Working with WordPress

A Simple Guide to Creating Websites & Blogs

By Janine Warner

About Janine Warner

Janine Warner's best-selling books and videos about the Internet have won her an international following and earned her speaking and consulting engagements around the world.

She is the creator of DigitalFamily.com, a full-service interactive design and training agency that offers web and mobile design, content strategy, and internet marketing services.

Janine's skills as a "techy translator" helped her land the deal for her first book in 1996. Since then, she's written or coauthored more than 25 books about the Internet, including Web Sites For Dummies, Mobile Web Design For Dummies, Social Media Design For Dummies, and every edition of Dreamweaver For Dummies. She's also created more than 100 hours of training videos on content strategy, web design, and Internet trends for creativeLIVE.com, Lynda.com and KelbyTraining.

Janine has taught courses at the University of Miami and the University of Southern California. She's also been a guest lecturer at more than 20 other universities in the U.S., Latin America, and Europe. In 2002, she helped create an Internet Literacy program for high school students in Central America that has reached more than 500,000 students.

She is a member of the Television Academy's Interactive Media Peer Group and has served as a judge in the Interactive Television Emmy Awards, the Knight News Challenge, the Arroba de Oro Latin American Internet Awards, and the World Summit Mobile Awards.

Janine began her career as a reporter in Northern California and recognized early that the Internet would transform traditional media. Her early Internet projects included managing communications between a creative team in California and a team of programmers in Siberia, designing a virtual store for Levi Strauss, and building one of the first newspaper websites in the United States for the Pulitzer Prize-winning Point Reyes Light Newspaper.

In 1998, her experience as a journalist and Internet consultant, combined with her fluency in Spanish, took her to The Miami Herald, as the Online Managing Editor. A year later, she was promoted to Director of New Media. She left that position to serve as Director of Latin American Operations for CNET Networks.

Since 2001, Janine has run her own business as an author, Internet consultant, and speaker. Over the years, she's helped one of Russia's largest publishing companies to develop a strategic internet plan; traveled to New Delhi to speak at Internet World India; and worked with media companies and other organizations in Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua El Salvador, Mexico, and Spain. (She speaks fluent Spanish.).

When she's not traveling, she is based in Southern California where she lives with her husband, David LaFontaine, manages DigitalFamily.com and occasionally takes a break to run on the beach.

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Introduction

So you've decided to design your website or blog using WordPress, the super popular open-source content management system (CMS). Good for you!

WordPress is a fantastic tool for creating websites and blogs, but don't take my word for it. More than 20 percent of all of the websites on the Internet were created with WordPress. That's more than 70 million websites created with this amazing program.

This guide provides instructions for creating and updating a website's design with WordPress. You'll also find tips for choosing the best web hosting service, registering a domain name, and recommendations for the size and formatting options you should use for images.

{ Web Hosting & Domain Registration }

Web Hosting

WordPress.com vs WordPress.org

The first question you need to answer when you create a WordPress site is how you plan to host your site. You have two main choices: WordPress.com or WordPress.org.

Should you set up your site at WordPress.com? Many people are confused by the difference between WordPress.com and WordPress.org, but essentially, WordPress.com is a 'hosted' web solution, which means they take care of everything. You sign up for an account at WordPress.com and the hosting is taken care of. That makes WordPress super easy to set up, but there are some limitations. WordPress.com offers a free level of service that includes their advertising on your pages. You have the option of paying pay a fee to have the ads removed (although it's less than you'd generally pay for a web host if you choose to go with WordPress.org).

There are other limitations at WordPress.com, some of which you can get around by paying a fee. For example, you can add your own custom CSS if you upgrade your WordPress.com account. Other limitations, you can't get around. The biggest one is that you can only use WordPress themes and plugins that are approved by WordPress.com. This is one of the main reasons that many people choose the WordPress.org option — it enables them to use any of the themes and plugins in the extensive open source community of WordPress. But there are always tradeoffs. WordPress.com sets this restriction to keep things safe. In the wild-world of open source development, some themes and plugins are problematic.

So the final decision comes down to this: Play it safe and live with the restrictions of WordPress.com, or enjoy all of the options in the WordPress world and set up web hosting with a service that uses the WordPress.org version of WordPress.

Tip: You can always start in the relative safety of WordPress.com and then move your site to another host in the future.

WordPress.org and Web Hosting

If you choose WordPress.org, you then have to decide where you want to host your website, which means you'll pay a monthly or annual fee to any web hosting company, usually less than $20 per month, unless you choose a premium web host.

If you set up an account with a web host, you'll need to take care of all the maintenance of WordPress on your own — that means you have to do your own backups, upgrades, and make sure your site doesn't get hacked. The trade off? You'll have far more control and more options along with that responsibility.

Your first choice is which web hosting service you want to use.

Choosing a web hosting service

Before the world can see your website, you have to publish it on a web server accessible to the World Wide Web. Most web designers pay a web hosting service for server space and then register a domain name to make it easy for visitors to find their site.

Domain registration and hosting are two separate services, but how the two work together is often confusing to new web designers, in part, because many companies offer both services. Whether you pay one company for both services or you use two separate companies, it's helpful to understand how they are different.

Here's a metaphor to help you understand the difference between web hosting and domain registration.

Think of a web hosting company that provides a web server kind of like a company that rents apartments. **A web server is a place where your website can live.**

Think of **a domain name like your phone number**, one that you can transfer (or forward) to a new apartment if you ever want to move your site.

Web hosting varies the way apartments do, and most providers offer different levels of service. When you sign up for basic web hosting at a new company like Dreamhost or Hostgator, you get a cheap apartment, one that is big enough to have a few friends over. **(Expect to pay about $4 to $20 per month for basic web hosting.)**

When you sign up for premium dedicated server at a company like Rackspace.com, you got a much nicer apartment that can handle a lot more visitors, but you pay for the view — or in this case, the faster, more reliable service. **(Expect premium hosting services to start at $50 to $200 per month.)**

Essentially, all web hosting services let you upload your own website to their web server or install a WordPress blog, much like you would furnish your own apartment and hang art on the walls. (You'll find my criteria for choosing the best web host below).

You can use the same company to register your domain name and host your website, or you can use two different companies. If you use two different companies, then you have to essentially transfer your domain from your domain registrar to your web host, much like you might ask the phone company to move your phone number to your new apartment.

In the case of a domain name, it's called changing DNS. If you ever want to change the company where you registered your domain, that's kind of like changing phone companies while keeping the same phone number — it's a bit more complicated than just changing DNS to point your domain at a new server.

Choosing the best web hosting service

Although you can run your own web server, most people sign up with a web hosting service. Essentially, you rent server space from a web host for a monthly or annual fee, ranging from as little as a few dollars per month to hundreds per month, depending on the size of your site and the services you need. When it comes to finding the best web hosting service, there is no 'right' answer. Choosing a web host is a little like choosing a phone company, there are many plans to choose from and you need to carefully consider how you plan to use your phone before you can find the plan that is best for you.

Here are a few things to consider when you choose a web host:

Security: If you plan to sell products or services on your site, and you want to handle the transactions on your site, you'll need to make sure your host offers good security options and you'll need an SSL certificate. You can buy SSL certs from both web hosts and domain registrars, just make sure your hosting service can use it.

Third-party programs: Many hosting services now include programs that make it easy to install popular web features, such as WordPress, Joomla, and many others. If you plan to use WordPress, you definitely want to make sure you choose a hosting service that supports WordPress and makes it easy to set up and install.

Special features: Look for any other special features that may make your life easier, or save you money, when you're working on your website. Many hosting services offer discounts and integration with third-party services you may find useful.

Multi-site hosting: If you're a web designer creating more than one site for clients, or you need more than one website for your own business, consider hosting services that will let you set up multiple domain names in the same account.

Support: If you do need help (and most of us do at one time or another), does your hosting company publish a phone number, or at least make it easy to reach them via email? If you're considering a hosting service, call or email their support line and see what kind of help you can expect.

Here are a few web hosting services to consider:

Dreamhost: Recommended by WordPress.org, this large web hosting service offers one-click installation of WordPress and more than a dozen other great third-party services.

Bluehost: This server is also recommended on WordPress.org.

Hostgator: This server is also recommended on WordPress.org.

Rackspace.com: Rackspace is a scalable, high-end service that can handle loads of traffic, offers high security, and advanced email support.

1&1 Web hosting: One of the biggest web hosts in the world — they offer some of the best prices on hosting and domain registration.

{ 10 things every website or blog should have }

1   **A clear goal:** If you're not clear on your top goal, you're sure to confuse your audience. Visitors to your site should be able to tell what your site is about in 3 seconds or less.

2   **A clear call to action:** What is the thing you most want visitors to your site to do? Buy something? Sign up for your newsletter? Call you? Make sure you include a clear "call to action," inviting visitors to do just that.

3   **An appropriate design:** How your site looks may be subjective, but the message it conveys comes through loud and clear. Make sure your site design reflects the quality and style of your work and will be appealing to your target audience.

4   **Your contact info:** Improve your trustworthiness (and your success) by making your contact info easy to find from any page on your website.

5   **Images:** Web surfers prefer web pages and blog posts that include images — and so does Google.

6   **Video:** Studies show adding video to your website is one of the best ways to tell your story.

7   **Testimonials or social proof:** Don't just tell me how great you are, show me that other people think you're great, too.

8   **Deadlines:** Nothing ever gets done without a deadline. Set yourself some deadlines and stick to them, or you'll never get anything done on your own website.

9   **Privacy Policy and Terms & Conditions:** It may seem like just a bunch of legal mumbo jumbo, but these two documents should be linked from the bottom of every page on your website. You'll protect yourself, and you'll make Google like you more, especially if you're selling things on your site or collecting any kind of information (newsletter signups, comments, etc.) from site visitors.

10   **Someone who cares:** Seriously, if you're not that into your website, how can you expect anyone else to be?

How to register a domain name

Anyone can do it!

The address for your website is called its domain name, or URL — it's what users type into a web browser to find your website. **(Expect to pay about $10 per year for domain registration.)**

When you register a domain name, you create an address for yourself on the World Wide Web. For example, this website has the domain name DigitalFamily.com.

Note: The www part of any domain is optional — if you set up the domain and hosting properly, you can make your address work with or without the www part of the URL. (Save typing, don't require www.)

Once you register a domain name, you can keep it for life (with few exceptions) as long as you pay the annual fee, usually about $10 per year. After you register a name, you can direct it to any web hosting company or web server where you host your site.

You can host your site at the same place you register the domain, and many companies offer both, but domain registration and web hosting are very different services.

The process of registering a domain name is relatively painless. Once you have a domain name registered, you can also create one or more email addresses with that domain.

