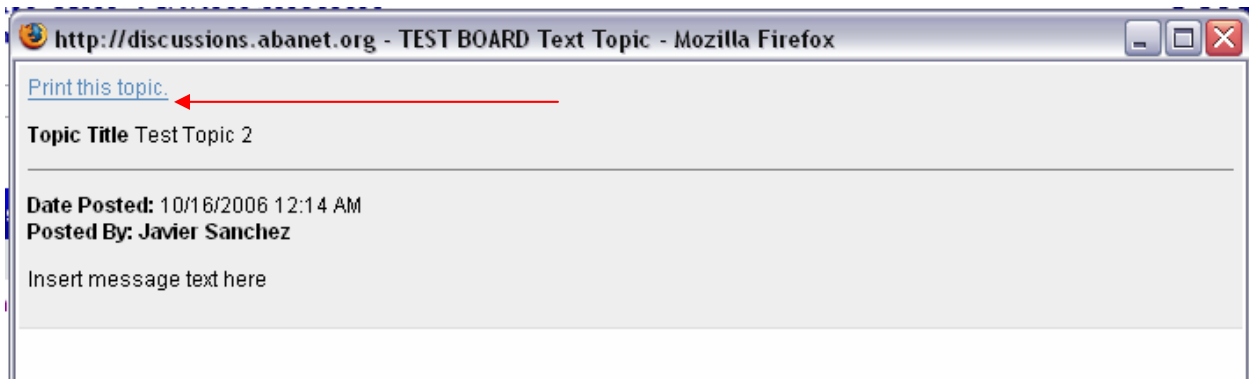
A screenshot of a forum message interface. At the top right, there are two buttons: "Search Topic" and "Topic Tools". Below these, there is a lightbulb icon and a printer icon. A red arrow points from the printer icon to the text "Insert message text here" in the message body. Another red arrow points from the lightbulb icon to the same text. Below the message body, there is a "Quick Reply" section with a text input field and a "Reply" button. The user's name "Javier Sanchez" and post information are visible on the left side of the message.

How do I print an entire topic full of messages?

Click on the “topic tools” drop down box. Select “print this topic”.

A screenshot of a forum topic page. At the top, there is a blue header with the text "CATEGORY > Sample Category 1 > Test Topic 2". Below this, there is a "Topic Title" and "Topic Summary" section. On the right side, there is a "Linear : Threading" link. Below the topic information, there is a "Search Topic" button and a "Topic Tools" button. A red arrow points from the "Topic Tools" button to a dropdown menu that is open. The dropdown menu contains several options: "Subscribe to this topic", "E-mail this topic", "Create a KB Topic", and "Print this topic.". The "Print this topic." option is highlighted. Below the dropdown menu, there is a message body with the text "Insert message text here" and the user's name "Javier Sanchez".

The following pop-up window will appear. Select “print this topic” to complete the process.


A screenshot of a pop-up window titled "http://discussions.abanet.org - TEST BOARD Text Topic - Mozilla Firefox". The window contains a link "Print this topic." with a red arrow pointing to it. Below the link, there is a "Topic Title" section with the text "Test Topic 2". Below that, there is a "Date Posted" section with the text "10/16/2006 12:14 AM" and a "Posted By" section with the text "Javier Sanchez". At the bottom of the window, there is a text input field with the text "Insert message text here".

FAQ – Search Features

How do I search for messages?

There are two different areas where a search can be initiated:

1) Select the “search discussion board” link in the main menu bar.



TEST BOARD Discussion Board

Latest News: [testing news title feature](#)

[Discussion Board Home](#) | [Search Discussion Board](#) | [Profile](#) | [latest topics](#) | [statistics](#)

Discussion board administrators will update this area with contact information for this discussion board. Participants of this discussion board are to contact the board administrator assigned to this board with any questions and comments.



Category Listing

Name	RSS	Topics	Last Post
------	-----	--------	-----------

The search screen displayed below give you the ability to search key words, author and by date.



