

Server Rules Not Working

What This Means

This issue occurs when server-level protections applied by Steel Security do not take effect.

You may enable a hardening control, but the expected behavior does not occur.

Common Symptoms

- restricted files or endpoints remain accessible
 - directory listing is still enabled
 - PHP execution is not blocked
 - changes appear to have no effect
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Why This Happens

Server-level rules depend on your hosting environment and configuration.

This issue may occur if:

- your server does not support the required rule type
 - configuration overrides are disabled
 - rules are not being read or applied
 - another configuration is overriding the rules
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How to Fix It

Try the following steps:

1. Confirm Your Server Type

- identify whether you are using Apache, Nginx, or IIS
 - ensure the control you applied is supported in your environment
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2. Check Apache Configuration (.htaccess)

If using Apache:

- ensure `.htaccess` overrides are enabled (`AllowOverride`)
 - confirm the file exists and is readable
 - verify no conflicting rules are present
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3. Check Nginx Configuration

If using Nginx:

- note that `.htaccess` is not supported
 - apply rules manually in your Nginx configuration
 - reload or restart the server after changes
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4. Check IIS Configuration (web.config)

If using IIS:

- confirm the `web.config` file is present
 - ensure rules are applied correctly
 - check for higher-level overrides
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5. Review Hosting Restrictions

- some hosting providers restrict server-level configuration
 - verify whether your hosting plan allows these changes
 - consult your hosting provider if needed
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What to Expect After Fixing

After resolving the issue:

- server rules should take effect immediately
 - restricted behavior should function as expected
 - hardening controls will apply correctly
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How to Verify

- test access to restricted files or endpoints
 - confirm expected responses (e.g., 403 Forbidden)
 - re-check behavior after applying fixes
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When to Seek Help

If the issue persists:

- note your server type and hosting environment
 - document the specific control applied
 - include any relevant error messages
 - contact support with details
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Key Principle

Server-level protections depend on your environment.

Understanding your server configuration is essential for effective hardening.

Related

- [Apache \(.htaccess\) Hardening](#)
 - [Nginx Hardening](#)
 - [IIS \(web.config\) Hardening](#)
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