

Safely Updating and Upgrading a Production VPS Server with Backup Plan

I noticed there was upgradable packages on the VPS Server I run. Since this is the one hosting BookStack Publicly on my Website, I wanted to treat this with as much caution as possible.

I wanted to check what was upgradable:

```
app list --upgradable
```

```
root@jammy:~# apt list --upgradable
Listing... Done
cloud-init/jammy-updates,jammy-updates 24.4.1-0ubuntu0~22.04.2 all [upgradable from: 23.1.2-0ubuntu0~22.04.1]
grub-efi-amd64-bin/jammy-updates,jammy-updates 2.06-2ubuntu14.8 amd64 [upgradable from: 2.06-2ubuntu14.4]
grub-efi-amd64-signed/jammy-updates,jammy-updates 1.187.12+2.06-2ubuntu14.8 amd64 [upgradable from: 1.187.6+2.06-2ubuntu14.4]
libldap-2.5-0/jammy-updates,jammy-updates 2.5.19+dfsg-0ubuntu0.22.04.1 amd64 [upgradable from: 2.5.18+dfsg-0ubuntu0.22.04.3]
libldap-common/jammy-updates,jammy-updates 2.5.19+dfsg-0ubuntu0.22.04.1 all [upgradable from: 2.5.18+dfsg-0ubuntu0.22.04.3]
monarx-agent/jammy 4.2.72-master amd64 [upgradable from: 4.2.62-master]
php8.1-bcmath/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-cli/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-common/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-curl/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-fpm/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-gd/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-imap/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-mbstring/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-mysql/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-opcache/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-readline/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-xml/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1-zip/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 amd64 [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
php8.1/jammy 8.1.32-1+ubuntu22.04.1+deb.sury.org+1 all [upgradable from: 8.1.2-1ubuntu2.21]
```

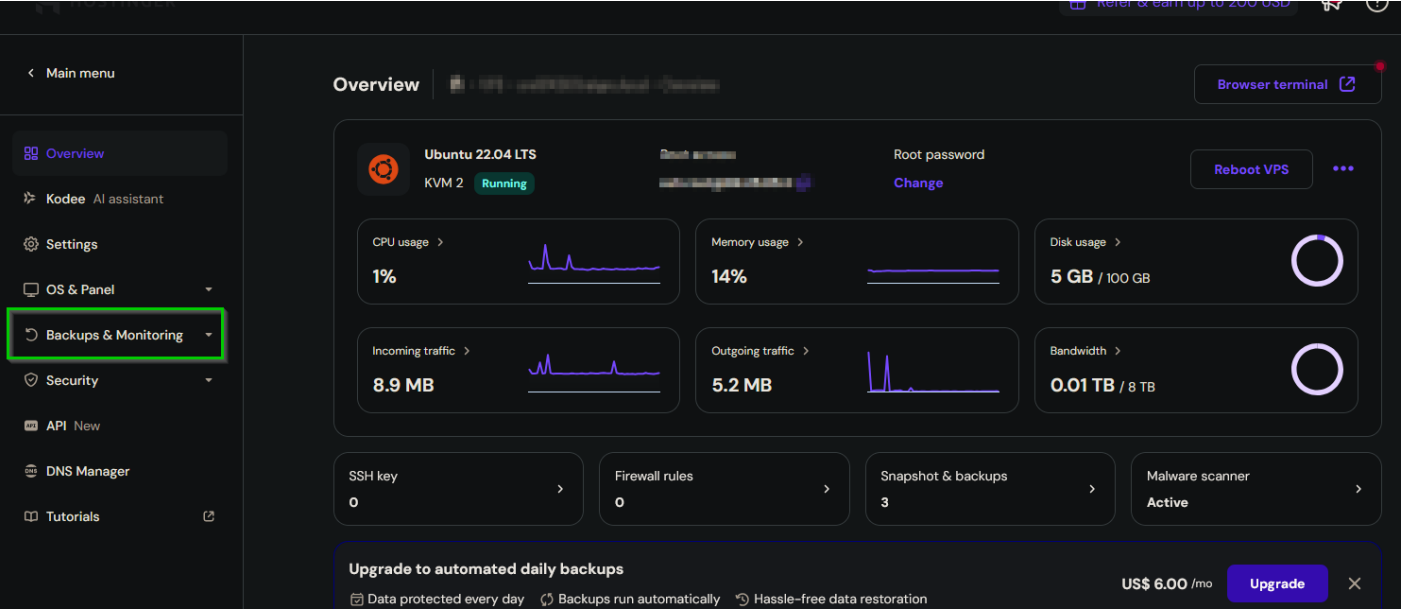
I leveraged AI to take a look at the packages that were upgradable and get a better understanding for my approach:

Category	Safe to Update?	Notes
cloud-init	☑ Yes	Handles initial cloud setup. Updating is safe and common.
grub-efi-*	⚠ Yes, with caution	These are bootloader packages. Safe but be cautious on production VMs. A reboot is required after update.

Category	Safe to Update?	Notes
libldap-*	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Core system libraries. These affect services using LDAP but are safe to upgrade.
monarx-agent	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	This is a Hostinger security monitoring agent. Regularly updated.
php8.1-*	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	You're using a PPA (<code>deb.sury.org</code>) for PHP — updates are fine and likely beneficial. Restart PHP-FPM afterward.

I decided that the quick reboot wouldn't take long and services on my site aren't in need of scheduling a time for a reboot so I went ahead and did this while keeping an eye on the Cardinals game. If this were a critical system with many users operating on it, I would schedule a time to do these upgrades and restart (After-Hours) or wait until a need.

I took a snapshot of my server before running the upgrades:



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Create Snapshot

A snapshot preserves the state and data of a virtual machine at a specific point in time

You can only have one snapshot at a time

Create Snapshot

Daily Backups

The data you store is the most important. It is always a good thing to have an additional protective layer for your project.

Upgrade

Your Snapshot List

Snapshot date	Expiration date	
2025-05-14 16:53	2025-06-03	<div>Restore</div> <div>Delete</div>

Your Backup List

Weekly automated backups are enabled

Auto-backups settings

Date	Location	
2025-05-16 20:33	United States	<div>Restore</div>
2025-05-09 19:40	United States	<div>Restore</div>

Snapshot date	Expiration date	
2025-05-17 18:53	2025-06-06	<div>Restore</div> <div>Delete</div>

Your Backup List

After the snapshot was complete, I went ahead with the update:

```
sudo apt update
sudo apt upgrade -y
```

I Ticked the boxes to restart services (PHP, MySQL, Etc)

Then I used:

```
sudo reboot
```

I waited for the server to come back online and made sure that php, mysql, was all up and running.

SUCCESS!!

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