



Simple Download Counter for WordPress

Create permanent tracked download links, count downloads and manage multiple files from one simple WordPress screen.

TRACKED LINKS	DOWNLOAD COUNTS	SHORTCODES	UNLIMITED
Permanent public URLs	See and edit totals	Display counts anywhere	Add as many files as needed

Developed by SPA Web Design

Version 1.0.0 • WordPress 6.0+ • PHP 7.4+

spawebdesign.co.uk

USER GUIDE

Getting started

Simple Download Counter is designed for website owners who want a lightweight way to count downloads without installing a full download-management system.

The key idea

Visitors should use the tracked URL created by the plugin, not the direct ZIP, PDF or Media Library URL. The tracked URL increases the counter and then redirects the visitor to the file.

1. Install and activate

Upload the plugin ZIP under Plugins → Add Plugin → Upload Plugin, then activate it.

2. Add a download

Go to Tools → Download Counter and create a download record.

3. Use the tracked link

Copy the tracked URL to your Elementor button, WordPress link or other call to action.

4. Update the file when needed

Keep the tracked URL unchanged and replace only the Current file URL when you release a new version.

Where to find the plugin

In WordPress go to **Tools → Download Counter**. A Settings link is also shown directly on the main Plugins page for quick access.

SPA Web Design

Dashboard

Elementor

Posts

Media

Pages

Comments

Projects

Hello

Appearance

Plugins

Users

Tools

Available Tools

Import

Export

Site Health

Export Personal Data

Erase Personal Data

Download Counter

Yoast Redirects

All-in-One WP Migration

Festivity

Appearance

Plugins

Users

Tools

Available Tools

Import

Export

Site Health

Export Personal Data

Erase Personal Data

Download Counter

Yoast Redirects

All-in-One WP Migration

Settings

ACF

WP Mail SMTP

Yoast SEO

Wordfence

Collapse Menu

SPA WEB DESIGN

Simple Download Counter for WordPress

Create permanent tracked links for plugins, PDFs, documents and other downloadable files.

How to use it

1. Click Add New Download and enter a name, slug and the direct URL of the file.

2. Click Save Changes. The plugin creates a permanent tracked URL.

3. Use the tracked URL on your download button or link, not the direct Media Library URL.

4. Each normal visit to the tracked URL increases the counter and redirects the visitor to the current file.

5. When you replace the file with a new version, update only the Current file URL. Your public tracked link can stay the same.

Important: Changing a slug changes its tracked URL. Direct visits to the original file URL are not counted.

Name	Slug	Tracked download URL	Current file URL	Downloads	Remove
Cloud PDF Sync for WPPre	cloud-pdf-sync	https://spawebdesign.co.uk/plugin-download/cloud-pdf-sync/	https://spawebdesign.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/cloud-p	1	☐ Delete
Scheduled Reports for Formi	scheduled-reports	https://spawebdesign.co.uk/plugin-download/scheduled-reports/	https://spawebdesign.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/schedul	1	☐ Delete

+ Add New Download

Save Changes

Displaying download counts

Use this shortcode anywhere WordPress shortcodes are supported. Replace your-slug with the slug from the table.

[sdc_download_count id="your-slug"]

Current shortcodes:

Cloud PDF Sync for WordPress: [sdc_download_count id="cloud-pdf-sync"]

Scheduled Reports for Formidable Forms: [sdc_download_count id="scheduled-reports"]

Data and uninstalling

Download details and counts are stored in your WordPress database. They are retained when the plugin is updated or deactivated.

☐ Delete all Simple Download Counter data if the plugin is uninstalled.

Leave this unticked if you may reinstall the plugin later and want to keep your counts.

Simple Download Counter for WordPress v1.0.0 — Developed by SPA Web Design.

Thank you for creating with WordPress.

Version 7.1.2

The Download Counter administration screen.

Simple Download Counter for WordPress | User Guide v1.0.0 | spawebdesign.co.uk

ADDING DOWNLOADS

Add a new download

Open Tools → Download Counter and click Add New Download. Complete the fields as follows:

Field	What to enter	Example
Name	A clear internal name for the download.	Simple Download Counter for WordPress
Slug	A short, URL-friendly identifier. Use lowercase words separated with hyphens.	simple-download-counter
Current file URL	The direct URL of the ZIP, PDF, document or other downloadable file.	https://example.com/wp-content/uploads/plugin.zip
Downloads	The starting total. Leave at 0 for a new file or enter an existing total if you already know it.	0

Tracked download URL

After saving, the plugin creates a permanent public URL in this format:

`https://example.com/plugin-download/your-slug/`

Important: Use this tracked URL on your public download button. If the button points directly to the ZIP or PDF file, the counter cannot see the click and the total will not increase.

About the slug

Choose the slug carefully. You can change it later, but doing so changes the public tracked URL. Any buttons or links still using the old slug will need updating.

