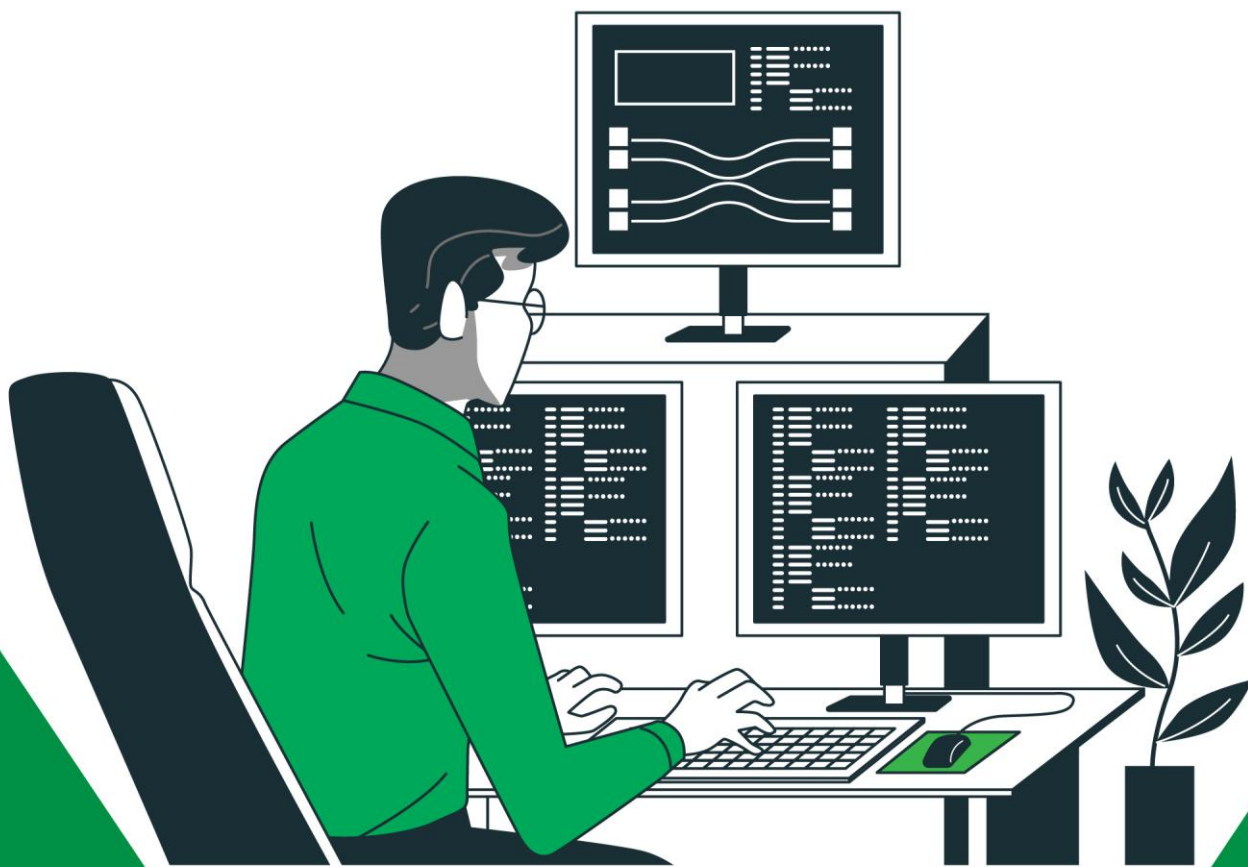


# WORDPRESS MIGRATION FOR NORMIES

60 Minute Step-by-Step Guide for Non Geeks



Ketharaman Swaminathan

# **WORDPRESS MIGRATION FOR NORMIES**

## **60 Minute Step-by-Step Guide for Non Geeks**

Ketharaman Swaminathan

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# DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my wife Sumathi Ramdas, without whose prodding, I would never have made the leap from blogging to writing a book.

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# ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is written by a non-geek and is targeted at non-geeks running their own blogs. It's a one-stop guide for crazy busy people without technical chops to migrate their WordPress blog as quickly as possible. The book provides one single way that works instead of multiple options that tend to send readers on a wild goose chase. That said, it does not oversimplify the migration problem by assuming that you live in a simplistic world that revolves around just one WordPress blog. Instead it takes up a real world estate that comprises multiple websites and blogs, exposes the challenges of migrating a sophisticated landscape, and walks the reader through a one-stop migration solution without asking them to reference multiple sources. Recognizing that WordPress is a specialist platform with its own lingo, the book contains a buzzword directory that unpacks the jargon in layman terms and equips the reader to talk intelligently about their WordPress migration chops. Additional bonus chapters provide tools, code snippets, and tips and tricks to speed the migration, make the blog more secure, and deal with the WordPress supplier ecosystem.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Setting up a new WordPress blog is easy. While the famous 5-minute installation on WordPress.org website is aspirational, there are 1-Click installers bundled with many hosting accounts that literally take only five minutes.

However, migrating an existing WordPress blog can be complicated, as we learned from our experience with a couple of blogs recently.

There are any number of step-by-step guides for migrating a WordPress blog. There are also a couple of plugins that automate the migration process. But they all tend to assume that your whole world revolves around one single WordPress site and address a plain vanilla migration from one hosting account to another.

If your situation mirrors that simplistic baseline, you can skip this book.

Most real world scenarios involve a more complex landscape. They have multiple domains hosted on a single server; comprise not only WordPress blogs but a couple of websites that are not on WordPress, entail change the WordPress version along with the underlying PHP environment, and so on. If your situation is close to this complex baseline, then this book is just right for you.

1. **Your world revolves around one or more websites.** Your blog is just a link on your websites. Even if your blog has a lot of content, your world most certainly does not revolve around it. While your blog is likely built using WordPress - as 42% of blogs in the world are - your website uses HTML + CSS or some other technology. In this book, we will use the terms *website* and *blogsite* to distinguish between the two types of digital properties. Except where noted otherwise, "website" does not use WordPress whereas "blogsite" does.
2. **You host multiple domains / websites on a single hosting account.** When I set up my personal blog [Talk of Many Things](#) in 2006, Hostgator was the only hosting provider I came across that provided multiple domains on a single account. That was one of the chief reasons I selected Hostgator, as I wrote in [Selecting The Right Web Hosting Package Is Tough!](#) at the time. Whereas, today, many hosting providers support multiple domains on their higher-end hosting plans e.g. Go Daddy. If you are like us, you have several websites and associated blogsites on a single hosting plan. As you are probably aware, in these cases, the hosting account is anchored to one primary domain and all other domains are configured as addon domains on the primary domain. In our case, we host gtm360.com, sketharaman.com, stradof.com, mybookalert.com and a bunch of other websites on top of the primary domain fskrsites.com, and a couple of blogsites under those websites.
3. **Version change.** The version of WordPress changes during the migration. As it did in our case, from 5.1 to the latest version 5.8.
4. **Theme change.** You would like to take the opportunity to upgrade the theme of your blogsite. When we launched this blog many years ago, we used *Quest*. While it was a very popular theme at the time, its developer shut down and there was no responsive design update for it. During this migration, we upgraded the theme to *Generate Press*, which is natively responsive design.

5. **Malware.** Your decision to change hosting provider / hosting plan is prompted by repeated malware infection on your shared hosting account. I have heard from many people in the past that WordPress is way more vulnerable to exploits compared to other technologies. I had little doubt about this after I found a password stored in plaintext in a prominent WP file!

These elements of a real life landscape introduce a lot of complications in your WordPress migration. Standard migration guides and plugins tend to bomb.

Enter ***WordPress Migration for Normies***.

Chronicling our migration journey, this book addresses the multifarious complications inherent to a real-life WordPress migration. It provides a step-by-step guide that will help anyone - including nongeeks - to navigate the various landmines buried in an industrial-strength migration and ensure that your new blogsite is up and running in 60 minutes.

Unlike other guides that ramble on and on with N number of alternative ways to carry out a step - presumably to showcase the author's technical expertise – this book provides one and only one (tried-and-tested) way to accomplish a given task. Its accent is on getting you up and running as fast as possible rather than showing off our technical prowess (which is anyway limited!). Since this is a book on migration, it assumes that you are already familiar with the basic building blocks of a WordPress blogsite. Therefore, it does not dwell on the minutiae of plugins, themes, and widgets.

In short, *WordPress Migration for Normies* is a comprehensive, one stop guide that provides everything you need to migrate a sophisticated WordPress landscape without needing to reference external resources.

This book is packed with compelling value of the nature that you are unlikely to find anywhere else.

1. Plenty of screenshots to guide you along the various steps.
2. No redactions. We understand why other articles and blog posts redact their screenshots but understanding is not accepting. We have gone the extra mile to avoid redactions so that it becomes very easy for readers to execute the steps given in this book.
3. How to 10x file copying speeds by using cPanel File Manager instead of FTP recommended by others.
4. How to change non-standard table prefixes. Strangely, all Google searches for this topic will tell you to how to change the standard table prefix wp\_ to a non-standard value. This does not help us since we need to do exactly the opposite during a migration!
5. No affiliate links. All migration blog posts and guides that we have come across in the market recommend paid plugins and tools because their authors make money when readers click through the links in the article. (We know this because most of these guides disclose this practice upfront). We are not against monetizing content but we can't, in good conscience, recommend a paid plugin for doing something when we have used a free plugin for doing the same job for years. Accordingly, this book does not have any affiliate links.



6. How to find critical fields like *home* and *siteurl* and change their values without SQL knowledge.
7. Free malware scanner *and* cleaner. Most malware tools available in the market support free scanning but charge \$\$\$ to clean the infection e.g. MalCare, Securi, WordFence. This book includes the license for a tool that not only scans but also removes malware free of cost.
8. Tips and tricks to handle product vendors and service providers in case you need to engage with the shady underbelly of the WordPress ecosystem.
9. Buzzword directory. Being an open source, community-based platform with hundreds of millions of users worldwide, WordPress is replete with jargon. Our book includes a listing of the most commonly-encountered buzzwords e.g. what does *WordPress Backup* really mean?

We hope this book helps you to achieve a speedy and successful migration of your WordPress blogsite!

