



Hello, and welcome to our hosting quickstart guide! The goal of this document is to help you learn the basics Gandi's hosting service in a way that is simple and quick. For those of you that are in a hurry to get started or are less experienced, you may skip directly to part 2. There, you will see how to use Gandi's resources right away, so that you can get your server up and running in no time at all.

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1. What is Gandi AI?

Gandi Auto Install (or Gandi AI) is a type of server that we provide. It runs on an operating system conceived of by Gandi (and based on Ubuntu), and allows for the automatic installation of some common applications. Because of this, you do not need to know the various Linux commands that are usually required for this type of operation. The idea is that this allows people with no experience with Linux servers to automatically manage the installation and configuration phase of packages, a phase that might otherwise dissuade them from creating their own server. The disadvantage of this service is that you do not have root access to the server as it is needed by Gandi AI's automated agent.

a. What is a package?

A package is a server-based application. This purpose of this application may be to send mails (Postfix), allow for file transfers (FTP) or just display a website (Apache). The modules are essential to the proper operation of your server and must be chosen carefully, depending on what you want to do with your server.

a. List of available packages

Here is a list of packages that are available for Gandi AI, as well as a brief description of what it does or how difficult it is to configure (on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most complicated). This list was last **updated on March 26th 2009**, when this guide was written, and is susceptible to being updated regularly, as our developers continually add new packages.

- **Apache2** is a prerequisite for any Gandi AI web server. The configuration of Apache2 is mandatory for the correct functioning of your websites. **4/5**
- **MySQL 5.0** manages your database. It is also a dependency for certain other packages. **1/5**
- **PHP 5.2** for Apache allows you to execute scripts written in the PHP programming language, commonly used for dynamic websites. **1/5**
- **phpMyAdmin** helps you manage your database via a web-based graphic interface so that you do not necessarily need to know MySQL to perform database operations. **1/5**
- **Perl** for Apache lets you execute scripts written in Perl. **1/5**
- **Python** for Apache allows for the execution of Python scripts. **1/5**
- **ProFTPd** lets you transfer your html files to your server for example, as it is an FTP server. **2/5**
- **PostFix** allows your server to send mails. **2/5**
- **AWstats** for Apache generates visitor statistics of your websites. **1/5**
- **Django** (Python) is a Python-based web development framework. **1/5**
- **Ruby on Rails** is also a MVC framework. **1/5**
- **Ruby** for Apache is a programming language. **1/5**
- **Dotclear 2.0** installs the famous blog publishing application. **2/5**
- **Subversion** or **SVN** is a version-tracking management system that is very useful for collaboration-based programs. **1/5**
- **Teamspeak** lets you have a vocal exchange server that is often used by the videogame community. **1/5**

b. Basics of configuring modules via Gandi's website

During the creation process of your Gandi AI server, you will encounter a phase where you still need to provide some information for the various packages that you want to install. Depending on the package, you will have either nothing that needs to be configured, or you will have to specify some information. The configuration page consists of **collapsible package C**. By default, you will be presented with the **Easy Mode A**. This mode only asks you for the strictly minimum amount of information needed to configure the packages. You may nonetheless switch to the **Advanced Server Administrator Mode B** for access to additional options (for experts).

The screenshot displays the Gandi AI configuration interface. At the top, there are three tabs: "Easy mode A", "Advanced server administrator mode B", and "Default configuration". The "Easy mode A" tab is selected. Below the tabs, there are several sections for configuring different modules:

- [+] Operating system (UNIX)**: A section with a "Guide" button.
- [-] HTTP server C**: A section with a "Guide" button. It shows the disk path "disk : d_startinguide" and a note: "If you have more than one disk, please chose which one you want your HTTP server to be installed on." Below this, there is a text input field for "e-mail : mymail@myisp.com" with a note: "Please provide the HTTP server administrator's email address." Below the input field, there is a section for "Virtual Hosts (management of websites) ?" with a "Create" link, a "[+] new" link, and a "Delete" link.
- [+] Mail server**: A section with a "Guide" button.
- [+] Web development**: A section with a "Guide" button.

b. Obtaining root access

As mentioned earlier, you do not have full rights under Gandi AI. The "root" user is under the control of Gandi AI for technical reasons; it is the only way that we can be sure that there is cohesion between the applications and the data. Because of this, applications that specifically require root access may not be installed under Gandi AI.

