

WORDPRESS SUCCESS



The 10-Step Guide To Creating
Your First Site Using WordPress

Chapter 1: Introduction To Using WordPress

You've read in many places on the Internet that it's important to build your own website. Whether it be for personal or business use, people tell you to get your own website. But you don't know how it's done.

You don't know anything about building websites, and you don't want to invest thousands of dollars on a professional coder to help build your website.

The next best solution?

Use WordPress. I'm sure you've heard it before. And you probably didn't know what it meant. Well, from this day forward, you're going to be learning everything there is to know about WordPress.

The learning curve will be a bit steep, especially if you know absolutely nothing about building websites. Don't worry though, I will do my best to make the technical stuff sound easy.

So, sit back, relax, and try to absorb all the information I will be sharing in this 10-part WordPress course.

By the end of this series of Chapters, you'll be able to build your very own WordPress website. You can even use your newfound skill to help other people build their WordPress sites, for a fee of course!

What Is WordPress?

WordPress is an extremely powerful software for building websites. Unlike free website builders which abound on the Internet, WordPress gives you maximum control over your website.

You get to control how you want your website to look. You can choose from thousands of themes to change your website's appearance. You can install plugins to extend the core functionality of WordPress.

Basically, it means you can choose to do whatever you want to do with your website! That's how powerful this software is. And best of all? It's 100% free!

Gone are the days when you'd have to learn HTML and CSS just to build a simple website. WordPress allows you to save thousands of dollars in professional web developers' fees.

The Two Versions Of WordPress

There are two versions of WordPress: **WordPress.com** and **WordPress.org**.

WordPress.org is the home of the free, open-source software which you must install on your web hosting server (a.k.a. self-hosted WordPress). This is the version of WordPress I will be covering in depth in this course.

WordPress.com works just like a website builder, and the learning curve is practically non-existent. You simply create a WordPress.com account, and voila, you're ready to write and publish your first post.

You can build a free website, yes, but your domain name will be something like '*yourname.wordpress.com*'. If you want to remove *wordpress.com* from your domain, then you'll have to upgrade your membership.

However, even with your upgraded WordPress.com membership, you still won't have the level of control and freedom that a self-hosted WordPress website enjoys.

In summary, WordPress.com works great for beginners who don't want to get involved with buying a custom domain, paying for web hosting, customizing and managing their website.

For those who want maximum control over their web properties, a self-hosted WordPress website is the way to go.

The Self-Hosted WordPress Story

In May 2003, WordPress version 1.0 was released to the world. Its founders, Matt Mullenweg and Mike Little, developed the platform based on another blogging software called "b2/cafelog".

The first release was well received by the blogging community. But it wasn't until a year later in 2004 when the biggest blogging software at the time, Movable Type, announced a radical change in licensing terms that resulted in mass migration of its users.

Most of Movable Type's users ended up using WordPress, a free and open source alternative that offered features found in their mainstream and premium competitors.

With the influx of new users giving favorable feedback to WordPress, more and more developers joined the platform. And the rest, as they say, is history.

WordPress has received numerous awards to date. It has been named the 'Best Open Source CMS,' 'Best Open Source Software,' 'Best CMS for Personal Websites,' and many other similar awards by different organizations.

Matt Mullenweg and Mike Little built this software for free, without expecting anything in return. And the world rewarded them for their generosity.

WordPress has grown from being supported by a few developers to being continuously updated by a global community of developers.

As of this writing, WordPress powers 30% of all websites on the Internet. That translates to millions upon millions of websites running on this very powerful, free software!

Who Uses WordPress?

WordPress may have started as a blogging platform, but it's not just bloggers who are avid fans today. People from many different industries with various website needs use WordPress.

Just because WordPress is free and open source doesn't mean only people who can't afford to spend money on web developers use it. Nothing can be farther from the truth. From personal websites and blogs to Fortune 500 companies to governments all around the world, WordPress can power them all.

To give you an idea of who's using WordPress here's a very short list:

1. Microsoft News Center (<https://news.microsoft.com>)
2. Sweden's Official Website (<https://sweden.se>)
3. The Walt Disney Company (<https://thewaltdisneycompany.com>)
4. Mercedes Benz (<https://www.mercedes-benz.com/en>)
5. The Wall Street Journal Law Blog (<https://blogs.wsj.com/law>)
6. Sony Music (<https://www.sonymusic.com>)
7. MTV News (<https://www.mtv.com/news>)
8. Time.com (<http://time.com>)
9. University of Washington (<http://www.washington.edu>)
10. The US Air Force Blog (<http://airforcelive.dodlive.mil>)

It's obviously just a small sample, but as you can see, if you build your website on WordPress you're in very good company!

How To Determine If A Website Is Using WordPress?

If you like how a WordPress website looks, and you want to know which theme and plugins it uses, then you can use any of these methods below to find out.

Method No. 1: Use Third Party Tools

If you want to know if a website runs on WordPress, you can type this web address on your browser: IsItWP.com.

Enter the domain name or website address and hit the **Look Up** button. You'll get your answer in a few seconds. If the site is indeed using WordPress, you'll also know what theme and plugins are currently in use.

Method No. 2: View The Source Code

On Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox, go to the website you want to check out. Then **right-click** on any blank space.

You should be able to see an option which says '**View Page Source.**' Click that option. It will open a new tab in your browser, and you'll see a long line of code on your screen.

Hit CTRL+F on your keyboard and type in "**wp-**". If the site is running on WordPress, your browser will then highlight "**wp-content**" or "**wp-uploads.**"

If you see an instance of any of these keywords, then the site is using WordPress.

10 Reasons Why You Should Use WordPress To Build Your First Website

There are plenty of advantages and benefits of using WordPress to build your website. Here are ten of the biggest reasons why:

1. WordPress is free and open source

You don't need to spend money to use WordPress. Rather, you just need to shell out a few dollars to buy your custom domain name and a web hosting plan to host your website files on.

That's it! Some web hosting providers even bundle a free domain for new customers, so that means you technically only need to pay for hosting!

2. You don't need to learn how to code

Knowing a bit of HTML and CSS won't hurt, but it's not a requirement for WordPress. The software gets easier to use with every update they roll out, making life easy for website owners and developers alike. There's no harm, however, in knowing how to code – you can transform your website's look to something uniquely your own!

3. It's fairly easy to use

Your WordPress backend is where all the website magic happens. It's where you add new pages, new blog posts, change themes, install plugins, change the appearance of your site, and so much more.

Once you get to know how the admin backend is organized, you'll be able to master it like the back of your hand, allowing you to build beautiful websites in a matter of hours!

4. You can build any kind of website you want

Whether you're building a personal blog, an affiliate website, a news website, a forum, an eCommerce site, or a business website, WordPress can help you out.

Themes and plugins help you change your website's appearance in just a few clicks. Don't be afraid to try out new themes, you can always go back to your old look if you find your new theme doesn't suit your brand!

5. Your website is 100% yours

You can use your WordPress website to build a multi-million dollar business, and the guys at WordPress won't come knocking at your door asking you to pay up for using their awesome software!

As long as you're current on your domain and hosting fees, and you don't violate any of your web host's terms and conditions, your website will be up and running.

6. It doesn't take much to maintain your WordPress site

All you have to do really is log in to your WordPress admin every few weeks or so. With a quick glance at your WordPress dashboard, you can see immediately if your version of WordPress needs to be updated, or any of your plugins and themes. Hit the Update button, and your WordPress site is up to date!

7. It's easy to update your website yourself

With WordPress, you can easily add new blog posts or add new pages to your website. You simply log in to your WordPress admin and create your post. If you know how to write on Microsoft Word, then you'll know how to write on WordPress.

Of course, writing the content is another matter entirely. But that's the beauty of owning your website, you can publish any type of content you want.

8. Say goodbye to comment spam

Allowing people to comment on your website helps you engage with your audience, which in turn helps build your community. But there are quite a few software that spammers use to spam comments on websites. You'll know it's spam because it's not relevant to the topic, and it's got links to dodgy-looking domain names.

With non-WordPress sites, managing spam comments can be quite difficult. But not with WordPress though. You can install an anti-spam plugin like Akismet, and it will take care of most, if not all, of your spam comments.

9. WordPress websites are optimized for SEO

WordPress is SEO-friendly right out of the box. It gives easy access to search engines to crawl your website's pages, posts, and other content. With the addition of third-party SEO plugins like Yoast, you'll be able to craft content that satisfies a search engine's stringent requirements to help rank your website!

10. It's easy to make a WordPress website mobile responsive

Having a mobile responsive website is extremely important nowadays. With the ever-increasing popularity of mobile devices, people are looking at websites from their mobile phones, tablets, and other mobile devices.

People still use desktops and laptops, but for the most part, people use mobile devices to search for information while they're on the go. With WordPress, you can either install a mobile responsive theme or use a plugin to make it responsive!

11. There's a plugin for literally anything you can think of!

Well, not really. But with over 54,000 plugins, you'll be hard-pressed not to find something that fits your needs. And if there's really no suitable plugin for you, you can always hire a developer to create one from scratch!

You can use it for your own website, or if you've got the entrepreneurial spirit, you can sell it to other WordPress users!

12. The global WordPress community is superb

If you need help with your WordPress website, you can ask for help in online forums and groups. Getting answers isn't hard as the community is generally happy to help newbies and beginners out.

In addition, there are thousands of tutorials on YouTube and blogs so you can get your questions answered quickly.

Final Words

WordPress is free, open source and relatively easy to use. With millions of websites running on WordPress, there's really no reason for you not to trust this platform.

In the next Chapter, you'll find out how you can lay the proper groundwork before diving into your WordPress website.

Chapter 2: How To Lay The Proper Groundwork Before Diving In

In the previous Chapter, you learned why WordPress is a very popular platform for website owners. It's free and open source, and you only need to pay for your domain name and your web hosting to get it to work.

Fortunately, a domain name will only set you back maybe \$10 to \$15 per year, while a basic web hosting plan will only cost you a few dollars per month.

In this Chapter, you'll learn how domains and web hosting work, as well as how to set up your custom domain email address in your web host's control panel or cPanel. Let's start with domain names.

What Is A Domain Name?

Your domain name is your website address. It's the address people type into their web browsers. Metaphorically speaking, if your website is your house, then your domain name is your house address.

For example, *Google.com* is a domain name. So are *WordPress.org* and *WordPress.com*.

There are two parts to a domain name. The first part is the name itself (*Google*) and the second part is the domain extension (*.com*).

For the name, it can be a combination of alphanumeric characters. This means that you're not limited to using only letters for your domain name. If

you want, you can use all numbers like *1234.com*, or a combination of numbers and letters like *abcd1234.com*.

For the domain extension, you can choose from 280 extensions. There are generic top-level domain names like *.com*, *.net*, and *.org*. And then there are country code top-level domains like *.us*, *.au*, *.uk*, *.de*.

Top 5 Tips To Choose The Perfect Domain Name For Your Website

There are a few things you need to keep in mind before you go ahead and buy your domain name. Take a look at this checklist to see if the domain name you have in mind fits the bill:

1. Make it short

The shorter your domain name, the better it is for your brand. Of course, all the two-letter and three-letter domain names fall into premium territory and can cost thousands or even millions of dollars!

Don't go for domain names that are 30 or more characters long. That's just really too long. For instance, if you want to look up a website and its domain name is '*thiswebsiteaddressisreallylong.com*' you'd probably stop typing halfway and just abandon the site.

Also, the chances of misspelling or mistyping a long domain name is high, so you definitely want to keep it short.

2. Make it easy to remember

Brandable domain names are more memorable than randomly spelled ones. An example of a brandable domain name would be the '*dollarshaveclub.com*.' It's a popular website with a good-sized following.

I'm sure that the memorable domain name helped with their branding efforts too.

If you're planning to build a personal or portfolio website, you can use your own name as your domain name. If your legal name is long and hard to spell, maybe you can try using your nickname instead.

If you already have an existing business, for example, a restaurant, then you should definitely use your restaurant's name as your domain name. However, if someone's already using your preferred domain, try adding something another word to your domain name.

For instance, instead of *restaurant.com*, you can use something like *bestveganrestaurant.com* or *restaurantincity.com*.

3. Try to avoid hyphens and numbers as much as possible

When you're giving out your website address to people over the telephone, and it's got a hyphen or number on it, it's going to be confusing for the other person on the line.

For example, if your domain name is *best-restaurant-in-90210.com*, people will probably misunderstand you, and you'd have to keep repeating the address.

Your conversation could go something like this:

"Is that the number 9 or the word nine?"

"What do you mean by hyphen? Do you mean dash?"

If you kept your website address simple like *bestrestaurantincity.com*, you'd have to repeat yourself less often.

4. Make sure your domain name isn't trademarked or copyrighted

Getting into legal trouble is a very real possibility if you don't research your domain name before you buy it. If you end up buying a domain name that is trademarked or copyrighted, you could get into a hot mess.

Before you buy your domain, it's a good idea to use an online tool like Trademarkia (<https://www.trademarkia.com>) to search for trademarks.

5. Use the right domain name extension

With hundreds of domain name extensions to choose from, which one is the right one for your business? For starters, *.com* is usually the first thing people search for. When the *.com* is taken up, people usually go for the *.net* and then *.org*, and so on.

But why are *.com*'s so popular? Well, it's been around for many, many years. When people tell you their web address for the first time, you normally expect to type in *.com* on your web browser.

For instance, if people tell you their website is '*myawesomewebsite.net*', you would probably type in '*myawesomewebsite.com*' before you realize it's the wrong website! So you'd have to go back and edit the domain name and type in *.net* instead of *.com*.

What Is Web Hosting?

Web hosting is simply a service you pay for to store your website files in. Think of it this way, if your *website* is your house, and your *domain name* is your house address, then *web hosting* is the land beneath your house.

Your website is made up of many different types of files. To make your website accessible to the Internet, you need to host your website files with a good hosting company. You can't just store your website files on your local computer. It's not powerful enough to handle the traffic.

When you host your website files with a web hosting company, they are able to serve up your files to your visitors 24/7. They have powerful computers or servers to keep your site online.

Web hosting companies offer different hosting plans to their customers. From shared servers to virtual private servers, you have a host of options to choose from.

But for your new website, you don't need to pay for the most expensive plan – a beginner or 'newbie' plan that runs on shared hosting will work just fine.

You can always upgrade to a better plan when you start gaining some traction with your site.

So, what's the best hosting for your WordPress site?

While there are thousands of web hosting companies in the entire world, WordPress.org officially recommends three web hosts. These are Bluehost (<https://www.bluehost.com>), DreamHost (<https://www.dreamhost.com>), and SiteGround (<https://www.siteground.com>).

A Quick Comparison Of Bluehost, DreamHost and SiteGround

While I'm not going to be recommending one host over the other (you have to decide for yourself), here's a quick rundown of the differences and similarities between each web host.

- **Pricing:** For pricing, Bluehost's Basic Plan offers the lowest price at \$2.95/mo if you lock yourself in a 3-year contract. The second cheapest is SiteGround's StartUp Plan at \$3.95/mo for a 12-month contract. The most expensive among the group is DreamHost. Its \$6.95/mo plan gets you locked in a 3-year contract.
- **Free Domain Name:** Both Bluehost and DreamHost offer a free domain name for all new customers. For SiteGround, you'd have to shell out an extra \$15.95/year for your domain name.
- **1-Click WordPress Installs:** All three web hosts make it easy for you to install WordPress with this feature. With just a single click, you'll have WordPress installed on your site in no time at all.
- **Money Back Guarantee:** If you change your mind about your hosting, both Bluehost and SiteGround offer a 30-day money back guarantee. DreamHost, on the other hand, gives you a 97-day money back guarantee.
- **Support:** You can't go wrong with any of these web hosts when it comes to technical and customer support. You can contact them for help 24/7. If you like figuring things out yourself, all three hosts provide a robust knowledgebase full of tutorials and screenshots.

If you don't want to use any of the official WordPress partner web hosts, know that you're free to use any other web host you like.

You just need to make sure they are able to meet the minimum requirements for running WordPress:

- PHP version 7.2 or greater
- MySQL version 5.6 or greater OR MariaDB version 10.0 or greater
- HTTPS support

If you're not sure your web host meets these requirements, WordPress even makes it easy for you to send a quick email to your host by supplying this copy-and-paste letter for you:

*I'm interested in running the open-source WordPress
<<https://wordpress.org/>> web software and I was wondering if my
account supported the following:*

PHP 7.2 or greater

MySQL 5.6 or greater OR MariaDB 10.0 or greater

Nginx or Apache with mod_rewrite module

HTTPS support

Thanks!

For the most part, however, many commercial web hosts do offer WordPress support, so you may not need to use that email at all.

Important Tip About Your Domain Name And Web Hosting

To keep things simple, I would recommend you buy your first domain name from your web hosting company. As I mentioned in the previous section, you can get a free domain name from Bluehost and Dreamhost.

The reason I recommend this is because doing so will help you simplify your website setup process. If you buy your domain name from a different company, you would need to point your domain name to your web host.

For beginners, the ‘linking’ process can be quite overwhelming. Messing around with domain nameservers can make your head spin. However, if you’re willing to learn the technicalities involved, you’ll find it’s really not that complicated to link your domain name to your web host.

Now that you know the important stuff about domain names and web hosting, let’s move on to the next step.

Setting Up Your Domain Email Address

One of the benefits of having your own self-hosted website is you get your own custom domain email address.

For example, if your domain name is ‘*myawesomedomain.com*,’ you can create email addresses like ‘*support@myawesomedomain.com*’ or ‘*sales@myawesomedomain.com*.’ Because it’s your custom domain, you can choose any name you want!

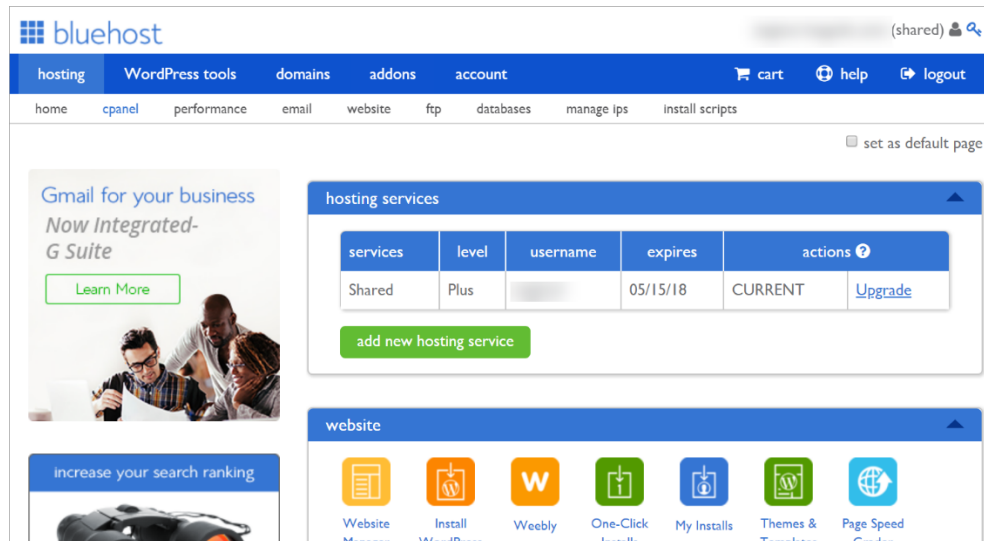
If you’re trying to build a brand for yourself or your business, then having a custom email address is very important. Not only does it help with your branding, but it also makes your brand more credible.

For example, if people email you on your site and you respond to them using a *@yahoo.com* or *@gmail.com*, people may not immediately recognize you. In fact, people may outright ignore your email.

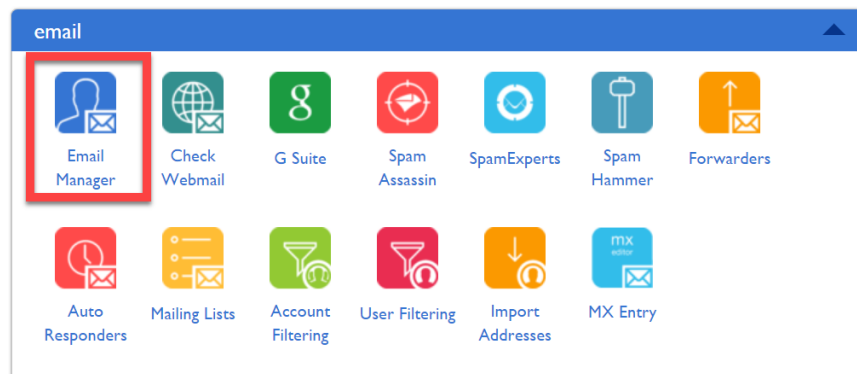
But if you use a custom domain email address, chances are they’d recognize your domain name, and they’d go check out your email.

