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How to Backup & Upgrade a Wordpress Website Hosted on HostGator

1. Browse to your website and confirm that it is in proper working order. Log into the dashboard and confirm that you still have administrator access
2. Log into your hosting control panel at http://www.*yourdomain.com*/cpanel (replace "yourdomain.com" with your actual domain name. You will need your HostGator username (8 characters or less) and password for this.

Make Backups

3. Scroll down to the icon section labeled "Files". Within this set of icons, is "Backups".
4. Click "Backups" icon.
5. Click the button labeled "Home Directory" to download a complete set of files (compressed) of your websites "home" directory (or root). A file download dialog pops up and lets you find a place on your hard drive to save the file.
6. Find the Databases table under "Download a MySWL Database Backup". Look for one that ends in "_wrpd". Click the database name- it's a link that will start a download. The file download dialog box pops up and you should find a good place on your hard drive to save the backup file. If there are more than one "_wrpd" or other database names in the list, you'll want to repeat this procedure for each.
7. Click on the "Home" icon in the top left corner of the webpage.

Check for/make latest Updates

8. Find the "Software/Services" section on the control panel (generally required scrolling down).
9. Click the icon "Fantastico De Luxe". The page may open directly to the "Update Now" page, if not, you can use the "Wordpress" link on the left navigation.
10. Fantastico will show you your installs, what directory they are in, and current Installed version. If an upgrade is available, there will be a link under "Upgrade link" that will "Upgrade to.. " indicating the version available.
11. Click this "Upgrade to …" link to start the upgrade. Click the "Upgrade" button on the next page to confirm.
12. PRINT the next page as it will indicate any errors as well as information needed to *restore* the site if something went wrong.
13. Check the website. Login at http://www.*yourdomain.com*/wp-login.php and make sure there are no followup steps to upgrading the database etc (just follow any instructions you see). Browse around the site to visually inspect for any errors or omissions.

You're done.