What Is an SSL Certificate and How Does It Work?

Website Security · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/what-is-an-ssl-certificate/

In short An SSL certificate is a digital file on the server that proves your site’s identity and encrypts the connection with visitors, so nobody on the way can read what is sent, such as passwords and order details. It shows the padlock and https in the browser; without it, browsers warn visitors that the site is “not secure”. Most Hyyat Host plans include a free certificate that is issued and renewed automatically.



What does the certificate do?

*1***Encrypts the connection**Data between the browser and your site travels encrypted, so eavesdroppers on networks such as public Wi-Fi cannot read it.

*2***Proves identity**A trusted authority confirms the domain belongs to the site owner, so another site cannot impersonate it.

*3***Earns trust from visitors and Google**Browsers warn about sites without https, and Google prefers secure sites.

SSL is an old name; the protocol used today is called **TLS**, but people still call it an “SSL certificate”.

How does it work? A simple walkthrough

1. **The browser connects to your site:** And asks for a secure connection over https.
2. **The server sends its certificate:** Containing the public key, the domain details and the issuer’s signature.
3. **The browser checks it:** Is it issued by a trusted authority? Is it for this domain? Is it still valid?
4. **They agree on a session key:** Using the public key and the private key that never leaves the server, they agree on a secret key for this visit.
5. **The visit is encrypted:** Everything sent afterwards is encrypted with the session key, and the padlock appears in the address bar.

Certificate types

Type	What the issuer verifies	Best for
DV: Domain Validation	Only that you control the domain; issued in minutes.	Most sites, blogs and small stores. Free certificates are this type.
OV: Organization Validation	The domain, and that the company legally exists.	Company sites that want their name in the certificate details.
EV: Extended Validation	A deeper check of the company and its documents.	Banks and organisations needing the highest level of verification.

Encryption strength is the same in all three; the difference is how much the site owner is verified.

Read the difference between free and paid certificates.

How to get a certificate for your site

- On most Hyyat Host plans, a free certificate is issued automatically with AutoSSL and renews by itself. For server owners: how to enable AutoSSL in WHM.

- After it is active, make your site always open on https, and if you see a “not secure content” warning, follow fixing WordPress HTTPS mixed content warnings.
- Need an OV or EV certificate? Open a ticket and we will help you order and install it.

The padlock does not mean a site is fully trustworthy: the certificate guarantees an encrypted connection and the right domain, but scam sites can get free certificates too. Always check the domain name before entering your details.

Frequently asked questions

Is an SSL certificate free with hosting?
Yes on most plans, and it is enabled automatically. A few very small plans do not include it; each plan’s page lists its details.

What happens if the certificate expires?
Visitors see a big warning that the connection is not secure. Automatic certificates renew themselves, so if you see the warning, open a ticket.

Does SSL protect my site from hacking?
No. It protects data only while it travels. To protect the site itself, read how to protect your website from hacking.

Related guides

- How to Keep Your Website Secure: Practical Tips to Prevent Hacking
- How to Protect Your Customers’ Data on Your Website: A Practical Guide
- Brute Force Protection: What It Is and How Hyyat Host Protects Your Site
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