Moving Wordpress from the testing server to the live site

without losing hair, sleep, or precious content

Always develop and make changes to a testing copy!

Never develop code on the live site. Something *will* go wrong!

Moving wordpress is something you will do many, many times

- should be painless if you go through the right steps
- different from the original installation
- gets better with practice

Overview of All Steps:

1. Set up hosting space and domain name (or subdomain/subdirectory) for the live site

2. Set up a database and user on the destination site

3. migrate the database after safely updating all references to the live site path

4. update wp-config.php with the new DB values

5. FTP the files to the live site

6. TEST and troubleshoot if necessary. Flush Permalinks

Step 1

Prep the destination domain

Confirm the live site is the right environment for WP

- PHP version 5.2.4 or greater
- MySQL version 5.0 or greater
- Apache is the recommended server software
- The mod_rewrite Apache module

How do you check? Create a new PHP file containing this code:

```
<?php phpinfo(); ?>
```

view it from your host

PHP Version 5.2.8

System	Windows NT TS-206 6.1 build 7601
Build Date	Dec 8 2008 19:30:48
Configure Command	cscript /nologo configure.js "--enable-snapshot-build" "--enable-debug-pack" "--with-snapshot-template=d:\php-sdk\snap_5_2\vc6\x86\template" "--with-php-build=d:\php-sdk\snap_5_2\vc6\x86\php_build" "--with-pdo-oci=D:\php-sdk\oracle\instantclient10\sdk,shared" "--with-oci8=D:\php-sdk\oracle\instantclient10\sdk,shared"
Server API	Apache 2.0 Handler
Virtual Directory Support	enabled
Configuration File (php.ini) Path	C:\Windows
Loaded Configuration File	E:\xampplite\apache\bin\php.ini
Scan this dir for additional .ini files	(none)
additional .ini files parsed	(none)
PHP API	20041225
PHP Extension	20060613
Zend Extension	220060519
Debug Build	no
Thread Safety	enabled
Zend Memory Manager	enabled
IPv6 Support	enabled
Registered PHP Streams	php, file, data, http, ftp, compress.zlib, zip
Registered Stream Socket Transports	tcp, udp
Registered Stream Filters	convert.iconv.*, string.rot13, string.toupper, string.tolower, string.strip_tags, convert.*, consumed, zlib.*

This program makes use of the Zend Scripting Language Engine:
Zend Engine v2.2.0, Copyright (c) 1998-2008 Zend Technologies

If everything checks out, make a place for WordPress to live

Wordpress can be installed in the root, a subdomain or subdirectory.

If using a subdomain or subdirectory, make it now!

Set up FTP access while you're at it.

Step 2

Set up Database

Prep the destination Database

On the destination host, Create a **new empty Database, User, and password** (*write their names down!*). Make sure the user has ALL privileges. If possible, try to use the same names as the testing server.

forgot? check wp-config.php for the right names

(sometimes matching the names is not possible due to hosting companies adding prefixes to your names. Hostgator works this way)

cpanel > MySQL Databases

Take some notes!

Example:

Testing site info:
Site Path: http://localhost
/melissa/wordpress

DB name: wpressDB

Username: wpressUSER

password: aU7z034fV9q

Live site info:
Site Path:
http://mysite.com

DB name: mysite_wpressDB

Username: mysite_wpressUSER

password:aU7z034fV9q

Step

3

Migrate the Database

Exporting the DB from your testing site

The trickiest part of migrating Wordpress to a new server is making sure the data in the DB matches the live URLs.

Wordpress stores its URLs in the **options table**, and many settings, like widgets and menus, rely on **serialized filepaths** in the database

So! We have to be careful when moving the Database.

