

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

The real visitor IP behind Cloudflare: logs, applications and IP blocks

Speed, Cache & CDN

CODE

RLX-MZ-KB-2104

VERSION

v2026.10.16

COUNTRY · LANGUAGE

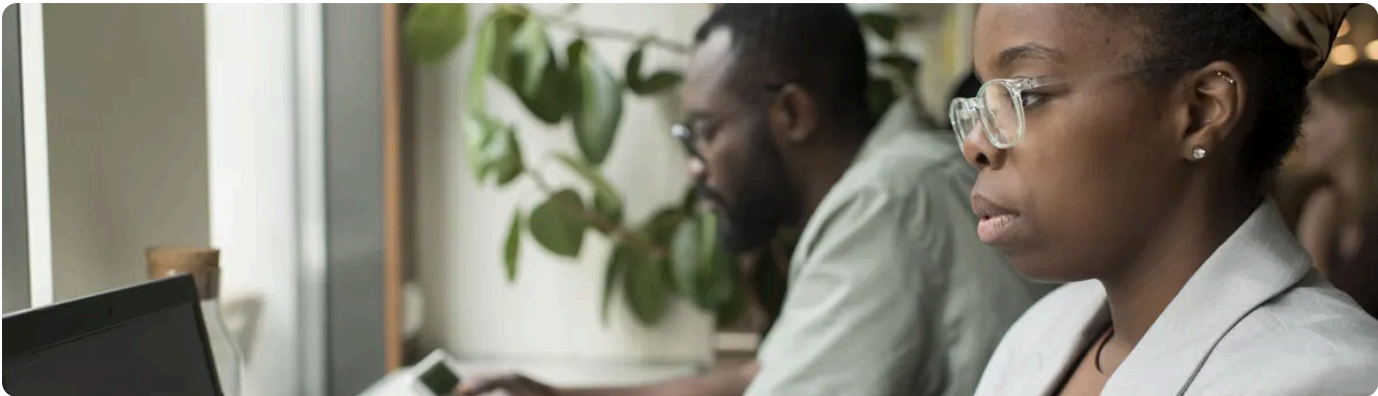
Mozambique · English

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<https://www.meu.interweb.co.mz/knowledgebase/2104>



For whoever runs the site, codes in it or has a VPS. With the site orange on Cloudflare, what connects to the server is Cloudflare, not the visitor. Unless something translates that, access logs, forms, security plugins and IP blocks see Cloudflare addresses instead of the real one. The true address arrives in a header, **CF-Connecting-IP** (and also in X-Forwarded-For). The job is getting the server or the application to read it, but only when the request really comes from Cloudflare.

Where you notice it

Symptom	Why
Comments, orders or login attempts show only a few addresses, always the same ones	The application records the address of whoever connects, and that is Cloudflare.
An IP block in .htaccess does not stop the visitor	The rule compares against the address the server sees. If that is Cloudflare's, it never matches: blocking an IP address .
A security plugin blocks lots of people at once	It blocked a Cloudflare address, and many visitors sit behind that address.
The visitor's country is wrong, or always the same	Geolocation is using Cloudflare's address instead of the visitor's.
The logs already show varied, real addresses	The server already translates the header. Nothing to do beyond confirming with the test below.

Seeing what your site sees, and fixing it

1

Create a temporary test file in the site folder, for example `ip-test.php` , with the code below.

2

Open it in the browser and compare both lines with your public IP (**how to find your public IP**). If REMOTE_ADDR is already yours, the server translates the header and applications see the right address. If REMOTE_ADDR is something else and CF-Connecting-IP is yours, the translation is missing.

3

Delete the file straight away. Forgotten diagnostic files on a site are an open door.

4

On shared hosting, the translation happens on the server and is not in your hands: if the test shows Cloudflare's address, tell us the domain. Meanwhile, in security and form plugins look for the option that chooses where the visitor's address is read from, and pick the Cloudflare header only if the site really is behind it.

5

On a VPS or dedicated server, the translation is done in the web server, using Cloudflare's official address list (cloudflare.com/ips): in Apache with mod_remoteip, in Nginx with the real_ip module, in LiteSpeed with the option to use the client IP from the header. The examples follow the test code.

6

To block a visitor while the site is orange, block them at Cloudflare, in the IP access rules, where the real address is known.

The test file (PHP):

SEE ALSO

[Cloudflare: what it is, what changes, and what stays the same](#)

[Blocking an IP address from visiting your site](#)

[How to find your public IP address \(and why we ask for it\)](#)

[Reading the Errors and Raw Access pages in cPanel when a page fails](#)

[Why your IP gets blocked by the firewall \(and how to avoid it\)](#)

[Visitor statistics: where they are and what they mean](#)



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