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Turning on WordPress MultiSite, and when it is not worth it

WordPress & CMS

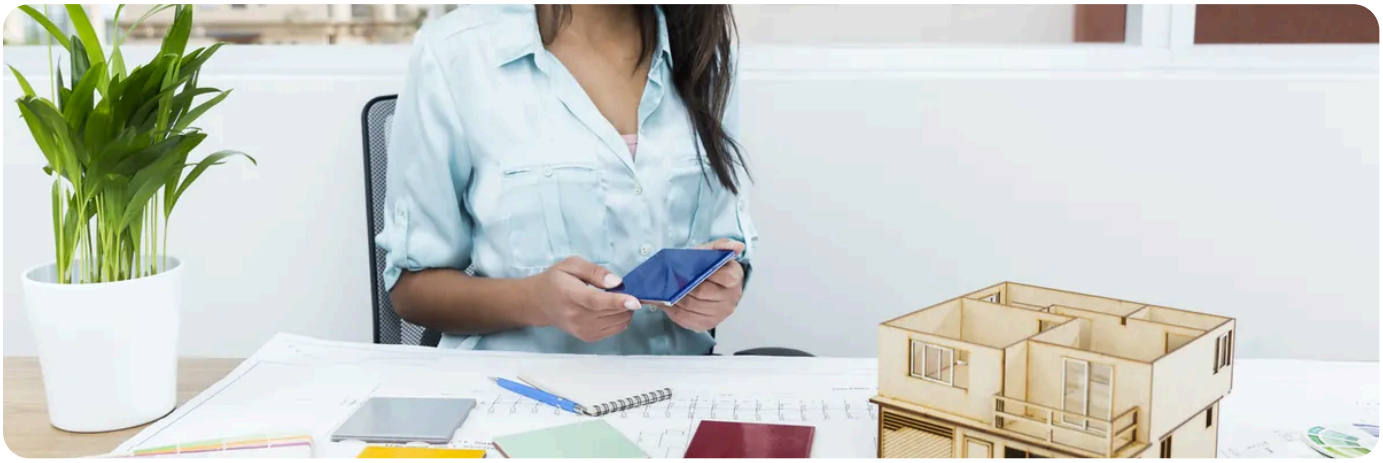
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Turning on WordPress MultiSite, and when it is not worth it

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MultiSite turns one WordPress installation into a network of sites. There is then one core, one themes folder, one plugins folder, one database, and a network administrator above everyone. It is an architecture decision, not a switch you flip on and off.

> **Read the “when it is not worth it” part before the “how to do it” part.**
> Getting out of a network once it is built is far more work than never having built one.

When it pays off

1. **The sites are all yours**, or the same organisation’s. Branches, brands, languages, campaigns.
2. **They use the same set of themes and plugins.** This is where the real saving lives: one update serves the whole network.
3. **The same person or team runs them.** Maintenance becomes one job instead of ten.
4. **They are small and similar.** The more alike they are, the bigger the gain.

When it is not worth it

Case	Why
Sites belonging to different clients	They share one database and one folder. A client who needs a plugin forces it onto the whole network, and nobody can leave with their site without real work.

Case	Why
Sites that need different plugins	Many plugins were never built for networks and misbehave. You find out late.
Sites that cannot go down together	One fault in the core, the server or the database takes the whole network at once.
Anyone who wants per-site backups	The backup is of the network. Pulling out or restoring a single site is manual work, every time.
Only two or three sites	Two ordinary installations are simpler to run, and completely independent.

How to turn it on

Only enable it on an installation that is not already full of content and plugins. On a fresh install it is straightforward.

1. **Back up the files and the database.** This is one of those cases where the backup is not advice, it is a precondition.
2. **Deactivate every plugin.** WordPress itself asks for this.
3. **Open** `wp-config.php` in File Manager, in the **Files** section of cPanel, and add the line `define( 'WP_ALLOW_MULTISITE', true );` above the line telling you to stop editing.
4. **Go into the dashboard** and open **Tools**. A new entry appears for network setup.
5. **Choose subdomains or subfolders.** This choice is effectively permanent. Read the next point before deciding.
6. **WordPress shows you blocks of text** to add to `wp-config.php` and to `.htaccess`. Copy them exactly, changing nothing.
7. **Sign in again**, and you now have the network administration menu, where sites are created and themes and plugins are managed for everyone.

Subdomains or subfolders is decided once.
With subfolders, each site sits at `asuaempresa.co.mz/name` and works immediately. With subdomains, each site sits at `name.asuaempresa.co.mz`, and every name has to exist in the hosting and in DNS. Talk to us before choosing subdomains, so we can confirm what your account needs.

If after reading this what you actually want is two independent sites, the simple road is **adding another domain or a subdomain**.

Try it in a subfolder first.
Build a practice network, create two sites, install the plugins you use and see whether they behave. Then decide: **a test site before touching what is live**.

NEED A HAND?

Want a network of sites and unsure whether your plan covers it? Tell us how many and what they are for.

Open a support ticket →

Where to see it in your account

We do not state MultiSite or wildcard subdomain support plan by plan, so ask us before building the network: tell us the domain and how many sites, and we will say whether your account can have them. What a network leans on, you can read in your own cPanel:

- **Space and number of files:** the Statistics sidebar. Space goes from 10 GB (Pro) to 200 GB (Business Ultra), and every new site adds to both.
- **Memory and processes:** Resource Usage, with the moments the limit was reached.
- **PHP version and PHP limits:** Select PHP Version.

When the network outgrows a shared plan, a VPS (full SSH access, from 1 vCPU and 2 GB RAM up to 32 vCPU and 64 GB) or a Cloud server gives you the limits to set yourself.

SEE ALSO

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- **WordPress hosting** →

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