



## Canonical

Plugin for Joomla!

This manual documents **version 18.x** of the Joomla! extension.

<https://www.aimy-extensions.com/joomla/canonical.html>

# 1 Introduction

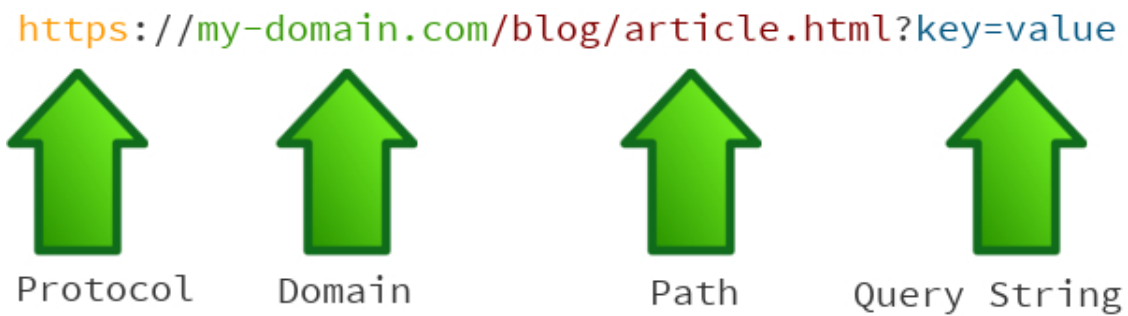
The Joomla! plugin [Aimy Canonical](#) allows you to set a *unique domain name* and *protocol* that is used to create a *canonical link tag* for all of your website's pages. [Aimy Canonical PRO](#) provides a couple of ways to handle a canonical link's *path* as well.

Using a canonical link tag helps to optimize your website for search engines, as it allows you to set a preferred domain and protocol used for all of your URLs. This way, the common *duplicate content* problem, which arises from multiple URLs having the same content, can be prevented.

Therefore, [Aimy Canonical](#) enriches your website's HTML code with a canonical link tag, which looks like this:

```
<link rel="canonical" href="https://my-domain.com/content.html" />
```

A typical canonical URL provides *protocol*, *domain* and *path* information – and maybe an appended *query string*:



This manual guides you through all steps necessary to install and use the plugin.

## 2 Installation

The installation of the extension follows the common Joomla! procedures.

In case you are not familiar with these procedures, proceed as follows:

1. Download the extension's ZIP archive
2. Log into your Joomla! backend as "Super User"
3. From the menu, choose "*Extensions*" → "*Manage*" → "*Install*"
4. Click on the "*Or browse for file*" button and select the ZIP archive

The extension's archive will be uploaded and installed afterwards.

For further information, please have a look at the Joomla! documentation [Installing an Extension](#).

**NOTE:** All plugins are disabled by Joomla! when installed for the first time. To enable [Aimy Canonical](#), proceed and configure the plugin.

### 3 Configuration

After a fresh installation, click on the "Configure plugin now" button on the installation report page.

At any time, you can configure the **Aimy Canonical** plugin using Joomla!'s Plugin Manager by choosing "Extensions" → "Plugin Manager" from the menu. Locate the plugin and click on its name in the "Plugin Name" column of the plugin listing.

In order to use the plugin's functionality, you have to **enable it first**.

To do so, change the plugin's status from "Disabled" to "Enabled" and apply your changes by clicking on either the "Save" or "Save & Close" button in the toolbar.

**Plugins: System - Aimy Canonical (PRO)**

Save Save & Close Close Help

Plugin Redirects

### System - Aimy Canonical (PRO)

system / aimycanonical

Canonical Link Tags for your Website (PRO)

Domain

Protocol \*  http  https

Remove Query String? \*  Yes  No

Add Pagination Parameters? \*  Yes  No

Cleanup <head>? \*  Yes  No

Use <base> Path? \*  Yes  No

Trailing Slashes \*  Keep As-Is  Remove  Add

Enable Custom Path Support? \*  Yes  No

## Domain

Enter your website's preferred domain name.

The plugin will change the **main domain name** and is therefore valid on all pages of your website.

Enter your plain domain name (i.e. `my-domain.com`) **without** any protocol specification or path information.

Subdomains (i.e. `sub.my-domain.com`) may be set as a canonical link as well.

