

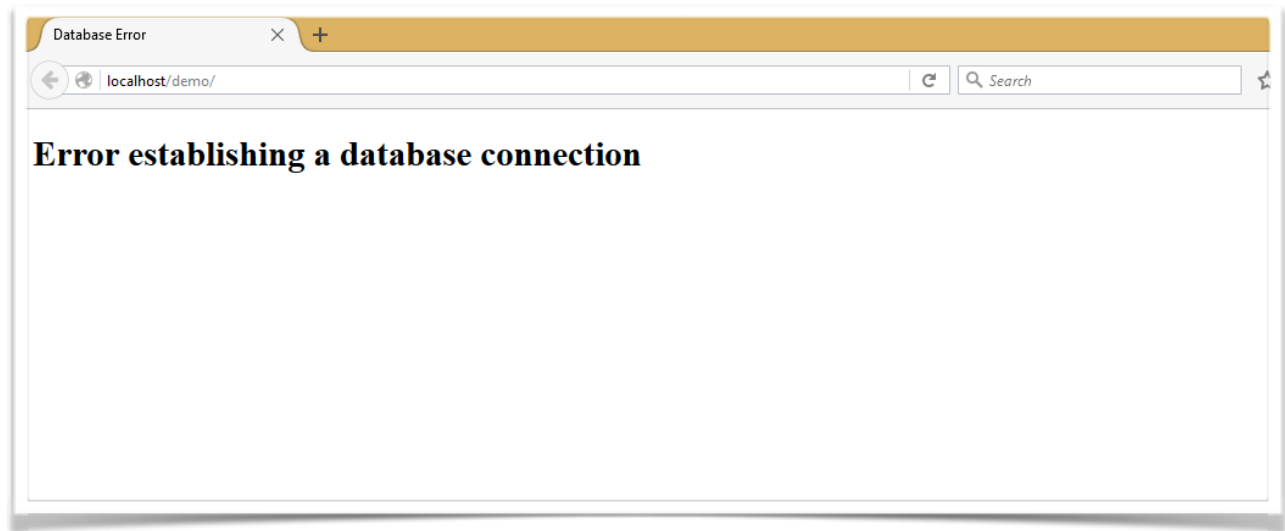
# Troubleshooting Guide for Migrating WordPress Installations



# WORDPRESS

**When you are trying to migrate a WordPress website from one server to another, you might run into some roadblocks.**

This guide is intended to help you navigate around some of the common problems you might have.



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Why am I seeing  
this screen?

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## Database Connection Error

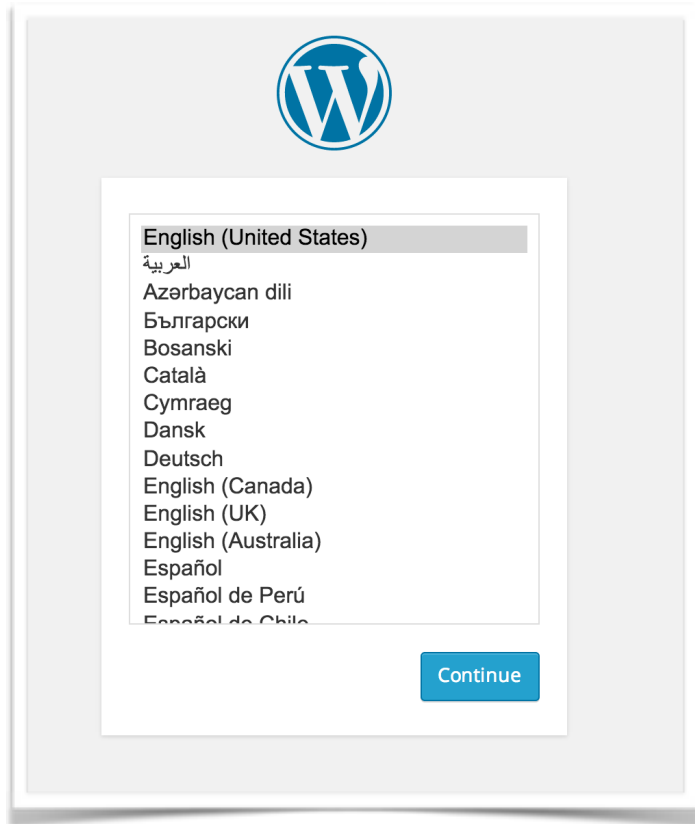
If you get a database connection error, you might have one of the following problems:

### Your 'wp-config.php' file has incorrect database connectivity credentials.

It's common for people to upload the old server's files to the new server, forgetting to change the **database name**, **database user name**, **database user password**, and/or the **database host name** in the new server's wp-config.php file.

