Understanding WordPress: How to Back Up Files and Databases

Every WordPress site owner understands the importance of regular backups to safeguard their website's data against loss or damage. However, the perceived complexity and time required for effective backup management often lead to neglect or delay.
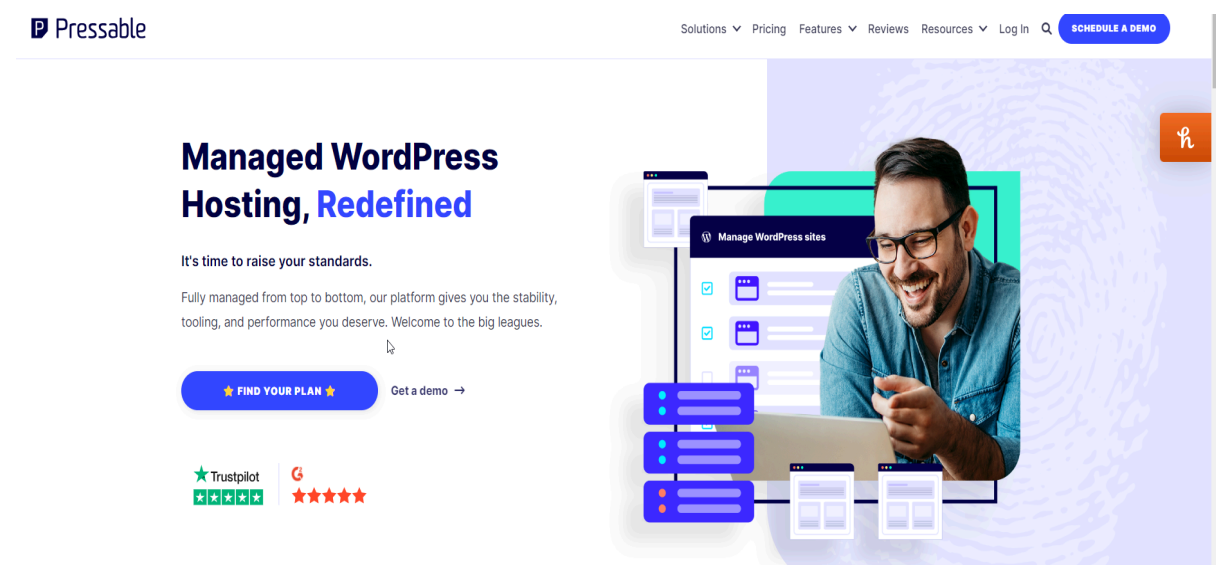
This article unravels the process of backing up your WordPress database and site files, making it accessible even to those with minimal technical expertise. Whether you're leveraging Pressable's streamlined backup services or seeking plugin solutions suitable for non-Pressable users, we've got you covered. Let's help you keep your WordPress site safe with thorough backup plans.

Why Backups Matter for WordPress Websites

Backups are the safety nets for [WordPress](#) websites that play an important role in preventing data loss and ensuring website security. Without a reliable backup strategy, your site is vulnerable to various threats that can lead to irretrievable data loss. Such risks include site crashes, hacks, updates that don't go as planned, and other unforeseen issues. The mere thought of losing valuable website data is a significant pain point for site owners, highlighting the undeniable importance of regular backups.

[Backing up your WordPress site](#) ensures that, in the event of such disruptions, you can restore your site to its previous state with minimal effort. The key to effective disaster recovery lies in the frequency and recency of backups. Regular backups mean less work in reinstating your site's original functionality, preserving both its security and data integrity. It's a proactive measure against the unpredictable, safeguarding your online presence from any unplanned incidents that might otherwise compromise your website.

Pressable's automatic backup is a hassle-free solution designed to give you peace of mind.

Alt Text: Pressable offers a hassle-free backup solution

For sites hosted on [Pressable](#), manual backups of site files are performed nightly, provided there have been changes to the site. Additionally, Pressable offers automatic hourly database backups, ensuring your content is consistently safeguarded without requiring constant attention from you. This automatic, frequent backup service is ideal for maintaining your website's health and security with minimal effort. However, some scenarios may necessitate a manual backup. Whether it's for extra precaution before an update or for personal assurance, the ability to manually back up your WordPress site remains a valuable skill.

In the following sections, we will guide you through the manual backup process, as well as introduce some of the best plugin solutions for those not using Pressable's services. Let's explore how to secure your WordPress website with both manual and automated backup strategies.

