WordPress Websites For Dumb-Dumbs

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This document has been modified slightly from its original form.

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Are you ready to create a **WordPress website** ? There is no reason why you can't go from complete beginner to website owner in very short time, even if you've never built a website in your life!

A bit of background first on what exactly WordPress is:

WordPress is a suite of computer programs that enable you to set up a website on the internet. It is completely free.

It works like this: You sign up for a hosting account and install WordPress with an easy-install through the host. This process literally takes minutes and then you can customize your brand new site.

The only thing you need to pay for is hosting and you can get that at a very affordable rate – often less than $10 per month.

Just to clarify the difference in this report we are talking about using WordPress.org and NOT WordPress.com. WordPress.com is for blogs only, WordPress.org is for blog and websites that you host on your own domain. Very important distinction there.

If you want more information on WordPress go to the main site WordPress.org. There you will find all kinds of documentation on how the software works as well as many add-ons that we'll get into as we go through this report.

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Let's get to it with your first lesson:

Hosting Your WordPress Website

Step 1: Finding a host for your WordPress Website

I'm going to recommend only one host to you. There are hundreds out there but this is the one I have used for years and their hosting and customer service is excellent. Of course feel free to look around or if you're ready to just get going you can take my recommendation below.

Sign up for your hosting at Bluehost:

Here's what you need to know about choosing any host if you want to install WordPress and have no programming experience:

- Host needs to have cPanel
- Host needs to have WordPress one-click install through Fantastico or Simple Scripts
- Multiple Domain name hosting is ideal (because once you've got the bug you'll want to make more than one website!)

Ok, so you've got your host. Next you need to follow these steps:

1. Log into your control panel.

2. Scroll to the Software/Services tab and click on Simple Scripts. NOTE: In Bluehost you can click Simple Scripts OR WordPress

Note: If you use another host you may need to use Fantastico instead. Please check with your hosting company for the details on how to do a quick install.

3. Choose WordPress under Blogs to install, click install, choose your blog location, agree to

the terms and conditions and then click 'Complete'

4. Congrats! You've got yourself a WordPress installation.

After you install your WordPress site you'll need to log in to go any further. Your login will be given to you upon installation – make sure you save it for later. Then, whenever you want to edit your website you will need to basically log into it and start working in WordPress.

Now, before you go too much further I recommend you take at least an hour or two to PLAY with your new software. Click around, look around, create a post, make a page, see if you can make a link or upload an image. All these things are possible and so much more. In fact, there are so many things you can do I won't talk about them all in this report as I don't want to overwhelm you.

But – I also don't want to underwhelm you! I want you to understand how powerful and fantastic the program you just installed really is! To help you along, let's do a quick overview of the different sections of WordPress:

The image you see to the left is on the left side of every page inside your WordPress dashboard. If you click on any of the words you see in the image you'll get a drop-down menu with more options. Let's go over what each general section does.

Dashboard – Click this to bring you to the main page of your WordPress. Here you will see various items relating to your WordPress site. It will give you a summary of your posts and pages, comments, etc. You will also see links to the WordPress.org site, recent comments, incoming links, etc. You can customize this page.

Posts – If you're going to set up a blog on your site this is where you create, view and edit your posts.

Media – You can use the media section to upload images, videos and documents.

Links – If you want to use the links 'widget' so you can link out to other people this is where you would fill in the links.

Pages – This is where you create, view and edit your pages.

Comments – Here you can view all the comments you've received, check your spam comments, edit or delete comments.

My Theme – This is actually part of my Builder theme – not everyone will see this! It is what I was talking about when I said some themes have custom settings. They will show up on your sidebar in some form like the 'My Theme' you see to the left.

Appearance – This is where you upload a new theme, you customize your widgets and you can also set up a custom menu. You can also work in the css and php files if you have some advanced coding knowledge.

Plugins – We've yet to talk plugins but here is where you can upload and activate them.

Users – Lets you set users to your site or update current users.

Tools – Import or export WordPress files.

Settings – You can set options about how people read your blog, how many posts they see, how the permalinks are set, etc. Any plugins you install will often show up here too.

That's STEP 1. You can rest here if you want but I suspect you're probably rearing to go and ready to move on to Step 2, Setting Up a Static Homepage

Step 2: Setting Up a Static Homepage

The main difference between a website and a blog is that the homepage is static on a website where the homepage is always changing on a blog.

This report focuses on the setup of a website. To do that you need to know how to set up a static homepage. It's a quick and easy process. Here's the steps:

1. Add a page called 'Home' by clicking on 'Pages' > 'Add New' from the left menu. Enter 'Home' into the title and then click 'Publish'.

