How to update a WordPress theme

Tutorial · https://mhthemes.com/support/knb/how-to-update-wordpress-theme/



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Premium WordPress themes are not only much less expensive than hiring a web designer, but they also come with ongoing theme development. That means you'll benefit from regular updates with improvements, new features and additional options. For just a few bucks you have access to regular theme updates and the WordPress themes will get better from time to time – sounds like a good deal! In this tutorial you'll learn how you can easily update your WordPress theme to a new version:

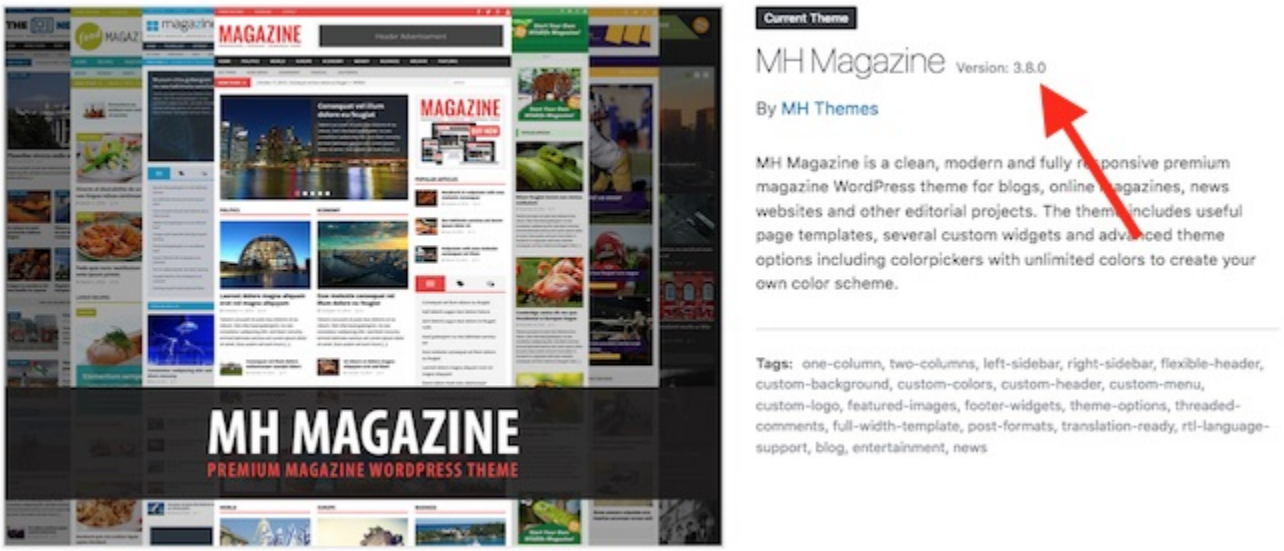
- Check the version number of your WordPress theme
- Don't forget to backup your WordPress website!
- Enable maintenance mode (optional)
- Update your WordPress theme to the new version

Check the version number of your WordPress theme

Before you know if there is a new version of your WordPress theme available, you need to know which version you're currently using. You can find the version number of your WordPress theme in the stylesheet file (*style.css*). As an alternative you can find it under **Appearance => Themes** in your WordPress dashboard when you click on "*Theme Details*" for the particular theme you're using:

```
/*****
Theme Name: MH Magazine
Theme URI: https://www.mhthemes.com/themes/mh/magazine/
Author: MH Themes
Author URI: https://www.mhthemes.com/
Description: MH Magazine is a clean, modern and fully responsive premium magazine WordPress
Version: 3.8.0
License: GNU General Public License v2 or later
License URI: http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl-2.0.html
Text Domain: mh-magazine
Domain Path: /languages/
Tags: one-column, two-columns, left-sidebar, right-sidebar, flexible-header, custom-backgrou
*****/
```

WordPress theme version in the stylesheet (style.css)



WordPress theme version in the WordPress dashboard

After you know what version of your WordPress theme you're using, you can check for theme updates. Usually you can check the website, social media channels or the theme changelogs of your WordPress theme provider to see if there are any theme updates available. If you're using WordPress themes by MH Themes, you also can get notified about new theme updates by following us on Facebook, Twitter or by subscribing to our newsletter.

Don't forget to backup your WordPress website!



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You probably have heard this many times before and we'll say it as well. We highly encourage you to backup your website before you make any changes under the hood of your website (theme updates, plugin installs, etc...). While only updating your WordPress theme, chances are very good that you won't need your backup and that there won't be any issues at all.

But if there are issues, you will be glad to have backups available to restore your website. It's always a very good idea to keep a copy of your old files and database backups to secure your site. In general it would be recommended to ensure that you have a regular backup schedule.

Enable maintenance mode (optional)

[Installation Tools WordPress]

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If you're working on website updates or other major changes and expect your site to be affected longer than a few minutes, then it would be recommended to enable a maintenance mode. While having your site in maintenance mode, your visitors will be aware that there is work in progress and that the site will be available again soon. Depending on your audience this could prevent frustration.

