

# Guide to cPanel Plugins

## Guide to cPanel Plugins

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## Introduction

cPanel plugins add new functionality to the cPanel interface. Third-party developers can add icons to the cPanel *Home* interface that link to new cPanel interfaces or to other files or locations.



### Note:

- For information about WHM plugins, read our [Guide to WHM Plugins](#) documentation.
- Make certain that your applications respect user privacy. We **strongly** recommend that you anonymize any data that you collect for analysis. For more information about how cPanel, L.L.C. handles private data, read our [cPanel Analytics](#) documentation.

## Plugin development workflow

When you create a cPanel plugin, we recommend that you use the following workflow:



### Note:

You can also create a cPanel plugin with WHM's [cPanel Plugin File Generator](#) interface (*WHM >> Home >> Development >> cPanel Plugin File Generator*).

1. Create your custom application (the plugin's backend code).



### Important:

cPanel's Paper Lantern interface incorporates the [RequireJS module loader](#). RequireJS may conflict with the [webpack module loader](#). We **strongly** recommend that you do not use webpack with any cPanel plugin or custom interface that you develop.

2. [Create the plugin's interfaces.](#)



### Notes:

- For more information about how to create a new cPanel interface, read our [Create a New Paper Lantern Interface](#) and [Create a New Paper Lantern Interface in PHP](#) tutorials.
- For more information about how to customize the appearance of the cPanel interface, read our [Guide to cPanel Interface Customization and Branding](#) documentation.

3. Add the plugin to the cPanel interface. For the Paper Lantern theme, this requires that you [create an install.json file](#).
4. For plugins on servers that run cPanel & WHM version 11.42 and earlier, [write a plugin installation script](#).
5. **Optional:** Compress your plugin for distribution.
  - The compressed file contains the application source files, the plugin registration file, and the installation script.
  - We recommend that you compress your plugin as a tarball (`.tar.gz`) file. However, the `install_plugin` script supports `.tar.gz`, `.bzip`, and `.zip` files, and uncompressed directories.
6. For plugins on servers that run cPanel & WHM version 11.44 and later, [use the `/usr/local/cpanel/scripts/install\_plugin` script to install the plugin](#).



### Note:

The `/usr/local/cpanel/scripts/install_plugin` script does **not** extract plugin files for you. Instead, your installation script **must** perform this action.

## Plugin files

## cPanel Plugins

### About cPanel Plugins

- *cPanel plugins add custom features to the cPanel interface.*
- *Each cPanel theme has different requirements for cPanel plugins.*

### Compatible with:

- cPanel 11.32 +

## Related Documentation

cPanel interfaces can include HTML, [Template Toolkit](#), PHP, or CGI files.

- Store plugin interface files in the `/usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/theme/` directory, where `theme` represents `paper_lantern` or another theme on the server.
- Access these files from `https://example.com:2083/frontend/theme/filename`, where:
  - `example.com` represents the domain or IP address.
  - `theme` represents `paper_lantern` or another theme on the server.
  - `filename` represents the interface file's name.

For example, if you create a custom *Support* interface in the `customsupport.html` file, use the following locations:

- Store the file in the following location on the server: `/usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/paper_lantern/customsupport.html`
- Access this file at the following URL: `https://example.com:2083/frontend/paper_lantern/customsupport.html`



**Note:**

Additional resources to help you match custom interfaces to the cPanel interface exist in our [experimental User Interface Style Guide](#).

## Installation scripts

Write any plugin installation scripts in your preferred programming language.

Plugin installation scripts must perform the following functions:

1. Verify that the system is compatible with the plugin. For example, confirm that the server uses a compatible version of cPanel & WHM.
2. Use the `wget` or `curl` commands to download the compressed plugin file.
3. Extract the compressed file's contents to the appropriate locations.
4. Perform the necessary tasks to add the plugin to the cPanel *Home* interface.
5. Remove any installation files that remain.

## The `install_plugin` script



**Important:**

Due to the permissions that the `/usr/local/cpanel/scripts/install_plugin` script requires in order to access the necessary files, **only** the `root` user can run this script successfully.

cPanel & WHM version 11.44 introduced the `install_plugin` script, which you can use to install a plugin to a theme.

To use this script to install a plugin to cPanel, run the following command:

```
/usr/local/cpanel/scripts/install_plugin plugin_file --theme theme_name
```

In this command, `plugin_file` represents the compressed plugin installation file (a `.tar.gz`, `.bzip`, or `.zip` file or an uncompressed directory), and `theme_name` represents `paper_lantern` or another theme on the server.

- [Guide to cPanel Plugins - Add Plugins to Legacy cPanel Versions](#) — cPanel & WHM version 11.42 and earlier requires you to manually add items to the `dynamicui` files.
- [Guide to cPanel Variables](#) — The [LiveAPI](#) system and [dynamicui files](#) can access cPanel's global variables.
- [Tutorial - Create a New Paper Lantern Interface in PHP](#) — This tutorial uses PHP to create a new cPanel interface for the Paper Lantern theme.
- [Tutorial - Add a Link to the cPanel Interface](#) — This tutorial adds an icon that links to an external location to the cPanel interface.
- [Guide to cPanel Plugins - Uninstall Plugins](#) — To uninstall plugins from cPanel & WHM, choose the uninstallation process according to your system's version.



**Notes:**

- When you run this script, it **only** installs the plugin to **one** theme. To install the plugin to a second theme, you **must** run the script again with the correct options.
- If you do not specify the `--theme` option and a theme, the script attempts to install the plugin to the Paper Lantern interface with the `install.json` method. If you do not specify a theme and the compressed plugin file does not contain an `install.json` file, the installation will **fail**.
- The `/usr/local/cpanel/scripts/install_plugin` script does **not** extract plugin files for you. Instead, your installation script **must** perform this action.