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Part 4: Other Things You Can Automate Using Templater Commands and Functions and Other Resources for More Inspiration

Introduction

This is the fourth — and for now final — article in my series on automating your workflow with templates. Use these links to navigate through the series:
- Part 1: Using Templates and Templater in Obsidian
- Part 2: Maximizing the Templates Core Plugin
- Part 3: Using the Templater Community Plugin to Automate Files and Content
- Part 4: Other Things You Can Automate Using Templater Commands and Functions and Other Resources for More Inspiration

As I wrap up this article, I thought I'd run few several templater commands and functions and then you can let your mind run through with those. If you find this useful, I hope you'll post comments with your own examples or let me know how you put these together to build templates that let you automate different tasks in your life.

Insert a new file as a link into a log/other file

[[<% (await tp.file.create_new(tp.file.find_tfile("Template Name"), tp.date.now("YYYY-MM-DD") + " Name of New File", false)).basename %>]] — If you use a Daily Note as a log, having this command saved as a template (or even several different templates — all point to different templates — you can call it from within your daily note and immediately create a new link to a properly named new file in the right location.

Add Links to Yesterday and/or Today

[[<% tp.date.yesterday("YYYY-MM-DD") %>]] |[[<% tp.date.tomorrow("YYYY-MM-DD") %>]] — Add links to yesterday and tomorrow somewhere in your daily note template to have easy access to these options.

Add Links to Yesterday or Today based off of the Date in the Filename

<% tp.date.now("YYYY-MM-DD", 1, tp.file.title, "YYYY-MM-DD") %> — This is the same command as above, but it bases the date off of the file title rather than off of today. This will generate the next date after the file's title. Put in a -1 for the 1 and you get the date before the file's title date.

Combine a Command with Existing Text (great option for adding in a "On This Day" section)

You can also combine a command with existing text. [Bryan Jenks suggested this](https://youtu.be/2234DXKbNgM?t=2193) as a method to create an "On this Day" section linking to the same date from previous years. I haven't been using Obsidian quite long enough for this to come in handy for me yet but I'm almost there. For anyone that uses their daily notes as a journal this might be of interest. The command looks like [[2020-<% tp.date.now("MM-DD") %>]]. I want to try using this with Transclusion and actually inserting my Highlight section from my notes right into my daily notes for the next year.

Add the Date the File Was Created

<% tp.file.creation_date() %> — Gives you the date a file was created. I like to include this in the Frontmatter for a lot of my documents.

Automatically Include Contents of your Clipboard in a New Note

<% tp.system.clipboard() %> — When I'm reading an online document and I want to annotate a piece of text from the web, I'll copy it to my Clipboard, come to Obsidian and run the "Paste Text" template in a new note. That template contains only this command. It pastes the text I have on my system clipboard into the note. This is very useful for research and could be used in a Literature or Reference note for Zettelkasten makers.

Prompting for File Name

This one is a bit longer but has a LOAD of functionality options for it because it prompts you for a file name when it runs. I've combined it with the clipboard contents in this template and changed the frontmatter tag to include inbox so that it will come up in my inbox search each day and I can properly process the note into my PKM. The code for the prompt is from an article by MacDrifter:

Using Templater with Other Community Plugins — What's Coming Next in This Series

Templater compliments many other Community Plugins. Just a couple of those are:

- Periodic Notes (which I think works best with the Calendar Community Plugin and which I'll cover in depth in another future post coming shortly — all about building Daily Notes Templates),
- Quick Add (which will be the subject of a future post like this one)
  - Buttons (I don't have this one on my list to do a big dive into but if there is interest, I'll be happy to put a post together.)
- Dataview — basically any dataview query that I write immediately gets put into a template so that I never have to figure it out again. (I don't have this one on my list, but would add it if there is interest)
- Buttons — This allows you to create buttons that do a lot of things in your notes, including firing templates. I don't have this one on my list to do but will also add it if there is interest.

Other Great Resources on Templater

In pulling together all my thoughts and notes for this article, I found a large number of really great resources about Templater and thought I'd close out with those. Where one was directly used in an example above, I tried to make sure I credited it in line above so that you see clearly that this is in no way all my work.
- Stephen Millard — His Obsidian Directory — His articles were some of the first I read about Templater and they inspired me to keep playing and get better at using the tool despite the documentation being a little clunky.
- Red Gregory — 15 Templater Commands for Obsidian — Red is fantastic! I hadn't thought of repeating tags in my document that are listed in the YAML front matter but I can see where that one might have value.
- Shabegom — How to use Templater JS Scripts — I've read this and played around with it. While I am in no way prepared to show it to anyone else, if you're interested in learning more about this functionality in Obsidian, this resource has been helpful to me.
- Macdrifter — Obsidian Templater Fun — One of the reasons this article was of interest to me to write, besides pulling together my knowledge about templates and templater into a single place in my own vault is that my template naming had gotten a little unwieldy. Macdrifter has some good thoughts on that
- Choumann — Templater Templates Samples — Some of the Readwise commands listed here might be useful in my workflows but they aren't necessities for me. That said, there is a TON of great stuff here and definitely something you should check out to see if there are things here you can grab for your templates.
- Bryan Jenks — Three Plugins Video — Templater is the last plug in he covers. Check out the time stamps in the description. I'm not interested in geeking out quite this much and replacing Periodic Notes plugin. It could be done but I like the simplicity of the Periodic Notes plugin. Bryan's video does contain a really good example of how to use IF statements with templater.
- Nicole van der Hoeven — Templater Video — Nicole is incredible. I think she has probably already forgotten as much about using Obsidian effectively as I will ever know. Her video is what got me started using Templater. As I mentioned somewhere above, Nicole is the one who shared the idea to include the title as a linked reference in the file itself so that any time you change the file name your heading gets updated as well.
- Pamela Wang — Create a Meta Templater — I have to admit, Pamela's version is NEXT LEVEL but watching her video gave me some ideas — particularly for all the content I create and the various templates for that.

Conclusion

This is the fourth — and for now final — article in my series on automating your workflow with templates.

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I would truly love to know what you thought. What did I get wrong? How could I make this better? What else would you like to learn about? Please comment or reach out to me with your thoughts.

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