mySites.guru

Build a Morning Routine for Checking All Your Joomla Sites in 5 Minutes

A practical morning workflow for agency owners to check uptime, backups, updates, and alerts across hundreds of Joomla sites in under 5 minutes.

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Running an agency means juggling dozens (sometimes hundreds) of client sites. Joomla updates land, SSL certificates creep toward expiry, hosting providers have outages at 3am, and somebody always manages to get hacked over the weekend.

You could spend your morning logging into each site individually, checking admin panels, refreshing hosting dashboards, and scrolling through email threads. Or you could do the whole thing in 5 minutes from a single dashboard.

This post walks through a practical morning routine built around mySites.guru. It's written for Joomla agencies, but every step applies equally to WordPress and generic PHP sites. The platform handles all three with full feature parity.

Why Do You Need a Morning Routine at All?

"My sites are fine, I would know if something went wrong."

That's the line every agency owner says right before a client calls to tell them their site has been down since Tuesday.

Most site problems are silent. A failed backup doesn't announce itself. An expired SSL certificate shows a scary browser warning to your client's customers, but your client might not notice for days. A Joomla core update has been sitting in the queue for two weeks and the vulnerability it patches is being actively exploited.

A structured morning check catches these problems early, before your client notices and before a small issue turns into an emergency.

The routine below covers five areas:

1. **Dashboard overview**: the 30-second scan

2. **Alerts and important items**: what broke overnight

3. **Uptime status**: which sites are actually responding

4. **Backup verification**: confirming your safety net exists

5. **Update queue**: getting ahead of security patches

Each step takes about a minute. The whole routine takes under five.

What Do You Need Before You Start?

Step 0: Coffee. Always coffee.

Nothing good happens before coffee. Make it strong, make it hot, and bring it to your desk. The rest of this routine assumes caffeine is flowing. Phil gets his beans from Cooper & Co in Jersey and grinds at home (not a sponsored link, just great coffee).

The tools you need

If you're already using mySites.guru, skip ahead to Step 1. If not, here's what the routine assumes:

- Your Joomla sites are connected to mySites.guru via the connector plugin. You can add unlimited sites to your account - see the full guide to managing multiple Joomla sites for setup details.

- Uptime monitoring is enabled for every site. The left sidebar shows a count of sites without a monitor, so you can spot any gaps.

- Backup schedules are configured. mySites.guru integrates with Akeeba Backup for Joomla (free or professional) and All-in-One Migration for WordPress.

- Real-time alerts are turned on for events you care about: admin logins, configuration file changes, and SSL expiration warnings.

- You have organised your sites with tags (the "Site Group Tags" feature) so you can filter by client, server, or priority level.

All of this is one-time setup. Once it's done, the morning routine is pure review.

Step 1: The 30-second dashboard scan

Log into your mySites.guru account. The first thing you see is the **Your Sites** page, a list of every connected site with status indicators.

But before you look at the list, look at the **left sidebar**. This is where mySites.guru does the heavy lifting for you.

The Important Items section

The sidebar contains a section called **Important Items** with live counters. These update automatically as snapshots run throughout the day. On a good morning, this section is empty. On a bad morning, you'll see entries like:

- **Hacked Sites**: sites where the <u>security audit</u> has detected malicious code. This is the red flag. If you see this counter at any number above zero, deal with it first.

- **Sites Not Connected**: the mySites.guru connector plugin could not reach these sites. Could be a hosting outage, a DNS problem, or the plugin was accidentally removed.

- **Core Update Needed**: sites running an outdated version of Joomla (or WordPress). Click through to see exactly which versions are available.

- **Invalid SSL Cert Install**: sites where the <u>SSL certificate</u> has expired, has a chain problem, or is misconfigured.

- **No Uptime Monitor**: sites that are not being actively monitored for downtime. These are blind spots in your coverage.

- **No Backup Schedule**: sites without an automated <u>backup schedule</u>. If something goes wrong on one of these sites, there's no safety net.

