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Linux Manual Deployment

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<https://bitwarden.com/help/install-on-premise-manual/>

Linux Manual Deployment

This article will walk you through the procedure to manually install and deploy Bitwarden to your own server. Please review Bitwarden [software release support](#) documentation.

⚠ Warning

Manual installations should be conducted by advanced users only. Only proceed if you are very familiar with Docker technologies and desire more control over your Bitwarden installation.

Manual installations lack the ability to automatically update certain dependencies of the Bitwarden installation. As you upgrade from one version of Bitwarden to the next you will be responsible for changes to required environment variables, changes to `nginx default.conf`, changes to `docker-compose.yml`, and so on.

We will try to highlight these in the [release notes on GitHub](#). You can also monitor changes to the [dependency templates](#) used by the Bitwarden installation script on GitHub.

Requirements

	Minimum	Recommended
Processor	x64, 1.4GHz	x64, 2GHz dual core
Memory	2GB RAM	4GB RAM
Storage	12GB	25GB
Docker Version	Engine 26+ and Compose ^a	Engine 26+ and Compose ^a

^a – Docker Compose is automatically installed as a plugin when you download Docker Engine. [Download Docker Engine for Linux](#).

Additionally, if you're building your own Bitwarden images, official .NET Core Runtime images (download from [DockerHub](#)) of the same .NET version as Bitwarden are required. You must use the Debian or Ubuntu versions.

Installation procedure

Create Bitwarden local user & directory

We recommend configuring your server with a dedicated bitwarden service account from which to install and run Bitwarden. Doing so will isolate your Bitwarden instance from other applications running on your server.

These steps are Bitwarden-recommended best practices, but are not required. For more information, see Docker's [post-installation steps for Linux](#) documentation.

1. Create a bitwarden user:

Bash

```
sudo adduser bitwarden
```

2. Set a password for the bitwarden user:

Bash

```
sudo passwd bitwarden
```

3. Create a docker group (if it doesn't already exist):

Bash

```
sudo groupadd docker
```

4. Add the bitwarden user to the docker group:

Bash

```
sudo usermod -aG docker bitwarden
```

5. Create a bitwarden directory:

Bash

```
sudo mkdir /opt/bitwarden
```

6. Set permissions for the `/opt/bitwarden` directory:

Bash

```
sudo chmod -R 700 /opt/bitwarden
```

7. Set the bitwarden user ownership of the `/opt/bitwarden` directory:

Bash

```
sudo chown -R bitwarden:bitwarden /opt/bitwarden
```

Download & configure

⚠ Warning

If you have created a Bitwarden user & directory, complete the following as the **bitwarden** user from the **/opt/bitwarden** directory. **Do not install Bitwarden as root**, as you will encounter issues during installation.

To download Bitwarden and configure Bitwarden server assets:

1. Download a stubbed version of Bitwarden's dependencies (**docker-stub-US.zip** or **docker-stub-EU.zip**) from the [releases pages on GitHub](#). For example:

Bash

```
curl -L https://github.com/bitwarden/server/releases/download/v<version_number>/docker-stub-US.zip \
-o docker-stub-US.zip
```

2. Create a new directory named **bwdata** and extract **docker-stub.zip** to it, for example:

Bash

```
unzip docker-stub-US.zip -d bwdata
```

Once unzipped, the **bwdata** directory will match what the **docker-compose.yml** file's volume mapping expects. You may, if you wish, change the location of these mappings on the host machine.

3. In **./bwdata/env/global.override.env**, edit the following environment variables:

- **globalSettings__baseServiceUri__vault=**: Enter the domain of your Bitwarden instance.
- **globalSettings__sqlServer__ConnectionString=**: Replace the **RANDOM_DATABASE_PASSWORD** with a secure password for use in a later step.
- **globalSettings__identityServer__certificatePassword**: Set a secure certificate password for use in a later step.
- **globalSettings__internalIdentityKey=**: Replace **RANDOM_IDENTITY_KEY** with a random alphanumeric string.
- **globalSettings__oidcIdentityClientKey=**: Replace **RANDOM_IDENTITY_KEY** with a random alphanumeric string.
- **globalSettings__duo__aKey=**: Replace **RANDOM_DUO_AKEY** with a random alphanumeric string.

- `globalSettings__installation__id`=: Enter an installation id retrieved from <https://bitwarden.com/host>.
- `globalSettings__installation__key`=: Enter an installation key retrieved from <https://bitwarden.com/host>.

Tip

At this time, consider also setting values for all `globalSettings__mail__smtp__` variables and for `adminSettings__admins`. Doing so will configure the SMTP mail server used to send invitations to new organization members and provision access to the [System Administrator Portal](#).

