What you need to get started

Table of content

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Quick list

Here is a quick list of what you need to get started with the installation of PrestaShop 1.5. Should you not feel comfortable with the lack of details, you will find detailed instructions in the sections following this one.

- A web-host providing the following:
    - PHP 5.2 or later.
    - MySQL 5.0 or later.
    - Better if: Unix hosting, Apache Web Server 1.3 or later, at least 64 Mb of RAM.
- Access codes to your FTP server and your MySQL database (provided by your web-host).
- A text editor.
- A FTP client.
- A Web browser.

You also need to know which URL on your domain you want your store(s) to be accessible from.

Installing PrestaShop on the Web

PrestaShop is a web application: it needs to be installed on a web server in order to run, and it needs a domain name that your visitor will use to access your store.

Registering a domain name

Before downloading or installing anything, you need to provide a home for your PrestaShop online store.That is made of two components: a domain name, and a web server. A domain is the online identifier for your website, such as `mydomainname.com` or `myonlineshop.net`. It is the public face of your web server.

You need to buy a domain name for your store. You can get one at the same time as you get your web hosting in place: many web hosts offer a free domain with every new account. They might be free for a year, or for as long as you a client of that web host. This makes it easy to get the full package (hosting+domain name) in one go.

> ⊘ There can be an issue with host-provided domain names: if you find yourself not satisfied with the host's service, you will want to switch to a better host. This means moving your files, data and domain name to that other host.
>
> The files and data are easy to move, but depending on the host, you might have a hard time getting your domain name back. Since they bought the domain name for you, technically the domain belongs to them, and they can either forbid you to transfer it to another host, or they can make you pay for it. And since the domain name is your brand and your address on the web, you must obey the web host's rules.
>
> That is why it is often recommended to get your domain name from an independent domain name registrar (see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_name_registrar). Technically, you can never buy a domain name; you can only rent it, most of the time for a yearly fee. This gives you the right to use that domain name, but as soon as you stop paying for it, it is not yours anymore and anyone can grab it for himself. So you pay for the registration of the domain name, but at least you are free to move to a better host at any time, for no supplementary fee: just change the domain name's DNS addresses, and within 24 hours the move is propagated to the world.

If you would rather get your domain name from an independent registrar, here are some that you can trust:

- Gandi: http://en.gandi.net/
- Namecheap: http://www.namecheap.com/
- PairNIC: https://www.pairnic.com/

There are many more. Ask your friends!

Finding a host

Now that you have a domain name, you need to have it lead to PrestaShop. This means that the PrestaShop files need to reside on a web server. You might have a web server of your own, but it is more likely that you have or will have your store hosted by an Internet hosting service (see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_hosting_service), which provides you with an online home for a monthly or yearly fee.

Before starting an online store, you will first need to select a hosting provider. Just about every webhost can effectively handle the PrestaShop solution. However, only a few Hosting providers offer optimized servers for PrestaShop:

- 1&1 worldwide: 1&1
- InMotion Hosting in all countries, except France and Spain: InMotion

Check out our hosting partners!

When choosing your host, remember one crucial requirement: it must provide you with support for PHP 5.2 (or more recent), the programming language with which PrestaShop is written, and MySQL 5 (or more recent), the database system where PrestaShop stores all its data. There are more requirements: see the "Technical requirements" section below.

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⊘ PrestaShop can host your online business on its in-house web servers: PrestaBox was built in order to free from any technical hassle, such as installing or updating PrestaShop.

Pplease consult our PrestaBox website for details on our low-priced, secure website hosting service. This is highly recommended for businesses with little to no experience with the Internet or computers.

You can reach PrestaBox at this address: http://www.prestabox.com/

Technical requirements

ⓘ PrestaShop is an application which runs on a web server, and is written using the PHP programming language. It stores its data in a MySQL server.

PHP is an open-source programming language, mainly used for web applications. Created in 1995, it has since become the most used programming language by web developers. It uses a C-like syntax, making it easy for developers to learn it.

