

Intro to
Blogging for
Smart People

Creating a blog from scratch using WordPress

by Erik Blair

Intro to Blogging for Smart People:

Creating a blog from scratch using WordPress

1. Planning Your Blog Concept
2. Setting up Hosting
3. Installing WordPress
4. Basic WordPress Settings
5. Finding Your Theme
6. Publishing Your First Post

[note: this is a very basic overview of how to start a blog]

Planning Your Blog Concept

What are you going to blog about? The first step is having something to say. Blogging is about sharing, so be certain you want to “publish” your “content” to the world before you post that first article! Once published, there's no taking it back.

You'll need time to compose your thoughts into short articles called, “posts”. It's worth the extra effort to take a lot of pictures or create graphics, or even videos of your subject because you'll need those to be included in your posts. If “Content is King” then pictures and video are the Queen. Along with 'time' you'll need to **have a regular place** to actually sit down with your laptop, tablet or computer and work with the WordPress “content management system” to post articles to your blog.

What I do is take notes first. I use that old-school thing called a notebook and scrawl little boxes and scribble notes about what I want to do with my blog. That's how I develop the “purpose” of my blog. I usually break things down into smaller segments to find my “niche”. For example, Dogs. Way too big of a subject. Small Dogs. Still too big. Small dogs in the Toy category. Nope! Brachycephalic dog breeds in the Toy category. Ok, that's good! It is important not to have too broad a subject, but not so niche that you can only write one article. If you already have a subject

that is a bit wide open, you can always have a lot of related articles about more specific related subjects.

When you **have a clear idea** of the purpose of your blog you'll be ahead of the game because there are a lot of blogs out there with seemingly no purpose. Now you need to decide on a Domain Name. Most of the "good ones" are already taken, so don't be discouraged, there are plenty out there. I suggest you pick one that uses keywords associated with your blog subject. For example, BrachycephalicToyDogs.com

Setting up Hosting

Hosting is basically **housing for your blog**. You'll need a safe place to shelter your new baby and a good hosting company will be there to keep your blog warm and secure. The problem is that bad hosting companies make things difficult and problematic. This is a very important step and you should consider hosting just as carefully as you would an auto mechanic or carpenter to fix your roof.

In the interest of Full-Disclosure, this is where I get something for writing this little guide. I'm a big fan of my hosting company, and I'm going to invite you to share in my happiness.

[Click here to check out my Hosting Company](#)

Yes, that is my Hosting company and yes, if you decide to purchase hosting from them using the link above, I'll get a little kick-back and you'll get the best hosting company I've ever worked with for less than \$6 per month! So use this URL please.

Setting up hosting using BlueHost is easy! Go to the link mentioned above and click the button that says, "Sign Up Now". Then if you don't have a domain name already, enter the domain name you'd like to use to see if it is available and click "next". If it is available it's free with your new hosting! If you already have a domain name, enter it in the second box and

click "next". Next you'll enter all your contact information and select the hosting package (I usually purchase the 24 month package). There are three small check boxes below the packages, I deselect those because you don't need them. In other words, turn off SiteLock, Site Backup & Domain Whois Privacy because they are paid services I personally don't recommend. Then enter your billing information and click "next". Next you'll be prompted to "create your password".



Congratulations!

Your purchase was successful. A confirmation e-mail will be sent to n

Choose a password for your account:

Before you can login to your account or use your new hosting feat
create a secure password - Please note this password and your hosting
these are used for account verification purposes when contacting BlueHos

[Create your password](#)

Once that's done you can login to your new hosting account which is ready to use immediately. Here's a tutorial video showing you the process: <http://youtu.be/IfhqfCZqfA4>

Installing WordPress

This is the easy part! Login to your new hosting control panel by clicking the button on the top right of the hosting website. Your username is usually your Domain Name. Once logged in you'll have a lot of icons associated with the many different services and features of your hosting account. The third section down has WordPress icon, click that! Since this is your first installation of wordpress the default directory that it wants to put your WP install into is blank and we are going to leave it there so that it installs at the top level of your domain name(1). In other words, when someone types in your domain name they go to the WP Blog.

