

Build your first WordPress website in 9 easy steps



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Table of Contents

Click or tap to jump to any section;

Chapter 1
3 What You Need to Know Before You Set Up Your First WordPress Website

Chapter 3
12 Registering a Domain

Chapter 5
22 Navigating Through the WordPress Dashboard

Chapter 7
39 Customizing Your WordPress Site's Appearance

Chapter 9
49 Publishing Your Site

Chapter 2
8 Selecting a Hosting Provider and a Plan

Chapter 4
16 Installing WordPress on Your Hosting Account

Chapter 6
31 Choosing a Theme

Chapter 8
44 Using WordPress Plugins

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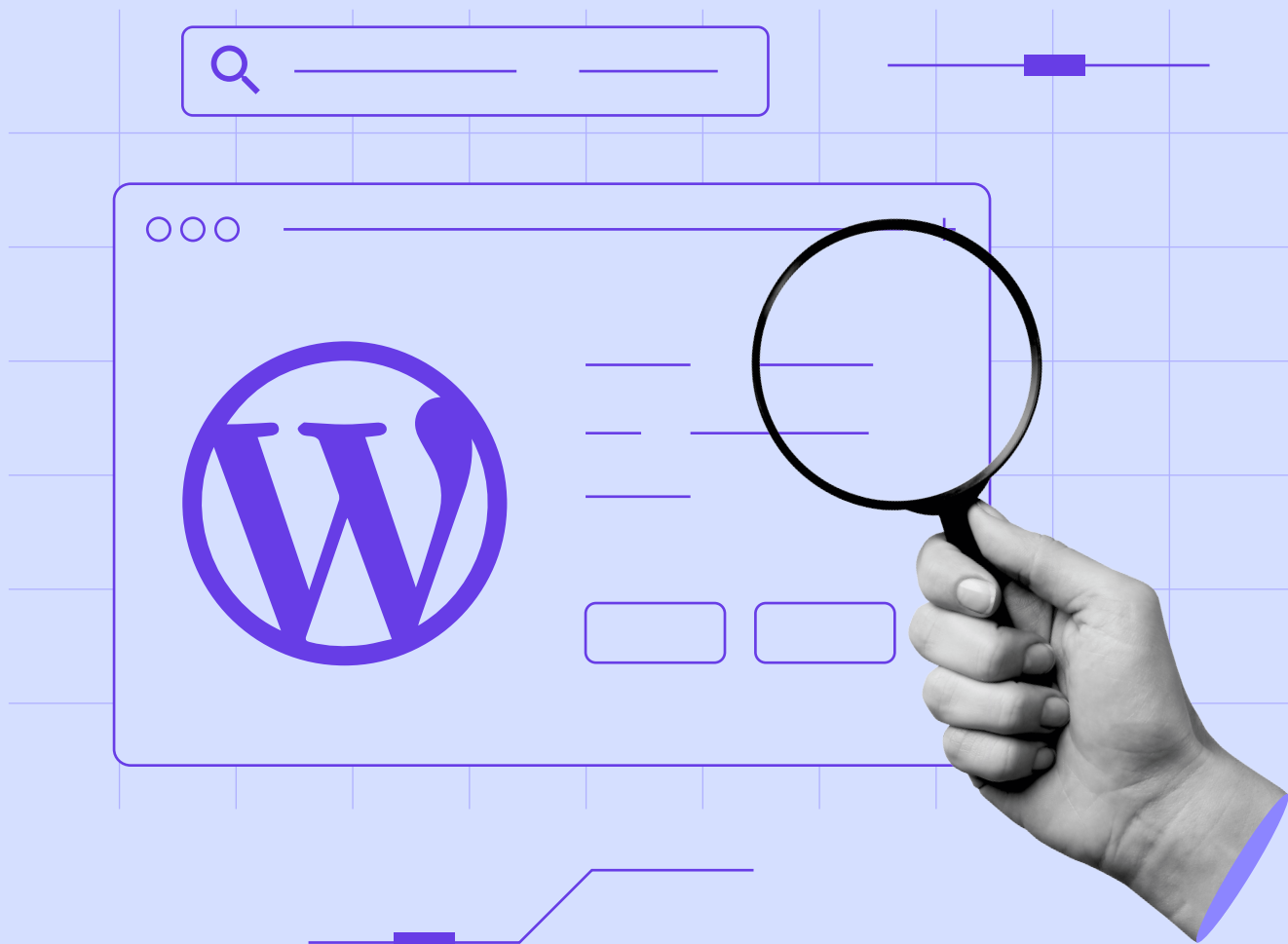
Introduction

Setting up a website with WordPress is now easier than ever. In fact, you can have a blog or a small business site up in a matter of hours, even if this is your first time launching a project online.

In this eBook, we'll introduce you to all the basic terms and steps you need to get the job done:

1. Selecting a hosting provider and a plan.
2. Registering a domain name.
3. Installing WordPress.
4. Navigating the WordPress dashboard like a pro.
5. Choosing the perfect theme.
6. Customizing your website's appearance further.
7. Setting up your plugins.
8. Publishing content.

We're going to cover every task involved in the journey. By the time we're done, you'll have a fully-functioning website you can use for any purpose.



1


What You Need to Know Before You Set Up Your First WordPress Website

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

Launching your first website is fairly straightforward. Hosting has never been more affordable, and there are many platforms, such as WordPress, that make the process even more simple.

Before you jump in, however, you need to understand some basic concepts related to creating and managing a website. That way, you won't be lost throughout the rest of this eBook.

In this chapter, we're going to introduce you to seven terms that are critical to understanding modern websites, and ones built with WordPress in particular.



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7 Helpful Terms for Understanding WordPress Websites

Below, we've defined seven common terms related to WordPress and websites in general. You'll need to know them to carry out the steps in later chapters, so take your time and familiarize yourself with them.

1. Hosting

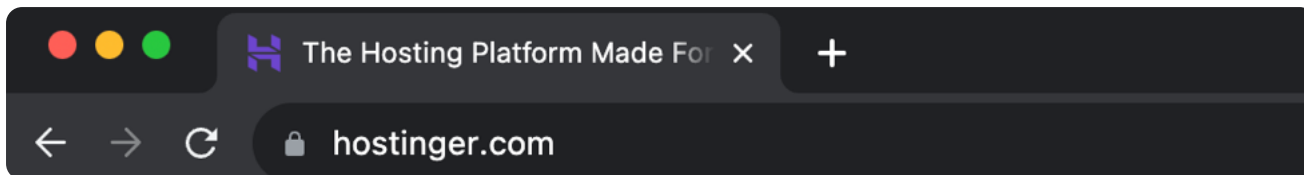
Every website requires a server – a computer configured for public access through the internet. You have to store your website on one to make it available to users online.

A **web host** or **hosting provider** is a company that offers servers you can rent to store your website. You'll pay a monthly fee for this service.

The hosting price depends on the plan you sign up for, which generally determines how powerful your server is. We'll discuss this in more detail in Chapter 2.

2. Domain Name

To access a website, you type its [domain name](#) into your browser:



To acquire an address for your own site, you'll have to register it, which involves:

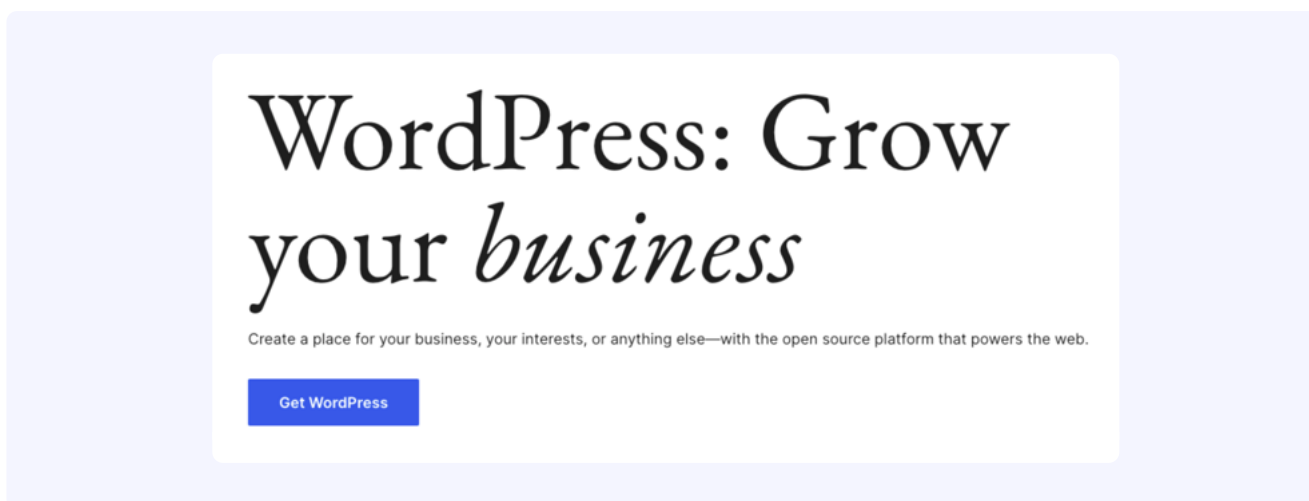
1. Checking if your desired domain is available.
2. Paying a fee to a domain registrar.
3. Renewing your registration regularly.

Thanks to domains, we can reach websites easily. Without them, you would have to enter an IP address instead, which is much harder to remember.

Your domain also becomes a key part of your brand, so it's important to choose a name that is related to your company or project. We recommend keeping it short, simple, and easy to spell.

3. Content Management System (CMS)

A CMS is a type of platform that enables you to build websites and organize online content. WordPress is the most popular example:

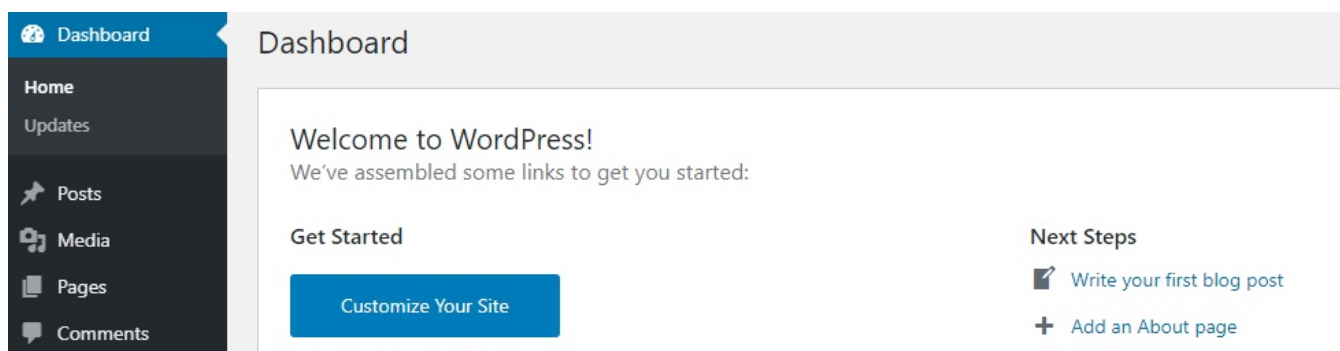


With a CMS, you can build a robust website without coding. Even experienced web developers often use them to save time and make their jobs easier.

There are a lot of [different types of CMSs](#) to pick from. You have options for eCommerce, forums, social media platforms, and many other types of projects. While WordPress was initially created as a blogging platform, it is highly versatile. Thanks to various plugins, you can create virtually any kind of website with the platform.

4. WordPress Dashboard

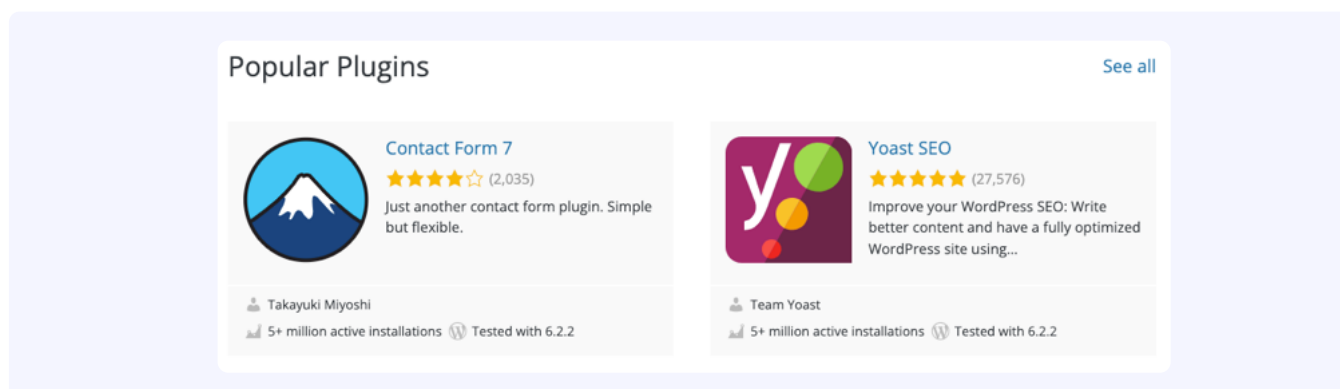
WordPress has a back-end interface or dashboard for managing your website's content, settings, and other key elements. It's only visible to you and other authorized users, not the general public:



The vast majority of changes you make to your website take place here, and there are a lot of options to take note of. In the upcoming chapters, we'll teach you how to navigate and use your WordPress dashboard.