# CHAPTER 2: WORDPRESS MIGRATION QUICK GUIDE

Given below are the steps involved in our WordPress migration, with the tool used in each step mentioned inside the parenthesis:

1. Backup files of the old blogsite on the old hosting account / server (cPanel S1 > File Manager)
2. Backup the database of the old blogsite on the old hosting account / server (cPanel S1 > phpMyAdmin)
3. Install the latest version of WordPress on the new hosting account / server (cPanel S2 > Softaculous)
4. Import the old database into the new database (cPanel S2 > phpMyAdmin)
5. Overwrite the files in the new wp-content folder with the old wp-content files (cPanel S2 > File Manager)
6. Leave the new wp-admin and wp-includes folders be i.e. don't overwrite the files inside them with the old files
7. Change non-standard table prefixes (e.g. wp2k\_) in the new wp-config file to wp\_ (cPanel S2 > File Manager)
8. Change nameserver settings to point to new server (Domain Registrar Website)
9. Change links in the files of the new blogsite to the new blogsite's URL (Simple Search-Replace)
10. Change links in the database tables of the new blogsite to the new blogsite's URL (Interconnect Database Search and Replace Script)
11. Log in to the new blogsite's wp-admin with the username and password you entered at step #3 (wp-admin S2).
12. Reset password (wp-admin S2); enter email address used at step #3
13. Repeat step #11 (wp-admin S2)
14. Scrub the users on the new blogsite – by default, they will be the old ones (wp-admin S2)
15. Google Analytics Check (Google Analytics, wp-admin S2).

Some of these steps might seem counterintuitive e.g. If I'm migrating from an old blogsite to a new blogsite, why the heck should I import the old database into the new database at step #4 or overwrite the new files with the old files at step #5? Some of them might contradict what's written in other step-by-step guides e.g. step #6. But, believe me, that's what you need to do - as we learned the hard way from our migration.

If there is one recurring theme in a WordPress migration, it is that you do many things that don't make sense on the first pass and fix them on the second pass.

Happy Migration!

DISCLAIMER: We have used these steps to successfully migrate many WordPress blogsites. However, since we are dealing with cloud-based platforms that can – and often do – change their features without prior notice, we cannot guarantee that these steps will work in every specific instance.

# CHAPTER 3: TEARDOWN OF WORDPRESS

A WordPress blogsite is essentially a combination of many files and one database that together store your posts, plugins, themes, widgets and other content. Migration of a WordPress blogsite is effectively the migration of these files and database from the old server to the new server.

To set the stage for the migration, we shall do a deep dive of the files and database in this chapter.

As stated in the introduction, our WordPress blogsite is a part of our website, which is *not built on WordPress technology*. So we must view our WordPress installation in the larger context of the overall landscape comprising one or more websites.

## Hosting Account aka Server

Your websites and blogsite being migrated are housed in a shared environment that provides computing, storage, network and other infrastructure. This shared environment is called Hosting Account aka Server. You manage these resources via cPanel. This book will reference the old server S1, the new server S2, and the migration of a WordPress blogsite from S1 to S2.

*Old Server S1:* The primary domain of the old server S1 is **einsuranceportal.com**. The blogsite to be migrated is located under **gtm360.com**, which is one of the many addon domains under the primary domain.

*New Server S2:* The primary domain of the new server S2 is **fskrsites.com**. The blogsite to be migrated will be located under **gtm360.com**, which is one of the many addon domains under the primary domain.

## cPanel

You will be spending a lot of time on *cPanel* during this migration.

In this section, we will help you to become comfortable with it.

As you can see from the following exhibit, cPanel has a lot of applications.



But we can ignore most of them.

Only a handful of these applications are relevant for our migration e.g. *File Manager*, *phpMyAdmin*, *Errors*, and *WordPress Manager by Softaculous*. The following exhibit describes their key function.

cPanel - Key Apps for WordPress Migration	
Name of App	Function
<b>Section: FILES</b>	
File Manager	Upload, download, copy, move files and folders within server and between server and local hard drive.
<b>Section: DATABASES</b>	
phpMyAdmin	Export, import database / tables between server and local hard drive, troubleshoot problems related to blogsite user access
MySQLDatabases	Create new database, database user, set access rights
<b>Section: DOMAINS</b>	
Addon Domains	Create addon domains to primary domain
<b>Section: METRICS</b>	
Errors	Apache Error Log, troubleshoot problems related to blogsite and website
<b>Section: SOFTWARE</b>	
WordPress Manager by Softaculous	5-minute installer for new blog, blogsite clone, mirror, backup

During the remainder of this book, we will assume that you are logged in to the cPanel of both old and new servers.

## Old Server File Structure

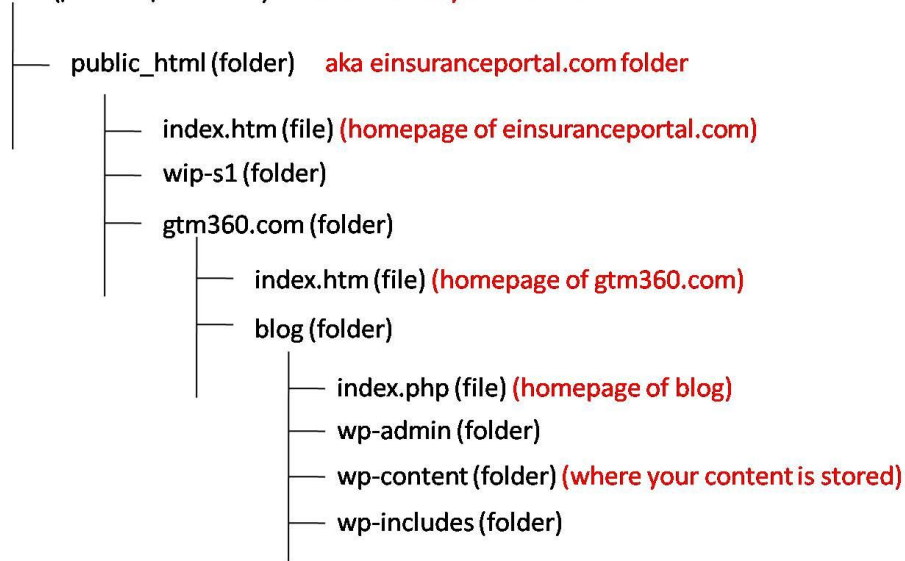
To view the file structure of this server, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S1 server
2. Click *File Manager*
3. View the file structure shown in the following exhibit

## FILE STRUCTURE: SERVER S1

Primary Domain: einsuranceportal.com

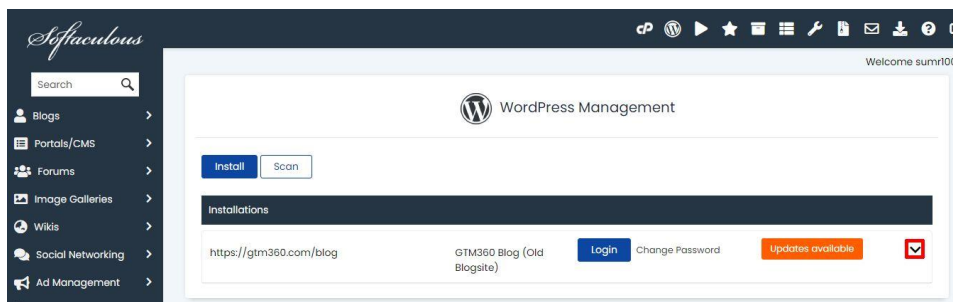
Home (/home3/sumr100) **Root directory of S1 server**



## Old Server Database

This server has only one database, which belongs to the blogsite. To view this database, follow these steps:

1. Login to the cPanel for S1 server
2. Click *WordPress Manager by Softaculous*
3. Click the downward arrow at the extreme right of the entry beginning with **<https://gtm360.com/blog>**



4. Scroll down to *Database Details* and click the + symbol to the left of it



Website URL

https://gtm360.com/blog

Site Name

GTM360 Blog (Old Blogsite)

 Database Details

[View Database](#)

<b>Database Name</b>	sumr100_wp50850
<b>Database User</b>	sumr100_wp50850
<b>Database Host</b>	localhost

5. Make a note of the following:

- *Database Name:* **sumr100\_wp50850**
- *Database User:* **sumr100\_wp50850**

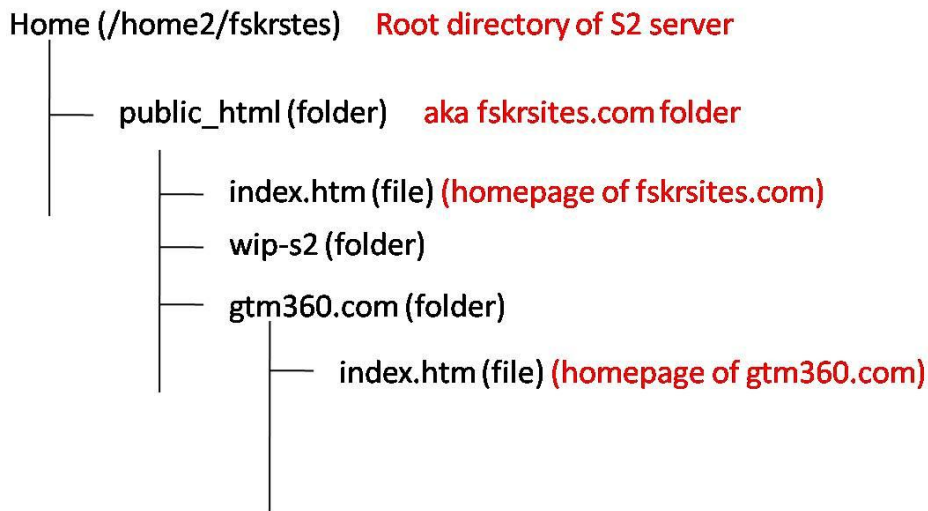
## New Server File Structure

To view the file structure of this server, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *File Manager*
3. View the file structure shown in following exhibit

## FILE STRUCTURE: SERVER S2

Primary Domain: fskrsites.com



Since we have not yet installed WordPress on the new server, there is no blog folder in the above file structure.

## New Server Database

Since we have not yet installed WordPress on the new server, there is no database on it. (As in the case of S1, the only database in this server belongs to the blogsite.)

We will dive deeply into database tables in the next chapter.

NOTE: For the sake of continuity, we will use the above named primary and addon domain names during the rest of this book. In the steps that follow, be sure to replace **einsuranceportal.com** with the primary domain of your old server S1, **fskrsites.com** with the primary domain of your new server S2, and **gtm360.com** with the website that will contain your blogsite. In case your existing blogsite is under one website, say abc.com, on S1, and your migrated blogsite will be under another website, say def.com, on S2, then replace **gtm360.com** with abc.com in all steps pertaining to S1, and with def.com in all steps pertaining to S2.



# CHAPTER 4: BACKUP

WordPress Backup means backup of files and database. Backup of database is really a backup of the tables in the database (of which there are 12 or more).