Tip: You can even register more than one name and point them at the same website. For example, both DigitalFamily.com and TheDigitalFamily.com go to my website. Registering more than one domain name, and including common misspellings and variations of your domain, can help ensure everyone can find you (even those who don't know how to spell your name).

## How can you find out if a domain name is taken?

Searching to see if the domain name you want is already registered is easy — and free. Just visit any domain registration service, such as the two listed below, enter the name you're looking for in the search box on the front

page, and you'll find out right away if it's already taken. (If the name is available, these sites walk you through the process of registering the name.)

The two most popular (and cheapest) domain registration services

www.1and1.com: claims to be the largest domain registrar in the world

GoDaddy.com: which claims to be the largest domain registrar in the U.S.
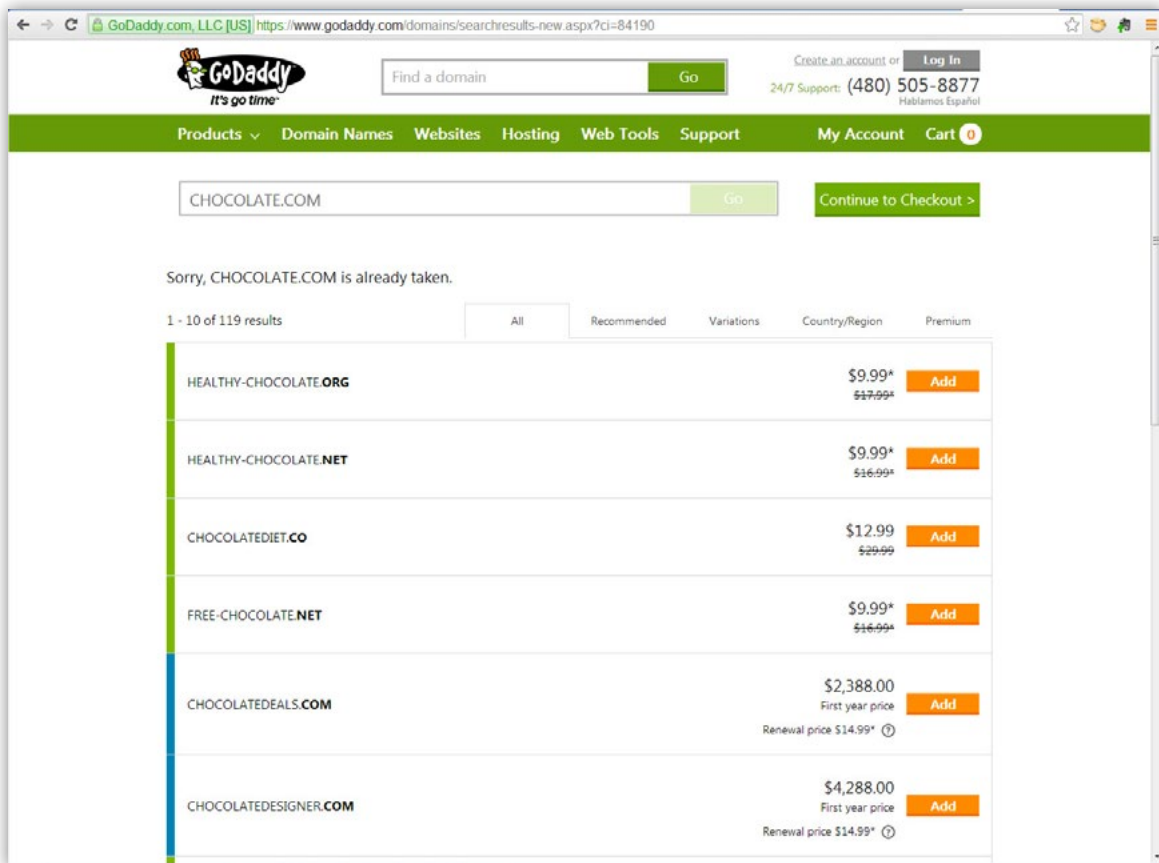
If the name you search for is already registered, most services will give you a list of alternatives to help you find a name that is still available.

{ WordPress Themes & Plugins }

Starting with a WordPress Theme

After you get your WordPress site set up on your web host, whether you use WordPress.com or WordPress.org, then the next step is to choose a theme.

One of the greatest strengths of WordPress is the stunning number and variety of themes available. A WordPress theme sets the "look and feel" of your page designs. Most themes include multiple templates that control the size and position of the banner, the typefaces and font sizes, how many columns appear, what the comments look like, and more.

There are generic themes and there are specialized themes. There are themes designed to show off photos, videos, music, and almost anything else you can upload to the Internet. You can create your own theme, you can download themes for free, and you can pay hundreds of dollars to purchase highly designed themes.

Most people who are new to WordPress start by playing around with the free themes, easily available through the Themes section of the WordPress Dashboard, and then go on to purchase premium themes, hire a programmer to create a custom theme, or learn to design their own.

Why themes don't always look good when you first install them

Until you've created at least a few pages and posts and added a few images in WordPress, you may be very disappointed by how your theme looks when you install it on your site.

That's because until you have some content on your site, there's nothing to display in a theme so it's likely to look pretty bare. Thus, I recommend that before you do much else in WordPress, you create a few pages and posts (covered in the section that follows). After you have some content in your WordPress site, you'll be better able to judge whether a theme will be a good fit for you or not.

In addition, most themes require a fair amount of customization before they look anything like the preview you may have seen on the website where you got your theme.

There are so many different types of themes with so many different options that it would be impossible to cover them all in this guide. When it comes to themes, my best advice is to review many of them before you choose one, and don't be afraid to download a few and switch them around to see what works for you.

Most good theme sites include documentation specific to the features of each theme, and most premium themes add many new features to WordPress, so you'll need the documentation to appreciate all those extra options.

To help you get started down the path of finding your perfect theme, here are some of the most popular premium WordPress themes on the market today.

Premium WordPress Themes

- **Elegant Themes:** http://www.elegantthemes.com/

- **Okay Themes:** http://okaythemes.com/

- **Woo Themes:** http://www.woothemes.com

- **WPMU Plugins & Themes:** http://wpmudev.org (Makers of the popular BuddyPress)

- **Headway Themes:** http://headwaythemes.com/

- **ThemeFuse:** http://themefuse.com/

- **Themes Kingdom:** http://www.themeskingdom.com

- **Photocrati:** Popular among photographers http://www.photocrati.com/ (Makers of the popular NextGen Gallery Plugin)

- **GraphPaperPress:** High design, highly customizable http://graphpaperpress.com/

- **Pexeto Themes:** http://themeforest.net/user/pexeto

What about ThemeForest? Great question. ThemeForest is a fine place to search for themes. Just remember, ThemeForest is like the eBay of themes. You'll find lots of themes by lots of developers, but not much quality control. If you use ThemeForest to find themes, make sure to read the reviews. Some of the themes you find there are great, some of them are terrible.

WordPress Theme Frameworks

You can use these frameworks to design your own themes without having to learn PHP.

- **PageLines Framework** http://www.pagelines.com/

- **Genesis Framework** http://www.studiopress.com/

- **iThemes** http://ithemes.com/ (Makers of the popular BackupBuddy plugin)

Installing Themes on your WordPress Site

There are two ways to install themes on your WordPress site. They differ depending on whether you are using a free theme available on the WordPress framework or a theme you purchased from a premium theme site.

Installing a free theme offered through WordPress:

1. With your WordPress Dashboard open (the home screen you see immediately after you log in to your WordPress site), click on the Appearance tab on the left hand menu and then choose Themes.

2. The "Manage Themes" area will appear and your current theme will be shown at the top. Below that will be a list of available themes that are free for you to use on your site. You will see that you have the option to view a live preview of each theme, so browse through them to get an idea of what you like.

3. If you're looking for something specific, you can use the Feature Filter, located at the top of this theme list) and check off what features you want.

4. When you find one you like, installing it is as simple as clicking the "Activate" button.
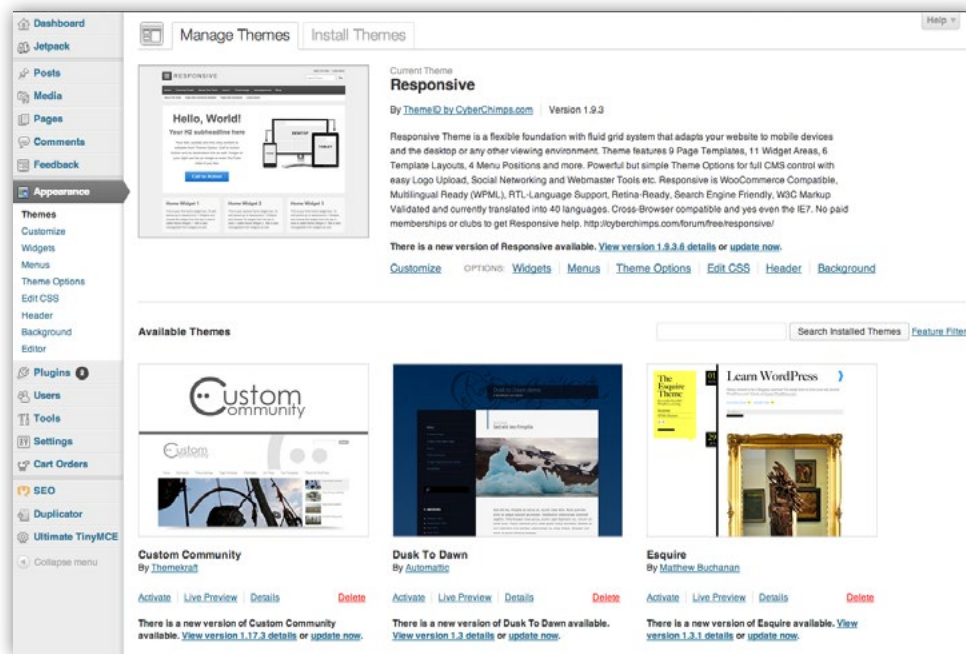
Under the "Manage Themes" tab in WordPress, you can browse many of the free themes available to you.

Installing a premium theme you purchased through a different site: If you purchased a theme from one of the premium theme sites such as woothemes.com or elegantthemes.com, then you will have downloaded a file for that theme. Within that folder will be a zipped file bearing the same name as the theme. You may be tempted to uncompress this file, but don't! WordPress likes zipped files.

1. With your WordPress Dashboard open, click on the Appearance tab on the left hand menu and choose Themes.

2. Click on the Install Themes tab at the top of this page. You will have a few options here, but you want to "Upload." Here, you will have the opportunity to choose that zipped file for the theme you downloaded and click "Install Now."
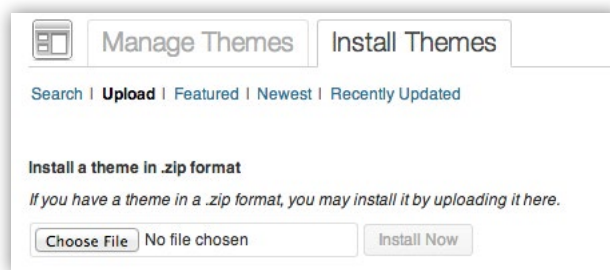
Under the "Install Themes" tab, you can upload a theme you purchased from a premium theme website.