5. Plugins

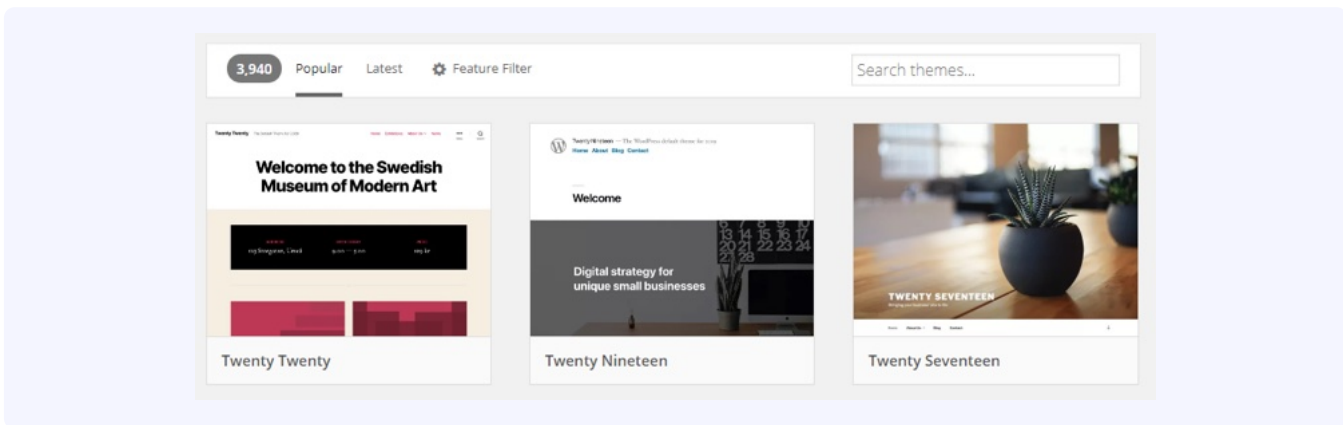
Plugins are add-ons that extend the functionality of WordPress. There are tens of thousands of them available online. If you can imagine a feature, there's probably a plugin out there that can help you implement it.



There are many plugins available for free, as well as premium tools that typically include more powerful features and customization options. You can download a large majority of what you'll need for a small site at no cost.

6. Themes

WordPress themes are templates for your website’s style. Just as with plugins, you have thousands to choose from. While some are absolutely free, others might charge a few hundred for a license.

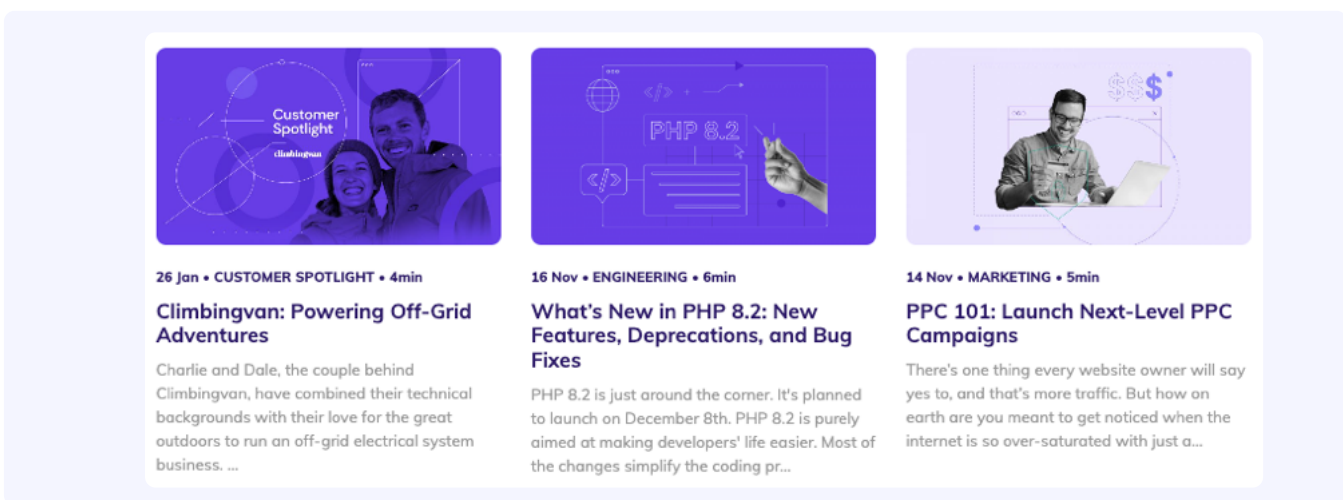


Depending on which theme you use, you’ll gain access to unique features, customization options, and more. Some even include pre-built layouts and website designs you can use in case you don’t want to start from scratch.

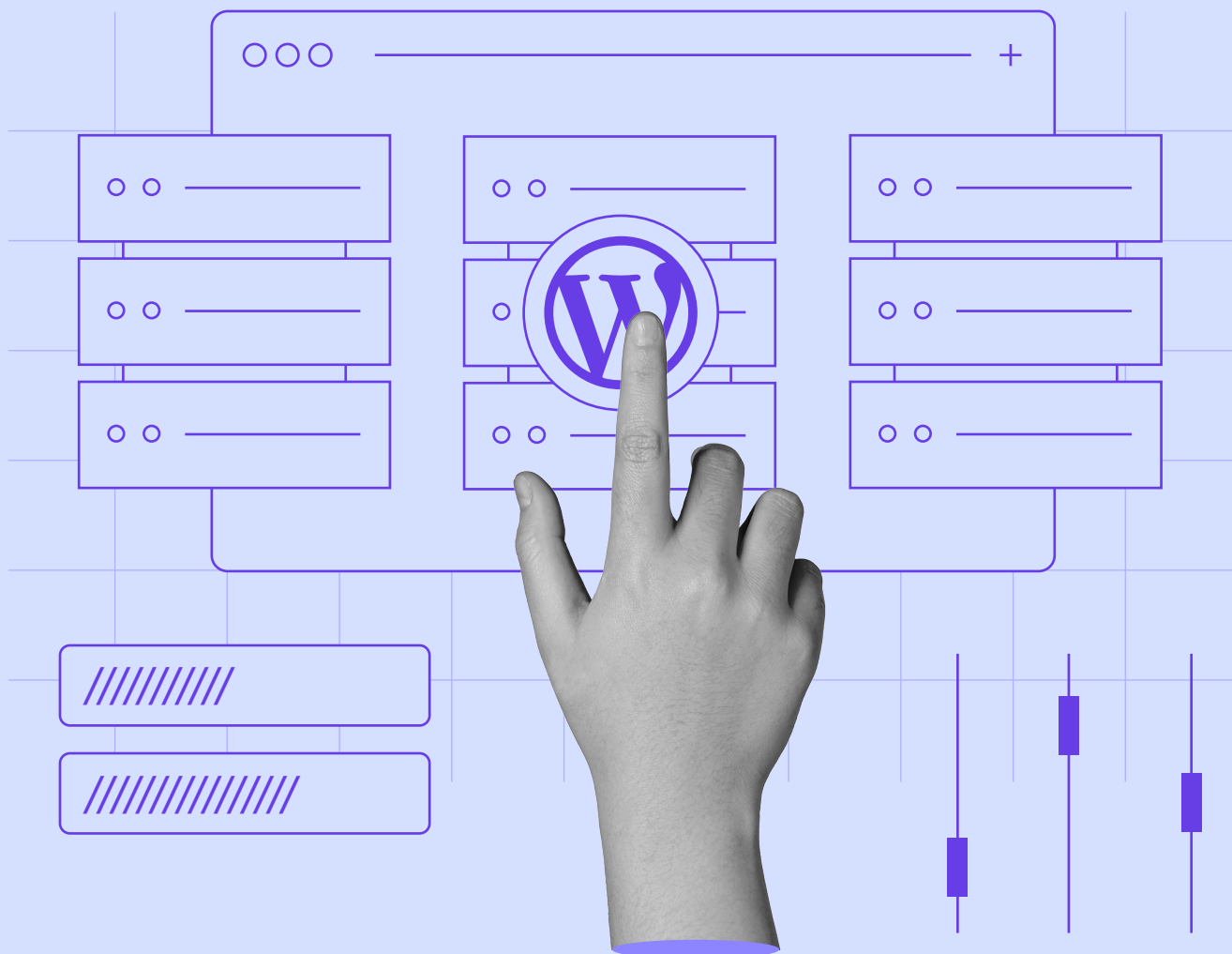
7. Posts and Pages

WordPress divides content into two main categories: **pages** and **posts**. Pages are for static content, such as your Homepage or About page.

Posts are more timely. Their name refers to **blog posts**, which illustrate their function well. However, you can adapt them to various purposes:



This is a simple distinction WordPress makes to help you organize your website’s content. The CMS also supports what is referred to as **custom post types**, which can be anything from online store products to reviews, depending on how you set up your website.



2

Selecting a Hosting Provider and a Plan

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

With an abundance of offered features, different plans, and varying pricing models, it can be hard to find the most suitable hosting provider for your needs.

Knowing what to search for in a reputable hosting provider will save you a lot of time and effort. Once you've chosen a web host, selecting a plan also becomes much easier.

In this chapter, we'll help you make those critical decisions. We'll discuss what sets the best web hosts apart and how to spot them. Then we'll explain how to pick the perfect plan for your new site.

Introduction to Web Hosting

In Chapter 1, we explained what web hosting is. However, we didn't get the opportunity to talk about the types of hosting and their differences. With that in mind, here are the most common options you'll see available:



WordPress hosting. This service is custom-built for WordPress users and includes tools and services to make managing your site easier. At Hostinger, all of our plans are WordPress-optimized for your convenience.



Shared hosting. With this type of plan, multiple users share one server. This keeps prices low, but your site might crash if another one on the server experiences a sudden spike of traffic.



Virtual Private Servers (VPS). With a VPS, you still share a physical server, but you get dedicated resources for better performance and a higher degree of customization.



Cloud hosting. While it is more expensive than shared hosting, cloud hosting uses a network of servers to ensure better performance and higher availability.

There might be more types of hosting available depending on your provider. However, for the rest of this eBook, we'll focus on [Hostinger's WordPress hosting solutions](#) since they include a lot of features that will make setting up your website easier.

What to Look for in a Hosting Provider

Selecting a host is a serious commitment, so it's wise to be picky. If everything goes well, you're going to be in a long-term relationship with this company. Here are some positive indicators to look for:

- The company has plenty of five-star reviews.
- You can choose from a range of plans depending on your budget and website size.
- The host offers excellent customer support with 24/7 availability.

These days, finding WordPress hosting at low prices, such as \$5 per month or less, is fairly easy. You can be selective even if you don't have a huge budget. [Hostinger](#), for example, offers some of the most inexpensive plans on the market, while still being rated consistently as a top provider.

How to Sign Up for a WordPress Hosting Plan With Hostinger (In 2 Steps)

Below, we'll show you how to sign up for our most popular WordPress hosting solution – [Business Web Hosting](#) plan. However, the process works much the same for every company and package. You should be able to follow these steps even if you choose another solution.

1. Purchase a WordPress Hosting Plan

Before you do anything else, you must decide which hosting plan you want and add it to your cart. Most providers will enable you to choose from multiple tiers:

Choose The Best WordPress Hosting Plan

Hosting built for WordPress with seamless support of all other platforms. Get top-notch performance for your website, no matter the framework.

Plan	Price	Discount	Free Offer	Renewal Price
Premium Web Hosting Perfect package for personal websites	\$2.99/mo	SAVE 75%	+2 months FREE	\$6.99/mo when you renew
Business Web Hosting Optimized for small and medium businesses	\$3.99/mo	SAVE 75%	+2 months FREE	\$8.99/mo when you renew
Cloud Startup Optimized for eCommerce and business	\$9.99/mo	SAVE 60%	+2 months FREE	\$19.99/mo when you renew

Top feature comparison

Feature	Premium	Business	Cloud Startup
100 Websites	✓	✓	✓
Unlimited Bandwidth	✓	✓	✓
100 GB SSD Storage	✓	✓	✓

Generally speaking, the more expensive the plan, the more storage and power it provides. However, it's always wise to read the fine print so you know what you're getting into. Once you make a decision, proceed to the checkout stage.

Here, you usually have a choice regarding the contract length you want to sign up for:

1. Choose a period

Contract Length	Monthly Price (USD)	Renewal Price (USD)	Renewal Date	Additional Offer
1 MONTH	\$11.99	\$11.99	01/07/2023	
12 MONTHS	\$2.99	\$8.99	01/06/2024	Free domain for 1st year
24 MONTHS	\$2.99	\$7.99	01/06/2025	Free domain for 1st year
48 MONTHS	\$2.99	\$6.99	01/09/2027	Free domain for 1st year, +3 months FREE

Most hosting providers, including us, will give you massive discounts for longer-term contracts. You can save a lot of money this way, even if it means a higher payment upfront.

Furthermore, this plan comes with a free domain for 1st year, so you won't have to [buy a domain](#) separately, but let's save that for Chapter 3.

While completing the checkout process, you'll be asked to provide an email address and password for your account. Make sure to store them somewhere safe.

2. Access Your Hosting Control Panel

After completing your purchase, you can log into your hosting control panel. To do this, use the credentials you chose during the checkout process:

Log in

Google Facebook GitHub

or

Email

Password

Log in

Once you're in, you'll see an overview of all your Hostinger products, including the plan you just purchased. Notice the **Setup** button next to it – this means you still have to configure the plan before you can use it.

To do so, however, you need a domain name. Let's take care of that before we dive into installing WordPress.



3

Registering a Domain

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

Once you have a hosting plan, you only need one more thing before you can start working on your website, and that's a domain.

Many web hosts also enable you to register domains as you purchase a plan. Hostinger is one of them. With us, you can register yours for as little as **\$1**, depending on which [Top-Level Domain \(TLD\)](#) you want to use. A **.com** address, for example, is a bit more expensive.

Remember that if you opt for a plan of 12 months or longer with us, you will get a domain name completely for free.

In this chapter, we're going to show you how to register a domain name through Hostinger. It's quite simple, so let's get to it.

How to Register a Domain With Hostinger (In 2 Steps)

Registering a domain is usually pretty easy, regardless of which web host or registrar you use. However, [purchasing a domain](#) through your hosting provider often makes the process of setting up your site easier. With that in mind, here's how to do so with Hostinger.

1. Choose Your Domain Name

With Hostinger, you can look up available domain names by selecting the [Domain](#) option on our homepage:

Domain Name Search – Buy a Domain In Minutes

Search domain name availability using our website domain checker tool. Simply type in your desired name and get instant results.

