

FAQ CONCERTINA

version 1.4.0

MANUAL

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Introduction

FAQ Concertina is a plugin for WordPress. It enables you to display a list of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) on your page or blog post in an attractive and presentable fashion.

This is achieved by using the following simple shortcode in your WordPress page or blog post:

[faq-concertina]

When the list of FAQs appears on your page the answers are initially hidden with only the questions visible. This makes efficient use of the space available on the page and avoids large tracts of text which can be difficult for the reader to peruse, especially on small screen devices such as smartphones.

The answer can be made to appear as an expandable section, concertina-style, by clicking on the question. The answer can be hidden again by clicking anywhere on either the question or answer.

FAQ Concertina is also WAI-ARIA compliant and fully accessible. It will work with screen readers and other assistive technologies. Furthermore FAQs can be navigated using the keyboard as well as with the mouse/trackpad.

To navigate the FAQs using the keyboard press the 'tab' key until the focus is on the first FAQ in the list. You can then traverse the FAQs using the up and down arrow keys. When the desired FAQ has the focus the answer can be displayed or hidden again by pressing either the 'space' or 'enter' keys.

With FAQ Concertina you can:

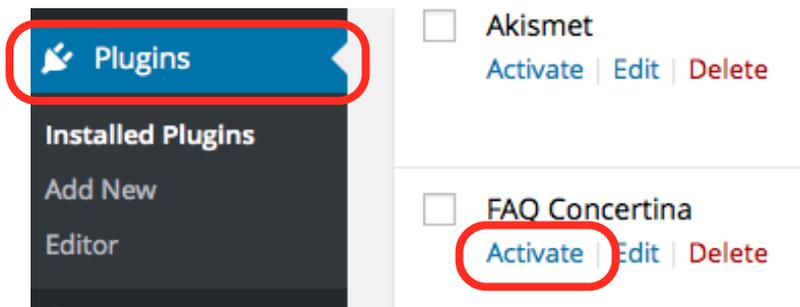
- have any number of FAQs;
- define the order in which the FAQs appear on the page;
- define whether or not more than one answer can be visible at any one time;
- categorise FAQs so that FAQs from different categories can appear in separate lists, either on the same page or on separate pages;
- customise the appearance of the FAQ listing to fit in with the style of your theme.

Installation

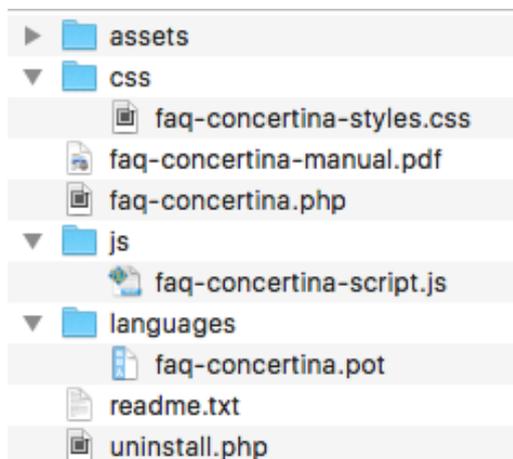
To install FAQ Concertina simply upload the *faq-concertina* directory to the *wp-content/plugins* directory of your WordPress website, or install from the WordPress Plugin Repository at:

<https://wordpress.org/plugins/faq-concertina/>

Once installed, log-in to the dashboard of your WordPress website and select 'Plugins' from the lefthand sidebar. FAQ Concertina should appear in your list of plugins. Click on 'Activate' to, err..., activate it!

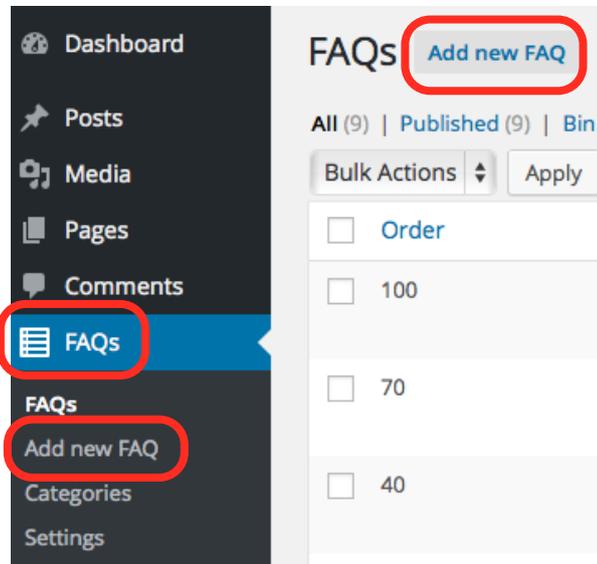


If FAQ Concertina does not appear in your list of plugins check that the folder has been uploaded correctly and that all the files and sub-folders are present and correct. For correct functioning ensure that the *faq-concertina* folder has a structure that looks like this:



Editing

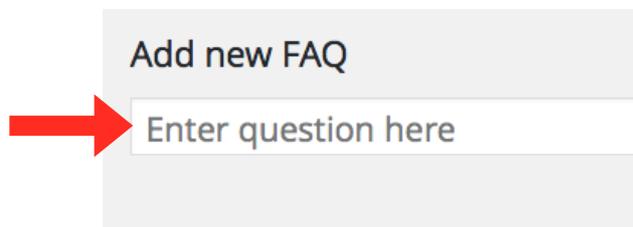
To create FAQ items click on 'FAQs' in the lefthand sidebar of the WordPress dashboard and click the button at the top labelled 'Add new FAQ', or select 'Add new FAQ' from the 'FAQs' menu.



There are up to four parts to creating and editing FAQs. Firstly you need to enter the **question** and enter the **answer**. These two are essential. Then you can optionally choose to add an **order number** and **categories**.

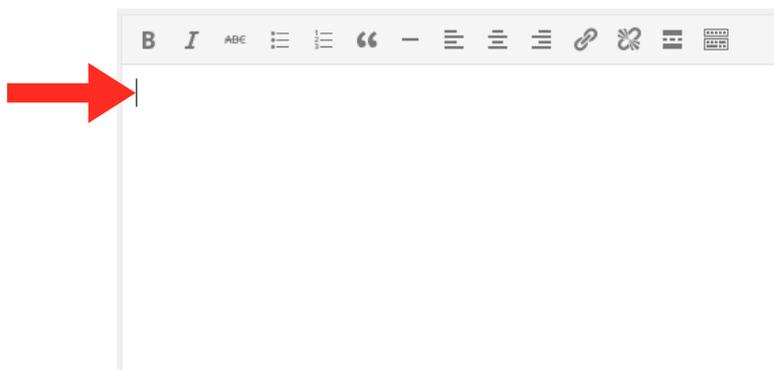
Enter the Question

Type the question into the top box (normally the title box on a regular post).



Enter the Answer

Type the answer in the large editor pane.



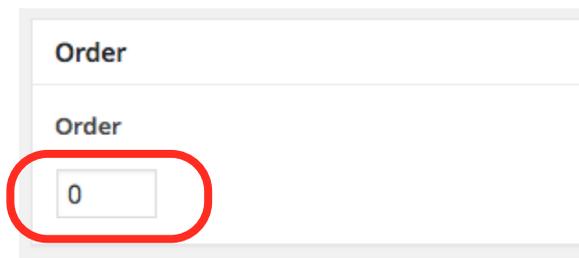
Note that the answer can include links, images, lists, paragraphs and formatting just like a regular post.

Enter the Order Number

If you enter the FAQs in the order in which you want them displayed then it is not necessary to provide an order number, but life is seldom that simple.

You may subsequently want to add more FAQs to the list and want to insert them between existing ones rather than simply have them appended to the end, or you may want to change the order of existing FAQs. To that end an order field is provided.

Enter a number in the order field to indicate what position in the list that FAQ should occupy.



The image shows a screenshot of a form with two sections, each labeled 'Order'. The first section is a header. The second section contains a text input field with the number '0' inside. A red oval highlights the input field.

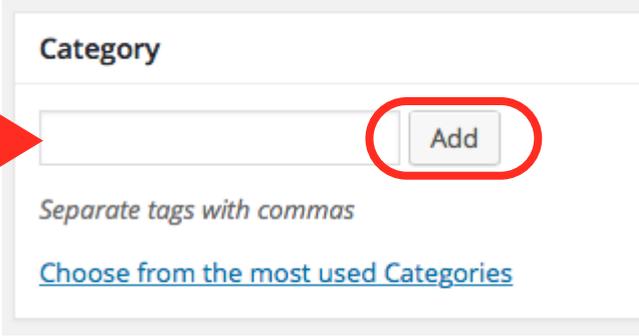
Tip: It is recommended that gaps be left in the numeric sequence thus: 10, 20, 30, etc.... In this way the order of the FAQs can be easily changed. So, for example, to make 30 the second in the sequence rather than the third simply change the sequence number from 30 to 15. The sequence thus becomes: 10, 15, 20. The item that was previously third is now second and the item that was previously second is now third without you having to change the sequence number of all the posts that should come after.

