iThemes PRESENTS

THE ESSENTIAL WORDPRESS MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

75 TASKS TO KEEP YOUR SITES RUNNING SMOOTHLY

Introduction

Maintaining a WordPress website means performing daily, weekly and monthly tasks so your site continues to run smoothly and load properly for visitors and users. These important tasks are also known as *website maintenance.*

Use this website maintenance checklist to help you maintain WordPress sites either for yourself or for your web design clients. This checklist includes one-time tasks for newer WordPress sites and repetitive maintenance tasks that will need to be performed on a regular basis.

In this checklist, website maintenance tasks are divided into the following groups:

- Backups
- Security
- Themes & Plugins
- Comments
- Uptime Monitoring
- Blog

- Images
- Pages
- Users
- Contact Page
- Portfolio
- SEO & Analytics

Ready to dive in? Let's go!

WordPress Backup Tasks

Having an ongoing WordPress backup strategy is an important part of the health of a WordPress site.

☐ 1. Install a WordPress backup plugin like BackupBuddy to start running automatic WordPress backups.

☐ 2. Confirm automatic WordPress backups are running at scheduled intervals (such as daily, weekly or monthly).

☐ 3. Confirm backup files are delivering to a safe, off-site storage destination.

☐ 4. Set up redundant backups (two or more backup file storage locations).

☐ 5. Confirm backup files include WordPress database and all files (media library, themes, plugins, etc.)

☐ 6. Consider using a real-time WordPress backup system (like Stash Live) if you manage a site with daily activity or frequent transactions.

☐ 7. Delete any old locally-stored backups (these are backups stored on your own server). Check your BackupBuddy settings to automatically delete local backups.

☐ 8. Delete old backup files stored off-site to reduce storage usage.

☐ 9. Keep a current version of the ImportBuddy script file on hand to migrate or restore your site.

More WordPress Security Tasks

Being proactive about your site's security means taking steps to lock down WordPress, fix common holes, stop automated attacks and strengthen user credentials.

☐ 10. Update WordPress core to the latest version.

☐ 11. Install a WordPress security plugin like iThemes Security to help perform WordPress security tasks and monitor security activity on your site.

☐ 12. Run the WordPress Security Check feature to activate recommended security features.

☐ 13. Enable the Banned Users setting to block specific IP addresses and user agents from accessing your site.

☐ 14. Review your WordPress security logs. For an easier visual summary of your logs, active the WordPress Security Dashboard to see a real-time overview of the security activity for your website.

☐ 15. Enable WordPress brute force protection to protect your site against attackers that try to randomly guess login details to your site.

☐ 16. Enable Network Brute Force Protection to protect your site against known attackers before they reach your site.

WordPress Security Tasks Continued

☐ 17. Run a WordPress malware scan.

☐ 18. Enable User Logging to log user actions such as login, editing or saving content and other actions.

☐ 19. Disable the File Editor in WordPress Tweaks.

☐ 20. Harden WordPress by using the Away Mode setting to limit access to your WordPress login and admin area (for example, overnight or while you're on vacation).

☐ 21. Whitelist your own IP Address to avoid unintentional lockouts.

☐ 22. Review WordPress file permissions.

☐ 23. Remove the Admin user.

☐ 24. Change your WordPress salts and secret keys.

☐ 25. Activate and set up WordPress two-factor authentication.

☐ 26. Enable Passwordless Login to add another secure way for users to log in. (Passwordless login is a great alternative to using a weak password and no form two-factor authentication).

WordPress Theme & Plugin Tasks

Your themes and plugins require a few maintenance tasks to ensure they are up-to-date and working properly.

☐ 27. Confirm premium theme and plugins have current licenses (licensing is usually how version updates are communicated to your WordPress site).

⚠️ Note: Always run a backup before updating themes, plugins and WordPress core.

☐ 28. Update current theme to the latest version.

☐ 29. Update active plugins to latest version.

☐ 30. Delete and completely remove unused themes and plugins.

☐ 31. Review notices for new plugin and theme features for implementation.

Comment Tasks

Don't let comments stack up with these tasks.

☐ 32. Approve & reply to any pending comments on your posts or pages.

☐ 33. Empty spam comments.

☐ 34. Activate an anti-spam service like Akismet to help reduce comment spam.

Uptime Monitoring Tasks

Monitor your site's uptime, downtime and performance.

- [ ] 35. Monitor WordPress uptime to track hosting performance.

- [ ] 36. Review uptime/downtime stats for uptime percentage, total downtime and number of downtimes.

- [ ] 37. Enable email notifications for downtime.

