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Recovering the Joomla administrator password

WordPress & CMS

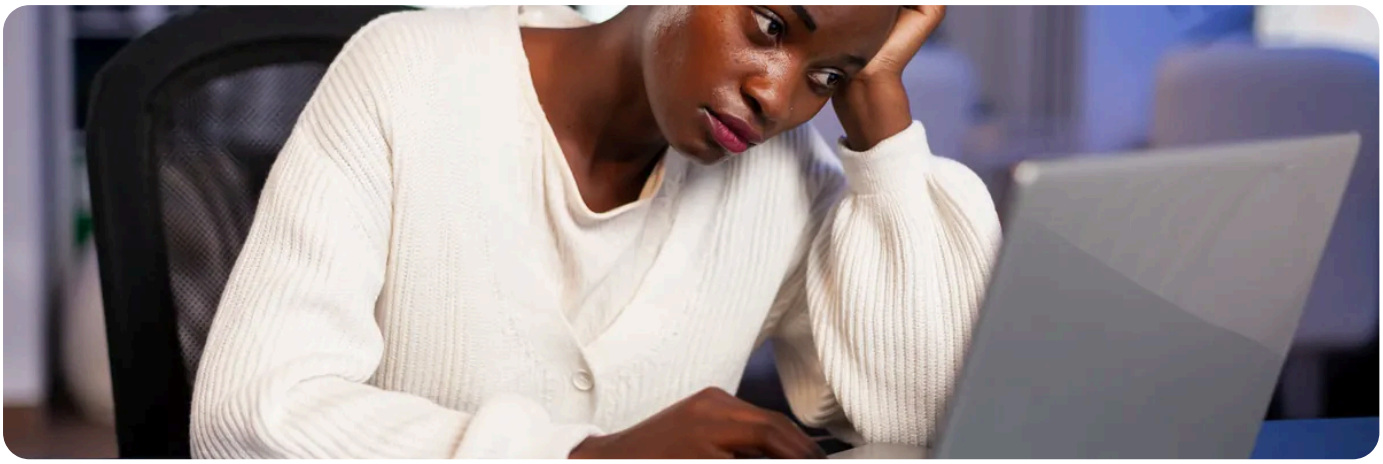
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Recovering the Joomla administrator password

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You cannot get into */administrator* any more. There are three ways back, and they are worth trying in this order: the first needs nothing, the second needs cPanel, the third writes to the database and is only for when the other two have failed.

> **First make sure it really is the password.**
> If the login page does not even open, or shows an error instead of the form, you have a different problem: see **website errors explained** and **error 403 Forbidden**.

1. From Joomla itself

1. Open your site address plus */administrator* and click **Forgot your password?**
2. Enter the e-mail address of the administrator account. Joomla sends you a link to set a new one.
3. If nothing arrives within a few minutes, check the junk folder, and if it is still missing move to route 2. Joomla depends on the site being able to send mail, and that is exactly what is usually misconfigured: see **why your e-mail is not sending**.

2. From cPanel, which is the safe route

If Joomla was installed with **Softaculous**, there is a button built for exactly this, and it needs no working e-mail at all.

1. In cPanel, open the **Softaculous Apps Installer** and click the **installations** icon, which lists everything already installed.
2. Find the row for your Joomla and click the pencil to **edit the installation details**.

3. Type the new password in the administrator field and save. Softaculous writes it straight into the Joomla database, hashed correctly.

4. Go back to */administrator* and sign in with your usual username and the new password.

If the installation is not in the list

, Joomla was set up by hand. You can pull it into the list with the Softaculous **Import** button, and from then on you get this button, plus backups and upgrades.

3. Through the database, when nothing else is left

Joomla keeps its users in a table ending in *users*, with whatever prefix was chosen at install time. This route **writes directly to the database** and has no undo.

1. **Export the database before touching anything.** It is explained in **creating databases and using phpMyAdmin**.

2. Find out which database Joomla uses: it is in *configuration.php*, at the root of the installation, in the database name field.

3. In phpMyAdmin, open that database and the table ending in *users*. Find the administrator row.

4. Edit the password field, choose the **MD5** function from the list beside it, type the new password and save. Joomla accepts that format and rehashes it properly on your first login.

5. Sign in at */administrator* and immediately change the password again from inside Joomla, in the user profile.

If the user has two-step authentication switched on, changing the password is not enough.

Joomla will still ask for the code. Either you have the recovery code it showed you when you turned it on, or the two-step plugin has to be disabled through the database. If you are at that point, open a ticket instead and we will do it with you.

So it does not happen again

Create a **second administrator user** on a different e-mail address, and keep both sets of credentials in a password manager. Check as well that the account e-mail is one you read every day. The same logic applies to your account with us: see **locked out**.

NEED A HAND?

None of the three worked? Tell us the domain and the directory where Joomla lives, and we will sort it out with you.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Password generator** →
- **Support Policy** →
- **Frequently asked questions** →

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