Example:

Default Directory: www.google.com ← yes

New Directory: www.google.com/anotherdirectory ← no

It's as easy as 1-2-3.

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 enable the latest features.

3.2.1 (Stable)

Where would you like WordPress installed?

/

Access URL: <http://www.bestmauihikes.com/>
Server Path: [/home8/bestmau1/public_html/](#)

Leave Blank 1

Step 2: Advanced Options

These options include administrative privileges, database configuration, and more. Changes are optional.

[Click here to display>](#)

Step 3: Legal Information

I have read the terms and conditions of the [GPLv2 license agreement>](#) ← Check Box 2

Complete

← Click "complete" 3

When it is done installing, you must copy down the information on the next page (password, etc). You can click on the link provided that says, "www.yourdomain.com/wp-admin/ you can now login to your new WP installation. Be sure to copy your password first! Lately, they have been offering some other features that are "security" related, I would uncheck those because you don't need them.

WordPress

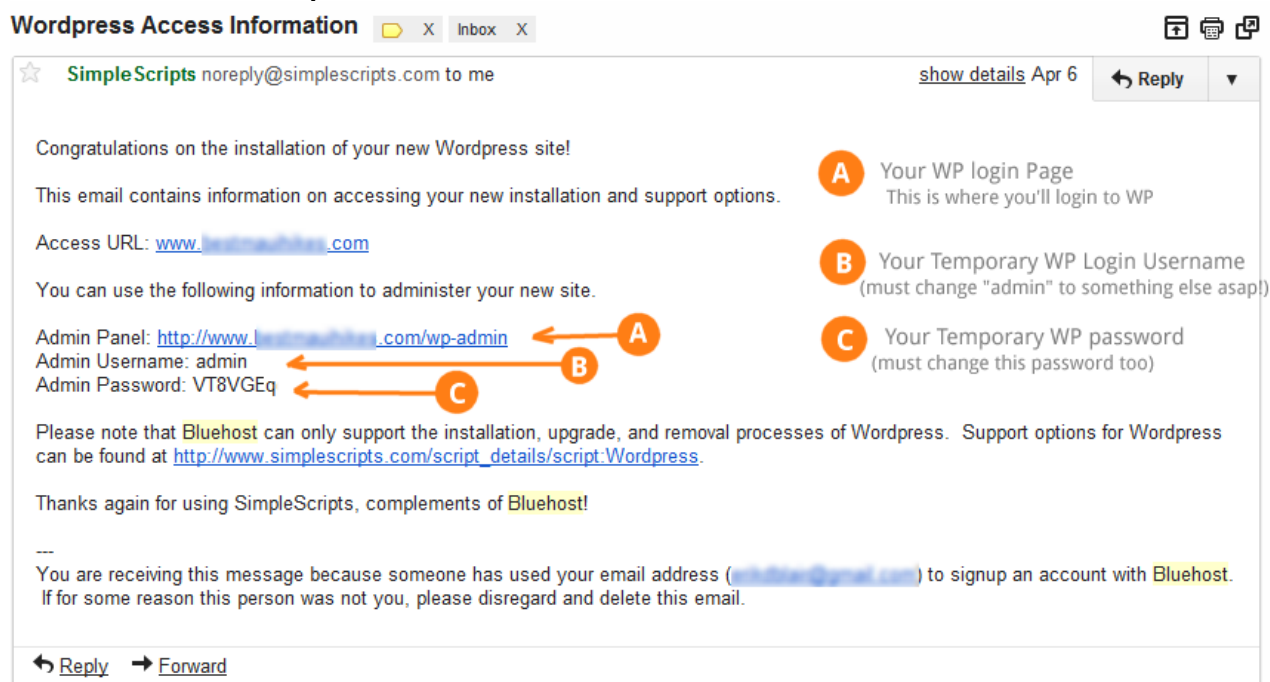
Username
Director

Password
.....

Remember Me

[Lost your password?](#)

You will also get an email containing your WP install information, username and password. See Below:



Here is a video explaining the process:

<http://youtu.be/uqdWyVpR6HI>

NOW YOU'RE ALMOST BLOGGING!