Enter the Category (or Categories)

Note: If you only want a single list of FAQs you do not need to create categories or categorise your FAQs, in which case this section and the following one can be disregarded.

FAQ Concertina allows you to categorise your FAQs. You may want to do this if you want your FAQs to appear on the page grouped under different sub-headings for instance, or if you want different sets of FAQs on separate pages.

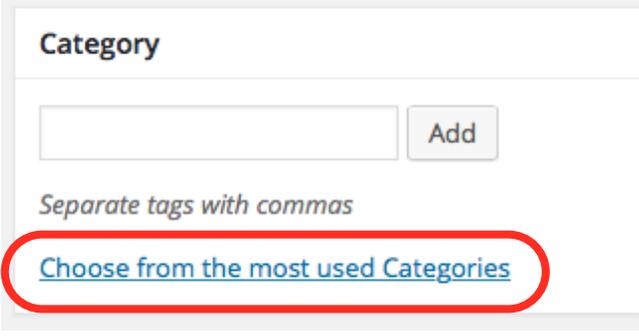
To create a new category type the category name into the 'Category' field and click 'Add'.



The screenshot shows a form titled "Category". It features a text input field on the left and an "Add" button on the right. A red arrow points to the input field, and the "Add" button is circled in red. Below the input field, there is a note "Separate tags with commas" and a blue link that says "Choose from the most used Categories".

The FAQ currently being added or edited will be assigned to the new category and a category slug will automatically be created once the 'Publish' button has been clicked. A note should be taken of the category slug as it will be needed when you add the shortcode to your page or post.

If you want to assign the FAQ to a pre-existing category then click on 'Choose from the most used Categories' and select the desired category.



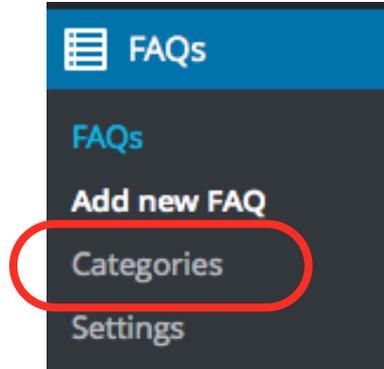
The screenshot shows the same "Category" form. In this version, the "Add" button is not circled, but the blue link "Choose from the most used Categories" is circled in red. The text "Separate tags with commas" is visible above the link.

Note that an FAQ can have more than one category assigned to it. This can be useful if you want an individual FAQ to appear in two or more separate FAQ listings.

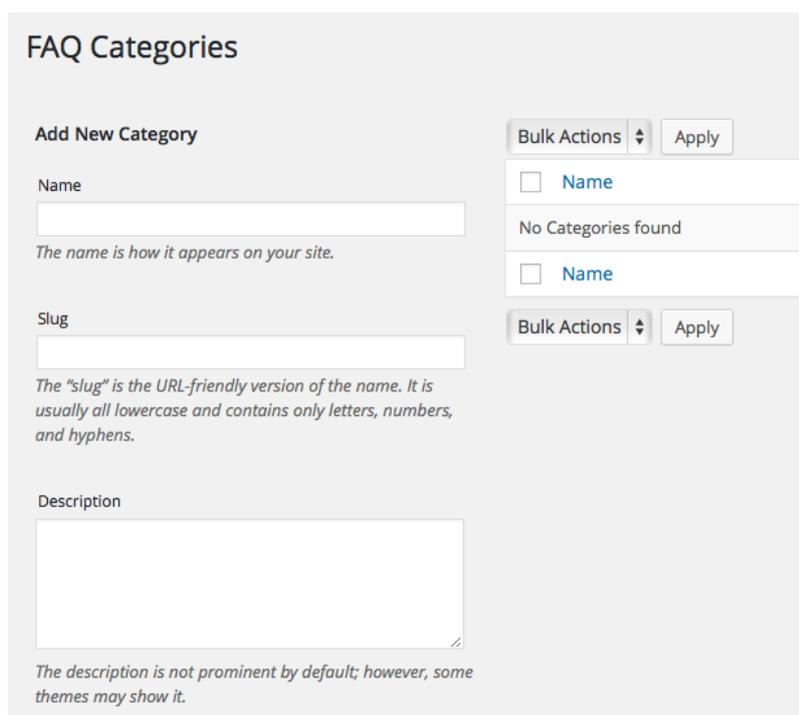
Once you have finished entering the question, the answer, and optionally an order number and one or more categories, don't forget to click the 'Publish' button in order to save and publish your new FAQ.