> ### Tip: Make the sidebar your first glance
> If every counter in the Important Items section is zero, your morning is off to a great start. If any counter is above zero, click it to go directly to the affected sites.

Filtering by platform

Below the total site count, the sidebar breaks your sites down by platform: Joomla, WordPress, and generic PHP. If you are primarily a Joomla agency, clicking "Your Joomla Sites" filters the main list to show only Joomla sites. Useful when you want to focus your morning check on one platform at a time.

Using tags for priority

If you have set up Site Group Tags, they appear in the sidebar too. Many agencies create tags like "Priority Clients", "Managed Hosting", or "Monthly Retainer" so they can check their most important sites first. Click a tag to filter the site list instantly.

This entire sidebar scan takes 30 seconds. You now know whether anything is on fire.

Step 2: Review overnight alerts

Before you dig into individual sites, check your email for mySites.guru alerts that arrived overnight.

mySites.guru sends <u>real-time alerts</u> based on triggers you configure:

- **Admin login alerts**: someone logged into a Joomla or WordPress admin panel. If it happened at 3am and it wasn't you or your team, that's worth investigating.

- **File change alerts**: a monitored file (like `configuration.php` on Joomla or `wp-config.php` on WordPress) was modified. This is <u>near real-time detection</u>, with the check running on every page load.

- **Configuration change alerts**: someone saved Global Configuration on a Joomla site.

- **SSL expiration warnings**: a certificate is approaching its <u>expiration date</u> within your configured grace period.

- **Uptime alerts**: a site failed to respond to three consecutive checks from multiple global locations.

Triage the alerts

Not every alert needs action. An admin login at 9am from your developer's IP is expected. An admin login at 2am from an unfamiliar IP is not.

For file change alerts, mySites.guru uses MD5 hash comparison on every page load. If a monitored file's hash changes, you get notified immediately. Legitimate changes (like saving configuration after a Joomla update) trigger alerts too, and that's intentional. You can whitelist your own IP addresses to reduce noise from your own work.

Team alerts

If you have team members on your account, each person can configure their own alert preferences per site. This means your on-call person gets the overnight alerts while everyone else reviews them during business hours.

> ### Pro tip: Create an email filter
> Set up a Gmail or Outlook filter that labels mySites.guru alert emails and sorts them into a dedicated folder. Your morning check becomes: open the folder, scan the subjects, act on anything unexpected.

Step 3: Check uptime status

Click through to the uptime monitoring overview in your mySites.guru account. This screen shows every connected site with its current status: up or down.

mySites.guru's built-in uptime engine checks your sites every minute. If the initial HEAD request fails, it retries with a GET request, then tries again from a different global location. Only after all three attempts fail does it send a downtime alert.

What to look for

- **Currently down sites**: obvious, but these need immediate attention. If a site is down right now, your client's visitors are seeing an error page.

- **Response time trends**: mySites.guru shows the last 24 hours of response times for each site. A site that is technically "up" but responding in 8 seconds has a performance problem that needs investigating. Use this to spot hosting issues before they become outages.

- **Repeated short outages**: some hosting environments have brief hiccups that resolve themselves. If you see a pattern of short downtimes on the same site, it usually points to resource limits, cron job conflicts, or a server under strain.

Sites without monitors

Remember that "No Uptime Monitor" counter from the sidebar? If it's above zero, add monitors to those sites now. It takes seconds. mySites.guru <u>monitors every connected site at no extra cost</u>, so there's no reason to leave gaps.

Step 4: Verify backup status

Navigate to the **Scheduled Backups** page. This is where you confirm that your automated backups are actually running.

The backup schedule overview

The Scheduled Backups page lists every site with a configured backup schedule, showing:

- When the last backup completed

- Whether the backup succeeded or failed

- Which backup profile was used

- When the next scheduled backup is due

Sites are sorted so the ones that need attention appear first: failed backups, missed schedules, and sites that have not been backed up recently.