In this chapter, we will see how to take a manual backup of a blogsite. This will cover the following steps:

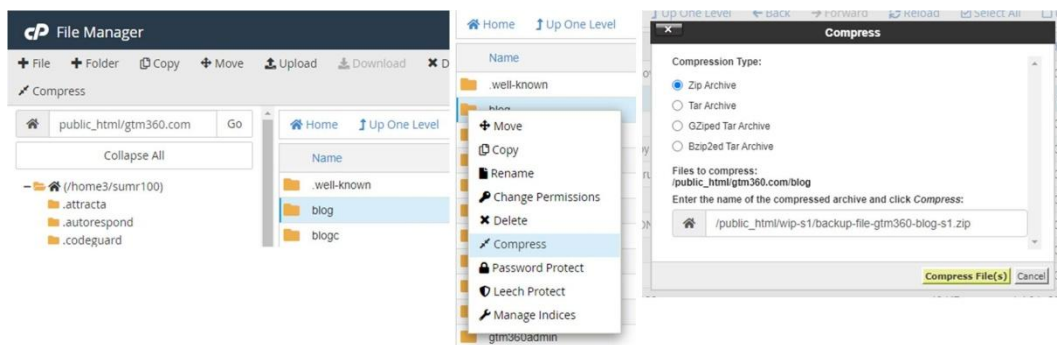
**Step 1:** Backup files of the old blogsite on the old hosting account / server (cPanel S1 > File Manager)

**Step 2:** Backup the database of the old blogsite on the old hosting account / server (cPanel S1 > phpMyAdmin).

## File Backup

To backup the files of the blogsite, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S1 server
2. Click *File Manager*
3. Click the folder called *blog* (path: **/public\_html/gtm360.com**)
4. Right click and select *Compress*
5. Check *Zip Archive*
6. Change the default archive path / name to **/public\_html/wip-s1/backup-file-gtm360-blog-s1.zip**
7. Click the *Compress File(s)* button



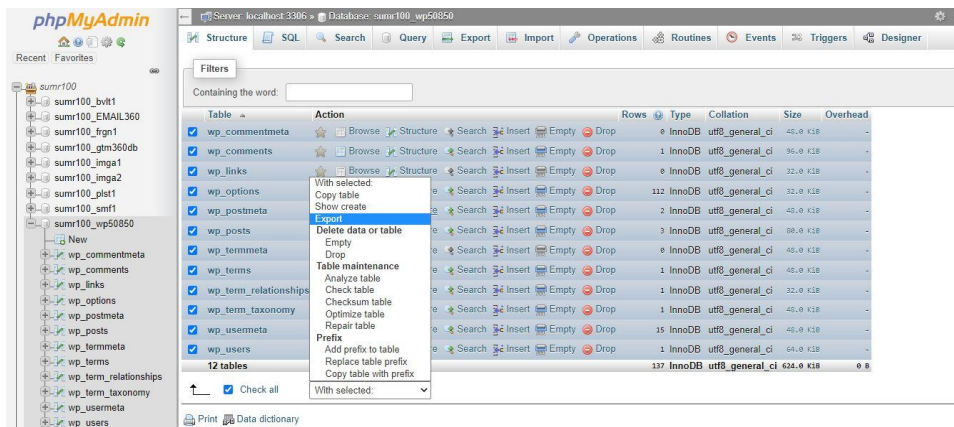
8. The file backup will be found under **/public\_html/wip-s1/**. Click *Download* to download this file to your hard drive.

**NOTE:** If you are only migrating one blogsite, its name does not need to be a part of the backup filename, and we will make this simple by renaming the backup to **/public\_html/wip-s1/file-backup-s1.zip**.

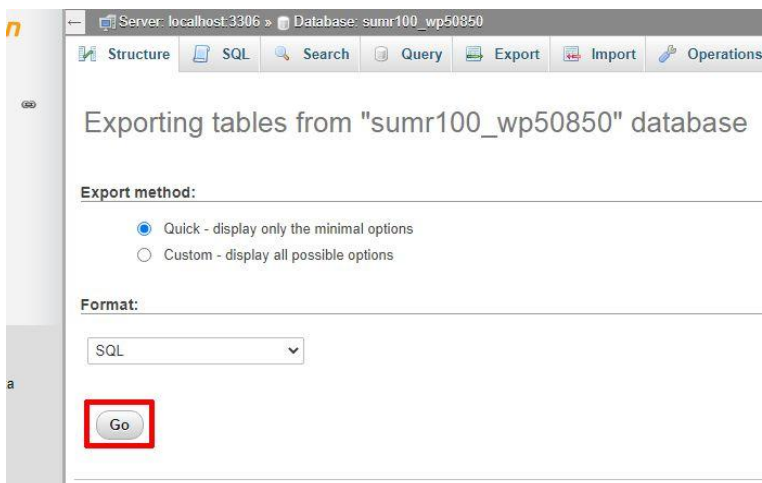
# Database Backup

To backup the database of the blogsite, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S1 server
2. Click *phpMyAdmin*
3. Click the + symbol to the left of **sumr100** on the sidebar on the left
4. Click the database you noted down in the previous chapter **sumr100\_wp50850**.  
You will now see 12 tables on the sidebar on the RHS
5. Click the *Check all* box at the bottom of the table list
6. Click the *With selected* box
7. Click *Export*



8. On the next screen, leave the default settings intact and click the **Go** button



9. The database backup will be downloaded to your hard drive as a file named **sumr100\_wp50850.sql**.

We have now taken the file and database backup of the old blogsite.

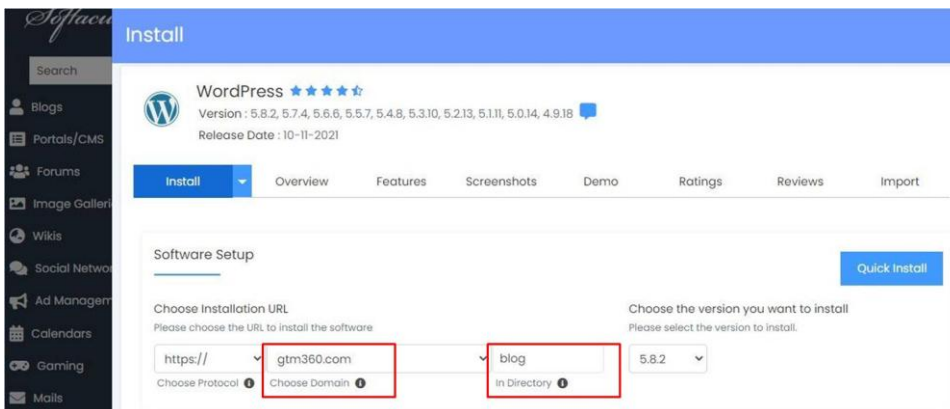
# CHAPTER 5: NEW INSTALLATION

We will cover the following step in this chapter:

**Step 3:** Install the latest version of WordPress on the new hosting account / server (cPanel S2 > Softaculous)

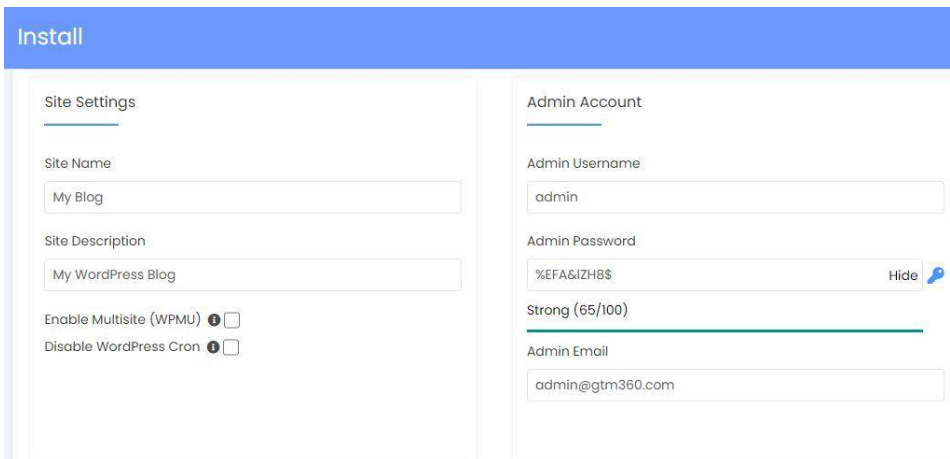
To install WordPress on the new server, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *WordPress Manager by Softaculous*
3. Click the *Install* button and enter the following settings on the next screen
4. Choose *Installation URL:* as **gtm360.com** and *in Directory* as **blog**



The screenshot shows the Softaculous installation interface for WordPress. The 'Software Setup' section is active, showing the 'Choose Installation URL' field with 'https://', 'gtm360.com', and 'blog' selected. The 'Choose the version you want to install' dropdown is set to '5.8.2'. A 'Quick Install' button is visible.

5. Use further settings per following exhibit:



The screenshot shows the 'Site Settings' and 'Admin Account' sections of the Softaculous installation interface. The 'Site Settings' section includes 'Site Name' (My Blog), 'Site Description' (My WordPress Blog), and checkboxes for 'Enable Multisite (WPMU)' and 'Disable WordPress Cron'. The 'Admin Account' section includes 'Admin Username' (admin), 'Admin Password' (Strong (65/100)), and 'Admin Email' (admin@gtm360.com).

6. *Select Plugin(s):* Check **Classic Editor**
7. Click + symbol before *Advanced Options*
8. Change *Table Prefix* to **wp\_**

**Choose Language**

Select Language

English

**Select Plugin(s)** Manage Plugin Sets

Limit Login Attempts (Loginizer) ⓘ

**Classic Editor** ⓘ

wpCentral - Manage Multiple WordPress ⓘ

**Advanced Options**

**Database Name**  
Type the name of the database to be created for the installation

fskrstes\_ wp192

Disable Update Notifications Emails ⓘ

Auto Upgrade WordPress Plugins ⓘ

Auto Upgrade WordPress Themes ⓘ

**Table Prefix**

wp\_

**Auto Upgrade** ⓘ

Do not Auto Upgrade


Upgrade to Minor versions only

Upgrade to any latest version available (Major as well as Minor)

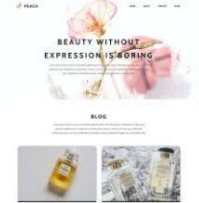
9. Choose theme for your new WordPress blogsite from one of the free themes listed in the *Select Theme* section
10. Click *Show All Themes* button and have a good look around (We went with *Generate Press* but *Sinatra* and many other themes are also good.)

**Select Theme** Manage Theme Sets


**Note:** This is optional. If not selected, the default theme will be installed. Themes are provided by PopularFX and built on Pagelayer Editor.