More on Categories

In addition to adding categories directly on the 'Add new FAQ' and 'Edit FAQ' pages you can also create categories on the 'FAQ Categories' page where you can also manage and administer your categories.



You can reach the 'FAQ Categories' page by selecting 'Categories' from the 'FAQs' menu. This opens the 'FAQ Categories' page where you can edit and administer your categories.

A screenshot of the 'FAQ Categories' page. On the left, there is a form to 'Add New Category' with fields for 'Name', 'Slug', and 'Description'. The 'Name' field has a note: 'The name is how it appears on your site.' The 'Slug' field has a note: 'The "slug" is the URL-friendly version of the name. It is usually all lowercase and contains only letters, numbers, and hyphens.' The 'Description' field has a note: 'The description is not prominent by default; however, some themes may show it.' On the right, there is a table with two rows, each containing a checkbox and the text 'Name'. Above and below the table are 'Bulk Actions' dropdown menus and 'Apply' buttons.

Note that categories created on the 'FAQ Categories' page only apply to FAQs and not to other posts or post types. Conversely, categories that apply to other post types do not apply to FAQs.

Note also that category slugs should not contain spaces, just alpha-numeric characters, hyphens and underscores. Categories created in the 'Categories' box on the 'Add new FAQ' and 'Edit FAQ' pages will appear here with an automatically generated slug. You

should take note of the slug as you will need it when adding the shortcode to your post or page.

Categories created on the 'FAQ Categories' page will also be selectable from the 'Categories' box on the 'Add new FAQ' and 'Edit FAQ' pages.

Styling Categories

If you are using categories then FAQ Concertina will add the category slug as a class enabling you to style different categories of FAQs differently. You will need some expertise in CSS to do this. Put your style definitions in *faq-concertina-styles.css* or in your main *style.css* file. **IMPORTANT: if you make changes to *faq-concertina-styles.css* ensure that you make a backup of the file as it will be over-written each time the plugin is updated!**

Publishing

Simple listing

For your list of FAQs to appear on your WordPress website the following shortcode should be inserted into the page or post that you want the list to appear on and at the position that you want it to appear:

[faq-concertina]

This will create a list of all the FAQs you have created. If you just want a single list of FAQs then that is all you have to do.

Categorised listings

However, if you have categorised your FAQs then to have them appear in their categories add a 'category' parameter to the shortcode thus:

[faq-concertina category="category-slug"]

'category-slug' should be identical to the category slug you entered when you created your category.

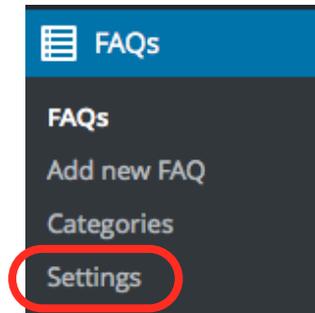
You can have several shortcodes with a 'category' parameter on a single page, for example if you want different FAQs to appear under different sub-headings.

Alternatively you can have shortcodes with different 'category' parameters on separate pages of your WordPress site.

Settings

FAQ Concertina provides a comprehensive range of settings for you to customise the FAQ listing to your liking and to match your theme.

To access the settings select 'Settings' from the 'FAQs' menu.



The 'Settings' page provides three sections for customising your FAQ listing, namely **Animation**, **Appearance**, and **Order**. These are described in detail in the following sections.

Animation

The Animation section of the Settings page determines the way in which answer sections are opened and closed.

Animation

Sets the animation effects when Answer panel is opened or closed.

Speed 3 - Medium ▾

Hide Others Hide previously opened answer when new answer is opened (i.e. only one answer visible at a time).

