

InstantWP User Guide

InstantWP Version 5



<http://www.instantwp.com>

email: support@instantwp.com

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A Word From The Author

I originally created Instant WordPress for a class on blogging that I was teaching way back in 2007.



It became an immediate hit with my students and allowed them to unleash their creativity in their work with WordPress without getting bogged down in technical details.

I hope that InstantWP brings you the same freedom and creativity in your work with WordPress.

Regards

Seamus Brady

Founder, Corvideon Ltd.

1. Introducing InstantWP

1.1. Overview

Instant WordPress is a complete standalone, portable WordPress development environment. It turns any Windows or macOS machine into a WordPress development server. It will even run from a USB key.

InstantWP has been under development since 2008 and was first developed as a WordPress teaching tool.

The software has been downloaded over a million times and is trusted worldwide in universities, schools and businesses for teaching, developing and working with WordPress.

1.2. Technical Overview

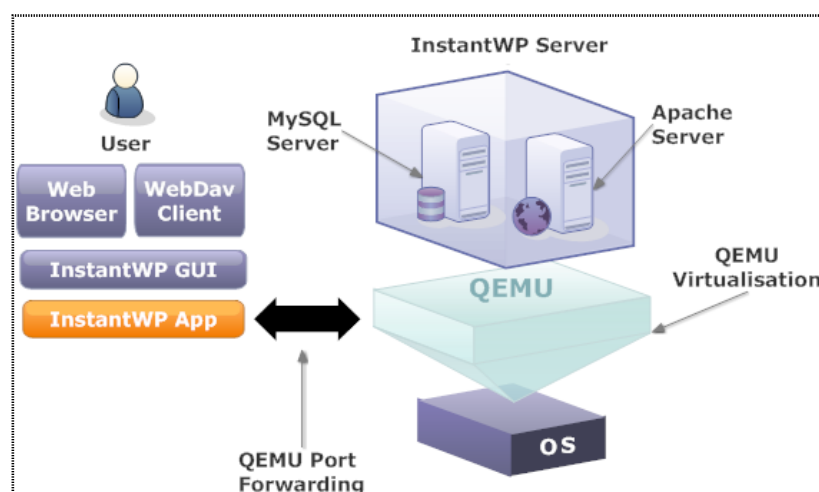


Figure 1: InstantWP Technical Overview

InstantWP contains a virtual webserver wrapped in a simple user interface that should up in under a minute. The default URL of WordPress is launched from <http://127.0.0.1:10080/wordpress>

The virtual webserver, called **IWPServer**¹, runs Alpine Linux inside an open source virtualisation layer called QEMU.

The user interface, or the **InstantWP Control Panel**² as we call it, communicates with QEMU via the main InstantWP app.

For more details, see the IWPServer section.

1.3. Installing and Uninstalling InstantWP

InstantWP is completely portable and the installation on both Windows and macOS is extremely straightforward.

In both cases, you should download the InstantWP zip from the main InstantWP website at <http://www.instantwp.com>.

1. See Section 3 on IWPServer, page 19.

2. See Section 2 on the InstantWP Control Panel, page 11.

InstantWP can be installed as many times as you wish, but only one instance can be run at a time unless you edit the Port Offset number. See the Network Ports section³ for more details.

1.3.1. Installation on Windows

- Copy the downloaded InstantWP zip into the desired folder. It is best to not have any spaces in the folder path to InstantWP as this can cause issues.
- Unzip the InstantWP zip file using any standard zip utility.
- Open up the unzipped folder.
- Double click on the *Start-InstantWP.bat* file to start InstantWP.
- The InstantWP Control Panel should start up after the progress bar completes.

However, on some Windows systems there is a new security filter called SmartScreen. This will stop InstantWP running with a dialog asking if the user wishes to continue. In order to start InstantWP on these systems, you will need to click on the 'More info' link on the dialog. Then click on the 'Run anyway' button on the resulting dialog. See the *ReadMe-First-Windows* file that is included within the InstantWP release for more details

3. See Section 3.6 on Network Ports, page 21.

1.3.2. Installation on macOS

- Copy the downloaded InstantWP zip into the desired folder.
- Unzip the InstantWP zip file using the standard macOS archive utility.
- Open up the unzipped folder.
- Double click on the *Start-InstantWP* file to start InstantWP.
- The InstantWP Control Panel should start up after the progress bar completes.

Please note, on some macOS systems there is a new security service called GateKeeper. This will stop InstantWP running as it is started by a script file (called a 'Unix application' in the warning dialog). In order to start InstantWP on these systems, you may need to right click on the Start-InstantWP script and click 'Open'. See the *ReadMe-First-macOS* file that is included within the InstantWP release for more details.

