

Wordpress.com or Wordpress.org?

Wordpress.com is a quick and easy way to get a blog online. You can go sign up and create a WordPress blog immediately, for free. You have a variety of themes and widgets to choose from and can adjust most basic settings. Your address will be *yourblog.wordpress.com*. You will have to pay for the ability to adjust the CSS of your blog and you cannot install plug-ins.

Wordpress.org is open source blogging software that you can download for free. You have complete control over the look and feel of your site and you can install any WordPress plug-in to extend the functionality of your site but you will have to provide your own hosting, backups and do all of the back-end administration.

Create an Account on www.wordpress.com

You'll need a username and password. Your username can be the same as the blog URL or different. You can have multiple blogs attached to the same username. Keep in mind: it may take a while to find a username or blog URL that's not taken. Be creative!

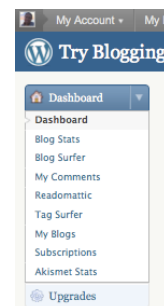


Create a Blog

Give your blog a name and a title; they don't have to be the same. Decide if you want your blog to be private (only available to readers who are invited), public (anyone can find and read it) or public, but hidden from search engines (won't come up in search results someone could find it if they had the URL).

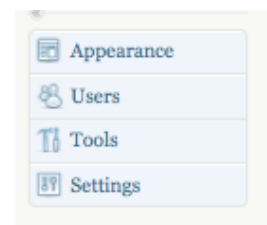
Wordpress Dashboard

The dashboard gives you basic information about your blog, including visitor statistics, comments, recent comments, etc.



Configure Your Blog Appearance

Under the appearance menu, you can browse the free themes available for your blog, or search for a theme based on certain criteria like color or a certain functionality. Themes differ widely in terms of what options they allow you to have but there is generally something that will work for you. The availability of certain widgets is one of the things that may change from template to template.



Widgets

Widgets are little items that can enhance the functionality of your blog. They are

usually included as sidebar or header items, such as the blogroll, links, tag clouds, recent post options, twitter integration etc. Experiment with them to see which ones will work best for you. One very useful widget to add is the “Akismet” widget, which is an excellent spam-blocker.

Users

You can include other users in your blog, as contributors or authors (if you want them to be able to write guest posts) or even administrators.

Settings

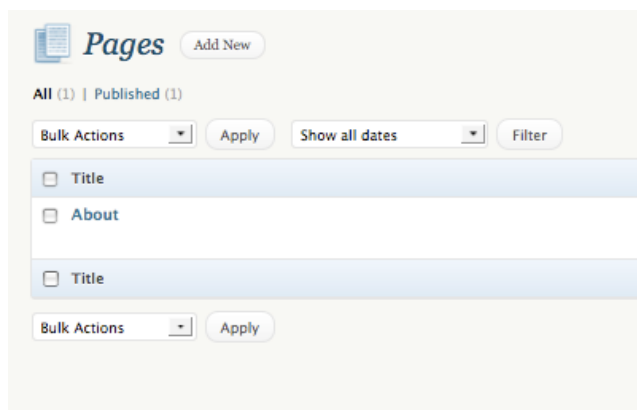
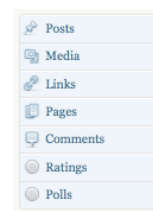
Under the Settings menu, you can change or adjust your blog’s title or tag line (the line of text under the title), as well as the time zone and time format. You can also decide what will be displayed on the front page---i.e., your latest posts or a particular static page. You can decide how many posts will be displayed on a page and configure your blog feeds. Very importantly, you can also configure settings for comments. Do you want users to be required to fill out their name and email, or be registered users of Wordpress? Do you want comments to be threaded? Do you want to moderate comments, or be emailed when a comment is posted? These are all things to take into consideration.

