django-simple-history Documentation

Release 2.12.0

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django-simple-history stores Django model state on every create/update/delete.

This app supports the following combinations of Django and Python:

| Django | Python |
|--------|-------------------------|
| 1.11 | 2.7, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 |
| 2.0 | 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 |
| 2.1 | 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 |
| 2.2 | 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 |
| 3.0 | 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 |

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CHAPTER 1

Contribute

- Issue Tracker: https://github.com/jazzband/django-simple-history/issues
- Source Code: https://github.com/jazzband/django-simple-history

Pull requests are welcome.

CHAPTER 2

Documentation

2.1 Quick Start

2.1.1 Install

Install from PyPI with pip:

```
$ pip install django-simple-history
```

2.1.2 Configure

Settings

Add simple_history to your INSTALLED_APPS

```
INSTALLED_APPS = [
# ...
'simple_history',
]
```

The historical models can track who made each change. To populate the history user automatically you can add ${\tt HistoryRequestMiddleware}$ to your Django settings:

```
MIDDLEWARE = [
# ...
    'simple_history.middleware.HistoryRequestMiddleware',
]
```

If you do not want to use the middleware, you can explicitly indicate the user making the change as documented in *User Tracking*.

Track History

To track history for a model, create an instance of simple_history.models.HistoricalRecords on the model.

An example for tracking changes on the Poll and Choice models in the Django tutorial:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    history = HistoricalRecords()

class Choice(models.Model):
    poll = models.ForeignKey(Poll)
    choice_text = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    votes = models.IntegerField(default=0)
    history = HistoricalRecords()
```

Now all changes to Poll and Choice model instances will be tracked in the database.

Track History for a Third-Party Model

To track history for a model you didn't create, use the simple_history.register function. You can use this to track models from third-party apps you don't have control over. Here's an example of using simple_history.register to history-track the User model from the django.contrib.auth app:

```
from simple_history import register
from django.contrib.auth.models import User
register(User)
```

If you want to separate the migrations of the historical model into an app other than the third-party model's app, you can set the app parameter in register. For instance, if you want the migrations to live in the migrations folder of the package you register the model in, you could do:

```
register(User, app=__package__)
```

2.1.3 Run Migrations

With your model changes in place, create and apply the database migrations:

```
$ python manage.py makemigrations
$ python manage.py migrate
```

Existing Projects

For existing projects, you can call the populate command to generate an initial change for preexisting model instances:

```
$ python manage.py populate_history --auto
```

By default, history rows are inserted in batches of 200. This can be changed if needed for large tables by using the --batchsize option, for example --batchsize 500.

2.1.4 What Now?

By adding HistoricalRecords to a model or registering a model using register, you automatically start tracking any create, update, or delete that occurs on that model. Now you can *query the history programmatically* and *view the history in Django admin*.

2.1.5 What is django-simple-history Doing Behind the Scenes?

If you tried the code *above* and ran the migrations on it, you'll see the following tables in your database:

- app_choice
- app historicalchoice
- app_historicalpoll
- app_poll

The two extra tables with historical prepended to their names are tables created by django-simple-history. These tables store every change that you make to their respective base tables. Every time a create, update, or delete occurs on Choice or Poll a new row is created in the historical table for that model including all of the fields in the instance of the base model, as well as other metadata:

- history_user: the user that made the create/update/delete
- history_date: the datetime at which the create/update/delete occurred
- history_change_reason: the reason the create/update/delete occurred (null by default)
- history_id: the primary key for the historical table (note the base table's primary key is not unique on the historical table since there are multiple versions of it on the historical table)
- history_type: + for create, ~ for update, and for delete

Now try saving an instance of Choice or Poll. Check the historical table to see that the history is being tracked.

2.2 Querying History

2.2.1 Querying history on a model instance

The HistoricalRecords object on a model instance can be used in the same way as a model manager:

```
>>> from polls.models import Poll, Choice
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll = Poll.objects.create(question="what's up?", pub_date=datetime.now())
>>>
>>> poll.history.all()
[<HistoricalPoll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:03:29.855689>]
```

Whenever a model instance is saved a new historical record is created:

```
>>> poll.pub_date = datetime(2007, 4, 1, 0, 0)
>>> poll.save()
>>> poll.history.all()
[<HistoricalPoll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>, <HistoricalPoll:_

→Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:03:29.855689>]
```

2.2.2 Querying history on a model class

Historical records for all instances of a model can be queried by using the <code>HistoricalRecords</code> manager on the model class. For example historical records for all <code>Choice</code> instances can be queried by using the manager on the <code>Choice</code> model class:

Because the history is model, you can also filter it like regularly QuerySets, e.g. Choice.history.filter(choice_text='Not Much') will work!

2.2.3 Getting previous and next historical record

If you have a historical record for an instance and would like to retrieve the previous historical record (older) or next historical record (newer), *prev_record* and *next_record* read-only attributes can be used, respectively.

If a historical record is the first record, *prev_record* will be *None*. Similarly, if it is the latest record, *next_record* will be *None*

2.2.4 Reverting the Model

SimpleHistoryAdmin allows users to revert back to an old version of the model through the admin interface. You can also do this programmatically. To do so, you can take any historical object, and save the associated instance. For example, if we want to access the earliest HistoricalPoll, for an instance of Poll, we can do:

```
>>> poll.history.earliest()
<HistoricalPoll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>
```

And to revert to that HistoricalPoll instance, we can do:

```
>>> earliest_poll = poll.history.earliest()
>>> earliest_poll.instance.save()
```

This will change the poll instance to have the data from the HistoricalPoll object and it will create a new row in the HistoricalPoll table indicating that a new change has been made.

2.2.5 as of

This method will return an instance of the model as it would have existed at the provided date and time.

