KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Views, Paging, Search and Counters: Display Settings of the Discussions Web Part

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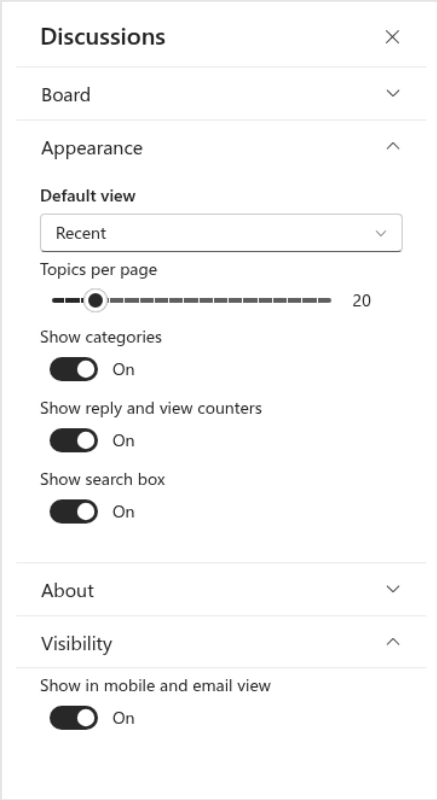
Overview

The topic list is the first thing a reader sees in the Discussions web part, and five settings decide how it looks: which view opens first, how many topics load at a time, whether the search box, the category filter and the reply and view counters are shown. All five live in the **Appearance** group of the property pane and apply to one web part instance, so two pages that show the same board can be tuned differently. This article explains each setting, what it changes on the page and which combinations suit the common scenarios.

The settings do not change the content of the board: every topic stays in the **Discussions Topics** list, and readers can always switch views or search on their own. The complete list of properties of both web parts is in KB10425. Discussions Web Part Settings Reference.

Where the settings are

1 Edit the page and select the web part.
2 Click the pencil (**Edit web part**) to open the property pane.
3 Expand the **Appearance** group. It contains **Default view**, **Topics per page**, **Show categories**, **Show reply and view counters** and **Show search box**.
4 Republish the page when you are done; the settings are stored with the page.



The Appearance group of the property pane

Views and the default view

The topic list has up to five views, shown as tabs above the list. A reader can switch between them at any time; **Default view** decides which tab is active when the page opens.

View	What it shows
Recent	Every topic of the board, newest activity first
Unanswered	Questions without an accepted answer, including questions a moderator has locked without marking one
Answered	Questions with an accepted answer — marked by the author or a moderator — whether open or locked
Featured	Topics a moderator has marked as featured
My topics	Topics started by the current user,

View	What it shows
	including those still waiting for approval

In every view the topics are ordered by their last activity, newest first, and pinned topics are placed at the top. The **Unanswered** and **Answered** tabs exist only for boards in the *Questions and answers only* and *Discussions and questions* modes; a board in the *Discussions only* mode shows **Recent**, **Featured** and **My topics**. The default is **Recent**.

Note

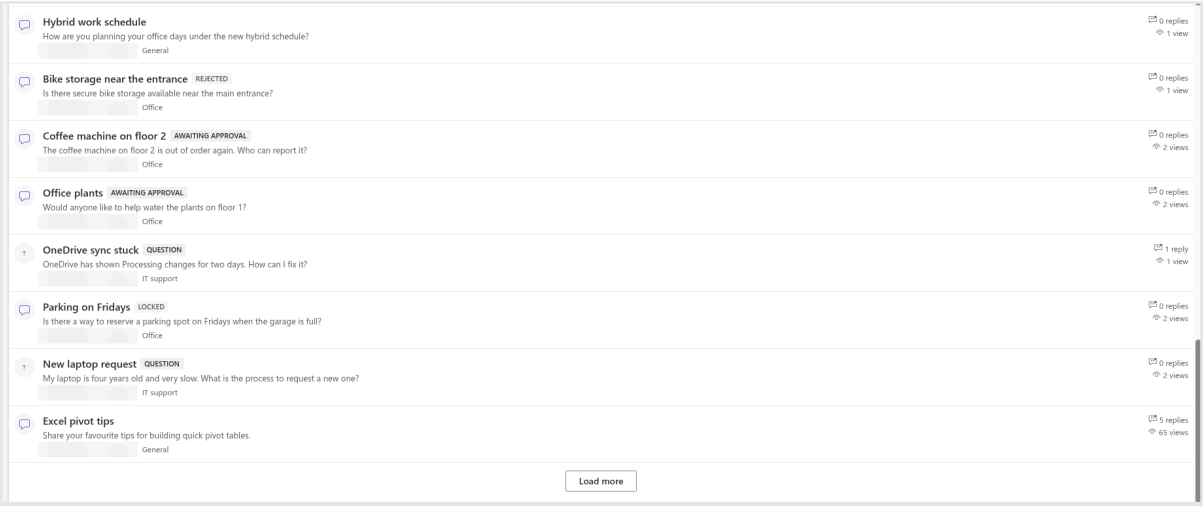
The **Default view** drop-down offers **Unanswered** and **Answered** only when the board selected in the **Board** group is not in the *Discussions only* mode; for a discussion-only board it lists **Recent**, **Featured** and **My topics**. If a saved default view is no longer available for the board — for example, because a moderator switched the mode to *Discussions only* in **Board settings** after the page was configured — the list opens on **Recent**.

