
Creating Your Own Website

A small business owner's simple step-by-step guide!



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Hello!

So you want your own website, do ya?

Well, today's your lucky day, friend. Because I'm here to help get you and your company on the right track toward building a super easy-to-manage and professional website!

****Cue the applause****

You've purchased this guide, so you're clearly no fool, and you already understand how important it is to have a presence online in today's rapidly changing digital world.

Congratulations!

This realization can be the trickiest part.

I make it super easy to understand the process of this

seemingly daunting task of building a website, complete with zero web-developer jargon that no one really wants to read anyway.

I will walk you through each phase, step-by-step, to creating your own beautiful, professional website, and there's no need to freak out, either – you don't need to know about HTML, CSS, Dreamweaver, or anything like that to get started. Knowledge of these certainly wouldn't hurt, but they are not required by any means!

I will make sure that you are covered completely, and that you know how to make a gorgeous website by the end of this guide!

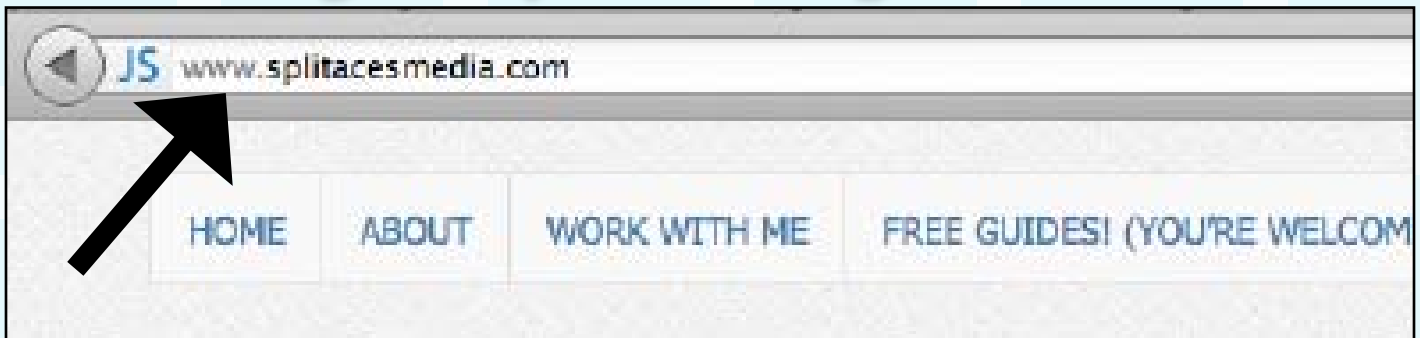
What you'll need:

1. A bowl of your favorite snack (I prefer Honey Nut Cheerios or grapes), and a bottle of water (hydration is key)!
2. Your credit card (for purchasing a domain name and hosting service).
3. One to two hours of your time

Let's get started!

Step 1

Choosing and purchasing a domain name



First things first, you're going to need a domain name.

Important things to keep in mind when pondering domain names:

If you were searching for your company in Google, what words would you think to search for?

Things to think about:

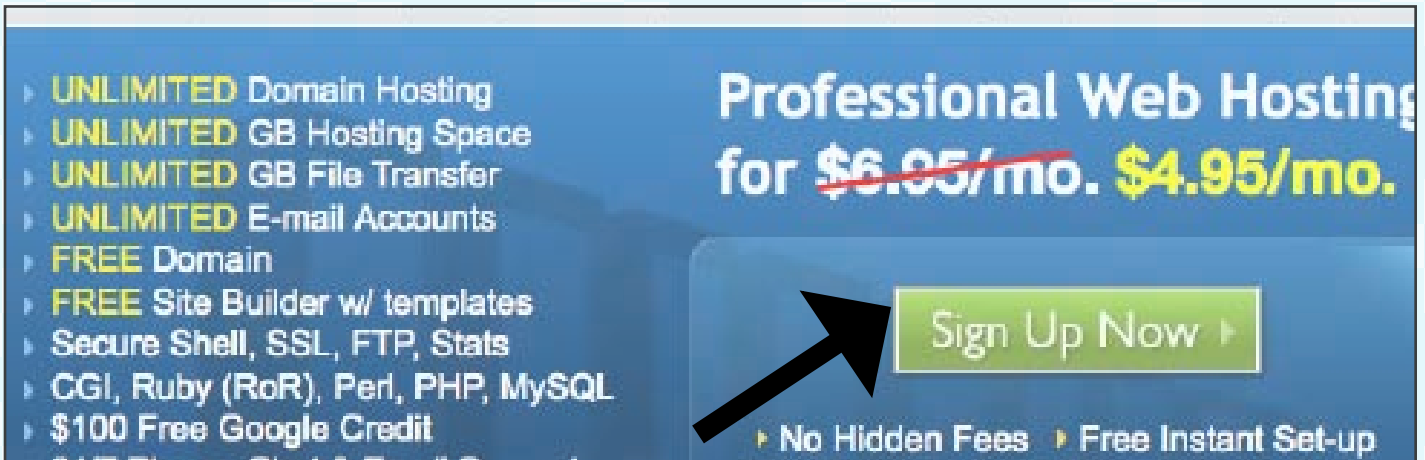
Would you spell the name correctly?