Enter your desired domain name [Search](#)

.com \$14.99 \$9.99	.online \$24.99 \$0.99	.shop \$24.99 \$0.99	.pro \$19.99 \$3.99	.net \$12.99 \$12.99	.xyz \$12.99 \$1.99
---	--	--	---	--	---

Free WHOIS privacy protection is included with every eligible domain registration. [?](#)

Already bought a domain? [Transfer it](#)

On the next page, enter the domain name you want to use, then click on **Search**.

If the option you entered isn't available, we'll give you plenty of alternatives to consider:


Domain is taken

mynewdomainname.com
Sorry, this domain is already taken [All endings](#)

More options

	mynewdomainname.online	SAVE 97%	\$34.99 \$0.99/yr	Add to Cart	
SALE		mynewdomainname.io	SAVE 20%	\$49.99 \$39.99/yr	Add to Cart
		mynewdomainname.life	SAVE 89%	\$27.99 \$2.99/yr	Add to Cart
PROMO		mynewdomainname.shop	SAVE 97%	\$34.99 \$0.99/yr	Add to Cart

At this stage, we recommend you take your time until you find a domain you're happy with. As the address visitors will use to access your website, it's an important part of your overall brand and image. It's best not to rush through this decision.

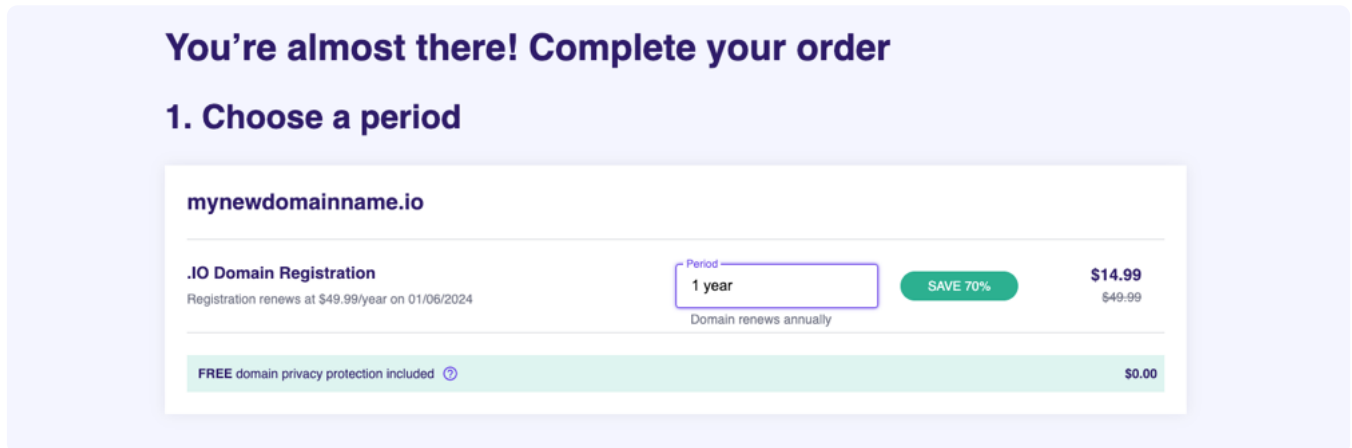


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2. Purchase Your Initial Registration

Once you settle on one, add your domain to your cart and proceed to the checkout page:



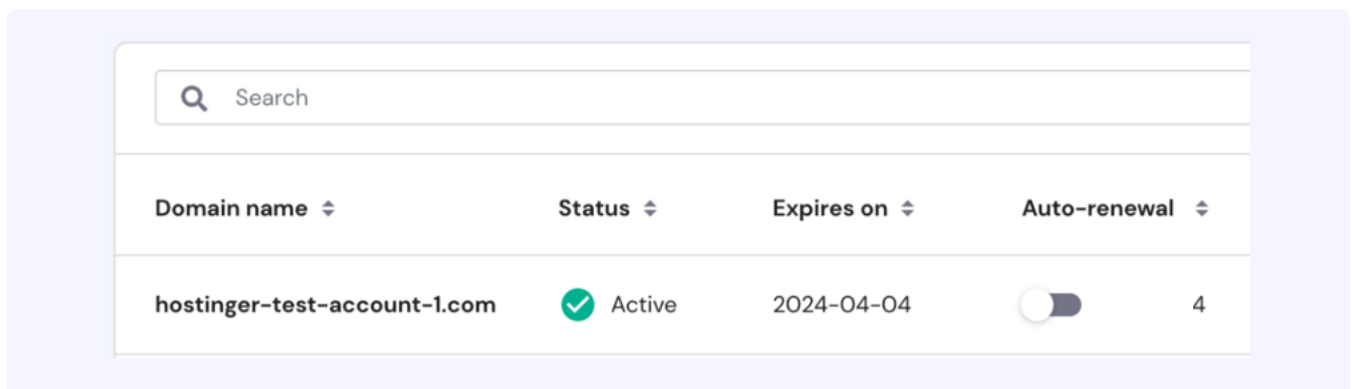
Domain registration costs can vary depending on several factors, including:

- Checking if your desired domain is available.
- Paying a fee to a domain registrar.
- Renewing your registration regularly.

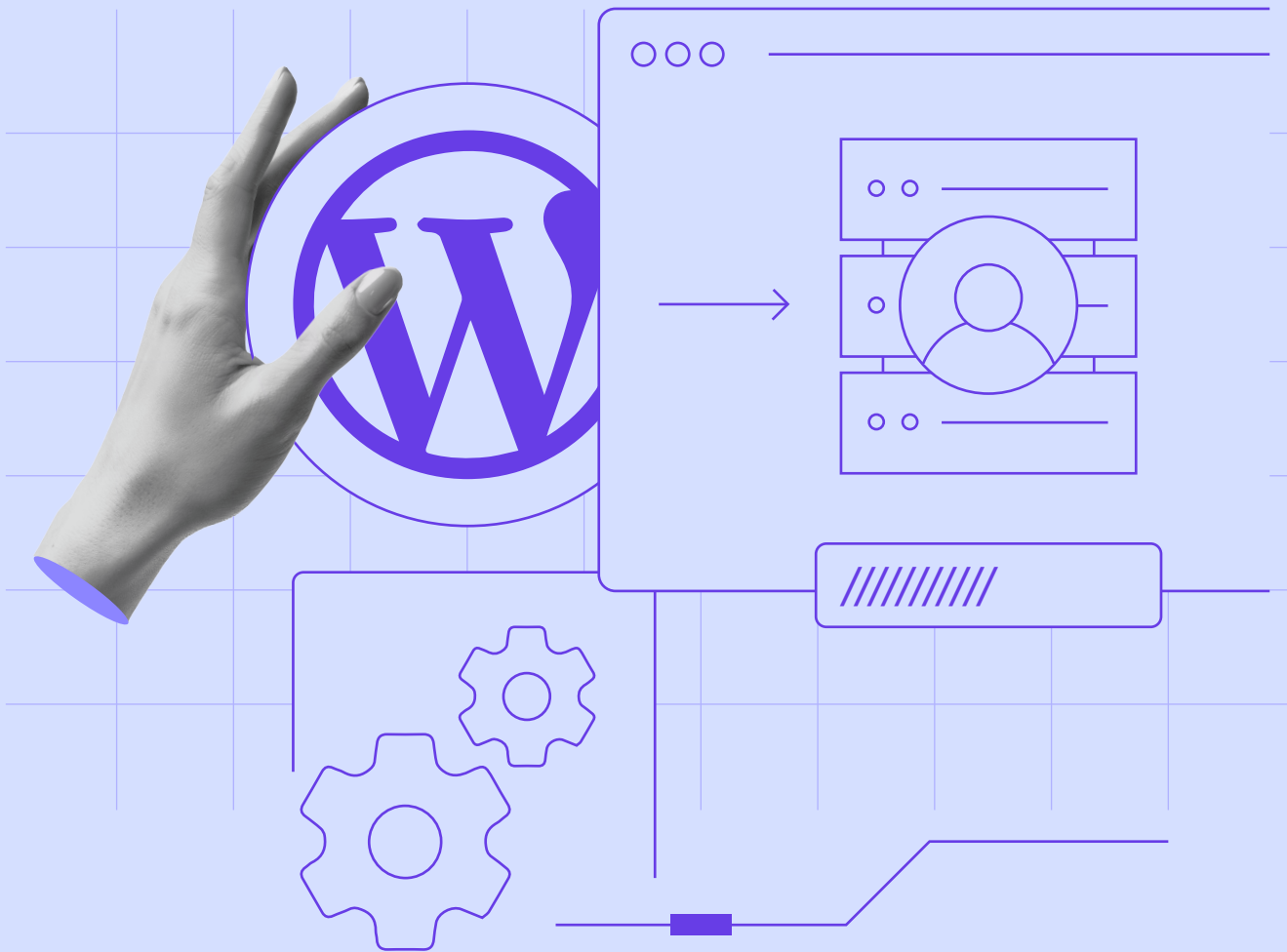
During the checkout process, you'll have the option to choose the duration of your initial domain registration. A longer contract means you won't have to worry about renewing it for a while, but the choice is ultimately up to you.

At this stage, you can also opt to include some extras. For example, you may choose to hide personal information about your domain from the public.

When you're ready, proceed with the payment process. Once the domain belongs to you, you'll find it listed in the **Domains** section on your hosting control panel, **hPanel**:



Now all that's left is to connect your domain to your hosting plan. We're going to cover that in the next chapter and install WordPress while we're at it.



4

Installing WordPress on Your Hosting Account

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

Now that you have both a domain and a hosting account, it's time to install WordPress. There are several ways you can do so, depending on your web host.

Ideally, your web host will offer you the option to install WordPress with a few clicks. That way, you can get your website up and running faster.

For this chapter, we're going to show you how to [install WordPress](#) on your Hostinger account, which shouldn't take more than a few minutes.

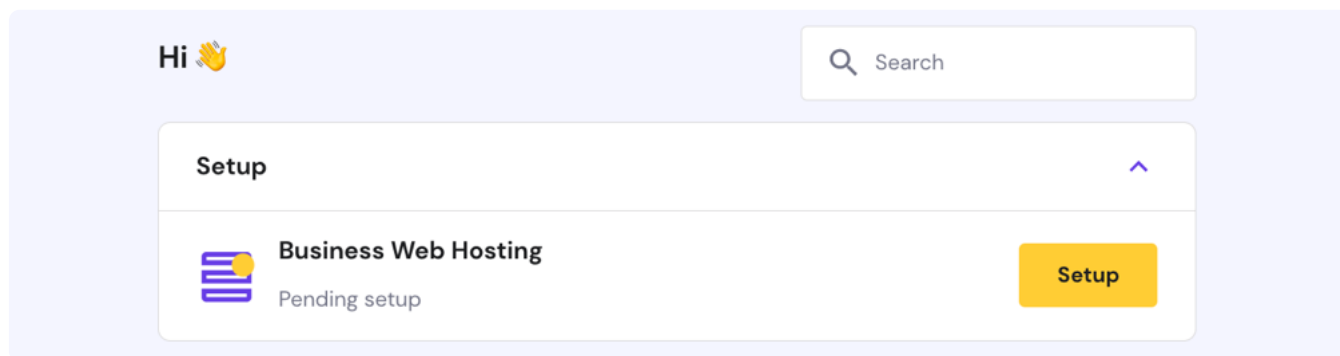
How to Install WordPress on Your Hostinger Account

When you log into your Hostinger dashboard now, you should see your domain listed alongside your hosting plan. We can install WordPress on your hosting plan and point your domain toward your website in one go. The Hostinger website setup wizard makes it easy.

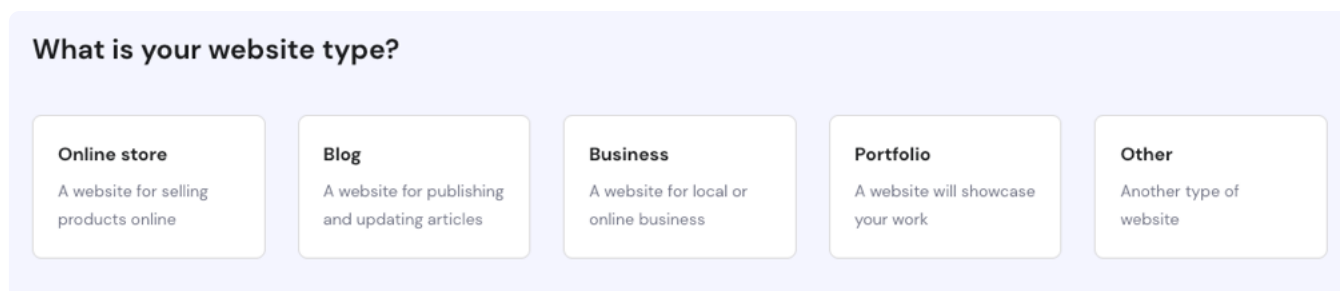
Keep in mind, however, that not all web hosts offer comparable features. If your provider doesn't, you may have to [install WordPress manually](#). It's not too difficult, but it does require some technical skills.

