Installing WordPress Plugins: Searching the Directory, Uploading a .zip, via FTP, and When to Trust a Plugin

WordPress Guides · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/install-wordpress-plugins/

Short answer In **Plugins › Add Plugin**, search for the plugin, click **Install Now**, then **Activate**. For a premium plugin: **Upload Plugin** and choose the .zip file. If the upload fails, upload the plugin folder to `wp-content/plugins` via FTP, then activate it on the Plugins screen.

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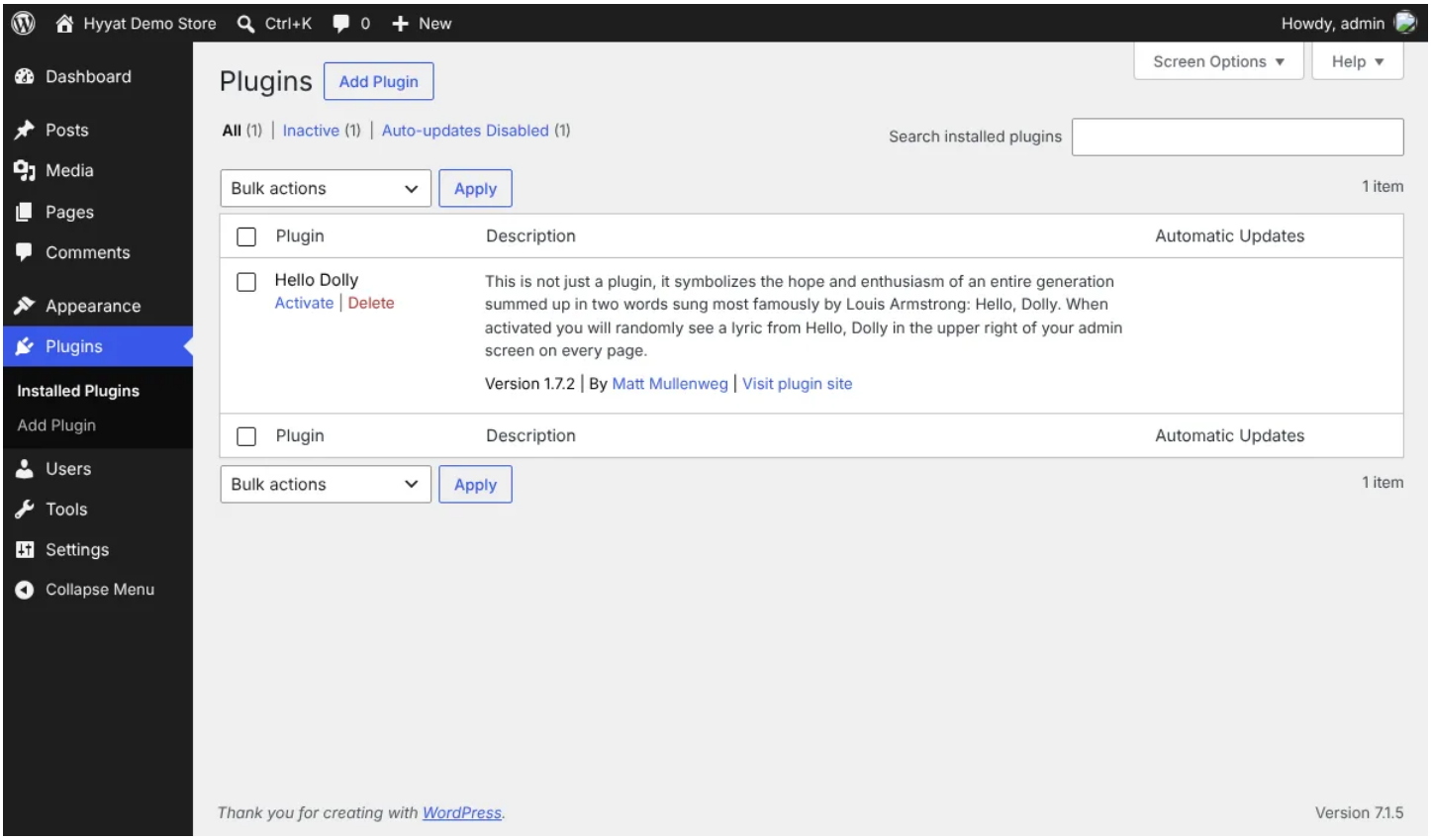
A plugin is a small program that adds a feature: a contact form, a shop, SEO, backups. Every plugin is new code running on your site, so choose a few trustworthy ones.

