What Is a DKIM Record? How It Signs Your Domain’s Mail, and Why Gmail and Outlook Reject Mail Without It

WHM/cPanel · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/what-is-dkim/

DefinitionDKIM is a digital signature your mail server adds to every message your domain sends. The server signs with a private key, and the receiver checks the signature against a public key published as a TXT record at `default._domainkey.yourdomain`. If they match, the receiver knows the message really came from your domain and was not altered on the way.

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

Put simply: DKIM is like a company seal on a letter. Only you hold the seal (the private key on the server), and an image of it is published for all to see (the public key in DNS). Any recipient compares the seal on the letter with the published image and knows the letter is genuine.

What DKIM proves, and what it does not

Proves	Does not prove
The message came from a server holding the domain’s key	That the content is not spam
The headers and body were not altered after sending	That the sender address the reader sees is honest; that is DMARC’s job

DKIM, SPF and DMARC together

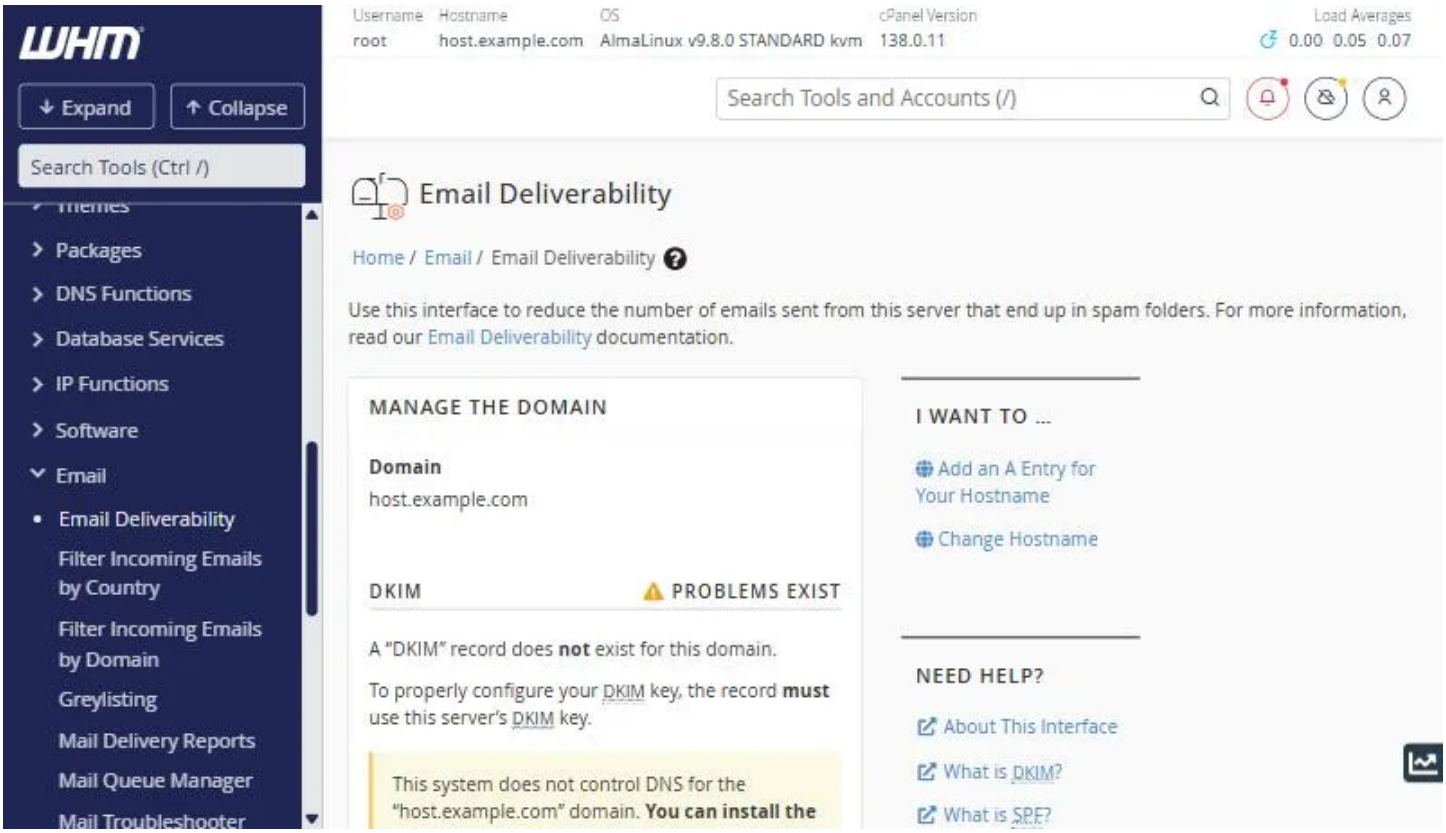
Record	Its question	Example
SPF	Is this server allowed to send for the domain?	`v=spf1 +a +mx +ip4:203.0.113.10 ~all`