Would you think to spell out numbers or to include hyphens?

Make sure that whatever name you choose is easy to spell, easy to find, and easy to remember! (I failed epically on "www.jessiespielvogel.com"... no one can spell that)...

I would also try to steer clear of anything aside from a website ending in ".com" simply because most people automatically think ".com" when searching for a site, and won't remember to search for a ".net." You can certainly purchase domains ending in something other than a ".com" – but if it can be avoided, I would try to do that! Other options you will have include .net, .org, .co, .biz, .tv, .info and more. Again, not bad choices... just not ideal.

There are plenty of hosting services out there for you to choose from, but I use BlueHost. So that's what I'll help you get set up with, as well. If you choose to go with another service, it works basically the same way.



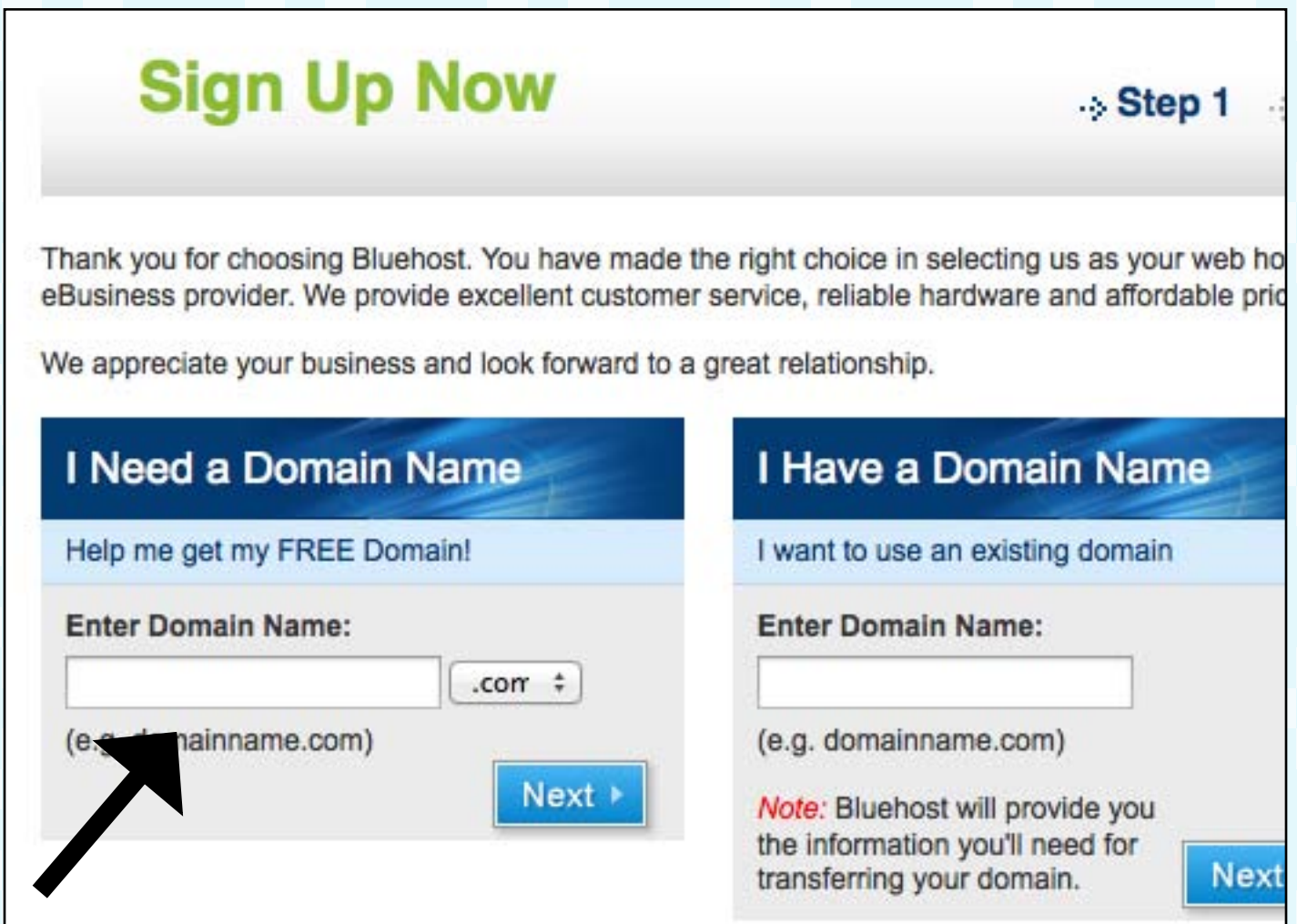
A promotional banner for BlueHost web hosting. On the left, a list of features is shown with yellow arrows pointing to the right. On the right, the text 'Professional Web Hosting for \$6.95/mo. \$4.95/mo.' is displayed, with the original price crossed out. Below this is a green 'Sign Up Now' button with a black arrow pointing to it. At the bottom right, it says 'No Hidden Fees' and 'Free Instant Set-up'.

