

# OPNsense Setup and Maintenance Guide

This guide outlines the essential configuration steps after installing OPNsense, followed by recommended maintenance tasks to ensure long-term stability, security, and performance.

## Essential Steps After a Fresh Install

- Go to **System → Settings → General**:
  - Set your local timezone (e.g. `America/Montreal`)
  - Define hostname (e.g. `router.home`) and local domain if needed
- Check for firmware updates (see below under Maintenance)
- Go to **System → Access → Users**:
  - Change the password for the `root` account
  - Optionally create a new user with limited privileges
- Configure Internet access : go to **Interfaces → [WAN]**:
  - Configure PPPoE, static IP, or DHCP depending on your ISP
- Configure your LAN : go to **Services → ISC DHCPv4 [LAN]**:
  - Check **Enable DHCP server on the LAN interface**
  - Configure static leases if needed, by going to the **DHCP Static Mappings for this interface** (click +).
- Go to **Services → Unbound DNS → Blocklist**:
  - Add blocklists under **Type of DNSBL** (e.g. AdGuard List, Steven BlackList) to filter ads, malware, and adult content
  - Whitelist domains
  - Enable **Advanced mode** to add custom URLs of Blocklists
- Go to **System → Settings → Administration**:
  - Enable SSH access if needed
  - Restrict access to trusted IPs
- Go to **System → Configuration → Backups**:
  - Download encrypted configuration file manually
  - Set up automated backups to online or offline

## OPNsense recommended maintenance tasks

### Weekly Maintenance Tasks

- **Check for firmware updates**
  - Menu: **System → Firmware → Updates**
  - Duration: 5-10 minutes

- Notes: Some updates may trigger a reboot; OPNsense will notify you before applying

- **Review system logs and interface status**

- Menu: **System → Diagnostics → Logs & Interfaces**
- Duration: 5–10 minutes
- Notes: Look for errors, dropped packets, or unusual activity

## Monthly Maintenance Tasks

- **Verify backup integrity and schedule**

- Menu: **System → Configuration → Backups**
- Duration: 5 minutes
- Notes: Ensure remote backups are recent and restorable

- **Check email notifications**

- Menu: **System → Settings → Notifications**
- Duration: 5 minutes
- Notes: Confirm SMTP settings and test alert delivery

- **Monitor traffic usage**

- Menu: **Reporting → NetFlow**
- Duration: 5–15 minutes
- Notes: Useful for identifying bandwidth hogs or suspicious traffic

## Quarterly Maintenance Tasks

- **Test DNS filtering effectiveness**

- Menu: **Services → Unbound DNS → Blocklist**
- Duration: 10 minutes
- Notes: Update blocklists and verify that filtering is active

- **Verify firewall rules**

- Menu: **Firewall → Rules → LAN / WAN**
- Duration: 10–20 minutes
- Notes: Ensure rules match current network needs and security posture

- **Review VPN configuration**

- Menu: **VPN → WireGuard / OpenVPN**
- Duration: 10–15 minutes
- Notes: Test connectivity and update keys or endpoints if needed

## Semi-Annual Maintenance Tasks

- **Audit user accounts and privileges**

- Menu: **System → Access → Users / Groups**
- Duration: 10 minutes
- Notes: Remove unused accounts and verify privilege scopes

- **Reboot the system (if uptime exceeds 6+ months)**
  - Menu: **System → Diagnostics → Reboot**
  - Duration: 2-3 minutes
  - Notes: Prevents memory leaks and applies kernel-level updates

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