To set up your custom email address, you’d need to login into your web host’s cPanel.

Each web host's cPanel may look different from each other. If you choose to sign up with Bluehost as your web host, then this is what your cPanel is going to look like:



Scroll down to the **Email** section and click on the first icon **Email Manager** (see red box in the screenshot):



Creating an email account is simple. Click on the button that says '**create an email account.**'

hosting

WordPress tools

domains

addons

account

cart

help

logout

home

cpanel

performance

email

website

ftp

databases

manage ips

install scripts

email accounts

forwarding ?

autoresponders ?

email configuration

anti-spam filtering ?

email filters ?

email trace

Current Email Accounts

Search...

create an email account

email address	webmail client	inbox	spam protection	action
	Roundcube	View Inbox	Add Spam Protection	view details
	Horde	View Inbox	Add Spam Protection	view details
	Roundcube	View Inbox	Add Spam Protection	view details

In the next page, the instructions are quite straightforward as you can see in the screenshot:

email accounts

forwarding ?

autoresponders ?

email configuration

anti-spam filtering ?

email filters ?

email trace

Set Up New Email Account

Enter name

@ your domain name here

Please choose a unique password at least 8 characters long with one of each of the following:

Enter password

Feeling stuck? Have us pick one!

Retype password

generate password

- A lowercase letter (e.g. abcde)
- An uppercase letter (e.g. ABCDE)
- A number (e.g. 123456)
- A symbol or a space (e.g. -!@#\$\$%^)

[View Password Hints & Tips](#)

Default webmail client

I want to choose later

Mailbox Storage

250

MB

Unlimited mailbox size

create

cancel

To properly set up your new custom domain email account, you would need to enter the following details:

1. **Name** – it can be anything you want. For example, it can be *support*, *sales*, *help*, *contact*, or even your first name.
2. **Domain name** – if you have more than one domain in your account, you'd have to select the correct domain from the drop-down. Otherwise, if you just have one domain, then that will be the default option.
3. **Password** – you can choose your own password, or you can have Bluehost generate it for you. Make sure you keep your password in a secure location.
4. **Default webmail client** – Bluehost offers 3 webmail clients: Horde, SquirrelMail, and Roundcube. You're free to use any of them, or you can use another email client like Outlook or Gmail.
5. **Mailbox storage** – you can specify how many MBs or megabytes you want for your mailbox or you can go for 'unlimited' storage.

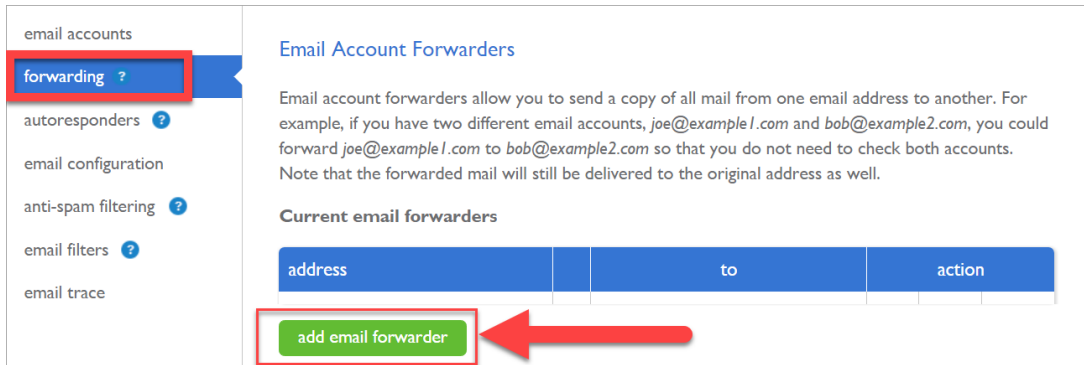
Once you've filled out all fields, hit the **Create** button.

Congratulations! You've just created your first custom domain email account!

Forwarding Your Custom Domain Email Address Emails

If you find it cumbersome checking on your custom email address, and you want to check all your emails in one place, then you need to set up email forwarding.

To do this, look for the **Email Forwarding** option in your cPanel. This is what it looks like on Bluehost:



Clicking on the green **'add email forwarder'** button will lead you to the next step:

In the first field **'address to forward,'** enter the custom domain email address you want to forward. If you want to forward all emails from *'support@yourcustomdomain.com'* then type in this email address.

In **Destination Options**, enter the address you want to forward your custom domain emails to. If you want to forward it to your Gmail account, then type in your Gmail email address on the form.

Hit the green **'submit'** button to finalize your email forwarding settings.

To make sure your email forwarding works, send a test email to your custom domain email address and then check your Gmail account (if you chose to forward it to Gmail).

If you receive your test email in Gmail, then it means you've successfully set up your email forwarding.

Final Words

In this Chapter, you learned how to set up the proper groundwork for your new WordPress website. You learned all about custom domain names and web hosting.

Lastly, you also learned how to setup your custom domain email address and forward all your incoming emails to another email address. Read the next Chapter to find out how you can install WordPress in just a few clicks.

Chapter 3: Simple WordPress Installation In A Few Clicks

In the previous Chapter, you learned which web hosting companies are recommended by WordPress.org. To refresh your memory, these are Bluehost, SiteGround, and Dreamhost.

Each web hosting company has its pros and cons, one may be better than the other in a particular aspect. But the most important thing to note is that you really can't go wrong with any of these three hosts.

If you want to go web host shopping, you can try out each host for a short period of time as all three hosts offer money-back guarantees. Bluehost and Siteground offer 30 days while Dreamhost offers a 97-day money back guarantee.

Now, what's really great about these three hosts is that they make it super easy for new WordPress users to get started on WordPress. A few years ago, you'd have to have some technical knowledge to be able to install WordPress on your website.

You'd have to download WordPress from WordPress.org and then upload it to your web host via FTP or file transfer protocol. But not anymore.

WordPress 1-click install is the easiest way to install the software on your website. As the name suggests, all you have to do is click a single button, wait a few minutes, and you'll have a brand-new WordPress website!

But, is that really all there is to it?

Well, in a sense, yes. But you still have to fill out a few essential fields before you can install WordPress. Don't worry, you don't have to do anything technical, if you're worried about that.

How To Do A 1-Click WordPress Installation:

Depending on your web hosting company, you may have a couple of different ways to do the 1-click install.

For instance, if your web host is Bluehost, you can either use Bluehost's WordPress Tools or you can use their partner, MOJO Marketplace. You can access MOJO from your Bluehost cPanel dashboard.

In this section of the Chapter, I will walk you through the two methods of 1-click WordPress install on Bluehost. If you use another web host that offers this functionality, the user interface may appear different. But for the most part, however, the fields you need to fill out will be similar.

Method 1: Installing via cPanel's WordPress Tools section

Once you've logged in to your web hosting's cPanel, look for the **WordPress Tools** section. On Bluehost, you'll find the link in the menu bar at the top of the page. Click on **WordPress Tools** and then go to the **New Install** tab.

You will see this screen below:

A screenshot of a hosting control panel interface. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with links: 'hosting', 'WordPress tools' (highlighted with a red box), 'domains', 'addons', and 'account'. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with icons and labels: 'New Install' (highlighted with a red box), 'Themes', 'Updates', 'Users', 'Backups', 'Plugins', 'Performance', 'Security', and 'Settings'. The main content area has a light blue background. It features the heading 'New Install' followed by the text 'Install WordPress, quickly and easily, with a single click of your mouse.' Below this, there is a form with several input fields: 'Domain' (a drop-down menu), 'Path' (a text field with the placeholder '/sub-folder (optional)' and a small icon), 'Site Title' (a text field with the placeholder 'My Great Blog'), 'Admin Username' (a text field with the placeholder 'Username'), 'Admin Password' (a text field with the placeholder 'Password'), and 'Admin Email' (a text field with the placeholder 'Email Address'). At the bottom of the form is a green button labeled 'Install WordPress'. The entire form area is enclosed in a red rectangular border.

As you can see, the form is very straightforward. Here's what you need to supply so you can successfully install WordPress:

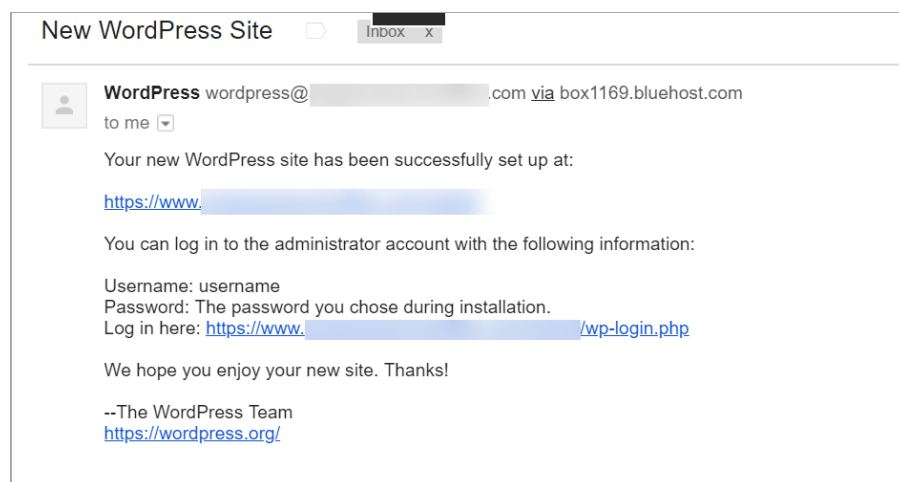
- **Domain** – if you have more than one domain name in your account, you need to select the correct domain from the drop-down list. Otherwise, if you only have one, then it's going to show up by default.
- **Path** – leave blank if you want to install WordPress on your main or root domain. However, if you want to install on a sub-folder such as *yourdomainname.com/blog* or *yourdomainname.com/news*, then use either *blog* or *news* as the install Path.
- **Site Title** – type in the title for your website. You can always edit this later on in your WordPress admin. For now, you can just leave this blank or write something like, 'My New Blog' or 'My New WordPress Website.'
- **Admin Username** – type in the username you want to use when you log in to your WordPress admin.

- **Admin Password** – type in the password you want to use for your WordPress site admin.
- **Admin Email** – type in the admin email you want to use for your WordPress website. It can be your custom domain email address, or your personal email address such as Gmail, Hotmail or Yahoo.

Once you've filled out the required information, hit the green **Install WordPress** button. In a few minutes, you will receive an email from your web host confirming the installation. It will look something like this:



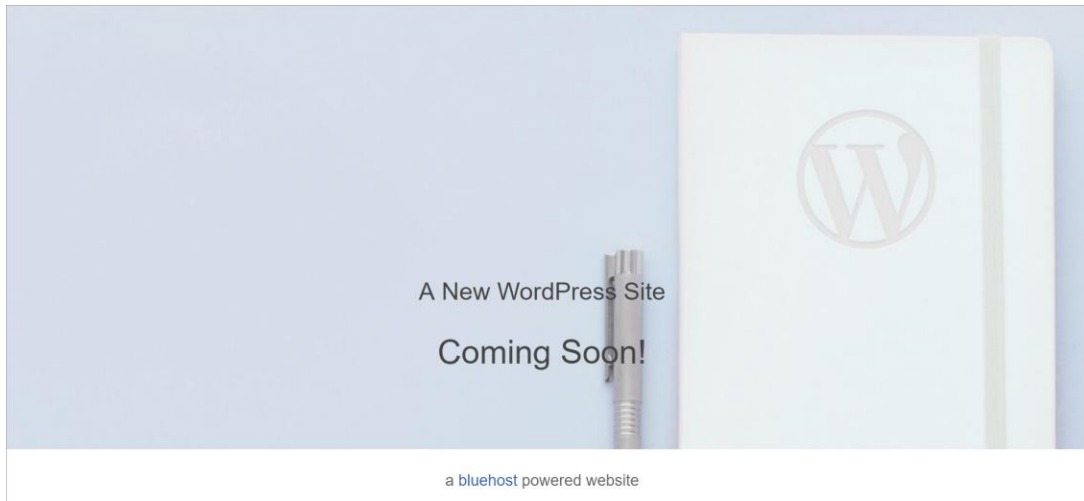
The email content will be something like the screenshot below shows:



The confirmation email contains the link to your new WordPress website, the link to where you can log in to your WordPress admin, and your username. Your password won't be displayed for security reasons, so you need to make sure you remember to keep a copy of your password.

If you want to check how your new website looks like, simply click on the first link in the email, right under ‘*Your new WordPress site has been successfully set up at*’.

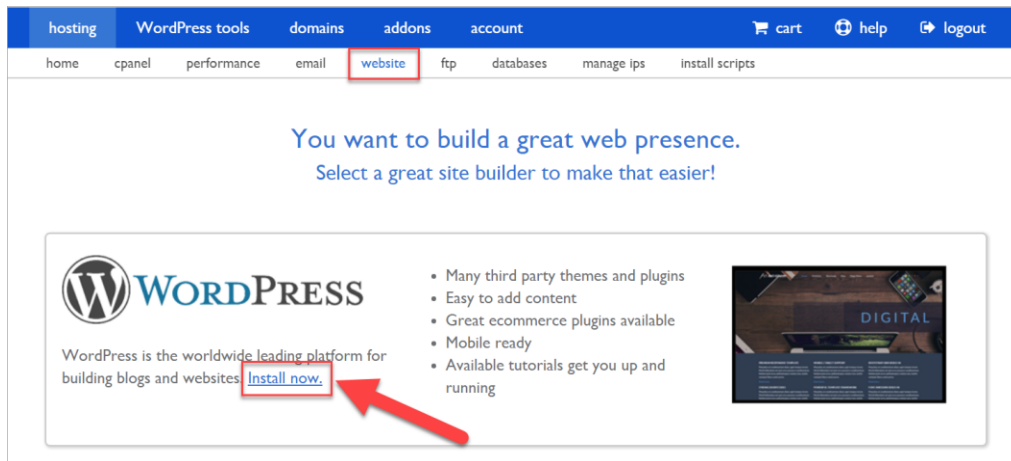
Your freshly installed WordPress website will look something like this:



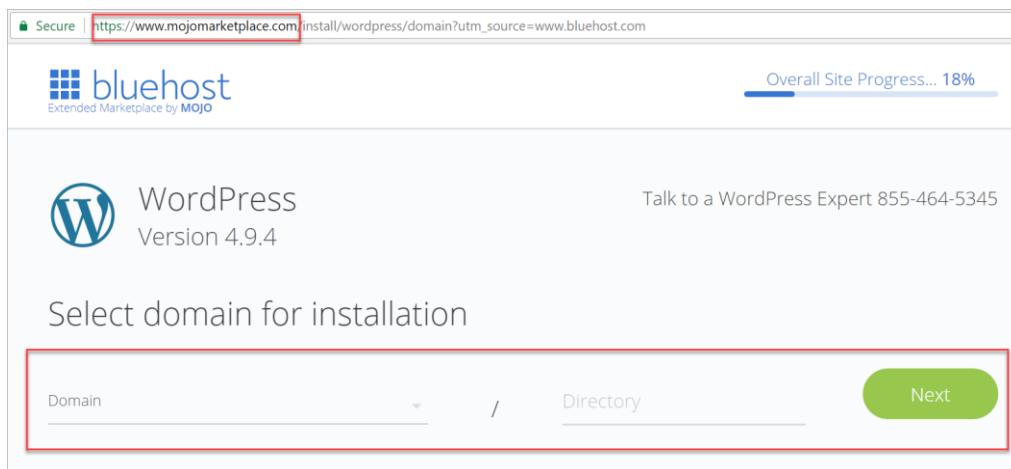
Method 2: Installing via MOJO Marketplace (can be accessed within cPanel)

If you prefer to do your installation via the MOJO Marketplace, you can go to the **Website** section (instead of **WordPress Tools**).

Here's what you'll see on this page:

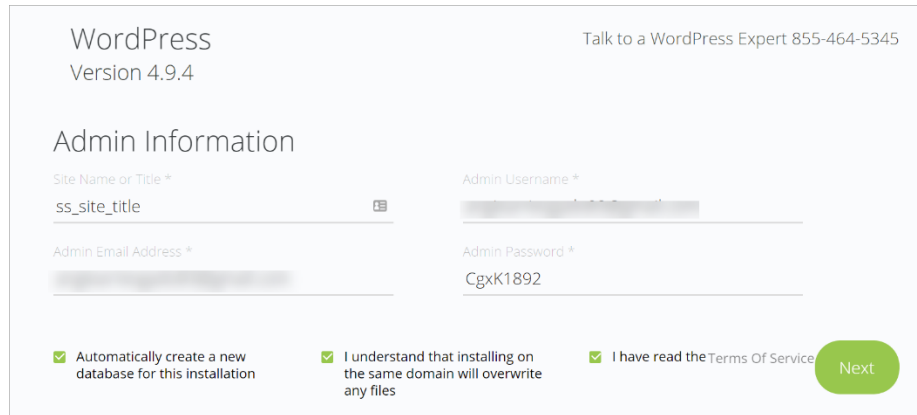


Click the **Install Now** link. You will then be redirected to the MOJO Marketplace:



Once you've chosen the domain and directory, hit **Next**.

You'll then see this screen:



WordPress
Version 4.9.4

Talk to a WordPress Expert 855-464-5345

Admin Information

Site Name or Title *
ss_site_title

Admin Username *
[Redacted]

Admin Email Address *
[Redacted]

Admin Password *
CgxK1892

☒ Automatically create a new database for this installation

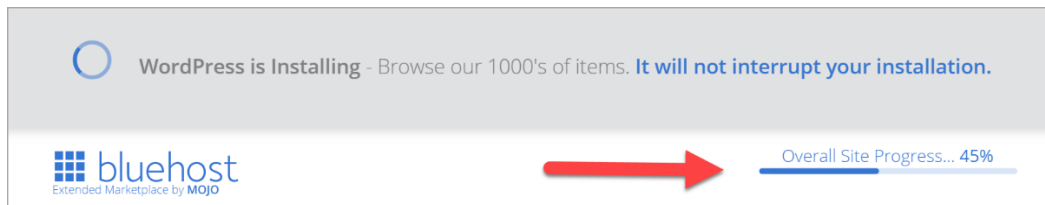
☒ I understand that installing on the same domain will overwrite any files

☒ I have read the Terms Of Service

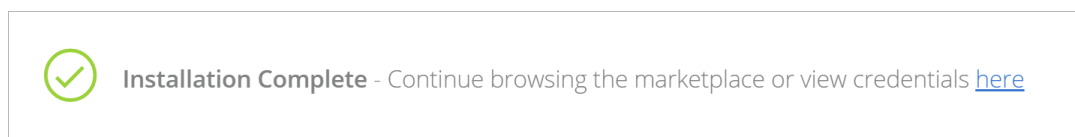
Next

Fill out the required **Admin Information** fields and leave the 3 boxes at the bottom ticked. Click **Next** when you're done.

While WordPress is being installed, MOJO marketplace will give you real-time update on the progress of your installation. As you can see in the screenshot, the overall site progress is at 45%.



In a few minutes, your browser will automatically refresh the page, and you'll see the **Installation Complete** message as you see here:

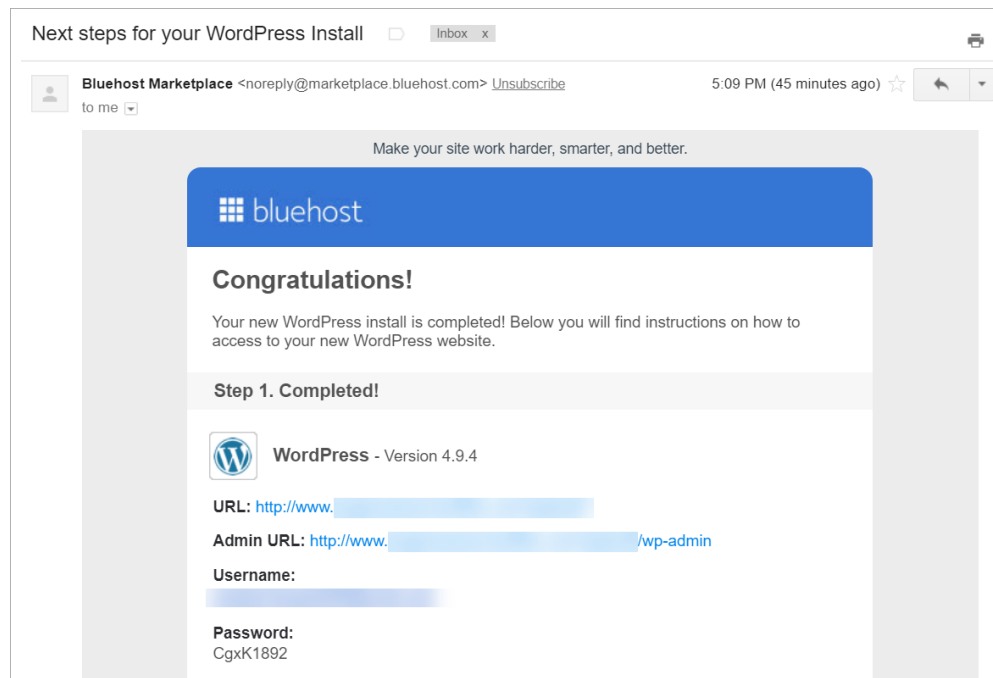


You will also receive an email from Bluehost/MOJO Marketplace.

