

# Upgrading Moodle 5.0 to Moodle 5.1 on a VPS

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Version 2

# Addendum

- Version 1 ~ October 12, 2025
  - Posted “Quickie Presentation” on Moodle.org



# Addendum

- Version 1 ~ October 12, 2025
- Version 2 ~ November 25, 2025



# Objectives

- On my GoDaddy VPS
  - Upgrade Moodle 5.0 to Moodle 5.1
  - To demonstrate a method for future Moodle upgrades

# Moodle 5.1 – What's new?

1. A change in Moodle folders
  - A new /public/ folder
2. A "Server Configuration" change
  - Cannot go to [www.mydomain.com/moodle/](http://www.mydomain.com/moodle/) folder
3. php.ini: Enable `zend.exception_ignore_args=ON`
4. Optional "Composer" accessory
  - No change in php or database versions
    - PHP 8.2
    - MySQL 8.4

# Overview and Preparation

- Moodle upgrading varies
  - Manual upgrade
  - Git upgrade
- Moodle's Upgrading docs are good
  - I use a slightly different order and method
- Tools
  - cPanel, Terminal, FTP, and Others
  - cPanel: File Manager, Manage Databases, Terminal, phpMyAdmin, Cron
  - Mac: Terminal, Forklift, Finder
- Upgrade to 5.1 - Moodle 4.3.2 or newer
- Requires "zend.exception\_ignore\_args = On" in php.ini

# Overview and Preparation

- Add “**upgrade key**” in config.php
  - \$CFG->directorypermissions = 0777;
  - \$CFG->upgradekey = 'myfavoritepassword';
- Additional **plugin** versions for 5.1 **compatibility**
  - Remove those that are not compatible
  - Remove unused plugins
- Code placement
  - Folder **inside** or outside of web root
    - Web root (**public\_html**, htdocs, docroot, www, or document root)
  - Within web root
  - Sub-domain
- **Experimental** server (herkysmith.com)
- **Goal:** Keep Moodle 5.1 inside web root

# Upgrading Moodle

## Steps

1. Prepare a **new** Moodle by downloading and unzipping the code in a **temporary** location
2. Copy **config.php** from old to new
3. Manage plugins from old to new
4. Make any **code changes** to the new
5. **Backup** your old Moodle site
6. **Replace** the old folder with the new
7. \* Create a **symbolic link** to the new Moodle
8. **Log in to Moodle** to complete the update



# 1. Prep New Moodle

- Download latest from Moodle.org
- Move the downloaded file into a temporary location
- Extract it
- Rename it (e.g., moodle5)

## Step 2. Copy config.php

- `cp -p ~/public_html/moodle5/config.php  
~/mdl_temp/moodle5/config.php`
- Use a shell script, then
  - `"sh 2*"`

## Step 3. Manage Plugins

- Rick's plugins
  1. Checklist
  2. Collapsed Topics
  3. Sharing Cart
  4. Configurable Reports
- Copy from old to new
- Shell script is **easiest**

## Step 4. Making Code Changes

- Generally discouraged
- Sometimes the only solution
- SED is a streaming editor utility
- Example (all on one line)
  - `sed -i'.bak' 's/VENDOR name="mysql" version="8.4"/VENDOR name="mysql" version="8.0"/g' $www/$temp_folder/public/admin/environment.xml`

## Step 5. Backup Old Moodle

- I do **nightly** site backups with a **script** run by **cron**
- Enable “maintenance mode”
  - `php ~/temp_foeder/$moodle/admin/cli/maintenance.php --enable`
- Backup...
  - Moodle code, Moodle database, moodledata folder
- Many examples on Moodle.org

```
# echo "Backup the current Moodle"  
source "$buscript"
```

where \$buscript is the name of your backup script

## Step 6. Replace Old with New

1. **Remove** previous moodle\_old folder, if it exists
2. **Rename** the old moodle folder, appending “\_old” to its name
3. **Move** the new prepped moodle folder into place

## Step 7. Create Symbolic Link

- **Note:** This is a new step for Moodle 5.1 and later
- **Create** a symbolic link file pointing to **"/public"** in moodle
  - **Example:**
    - In `-fs ~/public_html/moodle5/public ~/public_html/moodle`
- **Edit** config.php
  - Ensure that `$CFG->wwwroot` uses the **link file name**
- **Rule:** Symbolic link file name cannot match the moodle folder name

## **Step 8. Log in to Moodle**



# Summary

- My website looks and functions fine, moodle5 is in public\_html
  - No need to mess with “document root,” Apache config files, or a subdomain
- Required:
  - Symbolic link file
  - Some items are in Moodle’s /public folder

# Future Changes

- Rick's method
  - **up\_m5.sh** – contains steps 2 through 7
- After initial upgrade of 5.0 to 5.1, in up\_m5.sh
  - Change mdl\_public\_folder from "" to "public"
- Move moodle folder **outside** of web root
  - `mv -i ~/public_html/moodle5 ~/mdl_sites/moodle5`
  - `ln -fs ~/mdl_sites/moodle5/public ~/public_html/moodle`
- **Edit cron job** when moving Moodle folder
- Change mdl\_code\_location to "mdl\_sites"

# Future Changes

- Placing Moodle code directly into web root
  - Create a symbolic link to (web root)/public
- Or
- Change the Document root to (web root)/public

# Moodle Resources