USING THE TRACKED LINK

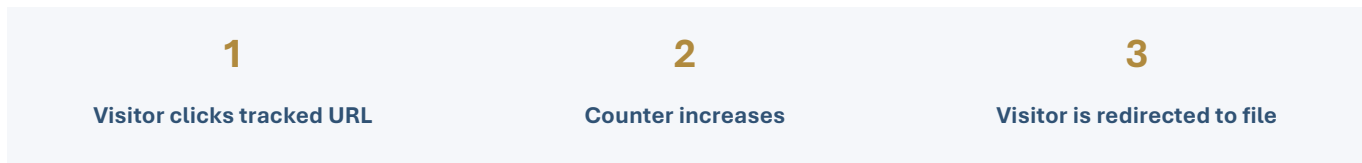
Add the tracked URL to your website

The plugin works with ordinary WordPress links, Elementor buttons, text links and other places where you can enter a URL.

Elementor button example

1. Edit the page with Elementor.
2. Select the Download button.
3. In the button Link field, paste the tracked URL created by the plugin.
4. Update the page.
5. Test the button in a normal browser window.
6. Return to Tools → Download Counter and confirm that the total has increased.

What happens when a visitor clicks?



What is counted?

A normal browser GET request to the tracked URL increments the count. A direct visit to the underlying file URL bypasses the counter. HEAD requests are not counted.

Updating a file without changing the button

This is one of the main benefits of the plugin. When you release a new version of a plugin or replace a PDF:

- Upload the new file to WordPress or another web location.
- Copy its new direct file URL.
- Open Tools → Download Counter.
- Replace only the Current file URL for that download.
- Save changes.

No page edits required. As long as the slug stays the same, the tracked URL on your website can remain unchanged.

COUNTS & SHORTCODES

View, adjust and display download totals

Each download has an editable Downloads field. The value increases automatically when the tracked URL is used, but administrators can also change the number manually.

When might you edit a count?

- You already know the historic total and want to use it as the starting figure.
- You are migrating from another tracking method.
- You deliberately want to correct a test download or other known discrepancy.

Display the count with a shortcode

Use the download slug in the shortcode:

```
[sdc_download_count id="your-slug"]
```

For example:

```
[sdc_download_count id="simple-download-counter"]
```

You can place the shortcode in a WordPress Shortcode block, an Elementor Shortcode widget or anywhere else WordPress processes shortcodes.

Legacy shortcode

The earlier SPA-only shortcode is retained for backwards compatibility:

```
[swd_download_count id="your-slug"]
```

MANAGING DOWNLOADS

Manage, delete and uninstall safely

Deleting a download

If you delete a download record from the plugin, its tracked URL will stop working. Remove or update any public buttons that use that URL before deleting the record.

Deactivation

Deactivating the plugin does not delete your download records or counts. They remain stored so they are available when the plugin is activated again.

Uninstall option

The plugin includes an option to delete its stored data when the plugin is uninstalled. Leave this option off if you want to preserve the records and counts.

Caution: If you enable data removal and then delete the plugin from WordPress, the saved download records and totals are removed from the database.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Common questions and fixes

The counter still shows zero

Check the public button link first. It must point to the tracked /plugin-download/ URL, not directly to the ZIP, PDF or Media Library file.

The tracked URL shows a 404 error

Go to Settings → Permalinks and click Save Changes once. This refreshes WordPress rewrite rules.

The button downloads the file but the count does not increase

You are probably using the direct file URL. Replace it with the tracked URL shown in Tools → Download Counter.

I uploaded a new plugin version and the button still downloads the old file

Open Tools → Download Counter and replace the Current file URL with the direct URL of the new file. Keep the slug unchanged.

I changed the slug and my old link stopped working

Changing a slug changes the tracked URL. Update your page or button to use the new tracked URL.

Can the plugin count old downloads automatically?

No. It can only count requests that pass through its tracked URL. If you know an historic total, enter it manually in the Downloads field.

GOOD PRACTICE

Recommended workflow

1	Use stable slugs Choose a clear slug once and avoid changing it after the tracked URL is published.
2	Keep the tracked URL on the page When you update a file, change the Current file URL in the plugin instead of editing every page.
3	Test after changing a file Click the public button once and confirm the correct file opens and the count increases.

4

Use meaningful names

The Name field is primarily for administrators, so use a label that makes each download easy to identify.

5

Back up WordPress normally

Download counts are stored in the WordPress database and will be included in a normal database backup.

SUPPORT

SPA Web Design

Simple Download Counter for WordPress is developed by SPA Web Design, a WordPress specialist based in Southam, Warwickshire.

Website<https://spawebdesign.co.uk/>**Email**

contact@spawebdesign.co.uk

Plugin

Simple Download Counter for WordPress v1.0.0

SPA WEB DESIGN

WordPress websites • plugins • support