Manual Database Backup: A Step-by-Step Guide

Backing up your WordPress website manually is a skill that every site owner should possess. It provides a deeper understanding of how your website operates and can be invaluable in emergency scenarios. Manual backups ensure you have a recent snapshot of your site that can be restored if needed. Let's walk through [the process of manually backing up a WordPress database](#), by Pressable, covering both database and file system backups.

Scenarios for manual backups:
The following are the three scenarios where the user might decide to manually back up their website:

A. **Before major updates or changes**
- **Updating critical components:** Before updating essential components of your website such as the Content Management System (CMS), themes, or plugins, a manual backup is crucial. These components are the backbone of your website's functionality and appearance. Updating them without a recent backup could lead to compatibility issues or other unexpected problems that may negatively impact your site.
- **Implementing significant design changes or adding new features:** Any major overhaul of your website's design or the introduction of new features can significantly alter the user experience and site functionality. A backup ensures you have a restore point should the changes not go as planned or negatively affect the site's performance.
- **Migrating to a new server or changing hosting providers:** [Server migration or switching your hosting provider](#) is a critical process that involves transferring your site's data to a new environment. Conducting a manual backup beforehand provides a shield, ensuring that no data is lost during the transition.

B. **After significant content addition or events**
- **Adding substantial content:** Following the addition of significant new content, such as articles, product listings, or multimedia files, it's wise to back up your site. This content is valuable and often the result of extensive work, making its preservation essential for your business or personal archive.

- **Major event or campaign:** If your site has recently been the focal point of a major event, marketing campaign, or promotion that resulted in a substantial increase in user data or engagement, a backup helps secure this influx of valuable information.

- **Post-event backups:** After hosting online events, promotions, or product launches, it's advisable to perform a backup. These events can change the structure or content of your site significantly, making it important to capture its state post-event for future reference or recovery needs.

C. **In response to security incidents or vulnerabilities**
- **A security breach or malware attack:** Following the detection and remediation of a security breach or malware attack, backing up your site is essential. This ensures that you preserve a clean, secure version of your site, free from vulnerabilities.
- **Applying security patches:** Before and after applying patches to address security vulnerabilities, a backup is advisable. This precautionary step ensures that should the patches cause any issues, you can revert to a pre-patch state without losing data or functionality.
- **Heightened security alerts:** In times of increased security threats, conducting manual backups serves as a judicious measure to protect your website's integrity. This proactive approach prepares you to restore your site swiftly should it be compromised.

Backing up a Pressable website using "On-Demand Backups"
The steps involved are:
1. Log into your my.pressable.com dashboard
2. Next, select "Manage Data" → "On-Demand Backups"
   - If you manage multiple websites, be sure you've selected the site you want to back up.
   - Pressable allows users to create and store three "on-demand" backups, so if you've reached your limit you'll need to delete an older site backup.
   - There are two separate on-demand backup options:
      - Filesystem backups (backups of your WordPress website files) and
      - Database backups (backups of your WordPress database).
     For a full-site backup, you'll need to create both.
3. Click the button for the backups you want to run.
4. When the backup is ready, it will appear in the "On-demand backups for this site" section.

Manually backing up your database on Pressable
Here are the steps:
1. Log into your my.pressable.com dashboard, and select the "phpMyAdmin" icon.
2. Select your database from the left-hand menu.
3. Click on the "Export" tab at the top of the resulting page.
4. Select your export method. In most cases, "quick" will do, however, if you need to fine-tune your export options you can do so by selecting "custom."
5. Save your exported file in a manner that makes it easy to find and identify later. For example, you may decide to save all backup files on a single external hard drive so you know exactly where backups are.

Backing up your WordPress website files using SFTP
The steps to be followed are:
1. Set up SFTP for your Pressable site if you haven't already done so.
2. Connect to your site's files using the SFTP client of your choice. Pressable recommends using FileZilla or Cyberduck SFTP clients.

3. Select the site files you want to backup, and save them in a clearly labeled, easy-to-find manner similar to your database backup.

Pressable Backup and Restore: Piece of Cake for Peace of Mind

Restoring a WordPress site can feel like finding your way through a complex puzzle, especially for big sites with lots of content. However, with Pressable's backup and restoration services, these pain points are addressed and resolved easily.