A typical choice is **Unanswered** for a help-desk style Q&A board, so experts land on the questions that need them, and **Recent** everywhere else. The best-answer workflow behind the **Unanswered** and **Answered** views is described in KB10400. Marking the Best Answer in Q&A Topics.

Paging: Topics per page

Topics per page is a slider from 5 to 100 in steps of 5; the default is 20. The web part asks SharePoint for exactly that many topics, and when the board has more, a **Load more** button appears under the list. Each click appends the next portion; the topics already shown stay on the page, so the reader never loses their place. The number applies to each view, category filter and search separately — every change of view or filter starts a fresh first page.

Paging is done on the server with indexed columns, so a large board does not load everything at once and does not hit the list view threshold when a reader opens the page. A smaller page size makes the first paint faster on slow connections and phones; a larger one suits boards that readers scan rather than search. For the limits behind this behaviour, see KB10427. Limits and Performance: Large Boards, Long Threads and the List View Threshold.



The topic list with views, filters, counters and the Load more button

Search: Show search box

Show search box adds the **Search topics** box to the right of the view tabs. The reader types a word or phrase and presses Enter; the web part asks SharePoint for the topics of the board whose **title contains** the text, within the current view and category. Clearing the box restores the full list. When nothing matches, the list shows *Nothing found*.

Keep in mind what the search covers and what it does not:

- It searches topic **titles** only — not the body of the topic, not the replies, not attachments or author names.
- It is limited to the current board, view and category; switch to **Recent** and **All categories** to search the whole board.
- It is a substring match, not a word search: *mail* finds *Mailbox quota* and *Email signature*.
- It does not use the Microsoft Search index, so a new topic is found immediately.

For a board whose readers mostly look for existing answers, keep the box on and consider a Q&A-style default view; for a short announcements-style board with a dozen topics, hiding the box frees the toolbar. The enterprise search behaviour of the lists is described in KB10411. Where Discussions Stores Your Data: Lists, Columns and Privacy.

Categories: Show categories

Show categories controls two things at once: the category drop-down in the toolbar (**All categories** plus one entry per category of the board) and the category name in the metadata line of each topic row. The drop-down appears only when the board actually

has categories. The topic itself still shows its category when opened, and the **Category** field in the new-topic form is not affected. How to define and maintain categories is covered in KB10423. Organizing Topics with Categories.

Counters: Show reply and view counters

Show reply and view counters shows or hides the column on the right of every row with *N replies* and *N views*. The reply counter counts approved replies of the topic; the view counter grows by one when somebody opens the topic — once per topic and browser session, so reopening the topic in the same session is not counted again. Both are stored in the topic item and updated by the web part when a reply is posted or a topic is opened — the counters are kept on a best-effort basis and can lag behind for a moment, as explained in KB10405. Likes, Views and Reply Counters in Discussions.

Hiding the counters affects the list only. The opened topic still shows its number of views in the header and the number of replies above the thread, and the **Discussions Activity** web part still shows the reply count of each recent topic.

Note

Counters are a strong signal on a busy board and an awkward one on a new board where every topic reads *0 replies · 3 views*. A common pattern is to launch a board with the counters off and switch them on after the first weeks.

The web part title

The heading above the list is the **Web Part Title**, edited inline on the web part itself in edit mode, not in the property pane. It is empty by default: with no title, the web part starts directly with the command bar and the topic list. A title is useful when the page shows several web parts or when the board name alone does not tell readers what to post there.

Recommended combinations

Scenario	Default view	Topics per page	Categories	Counters	Search
Internal help desk or HR Q&A (board in	**Unanswered**	20	On, one per service area	On	On

Scenario	Default view	Topics per page	Categories	Counters	Search
Questions and answers only mode)					
Community of practice or class forum (*Discussions and questions*)	**Recent**	20–30	On, a few broad themes	On	On
Small team board, a few topics per week (*Discussions only*)	**Recent**	10	Off	Off	Off
Curated board where moderators feature the best threads	**Featured**	10–20	On	On	On

Tip

The same board can be placed on two pages with different settings — for example **Unanswered** with 10 topics on the team's working page and **Recent** with 50 topics on an archive page. Both web parts read and write the same lists; see KB10391. How to Add and Configure the Discussions Web Part.