```
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll.history.as_of(datetime(2010, 10, 25, 18, 4, 0))
<Poll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:03:29.855689>
>>> poll.history.as_of(datetime(2010, 10, 25, 18, 5, 0))
<Poll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>
```

2.2.6 most_recent

This method will return the most recent copy of the model available in the model history.

```
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll.history.most_recent()
<Poll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>
```

2.2.7 Save without a historical record

If you want to save a model without a historical record, you can use the following:

```
class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords()

def save_without_historical_record(self, *args, **kwargs):
    self.skip_history_when_saving = True
    try:
        ret = self.save(*args, **kwargs)
    finally:
        del self.skip_history_when_saving
    return ret

poll = Poll(question='something')
poll.save_without_historical_record()
```

2.2.8 Filtering data using a relationship to the model

To filter changes to the data, a relationship to the history can be established. For example, all data records in which a particular user was involved.

```
class Poll (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    log = HistoricalRecords(related_name='history')

Poll.objects.filter(history_history_user=4)
```

You can also prefetch the objects with this relationship using somthing like this for example to prefetch order by history_date descending:

```
Poll.objects.filter(something).prefetch_related(Prefetch('history', queryset=Poll.

→history.order_by('-history_date'),

to_attr='ordered_histories')
```

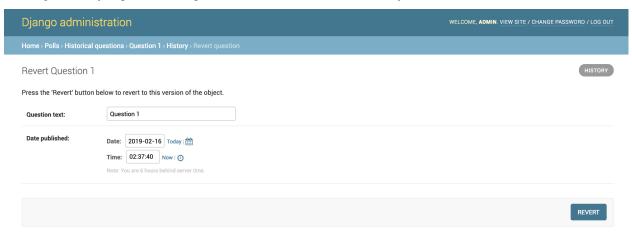
2.3 Admin Integration

To allow viewing previous model versions on the Django admin site, inherit from the simple_history.admin. SimpleHistoryAdmin class when registering your model with the admin site.

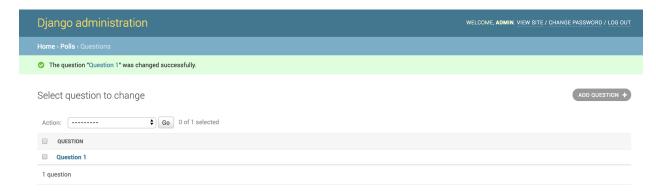
This will replace the history object page on the admin site and allow viewing and reverting to previous model versions. Changes made in admin change forms will also accurately note the user who made the change.



Clicking on an object presents the option to revert to that version of the object.



(The object is reverted to the selected state)



Reversions like this are added to the history.



An example of admin integration for the Poll and Choice models:

```
from django.contrib import admin
from simple_history.admin import SimpleHistoryAdmin
from .models import Poll, Choice

admin.site.register(Poll, SimpleHistoryAdmin)
admin.site.register(Choice, SimpleHistoryAdmin)
```

Changing a history-tracked model from the admin interface will automatically record the user who made the change (see *User Tracking*).

2.3.1 Displaying custom columns in the admin history list view

By default, the history log displays one line per change containing

- a link to the detail of the object at that point in time
- the date and time the object was changed
- a comment corresponding to the change
- the author of the change

You can add other columns (for example the object's status to see how it evolved) by adding a history_list_display array of fields to the admin class

```
from django.contrib import admin
from simple_history.admin import SimpleHistoryAdmin
from .models import Poll, Choice
```

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class PollHistoryAdmin(SimpleHistoryAdmin):
 list_display = ["id", "name", "status"]
 history_list_display = ["status"]

admin.site.register(Poll, PollHistoryAdmin)
admin.site.register(Choice, SimpleHistoryAdmin)

search_fields = ['name', 'user__username']

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Change history: Poll 1

Choose a date from the list below to revert to a previous version of this object.

OBJECT STATUS DATE/TIME COMMENT CHANGED BY

Poll 1 CLOSED June 10, 2017, 10:14 a.m. Changed gregory.bataille@gmail.com

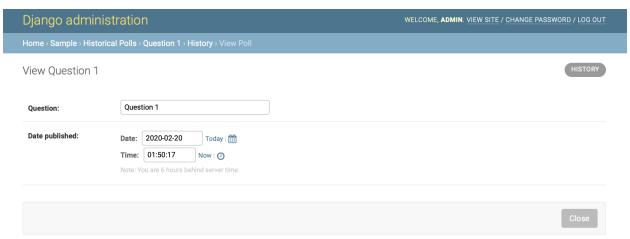
Poll 1 CREATED April 14, 2017, 7:35 a.m. Changed gregory.bataille@gmail.com

2.3.2 Disabling the option to revert an object

By default, an object can be reverted to its previous version. To disable this option update your settings with the following:

SIMPLE_HISTORY_REVERT_DISABLED=**True**

When SIMPLE_HISTORY_REVERT_DISABLED is set to True, the revert button is removed from the form.



2.4 Historical Model Customizations

2.4.1 Custom history_id

By default, the historical table of a model will use an AutoField for the table's history_id (the history table's primary key). However, you can specify a different type of field for history_id by passing a different field to history_id_field parameter.

The example below uses a UUIDField instead of an AutoField:

```
import uuid
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    history = HistoricalRecords(
        history_id_field=models.UUIDField(default=uuid.uuid4)
    )
```

Since using a UUIDField for the history_id is a common use case, there is a SIMPLE_HISTORY_HISTORY_ID_USE_UUID setting that will set all history_id``s to UUIDs. Set this with the following line in your ``settings.py file:

```
SIMPLE_HISTORY_ID_USE_UUID = True
```

This setting can still be overridden using the history_id_field parameter on a per model basis.

You can use the history_id_field parameter with both HistoricalRecords () or register () to change this behavior.

Note: regardless of what field type you specify as your history_id field, that field will automatically set primary_key=True and editable=False.

2.4.2 Custom history_date

You're able to set a custom history_date attribute for the historical record, by defining the property _history_date in your model. That's helpful if you want to add versions to your model, which happened before the current model version, e.g. when batch importing historical data. The content of the property _history_date has to be a datetime-object, but setting the value of the property to a DateTimeField, which is already defined in the model, will work too.

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
    history = HistoricalRecords()
    __history_date = None

    @property
    def _history_date(self):
        return self.__history_date

    @_history_date.setter
    def _history_date(self, value):
        self.__history_date = value
```

```
from datetime import datetime
from models import Poll

my_poll = Poll(question="what's up?")
```

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```
my_poll._history_date = datetime.now()
my_poll.save()
```

2.4.3 Custom history table name

By default, the table name for historical models follow the Django convention and just add historical before model name. For instance, if your application name is polls and your model name Question, then the table name will be polls_historicalquestion.

You can use the table_name parameter with both <code>HistoricalRecords()</code> or <code>register()</code> to change this behavior.

```
class Question(models.Model):
    question_text = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    history = HistoricalRecords(table_name='polls_question_history')
```

```
class Question(models.Model):
    question_text = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
register(Question, table_name='polls_question_history')
```

2.4.4 Custom model name

By default, historical model is named as 'Historical' + model name. For example, historical records for Choice is called HistoricalChoice. Users can specify a custom model name via the constructor on HistoricalRecords. The common use case for this is avoiding naming conflict if the user already defined a model named as 'Historical' + model name.

This feature provides the ability to override the default model name used for the generated history model.

To configure history models to use a different name for the history model class, use an option named <code>custom_model_name</code>. The value for this option can be a *string* or a *callable*. A simple string replaces the default name of 'Historical' + model name with the defined string. The most simple use case is illustrated below using a simple string:

```
class ModelNameExample(models.Model):
   history = HistoricalRecords(
        custom_model_name='SimpleHistoricalModelNameExample'
   )
```

If you are using a base class for your models and want to apply a name change for the historical model for all models using the base class then a callable can be used. The callable is passed the name of the model for which the history model will be created. As an example using the callable mechanism, the below changes the default prefix *Historical* to *Audit*:

```
class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords(custom_model_name=lambda x:f'Audit{x}')

class Opinion(models.Model):
    opinion = models.CharField(max_length=2000)
```

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```
register(Opinion, custom_model_name=lambda x:f'Audit{x}')
```

The resulting history class names would be *AuditPoll* and *AuditOpinion*. If the app the models are defined in is *yoda* then the corresponding history table names would be *yoda_auditpoll* and *yoda_auditopinion*

IMPORTANT: Setting *custom_model_name* to *lambda x:f'{x}'* is not permitted. An error will be generated and no history model created if they are the same.

2.4.5 TextField as history_change_reason

The HistoricalRecords object can be customized to accept a TextField model field for saving the *history_change_reason* either through settings or via the constructor on the model. The common use case for this is for supporting larger model change histories to support changelog-like features.

```
SIMPLE_HISTORY_HISTORY_CHANGE_REASON_USE_TEXT_FIELD=True
```

or

```
class TextFieldExample(models.Model):
    greeting = models.CharField(max_length=100)
    history = HistoricalRecords(
        history_change_reason_field=models.TextField(null=True)
    )
```

2.4.6 Change Base Class of Historical Record Models

To change the auto-generated HistoricalRecord models base class from models. Model, pass in the abstract class in a list to bases.

```
class RoutableModel(models.Model):
    class Meta:
       abstract = True

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
    history = HistoricalRecords(bases=[RoutableModel])
```

2.4.7 Excluded Fields

It is possible to use the parameter <code>excluded_fields</code> to choose which fields will be stored on every create/update/delete.

For example, if you have the model:

```
class PollWithExcludeFields (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
```

And you don't want to store the changes for the field pub_date, it is necessary to update the model to:

```
class PollWithExcludeFields (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')

history = HistoricalRecords(excluded_fields=['pub_date'])
```

By default, django-simple-history stores the changes for all fields in the model.

2.4.8 Adding additional fields to historical models

Sometimes it is useful to be able to add additional fields to historical models that do not exist on the source model. This is possible by combining the bases functionality with the pre_create_historical_record signal.

```
# in models.py
class IPAddressHistoricalModel (models.Model):
    """
    Abstract model for history models tracking the IP address.
    """
    ip_address = models.GenericIPAddressField(_('IP address'))

class Meta:
    abstract = True

class PollWithExtraFields (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')

history = HistoricalRecords(bases=[IPAddressHistoricalModel,])
```

```
# define your signal handler/callback anywhere outside of models.py
def add_history_ip_address(sender, **kwargs):
    history_instance = kwargs['history_instance']
    # thread.request for use only when the simple_history middleware is on and enabled
    history_instance.ip_address = HistoricalRecords.thread.request.META['REMOTE_ADDR']
```

```
# in apps.py
class TestsConfig(AppConfig):
    def ready(self):
        from simple_history.tests.models \
            import HistoricalPollWithExtraFields

        pre_create_historical_record.connect(
            add_history_ip_address,
            sender=HistoricalPollWithExtraFields
)
```

More information on signals in django-simple-history is available in Signals.