2. In the same fashion as step 1, add a page called 'Blog'.

3. Next, click on 'Settings' > 'Reading' from the left menu.

4. Now you'll need to select the radio button that says 'A static page'. Set the front page to your 'Home' page and the blog page to your 'Blog' page. Make sure you save your changes by clicking the blue button.

Now you've got a static home page!

Step 3: Choosing and Installing Your Theme

We've covered how to choose a host and we've installed WordPress in the last lesson.

Next we are going to talk about choosing and installing a theme for your new site!

What is a WordPress theme or template?

WordPress comes with a default 'theme'. A theme is what sets the layout of your website. It is a bunch of advanced php and css coding that allows you to have a more customized look.

There are literally thousands of themes to choose from. You can choose from a current selection of over 1200 on WordPress.org database here:
http://WordPress.org/extend/themes/

Here's what I recommend you do before you take ANY time looking for a theme:
--> **Decide what you need it for.**

Get a very good idea in your mind what you want from a theme and your search will be much, much easier!

Here are some questions you should ask yourself, copy these to a notepad file on your computer then print and answer them before you start your search:
- Do I want a blog only?
- Do I want a WordPress website only?
- Do I want a blog + website?
- Do I want a magazine style theme?
- Do I want a professional look?
- Do I want an amateur look? (some people will want this!)
- Am I willing to pay for a theme?
- Do I want a free theme?
- Do I want to customize the header?
- What colors do I want my theme to be?
- Do I want two columns or three?
- Do I want a right side column?
- Do I want a left side column?

Now that you have all those questions answered (and maybe a few more that you think of on your own), you're ready to go searching for your theme!

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RECOMMENDED THEME SOURCES

FREE:
WordPress - You can search a huge database of free themes here
http://www.WordPress.org

Smashing Magazine - I love the graphics and themes you can find on this site for free. Search their 'freebies' section or use the search function.
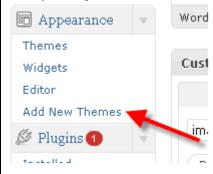http://www.smashingmagazine.com

WooThemes - Beginner to advanced themes, great style.
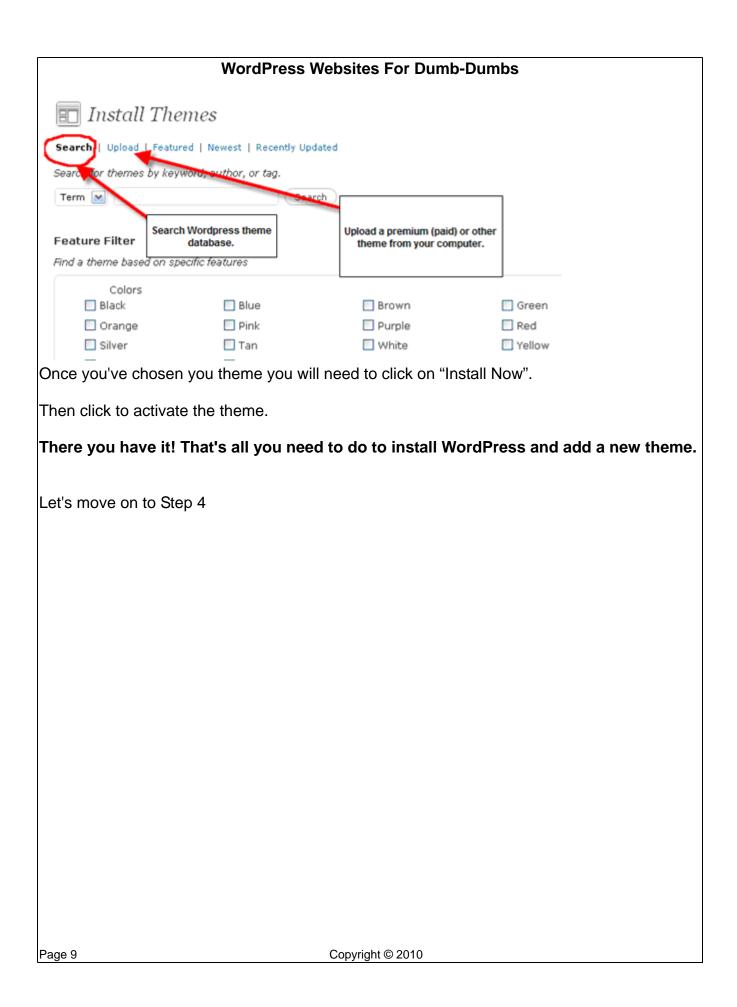http://www.marketersmojo.com/recommends/woothemes

WPCode - This is a beautiful theme just for websites, no blog. Beginner friendly.
http://WordPress.bustatheme.com/coda/

Ok that will get you started. Just make sure you don't spend forever choosing a great theme! You can always switch later, the main thing for now is to get moving :)

Once you've chosen you're theme you'll need to install it. To do this you need to log into your WordPress dashboard and then click 'Add New Theme' under the 'Appearance' tab on the left sidebar.