## Protocol

You can select your preferred protocol used in your canonical URL. By changing the default of "http" to "https", so you can define your SSL-secured website as the canonical URL.

## Remove Query String

Some Joomla! extensions append their required parameters as a query string to the pages of your website they are used on – even if SEF is enabled in Joomla!'s global configuration. In some cases this query string is then appended to your canonical URL as well.

If enabled, this option removes the query string from your canonical URL.

**NOTE:** The query string is only removed if SEF is enabled.

## Add Pagination Parameters (PRO Feature)

Adds pagination parameters to the canonical URL as a query string (i.e. "start=5") if required on that page **and** the *Remove Query String* option is enabled.

## Cleanup <head> (PRO Feature)

Under some conditions, **multiple canonical link tags** may be inserted into your pages' <head>. For example, the designer of your Joomla! template may insert one as well as a SEO extension you have installed on your website, without using Joomla!'s mechanism for handling links in a page's <head>.

If this is the case, just enable this option and **Aimy Canonical PRO** will clean up any canonical link tag from your head automatically and insert a single one at the end of the page's <head> afterwards.

## Use <base> Path (PRO Feature)

Under some conditions, the path of the SEF-URL generated by the component which handles a page may not be accurate.

If this is the case, enable this option to use the path of the <base> element's `href` attribute instead.

**NOTE:** If SEF is disabled, this option is not evaluated.

## Trailing Slashes (PRO Feature)

To prevent duplicate content issues and to keep your website's canonical link paths consistent with the way links are placed on your website, **Aimy Canonical PRO** allows you to customize trailing slash handling.

### Keep As-Is

Trailing slashes will be kept as-is.

### Remove

Trailing slashes are removed from a page's canonical link path.

Examples:

- `"/index.php/about-us/"` → `"/index.php/about-us"` (Plain SEF)
- `"/about-us/"` → `"/about-us"` (SEF & URL Rewriting enabled)
- `"/about-us.html/"` → `"/about-us.html"` (SEF & URL Rewriting & Suffix enabled)

### Add

A single slash is added at the end of a page's canonical link path if necessary.

**NOTE:** If "Add Suffix to URL" is enabled in the "SEO Settings" of Joomla!'s Global Configuration, this option is not evaluated.

Examples:

- `"/index.php/about-us"` → `"/index.php/about-us/"` (Plain SEF)
- `"/about-us"` → `"/about-us/"` (SEF & URL Rewriting enabled)

**NOTE:** If SEF is disabled, this option is not evaluated.

## Enable Custom Path Support (PRO Feature)

If enabled, a custom path may be entered in a special "*Aimy Canonical*" tab for any content of a supported Joomla! component.

Have a look at the chapter "*Using Custom Canonical Paths*" for details.

**NOTE:** If SEF is disabled, this option is not evaluated.

### 🔌 Plugins: System - Aimy Canonical (PRO)

Plugin | **Redirects**

Enable Redirects? \*  Yes  No

On Protocol Mismatch? \*  Yes  No

On Domain Mismatch? \*  Yes  No

On Path Mismatch? \*  Yes  No

### Enable Redirects (PRO Feature)

If enabled, **Aimy Canonical PRO** will send a redirect if a mismatch between a page's URL ("address") and the chosen parts of its canonical URL occurs.

You can choose on which condition or conditions such a redirect should be used:

#### On Protocol Mismatch

If the protocols differ, i.e. "http" vs. "https".

#### On Domain Mismatch

If the domain name differs, i.e. "www.my-domain.com" vs. "my-domain.com".

#### On Path Mismatch

If the path differs, i.e. "/" vs. "/index.php".

