KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Sharing a Link to a Topic in Discussions (Deep Links)



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Overview

A board in Discussions lives on a **SharePoint** page, and every topic on that board can be addressed by a URL of its own. When you open a topic, the **web part** adds the parameter `?topic=ID` to the address of the page; whoever opens that address lands directly on the topic instead of the topic **list**. The same link format is used by the Discussions Activity web part and by notification emails, so a topic has one address wherever it is referenced. This article explains how the link is built, how to share it and what to expect when it is opened.

How the link is built

Part	Value
Base	The address of the page that hosts the Discussions web part, for example `https://contoso.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/SitePages/Forum.aspx`
Parameter	`topic=ID`, appended with `?` - or with `&` when the address already has parameters
`ID`	The item ID of the topic in the **Discussions Topics** list of the **site**, a whole number such as `42`

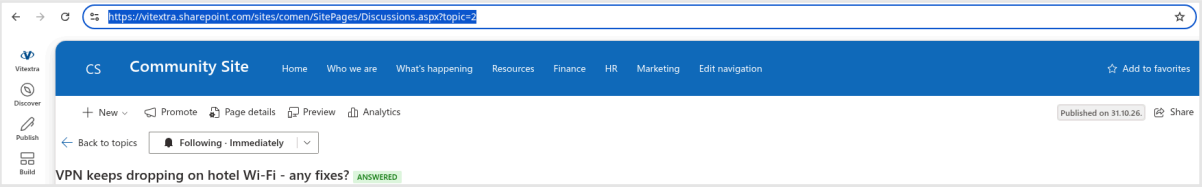
A complete link looks like `https://contoso.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/SitePages/Forum.aspx?topic=42`. The ID is the ordinary SharePoint item ID: you can see it in the **ID** column of the **Discussions Topics** list, and it never changes for the life of the topic - renaming the topic, pinning it or moving it to another category keeps the link valid.

Copying a link to a topic

1 Open the board and click the topic.
2 Look at the address bar of the browser: the web part has added `?topic=ID` to the page address without reloading the page.
3 Copy the address and paste it in an email, a chat or a page.

When you click **Back to topics**, the parameter is removed again, so the address of the list is always the plain page address. The web part has no separate **Copy link** button in

this version; the address bar is the link.



The topic parameter in the address bar

What happens when the link is opened

When the page loads with `?topic=ID` in its address, the web part skips the topic list and opens the topic right away: its text, attachments, the reply thread and the reply editor, exactly as if the reader had clicked the topic in the list. A **view** is counted for the topic, once per browser session (see KB10405. Likes, Views and Reply Counters in Discussions). **Back to topics** takes the reader to the list of the board.

The reader needs the same permissions as for the board itself: anyone who can read the site can open the link; posting a reply requires the **Add items** permission. A person without access to the site gets the usual SharePoint access-request page before the web part even loads.

If the ID does not match a topic - the topic was deleted, or the number was mistyped - the web part shows an error message in place of the topic together with the **Back to topics** button; the board is still usable.

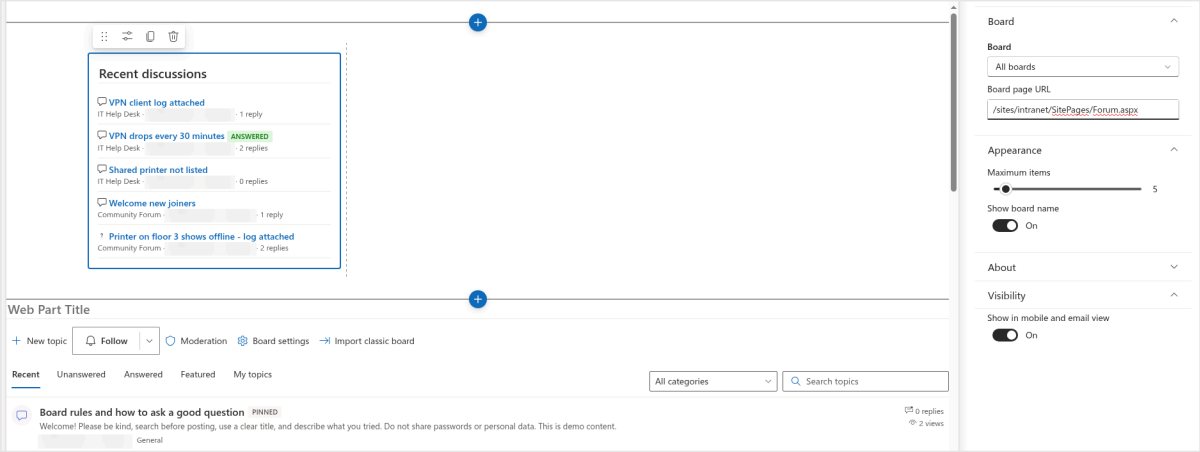
A deep link does not bypass the visibility rules of the board. If the topic is awaiting approval or was rejected and the reader is neither its author nor a moderator, the web part shows the message *This topic is not available. It may be awaiting approval or may have been removed.* instead of the topic, again with the **Back to topics** button. Moderators and the author open such a topic as usual; see KB10430. Why a Post Is Not Visible: Approval, Rejection and Visibility Rules.

