Publish your help center

Getting started

New help centers start unpublished, so you can set yours up before anyone sees it. When you're ready for customers, publish it: anyone can then find and read your published articles.

Who can do this: Owners and Admins · **Plans:** All plans

Before you start

Two things come first, both on the account owner's side:

- **A verified email address.** Until it's verified, the **Publishing** card shows a **Confirm your email address** notice and the **Publish help center** button is locked. Open the verification email we sent when you signed up and click its link, or get a new one from **Account Settings** with **Resend**.

- **An activated plan.** Publishing is available once the owner activates a subscription. Until then, the card shows **Publish when you activate your plan**, with an **Activate your plan** button. You can activate during the free trial without losing the days you have left, so nothing is charged before the trial ends. See Choose a plan and start your subscription.

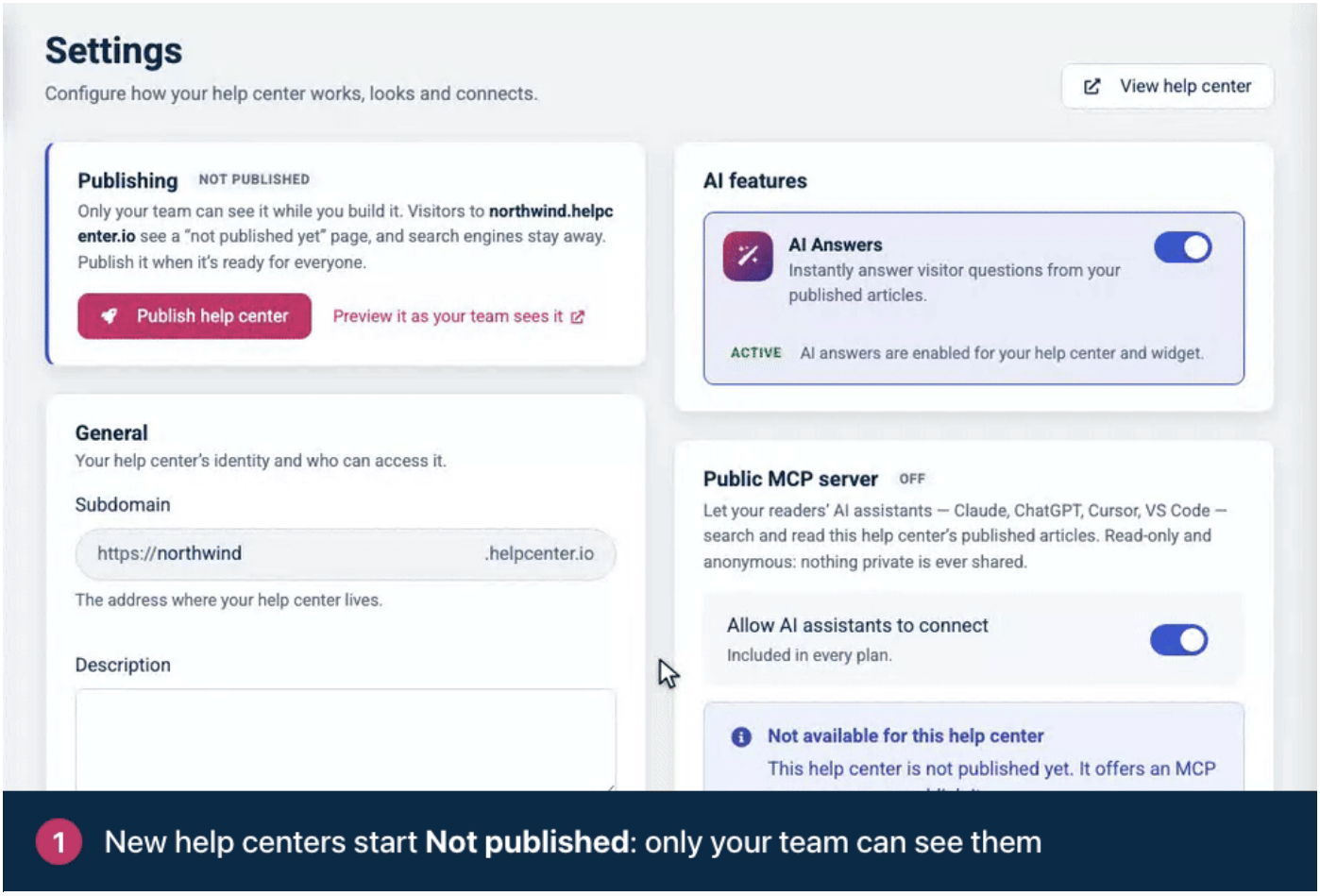
Until then, you can keep building and preview every page while signed in with **Preview it as your team sees it**. If you're an Admin, the card reads **Publishing unlocks when the account owner activates a plan**: ask the owner to activate it.

Publish it

1. In the left menu, click the gear icon, then **Settings**.

2. In the **Publishing** card at the top, click **Publish help center**.

3. In **Publish your help center?**, click **Publish**.



Publishing waits for you: until then, only your team can see it.

You see "Your help center is published. Anyone can read it now." The card's badge changes from **Not published** to **Published**, and **View help center** opens it.

The **Publishing** card shows only while **Access & visibility** is set to **Public**, which is how new help centers start. If yours is Private or Password, choose **Public** in the **General** card and click **Save changes** first. Saving doesn't publish it.

What changes when you publish

- Anyone can open your help center and read your published articles without signing in.
- Drafts, private articles and private categories stay hidden from readers.
- Search engines can list your help center, because **Search engine indexing** is on by default. It's in the **General** card. See Hide your help center from search engines.
- Readers can connect your help center to their own AI assistant through its public MCP server, which is on by default. See Let readers use your help center in their AI assistant.

Before you publish, visitors see a "This help center isn't published yet" page and search engines stay away. Your team sees every page while signed in, with a **Not published yet** banner at the top.

Unpublish it

In the **Publishing** card, click **Unpublish**, then **Unpublish** again to confirm. Visitors see the "not published yet" page again, links to it stop working, and only your team can read it until you publish it again.

Other ways to share it

Option	Who can read it	Good for
Public	Anyone on the internet, once you publish it.	Help for your customers.

Private	People you invite to your team, in any role. They sign in with HelpCenter.io.	Internal knowledge bases.
Password	Anyone who has the password you set under **Access password**.	A small group who don't have HelpCenter.io accounts.

Private and Password work on every plan and don't need publishing. See Control who can see your help center for every option, including single sign-on and IP restrictions.

Troubleshooting

The Publish help center button is locked. The owner's email isn't verified, or their plan isn't activated yet. The notice in the card says which one. See **Before you start** above.

You don't see the Publishing card. Your help center is Private or Password. Choose **Public** under **Access & visibility** and save.

Visitors see "This help center isn't published yet". Click **Publish help center** in the **Publishing** card.

Related articles

- Control who can see your help center
- Use your own domain
- Set up your help center: a first-hour checklist