

How to Hide Your Affiliate Links

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INTRODUCTION

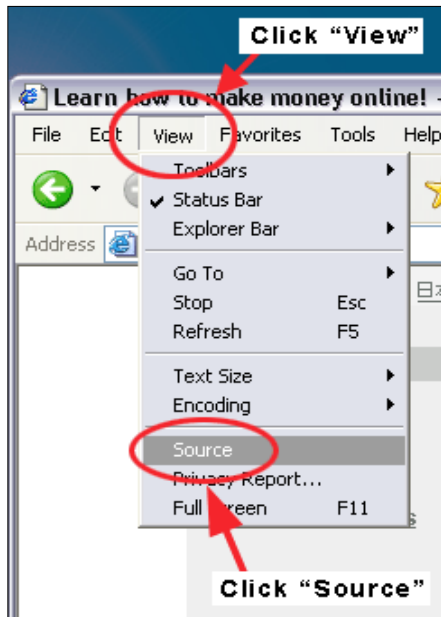
Why You Should Hide Your Affiliate URL

Because affiliate URLs are easy to be identified, people will omit your affiliate ID or use someone else's ID when ordering. Either way, you lose commissions you are supposed to get.

Anatomy of Cloaking Affiliate URL

All of affiliate link cloaking software I know (including [Affiliate Link Cloaker](#)) simply creates full window frame page which loads your affiliate Web page inside the frame. It isn't the perfect way to hide your affiliate URL, but it has following benefits.

1. Prevents from displaying the source of frame page. Right mouse button still works, but if anyone clicks "right mouse button" → "view source," he/she will see the source of your affiliate web page loaded in the frame. To view the source of the frame page which contains your affiliate URL, viewers must click "view" in Web browser's tool bar → "source." So, not too many people will see the source of your frame page.
2. Works on almost every Web browser. Today, it is hard to find Web browser which cannot display Web pages which use frame.
3. The Address Bar won't display your affiliate URL unless your affiliate site has a frame breaker.
4. When someone bookmarks, your frame page will be bookmarked. So, he/she will use your affiliate ID every time.



If you want these benefits, follow the simple steps below. You will be able to protect your commissions without buying any software.

Cloaking Your Affiliate URL

Step 1 - Making Numeric Ampersanded URL

Let's start with the hardest part, converting your affiliate URL to numeric ampersand entities. If an internet savvy managed to view the source code of the page, your affiliate URL would be displayed like this

http://...

Despite of the effort you will make to convert the URL, it is easy to decode ampersanded URL. (See [Step 2](#)) Also, as I mentioned in the above, not too many people will see the source of frame page. If you think converting URL is not necessary, skip to [Step 3](#).

To make numeric ampersanded URL, you just need to replace each character of your URL with the corresponding numeric ampersand entity.

From the list below,

"h" is for "h"

"t" is for "t"

"p" is for "p"

":" is for ":"

"/" is for "/"

So,

"http://"

is expressed as

"http://"

in numeric ampersand entities. For example, my URL, <http://www.thatswise.com>, would be

http:// w w w
. thatswise
. com

Table 1 - Numeric Ampersand Entities

!	!	/	/	=	=	K	K	Y	Y	g	g	u	u
"	“	0	0	>	>	L	L	Z	Z	h	h	v	v
#	#	1	1	?	?	M	M	[[i	i	w	w
$	\$	2	2	@	@	N	N	\	\	j	j	x	x
%	%	3	3	A	A	O	O]]	k	k	y	y
&	&	4	4	B	B	P	P	^	^	l	l	z	z
'	‘	5	5	C	C	Q	Q	_	_	m	m	{	{
((6	6	D	D	R	R	`	`	n	n	|	
))	7	7	E	E	S	S	a	a	o	o	}	}
*	*	8	8	F	F	T	T	b	b	p	p	~	~
+	+	9	9	G	D	U	U	c	c	q	q		
,	,	:	:	H	H	V	V	d	d	r	r		
-	-	;	;	I	I	W	W	e	e	s	s		
.	.	<	<	J	J	X	X	f	f	t	t		

Step 2 – Checking The Converted URL

To check if you have converted your URL correctly, open the file, “test.html,” with Windows Notepad, not with Web browser.

Note

- If you don’t have the file, you can get it from <http://www.thatswise.com/free/sources/cloak.html>.
- If you don’t know how to open an HTML file with Notepad, see [Appendix A](#).

