

## What is [.htaccess](#)?

An **.htaccess** (*hypertext access*) file is a **directory-level configuration file** supported by several **web servers**, that allows for decentralized management of web server configuration.

- More specific information is available through the Apache .htaccess Tutorial found at: <http://httpd.apache.org/docs/2.0/howto/htaccess.html>
- Also, a great common usage guide is available at: <http://www.htaccess-guide.com/>
- Finally, a mod-rewrite cheat sheet is available at: [http://www.addedbytes.com/download/mod\\_rewrite-cheat-sheet-v2/pdf/](http://www.addedbytes.com/download/mod_rewrite-cheat-sheet-v2/pdf/)

## Editing the .htaccess file

- You can edit the .htaccess file using any text editor, including the terminal/console's built in editor.
- Since this is a system file, be sure it is saved as **.htaccess** and not .htaccess.txt
- Be sure to backup a copy of the file before manipulating or replacing it.

## Commenting the .htaccess file

To comment out an entire line, prefix the line with the number/hash sign (#)

## Common Configuration Use Cases

You can configure and initialize PHP.ini variables (system settings) and httpd.conf variables (virtual hosts) within .htaccess.

### Increase memory limit for PHP:

```
php_value memory_limit 64M
```

### Increase file size limit for uploads:

```
php_value upload_max_filesize 32M
```

### Set the default page priority

This applies to the immediate/parent directory (in which the .htaccess file resides) and subdirectories:

```
DirectoryIndex index.html index.htm index.php index.cgi
```

### Define a virtual host or subdomain:\*

```
<VirtualHost *>
    DocumentRoot "/absolute-path-to-folder-for-subdomain-or-alternate-domain"
    ServerName sub.domain.com
    <Directory /absolute-path-to-folder-for-subdomain-or-alternate-domain >
        Options Indexes FollowSymLinks
        AllowOverride All
    </Directory>
</VirtualHost>
```

**\*Note:** this also requires that the ServerName also be added to the etc/hosts file, which may need to be requested through your server administrator. However for hosting services with a Control Panel, this (both the definition for the subdomain or alternate domain AND the hosts file entry) is automatically updated.

## Redirection

All the rules and conditions used for redirection commands are built using Regular Expressions. Certain characters must be “escaped”. Refer to this handy Regular Expressions Cheat Sheet at:

<http://www.addedbytes.com/download/regular-expressions-cheat-sheet-v2/pdf/>

All redirection conditions and rules must be inserted between the ReWriteEngine On command and closing </IfModule> tag.

```
<IfModule mod_rewrite.c>
    RewriteEngine On
```

*Your rules go here*

```
</IfModule>
```

## Forcing “www” in Your URL Structures

You should also set this preference for Google to index your site with or without the “www” through Google Webmaster Tools.

```
RewriteCond %{HTTP_HOST} ^domain\.com$ [NC]
RewriteRule ^(.*)$ http://www.domain.com/$1 [R=301,L]
```

## Redirecting individual pages

```
redirect 301 /old-page-url-alias http://domain/new-page-url-alias
```

## Redirecting the entire website

```
RewriteRule (.*) http://www.newdomain.com/$1 [R=301,L]
```

## Redirecting based on devices/user agents

You can force users of certain devices to automatically go to a separate mobile-specific page. For sites that offer mobile users the option to view both full and mobile versions, you may need to use an additional mobile detection script to prevent forcing mobile users to only see the mobile specific page(s).

```
RewriteCond %{HTTP_USER_AGENT} ^.*Android.*$ [OR]
RewriteCond %{HTTP_USER_AGENT} ^.*iPhone.*$ [OR]
RewriteCond %{HTTP_USER_AGENT} ^.*iPad.*$ [OR]
RewriteCond %{HTTP_USER_AGENT} ^.*BlackBerry.*$ [OR]
RewriteCond %{HTTP_USER_AGENT} ^.*Palm.*$
RewriteRule ^(.*)$ mobile-specific-sniffer-page [NC,L]
```

## Avoiding Infinite Looping during Device Based Redirection

Test to make sure site/page request is not coming from someone already on the site using this condition before your other conditions and resulting RewriteRule:

```
RewriteCond %{HTTP_REFERER} !^http://(www\.)?domain\.com/ [NC]
```