Run the Auto-Installer

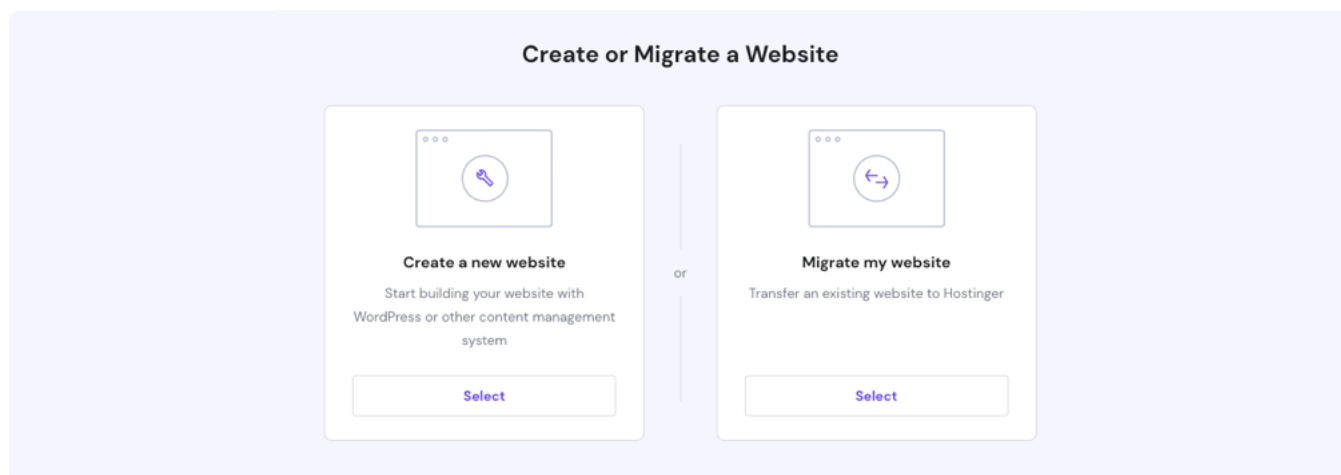
To get started with Hostinger, go to the **Hosting** section on your hPanel, and click on the **Setup** button to the right of your hosting plan in your control panel.



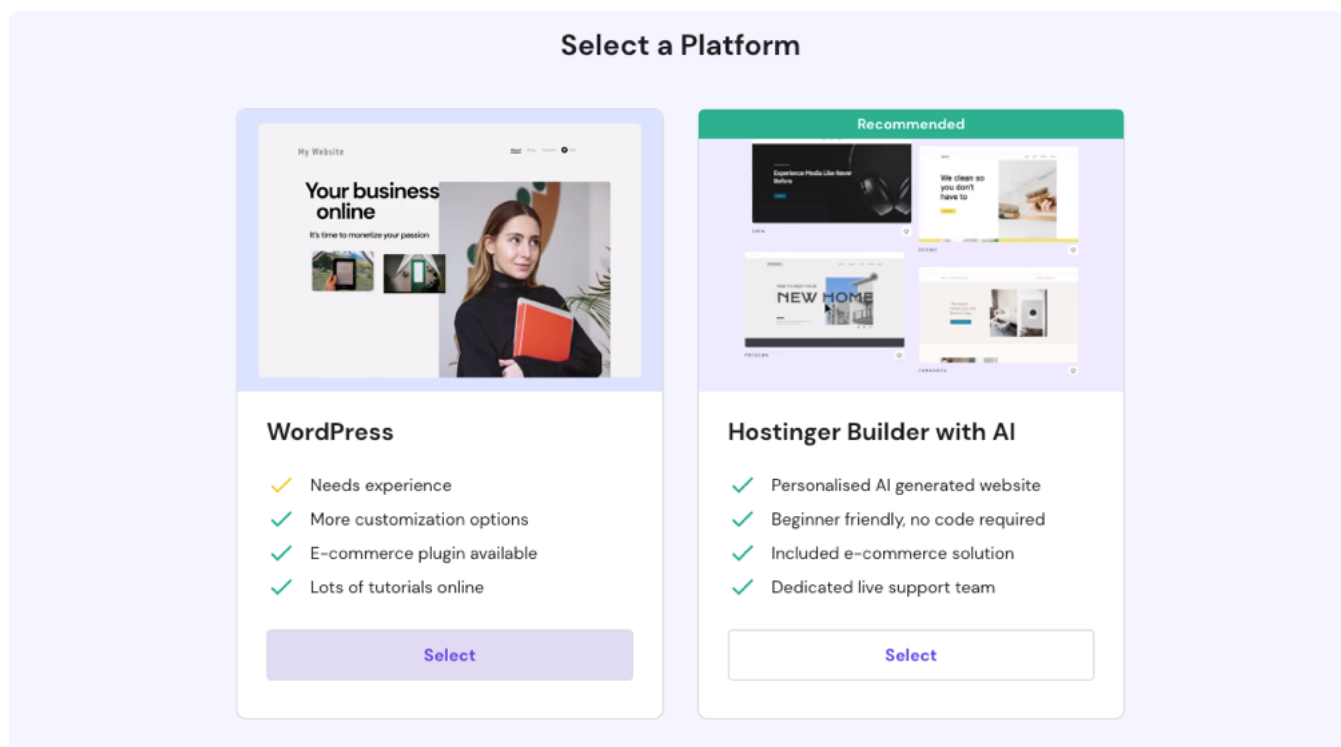
On the next screen, click on **Start Now**. You will be asked what website type you want to create.



Once you choose the type, you will have to say whether you are creating a new site or migrating one.



Let's **Select** the **Create a new website** option. Then, choose WordPress as your platform.



You will be directed to the window asking to create your login details for the WordPress account. Make sure to memorize them.

Then, to make your WordPress journey easier, we will offer some of the [best WordPress plugins](#) to install:

Add Plugins to Your Website

- WooCommerce**
For e-commerce websites. Includes secure payments, configurable shipping options, and more.
- MonsterInsights**
Track your website's statistics and view how people interact with your site
- OptinMonster**
Marketing plugin that assists in getting more email subscribers and grow your business
- All in one SEO**
For optimizing SEO. Helps your website to be visible, gain traffic and clients.
- Google Site kit**
Discover insights about how people find and use your website

[Continue](#) [Skip, I will manage plugins later](#)

Once done, choose your preferred WordPress theme. As we'll help you pick the perfect theme for your site and customize it later, feel free to skip this for now.

Which look do you prefer?

- Slick Blog**: A clean, modern blog layout with a large hero image and a grid of smaller images below.
- Twenty Twenty-One**: A minimalist layout with a large text area and a small image at the bottom.
- Blog Explorer**: A layout featuring a large featured article with a food image and a list of smaller articles below.
- Twenty Twenty-Three**: A layout with a large text area and a sidebar on the right containing a list of articles.
- Three Blog**: A layout with a large featured article and a list of smaller articles below.
- GeneratePress**: A layout with a large featured article and a list of smaller articles below.
- Yuki Blogger**: A layout with a large featured article and a list of smaller articles below.
- OceanWP**: A layout with a large featured article and a list of smaller articles below.

[Show More](#)

With Hostinger, you can also automate your text creation with AI. Just enter at least 10 characters, and the tool will create a few WordPress posts for you.

Automate Your Text Creation with AI

Provide your brand name and business details, and let ChatGPT handle the rest. We will generate a few content pieces for your website.

Brand name


Description

Enter at least 10 characters

i e.g. We are a sustainable farming company based in the beautiful city of Newark, NJ. We have a passion for quality food and love for sustainable practices...

Finally, click on **Use an Existing Domain** to select the one you registered in Chapter 3. Since it's already configured to work with Hostinger, you don't have to do anything else – a key advantage of registering your domain with your hosting provider.


Name Your Website



Buy a Domain

Purchase a new domain name for your project

Select

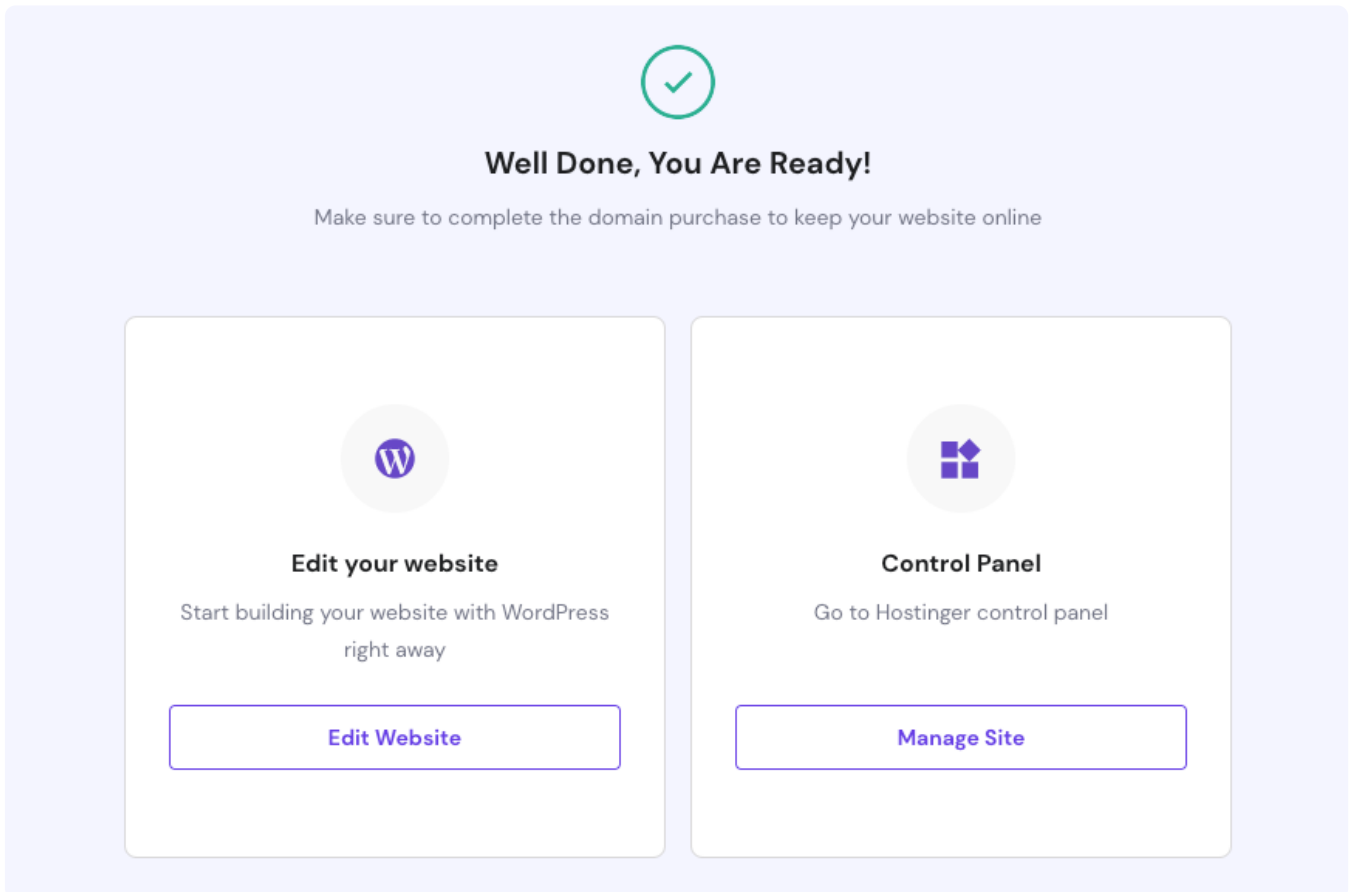


Use an Existing Domain

Use a domain previously purchased at another provider

Select

Now the installer will take a few minutes to set up your website, so sit back and relax while it works its magic in the background. Once everything is done, you will see this:



If you registered your domain with a different registrar than Hostinger, you will have to access your domain settings on their control panel and [point your domain to our nameservers](#).


Once your website is ready and the DNS propagation period, which can take from 24–72 hours, is over, you'll be able to jump to your WordPress Login page and continue customizing there.

On the other hand, if your domain is registered with us, you won't need to take any further action.



5

Navigating Through the WordPress Dashboard

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

At this stage, your website is ready for customization. Since you're using WordPress, that involves [logging into your dashboard](#). Using it for the first time can be overwhelming, as it includes a lot of options.

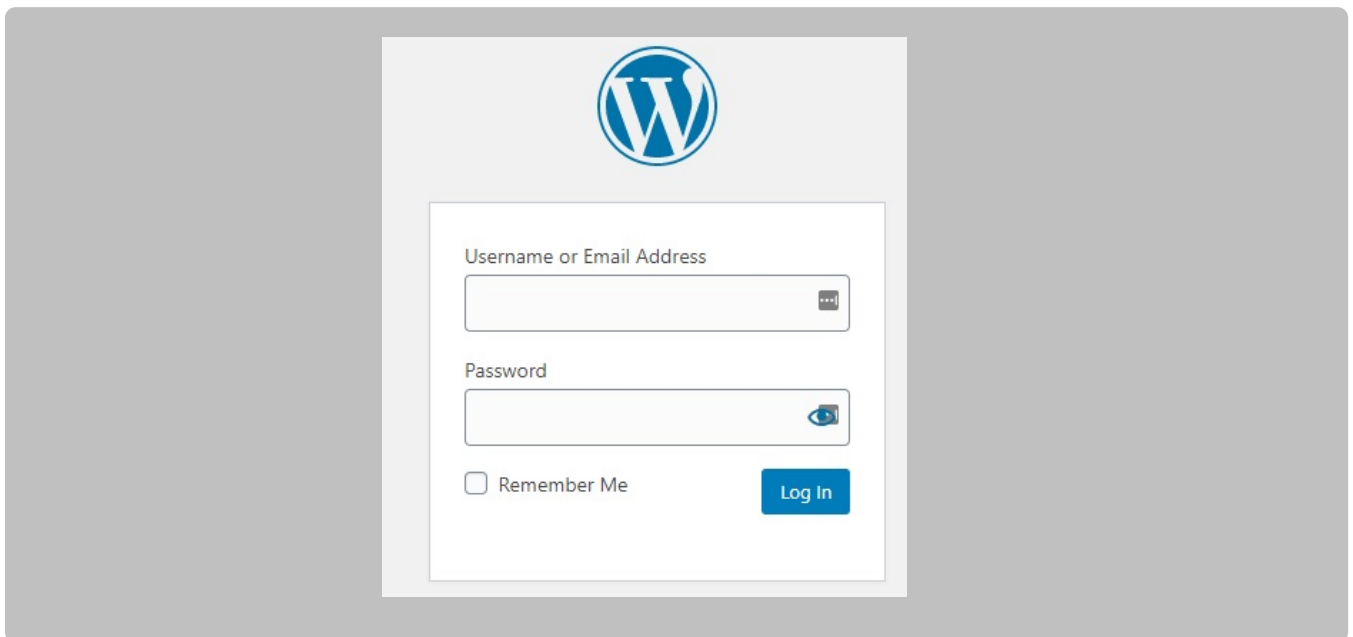
However, once you learn the ins and outs of the dashboard, you'll understand why WordPress is so popular. Everything you need to build a stylish and successful website is right at your fingertips.