Twenty Twenty-One  
Default WordPress Theme



Peach



educator



Pizza Box

<
Show All Themes
>

**NOTE:** Bear in mind that upgrading your blogsite to a new theme is one of the primary objectives of this migration exercise, so you might want to spend some quality time on this step.

11. Enter your preferred email address against *Email installation details to* : e.g. **s.ketharaman@gtm360.com**

Install

Email installation details to : s.ketharaman@gtm360.c

12. Leave all other settings at their default values
13. Note down the prefilled credentials of the admin account for your new WordPress blogsite e.g.

- *Admin Username* = **admin**
- *Admin Password* = **%EFA&IZH8\$**

NOTE: Don't worry about this hard-to-remember password. As we will see later, it won't work! At that stage, you will be prompted to change it. You can always choose an easy-to-remember password like password123 (just joking!).

14. Click the *Install* button. This will initiate installation of a new WordPress blogsite on your new server
15. Once the installation is complete, note down the following details from the next screen:

- *Blogview URL*: **www.gtm360.com/blog**
- *Admin Panel URL*: **www.gtm360.com/blog/wp-admin**

*Blogview* is the view of your blogsite that visitors will see.

*Admin Panel* is what only you, as the owner of the blog, can access. You will use the admin panel to publish new blog posts, customize themes, install plugins, and so on. If you outsource this work, you would create a few other admin users who will enjoy the same access privileges as you.

NOTE: Give admin access only to very few and trusted people. If miscreants find out your admin credentials, they can hack your blogsite easily.

## New Server File Structure

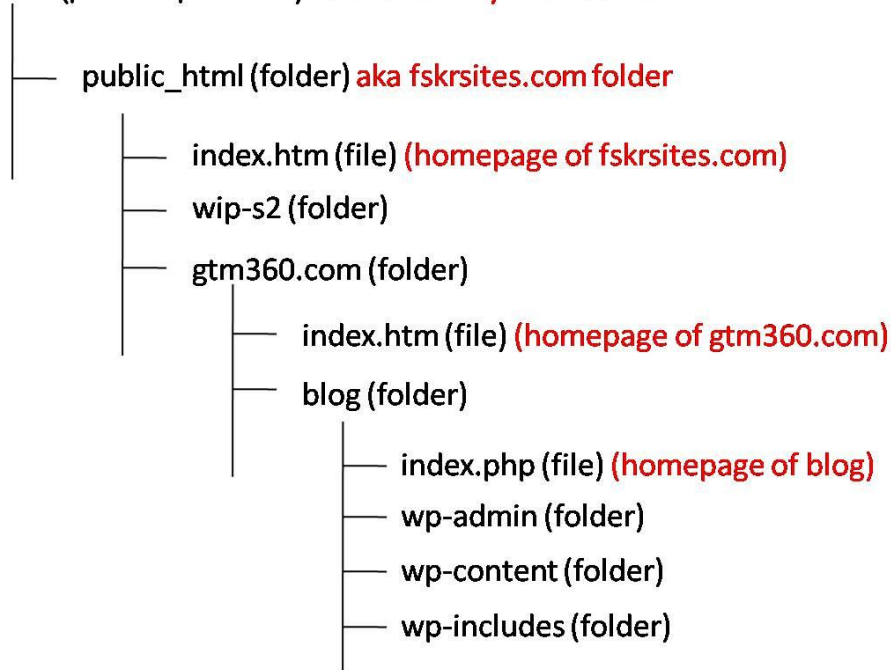
Having installed WordPress on the new server, it's a good time to view the new file structure. To do so, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *File Manager*
3. As expected, you will now see **blog** and underlying folders

## FILE STRUCTURE: SERVER S2

Primary Domain: fskrsites.com

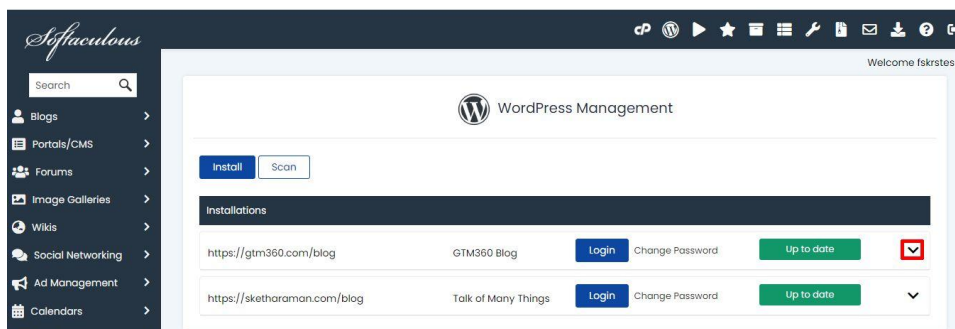
Home (/home2/fskrstes) **Root directory of S2 server**



## New Server Database

To view the newly-installed database on the new server, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *WordPress Manager by Softaculous*
3. Click the downward arrow at the extreme right of the entry beginning with **https://gtm360.com/blog**
4. Now that WordPress is installed on the new server, you will see a database



5. Scroll down to *Database Details* and click the + symbol to the left of it



Website URL

https://gtm360.com/blog

Site Name

GTM360 Blog

Database Details

[View Database](#)

<b>Database Name</b>	fskrstes_wp5
<b>Database User</b>	fskrstes_wp5
<b>Database Host</b>	localhost

6. Note down the following:

- **Database Name: fskrstes\_wp5**
- **Database User: fskrstes\_wp5**

Your new blogsite is now set up with fresh files and database tables.

You are now ready to migrate your old files and database to the new blogsite.



# CHAPTER 6: MIGRATE DATABASE

This chapter will cover the following step:

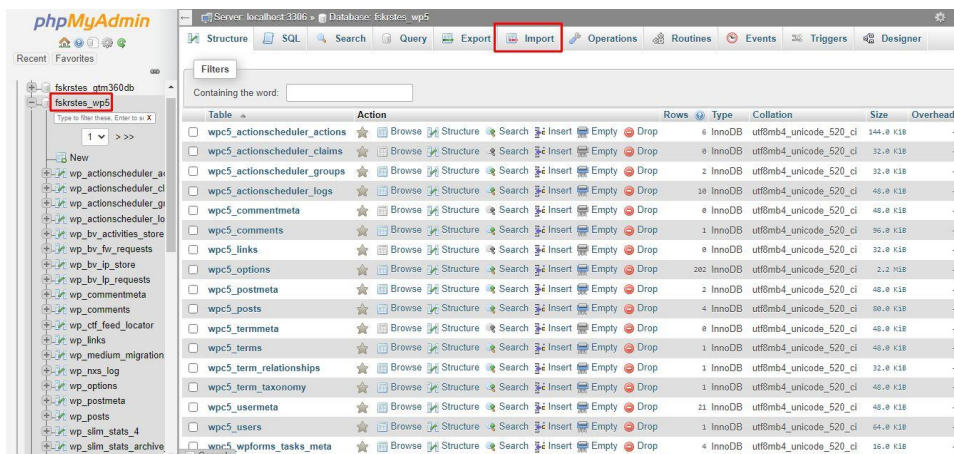
**Step 4:** Import the old database into the new database (cPanel S2 > phpMyAdmin).

To recap:

The name of the database for the WordPress blogsite installation on S2 is **fskrstes\_wp5**.

We downloaded the database backup of the old blogsite on S1 to your hard drive as **sumr100\_wp50850.sql**. We will now upload this database to the new database by following these steps.

1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *phpMyAdmin*
3. Click the + symbol before **fskrstes** to see all databases in S2
4. Click the database pertaining to the new blogsite i.e. **fskrstes\_wp5**
5. On the RHS sidebar, you will see a number of tables of this database (typically 12 but could be more)
6. Click the *Import* button on top menu panel



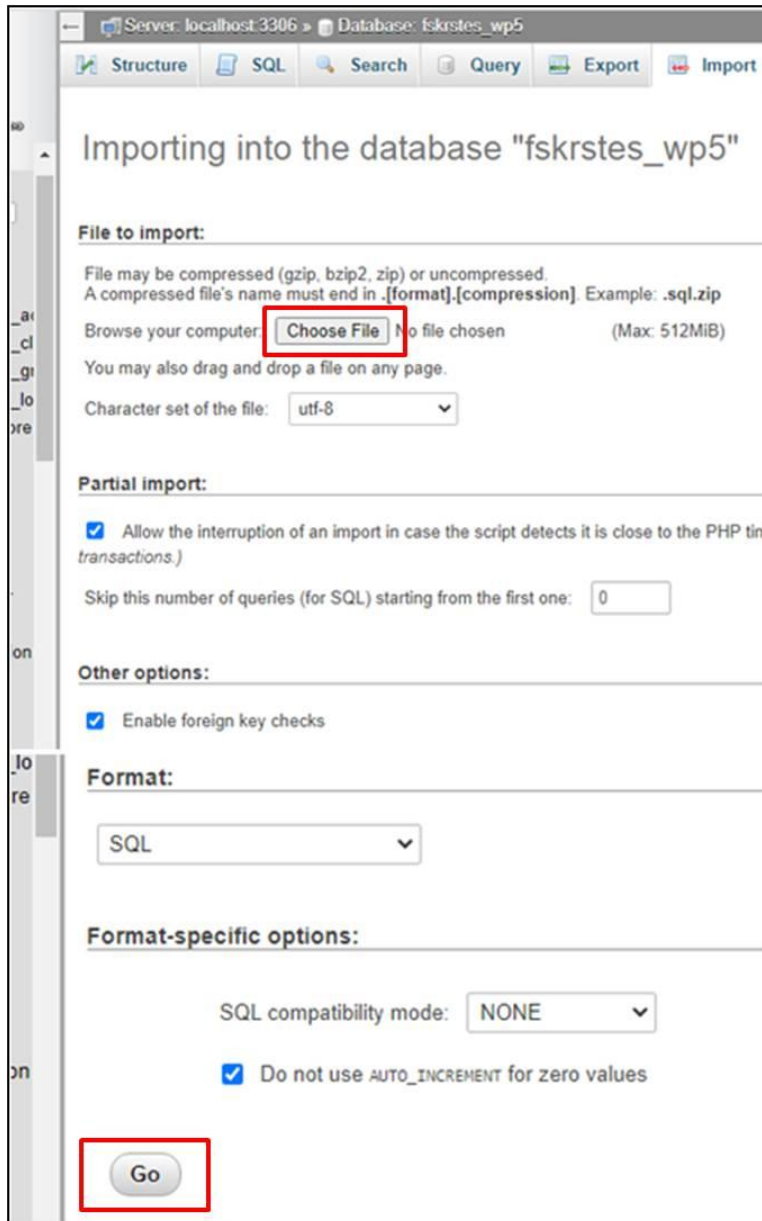
7. Maintain the default values on the next screen

**NOTE:** At the start of this book, I promised to give only one way that works, without getting in to all the possible variants. I'm making one exception to that rule now. Many WordPress experts advocate unchecking the box to the left of the following option: *Partial import: Allow the interruption of an import in case the script detects it is close to the PHP timeout limit*. While I ignored this advice and kept the box checked in my migration, I am tabling it just in case you wish to go the other way in your migration for reasons best known to you.

