

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Letting visitors register on your WordPress site: roles, bots and the risks

WordPress & CMS

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Interweb Mozambique

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The short answer: WordPress can let anyone create an account (Settings > General, “Anyone can register”). It only makes sense if the site **needs** accounts (a members area, a shop, a forum). On a presentation site it is opening a door to bots: **leave it off**.

If you need it, what to set

Setting	Recommendation
New user default role	Subscriber (the lowest). Never “Editor” or “Administrator”: see Which role to give .
Against bots	A captcha on the registration form and e-mail confirmation: A captcha on the WordPress login .
Against account spam	Manual approval of new accounts, or a plugin that filters them: Fake sign-ups .
What data to ask for	The minimum: e-mail and name. Every extra detail is your responsibility: Personal data protection .
Who sees what	Subscribers must not access the site’s administration; check they only see their profile.

Switching on and controlling, step by step

1

Decide whether you really need it. If the answer is “so customers can see their orders”, the shop handles that, not the general registration.

2

Switch it on under Settings > General: “Anyone can register” and choose the “Subscriber” role.

3

Add the captcha and the e-mail confirmation before publicising the registration page.

4

Review the new accounts every week (Users) and delete the suspicious ones: **Protecting the WordPress login**.

5

If it is too late and the site filled with fake accounts, switch registration off, delete the subscribers you do not know (with a backup) and change the default role.

Too many accounts are a real risk. A bot can create thousands of accounts, fill the database and test plugin flaws against them. And if the default role is badly chosen (an “Editor”), anyone can write on your site. Confirm the role before opening registration.

For real members areas, use a solution of its own, instead of the general registration:
Which plan for a membership site.

Already have strange accounts on your WordPress and want help? Open a ticket with the address.

[Open a support ticket](#)

SEE ALSO

[Adding a WordPress user, and which role to give them](#)

[Putting a captcha on the WordPress login](#)

[Fake orders and spam sign-ups in WooCommerce: how to stop them](#)

[Protecting the WordPress login: three steps in order of effect](#)



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