Common backup issues

Failed backups usually mean the backup process timed out, the hosting server ran out of memory, or the <u>Akeeba Backup</u> profile needs adjustment. Click into the failed backup for error details.

Missing schedules were already flagged by the sidebar's "No Backup Schedule" counter. Sites without a schedule are not being backed up automatically. Fix this by setting a default backup profile on the site's Settings tab.

Stale backups happen when a schedule is configured but the last backup was weeks ago. This can occur if the Akeeba Backup component was updated and the profile needs reconfiguration.

The one-click backup option

If you see a site that needs an immediate backup, maybe because you're about to push an update and want a fresh restore point, you can trigger a backup directly from this page. The backup runs in the background on the mySites.guru server queue; you don't need to keep your browser open.

For bulk operations, the **"Start Backup Of All Sites Visible Below"** button queues backups for every site on the page. Filter the list first (by tag, platform, or search) to target specific groups.

> ### Remember: an untested backup is worthless
> Periodically restore a backup to a staging environment and verify it works. Knowing your backups exist is not the same as knowing they will work when you need them.

Step 5: Review the update queue

Last step. Open the update queue to see which Joomla core versions and extensions have updates available.

Core updates

The sidebar's "Core Update Needed" counter already told you how many sites are behind. Click through to see the specific versions. mySites.guru supports <u>mass upgrades</u>, so you can select individual sites or all of them and queue the upgrades in one operation.

The process:

1. **Backup first.** Always take a fresh backup before upgrading. Use the bulk backup button from Step 4.

2. **Queue the upgrades.** Select the sites, click upgrade, and the queue processes them in the background. You'll hear a success sound for each completed upgrade if you keep the tab open.

3. **Verify after.** Trigger a fresh <u>snapshot</u> on the upgraded sites to confirm everything is healthy.

Extension and plugin updates

Beyond core updates, mySites.guru tracks every extension and plugin installed on your Joomla sites. The snapshot collects this information automatically, and if an update is available, it appears in the update queue.

You can <u>enable automatic updates</u> for specific extensions on a per-site or per-extension basis. When the next snapshot runs and detects an available update for an auto-update-enabled extension, mySites.guru applies it and notifies you of the result.

For extensions you prefer to update manually (maybe you want to test them on a staging site first, or the extension has a history of breaking changes), leave auto-update off and review them during this morning check.

Prioritise security updates

Not all updates are equal. A Joomla security patch that fixes an actively exploited vulnerability should be applied the same morning you see it. A minor version bump for a gallery plugin can wait until your next maintenance window.

mySites.guru's <u>vulnerability alerting</u> flags known security issues in extensions, helping you tell the difference between "update at your convenience" and "update right now."

The complete routine at a glance

The full routine as a daily checklist:

0:00 – 0:30 | Dashboard scan

- Log in and check the Important Items sidebar counters

- If any counter is above zero, click through to the affected sites

- Filter by platform or tag if needed

0:30 – 1:30 | Alert review

- Scan overnight alert emails for unexpected admin logins, file changes, or downtime

- Triage: expected activity vs. suspicious activity

- Investigate anything unusual

1:30 – 2:30 | Uptime check

- Review the uptime monitoring overview

- Check for currently down sites

- Look at response time trends for performance issues

- Add monitors to any unmonitored sites

2:30 – 3:30 | Backup verification

- Open the Scheduled Backups page

- Check for failed or stale backups

- Trigger manual backups if needed

- Ensure every site has a backup schedule

3:30 – 5:00 | Update queue

- Review pending core updates

- Back up affected sites, then queue the upgrades

- Check extension updates and apply or schedule them

- Prioritise security patches

That's the whole routine. Five areas, five minutes, every site covered.

Does This Routine Scale from 10 Sites to 500?

The routine above works whether you manage 10 sites or 500. Here's why.