In this chapter, we're going to teach you how to access the back end of your website and walk you through each component of the WordPress dashboard.

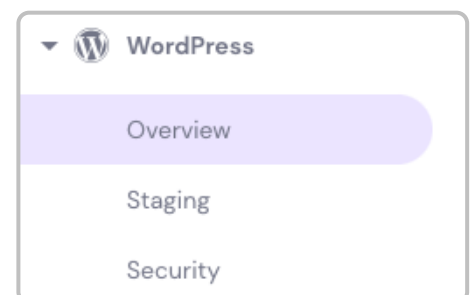
How to Access and Navigate the WordPress Dashboard

The back end of your website is where you can find all the options for customizing its looks, as well as publishing content. To access it, you first need to log in. You should be able to do so by typing `yourwebsite.com/wp-login.php` into your browser.

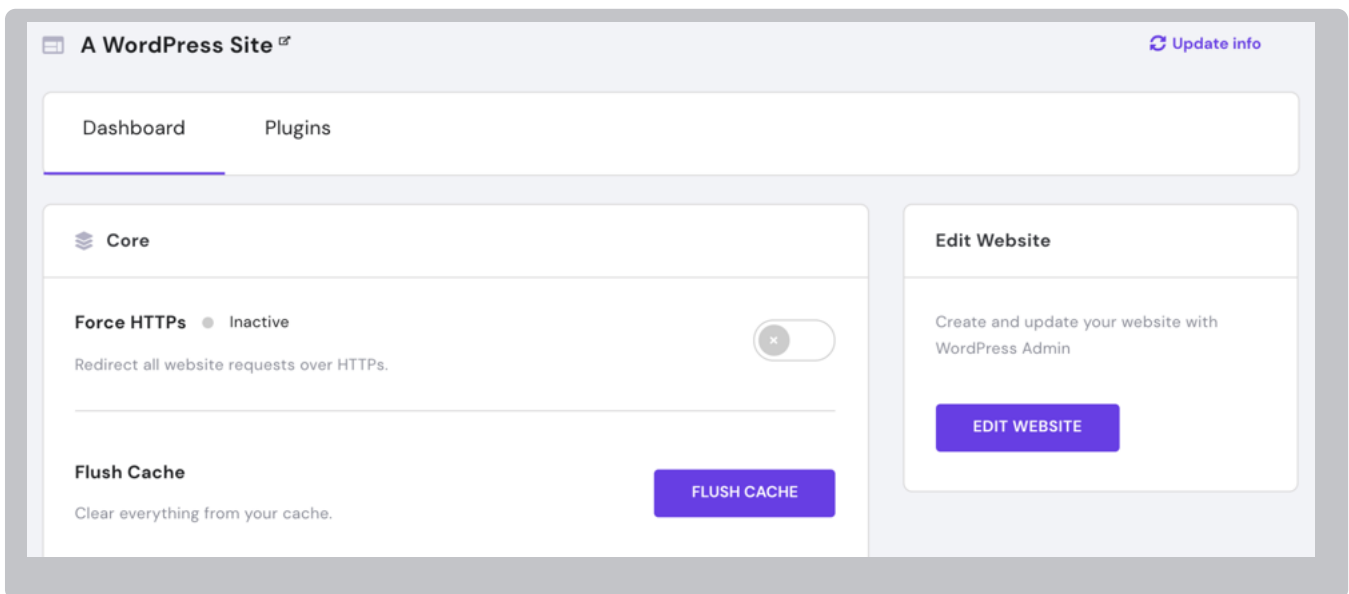
Then, enter the username or email address and password you set up when you installed WordPress:



Alternatively, if you're using hPanel, you can access your WordPress admin area by navigating to the **WordPress → Overview** section.

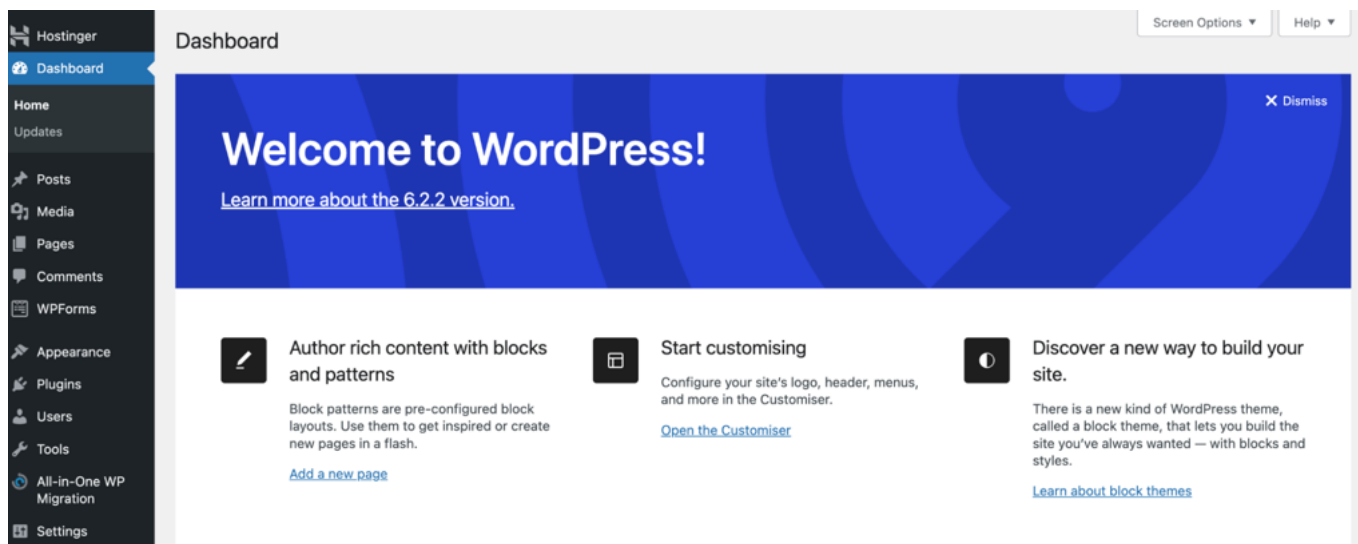


Once there, click on **Edit Website**.



Once you log in, you'll see your dashboard's main hub. It includes a lot of information, but there's no need to feel overwhelmed. When you break the back end down into its major parts, it's not difficult to understand at all.

In our case, the WordPress dashboard presents new major changes in the WordPress 6.2.2 version.

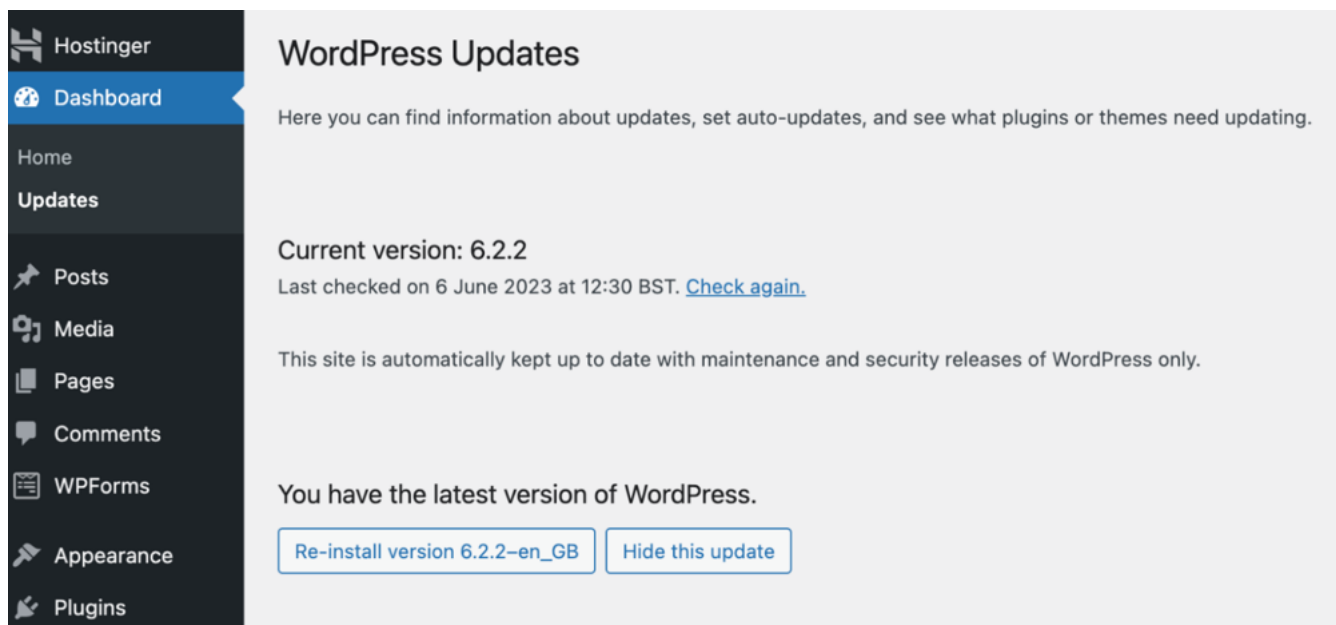


The dashboard also includes ten default tabs in the menu to the left. The one pictured above has additional ones – **WPForms**, **Hostinger**, and **All-in-One WP Migration**. These are plugins, which we'll discuss in Chapter 8. Now, let's focus on the standard ones.

1. Dashboard

The first default tab is labeled **Dashboard**. It includes two subsections. The first is the **Home** screen, which is the main hub pictured above.

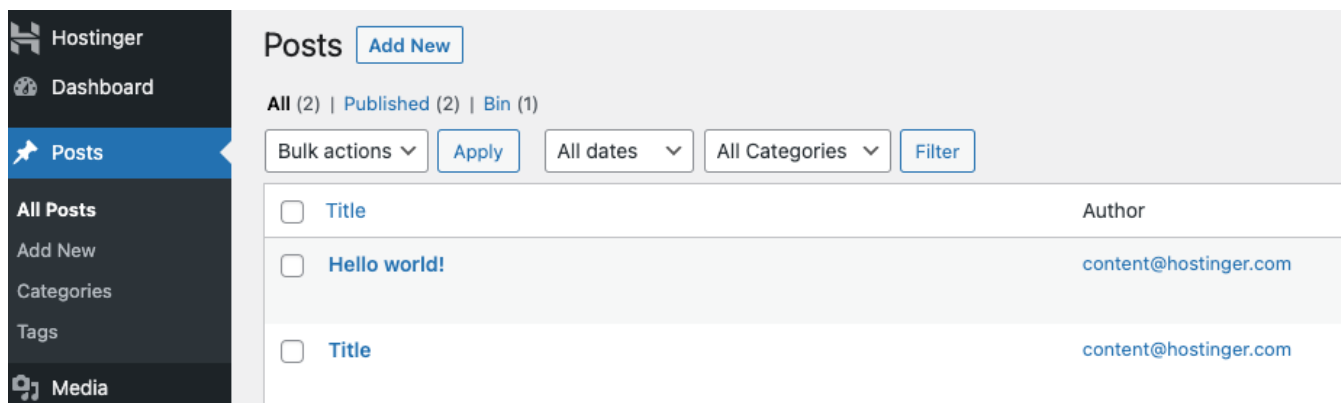
The second is the **Updates** screen. Here you can see any components of your WordPress site that are out of date:



A red icon will appear in the sidebar menu when something in this tab requires your attention. Keeping your WordPress installation, plugins, and themes up-to-date is an important security measure, so be sure to upgrade to new versions whenever you see a notification.

2. Posts

The **Posts** tab provides a quick overview of all your blog posts. Here, you can see their publication status, comments, authors, categories, tags, and more:



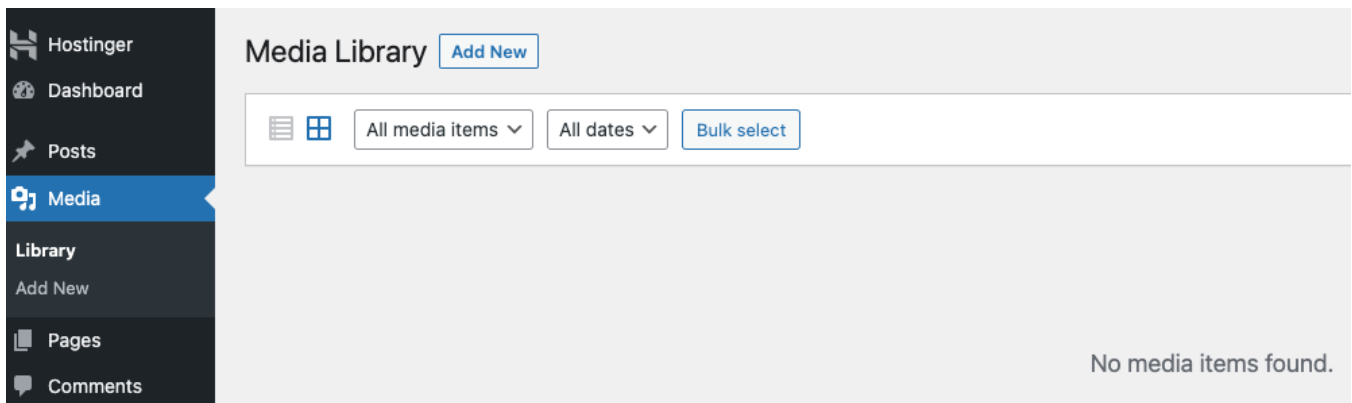
For each post, there are four actions you can take:

- **Edit.** Using the WordPress editor, you can make extensive changes to its content as well as its metadata and taxonomies.
- **Quick Edit.** You can change the post's status, title, slug, or taxonomies without having to enter the editor.
- **Trash.** Delete the post permanently.
- **Preview.** Check out how the post will look to visitors.

