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Running OpenClaw day to day: updates, logs and backups

Agents & AI on a VPS

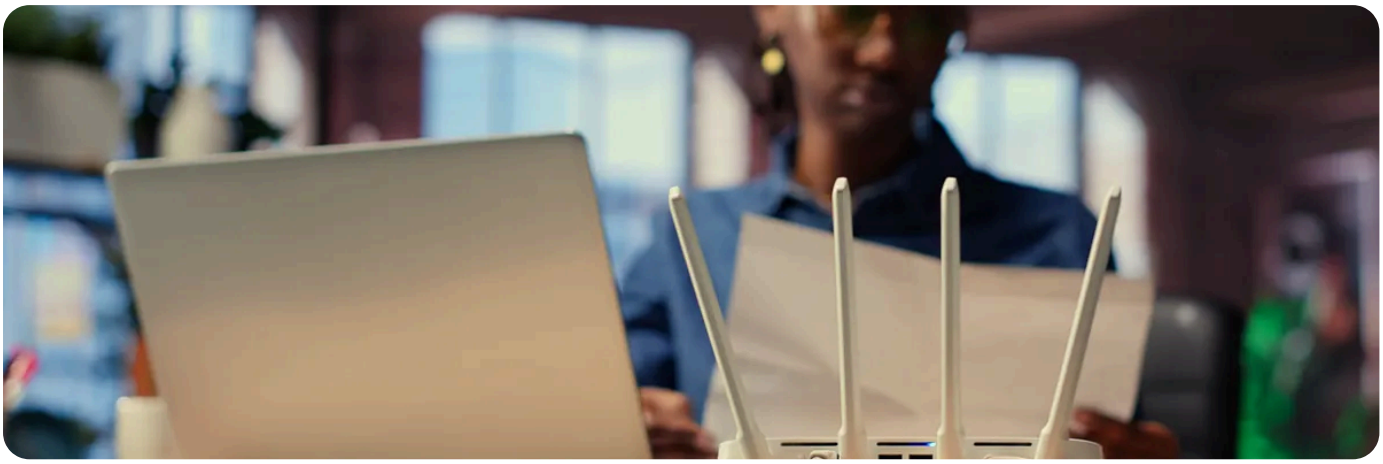
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Running OpenClaw day to day: updates, logs and backups

Agents & AI on a VPS Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



An agent that is installed and forgotten is a risk, not a saving. Keeping OpenClaw standing comes down to **four habits**: update with a backup taken first, read the logs, save what you cannot lose, and watch memory, disk and spend. The exact update commands and the file locations are in the **project's official documentation**, which follows each release; this article tells you what to do and when.

As with any unmanaged VPS, maintaining the application is up to you. The server, the network and the access are our side. See **how far our support goes**.

Updating

1. **Read the release notes** on the project before updating. Look for changes that break the configuration and for new Node.js requirements.
2. **Take a backup first.** A snapshot of the VPS and, separately, the configuration and data folder the documentation names. See **backing up a VPS**.
3. **Update off-hours** and with the agent stopped, following the official procedure.
4. **Test with a harmless task.** Only then reconnect the messaging channels.
5. **If it goes wrong, go back to the backup** and postpone the update until a calmer release.

! **Do not update blindly, or in a panic in the middle of the night.**
An agent that starts behaving differently after an update can delete or send things it did not do before.

Logs: what to look for

Sign in the logs	What it usually means	What to do
Authentication errors with the provider	Key expired, revoked or out of credit	Check the provider's console and replace the key
Requests repeating in a loop	A failing task retrying	Stop the task and fix the cause before switching it back on
Out of memory	The VPS is too small for the load	Reduce what runs at once or move to a bigger plan
Commands you did not ask for	Malicious instruction or a model error	Switch it off, revoke the keys and restore the backup

Where the logs live depends on how you installed it and is in the documentation. If you run it as a system service, the service's logs are read with the system's own tools, such as `journalctl` on distributions that use it.

What to save and what to watch

1. **Save the agent's configuration and data** (the folders the documentation identifies) off the server, and test that you can restore them. See **making and testing your own backup**.
2. **Keep the keys in a password vault**, not only on the server. If the VPS is lost the keys can be recreated, but it is a chore you can spare yourself.
3. **Watch memory and disk** now and then, with `free -h` and `df -h`. Logs that grow forever fill the disk.
4. **Check the spend at the provider** once a week. See **what it costs**.

Put a short monthly review in the calendar: version, logs, disk, spend and keys you no longer use. It is little, and it is what separates a useful agent from a problem waiting to happen.

NEED A HAND?

Has the VPS run out of space or memory, or stopped answering? Open a ticket and we will check what we can see on the server side.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Installing OpenClaw on a VPS**
- **OpenClaw security: what it can reach, and how to limit it**
- **Common VPS and Cloud errors: SSH, memory, disk and reboots**
- **Support Policy**

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