Connecting to a MySQL Database from Outside the Server: WHM, cPanel Remote Database Access and the Firewall

WHM/cPanel · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/enable-remote-mysql/

How it works Three layers must allow the connection: the account owner adds the outside machine's IP in **Remote Database Access** in cPanel, port **3306** is opened in the firewall for that address only, and (optionally) you add it in **Manage Database Access Hosts** in WHM for every account.

Embedded media: https://www.hyyat.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/hyyat-srv-remotesql-en.mp4?_=1

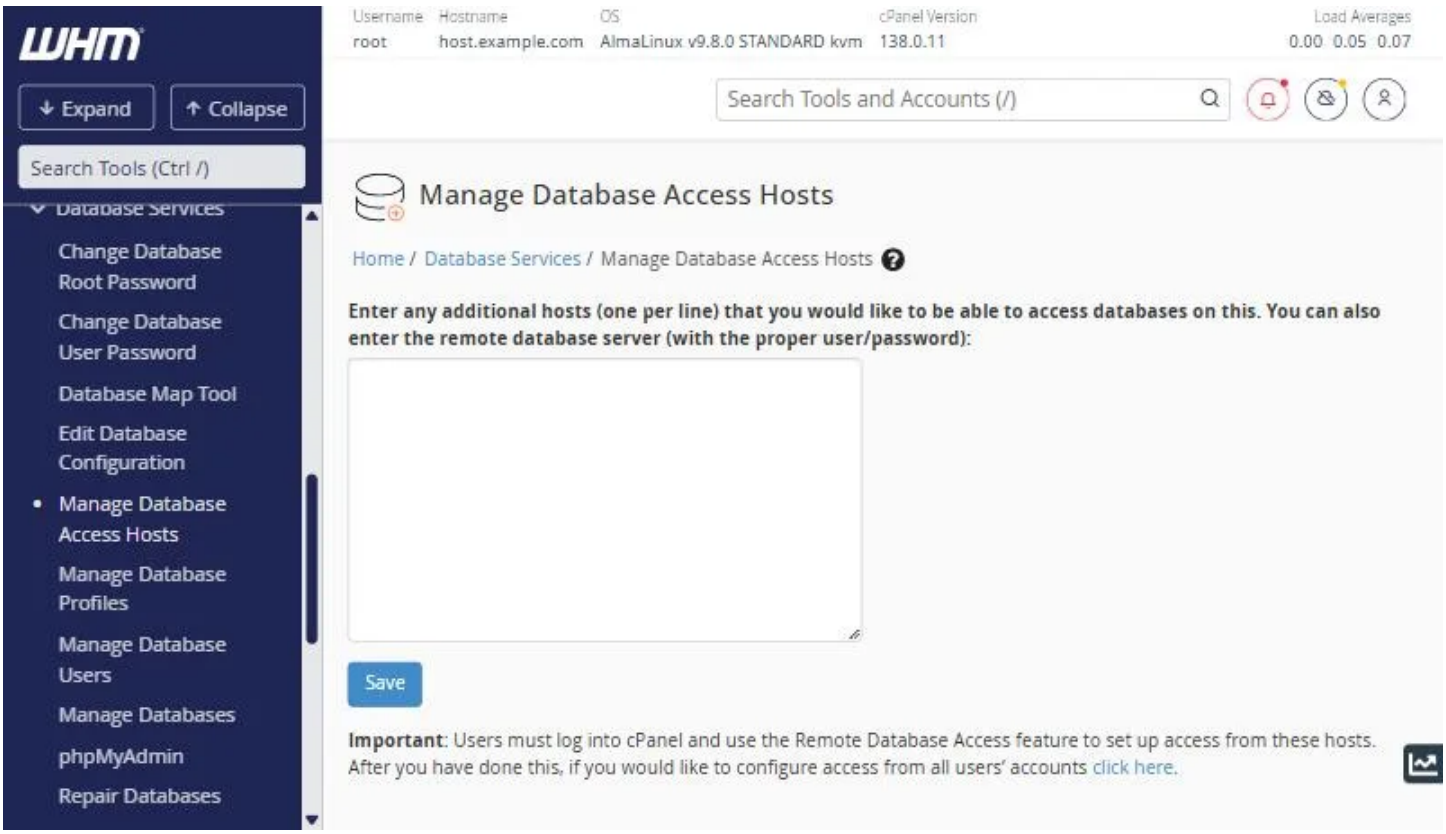
Sometimes accounting software on an office PC, or an app on another server, needs to read the site's database directly. MySQL refuses any connection that does not come from the server itself by default, which is good for security. This guide opens the door for one specific address only.

Layer one: the account's cPanel

In the database owner's cPanel, open **Remote Database Access** under Databases, enter the outside machine's IP and click Add Host. This is what gives the database user permission to connect from that address.

Layer two: WHM (for all accounts)

`WHM › Database Services › Manage Database Access Hosts`



Enter one address per line and Save. As the page itself says, this is not enough on its own: the account owner must add the address in Remote Database Access, or you click the link at the bottom to apply the addresses to every account.

Layer three: the firewall

Open port 3306 to one address, not the world. In CSF, add a line to `/etc/csf/csf.allow`:

```
tcp|in|d=3306|s=203.0.113.5   # accounting PC
csf -r
```

If your provider has an external firewall, allow the same address there. Ports are covered in opening a port in CSF.

Never put % (any host) in Remote Database Access, and never open 3306 in TCP_IN for everyone. A database open to the world is a permanent target for password guessing.

Connection details to give the app

Field	Value
Host	The server’s IP or hostname, not localhost
Port	3306
Database	The full name with prefix, such as user_dbname
User	The full database user with prefix, not the cPanel user
Password	The database user’s password

A safer alternative: an SSH tunnel

Instead of opening 3306, the app can connect through an SSH tunnel: it connects to the server on the SSH port, then reaches the database locally. Tools such as HeidiSQL and DBeaver support this directly.

Connection errors

Message	Likely cause
`Host ... is not allowed to connect`	The address is not in Remote Database Access
`Can’t connect ... (110)` or a timeout	The port is closed in the firewall or at the provider
`Access denied for user`	Wrong username or password, or the prefix is missing
Works, then stops	The outside machine’s IP changed (a home connection with a dynamic address)

A full example: accounting software in the office

1. **Is the office IP fixed?** Ask the internet provider. If it changes, an SSH tunnel or VPN suits better than opening the port.

2. **The account owner adds the address** in Remote Database Access in cPanel.
3. **You open the port for that address** one line in csf.allow as above.
4. **Test from the office** `mysql -h server-address -u user_db -p`, or from the software itself.
5. **Document it** note why the port was opened and for which address, so you can close it when no longer needed.

Remote access questions

Can I allow a range of addresses?
Yes. Remote Database Access accepts a form such as 203.0.113.%, but keep the range as narrow as possible.

Is the connection encrypted?
Not by default. For sensitive data, use an SSH tunnel or an SSL connection if the app supports it.

Does this work on shared hosting?
Yes, through Remote Database Access in cPanel, provided the port is allowed on the server. Ask support if it does not work.

Does remote access affect site performance?
Heavy queries from the outside app use the same database resources, so watch them if they are large.

Related guides

- Opening a Port in the CSF Firewall: From WHM or csf.conf, Plus the Common cPanel Ports
- Basic MySQL Commands to Manage Databases over SSH
- Create a MySQL Database and User in cPanel: With the Wizard or by Hand
- Upgrading MySQL to MariaDB on a cPanel/whm server

All WHM guides →

Need this service from Hyyat Host?Our team handles it for you, with support replying to tickets within 24 hours at most.
Server Managementdedicated server