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Sending alerts to Telegram from your website or a script

Ideas & Everyday Automations

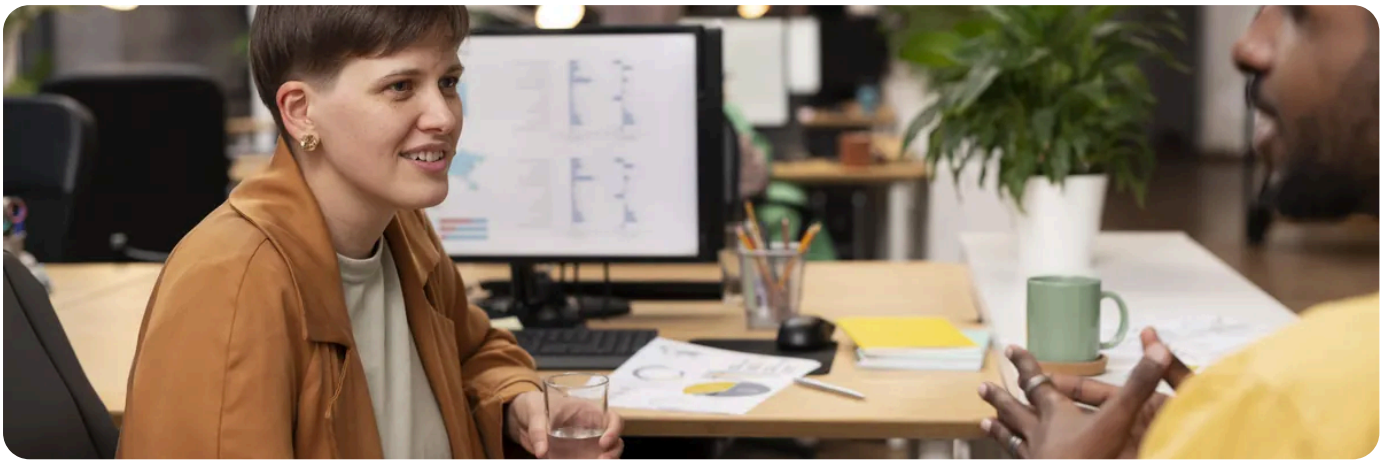
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Sending alerts to Telegram from your website or a script

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To get a notice on your phone whenever something happens on your site, Telegram is one of the simplest roads: you create a **bot**, find the number of your chat, and send messages with a single HTTP request. You do not need a server of your own, and it works from a PHP script, a cron job or n8n.

Setting up the bot, step by step

1. **Create the bot.** In Telegram, open the chat with `@BotFather`, send `/newbot` and choose a name and a username ending in “bot”. At the end you get the **token**, a long string of characters.

2. **Talk to your bot.** Search for the bot by username and send it any message. Without that it has no permission to write to you. For alerts in a group, add the bot to the group and write there.

3. **Find the chat number.** Open `https://api.telegram.org/botTOKEN/getUpdates` in a browser, with your token in place of TOKEN. In the reply look for `chat` and the `id` in it. For groups the number is negative.

4. **Send the first message.** In a terminal or a cron job: `curl -s "https://api.telegram.org/botTOKEN/sendMessage" -d chat_id=NUMBER --data-urlencode "text=New enquiry on the site"`.

5. **Put the token somewhere safe.** In a file outside `public_html`, read by the script, with permissions that only your account can read.

Where to use it

Situation	Who sends it
A form on the site was filled in	The form’s PHP, with `curl`, after validating the fields.

Situation	Who sends it
The site stopped answering	A script that checks the site and warns you. See **getting an alert when your site goes down**.
A backup finished or failed	The end of the backup script, in a cron job.
An order was paid	The shop, through a plugin, or an n8n workflow with the Telegram node.

For a team, use a group. Create a group, add the bot and use that group's (negative) number: everyone sees the same alert. You can have one bot per purpose, one for the site and one for backups, so the name tells you at once where the notice comes from.

Whoever has the token controls the bot.
Never put it in a repository, in a file inside `public_html` or in a chat. If you think it has left your hands, ask BotFather for a new one (`/revoke`) and update the script. See also **keeping passwords out of your PHP code**.

If the `getUpdates` reply is empty, you never wrote to the bot, or the bot already has a webhook set, which stops `getUpdates` from returning messages. If the message does not arrive, check the chat number and the token, with no stray spaces.

Keep alerts short and with context
: what happened, where and when. "New enquiry from Ana, 14:32" will do. If everything raises an alert you stop reading them. Keep alerts for what needs action. For WhatsApp, see **which WhatsApp suits your business**.

RECOMMENDED
Want to run your scripts on a plan with cron and PHP? See the hosting plans.
See the plans →

SEE ALSO

- **Cron jobs: what they are for and how to create one** →
- **Keeping passwords out of your PHP code: .env files and the right permissions** →
- **What a webhook is, and how to test one with curl** →

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TAX NO. (SARS)	943 907 6234
REGISTRATION NO. (CIPC)	2025/667953/07
REGISTERED OFFICE	1111 Olive Street Saint Louis 63101, Missouri, United States
CONTACT	info@mozout.com · +27 78 823 3325 · www.mozout.com
OPENING HOURS	Monday to Friday - 08 AM to 04 PM Saturday & Sunday - Closed

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