- ▶ **UNLIMITED** Domain Hosting
- ▶ **UNLIMITED** GB Hosting Space
- ▶ **UNLIMITED** GB File Transfer
- ▶ **UNLIMITED** E-mail Accounts
- ▶ **FREE** Domain
- ▶ **FREE** Site Builder w/ templates
- ▶ Secure Shell, SSL, FTP, Stats
- ▶ CGI, Ruby (RoR), Perl, PHP, MySQL
- ▶ \$100 Free Google Credit

Professional Web Hosting
for ~~\$6.95/mo.~~ **\$4.95/mo.**

Sign Up Now ▶

▶ No Hidden Fees ▶ Free Instant Set-up



A screenshot of the BlueHost sign-up process, Step 1. The page has a green 'Sign Up Now' header and a 'Step 1' indicator. The main text says 'Thank you for choosing Bluehost. You have made the right choice in selecting us as your web host and eBusiness provider. We provide excellent customer service, reliable hardware and affordable prices. We appreciate your business and look forward to a great relationship.' Below this are two options: 'I Need a Domain Name' and 'I Have a Domain Name'. The 'I Need a Domain Name' option has a 'Next' button with a black arrow pointing to it. The 'I Have a Domain Name' option also has a 'Next' button.

Sign Up Now

❖ **Step 1**

Thank you for choosing Bluehost. You have made the right choice in selecting us as your web host and eBusiness provider. We provide excellent customer service, reliable hardware and affordable prices. We appreciate your business and look forward to a great relationship.

I Need a Domain Name
Help me get my FREE Domain!

Enter Domain Name:
 .com ↕
(e.g. domainname.com)

Next ▶

I Have a Domain Name
I want to use an existing domain

Enter Domain Name:

(e.g. domainname.com)

Note: Bluehost will provide you the information you'll need for transferring your domain.

Next

1. Go to [BlueHost.com](https://www.bluehost.com) and click "sign up now." (Full disclosure: this is an affiliate link, which means I get paid for sending referrals to Bluehost. However, it's no extra charge to you, and it's the same service I currently use)!

2. You will see a box that says "I need a domain name." Enter the domain you would like to reserve, and this will tell you if your domain is available or not. You can choose to change it from a ".com" to one of the other options listed above, but, again, I wouldn't mess with it. If it tells you that your domain is taken, keep thinking about what you would like your site to be called. Try different variations of initials if you have to until you find something that works.

Once you've found one that isn't already taken, you'll get a screen that says, "Congratulations!"

3. Fill out the standard information (name, email, etc...)

4. You will come to a section that says package information. You don't need all that stuff! Select the most basic package (select from 1, 2, or 3 years for hosting services), and uncheck all of those boxes that add on extra fees. Some people may find those services necessary, but for our purposes, let's just keep it simple and less expensive! You can always get back in and add them later.

5. Enter in your billing information.

6. Once you've been approved, you will get emails telling you step-by-step what to do next. It will tell you how to login to your BlueHost account, and how to manage your personal preferences.

Step 2

Installing Wordpress



WordPress is what is called a Content Management System (CMS). It can be used to host a blog or a regular website, and the best part, aside from the fact that it comes with templates that are already designed for you, is that it's free! There are tons and tons of templates to choose from and to easily customize for your needs.

1. Login to your BlueHost control panel by going to Bluehost.com.
2. Click the WordPress option under "SimpleScripts Installations"



3. A new page will open up. Click "Install"
4. It will ask you which version of WordPress you would like to install, but it should already have the latest version chosen for you, so leave that part alone.
5. It will ask you where you want the install to be linked, and it should already have the domain you just purchased chosen, so again – leave that part alone!
6. It will ask you which plug-ins you want to have installed with your new site... all of the plug-ins have checked boxes, and that's fine. They don't cost you anything, and they can easily be changed or deleted as you see fit.

Step 1: Installation Preferences

Which version of WordPress would you like to install?

It is highly recommended to choose the latest version to ensure your website's security and

3.3.2 (Stable)

7. Check the box to say that you agree with the terms and conditions, and you're ready to rock! Your install will begin immediately, and when you go to your newly acquired domain name, you will see a WordPress template pre-installed for you. Don't worry - I know it's ugly. We can fix that!

