How to Modify Your Hosts File

Overview

Your hosting provider may offer you a temporary URL in the `http://IP/~username` format (where `IP` represents the server's IP address and `username` represents the cPanel account name) to access your website. This is useful, for example, if you migrate your website to a new server and want to test the site before you point the DNS records to it.

However, some sites will **not** work with a temporary URL. For those sites, you can configure your workstation with the server's IP address. To do this, modify your workstation's `/etc/hosts` file to use the server's domain name and IP address.

This document explains how to modify your workstation's `/etc/hosts` file.

> **Note:**
> Hosting providers can use the WHM's *Apache mod_userdir Tweak* interface (*WHM >> Home >> Security Center >> Apache mod_userdir Tweak*) to offer their customers a temporary URL.

Modify the `/etc/hosts` file

The following methods allow you to modify your workstation's `/etc/hosts` file.

> **Important:**
> Your workstation's operating system will **not** remove your changes to the `/etc/hosts` file. If you want the domain that you added to use public DNS entries, you **must** manually remove the domain name and IP address in the `/etc/hosts` file.

MacOS® and Linux®

To modify your `/etc/hosts` file if your workstation runs MacOS or a Linux distribution, perform the following steps:

1. On your workstation, open the `/etc/hosts` file with your preferred text editor.
2. Add the server's IP address and domain name under the last entry in the file, for example:

```
127.0.0.1 localhost localhost.localdomain localhost4
localhost4.localdomain4
::1 localhost localhost.localdomain localhost6 localhost6.localdomain6
192.168.0.20 example.com
1.2.3.4 username.example.com
```

> **Note:**
> In this example, `1.2.3.4` represents the server's IP address, and `username.example.com` represents the domain name.

3. Save your changes.
4. Reload your browser for the changes to take effect.

Microsoft Windows®

To modify the `/etc/hosts` file on a Windows workstation, perform the following steps:

1. Open the *Start* menu.

    a. If you run Windows 8 or Windows 10, type **Win+X** on the keyboard or click the Windows icon in the lower-left corner of your desktop interface.

    b. If you run Windows 7 or Windows Vista®, click *Start*.

2. Enter *Notepad* in the search text box.
3. Right-click *Notepad* and select *Run as Administrator*.
4. In *Notepad*, open the following file:

```
C:\Windows\System32\Drivers\etc\hosts
```

5. Add the destination server's IP address and domain name under the latest entry in the file, for example:

```
127.0.0.1 localhost localhost.localdomain localhost4
localhost4.localdomain4
::1 localhost localhost.localdomain localhost6 localhost6.localdomain6
192.168.0.20 example.com
1.2.3.4 username.example.com
```

> **Note:**
> In this example, `1.2.3.4` represents the destination server's IP address, and `username.example.com` represents the domain name.

6. Save your changes.
7. Reload your browser for the changes to take effect.

Additional documentation

Suggested documentation For cPanel users For WHM users For developers

- How to Modify Your Hosts File
- The ea-nginx script
- Nginx
- How to Install a Node.js Application
- How to Purchase a LiteSpeed Web Server License

- How To Clear Your DNS Cache

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- WHM API 1 Functions - addzonerecord
- WHM API 1 Functions - editzonerecord
- WHM API 1 Functions - has_local_authority
- UAPI Functions - DNS::has_local_authority
- UAPI Functions - DCV::check_domains_via_http