1.3.3. Uninstalling on Windows and macOS

There is nothing installed when InstantWP runs, apart from what is in the unzipped InstantWP folder. Shutting down InstantWP and then deleting the unzipped folder is all that is required to remove InstantWP.

1.4. Requirements

InstantWP should run on the most recent versions of macOS. InstantWP should also run on 32 bit and 64 bit versions of Windows 10, Windows 7 and recent versions of Windows Server.

It is suggested that you have at least 4GB of RAM to run InstantWP but the amount of RAM that is needed can be adjusted if you wish. See the Configuration Section⁴ for more details.

InstantWP also needs a recommended 300MB of disk space.

On Windows systems, InstantWP may not run correctly if there are spaces in the InstantWP directory path.

4. See Section 4 on the InstantWP Configuration File, page 23.

1.5. WordPress File Access

You have one button click access to the WordPress files on the Linux Virtual Machine via the InstantWP Web File Manager. This is a file manager for your WordPress installation, similar to Windows Explorer or macOS Finder, but that runs through a web interface. You can use the Web File Manager to copy, paste, upload and edit files in your InstantWP WordPress install. Please see the help file that is included with the Web File Manager for more details.

If you would like to access the WordPress files on the Linux Virtual Machine through Windows Explorer or the macOS finder, please visit the InstantWP FAQ:

<http://www.instantwp.com/go/FAQ/>

This gives some tips on mapping a Windows drive to the Linux Virtual Machine via SFTP. There are also instructions on mounting the InstantWP WebDav⁵ directory using the macOS Finder. Of course, you could also use the included SFTP client for file access on the Virtual Machine. See Section 2.5.1 for more details.

5. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WebDAV>

2. InstantWP Control Panel

The InstantWP Control Panel is the main user interface for InstantWP and will start up after the progress bar runs. There are two tabs available on the Control Panel.

2.1. Control Panel Tab

This tab gives access to the local WordPress installation. See Figure 2 and Figure 3 for a screenshot.

Button	Description
WordPress Frontpage	This opens the WordPress homepage.
WordPress Admin	This opens the WordPress Dashboard. The default login is the user "admin" and the password is "password".
Themes Folder	This opens up the WordPress Themes folders on your local machine using the InstantWP Web File Manager.
Plugins Folder	This opens up the WordPress Plugin folders on your local machine using the InstantWP Web File Manager.
MySQL Admin	The default MySQL user is "root" and the password is left blank.
Help	This opens up the local InstantWP documentation.
About	This opens up information about the InstantWP software.
Quit	Exits InstantWP and shuts down the IWPServer.

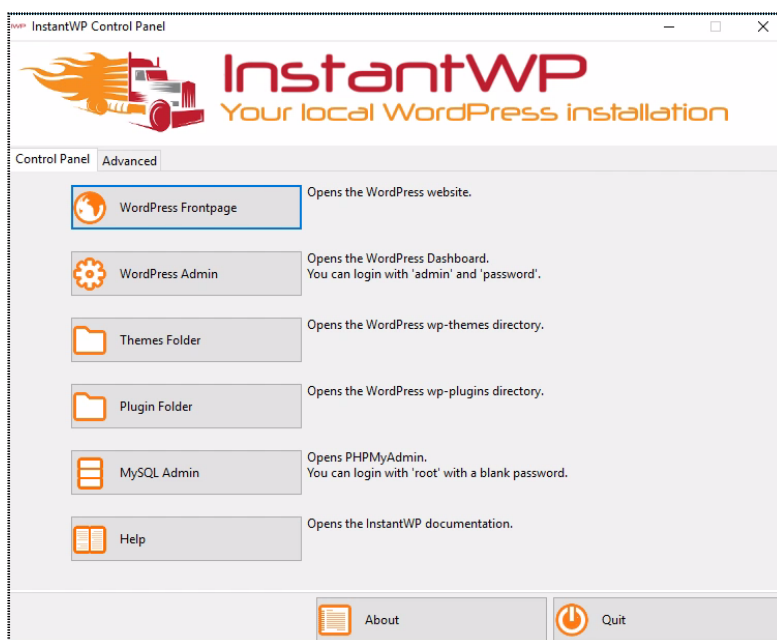


Figure 2: Control Panel Tab on Windows



Figure 3: Control Panel Tab on macOS

2.2. Themes and Plugins Folder Management

The Themes and Plugins folder are handled by the InstantWP Web File Manager. Please see the help file that is included with the Web File Manager for more details.

In either case, if the default Themes and Folders access is not sufficient, then there are plenty of options available. For more information on these alternatives, please see the Advanced Tab section⁶ for information on the Web File Manager or using the SFTP⁷ client that is bundled with InstantWP (SFTP is a standard way of communicating securely with web servers).

