

# How to Set Up a Demo Site for Your WordPress Plugin

<https://wpdemo.net/wordpress/plugins/set-up-demo-site-wordpress-plugin-p1705>

## How to Set Up a Live Demo for Your WordPress Plugin



When you're developing a WordPress plugin, one of the best ways to market it is by offering a live demo for your plugin. Let users test-drive your plugin before they buy it ideally both public and the admin side. But how do you actually set up that live product demo?

Let's explore the possible options.

### **Manual Setup (The Old-School Way)**

The most straightforward method is to spin up a WordPress install manually, configure your plugin, and link users to it.

Steps include:

- Install WordPress on a subdomain like demo.yourplugin.com
- Upload and activate your plugin
- Add some sample content and configuration
- Make the site publicly accessible with the same admin password.

This works, but there are several caveats:

- The site will get messy. Public demos are exposed to spam, junk posts, or worse.
- No resets. You'll have to manually reset or clean up the site regularly
- It's not scalable. One shared instance means if one person breaks the settings, it's broken for everyone
- Security risks. A demo site left outdated becomes a target for hackers. And if it's hosted on the same account as your main site or client sites? You're opening a door to disaster

## **Build a Resettable Demo Site**

A step above the manual method is to create a plugin demo site that resets itself every few hours.

You'll need:

- A cron job or scheduled script to reset the database and files
- Knowledge in WP-CLI to automate the resetting of the demo site
- A backup of the default state of the WordPress site
- Site isolation preferably a separate cPanel or VPS server or account

While this is a more controlled setup, it's still prone to problems:

- If the reset fails, you're troubleshooting broken demos
- Maintenance becomes time-consuming
- If hosted on your main server, the security risk remains
- Visitors still might see the site mid-reset or in a broken state

## **The Problem with Self-Hosting Demos**

Let's talk real risks. Hosting your demos on the same server as your main website, clients, or production infrastructure is a gamble.

Why?

- Outdated demos become vulnerable. Developers are busy. Updates get missed

- One click away from disaster. If a hacker gets into the demo site, they might try to access other sites that are on that hosting account - e.g. client sites, your business and access client data.
- Manual upkeep becomes a distraction. Every hour spent fixing or monitoring a demo is an hour not spent on development or marketing

That's why it's often better to isolate the demo site. Use a dedicated service, or at the very least, a completely separate hosting account or VPS.

### **Use a Hosted Demo Solution like WPDemo.net**

This is where things get interesting. Instead of building your own infrastructure, you can use a service like ours - WPDemo

What WPDemo.net does:

- Spins up a fully isolated/sandboxed WordPress demo site for each user
- Automatically expires and cleans up the sites after a certain time
- Supports themes, plugins, and full WordPress setups
- Keeps your demos private, secure, and consistent
- The users can't install new plugins and can't access your code
- Offloads all the hosting and resetting hassles to a purpose-built platform

This method is ideal because:

- You're not exposing your hosting account
- The demos are easy to maintain and update
- You can link directly from your plugin page or marketing site
- You look professional and trustworthy

### **Conclusion: Choose a Smarter Demo Setup**

You have options when it comes to demo sites, but not all of them are created equal. The wrong setup can lead to wasted time, security vulnerabilities, and a poor user experience.

Services like WPDemo.net simplify the process and take care of the technical and operational overhead, so you can focus on building a great plugin and letting users explore it with confidence.