2.4.9 Change Reason

Change reason is a message to explain why the change was made in the instance. It is stored in the field history_change_reason and its default value is None.

By default, the django-simple-history gets the change reason in the field _change_reason of the instance. Also, is possible to pass the _change_reason explicitly. For this, after a save or delete in an instance, is necessary call the function utils.update_change_reason. The first argument of this function is the instance and the second is the message that represents the change reason.

For instance, for the model:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords()
```

You can create an instance with an implicit change reason.

```
poll = Poll(question='Question 1')
poll._change_reason = 'Add a question'
poll.save()
```

Or you can pass the change reason explicitly:

```
from simple_history.utils import update_change_reason

poll = Poll(question='Question 1')
poll.save()
update_change_reason(poll, 'Add a question')
```

2.4.10 Deleting historical record

In some circumstances you may want to delete all the historical records when the master record is deleted. This can be accomplished by setting cascade_delete_history=True.

```
class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords(cascade_delete_history=True)
```

2.4.11 Allow tracking to be inherited

By default history tracking is only added for the model that is passed to register() or has the HistoricalRecords descriptor. By passing inherit=True to either way of registering you can change that behavior so that any child model inheriting from it will have historical tracking as well. Be careful though, in cases where a model can be tracked more than once, MultipleRegistrationsError will be raised.

```
from django.contrib.auth.models import User
from django.db import models
from simple_history import register
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

# register() example
register(User, inherit=True)

# HistoricalRecords example
class Poll(models.Model):
    history = HistoricalRecords(inherit=True)
```

Both User and Poll in the example above will cause any model inheriting from them to have historical tracking as well.

2.4.12 History Model In Different App

By default the app_label for the history model is the same as the base model. In some circumstances you may want to have the history models belong in a different app. This will support creating history models in a different database to the base model using database routing functionality based on app_label. To configure history models in a different app, add this to the HistoricalRecords instantiation or the record invocation: app="SomeAppName".

```
class Poll (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords(app="SomeAppName")

class Opinion(models.Model):
    opinion = models.CharField(max_length=2000)

register(Opinion, app="SomeAppName")
```

2.4.13 FileField as a CharField

By default a FileField in the base model becomes a TextField in the history model. This is a historical choice that django-simple-history preserves for backwards compatibility; it is more correct for a FileField to be converted to a CharField instead. To opt into the new behavior, set the following line in your settings.py file:

```
SIMPLE_HISTORY_FILEFIELD_TO_CHARFIELD = True
```

2.5 User Tracking

2.5.1 Recording Which User Changed a Model

There are four documented ways to attach users to a tracked change:

- 1. Use the <code>HistoryRequestMiddleware</code>. The middleware sets the User instance that made the request as the <code>history_user</code> on the history table.
- 2. Use simple_history.admin.SimpleHistoryAdmin. Under the hood, SimpleHistoryAdmin actually sets the _history_user on the object to attach the user to the tracked change by overriding the *save_model* method.
- 3. Assign a user to the _history_user attribute of the object as described in the _history_user section.
- 4. Track the user using an explicit history_user_id, which is described in *Manually Track User Model*. This method is particularly useful when using multiple databases (where your user model lives in a separate database to your historical model), or when using a user that doesn't live within the Django app (i.e. a user model retrieved from an API).

Using _history_user to Record Which User Changed a Model

To denote which user changed a model, assign a _history_user attribute on your model.

For example if you have a changed_by field on your model that records which user last changed the model, you could create a _history_user property referencing the changed_by field:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
    history = HistoricalRecords()

@property
def _history_user(self):
    return self.changed_by

@_history_user.setter
def _history_user(self, value):
    self.changed_by = value
```

Admin integration requires that you use a _history_user.setter attribute with your custom _history_user property (see *Admin Integration*).

Another option for identifying the change user is by providing a function via get_user. If provided it will be called everytime that the history_user needs to be identified with the following key word arguments:

- instance: The current instance being modified
- request: If using the middleware the current request object will be provided if they are authenticated.

This is very helpful when using register:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')

def get_poll_user(instance, **kwargs):
    return instance.changed_by

register(Poll, get_user=get_poll_user)
```

Manually Track User Model

Although django-simple-history tracks the history_user (the user who changed the model) using a django foreign key, there are instances where we might want to track this user but cannot use a Django foreign key.

Note: If you want to track a custom user model that is still accessible through a Django foreign key, refer to *Change User Model*.

The two most common cases where this feature will be helpful are:

1. You are working on a Django app with multiple databases, and your history table is in a separate database from the user table.

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2. The user model that you want to use for history_user does not live within the Django app, but is only accessible elsewhere (i.e. through an API call).

There are three parameters to <code>HistoricalRecords</code> or register that facilitate the ability to manually track a <code>history_user</code>.

history_user_id_field An instance of field (i.e. IntegerField(null=True) or UUIDField(default=uuid.uuid4, null=True) that will uniquely identify your user object. This is generally the field type of the primary key on your user object.

history_user_getter *optional*. A callable that takes the historical instance of the model and returns the history_user object. The default getter is shown below:

```
def _history_user_getter(historical_instance):
    if historical_instance.history_user_id is None:
        return None
    User = get_user_model()
    try:
        return User.objects.get(pk=historical_instance.history_user_id)
    except User.DoesNotExist:
        return None
```

history_user_setter *optional*. A callable that takes the historical instance and the user instance, and sets history_user_id on the historical instance. The default setter is shown below:

```
def _history_user_setter(historical_instance, user):
    if user is not None:
        historical_instance.history_user_id = user.pk
```

2.5.2 Change User Model

If you need to use a different user model then settings.AUTH_USER_MODEL, pass in the required model to user_model. Doing this requires _history_user or get_user is provided as detailed above.

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords
class PollUser (models.Model):
   user_id = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
# Only PollUsers should be modifying a Poll
class Poll (models.Model):
   question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
   pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
   changed_by = models.ForeignKey(PollUser)
   history = HistoricalRecords(user_model=PollUser)
   @property
   def _history_user(self):
       return self.changed_by
   @_history_user.setter
   def _history_user(self, value):
       self.changed_by = value
```

2.6 Signals

django-simple-history includes signals that help you provide custom behavior when saving a historical record. Arguments passed to the signals include the following:

instance The source model instance being saved

history_instance The corresponding history record

history_date Datetime of the history record's creation

history_change_reason Freetext description of the reason for the change

history_user The user that instigated the change

using The database alias being used

To connect the signals to your callbacks, you can use the @receiver decorator:

```
from django.dispatch import receiver
from simple_history.signals import (
    pre_create_historical_record,
    post_create_historical_record
)

@receiver(pre_create_historical_record)
def pre_create_historical_record_callback(sender, **kwargs):
    print("Sent before saving historical record")

@receiver(post_create_historical_record)
def post_create_historical_record_callback(sender, **kwargs):
    print("Sent after saving historical record")
```

2.7 History Diffing

When you have two instances of the same <code>HistoricalRecord</code> (such as the <code>HistoricalPoll</code> example above), you can perform diffs to see what changed. This will result in a <code>ModelDelta</code> containing the following properties:

- 1. A list with each field changed between the two historical records
- 2. A list with the names of all fields that incurred changes from one record to the other
- 3. the old and new records.

This may be useful when you want to construct timelines and need to get only the model modifications.

```
p = Poll.objects.create(question="what's up?")
p.question = "what's up, man?"
p.save()

new_record, old_record = p.history.all()
delta = new_record.diff_against(old_record)
for change in delta.changes:
    print("{} changed from {} to {}".format(change.field, change.old, change.new))
```

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2.8 Multiple databases

2.8.1 Interacting with Multiple Databases

django-simple-history follows the Django conventions for interacting with multiple databases.

```
>>> # This will create a new historical record on the 'other' database.
>>> poll = Poll.objects.using('other').create(question='Question 1')
>>> # This will also create a new historical record on the 'other' database.
>>> poll.save(using='other')
```

When interacting with QuerySets, use using():

```
>>> # This will return a QuerySet from the 'other' database.
Poll.history.using('other').all()
```

When interacting with manager methods, use db_manager():

```
>>> # This will call a manager method on the 'other' database.
>>> poll.history.db_manager('other').as_of(datetime(2010, 10, 25, 18, 4, 0))
```

See the Django documentation for more information on how to interact with multiple databases.

2.8.2 Tracking User in a Separate Database

When using django-simple-history in app with multiple database, you may run into an issue where you want to track the history on a table that lives in a separate database to your user model. Since Django does not support cross-database relations, you will have to manually track the history_user using an explicit ID. The full documentation on this feature is in *Manually Track User Model*.

2.8.3 Tracking History Separate from the Base Model

You can choose whether or not to track models' history in the same database by setting the flag use_base_model_db.

```
class MyModel(models.Model):
    ...
    history = HistoricalRecords(use_base_model_db=False)
```

If set to *True*, migrations and audit events will be sent to the same database as the base model. If *False*, they will be sent to the place specified by the database router. The default value is *False*.

2.9 Utils

2.9.1 clean duplicate history

For performance reasons, django-simple-history always creates an HistoricalRecord when Model. save() is called regardless of data having actually changed. If you find yourself with a lot of history duplicates you can schedule the clean_duplicate_history command

```
$ python manage.py clean_duplicate_history --auto
```

You can use —auto to clean up duplicates for every model with HistoricalRecords or enumerate specific models as args. There is also —m/—minutes to specify how many minutes to go back in history while searching (default checks whole history), so you can schedule, for instance, an hourly cronjob such as

```
$ python manage.py clean_duplicate_history -m 60 --auto
```

You can also use --excluded_fields to provide a list of fields to be excluded from the duplicate check

```
$ python manage.py clean_duplicate_history --auto --excluded_fields field1 field2
```

2.9.2 clean_old_history

You may want to remove historical records that have existed for a certain amount of time.

If you find yourself with a lot of old history you can schedule the clean_old_history command

```
$ python manage.py clean_old_history --auto
```

You can use --auto to remove old historial entries with <code>HistoricalRecords</code> or enumerate specific models as args. You may also specify a --days parameter, which indicates how many days of records you want to keep. The default it 30 days, meaning that all records older than 30 days would be removed.

```
$ python manage.py clean_old_history --days 60 --auto
```

2.10 Common Issues

2.10.1 Bulk Creating and Queryset Updating

django-simple-history functions by saving history using a post_save signal every time that an object with history is saved. However, for certain bulk operations, such as bulk_create, bulk_update, and queryset updates, signals are not sent, and the history is not saved automatically. However, django-simple-history provides utility functions to work around this.

