Beginners Guide: WordPress Maintenance - Scribe Updating WordPress, Plugins and Themes

This beginner's guide provides step-by-step instructions on how to update WordPress, plugins, and themes. It emphasizes the importance of taking backups before updating and provides tips on how to approach updating plugins based on their version numbers. The guide also covers updating themes and translations, as well as updating the WordPress core. It reminds users to clear their cache and review their website after updates. Overall, this guide is a comprehensive resource for beginners who want to learn how to properly maintain their WordPress website.

1 Navigate to your Wordpress website login. Typically it looks something like https://www.yourdomain.co.uk/wp-admin

Log in with your credentials. You must have full access, so be sure to log in as an administrator.

2 Notice the red dot with a number - this shows how many items need updating.

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Dashboard	WordPress 6.4.2 is availa	ble! <u>Please upda</u>	te now.				
Updates 18 Updates options	Dashboard						
🕼 Astra	📣 Rank Math Overview			~ ~	•	Quick D	raft
🖈 Posts	WPForms			~ ~	•	WordPr	ess Events and Ne
Media NextGEN Gallery	WP Mail SMTP			~ ~	•		
Internal Links Pages	Elementor Overview			~ ~	¥		
Comments	Site Health Status			~ ~			
Spectra		Your site has cri addressed as so	tical issues t on as possib	hat should be ble to improve	its		



But first we ALWAYS ALWAYS ALWAYS take a back-up just in case something goes wrong.

3 Use whichever backup plugin you have installed, in this case, I am using Updraft.

Click "Backup / Restore"

lardening	Updates	WPCode	6	Linkindex: 100%	WPForms	Security	UpdraftPlus	Hi, beknowin 🚢
							Backup / Restor	e
							Migrate/Clone	
							Settings	
							Advanced Tools	;
							Extensions	
							UpdraftPlus Pre	emium

date Themes".

emes for modifications.

4 Clic	4 Click the blue "Backup Now" button								
FAQs More pl	ugins - Version: 1.23.13								
5									
	Backup Now								
	Add changed files (incremental backup)								
	Download most recently modified log file								

5 Now Click the 2nd "Backup Now" button to start the process

) Only allow this backup to be deleted manually (i.e. keep it even if retention limits are hit).	Dow
Backup Now Cancel	Actions
Database Plugins Themes Uploads Others	Restore Delete
Database Plugins Themes Uploads Others	Restore Delete
Database Plugins Themes Uploads Others	Restore Delete

6 Once it's complete, you can click "Close" Database:

Mon, January 15, 202/ 00:50	Back
224 18:28	<u>Add changed files (</u>
The besture has finished manine	
I ne backup nas tinisned running	
v complete (Jan 12 18:28:54)	
scan local folder for new backup sets Rescan remote storage	
Backup data (click to download)	A

7 Let's start updating - You can go to Dashboard and select "Updates"



8 If you want to, you can Click the "Select all" field.

This will do a blanket update of all plugins. Since we have so many plugins to update, I prefer to start with a more considered approach.

Have you ever wondered why version numbers have 2 to 3 digits 1.2.11 or 2.3, well generally these denote whether the update is minor or major.

2.3.11 to 2.3.12 suggests a small update has been made, possibly a tweak or quick bug fix (x.x.11 update to x.x.12)

2.3.12 to 2.4 however suggests a more important update but is still relatively minor (2.3.x to 2.4)

When we see updates to the first number, eg 3.4 to 4.0 this is a major update and more fundamental changes to code have been made, which in turn can have bigger impacts to your website (3.x.x to 4.x).

For that reason, I like to start with updating the plugins with minor updates, then the slightly more important updates and finish with the major ones. Each time clearing my cache and checking how the website appears on the front end to visitors.

You can also update each plugin one by one with a check following each update, just to make sure.



