Restarting Services in WHM: Apache, Database, Mail and DNS Without Rebooting the Server

WHM/cPanel · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/restart-services-whm/

Fix in two lines From the **Restart Services** menu in WHM pick the service, such as **HTTP Server (Apache)**, and click **Restart**. It stops for a few seconds and comes back while everything else keeps running. If it does not come back, check its log before rebooting the server.

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

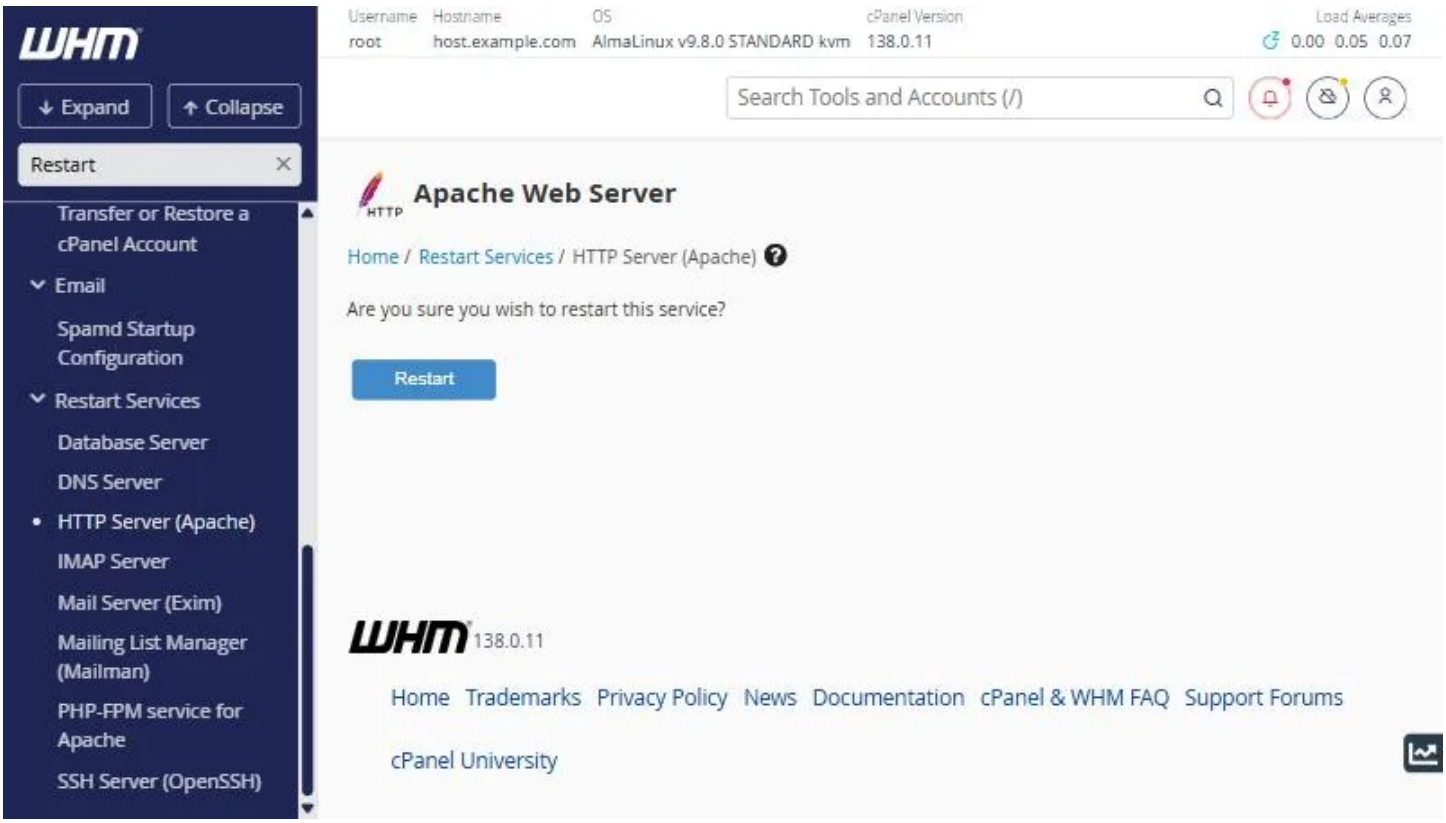
When sites stop responding or mail breaks, the cause is usually one service that has hung or eaten the memory. Restarting just that service fixes it in seconds, without taking mail down because you restarted the web server, or the other way round. It is quicker and less disruptive than rebooting the server.

