

# BookStack

## Mastering Documentation with BookStack: Your Open-Source Knowledge Management Solution

In an era where information is power, having an efficient knowledge management system is crucial. BookStack is an open-source, self-hosted platform designed to help you organize and manage your documentation and knowledge base. This blog post will delve into the features of BookStack, provide step-by-step installation instructions using Docker Compose, and guide you through the initial setup process.

### What is BookStack?

[BookStack](#) is an open-source, self-hosted platform for managing and organizing your documentation. Designed to be simple and easy to use, it structures content in a familiar book format, making it perfect for creating user manuals, internal documentation, and knowledge bases.

### Key Features of BookStack

- Structured Organization:** BookStack uses a familiar book-like structure, organizing content into books, chapters, and pages. This hierarchical structure makes it easy to navigate and manage large amounts of information. Each book can contain multiple chapters, and each chapter can contain multiple pages, allowing for deep and detailed documentation.
- WYSIWYG Editor:** The built-in "What You See Is What You Get" (WYSIWYG) editor simplifies content creation and formatting. Users can easily add text, images, links, and tables without needing to know HTML or other markup languages. This feature makes it accessible for users of all technical levels to contribute to the documentation.
- Markdown Support:** For those who prefer markdown, BookStack also supports markdown syntax. This allows users who are familiar with markdown to quickly format text and add elements like headers, lists, and code blocks. The dual support for WYSIWYG and markdown caters to a wide range of user preferences.
- User Management:** BookStack includes comprehensive user management features. Administrators can create user accounts and assign roles with specific permissions, ensuring that users have the right level of access. This feature is crucial for maintaining the integrity and security of the documentation, especially in larger teams or

organizations.

5. **Search Functionality:** The powerful search capabilities of BookStack allow users to quickly find the information they need. The search function indexes the content of books, chapters, and pages, making it easy to locate specific information. This is particularly useful in extensive documentation repositories.
6. **Customizable Themes:** BookStack offers customizable themes, allowing administrators to personalize the look and feel of the documentation site. This feature enables organizations to align the documentation with their branding and aesthetic preferences. Themes can be adjusted through the settings or by editing the CSS directly.
7. **Multi-language Support:** BookStack supports multiple languages, making it accessible for global teams. This feature is vital for organizations with a diverse workforce, ensuring that documentation is available in the preferred language of the users. Language packs can be easily installed, and the interface can be switched between languages.
8. **Revision History:** BookStack keeps a detailed revision history of all pages and chapters. This allows users to track changes, revert to previous versions, and understand the evolution of the content. The revision history is particularly useful for collaborative environments where multiple users contribute to the documentation.
9. **API and Webhooks:** BookStack provides an API and webhooks for integrating with other systems and automating tasks. The API allows developers to programmatically access and manipulate content, while webhooks can trigger actions based on events within BookStack. These features extend the functionality of BookStack and enable integration with existing workflows.
10. **Export and Import Options:** BookStack supports exporting and importing content in various formats, including HTML and PDF. This feature is useful for backing up documentation, sharing it externally, or migrating content from other systems. The import function can also streamline the initial setup by allowing bulk import of existing documentation.

## Installing BookStack Using Docker Compose

Setting up BookStack with Docker Compose is straightforward and ensures a consistent environment across different deployments. Follow these steps to get started.

### Prerequisites

Ensure you have Docker and Docker Compose installed on your system.

### Docker Compose Configuration

1. **Create a Docker Compose file:** Create a file named `docker-compose.yml` in your desired directory.
2. **Add the following content to the file:**

---

services:

bookstack:

image: lscr.io/linuxserver/bookstack

container\_name: bookstack

environment:

- PUID=\${PUID}
- PGID=\${PGID}
- TZ=\${TZ}
- APP\_URL=https://subdomain.domain.com
- DB\_HOST=bookstack\_db
- DB\_PORT=\${DB\_PORT}
- DB\_USER=\${DB\_USER}
- DB\_PASS=\${DB\_PASS}
- DB\_DATABASE=\${DB\_DATABASE}
- APP\_DEFAULT\_DARK\_MODE=true

volumes:

- \${DOCKER}/bookstack/bookstack\_app\_data:/config

ports:

- \${HTTP\_PORT}:80

restart: unless-stopped

depends\_on:

- bookstack\_db

bookstack\_db:

image: lscr.io/linuxserver/mariadb

container\_name: bookstack\_db

environment:

- PUID=\${PUID}
- PGID=\${PGID}
- TZ=\${TZ}
- MYSQL\_ROOT\_PASSWORD=\${MYSQL\_ROOT\_PASSWORD}
- MYSQL\_DATABASE=\${MYSQL\_DATABASE}
- MYSQL\_USER=\${MYSQL\_USER}
- MYSQL\_PASSWORD=\${MYSQL\_PASSWORD}

volumes:

- \${DOCKER}/bookstack/bookstack\_db\_data:/config

restart: unless-stopped

3. **Adjust the environment variables:** Ensure you replace placeholder values like `/path/to/bookstack/config` and `/path/to/bookstack_db/data` with appropriate paths on your system.

## Running BookStack

1. **Navigate to the directory containing your `docker-compose.yml` file.**

**Run the following command to start BookStack:**

```
docker-compose up -d
```

This command will pull the necessary Docker images and start the containers in detached mode. BookStack will be accessible at `http://localhost:6875`.

## Basic Setup Instructions

Once BookStack is up and running, follow these steps to complete the basic setup:

1. **Access the BookStack Web Interface:** Open a web browser and navigate to `http://localhost:6875`.
2. **Initial Login:** The default admin credentials are typically `admin@admin.com` for the email and `password` for the password. Log in and change these credentials immediately to ensure security.
3. **Configure Settings:** Navigate to the settings menu to configure site settings, including the site name, base URL, and language.
4. **Create Your First Book:** Use the interface to create your first book. Add chapters and pages to organize your content.
5. **User Management:** Add users and assign roles to manage access and permissions effectively.

## Helpful Resources

- [BookStack Documentation](#): Comprehensive guides and references.
- [BookStack GitHub Repository](#): Source code and community contributions.

## Conclusion

BookStack provides a robust and user-friendly solution for managing documentation and knowledge bases. Its open-source nature, combined with powerful features and ease of deployment using Docker Compose, makes it an excellent choice for teams and organizations of all sizes. By following the setup instructions provided, you can quickly get started with BookStack and leverage its capabilities to enhance your documentation strategy.