Adding WordPress Features with Plugins

Plugins are used to add features to WordPress, such as slideshows, forms, and social media sharing icons. There are tens of thousands of plugins in the world of WordPress and in almost any category you will find multiple options to choose from.

At the end of this guide, you'll find a list of some of my favorite plugins to help you get started with some of the most popular and useful plugins, but in general, I recommend that if you are looking for a new category of plugins, you start by searching the WordPress.org plugin collection, and then choose the best candidate based on the number of users (the more people who have used it the better) and the number of good reviews.

After you choose a plugin, follow these steps to add it to WordPress:

1. From the WordPress Dashboard, select Add Plugin from the Plugins Tab on the left menu of your Dashboard.

2. If you already know which plugin you'd like to install, search for it by name in the Search field. Alternatively, you can search for a plugin in more generalized terms. For example, "photo gallery slider."
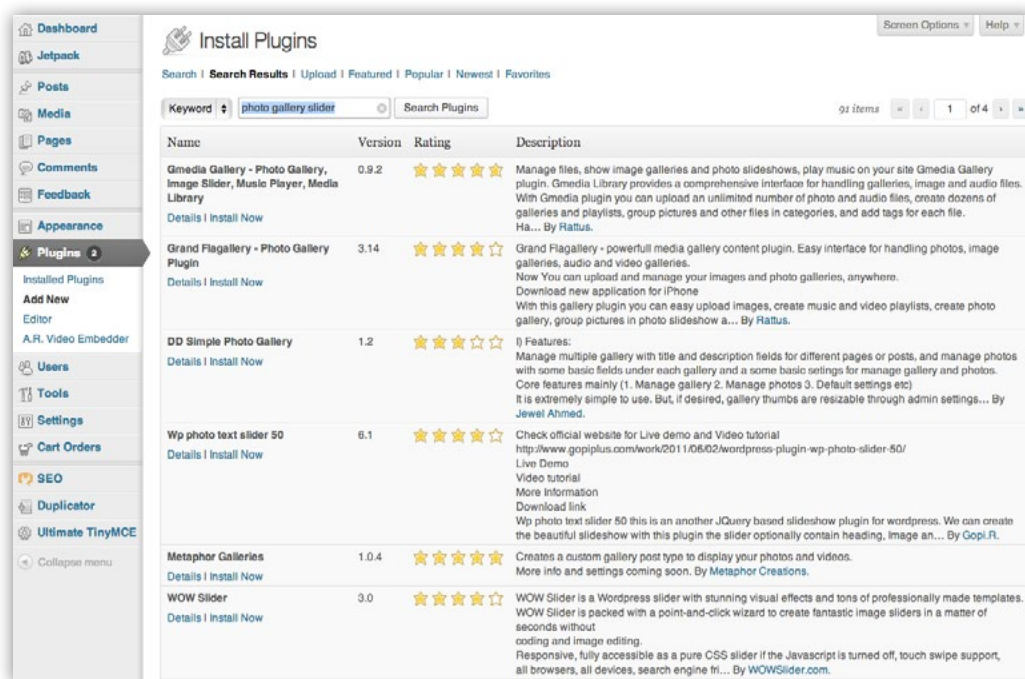
3. A list of plugins will appear, with ratings, descriptions, and the option to install the plugin you've selected.

4. After your plugin has been installed, click the "Activate" button. If the plugin has any settings that go with it, you will find them in the left hand menu under Settings. (Though some plugins will actually appear as a new tab to that Dashboard menu.)

How to install plugins that you downloaded to your computer

You can purchase plugins for a large number of websites and download them to your computer before installing them. If you get a plugin from a site other than WordPress.org, follow these instructions to install it from your computer's hard drive:

1. From the left menu of the WordPress Dashboard, select the Plugins Tab.

2. Choose Add New link from the Plugins list in the left side of the Dash-board, or click the Add New button at the top of the Plugins page.

3. Click the Upload link in the top of the Install Plugins page.

4. Navigate to the place on your hard drive where you saved the plugin file.

5. Click to select the .zip file that contains the plugin and then click Install.

Remember: Just as with themes, the plugin will be in a zipped file and you should not unzip it before you upload it to WordPress.

{ **Working with Pages & Posts** }

Logging into WordPress

Before you can edit a WordPress website, you must first log in to the administrative tools, called the Dashboard. On nearly any WordPress site, you can access the Dashboard by adding "wp-admin" to the end of your URL, like this:

www.DomainName.com/wp-admin

Editing Pages in WordPress

The Front End and Back End

Think of your web site as having two sides: a front end, the version that visitors to your web site see when they open the pages of your site in a browser, and a back end, a place that you can only get to if you have a password, where you can edit the text and images that appear on your site.

To illustrate this guide, I'll be using a fictitious website I created at http:// hand-crafted-chocolate.com. This site is online where you can view it at your leisure, but you can't actually order chocolate there (although I'm thinking about finding a way to sell chocolate there after all the inquiries I've received).

The front end of your site, or the public pages, looks like this first image:
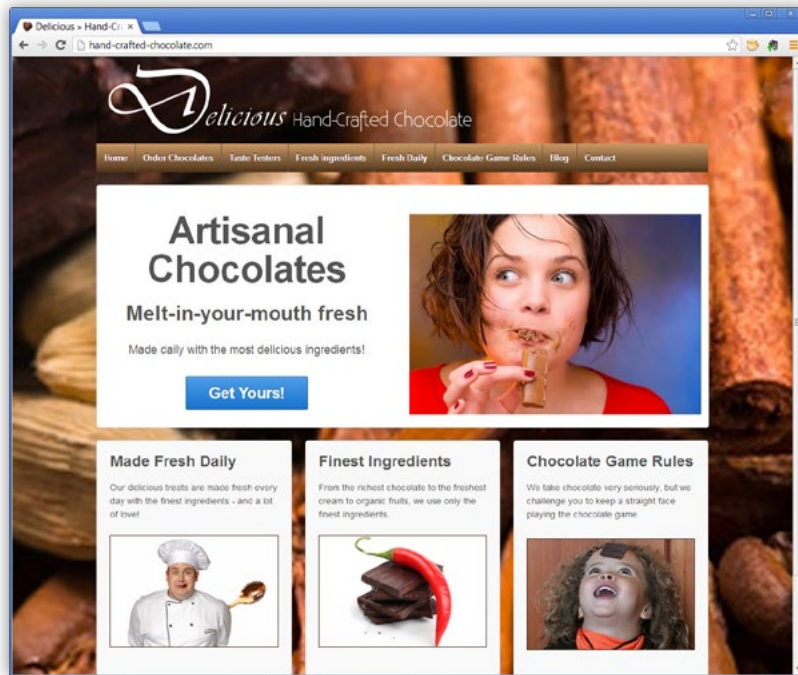
And the back end of your site, or the WordPress Dashboard, looks like this:
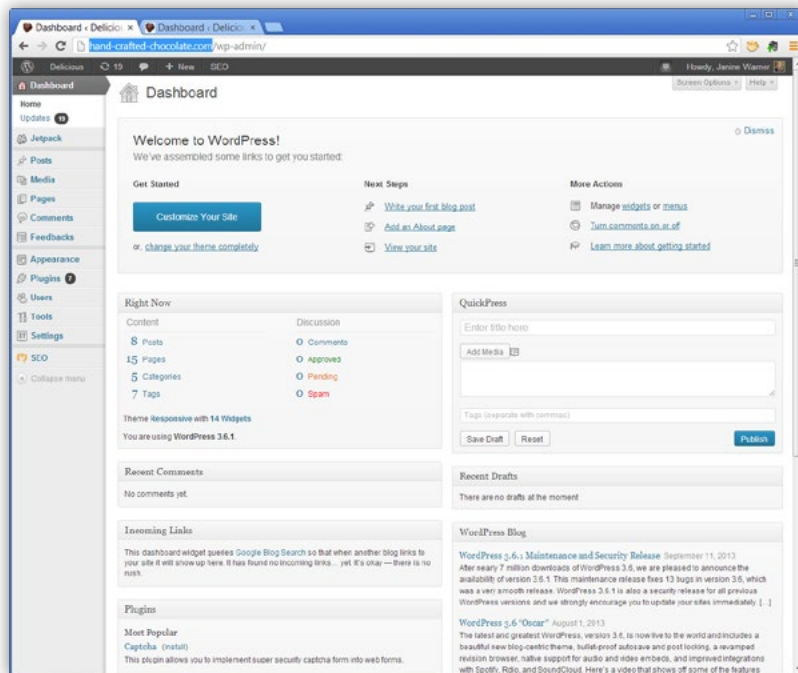
Editing WordPress with Two Browser Windows

It's good practice to use two browser tabs or two windows so that you can have the Dashboard with all of the administrative tools open in one window, and have the public side of the web site, or the front end, open in another.

Note: When you make changes in the back end, you'll need to refresh the page on the front end to see the changes. Having both sides of the site open at once makes it easier to switch back and forth and to check your work as you go along.
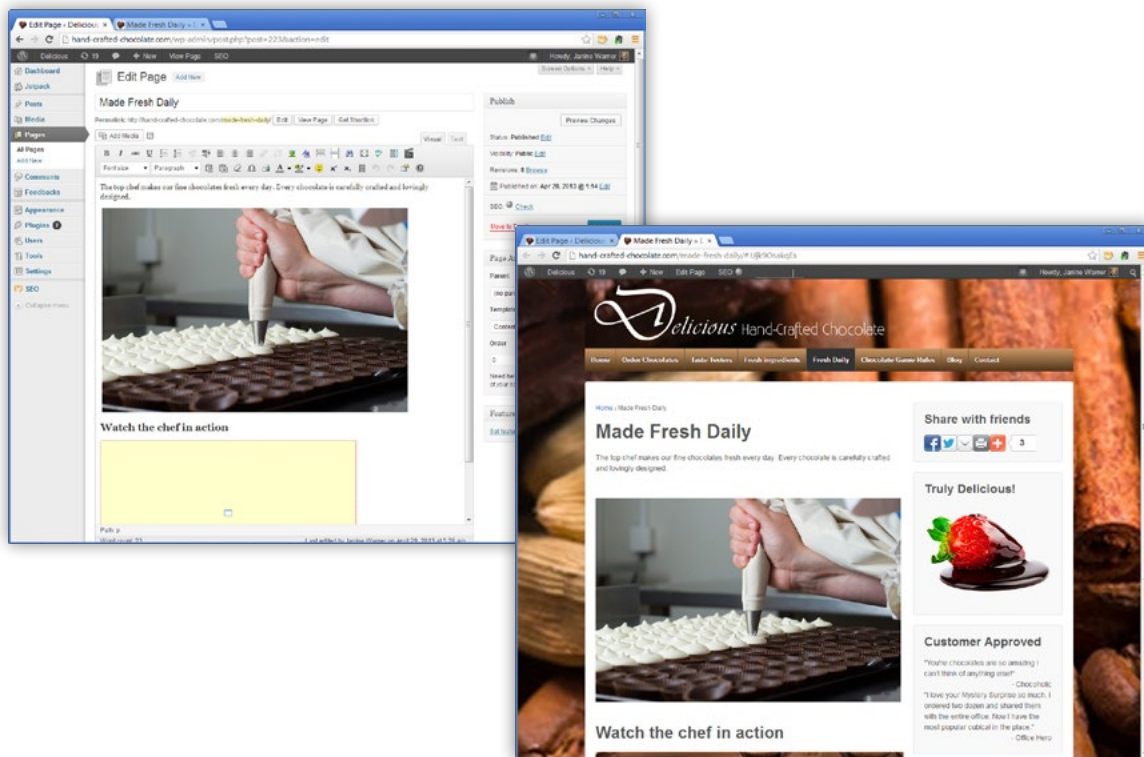
My Favorite Web Browser

You can edit the site in any popular web browser (the latest versions are best), but I find Google Chrome is an ideal choice for editing WordPress on both the Mac and Windows.

