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A table marked as crashed: what it means and how to repair it

Databases

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A table marked as crashed: what it means and how to repair it

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The message *Table is marked as crashed and should be repaired* means a table, almost always of the **MyISAM** type, has an inconsistent file, usually because something stopped halfway through a write. In most cases it is fixed with **Repair table** in phpMyAdmin or in cPanel. First, make a copy of whatever you can still read.

Step by step

1. **Copy first.** If you can export, export. See **exporting with phpMyAdmin**. If you cannot, at least save the table name and the full message.
2. In cPanel open **MySQL Databases**. Under **Modify Databases**, choose the database and click **Repair DB**.
3. Or in **phpMyAdmin**: open the database, tick the table, and in the “With selected” menu choose **Repair table**. It is the same as running `REPAIR TABLE table_name;` on the SQL tab.
4. Run `CHECK TABLE table_name;` and confirm the status is *OK*.
5. Open the site and confirm the message is gone.
6. To keep it from coming back, convert the table to InnoDB: `ALTER TABLE table_name ENGINE=InnoDB;`. Do it with the copy already made.

Situation	What to do
MyISAM with the “crashed” message	`REPAIR TABLE` . Usually enough.

Situation	What to do
InnoDB with errors	`REPAIR TABLE` does not apply. Restore from a copy. See **restoring your data with JetBackup**.
The repair fails or loses rows	Restore the table, or the database, from the most recent copy you have.
In WordPress, several table errors	Use WordPress's own repair (below).

WordPress's repair leaves a door open.
Add `define('WP_ALLOW_REPAIR', true);` to `wp-config.php`, open `/wp-admin/maint/repair.php` on the site, repair, and **remove the line right afterwards**: while it is there, anyone can open that page without logging in. And if you see the message once, after a failure, it may have been a one-off; if it comes back, switch to InnoDB and check for a full disk.

Why it happens

A table gets marked as damaged when something interrupts a write halfway: a **restart** of the server, a process killed for lack of resources, or **an account with no space left** to write. MyISAM tables are the most sensitive to this, because they lack the log InnoDB uses to repair itself. That is why the underlying advice is to use InnoDB. A table marked as damaged does not mean someone broke into the site: nearly always it is just a write that was left half done. Even so, change the passwords if you have any doubt, and look at the access log for requests you do not recognise.

Real backups remove the scare.
Someone with a daily copy recovers in minutes. See **making and keeping your own backup** and **database connection errors**.

NEED A HAND?

The repair did not work or the database is incomplete? Tell us the database name and the message and we will see what can be recovered.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- How to restore your data with JetBackup →
- Error establishing a database connection: the causes, in order →

Cleaning and optimising the database in phpMyAdmin

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