Creating Content

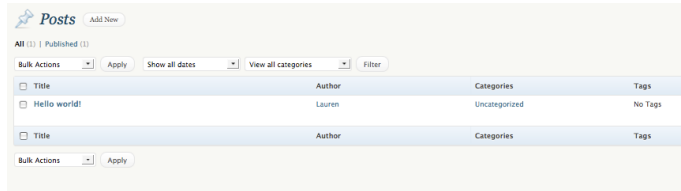
Wordpress blogs feature three types of content: pages, posts and comments.

Pages are static pages, like that of a normal website. By default, you will automatically have an “About” page. You can edit this page or delete it by “moving it to the trash.” You can create as many pages as you like; they will generally be accessible to readers by links at the top of your published blog. Creating and editing a page is just like creating and editing a post.

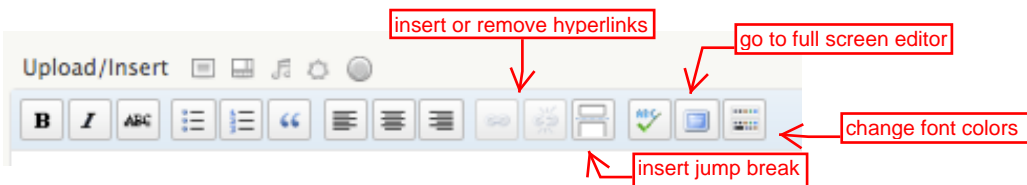
Posts are individual entries that, together as a whole, make up your blog. Posts are generally presented to the reader in reverse chronological order, that is, latest first. Posts can be placed into “categories” and attached to “tags,” which make sorting



through and searching them much easier. When you first create your blog, you will have a default post already in place entitled, “Hello world!” Feel free to amend or delete this.

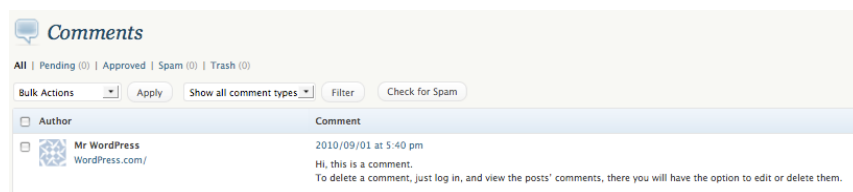


To create a new post, click the “Add New” button at the top of the page. You will be taken to the post editing screen. **See the last page for a descriptive capture of this screen.** You can put as much text as you like into a post, and use the WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor to stylize it. A WYSIWYG is a word-processing menu similar to what you might get in Microsoft Word. In Wordpress, you can upload or embed various types of media, including images, movies, audio files and PDFS) by using the visual editor at the top of the posting window.



To the right of that window, you can preview the post, or save it as a draft. You can also publish it immediately or schedule it to be published at a later date, which is a good way to stagger your posts that you might want to write in advance. You can also select or create a category into which that post should go, and add or amend keyword tags for that post. If you want to get rid of a post entirely, click “Move to Trash,” a red link near the “Publish” link.

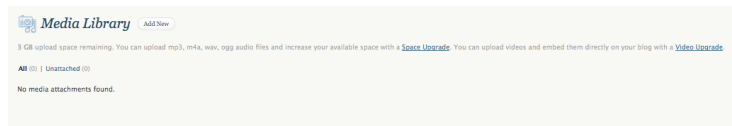
Comments are the third type of content on Wordpress. Part of the point of creating a blog is to engage in conversation with your readers, and comments are how to achieve that. Anyone reading your blog can leave a comment, depending on the settings you select in the Settings > Discussion menu. You can view comments by reading through the published post, or via the Comments menu in your admin menu. By default, you will have a comment from “Mr. Wordpress” already there when you begin your blog. You can reply to comments, approve them if you decide to moderate, mark them as spam or send them to the trash individually or in a group by using the “Bulk Actions” menu.



