

1. Quick install

If you have basic knowledge of using FTP and are sure your hosting service or server will run phpBB3 you can use these steps to quickly get started. For a more detailed explanation you should skip this and go to [section 2](#) below.

1. Decompress the phpBB3 archive to a local directory on your system.
2. Upload all the files contained in this archive (retaining the directory structure) to a web accessible directory on your server or hosting account.
3. Change the permissions on config.php to be writable by all (666 or -rw-rw-rw- within your FTP Client)
4. Change the permissions on the following directories to be writable by all (777 or -rwxrwxrwx within your FTP Client):
store/, cache/, files/ and images/avatars/upload/.
5. Using your web browser visit the location you placed phpBB3 with the addition of install/index.php or pointing directly to install/, e.g.
http://www.mydomain.com/phpBB3/install/, http://www.mydomain.com/forum/install/
etc.
6. Click the *INSTALL* tab, follow the steps and fill out all the requested information.
7. Change the permissions on config.php to be writable only by yourself (644 or -rw-r--r-- within your FTP Client)
8. phpBB3 should now be available, please **MAKE SURE** you read at least [Section 6](#) below for important, security related post-installation instructions.

If you experienced problems or do not know how to proceed with any of the steps above please read the rest of this document.

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2. Requirements

phpBB3 has a few requirements which must be met before you are able to install and use it.

- A webserver or web hosting account running on any major Operating System with support for PHP
- A SQL database system, **one of**:
 - MySQL 3.23 or above (MySQLi supported)
 - PostgreSQL 7.3+
 - SQLite 2.8.2+
 - Firebird 2.1+
 - MS SQL Server 2000 or above (directly or via ODBC)
 - Oracle
- **PHP 4.3.3+ (>=4.3.3, >4.4.x, >5.x.x, >6.0-dev (compatible))** with support for the database you intend to use.

- `getimagesize()` function need to be enabled.
- These optional presence of the following modules within PHP will provide access to additional features, but they are not required.
 - zlib Compression support
 - Remote FTP support
 - XML support
 - Imagemagick support
 - GD Support

If your server or hosting account does not meet the requirements above we are afraid phpBB3 is not for you.

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3. New installation

Installation of phpBB3 will vary according to your server and database. If you have *shell access* to your account (via telnet or ssh for example) you may want to upload the entire phpBB3 archive (in binary mode!) to a directory on your host and unarchive it there.

If you do not have shell access or do not wish to use it you will need to decompress the phpBB3 archive to a local directory on your system using your favourite compression program, e.g. winzip, rar, zip, etc. From there you must FTP **ALL** the files it contains (being sure to retain the directory structure and filenames) to your host. Please ensure that the cases of filenames are retained, do **NOT** force filenames to all lower or upper case doing so will cause errors later.

All `.php`, `.inc`, `.sql`, `.cfg`, `.html` and `.txt` files should be uploaded in **ASCII** mode, while all graphics should be uploaded in **BINARY** mode. If you are unfamiliar with what this means please refer to your FTP client documentation. In most cases this is all handled transparently by your ftp client but if you encounter problems later you should be sure the files were uploaded correctly as described here.

phpBB3 comes supplied with english as its standard language. However a number of separate packs for different languages are available. If you are not a native english speaker you may wish to install one or more of these packages before continuing. The installation process below will allow you to select a default language from those available (you can of course change this default at a later stage). For more details of language packs, where to obtain them and how to install them please see the [README](#).

Once all the files have been uploaded to your site you should point your browser at this location with the addition of `install/`. For example if your domain name is `www.mydomain.tld` and you placed phpBB3 in a directory `/phpBB3` off your web root you would enter `http://www.mydomain.tld/phpBB3/install/` or (alternatively) `http://www.mydomain.tld/phpBB3/install/index.php` into your browser. When you have done this you should see the phpBB3 Installation screen appear.

Introduction:

The installation screen gives you a short introduction into phpBB. It allows you to read the license phpBB3 is released under (General Public License) and provides information about how you can receive support. To start the installation, use the *Install* button.

