

How To Start a WordPress Blog in 7 Easy Steps (2020 Edition)

contentchampion.com/how-to-start-a-wordpress-blog

Learning how to start a WordPress blog for your business website or authority site can feel rather daunting at first.

All that hassle with domains, hosting, themes and plugins – it's enough to make you pack it all in before you've even got started.

But that would be a mistake, because the truth is that with just a few straightforward steps to follow, and thanks to the user-friendly wonder that is WordPress, setting up your new site is incredibly simple.



You won't even have to throw your computer out of the window and run around screaming to get everything done (believe me, I very nearly did smash my old PC in frustration when I started out online – but that's a story for another day).

In this article, we'll take you through all the stages of creating your first blog – from choosing a domain name, setting up your hosting and installing WordPress, to selecting your theme, uploading plugins, writing your first blog post and attracting readers.

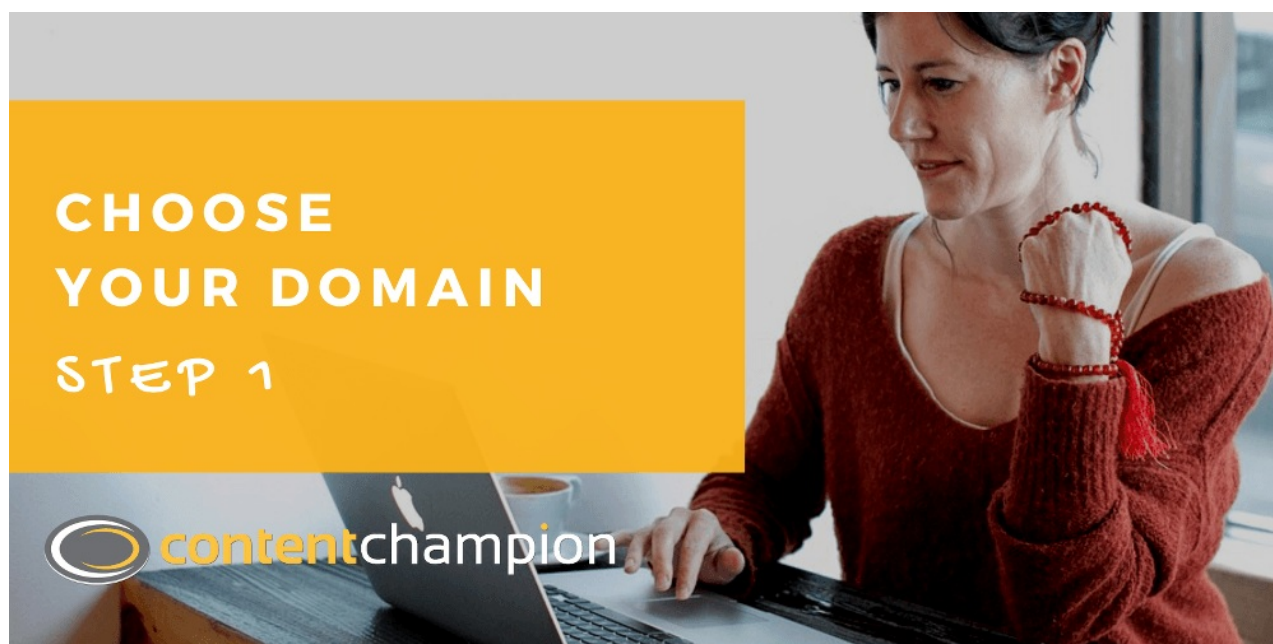
Thanks For Requesting Your Free PDF Guide

There's a lot of information online to support bloggers and small business owners looking to get started with WordPress, so we'll also be pointing you towards several resources we've found useful in building and growing your online presence.

And don't worry, you won't need to be a graphic designer or have superb technical skills to set up a WordPress blog (which is doubtless why over 60 million websites are now powered by it), and the whole set up will cost you very little to get going.

So with all that said – get yourself a coffee (and probably definitely some biscuits), because here are those seven easy steps to creating your first WordPress blog.

1. What's in a Name? Choosing & Buying Your Domain



First things first. Before you even open up the hood on WordPress (BTW – we rather quaintly say 'bonnet' here in the UK), you're going to need a domain name. Your domain is simply the name of your business on the internet, which people type in to reach you.