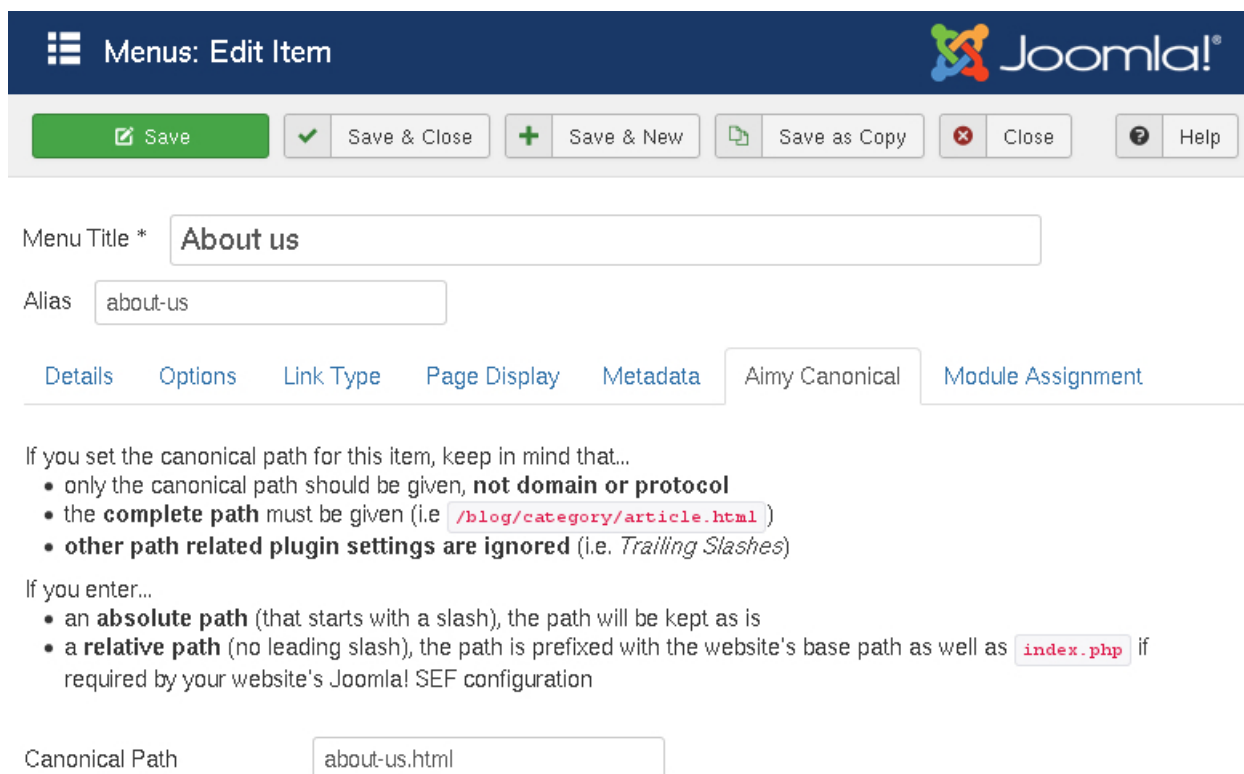
After you enabled the plugin, **Aimy Canonical** will automatically generate and insert a unique canonical link tag to all pages of your website.

No further action required – unless you like to assign a custom path to (some of) your website's pages!

## 4 Using Custom Canonical Paths (PRO Feature)

**Aimy Canonical PRO** allows to set a custom canonical path to specific content which is used regardless of the URL that points the content.

A special new tab (labeled "*Aimy Canonical*") is placed right where you edit your content, so the path can be easily assigned and maintained. To get the tab, make sure the "*Enable Custom Path Support*" option is switched on.



The screenshot shows the Joomla! administration interface for editing a menu item. The title bar reads "Menus: Edit Item" and the Joomla! logo is in the top right. Below the title bar is a toolbar with buttons for "Save", "Save & Close", "Save & New", "Save as Copy", "Close", and "Help".

The main form area has the following fields:

- Menu Title \***:
- Alias**:

Below the form are several tabs: "Details", "Options", "Link Type", "Page Display", "Metadata", "Aimy Canonical", and "Module Assignment". The "Aimy Canonical" tab is currently selected.

Under the "Aimy Canonical" tab, there is instructional text:

If you set the canonical path for this item, keep in mind that...

- only the canonical path should be given, **not domain or protocol**
- the **complete path** must be given (i.e. `/blog/category/article.html`)
- **other path related plugin settings are ignored** (i.e. *Trailing Slashes*)

If you enter...