Record	Its question	Example
DKIM	Is the message signed with the domain's key and unaltered?	A TXT record at `default._domainkey`
DMARC	What should the receiver do if both fail, and where to send reports?	`v=DMARC1; p=none; rua=mailto:...`

Gmail and Outlook now rely on all three to decide inbox or spam, especially for bulk senders. A domain without DKIM will often find its mail in spam.

Enabling it for every domain in WHM

`WHM › Email › Email Deliverability`



The tool lists every domain on the server with its DKIM, SPF and PTR state. If the domain's DNS is on this server, **Repair** fixes the record in one click. If DNS is elsewhere, such as Cloudflare, the page shows the record value to copy there, as in the example in the screenshot.

To enable DKIM and SPF on every account at once there is **Enable DKIM/SPF Globally** under Email, and Tweak Settings has options to enable both automatically for new accounts.

For one domain in cPanel

Site owners can enable it themselves in **Email Deliverability** in cPanel; the customer steps are in enabling SPF and DKIM in cPanel.

How to confirm it works

1. **Send a message to Gmail** then open it and choose Show original.
2. **Read the result** look for `DKIM: PASS` with your domain beside it.
3. **Or from the command line** `dig TXT default._domainkey.example.com +short` shows the published public key.

Why DKIM fails

Cause	Fix
The record is not published at the external DNS provider	Copy it from Email Deliverability into the DNS panel
The record is cut off or has extra spaces	Some DNS panels split long values; make sure it is complete
An old key after moving the site	The new server has a different key, so update the record
The message passed through a service that changed it	Some mailing lists modify content and break the signature

What a real DKIM record looks like

```
default._domainkey.example.com.  IN  TXT  "v=DKIM1; k=rsa;
p=MIIBIjANBgkqhkiG9w0BAQEFAAOCAQ8AMIIBCgKCAQEA..."
```

Part	Meaning

`default`	The key name (selector), which cPanel uses by default
`v=DKIM1`	The standard version
`k=rsa`	The key type
`p=...`	The public key itself, which is very long

The receiver knows which record to look up from the message's `DKIM-Signature` header, which carries the domain `d=` and the selector `s=`.

DKIM questions

Is DKIM alone enough for delivery?
No. It needs SPF, DMARC, an IP with a clean reputation and a correct PTR record alongside it.

Can a domain have more than one DKIM record?
Yes. Each sending service has its own key under a different selector, such as default for your server and google for Google.

Do I need to rotate the DKIM key?
It is not required, but rotating it periodically is good security practice for important domains.

Related guides

- Enable SPF and DKIM with Email Deliverability in cPanel So Your Mail Avoids Spam
- Limiting Emails per Hour for Each Domain in WHM: Max Hourly Emails and Package or Account Limits
- Why Do Your Website and Business Emails Go to Spam? Causes and Step-by-Step Fixes
- Creating a New cPanel Account in WHM: Every Field in Create a New Account Explained

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