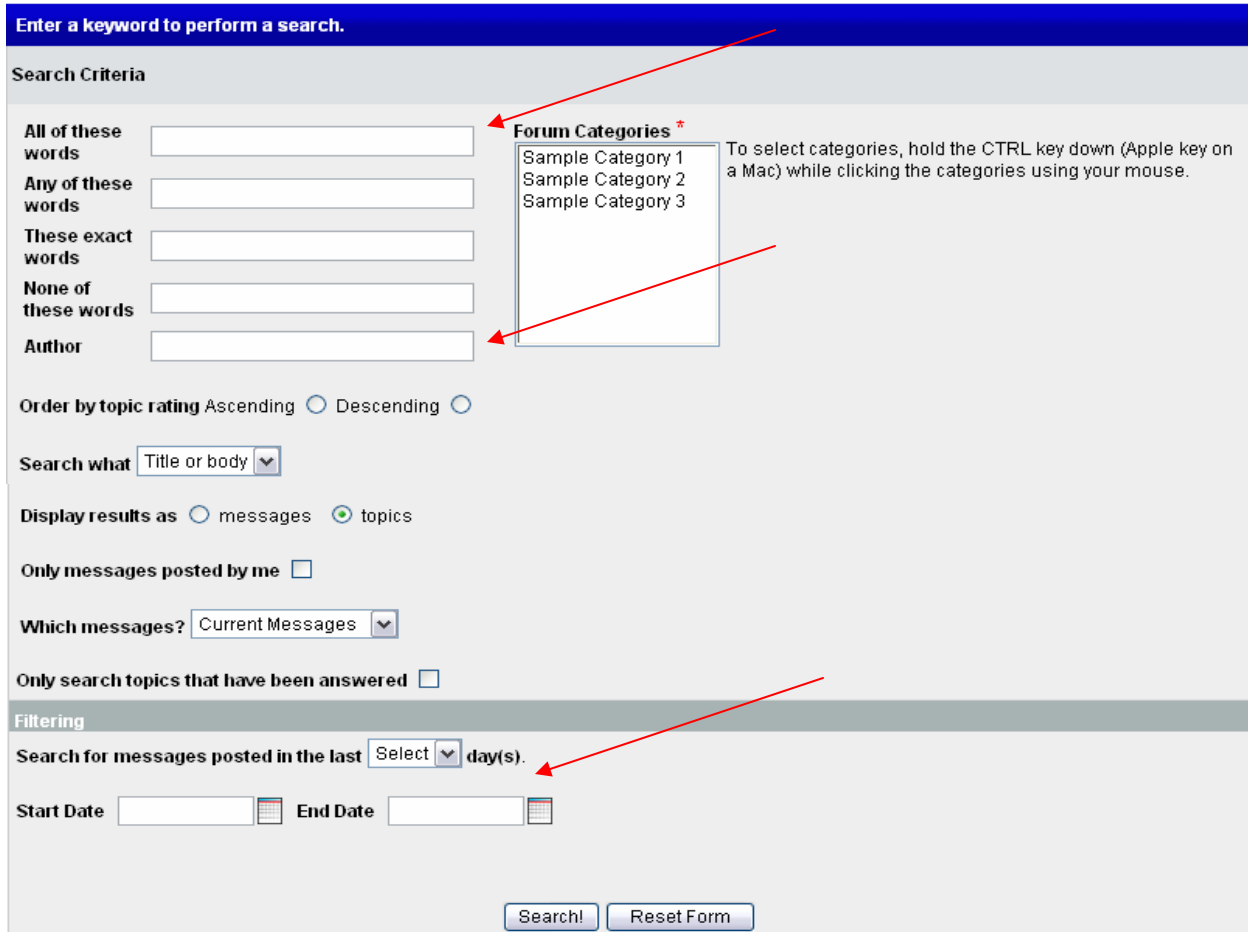
TEST BOARD Discussion Board

Latest News: [testing news title feature](#)

[Discussion Board Home](#) | [Search Discussion Board](#) | [Profile](#) | [latest topics](#) | [statistics](#)

Categories:

Discussion board administrators will update this area with contact information for this discussion board. Participants of this discussion board are to contact the board administrator assigned to this board with any questions and comments.



Enter a keyword to perform a search.

Search Criteria

All of these words

Any of these words

These exact words

None of these words

Author

Forum Categories *
Sample Category 1
Sample Category 2
Sample Category 3

To select categories, hold the CTRL key down (Apple key on a Mac) while clicking the categories using your mouse.

Order by topic rating Ascending Descending

Search what

Display results as messages topics

Only messages posted by me

Which messages?

