Self-hosting handover guide

How to upload your new website to your own hosting and get it live on your domain. Written for business owners, not developers.

What you'll receive from us

- A **.zip file** of your finished website (pages, images, styles and scripts), ready to upload.
- Your **domain**, still registered in your name, plus the login details for your domain manager.
- This guide. Most people finish in 30 to 60 minutes.

Before you start

- **Hosting account:** any host that serves standard websites (HTML, CSS and JavaScript) works. Common choices are listed in step 2.
- **Domain manager login:** where your .co.nz or .nz domain is registered, so you can point it at your new host.
- **Your website .zip:** download it from our email and unzip it on your computer. You should see a file called **index.html** at the top level.
- **Email:** if you have business email on the domain (Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace), don't change your MX records. Only change the records this guide mentions.

Step 1. Check the files

Open the unzipped folder. You should see **index.html** (your home page), other pages such as **about.html** or folders such as **about/**, and an **assets** or **images** folder. Double-click index.html to preview your site in a browser. Some features, like the contact form, only work once it's online.

Step 2. Upload to your host

Follow the section for your host. Upload the **contents** of the folder, so index.html sits at the top, not inside another folder.

Cloudflare Pages (free, fast in NZ)

1. Sign in at dash.cloudflare.com, then go to **Workers & Pages** → **Create** → **Pages** → **Upload assets**.
2. Name the project (for example your business name) and drag in your unzipped website folder.
3. Click **Deploy**. You'll get a temporary address ending in .pages.dev to check everything looks right.
4. Open **Custom domains** → **Set up a custom domain** and enter your domain. Cloudflare shows the DNS record to add (step 3).

Netlify

1. Sign in at app.netlify.com and open **Sites**.
2. Drag your unzipped website folder onto the "drag and drop" area. It goes live on a temporary .netlify.app address.
3. Go to **Domain management** → **Add a domain** and follow the DNS instructions (step 3).

Vercel

1. Sign in at vercel.com → **Add New** → **Project**. Without a Git repository, install the Vercel CLI and run **vercel deploy** in the folder, or use a host above.
2. Under **Settings** → **Domains**, add your domain and follow the DNS instructions.

cPanel hosting (most NZ hosts, e.g. shared hosting plans)

1. Sign in to cPanel and open **File Manager**.
2. Open the **public_html** folder (or the folder for your domain). Remove any placeholder index file.
3. Click **Upload**, choose your website .zip, then right-click it and choose **Extract**. Check index.html sits directly inside public_html.
4. Your host usually connects the domain for you. If not, see step 3.

WordPress hosting

1. WordPress hosting is built for WordPress sites, not ready-made website files. Most WordPress hosts include cPanel or "File Manager": use the cPanel steps, uploading into the folder for your domain. If your plan has no file access, ask your host or choose another option above.

Website builders (Wix, Squarespace, GoDaddy Website Builder)

1. These don't accept uploaded website files, so they can't host this website. Choose one of the hosts above instead.

Step 3. Point your domain at your host (DNS)

Sign in where your domain is registered (your domain manager) and open its **DNS** settings. Your host tells you exactly which records to add. They usually look like this:

Record	Name / Host	Value / Points to	Typical for
CNAME	www	your-site.pages.dev (or .netlify.app)	Cloudflare Pages, Netlify, Vercel
A	@ (the bare domain)	the IP address your host gives you	cPanel and most shared hosts
CNAME / ALIAS	@	your host's address (if supported)	Hosts without a fixed IP

- Remove any old A or CNAME records for @ or www that point somewhere else, so they don't clash.
- **Leave MX, SPF, DKIM and DMARC records alone.** They run your email.
- Changes usually work within an hour, but can take up to 48 hours.

Step 4. Turn on HTTPS (the padlock)

Cloudflare Pages, Netlify and Vercel add a free security certificate automatically once your domain is connected. On cPanel, open **SSL/TLS Status** or **Let's Encrypt** and run it for your domain. Then

check your site loads at https://yourdomain and that http:// redirects to https://.

Step 5. Check everything works

- Visit your home page and every page from the menu, on your phone and your computer.
- Send a test message through your contact form and check it arrives.
- Search for your business on Google Maps and check your Google Business Profile links to your new address.
- In Google Search Console (search.google.com/search-console), add your domain and submit **sitemap.xml** if your site includes one.

Looking after your site

- **Keep a copy** of the .zip somewhere safe, such as your cloud storage.
- **Renew your domain** each year with your domain manager. If it lapses, your website and email stop working.
- **Changes:** edit the files and upload them again, or ask us for a quote for changes. You can also move to our Care plan ($39/month) at any time and we'll host and look after it for you.

Stuck? Email hello@upfront.kiwi with your domain and a screenshot of where you're up to, and we'll point you in the right direction. We can't log in to or manage accounts you own, so you stay in control of your hosting and domain.