Challenges of site restoration without Pressable:
1. **Time-consuming:** Especially for larger sites, restoration can take considerable time, complicating urgent recovery needs.
2. **Complexity:** Users with limited tech expertise may find the process intimidating, with a high risk of errors.
3. **Stress-inducing:** Even without technical issues, the weight of ensuring a successful restoration can be stressful.

Pressable offers an effortless, reliable means of restoring your site from automatic and on-demand backups. While manual restoration via SFTP remains an option, Pressable simplifies the process with its [automatic restoration tool](), designed to save time, minimize stress, and guarantee efficiency.

Steps for automatic restoration with Pressable:
1. Login to my.pressable.com to access your site's dashboard.
2. Navigate to Manage Data → Restore Site
3. Select the Filesystem and Database backup you'd like to restore.
4. Click the "Restore" button.

During restoration, your site enters maintenance mode, temporarily making it inaccessible to ensure a smooth process. The duration varies based on your site's size, from a few minutes to several hours. Ideally, you should plan restorations during low-traffic periods to minimize impact on site visitors. Restoration is an irreversible action, so it's crucial to confirm its necessity to prevent accidental data overwrites. Also, 24/7 assistance is available to offer support and guidance every step of the way.

Easing the pain points:
Pressable makes backing up and restoring sites easy, solving the problems of traditional methods. Its simple, fast process is for everyone, no matter their tech skills. With automatic tools, maintenance mode, and team support, restoring your site is smooth and stress-free. If old backup methods frustrate you, Pressable's reliable and easy-to-use service is a welcome change, turning a tough job into something simple and worry-free.

Backup and Restoration Plugins

For [WordPress]() site owners not using Pressable's streamlined backup and restoration services, navigating the backup process can seem challenging. Fortunately, WordPress backup plugins offer a viable alternative, simplifying the task of safeguarding your website's data. These plugins automate the process, eliminating the need for manual backups and significantly reducing the time and effort involved.
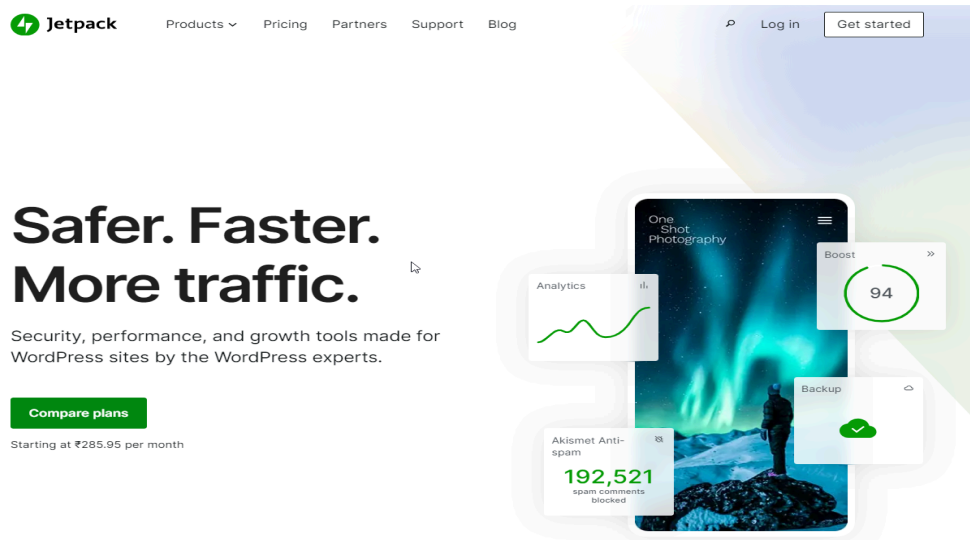
Automating backups via plugins allows users to configure specific settings, such as scheduling backups to occur during low-traffic hours, selecting which files or databases to back up, and choosing where backups are stored, whether on the cloud or an external drive. This level of customization ensures that your website is backed up according to your needs, without requiring constant attention.

However, it's important to be aware of potential downsides. Some plugins might impact your website's performance during the backup process, especially if your site is large or contains a lot of data. Despite potential drawbacks, the convenience and peace of mind provided by backup plugins are invaluable for many WordPress site owners. While Pressable offers an integrated, hassle-free backup solution, understanding and utilizing plugins can be beneficial for those not yet on Pressable's platform.

