MIGRATION PLAYBOOK · WEBSITES AND ECOMMERCE

How to migrate a Joomla or Drupal site to WordPress

An importer plugin in WordPress reads the old Joomla or Drupal database directly and copies content, categories, tags and images. Build on a staging site, rebuild the design and extensions, add redirects for every old URL, then switch the domain.

Updated 4 Nov 2026 4 phases 5 detailed steps 4 official sources

START HERE

How do you migrate a Joomla or Drupal site to WordPress?

SHORT ANSWER

This moves a website built on Joomla or Drupal to WordPress. You set up WordPress on a staging address, install a plugin that reads the old site's database and copies the articles, pages, categories and images across, then rebuild the design and features.

- **Recommended route:** WordPress on staging, FG importer plugin, then redirects and domain switch
- **Order:** Content first, design second, redirects before launch.
- **4 phases:** Inventory and staging, Import content, Rebuild and Redirect and launch.
- **You're done when:** All content is in WordPress and checked.

Before switching, you add redirects so every old page address leads to its new one. Then you point the domain at WordPress.

RECOMMENDED ROUTE

WordPress on staging, FG importer plugin, then redirects and domain switch

The importer copies content straight from the database, leaves the old site untouched and can be rerun.

▼ Other options and when to use them

- **Manual copy and paste**
  : Sites with a few dozen pages.
- **Developer-built migration scripts**
  : Complex custom content types or very large sites.

TOOLS FOR THIS PLAN

Are you ready?
22-question readiness check

Plan your dates
Dated countdown you can add to your calendar

Compare options
WordPress hosting compared

New to the jargon?
Plain-English migration glossary

ORDER TO MIGRATE IN, AND WHY

Content first, design second, redirects before launch.

1. **Content and URL inventory**
   Every old URL that gets traffic needs a redirect.
2. **WordPress staging site**
   Lets you import and rebuild while the old site stays live.
3. **Import with the FG plugin**
   Copies content, categories, tags and images from the database.
4. **Theme and plugins**
   Templates, extensions and modules do not transfer.
5. **Redirects and checks**
   Keeps rankings and links working.
6. **Domain switch and Search Console**
   Moves visitors and search engines to WordPress.

SETTINGS CHECKLIST: DECIDE THESE BEFORE YOU COPY

Built-in and third-party tools treat these differently. Tick each one off once you have decided.

Download this checklist (Excel)

What the importer moves

Free or premium importer, or manual work for the rest.

▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	WordPress has no built-in Joomla or Drupal importer.
FG Joomla to WordPress	Free: sections, categories, posts, images, media and tags. Premium: users with passwords, menus, URL redirects and add-ons such as K2 and JComments. Tested with Joomla 1.5 to 6.0.
FG Drupal to WordPress	Free: articles, basic pages, categories, tags and images. Premium: comments, users, custom fields, menus and URL redirects. Tested with Drupal 4 to 11.

Tip: Run the free version on staging first to see how much else you need.

WordPress.org: FG Joomla to WordPress

Database access

How WordPress reaches the old database.

▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	Both importers connect to the old database with the details in Joomla's configuration.php or Drupal's sites/default/settings.php.
FG Joomla to WordPress	Needs remote MySQL access between hosts, or a copy of the Joomla database on the WordPress host; PDO and PDO_MySQL enabled.

Tip: Copy the old database to the WordPress host to avoid opening remote MySQL access.

WordPress.org: FG Drupal to WordPress

Security status of the old site

How urgent the move is.

▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	Drupal 7 security support ended on 5 January 2025. Joomla 3.10 support ended on 17 August 2023.

Tip: Lock down admin access on the old site while the project runs.

Drupal.org: Drupal 7 end of life

- [ ] **Redirects**
  Plugin redirects or a redirect map.

  ▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	WordPress: redirects are added with a plugin or at the web server.
FG Joomla to WordPress	Premium redirects Joomla URLs to the new WordPress URLs.
FG Drupal to WordPress	Premium redirects Drupal URLs to the new WordPress URLs.

Tip: Export your top landing pages from analytics and test each one.

WordPress.org: FG Drupal to WordPress

THE PLAN, PHASE BY PHASE

1 Inventory and staging Week 1

List content types, extensions or modules, and top URLs.

