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Generated on 22/10/2026 05:11

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Adding a WordPress user, and which role to give them

WordPress & CMS

CODE	VERSION	COUNTRY · LANGUAGE
RLX-MZ-KB-604	v2026.10.21	Mozambique · English

Interweb Mozambique
RLX Holdings, S.A. · Group RLX Holdings
Tax ID (NUIT) 401 191 607 · Legal entity no. (NUEL) 105 045 974 · Economic activity code (CAE) 62022

https://www.meu.interweb.co.mz/knowledgebase/604

Adding a WordPress user, and which role to give them

WordPress & CMS · Created on **September 27, 2026** · Updated on **October 21, 2026** · 2 min read



Everyone who works on the site should have an account of their own. This is not paperwork: it is how you know who did what, and how you take someone's access away without changing the password for everybody.

Creating the account

1. In the WordPress dashboard, open **Users** and then **Add New**.
2. Type the **username**. Think about it: WordPress will not let you change it later through the interface.
3. Type the **e-mail**. It has to be unique on the site, and it is where password resets go.
4. Let WordPress generate the password, or use our **password generator**.
5. Choose the **role**. That is the decision that matters, and it is explained right below.
6. Tick the notification e-mail so the person can set their own password.

The roles, and what each can do

Role	Can	Give it to
Administrator	Everything, including installing plugins, changing the theme, and creating or deleting users.	You, and nobody else without a real need.
Editor	Write, edit and publish their own and other people's content, and manage comments.	Whoever owns the content of the site.

Role	Can	Give it to
Author	Write and publish their own posts, and delete their own.	People who write regularly and have earned trust.
Contributor	Write posts but not publish them. Somebody has to approve.	Outside contributors, interns, anything that needs review.
Subscriber	Read, and manage their own profile. Nothing else.	Anyone who only needs to be registered.

An Administrator can install plugins, and whoever installs plugins can do anything.
Handing that role to more people than you need is the shortest path to losing a site. If someone only needs to publish, give them Editor.

Never share one account between people.
When something goes wrong, and it will, you need to know who touched it. And when a person leaves, you delete one account instead of changing everybody's password.

When someone leaves

Changing the password is not enough. Delete the account, or drop it to Subscriber. On deletion WordPress asks what to do with that person's content: choose **attribute it to another user**, or you lose it. It is one of the few WordPress prompts where the wrong answer deletes content for good.

Not the same as hosting accounts

WordPress users live inside the site and have nothing to do with cPanel or with My Interweb. They are three separate account systems with three separate passwords. To give someone access to the hosting account, the road is a different one: **managing sub-accounts**.

And once you have real users, it is worth guarding the door: **three steps in order of effect**.

NEED A HAND?

Left with no administrator on the site at all? We can create one from the server.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

Password generator →

WordPress hosting →

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