# Kickstarter: install a whole site from one file

Source file: doc/eng-us/features/6.0/kickstarter-cli.md Last changed 2026-11-04
https://doc.exponential.earth/learninminutes/exphelp/viewer/features/6.0/kickstarter-cli.md

This page is for administrators who install the same site more than once, or on several servers. The setup wizard asks for the database, the languages, the site package, the administrator and more. The Kickstarter takes all of those answers from one file, `kickstart.ini`, so the same installation can be repeated with one command. Added on 12 July 2026 (`34c17cdbbe`). Full reference: Kickstarter CLI; this page is the short version.

## Install in three steps

**Shell**

```
# 1. write kickstart.ini from the template (asks questions; --yes accepts defaults)
php bin/php/console exp:kickstarter ini

# 2. check the answers and the remote packages without changing anything
php bin/php/console exp:kickstarter run --dry-run

# 3. install (needs --force because it can drop the database)
php bin/php/console exp:kickstarter run --apply --force
```

See the steps before you run them:

**Shell**

```
php bin/php/kickstarter.php run --list-steps
```

`bin/php/kickstarter.php` is the same program without the console.

## Commands and options

Checked with `./console help exp:kickstarter` on 6.0.15:

| Command | Options |
|---|---|
| `ini` | `--defaults` (copy `kickstart.ini-dist`), `--yes` |
| `run` | `--start-step`, `--stop-step`, `--dry-run`, `--list-steps`, `--force` |
| `help` | |

Every run is logged to `var/log/kickstart.log` with passwords masked. `EXP_KICKSTART_LOG=0` turns the log off.

## Things to know

> **Supported databases (Exponential 6.0.x), in order of preference:** 1. SQLite 3 (the default) · 2. PostgreSQL · 3. MongoDB · 4. MariaDB · 5. Oracle · 6. MySQL. Microsoft SQL Server is known to be possible with additional work at this time. Details: Database support.

- `kickstart.ini` **is an example, not a default.** A `kickstart.ini` in the root applied to every web setup and would have conflicted with a clean install. On 16 and 19 July (`d0530e1deb`, `f9df1f6854`) the file became `kickstart.ini--example`, and the template `kickstart.ini-dist` generates yours. Keep your own `kickstart.ini` out of version control: it holds the database password.
- **Remote packages can be tested.** `--dry-run` downloads and checks the packages named by the site type into a package repository named `dryrun` (`kernel/setup/steps/ezstep_site_types.php`) and stops before `CreateSites`, so the database is not written.
- **One progress line.** The scripts use `expScriptStatus` (renamed from `eZPMStatus`), so the web setup and the console report progress the same way.
- **Local packages first.** When a package exists in the installation, the site type step uses it instead of downloading it (15 August, `28d414f422`).
- **Siteaccess names.** Whatever access type you choose (hostname, port or URL), the siteaccesses are named `site` and `admin` (15 August, `67e2abf9a3`). Earlier runs produced names such as `<identifier>_user` that did not exist.
- **More settings**, such as the editor siteaccess, were added later; see the setup wizard page.

## Related pages

- Install in one command: needs no `kickstart.ini`
- Clean install defaults
- ezpm package manager CLI: installs single packages
- A package installer that survives big packages
- Look inside a package, compare it with your site, import single items
- Default extension distribution
- Static cache generator
- Installer logs and seed data
- Behaviour changes of July and August 2026
- 6.0.15 changelog
- History: June 2026, second half, July 2026, August 2026


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