8. You will receive an email with your login information and temporary password. Login to your new website, and let's start creating your masterpiece!

Step 3

Customizing and creating your page

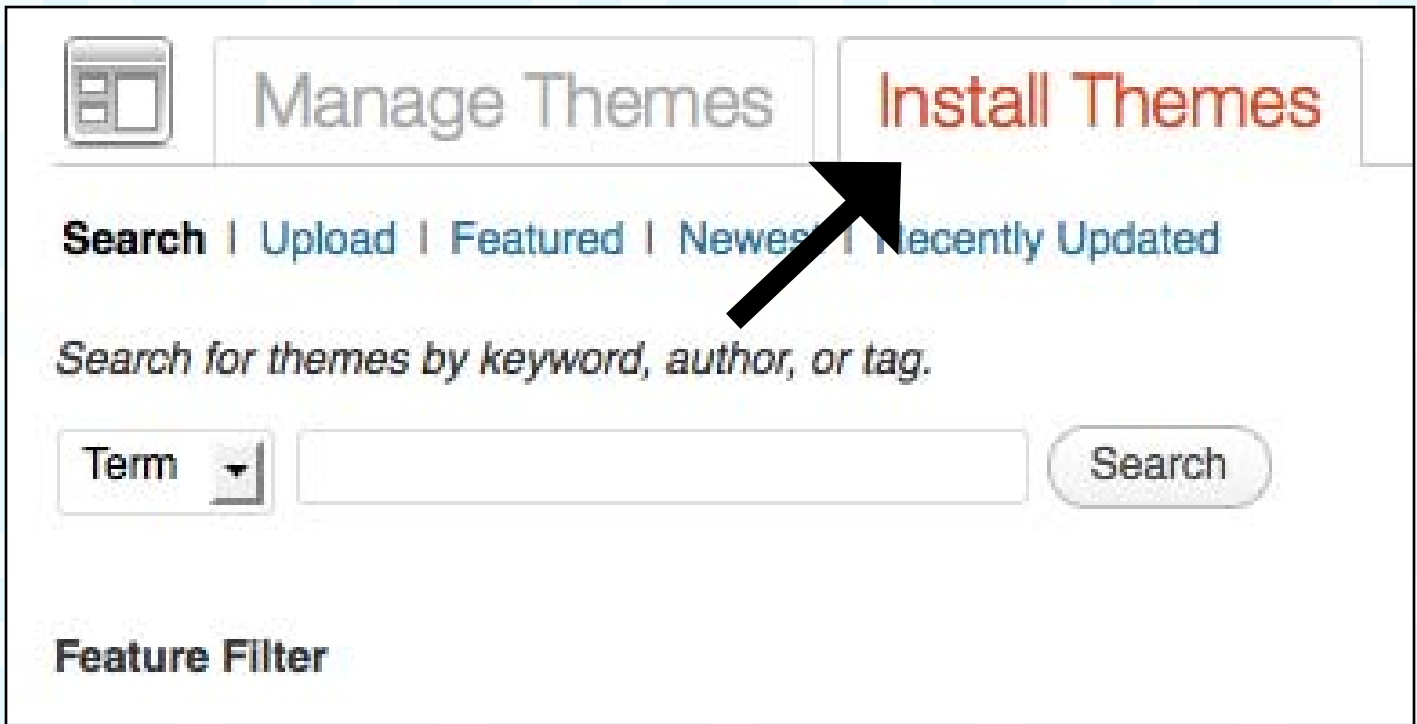


1. When you login to your new WordPress account, you will immediately see your Dashboard. This is your landing page for all of your admin needs!

2. On the left, you will see a tab that says "Appearance." Roll your pointer over that button, and you will see another tab called, "Themes." Click that!

3. You will see two tabs at the top: "Manage themes" and "Install themes." Click the one that says "Install themes."





4. Here, you can filter out the type of theme you want... although, since I like to see allllll of my options, I would just scroll down to the bottom and click, "Find themes."
5. Pick one you like! Most of these themes are extremely customizable, so if you don't like the colors or photos provided, don't worry about it. You can easily change them! (If you can't find a free them that you like, you can also search for themes that you have to pay for - a lot of times they are more customizable than the free ones... but for basic needs, go with the freebie)!
6. Once you've found the theme you want to use, click "Install."
7. Once your theme is installed, you will need to activate it by simply clicking "Activate!"