Bulk Creating a Model with History

As of django-simple-history 2.2.0, we can use the utility function bulk_create_with_history in order to bulk create objects while saving their history:

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If you want to specify a change reason or history user for each record in the bulk create, you can add _change_reason, _history_user or _history_date on each instance:

You can also specify a default user or default change reason responsible for the change (_change_reason, _history_user and _history_date take precedence).

```
>>> user = User.objects.create_user("tester", "tester@example.com")
>>> objs = bulk_create_with_history(data, Poll, batch_size=500, default_user=user)
>>> Poll.history.get(id=data[0].id).history_user == user
True
```

Bulk Updating a Model with History (New)

Bulk update was introduced with Django 2.2. We can use the utility function bulk_update_with_history in order to bulk update objects using Django's bulk_update function while saving the object history:

If your models require the use of an alternative model manager (usually because the default manager returns a filtered set), you can specify which manager to use with the manager argument:

QuerySet Updates with History (Updated in Django 2.2)

Unlike with bulk_create, queryset updates perform an SQL update query on the queryset, and never return the actual updated objects (which would be necessary for the inserts into the historical table). Thus, we tell you that queryset updates will not save history (since no post_save signal is sent). As the Django documentation says:

```
If you want to update a bunch of records for a model that has a custom
``save()`` method, loop over them and call ``save()``, like this:
```

```
for e in Entry.objects.filter(pub_date__year=2010):
    e.comments_on = False
    e.save()
```

Note: Django 2.2 now allows bulk_update. No pre_save or post_save signals are sent still.

2.10.2 Tracking Custom Users

• fields.E300:

```
ERRORS:

custom_user.HistoricalCustomUser.history_user: (fields.E300) Field defines a_

orelation with model 'custom_user.CustomUser', which is either not installed, or_

ois abstract.
```

Use register() to track changes to the custom user model instead of setting HistoricalRecords on the model directly.

The reason for this, is that unfortunately <code>HistoricalRecords</code> cannot be set directly on a swapped user model because of the user foreign key to track the user making changes.

2.10.3 Using django-webtest with Middleware

When using django-webtest to test your Django project with the django-simple-history middleware, you may run into an error similar to the following:

This error occurs because django-webtest sets DEBUG_PROPAGATE_EXCEPTIONS to true preventing the middleware from cleaning up the request. To solve this issue, add the following code to any clean_environment or tearDown method that you use:

```
from simple_history.middleware import HistoricalRecords
if hasattr(HistoricalRecords.thread, 'request'):
    del HistoricalRecords.thread.request
```

2.10.4 Using F() expressions

F () expressions, as described here, do not work on models that have history. Simple history inserts a new record in the historical table for any model being updated. However, F () expressions are only functional on updates. Thus, when an F () expression is used on a model with a history table, the historical model tries to insert using the F () expression, and raises a ValueError.

2.10.5 Reserved Field Names

For each base model that has its history tracked using django-simple-history, an associated historical model is created. Thus, if we have:

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```
class BaseModel(models.Model):
   history = HistoricalRecords()
```

a Django model called HistoricalBaseModel is also created with all of the fields from BaseModel, plus a few extra fields and methods that are on all historical models.

Since these fields and methods are on all historical models, any field or method names on a base model that clash with those names will not be on the historical model (and, thus, won't be tracked). The reserved historical field and method names are below:

- history_id
- history_date
- history_change_reason
- history_type
- history_object
- history_user
- history_user_id
- instance
- instance_type
- next_record
- prev_record
- revert url
- __str__

So if we have:

```
class BaseModel(models.Model):
   instance = models.CharField(max_length=255)
   history = HistoricalRecords()
```

the instance field will not actually be tracked on the history table because it's in the reserved set of terms.

2.10.6 Multi-table Inheritance

django-simple-history supports tracking history on models that use multi-table inheritance, such as:

```
class ParentModel (models.Model):
    parent_field = models.CharField(max_length=255)
    history = HistoricalRecords()

class ChildModel(ParentModel):
    child_field = models.CharField(max_length=255)
    history = HistoricalRecords()
```

A few notes:

- On the child model, the HistoricalRecords instance is not inherited from the parent model. This means that you can choose to track changes on just the parent model, just the child model, or both.
- The child's history table contains all fields from the child model as well as all the fields from the parent model.

• Updating a child instance only updates the child's history table, not the parent's history table.

2.10.7 Usage with django-modeltranslation

If you have django-modeltranslation installed, you will need to use the register() method to model translation, as described here.

2.10.8 Pointing to the model

Sometimes you have to point to the model of the historical records. Examples are Django's generic views or Django REST framework's serializers. You can get there through your HistoricalRecords manager you defined in your model. According to our example:

```
class PollHistoryListView(ListView): # or PollHistorySerializer(ModelSerializer):
    class Meta:
        model = Poll.history.model
        # ...
```

2.10.9 Working with BitBucket Pipelines

When using BitBucket Pipelines to test your Django project with the django-simple-history middleware, you will run into an error relating to missing migrations relating to the historic User model from the auth app. This is because the migration file is not held within either your project or django-simple-history. In order to pypass the error you need to add a `python manage.py makemigrations auth` step into your YML file prior to running the tests.

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CHAPTER 3

Changes

3.1 Unreleased

3.2 2.12.0 (2020-10-14)

- Add default date to bulk_create_with_history and bulk_update_with_history (gh-687)
- Exclude ManyToManyFields when using bulk_create_with_history (gh-699)
- Added --excluded_fields argument to clean_duplicate_history command (gh-674)
- Exclude ManyToManyFields when fetching excluded fields (gh-707)
- Use default model manager for bulk_create_with_history and bulk_update_with_history instead of objects (gh-703)
- Add optional manager argument to bulk_update_with_history to use instead of the default manager (gh-703)
- Add support for Django 3.1 (gh-713)
- Fix a bug with clean old history command's -days argument (gh-722)

3.3 2.11.0 (2020-06-20)

- Added clean_old_history management command (gh-675)
- Added user_db_constraint param to history to avoid circular reference on delete (gh-676)
- Leverages get_user from HistoricalRecords in order to set a fallback user on bulk update and bulk create (gh-677)

^{*} NOTE: This will be the last minor release before 3.0.0.

3.4 2.10.0 (2020-04-27)

- Added bulk_update_with_history utility function (gh-650)
- Add default user and default change reason to bulk_create_with_history and bulk_update_with_history(gh-653)
- Add french translation (gh-654)
- Start using _change_reason instead of changeReason to add change reasons to historical objects. changeReason is deprecated and will be removed in version 3.0.0 (gh-655)

3.5 2.9.0 (2020-04-23)

- Add simple filtering if provided a minutes argument in clean_duplicate_history (gh-606)
- Add setting to convert FileField to CharField instead of TextField (gh-625)
- Added notes on BitBucket Pipelines (gh-627)
- import model ContentType in SimpleHistoryAdmin using django_apps.get_model to avoid possible AppRegistryNotReady exception (gh-630)
- Fix utils.update_change_reason when user specifies excluded_fields (gh-637)
- Changed how now is imported from timezone (timezone module is imported now) (gh-643)
- settings.SIMPLE_HISTORY_REVERT_DISABLED if True removes the Revert button from the history form for all historical models (gh-632))

3.6 2.8.0 (2019-12-02)

- Fixed bulk_create_with_history support for HistoryRecords with relation_name attribute (gh-591)
- Added support for bulk_create_with_history for databases different from PostgreSQL (gh-577)
- Fixed DoesNotExist error when trying to get instance if object is deleted (gh-571)
- Fix model_to_dict to detect changes in a parent model when using inherit=True (backwards-incompatible for users who were directly using previous version) (gh-576)
- Use an iterator for clean duplicate history (gh-604)
- Add support for Python 3.8 and Django 3.0 (gh-610)

3.7 2.7.3 (2019-07-15)

- Fixed BigAutoField not mirrored as BigInt (gh-556)
- Fixed most_recent() bug with excluded_fields(gh-561)
- Added official Django 2.2 support (gh-555)

3.8 2.7.2 (2019-04-17)

• Fixed ModuleNotFound issue for six (gh-553)

3.9 2.7.1 (2019-04-16)

- Added the possibility to create a relation to the original model (gh-536)
- Fix router backward-compatibility issue with 2.7.0 (gh-539, gh-547)
- Fix hardcoded history manager (gh-542)
- Replace deprecated django.utils.six with six (gh-526)
- Allow custom_model_name parameter to be a callable (gh-489)

3.10 2.7.0 (2019-01-16)

- * Add support for using chained manager method and save/delete keyword argument (gh-507)
- Added management command clean_duplicate_history to remove duplicate history entries (gh-483)
- Updated most recent to work with excluded fields (gh-477)
- Fixed bug that prevented self-referential foreign key from using 'self' (gh-513)
- Added ability to track custom user with explicit custom history_user_id_field (gh-511)
- Don't resolve relationships for history objects (gh-479)
- Reorganization of docs (gh-510)

3.11 2.6.0 (2018-12-12)

- Add app parameter to the constructor of Historical Records (gh-486)
- Add custom_model_name parameter to the constructor of HistoricalRecords (gh-451)
- Fix header on history pages when custom site_header is used (gh-448)
- Modify pre_create_historical_record to pass history_instance for ease of customization (gh-421)
- Raise warning if Historical Records (inherit=False) is in an abstract model (gh-341)
- Ensure custom arguments for fields are included in historical models' fields (gh-431)
- Add german translations (gh-484)
- Add extra_context parameter to history_form_view (gh-467)
- Fixed bug that prevented next_record and prev_record to work with custom manager names (gh-501)

^{*} NOTE: This change was not backward compatible for users using routers to write history tables to a separate database from their base tables. This issue is fixed in 2.7.1.

3.12 2.5.1 (2018-10-19)

- Add '+' as the history_type for each instance in bulk_history_create (gh-449)
- Add support for history_change_reason for each instance in bulk_history_create (gh-449)
- Add history_change_reason in the history list view under the Change reason display name (gh-458)
- Fix bug that caused failures when using a custom user model (gh-459)

3.13 2.5.0 (2018-10-18)

- Add ability to cascade delete historical records when master record is deleted (gh-440)
- Added Russian localization (gh-441)

