cPanel

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About the Tutorial

cPanel is a Linux-based web hosting control panel. It provides graphical user interface and is packed with lots of features that automates the process of hosting a website. It is a premium software, which is developed by a private company, cPanel Inc.

cPanel has been written in Perl and was first released in March 21, 1996. It can only be installed in Linux servers, it supports CentOS, RHEL and CloudLinux operating software.

Nowadays most of the Linux webhosting servers use cPanel to host and manage websites on their servers. If a person purchases the hosting from companies like GoDaddy, Hostgator or even from smaller local companies, it is more likely that the hosting will come with cPanel.

In this tutorial, we will learn about managing and hosting a website with ease. This tutorial is divided as per the sections of cPanel and each section has the explanation of the functions it contains.

Audiences

This tutorial is prepared for anyone who has basic knowledge of computers as well as of websites. It will help all those readers who wish to host and manage a website using cPanel. After completing this tutorial, you will have a moderate level of expertise in using the automation tools available in cPanel.

Prerequisites

Before starting this tutorial, we assume that you have a domain and cPanel hosting already setup. If not, then we will also cover those topics briefly in the following chapters.

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Table of Contents

About the Tutorial 2
Audiences 2
Prerequisites 2
Copyright and Disclaimer 2
Table of Contents 3

1. cPanel – Overview 8
cPanel Users 8
Server Administrator – 8
Reseller Accounts – 8
User Account – 8
Why cPanel 8
Advantages 9
Disadvantages 9

2. cPanel – Registering a Domain Name 10
Importance of a domain 10
Registering a Domain Name 10

3. cPanel – Getting Web Hosting 12
Shared Hosting – 12
Virtual Private Servers – 12
Dedicated Server – 12

4. cPanel – Setting Up Nameserver 13

5. cPanel – Logging into cPanel Dashboard 14

6. cPanel – Changing Password 15

7. cPanel – Styles 17

8. cPanel – Contact Information 19

9. cPanel Home 21
Sidebar 21
Navigation Bar 21
Feature List 22

10. cPanel – Statistics & Dashboard 23
cPanel Statistics 23

tutorialspoint
SIMPLYEASYLEARNING

cPanel Dashboard 24

11. cPanel – User Manager 25
To Delete an Account 25
To Edit an Account 26
Add a New User 28

12. cPanel – File Manager 30
Searching for a File 30
File Manager Settings 31
Working with File Manager 31
Creating a File 31
Creating a Folder 32
Copying 32
Moving 32
Uploading a File 32
Downloading a File 33
Deleting a File or Folder 33
Renaming a File or Folder 33
Text Editor 33
Code Editor 33
Extracting a File 33
Compressing a File or Folder 33
Viewing a File 34

13. cPanel – File Permissions 35

14. cPanel – Images 37
Thumbnailer Converter 37

15. cPanel – Image Scaler 40

16. cPanel – Image Converter 41

17. cPanel – Directory Privacy 42

18. cPanel – Disk Usage 44

19. cPanel – FTP 46
Configure FTP Client 47
Special FTP Accounts 47

20. cPanel – FTP Sessions 48
Terminate a FTP Connection 49

21. cPanel – Backup 50

tutorialspoint
SIMPLYEASYLEARNING

Full Backup 50
Partial Backups 51

22. cPanel – Backup Wizard 53

23. cPanel – MySQL Databases 55
Create a New Database 55
Add a Database User 56
Modifying a Database 57
Check a Database 58
Repair a Database 58

24. cPanel – MySQL Database Wizard 59

25. cPanel – phpMyAdmin 61
Execute an SQL Query 62

26. cPanel – Remote MySQL 63
Add Access Host 63
Remove Access Host 64

27. cPanel – Subdomains 65
To Create a Subdomain 65
Managing Redirection 66

28. cPanel – Aliases 67
Create an Alias 67
Remove Aliases 68

29. cPanel – Addon Domain 69
Create an Addon Domain 69
Remove an Addon Domain 70

30. cPanel – Redirect 71
Permanent (301) Redirect 71
Temporary (302) Redirect 71
Create a Redirect 71

31. cPanel – Simple Zone Editor 74
Add an A Record 74
Add a CNAME Record 75
Remove an A or CNAME Record 75

32. cPanel – Advance Zone Editor 76
Reset Zone Files 76
Add an A record 77

tutorialspoint
SIMPLYEASYLEARNING

Add an AAAA Record 78
Add a CNAME Record 78
Add an SRV Record 79
Add a TXT Record 80
Edit or Delete a DNS Record 81

33. cPanel – Email Accounts 82
Create an Email Address 82
Manage Email Accounts 83
Change Passwords 83
Change Quota 84
Configure Mail Client 84
Delete an Email Account 85

34. cPanel – Email Forwarders 86
Create an Email Forwarder 86
Create an Email Account Forwarder 86
Add Domain Forwarder 88
Delete an Email Forwarder 89

35. cPanel – Webmail 90
Opening Your Webmail 90
Through cPanel Interface 90
Access webmail directly 92

