
BUILD YOUR WORDPRESS WEBSITE

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SETTING
UP YOUR WORDPRESS SITE

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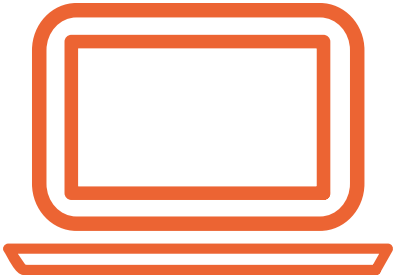


chapter one

Getting Started

Wordpress is a Content Management System (CMS): it allows you to create and maintain a website through an interface. It provides a site architecture and navigation system automatically. Beginners can learn how to maximize their Wordpress site within a few hours.

Because Wordpress is Open Source, meaning it was created from contributions from programmers all over the world, a collaboration that comes together easily, most of the time. It also means that each Wordpress theme is unique and has slightly different nuances. Because there is no charge for using Wordpress and it's fairly easy to customize, you should incur very little cost in creating your own website. Aside from buying your domain name and setting up your monthly web hosting, unless you purchase a premium theme, you can operate Wordpress at very little cost to you.



Wordpress is considered a web-based application that utilizes PHP and MySQL databases which usually run on Linux servers. As you probably guessed, PHP is a programming language, MySQL is a relational database, and Linux is an operating system.

Wordpress, because of its ease of use, and popularity with individuals and organizations, is the most used CMS. In 2016 there were more than 670 million websites using Wordpress as a CMS.

Another term you should know is CSS, a web page derived from multiple sources with a defined order of precedence where the definitions of any style element conflict. PHP or hypertext preprocessor is defined as an HTML-embedded scripting language that is used to write web pages. An example of PHP is a script that displays the date in a website.



By customizing a few key CSS terms, and editing PHP, you can easily alter the appearance and function of a Wordpress template, allowing you full control over your website. You'll learn more about customizations later.

Originally designed as a platform for blogs, Wordpress is a complete content management system that allows you to expand its capabilities to have a fully functional website. Once you master your Wordpress dashboard and understand the functions, you will be able to create as many websites and/or blogs as you like. You can change your content, color, and layout in just a few minutes, and you can replicate your efforts for each and every domain name you purchase.

FREE Wordpress or Self-Hosted Wordpress

Wordpress can be used in two different ways. If someone wishes to have a free blog, hosted on the Wordpress servers, they can sign up in just a few minutes by visiting www.Wordpress.com. When someone uses a Wordpress hosted blog their URL looks like this:



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www.WeLoveMarshmallows.wordpress.com



Users are able to personalize the first part of the URL, but as the files are hosted on Wordpress.com, that term (wordpress.com) remains part of the domain. The good news? It's free, and can be set up immediately. The down side? Besides having a funky URL, Wordpress is in control of the files. You cannot customize the CSS codes and you cannot override many of the Wordpress elements.

If you want to offer an opt-in for your web visitors to sign up for your enewsletter, you can't. If you want to modify the footer and remove the "hosted by Wordpress" at the bottom of the web page, you can't. If you want to use the version of Wordpress that is hosted by Wordpress it won't cost you any monthly hosting fees, but you also are limited to a blog, and you'll not have much success in customizing your blog.



The materials in this guide cover the self-hosted version of Wordpress, (www.wordpress.org).
When you host Wordpress on your own server, you can customize it any way you want.
That's what these materials will prepare you to do!

Step One :: Domain Name & Hosting

The first step in getting online is securing your domain name, or the address/URL you want for your website. Keep a couple things in mind. While it is tempting to grab your own name, or the name of your business, ask yourself if people know what you do, by the name you intend to use.

Let's say that your name is Harvey P. Jones. And you're an accountant. If you purchase the domain: www.harveypjones.com you will still face the problem of nobody knowing what you do. Consider alternatives like www.taxesbyharvey.com or www.bookkeepingbyharvey.com or something similar.



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In order to find out if the domain name you want is available, you can visit www.whois.com and find out if someone else owns it. If the name is available, you'll be prompted to purchase the domain right on the spot.

We caution you to take a different approach.

Whereas you would normally be limited to purchase domains with .com, .net, .info, .biz or .org, things have changed. You can now purchase domains with many of the following extensions:

.space .rocks .me .pro .pw .club .fun .mobi .online .site .tech .top .xyz .website
AND A FEW MORE! If you can't secure the exact domain you want, look for variations and choose the one that will offer the least confusion for your prospects.

Sometimes these additional domain extensions will allow you more freedom in securing the domain name you want. With so many websites, it's getting difficult to find original and available domain names that are available for purchase, so get creative and head over to your domain registrar.



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OK, What? :: Domain Registration



Purchasing a domain name is done through a registrar. You pay a fee to own a domain for a specified amount of time. First, purchase your domain for more than one year, because search engines don't pay much attention to domains that could be seen as "temporary," and if you're only planning on owning it for a year, they consider that a "temporary" transaction.

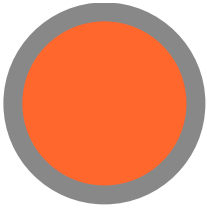
Once you purchase the domain, you have to contract with a hosting company to host your files on their server. The easiest way to handle all of this is to purchase your domain and set up hosting at the same time. One of the easier company to work with is Hostgator. They can be used for domain registration and web hosting. They typically charge about \$15 for ".com" registrations per annual basis, and about \$12 per month, thereafter, for monthly web hosting.



A few quick words about Hostgator – you will pay about \$12 per month whether you have ONE website on their servers, or 500 websites on their servers. They also provide FREE email with your domains, unlike many hosting companies who charge you one fee for monthly file hosting, and another fee for using their email boxes.



Another reason we recommend hosting with Hostgator is that it has one of the easiest control panels (also referred to as **Cpanel**) to work with, and they have an instant Wordpress Install that cannot be beat. (The other option is to do a manual installation of Wordpress using ftp, which is not difficult if you have experience).



If you have already purchased your domain name, and are now ready to host it somewhere, we still recommend Hostgator. Because they like to be a one-stop-shop, they will not charge new customers for transferring a domain to Hostgator.

To be clear, you do not have to use the same registrar and hosting company. Here is what happens if you purchase your name from REGISTRAR XYZ, and then host with HOSTING COMPANY ABC...you have to change your domain name servers (DNS) to those of your hosting company.

This requires you to 1) set up your hosting account and find out your host's domain name server settings (DNS). Then 2) log into your registrar account (the company from which you purchased your domain name) and change the domain name servers to match your hosting company domain name servers. What does the domain name server typically look like? Something like this: NS2320.hostgator.com and NS2321.hostgator.com.



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Pretty much every domain registrar we've ever worked with has a similar process for updating or changing domain name servers (DNS). It is very simple to do, and if you get confused when looking at your account dashboard of your domain registrar account, simply contact their customer support, or search the Q&A section of their site, and look for "changing DNS settings."



Making the change is not difficult to do, however it can take between 24-48 hour in domain propagation time. (We've never seen this take more than 2 hours, however every registrar is different). Not the end of the world, it just means your website will not be visible until the domain is propagated.

If you purchase your domain and hosting with Hostgator at the same time, your domain should be visible almost immediately. That's because when you purchase your domain AND hosting from the same company...it automatically sets your DNS for you.

Once you have the domain registered (through the registrar), and you have purchased website hosting (through a hosting company), it will be time to install Wordpress. This is an extremely simple process, especially if the hosting company you have selected offers a Wordpress install feature.



**This concludes the introduction.
Coming up:: Installing Wordpress**