‘Speed’ controls the speed of the animation when the answer panel is displayed and hidden. Five animation speeds are available plus ‘Instant’ or no animation. Select your preferred animation speed.

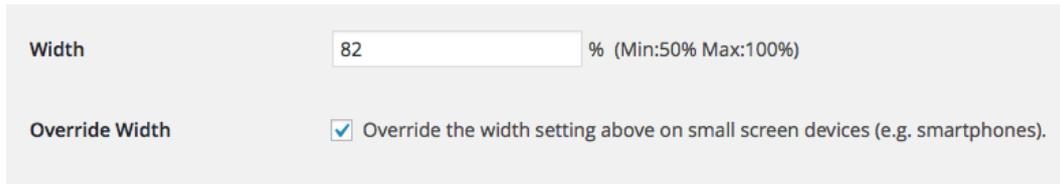
‘Hide Others’ determines whether the previously opened answer is closed when a new answer is opened. The default behaviour is for as many answers to be open at a time as the user wishes. This facilitates cross-referencing and so is recommended. However, if this box is checked then only one answer can be open at a time.

Appearance

The 'Appearance' section provides a range of styling options that affect how your FAQ listing looks in the browser.

'Width' determines the width in % of the FAQ listing within its containing <div> and should be set to a value between 50% and 100%.

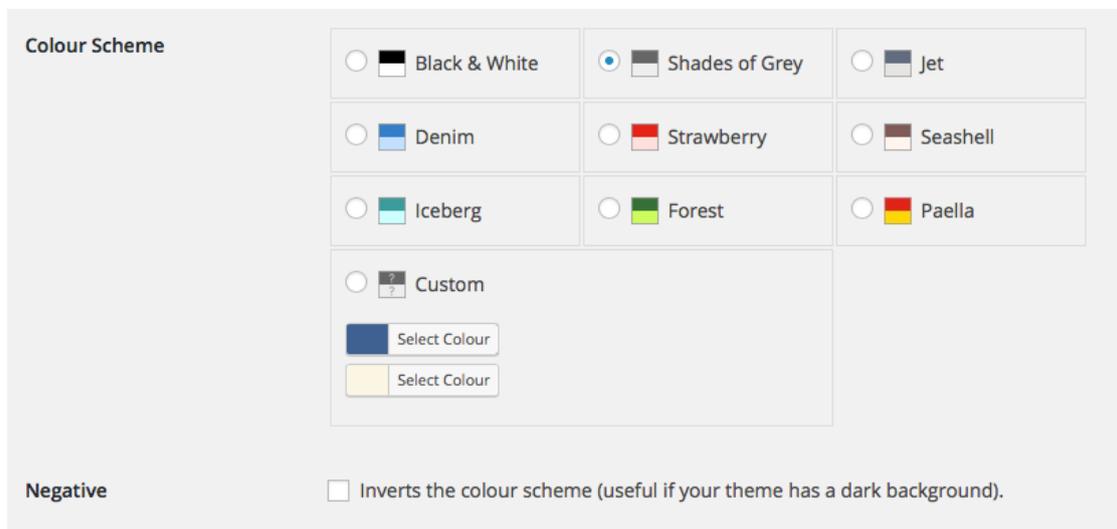
If 'Override Width' is checked then the FAQ listing will be displayed at a width of 100% on small screen devices (such as smartphones) irrespective of the 'Width' setting. Setting this to 'checked' is recommended!



The screenshot shows two settings. The first is 'Width', which has a text input field containing the number '82' and a label '% (Min:50% Max:100%)'. The second is 'Override Width', which has a checked checkbox and the text 'Override the width setting above on small screen devices (e.g. smartphones)'.

A selection of colour schemes is available. Select the one you like and that matches the styling of your theme. Alternatively, choose 'Custom' and select your desired colour scheme using the *colorpicker* controls.

If your theme has a dark background you may want to have 'Negative' checked. This inverts the selected colour scheme, much like a photographic negative, to render it more appropriate to dark coloured backgrounds.



The screenshot shows the 'Colour Scheme' section with a grid of radio buttons and color swatches. The options are: Black & White, Shades of Grey (selected), Jet, Denim, Strawberry, Seashell, Iceberg, Forest, Paella, and Custom. Below the grid are two 'Select Colour' buttons. At the bottom, there is a 'Negative' checkbox which is currently unchecked, with the text 'Inverts the colour scheme (useful if your theme has a dark background)'.