It will have a different subject line from our Method 1 email:



When you click on the email, the content will be like this:



Unlike the confirmation email you will receive in Method 1, the confirmation email you will receive in Method 2 will **include your password**. This can either be a good or bad thing as email is far from being a secure communication channel.

If you don't want to receive your password via email, use Method 1. If you're not too concerned about it, then Method 2 should work fine for you. Just remember that you can always change your WordPress admin password anytime you like.

And that's basically it! Congratulations on successfully installing WordPress!

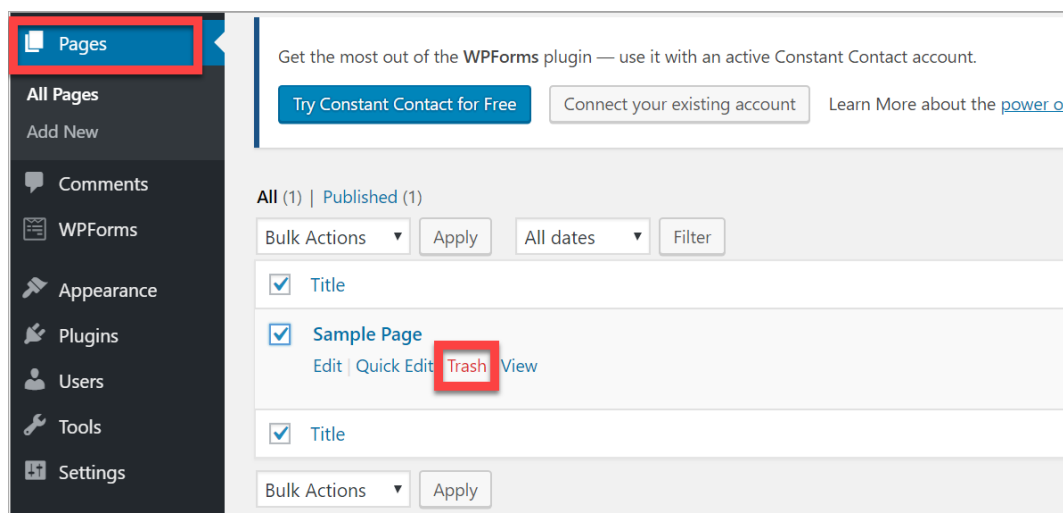
What's Next After Installing WordPress?

Your WordPress installation comes with a few dummy content and some pre-installed plugins. You need to delete most of this stuff. Let's begin with the dummy content.

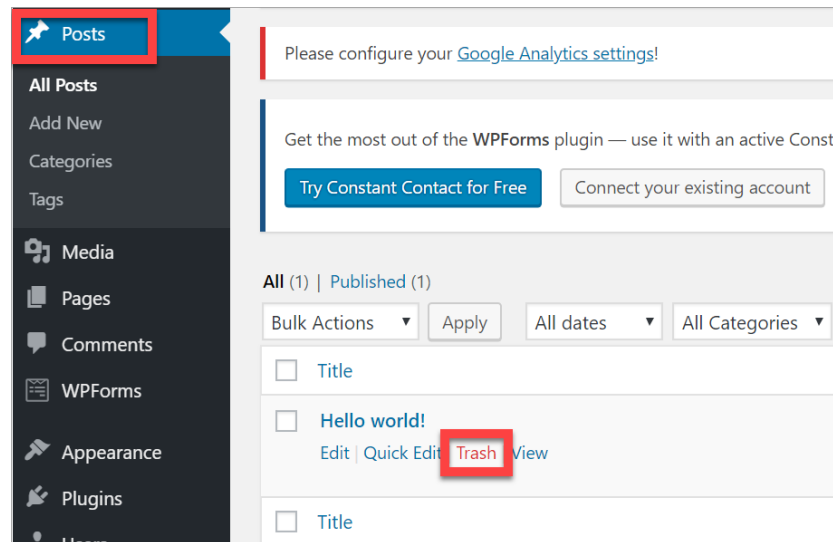
1. Delete the dummy content

There are 3 dummy content that comes pre-published on your WordPress site. There's a dummy page, a dummy post, and a dummy comment.

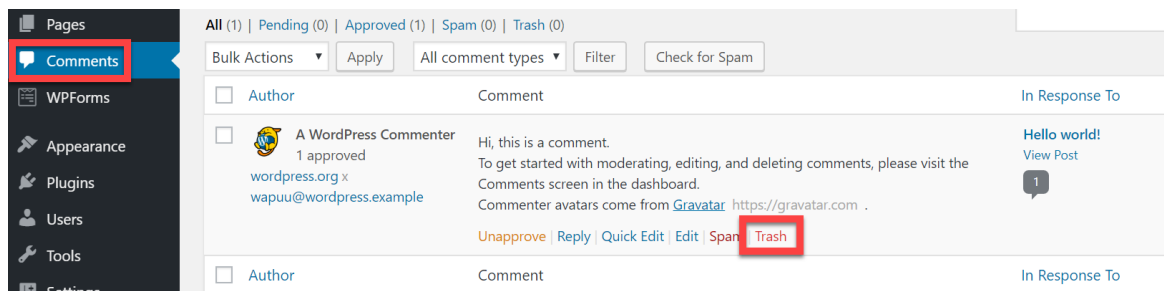
To delete the dummy page, navigate to the **Pages** section. You'll see a single page there with the title 'Sample Page.' Hover your mouse over the title so the editing options will appear. Click on **Trash** to delete the dummy page.



To delete the dummy post, navigate to the **Posts** section. You will see a post with the title ‘*Hello world!*’ Hover your mouse over the title and delete the post.



To delete the dummy comment, go to the **Comments** section. You will see an approved comment from ‘*A WordPress Commenter.*’ Again, hover your mouse over the comment so the **Trash** button will appear. Click on **Trash** to delete the comment.



2. Set up your WordPress site's title and tagline

For branding purposes, it's best to use your brand name as your site title. It will help make your brand more recognizable to your audience.

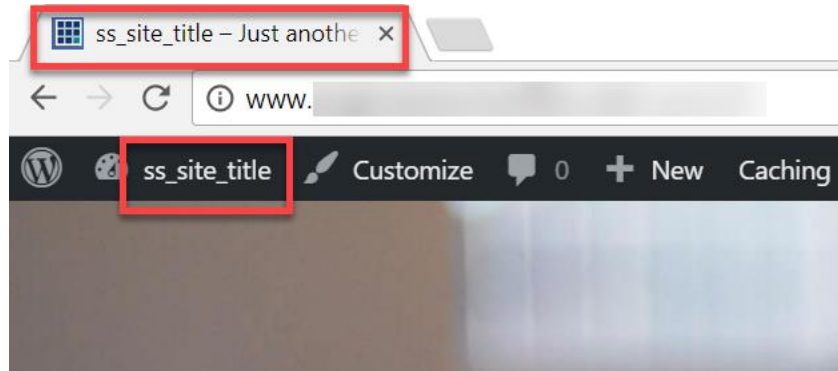
The tagline can be your brand's motto. If you've got a motto already, then use that. If not, then come up with one as soon as possible. Just make sure it describes what your site is about.

For instance, if you're a roofing company, then your site title can be something like 'Johnny's Roofing Services' and your tagline can be 'The best roofing company in South Los Angeles.'

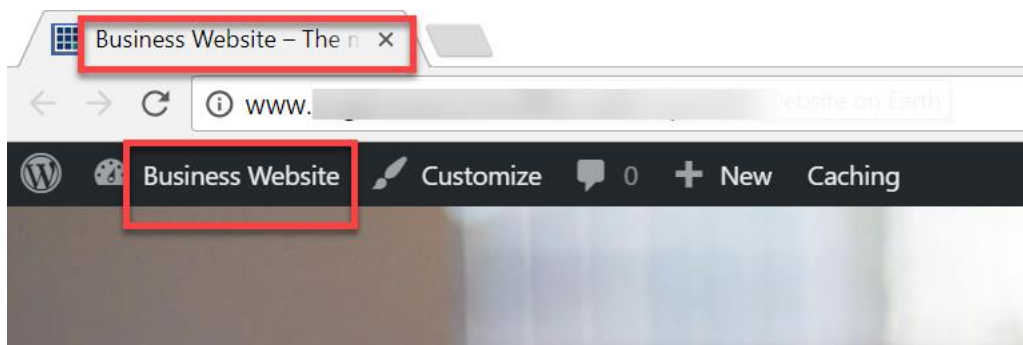
Think about what's relevant to your business and use that to come up with the perfect site title and tagline for your new WordPress website.

The site title and tagline appear on your visitor's web browser when they land on your website. If you forget to change it, people will see the default WordPress site title (***ss_site_title***) and tagline (***Just another WordPress site***) which will make you look unprofessional.

Take a look at this screenshot. You can clearly see the site title and the tagline.



To edit this information, go to **Settings > General** and type in the new details. Now, look what happens when I change the site title and tagline to something else:



3. Change your WordPress Permalinks

Permalinks are the hyperlinks that appear on your web browser. By default, WordPress uses the **Day and Name** permalink option as you can see in the screenshot below. To access this page, simply go to **Settings > Permalinks**.



Many WordPress website owners use the default format. However, if your content is more the evergreen type, people don't necessarily need to know when your content was published, right?

For example, if you've got a website on training dogs, and you know that what you publish today will still be relevant next year or even 10 years later, then people don't need to know the date it was published.

More often than not, people prefer to see fresh content. If they see your post is a few years old, they may not bother reading your content, no matter how awesome and valuable it is.

With that said, for evergreen types of content, there's really no need to include the date in your permalinks. This is why it's highly recommended you update your Permalink settings from '**Day and name**' to '**Post name**.'

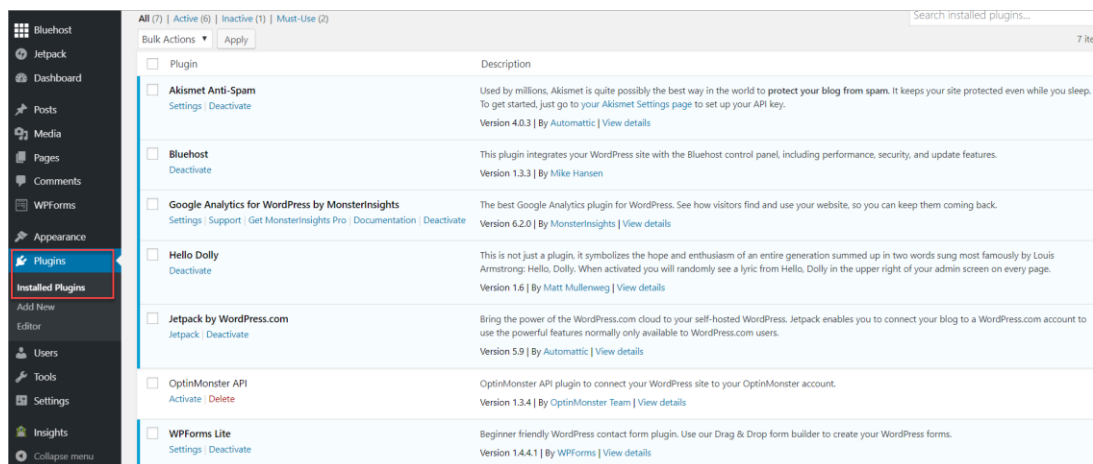
There are a couple of advantages as well when you use **Post name** as permalinks:

1. Your website visitors will know what your page or post is about.
2. It's good for your website's SEO.
3. It's a great way to keep your content organized.

WordPress gives you a number of choices for your permalinks. In the end, you will have to decide what works best for your website and the type of content you publish.

4. *Uninstall unnecessary plugins*

Your WordPress install probably came with a few pre-installed plugins. In our demo WordPress installation using Bluehost's 1-click install option, a number of plugins were already present in the **Plugins** section as you can see below:



As much as possible, you want to use only the most essential plugins on your website. If you've got too many plugins running, you risk slowing down your website.

Some plugins could also conflict with other plugins, and cause problems on your site. Troubleshooting can be a headache especially if you're a novice WordPress user.

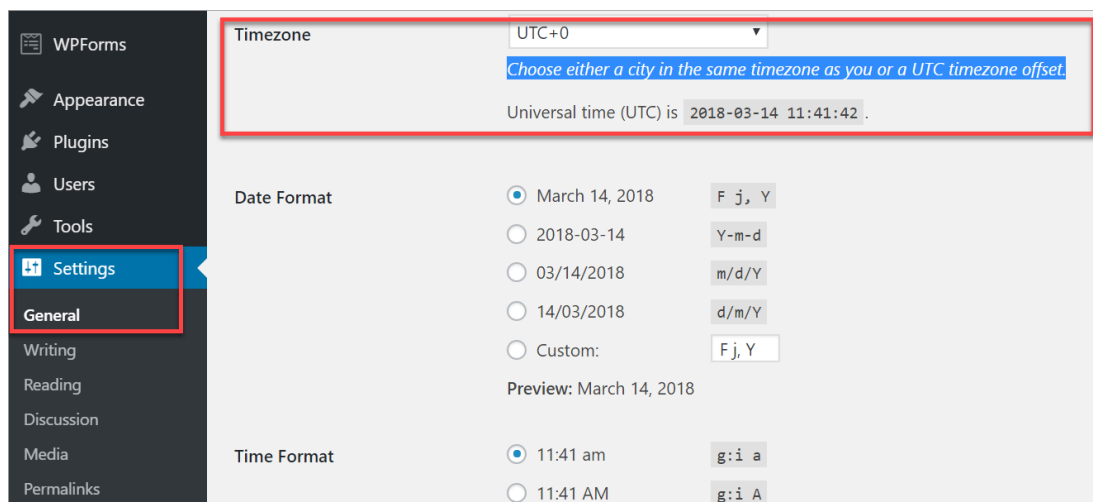
For starters, you may want to delete the **Hello Dolly** plugin. It's unnecessary and doesn't really do anything for your website.

We'll be covering website enhancing plugins in **Chapter No. 5** so we're not going to go into too much detail about plugins here.

5. Set your time zone

Setting your time zone is important because this is what your system will base on when you schedule posts to be published, or schedule a backup.

By default, the WordPress time zone is UTC+0. To change it to your local time zone, go to **Settings > General**. Scroll down a bit and you'll see the **Time zone** settings.



Final Words

As you've learned in this Chapter, installing WordPress isn't hard, but you have to at least know what you're doing. 1-click WordPress installs have encouraged many web owners to try their hand at building their own WordPress website.

In the next Chapter, you'll learn everything there is to know about WordPress themes and how you can go about choosing the perfect theme for your new website.

Chapter 4: How To Match Your WordPress Theme To Your Offer

All WordPress themes look great at first sight – but how do you know which theme will actually work best for your needs?

Looking for the best WordPress theme for your brand-new website can be a daunting task. You may think it's going to be fun because you've literally got thousands of options. And it could be fun, really.

However, when you've tested hundreds of themes and you still haven't found "the" theme, then you need help. In this Chapter, you'll learn how to find the best WordPress theme that matches what your website, and your brand, is all about.

First Of All, What Are WordPress Themes?

WordPress themes define how your website looks. A theme is made up of many files such as customized template files, style sheets, image files, custom pages, and other necessary code files. These files work together to give your website a new look.

In addition to helping you change your website's appearance, themes also help change some features and functionalities on your site. Some themes allow you to add custom CSS, while others don't.

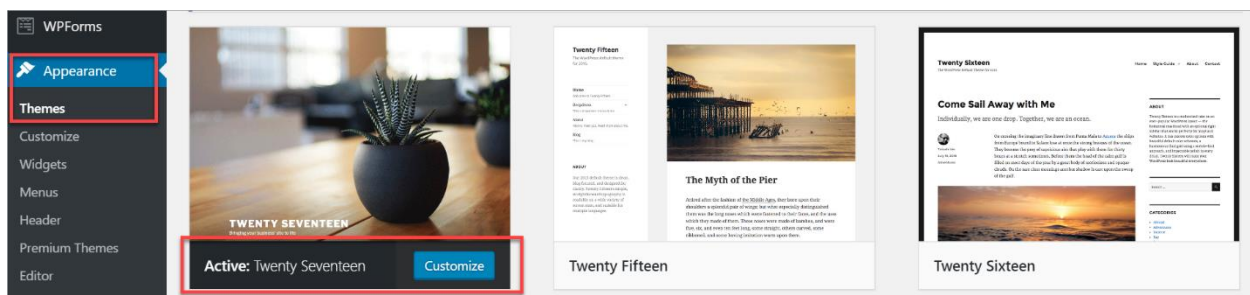
Some themes give you 5 different options to display the images on your site, while others only give you 1 or 2 ways.

WordPress themes aren't created equal. Price-wise, themes can go anywhere from free to a few hundred dollars. Flexibility-wise, some themes allow you to build just about any kind of website, while others will limit you to a few tweaks only.

The Pre-Installed WordPress Themes

In the previous Chapter, I showed you how to install WordPress in just 1-click. If you want to see what kind of themes came pre-installed on your website, you need to log in to your WordPress dashboard.

When you're logged in, go to **Appearance > Themes**. As you can see on the screenshot below, 3 free themes came pre-installed: *Twenty Seventeen*, *Twenty Sixteen*, and *Twenty Fifteen*.



The default active theme is the *Twenty Seventeen* theme. To date, this is the most versatile theme released by WordPress. Just take a look at the preview images on the screenshot.

The *Twenty Fifteen* and *Twenty Sixteen* themes look outdated and plain. But the *Twenty Seventeen* features an attractive header area. It can display a full-sized header image or video that will immediately capture the attention of your website visitors.

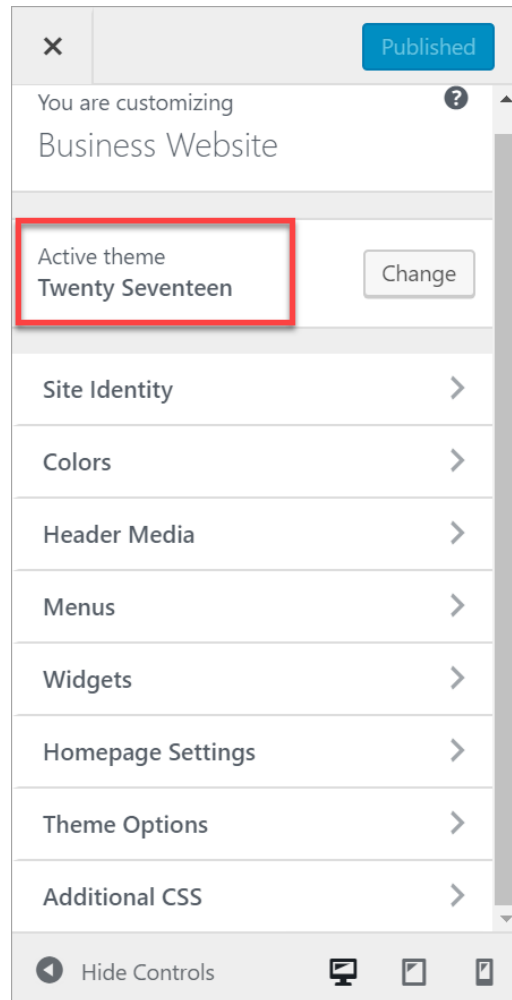
The *Twenty Seventeen* theme looks so good that no one's probably going to think you're using a free theme!

What's even cooler is you can use a YouTube video as your header video. If, for instance, your visitor's Internet connection is a bit slow and

YouTube's taking some time to load, the theme will automatically replace your video with a static header image. So, make sure you upload a couple of attractive images in the **Header Media** section of your WordPress theme customizer.

To access the customizer, you simply need to click on the blue **Customize** button as you can see in the screenshot above. Alternatively, you can also go to **Appearance > Customize**.

