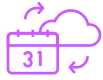


Website Server Migration Checklist

Six ordered phases, from planning and backups through DNS cutover and post-launch monitoring.



Phase 1

Pre-Migration Planning

- Document all assets in scope: files, databases, email, cron jobs, and integrations.
- Audit PHP, MySQL, and server module versions on both hosts.
- Assign roles to IT leads, developers, and stakeholders.
- Write the rollback plan (trigger conditions and procedures) before touching anything.



Phase 2

Back Up Everything

- Export full database backup, test-import it, and verify special characters render correctly.
- Download all website files (including hidden) and compare counts against the live server.
- Capture .htaccess, php.ini, and any custom nginx or Apache config files.
- Export the full DNS zone file: MX, SPF, DKIM, and DMARC records.
- Store copies in at least two geographically separate locations.



Phase 3

Staging & Testing

- Provision staging with identical PHP version, database engine, and server modules.
- Test checkout and payment flows end-to-end with real test-mode credentials.
- Send transactional email to Gmail, Outlook, and Microsoft 365 — check inbox placement.
- Confirm robots.txt and noindex tags aren't blocking search indexing.
- Verify all cron jobs and background tasks are replicated and running.



Phase 4

DNS Cutover

- Lower TTL on all DNS records to 300 seconds at least 48 hours before cutover.
- Update nameservers or A records during your lowest-traffic window.
- Keep the original server fully live as a fallback throughout propagation.
- Monitor global propagation in real time — full resolution can take up to 48 hours.
- Avoid content changes during propagation to prevent data inconsistency.



Phase 5

SSL, SEO & Redirects

- Install and validate SSL on the new server before DNS flips — HSTS gives no grace period.
- Confirm the certificate covers all subdomains and www/non-www variants.
- Recreate every 301 redirect as a single hop — chains dilute link equity.
- Verify the XML sitemap and robots.txt are accessible on the new server.
- Submit the updated sitemap to Google Search Console.



Phase 6

Monitor & Validate

- Deploy uptime monitoring before DNS changes — alert within seconds of any downtime.
- Compare the live database against the original backup for data integrity.
- Confirm email accounts are sending and receiving on the new mail server.
- Track organic rankings and traffic for at least 7 days post-cutover.
- Decommission the old host only after rankings, email, and jobs are all confirmed stable.

