Password Protect a Folder in cPanel (Directory Privacy): Steps, and What It Does and Does Not Protect

cPanel Guides · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/password-protect-directory-cpanel/

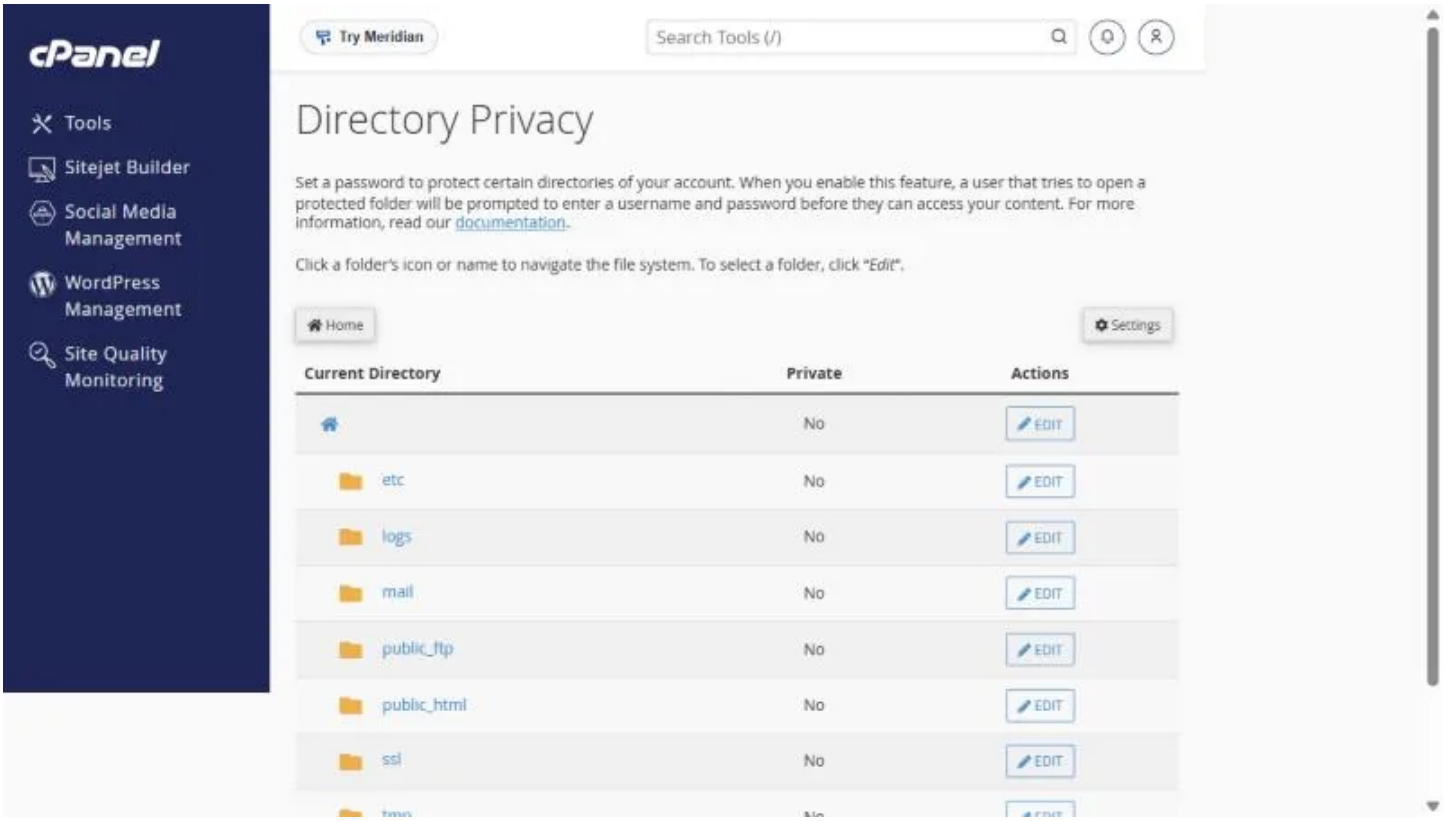
The idea in two linesDirectory Privacy makes the browser ask for a username and password before a folder opens. Click **Edit** next to the folder, tick **Password protect this directory**, enter a name and click **Save**, then create a user with a password.

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

You have a staging copy of your site that visitors should not see, or a folder of files meant for clients only. Directory Privacy puts a simple lock on the folder: anyone who opens it gets a small browser prompt asking for login details, and without them they see nothing.