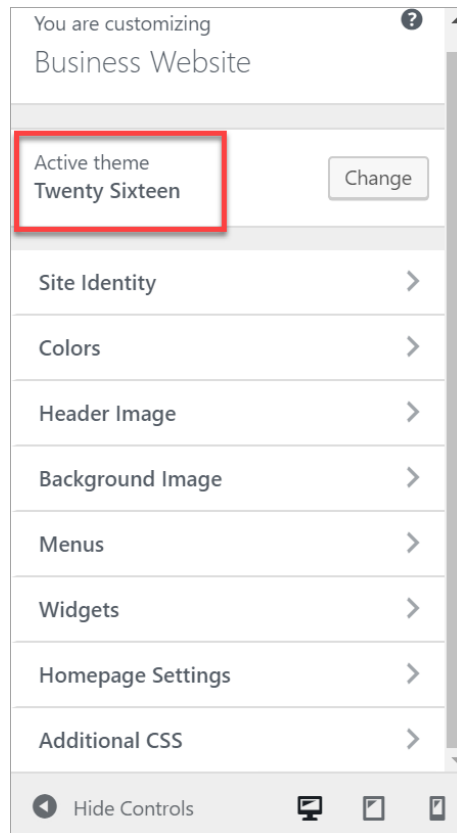
You can customize each theme differently, depending on the theme's features. For the *Twenty Seventeen* theme, these are the available options you can customize:



- In the **Site Identity** section, you can upload your website's logo and favicon, as well as update the Site Title and Tagline here.
- In the **Colors** section, you can set the color scheme you want to use. You can choose from Light, Dark, or Custom. You can also customize the Header Text color here.
- In the **Header Media** section, this is where you upload header images, or your header video. You can either upload a video or link to a YouTube video as I mentioned earlier.

- In the **Menus** section, you can specify where you want your menus to appear. The Twenty Seventeen theme can display menus in 2 different locations.
- In the **Widgets** section, you can choose to add widgets in the Sidebar, or in the Footer section.
- In the **Homepage Settings** section, you can choose what's displayed on the homepage of your website. You can use a static homepage or display your latest blog posts.
- In the **Theme Options** section, you can choose from one or two-layout column. You can also select the content you want to display in the front page.
- In the **Additional CSS** section, you can add your own CSS code to customize the appearance of your WordPress website.

Now, check out what happens to the customizer when I activate the *Twenty Sixteen Theme*.



Instead of **Header Media**, there is now only settings for a **Header Image**. This means you can no longer use video as header in the *Twenty Sixteen* theme. You can, however, use a background image if you want to.

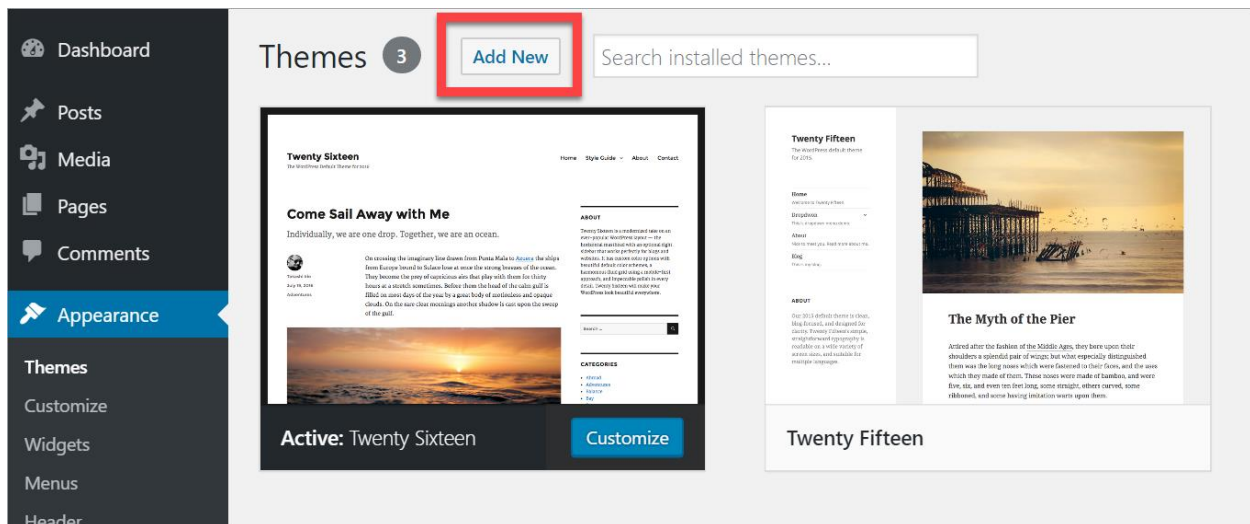
As you can see in this example, WordPress themes allow you to change your website's look in just a few clicks. Settings for each theme will vary greatly, with premium themes offering the most flexibility.

In the next section, we'll take a look at how to add new WordPress themes to your site.

How To Add New WordPress Themes To Your Site

Switching between themes in WordPress is extremely easy. You just need to go to **Appearance > Themes** and click on either **Live Preview** to preview how your site is going to look like, or click on **Activate** to use the theme immediately.

To add a new theme, click on the **Add New** button.

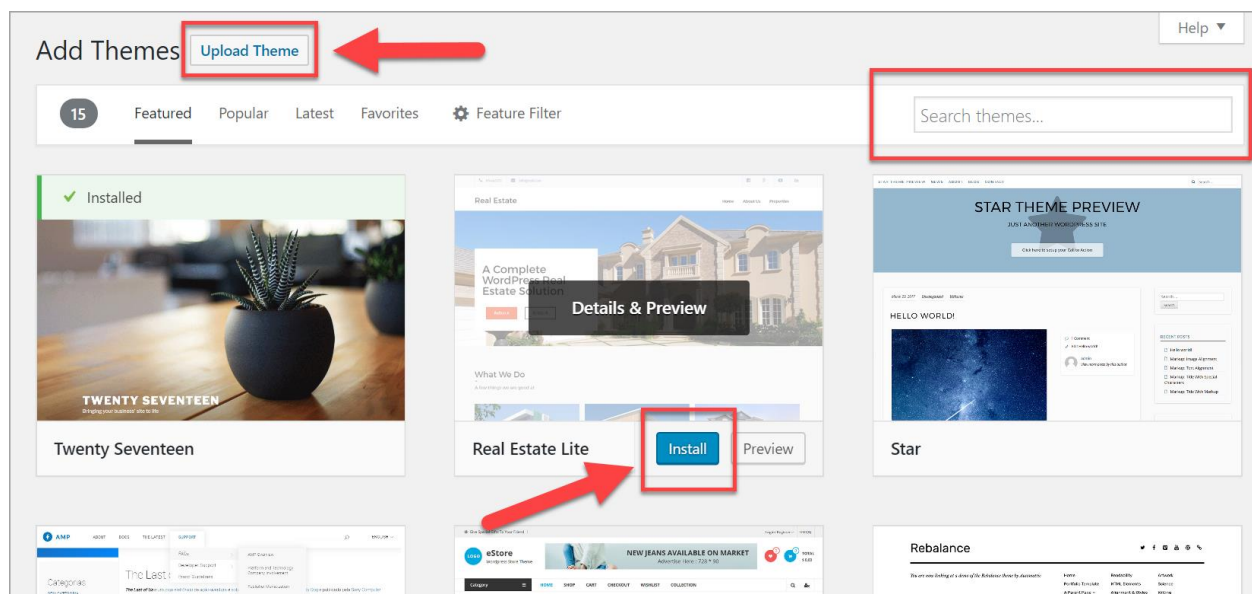


In the next screen, you will then have the option to either **upload a new theme** or **install** one from WordPress.org. Normally, you use the upload button if you buy a premium theme from a third-party website.

If you want to get a feel for how WordPress themes work, then you can simply choose from any of the **Featured**, **Popular**, and **Latest** themes on your Themes dashboard. Note that these themes are from the free WordPress.org Theme Directory (<http://wordpress.org/themes>).

If you don't want to scroll through thousands of free themes, use the **Search Themes** box on the right.

If you want to install or preview a free WordPress.org theme, hover your mouse over the theme so the **Install** and **Preview** buttons will appear, just as you see in the screenshot below.



Free Versus Premium WordPress Themes – Which Should You Go For?

WordPress is an extremely versatile open source platform. You can choose from thousands of both free and premium themes either on the WordPress.org Theme Directory or on many third-party websites. Let's go over some key differences between these two types of themes:

Price

Obviously, free themes come with a zero dollar price tag. Premium themes can go from a few dollars to a few hundred dollars. Some theme shops like Thrive Themes (<https://thrivethemes.com/>) and Elegant Themes (<https://www.elegantthemes.com/>) offer subscription-style membership which gives you access to their full suite of WordPress themes and plugins.

Uniqueness

It makes sense that more people will be using free WordPress themes for their websites, right? After all, they don't pay for using it. The only downside is that thousands of websites will be using the same free theme, so you're not exactly in unique territory.

If you want your website to stand out, consider getting a premium theme. Yes, other people will still be using that theme, but with the host of customization options you get, you can pretty much make your website look as unique as you want.

Support and Updates

For most free themes, developers may provide support in WordPress forums. But for the most part, if something goes wrong, you're on your own. Some developers even abandon old themes after some time, so that's something to consider as well.

Premium themes often come with support and are regularly updated. Support varies. Some offer free support for the first 6 months or so, after

which you have to pay extra if you want extended support. Others offer free support for as long as your theme license or membership is valid.

Features and Functionality

Most free themes have limited features and functionality. Premium themes, on the other hand, offers a variety of customization options. There's plenty of competition in the premium themes industry, so developers and theme shops are always finding new ways to offer more features at a lower cost.

The Theme Selection Process - How To Choose The Best Theme For Your WordPress Website

Choosing the best theme will depend entirely on what you aim to achieve with your website. A blogger will most likely use a different theme from a web designer or a photographer. An eCommerce store will need to showcase its products and will therefore need a theme that will do just that.

When matching your WordPress theme to what you have to offer to the world, you have to consider the following tips:

1. Does it include all the features you want in a theme?

To know the answer to this question, you must already have an idea of which features are important.

To find out what you want, you can research your favorite WordPress websites and write down the features you would like on your own website.

To give you an idea, for example, you may want to have a theme that has the following features:

- Unlimited colors
- Fully mobile responsive
- Number of columns supported
- Number of available layout positions
- Custom or Google fonts option
- Ready-made widgets
- SEO-optimized

The more choices you have, the better. But sometimes, especially if you're a WordPress novice, having too many options available can only lead to confusion, which brings us to the next point.

2. Will your theme help you support your website's goal?

If you're a blogger, you want a theme that will showcase your content and your ideas. You don't want too many animations and advertisements flashing on your content pages as that could be distracting for your website visitors.

If you're building an online store, you'd want a theme that will showcase your main products. You'd want to be able to put up nice images, maybe even image sliders or galleries, and video support so your customers can easily decide for themselves if they want to buy your products or not.

In most theme marketplaces and theme shops, you'll find that most of them have categorized their themes. For example, if you go to **ThemeForest**

(<https://themeforest.net>), you'll see that their WordPress themes are categorized into these categories:

- Blog/Magazine
- BuddyPress
- Corporate
- Creative
- Directory & Listings
- eCommerce
- Education
- Entertainment
- Layers
- Mobile
- Non-profit
- Real Estate
- Retail
- Technology
- Weddings
- Miscellaneous

As you can see, ThemeForest makes it easy for their customers to find the perfect WordPress theme for their needs. Bloggers can simply check out themes in the Blog/Magaziness category, and for those looking to build a membership site they can easily browse through the BuddyPress category, and so on.

3. Does the theme include a drag and drop builder?

Drag and drop builders make it easy for you to customize your website anyway you want. All you basically have to do is just know the elements you want to use on a specific page, drop it, and add the content to the element.

For example, if you want to add a video, you simply drag the video element to the area you like, then upload or add a link to the video.

You don't need to pay a website designer to make your website look nice. You can visit your favorite sites for inspiration, and then use your drag and drop builder to create landing pages, homepages, and any other page on your website exactly as you want.

Some popular drag and drop builders that come bundled with premium WordPress themes are Thrive Theme's Thrive Architect and Elegant Theme's Divi Builder.

Final Words

Your WordPress theme plays a very important role in determining the outcome of your website's overall design and appearance. While a few modern free themes offer some advanced features, premium themes remain ahead of the pack with superior features and customization options.

At the end of the day, however, it's what you want to achieve with your website that should lead you or match you to the perfect WordPress theme for your needs.

Chapter 5: Website Enhancing Plugins

To Install

At its core, a vanilla WordPress installation, or a freshly installed version of WordPress, is already powerful. As soon as you log in to your WordPress dashboard, you can immediately start writing and publishing content. You'll literally have a nice-looking website in less than an hour!

However, the true power of WordPress lies not in the core software, but in its ability to allow website-enhancing plugins. These plugins make it possible for users to quickly extend their website's functionality without touching any line of code.

What Are WordPress Plugins?

Plugins are software that you install on your WordPress website. To put it in another perspective, if your website is your *smartphone*, then plugins are the *apps* that you download from the app store and install on your phone.

Just like your phone's apps, these WordPress plugins can make your website look and act differently.

For example, if you want to turn your WordPress website into an online store, you can install the free and open source WooCommerce plugin. If you want to sell subscription-based digital products, such as a video course or online course, then the MemberPress plugin may be a better option.

Depending on the functionality you want, there's plenty of plugins to choose from, whether it be for an eCommerce website, a blog, a news website, a forum, etc.

Where Can You Find Plugins?

The great thing about WordPress plugins is that there are tens of thousands of **free** plugins you can download on the official WordPress Plugins Directory (<https://wordpress.org/plugins>).

If none of the free plugins suit your needs, then you can buy premium plugins in third-party marketplaces like CodeCanyon (<https://codecanyon.net>) or MOJO Marketplace (<https://www.mojomarketplace.com>).

Additionally, you can buy premium plugins from the plugin developers themselves. For example, if you want to buy a premium plugin from Thrive Themes (<https://thrivethemes.com>) or Elegant Themes (<https://www.elegantthemes.com>), then you'd have to buy from their website.

You can install as many plugins as you want, though of course, it should be within reason. The best practice is to install only what's *absolutely necessary* for your website. If you find a better plugin, then deactivate or uninstall the old one.

Installing too many plugins increases the probability of plugins conflicting with each other which could result to errors or a slow down of your entire website.

Resolving plugin conflicts can be a headache if you've got too many plugins installed. Troubleshooting usually involves deactivating each plugin and checking the front end manually until you find the culprit. Imagine how long this process will take you if you install 30, 50 or 100 plugins!

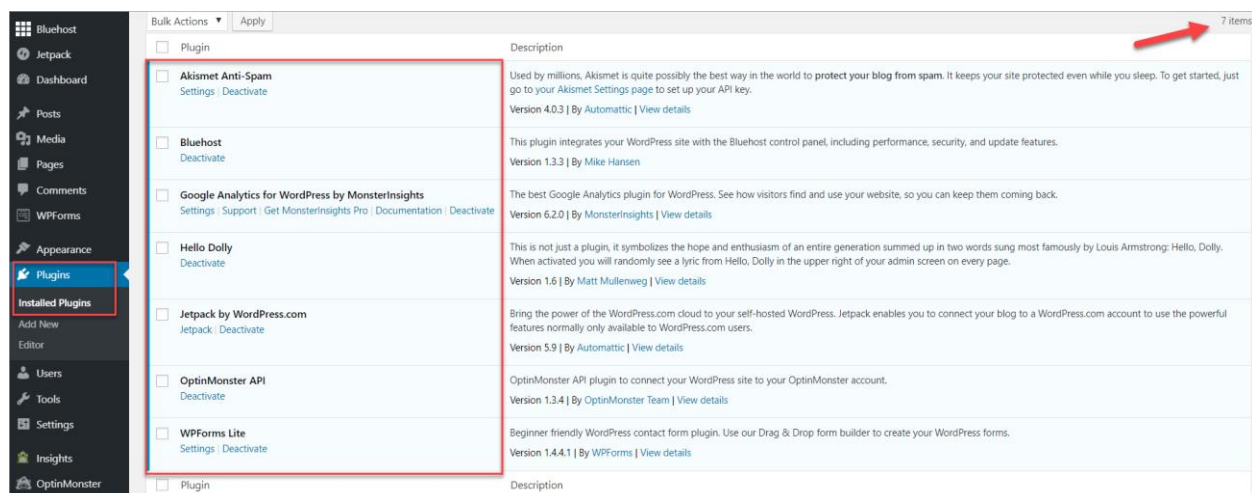
How Do You Install Plugins?

Now that you know what plugins are and where you can find the right plugins for your WordPress website, it's time to show you how to install plugins on your WordPress backend.

In Chapter 3, I showed you how to install WordPress in 1-click. From the screenshots I shared, you know I used Bluehost's 1-click install feature on a test website.

It's important to mention this here because if you follow my steps, then you'll see more than a few pre-installed plugins on your WordPress website.

Here, take a look:



Now, it will be up to you if you want to keep these plugins. But in Chapter 3, I already suggested deleting the **Hello Dolly** plugin since it really doesn't add any value to your website.

So, let's get started with adding plugins. There are basically two ways to add a plugin.

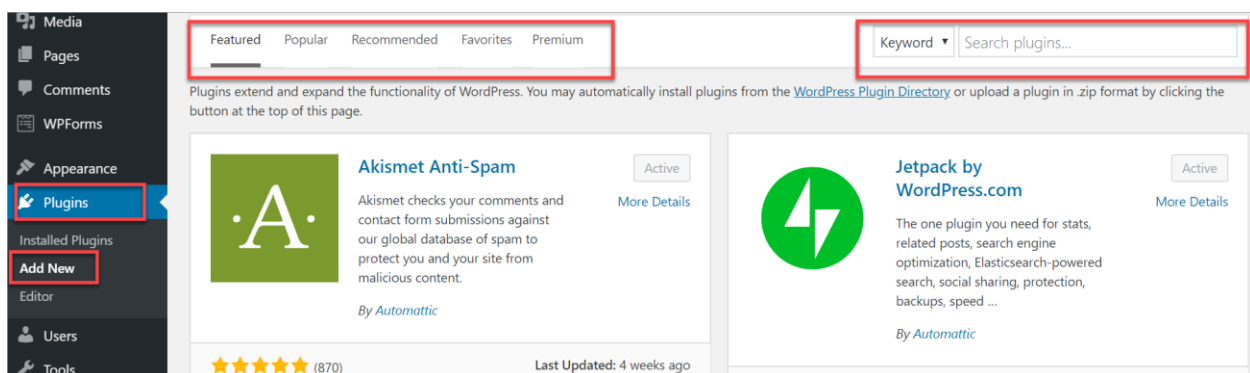
Method 1: Add plugins from the WordPress Plugin Directory

To begin, go to **Plugins > Add New**.

The plugins that appear here are from the WordPress Plugin Directory.

You can view the **Featured**, **Popular**, and **Recommended** Plugins. You can also browse through plugins you've marked as **Favorite** in WordPress.org.

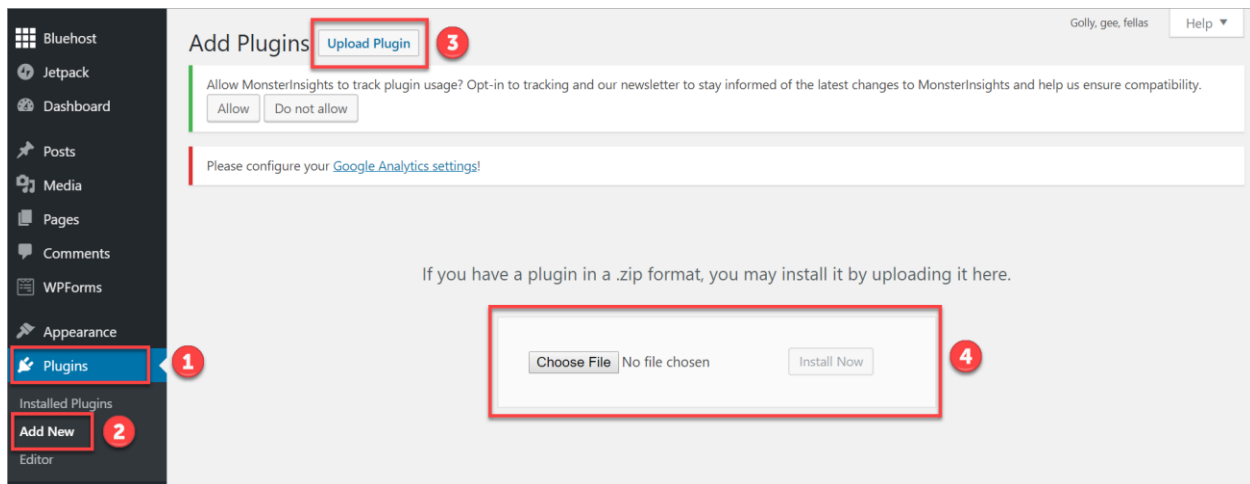
Also, in the screenshot below, you'll see a link to **Premium** plugins which goes to the Bluehost/MOJO Marketplace; this is because the Bluehost plugin came pre-installed on this sample WordPress website.