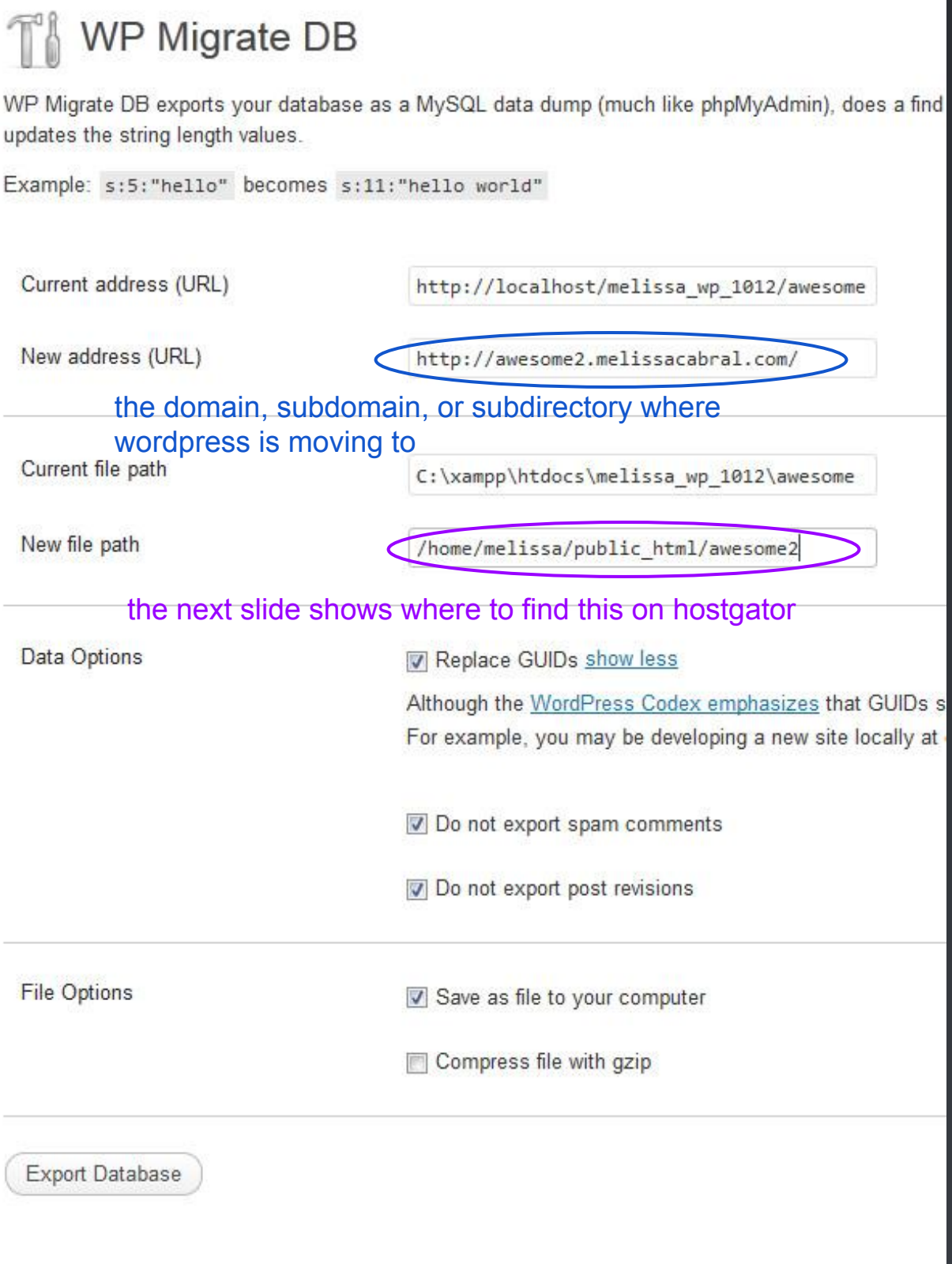
A great plugin for simplifying the process is WP Migrate DB.

Install and activate it on your testing site.

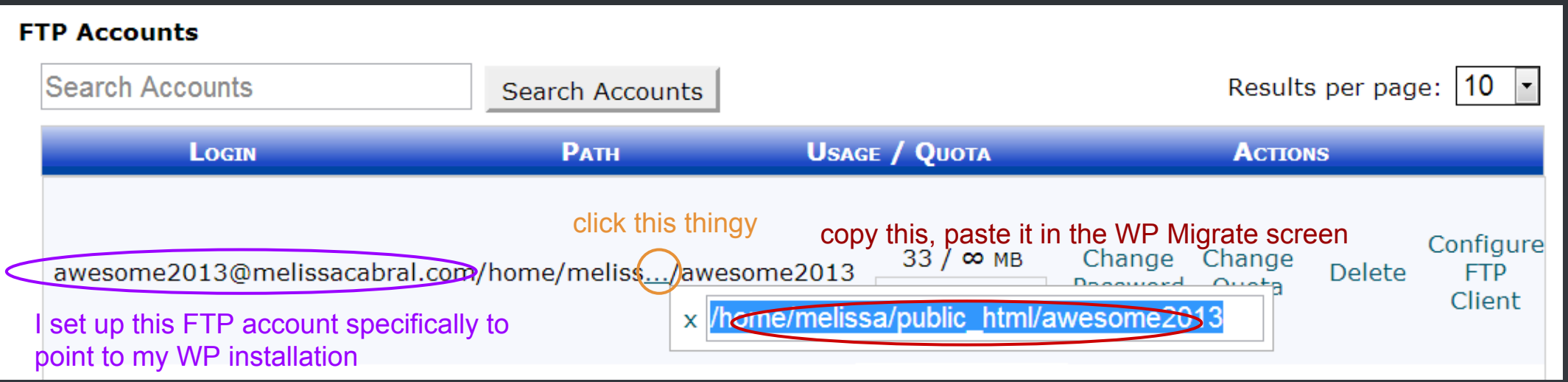
This plugin will output an .sql export file.