Editing WordPress while Browsing...
A great way to make quick edits

Once you log into WordPress and access the WordPress Dashboard and Editor, a new toolbar appears at the top of your browser window. This toolbar will remain visible at the top of the browser as long as you are logged in, even when you are viewing the 'public' side of the site. This toolbar makes it easy to edit any page you are viewing, a great way to fix typos and make other quick edits as you review the pages.
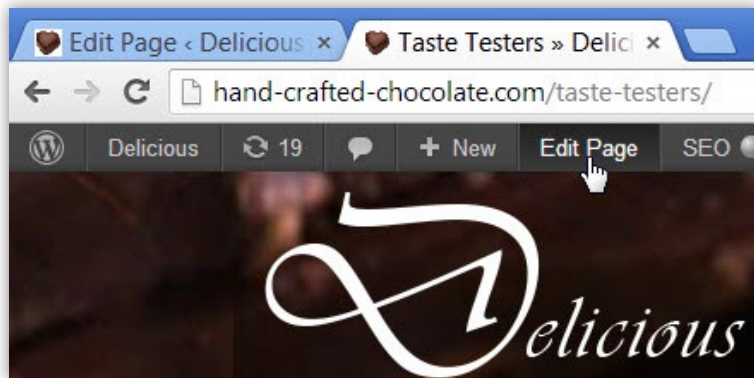
As you surf through the site, click on the Edit button at the top of any page to open the page in the WordPress Editor.

Creating a New Page in WordPress

You can create a completely new page and link it to any existing page. You can also add new pages to the main navigation of the site (see the adding navigation links section later). To create a new page:

1. Click to Open the Page section in the WordPress Dashboard

2. Click Add New under the Pages section to create a new page

3. Enter a title in the top field, where you see the words "Enter Title Here," in the figure below.

4. Fill in the main area with text, images, links, etc. using the WordPress editing tools.
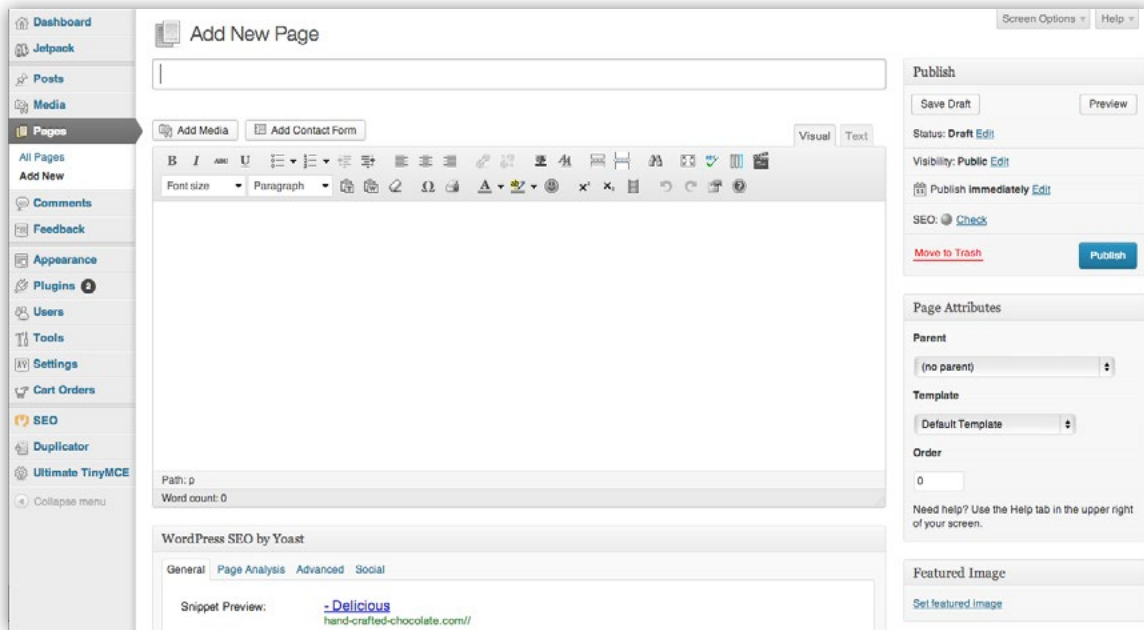
Above: The main editing area where you enter text, images, links, etc. Right: Once you're done adding content, use this area to either publish your new page or save it as a draft to work on later.
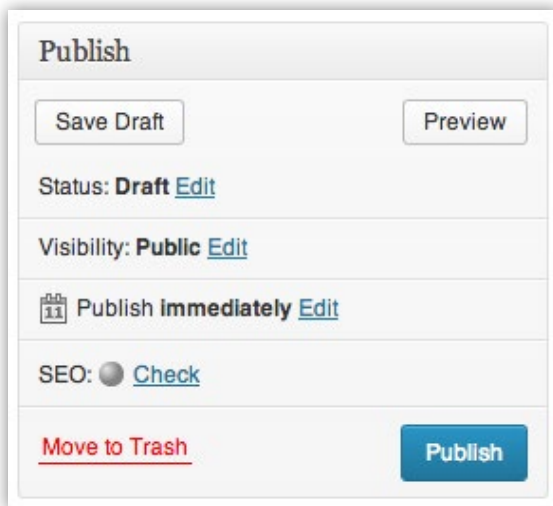
5. Choose the Parent section Template from the Page Attributes module in the right sidebar of the editing tools. (See screenshot and tip below)

6. Choose Publish to publish the page on the site and it will automatically be added to the site in the section that corresponds to the selected parent and title.

7. You can choose Save Draft if you want to save a page without publishing it — such as when you want someone else to double-check your work.

Choosing Parent Options to Control Page and Section Order

When you create a new page, you need to identify the parent of the page to position the page in the correct menus and section of the site.

For example, if you were adding a page for a new taste tester at hand-crafted-chocolate.com, you would want to select taste tester. When you create a new page and specify the Parent section, a link to the page is automatically added to the parent page. Thus, if you add a new person to the taste tester section, their name will appear in the list of taste testers in the Taste Taster page.

If you also want to add a page to the main menu, you'll need to use the menu options.

Page Attributes ▼

Parent

✓ (no parent)
Blog
Chocolate Game Rules
Contact
Fresh ingredients
Ingredients Circles Gallery 4
Ingredients Slideshow Gallery 5
Ingredients Square Tiles Gallery 3
Ingredients Thumbnail Grid Gallery 1
Ingredients Tiled Mosaic Gallery 2
Made Fresh Daily
New Gallery
Order Chocolates
Taste Testers

Featured Image

Set featured image

Creating a New Post in WordPress

In a WordPress site, Posts are different than Pages. Pages are fixed elements of your site that can appear in the navigation. Posts will appear in your Blog section, and you can kind of think of them as articles (like you would read in a magazine.) They usually appear in order of newest-to-oldest on the Blog page of your site. Here is how to create a new Post:

1. Click to Open the Post section in the WordPress Dashboard

2. Click Add New under the Posts section to create a new post

3. Enter a title in the top field, where you see the words "Enter Title Here."

4. Fill in the main area with text, images, links, etc. using the WordPress editing tools.

5. Use the Categories section to specify what type of post this is. Categories can be useful in blog navigation and allows posts to be grouped together with other similar posts. In our site, you can see that we have different categories for Ingredients, New Recipes, Random Tips, and Tasters.

6. Use the Tags field to enter words describing your post. These Tags will help the post show up in search results on your site and will help to group the post with other posts of similar content. Examples of tags for a chocolate cake recipe post would be the following: chocolate, cake, recipe, award-winning, dessert, etc.

7. Choose Publish to publish the post on the blog page and it will automatically be added to the top of your blog page (because it's the newest). **Tip:** If you want a blog post to show up below another post, change the publish date to a day BEFORE that other post was written.

