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Google Analytics: setting it up and what to look at first

Analytics & Tracking

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Google Analytics: setting it up and what to look at first

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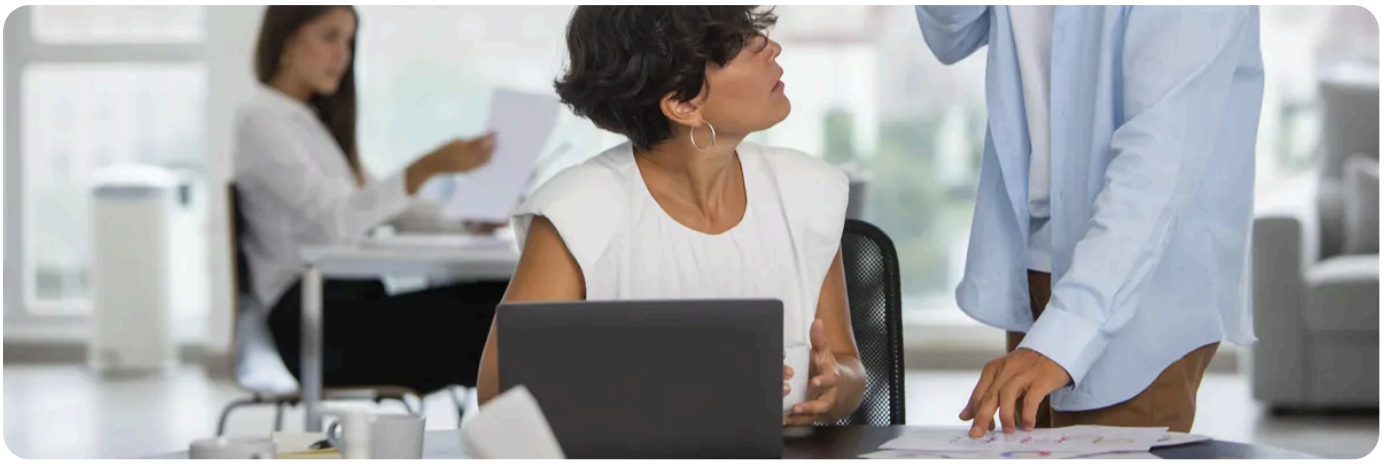

Google Analytics tells you **how many people visit the site, where they come from and what they do there**. It is a Google product, free to start with, that you set up with your own Google account and connect to your site. We neither sell nor run it: the hosting keeps the site, Analytics measures who visits it. This article is the shortest road to your first numbers.

Get it measuring, in five steps

1. **Create the Google Analytics account** with a Google account of your own, preferably one you will not lose (not an employee's who may leave).

2. **Create a property and a Web data stream**, with your site's address. Google Analytics gives you a **measurement ID**, which begins with `G-`.

3. **Put that ID on the site.** On WordPress the simplest road is a plugin that takes it: Google's own plugin (Site Kit) or another you trust. You can also paste Google's code into the theme's header area. Paste the code only once: duplicated, it counts every visit twice.

4. **Test.** Open the site in a private window and, in Analytics, look at the **Realtime** report. Your visit should appear within moments. The other reports take longer to fill; that is normal.

5. **Clear the site cache.** If you run a cache plugin, purge it so that the stored pages carry the new code.

What to look at first

Report	The question it answers
Realtime	Is anyone on the site right now? It confirms the installation works.

Report	The question it answers
Acquisition	Where visitors come from: search, social media, direct links, other sites.
Engagement, pages and screens	Which pages are viewed most, and which nobody opens.
Events	What visitors do: clicks, forms sent, downloads.
Tech	Computer, phone or tablet: which devices they arrive on.

Do not try to read everything at once. Pick **one question** (for example, “where do my visitors come from?”) and answer it. Then pick the next.

Two things Analytics will not tell you

It does not tell you **where you appear on Google**, or which searches brought people. That is in Search Console, another Google tool: see **getting your site into Search Console**. The two can be linked. Nor does it count visitors who refused cookies, when your site asks for consent.

Measuring people has rules.
Analytics uses cookies and identifiers, and data-protection law applies. If the site has visitors, have a privacy policy and a cookie notice that match what the site really does. See **the cookie notice and consent** and **data protection on your website**.

Take your own visits out of the count.
If you and your team go into the site every day, your visits count as if they were customers’. In the plugin, exclude logged-in users, and in Analytics use the internal-traffic filter.

NEED A HAND?

Does the site fail to load because of the code, or turn slow? Tell us the address and we will see what the server returns.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- WordPress hosting →
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Support Policy

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TAX ID (NIF)	500 260 5724
COMMERCIAL REGISTRATION NO.	26464-25/250724
REGISTERED OFFICE	Rua Direita do Patriota, Bairro Dangereux Belas, Luanda, Angola
CONTACT	info@interweb.ao · +244 942 011 191 · www.interweb.ao
OPENING HOURS	Monday to Friday - 08 AM to 04 PM Saturday & Sunday - Closed

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