Access Log

What Is an Access Log?

An access log is a list of all requests for individual files that people or bots have requested from a Web site. These files will include the HTML files and their embedded graphic images, and any other associated files that are transmitted.

Combined Log Format

The only appropriate format of the **access.log** file is **“Combined Log Format"** and it uses the following structure:

%**h** %**l** %**u** %**t** \"%**r**\" %>**s** %**b** \"%{**Referer**}i\" \"%{**User-agent**}i\"

Where:

- **h** — the host / IP address from which the request was made to the server
- **l** — client id, usually stays blank (represented by a hyphen (-) in the file)
- **u** — username, usually stays blank (represented by a hyphen (-) in the file)
- **t** — the time and time zone of the request to server
- **r** — the type of the request, its content and version
- **s** — the HTTP status code
- **b** — the size of the object requested (in bytes)
- **Referer** — the URL source of the request (previous page), often stays blank (represented by a hyphen (-) in the file)
- **User-Agent** — the HTTP header containing information about the request (client application, language, etc.)

Sample string:
66.249.64.222 - - [29/Jun/2018:13:43:07 +0100] "GET /samplepage.html HTTP/1.1" 200 2887 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (compatible; Googlebot/2.1; +http://www.google.com/bot.html)"

Where Can You Find the Access Log?

As log files are stored on a web server, you need to first access your server. You can do that as follows:

- **Using the control panel of your hosting provider**
  Some hosting platforms have a built in file manager. Look for something with a name like: “file management,” “files,” “file manager,” etc.

- **Using an FTP**
  You will need:
  1. Any FTP client on your computer;
  2. An FTP address, login and password to access the server via FTP. You can find these in the administrative panel of your hosting provider.

  Open an FTP client, set a new connection to your server, and then authorize with your login and password.

After you have entered a server file directory, you can get your access logs.
Here are the three most popular types of HTTP servers and locations where access logs can be found:

- **Apache**
  /var/log/access_log
- **Nginx**
  logs/access.log
- **Windows***
  C:\Windows\System32\LogFiles

***Right now, we do not process logs from Windows servers. If you’ve encountered that limitation, please let us know.**

Unarchive and Upload Your Logs

Next you need to unarchive (if they are archived) and upload your logs (.log) to the Log File Analyzer via upload form.

If you have any questions, you can ask them at log-analysis@semrush.com