Using the **Add New** button at the top of the screen, you can draft and publish fresh content. The **Bulk Actions** dropdown enables you to select multiple posts to edit or trash simultaneously.

3. Media

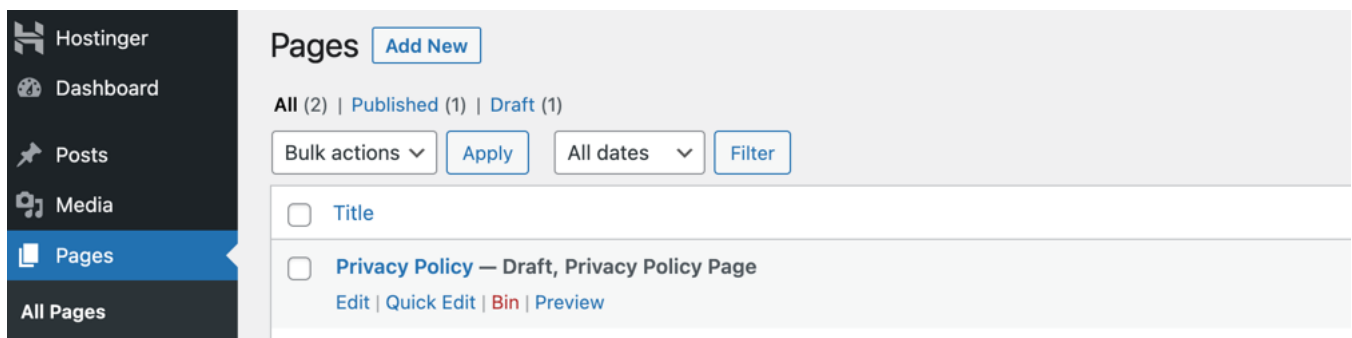
Here, you can view your **Media Library**. It includes all the image, video, audio, and PDF files you've uploaded to your website. If you click on one, you can edit its details and how it appears on your site:



You can use the **Add New** button to upload additional files.

4. Pages

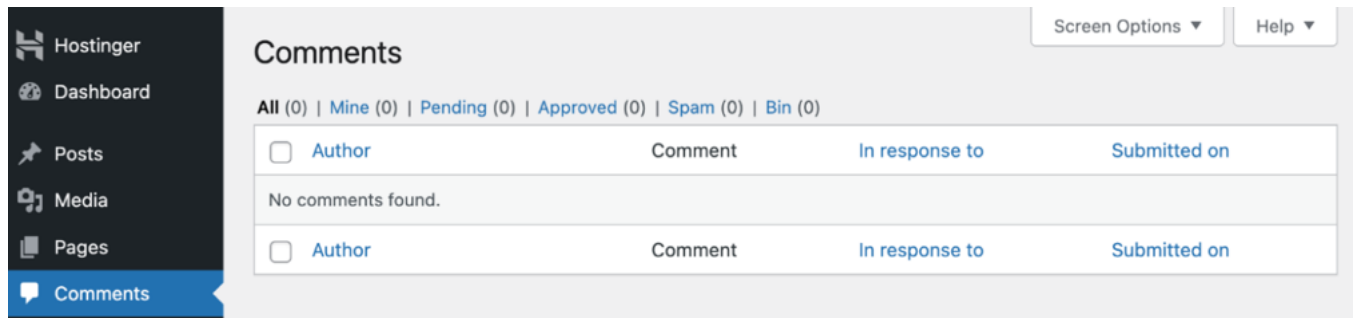
The **Pages** tab works identically to the **Posts** screen:



Once again, you can edit, quick edit, trash, or preview your content. You can also add new pages or implement bulk actions. The only difference is that WordPress treats pages and posts differently, as we explained in Chapter 1.

5. Comments

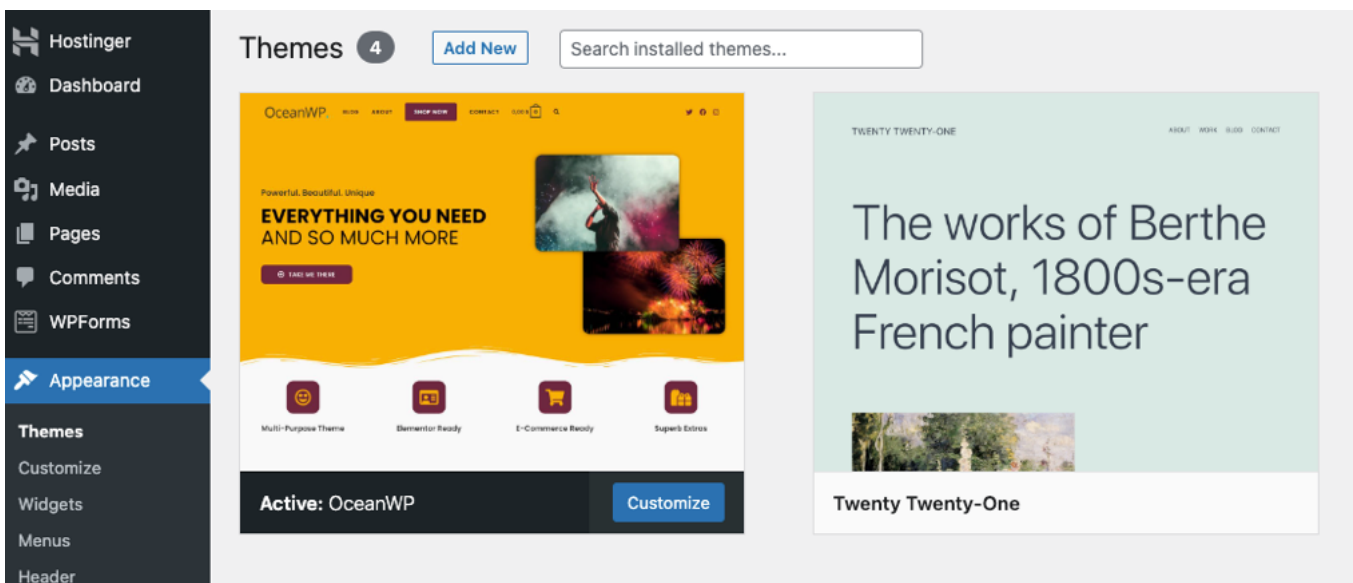
If you enable comments for your website, you can see everything visitors are saying about your posts:



The **Comments** tab includes different sections for approved comments, spam, those pending moderation, and deleted submissions. By default, you'll have to approve comments from all first-time posters here.

6. Appearance

In the **Appearance** tab, you can switch themes, customize them, or install new ones by clicking on the **Add New** button:



If you already have a theme, you can **Customize** it by clicking on the button.

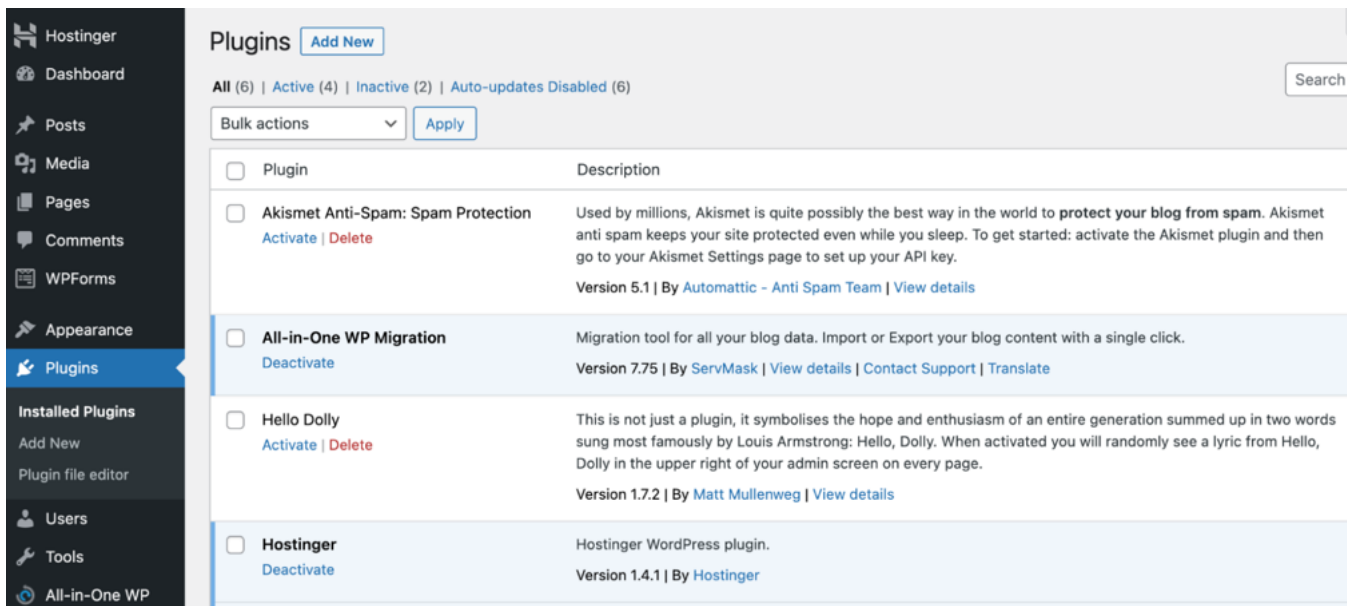
Other subsections are:

- **Customize.** Access the WordPress Customizer.
- **Widgets.** These are small content blocks that remain visible throughout your site, and are usually found in your sidebar or footer.
- **Menus.** Navigation links displayed in your header, footer, or sidebar to help users get around your site.
- **Theme Editor.** A built-in code editor that you'll likely only use for major troubleshooting.

Most users can accomplish everything they need using the Customizer, which we'll explore in more detail in a later chapter.

7. Plugins

Plugins are a key part of the WordPress experience. Here, you can manage the ones installed on your website:



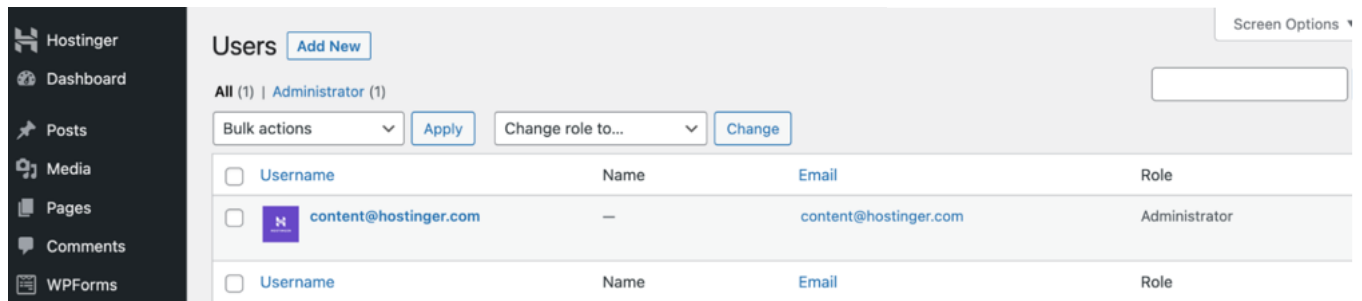
The screenshot shows the WordPress Plugins dashboard. On the left is a sidebar menu with options like Hostinger, Dashboard, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, WPForms, Appearance, Plugins (selected), Installed Plugins, Add New, Plugin file editor, Users, Tools, and All-in-One WP. The main content area is titled 'Plugins' and includes an 'Add New' button. Below the title, there are filters for 'All (6)', 'Active (4)', 'Inactive (2)', and 'Auto-updates Disabled (6)'. A search bar is on the right. A 'Bulk actions' dropdown menu is set to 'All' with an 'Apply' button. The main table lists installed plugins with checkboxes, plugin names, descriptions, and version information.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Plugin	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Akismet Anti-Spam: Spam Protection Activate Delete	Used by millions, Akismet is quite possibly the best way in the world to protect your blog from spam . Akismet anti spam keeps your site protected even while you sleep. To get started: activate the Akismet plugin and then go to your Akismet Settings page to set up your API key. Version 5.1 By Automattic - Anti Spam Team View details
<input type="checkbox"/>	All-in-One WP Migration Deactivate	Migration tool for all your blog data. Import or Export your blog content with a single click. Version 7.75 By ServMask View details Contact Support Translate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hello Dolly Activate Delete	This is not just a plugin, it symbolises the hope and enthusiasm of an entire generation summed up in two words sung most famously by Louis Armstrong: Hello, Dolly. When activated you will randomly see a lyric from Hello, Dolly in the upper right of your admin screen on every page. Version 1.7.2 By Matt Mullenweg View details
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hostinger Deactivate	Hostinger WordPress plugin. Version 1.4.1 By Hostinger

The **Add New** button enables you to install additional plugins by uploading a **.zip** file or searching the WordPress Plugin Directory.