Ours is ContentChampion.com – simple right?

So how do you choose a name?

Ideally, your domain name needs to be either your business name itself or as close to it as possible, which makes it fairly easy for customers in the first instance to find you. You should also choose a top-level domain extension such as .com, .net or .org – or go for the domain name extension for your specific country – such as .co.uk.

And if you're setting up an authority site or affiliate site, it's best to make your domain short, 'brandable' and not stuffed with keywords (which is what people used to do in the past). So think IncomeRenegade.com instead of HowToMakeMoneyOnlineFromHome.com.

As no two domain names can be the same (obviously), choosing your domain is getting trickier as more and more names become taken. It also means it's extra-important to snap up a good name when you think of one – so even if you're not quite ready to get

blogging or build your site, bag that domain with all the extensions you need as soon as you can.

If you want some help finding just the right domain and also making sure its available (and don't we all), then the following resources are not only useful but fun to use too. Rather embarrassingly I actually enjoy looking for domains and own well over 50 – so domain name creation can be quite addictive if you get into it (I've always said I'm a content marketing nerd at heart).

Anyway, try these out – I've found some corkers from these:

<https://www.panabee.com/>

<https://www.nameboy.com/>





<https://www.namemesh.com/>

When it comes to buying your domain we always recommend Bluehost for beginners: they're super-easy to work with, won't blow the budget, and are WordPress affiliated. They've been hosting websites since 1996, and that's positively ancient and venerable by Internet standards – like me.

First up – simply go to the Bluehost homepage and click the big get started now button.



This is a courtesy notice that you have visited one of our paid endorsers while researching your purchase.

 WordPress made easy <small>#1 recommended web hosting by WordPress.org. Every account features 1-click WordPress installation.</small>	 24/7 support <small>Trained, in-house experts are here to help 24/7. Our robust help center includes guides, video tutorials and more.</small>	 money-back guarantee <small>Try us and love us, or get a refund within 30 days of signing up. Your satisfaction is our top priority and we're committed to it.</small>	 over \$150 in offers <small>Leverage advertising offers from Google, Bing, and other leading sites to help grow your business - all included.</small>
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If your chosen domain isn't available, Bluehost will helpfully come up with similar alternatives, or it may be that you can switch to .net rather than .com or .co.uk to get your chosen name. As discussed, you may choose to have more than one domain extension: for example, .com and .org. Being a bit flexible will help you get a domain you're happy with.

Just make sure you do a quick Google search for your chosen domain to make sure you're not buying a version of one that's already being used by a big company, or is trademarked or something – as the last thing you want is a cease and desist letter the moment you launch your new site.

When you've finally decided on your ideal domain name – and you know it's available and using it won't mean treading on anyone's toes – Bluehost will give you a price, which can be as little as \$8.99 per year.

This cost covers auto-renewal (you can't accidentally let your name expire), domain lock (nobody else can transfer it), and an easy control panel.

Happy with the price? Create an account and proceed towards payment. You'll receive a confirmation email with all your login details.

So there you have it: your first business blog domain name.

And if you're hosting your website with [Bluehost](#) (which we also advise if you're just starting out), you can buy your domain AND set up hosting at the same time.

Let's keep moving...

2. The Host With The Most: How To Set Up WordPress Hosting



Every website needs a domain name and a host. We've sorted the former – now what's the latter?

At its simplest, your web host is your website's home. If the domain name is your business name above the door, your host is the building. Hosting gives your website a space to exist on the Internet and allows visitors to access it through your chosen

domain.

Again, we recommend that rookie bloggers use the ever-helpful Bluehost, who offer [WordPress-specific hosting](#). They offer several different packages for this too – starting from just \$19.99 per month.

How do you know which one to go for? The main difference between the packages is the amount of storage you get (how many files and pictures etc you can store online), so you'll need to think about how big your website is going to be and start planning out the pages you'll need in line with your business goals.

A simple website which is mostly made up from static content (text and a few images) won't need much storage space. If you're thinking of dynamic content podcasting or videos, you'll need more space to keep things running smoothly. Ecommerce and music-based websites are hungry for storage space.