36. cPanel – MX Entry 93
Configure Email Routing 93
Add an MX Record 95
Edit or Remove an MX Record 95

37. cPanel – Autoresponders 97
Add an Autoresponder 97
Edit or Delete Autoresponder 100

38. cPanel – Track Delivery 101

39. cPanel – Email Filters 104
User Level Filter 104
Create a User Level Filter 104
Edit or Delete a User Level Filter 105
Testing an Email Filter 106
Account Level Filtering 106

40. cPanel – Authentications 108
DKIM 108
Enabling DKIM 108

tutorialspoint
SIMPLYEASYLEARNING

Disable DKIM 109
SPF 109
Enable SPF 109
Disable SPF 110

41. cPanel – Address Importer 111
Importing Email Addresses 111
Importing Email Forwarders 113

42. cPanel – Encryption 116
Create a GnuPG Key 116
Import a Key 117
Delete or View the Key 118

43. cPanel – Apache Spamassassin 119
Enable or Disable Apache Spamassassin 119
Setup Spam Auto–Delete 120

44. cPanel – Visitors 121

45. cPanel – Errors 123

46. cPanel – Bandwidth 124

47. cPanel – Webalizer 126

48. cPanel – Raw Access 128

49. cPanel – CPU and Connection Usage 129

50. cPanel – IP Blocker 131
Deny Access to an IP Address or Domain 131
Remove an IP from the Denied List 132

51. cPanel – SSH / TLS 133
Generate Private Key 133
Upload a Private Key 134
Generate a CSR 135
Upload an SSL / TLS Certificate 136
Self–Signed Certificate 137
Installing SSL 138

52. cPanel – Hotlink Protection 139
Configure Hotlink Protection 139

53. cPanel – Ruby on Rails 141

tutorialspoint
SIMPLYEASYLEARNING

Create a Rewrite 142

54. cPanel – Optimize Website 143

55. cPanel – Cron Jobs 145
Setup Cron Job 145
Cron Email 146
Edit or Delete Existing Cron Jobs 146

56. cPanel – Track DNS 147
Domain Lookup 147
Trace Route 148

57. cPanel – Indexes 149

58. cPanel – Error Pages 151

59. cPanel – MIME Types 153
Delete a MIME Type 154

60. cPanel – Virus Scanner 155

61. cPanel – Softaculous Apps Installer 157
Install Application using Softaculous Apps Installer 158
Create Backup of any Application 159

62. cPanel – Installing WordPress 161

63. cPanel – FileZilla FTP Client 166

64. cPanel – CloudFlare 168

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1. CPANEL – OVERVIEW

cPanel is a Linux-based hosting management control panel. It is used to manage your website and server's backend working system. It provides graphical user interface for most of the tasks we perform on the website's server, for example, uploading files, creating emails, setting cron jobs, handling databases, etc.

cPanel Users

cPanel is installed on a Linux system by the server administrator. With the help of the cPanel Software Server, an Administrator can create Virtual Private Servers or it can dedicate the whole server for shared hosting environment. cPanel Shared hosting has three types of user levels.

Server Administrator – This user is the root user of a cPanel Linux Server and has all the permission over the server. Server Admin can create, modify or delete any account from the cPanel Server. The Server Admin has access to cPanel WHM (Web Host Manger), which can be understood as the backend of cPanel.

Reseller Accounts – This user is created by the server administrator and server administrator can choose which type of permissions should be given to reseller accounts. A Reseller account can further create user accounts and has access to all those accounts, which they have created. One reseller account does not have access to the user accounts that were created by another reseller accounts. They also have access to WHM with limited permissions.

User Account – These are normal user accounts, each user who subscribes for a web hosting from a company, is given this type of account. They do not have access to Web Host Manager. User account can host single or multiple websites according to their plans they have purchased from web hosting provider.

Why cPanel

cPanel is packed with many features that is not provided by other web hosting management panels. It is graphical, hence, non–technical users can also use it perfectly. cPanel is responsive to the screen size, hence can be used in mobile and tablets. It will automatically adapt the screen size of the device.

cPanel is very easy to use and configure. It automatically adjusts all the advanced setting for web hosting. A user hardly needs to go to the command line to configure any settings, as it already has all the features inbuilt.

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Advantages

cPanel offers the following advantages:

- It is very easy to host a website using cPanel.
- It is multiannual and available in many languages.
- It is responsive and adapts to any screen size, it can be used efficiently in mobile and Tablet too.
- cPanel has in–built File Manager, which helps in managing your files without the hassles of an FTP.
- cPanel has integrated webmail software, which helps in sending and receiving emails through online webmail client.
- You can easily create a backup of your website in a few steps. This will help you to restore your backup, if your website encounters any error.
- You can easily manage your website databases, as cPanel has integrated phpMyAdmin, which helps to directly manage databases.

Disadvantages

cPanel does not have any significant drawbacks, however here are a couple of its notable disadvantages:

- cPanel is a commercial software and you need to pay to get this.
- cPanel is meant for small and medium websites only. Creating a large website using cPanel is not recommended.

