

# n8n 3.0 upgrade checklist

Everything that breaks in 3.0, in the order you should check it. Tick it off before you press update, and the upgrade takes minutes instead of a weekend.

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Based on the official v3.0 breaking changes ([docs.n8n.io, DEVELOPING\\_V3.md](https://docs.n8n.io/DEVELOPING_V3.md))

# Three steps to a calm upgrade

n8n 3.0 is an operational release: breaking changes, removals and legacy cleanup. Your workflows run real processes, and some of them will behave differently, or stop, the day you upgrade. Work through the three steps in order.

## 01

### Scan

Read the Migration Report and your 2.x startup warnings. Note npm installs, custom chat clients and old AI Agents.

## 02

### Fix on 2.x

Swap legacy nodes, update AI Agent nodes, set changed defaults explicitly and export test workflows.

## 03

### Upgrade

Back up the database and volumes, move to Docker, upgrade a staging copy first, then production.

**Start here:** open **Settings › Migration Report** in your 2.x instance. It lists affected nodes, Chat Hub use and removed variables on your own instance, before you update.

## Step 1 · Scan

DO THIS FIRST

- ☐ **Open Settings › Migration Report and save a copy**  
It names the exact workflows, nodes and variables that 3.0 affects on your instance.
- ☐ **Read the deprecation warnings in your 2.x startup logs**  
2.x logs a warning for every removed setting that affects you.
- ☐ **Write down how n8n is installed: Docker, npm or npx**  
npm and npx installs stop working in 3.0.
- ☐ **List custom chat clients and embedded @n8n/chat widgets**  
The Chat Trigger frame format changes.
- ☐ **List workflows that use an AI Agent node older than the current version**  
AI Agent v1 modes are removed.
- ☐ **List long-running Code node tasks and Gmail Trigger workflows**  
Both behave differently after the upgrade.

# Deployment and removed nodes

## Deployment

SELF-HOSTED

- ☐ **Move npm or npx installs to Docker Compose**  
n8n no longer publishes a runnable package to npm. One-line setup: `curl -fsSL https://get.n8n.io | sh` creates a compose.yml and an .env with unique secrets and starts n8n on port 5678. Review the script first if you prefer.
- ☐ **Building community nodes? Install Docker or Podman for `n8n-node dev`**  
Test data moves to a container volume.

## Removed nodes with a direct successor

SWAP BEFORE UPGRADING

| Removed                                              | Use instead                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Function · Function Item    | Code node (Run Once for All Items · for Each Item)                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Item Lists                  | Split Out, Aggregate, Sort, Limit, Remove Duplicates, Summarize                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cron · Interval             | Schedule Trigger                                                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HTML Extract                | HTML › Extract HTML Content                                                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read PDF                    | Extract from File › Extract From PDF                                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read / Write Binary File(s) | Read/Write Files from Disk                                                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convert to/from binary data | Convert to File · Extract from File                                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> iCalendar                   | Convert to File › Convert to ICS                                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workflow Trigger            | n8n Trigger                                                                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AI Transform                | Migrates to a Code node automatically, same JavaScript. You just cannot add new ones. |

## Removed nodes without a direct replacement

REBUILD

- ☐ **Motorhead · Zep memory · Zep Vector Store**  
Move to another supported memory or vector store node.
- ☐ **SerpApi (Google Search)**  
Call the SerpApi REST API with an HTTP Request node as a tool, or use a verified community node.
- ☐ **Orbit**  
No replacement. The Orbit service shut down.

# AI, chat and behaviour changes

## AI and chat

LATEST NODE VERSIONS

- ☐ Replace AI Agent v1 modes: SQL, Conversational, OpenAI Functions, Plan and Execute, ReAct  
Tools Agent keeps working. For SQL, use a Postgres or MySQL tool on a recent AI Agent.
- ☐ Move legacy OpenAI and OpenAI Assistant nodes to the OpenAI node (Assistant resource)  
OpenAI Model moves to OpenAI Chat Model.
- ☐ Update custom chat clients to parse JSON frames  
Every WebSocket frame from the Chat Trigger gets a type field.
- ☐ Update embedded @n8n/chat to 1.31.0 or later
- ☐ Using Chat Hub? Add `chat-hub` to `N8N_ENABLED_MODULES`  
Off by default in 3.x. Your data stays. n8n 4.0 removes the feature.
- ☐ Replace HTTP Request Tool (legacy), Manual Chat Trigger and Chat Messages Retriever  
Also removed in 3.0.