If you don't want to scroll through thousands of plugins, you can search for plugins using keywords, the name of the author, or tags. Simply type in the search box on the right side of your screen.

Method 2: Upload plugins manually

You can upload either free or premium plugins to your WordPress website manually. All you have to do is go to **Plugins > Add New > Upload Plugin**. Then click on **Choose File** to upload your *plugin zip file* and hit **Install Now**.



The Most Essential Plugins For Your New WordPress Website

Knowing the most essential plugins is important if you want to make the most of your self-hosted WordPress website. Since you have full control over your website, it is, therefore, your responsibility to make sure your site runs perfectly, and offers the best possible experience for your visitors.

But, which plugins do you need to install first?

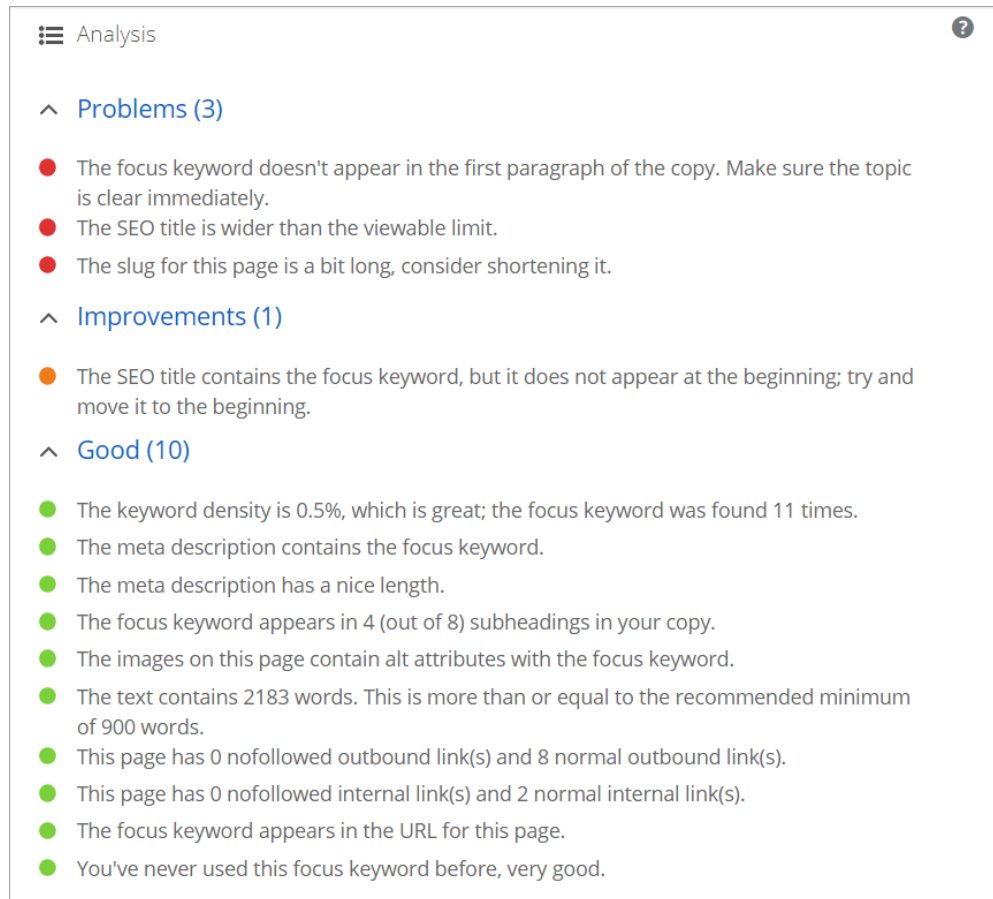
For the remainder of this Chapter, I'll go through the most important plugins you must consider adding to your website.

1. **Yoast SEO Plugin** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/wordpress-seo>)

One of the most popular plugins on the WordPress Plugin Directory is the Yoast SEO plugin. You can easily see why it's installed on more than 5 million websites - it's free, it gets updated frequently, and it really works as advertised.

Yoast doesn't only help you optimize your site for search engines, it also gives you useful suggestions on how to write valuable content. Also, it also checks your content's readability by giving you a Flesch Reading Ease score.

Here's a sample analysis by the Yoast SEO plugin:



The screenshot shows the Yoast SEO Analysis panel. At the top, it says 'Analysis' with a hamburger menu icon on the left and a help icon on the right. Below this, there are three sections: 'Problems (3)' with three red circular icons, 'Improvements (1)' with one orange circular icon, and 'Good (10)' with ten green circular icons. Each icon is followed by a text description of the issue or suggestion.

Problems (3)

- The focus keyword doesn't appear in the first paragraph of the copy. Make sure the topic is clear immediately.
- The SEO title is wider than the viewable limit.
- The slug for this page is a bit long, consider shortening it.

Improvements (1)

- The SEO title contains the focus keyword, but it does not appear at the beginning; try and move it to the beginning.

Good (10)

- The keyword density is 0.5%, which is great; the focus keyword was found 11 times.
- The meta description contains the focus keyword.
- The meta description has a nice length.
- The focus keyword appears in 4 (out of 8) subheadings in your copy.
- The images on this page contain alt attributes with the focus keyword.
- The text contains 2183 words. This is more than or equal to the recommended minimum of 900 words.
- This page has 0 nofollowed outbound link(s) and 8 normal outbound link(s).
- This page has 0 nofollowed internal link(s) and 2 normal internal link(s).
- The focus keyword appears in the URL for this page.
- You've never used this focus keyword before, very good.

As you can see, Yoast gives you a detailed and highly actionable list of what you need to work on, and what's already good with your content. All you have to do is go through all the suggestions and apply the changes accordingly!

The Yoast SEO plugin is free, but if you want more features and access to 24/7 support, then you'd need to shell out \$89/site for the annual fee.

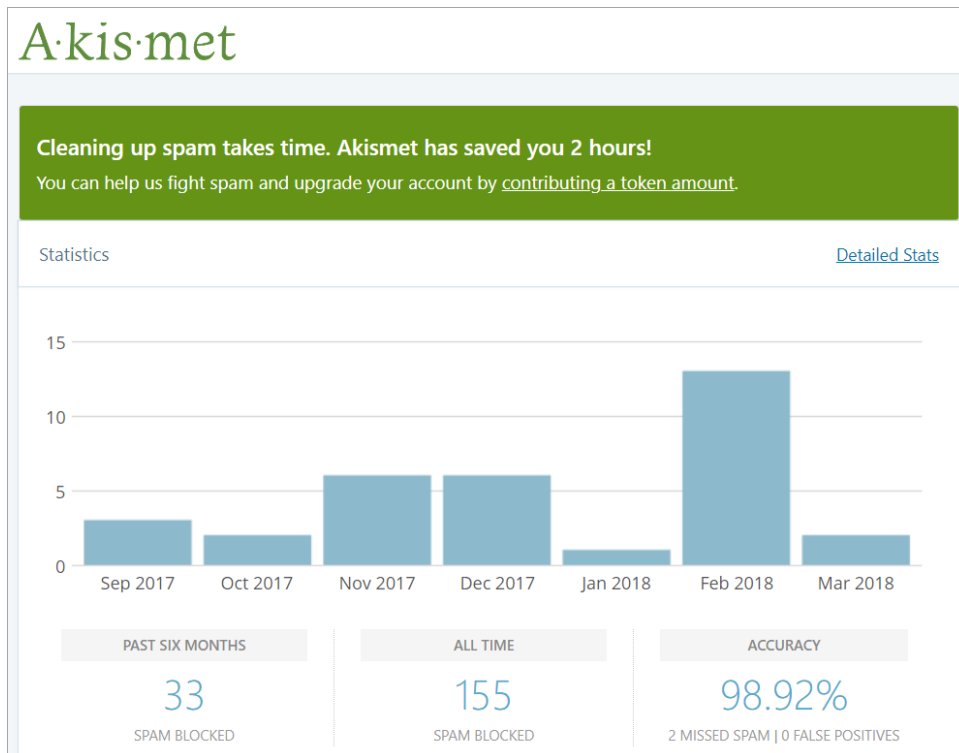
2. Akismet Anti-Spam Plugin (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/akismet>)

Akismet usually comes pre-installed on fresh WordPress installations, so there's no need for you to install it. If you're wondering whether to remove it or not, don't. Akismet filters out spam comments and pingback spam on WordPress sites.

If you've ever had the unpleasant task of manually filtering out spam emails, then you'll find comment and pingback spam even more unpleasant. Akismet can save you countless hours just by automatically blocking spam.

To view the number of spam blocked by Akismet, you can go to **Plugins > Installed Plugins > Akismet Anti-Spam Settings**, or you can go to **Settings > Akismet Anti-Spam**.

Over time, you will see a report like this on your Akismet Anti-Spam dashboard:



If you receive hundreds or thousands of comments in a month, Akismet will effectively save you many hours since you no longer have to see spam comments in your site's **Comments** section.

3. *MonsterInsight's Google Analytics Plugin* (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/google-analytics-for-wordpress>)

Using Google Analytics to track your website visitors is very important. If you want to know your detailed website statistics like who your site visitors are, where they come from, what they do on your site, etc. then you must use Google Analytics on your website.

To begin, you need to sign up for a Google Analytics account. You need a Gmail email address so you can use the service. Once you've set up your Google Analytics account, you can download the plugin from the WordPress Plugin Directory.

In the old days, webmasters had to install the Google Analytics code onto their website's header. Viewing the data meant opening another browser tab and logging in to Google Analytics.

With Monster Insight's plugin, you can simply log in to your WordPress dashboard, and your website data will be waiting for you.

If you want more features, then you can buy the premium version of MonstersInsights starting from \$39/ year for one website.

4. Updraft Plus Backup Plugin (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/updraftplus>)

Losing all your WordPress data is a scary thought. Just think of all your hard work vanishing, never to be recovered again. If you don't back up your website regularly, then this scenario is very much possible.

Hackers and malware can get access to your website and delete all your website files.

There are plenty of backup plugins available on WordPress, but one of the most highly recommended backup plugins is Updraft Plus. The plugin has been installed on over one million websites.

It's frequently updated, and best of all, it's free. There's a premium version available too, but when you're just starting, the free version works just fine.

Updraft Plus doesn't just back up your website files, it also includes your databases, themes, and plugins. There are plenty of places you can choose to backup your website files to. These include Google Drive, Dropbox, Amazon S3, FTP, email, and others.

You can define whether to schedule your backups automatically or just do a manual backup from time to time.

If you've got a static website, a manual backup is great as long as you remember to backup your files everytime you update your site. But for your peace of mind, just do the automatic backup.

If you run out of space on your backup destination, simply erase the older backup files to free up some storage space.

In the unfortunate event you do lose your website files to hackers or malware, then Updraft Plus will save the day with its 1-click restore function!

5. *WP Super Cache Plugin* (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-super-cache>)

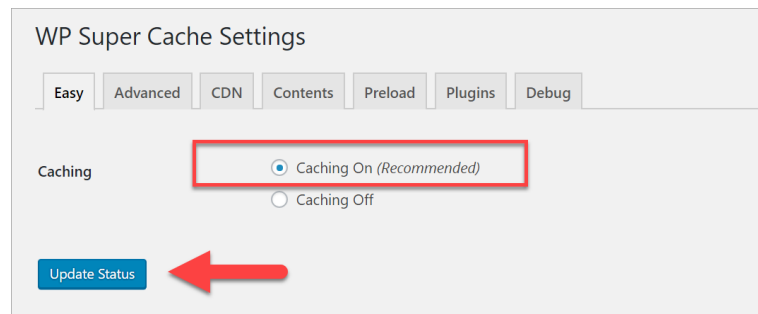
There's nothing more annoying than landing on a web page that takes forever to load. More often than not, instead of waiting for your site to finish loading, your visitors may hit the back button on their browser to go look for a faster-loading alternative.

If you offer really valuable content, some people may be compelled to wait. But would you really risk turning away people who are interested in hearing what you have to say? I sure hope not.

Many factors contribute to a faster loading website. One of the best, free ways you can help your site load faster is by installing a caching plugin such as WP Super Cache.

This nifty plugin creates static pages of your website which is then served to your website visitors instead of processing the full PHP scripts.

Another upside for this plugin is that activating it is a breeze. You simply need to click the **Caching On** button, and you're good to go.



Of course, as you can see on the screenshot, there are other settings you can play around with, but for the most part, just activating the **Caching On** option is all you need for a faster loading website.

6. **Search Exclude Plugin** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/search-exclude>)

If you want to build a mailing list on your WordPress website, then this plugin is a must-have. After people sign up to your list, you redirect them to the *download* page or a *thank you* page.

Now, you don't want people randomly accessing the download and thank you pages if they haven't signed up for your list. So, what you need to do is hide or exclude your download pages from the public.

One of the easiest ways to do this is by using the Search Exclude plugin. It's free, open source, and it's compatible with the latest version of WordPress so you can be assured it's going to work on your 'secret' pages.

Final Words

Plugins make your WordPress website even more powerful than it already is. There's a popular saying in the WordPress community – if you can think it, there's probably a WordPress plugin for that, or something along those lines.

Just like WordPress themes, if you can't find the right plugin for your website, then there's always the option to hire a developer to create your plugin from scratch.

WordPress literally gives you full control over your website – use it to make your website the best it can possibly be.

Chapter 6: WordPress On-Site Optimization

If you want your WordPress website to rank high in search engines, then you must practice on-site optimization. Before you start thinking this is way too complicated, let me just say that on-page and on-site optimization are simply ways to get your site and your web pages indexed and ranked faster on Google and other search engines.

Optimizing your site is important if you want highly qualified and free traffic from search engines. Who doesn't want that, right?

Even if you plan on using paid advertisements to give your site an initial traffic boost, you should still optimize your site so that once it's out of the Google 'sandbox' then your site is primed and ready to receive search engine traffic.

If you've never heard of the 'Google sandbox' it's basically a theory that's been going around in SEO communities for a couple of years now. The theory is that Google puts new websites (usually 6 months or less) on probation.

No matter how good your content is, or how many backlinks you get from good sites, if it's a new site, you don't get anywhere near the first page for any keyword.

After the so-called sandbox period, most websites experience an influx of free traffic from Google, as attested to by their Google Analytics data.

Now, that you know what the sandbox is, let's move on to the next section, so your site is prepped and ready when it finally gets out of the sandbox!

Top 7 Ways To Optimize Your WordPress Website

Optimizing your website is a tad difficult, at first. You probably just want to start publishing your content and getting your website in front of as many people as possible.

But, I promise that when you finally see the many benefits of having a well-optimized website, you'll thank yourself for taking the time to learn all these methods. Let's begin!

1. Use a fast loading WordPress theme

Google loves fast websites. And so do your site visitors. You have to admit that even you yourself can get impatient with slow-loading websites.

The speed of WordPress themes varies wildly. Some may be poorly coded that it adds unnecessary weight to web pages, while others are lightning fast. I'm not saying premium themes are inherently fast, but most of them are optimized for speed.

If you're willing to shell out a few bucks for a premium well-coded theme, consider the **Genesis Framework from StudioPress** (<https://my.studiopress.com/themes/genesis>). It's one of the most highly recommended fast-loading themes among WordPress users.

Also, if your website visitors are mostly viewing your website on a mobile device, you should consider using the plugin **AMP for WordPress** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/amp>).

AMP stands for Accelerated Mobile Pages, it's an open source project that aims to provide content that's optimized for mobile devices. If you've ever

been on a WordPress website that loaded instantly, then that site was probably using an AMP plugin.

2. Install a caching plugin

Everytime someone visits your website, your web server sends over your website files to your visitor's computer. With the help of a caching plugin, your server gets to take a break from sending all those files.

How? Well, a caching plugin generates static HTML files, which have a smaller file size than your regular website files, and sends it to your visitor. This makes your website load faster on your visitor's browser which, in turn, helps leave a positive impression on your visitor. As you probably already know, a fast-loading website encourages repeat visits.

In Chapter No. 5, I recommended you install the caching plugin, **WP Super Cache**, to help speed up your site. There are other caching plugins available, both free and premium, and it's really up to you which plugin you'll choose to install.

Check out the reviews and the feedback from other users, so you'll know if it's the right plugin for your website.

3. Make sure your site is visible to search engines

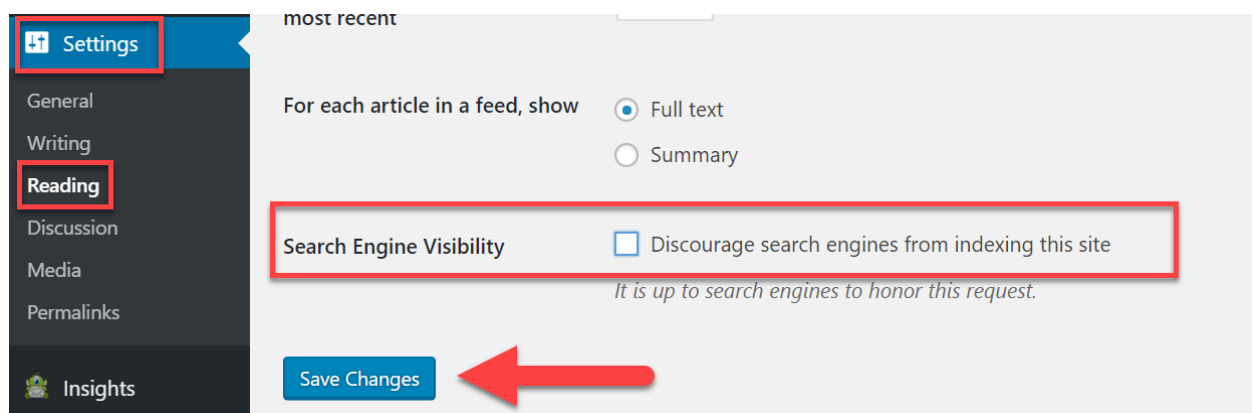
Months after you launched your website, well outside the normal Google sandbox period, you start wondering why no one still visits your site. You've published highly valuable content, but no one's reading it.

If you don't want to run into this problem in the future, then you need to make sure you make your site visible to search engines. When your site is brand new, and you don't have any content up, then you don't need to make your website visible to search engines *yet*.

However, once you've added content and you're ready to receive some traffic, then head on over to **Settings > Reading > Search Engine Visibility**.

Make sure to untick the box '*Discourage search engines from indexing this site.*'

Here's a screenshot:



Lastly, don't forget to hit the '**Save Changes**' button for your changes to take effect.

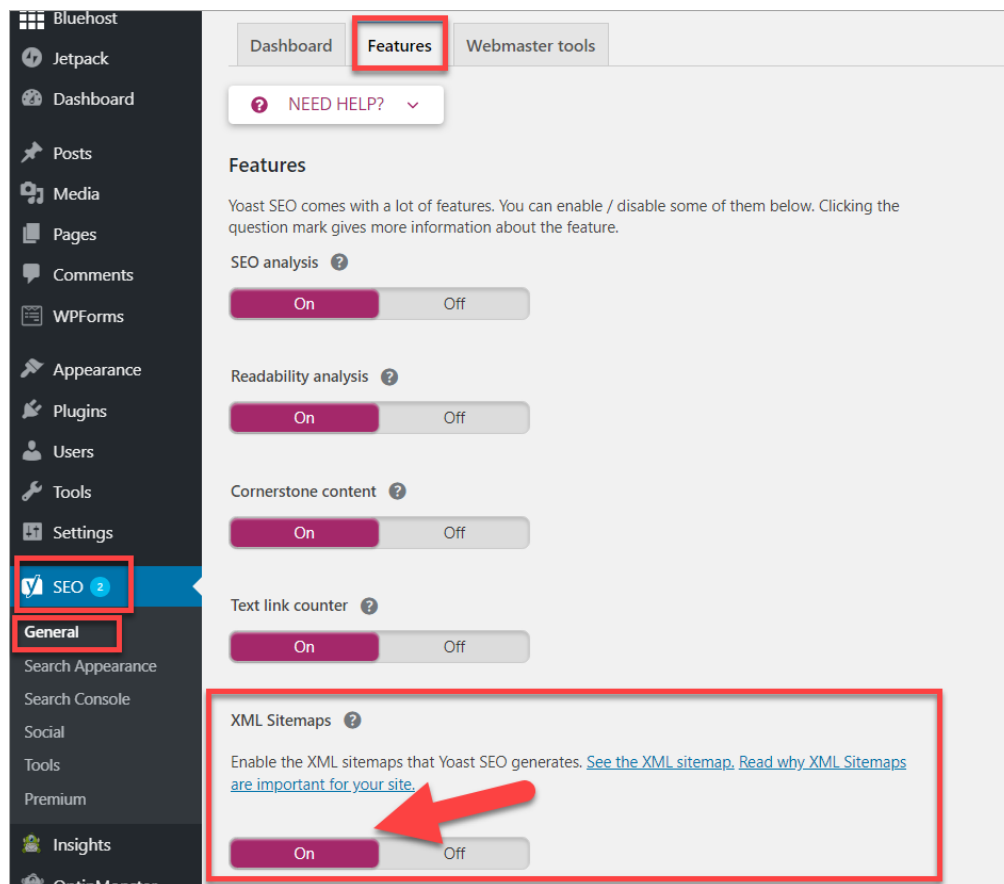
4. Add a sitemap

Having an XML sitemap is good for your website's SEO. A sitemap is quite literally a map of all important pages on your website. When search engines crawl your website, they can easily access all the other important pages on your website.