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2. CPANEL – REGISTERING A DOMAIN NAME

If you have a website developed locally or you have planned to make a website, then there are two things that you will need — a **Domain Name** and **Web Hosting**. A Domain name is the address of your website, which will be used by your users to access it. For example, **tutorialspoint.com** or google.com these are domain names.

A domain name has two parts, TLD (Top Level Domain) and SLD (Second level domain), for example in **tutorialspoint.com**, tutorialspoint is second level domain of TLD .com, or you can say it's a subdomain of .com TLD. There are many top level domains available, like .com, .net, etc. and also country specified TLD like .in, .uk, .ae, etc.

Importance of a domain

Getting a domain name of your choice can be very useful. You can use it for many reasons, for instance, you can create the identity of your brand online or you can create a personal blogging website. If you have a business, people will be able to learn about your business remotely.

Registering a Domain Name

Domain names are registered with a non–profit organization ICANN. It does not let you register your domain directly, but you will have to go with a domain registrar for this purpose. Domain name registrations involve a registration fee for a year, and you have to renew the domain every year by providing a renewal fee. Domain names cannot be purchased permanently at once, but you have to renew it every year, if you fail to renew the domain, it is automatically deleted from registry.

If you want to register your domain name, then you will have to follow these steps:

Step (1) – Choose a **perfect domain name** for your website. If it's a business website, then you may want to go with a domain name, which is the name of your business.

Step (2) – Choose a **good domain registrar company** having good support infrastructure. For example, GoDaddy or BigRock.

Step (3) – In the registrar's website, **check if your domain name is available** for registration. If the domain you selected has been already registered by someone, then you will have to think of some other domain name. If your domain name is available to register, then you can proceed further.

Step (4) – Provide your contact information and everything that the registrar asked for. It is **mandatory** that you provide correct information while registering a domain name, as it will be visible to everyone if the user looks for **WHOIS** information.

Step (5) – You can hide your contact details by choosing to be viewed by anyone by subscribing **privacy protection service**. This service hides all your contact information to everyone except the registrar, this service is provided by many domain registrars at some extra cost.

Step (6) – Complete the purchase by **paying the registration fees**. Domain name will be registered to you.

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3. CPANEL – GETTING WEB HOSTING

If you have already registered your domain name, the next step is to get a web hosting for your website. Web hosting is a service, which provides space for your website on internet. If you want your website to publish online, then you will have to get web hosting service.

In a web hosting service, your website is stored in high powered computers called web servers, which are connected to a high speed network and they are powered-on 24/7. While purchasing a web hosting service, you rent a space for your website on these servers.

There are basically three types of web hosting –

Shared Hosting – In this type of web hosting, a single server hosts multiple websites, sometimes thousands of them. Each account on this server has certain limits on using disk space to store websites, databases and bandwidth. This is the amount of data transferred through your website. This type of hosting is cheap and suitable for small and medium websites.

Virtual Private Servers – In this type of hosting, a Linux Server is divided into several parts and each part acts as a different server, each server has some limited resources given. In this, the VPS administrator has root access to his VPS and can then host single or many websites according to his need. These type of hosting is recommended for medium and large websites. Cost of VPS is higher than Shared Hosting, but lower then Dedicated Hosting.

Dedicated Server – In this type of hosting, a whole server is rented to the user, who can host a large website on this server or can use it to host multiple websites in this server, the server admin can create multiple VPS. Cost of dedicated hosting is much higher and it requires a server admin to manage this type of hosting.

If your website is new and it is not expecting much resource usage, then you can go for shared hosting. You can purchase shared hosting for hosting one website or multiple websites according to your need. In this tutorial, we will learn about hosting a website using cPanel, hence it is recommended that you purchase the hosting that comes with cPanel.

4. CPANEL – SETTING UP NAMESERVER

When you have purchased your hosting, you will have to connect your domain with the hosting that you have purchased. If you have purchased the domain and hosting from the same provider, then it is liable that your Nameservers are already setup. If you have purchased your domain and hosting from different providers, then you will have to manually add new Nameservers to your domain, so that it can point your domain to the right server.

Nameservers are a part of Domain Name System. These DNS servers keep the records of which domain is connected to which IP address. Nameservers allow us to use a domain instead of IP address of the DNS server. When a visitor types the URL of your domain then the DNS server tells the browser that from which server it should load content from. In easy words, Nameservers define the current DNS provider of your domain.

When you get the email of the Login details of your web hosting server along with it, you also get the details of your Nameservers. Most hosting providers use their own DNS servers. For setting up your Nameservers, you will have to login to your domain control panel, and update your Nameservers by replacing the old one. Each domain provider has its own application to do so, you will have to refer to your domain registrar's documentation for further details.

Domain Nameservers take time to propagate through different DNS servers around the globe, the change may reflect instantly or it may take up to 48 hours of time according to the DNS servers of hosting provider.