Requirements

The first page you will see after starting the installation is the Requirements list. phpBB3 checks automatically whether everything that it needs to run properly is installed on your server. You need to have at least the minimum PHP version installed, and at least one database available to continue the installation. Also important, is that all shown folders are available and do have the correct permissions. Please see the description of each section to find out whether they are optional or required for phpBB3 to run. If everything is in order, you can continue the installation with *Start Install*.

Database settings

You now have to decide which database to use. See the [Requirements section](#) for information on which databases are supported. If you do not know your database settings, please contact your host and ask for them. You will not be able to continue without them. You need:

- The Database Type - the database you will be using.
- The Database server hostname or DSN - the address of the database server.
- The Database server port - the port of the database server (most of the time this is not needed).
- The Database name - the name of the database on the server.
- The Database username and Database password - the login data to access the database.

Note: if you are installing using SQLite, you should enter the full path to your database file in the DSN field and leave the username and password fields blank. For security reasons, you should make sure that the database file is not stored in a location accessible from the web.

You don't need to change the Prefix for tables in database setting, unless you plan on using multiple phpBB installations on one database. In this case you can use a different prefix for each installation to make it work.

After you entered your details, you can continue with the Proceed to next step button. Now phpBB3 will check whether the data you entered will lead to a successful database connection and whether tables with the same prefix already exist.

A *Could not connect to the database* error means that you didn't enter the database data correctly and it is not possible for phpBB to connect. Make sure that everything you entered is in order and try again. Again, if you are unsure about your database settings, please contact your host.

If you installed another version of phpBB before on the same database with the same prefix, phpBB will inform you and you just need to enter a different database prefix.

If you see the Successful Connection message, you can continue to the next step.

Administrator details

Now you have to create your administration user. This user will have full administration access and he/she will be the first user on your forum. All fields on this page are required. You can also set the default language of your forum on this page. In a vanilla phpBB3 installation we only include English. You can download further languages from www.phpbb.com, and add them before installing or later.

Configuration file

In this step, phpBB will try to write the configuration file automatically. The forum needs the configuration to run properly. It contains all database settings, so without it, phpBB will not be able to access the database.

Usually writing the configuration file automatically works fine. But in some cases it can fail due to wrong file permissions, for instance. In this case, you need to upload the file manually. phpBB asks you to download the config.php file and tells you what to do with it. Please read the instructions carefully. After you have uploaded the file, use *Done* to get to the last step. If *Done* returns you to the same page as before, and does not return a success message, you did not upload the file correctly.

Advanced settings

The Advanced settings allow you to set some parameters of the board configuration. They are optional, and you can always change them later. So if you are not sure what these settings mean, proceed to the final step and finish the installation.

If the installation was successful, you can now use the Login button to visit the Administration Control Panel. Congratulations, you have installed phpBB3 successfully. But there is still work ahead!

If you are unable to get phpBB3 installed even after reading this guide, please look at the support section to find out where you can ask for further assistance.

At this point if you are converting from phpBB 2.0.x, you should refer to the [conversion steps](#) for further information. If not, you should remove the install directory from your server as you will only be able to access the Administration Control Panel whilst it is present.

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4. Updating from stable releases of phpBB 3.0.x

If you are currently using a stable release of phpBB3 updating to this version is straightforward. You would have downloaded one of four packages and your choice determines what you need to do. **Please Note:** That before updating we heavily recommend you do a *full backup of your database and existing phpBB3 files!* If you are unsure how to achieve this please ask your hosting provider for advice.

Please make sure you update your phpBB3 source files too, even if you run the `database_update.php` file.

4.i. Full package

The full package is normally meant for new installations only, but if you want to replace all source files this package comes in handy.