Backup Plugins We Like

- **Jetpack Security**

  [Jetpack Security](#) simplifies backups and restoration with its VaultPress feature, allowing one-click actions for both tasks.
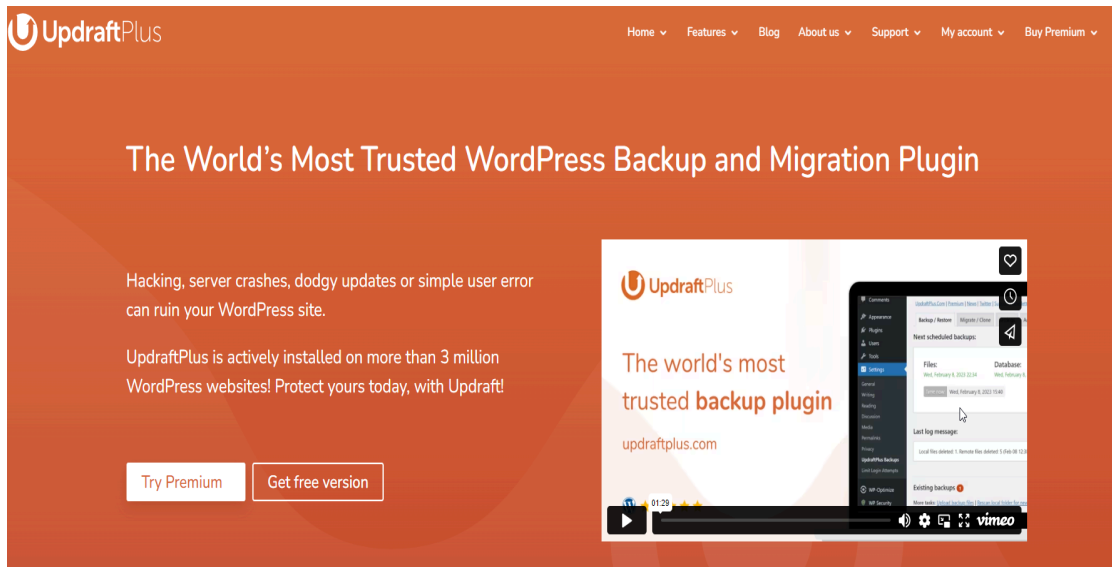

Alt text: Jetpack is trusted for security, performance, and growth on WordPress sites.

  Beyond backups, Jetpack Security delivers a suite of tools to enhance your site's safety, including a website firewall, spam protection, malware scanning, and a 30-day activity log, ensuring comprehensive protection and easy recovery options.

- **UpdraftPlus**

  [UpdraftPlus](#) is available in both free and premium versions, catering to a wide range of backup needs.

Alt text: Secure your WordPress sites using UpdraftPlus.

The free version includes scheduled backups, storage on remote services like Dropbox and Google Drive, and restoration capabilities. The premium upgrade introduces incremental backups, additional file and database backup options, and automatic backups following WordPress, plugin, or theme updates. It also allows restoring a backup from other plugins, enhancing its utility and flexibility.

● **BlogVault**

BlogVault is a premium service offering a 7-day free trial. It supports daily scheduled backups, unlimited manual backups, multi-site backup features, and a built-in staging environment.

Alt text: BlogVault ensures WordPress backups for business-critical websites.

With additional benefits like website monitoring and an activity log, BlogVault is designed for robust site management and protection.

While all these plugins offer effective solutions for WordPress database backups, it's important for users on hosting services lacking backup and restoration features to consider their needs. Switching to [Pressable](#) simplifies backups and also provides a suite of additional features, such as:
- Free managed migration
- A 100% uptime guarantee
- A super-fast network supported by a [global content delivery network and Pressable's Edge Cache](#),
- Performance monitoring and optimization
- Unlimited free staging environments
- A web-application firewall, and
- Comprehensive [malware scanning and threat monitoring](#).

Secure Your WordPress Site Today with Reliable Backup Strategies

Keeping your WordPress site safe by regularly backing up your database and files is a must for dealing with the uncertainties of the online world. From preventing security breaches to correcting update failures and resolving site design issues, a robust backup strategy is your first line of defense.

The convenience of automatic backups - whether through a dedicated plugin or a comprehensive hosting service like [Pressable](#) - cannot be overstated. Pressable simplifies this process by offering straightforward backup and restore options. These integrate seamlessly with other features like performance optimization and security enhancements, all designed to strengthen your site's resilience.

Don't let the fear of data loss or site downtime hold you back. [Get started with Pressable today](#) and invest in the peace of mind that comes with knowing your WordPress site is protected by the best in the business.