2.3. Manually Installing Themes and Plugins

To install plugins and themes, simply download and unzip the theme or plugin folder to your computer.

On the InstantWP Control Panel click on the Plugins Folder button or the Themes Folder button as appropriate. This will open the plugin or theme folder for your local WordPress installation using the InstantWP Web File Manager.

6. See Section 2.5 on the Advanced Tab.

7. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SSH_File_Transfer_Protocol

Simply click on the upload files button on the menu bar in the Web File Manager. You can then choose the files and folders you wish to upload. Please see the help file that is included with the Web File Manager for more details on how to upload files.

Click on the WordPress Admin button on the InstantWP Control Panel and log in. The plugin or theme should now be listed. Enable the plugin or theme. Please note that this may take moment or two to appear if you are using the Windows operating system.

Click on the WordPress Frontpage button on the Instant WordPress Control Panel to see how the plugin or theme is working in your local WordPress installation.

Of course, you can also install themes and plugins in the usual way from within the WordPress Dashboard.

2.4. Upgrading WordPress

The version of WordPress within InstantWP can be upgraded automatically using the standard WordPress update mechanism.

Simply open the WordPress Dashboard⁸ using the WordPress Admin button on the InstantWP Control Panel and follow the links that appear within the WordPress Dashboard.

Please note that sometimes the WordPress version in InstantWP will be a little behind the currently released WordPress version. This is to allow testing of upgrade scenarios.

8. See https://codex.wordpress.org/Dashboard_Screen

2.5. Advanced Panel Tab

The buttons on the Advanced Panel tab open up more advanced functionality. See Figure 4 and Figure 5 for a screenshot.

Button	Description
SSH Terminal	This button will open an SSH ⁹ session to the Virtual Machine ¹⁰ . You will be logged in automatically as user "iwp" with password "iwp". Please see Section 3.4, page 20, for some useful commands you can run via the SSH Terminal for starting and stopping services.
SFTP Client	This will open the SFTP client - Fugu SFTP on OSX and WinSCP on Windows. Please see the SFTP client section on page 18.
QEMU Monitor	This will open access to the QEMU monitor console for interacting with Virtual Machine. See the QEMU Monitor documentation for more information. You can control various aspects of the virtual machine.
IWP Web Console	This will open the InstantWP Web Console. This allows web-based access to WP-CLI and other commands. See the included help file for more details. You can login with user "iwp" and password "iwp".
Edit Config File	This will open the InstantWP config file in your default text editor. Please see Section 4, page 23, on the Configuration File for more information.
PHP Info	This will open the PHP Info page which outputs information about PHP's configuration. Please see the PHP manual page .

9. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secure_Shell

10. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_machine



Figure 4: Advanced Tab Panel on Windows



Figure 5: Advanced Tab Panel on macOS

2.5.1. Using the SFTP Client

You can use the following details to login to IWPServer, the InstantWP Virtual Machine:

- The server to connect to: 127.0.0.1
- The username: root
- The network port: 10022
- The password: root
- The web root directory is at /var/www/localhost/htdocs/

For more information and help on the included macOS SFTP client, please see the [Fugu homepage](#).

For more information and help on the included Windows SFTP client, please see the [WinSCP homepage](#).

If you would like to access the WordPress files on the Linux Virtual Machine through Windows Explorer or the macOS finder, please visit the InstantWP FAQ:

<http://www.instantwp.com/go/FAQ/>

3. IWPServer - The InstantWP Virtual Machine

IWPServer is the embedded Linux Virtual Machine that runs WordPress. The Virtual Machine is stored in a qcow2 file in the VM folder where you unzipped InstantWP.

The standard way to access the Virtual Machine is using the SSH Terminal.¹¹

3.1. Alpine Linux

The Virtual Machine runs Alpine Linux. Alpine Linux is a security-oriented, lightweight Linux distribution. You can find out more information about Alpine Linux at the [distribution homepage](#).

3.2. Managing Software on IWPServer

You can manage installed software on the Virtual Machine using the *apk* tool which is included with Alpine Linux. You can add, upgrade and install any software as you wish on the Virtual Machine including PHP and MySQL. For more information see the [Alpine Linux package management documentation](#).

11. See Section 2.5, page 16, on the Advanced Tab Panel for more information.

3.3. Default User Accounts

- The default user account is "iwp" with the password "iwp".
- The default admin account is "root" with the password "root".

Of course, you can add, edit and remove user accounts using the standard Linux command line tools.