8. You can choose Save Draft if you want to save a post without publishing it yet.
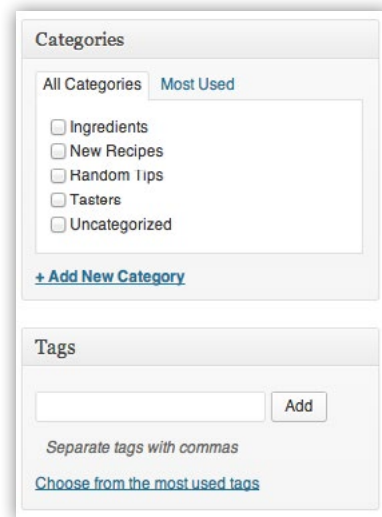
{ **Editing Tools** }

How to Use the WordPress Editing Tools

The WordPress editing tools are a lot like the buttons you find in a program like Microsoft Word. For example, you can make text bold or italic by selecting it and clicking on the B or I buttons.
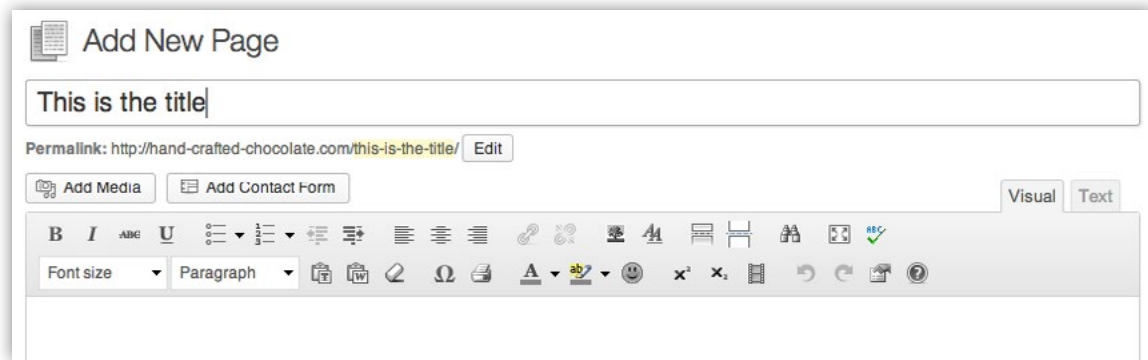
Explanation of First Row of Buttons in Visual View

B Bolds text

I Formats text in italics

ABC not recommended

U Underlines text

Bulleted list Creates an indented unordered list with bullets

Numbered list Creates an indented ordered list with numbers

Blockquote Designed to set apart long quotes, this HTML tag adds space to the left and right of text and can be used to indent text and other elements on a page

Alignment Left, centered, or right alignment

Insert/Edit link Used to create hyperlinks. This button is grayed-out until you select text or an image. To create a link using the Link button:

1. Select the text or image you want to make a link

2. Click the link button

3. Type in a URL, including http:// if you want to link to another site. If you want to link to another page within you site, copy and paste in everything that comes after the .com, including the forward slash. For example, /features/gallery/branching-corrugahorn

4. Use the target option if you want the link to open up in a new browser window. If you do not change this setting, the link will open in the same window by default in most web browsers.

5. Title is what will appear when someone rolls their cursor over a link (the ALT text)

6. The Class option enables you to apply a custom CSS style and is optional

Unlink Used to remove hyperlinks. Simply select any linked text or image and click on this button to remove the link.

Insert/Edit Anchor Use this to add an Anchor anywhere on a page. You can then create a link to that Anchor to link to a specific part of a page. These are often called jumplinks. The Anchor text should not include any spaces or special characters. You create a link to an anchor as you would create any other link using the Link button, but the URL is a pound# followed by the anchor name. For example, if you add an Anchor named guitar, the link to that anchor would be #guitar.

Insert/Edit Image Contains some advanced images settings, but in general, the image options located next to Upload/Insert just above the editing tags (and covered later in this section) are the preferred option.

Edit CSS Style (looks like two AAs) This advanced option can be used to edit CSS styles, but should only be used if you understand CSS styles.

Insert More Adds a link to more text and is used to divide an introductory paragraph from the rest of an article of text. When you use this link, the text that comes before this appears on the page, followed by a "click here to read more" link that, when clicked, links to the remaining text on the page.

Insert Page Break Adds a page break between sections of text and automatically creates links to each page with the text, Page 1 2 3 etc.

Find (looks like binoculars) Use this to search for (and replace) text on a page.

Distraction-free writing mode This option gives you more room to edit your pages. Click here to view the editing area in full screen, hiding the left and right columns in the administrative tool.

The ABC button is a spellchecker, which checks your words for spelling errors. Use the drop-down list to select your preferred language.

Second Row of Buttons

Font Size lets you change the size of your selected text

Font Size lets you change the size of your selected text

The Format drop down menu provides easy access to common formatting options, including Paragraph, which formats text in the default option with link breaks, and the 6 Header tags.
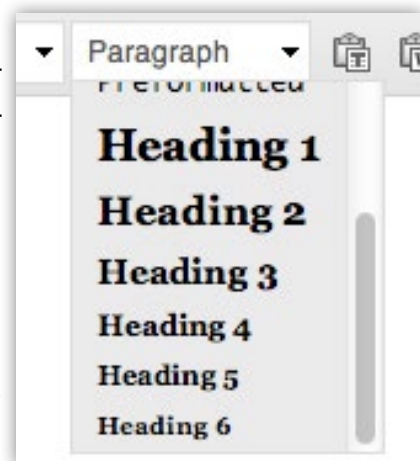
The Header Tags are customized for the theme you are using, so they vary from theme to theme. You can use the Header tags anywhere in your site by inserting the <h1> and close </h1> tags.

Paste as Plain Text Use this to insert text and remove any formatting as you insert it into a page.

Paste from Word Use this option to preserve basic formatting but strip out superfluous code created in Microsoft Word.

Remove Formatting (looks like an eraser) Removes the formatting tags from any selected text or other elements. (Note: this feature has some limitations and formatting is often better removed in HTML view where you can be sure you are removing all of the code you want to get rid of.)

Insert Custom Character (The Omega symbol) Use this option to insert copyright symbols, accents, and other special characters. Simply place your cursor where you want the special character and use this option to insert it.

Print Content Use this to print the content of your page

Select Text Color Use the drop down arrow to apply any of the predefined colors to selected text. Use the More Colors option at the bottom of the drop-down for more options.

Select Background Color Use the drop down arrow to apply any of the predefined colors to background of the selected text. Use the More Colors option at the bottom of the drop-down for more options.

Insert an Emoticon Gives you a series of emoticons, or "smileys" to add to your text.

Superscript / Subscript Subscripts appear at or below the baseline of the text, superscripts appear above it.

Insert/Embed Media You can use this option to add sound, video, and other media files from any URL on the web. These are covered in the section on uploading and inserting audio files later in this document.

Help Click on the question mark to reveal basic help files with additional information about how to use the WordPress tools.

Note: You may see additional icons in the toolbar of your site if you install plugins that add new features.

> **Tip:** If you see only one row of tools, look for the "Kitchen Sink" icon, and click on it to open the second row of tools.

Working in HTML View

To access HTML View, click on the HTML tab at the far right of the editing window. You will see all the various HTML and CSS codes that go into making a page. If you are not sure what these mean, leave them alone.
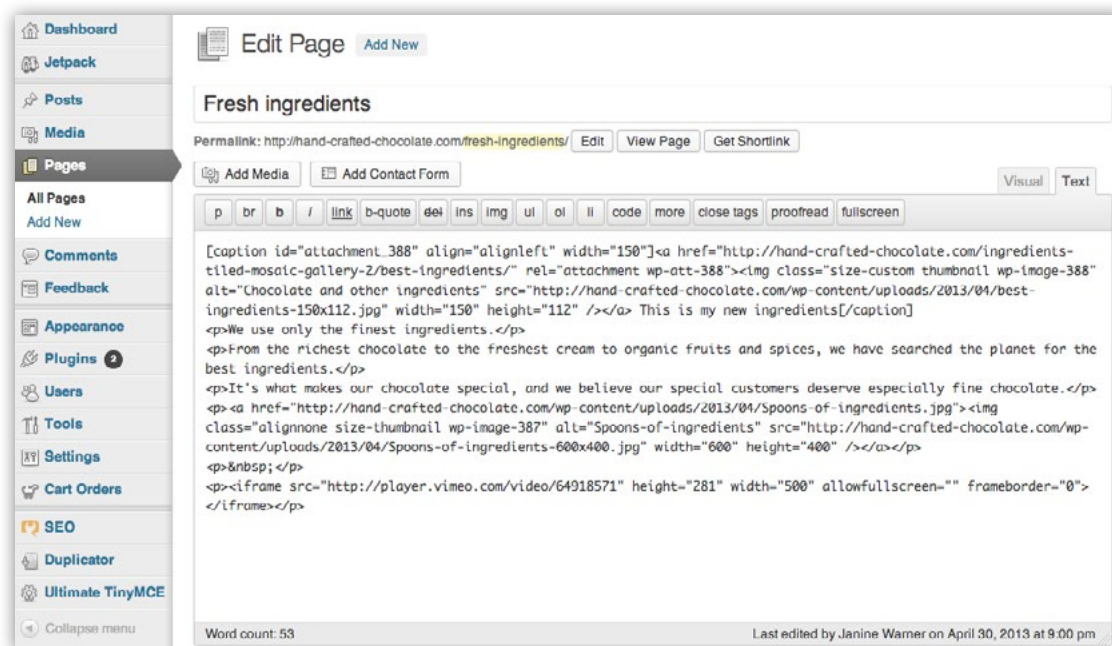
Common HTML Tags and corresponding buttons in WordPress HTML View:

Button	Tag	Description
P		The HTML Paragraph tag adds a line break & an extra line of space below it.
br	 	The HTML break tag adds a line break with no extra line of space.
B		HTML tag for strong emphasis (appears as **bold** in most web browsers)
i		HTML tag for emphasis of text (i.e. italicize).
link	Linked Text here	HTML tag to create a hyperlink.

Button	Tag	Description
b-quote	<blockquote> </blockquote>	HTML tag to distinguish quoted or cited text. (The effect of this tag is to indent the text it surrounds.
del	<del></del>	HTML tag to label text considered deleted from a post. Most browsers display as striked through text. (Assigns datetime attribute with offset from GMT (UTC))
ins	<ins></ins>	HTML tag to label text considered inserted into a post. Most browsers display as underlined text. (Assigns datetime attribute with offset from GMT (UTC))
Img		The HTML Image Source tag is used to insert an image.
ul		HTML tag will insert an unordered list, or wrap the selected text in same. An unordered list will typically be a bulleted list of items.
ol		HTML tag will insert a numbered list, or wrap selected text in same. Each item in an ordered list are typically numbered.
li		HTML tag will insert or make the selected text a list item. Used in conjunction with the ul or ol tag.
Code	<code></code>	HTML tag for preformatted styling of text. Generally sets text in a mono-spaced font, such as Courier.
more	<!--more-->	WordPress tag that breaks a post into "teaser" and content sections. Type a few paragraphs, insert this tag, then compose the rest of your post. On your blog's home page you'll see only those first paragraphs with a hyperlink ((more...)), which when followed displays the rest of the post's content.

Button	Tag	Description
Close tags	<!--nextpage-->	WordPress tag similar to the more tag, except it can be used any number of times in a post, and each insert will "break" and paginate the post at that location. Hyperlinks to the paginated sections of the post are then generated in combination with the wp_link_pages() or link_pages() template tag.
Proofread		Runs a spellcheck program over the text and highlights any errors recognized on the page.
Full screen		Enlarges the editing area to fill the entire screen space in the browser window.

Lookup Opens a dialogue where you can search for any word using the online dictionary at answers.com. Handy for checking spelling or the definition of HTML and other code.

Close Tags Click on this to insert the close tag for any open HTML tag.

Note about formatting with HTML Tags

In general, it is best to select the text, image, or other element that you want to format and then click on the corresponding icon to insert the open and close tags around what you have selected.

However, you have the option of clicking on any of the HTML icons to insert the open HTML tag code into the code, then type or add any other content, and then click on the Close Tags icon to close the tag.

