Asia Web Services Ltd. (vpshosting.com.hk)

Getting Started guide for VPS

with Plesk 10.

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I. Introduction to VPS

A Virtual Private Server (VPS) was developed to provide features usually reserved for a dedicated server at a more affordable price. An increasing number of web hosting users needed more flexibility, custom configurations, and Root Access, and the concept of a true virtual server fit their needs perfectly.

With a Virtual Private Server (VPS), each web hosting account receives their own operating system. The most common operating system is a version of Linux. The user's operating system runs the typical web hosting software, including an FTP server, a web server such as Apache, and an email server. Users can configure these components without affecting other users on the same physical machine because they are working within their own virtual server. They are given "Root Access," meaning they are allowed to use the root account on their server. The root account is required if you want to compile your own programs, change ownership of files and directories, or start services on ports below 1024.

Figure 1. An illustration of a host server that has multiple VPS on it. Each VPS is fully isolated to each other.

A Virtual Private Server (VPS) runs on one of our host servers. The host server runs a number of virtual private servers. Each VPS shares the host server's memory, CPU, Internet connection and other resources. No one VPS can monopolize on resources. Each VPS gets a guaranteed share of the host server's CPU, disk space, RAM and network.

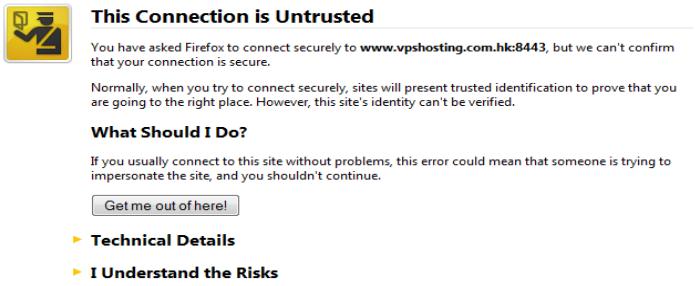
II. Accessing Plesk control panel

Plesk control panel can be access via a secure connection (https) through port 8443.

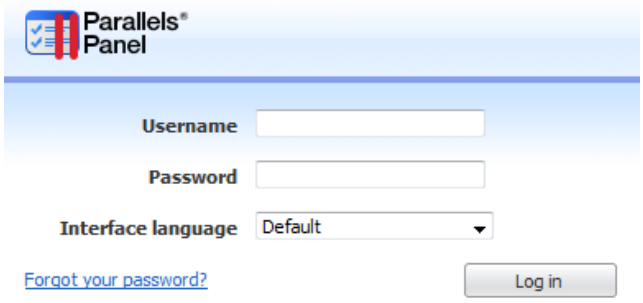
The Plesk control panel URL would be like this – https://x.x.x.x:8443

x.x.x.x above is just an example, you should replace it with your own IP address.

On your very first attempt to access Plesk, your web browser will show some warning that the SSL certificate can't be verified. That's because Plesk is using a self-signed certificate.



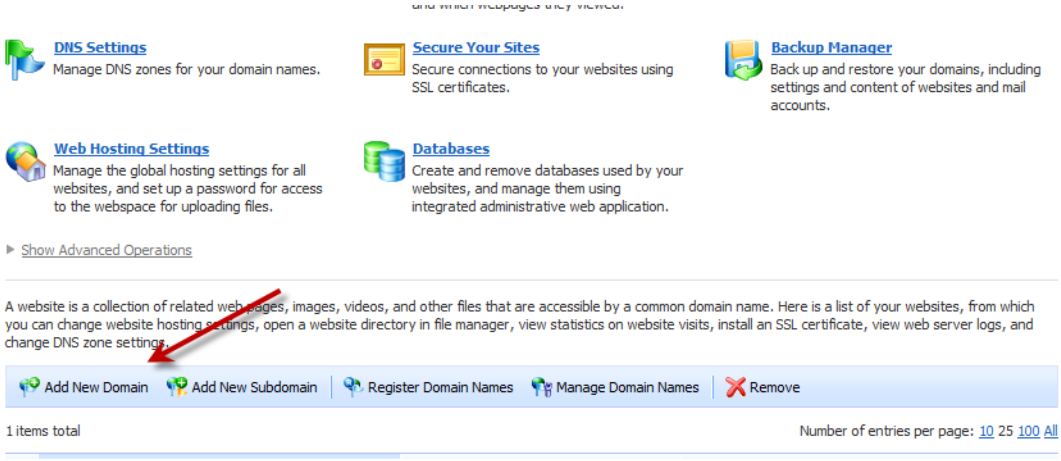
You can safely disregard that warning and accept the certificate. Click on "**I Understand the Risks**" > "**Confirm Security Exception**". After that you should see the Plesk login page.