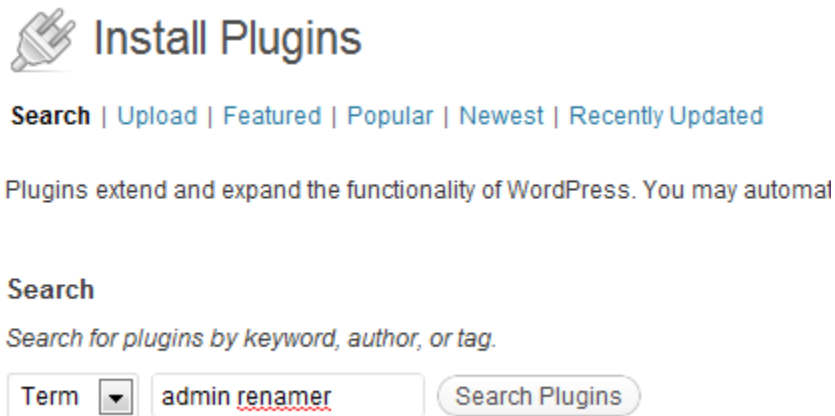
Basic WordPress Settings

There are a few things you should do with your new WP installation right away.

1. Change your password! Once you're logged into WP, click on the "users" menu on the left side of your WP Dashboard. Then click "your profile". At the bottom of this page you'll see where you can change your password. Please make a note of your new password somewhere safe.

2. Change your user name. You'll need to download and install a plugin called "Admin Renamer Extended". Go to

“Plugins” on your WP dashboard, then “Add New”. There you can type “admin renamer” into the search box to find the plugin.



Find “Admin Renamer Extended” which should be near the top of the list.

Name	Version	Rating	Description
Admin Renamer Details Install Now	0.1.2	★★★★☆	Wtyczka pozwala zmienić login domyślnego użytkownika "admin". By
Admin renamer extended Details Install Now ← Click here	1.5	★★★★★	Plugin to change your default admin username (with GUI to change a Will check for: * Empty names * Existing usernames * Valid username (no funky special characters) By Ramon Fincken .

Click “install Now”. After it installs, click “Activate Plugin”. Then go back to the WP dashboard menu under “Plugins” and you will see the new option, “Admin renamer extended”. Click on that link to edit the settings.



Simply enter your name or a different name than “admin”. I use “Director” for example. Then go to your “users” section of the menu bar, and click on “all users”. Find the new admin name you created and click

“edit”. Change that information to reflect your true information and this is a good time to change the password as well. This simple task will help you avoid problems with hacking.

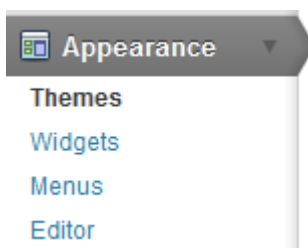
3. Permalinks. This is very important if you want to get organic traffic from search engines. From the WordPress Admin Panel, go to the “Settings” tab on the left menu. Then find the term “Permalinks”. Open that link and you'll see the settings for your linking structure. It's important to note that you can use any of these, but if you're not going to follow my recommendations, then you should leave it set to “Default”. I recommend setting it to a “Custom” structure by putting in this term exactly, “/%postname%” (without the quotations). That will link all your posts using the title keywords (which is ideal for SEO).

Common settings

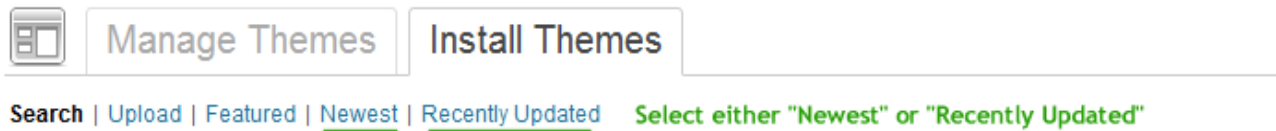
<input type="radio"/> Default	<code>http://www.accidentalconsultant.com/?p=123</code>
<input type="radio"/> Day and name	<code>http://www.accidentalconsultant.com/2011/11/20/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Month and name	<code>http://www.accidentalconsultant.com/2011/11/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Numeric	<code>http://www.accidentalconsultant.com/archives/123</code>
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Custom Structure	<input type="text" value="/%postname%/"/>