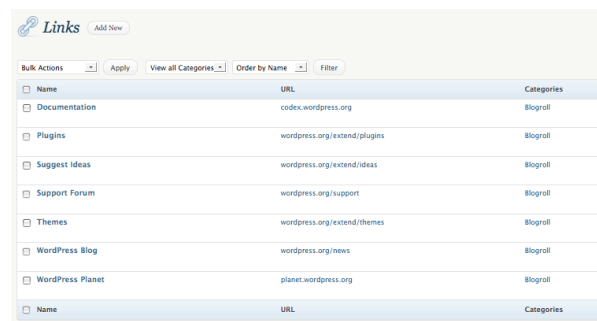
This documentation is not meant to be comprehensive. For fuller Wordpress instruction, go to wordpress.com/help

Links and Media

You can include media in your posts and pages. Wordpress gives you a “media library” with 3GB of space for free (more requires a paid upgrade). You can upload and use image files, PDFs, Powerpoints and Word documents. Other paid upgrades will allow you to upload audio and video files. (However, you can still *embed* media from other sites, like YouTube, for free. The Media Library service refers to uploading files from your computer to your Wordpress site.)

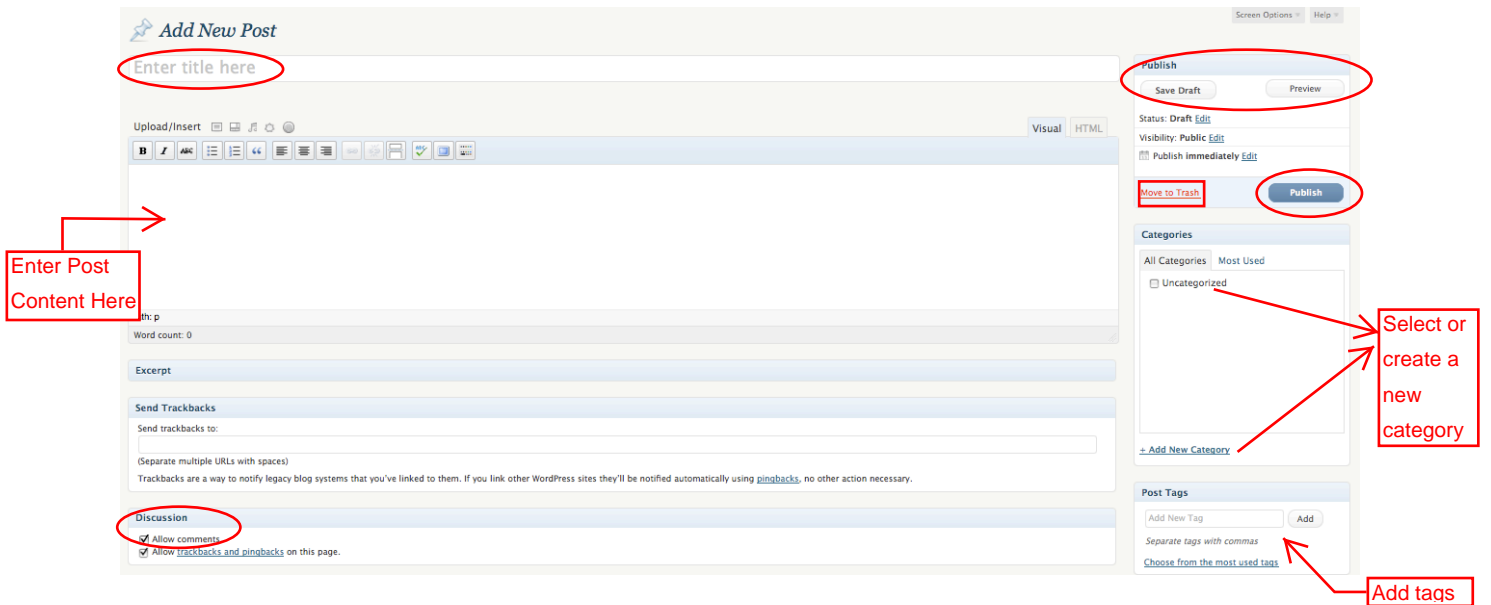


You can also include a set of links in your sidebar as resources for you and your readers, like a blogroll. Much like posts, you can also assign categories to these links. To add a new link, just click “Add Link” under the Links menu, give the link a name (like CNN) and paste in the URL (<http://cnn.com>). You can give it a description and assign it a category (such as Blogroll) if you choose.