Note: Plesk control panel can also be access via non-secure connection (http) through port 8880. But we suggest to use the secure connection (https, via 8443) if possible.

III. Adding your domain in Plesk

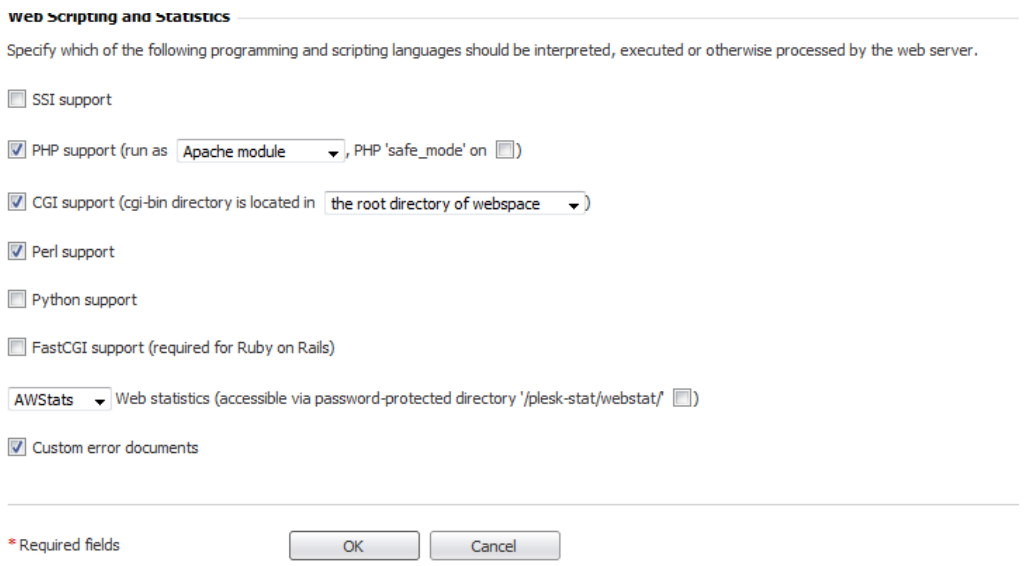
To add your domain for hosting in Plesk, click on "**Websites & Domains**", then to "**Add New Domain**".



IV. Enabling the needed web scripting languages for your domain.

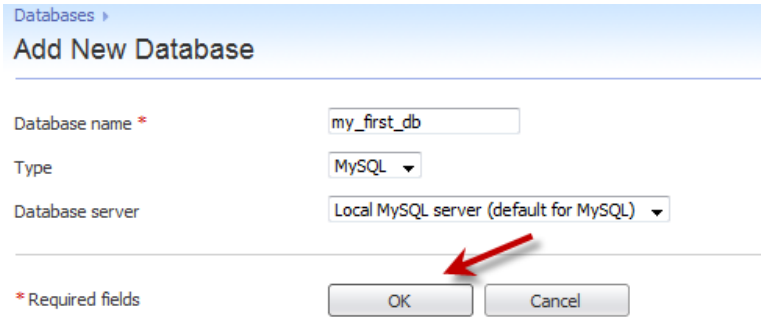
Plesk supports the following web scripting languages: SSI, PHP (as mod_apache or FastCGI), Perl/CGI and Python. However for system optimization purposes, it's ideal that you'll only enable the scripting languages that you'll need. For instance, if you will be using Wordpress or Joomla for your site – you only have to enable PHP.

These can be configured from Plesk, under "**Websites & Domains**" > "***yourdomain.com***" > "**Web Scripting and Statistics**".