Step 4

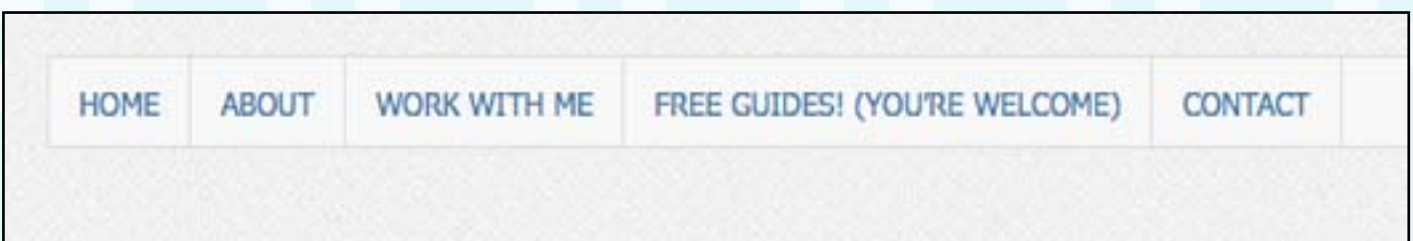
Setting up your pages and tabs



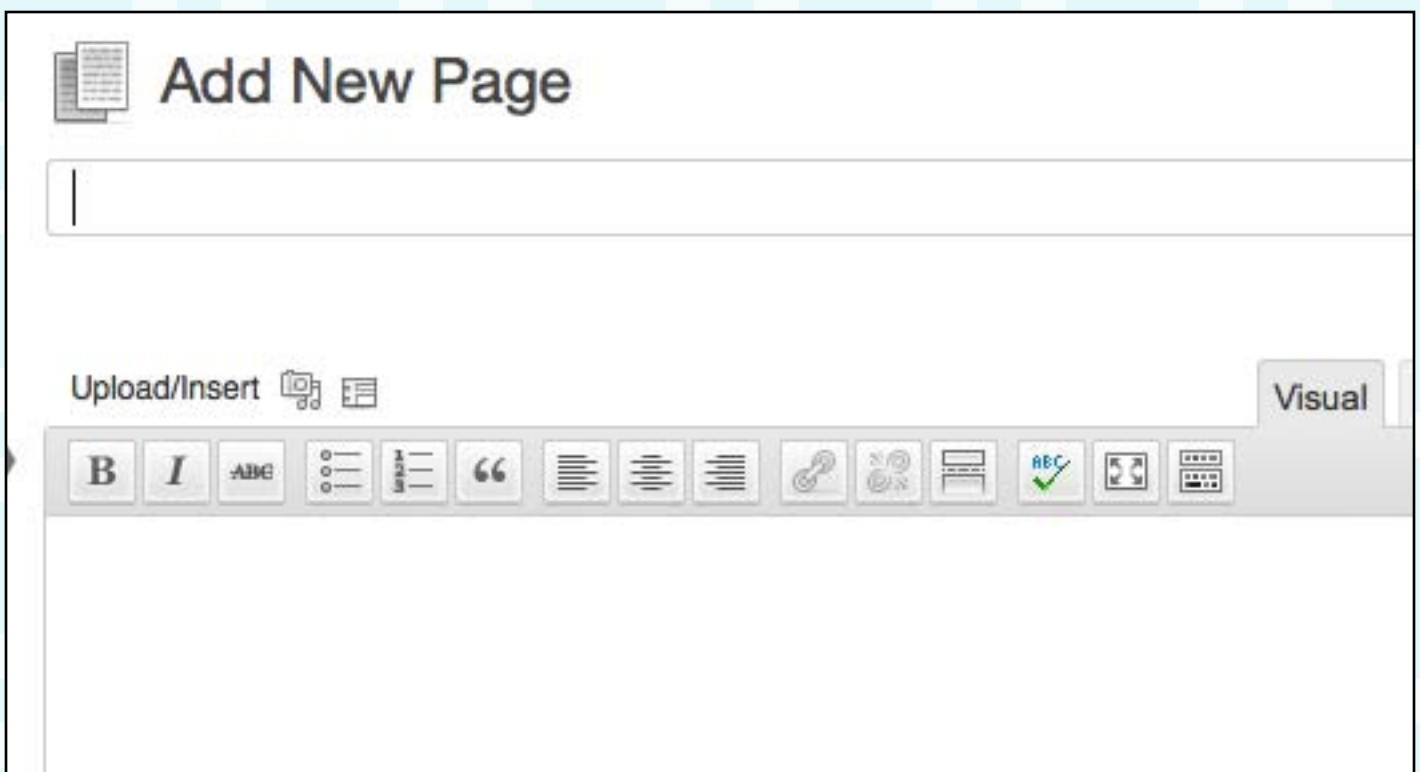
Your pages are going to be those tabs that you see across the top of websites. Each page will have its own unique URL. For example... **www.jessiespielvogel.com** is my homepage, but **www.jessiespielvogel.com/contact** is a separate page that takes you to my contact information.

You can set up your tabs to be anything you want! Photos, About, Resources, Contact, Things I Love, People I Hate... whatever you want! Just kidding about the People I Hate part. That's mean.

