Tuning Apache on a cPanel Server: Global Configuration, MPM, PHP-FPM, Compression and Caching

WHM/cPanel · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/optimizing-apache-web-server-on-whm/

Where to start The biggest gain is usually not a number in httpd.conf but how PHP runs: turn on **PHP-FPM** for sites in MultiPHP Manager and use the **event** MPM in EasyApache 4. Then tune **Global Configuration** carefully for the server's memory, and test the configuration before every restart.

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

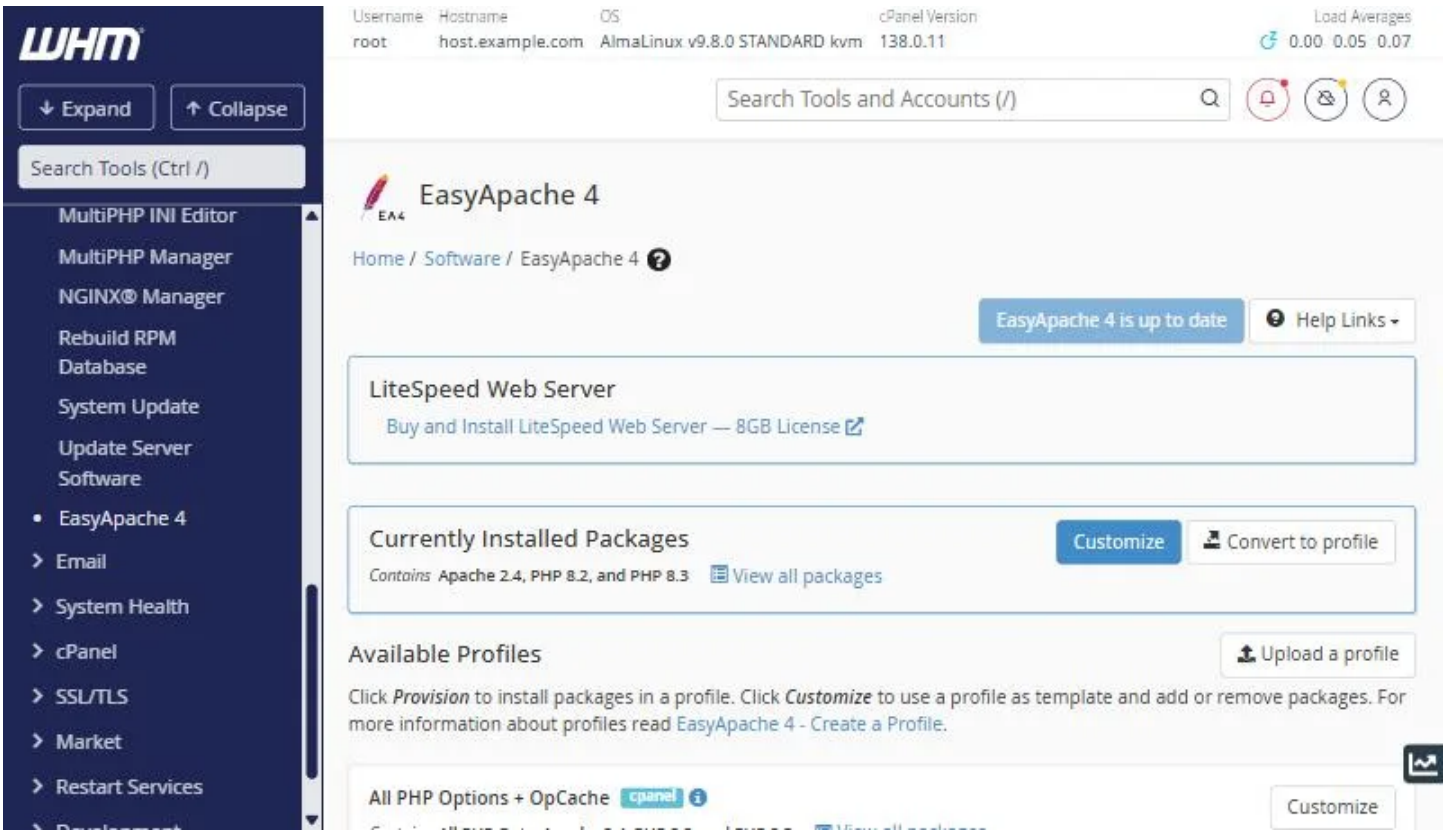
Put simply: Apache is like a restaurant: each visitor's request needs a "waiter". Hire more waiters than the kitchen (memory) can hold and they crowd each other; hire too few and customers queue. Tuning is finding the right number and making each waiter quicker.

Step one: how PHP runs

Most sites on cPanel are PHP, and how PHP is executed affects performance more than any other setting. **PHP-FPM** keeps PHP processes ready and separate from Apache, easing memory pressure and improving response time. Turn it on for every site or selected accounts in **Software, then MultiPHP Manager**.