Only search topics that have been answered

Filtering

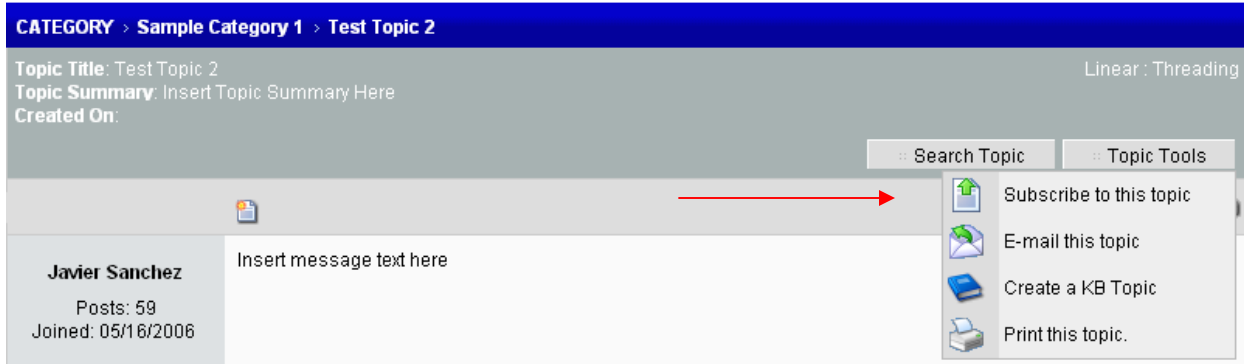
Search for messages posted in the last day(s).

Start Date End Date

Email Subscriptions and Digest Features:

How do I subscribe to a particular topic?

Click on ‘topic tools’ drop down box. Select the ‘subscribe to this topic’ option.



Select ‘subscribe’ and you will notice your status changed to subscribed. You will now receive an email any time there is activity on this topic. Use the same process to unsubscribe from a topic.



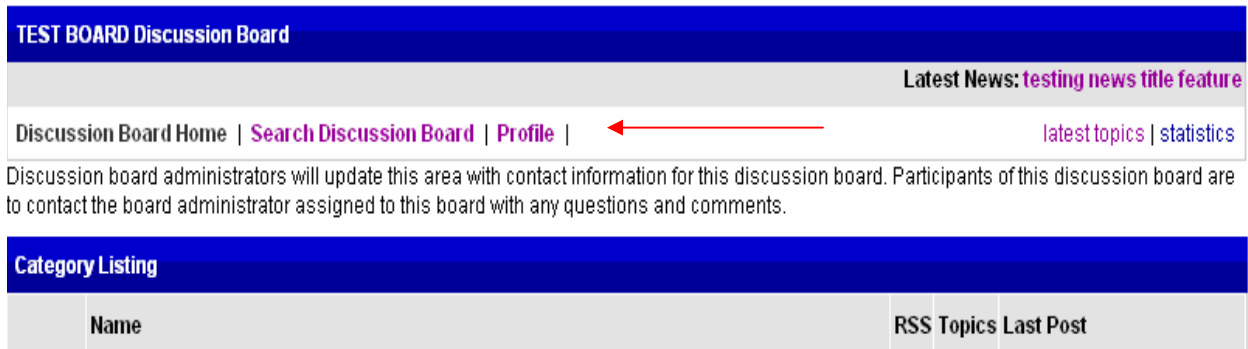
What is the difference between a subscription and a digest?

The subscription feature generates an email and sends it to you every time a message is posted. The digest feature generates one email with all the posts that took place that day and sends you one email at approximately 5:30pm CST with a listing of each post.

On a very active discussion, the difference between a subscription and a digest could be the receipt of one email or hundreds of emails.

How do I enable a subscription or a digest?

Click on the “profile link on the main menu.



The screenshot shows a forum interface. At the top is a blue header with the text "TEST BOARD Discussion Board". Below this is a navigation bar with links: "Discussion Board Home", "Search Discussion Board", "Profile", "latest topics", and "statistics". A red arrow points to the "Profile" link. Below the navigation bar is a paragraph of text: "Discussion board administrators will update this area with contact information for this discussion board. Participants of this discussion board are to contact the board administrator assigned to this board with any questions and comments." Below this is a blue header for "Category Listing". At the bottom is a table with three columns: "Name", "RSS Topics", and "Last Post".

On the next page you will see a sample profile lay out. At the bottom of the page you will see a subscription area and a digest area. The open categories within your discussion board will appear on the right side of the screen.

Depending on the service you want to enable, subscription, digest or both, click on the category(s) that you want to enable. You can select multiple categories by holding the CTRL key as you select the categories. Earlier in the document you learned how to subscribe to one particular topic. Now you are subscribing to an entire category. Any topics that fall within a category you select will be included. For example, if category xyz has ten active topics and you subscribe to category xyz you will receive an email for each of the posts that takes place within those ten topics. Same concept applies for the digest.

How do I unsubscribe from a category or digest?

To unsubscribe from a digest, simply go back into your profile and deselect the categories you wish to remove from your subscription or digest.