




PIXELPERFECT

# MONTHLY MAINTENANCE

CHECKLIST



A handy checklist you can use to  
keep your WordPress website  
performing at its best

Keeping your WordPress website up to date is an absolute must. By doing proper regular maintenance you greatly reduce a variety of potential problems, such as decreasing the likelihood it'll be hacked, decreasing load speeds, and improving your search engine rankings.

This checklist provides the steps that you should follow regularly to keep your website running smoothly and making sure it functions impeccably.

### **Backup, backup, backup**

I can't express this enough, this is the single most important step you can do for the health and longevity of your website. Taking regular backups of both the database and the files. If the worst should happen and your website is hacked or lost you will have a clean copy that you can restore. There have multiple options to choose from when picking a backup plugin. WordPress offers a few high-quality plugins, which are still great options. These include: [UpdraftPlus](#) (this is the one that I use and recommend); [BackWPup Free](#); [BackUpWordPress](#).

Don't do any other steps until you have downloaded a clean backup to your computer or a remote location such as Dropbox or Google Drive.

### **Update WordPress, themes & plugins**

WordPress releases updates on a regular basis. This includes the WordPress core along with themes and plugins that you have installed on your website. These updates need to be applied in order for your site to continue to function properly and to protect against unwanted problems, such as hackers.

Updates should be completed in this order, WordPress core, themes and then updates. This will help avoid plugin and theme conflicts which could cause your entire website to crash.

### **Review comments**

You should review your pending comments and decide if they are legitimate comments that you want to approve or spam comments that should be marked as spam and deleted. It doesn't necessarily improve the performance of your website, but it will ensure that you don't miss out genuine comments.

### **Check for broken links**

As your website grows, you will find that some external website link that you have included in your content may no longer exist. Some may have moved, while others maybe have been deleted.

Broken links aren't just limited to external links either, there could be broken images, poorly formatted links or links that you have misspelled. This causes bad user experience and affects your site's bounce rate and page views.

Look for broken links on your website with the [Broken Link Checker](#) plugin.

#### **Optimize the database**

By maintaining your database you are essentially cleaning out the cobweb's. This helps improve your load speeds and reduce the frequency of database errors. To keep your database clean, use a plugin to simplify the process. Here are some free options that will do a variety of tasks to maintain and optimize your database and best of all, they are all free!

- [WP-Optimize](#) (my recommendation)
- [WP Clean Up](#)
- [WP Sweep](#)

#### **Run a security check**

It is essential to monitor your website's security on a regular basis to keep your site safe from phishing, spamming, malware and other malicious attacks. Installing and configuring a security plugin will go far in helping protect your site from threats. Here are options;

- [Wordfence](#)
- [Sucuri](#)

You can use these on their own or in conjunction with each other for an extra layer of security monitoring.

#### **Check website performance**

Speed is a factor that can contribute to a poor on-site experience and compromise the user experience. That said, it's easy enough to run a speed and general performance check on your WordPress site every month. This will, in turn, make it easier to catch changes to themes, files, or your database that cause slowdowns.

To understanding what slows down your WordPress site, you first need to analyze how fast your site is loading. Therefore we can utilize a number of free tools and services that provide interesting insights into the loading process. By running your site through the platforms I'm about to mention, you'll be getting an idea of which of the common bottlenecks is slowing down your site.

- [GTMetrix](#)
- [Pingdom](#)

- [Google Page Speed Insights](#)

By following this list, you will keep on top of these simple management and maintenance tasks and you'll have a safe, secure, speedy WordPress website.

For website owners who'd like their website's monthly upkeep handled for them, feel free to check out our [monthly support packages](#).