- an **absolute path** (that starts with a slash), the path will be kept as is
- a **relative path** (no leading slash), the path is prefixed with the website's base path as well as `index.php` if required by your website's Joomla! SEF configuration

At the bottom, there is a field for **Canonical Path** with the value

### 4.1 Supported Components

This feature is currently supported for the following components:

**Joomla! Articles** (`com_content.article`)

**Joomla! Category Descriptions** (`com_content.category`)

**Joomla! Tag Descriptions** (`com_tags.tag`)

**Joomla! Menu Items**

### 4.2 Notes and Limitations

All other **path related options** of **Aimy Canonical PRO** (i.e. "*Use <base> path*" or "*Trailing Slashes*") won't take effect for custom canonical paths. However, all other options are evaluated, that means protocol and domain are set according to your preferences, query strings are processed as configured and redirects will be send when enabled (and appropriate).

If a custom canonical path has been assigned to both content and its menu item (that directly references it), the custom canonical assigned to the menu item is used instead of the one assigned to the content.

**Aimy Canonical PRO** does not check whether the entered path is actually handled by your website or correct – you need to take care of that yourself. That means, **Aimy Canonical PRO** inserts the custom path you entered, but does not route a request to that path on your website to the content.

Be sure to set the **complete path** (i.e. `/blog/category/article.html`). If you enter an **absolute path** (that starts with a slash), the path will be kept as is. In case of a **relative path** (no leading slash), the path is prefixed with the website's base path as well as `index.php` if required by your website's Joomla! SEF configuration.

This feature requires SEF to be enabled.

## 5 Extension Specific Hints

Some extensions require extra logic in order to generate an appropriate canonical URL:

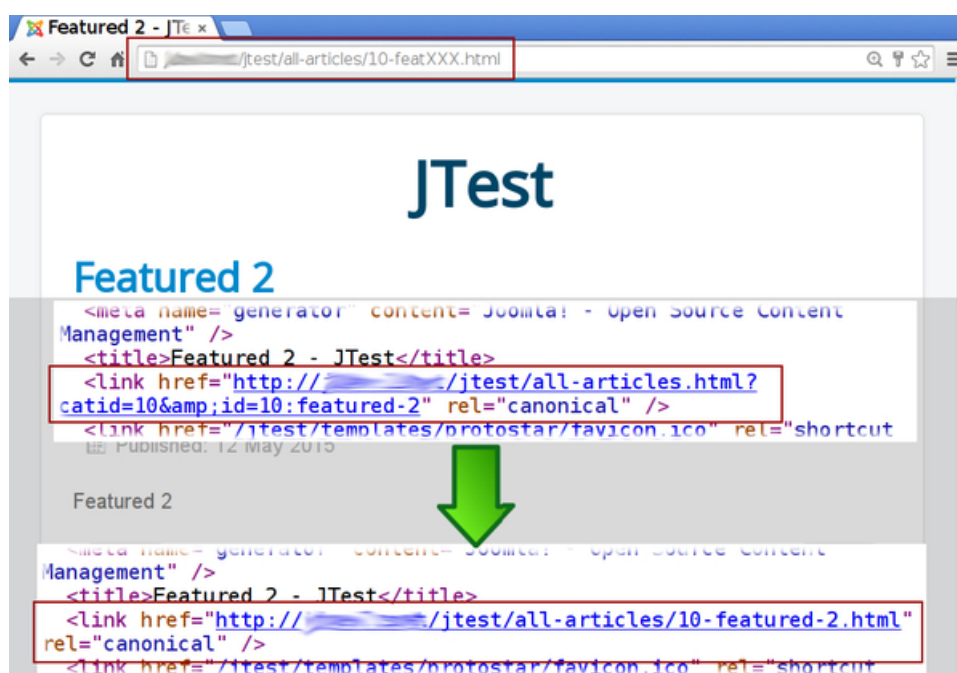
### 5.1 VirtueMart (PRO Feature)

**Aimy Canonical PRO** includes a workaround to enable **SEF canonical URLs** for VirtueMart. With the PRO version installed, no further action is required if you enabled SEF on your website.

### 5.2 com\_content (PRO Feature)

In some cases, the SEF URL's path generated by Joomla!'s `com_content` used in a page's canonical URL may not be correct.

This is the case on article pages that are not directly referenced by a menu item and referenced using an URL that is misspelled but still resolvable by the component. As a result, the page is shown in the frontend, but the generated SEF URL's path is not correct and, if followed, results in a 404 error.



**Aimy Canonical PRO** detects and fixes this issue automatically.



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