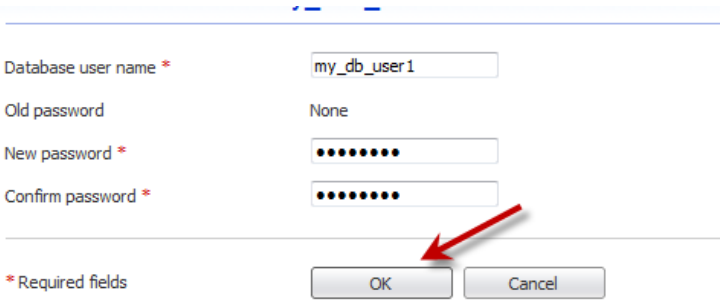
V. How to create MySQL database

To create a MySQL database, click on "**Website & Domains**" > "***yourdomain.com***" > "**Add New Database**".



Click on "**OK**" button.

After that, assign a username and password for your database. Click on "**Add New Database User**".

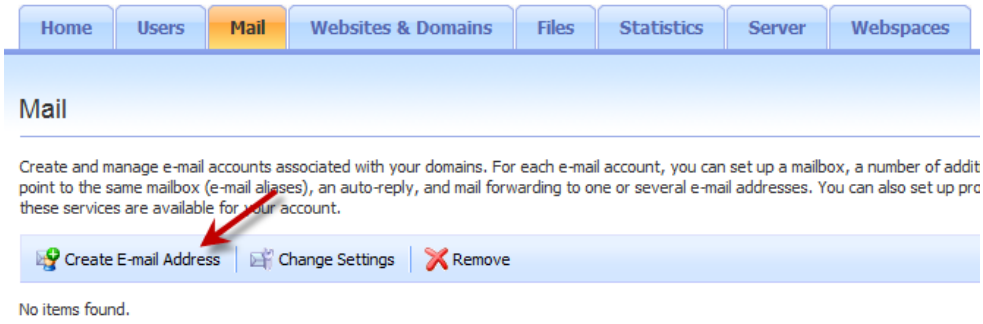


Now your MySQL database has been created with its own DB user.

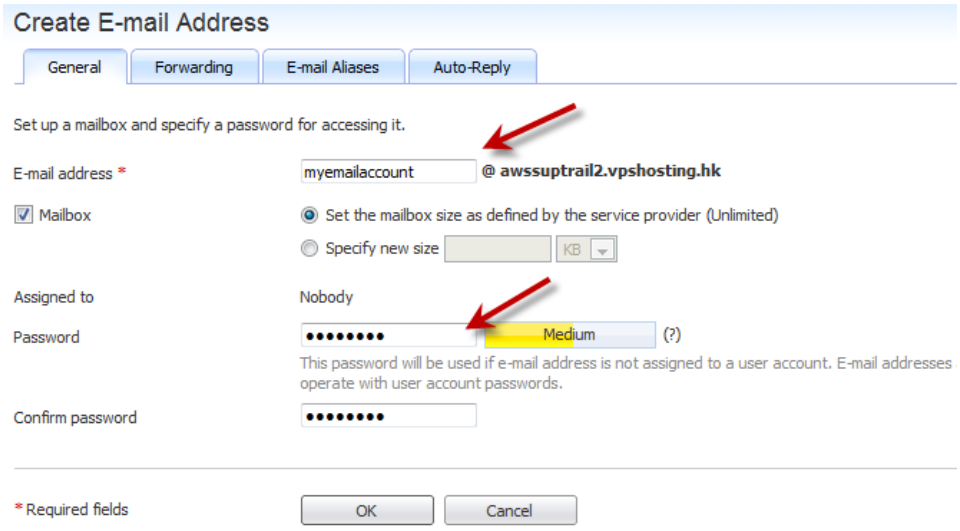
VI. How to create an email account

To create an email account, click on "**Mail**" tab from Plesk control panel.