Note

The parameter is read from the page address, so it belongs to the page, not to a particular web part. Keep one Discussions board per page: if two Discussions web parts were placed on the same page, both would react to the same `?topic=` parameter.

Links from the Discussions Activity web part

The Discussions Activity web part lists the latest topics of the site on any page - for example the home page of the intranet - and links every topic to its board with the same `?topic=ID` format. For that, the web part needs to know where the board lives: enter the address of the page that hosts the Discussions web part in the **Board page URL** field of the **Board** group in its property pane. If the field is left empty, the titles in the feed are shown as plain text without links.



The Board page URL setting of the Discussions Activity web part

When the Activity web part shows **All boards** of the site, every topic is linked to the one page address you entered. If your site has several boards on several pages, add one Activity web part per board, each with its own **Board** and **Board page URL**; see KB10415. Showing Recent Discussions on Any Page with the Discussions Activity Web Part.

Links in notification emails

Email notifications for subscriptions and mentions are delivered by a **Power Automate** flow that works on the lists of the site. The link in such an email is built by the flow from the address of the board page, which is one of the flow's parameters, plus `?topic=ID` of the topic that triggered the email - the web part does not store the page address anywhere. The contract is described in KB10414. How Notifications Work in Discussions: Subscriptions, Mentions and Power Automate.

Deep links in Microsoft Teams

In **Microsoft Teams** the board is a tab that shows the same web part. The `?topic=` parameter belongs to the SharePoint page inside the tab, and Teams does not show that address, so there is no address bar to copy from inside the tab. To share a topic with colleagues who use Teams:

- open the board on its SharePoint page - the site of the team - and copy the address

with `?topic=ID` from there, or
- use the link from a notification email or from the Discussions Activity web part.

A link of that form opens the SharePoint page in the browser, with the topic opened. The Discussions web part does not use Teams-specific deep links (a link that would switch Teams to the tab and open the topic inside it) in this version. See KB10393. How to Add Discussions to Microsoft Teams.

Deep links on a phone

The link works wherever the SharePoint page opens: in the browser of the phone and in the SharePoint mobile app. Copying the address from inside the mobile app is not always possible, so the practical way to share a topic from a phone is to use the **Share** function of the app on the page or to forward a notification email. See KB10416. Discussions in the SharePoint Mobile App and Teams Mobile.

Limits

- The link addresses a **topic**, not an individual reply. A reader who follows the link sees the whole thread from the top; there is no anchor for a particular reply in this version.
- The link depends on the page: if the page is renamed or moved, or the web part is moved to another page, existing links must be updated. The topic ID stays the same.
- The ID is site-wide: all boards of a site share one **Discussions Topics** list, and the web part does not check that the topic belongs to its board. An ID from board *A* pasted after the page address of board *B* opens that topic on board *B*'s page.
- The link is not a share with permissions: it does not grant access to the site. Use the standard **Share** of the page or the site for people who do not have access yet.

Tip

To give the board a short, stable address, keep it on a dedicated page with a simple name - `Forum.aspx`, `Questions.aspx` - and add that page to the site navigation. Every topic link then starts with an address that readers recognise.

Terms

List
A list is a storage unit in SharePoint. A list can contain columns of different types, content types, and views. A document library is a special type of list and therefore inherits the functionality of a list.

Microsoft Teams
Microsoft Teams is a chat-based collaboration platform for business communications with features for online meetings, live events, and document sharing.

Power Automate
Microsoft Power Automate is a cloud-based service that allows users to create automated workflows between applications and services. It enables the automation of repetitive tasks and processes, such as data collection, notifications, and approvals, without the need for extensive coding knowledge.

SharePoint
SharePoint is a web-based collaboration platform that provides content management, document management, workflow applications, search, and other tools that empower employees and teams to work together. SharePoint is also a secure place to store, organize, and access shared information.

Site
A SharePoint site is a container for information within the SharePoint platform. Sites typically offer features such as document libraries, lists, calendars, discussion boards, and workflows, facilitating collaboration, communication, and document management within teams or across departments. Sites can be customized and configured to suit the specific needs and workflows of an organization.

View
A view is a saved configuration that determines which items of a list or library are displayed and how, including the columns, sorting, filtering, grouping, and layout. Views can be personal or public.

Web Part
A web part is a primary building block of functionality or content placed on a

Terms

SharePoint page. Some web parts support customization, such as configuring the web part or changing its appearance.