8. Click the *Choose File* button



9. Windows File Explorer will open. Select the old database backup file **sumr100\_wp50850.sql** from your local hard drive
10. Click the **Go** button at the bottom. This will initiate upload of the old database to the new database



The database upload could take a few minutes depending on the amount of content in your old blogsite and the speed of your Internet connection, among other things. You will be notified when it is complete.

# CHAPTER 7: MIGRATE FILES

In this chapter, we will explain how to migrate files from the old blogsite to the new blogsite. It covers the following steps:

**Step 5:** Overwrite the files in the new **wp-content** folder with the old **wp-content** files (cPanel S2 > File Manager)

**Step 6:** Leave the new **wp-admin** and **wp-includes** folders be i.e. don't overwrite the files inside them with the old files.

## Unpacking “Overwrite”

When they say copy WordPress files from old blogsite (S1) to new blogsite (S2), you should copy only **wp-content** folder, which is a subset of the blogsite. And leave the **wp-admin** and **wp-includes** folders in the new blogsite (S2) version intact.

Let's say that the S1 version of **wp-content** has five folders named A, B, C, D, E, and several underlying files. After installing a new instance of WordPress on S2, a new **wp-content** folder will be created automatically. This contains, say, three folders named, C, X, Y, and several underlying files, that are all native to S2.

As we can see, folder C is common to both S1 and S2.

What should happen to C during the copy? Since Copy means “Overwrite existing files” in this context, C (from S1) should overwrite C (native to S2).

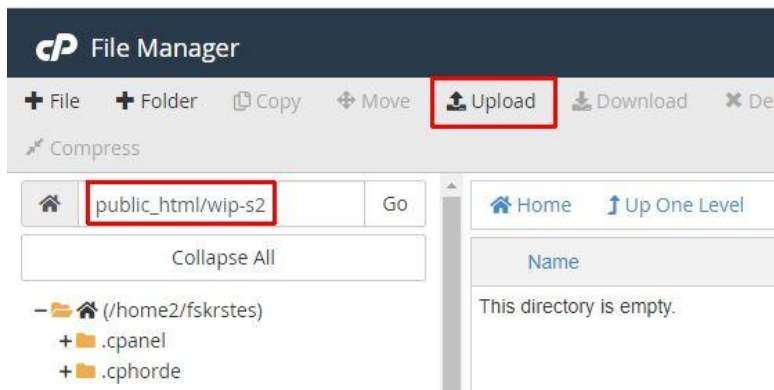
In the end state, **wp-content** folder on S2 should have the following files / folders: A (from S1), B (from S1), C (from S1, not S2), X (native to S2), Y (native to S2).

We will use cPanel *File Manager* for copying the files.

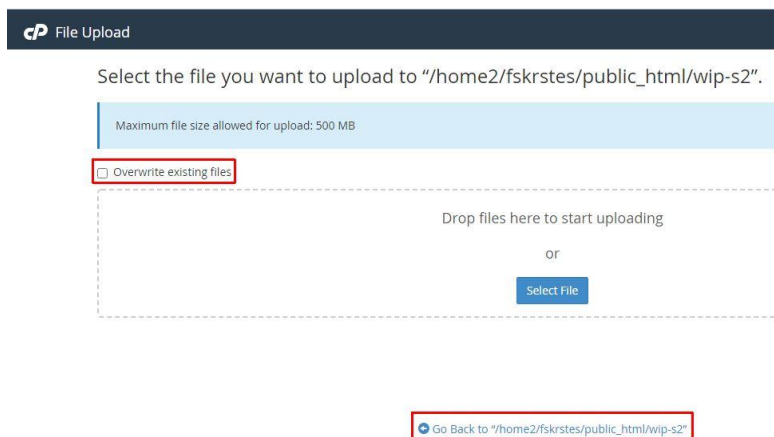
**ProTip:** Most migration guides tell you to use an FTP tool like CoreFTP or FTPzilla to upload the files from the old blogsite to the new blogsite. We found that FTP takes several hours to complete. Our procedure uses *cPanel File Manager* and gets over in a few minutes. Elsewhere in this book, we claimed a 10X improvement in upload speed as a result of this hack but, in our case, it was closer to 30X.

Follow these steps to upload the files from the old blogsite to the new blogsite:

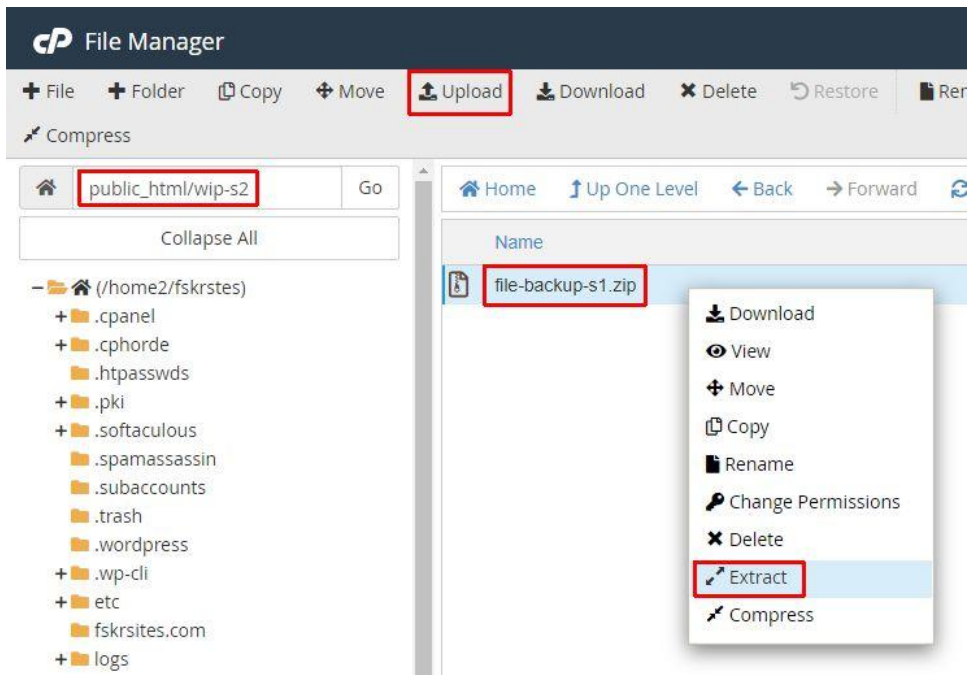
1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *File Manager*
3. Go to **/public\_html/wp-s2** folder
4. Click the **Upload** link on top menu panel



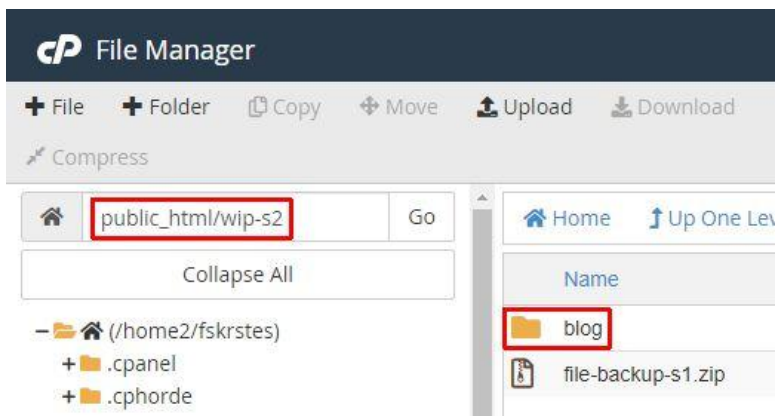
5. Leave *Overwrite existing files* option at the top unchecked
6. Locate the file backup of the old blogsite **file-backup-s1.zip** that you earlier downloaded to your local hard drive: Drag and drop this file into this screen. File upload will start automatically
7. When the upload is complete, click the *Go Back to "/home2/fskrstes/public\_html/wip-s2"* link



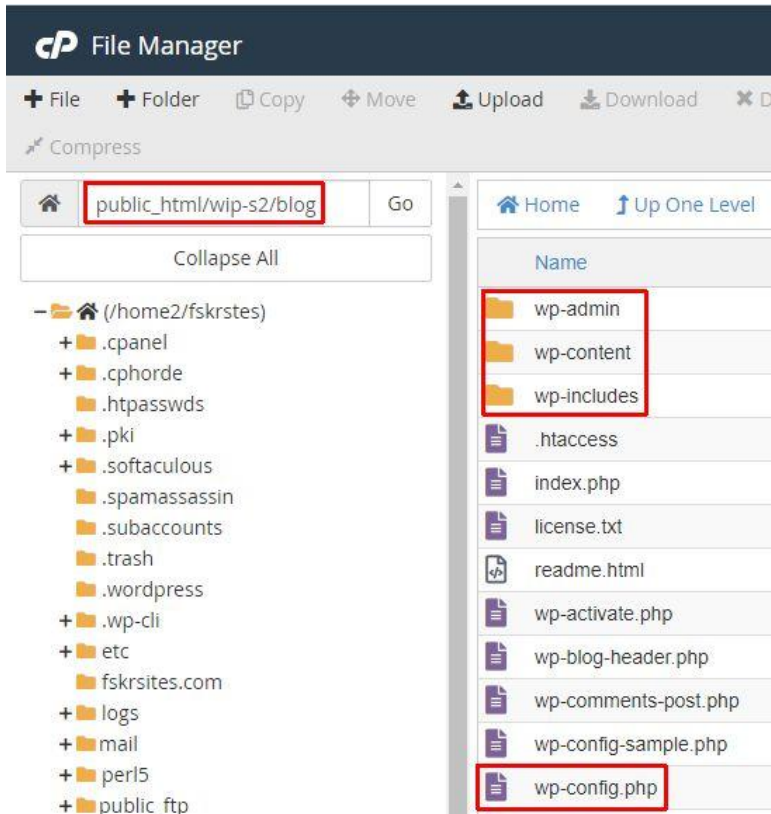
8. Click the **wip-s2** folder. Make sure that you can see the file **file-backup-s1.zip** there (Click the *Reload* button if required.)
9. Right click this file and select the *Extract* option
10. On the next screen, leave the path in its default value: **/public\_html/wip-s2**