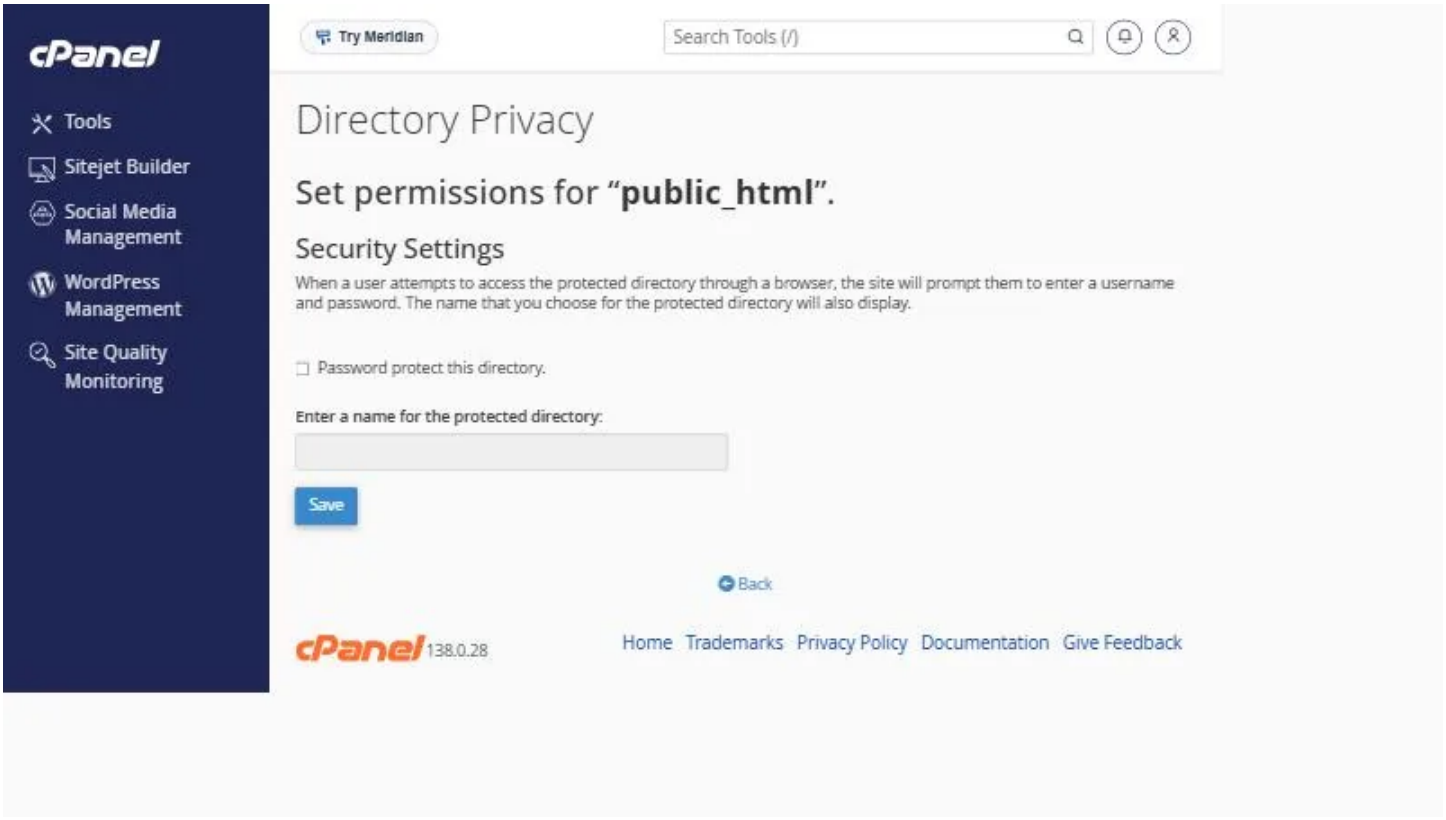
Stage one: choose the folder

1. **Open Directory Privacy** in the Files section of cPanel.
2. **Navigate to the folder** click a folder name or icon to go inside it.
3. **Click Edit** next to the folder you want to protect.



Stage two: turn protection on

1. **Tick Password protect this directory** on the Security Settings page.
2. **Enter a name for the protected directory** visitors see it in the password prompt, such as Client Area.
3. **Click Save** then Back to reach the user section.



Stage three: create a user

Protection on its own locks everyone out. Create at least one user with a name and password. You can add several users to the same folder and remove any of them later without turning protection off.

What this protection suits

Good for	Not good for
A staging site or a site under construction	A customer login system with many accounts
A private downloads folder for your team	Protecting a single page inside WordPress
An extra layer on an admin folder	A replacement for updates and strong passwords

Before you protect wp-admin: some plugins use files inside it for visitors, such as `admin-ajax.php`, so parts of your site may break. Test on a staging site first.

Removing protection

Go back to the same folder, click Edit, untick protection and click Save. The tool writes its settings into the folder's `.htaccess` file, so do not delete that file by hand or the protection disappears.

Frequently asked questions

Does protection cover subfolders?
Yes, everything inside the protected folder needs the password.

I forgot the folder password. What now?
Open Directory Privacy and change the user's password, or create a new user.

Does it protect against hacking?
It stops ordinary browsing only and does not replace updates and strong passwords.

Will it affect my Google ranking?
A protected folder is not indexed, which is usually what you want for a staging site.

Related guides

- How to Stop Your Website Files Being Listed in the Browser (cPanel Indexes)
- Create an FTP Account in cPanel for a Developer or Staff Member, Limited to One Folder
- cPanel File Manager: Open It, Show Hidden Files, Change Permissions and More
- Exposed Sensitive Files on Your Site: .env, .git and Backups, and How to Hide Them
- The Files and Databases Sections in cPanel: File Manager, FTP and Creating a Database

All cPanel 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