'Corners' allows you to choose whether you want square or rounded corners.

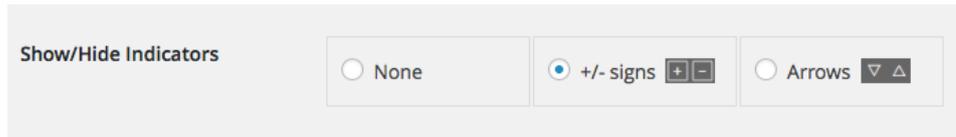


Corners

Square 

Rounded 

'Show/Hide Indicators' enable you to display an indicator against the question that indicates that there is a hidden section that can be expanded.



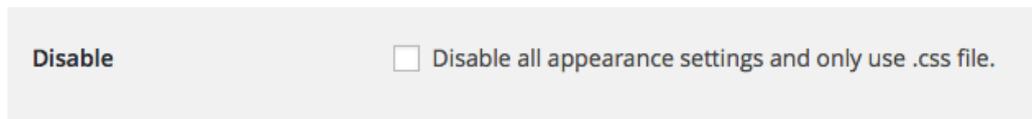
Show/Hide Indicators

None

+/- signs  

Arrows  

Additionally the option is provided to disable all the above appearance settings such that the appearance of the FAQ listing in the browser is determined solely by the external .css file.



Disable

Disable all appearance settings and only use .css file.

Checking 'Disable' is only recommended for those familiar with CSS and who are happy that they can successfully customise the appearance of their FAQ listing by modifying the *faq-concertina-styles.css* file. **If editing the *faq-concertina-styles.css* file ensure that you make a backup of it prior to installing any updates!**

Order

The 'Order' section allows you to define in what order your FAQs are listed.

The screenshot shows a settings panel for FAQ ordering. It has two sections: 'Order' and 'Reverse'. The 'Order' section contains three radio buttons: 'Alphabetical', 'Chronological', and 'Numerical'. The 'Numerical' radio button is selected. The 'Reverse' section contains a checked checkbox with the text 'List FAQs in reverse order.'

'Alphabetical' orders the FAQs alphabetically by question.

'Chronological' orders the FAQs according to the order in which you created them.

'Numerical' orders the FAQs according to the Order attribute (optionally defined when you add/edit an FAQ - see page 5).

If 'Reverse' is checked then the defined order is reversed, so alphabetical listings will go from 'z' to 'a', chronological listings will start with the most recent FAQ entered and end with the oldest FAQ entered, and numerical listings will start with the highest 'Order' number and descend to the lowest.

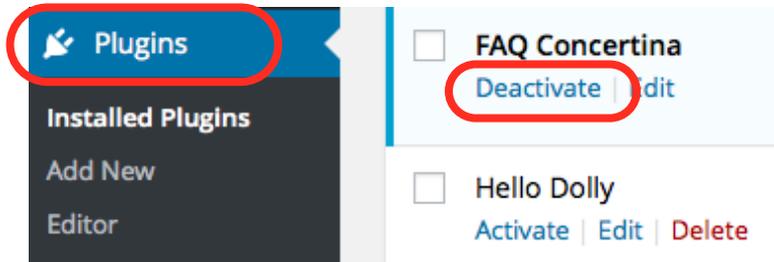
If you would like to be able to drag and drop your FAQs into the order that you want them displayed then the Post Types Order plugin works very well and has been tested with FAQ Concertina. It can be downloaded from:

<https://wordpress.org/plugins/post-types-order/>

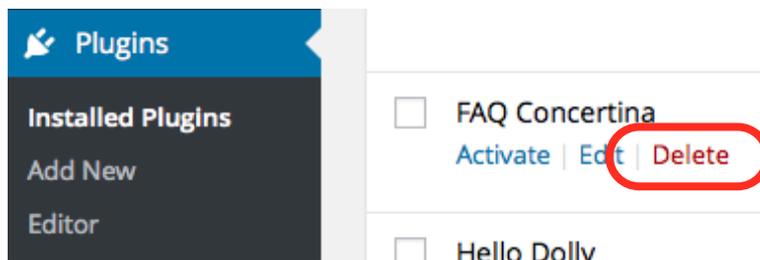
Install and activate it and set the 'Order' to 'Numerical'.