Step two: the right MPM

`WHM › Software › EasyApache 4`

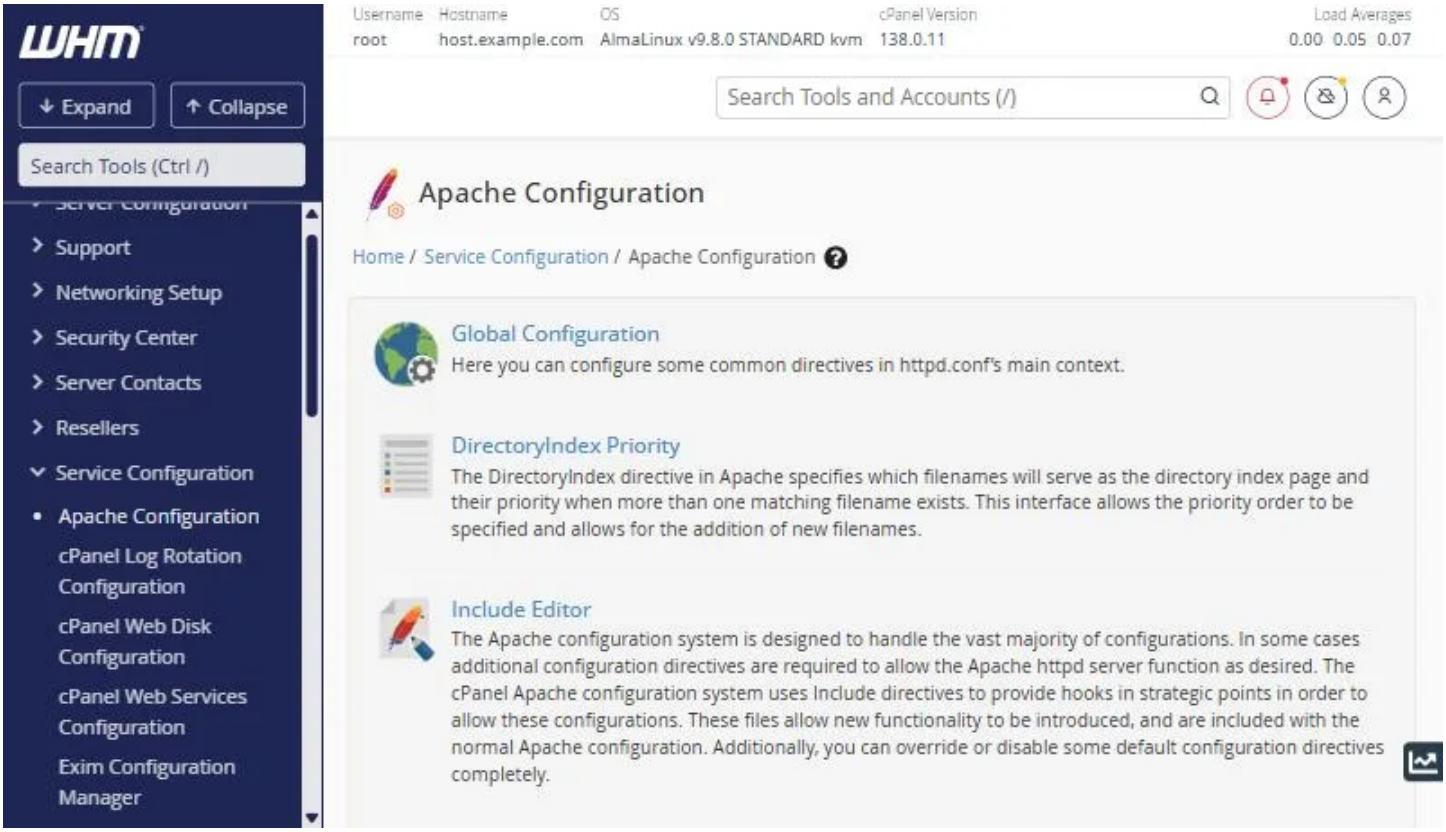


MPM	How it works	Suits
event	Threads serve connections and handle idle ones efficiently	Most modern servers with PHP-FPM
worker	Several threads per process	A close alternative to event
prefork	A whole process per connection, using more memory	Legacy cases needing modules that do not work with threads

In EasyApache 4 click Customize beside Currently Installed Packages, then Apache MPM, choose event, review and provision. EasyApache rebuilds and restarts Apache itself.