Then click on "**Create E-mail Address**"



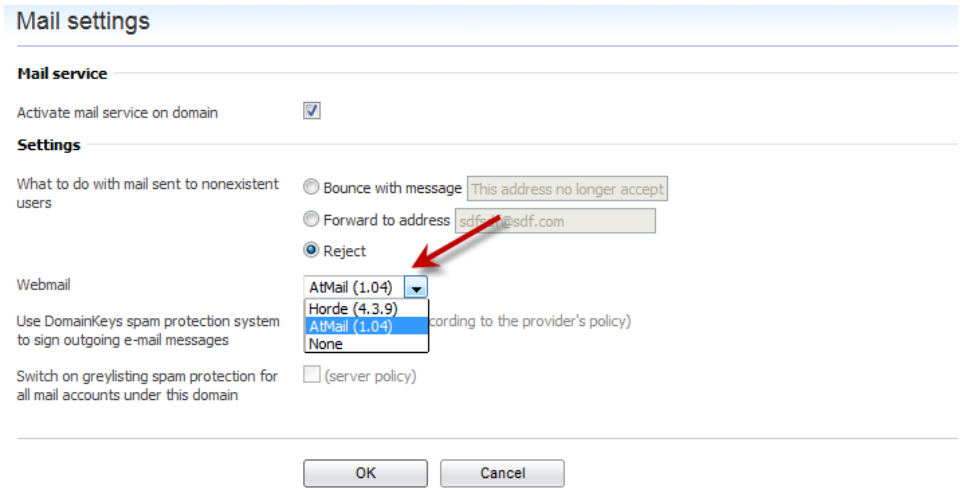
Fill in there the details such as Mail Account name and its password.



Click on "**OK**" button and that's it.

VII. How to access webmail

You need to make sure first that webmail is enabled from Plesk. Click on "**Mail**" > "**Change Settings**". You should see it from there, from the drop-down menu under Webmail if you've selected any.



Select either **Horde** or **AtMail**.

You can also switch your webmail preference anytime.

eg. Switching from Horde to AtMail, or vice versa.

To access the webmail, use the "webmail" prefix followed by your domain – with a dot in between. That's **http://webmail. yourdomain.com**.

yourdomain.com there is just an example. Replace it with your own domain.

Note: The DNS record for webmail (*webmail.yourdomain.com*) must resolve to the IP address of your VPS in order for you to access webmail. For the details, see the next topic about DNS Pointing.

VIII. DNS pointing

Now if you're done with your site deployment and you are ready to start using your site and even with emails and webmail, you must point the DNS of your domain to your VPS.

There are two ways of doing that, either:

A.) By changing the Name Servers

This means that you have to use your own Name Server, others call it Custom Name Server or Private Name Server.

Since you will be using your Private Name Server, you must register it first from your Registrar (from the company on where you purchase your domain). Although some provider will automatically register your Private Name Server when you key-in its FQDN (eg. ns.yourdomain.com) and its IP address.

This will be the default Name Server format (from Plesk DNS template), which you will use as your Private Name Server.

ns.yourdomain.com – A – x.x.x.x

Replace 'yourdomain.com' with your real domain.
x.x.x.x – this is just an example also of an IP address, replace it with your own IP address.

Contact your Registrar and ask them on how you can register your Private Name Server.

I have successfully registered my Private Name Server, what now?

Then you can now proceed on changing the Name Servers of your domain and start using your Private Name Servers. You should change your Name Servers from the control panel of your domain Registrar.

After a couple of hours, normally within 24-48 hours depending on your location and ISP, your domain should resolve to your IP address.

VIII. DNS pointing

B.) By pointing the DNS records

With this option, you will not be changing the Name Server of your domain.

This means that you will use the default Name Server of your domain, which comes from your Registrar. You will just point the DNS record of your domain to your VPS. With this method, management of DNS records will be done from the control panel of your domain Registrar – because you are using their Name Server.

Below are some examples of how you should configure the DNS records of your domain. You must set those from your domain's Registrar control panel.