*Editors note. We started out with Bluehost until our website outgrew it, and we still host multiple sites on it. However, if you're just diving in and you know you're going to have a larger site from the outset, we recommend WPX Hosting as an upgrade to Bluehost. The latter is a great place to start, but if your site is going to be resource hungry from the get-go – or you're an intermediate blogger looking to move up the ladder a bit – you can't go wrong with [WPX Hosting](#) when your site starts to grow. We recommend both of these hosting solutions here at Content Champion and continue to pay for active accounts with both providers.

So – once you've chosen your Bluehost plan, register for your hosting by entering your domain name (or buy one now, if you're setting up your domain and hosting in tandem).

Finally, choose the length of term you're going to sign up for (work out which is the best value per month for your plan).

There are also optional extras that you can purchase (such as “SiteLock Security”), but you don't need to worry about these now – we can always revisit these later. Don't forget, we want to get you up and running as easily as possible.

Then it's just a case of setting up the account and making payment, and waiting for the email with your account and log-in details to ping into your inbox.

This will give you access to your control panel (“cPanel”). You'll manage your website from this panel, and it has a nicely intuitive interface. You can also install WordPress from here too, and that's where we're going next...

This video of the process is comprehensive and should really help:

3. “Free and Priceless”: Installing WordPress



WordPress really is a fantastic resource for the blogger. It's free, it's wonderfully straightforward to use, and you can create a great-looking website that converts visitors into email subscribers and customers.

I've created every website I've ever made any money from using WordPress, including our latest ecommerce store running WooCommerce – which has already made over £100,000 of sales in just over 16 months online 😊

People who are sniffy about WordPress sites are now in the minority, with many big businesses even opting for this user-friendly platform (if it's good enough for the Obama Foundation, frankly, it's good enough for anybody). So if you want to run an easy-to-manage blog, all the sensible bloggers are on WordPress.

A note here: there are two WordPresses: WordPress.org and WordPress.com. The first is self-hosted and free – and that's the one we'll focus on. The dot com version covers domains and hosting as well as providing a platform so naturally it's a paid-for service. We're not saying not to use it; however it's not your lowest cost option.

If you've gone for hosting through Bluehost, your new control panel will let you install WordPress instantly at the click of a button.

Simply follow the instructions to set up your WordPress account (domain, username, set up a password), and Quickinstall will do the rest.

When the install is complete, you'll see a screen with your username and password. Log on, and there's your dashboard or "back-end" (no sniggering please).

If you're not going through Bluehost, have a look at WordPress' thorough and readable [guide to downloading the platform](#).

In brief, download the latest version of WordPress direct from the WordPress.org website. You'll receive a downloaded file that you'll need to unzip and upload to a database on your server via FTP (your host's website should give you instructions about this process).

If you're not the techy type (which let's face it is most of us), just make your life a whole lot easier and go for a one-click install method as with Bluehost or WP Hosting. WordPress themselves recommend this approach, and it really does make everything far less stressful.

Ok, let's keep this show on the road...

4. Making It Your Own: Choosing Your WordPress Theme



Now the fun begins. Set aside plenty of time for this stage, partly because the look and layout of your website are really important, and partly because playing about with themes is the best bit of setting up your new blog.

When you first set up WordPress, you're given a blank sheet. You then customise your new website with a "theme". The theme establishes how your website looks to visitors. A WordPress template takes care of all of this for you: the typeface, the layout, the colours, the number of images, the size of the header. The back-end doesn't change: you'll still get a document-style page to type onto, and you can easily install a new theme without changing all the behind-the-scenes stuff.

