Getting Started with Remove Special Characters From Permalinks

Getting Started · https://wpfactory.com/docs/special-characters-getting-started/

To get started with Remove Special Characters From Permalinks (URLs) for WordPress, install and activate it from **Plugins > Add New**, confirm WooCommerce is active, then publish or update any post. The free version has no settings screen: it cleans the permalink every time you save. Pro adds **Settings > Special Characters** and **Tools > Remove Characters**.

What the plugin does

WordPress builds a post's URL slug from its title. Symbols such as a chain icon (🔗), emoji or other non-ASCII characters can end up in that slug, which makes URLs hard to read and can confuse third-party tools that cannot handle them. Remove Special Characters strips those characters from the slug when the post is saved, so the URL contains only plain letters, numbers, hyphens, underscores and dots.

- **Free:** cleans the permalink of each post, page, product or custom post type item when you publish or update it.
- **Pro:** adds a one-click tool that cleans every published permalink on the site at once, an optional forced redirect from old URLs to the new ones, and an email when the bulk run finishes. See Free vs Pro.

Before you start

- WordPress 4.4 or later and PHP 5.6 or later (from the plugin readme).
- **WooCommerce must be active.** In the current builds (free 1.1.1, Pro 1.0.8) the plugin checks for WooCommerce when it loads and does nothing at all if WooCommerce is not active, even though it works on any post type. If you run a site without WooCommerce, contact support before relying on the plugin.

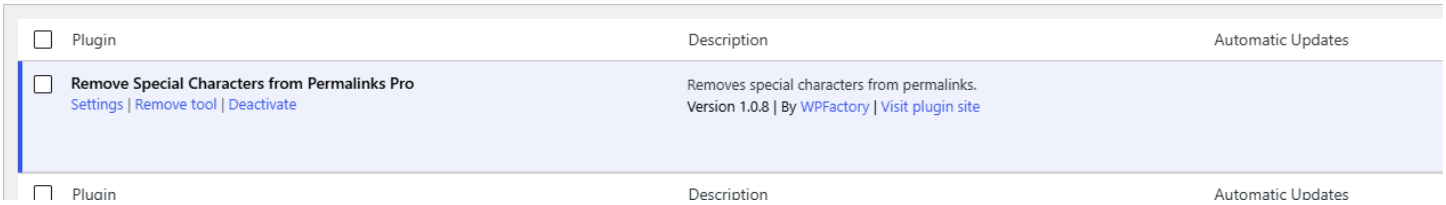
- Pretty permalinks enabled in **Settings > Permalinks** (any structure other than Plain). With Plain permalinks, URLs use `?p=123` and slugs are not visible.
- A recent database backup if you plan to change URLs that are already indexed by search engines.

Install the free version

1. Go to **Plugins > Add New** and search for *Remove Special Characters From Permalinks*, or download it from WordPress.org and upload the zip with **Upload Plugin**.
2. Click **Install Now**, then **Activate**.
3. That is all. There is no menu item or settings page in the free version. On the **Plugins** screen the plugin shows a **Pro Version** link.

Install Pro

1. Download the Pro zip from your WPFactory account.
2. Go to **Plugins > Add New > Upload Plugin**, choose the zip, click **Install Now** and then **Activate**.
3. Pro already contains the free plugin's save-time cleanup, so you can deactivate the free version once Pro is active.
4. On the **Plugins** screen, Pro adds two links: **Settings** (opens **Settings > Special Characters**) and **Remove tool** (opens **Tools > Remove Characters**).



Check that it works

1. Create a test post with a title that contains a symbol or emoji, for example *Summer Deals 2026*.
2. Click **Publish**.
3. Look at the permalink under the title (or in the post's URL settings panel). The symbol is gone and the slug reads `summer-deals-2026`.
4. Delete the test post when you are done.

> **Note:** existing posts keep their current URLs until you update them. To clean all existing permalinks in one go, use the Pro tool described in How to Bulk Clean Special Characters from All WordPress Permalinks.

Next steps

- How to Remove Special Characters from WordPress URLs
- How to Fix Non-English Characters in WordPress Permalinks
- How to Redirect Old Permalinks After Removing Special Characters (Pro)
- Troubleshooting



REMOVE SPECIAL CHARACTERS

Save-time cleanup is free. Remove Special Characters From Permalinks (URLs) for WordPress Pro cleans every existing permalink with one click and can force redirects from the old URLs.

See what Pro unlocks →

Need a hand? Our team answers every ticket on the Remove Special Characters support forum.

Related articles

- Remove Special Characters Developer Reference
- Remove Special Characters Settings Reference