There are plenty of XML sitemap plugins available on the WordPress Plugin Directory, including dedicated sitemap plugins. But for starters, I recommend you use Yoast SEO plugin. This is a very powerful plugin and installing it on your website helps get your SEO in order.

To use the XML sitemap feature on Yoast, all you have to do is go to **SEO > General > Features**, and then scroll down a bit to where it says **XML Sitemaps**. Click on **On** to activate this feature.

Here's a screenshot:



At the bottom of the page, don't forget to hit the blue **'Save'** button to save your changes.

If you want to see how your XML sitemap looks, you can click on the link (please refer to screenshot) that says *'See the XML sitemap.'*

Instead of waiting for Google to find your sitemap, which can take a while if your site is new, you can take the proactive route and add your sitemap to

the Google Search Console. Doing so allows Google to crawl your web pages and posts. If there are errors in the sitemap, you will know about it right away.

5. Use readable and SEO-friendly permalinks

Readable hyperlinks are those that tell you exactly what the content is all about. For example, if your domain name is *yourawesomewebsite.com* and you've got a post about why SEO is important, then the permalink should be something like this:

Yourawesomewebsite.com/why-SEO-is-important, or
Yourawesomewebsite.com/importance-of-SEO

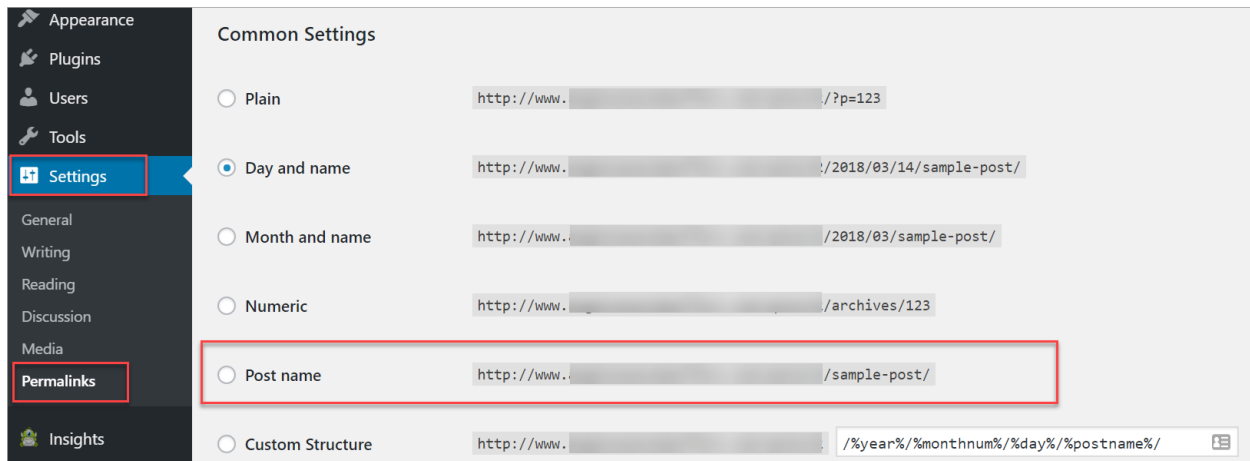
Just by looking at the link, you can already tell what the content of the page is going to be all about, right? Now, how about if your links look something like this:

Yourawesomewebsite.com/archives/12345, or
Yourawesomewebsite.com/?p=12345

These links don't really mean anything, and it's impossible for you to guess what the content is.

Well, guess what? Google doesn't like these kinds of links either which is why if you want to optimize your website, then you better make sure you're using the correct format for your permalinks.

In Chapter 3, I already showed you how you to change your permalink settings. To recap, click on **Settings > Permalinks**, then choose **Post name** as you can see in the screenshot below:



What's important to mention here is that once your content is already a few months old, and your pages are already appearing on Google, then you need to be careful when you change your permalink structure.

You'll need to redirect the old links to the new links so you don't lose your existing SEO ranking. Redirecting links can get quite complicated, so it may be best if you hire an SEO professional to make sure you don't destroy your site by accident.

6. Use categories and tags properly in WordPress

Categories and tags may sound like they're the same, but they're two separate entities on WordPress. Categories are broad groupings of the content on your website.

For example, if you have a blog on dogs, then you may use the dog breed as a category on your blog.

For tags, you can use that to describe what a particular post is about. So, if you've got a blog post about raising American Cocker Spaniels, then your category would probably be Cocker Spaniels, and your tags would be *cocker spaniel*, *walking a cocker spaniel*, *feeding a cocker spaniel*, etc.

7. Install a good SEO plugin to take care of your on-site SEO



I've already mentioned Yoast SEO in this Chapter, but I'll mention it again. Yoast is really one of the best SEO plugins for WordPress.


In addition to the XML Sitemap feature we mentioned in point number 4, you can also activate the following features on Yoast:




- **SEO Analysis.** This helps you write content that search engines love. You'll have to enter a 'focus keyword' which is the main keyword you're hoping to rank for.


Yoast will give you suggestions on how you can improve your content. All suggestions happen in real time so the moment you edit your content and address the problems Yoast point out, then it's going to disappear from the list of Problems or Improvements.


Take a look at this screenshot:


 Analysis 











 **Problems (3)**

-  The focus keyword doesn't appear in the first paragraph of the copy. Make sure the topic is clear immediately.
-  The SEO title is wider than the viewable limit.
-  The slug for this page is a bit long, consider shortening it.

 **Improvements (1)**

-  The SEO title contains the focus keyword, but it does not appear at the beginning; try and move it to the beginning.

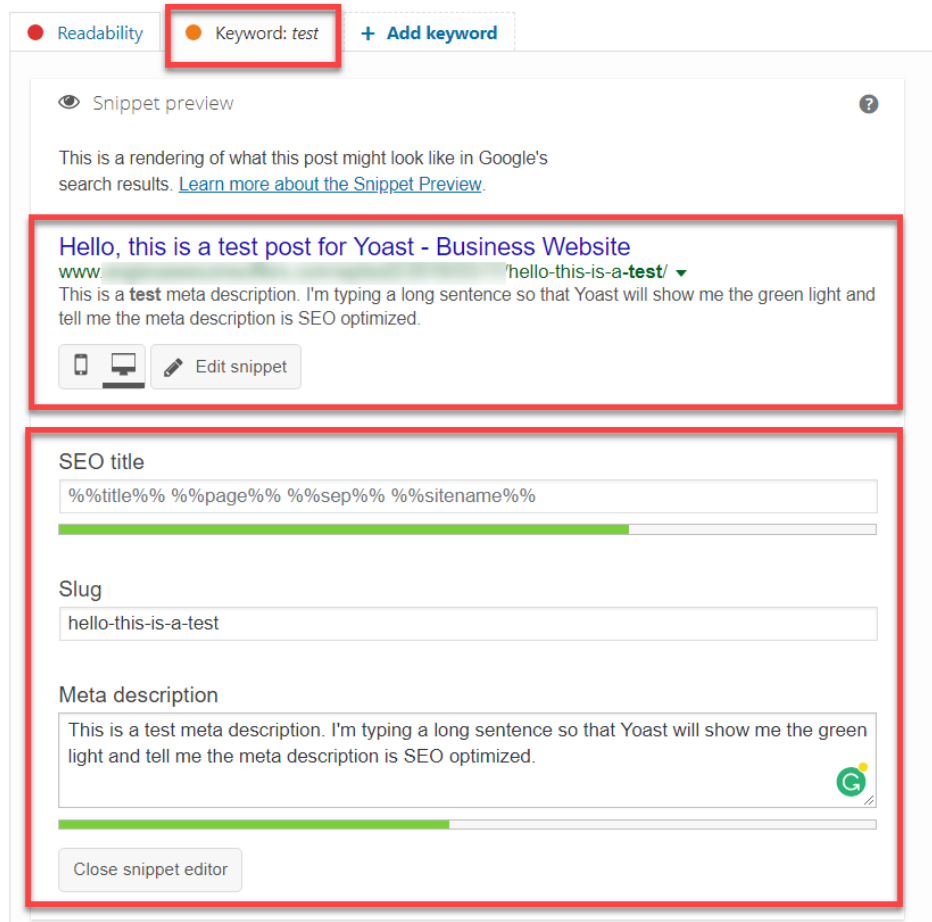
 **Good (10)**

-  The keyword density is 0.5%, which is great; the focus keyword was found 11 times.
-  The meta description contains the focus keyword.
-  The meta description has a nice length.
-  The focus keyword appears in 4 (out of 8) subheadings in your copy.
-  The images on this page contain alt attributes with the focus keyword.
-  The text contains 2183 words. This is more than or equal to the recommended minimum of 900 words.
-  This page has 0 nofollowed outbound link(s) and 8 normal outbound link(s).
-  This page has 0 nofollowed internal link(s) and 2 normal internal link(s).
-  The focus keyword appears in the URL for this page.
-  You've never used this focus keyword before, very good.

Check the points listed in the **Good** section. You'll notice Yoast keeps track of your keyword density, your meta description, focus keyword, your images' SEO, the length of your content, inbound and outbound links, and more.

Yoast's SEO Analysis feature also allows you to view a snippet of how your page will look like in Google's search results.

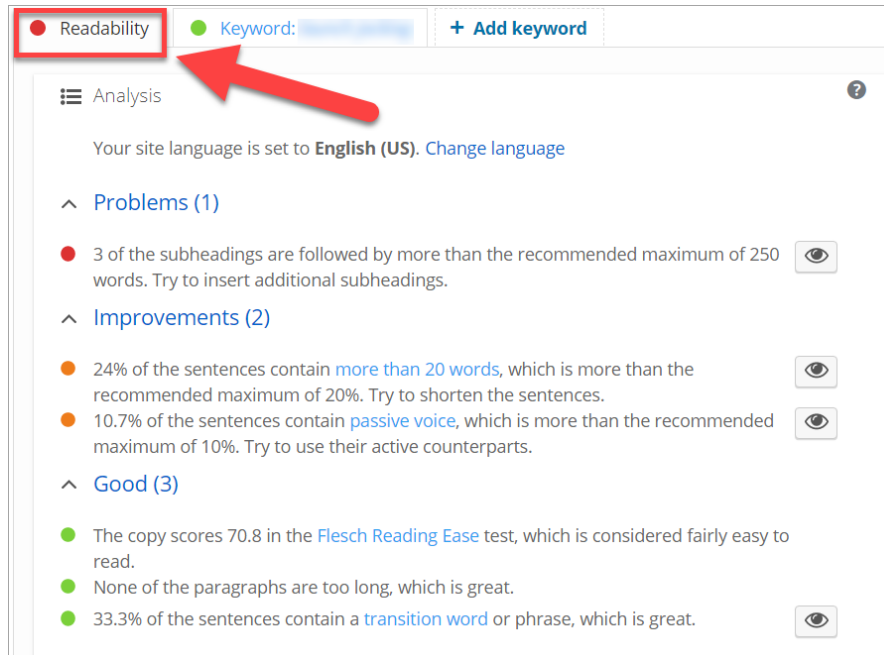
You can edit the SEO title, the URL slug, and the meta description.



As you can see in the screenshot, the SEO Title and Meta Description are showing green which means it's SEO optimized.

However, at the top right where it says *Keyword: test*, it shows the orange color which means the content isn't SEO optimized yet. The goal here is to get a green light so keep this in mind when you write your content.

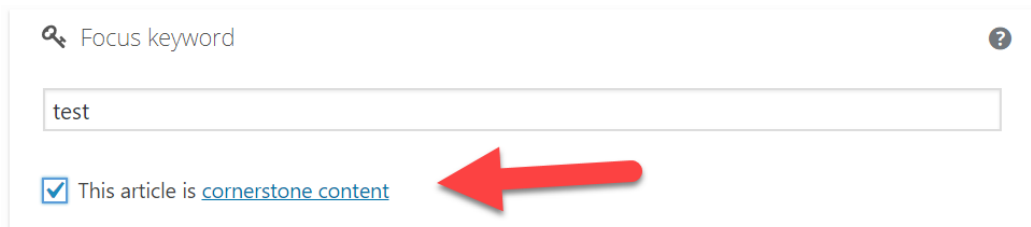
- **Readability Analysis.** This tool helps you improve the structure and style of your content. Here is an example Readability Analysis by Yoast.



As you can see, the Readability tab has a red color which means the content needs to be improved. To get a green light, all you have to do is fix the issues listed in Problems and Improvements.

Yoast even makes it easy for you to locate the problem areas – simply click on the *eye icon* to have the text highlighted.

- **Cornerstone Content.** You can identify which of your pages or posts are cornerstone content. If you mark a page as cornerstone, then Yoast will help you build links to other pages on your website. To mark a specific page or post as cornerstone content, simply go to the Focus Keyword section, then tick the box '*This article is cornerstone content.*'



Focus keyword

test

☒ This article is [cornerstone content](#)

- **Text link counter.** Yoast's text link counter helps improve your site structure by showing you how many internal links you've put in your post (*outbound links*) as well as the number of internal links to your post (*inbound links*).

This tool isn't just great for helping with your site's SEO, it also helps your site visitors to browse other relevant pages within your website. This helps encourage people to stay on your site longer which is also good for your site's SEO.

- **Ryte integration.** To make sure your site is still indexable by search engines, activate this feature. Ryte will check your site on a weekly basis. If there's a problem with your site's indexing, then you'll get a notification on your WordPress dashboard as well as your email.

Final Words

Optimizing your WordPress website will take a lot of work, and until you finally see your website climbing up the search engine pages, it will feel like you've got nothing to show for it. Don't give up. Continue optimizing your website, and you'll reap the benefits later!

Chapter 7: Securing Your WordPress Site Against Modern Day Hackers

If you're wondering why anyone would want to hack your WordPress website, you're not alone. Read this Chapter to find out why your site is being targeted, and better yet, what you can do to protect it!

WordPress powers a quarter of all websites in the world. That translates to millions of websites. With WordPress being open-source software, developers, users, and hackers alike can view the entire code that makes the platform what it is.

This makes it relatively easy for hackers to find vulnerable areas on a WordPress website.

In older movies, hackers are often portrayed as individuals sitting in front of a computer trying to get access to a website. There are still individual hackers that do this today, but often they target high-value websites so they can hold them for ransom.

More often than not, bots and botnets attack WordPress websites looking for vulnerabilities so they can take over and use the site or the server where it's hosted to spam other websites.

Bots are programs written by hackers. They scan WordPress sites looking for known security holes. Botnets, on the other hand, are a network of bot-infected machines that try to hack into a huge number of sites.

Sounds scary, right? Since bots aren't slow like us humans, they can infect a large number of sites very quickly.

This is why it's extremely important to update your core WordPress software, your themes, and your plugins. Because if a bot gets to your site first before you update, then your site is as good as compromised!

Why Hackers And Bots Attack WordPress Websites

To learn how to protect your site, it's important to know first why your WordPress site is being attacked. Most of the time, hackers create bots to be able to do the following malicious activities:

- **Steal your website data** – if you collect people's information on your website, that is if you have a mailing list or a membership website, then you're a prime target for hackers.

They can use or sell your stolen data to other people. Depending on the kind of data they steal, they can use the information to send spam emails or use the more sensitive info to commit identity theft.

- **Use your site to send spam** – hackers can control your website and use it to send spam emails. You won't even realize it, but when it's time for you to send emails to your list, no one's going to receive any of your emails. That's because your site has already been blacklisted by email servers!
- **Host malicious content** – sometimes hackers use other people's resources to hide illegal and immoral content. They don't want these files showing up on their web properties, so they look for an unwilling and innocent participant to hide their files in.
- **Attack other websites** – hackers are clever people. Instead of relying on a single bot, they've found a sophisticated way to attack even more websites.

First, they'll infect your site, and then they'll use it as part of their botnet or bot-network to launch massive attacks on even more websites!

I hope you now understand why even your new WordPress website is not immune to attacks. It's not because the hackers hold a grudge against you, it's nothing personal really.

They don't know you, but they want to use your website and your resources to run their malicious and illegal activities.

Top Security Measures To Keep Your WordPress Site Safe

There are a number of ways you can protect your WordPress site from getting hacked. I'll begin with the simple ones you can implement right away on your website.

1. Update your core WordPress software, themes, and plugins

WordPress gets updated frequently. So do your themes and plugins. Updating your software is not a choice, it's a must. Using outdated software leaves your website extremely vulnerable to bot attacks.

Updating your WordPress site is easy. When you log in to your WordPress dashboard, you'll immediately see which files need updating. All you have to do is click on the Update button, wait a few minutes, and voila! You've just added an extra layer of protection to your WordPress website.

But what if you don't have the time to log in to your WordPress account every few days?

Well, the solution is to install a security plugin like WordFence (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/wordfence>). This plugin can send you an email notification every time something needs to be updated on your website.

That way, you only need to login to your account whenever you receive a notification from WordFence.

2. Make your username and password very difficult to guess or crack

Bots try to gain access to WordPress websites by guessing the username first. As a rule, you should never use common usernames as your username, especially not *admin*. Make it extremely difficult for bots to guess your username.

For passwords, use a combination of numbers, upper and lower case letters, and symbols. You should also remember to change your password frequently.

I know writing everything down is a hassle, which is why I recommend you generate and store your passwords using a password manager like LastPass (<https://www.lastpass.com>).

3. Disable directory browsing

If you go to this URL on your website – *yourdomainname.com/wp-includes/* and you're able to see a list of filenames, then you need to disable directory browsing right now.

If you don't, hackers can simply look through your files, and it will be easy for them to look for the most vulnerable file to gain access to your site!

To disable directory browsing, you're going to have to use an FTP client such as Filezilla so you can edit your **.htaccess** file. Once you've downloaded your .htaccess file, simply add this line at the very bottom of the file "**Options All -Indexes**" (don't include the quotation marks).

Before you attempt to do this on your own, please backup your .htaccess file. If you don't think you can manage this small tweak yourself, please get the help of someone who knows his way around FTP and WordPress.

To confirm directory browsing has been disabled, simply refresh the page *yourdomainname.com/wp-includes/*. If you see a **Forbidden** error, then you've successfully disabled directory browsing.

4. Use two-factor authentication

Most modern apps that handle sensitive information now use two-factor authentication. For example, if you log in to your online banking account, you'll be asked to enter your username and password.

When you enter the right credentials, you'll get a message on your screen telling you to enter the one-time password that's been texted to your phone or emailed to your default email address.

You then need to enter the code within a short period of time. This is how two-factor authentication works. As you can tell, this makes a bot or hacker's job more difficult.

There are quite a few two-factor authentication plugins for WordPress, but if you've installed WordFence security plugin as we've suggested earlier, then you can simply activate this feature on the plugin.

5. Hide or rename the default WordPress login page

The default WordPress login page ends with `/wp-login.php` or `/wp-admin`. If you rename the page, then it makes a hacker's job more difficult to try and attack your website.

One such plugin available in the WordPress Plugin Directory is **WPS Hide Login** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/wps-hide-login>). To make sure you don't make your login page invisible to yourself, don't forget to bookmark the new login link!

6. Get an SSL certificate for your website

If you've ever wondered what the difference is between HTTP and HTTPS websites, it's that HTTPS websites are secure because they have an SSL certificate. SSL stands for Secure Sockets Layer which encrypts all communications between the website and your browser.

Sites with a valid SSL certificate displays a green padlock on your browser. If you click on the padlock, it will say something like 'it's a secure connection and your information is private when it's sent to the site'.

SSL certificates can go anywhere from free to hundreds of dollars per year. Many commercial web hosting companies like WordPress.org's recommended web hosting companies Bluehost, DreamHost, and SiteGround, all offer free SSL with their hosting plans.

7. Limit login attempts

WordPress allows you to log in as many times as possible until you finally enter the right credentials. This is mainly why hackers do brute force attacks on WordPress, trying out username and password combinations until they manage to guess the right credentials!

There are many plugins that can help you limit the number of login attempts on your website.

However, if you've already installed WordFence like we've suggested a couple of times in this Chapter, then you can simply activate this feature on your WordFence dashboard.

8. Install a WordPress security plugin

The most popular free WordPress security plugin by far on WordPress.org is WordFence. It's got a premium version, but most people just use the free version and are pretty happy with the results.