First you should make a copy of your existing *config.php* file, keep it in a safe place! Next delete all the existing phpBB3 files, you may want to leave your `files/` and `images/` directory in place. You can leave alternative styles in-place too. With this complete you can upload the new phpBB3 files (see [New installation](#) for details if necessary). Once complete copy back your saved *config.php*, replacing the new one. Another method is to just **replace** the existing files with the files from the full package - though make sure you do **not** overwrite your *config.php* file.

You should now run `install/database_update.php` which, depending on your previous version, will make a number of database changes. You may receive *FAILURES* during this procedure, they should not be a cause for concern unless you see an actual *ERROR*, in which case the script will stop (in this case you should seek help via our forums or bug tracker).

Once the `install/database_update.php` has completed you may proceed to the Administration Control Panel and check remove the install directory as advised.

4.ii. Changed files only

This package is meant for those wanting to only replace changed files from a previous version to the latest version. This package normally contains the changed files from up to five previous versions.

This package contains a number of archives, each contains the files changed from a given release to the latest version. You should select the appropriate archive for your current version, e.g. if you currently have 3.0.5 you should select the `phpBB-3.0.6_to_3.0.7.zip/tar.gz` file.

The directory structure has been preserved enabling you (if you wish) to simply upload the contents of the archive to the appropriate location on your server, i.e. simply overwrite the existing files with the new versions. Do not forget that if you have installed any MODs these

files will overwrite the originals possibly destroying them in the process. You will need to re-add MODs to any affected file before uploading.

As for the other update procedures you should run **install/database_update.php** after you have finished updating the files. This will update your database schema and increment the version number.

4.iii. Patch file

The patch file package is for those wanting to update through the patch application, and being comfortable with it.

The patch file is one solution for those with many Modifications (MODs) or other changes who do not want to re-add them back to all the changed files if they use the method explained above. To use this you will need command line access to a standard UNIX type **patch** application. If you do not have access to such an application but still want to use this update approach, we strongly recommend the [Automatic update package](#) explained below. It is also the recommended update method.

A number of patch files are provided to allow you to update from previous stable releases. Select the correct patch, e.g. if your current version is 3.0.6 you need the phpBB-3.0.6_to_3.0.7.patch file. Place the correct patch in the parent directory containing the phpBB3 core files (i.e. index.php, viewforum.php, etc.). With this done you should run the following command: **patch -cl -d [PHPBB DIRECTORY] -p1 < [PATCH NAME]** (where PHPBB DIRECTORY is the directory name your phpBB Installation resides in, for example phpBB3, and where PATCH NAME is the relevant filename of the selected patch file). This should complete quickly, hopefully without any HUNK FAILED comments.

If you do get failures you should look at using the [Changed files only](#) package to replace the files which failed to patch, please note that you will need to manually re-add any Modifications (MODs) to these particular files. Alternatively if you know how you can examine the .rej files to determine what failed where and make manual adjustments to the relevant source.

You should of course delete the patch file (or files) after use. As for the other update procedures you should run `install/database_update.php` after you have finished updating the files. This will update your database schema and data (if appropriate) and increment the version number.

4.iv. Automatic update package

This update method is the recommended method for updating. This package allows detecting changed files automatically and merges changes if needed.

The automatic update package contains - contrary to the others - only the information required to update the previous release version to the latest available version. These packages are meant for use with the automatic update tool.

To perform the update, either follow the instructions from the Administration Control Panel->System Tab - this should point out that you are running an outdated version and will guide you through the update - or follow the instructions listed below.

- Go to the [downloads page](#) and download the latest update package listed there, matching your current version.
- Upload the archives contents to your phpBB installation - only the install folder is required. Upload the whole install folder, retaining the file structure.
- After the install folder is present, phpBB3 will go offline automatically.
- Point your browser to the install directory, for example `http://www.example.com/phpBB3/install/`
- Choose the "Update" Tab and follow the instructions

4.v. All package types

If you have non-English language packs installed you may want to see if a new version has been made available. A number of missing strings may have been added which, though not essential, may be beneficial to users. Please note that at this time not all language packs have been updated so you should be prepared to periodically check for updates.