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Domain, DNS and SSL Basics

- DNS connects your domain (e.g. example.com) to your server's IP.
- Common records: A, CNAME, MX, TXT.
- SSL/TLS encrypts traffic. Let's Encrypt can be enabled in Plesk for free.
- Checklist: Ensure A record points to server, CNAME for www, SSL enabled.

Getting Started with Plesk

- Plesk is a control panel to manage domains, hosting, databases, and emails.
- Key menus: Websites & Domains, Files, Databases, Mail, Tools & Settings.
- Checklist: Domain added, hosting type = Web Hosting, SSL enabled.

Setting the Correct Default Site

- When multiple sites share the same IP, one is the 'default site'.
- If the wrong one is selected, your visitors may see the wrong page or the Plesk welcome page.
- Steps: Tools & Settings → IP Addresses → select your domain as Default Site.
- Checklist: Visiting server IP shows your site.

WordPress Installation (OneClick / Manual)

- OneClick: Plesk → WordPress Toolkit → Install.
- Manual: Upload files, create database, configure wp-config.php.
- Checklist: Permalinks set to 'Post name', timezone configured, admin secured with 2FA.

Theme Installation and Child Theme

- Themes define your website's design.
- Always use a Child Theme to preserve customizations during updates.
- Checklist: Correct zip uploaded, Child Theme activated, demo data imported if required.

Must■Have Plugins

- Security: Wordfence or iThemes Security.
- Caching: W3 Total Cache, WP Super Cache, or LiteSpeed Cache.
- Backup: UpdraftPlus or Duplicator.
- SEO: Yoast SEO or Rank Math.
- Checklist: Choose plugins suited to your server (e.g. LiteSpeed).

Email Delivery: SMTP + SPF/DKIM/DMARC

- Default PHP mail often ends up in spam. Use SMTP.
- Set DNS records for SPF, DKIM, and DMARC for email authenticity.
- Checklist: SMTP test mail works, SPF/DKIM/DMARC pass verification.

Performance: Caching, Image Optimization, CDN

- Enable caching for speed.
- Optimize images (convert to WebP).
- Use a CDN like Cloudflare for global performance.
- Checklist: GTMetrix/PageSpeed scores checked.

Security and Backup Routines

- Regular updates for WordPress, plugins, and themes.
- Use strong passwords and 2FA.
- Enable automated backups stored off-site.
- Checklist: Weekly backups scheduled, security scans enabled.

Common Issues and Quick Fixes

- Wrong document root → adjust Hosting Settings.
- Theme fails to install → check zip type, increase PHP memory limit.
- Emails not sending → configure SMTP & DNS records.
- SSL errors → reissue Let's Encrypt certificate.

SEO Essentials

- Use SEO plugin to set meta titles and descriptions.
- Create sitemap.xml and submit to Google Search Console.
- Ensure site loads fast on mobile.
- Checklist: Sitemap works, Search Console verified, schema markup enabled.

Maintenance Plan & Checklists

- Weekly: Update WP core, plugins, and themes.
- Monthly: Test forms, run performance tests.
- Quarterly: Audit plugin list, remove unused ones.

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: My site shows Plesk default page? A: Set correct Default Site.
- Q: Emails not arriving? A: Use SMTP + SPF/DKIM/DMARC.
- Q: Theme says 'install failed'? A: Upload the installable theme file only.

Appendices

- Sample DNS records template.
- One-page checklist covering DNS, SSL, WordPress, Plugins, Security, Backups, SEO.