From there you can choose to search the WordPress.org database for free themes or you can upload your chosen theme (in zip format) from your computer and install it.

Once you've chosen you theme you will need to click on "Install Now".

Then click to activate the theme.

There you have it! That's all you need to do to install WordPress and add a new theme.

Let's move on to Step 4

Step 4: Customizing Your Theme

Next we are going to talk about customizing your WordPress Website.

Almost everyone who installs their own WordPress theme will at least want to customize the header. How you do this will be dependent on the theme in question. Then you may want to customize other parts of your theme like the sidebar, the footer and the colors.

Many themes will come with settings that allow you to customize the entire site making it completely unnecessary for you to have any previous coding or design experience. I highly recommend these if you are a beginner. The default WordPress theme is actually a great beginner theme. You could also have a look at your options for premium themes (some are listed in Step 2) as they will often have many customization options.

The best thing about buying premium themes is that they almost always come with user support as well as forums and files to make installation and customization easy for you.

Other items to customize:

Sidebar - Many people will want to remove the 'Meta' information that is added to some WordPress themes by default. You may also want to add other elements such as an email opt-in and RSS Feed info to your sidebar. The easiest way to make changes to the sidebars is to use widgets. Almost all new themes are 'widget-friendly'. You simply click on 'Widget' under 'Appearance' in the left menu of your WordPress software to see what options you have for customizing with widgets.

Background Color – Again, some free and premium themes let you change the background color within the theme settings. Others may require some custom coding. I recommend you go with the ones that don't require coding. I know how to custom code but I'll always choose the easier path if you let me. There are also many themes out there that now offer various color options. This would mean that you don't need to make any color changes yourself and can use the theme 'as is'. Woo Themes is a great choice if you are looking for themes with different colors.

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Important Information About Permalinks

Changing permalinks is very important, almost crucial, to your search engine results. Please make sure you do this step every time you set up a new website or blog!
The first thing you do is go to 'Settings' > 'Permalinks'. Then, under 'Custom Structure' enter whatever custom structure you choose.

What that does is change your website page and post links from a bit of meaningless code to actual WORDS. If this doesn't make sense right now just follow the steps anyway, you'll thank me for this tip later!

Here's the one I use:
/%post_id%/%postname%/

The permalink structure only uses numbers for your blog posts, not your pages. Pages will show up like this:
http://www.yourdomain.com/your-page-title

If you use that permalink it will make your website post URLs show up with a number ID and words. For example, a real page on my site with this is setup is:
http://www.marketersmojo.com/1059/how-to-start-your-own-blog/

The neat part about this is that you don't NEED the words. You can just use the numbers and people will get to your post. So for the example above, all you'd need is this link:
http://www.marketersmojo.com/1059

This is handy because it really shortens your blog post URLs and is great for social media sites like Twitter and Facebook.

You can enter other Permalink structures if you prefer such as this one:

/%postname%/

That one will simply show up with your post words.

There are other pre-set permalinks you can choose and some advanced options to add

categories if you choose to get into this more. Check WordPress.org if you want to really study up on permalinks.

WordPress has gotten really advanced in the way you can customize it over the last few years. When I first wrote this report you largely had to customize a WordPress theme by digging into the css and php files. That's not always a challenge the typical beginner is ready to take on.

But now there are so many easy ways to customize WordPress. Depending on the theme you choose you may never have to touch the theme files at all.

Step 5: Stopping The Spam

Oh spam – how we love to hate you!

Today we are going to talk about stopping the spam on your WordPress Website.

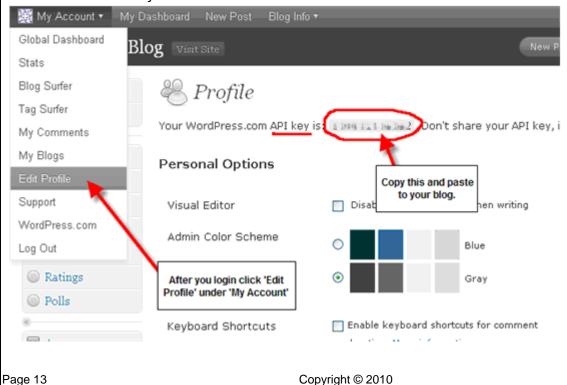Spam is a problem everywhere and blogs or blogsites get no reprieve.