Step three: Global Configuration

`WHM › Service Configuration › Apache Configuration › Global Configuration`



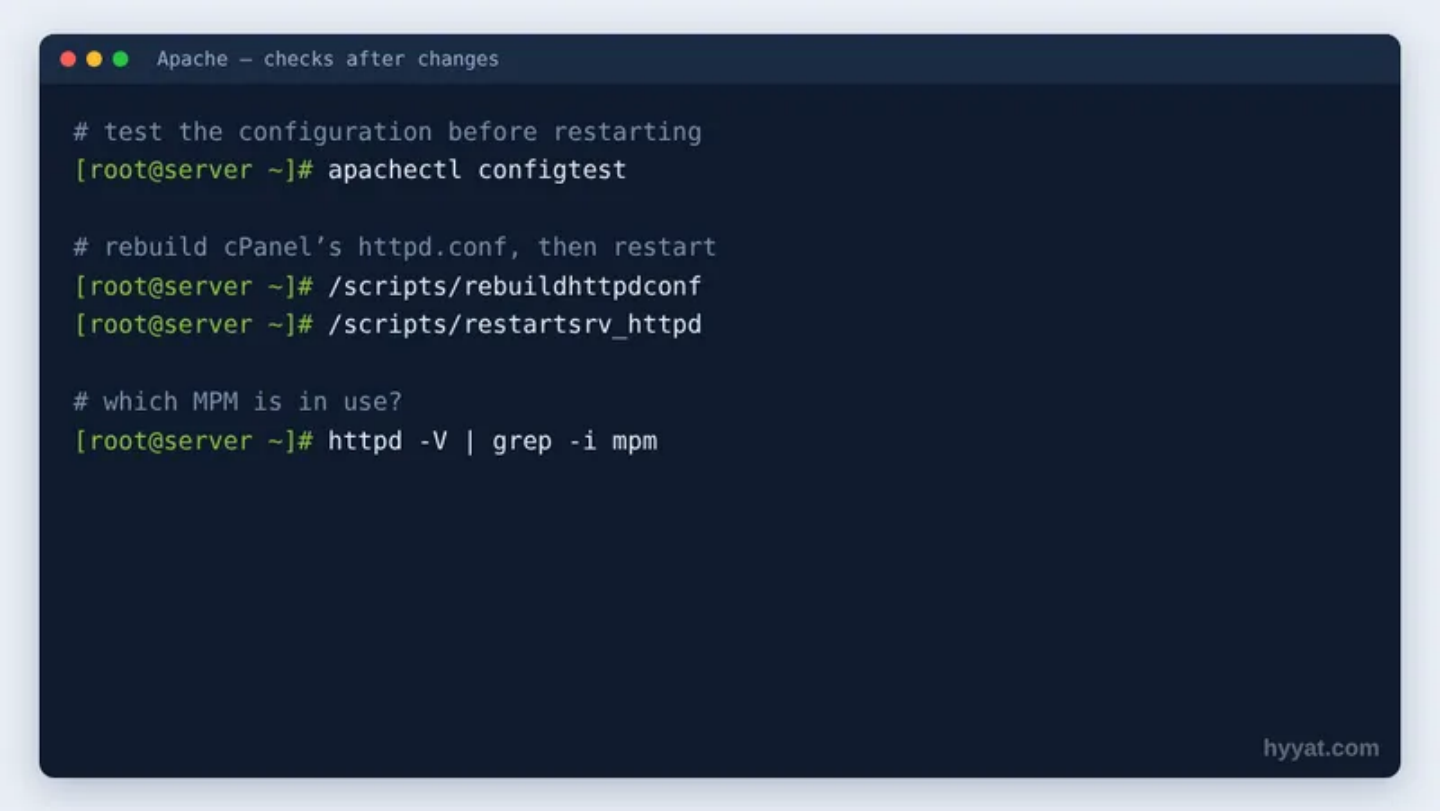
Setting	Controls	Advice
Max Request Workers	The most requests served at once	Raise it according to available memory, not by guesswork
Server Limit	A ceiling tied to the previous setting	Must allow the Max Request Workers value
Keep-Alive and **Keep-Alive Timeout**	Keeping a visitor’s connection open for follow-up requests	On with a short timeout beats a long one
Timeout	How long Apache waits for a slow request	A moderate value limits stuck connections
Max Requests Per Child	Recycling processes after a number of requests	Contains memory leaks in older modules

No numbers suit every server. Raise values gradually and watch memory in Process Manager and Apache Status. Values above what memory can hold push the server into swap and make it slower.

Step four: compression and caching

- **Compression**: mod_deflate (or brotli if available) in EasyApache 4 shrinks HTML, CSS and JS before sending.
- **Cache headers**: mod_expires tells browsers to reuse images and static files.
- **At site level**: a WordPress caching plugin saves PHP and the database more than any Apache setting.

Test before you restart



One mistake in the Include Editor can take every site down. `apachectl configtest` catches it before visitors do.

How to measure the result

Compare before and after: load time of a known site's home page, server load at peak times, and the number of Apache workers in Apache Status. If one site is the slow one, the cause is probably in that site; see why is my website slow.

Apache performance questions

Should I switch to LiteSpeed or NGINX instead?

You can; each has its strengths. But Apache with PHP-FPM and the event MPM performs well for most cPanel servers with no extra licence cost.

Should I edit httpd.conf by hand?

No. cPanel rebuilds the file and your edits are lost. Use Global Configuration and the Include Editor.

I raised Max Request Workers and the server got slower

You probably exceeded memory. Lower the value and watch per-process memory.

Related guides

- Checking cPanel Server Health in WHM: Load, Memory, Processes and Services in Five Screens
- Restarting Services in WHM: Apache, Database, Mail and DNS Without Rebooting the Server
- The most common problems faced by WHM / cPanel users
- Why Is My Website Slow? 8 Causes and How to Find Yours

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.

Web HostingSaudi Hosting