## Behaviour changes

SAME WORKFLOW, DIFFERENT RESULT

| What changes                                                                                                                              | What to do                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always Output Data on If and Switch adds an empty item only when every output is empty                           | Review the flagged nodes and match the setting to your intent       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gmail Trigger v1 to v1.3 run as v1.4: drafts skipped, max 10 per poll, sent and scheduled mail no longer trigger | Turn on Include Drafts, or use Schedule Trigger plus Gmail Get Many |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Code node task timeout drops from 5 minutes to 1 minute                                                          | Set <code>N8N_RUNNERS_TASK_TIMEOUT</code> if tasks run longer       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queue mode: manual executions always run on workers                                                              | Check the memory you give your workers                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Execute Sub-workflow Local File/URL, <code>\$getPairedItem</code> , <code>\$evaluateExpression()</code>          | Check the breaking changes page for each one you use                |

# Security and configuration

## Security

SAFER BY DEFAULT, CHECK YOUR EXCEPTIONS

- ☐ **SSRF: allow the internal hosts you need explicitly**  
The block list grows and now also blocks 100.64.0.0/10 and IPv6 transition ranges.
- ☐ **Check zip handling against the new limits**  
Unzip limit drops from 2 GiB to 256 MiB. Max zip entries drop from 5,000 to 1,000.
- ☐ **Opt in explicitly for unverified community nodes from npm**  
Unverified packages are off by default.
- ☐ **Review credential handling with key rotation on**  
Enabled by default, with stricter credential handling.

## Configuration

SELF-HOSTED

| Setting                                                                       | Change                                 | Do this                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <code>~/.n8n/binaryData</code>                       | Renamed to <code>~/.n8n/storage</code> | Remount the volume or set <code>N8N_STORAGE_PATH</code> . n8n refuses to start when both folders exist. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <code>N8N_DEFAULT_BINARY_DATA_MODE=default</code>    | No longer valid                        | Pick filesystem, s3, azure or database                                                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <code>N8N_PRE_EXECUTE_ERROR_CREATES_EXECUTION</code> | Removed                                | Delete before upgrading                                                                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <code>OFFLOAD_MANUAL_EXECUTIONS_TO_WORKERS</code>    | Removed                                | Delete it, size workers                                                                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <code>N8N_DB_PING_TIMEOUT</code>                     | Removed                                | Use <code>DB_PING_TIMEOUT_MS</code>                                                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <code>N8N_RUNNERS_TASK_TIMEOUT</code>                | Default 300 to 60                      | Set it explicitly if needed                                                                             |

# Upgrade day

Before you press update

BACKUPS FIRST

- ☐ Export the workflows you changed as test cases
- ☐ Back up the database and the Docker volumes
- ☐ Upgrade a staging copy first and run your test workflows
- ☐ Check Migration Report and startup logs on staging for anything you missed
- ☐ Upgrade production, then run the same test workflows again

## Upgrade unprepared

- ☐ n8n refuses to start when both storage folders exist
- ☐ Workflows with Function or Cron nodes break
- ☐ Long Code node tasks fail after one minute
- ☐ Gmail flows miss mail they used to catch

## Upgrade prepared

- ☐ Workflows behave the same on day one
- ☐ Stricter security defaults, no broken calls
- ☐ Agents on the current AI Agent node
- ☐ A clean base for the whole 3.x line

The upgrade takes minutes. The audit takes an afternoon. Do the audit first.

## Notes

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Want to go through your Migration Report together? Bring it to the next n8n Amsterdam meetup, or book a strategic call with Marrallisa Kreijkes, n8n Ambassador.

[Book a strategic call](#)

[viralistic.nl/automation/n8n](https://viralistic.nl/automation/n8n)