Any references to the old URL will be safely changed to the new URL

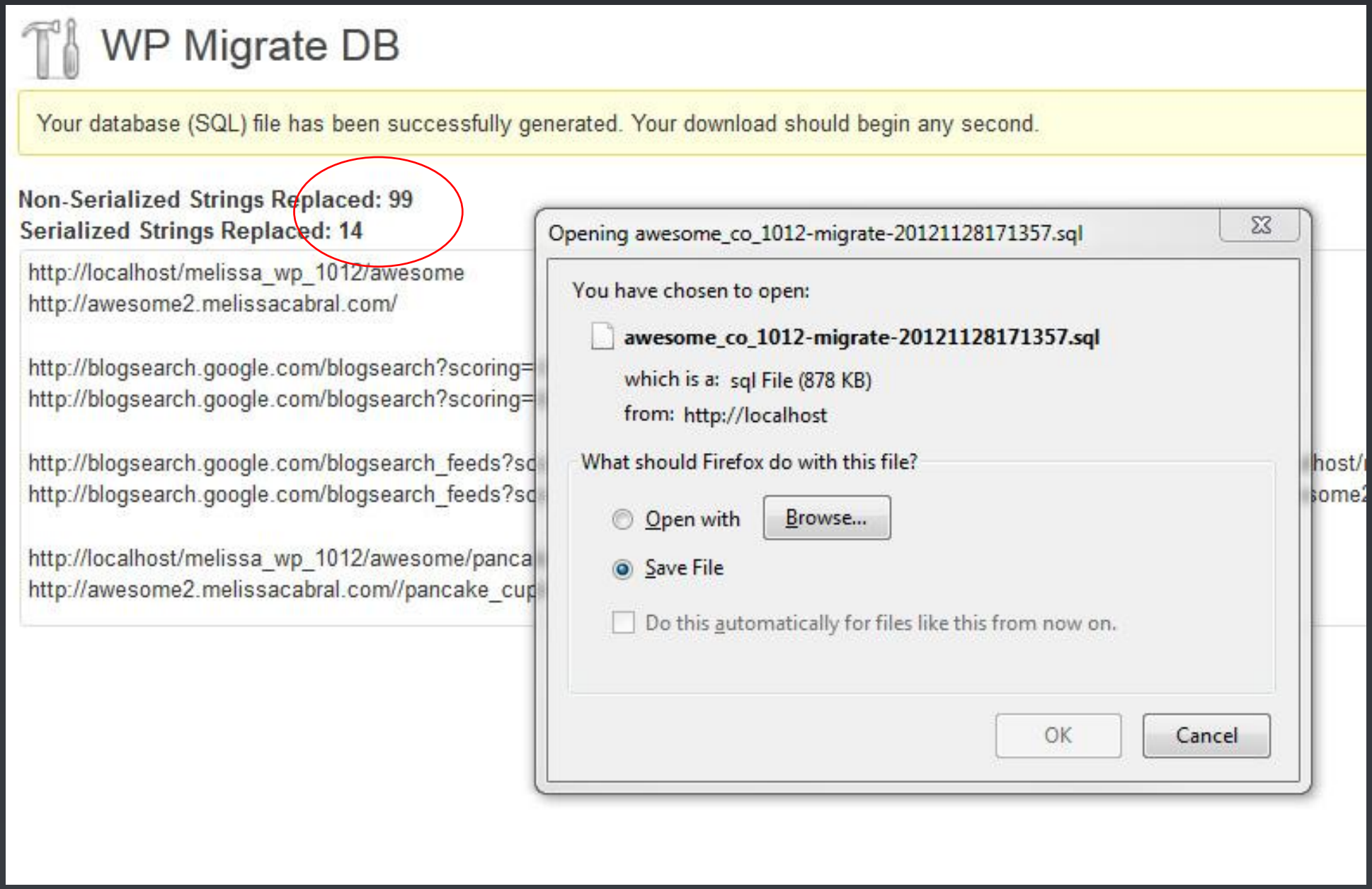
Fill in all the blanks with the **correct paths** and hit "Export Database"