Copy and past the converted URL over “URL_Here” (between “<body>” and “</body>”). Using my URL as an example, the file will be

```
<html>
<body>

&#104;&#116;&#116;&#112;&#58;&#47;&#47; &#119; &#119; &#119;
&#46; &#116;&#104;&#97;&#116;&#115;&#119;&#105;&#115;&#101;
&#46; &#99;&#111;&#109;

</body>
</html>
```

Note

You don't have to divide the URL into 3 lines. In the above example, URL is divided because it doesn't fit as a single line here.

Then, save the file. When you open it with your Web browser, you will see the URL in normal characters.

Additionally, by copy-and-pasting someone else's converted URL instead of yours, you can easily decode someone's converted URL.

Step 3 – Making Cloaked Page

Making cloaked page is much easier than converting your URL. Open the file, "example.html," with Windows Notepad.

Note

- If you don't have the file, you can get it from <http://www.thatswise.com/free/sources/cloak.html>.
- If you don't know how to open an HTML file with Notepad, see [Appendix A](#).

At the 5th line (without counting blank lines), you will find

```
<frame src="affiliate_URL" marginheight="0" marginwidth="0"
scrolling="auto" noresize>
```

Copy and past the converted URL (or your normal affiliate URL) over "affiliate_URL." (Don't delete quotation marks.) With my URL, the line will be

```
<frame src="&#104;&#116;&#116;&#112;&#58;&#47;&#47; &#119;&#119;&#46;&#116;&#104;&#97;&#116;&#115;&#119;&#105;&#115;&#101;&#46;&#99;&#111;&#109;" marginheight="0" marginwidth="0" scrolling="auto" noresize>
```

Save the file with the name you like.

Note

Again, you don't have to divide the URL into 3 lines. It just doesn't fit as a single line here.

Once you upload the file and point the links to the cloaked page, you are all done. Just you need to send a lot of potential customers to that page.

Additional Step – Increasing The Security

The most famous affiliate link cloaking software, "Affiliate Link Cloaker," has a few extra tricks. When you go to their example page <http://www.affiliatelinkcloaker.com/ese.html> and view the source (As I said in the above, click "view" in the tool bar, not the right mouse button.), you will only see a comment which tells you to close the file editor. In HTML, "<!-- -->" tag is for comments. Anything you type between "<!--" and "-->" Web browser simply ignores them. If you are using my file, it begins with "<!-- Howdy -->." You can re-phrase "Howdy" to whatever you want to say.

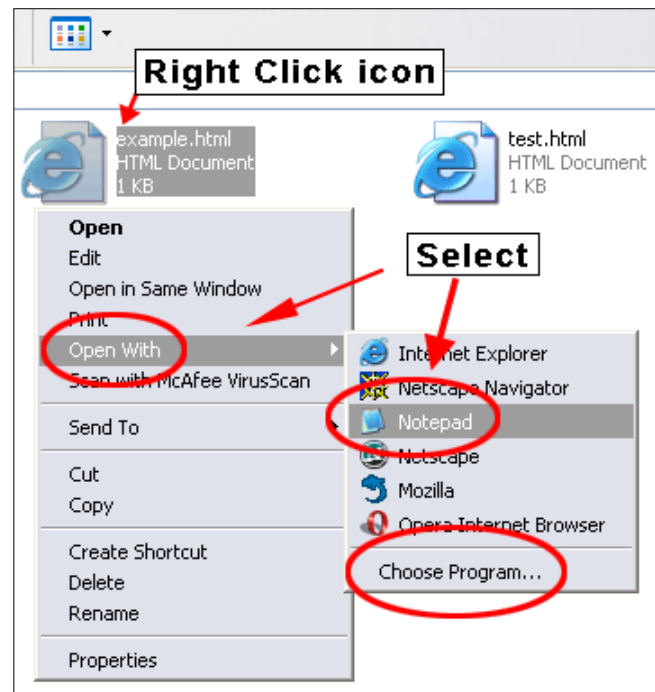
You are now wondering where the actual source code is. There are 45 carriage returns after the comment. So, you need to scroll down to see the code.

You can go farther. If you put 140 spaces in front of every line, you won't see the code even after scrolled down. Because this trick is very common, what anyone who scrolled down will do next is scrolling horizontally. If you put other 45 carriage returns after the last line, computer geeks won't see anything even after scrolled horizontally. Furthermore, you can put other 140 spaces after the longest line. That is most likely the line with the URL. The code will be placed in the middle of large white space. It is very difficult to locate the code. You can experience how difficult it is at <http://www.thatswise.com/mlo>. Make sure to click "view" in the browser's tool bar, not the right mouse button. If you do a search (i.e. searching the character string, "html"), the codes will be found in a second, though.

