

WhenNotToUseRewrite

Given the power and flexibility of `mod_rewrite` it's not surprising that people often use it as their [golden hammer](#). Part of gaining knowledge about `mod_rewrite` is knowing when not to use it.

The following is a list of misuses of `mod_rewrite` and more appropriate (and often faster) alternatives. These examples assume the `RewriteRules` are not placed in a directory context (i.e., not in a `.htaccess` file nor in a `<Directory>` section).

Simple Redirects

```
RewriteRule ^/(.*) http://other.example.com/$1

# is better expressed as..
Redirect / http://other.example.com/
```

Complex Redirects

```
# redirect and drop the trailing uri
RewriteRule ^/. * http://other.example.com/

# is better expressed as.. (we only need to match every possible string
# without storing it, thus just ^)
RedirectMatch ^ http://other.example.com/
```

```
# redirect to a uri containing a portion of the original
RewriteRule ^/foo/(.+)/bar http://other.example.com/$1

# is better expressed as..
RedirectMatch ^/foo/(.+)/bar http://other.example.com/$1
```

Appropriate uses of `mod_rewrite` for redirecting include:

- Redirecting based on the query string
- Redirecting based on other request details such as user-agent.

Aliasing

```
RewriteRule ^/foo/(.*) /bar/$1

# is better expressed as..
Alias /foo /var/www/bar
```

or

```
RewriteRule ^/foo/(.*)/baz /bar/$1

# is better expressed as..
AliasMatch /foo/(.*)/baz /var/www/bar/$1
```

Appropriate uses of `mod_rewrite` for aliasing include:

- Aliasing based on complex rules

TODO, validate `AliasMatch` example, add more valid uses or expand them 😊

Proxying

```
RewriteRule ^/(.*) http://other.example.com/$1 [P]
```

```
# is better expressed as..  
ProxyPass / http://other.example.com/
```

```
# reverse proxy everything except images  
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} !^/images  
RewriteRule ^/(.*) http://other.example.com/$1 [P]
```

```
# is better expressed as..  
ProxyPass /images !  
ProxyPass / http://other.example.com/
```