Switch Your DNS to CloudFlare to Be Protected

Owning a Website Comes With Responsibility

With how websites are built today on software platforms like WordPress, Joomla, DotNetNuke, Drupal and others, you're running actual software on your website. Don't get me wrong – it's great. This software makes managing a website and adding content really easy. Along with that kind of power comes great responsibility.

Some of the Things That Can Go Wrong

Your website is on a public server. That means it's open for the public to view. It has to be because people need to connect to it to see what's on it. Because there's that public access, you're pretty much inviting trouble.

For example – let's say you had your laptop and you put it out in a busy shopping mall on a Saturday. You nailed it down to a table and gave it Internet access. When the end of the day rolls around and the mall closes, how do you think that laptop would look. Would all your icons be in a row and would all your files be how they were when you first put it there? No, it would be a mess. People would be looking through your data, installing software and using it to do whatever.

Ok, so that's just a shopping mall with maybe a few hundred people using it. Multiply that out to where **the whole world has access** and what do you think would happen? This is essentially what's going on with your website. If it's going to be set up like that, it needs to be protected.

Here are some things that might happen if it's not protected:

- Cross site scripting
- SQL injections
- Comment spam
- Excessive bot crawling
- Email harvesters
- Malware/virus installation
- Phishing schemes
- Junk email scripts
- Denial of service attacks

How to Protect Against This

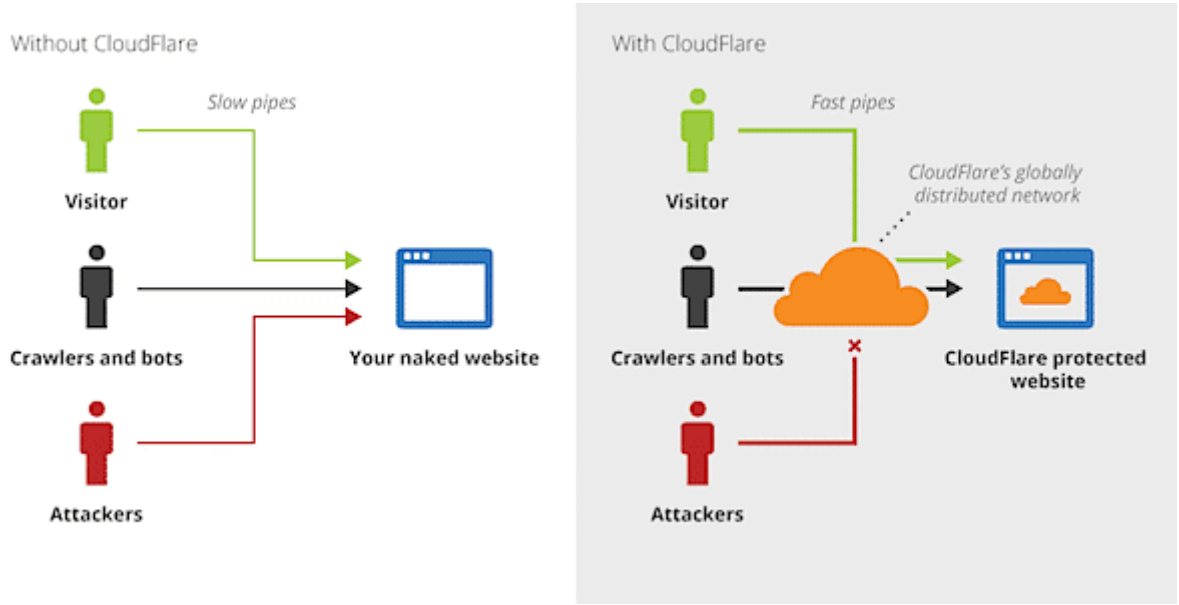
The first thing to do is to make sure your website software is always up to date. Install the latest patches for the core system as well as any plugins or extensions. Make sure the theme is also up to date since it is software, too.

Secondly, I highly suggest that you move your DNS over to CloudFlare.

CloudFlare is a CDN (Content Distribution Network) and more. You get all kinds of benefits!

