

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

# MongoDB on a VPS: install it, lock it down, and why not to expose it

Databases

CODE

RLX-INT-KB-5220

VERSION

v2026.10.15

COUNTRY · LANGUAGE

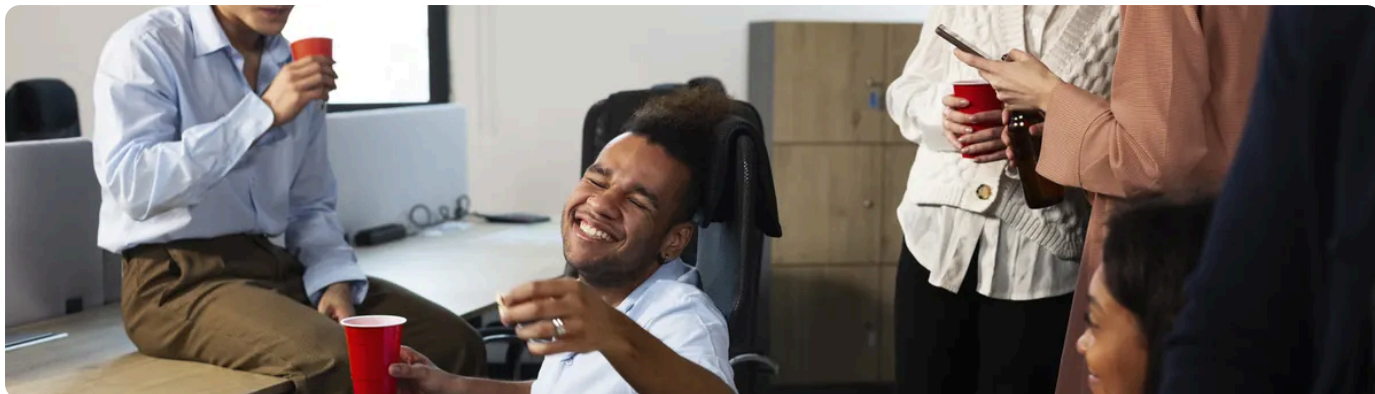
International · English

## MozOut International

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<https://www.my.mozout.com/knowledgebase/5220>



**The short answer: MongoDB** is a database that stores documents (like JSON) instead of tables. It is not part of cPanel's database tools, so you run it on a **VPS**. The rule that matters most: **never leave it open to the internet**. Many unprotected MongoDB servers have been wiped and held to ransom by whoever found them.

## The simplest way: a container

If you already use Docker (see [Running Docker on a VPS safely](#)), the official image gives a clean install that is easy to remove:

```
docker run -d --name mongo --restart unless-stopped \
-p 127.0.0.1:27017:27017 \
-v mongo-data:/data/db \
-e MONGO_INITDB_ROOT_USERNAME=admin \
-e MONGO_INITDB_ROOT_PASSWORD=A-STRONG-PASSWORD \
mongo
```

| Part                                  | What it is for                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <code>-p 127.0.0.1:27017:27017</code> | <b>The most important.</b> Publishes the port on the VPS itself only. Without <code>127.0.0.1</code> , Docker opens it to the world, even with the firewall on. |
| <code>-v mongo-data:/data/db</code>   | Keeps the data in a volume, so you do not lose it when the container is recreated. See <a href="#">Docker volumes or bind mounts</a> .                          |
| <code>MONGO_INITDB_ROOT_*</code>      | Creates the administrator user and switches authentication on. Use a long password; see <a href="#">A strong password and a password manager</a> .              |

Use a numbered version instead of `mongo` alone, so an update does not catch you by surprise (the list is on the image's page on Docker Hub).

## Installed on the system

Without Docker, MongoDB is installed from MongoDB's own repository for your Ubuntu or Debian version. Package and key names change with versions, so **follow the official installation guide** rather than copying old commands. Either way, after installing:

**1**

**Switch authentication on** (the “authorization” option in MongoDB's configuration file) and create the administrator user.

**2**

**Leave it listening on 127.0.0.1 only** (the “bindIp” option), unless you really must connect it to another machine.

**3**

**Close port 27017** in the firewall. See **Setting up the ufw firewall on Ubuntu** and **Ports and firewall on a VPS**.

## How the application connects

An application on the same VPS connects with an address like

`mongodb://admin:PASSWORD@127.0.0.1:27017/my-database?authSource=admin` . Keep it in the application's configuration file, outside the code: see **Keeping passwords out of your code**. To look at the data from your computer, use an **SSH tunnel** instead of opening the port: `ssh -L 27017:127.0.0.1:27017 user@VPS-IP` , and connect to `localhost` .

## Backups

Use `mongodump` to make the copy: `mongodump --uri="mongodb://..." --gzip --archive=/backups/mongo.gz` ; and `mongorestore` to put it back: `mongorestore --uri="mongodb://..." --gzip --archive=/backups/mongo.gz` . Run it from cron and send the copy off the server: see **Off-site backups**. And test the restore, not only the copy.

**If your MongoDB was ever open to the internet**, treat it as compromised: change all passwords, check for data that is missing or extra, and restore from a clean copy. See **Keeping your VPS secure**.

Want help deciding whether MongoDB suits your application, or locking it down? Open a ticket saying what you will store.

[Open a support ticket](#)

#### SEE ALSO

[Keeping your VPS or dedicated server secure: the six that matter](#)

[Running Docker on a VPS safely: the precautions that matter](#)

[Ports and firewall on a VPS: why your app is not reachable](#)

[Off-site backups: sending a copy to cloud storage, an S3 bucket or Google Drive](#)



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