This is what my tabs (pages) look like across the top of my website:

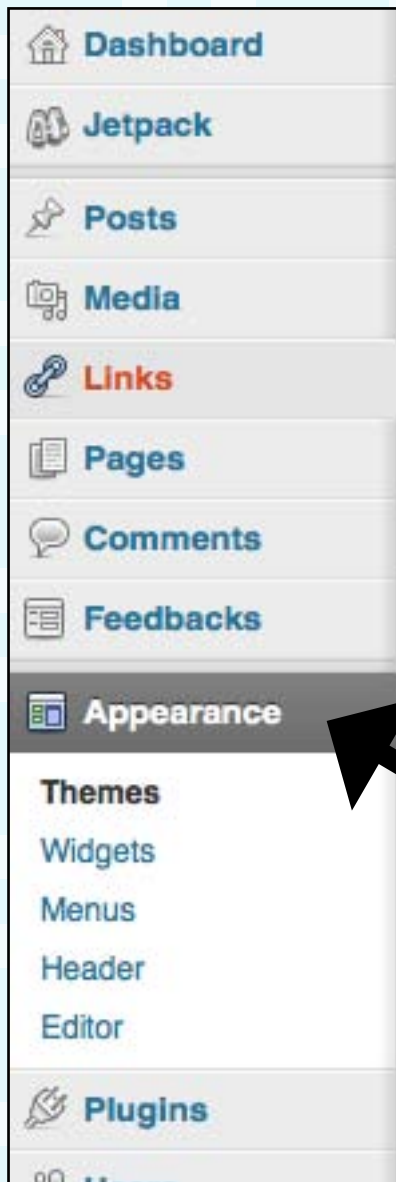


1. From your dashboard, click the tab on the left that says "Pages."
2. You will see that a sample page is already created for you. Send that sucker to the trash by clicking the link below it that says "trash."
3. At the top of the page, you will see a link that says "add new." Click that!
4. Give your page a title. Let's start with your "About" page (generally the most clicked on page for websites).
5. Repeat those steps for any other tabs you'd like on your page, as well. I recommend starting with the basics: About, Services, and Contact.



Step 5

Play with the appearance options



To me, this is the fun part. Sure, the content for your business is important... but this is waaayyyy more entertaining to design.


1. Click on the Appearance tab on the left.
2. Here you can edit your background, header, and more, depending on which theme you chose to install. You can upload photos as backgrounds, a personalized logo as a header... basically anything you want.

Make it look good! This is your online home, so make it something you would be proud to invite people into.

Step 6

WTF is a "Widget?"

Aside from a funny word, a widget is an application that can be installed into your website to provide some type of service. The theme you selected will have a handful of widgets pre-installed (usually a contact form, a social media widget, a calendar, an archives tab, etc...) but a lot of times, you will need to manually install these features. Don't freak yet! It's just as easy as the rest has been.



Widgets

Available Widgets

Drag widgets from here to a sidebar on the right to activate them. Drag widgets back here to deactivate them and delete their settings.

Akismet Widget
Display the number of spam comments
Akismet has caught

Archives
A monthly archive of your site's posts

Calendar
A calendar of your site's posts

1. Click the "Appearance" tab on the left. Then click "Widgets."
2. Click and drag whichever options you want on your website to the right column and place it where you want it to go. Once you've clicked and dragged them over to the proper place, go to your actual website to see how it looks. It should update instantaneously. If you like it where they are at, great. If not, keep playing around with them until you find something that you like.
3. I recommend the following widgets for your sidebar to get started (in this order): Search, Social Media Widget, and if needed, arbitrary text (anything you want to say in text only format).
4. If you don't see these widgets already installed with your theme, don't fret! Let's just go get them. On the left side, you'll see a tab called "Plugins." Click that.



The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Plugins' management interface. At the top left is a plug icon and the word 'Plugins'. To its right is a button labeled 'Add New', which is pointed to by a large black arrow. Below this are filters for 'All (12)', 'Active (11)', and 'Inactive (1)'. There is a 'Bulk Actions' dropdown menu and an 'Apply' button. The main content is a table with two columns: 'Plugin' and 'Description'. The table lists three plugins: Akismet, Contact Form 7, and Disqus Comment System. Each plugin row includes a checkbox, the plugin name, and links for 'Deactivate', 'Edit', and 'Settings'. The description column provides a brief overview of each plugin's function and version information.