Benefits of CloudFlare

You get protection, speed and a lot more. Basically, your website isn't naked anymore:



Here are the benefits:

- Your website loads faster / better website performance – they cache content for you
- Add security – they can see attacks coming and block them before they get to you
- Additional analytics – get website statistics from a different point of view
- Save bandwidth / additional servers
- It's easy to enable
- It's free

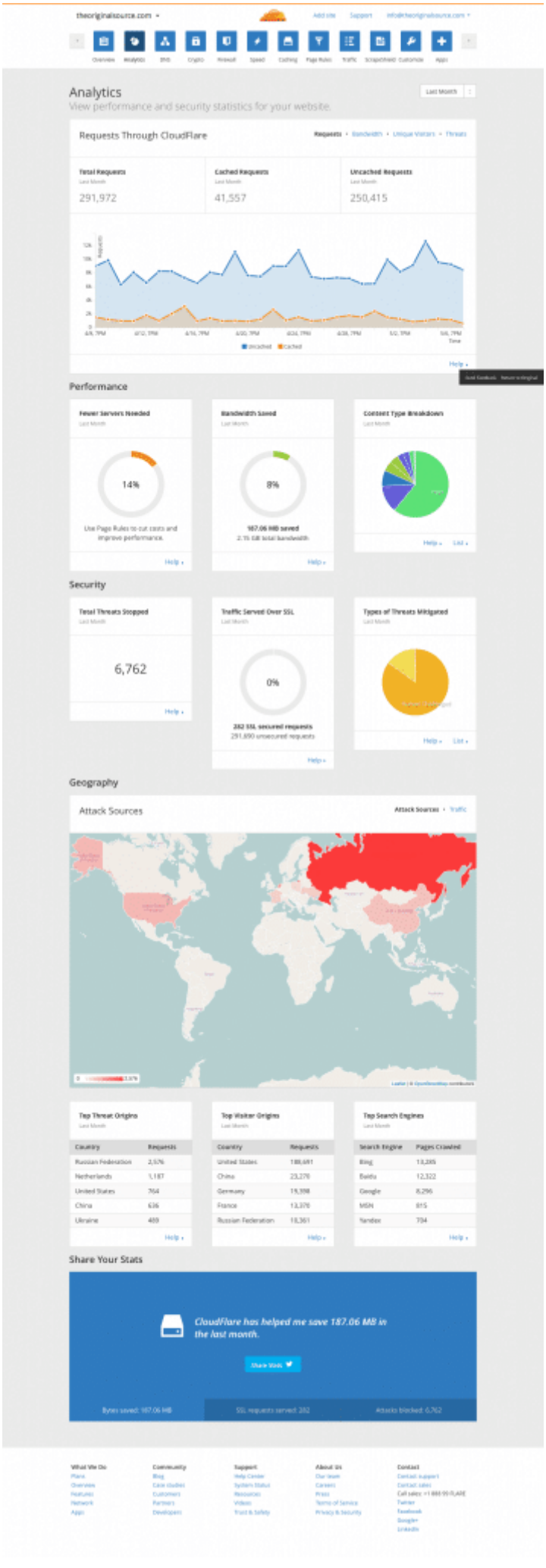
They take over your DNS for you and that's how they're able to do all these things. Their DNS servers are worldwide, authoritative and fast.

With pending attacks, they can see where they're coming from and take action so that your website isn't even accessible to hackers. With that in place, they'll skip your website and move on to another one that isn't as well protected.

I Use It

I’ve been testing CloudFlare for a while and I’m now moving more and more websites that I own over to it. It works really well. I’ve had no problems at all.

Here’s a report showing what they’re done for a website of mine (that gets decent traffic) over a 1-month span (click on the image to see a larger version):


theoriginalsource.com
Add site
Support
Overview
Analytics
DNS
Crypto
Firewall
Speed
Caching
Page Rules
Traffic
Scrapeshield
Customize
Apps
Analytics
View performance and security statistics for your website.
Last Month
Requests Through CloudFlare
Requests • Bandwidth • Unique Visitors • Threats
Total Requests
Last Month
291,972
Cached Requests
Last Month
41,557
Uncached Requests
Last Month
250,415
Requests
Time
Uncached
Cached
Help
Performance
Fewer Servers Needed
Last Month
14%
Use Page Rules to cut costs and improve performance.
Help
Bandwidth Saved
Last Month
8%
187.06 MB saved
2.75 GB total bandwidth
Help
Content Type Breakdown
Last Month
Help
List
Security
Total Threats Stopped
Last Month
6,762
Help
Traffic Served Over SSL
Last Month
0%
282 SSL secured requests
291,690 unsecured requests
Help
Types of Threats Mitigated
Last Month
Help
List
Geography
Attack Sources
Attack Sources • Traffic
Top Threat Origins
Last Month
Country
Requests
Russian Federation
2,576
Netherlands
1,187
United States
764
China
636
Ukraine
469
Help
Top Visitor Origins
Last Month
Country
Requests
United States
188,691
China
23,276
Germany
19,398
France
12,376
Russian Federation
10,361
Help
Top Search Engines
Last Month
Search Engine
Pages Crawled
Bing
13,205
Baidu
12,322
Google
8,296
MSN
815
Yandex
794
Help
Share Your Stats
CloudFlare has helped me save 187.06 MB in the last month.
Share With
Bytes saved: 187.06 MB
SSL requests served: 282
Attacks blocked: 6,762
What We Do
Plans
Overview
Features
Network
Apps
Community
Blog
Case studies
Customers
Partners
Developers
Support
Help Center
System Status
Resources
Videos
Trust & Safety
About Us
Our team
Careers
Press
Terms of Service
Privacy & Security
Contact
Contact support
Contact sales
Call sales: +1 888 99 FLARE
Twitter
Facebook
Google+
LinkedIn