Appendixes

A: Opening HTML File with Windows Notepad

1. Right click an icon of the file you want to open.
2. Select “Open With,” then click “Notepad.”
3. If you don’t see a Notepad icon on the list, click “Choose Program...” New window with a list of applications will be opened.
4. Select “Notepad” from the list in the new window that has just opened.
5. Un-check the box for “Always use the selected program to open this kind of file.” If you check this box, all HTML files will be opened with Notepad every time you double click an icon of HTML file.
6. Click “OK.”



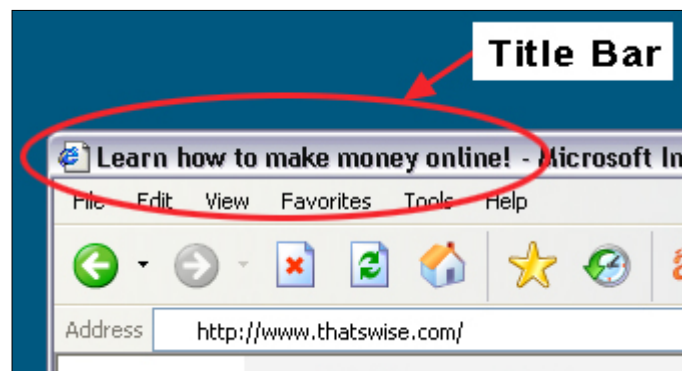
B: Customizing The Title Bar

You can customize the texts displayed at the top left hand corner of the window.

At the 3rd line (without counting blank lines) of the file, “example.html,” you will find

```
<title>My Favourite Product</title>
```

What ever you type between “<title>” and “</title>” will appear in the Title Bar.



C: Changing File Extensions

As you see the extension of the file, “example.html,” is “html.” You can change it to “htm” or other extensions.

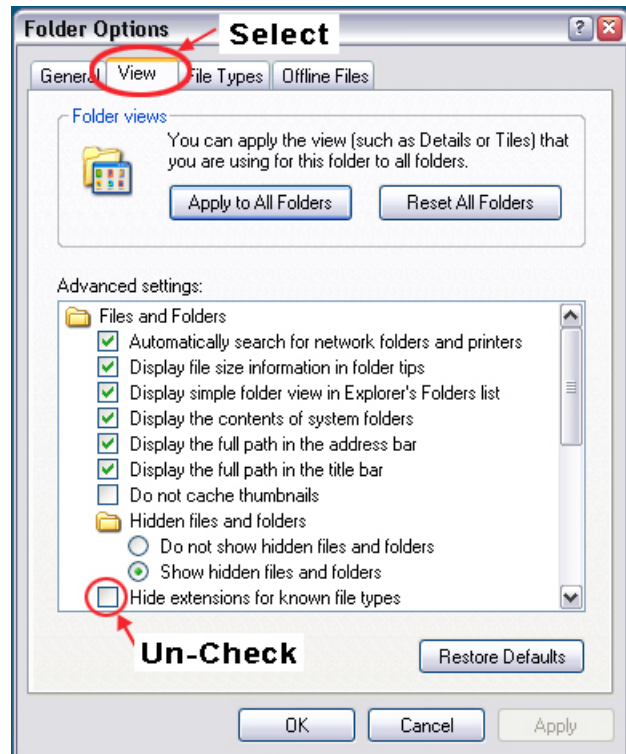
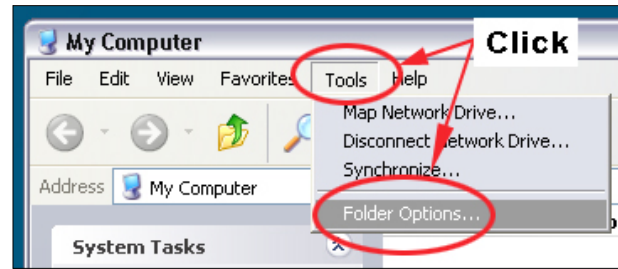
- **You see the extension with file name.**

You can change the extension in the same way you change file names. You will get a warning message, but click “Yes” to continue.



- **You don't see the extension with file name.**

1. Open “My Computer.”
2. Click “Tools” in the Tool Bar, then click “Folder Options...” A new window will be opened.
3. Select “View” tab in the new window.
4. In the “Advanced settings:” area, un-check “Hide extensions for known file types.”
5. Click “Apply,” then “OK” to close the window.
6. Now, you see the extensions with file names. Change the extension in the same way you change file names.
7. You will get warning message, but click “Yes” to continue.



Note

Domain names are not case sensitive, but file names and file extensions are case sensitive.