The sidebar counters don't change with scale. Whether you have 10 sites or 500, the Important Items section gives you the same quick summary. Zero hacked sites is zero hacked sites, regardless of the denominator.

Snapshots run automatically. mySites.guru snapshots every connected site twice a day without any manual intervention. You're reviewing results, not running checks. The per-site overhead of your morning routine is effectively zero.

Bulk operations are built in. Mass upgrades, bulk backups, and the command palette (Cmd+K / Ctrl+K) mean you're never clicking through hundreds of individual sites. Type a few characters, hit enter, and you're on the right page.

Tags keep things manageable. For large portfolios, Site Group Tags let you break the morning check into segments. Check your "Priority" tag first, then "Managed Clients", then "Legacy Sites." Each segment uses the same five steps; you're just working through filtered views.

The command palette shortcut

If you want to skip the sidebar entirely and jump straight to a specific site or tool, press **Cmd+K** (Mac) or **Ctrl+K** (Windows) from anywhere in the dashboard. The command

palette searches across all your sites, all tools, and all account functions. Type "backups" and you're on the backup page. Type a domain name and you're on that site's management page. It's faster than clicking through menus.

> **Keyboard shortcuts go further**
>
> Press the question mark key (?) anywhere in mySites.guru to reveal a full keyboard shortcuts page. Shortcuts include mass updates (m u), mass installs (m i), toggling dark mode (d), and logging out (Shift+L).

What about WordPress sites?

Everything in this routine applies to WordPress sites too. mySites.guru manages Joomla, WordPress, and generic PHP sites with identical features across all three platforms. The sidebar counters include all platforms. The backup scheduler works with Akeeba Backup for WordPress and All-in-One Migration. The uptime engine checks every connected site regardless of platform.

If you run a mixed agency with both Joomla and WordPress clients, you don't need separate tools or separate routines. One login, one dashboard, one morning check.

For a detailed walkthrough of the WordPress-specific workflows, see the guide to managing multiple WordPress sites.

How Can You Automate Beyond the Morning Check?

The morning routine is for your awareness. But much of the work can be automated so that problems are caught and resolved before you even log in.

Scheduled snapshots and audits

mySites.guru schedules audits on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. The deep security audit checks every line of code in every file on your webspace, including hidden files you might not know about, using crowdsourced detection patterns that improve daily. If

a hack is found on another subscriber's site, the detection rule is added to the system, and your next audit benefits from it.

Automatic extension updates

For extensions you trust to update without testing, <u>enable auto-updates</u>. mySites.guru applies the update on the next snapshot when it detects a new version, and notifies you of the result. This is particularly useful for well-maintained security extensions and backup components that you want kept current at all times.

SSL monitoring on autopilot

<u>SSL certificate checks</u> run on every snapshot. mySites.guru downloads the certificate, checks the issuer, validates the full chain, and monitors the expiration date. You set a grace period (default is 2 days before expiry) and the system alerts you automatically. The SSL overview page lists all your sites sorted by certificate expiry date, with a CSV export for offline review.

Real-time file monitoring

The <u>file monitoring system</u> watches critical files like `configuration.php` and `wp-config.php` using MD5 hash comparison on every page load. This isn't a scheduled scan; it fires in real time. By the time you sit down for your morning check, any overnight file changes have already been reported to your inbox.

What Are the Common Mistakes to Avoid?

Skipping the backup check. It's easy to assume backups are running because you set up the schedule once. Hosting changes, extension updates, and disk space limits all break backup schedules silently. Check the backup page every morning.

Ignoring "Sites Not Connected." A disconnected site is a blind spot. You're not getting snapshots, you're not getting alerts, and you won't know about problems until someone

tells you. Reconnect these sites immediately. The connector plugin may need reinstalling or the site may have moved to a new server.

Treating all updates equally. A Joomla security release that patches an <u>actively exploited vulnerability</u> isn't the same as a template update that adds a new colour option. Security updates go first.

