Security checklist

For CMS developers, the security work of a site project as checklists. It covers the content model and roles, templates and output, forms and uploads, your own code, APIs, configuration and deployment, and the go-live...

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This page is for developers who build sites and must hand them over secure. Exponential is secure by default in many places, and a project can still undo that with one careless role, template or setting. Go through these lists during development and again before launch; the hardening guide explains the attacks behind each item (Security hardening).

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Content model and access

☐ The Anonymous role reads only what visitors may read (`content/read` on the public sections), and nothing else beyond `user/login` and what the site's forms need.

☐ Members-only content is in its own section, read by a role assigned to the members' group, not just hidden.

☐ Editor roles are limited by class and subtree; no editor role has `setup/*`, `role/*` or `user/*` beyond need.

☐ Roles are assigned to groups; members and staff are in different groups.

☐ Access was tested with test accounts at `example.invalid`, and `./console exp:accesscheck` explains every surprise (Sections, roles and policies).

Templates and output

☐ Every value you print yourself goes through `|wash()`; datatype output comes from `attribute_view_gui` (Wash and escaping).

☐ No `<style>` blocks, `style=""` attributes, inline scripts or `javascript:` links in templates, so a Content Security Policy can be enforced (CSP-safe design, Content Security Policy).

☐ Editors cannot store markup: rich text has no tag for scripts; custom tags instead of pasted HTML (Rich text).

☐ No visitor-specific data in shared caches (Caching for CMS developers).

Forms and uploads

☐ `ezformtoken` is active and every form keeps the hidden fields the original template prints.

☐ Public forms have a captcha datatype; collected answers are removed on a schedule (Forms and information collection).

☐ Upload types are limited to what editors need; file attributes have a maximum size.

☐ Self-registration is on only where needed, with e-mail verification (Users and registration).

Your own code

☐ Every module view declares a policy function and checks it; writes need POST and the form token.

☐ SQL goes through `eZPersistentObject` or `eZDB` with values escaped (`escapeString()`) and IDs cast to integers (eZDB).

☐ Redirects go only to addresses of the site (Safe redirects).

☐ Content is created through the kernel API, as a dedicated user with exactly the rights needed (Content from PHP).

☐ The book's rules are met: Security in extensions.

APIs

☐ `rest.ini` `[Authentication]` `RequireAuthentication=enabled` (shipped) and `RequireHTTPS=enabled`.

☐ One account per client, with a role limited to what it needs; API keys with scopes and an expiry (The REST API, Personal API keys).

☐ Keys and tokens live in environment variables or secret stores, never in repositories.

Configuration and deployment

☐ Debug output off on staging and live, or limited to your address; PHP `display_errors=Off`.

☐ `settings/override/` is not in any repository and not copied between machines.

☐ Code is read-only for the site's user; workers and cronjobs never run as root.

☐ `ManagedByDeployment=enabled` where configuration comes from version control (Deploying a site).

☐ The rewrite rules of the web server keep `settings/`, `var/` internals and source files from being served (Security hardening, chapter 13).

Accounts

☐ The installer's administrator password changed and `var/log/initial-admin-password` removed (Change the admin password).

☐ A personal administrator account per person; two-factor sign-in for administrators (Two-factor sign-in).

☐ Password rules decided (`MinPasswordLength`, `WeakPasswordCheck`, `[PasswordSettings]`).

☐ Demo mode off (`EXP_DEMO_MODE` not set) (Demo mode).

Go-live hardening

☐ HTTPS everywhere, HSTS, secure cookies.

☐ The administration on its own host or restricted by network.

☐ Request rules or the request shield in front, first monitoring, then enforcing (Request rules).

☐ The setting-by-setting list: Go-live checklist.

Watching and reporting

☐ Audit alerts go to a person and the trail leaves the machine (Security and audit).

☐ Logs are read weekly; backups are off the machine and a restore was tested.

☐ Updates of Exponential and its extensions are followed and tested.

☐ Your team knows how to report a vulnerability (Reporting a vulnerability).

Related pages

- Security standards
- Security review checklist for hosts
- Project launch checklist
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