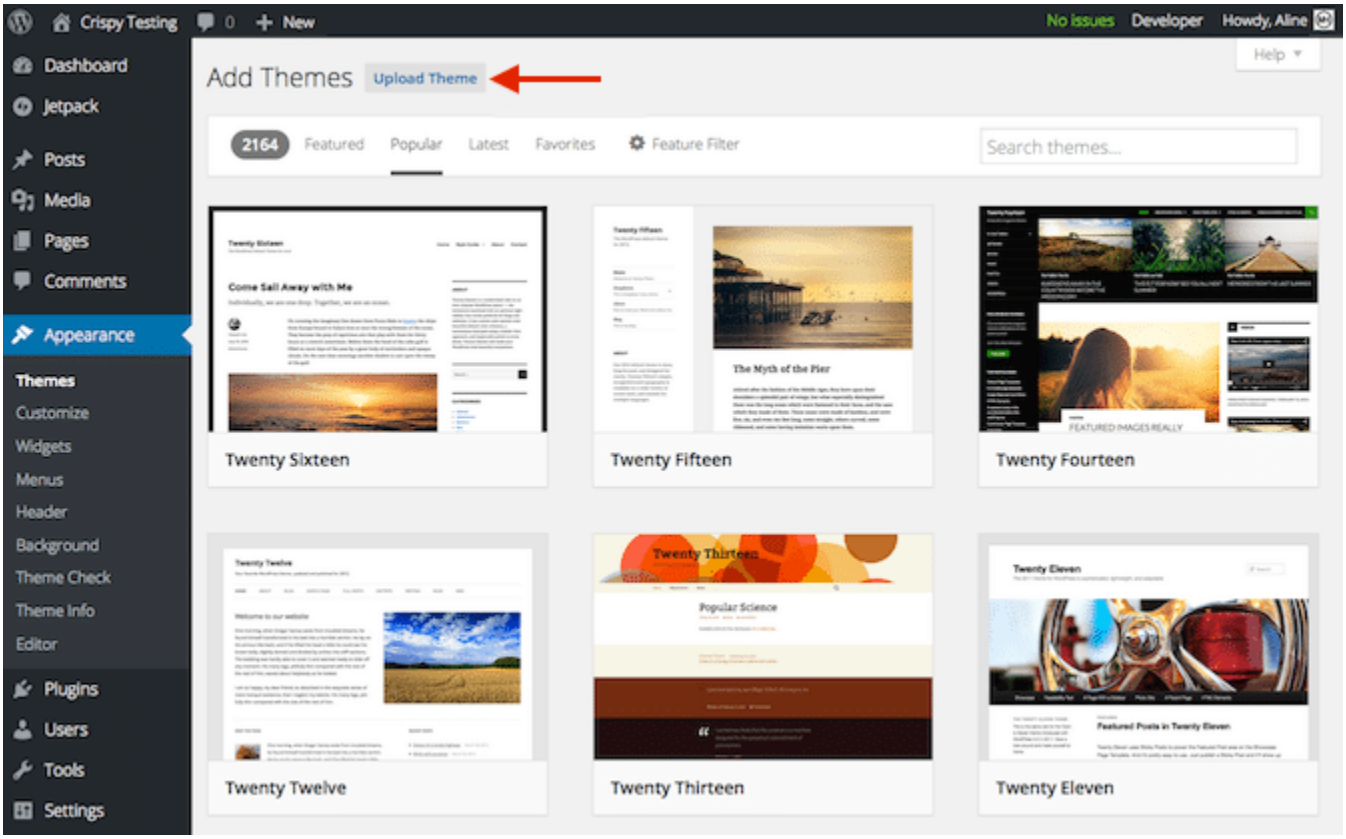
Of course putting your website in maintenance mode is fully optional. This isn't a requirement to update your WordPress theme. There are various free plugins available to put your site in maintenance mode, for example: Maintenance.

Update your WordPress theme to the new version

If there is a newer version of your WordPress theme available, you will first have to download the latest version of the theme. Please check the information of your theme provider to learn where you can download the updated file. In case you are using WordPress themes by MH Themes, you can just download the theme through your MH Themes account. That file always is the latest version of your WordPress theme. After you have downloaded the new file, there are two ways to update:

- Update WordPress theme through the WordPress dashboard
- Alternative: Update WordPress theme using a FTP client

Update WordPress theme through the WordPress dashboard



Upload WordPress theme through WordPress dashboard

If you're not tech-savvy and have no experience with FTP clients or in case you don't want to handle theme files manually, you can just update your WordPress theme through the WordPress dashboard. Basically you just get rid of the old version and install the new theme to update the files. To do this, just navigate to **Appearance => Themes** in your WordPress dashboard and then:

1. Switch to a different WordPress theme for a few seconds
2. Delete the old version of the theme which you want to update
3. Upload, install and activate the new version of your WordPress theme



To install the new version of your WordPress theme in the WordPress dashboard, you will need the zipped theme file! **DO NOT** unzip (extract) the file which you have downloaded, otherwise you won't be able to install the theme through the WordPress dashboard.

> **Important:** Sometimes people have software or browsers installed on their computers which automatically unzip (extract) .zip files after the download is completed. If you experience this issue, you will need to turn this off or get rid of the software that extracts .zip files automatically. For example the Safari browser is doing this by default, you can find instructions on how to disable this here.

