



Remove unused images from WordPress without breaking pages

Hey! A quick word about Mediapapa first: we built it because we kept losing afternoons to media cleanups that broke pages. Mediapapa indexes every file usage across your site, so you stop verifying by hand and start deleting with confidence.

Before you start

Five non-negotiables. Skip any of them and something will eventually break.

- Full backup taken** and restoration tested.
- Staging environment ready** if the site is in production.
- Batch size decided:** 10 to 50 files per pass, never more.
- Trash, not permanent delete:** every batch goes through the WordPress trash first.
- 60-second proof rule:** when in doubt, do not delete.

Pick your method

Match the method to your site size.

- Method 1 (manual):** small site, under a few hundred files, no page builder.
- Method 2 (plugin):** most sites, a few hundred to several thousand files.
- Method 3 (WP-CLI):** very large sites, WooCommerce catalogues, news archives.
- Exclusions configured: featured images, page builder assets, WooCommerce variations.

Run the loop (one batch at a time)

Find · Verify · Trash · Test · Purge · Repeat.

- Candidate list built using your chosen method.
- Each candidate URL searched in post content, post meta, customiser, widgets.
- Page builder pages opened and checked if relevant (Elementor, Divi, others).
- Batch moved to WordPress trash (do not empty yet).
- Front-end tested: homepage, top pages, header, footer, mobile.
- Browser console checked for 404 errors on image URLs.
- Trash emptied for this batch only after verification.
- Page cache cleared. CDN purged.

Post-cleanup sweep

Run this once at the end of the session.

- Homepage, desktop and mobile.
- Top five most-visited pages from analytics.
- Category and tag archives.
- Most recent ten blog posts.
- Product pages and checkout (if WooCommerce).
- Internal search results page with a common query.
- Logged-out view in a private browsing window.
- Any 404 found → restore from backup and fix the reference in the page.

Stop verifying every file by hand.

Mediapapa Pro builds a complete usage index across your posts, page builders, ACF, customiser and WooCommerce, then blocks any deletion that would break a page. The afternoon-long cleanup becomes a one-hour pass.

[See Mediapapa Pro plans →](#)

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