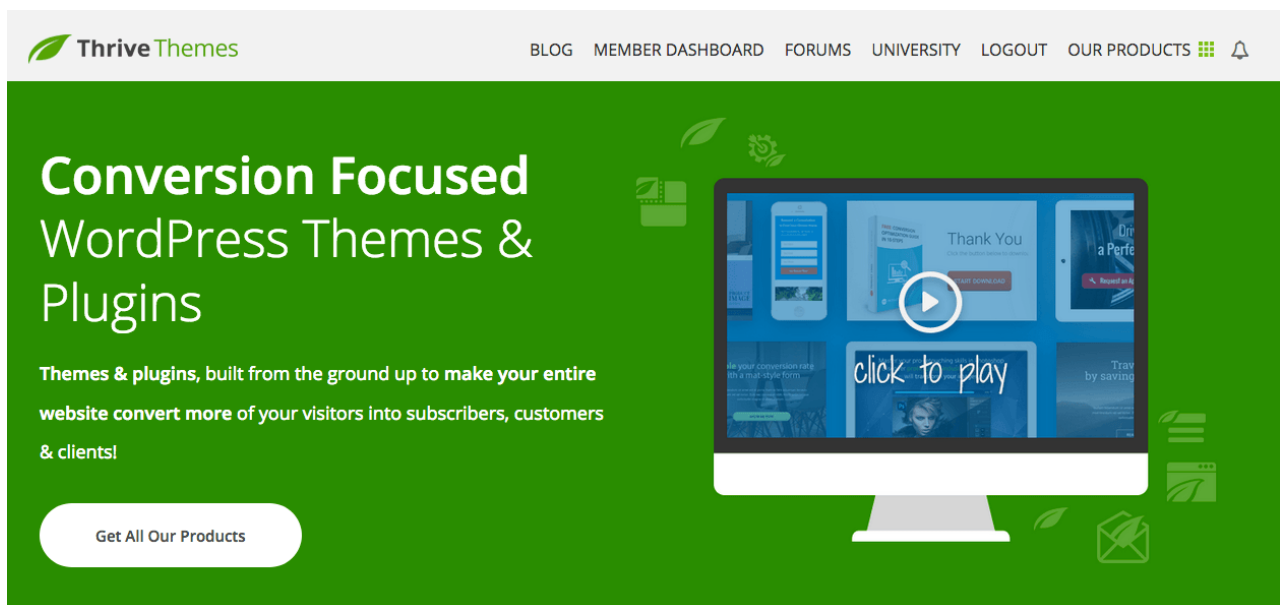
What do you need to think about before applying your new theme? The relationship between words and pictures is a big consideration. A photographer's blog will need plenty of space for images, but a financial organisation may struggle to find several

striking images for the home page (although all websites need some sort of visual engagement).

Typeface is important: if you're a blogger, you need a lovely clear font that's easy to read (and beware of themes with fancy-coloured fonts. They can be harder to read). If you have a logo, go for a theme that works with it: you don't want your branding to look squashed, diminished or clashing.

Make sure your theme is "responsive", meaning that it adapts to work with a smartphone. It seems incredible these days, but you can still get themes that don't work properly on mobiles.

WordPress offers a range of free themes, and by all means have a look through these to get an idea of what's out there. However, we recommend investing a bit of your budget in getting the right template, and we use [ThriveThemes](#) for most of our sites (and only recently changed Content Champion onto another theme).



Why should you pay when there are so many good-looking freebies out there? Free themes don't come with the level of support, and sometimes are abandoned altogether which leads to major security issues as you must always keep your WordPress install, theme and plugins up to date with the latest versions (or you'll get hacked).

Thrive Themes don't cost much, but you'll get the advantage of technical support if you have a problem, plus their designs are gorgeous. We find their themes easy to customise, and unlike many free templates, they're constantly maintained and updated.

Installing a Thrive theme isn't difficult. Create an account with Thrive Themes and download the theme of your choice. Save this file somewhere memorable.

Log in to your WordPress account. On the Admin dashboard, go to the Appearance menu and select Themes.