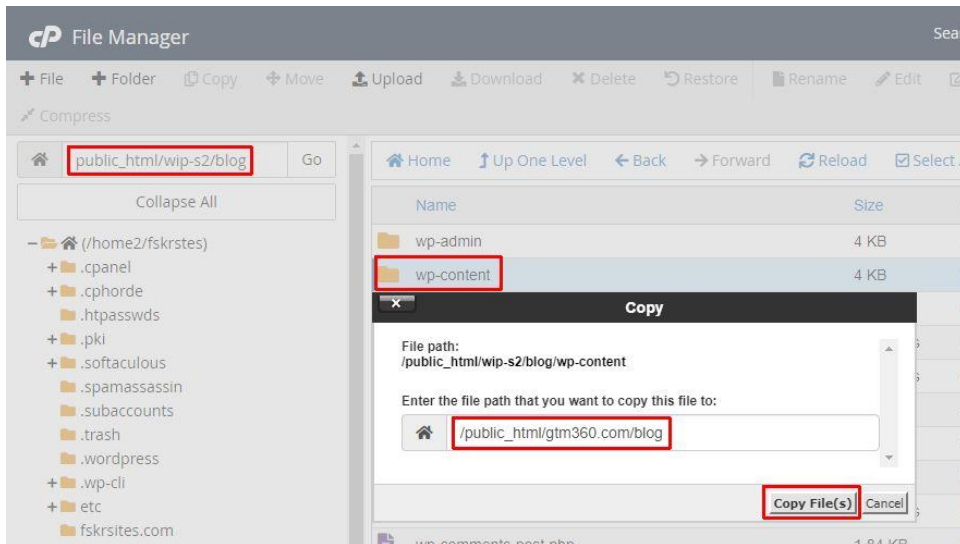
11. When the unzipping process is complete, you will see a folder named **blog** under **wip-s2** folder. Double click this folder



12. You will see the following folders **wp-admin**, **wp-content**, **wp-includes** and a critical file named **wp-config.php**. Bear in mind that these folders belong to the old S1 blogsite. You want to copy across only **wp-content** to the new S2 blogsite at **/public\_html/gtm360.com/blog**



13. Right click **wp-content** folder and select the *Copy* option
14. Change the path on the next screen to **/public\_html/gtm360.com/blog**
15. Click the *Copy File(s)* button. This will overwrite common folders on **wp-content** folder of S2 with those from S1 while leaving the non-common folders on S2 intact.



This completes the migration of files from the old blogsite to the new blogsite.

# CHAPTER 8: CHANGES IN NEW BLOGSITE

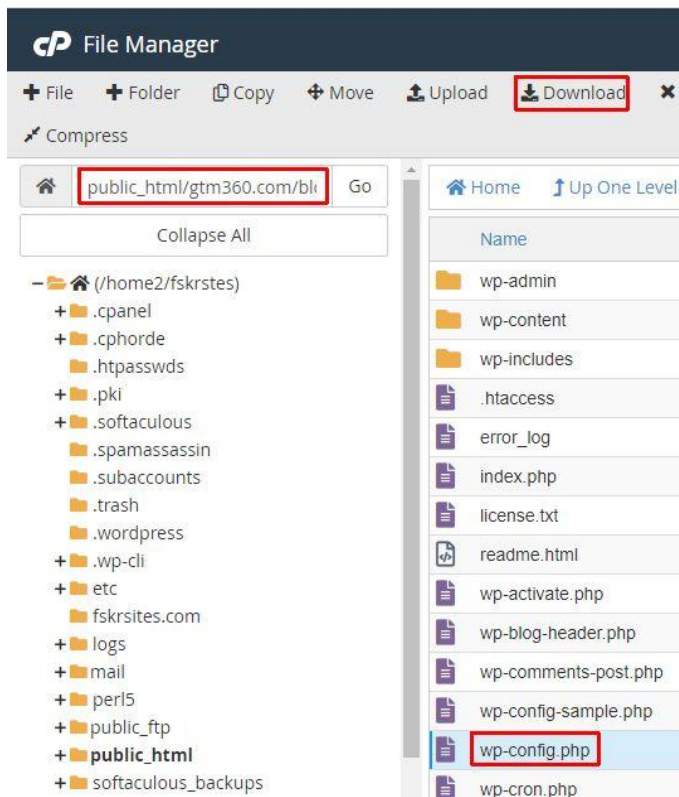
This chapter will cover steps 7 through 10 of the quick guide.

**Step 7:** Change non-standard table prefixes (e.g. wp2k\_) in the new **wp-config** file to **wp\_** (cPanel S2 > File Manager)

In Chapter 4, while setting up the new installation of WordPress on S2, we already changed the default table prefix value to **wp\_**. To that extent, this step is not required. However, it helps to reconfirm this. Besides, in doing so, we will get an opportunity to get familiar with the critical file **wp-config.php**, which holds the configuration of the new blogsite.

To view the table prefix, follow these steps:

1. Log in to the cPanel for S2 server
2. Click *File Manager*
3. Go to the root folder of the new blogsite i.e. **/public\_html/gtm360.com/blog**
4. Scroll down to **wp-config.php** and right click the file
5. Click the *Download* button on top menu panel and download a copy of this file to your local hard drive, just in case something goes wrong (I'm looking at you Murphy's Law!)



6. Again right click **wp-config.php**
7. Select the *Edit* option
8. View the contents of the file
9. Scroll down to the line starting with **\$table\_prefix**
10. Make sure it reads as **\$table\_prefix = 'wp\_';**
11. If it does not, change whatever it says to **wp\_**

```

83  * WordPress database table prefix.
84  *
85  * You can have multiple installations in one database if you give each
86  * a unique prefix. Only numbers, letters, and underscores please!
87
88  $table_prefix = 'wp_';
89
90  /**
91   * For developers: WordPress debugging mode.
92   *
93   * Change this to true to enable the display of notices during development.
94   * It is strongly recommended that plugin and theme developers use WP_DEBUG
95   * in their development environments.
96   *
97   * For information on other constants that can be used for debugging,
98   * visit the documentation.
99   * @link https://wordpress.org/support/article/debugging-in-wordpress/
100  */
101  define( 'WP_DEBUG', false );
102
103  /* Add any custom values between this line and the "stop editing" line. */
104
105
106  /* That's all, stop editing! Happy publishing. */
107
108  /** Absolute path to the WordPress directory. */
109  if ( ! defined( 'ABSPATH' ) ) {
110      define( 'ABSPATH', __DIR__ . '/' );
111  }
112
113  /** Sets up WordPress vars and included files. */
114  require_once ABSPATH . 'wp-settings.php';

```

12. While you are on this screen, scroll up to the section commented with **// \*\* MySQL settings - You can get this info from your web host \*\* //**
13. You will see the database settings in this section. In the introduction chapter, we had made a reference to a password stored in plaintext in a prominent WordPress file. This is where the said security abomination happens. For obvious reasons, we have redacted it in the following exhibit. In all likelihood, you won't make any changes, so click the *Close* button and exit the edit mode. (Click *Save Changes* in case you have made some changes.)

```

9  * This file contains the following configurations:
10  *
11  * MySQL settings
12  * Secret keys
13  * Database table prefix
14  * ABSPATH
15  *
16  * @link https://wordpress.org/support/article/editing-wp-config-php/
17  *
18  * @package WordPress
19  */
20
21  /** MySQL settings - You can get this info from your web host ** //
22   * The name of the database for WordPress */
23  define( 'DB_NAME', 'fkrstes_wp5' );
24
25  /** MySQL database username */
26  define( 'DB_USER', 'fkrstes_wp5' );
27
28  /** MySQL database password */
29  define( 'DB_PASSWORD', '75 [REDACTED]' );
30
31  /** MySQL hostname */
32  define( 'DB_HOST', 'localhost' );
33

```

**Step 8:** Change nameserver settings to point to new server (Domain Registrar Website)

While migrating your website from the old server S1 to the new server S2, you might have already changed your nameserver settings to point to the new server. If so, you can skip this step. However, just in case you need to carry it out while migrating your blogsite, this step should be fairly straightforward although the exact commands may vary from one domain registrar to another.

In the case of our domain registrar Go Daddy, the steps are as follows:



1. Login to *www.godaddy.com*
2. View the list of all your domains
3. Click the *Manage* button next to the domain name of your current website



4. Click *Manage DNS*
5. In the Nameservers section, click the *Change* button

## Nameservers

Using custom nameservers

Change

Nameservers ?

6. Click *Enter my own nameservers (advanced)*
7. You should be seeing the nameservers pertaining to S1
8. Change them to the corresponding ones for S2 (you can find the nameserver values on the cPanel of S2)

## Edit Nameservers

### Enter My Own Nameservers

Changing nameservers is risky, and change could potentially lead to your website disappearing from public view.

NS [REDACTED] GATOR.COM

NS [REDACTED] GATOR.COM

[+ Add Nameserver](#)

Cancel

Back

Save

9. Click the *Save* button and exit.

Your nameserver settings will be changed.

NOTE: As it says, ***changing nameservers is extremely risky***. Take utmost care while performing this step.



**Step 8B:** Ensure that the blogsite has moved to the new server (cPanel S2, Command Prompt)

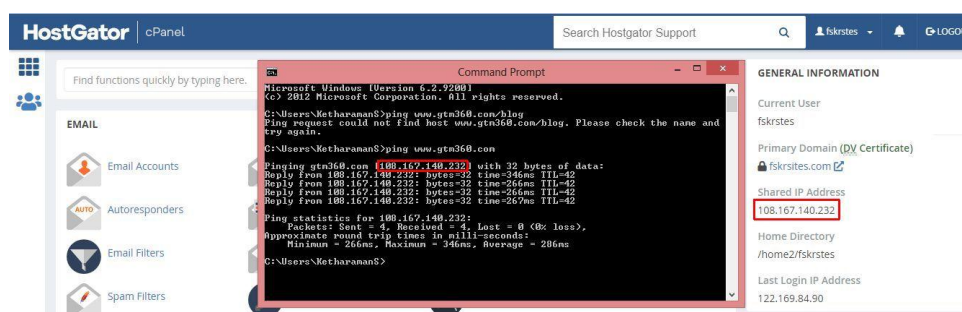
Depending upon your domain registrar, propagation of the new nameserver settings that you requested in Step 8 above could take anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours. Accordingly, it might take some time for your website and blogsite to be accessible on the new server. On our domain registrar, this happened in a few minutes although there was a warning on its website that it could take a few hours. We can't rule out the possibility that this actually takes a few hours on other domain registrar websites.

**Unless noted otherwise, all steps in this book from here on must be carried out only on the new server.**

Therefore, before proceeding, it is important to ensure that your blogsite is actually being accessed on the new server S2.

