

Import Items from an Existing SharePoint Site in Visual Studio 2010

(Microsoft Corporation)

This walkthrough demonstrates how to import items from an existing SharePoint site into a Visual Studio SharePoint project.

This walkthrough demonstrates the following tasks:

- Customizing a SharePoint site by adding a custom site column (also known as a *field*).
- Exporting a SharePoint site to a .wsp file.
- Importing the .wsp file into Visual Studio SharePoint by using the .wsp Import project.

Note: Your computer might show different names or locations for some of the Visual Studio user interface elements in the following instructions. The Visual Studio edition that you have and the settings that you use determine these elements. For more information, see Visual Studio Settings.

Prerequisites

You need the following components to complete this walkthrough:

- Supported editions of Microsoft Windows and SharePoint. For more information, see Requirements for Developing SharePoint Solutions.
- Visual Studio 2010.

Customizing a SharePoint Site

For this example, you will create and customize a SharePoint subsite by adding a new site column to it and by creating another subsite for use later. Later, you will export the first subsite to a .wsp file and then import the custom site column into the second subsite by using the .wsp Import project.

To create and customize a SharePoint site

1. Open a SharePoint site using a Web browser, such as <http://system name/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
2. Create a subsite off of the main SharePoint site by clicking **New Site** on the **Site Actions** tab.
3. In the site Create dialog box, click **Blank Site**.
4. In the **Title** box, enter Site Column Test 1, in the **URL name** box, enter columntest1, leave the other settings at their default values, and then click **Create**.
5. After the site is created, navigate in the browser back to the main site, <http://system name/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
6. Again, create a blank subsite off of the main SharePoint site by clicking **New Site** on the **Site Actions** tab and selecting **Blank Site**.
7. In the **Title** box, enter Site Column Test 2, in the **URL name** box, enter columntest2, leave the other settings at their default values, and then click **Create**.
8. Navigate back to the first subsite, <http://system name/columntest1/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
9. Click **Site Settings** on the **Site Actions** tab to display the Site Settings page.
10. Click the **Site columns** link in the **Galleries** section.

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11. Click the **Create** button at the top of the **Site Column Gallery** page.
12. In the **Column name** box, enter Test Column. Keep the other default values and then click **OK**.
13. The column **Test Column** appears under the Custom Columns heading in the Site Column Gallery.

Exporting the SharePoint Site

Next, obtain a SharePoint setup (.wsp) file that contains the SharePoint items and elements that you want to import into your Visual Studio SharePoint project. If you do not already have a .wsp file, then you must create one from an existing SharePoint site. For this example, you will export the default SharePoint site into a .wsp file.

Important: If you receive a runtime error performing the following procedure, you have to perform the procedure on a system that has access to the SharePoint site.

To export an existing SharePoint site

1. In SharePoint, click **Site Settings** on the **Site Actions** tab to display the Site Settings page.
2. Click the **Save site as template** link in the **Site Actions** section of the Site Settings page.
3. In the **File name** box, enter ExampleSite, and in the **Template name** box, enter Example Site.
4. For this example, leave the **Include Content** check box clear.
If you select this box, Visual Studio saves all lists and document libraries, and their contents, to the .wsp file. Although this is useful in some circumstances, it is not required for this example.
5. When the operation completes successfully, click the **user solution gallery** link to view the .wsp file.
To view the solutions gallery page later, click **Site Actions** on the **Site Settings** tab, click **Go to top level site settings** in the **Site Collection Administration** section, and then click the **Solutions** link in the **Galleries** section.
6. In the solutions gallery, click the **ExampleSite** link to display the **File Download** dialog box.
7. Click the **Save** button in the **File Download** dialog box and save the file on the system.

Importing the .wsp File

Now that you have a .wsp file that contains an item that you want to reuse (the custom site column Test Column), import the .wsp file to access it.

To import a .wsp file

1. In Visual Studio, display the **New Project** dialog box by pointing to **New** on the **File** menu, and then click **New Project**.
2. Expand the **SharePoint** node under either **Visual C#** or **Visual Basic**, and then click **2010**.
3. Click **Import SharePoint Solution Package** in the **Templates** pane, leave the name of the project as WsplmportProject1, and then click **OK**. The **SharePoint Customization Wizard** appears.

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4. On the **Specify the site and security level for debugging** page, enter the URL for the second SharePoint subsite that you created earlier. You will add the new custom Field item, `http://system name/columntest2`, to that subsite.
5. In the **What is the trust level for this SharePoint solution?** section, leave the selection as **Deploy as a sandboxed solution**.
6. In the **Specify the new project source** page, browse to the location on the system where you saved the .wsp file previously and then click **Next**.

Note: Clicking **Finish** on this page causes all available items in the .wsp file to be imported.

7. In the **Select items to import** box, clear all of the items in the list except for **Test Column** and then click **Finish**.

Because there are many items in the list, the easiest way to do this is to press **CTRL + A** to select all items in the list, press **SPACE** to clear the selection of all items, and then select the check box next to the **Test Column** item.

After the import operation is finished, a new project named **WsplImportProject1** is created that contains a folder named **Fields**. In this folder is the custom site column **Test Column** and its definition file Elements.xml.

Deploying the Project

Finally, deploy **WsplImportProject1** to the second SharePoint subsite that you created earlier to view the custom site column.

To deploy the project

1. In Visual Studio, press F5 to deploy and run the .wsp import project.
2. Click **Site Settings** on the **Site Actions** tab to display the Site Settings page.
3. Click the **Site columns** link in the **Galleries** section.
4. Scroll down to the **Custom Columns** section. Notice that the custom site column that you imported from the first SharePoint site appears in the list.