Finding Your Theme

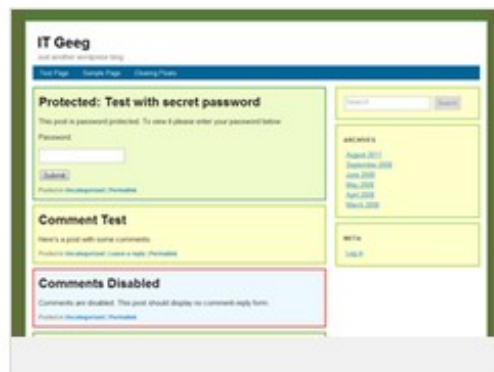
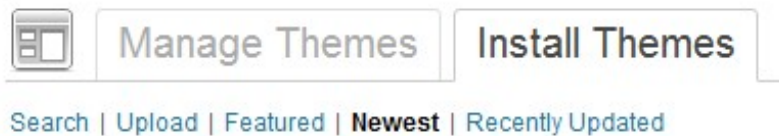
Your theme is the way your blog looks. It's optional to change from the the default theme, but you can find some good free and some great paid themes out there that will knock your socks off! Now go to your “Appearances” tab on the WP menu and click “Themes”.



Then, at the top of the themes page you'll see two tabs, click on the "Install Theme" tab.



This is where you'll have a chance to browse the various FREE themes available from the WordPress developer network. At this point you can select any of the themes and test them out. You can also use the "Preview" link below each theme to view a sample, but the previews are almost always not exactly what you'll get once you install and activate your theme.



ColorMagic

[Install](#) | [Preview](#)

Preview Option

A simple, fresh theme with a lot of basic theme-custom options prepared for you to start you site. It's a pure color work.

[Details](#)

If you click install, the theme will install but not activate till you click the activate link.



Biotodoma 1.6 by [Bas Weinans](#)

Biotodoma is my first theme available for downloading. With this theme I hope to give something back to the Wordpress Community. [Click here to activate](#)

[Activate](#) | [Preview](#) | [Delete](#)

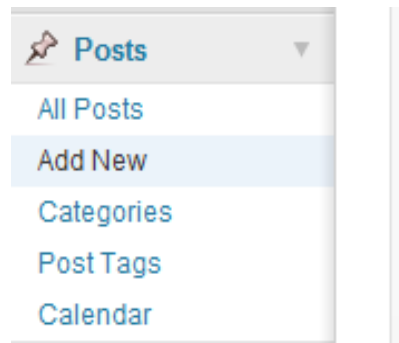
All of this theme's files are located in `/themes/biotodoma`.

Tags: black, red, white, two-columns, right-sidebar, custom-background, custom-menu

Once you've decided on a theme you like (or you like the default theme), and you've activated that theme, then you're ready to post your first article.

Publishing Your First Post

Go to your WordPress Admin Panel. On the left menu open the "Posts" tab and click on "Add New".



The "add New" post window will open...

You need to become familiar with this window, because it is where you will spend most of your time and produce all your content.

The Accidental Consultant

Howdy, Director

Add New Post

Screen Options Help

Enter title here

1

Visual HTML

Upload/Insert

Format

2

3

1. Enter your "Keyword-Rich" title Here (example: "7 proven wordpress plugins for security")

2. Enter your entire "content" here (your article).

3. Click publish to share it with the world.

Publish

Save Draft Preview

Status: Draft Edit

Visibility: Public Edit

Publish immediately Edit

Move to Trash Publish

Categories

All Categories Most Used

- Blog
- Blog Improvements
- HighTech Finds
- My Experiments
- Project Updates

Basically, it's as easy as 1-2-3.

That's all folks....

Now you're blogging! If you need more help there are several ways you can find more detailed information:

WordPress.org has a lot of highly useful information about how to blog using wordpress (of course).

YouTube, the 2nd largest search engine, is a great source for how-to videos, just type in "WordPress" to find a bunch of great videos.

Need more help? Contact me at:
<http://www.accidentalconsultant.com>