Now, WordFence is not perfect, but with it being installed on millions of websites, it's a testament to how good people find this plugin.

If you want to skip WordFence altogether, **Sucuri** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/sucuri-scanner>) or **iThemes Security** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/better-wp-security>) are good alternatives.

Sucuri is considerably more expensive than WordFence's premium version, but reviews do say Sucuri is well worth the price.

iThemes, on the other hand, has got a good reputation on the WordPress Plugin Directory, and their annual plans are affordable.

If you do go for a premium security plugin, make sure you check out reviews and read the product description to see if all your security needs are going to be met.

Final Words

The tips we've listed in this Chapter aren't by any means the complete, foolproof way of keeping your site safe, but it should help a lot. WordPress security is a very complex and highly technical subject.

With hackers continuously looking for new ways to get into WordPress websites, you have to be on the lookout and be aware of what's happening on your site at all times.

Most security experts edit WordPress code to fight hackers, so if this is something you're not comfortable in, I would suggest hiring a qualified WordPress security expert to help make your site as secure as possible.

Chapter 8: Keeping Up To Date With Legal Pages And Disclaimers

You're excited about the upcoming launch of your new website. You've got your marketing funnel in place, and you're ready to start advertising on Facebook, Instagram, Google Adwords, Bing Ads, and any other places your target audience hangs out.

You're confident you have excellent, well-written copy on your website, and you expect high conversion rates, and a very profitable return on your investment.

But before you launch your site to the world, does it have the requisite legal pages and disclaimers?

You know, the *Terms and Conditions*, *Privacy Policy*, and other important legal pages that you normally see on the footer section of most eCommerce websites? I hope it does, but if it doesn't then continue reading this chapter for more information.

When you're planning to sell something on your WordPress website, you normally think of how you're going to get paid. So, you do your research on the best payment processors that are going to be a good fit for your site.

There are plenty of payment processors that will be more than happy to receive payments on your behalf – there's PayPal, Stripe, 2Checkout, WorldPay, BitPay, Skrill, and many more. But I bet you probably didn't think about all the legal mumbo jumbo that needs to come with your online business!

Before you start receiving any payments, you need to make sure first that your site has all the requisite legal pages and disclaimers on it. If you don't have it, chances are your potential customers may not feel confident purchasing anything from you.

These legal pages protect both you and your customer if any dispute ever arises.

What Kind Of Legal Pages And Disclaimers Should You Put Up?

You may think you have nothing but the best intentions, and you have no plans of scamming people, so you don't need to have legal pages on your website.

You may even think no one ever reads those pages anyway (and you're probably right), so there's no point in drafting the content for these pages or hiring a lawyer to write it for you.

You may not think these pages are important, but the saying "*better safe than sorry*" will stand true when you get into legal trouble later. Without these pages, you could end up paying hefty fines, or worse, spending some time in jail.

Before I give you the list of important legal pages, I'd like to mention that you *probably* don't need to have all these pages on your website. That will depend on the kind of online business you're running.

1. Privacy Policy

Whether or not you sell something on your website, you need to have a Privacy Policy. In fact, all websites on the Internet must have a Privacy

Policy because technically, all sites collect information about their website visitors.

In most countries, websites are required to have a Privacy Policy to disclose the fact that they collect visitor-related information, and how this information is used.

Here are a few ways your website may collect visitor information:

- Information collected on website forms such as your email opt-in form, contact form, and comment form
- Google Analytics tracking
- Facebook pixel tracking
- Advertising platforms and social media platforms that track users

When writing your Privacy Policy, you need to mention the following points:

- The kind of information you collect from your site visitors
- Methods used to collect the information
- Third party advertisers collecting user information
- Links to privacy policies of all programs your site participate in
- Ways in which users can block cookies and opt out of advertisements
- Your contact information

The good thing is you don't have to write your Privacy Policy from scratch. You can use other websites Privacy Policies for inspiration.

Alternatively, you can use a WordPress plugin like **WP Legal Pages** ([https://wordpress.org/plugins/WP Legal Pages](https://wordpress.org/plugins/WP-Legal-Pages/)) and **Auto Terms of Service and Privacy Policy** (https://wordpress.org/plugins/auto-terms-of-service-and-privacy-policy) to generate a privacy policy for you.

2. *Terms and Conditions of Use*

The *Terms and Conditions*, or *Terms of Use*, or *Terms and Conditions of Use*, is a must-have if your website provides a service.

This page provides detailed information on how your service operates, your conditions for using your website, your payment or billing structure, and what you deem as grounds for terminating a user's account.

If you publish content on your website, you need to have a clause in your Terms of Use page that informs your user they can't use your content without your consent. Or if they use it, then they should credit you as a source.

A proper Terms of Use page should be comprehensive and should hold up in court if the need arises. While you can use a WordPress plugin to generate a template, I don't suggest this method especially if you use your website to sell products or services. If you do use a template, go over it with a fine-toothed comb and edit it to fit your business needs.

For best results, you can ask a lawyer to go over your Terms of Use page so they can close off any loopholes, and you'll have protection when someone comes up with a complaint later on. Having a solid Terms of Use will allow you to focus on growing your business without fear of getting hit by a lawsuit later on.

3. *Affiliate Disclosure*

If you receive any form of compensation on your website, then you need to have a Disclosure policy page. For example, if you recommend products on your blog and you use affiliate links in your articles where you get a

commission every time someone buys something through your link, then you must disclose that information.

The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) requires websites to have a disclosure page if you participate in affiliate marketing programs, if you run banner ads or contextual ads on your site, or whatever it is on your site you get paid for, then a disclosure policy is a must.

Whether you receive monetary compensation or in-kind compensation, you need to disclose it on your website. And you can't hide your disclosure in an obscure page. You have to make it visible or clear to your users that you're getting compensated in one form or another.

Disclosures help build trust among your users. If you try to hide the fact that you're an affiliate of some product or program, then you could lose the trust of your readers.

If you make it clear from the start that you're receiving a commission, but that your review is made from an objective standpoint, then your audience will appreciate your honesty.

You can write a short and succinct disclosure policy quickly, but if you don't want to spend the time writing it, then the WP Legal Pages plugin will help you generate a generic disclosure template in seconds.

Note, however, that the free version of WP Legal Pages plugin does not include this particular page. If you want to activate this page, you should consider upgrading to the premium version.

4. Earnings Disclaimer Policy

If you're selling a product that will generate some income for your clients or customers, then you need to have an Earnings Disclaimer Policy. This is especially important for SAAS or Software as a Service products, and online courses that teach people different strategies to make money online or offline.

Sales pages are often exaggerated. Most give the impression that making money using a vendor's product or service can earn them an unlimited amount of money in a certain period of time. If you're in the Internet Marketing space, then you know all about this sleazy marketing technique.

However, if you look closely at the footer section of the sales website, you'll see an Earnings Disclaimer that tells you that earnings are just estimates and are not guaranteed.

There are 4 basic elements to a good Earnings Disclaimer policy:

First, you need to disclose that income or earnings provided on the site are just estimates. Second, you need to make it clear the results are not guaranteed. Third, there is no assurance that another member's success may occur again. And lastly, your users must put in the effort to make your product or service work.

If you need a template of a good Earnings Disclaimer, you can use the WP Legal Pages plugin (premium version) to generate one for you. Just remember to edit and review the information to make sure it applies to your website.

5. Return/Refund Policy

A refund policy is a must if you use your website to sell products or services. This policy is quite straightforward in that it lists all conditions where a customer may qualify for a refund, and the conditions in which you can refuse to give a refund.

A return policy, on the other hand, is important if you're selling physical products such as clothing, gadgets, artwork, bags, fashion accessories, shoes, etc.

Most eCommerce customers visit a website's return and refund policy before making a purchase decision. If they find the policy acceptable, they'll proceed with the purchase. If something doesn't seem right to them, they'll cancel and hit the back button on their browser.

A good return/refund policy will include the following details:

- The number of days a customer has to return their purchase. If it's outside that period, then they don't qualify for a return/refund.
- Information on whether they will receive a refund, store credit, or a replacement.
- For returns, who pays for the shipping.
- For digital products, do you offer refunds? If yes, what are the conditions?

Again, the premium version of WP Legal Pages plugin is a good place to start. But, you should, of course, go through everything to make sure the content fits with your website's policies.

How To Add Legal Pages and Disclaimers To Your Website

Once your legal pages are ready, it's time to add these as links to your website. Legal pages are usually placed in the footer section of websites. You rarely see them in top menus or even in sidebars.

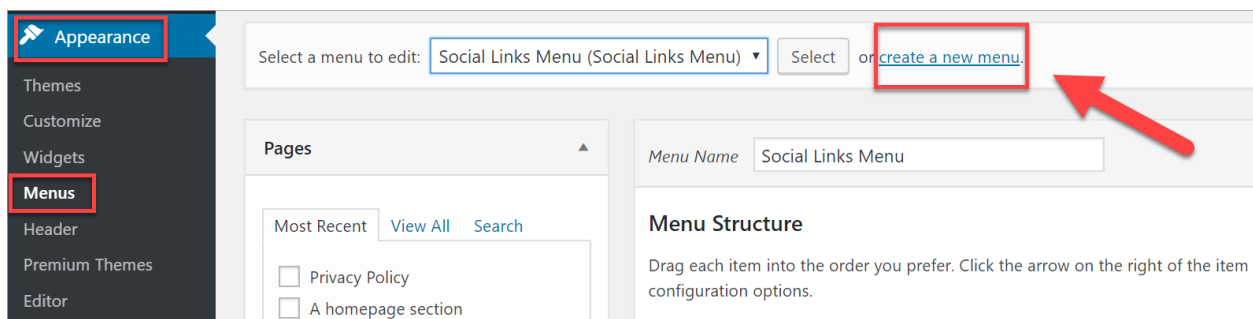
Whether you used a plugin to generate your legal pages, or you created a new page manually in the Pages section of your WordPress admin, you will still need to manually add the pages to the footer section of your site.

Here's what you need to do:

1. Add a custom menu

Go to **Appearance > Menus**. For this example, we are using the default *Twenty Seventeen* theme. It has two menus available: *Top Menu* and *Social Links* menu.

Click on *Create a new menu*.



On the next screen, type the name of your new menu. It can be anything you want, but it's best to give it a name you can easily recognize, such as *Legal Pages* menu or *Footer* menu. Click on **Create Menu** when you're done.

Menu Name [Create Menu](#)

Give your menu a name, then click Create Menu.

[Create Menu](#)

As you can see in the next screenshot, you will need to do the following steps:

Select a menu to edit: [Select](#) [Create a new menu.](#)

Pages

Most Recent [View All](#) [Search](#)

- ☒ Privacy Policy
- ☐ A homepage section
- ☐ Blog
- ☐ Contact
- ☐ About
- ☐ Home

[Select All](#) [Add to Menu](#)

Menu Name [Save Menu](#)

Menu Structure

Add menu items from the column on the left.

Menu Settings

Auto add pages ☐ Automatically add new top-level pages to this menu

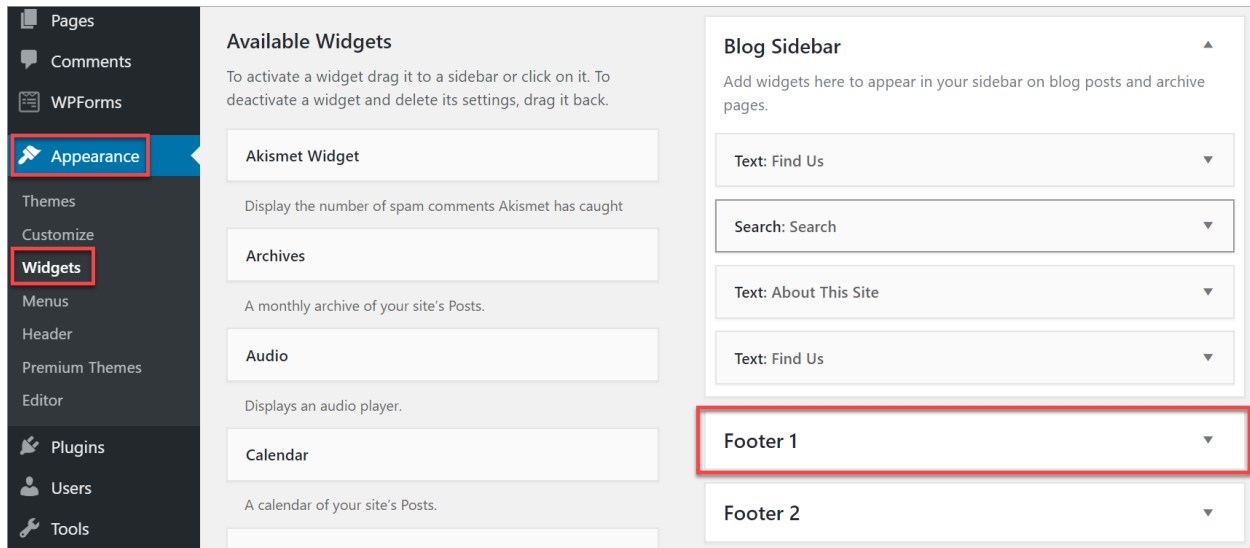
Display location ☐ Top Menu (Currently set to: Top Menu)
☐ Social Links Menu (Currently set to: Social Links Menu)

[Delete Menu](#) [Save Menu](#)

- (1) Select the right menu to edit. In this case, we need to edit the new menu which I named **Legal Pages**.
- (2) Tick the pages you want to include in the menu. For now, I just want to add the Privacy Policy page generated by the free version of WP Legal Pages plugin.
- (3) Click **Add to Menu**. When you do this, your selected pages will appear in the **Menu Structure** section.
- (4) Click **Save Menu** to save your changes.

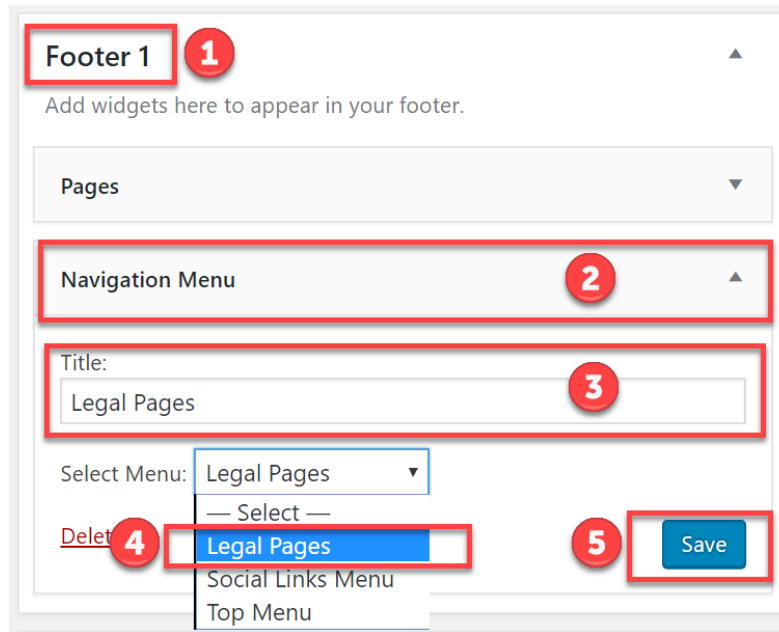
2. Add a widget in the footer section

With the new Legal Pages menu created, it's time to head to **Appearance > Widgets** page. Most themes will usually show a **Footer** section. For this example theme, we have two footer sections available, and I chose **Footer 1**.



What you need to do next is look for the **Navigation Menu** widget in the **Available Widgets** section, and drag it over to **Footer 1**.

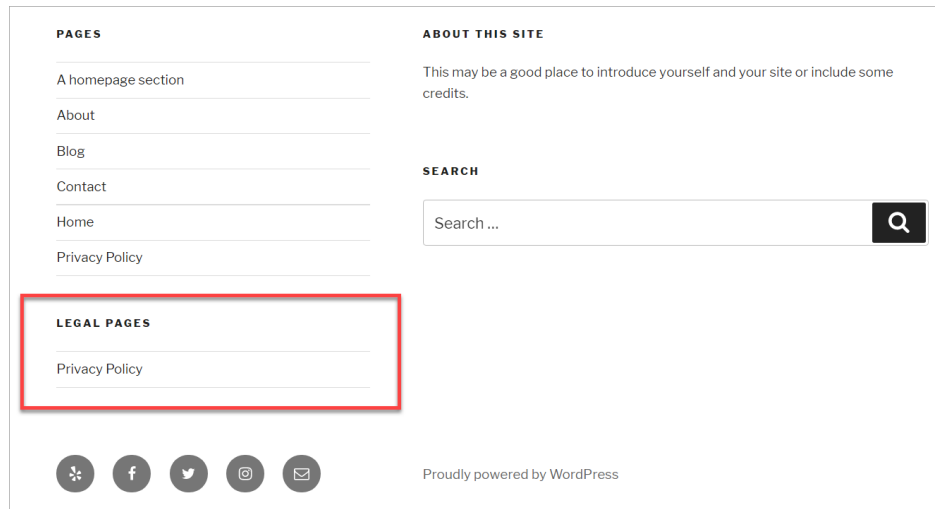
After you've done this step, you'll see something like on your screen:



Here's the rundown of what's happening on the screenshot above:

- (1) Make sure it's the right footer (Footer 1).
- (2) The **Navigation Menu** widget will appear after you've dragged it here.
- (3) Enter a title. This will appear on your website. I just chose **Legal Pages** to keep things simple.
- (4) Select the menu you've created earlier. In this case, it's Legal Pages menu.
- (5) Hit **Save** to save your changes.

And that's it. Check the changes on your site and scroll down to the footer area. Here's what it looks like on my test WordPress website.



Final Words

Adding legal pages and disclaimers to your WordPress website is a must especially if you plan on accepting payments online. As you have learned in this chapter, plugins are useful in generating template legal pages.

However, if you want to make sure you're safe from legal issues down the road, it's best to consult with a lawyer before you start selling anything on your website.

Chapter 9: How To Set Up Product Specific Pages And Navigation

When set up properly, your WordPress website can generate a healthy income for you. It's pretty amazing considering you're not paying anything for WordPress, just the domain name and hosting (and in some cases, just hosting if you get a free domain with your hosting plan!).

But how do you get sales? How do you get people to buy from your website?

That's what you're going to find out in this chapter. The first section will be dedicated to setting up product specific pages, and in the second section, I'll be covering the importance of having good website navigation.

How To Set Up Product Specific Pages In WordPress

Whether you're selling digital or physical products, you need to have well-designed product specific pages on your site. You want people to buy your products, so you need to make it as enticing as possible.

You can't just put up a page saying *this product is awesome, you should buy it right now!* That's never going to work.

So, how do you create awesome product pages that actually convert? Here are a few tips:

Organize your product page

It's a great idea to organize your product pages in a logical manner. For instance, if you have a website selling eBooks, you may want to categorize it into different genres or niches.

It will be easier for people to find the eBooks they want by simply clicking on the product category page.

If you have a blog-writing service, then you can organize your service page into the different areas you serve. For instance, you can list your preferred niches and your rates and packages for those niches.

Make your product descriptions short and informative

You don't want to write a 2,000-word description of your product, no matter how awesome it is. You want people to buy it, not run away from it, right? For your product descriptions, you should list the most important benefits of the product.

Try not to get too hung up on product specs. People want to know what's in it for them. You can have the most hi-tech product in your niche, but if you keep on talking about technical specifications, people are going to get lost.

Instead, talk about how your product is going to benefit your audience, how you can help make their lives or their work easier. That's how you win people over, not by blabbering about the latest microchip on your device.

Also, try to put yourself in your customers' shoes. Think about what people are going to ask about your product. Figure out what they would want to know, and answer that in your product page.

If you think people are going to be curious how your product was made, you can perhaps add a short video about it. Or if it's a time-sensitive product, how about you include some shipping information on your page.

Things like this will mean a lot to your customers. The more points you address (in a succinct manner, of course), the higher the chances people are going to buy from you!

Make your product landing page match your advert

If you're selling a good product, you may want to advertise on platforms such as Google Adwords, Bing Ads, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, native ads, and others.

However, what some advertisers fail to do is they fail to make their landing page match their advertisement. This honestly is an epic fail. You spend money on ads trying to convince people that your product is the best in the market.

But when people click on your ad, they land on a page that has nothing to do with the product you were advertising for! Or if it was, then the words and the overall design on the website just doesn't live up to the hype in your ad.