8. Users

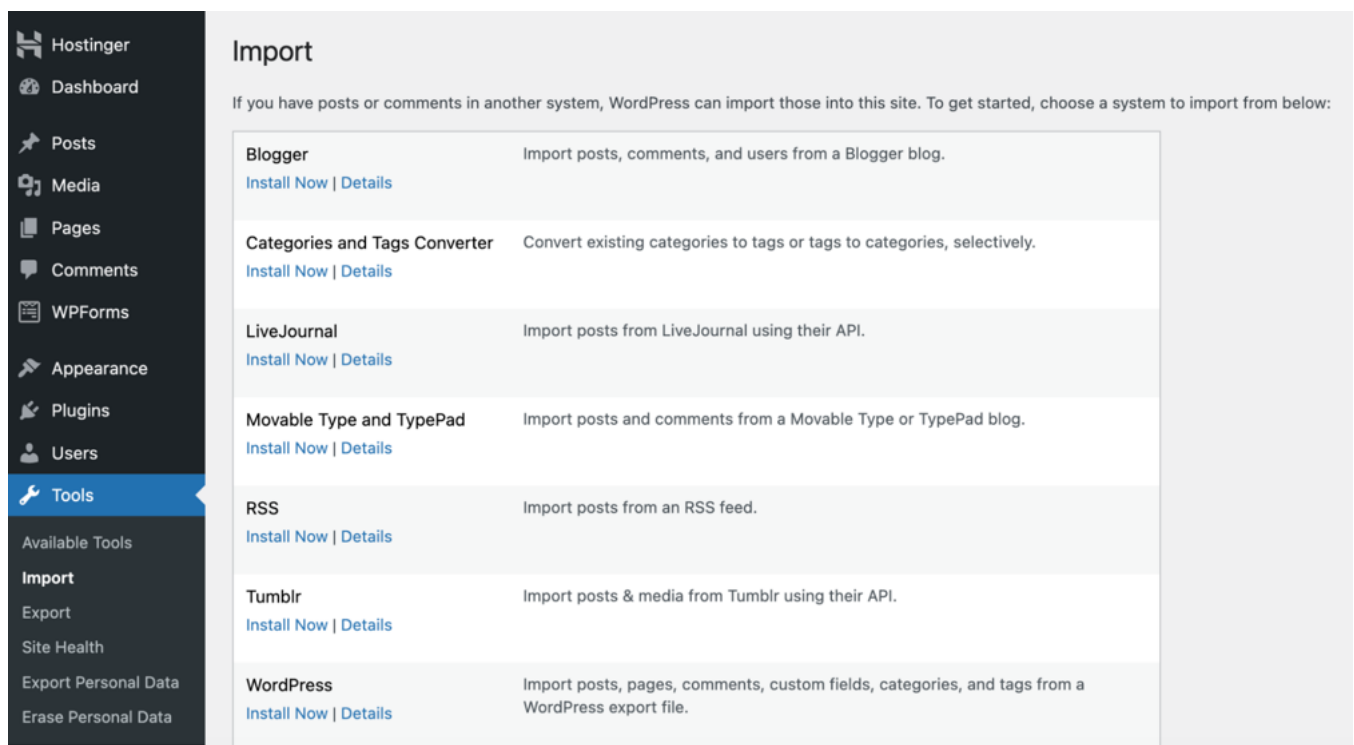
If you click on the **Users** tab at this point, there should only be one listed – you:



Once you add more users to your site, you can manage their accounts here. You'll also be able to assign them **roles**, which will determine which parts of your dashboard they can access.

9. Tools

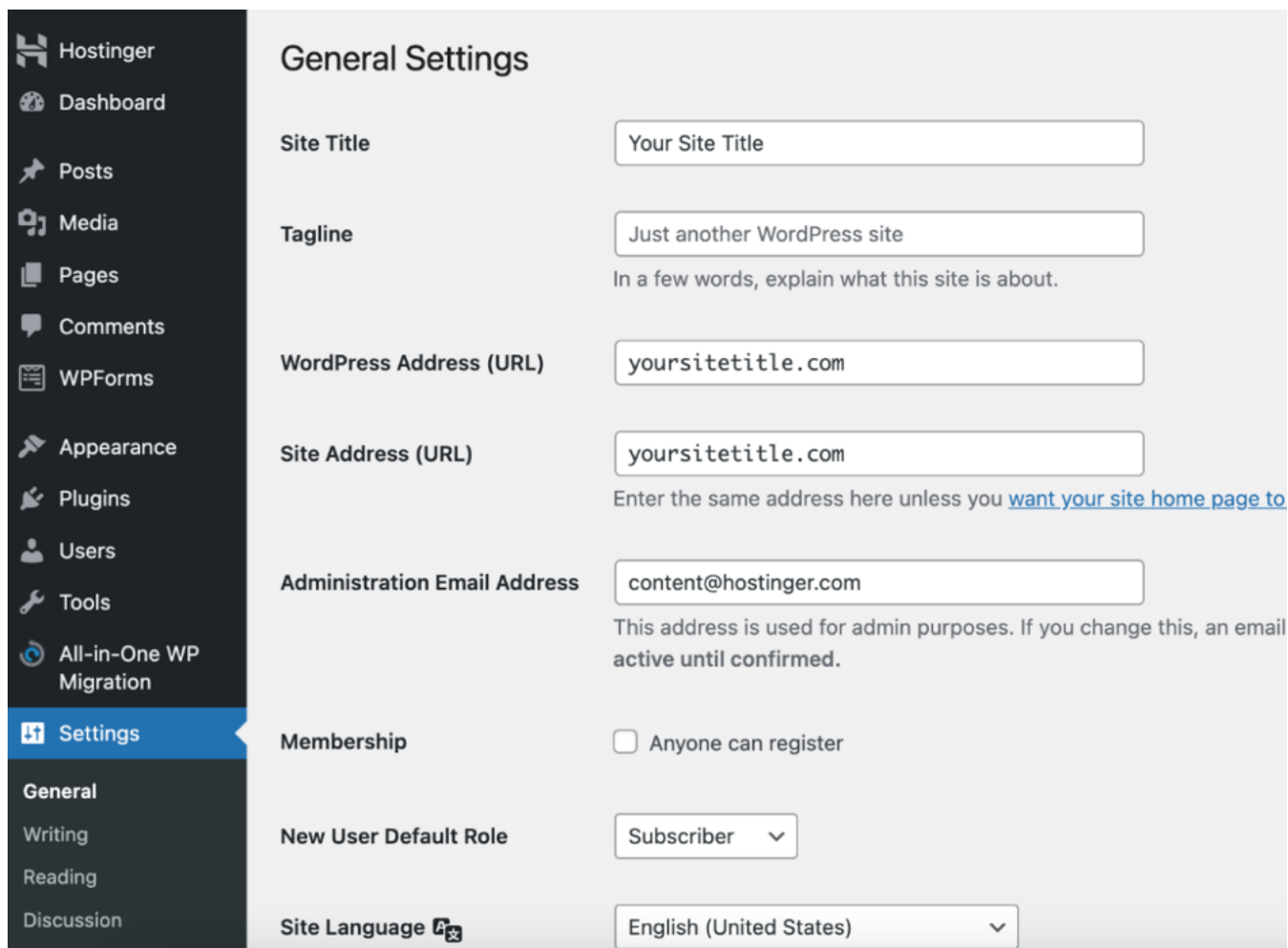
The **Tools** tab includes some default functionality that is primarily helpful if you're migrating from another platform:



You can also import and export content as a CSV file or transfer it from another WordPress site.

10. Settings

Here you can edit your website's primary settings, including your contact information, homepage, and whether users can register for accounts:



The screenshot shows the WordPress dashboard's 'Settings' page, specifically the 'General' tab. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with the following items: Hostinger, Dashboard, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, WPForms, Appearance, Plugins, Users, Tools, All-in-One WP Migration, Settings (highlighted), General, Writing, Reading, and Discussion. The main content area is titled 'General Settings' and contains the following fields:


- Site Title:** A text input field containing 'Your Site Title'.
- Tagline:** A text input field containing 'Just another WordPress site'. Below it is the instruction: 'In a few words, explain what this site is about.'
- WordPress Address (URL):** A text input field containing 'yoursitetitle.com'.
- Site Address (URL):** A text input field containing 'yoursitetitle.com'. Below it is the instruction: 'Enter the same address here unless you [want your site home page to](#)'.
- Administration Email Address:** A text input field containing 'content@hostinger.com'. Below it is the instruction: 'This address is used for admin purposes. If you change this, an email active until confirmed.'
- Membership:** A checkbox labeled 'Anyone can register' which is currently unchecked.
- New User Default Role:** A dropdown menu with 'Subscriber' selected.
- Site Language:** A dropdown menu with 'English (United States)' selected.

Keep in mind that we're only scratching the surface of what WordPress has to offer. Each tab includes many options we don't have time to cover in-depth here. However, now that you generally know your way around the WordPress dashboard, you can put aside some time to become more familiar with it.



6

Choosing a Theme

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

From free to paid ones, there are thousands of WordPress themes. You have options to help you create almost any type of website, from an online portfolio to an eCommerce store. However, you'll have to sift through them to find the best one for your needs.

Ideally, you should choose a theme you won't need to replace for a long time. If you know the hallmarks of a quality option, that shouldn't be an issue.

In this chapter, we'll talk about all the things you need to consider when choosing a WordPress theme. Then we'll show you how to install one so you can start customizing your website.

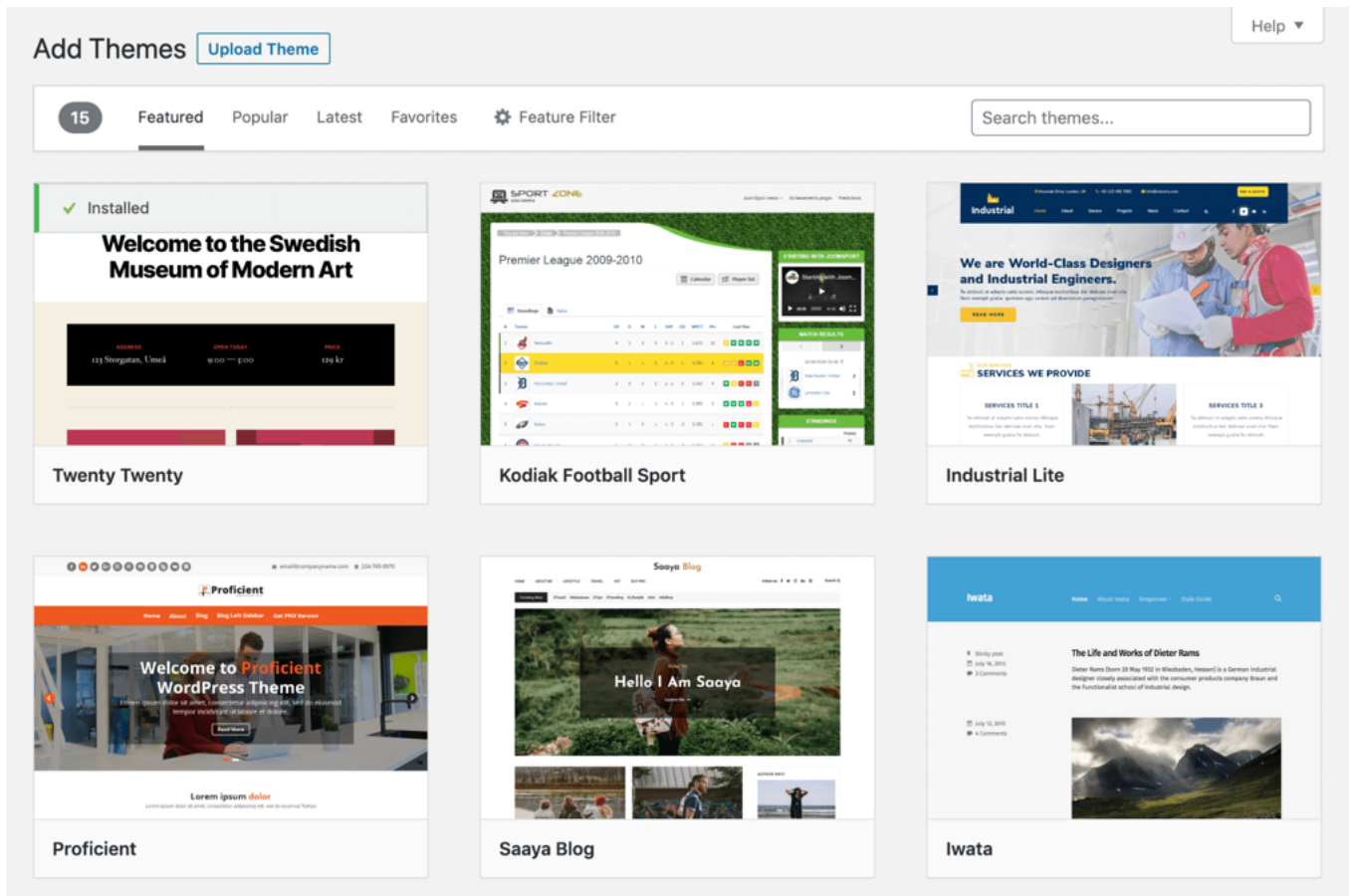
How to Choose a Theme for Your WordPress Website

Picking the right WordPress theme isn't just about the looks. A lot of them offer functionality that goes well beyond style. If you run an online store, for example, you can find one that will provide templates for your product, cart, and checkout pages.

The screenshot shows a dark-themed WordPress eCommerce store. The header includes the 'Storefront' logo, navigation links for 'My Account' and 'About this Demo', and a search bar. Below the header is a secondary navigation menu with links for 'Blog', 'Shop', 'Single Product Homepage Example', 'Pricing Tables', and 'Reviews'. A cart icon shows '£0.00 0 items'. The main content area features a product card for a 'Scubapro 10 litre 232 bar cylinder – single valve' with an 'Add to cart' button and a price of '£229.00'. To the right, there is a 'Cart' section showing 'No products in the cart' and a 'Product Categories' list including Clothing, Bags, Blouses, Dresses, Footwear, Hats, Hoodies, Shirts, and Skirts.

For both multi-purpose and niche themes, you can find free and premium options. Paid themes aren't necessarily better, but they usually offer more advanced features and dedicated support.

As for where you can find themes, WordPress enables you to browse its official repository of free options from your dashboard. Just navigate to **Appearance** → **Themes**.



From here, you can also [install themes](#), which we'll cover shortly.

If you're looking for premium options, you'll want to try marketplaces such as **Themeforest** or **Template Monster**. Some developers also sell their products directly from their own websites.

Regardless of where you look for WordPress themes, consider the following tips for picking a quality option:

- Look for themes that receive regular updates from their developers.
- Check out as many reviews as you can and pay close attention to negative ones.
- Make sure the features the theme offers align with what you need.
- Look for options with thorough documentation or support that you can consult if you run into issues.