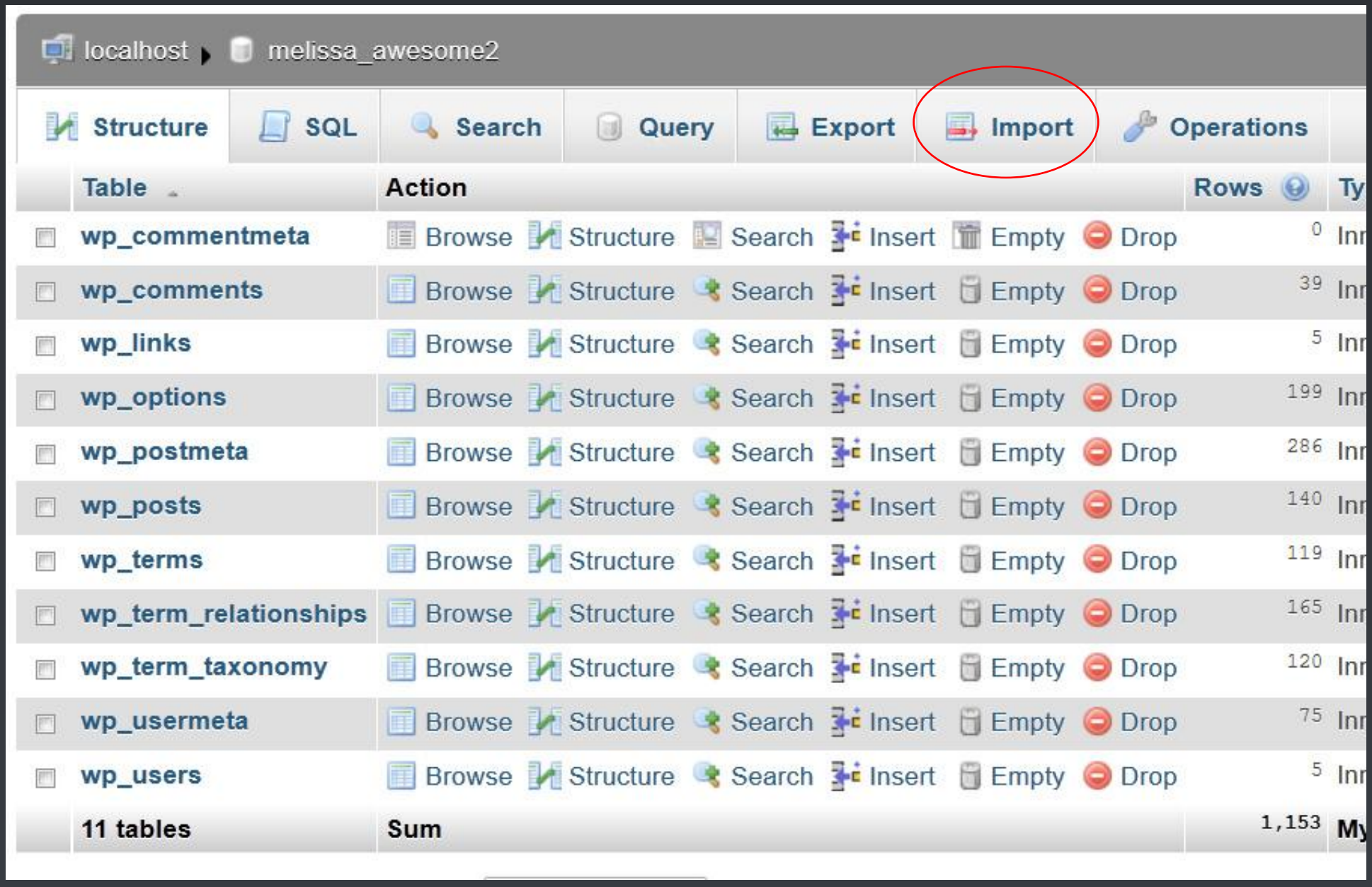
Where to find the "new file path" if you don't know it (Hostgator)
Control panel > FTP Accounts



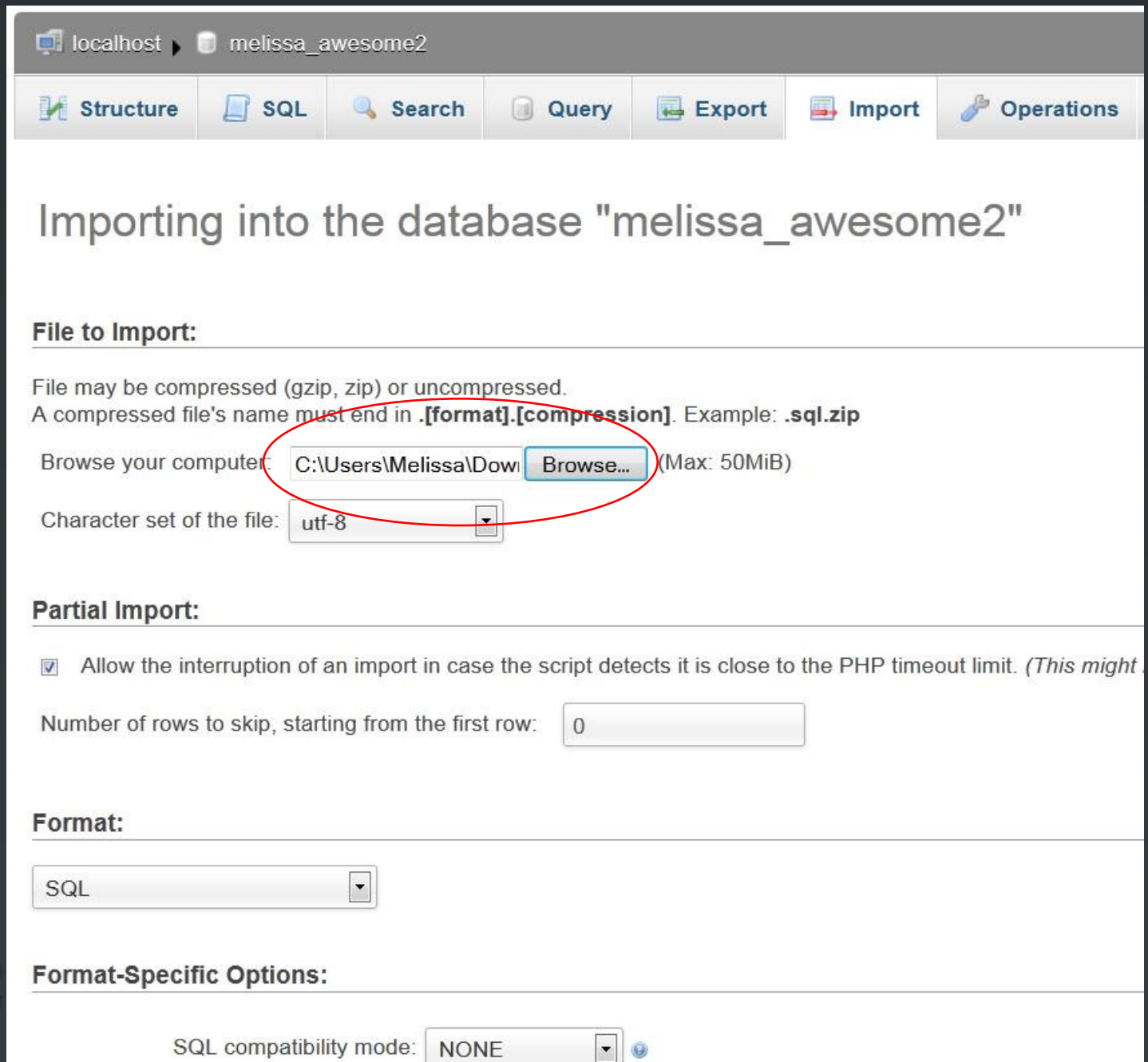
Look at all those replacements! this number is typically over 100 if you used the theme unit test data.
Save the resulting file anywhere on your computer