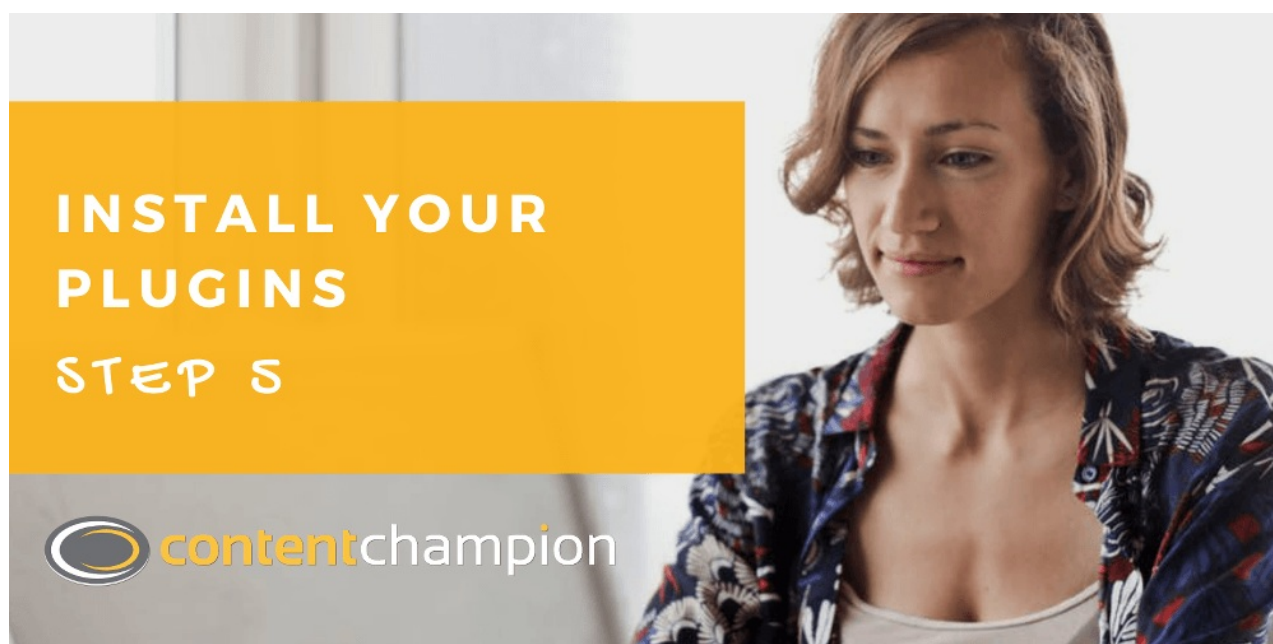
On the Themes page, there's an Add New button. Click on this, then on the Upload

Theme button. You then navigate to wherever it was you uploaded the theme file and select it.

The installation can take a few minutes. When it's complete click on the Activate link. You'll now have a new line on your menu, called Thrive Dashboard. Go onto License Manager and follow the instructions to activate the license for your new theme.

You now have a beautiful new website for your blog. What next?

5. Getting Plugged In: Finding Some Helpful WordPress Plugins



By now, you'll have read the phrase "plugins" a few times. What is a plugin, and how do they help?

In this context, a plugin is a piece of software that you can choose to add to your WordPress website, which enables it to perform a new function. There are all sorts of plugins. Some are essential (social media plugins for example), while others will simply cutter up your functionality and slow things right down.

Which plugins do you actually need? Before merrily plugging away, pause to think about which additions will help you better manage your site, or make life better for your website's visitors. Here's a look at a few of the more essential ones that it's good to have in place from the start.

To start, go to the plugIn menu on your dash, and select Add New. You can then search for plugins direct from WordPress, and it's a case of simply downloading and installing them from there. Each plugin has reviews you can check and tells you if it's compatible with your version.

Security is a must-have, and you can protect your WordPress website with a plugin such

as WordFence.

Unfortunately, spammy comments are a fact of blogging life. Beat the spammers with Akismet, which filters out the nasty comments for you. Manually trawling through your comments can be time-consuming (and a tad depressing, if it's a spammy sort of day), so let Akismet pick up this task for you.

If your business needs a contact form, Contact Form 7 is a good one to install. You can quickly customise your own form. There are also translation options.

For your blog, don't forget your on-page SEO. Yoast SEO is a much-used plugin tool that helps you manage your optimisation, and keeps a friendly eye on your writing.

For free-to-use images, the Pixabay plugin saves you the time of downloading their Creative Commons licensed pictures. (Pixabay is a great way of introducing a visual element to your blog if your image budget is, well, zero.)

We also recommend a social media share plugin – such as Monarch – which will let you add social media share buttons to your website. It seems surprising that a feature as ubiquitous as a social media button isn't standard: be prepared to search through the plugins for some surprisingly standard-seeming functions.

To keep a marketing and conversion focus, make sure you also use a plugin such as Thrive Leads to connect to your email marketing service of choice – such as AWeber or Active Campaign. If you're just starting out then go with the former as it costs less and has all the introductory features you'll need to send both one-time emails and autoresponder sequences.