5. CPANEL – LOGGING INTO CPANEL DASHBOARD

In this chapter, we will learn to login into the cPanel Dashboard. For logging into the dashboard, you will need your login credentials. This information is sent to you, when you have signed up for cPanel hosting or you may have created during purchase of hosting.

cPanel Dashboard is accessible by two ports – 2082 for unsecured connections and 2083 for secured connection, many hosting providers support unsecured connections, but it is always recommended that you should use a secured connection only.

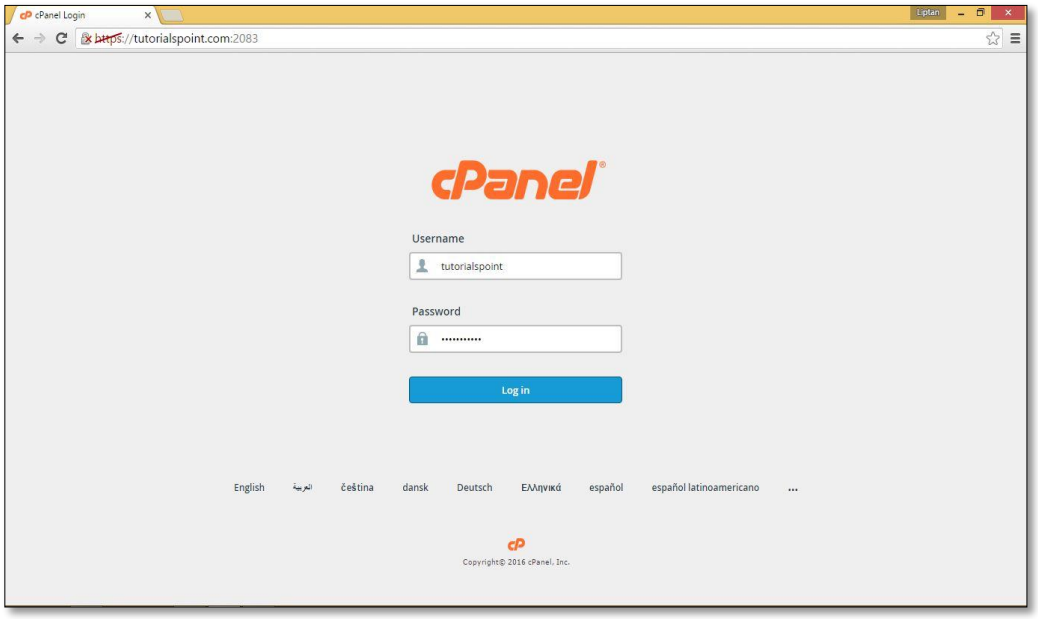
There are many ways to find the login screen of a cPanel. Recommended is that you may use the IP address of your cPanel, you may find the cPanel using IP address by typing the following in address bar –

```
https://<your_IP_address>:2083
https://<your_IP_address>/cpanel
```

If you have already updated your Nameservers for your domain, then you may use your domain for directly accessing cPanel by your domain. You may find cPanel login screen using your domain by typing the following into the address bar –

```
https://<your_domain>:2083
https://<your_domain>/cpanel
```

Once you are redirected to your login screen, you will find the login screen like shown below.



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You can enter the Username and Password and press the **Log in** button to login into the cPanel Dashboard.

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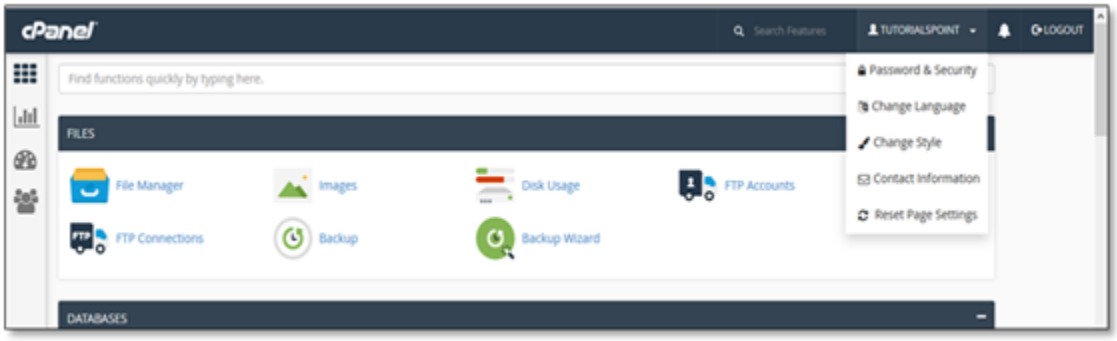
6. CPANEL – CHANGING PASSWORD