For website hosting only:

yourdomain.com – A – x.x.x.x
www. yourdomain.com – CNAME - yourdomain.com

For website and email hosting:

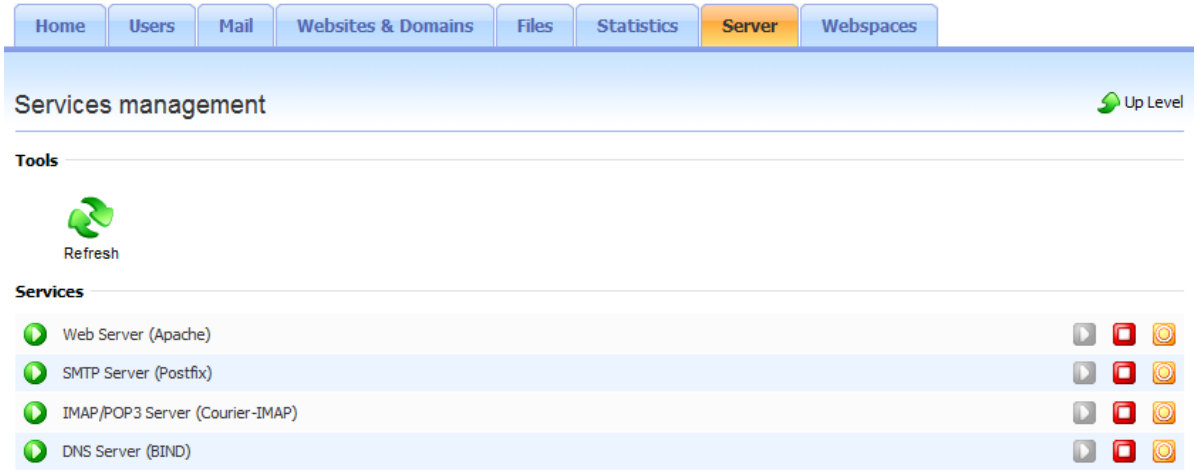
yourdomain.com – A - x.x.x.x
www. yourdomain.com – CNAME - yourdomain.com
mail. yourdomain.com – A - x.x.x.x
webmail. yourdomain.com – A - x.x.x.x
yourdomain.com – MX(10) - mail. yourdomain.com

Replace those details accordingly, yourdomain.com should be replace with your real domain and x.x.x.x should be replace with your own IP address.

IX. How to restart a service in Plesk

Plesk control panel allows you to stop, start or restart a service, like Apache, MySQL Database, STMP, POP3/IMAP and etc.

To do so, kindly login to your Plesk control panel. Once you are logged in, click on "**Server**" > "**Services Management**".



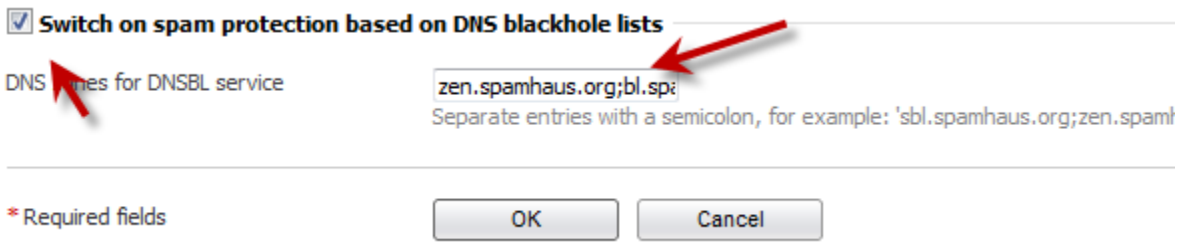
X. Using DNSBL for spam protection

DNS Blackhole List or DNSBL is a list of known IP addresses that are used for spamming. When enabling DNSBL for spam protection in Plesk, the sender's IP address will be check against the DNSBL – if the sender's IP address is listed there, his/her email will be rejected.

There are many DNSBL service on the web, each has its own listing of IP addresses. However we suggest you to use these two: **zen.spamhaus.org;bl.spamcop.net**

To enable DNSBL spam filtering from Plesk, click on "**Server**" > "**Settings**" > "**Mail Server Settings**".

Tick the option for "**Switch on spam protection based on DNS blackhole lists**" and key-in those two DNSBL service.



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XI. Video tutorials

More tutorials in a video format can also be found in Plesk, it's in the upper right-hand part of the window.