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The cPanel Terminal: a command line with nothing to install

Panel Tools & Features

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The cPanel Terminal: a command line with nothing to install

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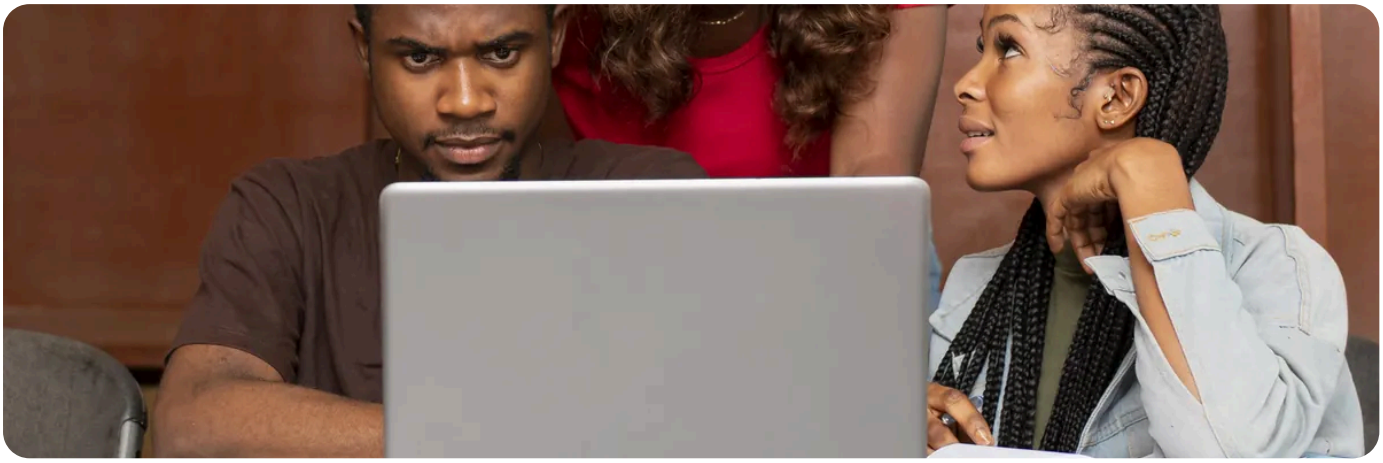

Terminal is a command line that opens **inside cPanel**, in your browser tab, already signed in to your account. Nothing to install, no keys to generate, no port to pick. You open it and you are there.

Most people never notice they have it. It is one of the most useful things in the panel and one of the least used, because it looks like a developer's tool. It is not: there is a handful of jobs that take an afternoon in the File Manager and a minute here.

> ! **Every shared hosting plan has Terminal. If it is missing from your cPanel, or it appears and refuses you, do not keep trying. It is not your password, and repeated attempts get your IP address blocked by the firewall. See why the firewall blocks your IP and, if the problem persists, open a ticket.**

Where it is, and what you see when it opens

In cPanel, under **Advanced**, called **Terminal**. If you cannot spot it in the list, type *terminal* into the panel's search box: it also matches words like *shell* and *command line*.

It opens in your **account's home folder**, which is one level above the website folder. The first surprise is usually what you **cannot** see: the account runs inside a cage, so Terminal shows you your own files and the tools we give you, and not the rest of the machine or anybody else's account. That is deliberate, and it is what makes shared hosting safe.

What it is genuinely worth using for

1. **Unpacking and packing big archives.** The File Manager can do it, but it chokes on an archive holding many thousands of files, because the browser has to draw the whole list. In Terminal the same work happens without the screen in the way.

2. **Searching.** Finding which file still holds an old address, a forgotten key, or a sentence you want to change across the site. On an install with thousands of files, that is the difference between one command and one afternoon.

3. **Copying, moving and deleting in bulk.** A whole folder, or only the files of one type, in a single go.

4. **Seeing what is eating the disk.** When the account fills up, Terminal names the guilty folder in seconds, and it is nearly never the one you had in mind.

5. **Importing or exporting a large database**, which phpMyAdmin tends to abandon halfway. The route is written up in **importing a large database over SSH**, and it works the same way here.

6. **Watching usage live** while something is going wrong: **watching your site usage in real time**.

Panel Terminal, or an SSH client on your computer?

Same command line, same account. What differs is the route in.

Point	Terminal, in cPanel	An SSH client
Installing	Nothing. It opens in the browser.	A program on your computer, or the one your system already ships.
Signing in	You are already in: the cPanel session is your identity.	The account user and password, or a key.
Port	You never pick one.	The SSH port here is **not 22**: it is `2299`. Forgetting that is the number one cause of «it will not connect».
Copy and paste	Depends on your browser and system, and is not always comfortable.	Normal, like any other window.
Moving files	It does not transfer from your computer.	It brings SFTP with it: **SFTP instead of FTP**.
When to pick it	A quick job, from any computer, with nothing to set up.	Repeat work, scripts, long sessions.

Run the looking version first.

Before you delete or overwrite, run the command that merely *lists* what would be affected, and read the list. If files you did not expect show up, your instruction was wrong and you have just saved yourself a restore.

Terminal does not ask twice.

There is no recycle bin and no undo, and a recursive delete takes the whole folder before your finger leaves the key. Only what is in a backup comes back. Before you work on anything real: **take your own copy** and know **how to restore one**.

What you cannot do in here

What you tried	Why it will not work
Installing software system wide	A shared account has no machine administrator, and cannot have one: the machine belongs to more people than you. Anything needing that level wants a VPS or a dedicated server, where the machine is yours.
Leaving your own program listening on a port	That is not how it is done here. For an application that has to stay running there are proper panel tools, and that is what **getting a Node.js application running** is about.
Looking at other accounts' files	The cage will not let you. For the same reason, nobody sees yours.
Leaving a heavy process running for hours	The account limits cut it off well before that. What each account may spend is explained in **the limits nobody advertises**.
Changing the SSH port or opening the firewall	Those are settings for the whole machine. Talk to us and we will say what is possible in your case.

If what you really want is to know what this account can run before you start experimenting, start with **which technologies run here**.

NEED A HAND?

Cannot find Terminal in your cPanel? Ask us and we will check.

Open a support ticket →

In our plans

- Terminal and SSH access are included in every shared hosting plan. Look for Terminal under Advanced in cPanel, or SSH Access. If neither shows, or it refuses you, open a ticket and we will check the account.
- Python and Node applications are set up in cPanel, under Setup Python App and Setup Node.js App. All the PHP, Python and Node versions the panel offers are available, and you pick the version in the panel (Select PHP Version for PHP).
- There is no fixed number published for incoming processes, CPU, memory or I/O. Resource Usage in cPanel shows your consumption and when you hit the limit; if you need more, move up a plan without losing the site.

SEE ALSO

Hosting plans and what each one includes →

Support Policy: how far our help goes →

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