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How to generate zip and sql files to migrate a WordPress site

Backups & Migration

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How to generate zip and sql files to migrate a WordPress site

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A WordPress site is always **two halves**: the files (theme, plugins, images) and the database (posts, pages, settings). To migrate you need both - a **.zip** with the files and a **.sql** with the database. Miss one and the site will not work at the other end.

Part 1 - Generating the .zip of files

1. In cPanel, open **File Manager** and go into **public_html** - or the site's folder, if it is not the main domain.
2. Click **Select All**. Make sure hidden files are visible - **.htaccess** is essential and starts with a dot. If you cannot see it, turn on the setting to show hidden files.
3. Right-click and choose **Compress**. Pick **Zip Archive**, give it a name and confirm.
4. When it finishes, the *.zip* appears in the folder. Click it and choose **Download**.

Part 2 - Generating the .sql of the database

First find out which database the site uses. Open **wp-config.php** in File Manager and look for the *DB_NAME* line - that is the name.

1. In cPanel, open **phpMyAdmin**, in the *Databases* section.
2. In the left-hand column, click the database you identified in *wp-config.php*.

3 On the **Export** tab, leave the method as **Quick** and the format as **SQL**. Press **Export** and the *.sql* file downloads.

Large database?
If the export fails halfway, choose the **Custom** method and enable *gzip* compression. The file comes out much smaller and copes far better with slow connections.

Check before calling it done

- [ ] The **.zip** contains *wp-content*, *wp-admin* and *wp-includes*, plus *wp-config.php*
- [ ] **.htaccess** was included - without it, the site's internal links stop working
- [ ] The **.sql** is not 0 KB - if it is, the export failed
- [ ] Both files are saved in the same place, ready to send

wp-config.php carries your database passwords.
At the destination those details will be different - you must edit the file with the new database name, user and password. And never send this file over public channels.

Once they are generated

With both files in hand, you can upload them to the new hosting - or send them to us. Our **Migration Department** handles the installation, and the correct order of steps is in **how to migrate a site without downtime**.

NEED A HAND?

Got your .zip and .sql? Send them over and we will handle the installation.

Open a support ticket →

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