Launch and sell your next big thing with email marketing.

Find your audience, build a relationship and sell your products. Reach your business goals with AWeber's email marketing and automation platform.



AWeber helps 100,000+ small businesses like yours build their audience, get more customers and go pro with their passion.

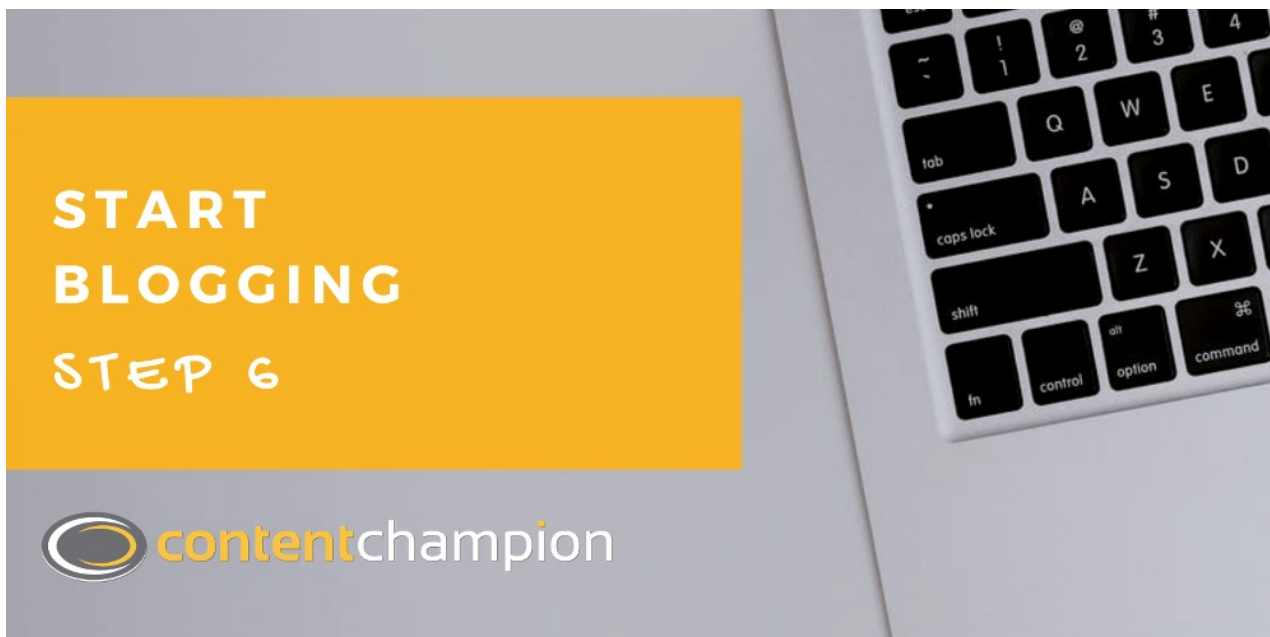
- Set up an automated email series to engage your subscribers at the right time.
- Promote your product with one-time broadcast emails, like newsletters and promos.
- Save time and build something beautiful with 700+ mobile responsive email and sign up form templates.

[Try AWeber for free](#)

AWeber can also handle some simple tagging and automation functions – so it's a great place to start. [As a Content Champion reader you can get a free 30-day trial of AWeber here.](#)

And of course, you've already installed the lovely Thrive Themes to make your website look all pretty. From now on, it's just a case of downloading your plugins as you need them. Try not to go crazy because too many additions will slow your website down. However, a carefully-chosen selection of useful plugins will improve both the back- and front-end experience. Let's keep up the momentum...

6. Filling The Blank Page: How To Start Blogging



OK, your website exists, it looks good, and it's got good functionality. Let's add some content.

Even if you're mainly using your site as a blogging platform, as well as the ability to add posts, you'll need to create and populate your static pages, such as Home, About, Contact – plus those all important Terms and Privacy pages ([there's also a helpful plugin for this by the way](#)).

For both static pages and making blog posts look a cut above – we always use [Thrive Architect](#), an incredibly user-friendly plugin with a one-off payment – that lets you easily build and edit your pages.