Now visit **phpmyadmin** on your live **destination site**
(go through cpanel > phpmyadmin).
Choose your wordpress Database and click Import



Choose the .sql file you exported, accept all defaults, hit GO



Step

4

Update wp-config

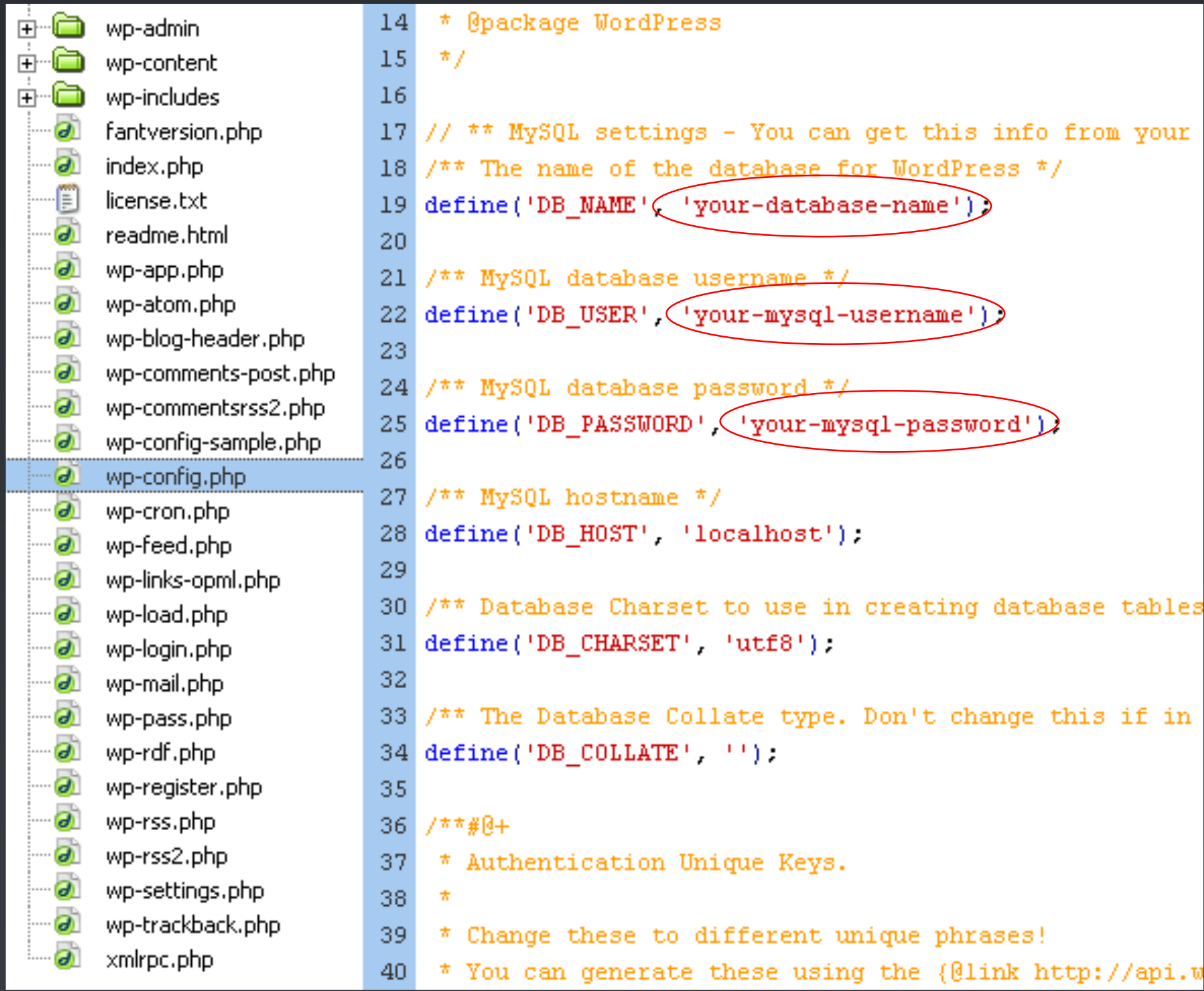
4. Edit wp-config.php

skip this step if your new host allowed you to use the same database names as your testing site

