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

• Go to **System** → **Settings** → **Time**:

Enable NTP sync with reliable servers (e.g. `0.ca.pool.ntp.org`)

• Go to System → Access → Users:

- Change the password for the `admin` account
- Optionally create a new user with limited privileges

• Go to Interfaces → Assignments:

Confirm WAN and LAN mappings

• Go to Interfaces → WAN:

Configure PPPoE, static IP, or DHCP depending on your ISP

• Go to Services → DHCP Server:

- Enable DHCP on LAN
- Configure static leases if needed

• Go to Services → Unbound DNS → Blocklist:

Add blocklists (e.g. StevenBlack's hosts) to filter ads, malware, and adult content

• Go to Firewall → Rules → LAN:

- Allow outbound traffic by default
- Optionally block private IP ranges or sensitive ports

• Go to Firewall → Rules → WAN:

Block all unsolicited inbound traffic

• 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

- o 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

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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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