

RELEASE DOCUMENTATION

Phoenix Visual Designer

Installation and Beta Update Guide

V1.0 RELEASE

For CE Phoenix Cart 1.1.0.6 and PHP 8.2
Admin-side visual layout and appearance editing with no Phoenix
core-file changes.

Released under the GNU General Public License

Copyright (c) 2026 Mort-Lemur

Before you begin

Phoenix Visual Designer works from the Phoenix admin area. It uses normal Phoenix modules, configuration records and a lightweight storefront hook. It does not replace Phoenix core files.

Back up the live store first

Before uploading any files, make a complete copy of the store files and export the complete Phoenix database. Keep both backups safely outside the hosting account and do not continue without them.

Requirements

- CE Phoenix Cart 1.1.0.6.
- PHP 8.2.
- A Phoenix database account that can create tables on first use.
- Admin and catalog URLs using the same protocol and hostname for live draft preview.
- A modern desktop browser for drag-and-drop editing.
- Write access to catalog/ext/phoenix_visual_designer/wallpapers if wallpaper uploads will be used.

Package contents

Item	Purpose
admin	Designer page, actions, JavaScript, styles, menu entry and English language files.
catalog	Storefront style hook, bundled local fonts, font licences and wallpaper folder.
Installation PDF	New installation, Beta update, checks and removal instructions.
How to Use PDF	Simple day-to-day instructions for designing and publishing.
FILE_LIST.txt	List of the installed add-on files.
uninstall.sql	Permanent removal of Designer tables and generated configuration records.

Optional integrations

Low Stock Contact V1.0, Main and Long Product Descriptions V1.0, Sidebar Flyout Menu V2 and Discount Codes 6.3/6.4 are recognised when installed. They are not bundled with Visual Designer.

New installation

Use the complete V1.0_Release package. There is no separate installer script.

1	Create complete backups first. Copy all store files and export the complete Phoenix database. Keep both backups safely outside the hosting account.
2	Unzip Phoenix_Visual_Designer_V1.0_Release.zip on your computer.
3	Upload the contents of the package admin directory into the store admin directory.
4	Upload the contents of the package catalog directory into the catalog root.
5	Sign in to Phoenix admin and open Visual Designer from the admin navigation.
6	On first use, allow the page to create its three database tables and three configuration records automatically.
7	Open Global Store Overrides, make one small change, choose Save Draft, inspect the preview, then choose Publish.
8	Check the real storefront in Desktop, Tablet and Mobile views before making further changes.

No module installation screen

Visual Designer is ready when its admin page opens successfully. Its own database records are created automatically; there is no module to install under Content or Layout.

First-use database items

Created item	What it stores
pvd_layouts	Saved drafts and published Designer layouts by area.
pvd_revisions	Restore points created during publishing and restoration.
pvd_baselines	Protected pre-Designer settings used by Pre-Uninstall.
PVD_THEME_SETTINGS	Validated Global Store Override values.
PVD_THEME_CSS	Generated global storefront CSS.
PVD_MODULE_CSS	Generated individual module and section CSS.

Updating from a Beta version

These instructions apply to all Phoenix Visual Designer Beta builds supplied before V1.0 Release, including the final V1.8 Beta package.

1	Create fresh complete backups first. Copy all store files and export the complete Phoenix database before overwriting any Beta files.
2	Upload the complete V1.0_Release admin and catalog contents over the installed Beta files.
3	Do not run uninstall.sql. Your existing drafts, published settings, restore points and protected baseline are reused.
4	Open Visual Designer. The final release completes any missing schema or protected-baseline setup automatically.
5	Use a hard refresh, normally Ctrl+F5, so the browser loads the V1.0 Release admin CSS and JavaScript.
6	Open Global Store Overrides and one site-wide area such as Site Header. Confirm the existing values and preview are present.
7	Save a draft and check Desktop, Tablet and Mobile before publishing.
8	After publishing, check the public home, product, cart and checkout pages used by the store.

Very early Beta builds

If updating from a build before the expanded global coverage was added, publish Global Store Overrides and one site-wide section once. Open V1.0 Release before deleting old restore points so the best available protected baseline can be reconstructed.

What is preserved

- Published global and individual appearance settings.
- Module order, visibility, responsive widths and A-I slot choices.
- Drafts and restore points.
- Protected Pre-Uninstall baselines.
- Uploaded wallpaper images and wallpaper settings.
- Supported Sidebar Flyout Menu configuration captured by the Designer.

Post-install checks

Complete these checks immediately after installing or updating, before making extensive design changes.

Check	Expected result
Admin page	The Visual Designer opens without warnings or missing CSS/JavaScript errors.
Area selector	Global Store Overrides, store pages and site-wide sections are available.
Preview	The selected storefront page loads and Draft preview active is shown.
Device buttons	Desktop, Tablet and Mobile switch both the controls and responsive preview.
Draft	Save Draft retains changes without changing the public storefront.
Publish	Publish updates the public storefront and creates a restore point first.
Module inspection	Hovering a card highlights the matching preview element.
Pick from preview	Clicking a supported preview element opens its Designer card.
Global appearance	Colours, typography and container width reach normal store pages.
Checkout	Payment and Confirmation appearance cards load only in a valid active checkout.
Optional add-ons	Only installed supported integrations appear in the area list or checkout cards.

Lighthouse and performance

The public shop receives only the generated CSS and, when selected, local font or wallpaper files. The large admin editor and preview do not load for customers. Use a compressed wallpaper and only the fonts you need.

Common installation problems

Problem	What to check
Designer page is unstyled	Hard refresh with Ctrl+F5 and confirm all admin files were uploaded.
Database table error	Confirm the Phoenix database account may create tables.
Preview loads but drafts do not appear	Admin and catalog must use the same protocol and hostname. Check same-origin framing policy.
Checkout preview redirects	Sign in as a customer, add a product and complete the preceding checkout steps.
A module is not shown	Only installed Phoenix modules are listed. Conditional markup may need the matching store state.
Wallpaper upload fails	Use JPG, PNG or WebP under 5 MB and confirm the wallpaper directory is writable.

Removal and recovery

Do not start with uninstall.sql

Running the SQL file alone removes Designer records but cannot safely restore every native module setting changed during publishing.

Permanent removal

1	Create a fresh copy of all store files and export the complete Phoenix database before changing or removing anything.
2	Open Visual Designer and scroll to the separate Pre-Uninstall card.
3	Choose Revert All Designer Changes and accept the confirmation only when you are ready to remove the add-on.
4	Check the real storefront. Native module settings and supported optional configuration should be restored; Designer CSS, drafts, restore points and uploaded wallpapers should be cleared.
5	Remove the files listed in FILE_LIST.txt.
6	Run uninstall.sql once to remove the three Designer tables and generated configuration records.
7	Check the storefront again and clear any server or browser cache used by the shop.

Pre-Uninstall is destructive

Revert All Designer Changes affects every Designer area and cannot be undone from Restore Points afterwards. It is not an everyday reset button.

Normal recovery without uninstalling

- Use Reset Draft to discard unsaved changes for the current area.
- Use a Restore Point to return one area to an earlier published design.
- Restoring first saves the current live design as another safety snapshot.
- The newest restore point for an area is protected; older ones can be deleted manually.

Release support boundary

V1.0 Release targets CE Phoenix Cart 1.1.0.6 and PHP 8.2. Back up first, then check all installed third-party content, layout, customer-data and payment modules after publishing.