Make a copy of wp-config.php as a backup, rename it to wp-config-local-backup.php . NEVER put this backup file on the internet.

in wp-config.php, edit the **DB name**, **user**, and **password** to match the "Live site" info

Re-upload wp-config via FTP to your live site


wp-admin
wp-content
wp-includes
fantversion.php
index.php
license.txt
readme.html
wp-app.php
wp-atom.php
wp-blog-header.php
wp-comments-post.php
wp-commentsrss2.php
wp-config-sample.php
wp-config.php
wp-cron.php
wp-feed.php
wp-links-opml.php
wp-load.php
wp-login.php
wp-mail.php
wp-pass.php
wp-rdf.php
wp-register.php
wp-rss.php
wp-rss2.php
wp-settings.php
wp-trackback.php
xmlrpc.php
14 * @package WordPress
15 */
16
17 // ** MySQL settings - You can get this info from your
18 /** The name of the database for WordPress */
19 define('DB_NAME', 'your-database-name');
20
21 /** MySQL database username */
22 define('DB_USER', 'your-mysql-username');
23
24 /** MySQL database password */
25 define('DB_PASSWORD', 'your-mysql-password');
26
27 /** MySQL hostname */
28 define('DB_HOST', 'localhost');
29
30 /** Database Charset to use in creating database tables
31 define('DB_CHARSET', 'utf8');
32
33 /** The Database Collate type. Don't change this if in
34 define('DB_COLLATE', '');
35
36 /**#@+
37 * Authentication Unique Keys.
38 *
39 * Change these to different unique phrases!
40 * You can generate these using the {@link http://api.w

Step

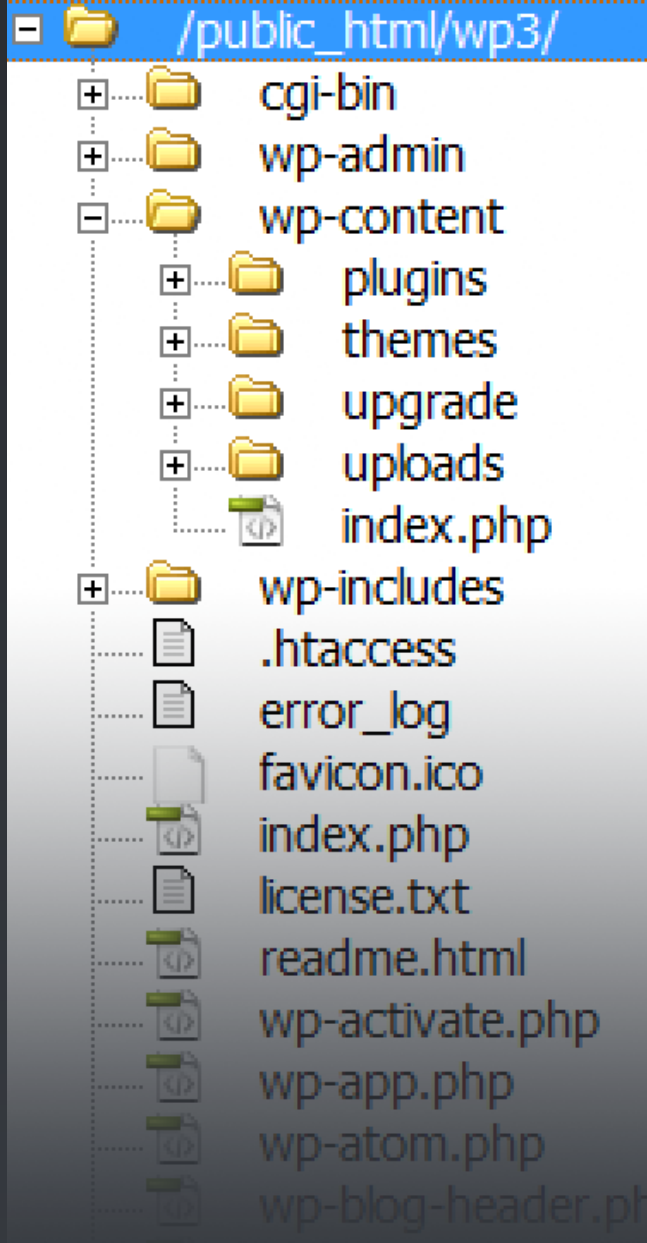
5

move the files

Take a full backup of the testing site

Back up all files, including the index and .htaccess files (make sure hidden files are visible)

(If you're working locally, you can skip this)