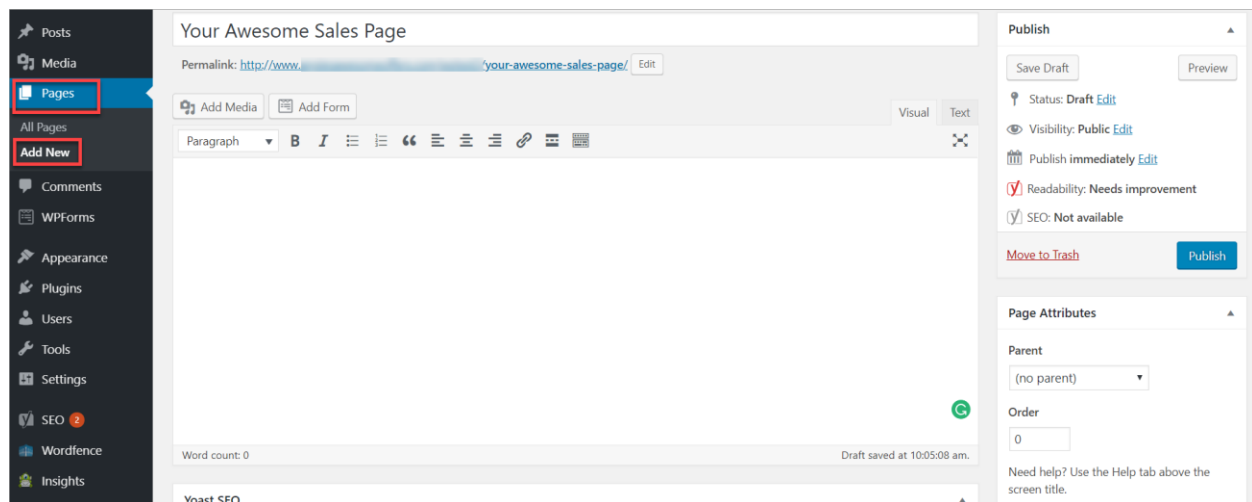
What's even worse is when people try to navigate your site to find the product you were advertising, they can't find it in your menu system because your website structure is practically non-existent. When that happens, I can guarantee that's advertising money down the drain.

How To Add Your High-Converting Product Pages To WordPress

Now that you know what you need to do to make your product pages stand out, here's how you can add those pages to your WordPress website.

To begin, log in to your WordPress admin account, then go to **Pages > Add New**. Add your content, then hit **Preview** to check how your content is

going to look like on the front end. Click **Publish** when you're ready to go live.



Let me just mention here that the WordPress text editor works really great for creating blog posts and other text-heavy content. However, if you want high converting sales pages and landing pages, then you may want to consider using a drag and drop page builder plugin.

A page builder is basically a what you see is what you get editor or WYSIWYG.

With a page builder, you don't need to imagine what your site is going to look like on the front end which is what you do with the default WordPress text editor. It helps save you time as you don't need to go back and forth between editing and previewing your page.

You can check out the free page builders on the WordPress.org Plugin Directory. The most popular ones are:

1. Elementor Page Builder (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/elementor>)
2. Beaver Builder Lite Version (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/beaver-builder-lite-version>)
3. Page Builder by SiteOrigin (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/siteorigin-panels>)

4. Live Composer (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/live-composer-page-builder>)

If you want to go premium, you can check out the pro version of Beaver Builder. Or you can purchase Thrive Themes' Thrive Architect plugin (<https://thrivethemes.com/architect>) or Elegant Themes' Divi Builder (<https://www.elegantthemes.com/plugins/divi-builder>).

Your Website's Navigation Structure

Have you ever been on a website that had a confusing menu or navigation system? I bet you have, and I bet you probably felt a little bit disoriented and left that site right away.

When you design your own website, it's important that you don't make your visitors feel the same way you did when you visited that poorly designed website.

After all, you're going to be spending a lot of time and effort creating the best possible content for your audience. You don't want them leaving your site on account of horrible navigation and menu structure.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to website navigation. In fact, you can place your menu anywhere you want. But, before you go about doing this, remember who your website is for. Is it for you or is it for your target audience?

If you use a crazy menu system on your site, you'd be able to find it quickly because you designed it yourself. But what about your visitors? Would they find it easy to navigate around your site?

Put yourself in their shoes. When designing your site's structure, it's important to put your viewers ahead of yourself.

The Menu Structure

Your website's main menu should be easy to locate. It helps people find what they want, and more importantly, it lets you guide your users to what you want them to find!

If you've got hundreds of pages on your site, you want the most important pages on your menu. This is why you also need to make your categories well-defined, so it's easier to link to it in your menu.

You don't want to have a complicated menu that lists all your pages on there! Organize and categorize your menu in a logical manner to make it easy for people to find where they want to go next.

Menus are usually found at the top of a page, and to a lesser extent, the left sidebar. It's very rare for a website to have its menu on the right sidebar. And I'll explain why:

Various eye-tracking studies and heatmaps have found that people scan websites in an F pattern. People usually start at the top left side of the page, slowing moving in a horizontal line to the right.

Then their eyes will move down and scan the next line. Then, they'll scan the rest of the content, usually on the left side.

Essentially, the reading pattern resembles the letter F. This is why most web designers put the logo and the main menu at the top of the page, so they can capture the user's attention. The right sidebar is largely ignored, so it's not a good place to put your menu in.

The 3-Second Rule

In web design, there is a 3-second rule. The idea is that it only takes approximately 3 seconds for your website visitors to look at your site and decide if they want to stay or not.

If you want to make your 3 seconds count, then you have to take note of the following suggestions:

- **Layout** – use plenty of white space to make your content stand out. White space helps make your site look clean and easy on the eyes. Make good use of headers and sub-headers as well as bullet points to make it easier for your visitors to scan your content.
- **Multimedia** – use images and videos to your advantage. Attractive photos usually capture people's attention than plain text. Whether you use stock photos or your own imagery, make sure it's relevant to the content.

Otherwise, your visitors will be scratching their heads trying to identify the relevance of your photo to your content. If you're selling physical items, you can use videos to show your product in action. With the right photos and videos, you can expect your sales and conversions to rise.

- **Minimize distractions** – if you've got too many things going on at once on your web pages, chances are people won't know what to do. They'll end up confused and annoyed. If you don't remove clutter on your site, then you're not using your 3 seconds to convince your visitors to stay longer on your site.

Implement these suggestions on your site, and I guarantee you'll find people staying on your site far beyond the 3-second time frame.

The Call To Action

Your website needs a call to action on every page and on every post. A call to action simply tells your audience what you want them to do on that particular page.

Think about why you created your website. You probably built it because you want to sell products, or you want people to buy a product you're recommending, or you want them to sign up to your mailing list, or you want them to request a quote for a particular service you offer.

Whatever your call to action is, you need to place it somewhere highly visible like at the top of your website, in your sidebar, at the beginning/middle/end of your article.

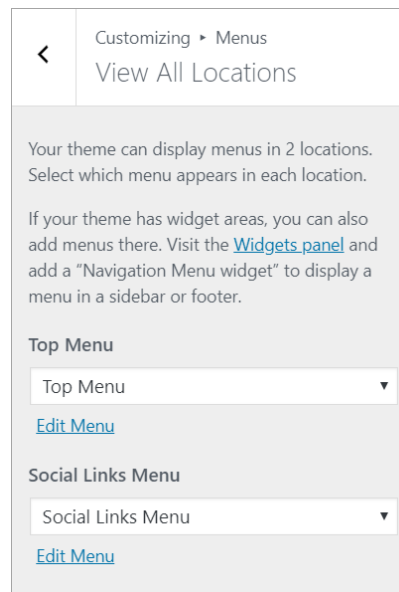
You need to make it stand out from the rest of your content, make it noticeable. The best calls to action will encourage people to take action right away.

How To Create Menus In WordPress

Creating navigation menus in WordPress is relatively easy. WordPress gives you plenty of options to customize your navigation menus. Depending on your theme, you can have 1, 2 or more menu locations.

In the default Twenty Seventeen theme, you can display menus in 2 locations (the top menu and the social links menu at the bottom).

You can find how many locations you can use in your theme by going to **Appearance > Customize > Menus**. This is what it looks like:



If you want to add a menu in another location, you're going to have to use widgets for that. *(If you remember, I showed you how to create a custom menu and widget to add legal pages in the previous chapter, Chapter No. 8).*

You can customize your menu all you want. Just remember that when you finally get bored with your current theme, and you want to use the latest theme from your favorite theme shop, then you may lose your current menu setup!

Changing themes will affect how your entire site looks, and that includes your menus.

Final Words

When creating your website, it's always important to remind yourself why you created it in the first place. You want people to buy from you, or follow your calls to action on your website.

Setting up high-converting product specific pages and using a clear navigation system on your site will help you win over customers.

Chapter 10: How To Start Collecting Payments And Build A Buyers List

You've finally reached the last chapter in this WordPress Success course. At this point, you already know a lot of things about WordPress. To round up this course, it's time for you to learn how to start collecting payments as well as build a buyers list.

But before we go into detail on how you can start collecting payments on your WordPress site, I'd like to let you know that collecting payments basically fall into two categories.

The first is you are collecting payments for products purchased from your eCommerce store. This means you need to build an online store first before you can start accepting payments.

The second is you are collecting payments for services rendered. This is particularly useful for those in the freelancing industry, or those selling only one or two products. They don't need to create a full store to receive payments. They can simply put a payment or buy now button on their website.

The reason I'm pointing this out is that because, in this chapter, I will be recommending a few plugins for each category.

I thought this was the best way to approach this topic since a full-featured eCommerce plugin like WooCommerce is overkill for someone who just wants to use their site to receive payments from clients.

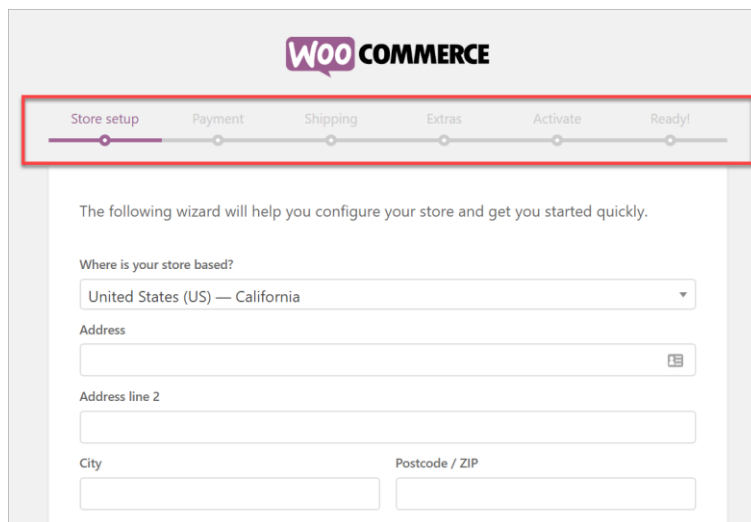
How To Collect Payments On An eCommerce Website

If you're running an online store and you want to build a secure payment gateway on your WordPress website, then you need an eCommerce plugin like **WooCommerce** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/woocommerce>) or **Easy Digital Downloads** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/easy-digital-downloads>).

Collecting payment with WooCommerce

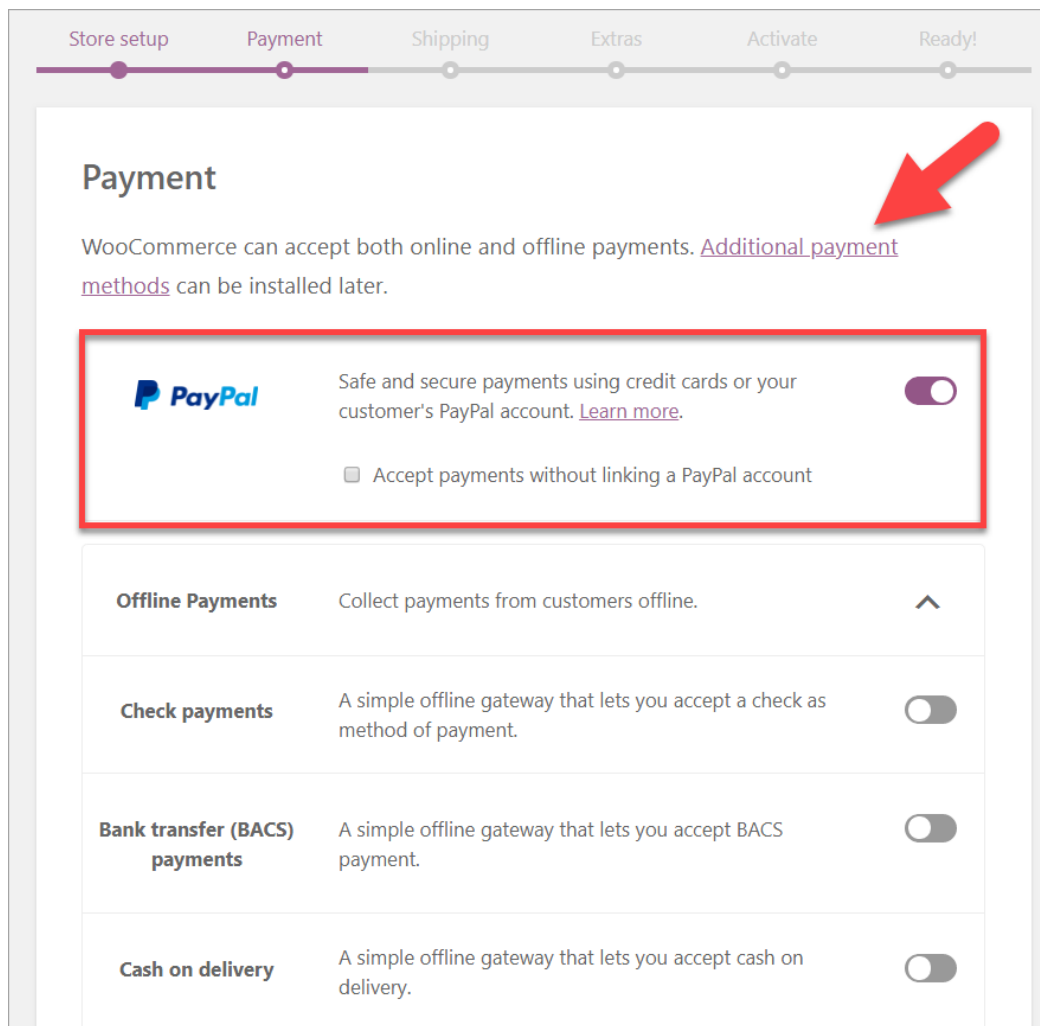
There are plenty of other eCommerce plugins, both free and premium, but WooCommerce is the most popular eCommerce plugin used on WordPress sites. It's so popular in fact that according to their plugin description, it powers 30% of all online stores!

Once you've installed WooCommerce on your site, the set-up wizard will walk you through the 6-step process. Here's how the **Store Setup** page looks like:



The next section is **Payment**. As you can see in the screenshot below, PayPal is activated by default.

You can choose to add other payment methods later on, but on this settings page, you can toggle on the settings for check payments, bank transfer payments, and cash on delivery.



If you click on the link which says *Additional payment methods*, you will be directed to a page where you can see the entire list of 80+ WooCommerce payment partners. The most popular ones are Stripe, Amazon Pay, Authorize.net, Square, WorldPay, 2GoCheckout, and Alipay, among others.

What's really great with WooCommerce is you can literally sell anything you want, whether it's physical or digital products. The plugin is highly versatile.

Once you've set up your store and connected your preferred payment gateways, receiving payments from your customers will be a breeze!

Collecting payments with Easy Digital Downloads

While WooCommerce is great for both digital and physical products, it can be quite complicated setting up an eStore full of digital products. This is where the **Easy Digital Downloads** plugin shine.

Selling digital products like eBooks, software, photos, videos, online courses, songs, documents, or any other type of media file is a breeze using this plugin.

Since digital products can be sold anywhere with Internet access, this plugin makes it easy for you to integrate the most common payment processors in the US and abroad. You can even accept Bitcoin payments!

How To Collect Payments On Your Blog or Non-eStore Website

If you're not using your WordPress site to build an online store, but you still want to receive payment, then it's certainly possible. You can still use WooCommerce, but as I mentioned earlier, there are far too many settings and options. You won't need to touch most of those if you're not building a store.

The simplest, easiest way to collect payments on your WordPress website is by putting a payment button on your website.

The easiest way to do this is by using a WordPress plugin, so you don't have to touch any code yourself.

As you probably already know, the most popular ways of receiving payments online are through PayPal and Stripe.

Receiving PayPal Payments

There are a number of plugins that will allow you to receive PayPal payments. Two of the most popular plugins are:

- **Subscriptions & Memberships for PayPal** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/subscriptions-memberships-for-paypal>) - if you're selling a subscription or membership on your site, then this plugin will be great for your particular business model.
- **WP Easy Paypal Payment Accept** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/wordpress-easy-paypal-payment-or-donation-accept-plugin>) – you can use this plugin to accept PayPal payments for a product, service or donation.

For donations, users can specify an amount they wish to pay. This is especially useful if you're accepting payments on behalf of a charitable institution, or you're accepting donations to help keep your site running.

Receiving Stripe Payments

Alternatively, you can sign up for Stripe and use it to process payments. Here are some plugins for you to consider:

- **WP Simple Pay** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/stripe>) – with this plugin, you don't need to set up a shopping cart to start accepting Stripe payments. Install this on your site, and you can easily configure it to receive one-time or recurring payments from your clients and customers.

- **Stripe Payments** (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/stripe-payments>) – you can accept credit card payments on your WordPress site using this simple plugin. You can put up payment or buy now buttons on your site via shortcode.

Why You Need To Build A Buyers List On Your WordPress Website

Building an email list of people you can market to later on is an important aspect of growing your business. People may visit your website, but a few minutes later, they'll leave and will probably never return to your site again.

As a business owner, you want to get a perfect conversion rate, that is, everyone who visits your website buys from you. But, as we all know, that is pretty much impossible.

So, we settle for the next best thing - getting the best conversion rates possible. And one of the easiest ways to achieve that is by building a buyers list.

To start building a list, you need to get your potential customers' email addresses by asking them to sign up for your mailing list. Today, people won't voluntarily give you their email address. They don't know you, and they don't trust you enough to give their personal details to you.

The most common technique website owners use is they offer an irresistible and highly valuable lead magnet to their website visitors in exchange for their email address.

Sounds brilliant, right? Well, it really is! And the more valuable the lead magnet, the higher the email opt-in rate.

For example, if you have an online store, you can give away a discount code or a free item for anyone who signs up for your list. You can tell them they'll get a coupon code every month or so.

Or you'll send them a free item when they buy your latest product. Think of something people will love, something that will be so enticing they'll have no choice but to put their email address on your sign-up form.

Here are a few reasons why an email list or buyers list is a must if you own a website:

1. **You can build a relationship with your list.** When people first land on your site, they have no idea who you are. But since you offered them something super valuable, they decided to sign up for your list. But just because they're on your list doesn't mean they trust you wholeheartedly.

To gain their full trust, you'd need to continue giving them value. You'd need to build a relationship. Ask for their input, let them know you read and reply to all email inquiries.

Make yourself approachable. Once you've built a relationship with your list, it's much easier to sell to them because you're not a total stranger to them.

2. **It's your very own property.** You have 100% control over your list. You can rebrand your site, or you can move to a new web host, but you can still carry your list over to your new site. Even if your website gets hacked, you'll still have your list provided you keep it safe in another location.
3. **Your subscribers have authorized you to send them emails.** They signed up for your list after all. But take note, sending emails is different from spamming. They signed up because you offered them something valuable. Continue offering them value, and they'll be more likely to buy whatever product you're recommending to them.

4. **You can drive traffic back to your website.** Every time you publish a new article or blog post on your website, or you release a new product, you can send out an email to your list letting them know of your update.

Of course, this advice is only feasible if you don't update every day. If you do update daily, then you may want to send out emails every few days or so. You'd hate to annoy your subscribers, and they can easily unsubscribe from your list.

5. **It's easier to convert your subscribers into fans.** If you nurture your list properly, that is, you give them something valuable in every email you send, then they're not going to be mere customers.

They'll be your fans. And when they become fans, they'll help spread the word about you and your business. They will become ambassadors of your brand, and they'll be willing to leave positive reviews for you on social media and various platforms.

Building a buyers list or a mailing list is a must for today's online businesses. And it's easy to build your list on your WordPress website. You don't need to code anything.

You can use themes and plugins to create beautiful and high-converting opt-in forms and landing pages.

Final Words

In this 10-part WordPress Success course, you've learned a lot of things about building a site on the WordPress platform.

From learning how to pick domain names and choosing the best web hosting service for your new site, to learning how to build a mailing list and collecting payments, I've just about covered it all.

However, as you already know, WordPress is a very complex platform. New features, new themes, and new plugins are developed every single day by WordPress developers who work tirelessly on making the platform the best it can possibly be.

So, don't stop learning here. Your WordPress journey has just begun!