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Products & Catalogue

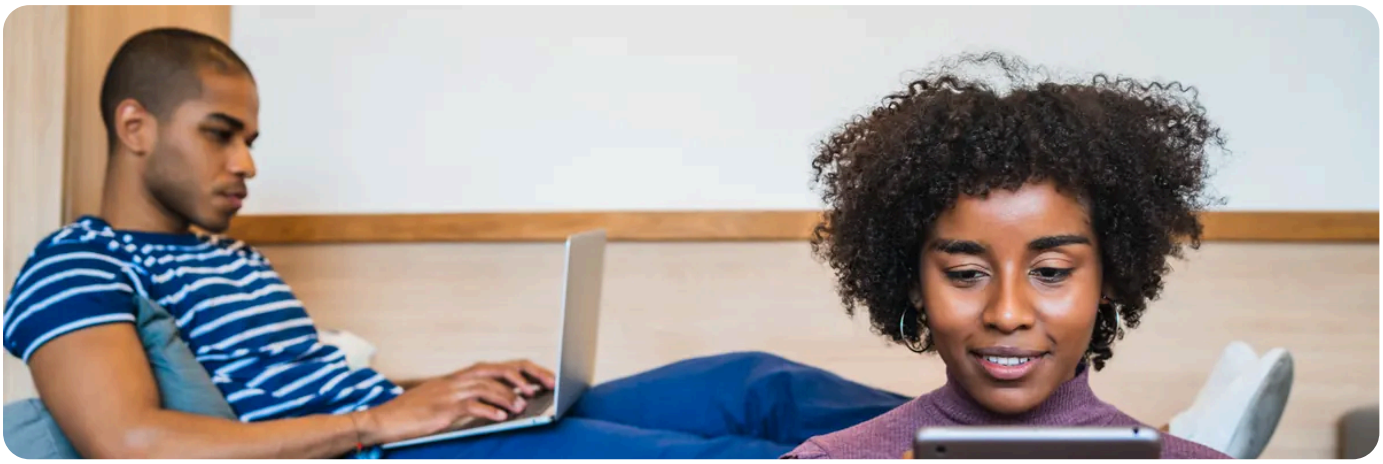
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Stock and low-stock alerts in WooCommerce

Products & Catalogue Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



WooCommerce can count your stock for you: it takes off each sale, stops selling what has run out and warns you when it is nearly gone. It is not switched on for everything by default, and that is where the nasty surprises begin, with products that sell without existing or show “out of stock” by mistake. This article gets stock working in **three layers**: the shop, the product and the alerts.

Switching stock on

1. **In WooCommerce settings**, the **Products** tab, the **Inventory** section, enable stock management. Without it, no product shows the quantity field.
2. **Choose the alerts.** In the same section, enable the low-stock and out-of-stock notifications and enter the e-mail of whoever should receive them. Set the “low stock” threshold and the “out of stock” one.
3. **Choose what happens to a sold-out product.** It can stay visible in the shop, or disappear. Pick according to what the customer should see. The same screen decides how the quantity is displayed.
4. **On each product**, in the editor, under the **Inventory** tab, tick that you want to manage stock, enter the quantity and, if you wish, a threshold of its own.
5. **Decide about backorders**: do not allow, allow but notify the customer, or allow without notice. For a product made to order, the second option is usually the right one.

When the number does not add up

Symptom	Usual cause
Stock goes down and the order was not paid	WooCommerce holds stock while payment is made. Orders in “pending payment” hold units until they are cancelled or expire.

Symptom	Usual cause
A product shows sold out and there are units	Its status was set to “out of stock” by hand, or the quantity is zero or below the out-of-stock threshold.
Variations show no stock	Each variation has its own: tick it on each one, not only on the parent product. See **product variations**.
The low-stock alert does not arrive	The alert is an e-mail. If the site has sending problems, it fails too. See **WooCommerce e-mails not arriving**.
The same unit sold to two people	Two purchases at the same moment, or a stock figure someone corrected by hand in the meantime.

If you also sell somewhere other than the shop

(at a stall, on another platform, over WhatsApp), WooCommerce does not know. Stock is only as right as the sales that pass through it. Either update by hand whenever you sell elsewhere, or pick a single source of truth and connect the rest to it.

Count the physical stock now and then

and correct the difference on the product. To see what is running out, the stock-status filter on the products list shows low and sold-out products at once. More on the shop’s settings in **setting up your WooCommerce shop: the settings that matter** and **general product settings**.

NEED A HAND?

Are orders getting stuck, or does stock take a long time to update? Tell us the shop address and an example product.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

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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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