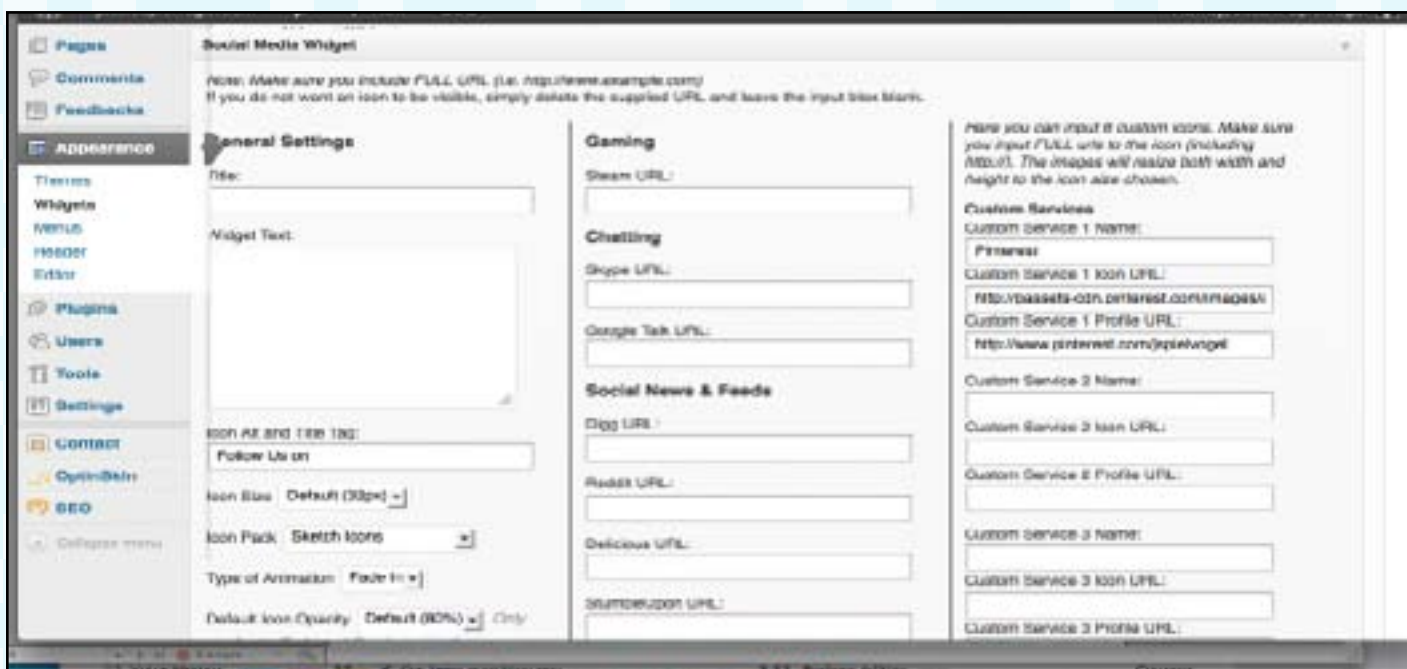
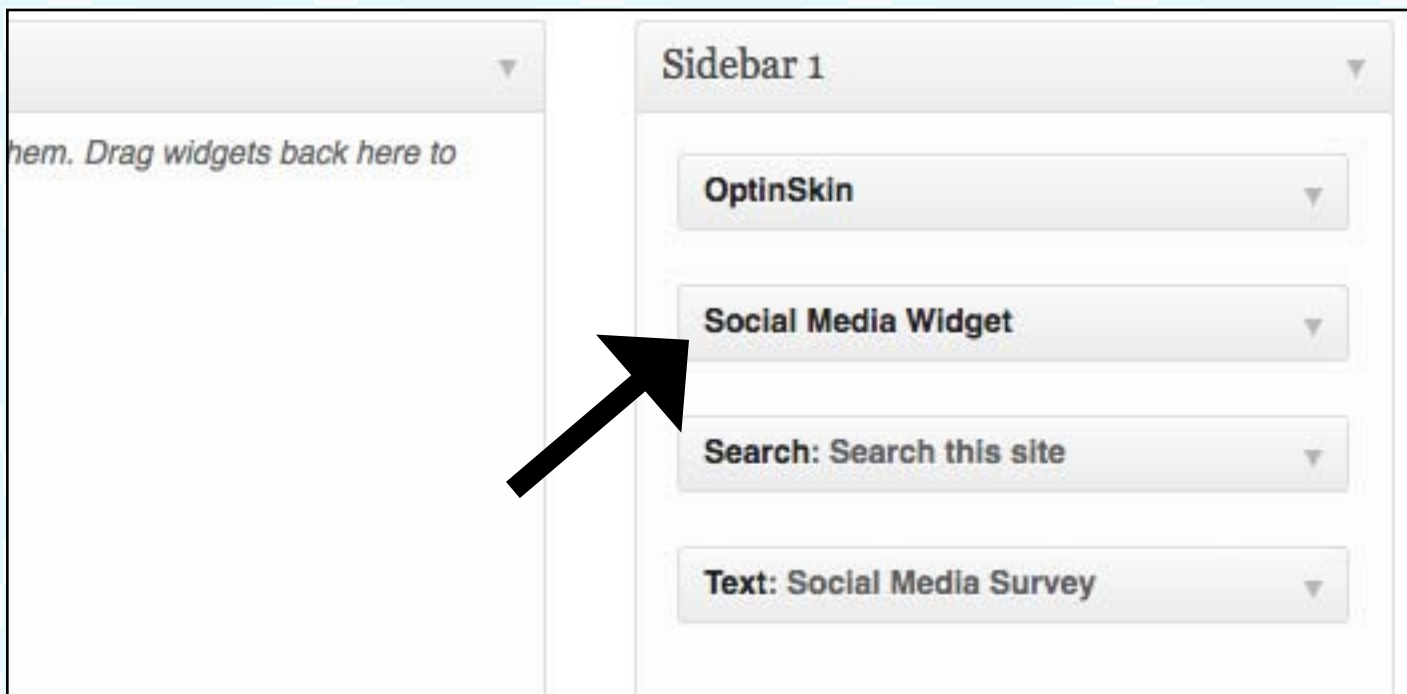
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Plugin | Description |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Akismet Deactivate Edit Settings | Used by millions, Akismet is quite possibly the best way spam . It keeps your site protected from spam even while this description, 2) Sign up for an Akismet API key , and 3 Version 2.5.6 By Automatic Visit plugin site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contact Form 7 Settings Deactivate Edit | Just another contact form plugin. Simple but flexible. Version 3.1.2 By Takayuki Miyoshi Visit plugin site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Disqus Comment System Settings Deactivate Edit | The Disqus comment system replaces your WordPress c Disqus. Head over to the Comments admin page to set u |