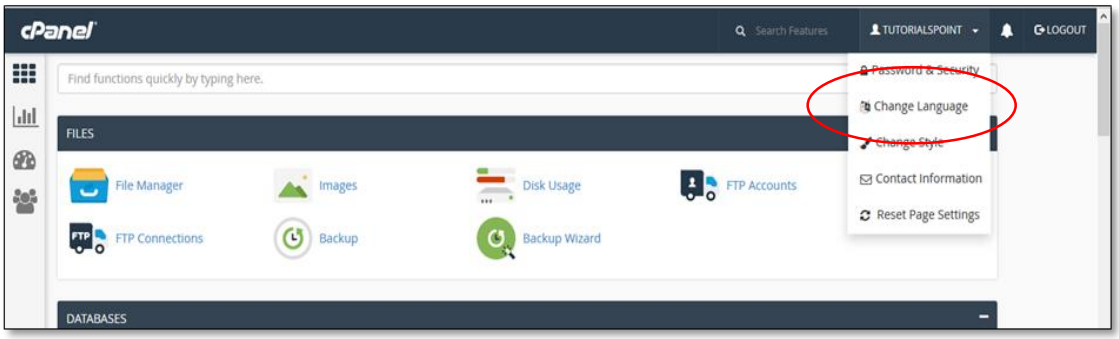
When you are successfully logged into a cPanel Dashboard, first and foremost, change the password of your cPanel account. This is very important, so that the security of cPanel remains intact. Nobody would want their website to be hacked.

To change your cPanel Password, follow these steps:

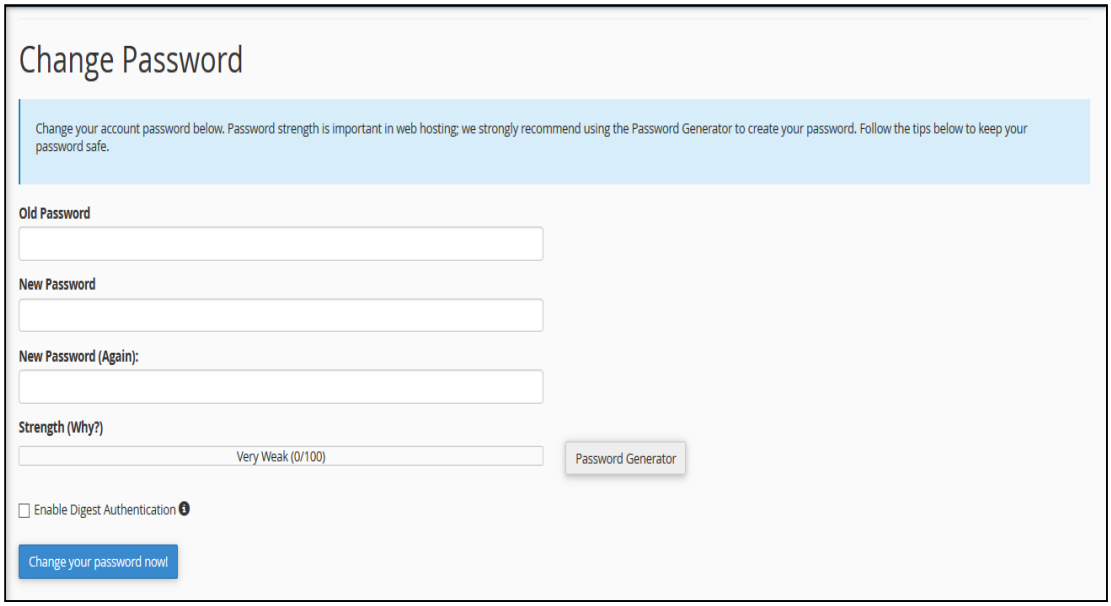
Step (1) – In cPanel Home, click **username** written over the right corner of the dashboard.



Step (2) – Click **Password & Security** option. You will find Change Password Interface.



Step (3) – Write your **old password** and in the following fields, write your new password twice.



Step (4) – Enable **digest authentication** option if you need to access your webdisk via an unencrypted connection in windows machine. This type of connection is unsecured and not recommended.

Step (5) – Click **Change your password now!** Button to change your current password. If successful, then cPanel will automatically log you out and you will have to login again with your new password.

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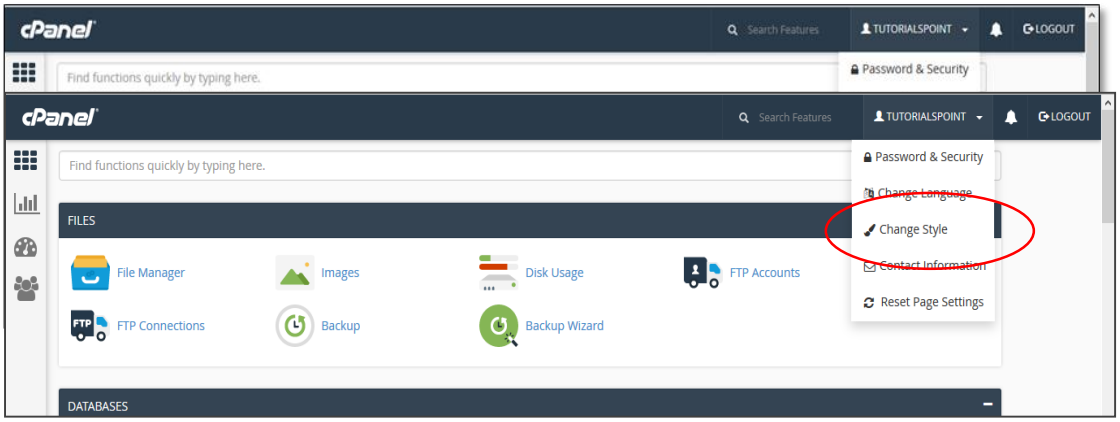
7. CPANEL – STYLES