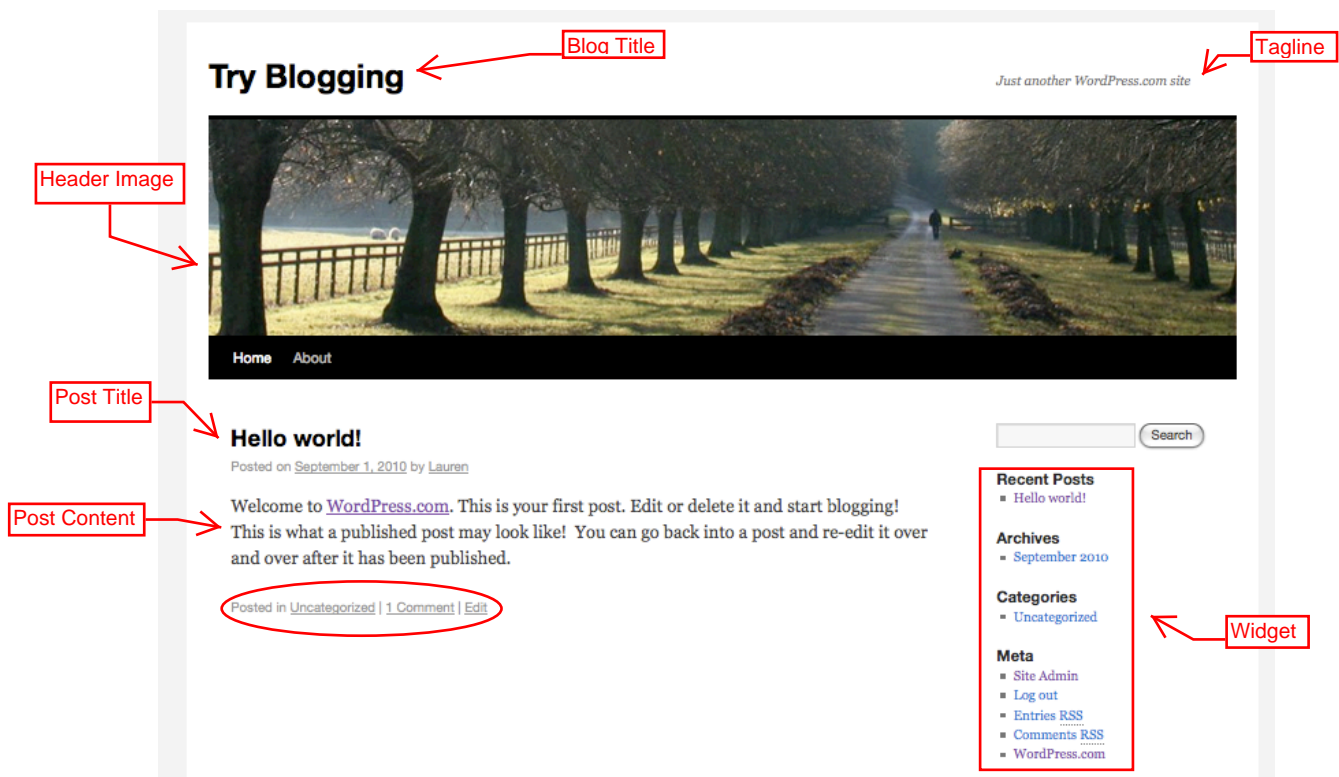


This guide only scratches the surface of what you can do with Wordpress. For more information, try out the resources at: <http://en.wordpress.com/tag/how-to-use-wordpress/>

Post Editing View:



Published Post View:



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