5. At the top of the page, click "Add new."
6. Hypothetically speaking, let's say that your social media widget is missing. Type in the search box, "social media," and see what pops up.
7. You'll see an option actually labeled "social media widget." Get that one.



8. Once you've installed the widget (you'll need to activate it), go back to your widgets tab, and drag the social media widget to the right column.
9. Once you do that, you will see a screen pop up where you can insert any and every social media platform you utilize and want to be found on. I would recommend including your Facebook brand page, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter, and email. RSS is an important one to include as well if you are going to be blogging regularly, as well.

Once you've got your widgets set up and your social media links plugged in, go back to your website and see what it looks like! You should see your tabs across the top, and your widgets wherever you installed them to be.



Step 7

Adjusting your settings

1. On the left again from the dashboard, find the tab that says "settings." Here, you will be able to give your website a title, a slogan, etc.
2. Give your site a title. If your domain is just your company name, use that! Just your company name. Keep it simple.
3. WordPress automatically plugs in "just another wordpress blog" as the tagline. Change that. Come up with something unique for your site. For example: "The online portfolio of the fantastic, beautiful, charming, and modest John Smith."
4. Roll your mouse over the "Settings" tab on the left again, and click "permalinks." The default setting for your unique URLs is sloppy. Choose a different one! Your links could look like any of these (I choose the second option for my site, but some prefer just the name with no date).



Permalink Settings

By default WordPress uses web URLs which have question marks and lots of numbers in them, but you can choose a different structure for your permalinks and archives. This can improve the aesthetics, usability, and forward compatibility of your site. Here are some examples to get you started.

Common Settings

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Default | <code>http://www.jessiespielvogel.com/?p=123</code> |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Day and name | <code>http://www.jessiespielvogel.com/2012/05/11/sample-post</code> |
| <input type="radio"/> Month and name | <code>http://www.jessiespielvogel.com/2012/05/sample-post</code> |
| <input type="radio"/> Numeric | <code>http://www.jessiespielvogel.com/archives/123</code> |

Step 8

Installing useful plugins



You may find that these plugins are useful for your site as well. Go back into your plugins tab on the left-hand side, and search for each of these. Install them, activate them, and you're good to go!

"Super useful plugins people shouldn't be without: Limit Login Attempts, WordPress SEO by Yoast, and WP-DBManager for backing the site up."

– Thomas Frank, [College Info Geek](#)

Limit Login Attempts: Just to be on the safe side, this plugin limits the amount of times that you can get your password incorrect when logging in. You will get an alert to your email if someone has attempted to log in to your site too many times by using the wrong password. Just a security precaution!

WordPress SEO by Yoast: This plugin helps you utilize the best “SEO” or “Search Engine Optimization.” When someone Googles a topic that you’ve been writing about, this plugin helps you to show up in more search engines as a relevant source for whatever it is that they’re searching for.

WP-DBManager: Don’t lost your stuff!!! A good habit to get into from the start would be to save all of your files on your computer, as well as on your website. This plugin just gives you that extra boost of security.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!



You are all set up with your own website. Fill in those pages, start blogging if you'd like, and let's see how this will help you grow your company. Your new website is easy to customize, you can change the theme's widgets, content, and more at any time... and you can also start blogging about anything and everything your customers would want to know!

If any part of these step-by-step instructions was cryptic in any way, PLEASE TELL ME! I will fix it immediately. Simply send me an email with your questions, and I'll get back to you ASAP.



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