Blog Tasks

Give your blog some attention with a few tasks to improve and refresh content.

- [ ] 38. Review top-performing posts from the last month/year for improvements and updates.

- [ ] 39. Add or confirm your email newsletter signup is working by testing a new signup.

- [ ] 40. Confirm social sharing buttons are working and linked to correct accounts.

- [ ] 41. Add/update featured images for posts.

- [ ] 42. Review post drafts and then delete unneeded post drafts.

- [ ] 43. Empty posts stored in trash.

- [ ] 44. Install a WordPress Content Upgrades plugin to start offering a download (like an ebook or checklist) in exchange for an email opt-in within your posts.

Image Tasks

These tasks review the size and usage of images on your site.

- [ ] 45. Optimize all images for the web (reduce file sizes for any images above 600KB).

- [ ] 46. Delete unused images from your media library (this helps to reduce the size of your site's backup files).

- [ ] 47. Add appropriate alt tags to all images included in posts and pages. This helps with SEO.

Page Tasks

Review, refresh and update your site's pages.

- [ ] 48. Audit older pages for content updates.

- [ ] 49. Empty unnecessary page drafts stored in the trash.

- [ ] 50. Review parent/child page relationships to better organize content.

- [ ] 51. Add featured images for pages.

Portfolio Tasks

Keep your portfolio and testimonials fresh.

- [ ] 52. Update your online portfolio with screenshots or images from your latest projects.

- [ ] 53. Add new testimonials from customers and clients.

User Tasks

Review users on your site and their permissions.

- [ ] 54. Delete unused or unnecessary user accounts.

- [ ] 55. Encourage Admin users to enable WordPress two-factor authentication for their login and to use WordPress password security.

- [ ] 56. Review user access levels and adjust roles as necessary with a WordPress Role Manager.

- [ ] 57. Encourage all users who write content or reply to comments (Admins, Editors & Contributors) to set up their Gravatar profile images.

Contact Page Tasks

Tasks to check on your contact page and contact form.

- [ ] 58. Confirm your current contact information (email, social, address, phone, etc.) is correct and up-to-date.

- [ ] 59. Test and confirm that your contact form confirmation emails and submission notification emails are working.

- [ ] 60. Reply to any missed contact form submissions.

- [ ] 61. Consider setting up conditional form logic to deliver canned responses.

- [ ] 62. Update your FAQs to reflect common customer or client questions.

SEO & Analytics Taks

Review your SEO and analytics strategy with these maintenance tasks.

- [ ] 63. Install a WordPress SEO plugin like Yoast SEO to help with basic SEO tasks.

- [ ] 64. Connect Google Analytics and activate Google Search Console (if you haven't already).

- [ ] 65. Submit an updated sitemap.

- [ ] 66. Audit pages and posts for keyword-focus. Make improvements to content for better SEO.

- [ ] 67. Add missing meta descriptions for posts and pages.

- [ ] 68. Review analytics data for total page views and unique visitors.

- [ ] 69. Review referral traffic & inbound links.

- [ ] 70. Review Google Console data (Search Traffic, Google Index and Crawl info).

- [ ] 71. Set up and review Goals in Google Analytics.

- [ ] 72. Review Behavior Flow.

- [ ] 73. Review page load times to make improvements.

- [ ] 74. Consider Page Speed suggestions.

- [ ] 75. Audit site for mobile-responsiveness.

Save *Tons* of Time with iThemes Sync Pro

Maintaining a WordPress site can get pretty time-consuming, especially if you have more than one website. Using a WordPress maintenance tool like iThemes Sync Pro can save you a lot of time.

Why? **Instead of having to log in to each WordPress site 's admin area that you manage, you can have one central dashboard to perform WordPress maintenance tasks.** With Sync Pro, you can perform a lot of the tasks included in this checklist from one dashboard for all your websites.

WordPress Maintenance Made Easy with iThemes Sync Pro

With one central dashboard to perform WordPress maintenance tasks, you can simplify your workflow.

ithemes sync PRO

30-DAY FREE TRIAL

GET STARTED NOW

- [ ] See all available updates for themes, plugins and WordPress for all your websites in one place
- [ ] Update themes, plugins and WordPress for all your sites at once
- [ ] Get email notifications when new updates are available
- [ ] Run remote WordPress backups
- [ ] Add/edit automatic backup schedules
- [ ] Manage remote backup files stored in BackupBuddy Stash
- [ ] Edit users
- [ ] Approve and reply to comments
- [ ] Add new posts and pages
- [ ] View Uptime stats
- [ ] View a summary of Google Analytics data
- [ ] Generate reports for SEO, Google Analytics and more.