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WooCommerce: what it is, and what you need before you start

Online Stores

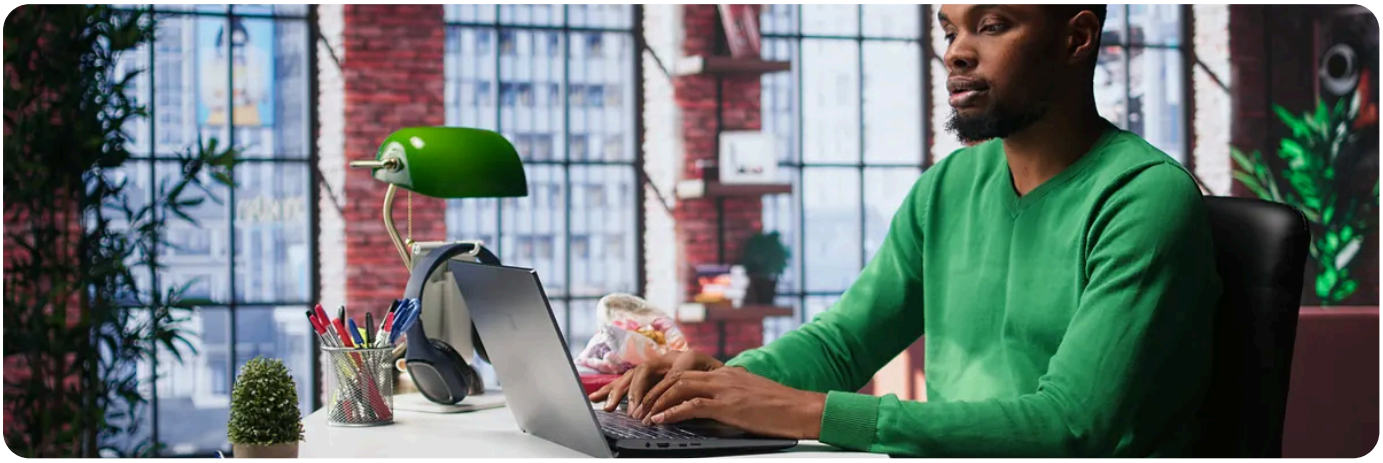
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WooCommerce: what it is, and what you need before you start

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WooCommerce is a free plugin that turns a WordPress site into a shop: catalogue, cart, checkout, orders, customers and shipping. It is not a separate service and not a place you rent space in. It is software running on your own hosting, which is why the catalogue and your customers' details stay yours.

Installing it takes minutes. Everything around it is what takes time, and that is what this article is about.

What has to exist before you install it

1. **A domain and a hosting plan.** A shop needs an address of its own. If you have none yet, look at the hosting plans.
2. **WordPress installed.** It goes in from cPanel in a few clicks: **how to install WordPress in a few clicks**.
3. **A padlock on the site.** Nobody buys without one, and payment providers insist on it. See **what an SSL certificate is**, then force https everywhere: **redirecting HTTP to HTTPS**.
4. **A current PHP version.** On a shop the difference shows far more than on a blog: **changing PHP version without breaking the site**.
5. **An answer to «how does the money reach my account?».** It is the question that saves months.
6. **Someone to handle the orders.** A shop is daily work: replying, packing, delivering, taking returns. The software is the easy part.

Start from the end.
Plenty of people build the whole shop and only then find they have no merchant account and no way to charge. The shop is finished and sells nothing. Sort out the payment alongside the site, not afterwards.

What comes in the box, and what does not

Included	Yours to arrange
Products, categories and variations	The photographs and the text for each product
Cart and checkout	Automatic payment methods, contracted separately
Shipping zones and rates	The arrangement with whoever delivers
Orders, statuses and automatic e-mails	A sending server that gets those e-mails delivered
Customer accounts and coupons	The legal pages: terms, returns, privacy and cookies
Sales reports	Bookkeeping and tax

WooCommerce is not installed from the panel.
It is not in the cPanel application installer, and it does not need to be: you install it from inside WordPress itself, under **Plugins** and **Add New**, searching for WooCommerce. It is free.

What a shop asks of the hosting

A shop weighs more than a company website: more database queries, a session for every visitor, and pages that cannot be cached at all, because they differ from person to person.

Care	Why
Recent PHP version	It is the single thing you notice most on a shop
Cart and checkout out of the cache	A cached cart page shows somebody else's cart. It is the most embarrassing bug there is
Generous upload limits	Product photographs hit the default ceiling: **the PHP limits**
An eye on consumption	If the shop grows, the plan has to keep up: **the limits nobody advertises**
Backups you have tested	A shop loses orders, not just pages: **restoring a backup yourself**

Where we stop and you start

We host the shop, keep the server fast, handle the certificate and fix anything that belongs to the hosting. Configuring WooCommerce, the products, the prices, the shipping and the contract with whoever processes the payment is your work, or your agency's. The line is drawn in **how far our support goes**.

NEED A HAND?

Building a shop and want to check the plan is enough?

Talk to us →

In our plans

Plan	Sites	Space
Pro	1	10 GB SSD NVMe
Plus	6	20 GB SSD NVMe
Ultra	Unlimited	30 GB SSD NVMe
Business Pro, Plus, Ultra	Unlimited	50, 100 or 200 GB SSD NVMe

A shop mostly leans on space (photographs), file count, PHP memory and processes. We do not publish the last three per plan, so read them in your account: the Statistics sidebar (space, files, databases), Resource Usage (CPU, memory, processes) and Select PHP Version (PHP version and options). A small shop can start on a smaller plan and check Resource Usage after its first busy weeks.

Every plan has a daily automatic backup with free restores; JetBackup in cPanel shows the restore points available. When the shop needs root access or settings of its own, the next step is a VPS or a Cloud server.

SEE ALSO

- **An online shop with local payment methods: WooCommerce and getting paid** →
- **How to install WordPress in a few clicks** →
- **Selling online: PCI, card data and what shared hosting is not** →

See the hosting plans →

Setting up your WooCommerce shop: the settings that matter →

Getting paid: connecting a payment method to WooCommerce →

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