Thrive Architect is a visual editor that's designed around the premise that writing and editing should be fast. The user shouldn't get bogged-down in the back-end stuff, but can "front end edit", i.e., edit directly onto the page. This lets you edit your content rapidly, while seeing exactly what your site visitors see. If you prefer this approach then definitely invest in this handy plugin – quite simply it will make your content look better than everyone else's J

Alternatively, you can stick with the WordPress editor, however, you'll need to keep switching between views and remembering to constantly update (save) your work; but it's really straightforward.

The Add Media function is similarly straightforward. Upload files or insert them from a url: again, you don't need tech or design skills to make your blog visually engaging. However, so think about the quality of your images, and don't demean your blog with low-res or poor photography. As mentioned, use [Pixabay](#) and [Pexels](#) for your royalty free images – and setup a free account at [Canva](#) to make your blog graphics look snazzy.

Group your blog posts into a few choice categories so your site is easy for readers and the search engines to navigate. You can set these up from the outset in the Categories section – or do it as you go along from the sidebar in your blog post page – and then it’s simply a case of checking the right box to categorise the post. This makes it easier for your readers to search for the right topic.

If you have the Yoast plug-in, you can keep an eye on keyword use, on-page SEO and word count as you go along too (although be aware that Yoast’s readability score sets the bar pretty low).

Yoast also helps you set the “snippet” for your Meta title and description. This is the title and few lines of text that appears in the search engine listings, letting the reader know what to expect, and helps your click-through rate. For more about on-page SEO – listen to this podcast.

Are you ready to write?

This next bit’s up to you – and there’s no hiding from the fact that if you can’t afford to outsource your blog writing then you’re going to have to do it yourself.

There’s literally a boatload of information online about how to write blog posts, ‘about pages’ and product reviews – but these guides are some of the best I’ve encountered on how to create epic content – so take a bit of time to get things straight in your mind before you put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard).

*Hint – as a professional copywriter and ex-journalist with over 20 years’ experience – the key to great writing is taking time over your research and ensuring you plan out the structure of the piece in advance. After this the writing itself just falls into place.

Anyway – here are those content writing resources:

Blog Posts

- <https://www.blogtyrant.com/how-to-write-the-perfect-blog-post/>
- <https://socialtriggers.com/perfect-blog-post/>
- <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/anatomy-perfect-blog-post>
- <https://brandongaille.com/greatest-blog-introduction-growth-hack-time/>

Product Reviews

- <https://authoritywebsiteincome.com/how-to-create-an-epic-product-review/>
- <https://www.contentchampion.com/writing-amazon-product-reviews/>
- <https://www.contentchampion.com/strategic-writing-with-tim-soulo/>

About Pages

- <https://www.blogmarketingacademy.com/great-about-pages/>

- <https://neilpatel.com/blog/how-to-write-the-perfect-about-page-that-drives-leads/>

Sales Pages

<https://optinmonster.com/how-to-write-a-sales-page-that-converts>

OK – now let’s talk about the elephant in the room – content promotion. Contrary to popular belief, if you ‘only’ create epic content then that’s not enough – you have to get out there and hustle to promote it, or nobody will ever see the results of all your hard work (and more importantly you won’t make any money)...

7. Promoting Your Blog: Let The World Know You’re Out There



Now, many personal bloggers are OK with the idea of blogging into thin air; however, you’re setting up a business blog or a blog as a business – so you need readers right? The old adage of “if you build it, they will come” does not work in the world of online blogging, and you’ll need to actively promote your blog to attract an audience.

This could be the subject of multiple blog posts, whole websites and online courses on its own (and it is), but let’s scratch the surface of this with some prerequisites so you start at least thinking about how to get your business noticed online.

Keyword Research, SEO & Link Building

The search engines (and therefore your audience) will only START to notice you if you get your essential on-page SEO right. Think about what your keywords should be – but don’t begin with unrealistic expectations of getting your blog to rank on the first page of

Google for ultra-competitive terms such as ‘dog training’ or ‘car insurance’ – because in truth you will probably never rank for those keywords.

Websites take time to gain authority, so it’s important to try and target less competitive long-tail and medium competition phrases at first until your site gains more trust in the search engines. Only when this happens will you start to rank for more headline terms that drive massive amounts of traffic.