MySQL is an open-source database management system. Also created in 1995, it has since become the most used database system by web developers. It is based on the SQL language, the most widely used database language.

Whichever hosting service you use must have the following components installed on your web server:

- **System**: Unix, Linux or Windows. Unix is highly recommended.
- **Web server**: Apache Web server 1.3 or later.
- **PHP 5.2 or later**. You may have to activate PHP 5 (ask your hosting provider).
- **MySQL 5.0 or later**.
- At least 64 Mb of RAM on your server (128 Mb is more comfy, the more the better).

PrestaShop can work with PHP 5.1.3 or later, but versions inferior to 5.2 have bugs that might prevent some functionalities to work as expected (such as invalid date time zone).
PrestaShop can also work with Microsoft's IIS Web server 6.0 or later, and nginx 1.0 or later.

More information is available for system administrators in the System Administrators Guide. Make sure to read it!

Tools

You will need two tools: a text editor, in order to edit text files, and a FTP client, in order to transfer files from your machine to your server and vice-versa.

Text editor

Here are a few well-known text editors:

- Windows:
  - Notepad++: http://notepad-plus-plus.org/
  - UltraEdit: http://www.ultraedit.com/
  - Crimson Editor: http://www.crimsoneditor.com/
- OS X:
  - Textmate: http://macromates.com/
  - Coda: http://www.panic.com/coda/
  - Smultron: http://www.peterborgapps.com/smultron/
- Unix/Linux:
  - Vim: http://www.vim.org/
  - Emacs: http://www.gnu.org/software/emacs/

⚠

⚠️ Do NOT use a word processor when editing text files, such as Microsoft Word or OpenOffice. org Write.

FTP client

FTP is short for "File Transfer Protocol", meaning the standard way used to transfer files from a computer to a web-host.

In this guide, we will use Filezilla, which is a great and free FTP client for Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. Download it from http://filezilla-project.org/ and start its installer. Note: do not download FileZilla Server, only FileZilla Client!

Once FileZilla is installed, you will need to configure it with the connection parameters for your web server, which should have been sent to you by your host. If not, ask for them to your host – or check your spam folder.

Basically, the needed parameters are:

- **a hostname** or **an IP address**: the location of your hosting space's FTP server.
- **a username**: your hosting account identifier, which is unique to you.
- **a password**: obligatory security measure.

Open FileZilla, and open its Site Manager tool. You can do this in three different ways:

- Press Ctrl-S,
- Click the "Open the Site Manager" icon, at the top left,
- Open the "File" menu, and select the "Site Manager..." option.

A window opens.

To add your hosting space to the Site Manager:

1. Click the "New Site" button. A new entry is created in the site list. Give it a recognizable name.
2. On the right side, in the "General" tab, enter the parameters your host provided you with: host, user, and password. You should not have to change the other default parameters, unless told so by your host.
3. Once all the fields are properly filled, click the "Connect" button. This will both save your site in the list, and log you into your account, so that you can make sure everything works right.

If FileZilla does not suit you, here are a few other well-known FTP clients:

- Windows:
    - CoreFTP: http://www.coreftp.com/
    - WinSCP: http://winscp.net/
    - SmartFTP: http://www.smartftp.com/
- Mac OS X:
    - Cyberduck: http://cyberduck.ch/
    - Transmit: http://www.panic.com/transmit/
    - Fetch: http://fetchsoftworks.com/fetch/
- Unix/Linux:
    - gFTP: http://gftp.seul.org/
    - kasablanca: http://kasablanca.berlios.de/
    - NcFTP: http://www.ncftp.com/ncftp/

Making a plan

You should decide right away where you want to host PrestaShop. There are four possibilities relating to your domain name:

- At the root of the domain: http://www.myprestashop.com/
- In a folder: http://www.myprestashop.com/shop/
- In a sub-domain: http://store.myprestashop.com/
- In a folder of a sub-domain: http://clothes.myprestashop.com/boutique/

Note that thanks to the multistore feature, you can have as many stores as necessary with a single installation of PrestaShop 1.5, each with its own specific domain name if necessary. You should take that into account when deciding what goes where.
Whatever your plan, the default store will always reside where PrestaShop itself is located.

