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Installing HestiaCP on your VPS, step by step: a free panel with e-mail

VPS & Servers

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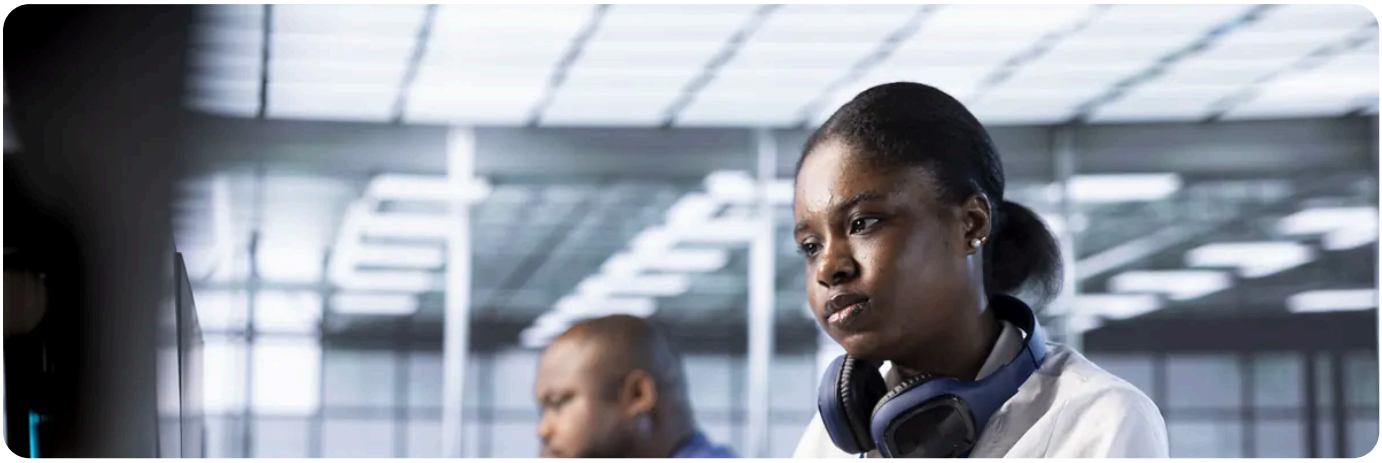

The short answer: HestiaCP is a free, open-source panel, **with no licence**, that installs the web server, PHP, databases, DNS and **e-mail** on your server. It has two requirements you cannot work around: **it only runs on Debian and Ubuntu LTS** (64-bit) and **only on a freshly installed system**. Of the systems you can pick with us, **Debian 12** and **Ubuntu 22.04** work; AlmaLinux, Rocky Linux, CloudLinux, Fedora and CentOS do not. The panel opens on port **8083**.

What you need before you start

Requirement	What HestiaCP asks for	On your server
System	Debian 12 or 13, Ubuntu 22.04, 24.04 or 26.04 LTS, 64-bit	Choose Debian 12 or Ubuntu 22.04. Debian 13 and Ubuntu 24.04 are available through a **support ticket**. Debian 10 and 11, Ubuntu 20.04 and 23.04 (not LTS) no longer work.
Clean install	Required	If the server has been used, ask for the system to be reinstalled through a support ticket.
Processor and memory	1 core and 1 GB (without SpamAssassin and ClamAV); 4 cores and 4 GB recommended	With 2 GB (VPS1, Cloud1), install without both (step 4).
Disk	10 GB minimum, 40 GB recommended	VPS plans start at 40 GB; Cloud1 has 25 GB.
Panel port	8083	Can be changed at install time with `--port`.

Installing, step by step

1. **Start with a clean system**, Debian 12 or Ubuntu 22.04. If the VPS has been used, back it up and ask for a reinstall through a **support ticket**: reinstalling erases everything.

2. **Log in over SSH as root**: `ssh root@server-IP`. The installer will not run without root. First time? See **the first steps with your VPS**.

3. **Download the installer:** `wget https://raw.githubusercontent.com/hestiacp/hestiacp/release/install/hst-install.sh` If it fails with a certificate error, install the certificates first: `apt-get update && apt-get install ca-certificates`.

4. **Run the installer** and answer its questions, among them the administrator's e-mail and the server name (hostname, for example `server.asuaempresa.ao`): `bash hst-install.sh` With 2 GB of memory, leave out the antivirus and the spam filter: `bash hst-install.sh --clamav no --spamassassin no`. Every option: `bash hst-install.sh -h`. At the end, the screen shows how to log in and an e-mail goes to the address you gave.

First login, first domain and SSL

1. **Open the panel** at `https://server.asuaempresa.ao:8083` or with the IP: `https://server-IP:8083`. Turn on two-factor authentication (2FA) for the admin user straight away.

2. **Give the panel a certificate:** with the hostname already pointing at the IP, in a new SSH session, `v-change-sys-hostname server.your-domain` `v-add-letsencrypt-host`

3. **Create a regular user** under Users, Add User, and put the sites there, not under admin. A user that already existed in Linux cannot be used.

4. **Add the domain:** log in as that user, open Web, Add Web Domain, type the domain and tick Create DNS zone (if DNS stays on the server) and Enable mail for this domain (if e-mail stays on the server).

5. **Point the domain at the server**: **pointing a domain at your VPS**. If you use Hestia's DNS, it needs at least two nameservers.

6 **Add SSL** once the domain already opens on the server: edit the domain, tick Enable SSL for this domain and Use Let's Encrypt to obtain SSL certificate, and save.

What usually goes wrong:

Installing on AlmaLinux, Rocky, a non-LTS release or a used system; asking for Let's Encrypt before the domain points at the server, with Cloudflare's proxy on, or with an IPv6 (AAAA) record pointing elsewhere (the error shows as «validation status 400», and the detail is in `/var/log/hestia/`). And firewall rules added by hand: Hestia clears them at the next change. Open ports under Server, Firewall.

E-mail is what asks the most of you.

To see whether the server can send, test outgoing port 25: `telnet ASPMX.L.GOOGLE.COM 25`. If it does not connect, the Hestia documentation points to an SMTP relay, in the mail domain settings. What remains your job is in **what HestiaCP gives you and what stays with you**. No need for e-mail on the server? See **CloudPanel**.

NEED A HAND?

Need a clean Debian 12 or Ubuntu 22.04 before you install, or another version? Ask us.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- Which control panel to install on your VPS: cPanel, Plesk, Webuzo, HestiaCP or CloudPanel
- HestiaCP and VestaCP on a VPS: what the panel gives you and what stays your job
- First steps with your VPS
- Pointing a domain at your own VPS: nameservers and glue records
- Common VPS and Cloud errors: SSH, memory, disk and reboots

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