3.14 2.4.0 (2018-09-20)

- Add pre and post create_historical_record signals (gh-426)
- Remove support for django_mongodb_engine when converting AutoFields (gh-432)
- Add support for Django 2.1 (gh-418)

3.15 2.3.0 (2018-07-19)

• Add ability to diff Historical Records (gh-244)

3.16 2.2.0 (2018-07-02)

- Add ability to specify alternative user_model for tracking (gh-371)
- Add util function bulk create with history to allow bulk create with history saved (gh-412)

3.17 2.1.1 (2018-06-15)

- Fixed out-of-memory exception when running populate_history management command (gh-408)
- Fix TypeError on populate_history if excluded_fields are specified (gh-410)

3.18 2.1.0 (2018-06-04)

- Add ability to specify custom history_reason field (gh-379)
- Add ability to specify custom history_id field (gh-368)
- Add HistoricalRecord instance properties prev_record and next_record (gh-365)
- Can set admin methods as attributes on object history change list template (gh-390)

• Fixed compatibility of >= 2.0 versions with old-style middleware (gh-369)

3.19 2.0 (2018-04-05)

- Added Django 2.0 support (gh-330)
- Dropped support for Django<=1.10 (gh-356)
- Fix bug where history_view ignored user permissions (gh-361)
- Fixed HistoryRequestMiddleware which hadn't been working for Django>1.9 (gh-364)

3.20 1.9.1 (2018-03-30)

- Use get_queryset rather than model.objects in history_view. (gh-303)
- Change ugettext calls in models.py to ugettext_lazy
- Resolve issue where model references itself (gh-278)
- Fix issue with tracking an inherited model (abstract class) (gh-269)
- Fix history detail view on django-admin for abstract models (gh-308)
- Dropped support for Django<=1.6 and Python 3.3 (gh-292)

3.21 1.9.0 (2017-06-11)

- Add --batchsize option to the populate_history management command. (gh-231)
- Add ability to show specific attributes in admin history list view. (gh-256)
- Add Brazilian Portuguese translation file. (gh-279)
- Fix locale file packaging issue. (gh-280)
- Add ability to specify reason for history change. (gh-275)
- Test against Django 1.11 and Python 3.6. (gh-276)
- Add excluded_fields option to exclude fields from history. (gh-274)

3.22 1.8.2 (2017-01-19)

- Add Polish locale.
- Add Django 1.10 support.

3.23 1.8.1 (2016-03-19)

• Clear the threadlocal request object when processing the response to prevent test interactions. (gh-213)

3.24 1.8.0 (2016-02-02)

• History tracking can be inherited by passing inherit=True. (gh-63)

3.25 1.7.0 (2015-12-02)

- Add ability to list history in admin when the object instance is deleted. (gh-72)
- Add ability to change history through the admin. (Enabled with the SIMPLE_HISTORY_EDIT setting.)
- Add Django 1.9 support.
- Support for custom tables names. (gh-196)

3.26 1.6.3 (2015-07-30)

• Respect to_field and db_column parameters (gh-182)

3.27 1.6.2 (2015-07-04)

- Use app loading system and fix deprecation warnings on Django 1.8 (gh-172)
- Update Landscape configuration

3.28 1.6.1 (2015-04-21)

- Fix OneToOneField transformation for historical models (gh-166)
- Disable cascading deletes from related models to historical models
- Fix restoring historical instances with missing one-to-one relations (gh-162)

3.29 1.6.0 (2015-04-16)

- Add support for Django 1.8+
- Deprecated use of CustomForeignKeyField (to be removed)
- Remove default reverse accessor to auth. User for historical models (gh-121)

3.30 1.5.4 (2015-01-03)

- Fix a bug when models have a ForeignKey with primary_key=True
- Do NOT delete the history elements when a user is deleted.
- Add support for latest
- Allow setting a reason for change. [using option changeReason]

3.31 1.5.3 (2014-11-18)

- Fix migrations while using order_with_respsect_to (gh-140)
- Fix migrations using south
- Allow history accessor class to be overridden in register ()

3.32 1.5.2 (2014-10-15)

• Additional fix for migrations (gh-128)

3.33 1.5.1 (2014-10-13)

- Removed some incompatibilities with non-default admin sites (gh-92)
- Fixed error caused by HistoryRequestMiddleware during anonymous requests (gh-115 fixes gh-114)
- Added workaround for clashing related historical accessors on User (gh-121)
- Added support for MongoDB AutoField (gh-125)
- Fixed CustomForeignKeyField errors with 1.7 migrations (gh-126 fixes gh-124)

3.34 1.5.0 (2014-08-17)

- Extended availability of the as_of method to models as well as instances.
- Allow history_user on historical objects to be set by middleware.
- Fixed error that occurs when a foreign key is designated using just the name of the model.
- Drop Django 1.3 support

3.35 1.4.0 (2014-06-29)

- Fixed error that occurs when models have a foreign key pointing to a one to one field.
- Fix bug when model verbose_name uses unicode (gh-76)
- Allow non-integer foreign keys
- Allow foreign keys referencing the name of the model as a string
- Added the ability to specify a custom history_date
- Note that simple_history should be added to INSTALLED_APPS (gh-94 fixes gh-69)
- Properly handle primary key escaping in admin URLs (gh-96 fixes gh-81)
- Add support for new app loading (Django 1.7+)
- Allow specifying custom base classes for historical models (gh-98)

3.36 1.3.0 (2013-05-17)

- Fixed bug when using django-simple-history on nested models package
- Allow history table to be formatted correctly with django-admin-bootstrap
- Disallow calling simple_history.register twice on the same model
- Added Python 3 support
- Added support for custom user model (Django 1.5+)

3.37 1.2.3 (2013-04-22)

• Fixed packaging bug: added admin template files to PyPI package

3.38 1.2.1 (2013-04-22)

- · Added tests
- Added history view/revert feature in admin interface
- · Various fixes and improvements

3.39 Oct 22, 2010

• Merged setup.py from Klaas van Schelven - Thanks!

3.40 Feb 21, 2010

• Initial project creation, with changes to support ForeignKey relations.

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