3.4. Useful Command Line Tools

You can use the following commands from the SSH Terminal to start and stop various IWPServer services:

Description	Command
Stop Apache Web Server	<code>sudo rc-service apache2 stop</code>
Start Apache Web Server	<code>sudo rc-service apache2 start</code>
Restart Apache Web Server	<code>sudo rc-service apache2 restart</code>
Stop MySQL Database Server	<code>sudo rc-service mariadb stop</code>
Start MySQL Database Server	<code>sudo rc-service mariadb start</code>
Restart MySQL Database Server	<code>sudo rc-service mariadb restart</code>
Reset WordPress Permissions	<code>/home/iwp/scripts/reset-wp-permissions</code>

3.5. Virtual Machine Configuration Files

You can edit the files below using the SFTP client and your operating systems text editor.

You can also use the Nano text editor from the SSH Terminal using the command "sudo nano <FILEPATH>". For more information on the Nano text editor, please see the [Nano documentation](#).

File Type	File Description	File Path
PHP Initialisation File	PHP settings and defaults	/etc/php7/php.ini
Apache Web Server Config	Web server settings	/etc/apache2/httpd.conf
MySQL Config File	Database settings	/etc/mysql/my.cnf

3.6. Network Ports

You can connect to the network ports using localhost or 127.0.0.1 as the host name.

Port Name	Port Number	Description
HTTP	10080	Apache web server port.
SSH	10022	Secure Shell port.
QEMU Monitor	10099	Virtualisation shell access.

3.6.1. Port Offset

Each InstantWP installation has a Port Offset number. This allows you to customise which specific network ports on your local computer get mapped to which specific network ports on the Virtual Machine.

If you wish to run more than one instance of InstantWP at a time, you need to edit the Port Offset setting in the Configuration file so that each instance has a unique number. For instance, leave one install at a Port Offset of 10000 and set the next install to 11000.

The default Port Offset of the standard Virtual Machine is 10000.

Please note there are also "spare ports" for when you need an extra port:

- SparePort1 maps 15001 on localhost to port 5001 on the VM.
- SparePort2 maps 15002 on localhost to port 5002 on the VM.
- SparePort3 maps 15003 on localhost to port 5003 on the VM.
- SparePort4 maps 15004 on localhost to port 5004 on the VM.

4. InstantWP Configuration File

The main config file for InstantWP is in the config folder wherever you unzipped InstantWP. You can also open the configuration file using the Edit Config Button on the Advanced Tab Panel. InstantWP needs to be restarted for changes to take effect.

There are multiple settings available but the settings below may be the most useful:

Setting Name	Setting Description	Default Value
VMFile	qcow2 virtual file in the vm directory	iwpserver-2.0.1.qcow2
RAM	RAM Amount in MB. You can increase this setting to 512 or 1024 if you want IWPServer to run faster.	256
ShowQEMUWindow	Show the QEMU window on start up. Can be yes or no. This can be useful for diagnosing issues: Start-IWP-Show-QEMU.bat	no
PortOffset	The Port Offset number. See Section 3.6.	10000

5. InstantWP Command Line

InstantWP comes with a command-line tool called `iwpcli` / `iwpcli.exe`.

The following commands are available:

Command Description	Command
Check if IWP is running and print out a status message	<code>iwpcli status</code>
Start InstantWP	<code>iwpcli start</code>
Quit InstantWP	<code>iwpcli quit</code>
Open WordPress frontpage	<code>iwpcli wpfrontpage</code>
Open WordPress Dashboard	<code>iwpcli wpadmin</code>
Open the plugins folder	<code>iwpcli plugins</code>
Open the themes folder	<code>iwpcli themes</code>
Open PHPMysqlAdmin	<code>iwpcli mysql</code>
Open IWP documentation	<code>iwpcli docs</code>
Open IWP about page	<code>iwpcli about</code>
Open up an SSH session on the IWP VM	<code>iwpcli ssh</code>
Open up the QEMU VM Monitor shell	<code>iwpcli monitor</code>
Opens up the InstantWP Web Console	<code>iwpcli webconsole</code>

6. Further Information

6.1. GitHub Project

The code for InstantWP is available at the GitHub project below:

<https://github.com/corvideon/InstantWP/>

6.2. Included Software

You can also find further technical information about what versions of PHP and MySQL and other included software is used as part of InstantWP by visiting the GitHub project.

The About page also lists some of this information from within InstantWP. The About button at the base of the InstantWP Control Panel will open this page.

6.3. FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

For troubleshooting and further technical tips please see the InstantWP FAQ:

<http://www.instantwp.com/go/FAQ/>

6.4. Open Source License and Warranty

InstantWP is released under the GPL v3. See the included LICENSE file.

You can use InstantWP for any purposes for an unlimited period of time.

InstantWP is provided free of charge.

InstantWP may be installed and used on any number of systems.

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