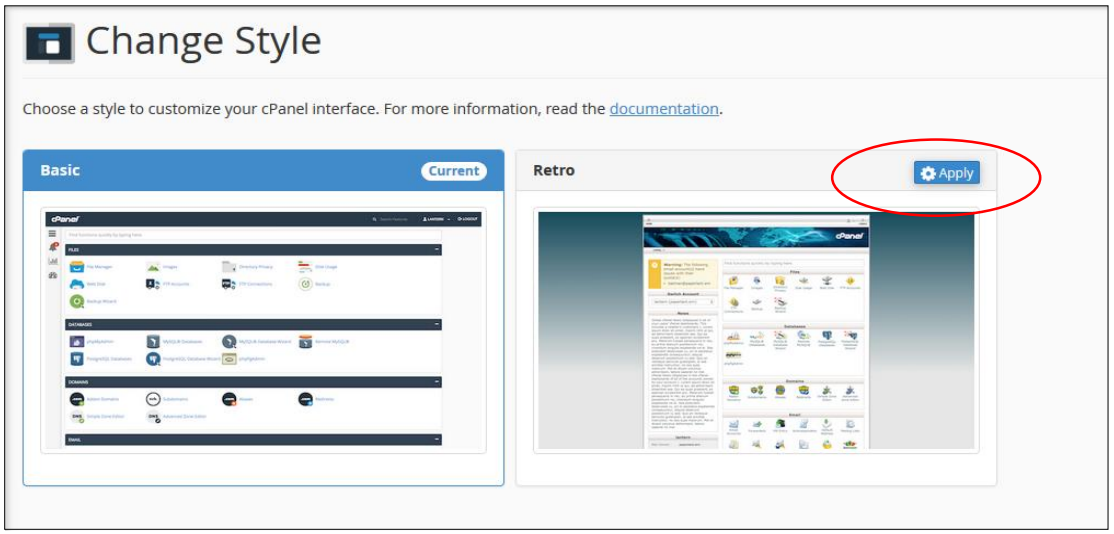
You can change cPanel's look and feel using this interface. cPanel has two major interface styles in which you can manage your web hosting. Although these interface is very standard, but these can be modified by your server administrator or reseller account admin to change its logo and icons etc.

To modify your cPanel Style follow these steps:

Step (1) – In cPanel Home click username written over the right corner of your dashboard.



Step (2) – Click Change Style option. You will find Change Style Interface.



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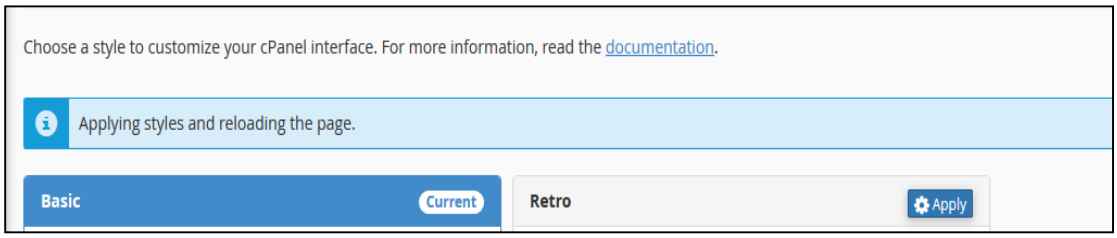
Step (3) – Choose any style option from the available styles, click Apply button which can be found over the top of the style to load the new style.



Step (4) – cPanel will automatically reload to apply the new setting and you will find a new interface according to the one you selected.

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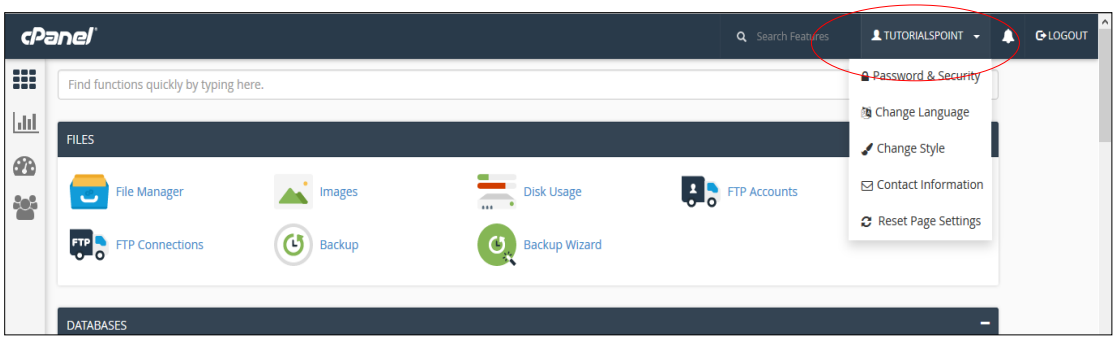
8. CPANEL – CONTACT INFORMATION