Adding Paragraph Returns and Line Breaks

Paragraph tags must include open and close tags <p> and </p>

Line breaks can be created using the BR tag, which has no close tag, but should be written like this

Tip: To insert a paragraph tag return when typing in Visual or Text views in WordPress, press the Return key (on a Mac) or the Enter key (on Windows). To insert a break tag, hold down the Shift key and then press Enter or Return.

{ Working with Images }

Inserting Images into a Page or Post

There are two ways to insert images into your pages: add one image at a time into the main area of a page, using the WordPress editor; or add images to the sidebar using the gallery features. (To change the images in the right sidebar and create galleries, follow the instructions in the next section that follows, "Image Galleries and Sidebars.") Use these instructions to add an image to the main area on the left side of your pages.

To add a single image to a web page or post in WordPress

1. Click on the Add Media button at the top of the Edit window.
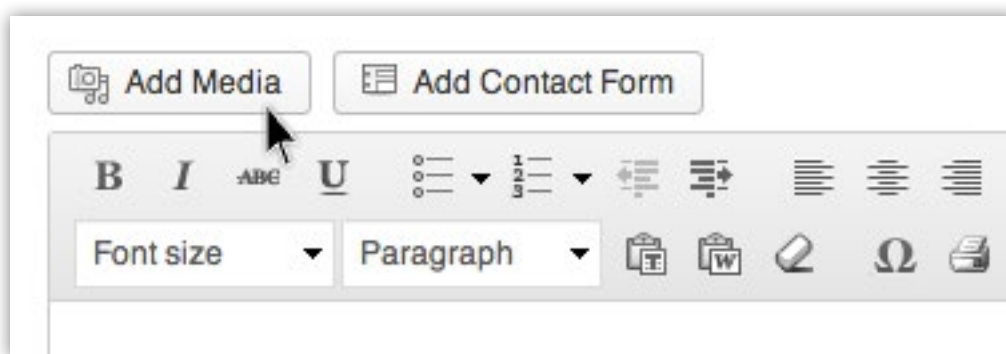
2. If the image is on your computer's hard drive, use the **Upload Files** tab from the top of the window.
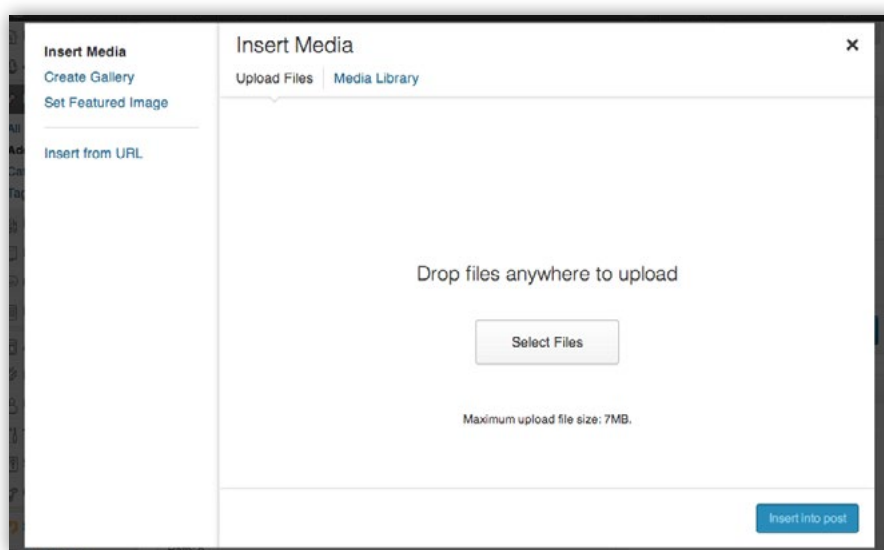
3. Choose the **Select Files** button and find the image on your hard drive. Select the image and click on the Open or Select button.

4. Alternatively, you can just drag files from a folder on your computer into this window.

5. The image will upload and it will appear in your Media Library with a selection box around it.

6. With the image selected, specify the image settings on the right (we'll cover that in the next section) and click the "Insert into Post/Page" button.

Insert Image options

When you upload an image, the image's thumbnail will be selected in the Media Library and the image's settings will appear on the right.

A preview of the image appears at the very top right of the image dialog. Below this preview are the following image settings:

Title: The name of the image file is automatically entered into the Title field. The Title appears only in the code, but is useful for accessibility and SEO.

Alternate Text: Enter any text you choose in this field to describe the image. This text is used by screen readers, special browsers for the blind, as an alternative to visual images.

Caption: If you add a Caption, it will appear in the body of the page on the site, just under the image in white text against a blue frame.

Description is not necessary but can be used to provide additional information about the image.

Alignment: Choose left, right, center, or none from the drop-down menu. If you align images to the Right or Left, and the image does not fill all of the available space, text and other elements will wrap around the image.

Link to: This option adds a link to the image. If you choose Media File, the version of image you insert into the page will be linked to the largest, original version, of the image that was uploaded to the site. If you choose Attachment Page, the image will link to a page that displays the original image, as well as any text that you have entered in the attachment page of the image. (To edit the Attachment Page for any image, choose Media from the left side of the Dashboard, and then click on the name of any image.) If you choose Custom URL, you can link the image to any URL you enter. If you choose None, the image will not be linked to anything.

Size: Use this drop-down list to choose the size of the image that you want to insert into the page. When you upload an image to WordPress, it is automatically resized based on the media settings or the sizes that are set up in your theme. You can insert any size from the drop-down list, including the original.

WordPress Image Sizes

When you upload any photo or graphic, WordPress automatically resizes the image into the sizes specified by your website theme.

The **Standard Sizes** for many websites are: 150 pixels wide, 300 px wide, and 640 pixels wide.

In addition, a fourth size is added if the image you upload is larger than the largest specified size pixels. If three sizes are not enough for you, you can add additional images sizes by installing the Simple Image Sizes plugin. This plugin expands that list to add more automatic image sizes http://wordpress.org/plugins/simple-image-sizes/
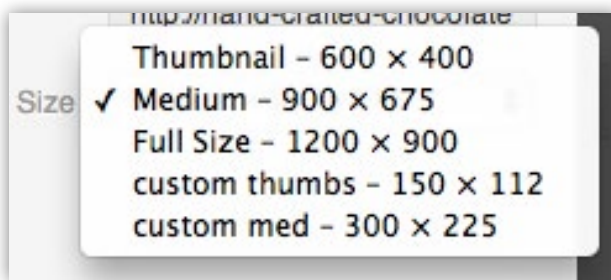
Note: You can always adjust the size of an image by changing the height and width attributes in the HTML code, but this is only recommended if you want a enlarger or reduce the size by a small amount. If you use the HTML code to change the size dramatically, you will distort the image.

Inserting Images from the Media Library

As soon as an image is uploaded, it is saved in the Media Library and can be added to any page or post in the site. You can use the same image as many times as you like.

Once an image is in the Media Library, choose the Media Library tab to find the image you want to use.

Click on it and a little checkbox will appear over its thumbnail. On the right side, you will find the Image options to select the size and alignment. Click the Insert button to add it to any open page in WordPress.
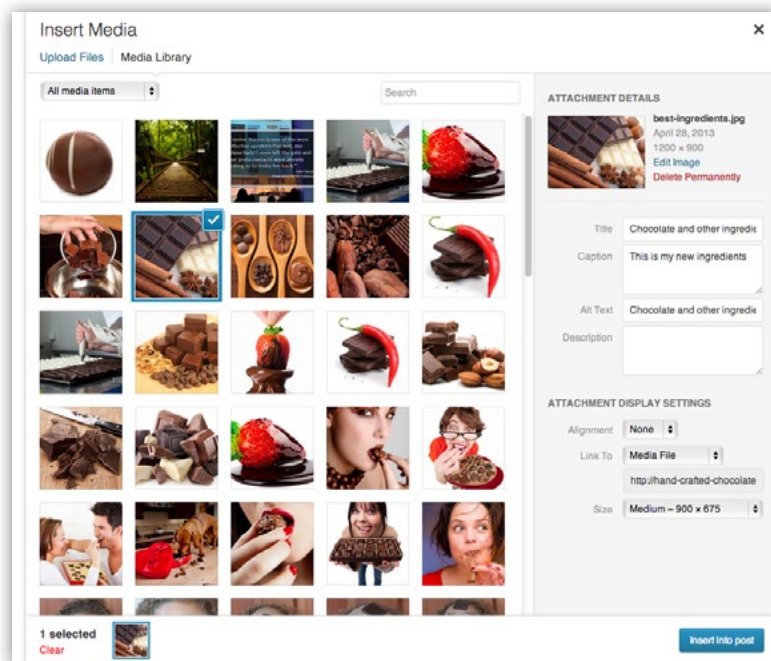
Adding Captions and Making other Changes to Images after they are Inserted

You can include captions, set alignment, and links for your images when you first insert them, and you can go back and add or edit captions and other settings after the images have been inserted.

The first challenge is finding your way back to the editing window after an image has been inserted into a page or post.

Here's the trick to editing an inserted image: just click to select any image in any post or page, and two little tiny icons will appear in the top left corner (as shown in the figure at right).

The edit image dialog looks a bit different from the insert image options, but the settings are the same. Note that at the top of the Edit Image dialog there is a second tab that opens the Advanced Settings, as shown in the figure below.

{ Navigation: Links & Menus }

How To Set Links to Pages, Sites, and Email Addresses

Note: Adding **Menu Links** is covered in the next section.

You can add links to the content of the main section of any page on your site. You can create links to other sites, to pages within your site, and to email addresses, by following these steps.

1. Click to highlight the text or image that you want to turn into a link.
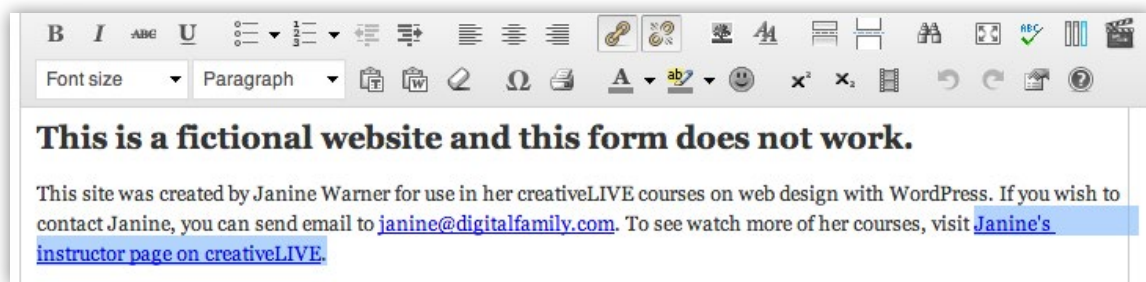
2. Click the link icon (looks like a piece of chain link) in the WordPress tools across the top of the main editing area.
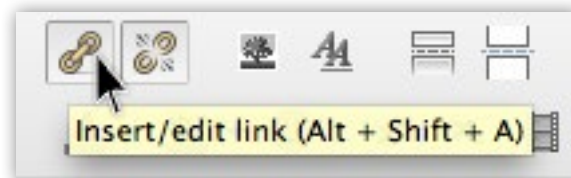
3. Enter the URL in the link field, or select the page you want to link to on your site.