9 Click the "Select all" field.



10 Or select the plugins you want to update

Spectra			NextGEN Gallery
🚚 Rank Math SEO			You have version 3.54 installed. Update to 3.57. <u>View version 3.57 details.</u> Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.1: 100% (according to its author)
Elementor			Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.2: 100% (according to its author)
🖕 Templates		NEW 2024!	Rank Math SEO
🞬 WPForms		nkMath	You have version 1.0.207 installed. Update to 1.0.210. <u>View version 1.0.210 details.</u> Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.1: 100% (according to its author)
🔊 Appearance			Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.2: 100% (according to its author)
🖌 Plugins 15			Really Simple SSL
🕹 Users		~	You have version 7.2.0 installed. Update to 7.2.1. <u>View version 7.2.1 details.</u> Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.1: 100% (according to its author)
	-		Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.2: 100% (according to its author)
		15	Redirection
L Settings		ar i s	You have version 5.3.10 installed. Update to 5.4.1. View version 5.4.1 details.
Code Snippets		1.5	Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.1: 100% (according to its author)
🕰 WP Mail SMTP			Compatibility with WordPress 6.4.2: 100% (according to its author)
			Solid Security Basic
WP File Manager			You have version 9.1.0 installed. Update to 9.2.0. <u>View version 9.2.0 details.</u>

11 Click "Update Plugins"



12 You'll see the number of updates remaining changes, following each update made.

🔞 🏠 Dog	aycare, Boarding & Walking 📀 14 📮 0 🕂 New Gallery 🊚 Rank Math SEO Purge cache 🔺 Impro	ve Harden										
🕜 Dashboa	Update Plugins											
Home Updates 04 Updates opti	The update process is starting. This process may take a while on some hosts, so please be patient. Enabling Maintenance mode											
🐼 Astra	Anti Spam by Fullworks Pro updated successfully. <u>More details.</u>	Updating Plugin Anti Spam by Fullworks Pro (1/4) Anti Spam by Fullworks Pro updated successfully. More details.										
9 3 Media	Updating Plugin NextGEN Gallery (2/4)											
8 NextGEN	allery NextGEN Gallery updated successfully. More details.											
InternalPages	KS Updating Plugin Rank Math SEO (3/4)											
Commer	Rank Math SEO updated successfully. More details.											
Spectra	Updating Plugin Really Simple SSL (4/4)											

13 Don't forget to check on your website during each update



14 You can also click on "Plugins" to make updates



15 Here, you can click on "update now" to individually update your plugin. Note the "view version..." link which tells you more about the changes made.

+ New	Gallery	,, ,	Rank Math SEO	Purge cache	🛕 Improve Hardening	Updates	WPCode	é <u>Li</u>	nkindex: 100%	WPForms
			The Spe Version	ctra extends th 2.11.3 By Brair	e Gutenberg functionali nstorm Force View deta	ty with seve ails	eral unique a	and feat	ture-rich blocks	that help bui
Э			Starter T library o Version	Femplates is all f ready templat 3.4.6 By Brain	in one solution for com es & provides quick acc storm Force View deta	olete starter ess to beau ils	sites, singl tiful Pixaba	e page y image	templates, bloc es that can be in	ks & images. nported in yoເ
ersion of Sta	rter Temp	lates	available. <u>View ve</u>	ersion 4.0.1 det	ails or update now.					
>/Restore Backup and restore: take backups locally, or backup to Amazon S3, Dropbox, Google Drive, Racks Settings Deactivate Take automatic schedules. Version 1.23.16 By UpdraftPlus Com, DavidAnderson View details										≀ackspace, (S
≀eviews ettings Dea	ctivate		Embed (Version	Google reviews 11.3 By Trustir	fast and easily into you ndex.io View details R	r WordPress ate our plug	site. Increa	ase SEO), trust and sale	s using Googl
ictivate			Manage Version	your WP files. 7.2.1 I By mndp	sinah287 I View details					