What you need to do to solve this is install a plugin to prevent spam. The one I'm going to recommend here is Akismet.

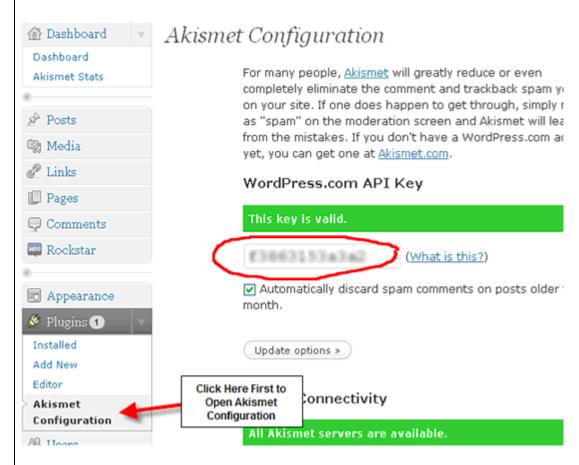Using Akismet will solve about 99.9% of any problems you might have with spam on your blogsite.

How do you install it?

Well the first thing you will need to know is that Akismet is automatically installed in your plugins section of your blog. Click on 'Plugins' from the left menu bar, find Akismet and click 'activate'.

The next thing you will need to do is get an API key from WordPress.com. This part is a little confusing because you can actually host a blog at WordPress.com but that is not what you want to do here. You just need to go to WordPress.com, sign up for a free account, go to your account settings to get the API key and then go back to your WordPress website (which is installed on your domain name at your hosting account like we've been talking here all along) and enter the API key.

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Now log back into your WordPress website admin area and follow these directions:

Once the API key is entered your Akismet spam protector is all ready to go. Then whenever you want to see what lovely people spammed you, just check the comments section and click Spam and you'll see how well Akismet filtered them out.

The only thing I would say is check the spam filter every once in a while. Spammers are getting smarter slowly and they sometimes are good at getting their comments approved. By the same token because they are so similar sometimes non-spammers get caught in the filter too.

Step 6: Adding Plugins

We talked about plugins in the last step while installing Akismet, your spam protector.

The thing to understand about WordPress is that it's open source. Open source means that the program is free. It also usually means that it's open for editing and additions. WordPress is really a community project where many programmers work on little software add-ons called plugins.

WordPress supports this fully. In fact it also lists these plugins right on it's site. Currently there are over 12,000 available!

You can see them here:
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/

Now, on to adding those plugins once you choose them.

Let's go through the steps again:

1. Choose your plugin.

2. Click the 'Add New' link under 'Plugins' from the left side menu:

3. Next choose how you want to add a plugin. You can search the plugin directory if you don't know exactly what you want, or even if you do but don't have it on your computer. You can also upload a plugin from your computer. You would normally do this when you have a plugin your paid for. An example would be Action Popup.

4. Once you've found your plugin you want to install click 'Install', then make sure you click 'Activate Plugin' to activate the plugin.

Step 7: Adding Content That Attracts

So you've got your website up and running. Ready to go and waiting for traffic. Not so fast! It's essential for you to add great content that draws and keeps readers on your site. Here are some tips for you.

First Tip:

Write content that people are looking for and that is targeted to your website's purpose. Fill your website with high-quality information that serves a purpose and provides high value at the same time. People come to the internet looking for information, entertainment or to find the answer to a problem - do any combination of these three things on a regular basis and you're sure to have a hit on your hands.

Second Tip:

Decide with a clear set of goals what you want to use your website for. Will it be to draw traffic to a service? To make money through affiliate marketing? To sell your own products? Or a bit of all of the above.

Third Tip:

Get out there and let people know your website exists! I'm not going to cover the dozens and dozens of ways to get traffic here. You need to build a plan you can follow and one that works for you. But know this --> just because you build a website that doesn't mean people will automatically find it. You now need to shout it from the rooftops!

A few ways to get your website found are:
- Advertising
- Website Directories
- Leave Comments on Blogs
- Links from other sites
- Writing articles for other websites
- Link from your products
- Your Email Signature
- Social Media Sites like Twitter, Facebook, etc.
- Guest Blog at Popular Blogs
- Partner Up With another High Profile Website Owner

Set your goals, stick to them and you'll start to see your efforts pay off as you build a website that people love to come back to again and again.

