

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about w3m

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General Questions, How to Get It, Required Environment

How do I pronounce “w3m”?

It's “W-three-M”. It doesn't rhyme with “pteranodon”.

Why is it called “w3m”?

It's an abbreviation of “WWW-wo-Miru”, which is Japanese for “See the WWW”. So in English the name of this browser would be something like “stw3”.

On which platforms does w3m work?

It runs on various versions of Unix, since version 990226 on OS/2 and since version 990303 also on MS-Windows with Cygwin32.

More recent versions have been confirmed to run on:

- SunOS 4.1.x
- HP-UX 9.x, 10.x
- Solaris 2.5.x, 2.6, 8
- Linux 2.0.1 to 3.17
- FreeBSD 2.2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 4.6
- NetBSD/macppc, m68k
- EWS4800 Rel.12.2 Rev.A
- Digital UNIX: v3.2D, v4.0D
- IRIX 5.3, IRIX 6.5
- OS/2 with emx
- Windows 9x/NT with Cygwin32 b20.1
- MS-DOS with DJGPP and WATT32 packet driver
- MacOS X Server
- MacOS X 10.1, 10.2

Where can I get more information about w3m?

At the [English w3m home page](#).

Is there a mailing list for w3m?

There is a mailing list for developers (w3m-dev-en). Please see the [w3m home page](#) for details. You may also mail your comments to [the author](#).

Are there any binary distributions?

So far there are only binaries for the win/cygnus32 version. Contact [the author](#) if you want to contribute binaries for other platforms.

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Compile and Install

No problem :-)

Options, Commands, Usage

w3m quits if started without parameters. What's wrong?

w3m is a **pager**. Therefore it just quits when invoked without any arguments. It keeps running

1. with a filename or URL as argument
2. with data piped from standard input
3. when invoked with option -B to show the bookmark file
4. when invoked with option -v to welcome users with a built-in page
5. with specified HTTP_HOME or WWW_HOME variable

w3m starts with black characters on a black background. How do I change this?

When compiled with color support, w3m assumes a white background and therefore displays black characters.

You may either change the background color of your terminal (e.g. with the -bg option in a xterm) or take these steps:

- invoke monochrome mode of w3m with w3m -M
- type "o" to get to the options setting panel
- mark "Display with color" as "YES" and choose an arbitrary color
- click on [OK].

Does w3m support colors?

Yes. When you run "./configure", answer the question

Let's do some configurations. Choose config option among the list.

```
1 - Baby model    (no color, no menu, no mouse, no cookie, no SSL)
2 - Little model  (color, menu, no mouse, no cookie, no SSL)
3 - Mouse model   (color, menu, mouse, no cookie, no SSL)
4 - Cookie model  (color, menu, mouse, cookie, no SSL)
5 - Monster model (with everything; you need openssl library)
6 - Customize
Which?
```

with 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Does w3m support monochrome displays?

Yes. You may either

1. Answer the above-mentioned "configure" question with 1, or
2. Invoke w3m with the -M option, or
3. Type "o" within w3m to enter the options setting panel and turn off color display mode.

How do I shift the display?

You can shift the display by moving the cursor to the edge of the screen. You may also use the following commands

- SHIFT_LEFT and SHIFT_RIGHT, bound to the keys > and <
- SHIFT_LEFT1 and SHIFT_RIGHT1, bound to the keys . and ,

Another idea would be adjusting the xterm with the -geometry option e.g. something like

```
xterm -geometry 110x45 -bg white -name w3m -e w3m -B
```

How do I move between hyperlinks?

You can move to the next hyperlink using TAB. ESC TAB moves the cursor to the previous hyperlink. (see Section [Functions and Key bindings](#) of w3m's manual)

Graphical browsers display a word red, but w3m doesn't. Why?

w3m doesn't support the attribute COLOR="..." of HTML. It wouldn't be impossible to implement this, but I think it would make documents more difficult to read.

How do I change the colors for hyperlinks, images and form fields?

Type "o" within w3m to get the options panel. You can change these settings there.

w3m doesn't seem to use the variable EDITOR. Why?

Go to the options setting panel using the "o" key. Any entry in the "Editor" field overrides the environment variable.

If you want to use the editor specified by EDITOR, blank the field and save the settings using the button [OK].

How do I quit a search or URL text input?

Clear input text using CTRL-u and hit RETURN.

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Questions about WWW usage

How do I fill in forms with w3m?

Form input fields are displayed in red (or reverse). Move the cursor to them. Then,

- if it is a text input field, hit RETURN put in your text on the bottom line. Press RETURN again
- if it is a radiobutton or checkbox, pressing RETURN changes or toggles the selection

- if it is a textarea, pressing RETURN spawns an editor
- if it is a “submit” or “reset” field, the respective action is performed.

Seems like w3m is slower than some other browsers. Why?

w3m renders a HTML document in two passes. Therefore it doesn't start to display the document until it has finished reading it.

Most other browsers display the document before having read the whole page, and therefore seem faster.

Loading time doesn't decrease when loading a previously seen page.

w3m doesn't have its own cache. Therefore, it reads the document from the server each time it accesses it. If possible, use a cache server.

How do I download a linked file?

Use “a” (or “d” with Lynx-like keybindings) or ESC RET. If you want to download an inline image, use ESC I. (see Section [Functions and Key bindings](#) of w3m's manual)

How do I specify a proxy server?

Set the environment variables HTTP_PROXY, HTTPS_PROXY, GOPHER_PROXY and FTP_PROXY, or use the option setting panel (“o” key). For example, if you want to use port 8000 of proxy.example.org, specify

```
http://proxy.example.org:8000/
```

w3m freezes when I invoke an external browser.

Enter w3m's option screen using the “o” key and specify

```
firefox %s &
```

(if you are using Firefox). Note that %s is replaced with the URL when invoking.

How do I change the default image viewer?

By default w3m uses xv to view images. If you want to change it into, let's say, “display”, add the following line to ~/.w3m/mailcap or /etc/mailcap.

```
image/*; display %s
```

You can specify external viewers of other file types as well:

```
image/*;          display %s
application/postscript;  ghostview %s
application/x-dvi;      xdvi %s
```

How do I enter a URL?

Type U

w3m appends a URL to the former one even when I clear the line with CTRL-u. What should I do?

Enter the *complete* address, e.g. http://www.slashdot.org.

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Miscellaneous

What is w3m's configuration file?

It is ~/.w3m/config.

With this file, you can adjust w3m's behavior by changing the values of options whose effects are described in the option setting panel. Each line contains one option setting,

consisting of an option name and its value with a space as a separator.

What are these w3mxxxx files in my ~/.w3m directory for?

These are temporary files used by w3m when reading documents from a WWW server. They are not cache files and are usually deleted when w3m is terminated. If any temp files are left behind, please remove them yourself.

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