

How the detection works

This chapter explains how Media Organizer arrives at its verdict. You do not need it for everyday work — but if you want to follow a classification or judge how well your website is covered, it is exactly the right place.

Two separate steps

A scan consists of two parts that are deliberately kept apart:

1. **Build the inventory.** Which media files exist at all? Read from the configured media adapters.
2. **Collect references.** Who points to which file? That is done by several independent *search areas*.

Only then does Media Organizer compare the two. A file without a matching reference becomes a candidate — no more than that.

Important for understanding: a search area **only reports occurrences**. It does not judge. The statement "without a reference" is made solely by the evaluating stage, after *all* search areas have run.

The search areas

Area	What it searches
Articles and categories	Articles (intro and full text, article image) and categories, including custom fields.
Modules	The HTML of "custom HTML" modules, the module settings and folder entries. Unpublished modules and those in the trash count as well (configurable).
Version history	Older versions of articles. Whoever restores an old version needs its images.

Area	What it searches
Template files	CSS and template files with image paths hard-coded in them — background images, for instance.
Extension profiles	Third-party extensions for which a vetted profile exists.
Deep scan	The safety net: searches all database tables for image references — including those of extensions without a profile of their own.

All six can be switched off individually (Options → *scanning*). That is rarely a good idea: every area switched off makes the list of candidates longer and the conclusion weaker.

The deep scan

The specialised areas know exactly where to look. The deep scan does not — it goes broadly across the database and searches for everything that looks like a media reference.

That makes it slower but indispensable: it catches references from extensions for which there is (as yet) no profile. If you switch it off, you lose exactly that safety net.

Folder references

Some references point not to a file but to a folder — a random-image module with the parameter "folder: `images/banner`", for instance.

Media Organizer counts that as a full reference to **all** files below it, including subfolders. Overlooking that would make a whole image directory count as orphaned, just because no image is named individually.

Normalisation: why paths get straightened out

The same reference can be written in many ways: with or without a leading slash, as an absolute URL, with Joomla's internal `#joomlaImage://` suffix, URL-encoded. For a comparison to succeed at all, Media Organizer reduces everything to one uniform form.

One special case deserves attention: **Unicode normalisation (NFC)**. Uploads from a Mac encode umlauts technically differently from Windows or Linux — *ä* can be one character or two. Without normalisation such files would wrongly count as "without a reference". The option is active by default; when in doubt, leave it on.

With **known website URLs** you additionally tell Media Organizer which absolute URLs count as local — useful when content is linked with full addresses.

Derivatives

Many images have automatically generated variants: thumbnails, scaled-down versions. Media Organizer recognises this relationship and passes the classification on: if the original is in use, the derivative counts as used as well.

What is never recorded

Certain top-level folders are off limits in principle and are not inventoried at all — among them `administrator`, `libraries`, `templates`, `plugins`, `cache` and the quarantine folder itself. That protects Joomla system files from being touched, even if a media adapter is configured wrongly.

The folder `media/` is deliberately *not* protected — on many websites real uploads live there.

Where to go from here

- [Extension profiles and the coverage gate](#)
- [Configuration reference](#)

Applies to version 1.2.0.

[Deutsche Fassung](#)

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