The Plugins screen

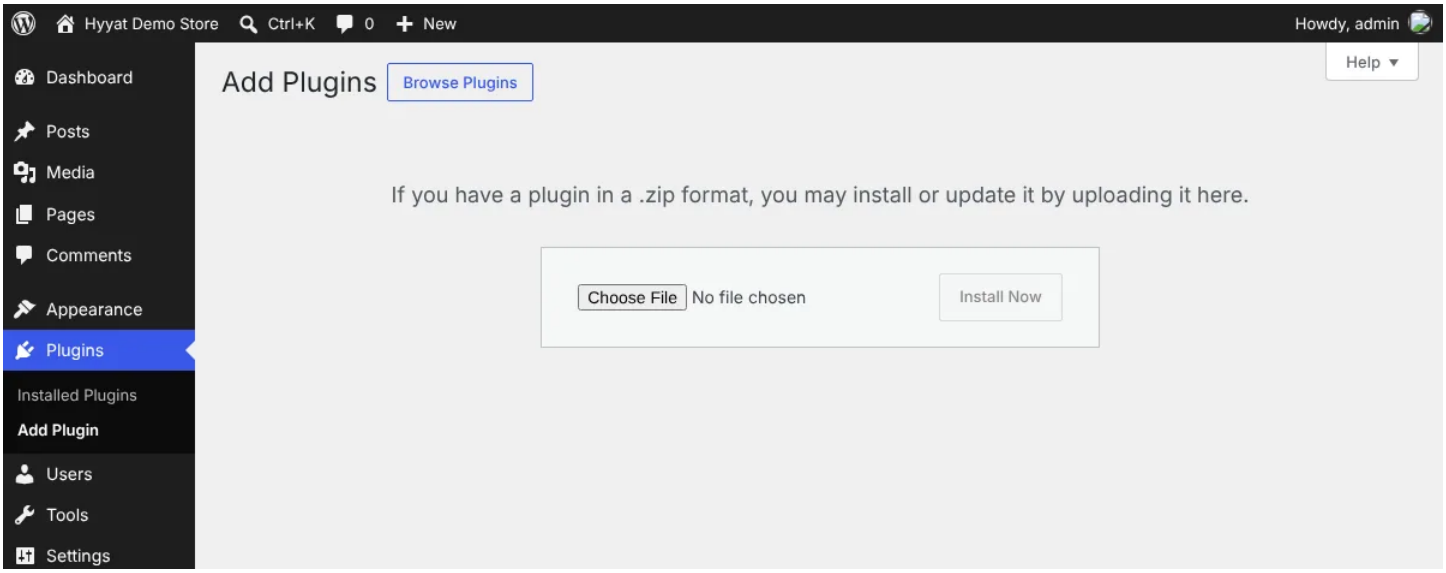


Plugins lists everything installed, active and inactive, with buttons to activate, deactivate and delete, plus an automatic updates option for each plugin.

Method 1: Searching the directory

1. **Plugins** › **Add Plugin** shows popular and recommended plugins.
2. **Search** by name or by job, such as contact form.
3. **Install Now** then **Activate**.

Method 2: Uploading a .zip



1. **Add Plugin, then Upload Plugin** at the top.
2. **Choose File** and select the .zip as downloaded from the seller.
3. **Install Now** then **Activate Plugin**.

The same screen updates a premium plugin: upload the newer version and WordPress compares the two versions and offers **Replace current with uploaded**.

Method 3: FTP or File Manager

When the upload fails because of size or permissions. The full steps are in installing a plugin manually .

How to choose a trustworthy plugin

Look at	Good sign	Red flag
Last updated	Within recent months	Not updated for years
Compatibility	Tested with the current WordPress	A warning that it has not been tested
Source	The WordPress directory or the developer's site	A "free premium" copy from an unknown site
Support	The developer answers questions	Many questions with no answers

A common mistake: Installing two plugins that do the same job, such as two caching or two SEO plugins. They usually clash and slow or break the site.

After activating

- Open the plugin's settings from the side menu or the Settings link under it.
- Turn on automatic updates for plugins you trust in the **Automatic Updates** column.
- If the site breaks after activating, deactivate it. If you are locked out: disabling plugins from cPanel .

Try it now: Deactivate Hello Dolly if it is there, then delete it. Unused plugins add nothing; delete them rather than just deactivating.

Automatic updates: which plugins?

Turn them on for large, well-known plugins that ship fast security fixes, and for security plugins. Hold off for shop and page-builder plugins, whose major updates can change how the site looks; update those yourself after a backup. If you use WP Toolkit, its updates feature handles this from one place.

Core plugins for most sites

Need	Type of plugin
SEO	One SEO plugin for page titles, descriptions and the sitemap
Security	One security plugin, plus WP Toolkit settings; see security plugins

Need	Type of plugin
Backups	WP Toolkit or a backup plugin
Forms	A contact form plugin
Speed	One caching plugin, such as AccelerateWP on our servers; see speeding up WordPress

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Our customers asked

How many plugins can a site handle?
There is no fixed number. One bad plugin weighs more than ten good ones. Install what you really need and delete the rest.

I cannot see Add Plugin
Either your account is not an Administrator, or plugin installs are disabled in wp-config.php with DISALLOW_FILE_MODS.

Is a deactivated plugin a risk?
A small one, since its files are still on the server. Delete what you do not use.

How do I update a plugin whose update failed?
Follow the manual FTP update.

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