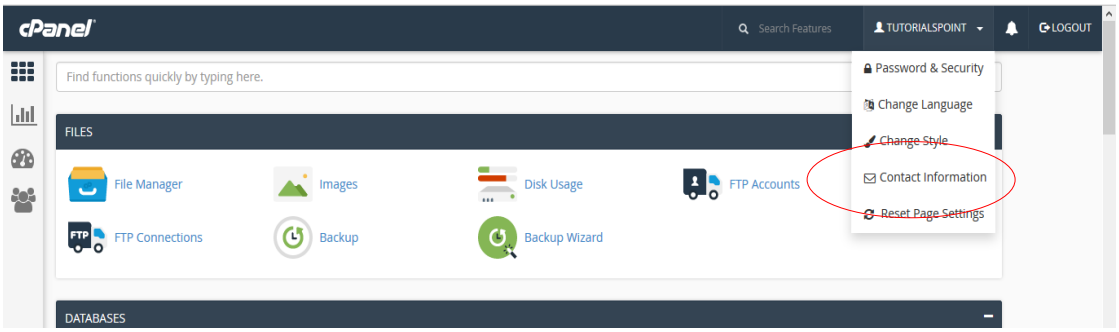
In this interface of cPanel, you are allowed to change the system email address. It is the email address on which the system can notify you for important updates. You cannot use your system email address or any email address, which is connected with your domain, so that you do not lose any important update, when the system is down.

To update your contact email, follow these steps:

Step (1) – In cPanel Home, click username on the right corner of your dashboard.



Step (2) – Click on Contact Information option. You will find Contact Information Interface.



Step (3) – Enter the email address on which you want the system to contact you for important notifications.

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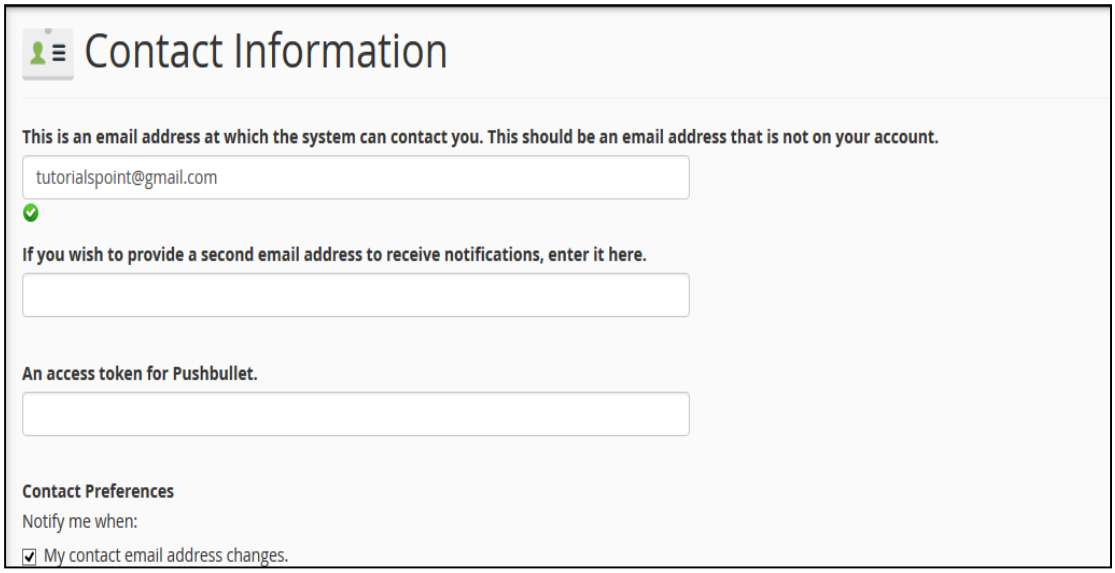
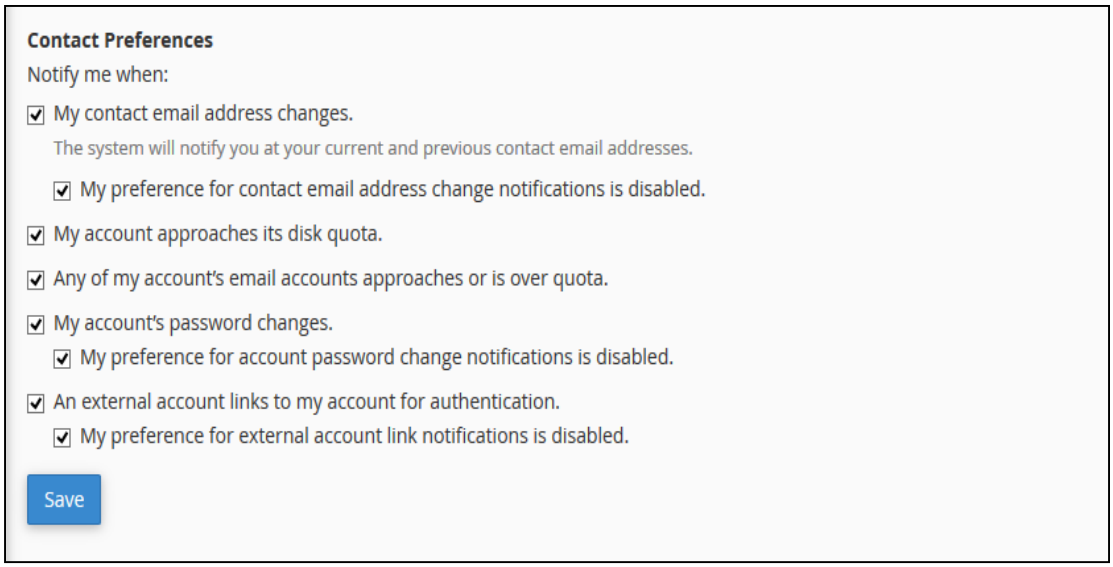