### Check to see that the server's MySQL service is running.

This is common on local computer installations using development packages like XAMPP, MAMP, Desktop Server, etc. You might just need to launch your development package's control panel and start the MySQL service.



## Getting the Language Selection Screen

If you are migrating to a new server and you get the language screen, **it can mean that it does not detect a 'wp-config.php' file or that it can't find the tables with the prefix assigned in wp-config.php.**

If you click "Continue" and it asks for database credentials, your wp-config file is missing. If, instead, it takes you to the screen to create the site's title and user, it cannot locate tables with the assigned prefix in wp-config.php.

First look to see if "wp-config.php" is in your root WP directory. If not, check your backup files from the your

old server to see if you still have the old wp-config.php file. The likelihood, however, that all the credentials in the old file will match the new server are not that high. So you have a couple of choices here:

### Copy and modify the old wp-config file.

Make a copy of the old wp-config.php file and modify the connectivity credentials to match the new server's database info. Upload that file to the root level of your new WordPress installation's file system. This should solve the problem when you re-enter the path in a browser to the root directory of the WordPress installation.

### Or go through the auto-installer process again...up to a point.

An alternative is to start walking through this new server's installation screens, following the prompts until you see the screen illustrated on the right (fig. 3). *This process will create the wp-config.php file, but you must remember to use the old*

fig.3 - Enter the new server's credentials with the old database's table prefix.

**database's table prefix.** Open the old wp-config.php file and scroll down to the place where it defines the table prefix. Be sure to enter that value *exactly* as it is written in the old wp-config file when you get to the database credential screen. The prefix can be located below the server hash/salt encryption data in the wp-config.php file.

**If you don't use the correct table prefix here, it will connect to the database, but it will then prompt you to create a new site title and WordPress user account. If you see the 'Welcome' screen (right, fig.4), you've likely entered the wrong prefix. Following through with this screen will create a new default set of WordPress tables in your database with this incorrect table prefix.** If you don't have the old wp-config file for some reason and can't remember the table prefix you used, you can look at the database's tables via phpMyAdmin to see what they start with.

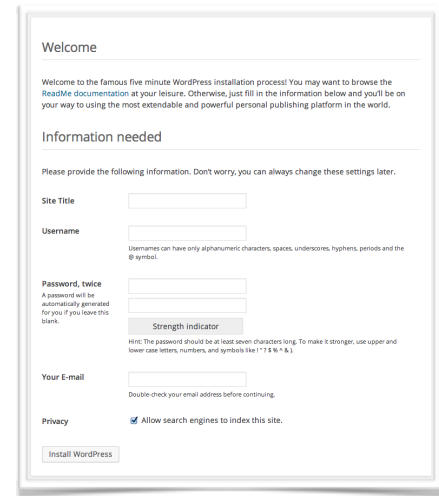
A screenshot of the WordPress 'Welcome' screen. It features a heading 'Welcome' followed by a paragraph about the five-minute installation process. Below this is a section titled 'Information needed' with a sub-header 'Please provide the following information. Don't worry, you can always change these settings later.' The form includes input fields for 'Site Title', 'Username' (with a note about allowed characters), 'Password, twice' (with a strength indicator and hint), 'Your E-mail' (with a double-check prompt), and a 'Privacy' section with a checked checkbox for 'Allow search engines to index this site.' An 'Install WordPress' button is at the bottom.

fig.4 - If you see this screen during this process, you didn't use the correct table prefix, or the tables are missing.