Three different kinds of links:

a. Link to another website: If you wanted to link to my site, you'd enter the full URL: http://www.digitalfamily.com

If you want that link to open up in a new browser tab or window (instead of the window with your page in it) then turn on the checkbox that says "Open link in new window."
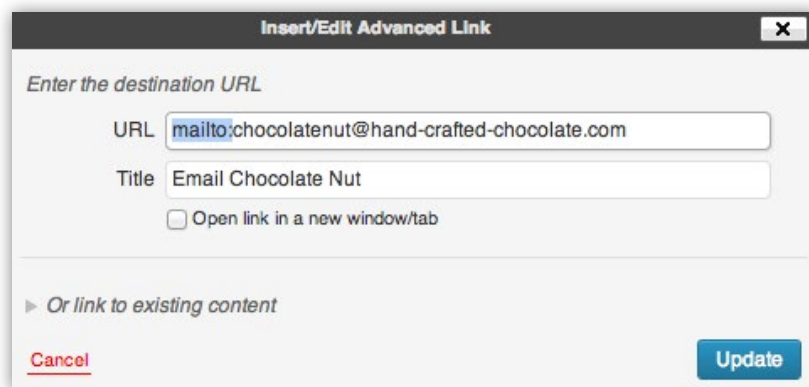
TIP: You can copy and paste the URL of any page to create a link by simply navigating to the page you want to link to in a web browser, and then copying the URL from the browser window and pasting it into the URL field in the WordPress editor.

b. Create an email link by entering the email address after the code **mailto:**

For example, to link to a chocolate taste tester's email address, you enter this with no spaces:

mailto:chocolatenut@hand-crafted-chocolate.com

c. Link to another page on your site:

(1) To open the list of pages in your site, click on the text that says: Or link to existing content.

(2) Click to select the page you want to link to from the searchable list of pages in your site.

(3) The Title field is optional. This text only appears in the code. **Note:** The link will be applied to the text or image you selected in the page when you set the link.

(4) Click Add Link, and voila! The link is added to the page.

Note: You have to preview the page to test the link.

Creating or Editing a Custom Menu

You can create a custom menu for your WordPress site instead of using the one being automatically generated for you. Here's how:

1. Click on Menus from the Appearance tab on the left side of the dashboard.

2. At the top of the page, next to the little dropdown menu, click on the "create new menu" button. You will be prompted to give your menu a name. You will then be able to add pages to that menu.

3. Under Menu Settings, you will have to specify where that menu will appear by checking the boxes (all that apply).

The Hand Crafted Chocolate site currently has eight links listed in the navigation menu at the top of each page. Those links are generated automatically using the WordPress Menu features.
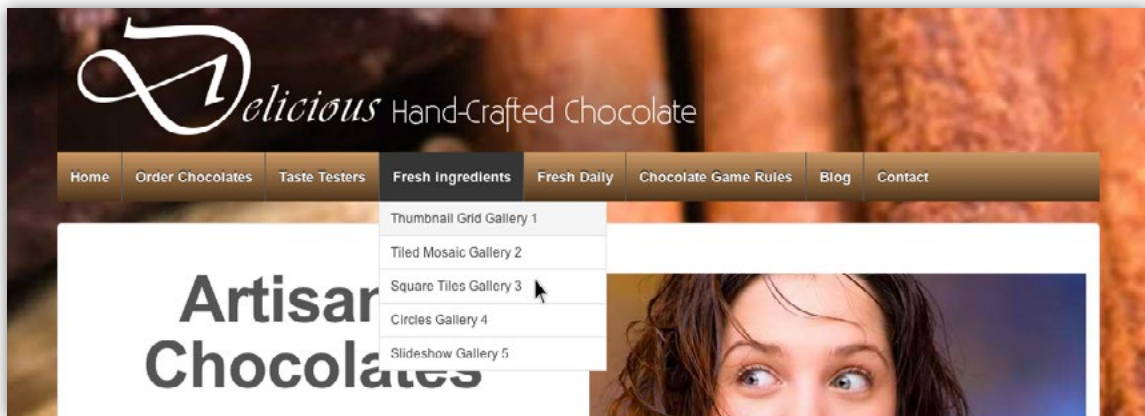
## To add links to the menu, or edit existing menu links

To Add a New Page to the Menu, first open the menu editor from the Dashboard, by selecting Menus from the Appearance tab.

Of course, you have to create a new page before you can link to it (see Creating a new page section earlier in this guide). But all new pages are automatically listed in the Pages section of the Menu editing page.

Here's what you do:

1. Use the small dropdown menu to select the menu you would like to add a page to. If you only have one menu, it will be Main Menu.

2. Click to check the page you want to link to from the new menu item box on the left.

3. Click Add to Menu

4. Make sure you click the Save Menu button in the main Menu list after you add each new item.
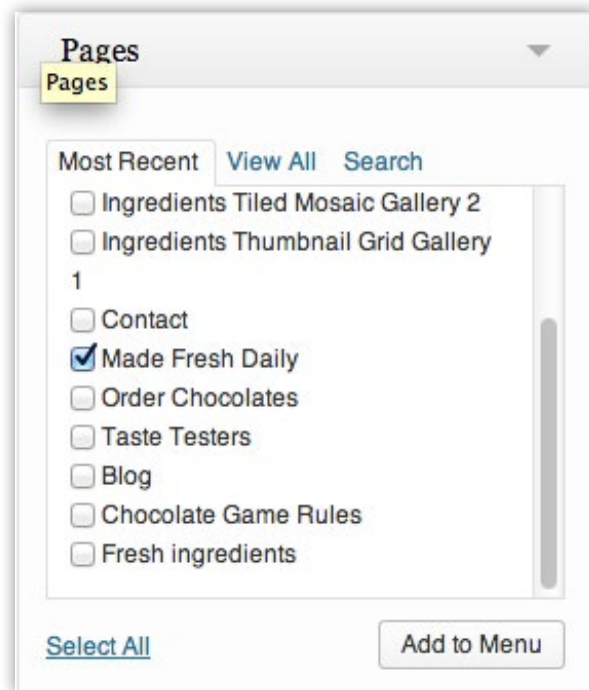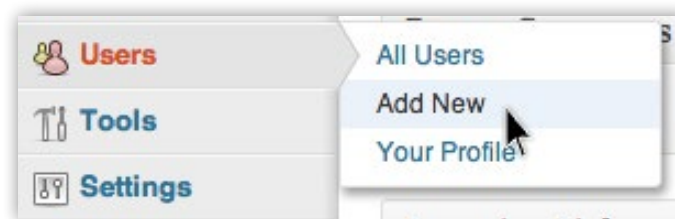
Changing Menu Order

When a new menu item is added, it appears at the bottom of the list so you'll need to drag it into the place you want it to appear in the menu. Note: make sure it's indented under the correct section.
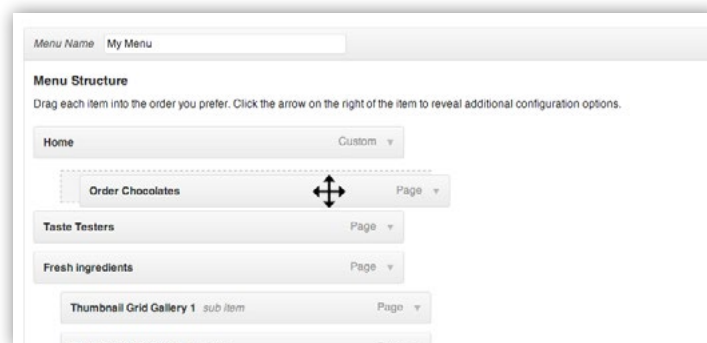
{ Adding Users }

Adding New Users

Any user with Administrative-level access can create new users once they are logged in. The process is pretty straight forward, but make sure to include their real email address (so they can retrieve their password if they lose it) and be careful about what level of access you give them. When you assign the Role, using the drop-down list, Administrator is the highest level of access, Editor is the appropriate option for most users who will edit or contribute to the site. Subscriber is the lowest level of access and only allows users to make comments on the blog.

To add a new user, Click "Users" from the left-hand menu and then choose "Add New."

{ Plugins }

Popular WordPress Plugins

Plugins extend the functionality of WordPress. For just about anything you can think of, there's a plugin for that. The following is a list of some of the most popular plugins and how they add features and options to WordPress.

Plugins and themes work together, but plugins are theme agnostic, meaning you can change from one theme to another and keep the same plugins (as long as they are compatible with the theme).

Managing WordPress Comments

Akismet: Although there is no way to get rid of comment spam entirely, this is the most popular comment spam blocker. http://wordpress.org/plugins/akismet/

Gravatar: http://en.gravatar.com/ It's not a plugin, but create a profile at gravatar.com and your profile photo will appear next to your name when you post comments on your site, or anyone else's who supports Gravatars, which is most sites. (Gravatar is run by WordPress.com but works on all WP sites where it's activated.)

Plugins for images: sliders, slideshows & more

NextGen Free and Pro Galleries: The most popular plugins for creating galleries with advanced, time-saving features like automatically uploading and formatting an entire folder of images and watermarking them at the same time. http://www.nextgen-gallery.com/

Simple Image Sizes: Three sizes are just not enough for all of the images on most WordPress sites. This plugin expands that list to add more automatic image sizes http://wordpress.org/plugins/simple-image-sizes/

Regenerate Thumbnails: Resize of all of your images in your WordPress Media Library automatically with this time-saving plugin http://wordpress.org/plugins/regenerate-thumbnails/

JetPack: All the plugins offered on WordPress.com come in one handy collection available for any WordPress site hosted anywhere http://wordpress.org/plugins/jetpack/

Image WaterMark: Image Watermark makes it easy to automatically (or manually) watermark images uploaded to the WordPress Media Library. http://www.dfactory.eu/plugins/image-watermark/

LightBox Plus Colorbox: There so many light box plugins to choose from, but this is one of the most popular options. http://wordpress.org/plugins/lightbox-plus/

Fancy Box: Another great way to add a photo box to all of your images in WordPress. http://wordpress.org/plugins/fancybox-for-wordpress/

Royal Slider: Adds a dynamic slider to almost any WordPress page with text images, and more http://dimsemenov.com/plugins/royal-slider/

Nivo Slider: Another popular slider plugin with many features and customization options. http://dev7studios.com/nivo-slider/

WP Smushit: Reduce image file sizes and improve performance using the Smush.it API within WordPress. By WPMU DEV | http://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-smushit/

WP Retina 2X: Make your website look beautiful and smooth on Retina displays such as the MacBook Pro and iPad Retina. (Note: Retina2x only works for post thumbnails or images inserted into a post, and only works if you use the Media features built into WordPress http://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-retina-2x/

Caching Plugins

Caching can improve the speed and efficiency of your WordPress site by saving generated pages so that the server does not have to hit the database to create a new page every time a visitor requests a page on your site. To fully appreciate how caching programs work requires an understanding of how WordPress dynamically generates each page by retrieving content from a database and displaying that content in a template before delivering it to a web page.