[Learn more about environment variables.](#)

4. From `./bwdata`, generate a `.pfx` certificate file for the identity container and move it to the mapped volume directory (by default, `./bwdata/identity/`). For example, run the following commands:

Bash

```
openssl req -x509 -newkey rsa:4096 -sha256 -nodes -keyout identity.key -out identity.crt -subj  
"/CN=Bitwarden IdentityServer" -days 10950
```

and

Bash

```
openssl pkcs12 -export -out ./identity/identity.pfx -inkey identity.key -in identity.crt -passou  
t pass:IDENTITY_CERT_PASSWORD
```

In the above command, replace `IDENTITY_CERT_PASSWORD` with the certificate password created and used in **Step 3**.

5. Create a subdirectory in `./bwdata/ssl` named for your domain, for example:

Bash

```
mkdir ./ssl/bitwarden.example.com
```

6. Provide a trusted SSL certificate and private key in the newly created `./bwdata/ssl/bitwarden.example.com` subdirectory.

Note

This directory is mapped to the NGINX container at `/etc/ssl`. If you can't provide a trusted SSL certificate, front the installation with a proxy that provides an HTTPS endpoint to Bitwarden client applications.

7. In `./bwdata/nginx/default.conf`:

1. Replace all instances of `bitwarden.example.com` with your domain, including in the `Content-Security-Policy` header.
2. Set the `ssl_certificate` and `ssl_certificate_key` variables to the paths of the certificate and private key provided in **Step 7**.
3. Take one of the following actions, depending on your certificate setup:
 - If using a trusted SSL certificate, set the `ssl_trusted_certificate` variable to the path to your certificate.
 - If using a self-signed certificate, comment out the `ssl_trusted_certificate` variable.
8. In `./bwdata/env/mssql.override.env`, replace `RANDOM_DATABASE_PASSWORD` with the password created in **Step 3**.
9. In `./bwdata/web/app-id.json`, replace `bitwarden.example.com` with your domain.
10. In `./bwdata/env/uid.env`, set the UID and GID of the `bitwarden` users and group you created earlier so the containers run under them, for example:

Bash`LOCAL_UID=1001``LOCAL_GID=1001`

Start your server

Start your Bitwarden server with the following command:

Bash`docker compose -f ./docker/docker-compose.yml up -d`

Verify that all containers are running correctly:

Bash`docker ps`

CONTAINER ID	IMAGE	COMMAND	CREATED	STATUS	PORTS	NAMES
de2f16dbb282	ghcr.io/bitwarden/nginx:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	80/tcp, 0.0.0.0:80->8080/tcp, :::80->8080/tcp, 0.0.0.0:443->8443/tcp, :::443->8443/tcp	bitwarden-nginx
6efc85901f189	ghcr.io/bitwarden/admin:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-admin
1d9158cab344	ghcr.io/bitwarden/mssql:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)		bitwarden-mssql
18ed4331c859	ghcr.io/bitwarden/attachments:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)		bitwarden-attachments
dd6369b85544	ghcr.io/bitwarden/api:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-api
960c7fab5287	ghcr.io/bitwarden/identity:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-identity
09f151b20e1d	ghcr.io/bitwarden/notifications:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-notifications
c1d2844ad4f3	ghcr.io/bitwarden/events:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-events
14e4d97569ae	ghcr.io/bitwarden/web:2025.4.1	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)		bitwarden-web
54ee328969ec	ghcr.io/bitwarden/sso:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-sso
561b65bc73b8	ghcr.io/bitwarden/icons:2025.4.3	"/entrypoint.sh"	53 minutes ago	Up 53 minutes (healthy)	5000/tcp	bitwarden-icons

Docker healthy

Congratulations! Bitwarden is now up and running at <https://your.domain.com>. Visit the web vault in your browser to confirm that it's working.

You may now register a new account and log in. You will need to have configured SMTP environment variables (see [Environment Variables](#)) in order to verify the email for your new account.

Next Steps:

- If you are planning to self-host a Bitwarden organization, see [self-host an organization](#) to get started.
- For additional information see [self hosting FAQs](#).

Update your server

Updating a self-hosted server that has been installed and deployed manually is different from the [standard update procedure](#). To update your manually-installed server:

1. Download the latest [docker-stub.zip](#) archive from the [releases pages on GitHub](#).
2. Unzip the new [docker-stub.zip](#) archive and compare its contents with what's currently in your [bwdata](#) directory, copying anything new to the pre-existing files in [bwdata](#).
Do not overwrite your pre-existing [bwdata](#) directory with the contents of the newer [docker-stub.zip](#) archive, as this would overwrite any custom configuration work you've done.
3. Run the following command to restart your server with your updated configuration and the latest containers:

Bash

```
docker compose -f ./docker/docker-compose.yml down && docker compose -f ./docker/docker-compose.yml up -d
```