You nonetheless have the possibility of permanently disabling Gandi AI at any time and as a consequence obtain root access to your server. This can be useful if you would like to use Gandi AI to install and configure your server, and then once it is running as you would like, gain root access in order to install something not possible under Gandi AI. To do this, you simply need to go to your server's control panel, and in the **System** Administration section, click on the **Disable Gandi AI** link. You will then need to specify the password that you want to attribute to the root user and submit the form

2. I'm in a hurry! I just want to publish my website!

Is your website ready? Are your PHP files still warm and your images nicely filed? All that remains is for you to create the server, upload it via your FTP server, and configure your domain name so that your DNS respond correctly. Here is how to do this using Gandi AI!

a. Gandi AI Lamp

Among the various Gandi AI services is the possibility of creating a prepackaged server. These are configured with a selection of packages that have been chosen in such a way as to assure they will work well together depending on the purpose of the server. The most common one is often referred to as LAMP. LAMP is an acronym for "Linux Apache MySQL PHP", which are the 4 packages needed to run a dynamic website. You will find this with the option "a PHP/MySQL web server" in the "Use Gandi AI (easy mode)" section.



The screenshot shows the Gandi AI configuration interface for an HTTP server. At the top right, there is a "Guide" button. The main section is titled "[-] HTTP server". Below this, there is a "disk : d_resizeme" label and a note: "If you have more than one disk, please chose which one you want your HTTP server to be installed on." There is an "e-mail :" field with the value "mymail@myisp.com" and a note: "Please provide the HTTP server administrator's email address." Below this is a section titled "Virtual Hosts (management of websites) ?" with a "Create" link. Underneath, there is a list of virtual hosts: "[-] www.mydomain.org" with a "Delete" link. Below the list, there is a "Name (hostname) :" field with the value "www.mydomain.org" and a yellow "A" icon. A note below this field says: "Indicate the hostname of your virtual host, for example: example.com or www.example.com". Below this is a section titled "FTP user" with a note: "To facilitate virtualhost management, a dedicated FTP user will be used. This account can only access files relating to this domain." There is a "Choose below or Create" link and a radio button selected for "myftpuser". Below this is a form with three fields: "Username :" with the value "myftpuser" and a yellow "B" icon; "password :" with a masked password "....." and a yellow "C" icon; and "Confirm :" with a masked password ".....".

a. Configure your virtualhost

Before a server can respond correctly once it has been interrogated by a web browser, it must know how to handle the request to see a specific website. This is the purpose of a "virtualhost" (or vhost): it lets the server know what to do once it receives a request for a specific address. To configure this, you only need to add the name of your website (ex. your domain name or subdomain: **example.com** or **www.example.com**) in the **host name** field **A**. Note that you will also need to configure your domain name so that it points to your server, but this will be discussed in section B.

b. Configure your FTP server

In order to update your files online, you will need to create a user that will have access to the file directory for the vhost that you created above. Nothing could be easier: choose a username **B** and a password of at least 8 characters **C**.

c. Upload your files

The FTP service will be available once your server has finished being created. You will then be able to upload your files in the /htdocs/ that corresponds to your virtualhost. This will render your website pages visible on the web.

Concerning your FTP login codes: the “host address” is the IP address of your Gandi server (you can obtain this from your server’s management page). The “username” is the one that you specified in the previous step in the **B** field, and the password is the one that you created in the **C** field.

b. Configuring your domain name

In order for your domain name to point to the correct server (the one that hosts your website), you will need to configure its DNS. If your domain name is at Gandi, and you are at least the Technical or Administrative contact, nothing could be easier!