Step (4) – You can enter a second email address on which you can receive the copy of that email sent on your primary email.

Step (5) – You can choose the options of an event on which the system should send you notification in contact preference. It is recommended that you leave every checkbox selected.



Step (6) – Click the Save button to save your contact preference.

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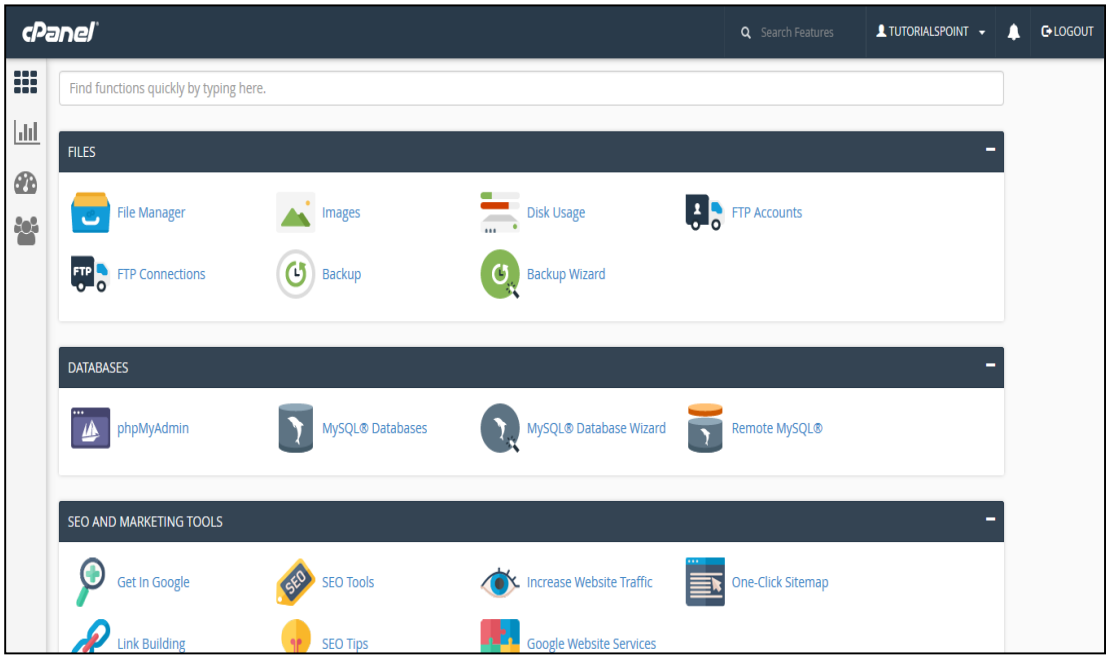
9. CPANEL HOME

Once you are logged into cPanel dashboard, you will see that it has so many options. In this chapter, you will find a quick brief of every option shown in the cPanel dashboard.



Sidebar

You can switch to your accounts' four main areas of cPanel through this interface, which are –

- **Home –** This is where you can access all the features of cPanel.
- **Statistics** – Displays information about your cPanel account and also the resources it used.
- **Dashboard –** Displays quick links to change styles etc. and overview of your cPanel account.
- **User manager** – Here you can manage the users of your cPanel account.

Navigation Bar

On this toolbar, you will find the cPanel's logo and a search box in which you can type any function of cPanel to access it quickly. Like your User account name and some quick links,

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once you click on it. The Notification Icon will show you the recent notifications about your cPanel account. Logout button will end your session (log you out) from the cPanel.

Feature List

It displays all the features and functions you have in your cPanel. You can click on any function and it will take you over to the desired functions interface.

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