16 If we go back to Dashboard and click "Updates" and scroll down, we can see there are also Themes to update.

	🏠 Dog Daycare, E	Boardii	ng & Walking	⊙ 3	P 0	🕇 New	Gallery	"	Rank Math SEO	Purge cache	\rm Improve Hardenir		
23 ()	Dashboard Astra	Ho Up	dates 3		availabl	e! <u>Please u</u>	<u>ipdate no</u>	<u>w</u> .					
*	Posts	Up	Updates options / Plugin										
9]	Media												
#	NextGEN Gallery		astr	a "	Ve have enabled 18 security fixes to r				xes to protect	o protect your site. Please review t			
٨	Internal Links		Harden WordP	ress									
J	Pages												
•	Comments	A	II (23) Activ	e (23)	Drop-in	(1) Auto-	-updates [Disab	led (23)				
Ø	Spectra		Bulk actions		~	Apply							
"J	Rank Math SEO		Plugin						Descrip	tion			
0	Elementor		📄 Anti Sp	oam by	Fullwork	ks : Spam	Protectio	n Pro	o Anti Spa	m by Fullworks	providing protection 1		
5	Templates		Setting	s Chan	ge Licens	se Opt Ou	t Deactiv	ate	Version 7	1.3.12 By Fullw	orks View details		

17 Select the theme to update and Click "Update Themes"

-		гиушэ
-	Templates	Your plugins are all up to date.
	WPForms	
×	Appearance	Themes (1)
Ň	Plugins	The following themes have new versions available. Check the ones you want to update and then click "Update The
.	Users	Please Note: Any customisations you have made to theme files will be lost. Please consider using child themes f
æ	Tools	
÷	Settings	
/>	Code Snippets	Select all
₩.	WP Mail SMTP	Astra You have version 4.5.0 installed. Update to 4.6.3.
0	WP File Manager	The second secon
€	WP-Optimize	Select all
ø	Trustindex.io	Update Themes
	Security	

18 We may also have Translations available to update. Even if you don't use translations, keep them updated.



19 Click "Go to WordPress Updates page"



20 WordPress is the core code that runs your website. It's important to keep this updated. All of your plugins have to work flawlessly with WordPress so keep in mind that when plugins are updated and WordPress is updated, there's always room for incompatibility and there may be a few more iterations to come!

Click "Update to version xx" to update WordPress

PagesComments	This site will not receive automatic updates for new versions of WordPress.
Spectra	
📣 Rank Math SEO	An updated version of WordPress is available.
Elementor	Important: before updating, please <u>back up your database and files</u> . For help with updates, visit the <u>Updating</u>
🗁 Templates	
🖼 WPForms	You can update from WordPress 6.4.1 to <u>WordPress 6.4.2-en_GB</u> manually: Update to version 6.4.2-en_GB Hide this update
🔊 Appearance	You can update from WordPress 6.4.1 to WordPress 6.4.2-en GB manually:
😰 Plugins	
👗 Users	Update to version 6.4.2-en_GB
🖋 Tools	While your site is being updated, it will be in maintenance mode. As soon as your updates are complete, this mod
Settings	
Code Snippets	Plugins
🕰 WP Mail SMTP	Your plugins are all up to date.

21 If you have a caching plugin, don't forget to purge the cache to ensure the changes filter through to your website. In this case we hit, "Purge cache for all pages"

Walking	P 0	🕂 New	Gallery		Rank Math SEO	Purge cache	\rm Improve Hardening	Updates	WPCode	Linkindex: 100%				
						PAGE CACHE	:							
						Cache size: 144 Purge cache t	bytes (2 files) for all pages	Site	e Healt	h				
								O Sho	uld be impr	roved				
								Status		Info				
	Site Health Status The site health check shows information about your WordPress configuration and items that n													
					2 critical issu prioritised.	2 critical issues Critical issues are items that may have a high impact on your sites performance or security, ar prioritised.								
					Your site	e may have pro	blems auto-updating p	lugins and	themes					

22 Now perform a last review of your website to make sure everything looks AND operates as it should.

	A Dog Daycare, Boarding & Walking			0	+ 1	New	Gallery	"	Rank Math SEO	Purge cache	\rm Improve Hardening	Upc
æ	Visit Site											
٨	Astra											
*	Posts											С
9,	Media											C+
88	NextGEN Gallery											51
6	Internal Links											
	Pages	The page cache was successfully purged.										
•	Comments								Site Heal	th Status		
Ø	Spectra								Siteriea	un Status		
	Rank Math SEO								The site hea	alth check show	vs information about you	r Wor
6	Elementor								2 critical i	issues		
5	Templates								Critical issu	es are items tha	at may have a high impac	ct on

23 Congratulations you've updated your website!