Set up WordPress on a staging address.

Copy the old database to the

WordPress host.

> **Watch out:** Remote database access may be blocked between hosts.
>
> **WAYS AROUND IT**
>
> - Import a copy of the old database on the WordPress host.

Show the detailed steps (1) →

2 Import content — Week 1 to 2

Install the FG plugin and enter database details.

Run the import and check posts, pages and images.

> **Watch out:** Users, menus and comments need the premium importer.
>
> **WAYS AROUND IT**
>
> - Recreate them by hand on small sites.

Show the detailed steps (2) →

3 Rebuild — Weeks 2 to 4

Choose and set up

a theme.

Replace extensions or modules with plugins.

Check forms, search and SEO titles.

> **Watch out:** Templates and extensions do not transfer.
>
> **WAYS AROUND IT**
>
> - Rebuild the design in a WordPress theme.

Show the detailed steps (2) →

4 Redirect and launch

Launch week

Add redirects and test them.

Rerun the import for new content, then switch the domain.

Submit the

sitemap and watch 404s.

> **Watch out:** Old URL patterns differ from WordPress permalinks.
>
> **WAYS AROUND IT**
>
> - Map each old URL in a redirect map.

Show the detailed steps (2) →

You are finished when

- All content is in WordPress and checked.
- Every old URL with traffic redirects to its new page.
- The domain points to WordPress and the sitemap is submitted.
- The old site is archived and switched off.

CLICK BY CLICK

What does each step involve?

Open a part when you reach it in the plan. Each step says where to go, what to do and what you should see.

About this migration

What it covers, limits at a glance −

Many Joomla 3 and Drupal 7 sites are now running without security support. Moving to WordPress means copying content out of the old database, rebuilding the design as a WordPress theme, replacing extensions or modules with plugins and redirecting old URLs so search engines and bookmarks follow.
Both importers are plugins in the WordPress directory and read the old database without changing the old site. Moving a WordPress site between hosts instead? See WordPress migration.

TOOL	CONNECTION	FREE VERSIONS MOVE
FG Joomla to WordPress or FG	**Reads the old site's database directly**	**Articles, pages, categories, tags and images**

Drupal to WordPress plugin

PREMIUM VERSIONS ADD
Users, menus, comments and URL redirects

DRUPAL 7
Security support ended 5 January 2025

JOOMLA 3.10
Support ended 17 August 2023

1 What do you need before you migrate a Joomla or Drupal site to WordPress?

Need	Details	Where to get it
Old database details	Host, name, user, password and table prefix.	configuration.php (Joomla) or sites/default/settings.php (Drupal)
WordPress staging site	PHP with PDO and PDO_MySQL, and allow_url_fopen on.	Your host
Full backup of the old site	Files and database.	Your host
Redirect map	Old URLs to new.	The 301 redirect map template

2 Prepare the staging site

1 step

1 Copy the old database

Where: Your host's database tool or the command line

Export the old database and import it into a new database on the WordPress host. See export and import a MySQL database.

✓ **You should see:** The old database is reachable from WordPress.

3 Run the importer

2 steps

1

Install and configure the plugin

Where: WordPress admin > Plugins > Add New, then Tools > Import

Install FG Joomla to WordPress or FG Drupal to WordPress, open its importer, enter the database details and table prefix, and test the connection.

✓ **You should see:** The connection test succeeds.

2

Import and check

Where: The importer screen

Click **Start / Resume the import** in the importer. Then check a sample of posts, pages, categories and images against the old site.

✓ **You should see:** Content and images appear in WordPress.

4 Redirect and launch

2 steps

1

Add redirects

Where: WordPress redirect plugin or web server

Add redirects from every old URL. See set up 301 redirects and test with a hosts file.

✓ **You should see:** Old URLs return 301 to the new pages.

2

Switch the domain

Where: DNS host

Rerun the import for recent content, point the domain at WordPress, update the site address and submit the sitemap. Follow the website launch checklist.

✓ **You should see:** The domain serves WordPress.

WORTH KNOWING

What can go wrong, and how do you avoid it?