The most obvious way of doing this is to simply visit [www.gtm360.com/blog](http://www.gtm360.com/blog) and see whether your blogsite looks like your old blogsite or it has changed to the new theme. However, this check can be inconclusive if you retained the blogsite's theme during the migration. Therefore, we recommend a slightly longer but more foolproof way of doing this.

1. Go to cPanel of S2
2. Read the *Shared IP Address* e.g. **108.167.140.232**
3. Go to Windows *START* menu of your computer and type **cmd.com** to open the *COMMAND* prompt
4. Type **ping www.gtm360.com**
5. Read the IP address in the output
6. If it matches the above *Shared IP Address*, it means that your blogsite has moved to S2. You are good to go
7. If not, wait for a few minutes or hours until your blogsite has moved to S2 before proceeding.



**CAUTION:** Proceed beyond this point only after ensuring that your blogsite is being accessed from the new server S2.

**Step 9:** Change links in the files of the new blogsite to the new blogsite's URL, if required (Simple Search-Replace)

We did not have to carry out this step during our migration. In all likelihood, you will not, either.

**Step 10:** Change links in the database tables of the new blogsite to the new blogsite's URL, if required (Interconnect Database Search and Replace Script)

We did not have to carry out this step during our migration. In all likelihood, you will not, either.

# CHAPTER 9: GETTING THE NEW BLOGSITE TO WORK

This chapter will cover steps 11 through 14 of the quick guide.

We leave the cPanel of S2 and move to *wp-admin* of the new WordPress blogsite at S2.

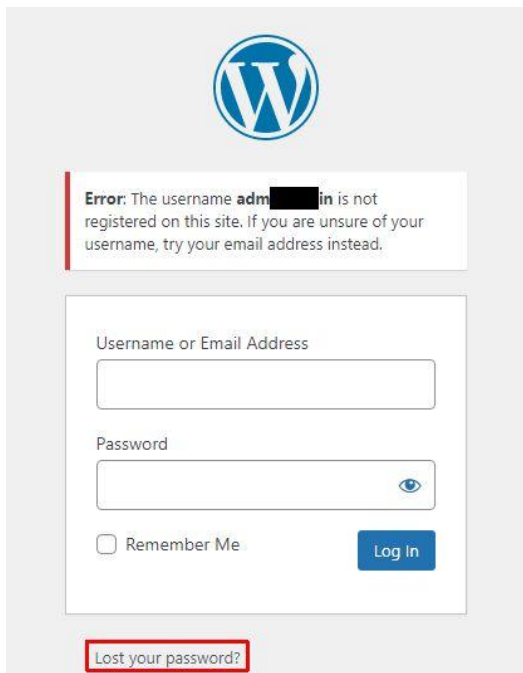
**NOTE:** Unless otherwise specified, server will mean S2 from here on. Make sure to follow Step 8B in the previous chapter to ensure that your blogsite is being accessed from the new server S2.

**Step 11:** Log in to the new blogsite's wp-admin with the username and password you entered at step #3 (wp-admin S2).

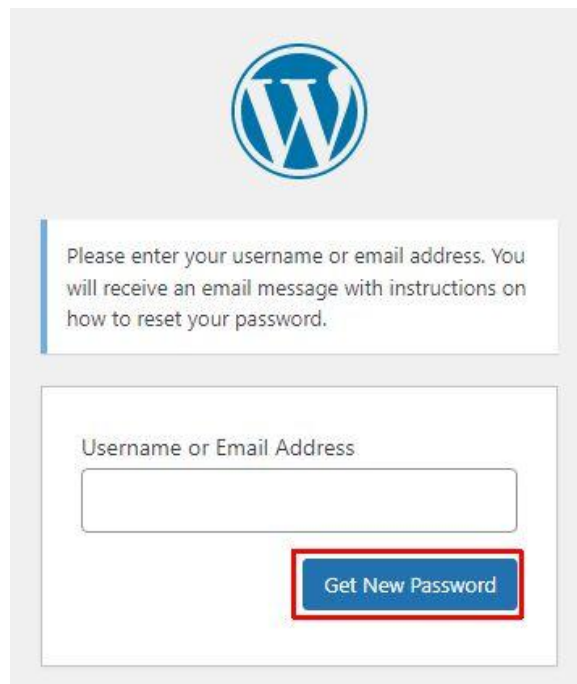
**Step 12:** Reset password (wp-admin S2); ; enter email address used at step #3.

**Step 13:** Repeat step #11 (wp-admin S2).

1. Go to **www.gtm360.com/wp-admin**
2. Enter *Username* = **admin**
3. Enter *Password* = **%EFA&IZH8\$**
4. Click the *Log In* button. You will be denied access. Don't panic - this is a feature, not bug, of how the migration works
5. Click the *Lost your password?* link



6. Enter the email address you entered at step #3 in Chapter 4 i.e. **s.ketharaman@gtm360.com**
7. Click the *Get New Password* button



8. Access your inbox and click the reset password link in the email from WordPress
9. Set a new strong password (not password123!)
10. Go to **www.gtm360.com/wp-admin**
11. Enter *Username* = **admin**
12. Enter *Password* = <new password set above>
13. Click the *Log In* button.

You will be able to access the WordPress Admin Panel of your new blogsite now. You can also see your old blogsite's posts, themes, plugins and other content on the new blogsite.

NOTE: If your WordPress Editor screen looks unfamiliar, it could be because the classic editor may have replaced by the new Gutenberg editor. To restore your familiar editor, install the "Classic Editor" plugin. Ditto "Classic Widgets" plugin. As stated earlier, since this is a book about WordPress migration, it skips detailed instructions for these basic WordPress activities.

YaaY! This completes the basic migration of your WordPress blogsite.

# CHAPTER 10: TUNING THE NEW BLOGSITE

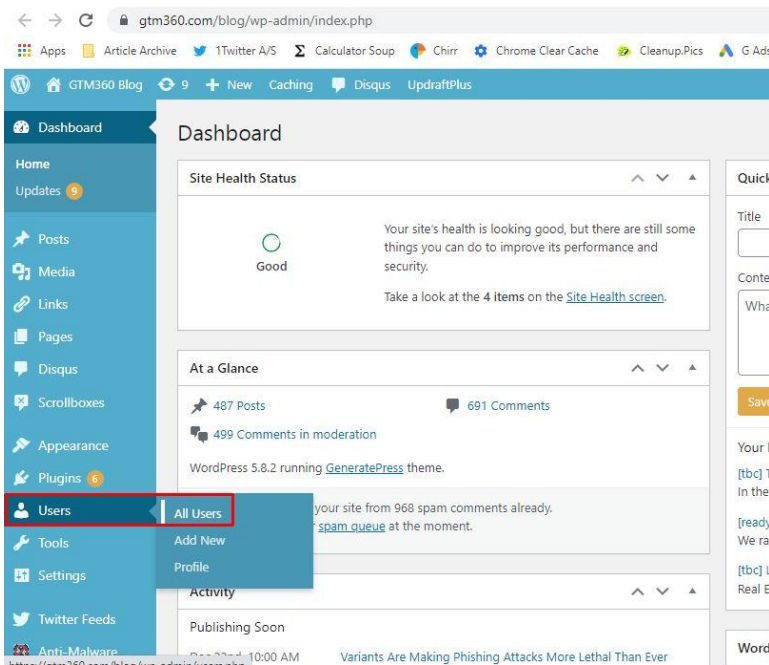
As we noted, the core migration activity is now complete.

We will now tune the new blogsite.

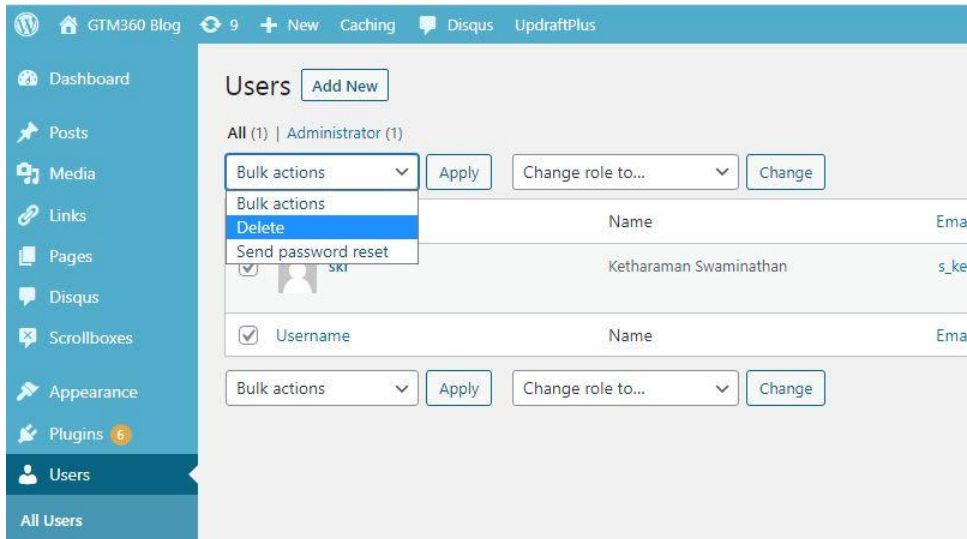
This chapter covers step 14 and 15 of the quick guide:

## Step 14: Scrub the users on the new blogsite (wp-admin S2)

1. Log in to *wp-admin* at **www.gtm360.com/wp-admin**
2. Click *Users > All Users*



3. View the list of all users and their roles. This will typically comprise the new *Administrator* user you created at Step 3 of quick guide plus all the old *Administrator* and *Subscriber* users migrated over from the old blogsite
4. You would typically want subscribers of your old blogsite to stay subscribed to your migrated blogsite, so leave them untouched
5. Have a good look at the users with *Administrator* role. One of them will be the new Administrator user you created at step 3. Retain this user
6. The others will be a list of *Administrator* users created for coworkers and outsourcing firms on the old blogsite. Retain the ones you are still associated with. Delete the rest as follows:



7. Click the box to the left of the users you want to delete
8. Click *Bulk actions*
9. Click *Delete*.

This completes the user scrubbing activity.

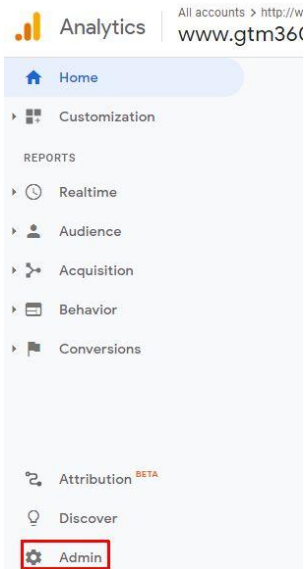
NOTE: Now is a good time to customize the new blogsite theme and delete old blogsite themes and plugins that you don't want in your new blogsite. As stated earlier, since this is a book about WordPress migration, it skips these basic WordPress activities.