I mean, 6,700 threats stopped… that says a lot right there.

I don’t get any compensation for recommending CloudFlare. I just think it’s really good and everyone should be using it. It’s free, so why not?

FAQs About Switching to Cloudflare

Is Cloudflare free?

Yes, Cloudflare offers a generous free plan that includes CDN, DNS management, DDoS protection, and a free SSL certificate.

Does Cloudflare speed up websites?

Yes. Cloudflare uses a global network of servers to cache and deliver your site’s content closer to users, which can significantly improve load times.

Can I use Cloudflare without changing hosts?

Yes. Cloudflare sits between your domain and your web host—no need to switch providers.

Does Cloudflare affect SEO?

It can improve SEO by speeding up your site and ensuring better uptime. Google favors fast-loading, secure sites.

With vs. Without Cloudflare: A Quick Comparison

Feature	Without Cloudflare	With Cloudflare
Site Speed	Slower (reliant on host/server)	Faster via global CDN caching
SSL Setup	Manual, can cost extra	Free and automatic
DDoS Protection	Limited or none	Built-in DDoS and WAF
DNS Management	Host-based and slower	Fast, global DNS network
Bot Blocking	Requires separate tools	Built-in firewall rules and bot filters
Analytics	Depends on host or GA	Built-in, privacy-friendly analytics

How to Switch to Cloudflare

Thinking about switching to Cloudflare? It's easier than you might think. Here's a quick step-by-step:

1. Go to Cloudflare.com and create a free account.
2. Add your domain and let Cloudflare scan your DNS records.
3. Update your domain's nameservers to point to Cloudflare (your registrar will have instructions).
4. Enable SSL and adjust caching, firewall, and performance settings as needed.
5. That's it! Cloudflare is now optimizing and protecting your website.

Who Should Switch to Cloudflare?

Cloudflare is especially helpful for:

- Small business websites wanting stronger security and faster speeds
- Bloggers and content creators looking to handle more traffic
- WordPress users trying to simplify SSL and reduce plugin load
- Anyone who wants peace of mind with DDoS protection and automatic caching

Setting it Up

Setting up CloudFlare is easy. You'll just sign up for an account and then enter your domain name. They scan your current DNS records (this takes a few minutes) and then you confirm they are right (they should be) and then they tell you what to change your name servers to – this is done at your domain name registrar… login there and make the changes.

It then takes some time to take effect.

If you use a WordPress website, it's a good idea to download, install and set up the CloudFlare WordPress plugin.

Also, when you FTP into your server, you might have problems. It might not connect. The workaround is either to just use the IP address of your web hosting server or else use the "ftp" subdomain. For example: ftp.yourdomain.com. Make sure that record exists, of course. Another issue might be accessing your control panel since that is sometimes on a different port (using cPanel or Plesk, for example).

If you do have some kind of weird plugins that trap visitors or .htaccess rules on your website, then you might run into issues with that. I had one of those plugins running on one of my sites and it caused CloudFlare to look like it was attacking the server. I had to remove the plugin and then everything worked.

If you do run into problems, CloudFlare is there to help – please contact them. It's still really great to use – don't let all of this scare you.

Conclusion

I give CloudFlare a 5 out of 5 for reliability and ease of use. You can even see all the protection they provide. Like I said, I'm going to move all my domains to CloudFlare. We even have some of our own hosting and we'll be moving clients to it as well for the health of our servers.

If website up time matters to you (and it should) along with website performance (providing the best user experience – Google thinks this is good), then get your website moved over to CloudFlare and be protected.

Original article: https://www.tonyherman.com/switch-to-cloudflare-review/

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