Here's what you really need to know: caching programs are highly recommended for speeding up the load time of WordPress pages, and many web hosts install caching programs when they install WordPress for you because they help the web server work more efficiently as well.

But here's the challenge with these plugins: When you use a caching plugin, you won't always see your changes when you update your site. That's because the pages are 'cached' and your changes won't be displayed in a web browser until you delete the cache (which you can do in the Settings options from the Plugins page).

Here are two of the most popular Caching plugins:

WP Super Cache: Improve the speed of your WordPress site with this popular plugin, which is automatically installed by many web hosting companies, including Dreamhost. http://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-super-cache/

W3 Total Cache: Trusted by many popular blogs, including: mashable.com, pearsonified.com, yoast.com, css3.info and others, the W3 Total Cache plugin improves your server performance by caching every aspect of your site and reducing the download time of your theme. http://wordpress.org/plugins/w3-total-cache/

Web Font Plugins

Font Plugin for Adobe Typkit: If you want professional quality fonts, you want Adobe's Typekit. Use this plugin to make it easier to apply Typekit fonts to your WordPress designs. http://wordpress.org/plugins/typekit-fonts-for-wordpress/

WP Google Fonts: The simplest way to add loads of new fonts to your site is through the Google Web Fonts Directory. Install this plugin and you can automatically change the fonts used in all your heading tags (h1 through h6) and other features in your site. http://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-google-fonts/

SEO Plugins

All in One SEO: To find this super popular, super easy search engine plugin just search the plugins at WordPress.org (you can get there from the plugins settings in your WordPress dashboard)

WordPress SEO Plugin by Yoast: More advanced SEO options, more automated features, & social media tools. http://yoast.com/wordpress/seo/

Google Sitemap Generator: Also available from the plugin search box, this tool automagically generates the kind of sitemaps that help Google crawl your site.

Social Media Plugins

AddThis plugin: for social sharing http://www.addthis.com

So Many More Plugins….

Favicon Generator: Complete your site with a favicon – that tiny little image that appears in the top of the browser window, right next to your URL. Favicon Generator will convert your gif, png, or jpeg image into a favicon. ico file and then upload that file to the root level of your site so that it will become visible as your Favicon in the browser URL bar. http://wordpress.org/plugins/favicon-generator/

My Custom CSS: If your theme doesn't support custom CSS and you want to customize your design, you want to add My Custom CSS. If you simply change the CSS in your theme's CSS files, and then upgrade the theme later, all your changes will be lost. (This plugin provides an alternative to creating a child theme.) http://wordpress.org/plugins/my-custom-css/

Broken Link Checker: Broken links are bad. Get notified if one breaks on your site with http://wordpress.org/plugins/broken-link-checker/

Tiny MCE: Not satisfied with the code view editor in WordPress? You're not alone. Add more HTML editing and viewing features with http://wordpress.org/plugins/tinymce-advanced/

Hotfix: Provides unofficial fixes for selected WordPress bugs, so you don't have to wait for the next WordPress core release. http://wordpress.org/plugins/hotfix/

Duplicate Post Plugin: After all your hard work crafting the perfect post design, why start over from scratch every time? Add this plugin and you can create a new post by duplicating any existing one. http://lopo.it/duplicate-post-plugin/

Ecommerce plugins and services

WooCommerce by WooThemes: Whether you use a Woo Theme to design your site or not, you can use their popular ecommerce features. Widely accepted as the standard for ecommerce sites with WordPress.

wpmudev: This company sells themes, plugins, and one of the most popular ecommerce solutions for WordPress. Similar to other services, you can use the wpmu ecommerce plugin even if you don't use their themes. http://premium.wpmudev.org/
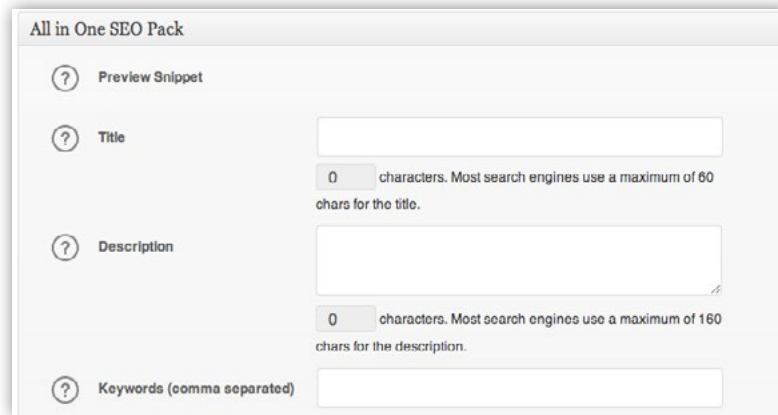
FrameMarket: A completed ecommerce solution from theme to checkout system, created by wpmu http://premium.wpmudev.org/project/frame-market-theme/

Shop Locket is a newcomer getting lots of attention. They have partnered with Automattic to bring ecommerce to WordPress.com. Similar to Cart66 cloud, you host your cart and products on their servers, so no need to make your own server PCI compliant, and their interface is really nice.

Cart 66 (which used to be PHPurchase) is simple, popular, and they just came out with a Cloud offering this year that allows you to host your products and shopping cart on their servers, which means you don't have to be PCI compliant on your own server. (And if you're not even sure what that means, you really need a service that takes care of server security for you.)

Search Engine Optimization

One of the most popular SEO plugins is called the "All in One SEO Pack." After you install this plugin, you can use it to customize the title, description, and other key SEO attributes on each page of your Web site.

Here's an explanation of the primary options in the All in one SEO plugin

Title: The title appears at the very top of the browser window and is considered especially important to search engines.

Description: Many search engines will use the text of the Description to describe your site in the search results page just below the Title. You should make this a 'call to action,' a reason for people to click on the link.

Keywords: Most search engines ignore this list (because search engines are more interested in the words that are actually in your web page), but you can include them for the few that still do put value on listed keywords.

Title Attribute: This field is optional. It enables you to add an additional description. The Title Attributes appear in some web browsers when you roll a cursor over the element.

Menu Label: Any text you enter will override the menu name in the navigation menu of the site.

Disable option: This enables you to turn off the SEO features for any page. Don't check it unless you really don't want it…
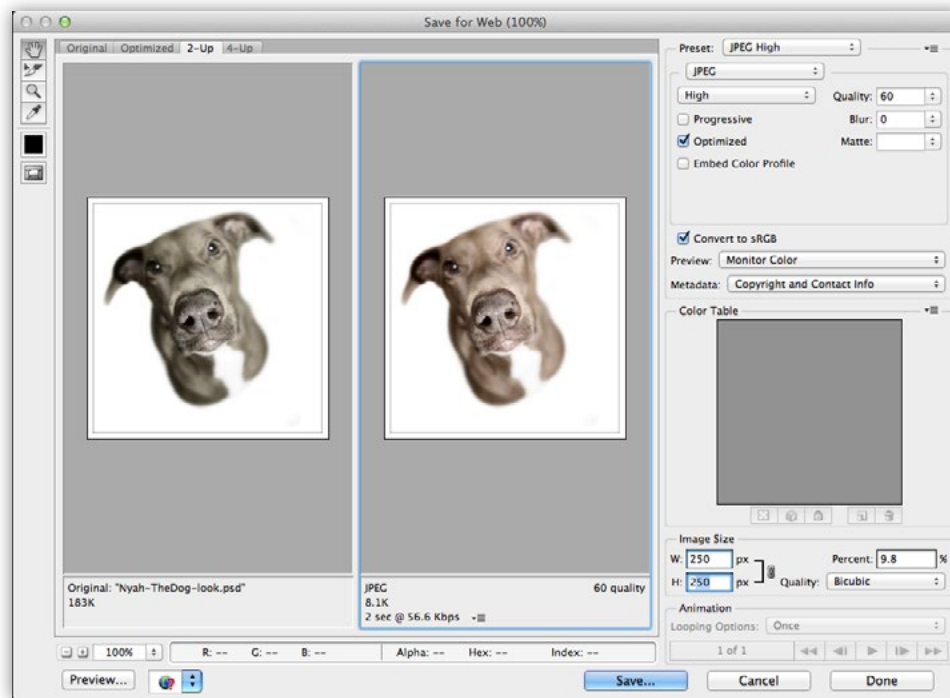
{ Photoshop }

How to Optimize Images in Photoshop for Use on Your Website

How to Optimize Images in Photoshop for Use on Your Web Site

The JPEG format is the best choice for images with many colors, such as photographs or images that include shading or gradients. You can save any image in GIF, PNG, or JPEG format by using the Save For Web dialog box in Photoshop, but you produce the best results if you choose the best format for each image. That's because the best way to optimize images (make them download faster over the Web) depends on how many colors appear in the image.

Also note that even if a photograph is already in the JPEG format, you can almost always reduce its file size further (and increase its download speed) by using the Save for Web dialog box to optimize the image.

1. Create a new image or open an existing image in any format in Photoshop. Because you create a copy of the image when you use the Save for Web dialog box, you don't need to worry about altering your original image.

2. Choose File-->Save for Web, and in the Save for Web dialog box, choose JPEG from the Optimized File Format drop-down list.

3. If the image is larger than the preview area in the Save for Web dialog box, choose the Hand tool from the upper-left corner of the dialog box and click and drag to position the most important elements in the image where you can see a better preview.

4. To reduce the size of a JPEG image, use the slider to alter the Quality setting, or enter a number, up to 100. Compression is measured as a percentage: The lower the number, the higher the compression and the smaller the file size.

5. Notice in the bottom of the Save for Web dialog box that the original file size appears under the preview of the image on the left, and the optimized file size appears under the preview on the right.

6. Alter the Quality setting until the image uses the greatest amount of compression (the greater the compression, the lower the number in the Quality field), without degrading the appearance of the image too much.

7. Keep a close eye on the preview screen as you adjust the Quality option. If you reduce the quality too far, you degrade the image's appearance noticeably.

8. After all the image settings are the way you want them, click OK, and in the Save dialog box, give the image a new name and specify where you want to save it on your hard drive. Then click Save to save a new version of the JPEG with the specified settings and preserve the original unchanged.