So that's it for how to get your website going !

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Geek-Speak Dictionary

Blog — A website that consists of 'posts' and usually is formatted with the most recent content at the top. Also typically allows comments and chronicles some sort of process, event or journey.

Browser — An 'internet browser' is a piece of software that displays website pages that are available on the internet.

Cpanel — Control panel for your website hosting. In the control panel you can manage your site files, check website statistics, create email, register new domains and of course install WordPress!

CSS — Cascading Style Sheets (css) is a type of code that tells internet browsers to repeat certain actions on all pages of your website. WordPress themes comes with a main Stylesheet which is usually named stylesheet.css

Domain Name — A website address that starts with www and ends in .com or another extension such as .org, .net, .ca, etc.

Domain Registrar — Every domain name must be registered with the ICANN (International Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers). Domain registrars are the brokers who have permission to register your chosen domain with ICANN.

Fantastico — A function in your cpanel that allows you to install various programs onto your web hosting account.

Footer — The 'footer' of your website is typically the bottom portion that stays the same throughout your entire site. It often contains a copyright notice and links to privacy policies.

Header — The 'header' of your website is typically the top portion that stays the same. It usually contains a logo and a navigation menu so people can find their way around your site.

Hosting — Your domain must be connected to hosting in order to be active on the internet. Hosting is a little bit like monthly 'internet rent'.

HTML — Coding that is read by 'browsers' so they can display a website.

Page — Content on your site that is typically static.
Permalinks — A function in WordPress that allows you to set how your website URL is displayed. (See URL def.)

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PHP
- Coding that is read by 'browsers' so they can display dynamic content on a website.

Plugin
- An add-on to WordPress. It's a little software program you add to increase ability with WordPress. Plugins do almost anything you can think of from spam protection, to tracking bad links, to tracking visitors, to adding functions to the software and more.

Premium Themes
- WordPress themes that you pay for. They usually come with forum support and are developed by professional designers who generally have greater experience than the designers of free themes.

Post
- A page on your WordPress website that often is listed by date, in chronological order and includes comments.

RSS Feed
- Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds are used to deliver content on an automatic basis, common for blogs, news sites, etc. Users will subscribe to an RSS feed via a feed reader or even through email and are automatically notified through their chosen method when new content is posted.

Sidebar
- Another section of your website that typically stays static. The sidebar will sometimes include a website navigation so people can find other pages. It will also contain RSS feed links, newsletter signups, advertising, etc.

Simple Scripts
- A function in your cpanel that allows you to install various programs on your web hosting account.

URL
- Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is the location of a page on the internet. Every page on the internet has a unique URL. Every site can have an unlimited number of URLs, one per page.

Widget
- A function in WordPress that allows you to drag and drop content in different forms into various sections of your site. Typically in the sidebar but some custom themes allow widgets to be setup in many places on the site.

WordPress
- Software program for blogging, also used for website and content management sites.

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Recommended Plugins List

Akismet – Already comes installed on WordPress. Comment spam protection.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/akismet/

All in One SEO – This plugin allows you to customize your page titles, descriptions (these show up on Google) and keywords.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/all-in-one-seo-pack/

Broken Link Checker – Will check all your content for broken links.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/broken-link-checker/

Comment Love – Make your readers love you by adding a link to their blog when they comment.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/commentluv/

Disqus – A comment system for your blog which connects a community of people with accounts.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/disqus-comment-system/

Do Follow – This plugin removes the nofollow tag that is standard on WordPress installations. It will give your readers Google love for commenting!
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/sem-dofollow/

Featured Content Gallery – Adds a rotating image gallery wherever you want on your WordPress site.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/featured-content-gallery/

Grunion Contact Form – Adds a contact form to your blog or site.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/grunion-contact-form/

Let It Snow – Fun plugin that makes it look like it's snowing on your site!
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/let-it-snow/

Search Meter – Keeps track of what people are searching for while on your blog or site.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/search-meter/

Sexy Bookmarks – This allows your readers to easily use social bookmarking or social media to promote your site.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/sexybookmarks/

Tweetable – Tweets out your blog posts automatically.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/tweetable/

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WordPress Facebook Like – Lets your readers 'Like' your page or post so it gets posted on their Facebook Likes list.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/WordPress-facebook-like/

WordPress Editorial Calendar – Puts your posts in calendar format in your dashboard so you can plan out your writing. Love this one!
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/editorial-calendar/

Wp-Polls – Allows you to run polls on your website. User can view the results.
http://WordPress.org/extend/plugins/wp-polls/