

OmniCart — User Guide

Version 1.3.0 · Semicolans

A complete guide to installing, configuring and running your OmniCart store. Read sections 1 and 2 before buying — they tell you exactly what you need and what you are getting.

1. Before you buy

What OmniCart is

OmniCart is a self-hosted e-commerce platform. You install it on your own hosting, under your own domain, and you run it. There is no monthly platform fee and no commission on your sales.

It is built in PHP using the Laravel framework with a MySQL database — the same technology stack used by a large share of the world's commercial web applications.

What you need

REQUIREMENT	DETAIL
Hosting	Any shared, VPS or cloud hosting running PHP
PHP	8.2 or higher
Database	MySQL 5.7+ or MariaDB 10.3+
PHP extensions	openssl, pdo_mysql, mbstring, tokenizer, ctype, json, bcmath, fileinfo, curl, gd, xml, zip, intl
Domain	One domain or subdomain
SSL	Recommended; most hosts provide it free

The installer checks every one of these before it lets you continue, so you will know immediately if your hosting is suitable.

What you do not need

- **No Node.js, npm or build tools.** Nothing is compiled during installation.
- **No SSH or command line.** The whole installation runs in your browser.
- **No coding knowledge** to install or to run the store day to day.

Your licence

Each purchase includes one licence key, valid for **one domain**. You enter it during installation and the store activates. Moving to a different domain later requires the key to be unlocked — contact us and we will do it.

2. Installation

Installation takes about five minutes.

Step 1 — Prepare hosting

In your hosting control panel:

1. Point your domain or subdomain at a folder.
2. Create an **empty MySQL database**, plus a user with full access to it.
3. Note the database name, username and password — you will need them shortly.

Step 2 — Upload

1. Upload the OmniCart zip file into your domain's folder.
2. Extract it there.
3. Delete the zip file once extraction finishes.

The folder should now contain `app`, `public`, `vendor`, `artisan` and others.

Step 3 — Run the installer

Open your domain in a browser. You will be taken to the installer automatically.

Step 01 — Requirements. The installer checks your PHP version, extensions and folder permissions. Anything missing is listed with what to fix. Ask your hosting provider to enable any missing extension — this is a routine request.

Step 02 — Licence. Enter the licence key you received with your purchase. It looks like `KEY-XXXXXX-XXXXXX-XXXXXX`. The key is checked with our licence server and locked to this domain.

Step 03 — Database. Enter the details from Step 1:

- Host: `127.0.0.1` (or as your host specifies)
- Port: `3306`
- Database name, username and password

Step 04 — Admin account. Create your own login: name, email and a password of at least 8 characters. Submitting this creates all database tables, so allow a few seconds.

Step 05 — Finish. The store is live. You will be given a link to the admin panel.

Step 4 — After installation

Sign in at `https://yourdomain.com/admin` with the account you just created.

3. First-time setup

Work through these in order. Most are found under **Settings** in the admin sidebar.

General settings

Your store name, logo, contact details, address and currency. The store name appears in the browser tab, on emails, and in the admin panel header.

Currency

Set your primary currency and its symbol. Additional currencies can be added under **Currencies** if you sell internationally.

Payment settings

Choose how customers pay:

- **Manual / bank transfer** — the customer places the order and pays by transfer; you confirm payment before dispatch.
- **Cash on delivery** — payment collected on delivery.
- **Online gateway** — card payments through a supported provider. Enter the merchant credentials given to you by the gateway.

Email settings

Order confirmations and account emails are sent from here. Enter your SMTP details — your hosting provider supplies these, or use a provider such as Gmail, Mailgun or Postmark. There is a **test** panel to confirm it works before you rely on it.

SMS settings

Optional. Used for order alerts and for SMS login. Enter your SMS provider's API credentials. Also has a test panel.

WhatsApp settings

Optional. Shows a WhatsApp contact button on the storefront and can send order notifications to your own number.

System update

Found at the bottom of Shop Settings. Shows the version of your files and the version your database is on, and installs a new release when you have one.

Appearance

Choose a storefront theme, set your brand colours, and upload your logo and favicon. Changes appear immediately — no rebuild required.

Delivery and shipping

- **Shipping rules** — set delivery charges by region, weight or order value.
- **Delivery partners** — record the couriers you use, for order labels and tracking.

4. Running your store

Products

Catalog → Products → New product.