Name servers	E-mail	Web
DNS1: a.dns.gandi.net DNS2: b.dns.gandi.net DNS3: c.dns.gandi.net Update Manage DNS zone file Create a glue record	Forwarding: 12/1000 Mailboxes: 1/5 Manage Gandi Mail Pack: Inactive Add more mailboxes	Forwarding: Inactive Update Gandi Blog: Active Update SiteMaker: Inactive Make a website! Hosting: Attach A SSL Certificate: Buy

Towards the bottom of your domain’s control panel, you will see a “**Technical Settings**”, you will find a link **A** to link your domain name to one of your servers.

If your domain name is not registered with Gandi, you will need to change your DNS zone file with your current registrar, or the company that manages your DNS. In either case, you will need to assure that your “A” record points to the IP address of your server. For example, if your IP address is 217.123.456.78 then you will need to configure your DNS so that the A record is:

@ 10800 IN A 217.123.456.78

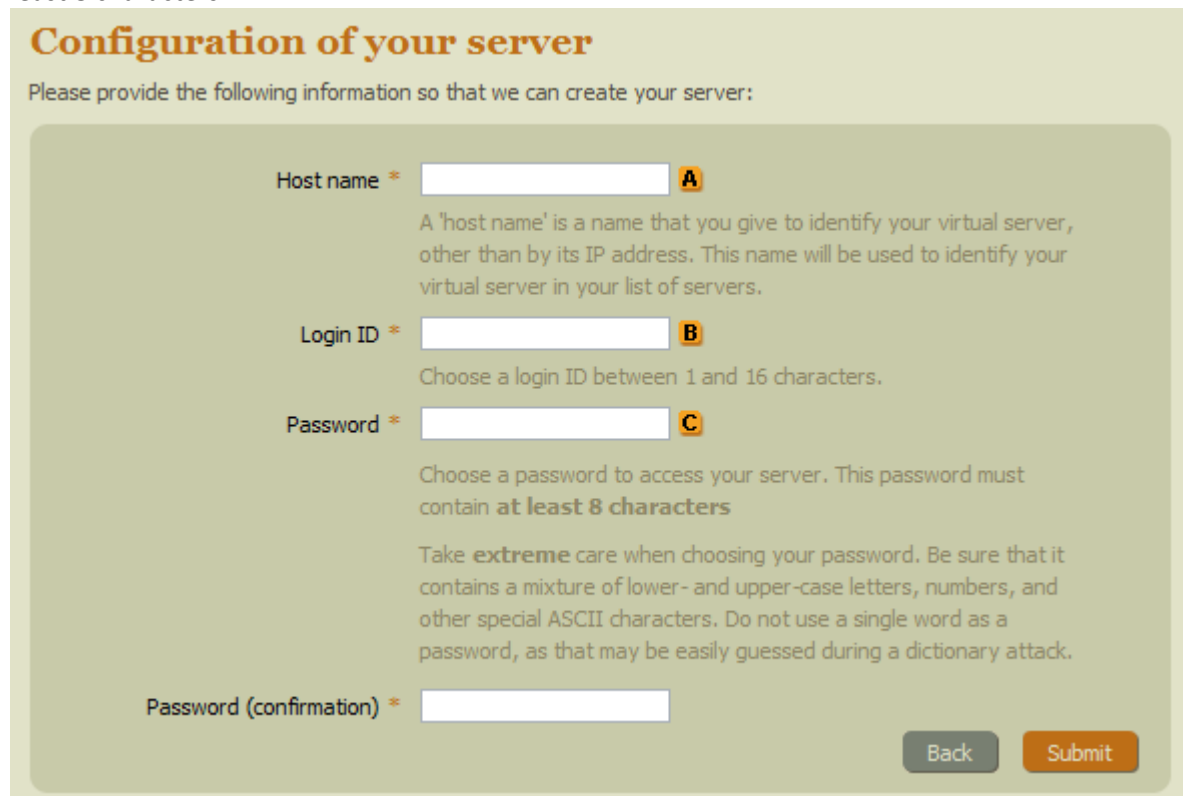
...if it is just your domain name that you have entered as the vhost. If you chose www.example.com as your host name, then you will need to add an A record for your www subdomain like:

www 10800 IN A 217.123.456.78

Note that the propagation period needed for the changes to take affect is under 3 hours.