Installing PrestaShop

Finally, now that all the requirements are in place, you can you the installation guide: http://doc. prestashop.com/display/PS15/Installing+PrestaShop.

Installing PrestaShop on your computer

You may wish to install PrestaShop on your local machine, either in order to test it before investing money in a server and domain name, or to customize your store locally before you push your modifications to the PrestaShop installation that would already you have online.

Installing any web-application locally requires that you first install the adequate environment, namely the Apache web server, the PHP language interpreter, the MySQL database server, and ideally the phpMyAdmin tool. This is known as an AMP: Apache+MySQL+PHP. It exists for many operating systems, which provides another letter for the acronym: WAMP (Windows+Apache+MySQL+PHP), MAMP (Mac OS X+...) and LAMP (Linux+...).

This would require you to be quite technical; luckily there exist many pre-built packages that you can install easily. It does not prevent you from having to get technical here and there, but they do provide a huge help. Since all of the items packaged are open-source, these installers are most of the time free. Here is a selection of free AMP installers:

- XAMPP: http://www.apachefriends.org/en/xampp.html (Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, Solaris)
- WampServer: http://www.wampserver.com/en/ (Windows)
- EasyPHP: http://www.easyphp.org/ (Windows)
- MAMP: http://www.mamp.info/ (Mac OS X)

Choose the package that you feel the most comfortable with, launch it, and make sure that everything it has installed does work before going on with this PrestaShop installation tutorial:

- The web server should be up and running. You should be able to access it through your browser, by typing "127.0.0.1" in the address bar. `http:/ /127.0.0.1` is the "localhost", meaning "your computer": it is a loopback address which directs the browser to your local server. In effect, http://1 27.0.0.1 and `http://localhost` are synonymous: you can use one or the other interchangeably.
- The database server should be up and running. MySQL is where all of PrestaShop's data is stored. The AMP package should provide you with a clear indicator whether MySQL is running or not.
- The phpMyAdmin tool should be accessible. This is the web application that helps you handle data stored in MySQL. Its location depends on which AMP packaging you chose: it can be found at `http://127.0.0.1/phpmyadmin` (XAMPP, WampServer, MAMP), `http://127.0.0.1 /mysql` (EasyPHP), or maybe at another location. Check your package's documentation – it might even provide a phpMyAdmin button of sort that would open the correct URL in your browser.

Once you have checked that the package is correctly installed and that all of its parts are running, you need to find the root folder. That is the local folder where you will place your application's files, and can be compared to the root folder of your online server, only its content is accessed with `http://127. 0.0.1`. The actual local location of the folder depends greatly on the AMP package, and can be customized:

- XAMPP: `C:\xampp\htdocs` or `/Applications/xampp/htdocs`
- WampServer: `C:\wamp\www`
- EasyPHP: `C:\easyphp\www`
- MAMP: `/Applications/MAMP/htdocs/`

Finally, you need to know the root user name and password for MySQL, in order to install PrestaShop. Most packages use the user name "root" with an empty password. Read your package's documentation.

With all that clear and done, you can follow up on the rest of this Getting Started guide, keeping in mind that when you install PrestaShop locally:

- Files are not to be uploaded via FTP to a server: simply move them in the correct local folder, as indicated above.
- You do not have to create a local domain name: PrestaShop is available through the loopback address indicated above, which is either `http://localhost` or `http://127.0.0.1` . PrestaShop itself is available at this address by adding its folder's name, for instance `http://localhost/prestashop` or `http://127.0.0.1/prestashop` if PrestaShop is in the `/prestashop/` subfolder of the local root folder.. When accessing this address for the first time, you should be automatically redirected to PrestaShop's install, at either `http://localhost/prestashop/install` or `http://127.0.0.1/prestashop/install` . From there on, follow the regular installation guide, starting directly at the "Creating a database for your shop" section.