Not using tags. If you manage more than 20 sites and aren't using tags, you're making the morning check harder than it needs to be. Tags let you prioritise, filter, and batch-process sites by any criteria you choose.

Checking sites one by one. The whole point of a centralised dashboard is that you don't need to log into individual admin panels. If you find yourself opening Joomla admin URLs to verify things, you're working around the tool instead of with it. Trust the <u>snapshot data</u>, which checks <u>over 140 data points</u> per site, twice a day.

Building the habit

A morning routine only works if you actually do it.

Same time every day. Pick a time (first thing, right after coffee, whatever works) and stick to it. The routine takes five minutes, so there's no excuse to skip it.

Make it a team responsibility. If you have team members, rotate the morning check. The person on duty reviews the dashboard and raises anything that needs attention. mySites.guru supports <u>unlimited team members</u> at no extra cost.

Use the command palette. Once you learn Cmd+K, you won't go back to clicking through menus. It shaves seconds off every navigation, and those seconds add up over a 5-minute routine.

Keep a log. Not a formal document, just a quick note in Slack or your project management tool. "Morning check: all clear" or "Morning check: 3 failed backups on Hetzner, investigating." It takes 10 seconds and gives your team visibility into the routine.

Act on problems the same morning. The whole point of the morning check is early detection. If you spot a problem and add it to a backlog for "later," you've defeated the purpose. Fix what you can immediately, escalate what you can't, and track what needs scheduling.

Getting started

If you're not yet using mySites.guru, the <u>first month is free</u>. Sign up, connect your sites, and try this morning routine on your own portfolio. The <u>pricing</u> is GBP 19.99 per month for unlimited sites, the same price since 2012.

Everything described in this post is included in that single subscription: the dashboard, the uptime monitoring, the snapshot engine, the alert system, the backup scheduler, the update queue, the security audits, and the <u>SSL monitoring</u>. No add-ons, no per-site fees.

Five minutes a morning, hundreds of sites checked.

> **Ready to try it?**
>
> Sign up for a <u>free first month</u>, connect your Joomla and WordPress sites, and try this morning routine on day one.

Further reading

- <u>Joomla Official Security Advisories</u> - Joomla-specific vulnerability disclosures

- <u>Akeeba Backup Documentation</u> - the backup component mySites.guru integrates with for both Joomla and WordPress

- <u>OWASP Web Security Testing Guide</u> - web application security best practices that complement daily monitoring

Daily workflows are the foundation of our <u>agency multi-site management guide</u>.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does a daily site check take in mySites.guru?

A complete morning check covering uptime, alerts, snapshots, backups, and pending updates takes under 5 minutes for most users, regardless of whether they manage 10 sites or 500.

Do I need to manually run snapshots every morning?

No. mySites.guru runs automated snapshots twice every 24 hours on every connected site. Your morning routine is about reviewing the results, not triggering the checks.

Can I see which sites have problems without clicking into each one?

Yes. The left sidebar displays an Important Items section with live counts of hacked sites, disconnected sites, core updates needed, invalid SSL certificates, missing uptime monitors, and missing backup schedules. You can click any counter to see exactly which sites are affected.

What if I manage both Joomla and WordPress sites?

The morning routine works identically for both platforms. mySites.guru treats Joomla, WordPress, and generic PHP sites with full feature parity: the same dashboard, the same alerts, the same update queue.

Can my team members follow this same morning routine?

Yes. You can add unlimited team members to your mySites.guru account. Each team member sees the same dashboard and can configure their own alert preferences per site.

How do I know if a backup failed overnight?

The Scheduled Backups page shows the timestamp and status of every backup. Failed backups are clearly flagged, and you can configure email alerts so failures are reported immediately, often before your morning check.

What happens if I skip the morning check for a day?

mySites.guru continues running snapshots, uptime checks, and scheduled backups whether you log in or not. Email alerts will notify you of anything urgent. The morning routine is about proactive oversight, not keeping the system running.

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https://manage.mysites.guru/en/register

Get in touch

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