How To Get Your First Website Online in Less Than 24 Hours

Get Your Ideas Online For The World To See

GET YOUR WEBSITE ONLINE IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS

This report will show you how to use WordPress to get a website published online in less than 24 hours. Why WordPress? The short answer is that is the fastest, easiest way to start and maintain a website. It's a system that is simple to get started and easy to keep going—a method that makes blog post number #1000 as easy as blog post #1.

Here are the ideas and steps we are going to cover in this short report:

- WordPress basics.

- Getting a domain name and web host.

- Installing WordPress.

- Changing the theme.

- Creating your first post.

WORDPRESS BASICS

Before we start on the site, let's cover some WordPress basics. WordPress is an open-source program available for free. Open-source programs are different from commercial programs because the underlying code can be worked on by anyone. An organization called Automattic maintains the WordPress project, and the code is licensed by GPLv2 from the Free Software Foundation. Software programmers and regular users alike contribute code, ideas, suggestions and improvements to both the core program as well as add-ons like themes and plugins.

WordPress uses a database to manage your blog posts. Previous to programs like WordPress, you had to create a page, enter your text, and upload the page to your site. That's doesn't sound so bad when you have 10 pages. However, when you have 1000 pages, it gets out of control. The database working behind the scenes of WordPress means you can easily add, copy, search, or delete blog posts. You can also add pictures, videos and audios very easily—all without knowing any programming.

GET A DOMAIN AND WEB HOST

To make it all run, you need the WordPress program and a place to host the files. A host is just a computer that holds your files so that people on the internet can access your content.
There are companies that specialize in hosting—you may have heard of services like GoDaddy, famous for their Superbowl commercials. It costs around $10/ month to pay for hosting. A great feature they offer is "one-click" installation of WordPress.

You also need a domain name. This is your website name. You can purchase it from the service at the same time you sign up for web hosting—the cost is about $12/ year.

We are going to use HostGator (http://www.hostgator.com) web hosting service for this report. Go to HostGator.com and look for the selection "View Web Hosting Plans." Select the "Baby Plan" and choose to pay monthly. Click "Order Now." Now you choose the domain name. Make it easy to remember. Many domains are taken. Get creative and think of different options. You can also go to sites like BustAName.com and NameBoy.com that will help you come up with different ideas.

Write in the username you want, a security pin and your billing data. Choose Paypal or credit cards as you method of payment. Check off the Terms and Conditions box, and click "Create Account." HostGator will send you a confirmation email that contains important links. Don't lose it!

Open the email and click the links to the control panel. Known as cPanel, it has everything you need to manage your website behind the scenes. Login in with the username and password from the email.

Look for the Software/ Services section and find the "Quick Install" selection. Click that and look for WordPress. Click WordPress and select your domain name from the dropdown arrow. Plug in your email address and create a title for your site. You can change it later. Click "Install Now." The progress bar will show you the status. When it gets done, write down the username and password and save it for later.

Now your website is ready to use, right! Well, almost. At this point you need to wait a few hours for the Internet to find it. It might only be a couple hours, but more likely will take four to eight hours for the web address to "lock in" so you can use it. Get a nice bottled water or other beverage, take a break and come back later.

Ready to go? OK, type in your website name and it should come up. If not, wait some more and try again. Congratulations, you have published your website to the World Wide Web! You are looking at a basic WordPress installation. This is the bare bones model which we will shape to your liking.

CHANGE THE THEME

The first thing you'll want to do is use a different theme. "Themes" change the look and feel of your site. Each one modifies the design to display different colors, fonts and details. There are hundreds of free themes available at the WordPress Themes site (http://theme.WordPress.com/).

To change the theme, you don't even need to leave your site. Login in to the Admin dashboard. Look to the left for the "Appearance" selection. Click "Appearance," then "Themes" and "Add New." From here you can use the "Feature Filter" to search for themes by color, layout and features. At the top, you can also click to view "Recently Updated," "Newest" and "Featured" themes.

Notice that you can Preview each theme to see how your site will look. Look for themes that fit the personality of your site. If your site is to showcase your avant-garde art, for example, you could go one of two ways: Find an edgy theme that matches your art, or choose a minimal theme that better showcases the art without stealing attention.

It may take some experimentation. The good thing is you can change themes lickety-split, and there are many to choose from. You can get an idea of some of the best themes on the market by looking in the search engines for "top Wordpress themes" or "best Wordpress themes."

PUBLISH YOUR FIRST POST

There are two types of documents in WordPress. The program starts you off with a sample of each type. There are "Pages," which are static documents used for support material like contact information. "Posts" are the other type, and are the core of your blog. Posts are published one after another in a series, each one time and date-stamped at the time of publication. This system allows you to create an ongoing "web log" of the topics you want to talk about. In fact, the word blog comes from "web log."

From the Admin menu, click "Posts." Go ahead and delete the default Post that comes with WordPress, called "Hello World." Now click "Posts" again and then "Add New." Enter an interesting title in the Title box, and then move down into the Body section. Type the body text of your message.

At this point you should choose a "Category" for your post. On the right hand side, you'll see the Category section. Think of Categories as the highest level of categorization of your content. For example, if your post is about how to maintain a checkbook, your Category might be "Finance" or "Personal Finance." Click "Add New Category" and enter your choice.

After that, move down below to the Tags section. Here you can categorize your content even further by entering tags with more detail. For the checkbook example above, you might enter "Checking," "Checkbook," "Balance Checkbook," "Money" or "Expenses." You can enter in quite a few, but try to keep the total between two and seven. Using ten or more tags gets unwieldy fast.

Now add a "Featured Image," which is used by WordPress to display an image for blog excerpts, thumbnails, category listings and more. Click "Set Featured Image," and choose "Upload Files." You can either drop and image there, or click "Select Files" and browse your computer for the right file.

To review, you've entered the title, the main text, set the Category and Tags, and selected a Featured Image. Go ahead and click "Publish." After it finishes, click "View Post." Good job--you've published your first WordPress post on the Web!

NEXT STEPS

We've just scratched the surface of what WordPress can do. You can use it to sell products from your site, display a portfolio of artwork, raise money for a campaign and much more. It's amazing how far technology has advanced, and you can get very powerful software like WordPress for free. As you have seen, the hosting and domain fees are very low as well.

To get a better idea of the full scope of features and options in WordPress, check out our **"Crash Course In WordPress for Everyday People."** This comprehensive report goes into more detail about Themes, Plugins, Site Structure, Customization, SEO, and much more. It is everything a beginning WordPress user needs to get a solid foundation in the world's most popular program for building websites on the Internet.