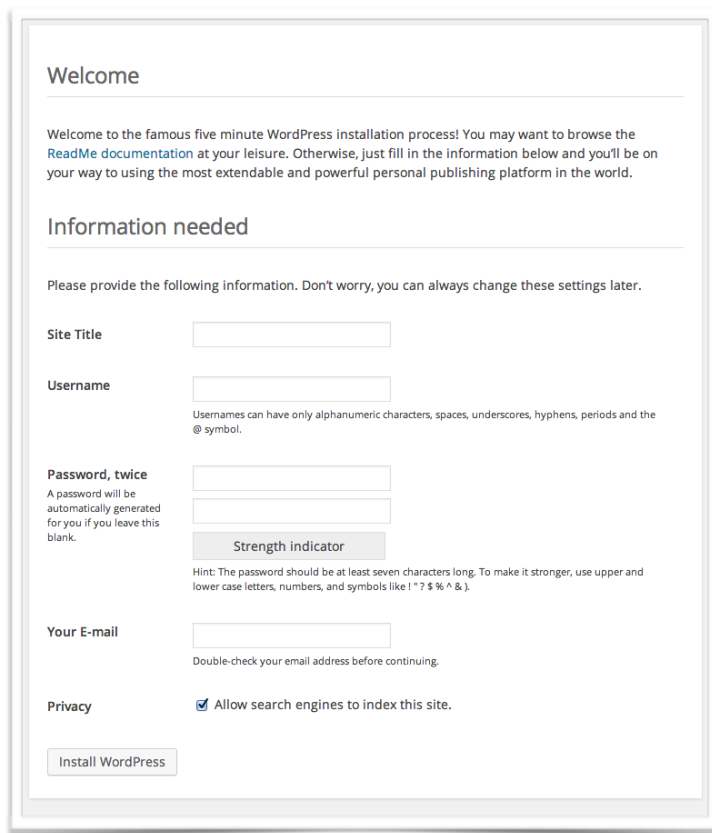
A larger, clearer screenshot of the WordPress 'Welcome' screen, identical to the one in fig.4. It shows the 'Welcome' heading, the introductory text, the 'Information needed' section, and the various input fields for site configuration, including Site Title, Username, Password (with a strength indicator), Email, and Privacy settings. The 'Install WordPress' button is visible at the bottom.

fig.5 - WordPress Welcome screen

## Seeing the Welcome Screen When You Least Expect It

If you get the screen to the left (fig. 5), chances are that you simply forgot to change the database table prefix somewhere. There are two places to look.

**First, check the table prefix in your new wp-config.php file.**

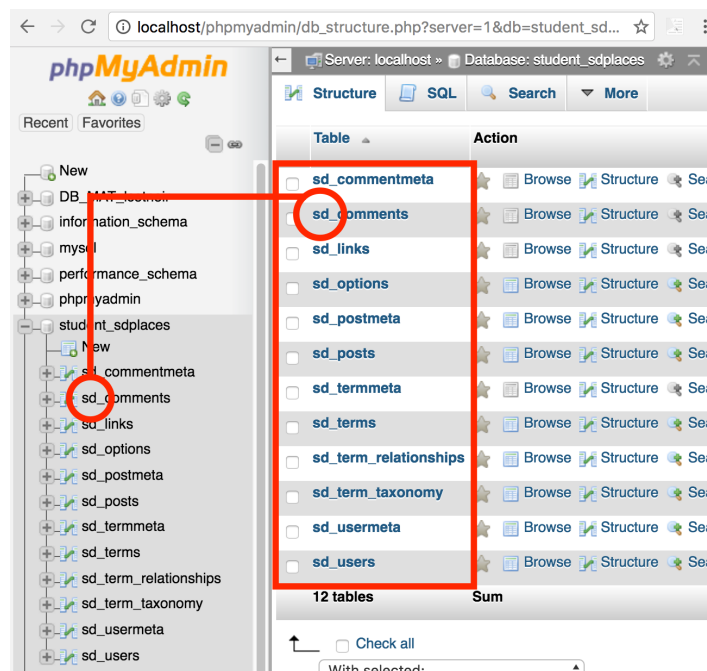
If the table prefix in the new wp-config file does not match the actual prefix being used in the new

installation's database table names, then the WordPress installation decision tree thinks that the tables don't exist. *You should be aware that although it is NOT IDEAL, WordPress does allow multiple WordPress websites point to the same database as long as the tables within it use different table name prefixes for each WP website instance.* **If you see this screen in fig.5 when you do not expect to see it, you should not continue filling it out.** You should stop to troubleshoot because you likely have everything you need, but it likely just needs a little tweaking.

If you are uncertain about what the prefix should be on the new installation, you can look at the old wp-config.php file from the other server (if you have access to it). Chances are that changing the new file's table prefix definition will take care of your problem. The prefix can be located below the server hash/salt encryption data in the wp-config.php file.

**If that doesn't work, look at the actual database to determine what the table-prefix should be.**

Take a look at your newly installed database on the new server. You can take a peek at it using phpMyAdmin either on a cloud server or on your local development computer... wherever the new installation is installed. If it's a cloud server, you'll likely need to log into the server's cPanel to access phpMyAdmin unless there is another portal option. If it's on your local development computer, you'll probably need to launch phpMyAdmin through the development package's dashboard or control panel.



Once you are in there, select the correct database on the left and look at the common table prefix used in that database. It might or might not have an underscore as part of the prefix; just pay attention to the common set of prefix characters preceding all table names: this is the prefix you should use in your new wp-config.php file.