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```
add_role( string $role, string $display_name, bool[] $capabilities = array() ):
WP_Role|void
```

Adds a role, if it does not exist.

### Parameters

**\$role** string required

Role name.

**\$display\_name** string required

Display name for role.

**\$capabilities** bool[] optional

List of capabilities keyed by the capability name, e.g. array( 'edit\_posts' => true, 'delete\_posts' => false ).

Default: `array()`

### Return

[WP\\_Role](#) | `void` [WP\\_Role](#) object, if the role is added.

### Source

wp-includes/capabilities.php

[Copy](#)

```
function add_role( $role, $display_name, $capabilities = array() ) {
    if ( empty( $role ) ) {
        return;
    }

    return wp_roles()->add_role( $role, $display_name, $capabilities );
}
```

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### Related

#### Uses

[wp\\_roles\(\)](#)

wp-includes/capabilities.php

[WP\\_Roles::add\\_role\(\)](#)

wp-includes/class-wp-roles.php

Used by

[populate\\_roles\\_160\(\)](#)

wp-admin/includes/schema.php

Changelog

Version	Description
<a href="#">2.0.0</a>	Introduced.

User Contributed Notes

Roger Theriault5 years ago

^ 29 v

Be sure to use this function (and similar role functions) only in an activation hook or within a conditional block. There is no need for this to execute every time the page loads, and it will keep updating the database every time it's called.

For example, this will store an option to track the version of the custom roles and will only update the database once:

Copy

```
function xx__update_custom_roles() {
    if ( get_option( 'custom_roles_version' ) < 1 ) {
        add_role( 'custom_role', 'Custom Subscriber', array( 'read' => true, 'level_0' => true ) );
        update_option( 'custom_roles_version', 1 );
    }
}
add_action( 'init', 'xx__update_custom_roles' );
```

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Jules Colle4 years ago

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You can also easily create a new user role based on an existing user role.

( equivalent to WP CLI: `wp role create <role-key> <role-name> --clone=<role>` )

Example: create a role Superintendent with the same capabilities as Administrator

Copy

```
add_role( 'superintendent', 'Superintendent', get_role( 'administrator' )->capabilities );
```

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A list of all possible Capabilities per user roles:

<https://wordpress.org/support/article/roles-and-capabilities/#capability-vs-role-table>

Super Admin

=====

create\_sites  
delete\_sites  
manage\_network  
manage\_sites  
manage\_network\_users  
manage\_network\_plugins  
manage\_network\_themes  
manage\_network\_options  
upload\_plugins  
upload\_themes  
upgrade\_network  
setup\_network

Super Admin + Administrator

=====

activate\_plugins (single site or enabled by network setting)  
create\_users (single site)  
delete\_plugins (single site)  
delete\_themes (single site)  
delete\_users (single site)  
edit\_files (single site)  
edit\_plugins (single site)  
edit\_theme\_options  
edit\_themes (single site)  
edit\_users (single site)  
export  
import

Super Admin + Administrator

=====

install\_plugins (single site)  
install\_themes (single site)  
list\_users  
manage\_options  
promote\_users  
remove\_users  
switch\_themes  
update\_core (single site)  
update\_plugins (single site)  
update\_themes (single site)  
edit\_dashboard  
customize

delete\_site

Super Admin + Administrator + Editor

=====

moderate\_comments

manage\_categories

manage\_links

edit\_others\_posts

edit\_pages

edit\_others\_pages

edit\_published\_pages

publish\_pages

delete\_pages

delete\_others\_pages

delete\_published\_pages

delete\_others\_posts

delete\_private\_posts

edit\_private\_posts

read\_private\_posts

delete\_private\_pages

edit\_private\_pages

read\_private\_pages

unfiltered\_html (single site)

unfiltered\_html

Super Admin + Administrator + Editor + Author

=====

edit\_published\_posts

upload\_files

publish\_posts

delete\_published\_posts

Super Admin + Administrator + Editor + Author + Contributor

=====

edit\_posts

delete\_posts

Super Admin + Administrator + Editor + Author + Contributor + Subscriber

=====

read

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Codex8 years ago

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Create a new role when a plugin is activated

See `register_activation_hook` .

Copy

```
function add_roles_on_plugin_activation() {
    add_role( 'custom_role', 'Custom Subscriber', array( 'read' => true, 'level_0' => true ) );
}
register_activation_hook( __FILE__, 'add_roles_on_plugin_activation' );
```

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Codex8 years ago

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Example

Create a new “Guest Author” role.

Expand codeCopy

```
$result = add_role(
    'guest_author',
    __( 'Guest Author', 'testdomain' ),
    array(
        'read'          => true, // true allows this capability
        'edit_posts'    => true,
        'delete_posts' => false, // Use false to explicitly deny
    )
);

if ( null !== $result ) {
    echo "Success: {$result->name} user role created.";
}
```

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Codex8 years ago

^ 1 v

Usage

Copy

```
<?php add_role( $role, $display_name, $capabilities ); ?>
```

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Codex8 years ago

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Note: When to call

Make sure the global `$wp_roles` is available before attempting to add or modify a role. The best practice is to use a plugin (or theme) activation hook to make changes to roles (since you only want to do it once!).

`mu-plugins` loads too early, so use an action hook (like `'init'` ) to wrap your `add_role()` call if you’re doing this in the context of an mu-plugin.

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Codex8 years ago

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Note: Delete existing role

You can not change the capabilities of an existing role using `add_role()` . This function will stop executing and return `null` if the specified role name already exists.

You can change a user role's capabilities (or display name) by using `remove_role()` , then `add_role()` .

This is for development only. Once you have nailed down your list of capabilities, there's no need to keep the [remove\\_role\(\)](#) code.

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