By the way, you don't need to be afraid that you will lose your settings or configuration by updating your WordPress theme. If you update the theme correctly through your WordPress dashboard, your configuration usually won't be affected if you had the theme installed correctly. There are exceptions, for example if your theme has been completely recoded of if there have been major changes. You can learn more here: Will I lose settings when updating my WordPress theme?

Alternative: Update WordPress theme using a FTP client



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An alternative way to update WordPress themes is to replace the old files on your server with the new version. You can do this by making use of FTP clients, like for example FileZilla. After you have downloaded the latest version of your WordPress theme, you should have a .zip file. Just unzip this file and upload the new theme files to your webserver to overwrite the old files of your WordPress theme. Once you have done this, the theme update is completed!

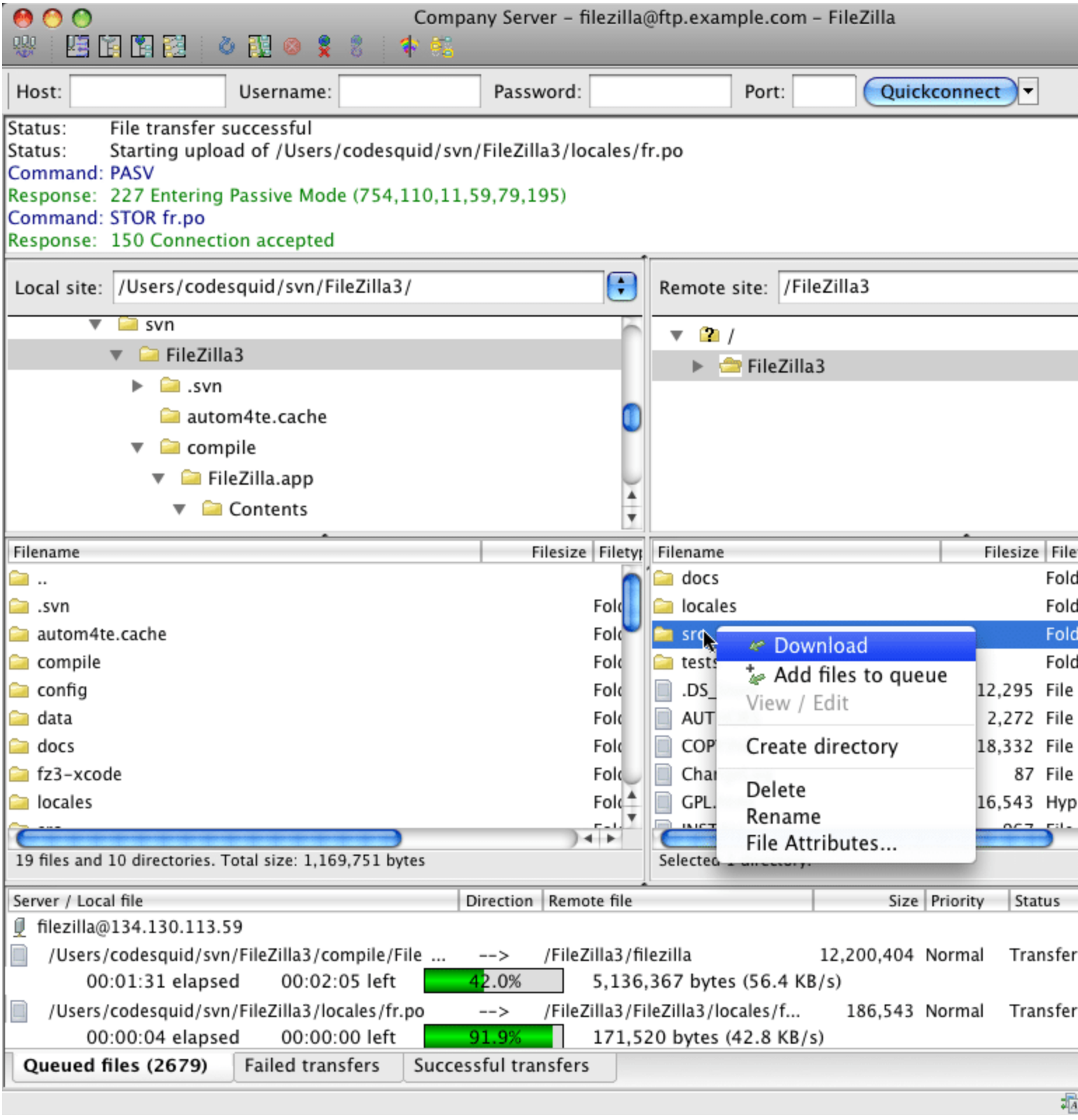


Image Source: Screenshot - FileZilla FTP Client

WordPress themes usually are located on your server in the WordPress folder */wp-content/themes*. So the location of the files for the MH Magazine WordPress theme for example is */wp-content/themes/mh-magazine*. In case you have trouble using your FTP client, please check the

documentation of the FTP client which you are using. If you need assistance to locate directories on your server, please contact the support desk of your hosting company.