3. What is Gandi Expert?

Gandi Expert (or MI for Manual Install) servers are servers over which you have full control. You just need to select the operating system that you want from the list of available distributions, specify the host name **A** of your server (from 3 to 12 characters), a user name **B** as well as a password **C** of at least 8 characters.



Configuration of your server

Please provide the following information so that we can create your server:

Host name * **A**
A 'host name' is a name that you give to identify your virtual server, other than by its IP address. This name will be used to identify your virtual server in your list of servers.

Login ID * **B**
Choose a login ID between 1 and 16 characters.

Password * **C**
Choose a password to access your server. This password must contain **at least 8 characters**
Take **extreme** care when choosing your password. Be sure that it contains a mixture of lower- and upper-case letters, numbers, and other special ASCII characters. Do not use a single word as a password, as that may be easily guessed during a dictionary attack.

Password (confirmation) *

Gandi's servers are configured so that the user "Root" cannot directly log in via SSH. This results in a considerable increase in security, notably against so-called "brute-force attacks". When you chose the root user name on this form, you are creating a user that may have root access by simply using the "su" command. Once you have connected as root you of course have the freedom to change the SSH restrictions.

a. List of available tutorials

The community of users of our service is growing larger every day. With this community, the number of actors on our wiki pages is also growing and the list of tutorials that are available is constantly evolving. Here is a list of links to some of the main tutorials at the time of this guide's writing:

- [Installing/removing with apt-get](#)
- [Creating a MySQL database and username](#)
- [Installing Apache 2.2, PHP 5.2 and MySQL 5.0](#)
- [Installing an FTP server](#)
- [Hosting multiple websites on Apache2](#)
- [Installing a TrackMania Nations server in Ubuntu](#)
- [Installing a F.E.A.R. Combat server on Ubuntu](#)
- [Installing TeamSpeak on Ubuntu](#)
- [Installing a Counter-Strike: Source server](#)

This list is not exhaustive and you will find many more tutorials at your disposal. We suggest that you [visit this page](#) on a regular basis, so that you can see the latest guides and even make your own!

4. How does the system of shares work?

Gandi Hosting is based on the idea of renting computing resources that, once gathered together, create a server that is available online. One Gandi share is therefore a resource, or part of an extremely powerful CPU. However since one part of a CPU is not enough to constitute a server, we add RAM, storage space, bandwidth, and an IP address for connection. With two shares, you may therefore create two servers, though you can also create a single server with twice as many resources, etc.. It is important to remember that one share can replace any other share; there is no particular identity attributed to shares. If you purchase a monthly share and create a server with it, and then decide to purchase an annual share, you may then release the monthly share without doing anything else, as it will not affect your server. Gandi's hosting service is conceived in such a way as to give you the maximum amount of flexibility.

a. Flexibility

Flexibility is being able to use as many resources as you need over a desired period. It is the ability to create a server in a few minutes, at any time, and install whatever you want on it. This flexibility is available to you at Gandi! Today, you can even rent additional disk space, and create as many disks as you want, with a storage space of 1 to 250 GB for each. You also have the possibility of increasing the size of your disks by adding the number of GB that pleases you. Finally, you may also create your own system images from one of your servers so that you can duplicate it as many times as needed.

b. Gandi Flex

In order to provide the maximum level of flexibility, we have invented a system that lets you schedule the addition or removal of your servers' resources in advance so that they will always have ample resources. The GandiFlex service lets you attribute additional shares (excluding disk space) at given times, which you have determined to be moments of peak activity.