**Step 15: Google Analytics Check (Google Analytics, wp-admin S2)**

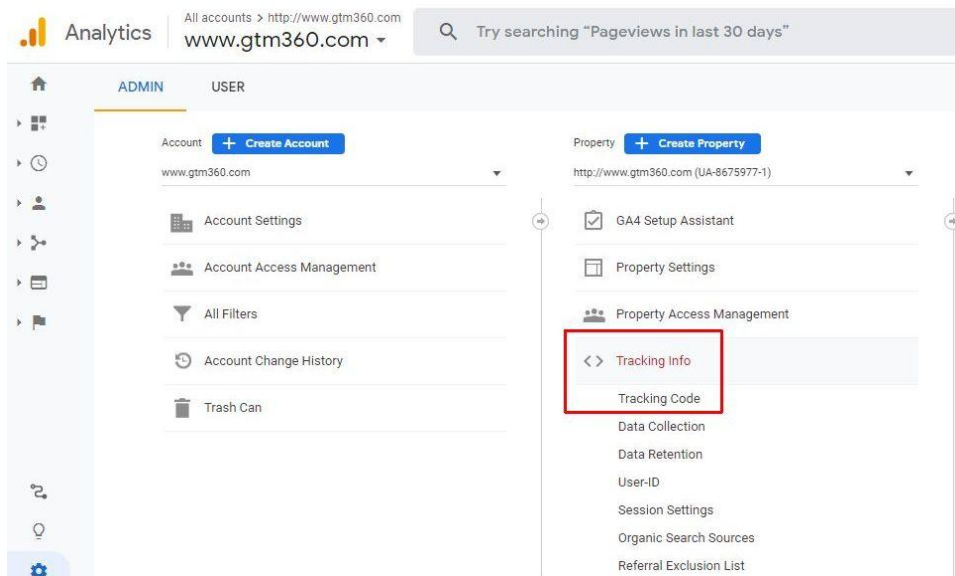
At the end of every year, the author publishes a blog post listing the top performing posts of the year. Click [here](#) to see the latest such post. He uses Google Analytics to get the pageview data. When he accessed his GA dashboard at the end of the year, he noticed that there was no data pertaining to the period post the migration of the blogsite. It appeared that Google Analytics did not get migrated over to the new blogsite.

The author could not readily find the root cause of this problem. Instead of spending too much time on it, he simply reinstalled the Google Analytics tracking code on the new blogsite. To preempt the problem in your migration, you might want to do the same by following these steps:

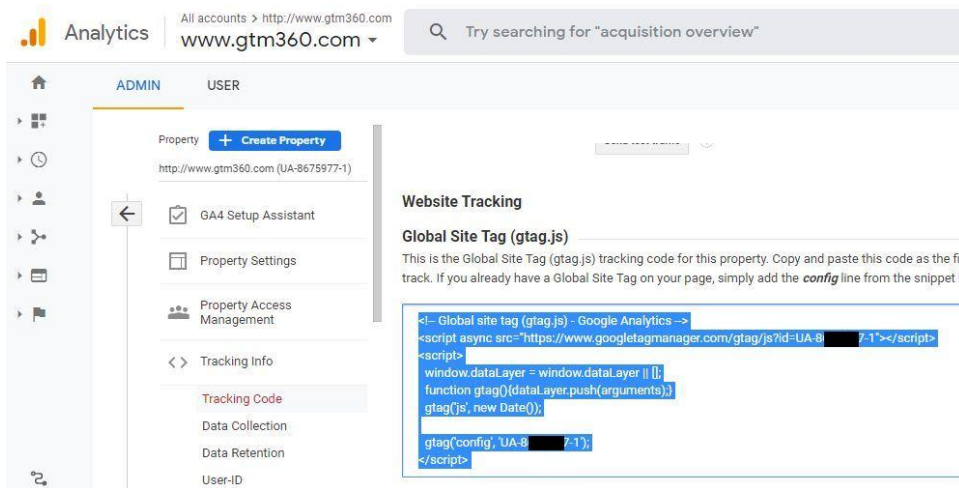
1. Log in to your Google Analytics account
2. Click *Admin*



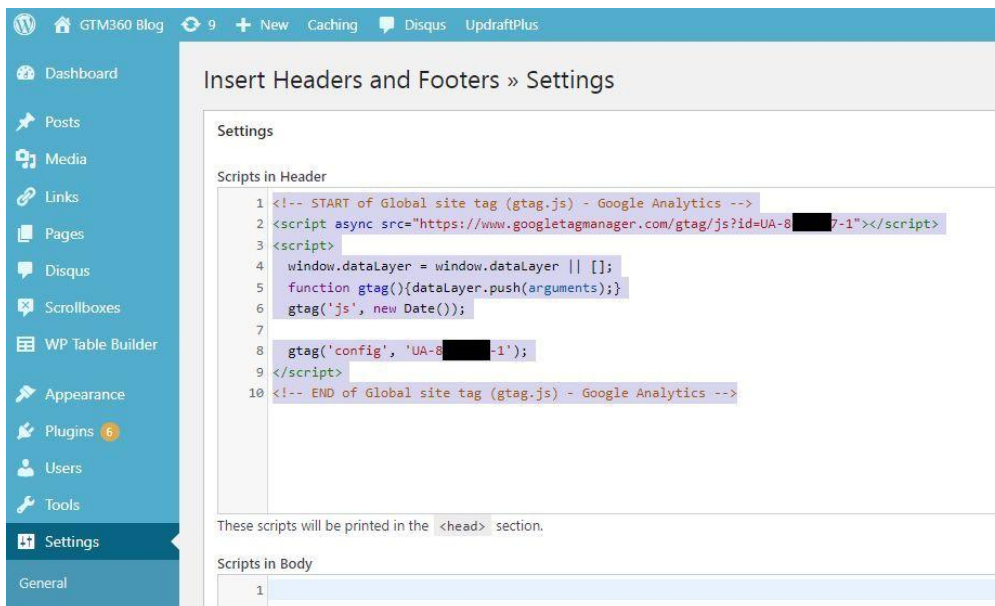
3. Click Tracking info > Tracking Code



4. Press *Ctrl+C* on your keyboard to copy the tracking code to the clipboard



5. Go to your *wp-admin*. Click *Plugins > Add New*
6. Search for the plugin called *Install Headers and Footers*, install and activate it
7. Click *Settings > Insert Headers and Footers > Paste the tracking code from the clipboard in Header section*



8. Click the *Save* button at the bottom of the page (not visible in the above exhibit).

This will provide line of sight for Google Analytics to your migrated blogsite. Visit your GA dashboard after a couple of days to confirm.



# OVERVIEW OF BONUS CHAPTERS

We promised that this book is packed with several tips and tricks and sources of compelling value of the nature that you are unlikely to find anywhere else.


We have already delivered some of the extras in the previous chapters:

1. Plenty of screenshots.
2. No redactions in screenshots.
3. How to 10x file upload speeds by avoiding FTP.
4. How to handle non-standard table prefixes.
5. No affiliate links.

The following bonus chapters provide additional value:

1. Learn how to edit database tables without SQL skills.
2. License for a free malware scanner and cleaner. Unlike the other products in the market that provide free scanning only for WordPress blogsites and charge big bucks for cleaning malware, the product covered in the bonus chapters provides *free scanning and cleaning of both WordPress blogsites and non-WordPress websites*.
3. Tips and tricks for outsourcing WordPress work to the seedy underbelly of the WordPress ecosystem without burning a hole in your pocket.
4. Code and instructions for setting up a cron job for tracking unauthorized file changes, which is a early warning for malware.
5. Miscellaneous hosting tips and tricks to simplify the migration of a complicated landscape comprising multiple websites.
6. Buzzword Directory that will help you talk intelligently about your WordPress migration inside and outside the WordPress community.

We encourage you to make a small donation to access the bonus chapters. For every \$5 of your donation, the author will make a donation of \$1 to the developer of the malware scanner and cleaner featured in the following pages.

<b>PayPal</b>	<b>Scan with Google Pay, Phone Pe, BHIM or any other UPI app</b>
Log in to your PayPal account.  <i>Send payment to</i> <b>s_ketharaman@yahoo.com</b>	

We will send the bonus content to the email stated in your donation alert. If you would like to receive it at an alternative email address, please let us know.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe deep gratitude to the extremely vibrant WordPress community for the immense help I received while carrying out my complicated WordPress migration. There are too many members in the community for me to thank individually but I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the assistance of Eli Sheetz, developer-owner of the GOTMLS.NET malware scanner and cleaner plugin.

My sincere thanks to my wife Sumathi Ramdas for providing the encouragement required to persevere through the challenging task of writing a book.

I thank my daughter Gayatri Ketharaman for providing a sounding board for my thoughts on the title of this book. Given its non-geeky nature, *WordPress Migration for Dummies* was the most obvious choice but I did not want to infringe on the copyright of the publisher of the famous Dummies series of books. Besides, who knows, the suffix “for Normies” might just catch on and create a cult following for itself some day. No harm dreaming, you see!

I have never seen credits for technology in acknowledgements pages. Given the vital role played by IT in the writing, editing and publishing of books, I wonder why that is the case. Let me fix that lacuna by thanking IrfanView, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, WordPress, etc. Without these programs and websites, this book would not have seen the light of the day.

I hope you have been able to use this book to migrate your WordPress blog successfully. Please feel free to share your experience via email. While this book does not include any support or warranty, I can always try and answer as many of your emails as possible.

KETHARAMAN SWAMINATHAN

February 2022

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ketharaman Swaminathan has over three decades of experience of working in the IT industry. During this period, he has held various roles in sales, marketing and general management in various IT companies across India, Middle East, Germany, UK, and USA. After working in Oracle, Ramco, Wipro and other leading IT firms, Ketharaman Swaminathan turned entrepreneur and founded GTM360 Marketing Solutions. He set up his personal WordPress blog in 2005. Subsequently, as part of delivering content development solutions for his company's customers, he has helped set up and migrate many professional WordPress blogs. Ketharaman Swaminathan has a B.Tech in Chemical Engineering from IIT Bombay and an MBA in Marketing Management from Jamnalal Bajaj Bombay. He lives with his family in Pune, India, and can be reached at [s.ketharaman@gtm360.com](mailto:s.ketharaman@gtm360.com).

# ALSO BY KETHARAMAN SWAMINATHAN

NON FICTION

[FROM DISLOYALTY TO OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT: Brands Have Come A Long Way In Fostering Retention, Enrichment And Advocacy \(Kindle Edition\)](#)