Parent theme is missing on theme installation

FAQ · https://mhthemes.com/support/knb/parent-theme-missing/

On a regular basis we receive support requests from users who try to install their WordPress theme, but then get an error that says that the parent theme is missing. Don't worry, your WordPress theme is not broken and you can fix the missing parent theme error very easily.

Why does the Missing Parent Theme Error occur?

The most convenient way to install a theme in WordPress is by uploading the zipped theme folder through your WordPress dashboard under **"Appearance => Themes"**. The .zip file will include all files that WordPress will need to install your WordPress theme properly.

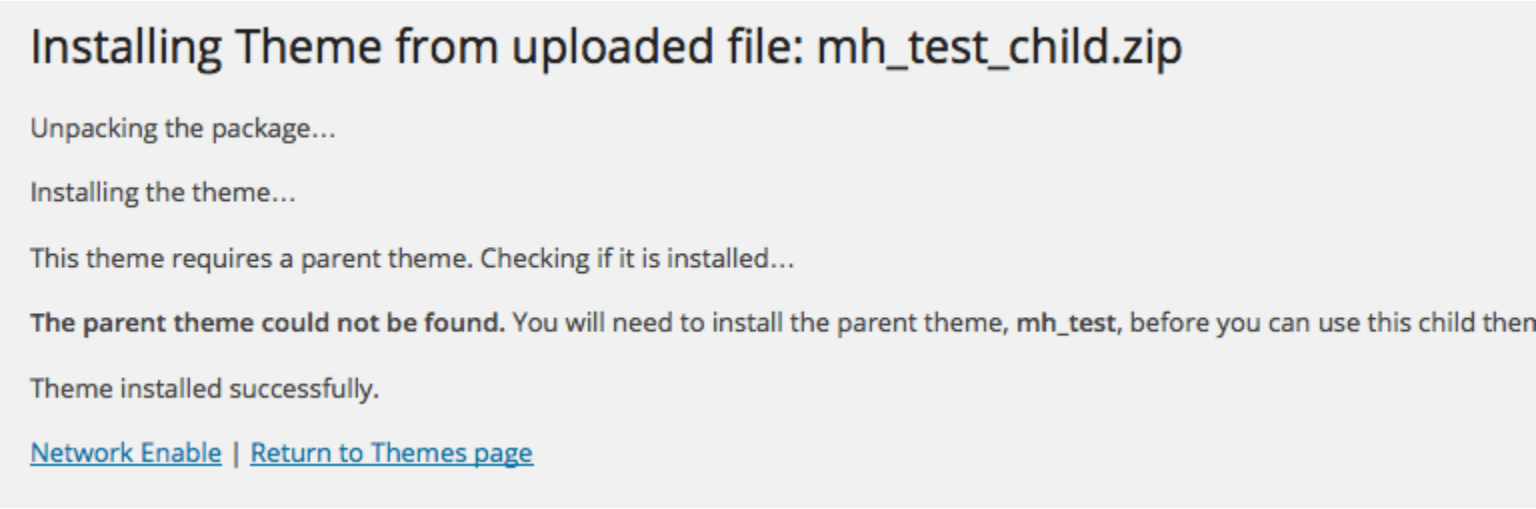
When people want to customize their WordPress themes (adding styles, changing code, etc...), the best way to do this is to create a child theme. Child themes are extensions of the "original" parent theme. To make sure that a child theme will work properly, you'll always need to have also the parent theme installed. Otherwise your child theme won't work.

Premium WordPress themes by MH Themes usually have already a basic version of a child theme included in the download package, to help users create their own customized child themes. The child theme is located inside the root folder of the parent theme. When people want to install their WordPress theme for the first time, they sometimes try to install the child theme instead of the parent theme. As mentioned before, that won't work and you'll probably get errors like this:

> The parent theme could not be found. You will need to install the parent theme, [theme_name], before you can use this child theme.

> Broken Theme: The parent theme is missing. Please install the [theme_name] parent theme.

> Broken Themes: The following themes are installed but incomplete. Themes must have a stylesheet and a template. The parent theme is missing. Please install the [theme_name] parent theme.



This is what you might see after theme installation, when the parent theme is missing.

How to fix the Missing Parent Theme Error?

In the end this issue is very simple and can be fixed by just uploading the zipped theme folder properly through your WordPress dashboard. In most cases people don't try to install the included child theme on purpose. **The problem is that some users have configured their browser or computer to automatically unzip .zip files after download.**

The result is that your computer will automatically unzip the theme download package and when you are trying to upload the theme to WordPress, only the zipped child theme folder can be found. Remember? WordPress will always need a .zip file to install WordPress themes properly and due to the fact that the child theme .zip file is located in the root folder of the parent theme, WordPress will only find the child theme when you have already unzipped the theme download package.

So actually you'll just need to make sure to turn off the automatic unzipping of .zip files by your computer or browser. Some people have also installed other applications (e.g. WinZip) which automatically take care of the unzipping. In that case please disable these programs or configure them properly. When this is done, please just download the theme package again from the place where you have purchased, **don't unzip the .zip file** and then upload the zipped theme folder through your WordPress dashboard and proceed with the installation of your WordPress theme.

The information in this article has also been helpful for users with the following questions:

- Why is the parent theme missing?
- How to reinstall the Parent Theme?
- How to fix missing parent theme error?
- Why is my WordPress theme broken?
- Theme stylesheet missing on theme installation
- How do I download a parent theme?