Uninstallation

FAQ Concertina is uninstalled in the same way as any WordPress plugin. In your WordPress dashboard select 'Plugins' from the lefthand sidebar. Locate FAQ Concertina in the list of plugins and click on 'Deactivate'.



Once deactivated FAQ Concertina can be permanently removed by clicking on 'Delete'.



Note that if you deactivate the plugin all your FAQs, categories and settings will be retained by your WordPress installation and will still be there when you reactivate the plugin.

However, if you click 'Delete' to remove the plugin then all your FAQs, categories and settings will be deleted and will no longer be there even if you subsequently reinstall the plugin.

FAQs

Will FAQ Concertina work with my theme?

FAQ Concertina is a plugin that works independently from the theme and is theme agnostic. It will work with any theme. Just put the shortcode [faq-concertina] in your page or post.

My theme is responsive, will FAQ Concertina work with it?

FAQ Concertina is fully responsive, and will adapt to the width of the device viewport. Furthermore, the width setting can be over-ridden so that FAQs appear at full width on narrow viewport devices such as smartphones, whatever the width has been set to for larger screens.

Can I change the appearance of my FAQ listing?

FAQ Concertina includes a settings page which allows you to customise colour schemes, animation speed, width, and other appearance settings.

What if I don't like the included colour schemes?

Appearance settings can be disabled so that you can customise the included .css file for full control over the appearance of your FAQs. Don't forget to make a backup of your .css file before each update. As of version 1.2.0 the settings page also includes *colorpicker* fields to enable you to choose a custom colour scheme.

Is FAQ Concertina compatible with assistive technologies?

FAQ Concertina is WAI-ARIA compliant and fully accessible. It will work with screen readers and other assistive technologies. Furthermore FAQs can be navigated using the keyboard as well as with the mouse/trackpad.

Can I decide what order FAQs appear in on my website?

FAQ Concertina provides options on the settings page to order your FAQs alphabetically, chronologically (i.e. by when they were created), or numerically according to the 'Order' attribute.

Can more than one FAQ be open at a time?

Yes, this is the default behaviour of FAQ Concertina. However, if you want the site visitor to only be able to see one answer at a time then there is a 'Hide Others' option that can be accessed on the Settings page.

What if I need different FAQs on separate pages?

FAQ Concertina allows you to categorise FAQs and pull FAQs into a specific list using the 'category' parameter in the shortcode.

Can I style different categories of FAQs differently?

The settings page allows you to define a single appearance for all FAQ listings. However, if you have categorised your FAQs then FAQ Concertina adds the category slug as a class allowing you to style different category listings differently in the .css file.

What is the maximum number of FAQs I can have?

There is no limit to the number of FAQs you can have. Likewise there is no limit to the number of FAQ categories that you can use.

Does the content of my FAQs contribute to my SEO?

Yes. As of version 1.1.2 FAQs are publicly queryable which means that the content in the questions and answers can be crawled by search engine spiders. It also means that FAQs can each have their own page addressable by slug.

Is FAQ Concertina just for FAQs?

Although primarily intended for FAQs FAQ Concertina is, of course, not limited to just FAQs and can be used for any content with a heading where the content is initially hidden and can be expanded by clicking on the heading

Can I translate FAQ Concertina into my language?

FAQ content can be entered in any language. Furthermore, FAQ Concertina is fully internationalised and a *.pot* file is provided. You can produce localised *.po* and *.mo* files in your language using a translation tool such as Poedit. You can download Poedit for free from:

<http://poedit.net>.

What if I don't like FAQ Concertina?

If you are not happy with FAQ Concertina after trying it out you can deactivate it and delete it. FAQ Concertina plays nicely with your WordPress installation when it is deleted and cleans up after itself by removing all data and settings leaving no trace of its former existence in your WordPress database.

Support

For support please visit the official support thread at WordPress:

<https://wordpress.org/support/plugin/faq-concertina>

Additional information can be found at the official web-page for FAQ Concertina:

<http://www.zyriab.co.uk/faqconc>

Please send any ideas or suggestions for improvement, any queries concerning the plugin, or any bug reports to:

faqconc@zyriab.co.uk

Credits

FAQ Concertina is developed by Michael Burrige (<https://profiles.wordpress.org/mburridge>)

Additional JavaScript contributions by Tim Kaye (<https://profiles.wordpress.org/kts915>)