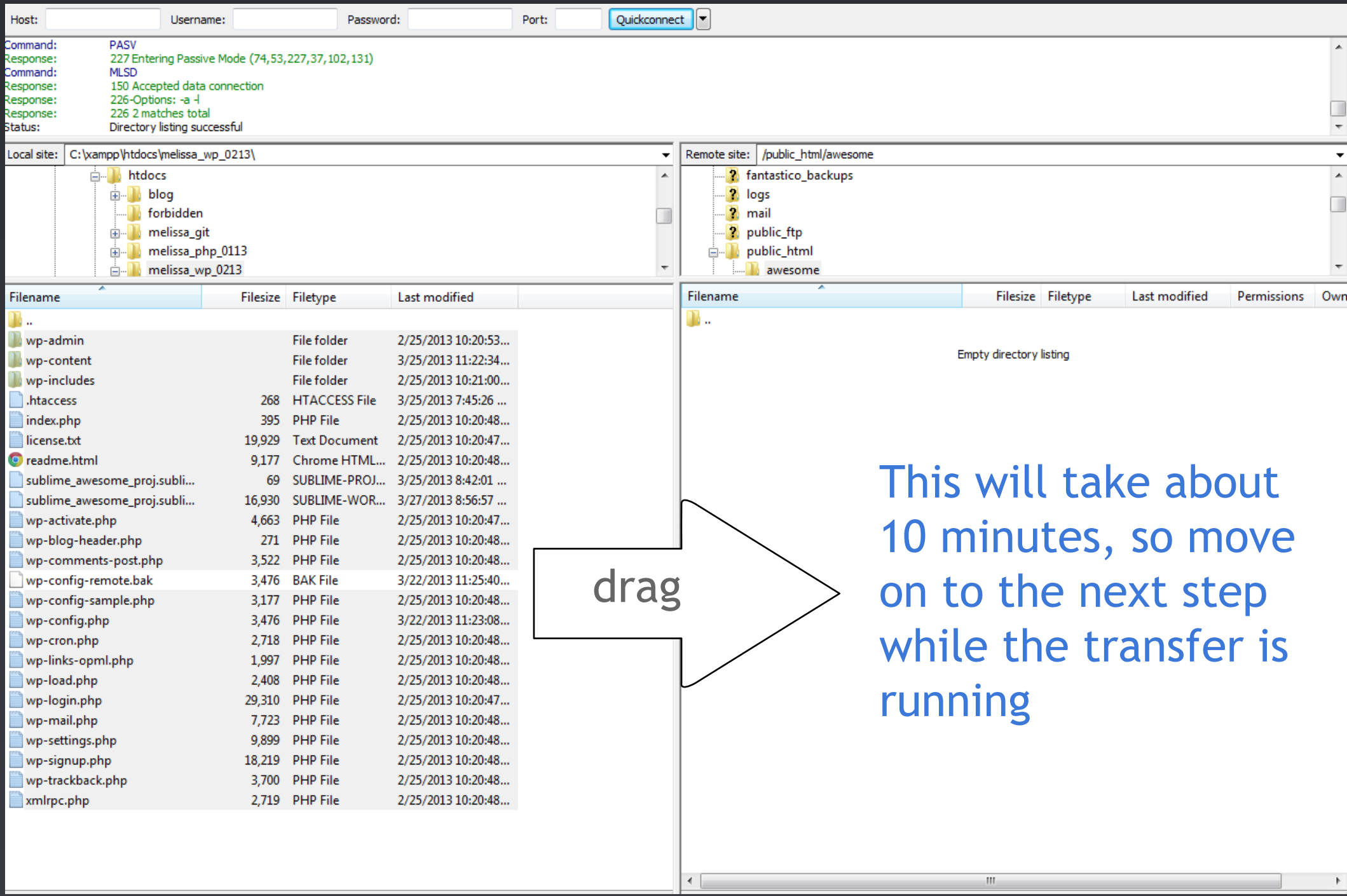
FTP the files onto the live site

Don't use dreamweaver!

Use Filezilla, FireFTP or your favorite FTP utility.

Make sure no files were skipped. One missing file can break Wordpress!

Filezilla Example.



drag

This will take about 10 minutes, so move on to the next step while the transfer is running

Step

6

Test it!

Visit your live site URL in the browser

Everything should work!

IF there are issues

White screen of death or fatal errors? de-activate all plugins (change the name of the plugins and mu-plugins folders)

visit the plugins page, confirm that they de-activated

change the directory names back to *plugins* and *mu-plugins*

visit the plugins page and re-activate all plugins one by one, looking for the problem plugin

IF there are *still* issues

permalinks not working?

in admin > settings > permalinks on the live site, switch permalinks to the default structure, then back to your custom structure

A Final Thought

As a WP designer/developer, **ALWAYS** maintain direct access to the WP database.

If you happen to have a client that (for some odd reason) won't give you easy DB access, let them know it is absolutely critical for you to do your job (or fire your client).

So long as you can work with the DB, you can recover a "broken" WP, **keep frequent backups**, and do regular repairs.

