WordPress: Production-Ready WordPress Themes

🏠 | WordPress

When deploying your WordPress theme from development to production, there are indeed files and settings that should be handled differently. Here's what you should consider:

Files to Exclude from Production

1. Development dependencies:

   - `/node_modules` directory[6]
   - `package.json` and `package-lock.json` [1]
   - `webpack.mix.js` or other build configuration files[1]

2. Source files:

   - `/src` directory containing your raw SCSS and JS files[1]

3. Development-specific files:

   - `tailwind.config.json` or similar configuration files[1]
   - Any local environment configuration files

4. Version control files:

   - `.git` directory
   - `.gitignore`

Settings to Change

1. Debug settings:

   - Set `WP_DEBUG` to `false` in your `wp-config.php` file[8]
   - Disable any development-specific logging or error reporting

2. Environment type:

   - Set `WP_ENVIRONMENT_TYPE` to `production` in `wp-config.php` [8]

3. Performance optimizations:

- Enable caching mechanisms
- Ensure all assets are minified and optimized

4. Security measures:

- Disable file editing in the WordPress admin:

```
define('DISALLOW_FILE_EDIT', true);
```

Best Practices for Deployment

1. Use version control (Git) to manage your theme files[9]

2. Implement a deployment pipeline or use a deployment tool to automate the process[9]

3. Always test your theme thoroughly on a staging environment before deploying to production[5]

4. Use Composer to manage WordPress core, plugins, and themes as dependencies[10]

5. Consider using a child theme for customizations if you're building upon an existing theme[7]

By following these guidelines, you'll ensure that only necessary production files are deployed, and your live site is optimized for performance and security.

Citations:

- [1] https://www.reddit.com/r/ProWordPress/comments/1e68oa6/best_practices_for_deploying_a_wordpress_theme/
- [2] https://developer.wordpress.org/themes/advanced-topics/build-process/
- [3] https://wordpress.stackexchange.com/questions/339882/how-to-deploy-a-new-theme-theme-options-from-staging-to-production-site
- [4] https://deliciousbrains.com/best-practices-for-wordpress-themes-in-2025/
- [5] https://developer.wordpress.com/docs/get-started/deploy/
- [6] https://support.getshifter.io/en/articles/2766480-excluding-folders-while-migrating-with-all-in-one-wp-migration
- [7] https://wpengine.com/resources/developer-best-practices/
- [8] https://developer.wordpress.org/advanced-administration/wordpress/wp-config/
- [9] https://reigntheme.com/best-practices-for-dev-staging-and-production-in-wordpress/
- [10] https://spinupwp.com/wordpress-deployment-workflow-preparing/

- [11] https://stackoverflow.com/questions/3484884/web-deployment-exclude-directories-depending-on-project-configuration-name
- [12] https://stackoverflow.com/questions/13328505/wordpress-development-vs-production-environments
- [13] https://wordpress.stackexchange.com/questions/138769/how-to-exclude-certain-files-from-the-plugin-editor
- [14] https://roconpaas.com/blog/wordpress-push-staging-site-without-overwriting-database/
- [15] https://buddy.works/guides/how-introduce-continuous-deployment-to-wordpress

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Answer from Perplexity: https://www.perplexity.ai/search/i-m-not-finding-many-good-sour-s6kB5FNAQGOz_mJtlotiDw?utm_source=copy_output

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References

- https://www.perplexity.ai/search/i-m-not-finding-many-good-sour-s6kB5FNAQGOz_mJtlotiDw#1