Understanding the Order Data Archiving

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Understanding the order data archiving

Overview

The plugin automatically archives all essential WooCommerce order information required to fully reconstruct an order later.

This includes:

- Billing details
- Shipping details
- Order totals and taxes
- Payment information
- Order status and lifecycle timestamps

All information is stored as **metadata**.

When an order is archived:

- The data is copied exactly as it exists in WooCommerce
- The original meta_key and meta_value are preserved
- No information is modified

This ensures the archived order remains accurate and complete.

Where Order Metadata Is Stored

WooCommerce stores order metadata differently depending on whether **High-Performance Order Storage (HPOS)** is enabled.

When HPOS Is Enabled

Order metadata is stored in:

wc_orders_meta

This table contains:

- All default WooCommerce order metadata
- All custom metadata added by plugins or custom development

When HPOS Is Disabled (Legacy Storage)

Order metadata is stored in:

wp_postmeta

This table contains:

- All WooCommerce order metadata (default and custom)

Automatic Table Detection

You do not need to configure anything manually.

For each order, the plugin automatically:

1. Detects whether HPOS is enabled
2. Reads metadata from the correct table:
    - wc_orders_meta (HPOS enabled), or
    - wp_postmeta (HPOS disabled)
3. Archives the data correctly

Default Metadata That Is Archived

Below are the core WooCommerce metadata fields archived automatically.

Billing Address Fields

These fields store the customer’s billing information:

- _billing_first_name → First name
- _billing_last_name → Last name
- _billing_company → Company name
- _billing_address_1 → Address line 1
- _billing_address_2 → Address line 2
- _billing_city → City
- _billing_state → State/Region
- _billing_postcode → Postal code
- _billing_country → Country
- _billing_email → Email address
- _billing_phone → Phone number

Shipping Address Fields

These fields store the delivery details:

- _shipping_first_name → First name
- _shipping_last_name → Last name
- _shipping_company → Company name
- _shipping_address_1 → Address line 1
- _shipping_address_2 → Address line 2
- _shipping_city → City
- _shipping_state → State/Region
- _shipping_postcode → Postal code
- _shipping_country → Country
- _shipping_phone → Phone number

Core Financial & Order Status Fields

These fields contain financial, transaction, and lifecycle information:

- _order_key → Unique identifier used for payment and order links
- _order_currency → Currency used
- _prices_include_tax → Whether product prices include tax
- _customer_user → Registered customer ID (0 for guest orders)
- _customer_ip_address → Customer IP address at checkout
- _customer_user_agent → Browser and device information
- _created_via → How the order was created (checkout, admin, API, etc.)
- _cart_discount → Cart discount amount
- _cart_discount_tax → Tax on cart discount
- _order_shipping → Shipping cost
- _order_shipping_tax → Shipping tax
- _order_tax → Total tax
- _order_total → Final order amount
- _payment_method → Payment gateway ID
- _payment_method_title → Display name of payment method
- _transaction_id → Payment gateway transaction reference
- _date_paid (or _paid_date) → Payment completion date
- _date_completed (or _completed_date) → Order completion date

Default Metadata Archiving Process

For each order being archived:

1. The plugin detects whether HPOS is enabled.
2. It retrieves metadata from:
    - wc_orders_meta (HPOS enabled), or
    - wp_postmeta (HPOS disabled)

3. All default metadata rows are copied to the archive database.
4. The original meta_key and meta_value are preserved exactly.

This guarantees that archived orders remain structurally identical to the original data.

Custom Metadata Archiving

What Is Custom Metadata?

Custom metadata refers to any additional order data added by:

- Third-party plugins
- Custom development
- Extended checkout fields
- Payment gateway extensions

These fields are not part of WooCommerce’s predefined core metadata.

Examples of Custom Metadata

- Subscription plugin data
- Custom checkout fields
- Additional payment gateway data
- Business-specific internal order fields

Where Custom Metadata Is Stored

Custom metadata is stored in the same table as default metadata:

- HPOS Enabled → wc_orders_meta
- HPOS Disabled → wp_postmeta

WooCommerce does not use a separate table for custom order metadata.

What Qualifies as Custom Metadata?

Any metadata entry that is not part of WooCommerce’s built-in core fields is treated as custom metadata.

These fields are typically created dynamically by:

- Third-party plugins
- Custom code
- Extended integrations

Custom Metadata Archiving Behavior

When custom metadata archiving is enabled:

1. The plugin retrieves all metadata rows for the order from:
    - wc_orders_meta (HPOS enabled), or
    - wp_postmeta (HPOS disabled)
2. Archiving is not limited to predefined keys.
3. Every additional meta_key → meta_value pair is included.
4. Custom metadata is stored alongside default metadata in the archive table.

No additional configuration or separate storage logic is required.

Summary

- The plugin archives all core WooCommerce order metadata by default.
- It automatically detects whether HPOS is enabled.
- All original meta_key and meta_value pairs are preserved exactly.
- When custom metadata archiving is enabled, all additional metadata is included.
- Default and custom data are archived using the same storage logic.

This ensures complete, accurate, and reliable order reconstruction when needed.