This is huge subject to cover in just a few paragraphs, so for now let’s keep it simple with a couple of resources that will help you to find keywords to get started on your blog.

For newbie bloggers I recommend the keyword research tool KWFinder.com – this video will help you quickly identify the sort of terms and phrases you should target for the titles and body content of your first blog posts. It literally provides a ‘green light’ for keywords that should be easy to rank for – and I’ve found the results to be very accurate.

And if you want to find even more easy-to-rank keywords that won’t even require backlinks (or very few), then definitely give Doug Cunnington’s Keyword Golden Ratio method a try. [Here’s a great post on what this is and how to use it.](#)

In addition, this great video from Pat Flynn will now show you how to use your chosen keyword(s) in your blog posts.

And when it comes to content length – we could debate the best length of a blog post for hours, and everyone has a different opinion on this. We’ve found that 2,000 words is a great length for both readers and the search engines alike. A good tip is to see how extensive the best content in the top ten of Google is then better it – [see Brian Dean’s Skyscraper technique for more information.](#) This fantastic resource will also give you a great primer on how to conduct outreach for effective link building.

[This guide from Moz](#) is also brilliant if you want to learn more about link building – and I recommend reading the whole guide too if you’re really committed to mastering SEO. [My podcast interview with Ryan Stewart](#) – although conducted a couple of years ago – is also still very relevant on effective SEO and link building.

Finally – the creator of the Yoast SEO plugin has also [created this monster guide](#) that tells you absolutely everything you need to know about WordPress SEO. This guide is simply amazing.

Content Amplification & Social Sharing

As well as getting your SEO on-point, there are various other active promotional tools the blogger can use – so I’ll touch on some here and provide some resources for further research.

Social sharing is an obvious way of spreading your words. Put a link to your article on Facebook, Tweet a link, or for B2B blogs, post them on LinkedIn. Unsure which platform to use? [BuzzSumo](#) can help you find the right influencers and prevent your fabulous post from getting lost in the daily noise.

We use Hootsuite to post our content to multiple social channels at once. What we do is create neat little blog graphics for each main section of the post (like in this article), then create a menu using Thrive Architect. We can then share these URL's that link to the different sections of the blog post – along with their corresponding images – using Hootsuite. [This quick start guide will help you get to grips with it all.](#)

- You can also use paid social ads: Facebook and Twitter ads are good if you know your target audience, as you can really fine-tune who sees your ad. However, if you're just starting out then I'd steer clear of paid advertising until you really know what you're doing – as getting these wrong can quickly burn through your budget. If you do want to get started with Facebook ads, [this great guide will be all you need.](#)
- Reach out to influencers. Ask them to share your posts or include them in a round-up. You can also offer your services as a guest blogger, writing for other websites, and (with permission) getting your backlink in the article pointing back to the blog post on your own site. Again – this is a HUGE subject to cover here, but [this guide to guest blogging from Brian Dean](#) will point you in the right direction.

These resources will also help when it comes to promoting your content:

Finally, my podcast interview with the ever-inspiring Jon Morrow will assist you in getting started with guest blogging and blog promotion:

Essential Email Marketing

And last but by no means least – don't forget good old email marketing (perhaps the single most important factor in online marketing).

If you have a database of subscribers or are planning to build one, send out your blog posts as a newsletter on a regular basis. Starting an email list is another massive subject to cover in full here – but [this video series from Pat Flynn](#) is really all you need to know. BTW – Pat's content is so good it's almost frightening 😊

Phew! That was a lot to take in – but you're up for the challenge right?

Starting a WordPress Blog: How Did You Get On?



There you have it: seven simple steps from rookie writer to sophisticated business blogger. How did you find the setting-up process?

We're not exaggerating when we say there's a lot of support and tech available for the modern blogger. To quote Thrive Architect, these days you need "zero skills" in the tech or design fields to produce a WordPress website and blog that looks great and is super-easy for both your audience and the search engines to navigate.

Now you've got everything in place, you can focus on your content and producing some exceptional blogs that will support you in your business or authority site-building career. We'll cover exactly how we can monetize our blog content to earn an income in a future post 😊