



Migrating to PHP 8

Headache Prevention Strategies



👋 Hi, I'm Tiffany Bridge

- 18 years working with WordPress
- Have worked as a freelancer and in agency-like settings
- Currently a product manager at Nexcess

But most relevantly...

...I have done this migration back when it was PHP 7.3 we were all moving to.

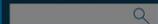
Not a developer? DON'T PANIC

This is not a technical problem.

This is a business problem.

The procedure

1. Spin up a staging site if you don't have one already.
2. Switch the staging site's environment to PHP 8.0 or 8.1.
3. Click through the site (front end AND wp-admin) to verify all major features are working.
4. If no, take note of anything that's broken and any error messages that you see.* Update to the latest version of anything that isn't already at the latest version and see if that helps.
5. If yes, go ahead and update the live site.

[BACK TO STOREBUILDER:
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testy.monster



Type StoreBuilder | Domain testy.monster

Application

Plugin Upgrades

If you turn off Plugin Upgrades, you will pause upgrades to your WordPress plugins. Your site may become susceptible to attack.

Core Upgrades

If you turn off Core Updates, you will pause WordPress Core updates for your site. Your site may become susceptible to attack.

Cloud Accelerator

NGINX Accelerator

NGINX accelerates content and application delivery. The NGINX Cache is a micro-cache that compresses and stores static content in-memory for short periods of time.

PHP

Version 8.0

Location /opt/remi/php80/root/usr/bin/php

[Change PHP Version](#)

Change PHP Version

Version *

8.0

 Compatibility Check

Before we make the change we would like to run a compatibility check to make sure your site won't have any issues.

[Cancel](#)[Update](#)

The business problem

PRIORITIZATION

Questions to Ask

1. How old (and therefore likely to have problems with PHP 8) are the sites I'm migrating?
2. Which customers are still paying me, or willing to pay me, to fix these problems?
3. What's my mix of old sites rescued from other admins, sites I built myself with my preferred tech stack, sites I built before I had this preferred stack?
4. How long do I have before my host starts forcing the issue?

Bucket 1: The Low-Hanging Fruit

Contains: Recently-built sites, low likelihood of problems, especially for clients who are still actively supported.

Strategy: Just move 'em! 

Bucket 2: Similar Problems

Contains: Sites who have the same incompatibility problems, like a common plugin or theme framework that hasn't yet been updated.

Strategy: Check with the developer about their roadmap for PHP 8, then plan a move accordingly.

Bucket 3: The Problem Children

Contains: Any site where you can't rely on someone else fixing the compatibility issue for you on an acceptable timeline so you have to act.

Strategy: Varies, but can include:

- Hiring a developer to fork plugins, submit PRs, update themes
- Replacing problem plugins with alternate solutions

Does your relationship with these clients justify the time/expense? If not, what are your obligations to that client? Can you pitch a new project for the update?