Before you start

- Access to WHM as **root** at `https://your-server-hostname:2087` (or the server IP on port 2087). Avoid the old port 2086: it is not encrypted.
- An idea of which service is at fault. If you are not sure, start with Service Status in checking server health.

Where is the menu?

Restart Services is a group near the bottom of the WHM sidebar. Quickest: type `Restart` into the search box at the top of the menu.



Which service should you restart?

Menu item	What it runs	When to restart it
HTTP Server (Apache)	Serving websites	Sites do not load or return 503, or after editing Apache settings
PHP-FPM service for Apache	Running PHP	PHP sites are slow or return 503 while static pages work
Database Server	MySQL or MariaDB	WordPress shows “Error establishing a database connection”
Mail Server (Exim)	Sending and receiving mail	Messages stuck in the queue or not sending
IMAP Server	Dovecot, for reading mail	Mail apps and phones cannot connect
DNS Server	The nameserver	DNS edits do not show and this server is the domain’s nameserver

Menu item	What it runs	When to restart it
SSH Server (OpenSSH)	SSH logins	Only after editing SSH settings, and carefully
Mailing List Manager (Mailman)	Mailing lists	Mailing lists are not sending

Restarting a service

1. **Choose the service** from the Restart Services menu.
2. **Read the question** the page asks whether you are sure you wish to restart this service.
3. **Click Restart** WHM shows the result and the service status afterwards.
4. **Confirm it worked** look for a line saying the service is running, then test the site or mail.

Careful with SSH: if the SSH configuration has an error and you restart it, you can lock yourself out. Keep your SSH session open and test a new login from a second window before closing the first.

From the command line

cPanel ships a script for each service, run as root:

```
/scripts/restartsrv_httpd     # Apache
/scripts/restartsrv_mysql     # database
/scripts/restartsrv_exim      # mail transfer
/scripts/restartsrv_dovecot   # IMAP and POP3
/scripts/restartsrv_cpsrvd    # the cPanel and WHM interfaces themselves
```

The last one is handy when WHM or cPanel will not load while the sites themselves are fine.

The service will not come back?

1. **Read the error** WHM shows after Restart; it usually names the file or line at fault.
2. **Check the log** for Apache: `/etc/apache2/logs/error_log`; for the database, the error log in its data directory; for mail: `/var/log/exim_mainlog`.
3. **Undo the last change** most failures follow a manual configuration edit.
4. **Check disk space** a full disk stops many services starting. See Show Current Disk Usage.

Let the server restart them for you

cPanel's **chkservd** watches services and restarts any that stop. Choose which ones it monitors in **Service Configuration, then Service Manager**, by ticking **Monitor** for each service.

Check afterwards

- The service shows up in Service Status.
- The original problem is gone.
- No new errors in the log.

Service questions

Do sites go down when Apache restarts?
Only for a few seconds, and visitors may not notice.

Is mail lost when Exim restarts?
No. Queued messages are kept on disk and sent once the service is back.

What is the difference between restarting a service and rebooting?
A service restart restarts one program while the rest keep running; a reboot stops everything until the server boots again.

Related guides

- Rebooting Your Server from WHM: Graceful or Forceful, and What to Do If It Does Not Come Back
- How to Check Server Health in WHM (System Health)
- The most common problems faced by WHM / cPanel users
- cPanel and WHM on a VPS — The Complete 2026 Guide: What They Are, Licensing, and When to Choose Them

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