The detail behind the plan: options compared, and what experienced engineers check first. Tap any item.

Compare all the ways to do this

3 options –

FG importer plugin — LOW EFFORT

Best for: Most Joomla and Drupal sites

+ Reads database directly
+ Can rerun
+ Old site untouched
– Users, menus and redirects need premium

Manual copy — MEDIUM EFFORT

Best for: Very small sites

+ Clean content
– Slow

Custom scripts — HIGH EFFORT

Best for: Complex content types

+ Full control
– Developer time

OUR ADVICE

Use the FG importer for your platform on a staging site. Decide on the premium version once you see what the free import leaves out.

The old site may be unsupported

REDUCES RISK

Drupal 7 security support ended on 5 January 2025, and Joomla 3.10 support ended on 17 August 2023.

WHAT TO DO

Treat the move as urgent and limit admin access to the old site meanwhile.

Drupal.org: Drupal 7 end of life

Extended support is an option for Drupal 7

COST LEVER

The Drupal Association runs an Extended Security Support Provider Program for Drupal 7 sites that cannot migrate in time.

WHAT TO DO

Consider it only as a bridge while you migrate.

Drupal.org: Drupal 7 end of life

Users and menus may need premium

SAVES TIME

The free FG importers do not move users or menus; their premium versions do.

WHAT TO DO

Count users and menu items to decide whether to rebuild by hand.

WordPress.org: FG Joomla to WordPress

The import leaves the old site untouched

REDUCES RISK

FG Drupal to WordPress only reads from the Drupal database.

WHAT TO DO

Keep the old site live until launch, and rerun the import for late content.

WordPress.org: FG Drupal to WordPress

Media copying needs allow_url_fopen

SAVES TIME

FG Joomla to WordPress needs PHP's allow_url_fopen on to copy media files.

WHAT TO DO

Check this with your host before the import.

WordPress.org: FG Joomla to WordPress

FINISH SAFELY

How do you check it worked, or roll back?

Full validation checklist

4 checks

Run these before you declare the migration complete. Record the results in the data validation report.

Check	How to check	What good looks like
Content counts	Compare articles and pages in old and new.	They match.
Images	Open a sample of pages.	No broken images.
Redirects	Test top URLs.	301 to the right page.
Search Console	Watch 404s after launch.	No rise in errors for important pages.

Rollback plan

If it goes wrong

ROLL BACK IF

- Key pages broken after launch
- Search traffic drops sharply from missing redirects

POINT OF NO RETURN

The old site is unchanged. Until you delete it, rollback is pointing the domain back.

1

Point the domain back

Where: DNS host

Restore the old DNS records.

✓ **You should see:** The old site loads.

2

Fix and retry

Where: WordPress staging

Fix redirects or content, then relaunch.

✓ **You should see:** A clean relaunch.

Agree the triggers and who decides before the go / no-go meeting. Use the rollback plan template.

Common problems and fixes

4 errors −

`Importer cannot connect to the database`

Cause: Wrong details or remote MySQL blocked.

Fix: Copy the database to the WordPress host and use local details.

`Images missing after import`

Cause: allow_url_fopen off, or old site unreachable.

Fix: Turn it on and keep the old site online during import.

`Old URLs return 404`

Cause: No redirects.

Fix: Add redirects from the redirect map.

`Users cannot log in`

Cause: Users not imported.

Fix: Use the premium importer or create accounts.

Search the full error library →

FAQ

Frequently asked questions

Does WordPress import Joomla or Drupal on its own? –

No. Use an importer plugin such as FG Joomla to WordPress or FG Drupal to WordPress.

Will my design move? –

No. Rebuild it in a WordPress theme.

Does the import change the old site? –

No. It reads the old database.

Which Drupal versions work? –

FG Drupal to WordPress lists Drupal 4 to 11 as tested.

SOURCES

Official sources

4 official pages this guide is based on

Vendors change limits and features, so confirm details on the source before you rely on them. Last checked 4 Nov 2026.

- WordPress.org: FG Joomla to WordPress
- WordPress.org: FG Drupal to WordPress
- Drupal.org: Drupal 7 end of life
- Joomla Community Magazine: Joomla 3.10 end of support handling