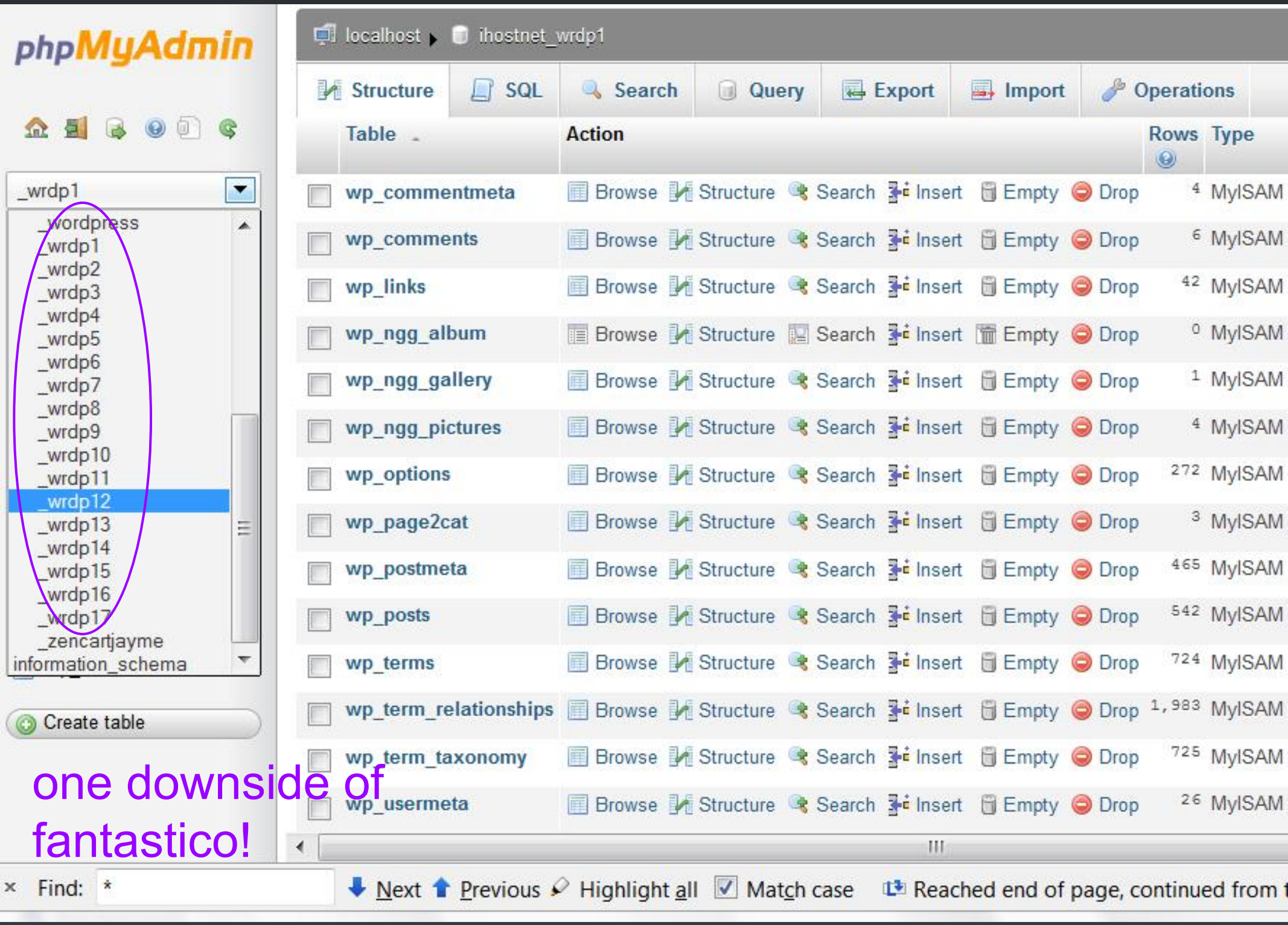
A good plugin for automated DB maintenance is WP DB Manager

A *Final* Final Thought

Fantastico?

Fantastico is great for saving time when setting up WP on your host, but it is NOT necessary for keeping WP up to date, and can even get in your way after the installation is done.

Also, it makes it really tough to distinguish databases when you run many WP installs off the same host


phpMyAdmin
localhost
ihostnet_wrdp1
Structure
SQL
Search
Query
Export
Import
Operations
_wrdp1
_wordpress
_wrdp1
_wrdp2
_wrdp3
_wrdp4
_wrdp5
_wrdp6
_wrdp7
_wrdp8
_wrdp9
_wrdp10
_wrdp11
_wrdp12
_wrdp13
_wrdp14
_wrdp15
_wrdp16
_wrdp17
_zencartjayme
information_schema
Create table
Table
Action
Rows
Type
wp_commentmeta Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 4 MyISAM
wp_comments Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 6 MyISAM
wp_links Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 42 MyISAM
wp_ngg_album Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 0 MyISAM
wp_ngg_gallery Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 1 MyISAM
wp_ngg_pictures Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 4 MyISAM
wp_options Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 272 MyISAM
wp_page2cat Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 3 MyISAM
wp_postmeta Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 465 MyISAM
wp_posts Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 542 MyISAM
wp_terms Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 724 MyISAM
wp_term_relationships Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 1,983 MyISAM
wp_term_taxonomy Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 725 MyISAM
wp_usermeta Browse Structure Search Insert Empty Drop 26 MyISAM
one downside of
fantastico!
Find: *
Next
Previous
Highlight all
Match case
Reached end of page, continued from t

As always, more in the codex

- "Moving Wordpress"

Plugins mentioned in this slideshow:

- WP Migrate DB
- WP DB Manager