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Creating a database user and giving it the right privileges

phpMyAdmin & Management

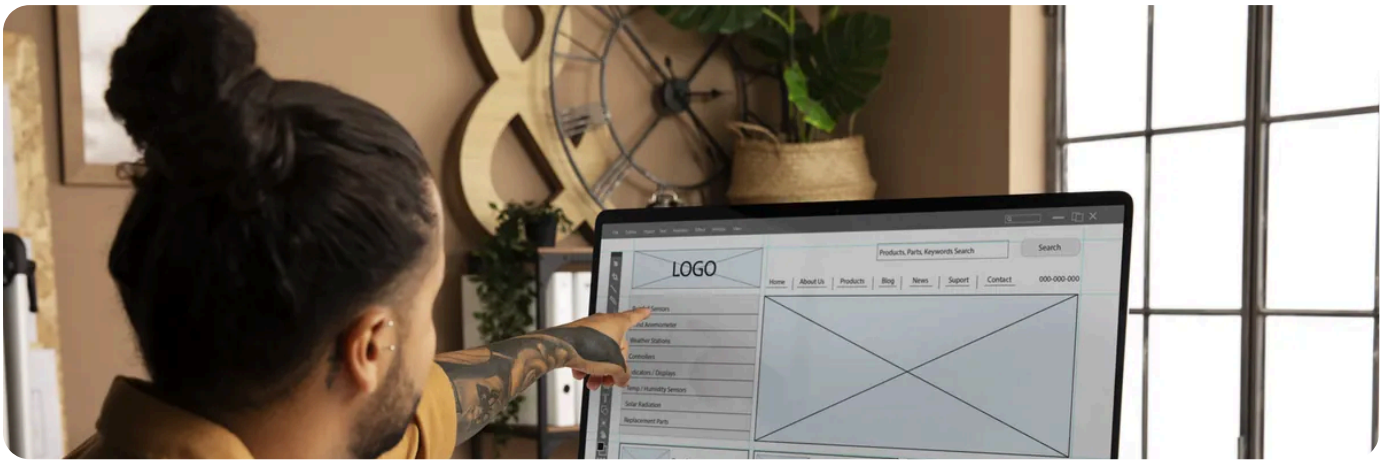
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Creating a database user and giving it the right privileges

phpMyAdmin & Management · Created on **October 10, 2026** · 3 min read



A database without a user is no use to anyone, and a user with too many privileges is an open door. In cPanel you do it in **MySQL Databases**: create the database, create the user, **link the two** and choose what that user may do. It takes three minutes.

cPanel adds your **account prefix** and an underscore to the name of both the database and the user. If the account is called `abc` and you type `shop`, the real name is `abc_shop`. That full name is what goes into your application.

Step by step

1. In cPanel open **MySQL Databases**. Under **Create New Database** type a name and create it.
2. Further down, under **MySQL Users**, choose a name and a strong password. The **password generator** makes a good one. Save it now, because you will not see it again.
3. Under **Add User To Database**, pick the user and the database and click **Add**.
4. The privilege list appears. For an application (WordPress, a shop, your own app) tick **ALL PRIVILEGES** *on this database*. For a reporting query, tick **SELECT** only.
5. In the application use three values: the full database name, the full user name and the password. The server is `localhost`.

Which privileges to give

Privilege	What it allows	When to give it
SELECT	Reading data.	Always. On its own it suits reports and read-only dashboards.

Privilege	What it allows	When to give it
INSERT, UPDATE, DELETE	Writing, changing and deleting rows.	Any application that stores data.
CREATE, ALTER, DROP, INDEX	Changing the structure of tables.	Installing and updating applications. A read-only user does not need them.
ALL PRIVILEGES	Everything cPanel allows, **on this database only**.	The normal choice for the application that owns the database.

What goes wrong:
You change the user's password in cPanel and forget to change it in the application's configuration file. The site starts showing *Error establishing a database connection*. See **the causes, in order**. Another trap: deleting the user does **not** delete the database, and deleting the database does **not** delete the user.

More than one user on the same database

You can link **several users** to the same database, each with its own privileges. For example: one user for the site, with all privileges; another with **SELECT** only, for whoever looks up figures; and another with **SELECT** and **LOCK TABLES** only, for the automatic backup. If one password leaks, you change only that one. In **MySQL Databases**, the **Current Databases** section shows the users linked to each database and lets you remove a link without deleting the user.

One user per application.
If one application is compromised, only its own database is lost. And do not use your cPanel password for the database: they are different things and should have different passwords. See **where each application keeps its connection details**.

NEED A HAND?

Created the user and the application still will not connect? Tell us the database name and the error message and we will look.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Creating databases and using phpMyAdmin** →
- **Error establishing a database connection: the causes, in order** →

Password generator

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