- **Basic details** — name, description, category, brand, SKU.
- **Pricing** — regular price and optional sale price.
- **Images** — upload several; the first becomes the main image.
- **Stock** — quantity on hand. With branches enabled, stock is tracked per branch.
- **Variations** — for products sold in sizes, colours and similar. Define the attributes first (under **Attributes**), then generate variations, each with its own price, SKU and stock.
- **Price tiers** — optional quantity-break pricing, for wholesale customers.

Categories and brands

Categories organise your catalog and appear in the storefront menu. They can be nested — for example *Clothing → Men's → Shirts*. Brands are optional and give customers a second way to browse.

Orders

Sales → Orders.

Every order shows the customer, items, totals, payment method and delivery address. From an order you can:

- Change its status — pending, processing, shipped, delivered, cancelled
- View the full status history, with timestamps
- Print a delivery label
- Record payment against a manual or bank-transfer order

Customers receive an email — and an SMS, if configured — when the status changes.

Customers

People → Users. Every registered customer, with their order history. Customers can also register and sign in themselves on the storefront.

Reviews

Catalog → Reviews. Customer reviews arrive here for approval before they appear publicly, so nothing is published without your say-so.

Promotions

Catalog → Promotions. Create discounts that apply automatically at checkout, or as coupon codes customers enter. Supported types include percentage off, fixed amount off, and free-item offers. Each promotion can have start and end dates and a usage limit, and you can see how many times it has been used.

Banners

Appearance → Banners. The promotional images on your home page. Each can link to a product, a category or any URL.

5. Point of sale

Sales → Point of Sale.

For selling over the counter using the same catalog and stock as the website.

- Search a product by name, SKU or barcode and add it to the sale
- Adjust quantity, apply a line discount or an order-level discount
- Select the branch you are selling from
- **Hold a sale** and recall it later — useful when a customer steps away
- Take payment and complete; stock is deducted immediately

Because the POS and the website share one inventory, an item sold at the counter is no longer available online, and the reverse.

6. Branches

Settings → Branches.

If you operate more than one shop or warehouse, add each as a branch. Stock is then tracked separately per location, so you can see what is where, and the POS deducts from the branch making the sale.

Running a single location? Leave the default branch as it is and ignore this section entirely.

7. Customer experience

What your customers can do:

- Browse by category or brand, with search suggestions as they type
- View products with multiple images, descriptions and variations
- Add to cart and check out
- Register an account, or sign in with **Google** or by **SMS one-time code**
- Apply coupon codes at checkout
- See delivery charges calculated before paying
- Track an order after placing it
- Leave a product review

On a phone, a bottom navigation bar keeps Home, Shop, Cart, Track and Account within thumb reach on every page, with a live count on the cart.

Guest checkout means a customer does not have to create an account to buy.

8. Day-to-day tips

Adding products quickly. Set up your categories and attributes first. Doing that once saves time on every product afterwards.

Stock accuracy. If online and counter stock ever drift apart, check that counter sales are being put through the POS rather than recorded by hand.

Test your emails. Send a test from the email settings panel before your first real order, not after. An order confirmation that never arrives is the most common complaint in online retail.

Back up. Your hosting control panel can schedule database backups. Turn this on. It costs nothing and it is the difference between an inconvenience and a disaster.

9. Troubleshooting

The installer says an extension is missing. Ask your hosting provider to enable it. This is a standard request and usually takes minutes.

"Unauthorized client" at the licence step. The store cannot authenticate with the licence server. Contact us with your order number.

The licence key is refused, naming another domain. The key is already activated elsewhere. Contact us to unlock it.

Changes are not appearing. Clear your hosting control panel's OPcache, then hard-refresh the browser (Ctrl+F5, or Cmd+Shift+R on a Mac).

A page shows "500 Server Error". Usually database credentials or folder permissions. Check `storage/logs/laravel.log` for the specific message, or send it to us.

Emails are not arriving. Test from the email settings panel. If the test succeeds but customers report nothing, check spam folders and confirm your sender address matches your domain.

10. Support and updates

Support covers faults, installation questions and guidance on using the admin panel, for the period stated in your purchase.

Updates to the platform — improvements and security fixes — are provided free of charge and install from your own dashboard. Download the release from your account, then open **System update** in the admin sidebar, upload the file and press install. The store verifies the package, applies any database changes and reopens. Your products, orders, settings and uploaded images are never touched. Full instructions are in `UPDATE-GUIDE.md`.

Custom work. We are the developers of OmniCart, not resellers of someone else's template, so we can modify or extend anything in it. Custom modules, integrations with systems you already use, and workflow changes are quoted before any work begins.

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OmniCart is a Semicolans product. This guide covers version 1.3.0.