Any server, whether a Gandi AI or expert, under 16 shares may schedule GandiFlex operations (16 shares is the current limit for a single server). To schedule a new GandiFlex operation, simply proceed to the server management page and click on the "Modify" link next to "Active Gandi Flex operations".

Title * **A**
Specify a name for your operation to help you identify it

Repeat this operation * **B**
Select the type of Flex operation that you would like

from 30/03 at 17:00 to 31/03 at 00:00

 Start * All day at **C**

Stop * All day at **D**
Choose a start and end date and time, or select "All day" and choose the day.

Total number of shares * **E**

Your server will use the number of shares specified here during the period chosen for your Gandi Flex operation.

You must give your Flex operations a **title** **A**, which will be very useful if you ever have several operations running at the same time. The scheduled operation **B** may be a one-time event, **re-occur every x days, x weekends, x weekdays, x weeks, or x months**. The repetition is therefore simplified and covers all the various possibilities. The scheduling options will vary depending on the repetition period chosen. In the event that you schedule a one-time event, you will need to indicate the date and time of the beginning **C** as well as the end **D** of the operation. For the other operations, you will need to choose the date and time of the start of the operation, how long it is to last, and how often it should repeat. Finally, in any case, you will be asked how many shares you want to add to your server for the duration of the scheduled operation. Please note that this refers to the total number of shares. If you select 2, and your server already has 2 shares, then nothing will happen. If you choose 4 shares for 3 hours every evening, for example, then you will be billed for 2 flex shares during the 3 hours that have been scheduled. Finally, if for any reason the operation fails, you can rest assured that our system will be aware of it and will automatically refund you for the operation.

5. How does the billing work?

Understanding our billing process is the key to benefiting from all of the flexibility offered by Gandi Hosting, though also to conscientious consumption!

a. Prepaid account and refunding

It is important to understand two things: Gandi does not store the credit card numbers of its customers, in accordance with French law on this subject, and all of these types of payment are made directly on the website of Gandi's bank partner. Because of this, we cannot perform any operation directly on your bank account.

In order to give those who want to have a certain level of tranquility, we offer a **prepaid account** system. You can credit your account (in one of the three currencies available) via one of the various means of payment that is available at Gandi (credit card, PayPal, bank transfer, French administrative transfer, check payable in France) and use its funds at any time to purchase or renew Gandi products, though also to have your account refunded (via the same payment means). This means that if you remove Gandi shares, we will credit your prepaid account for the amount that you paid for the period underway that will not be used.

The minimum billing period for one of the monthly shares is **one day**. All you need to do is to take the monthly price and divide it by thirty to see that the minimum amount at Gandi truly is minimal! For example, if you would like to try and install a server with 2 parts for one day, you must pay for the two shares for an initial one-month period. If you then free up and release these two shares before the second day, your prepaid account will be immediately refunded for 2 X 29 days for your shares. Please note one important point: **the shares need to be totally released** in order to be refunded, notably the disk quota that comes with it, and which is sometimes used for another server.

b. Automatic renewal

If you go on vacation and forget the monthly renewal of your shares, you risk getting an unpleasant surprise... In the event that we have not received your payment and you have not used it to renew your resources, we will stop the server(s) that were not renewed, and after a 7-day redemption period, we will delete them in order to free up the resources. To help you not miss the renewal date of your hosting resources, we provide you with an automatic renewal service. This service is deactivated by default. To activate this option, simply log into your [Hosting account](#) and click on "[Manage your resources](#)". Each type of resource may have a different expiration date.



Your Hosting Resources

This page allows you to manage the various resources in your hosting account

Resources	Expiration	Actions
9 base shares	05.04.2009	Add Remove B Renew
0 GB of disk quota		Activate auto-renew
0 annual shares		Add Remove Renew

Back

If you wish to activate automatic renewal, simply click on **A**, though to renew your resource manually you will need to click on **B**. Warning: automatic renewal can only take place if your prepaid account has sufficient funds.