Once you find a theme that offers all those features and fits the aesthetic you want for your website, it's time to install it.

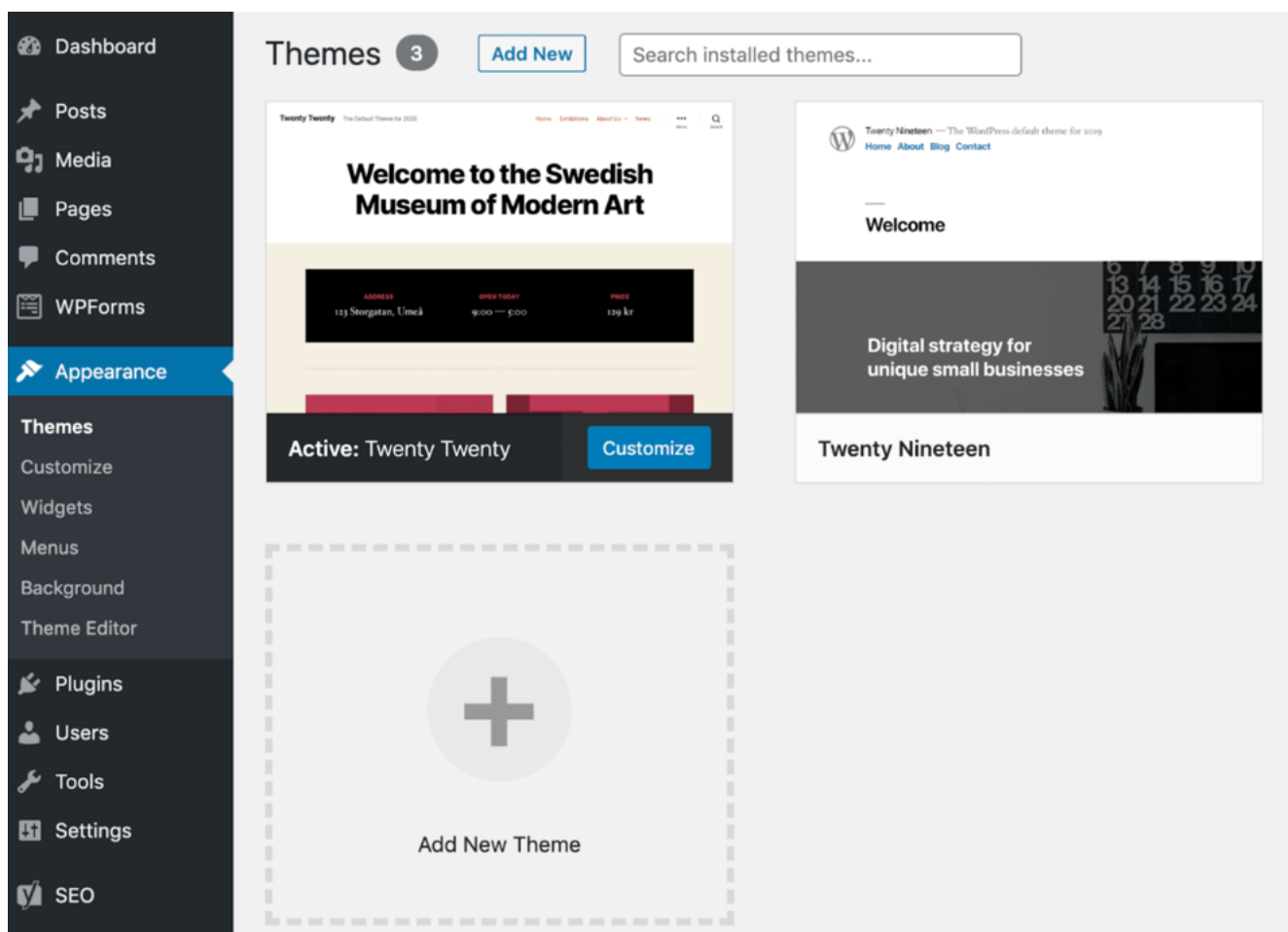
How to Install a WordPress Theme on Your Website (2 Possible Methods)

Depending on whether you're using a free or premium theme, there are two ways to install it on your WordPress site. Here's how to get started.

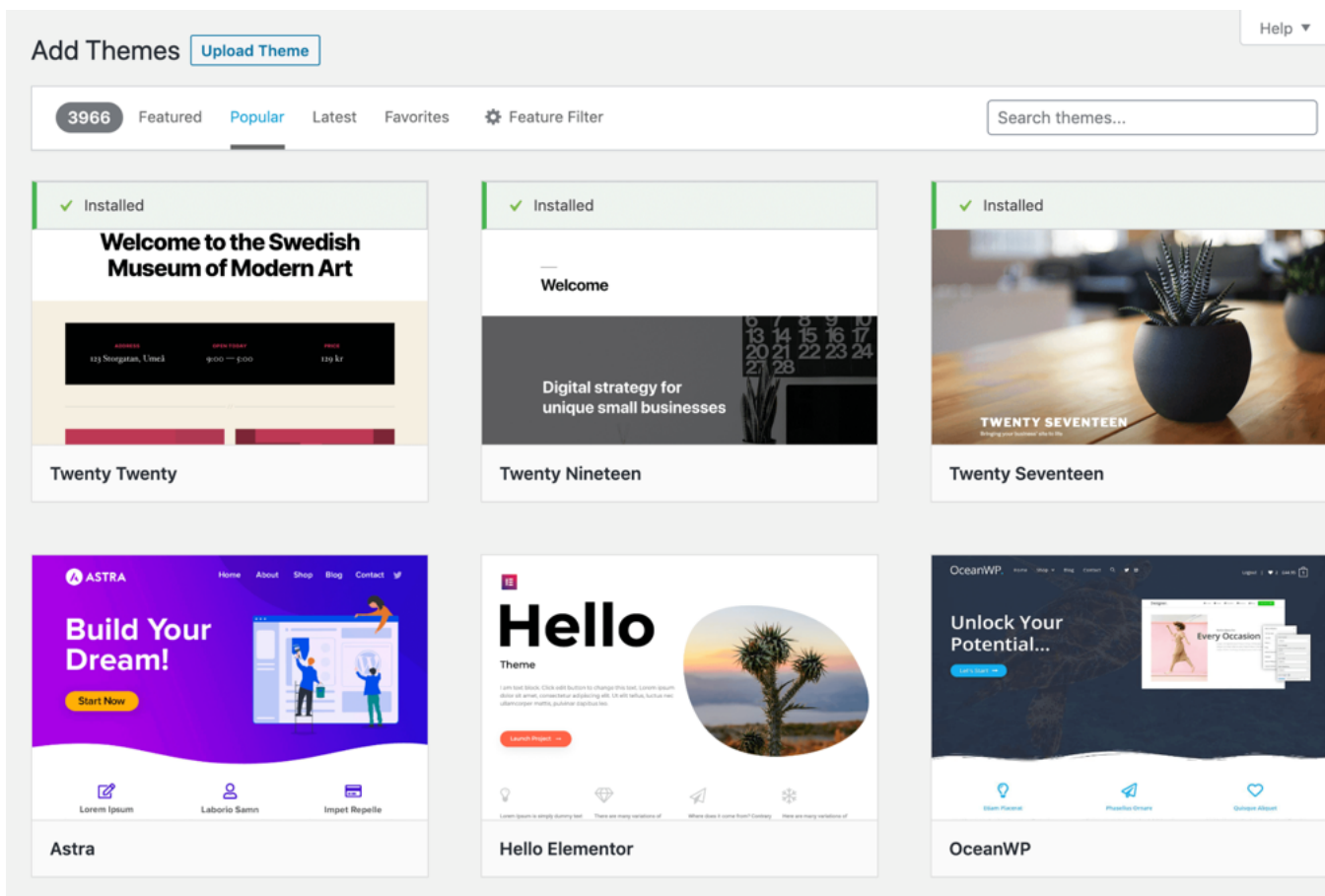
Method 1: Install a Free Theme from Your Dashboard

If you're going to use a [free theme](#) from the official Repository, the easiest way to add it to your site is using the WordPress built-in installation feature. To get started, return to your dashboard and go to **Appearance** → **Themes**.

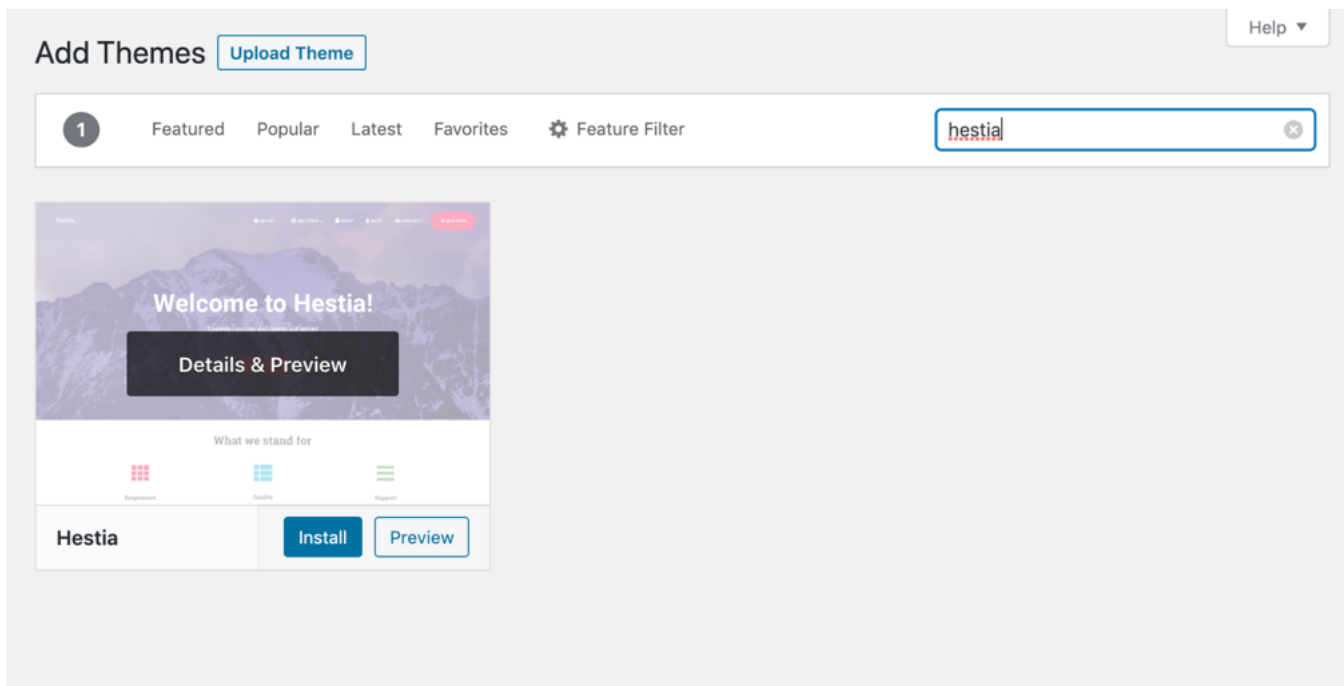
There, you'll see a list of the themes WordPress installs on your site by default.



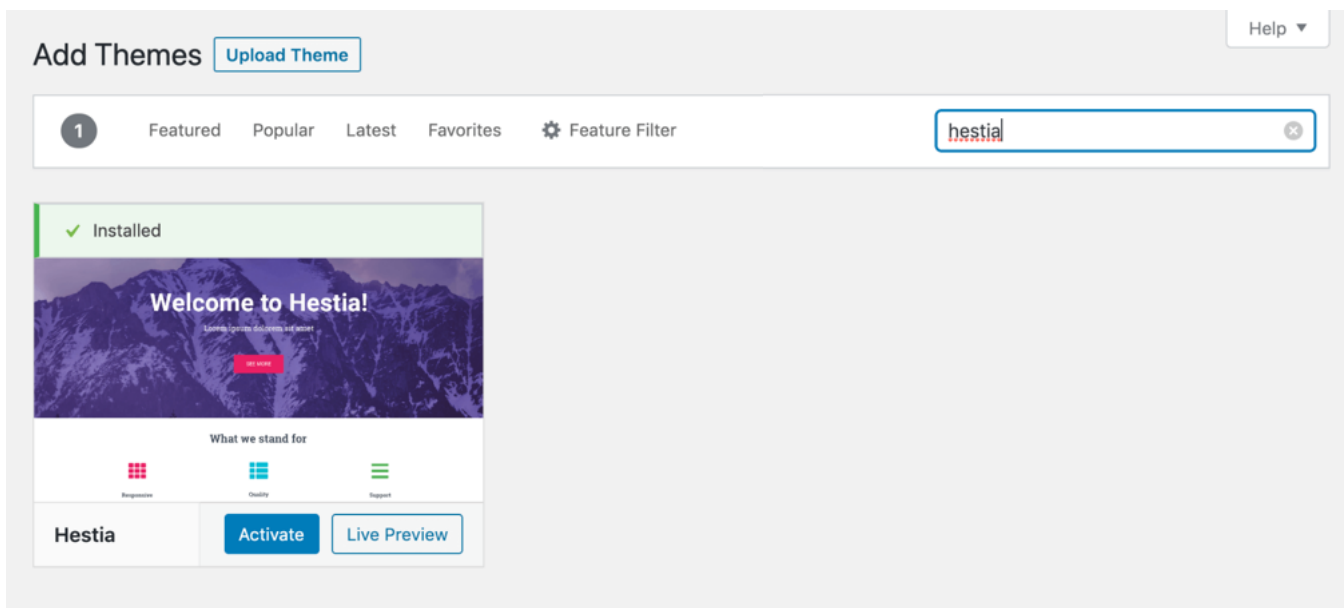
To install a new theme, you can click on the **Add New Theme** option seen in the screenshot above or on the **Add New** button at the top of the page. Once you do that, WordPress will enable you to browse the official Theme Repository.



You can click on any theme to see more details, such as reviews and the last update date. Once you've made your selection, click on the **Install** button:



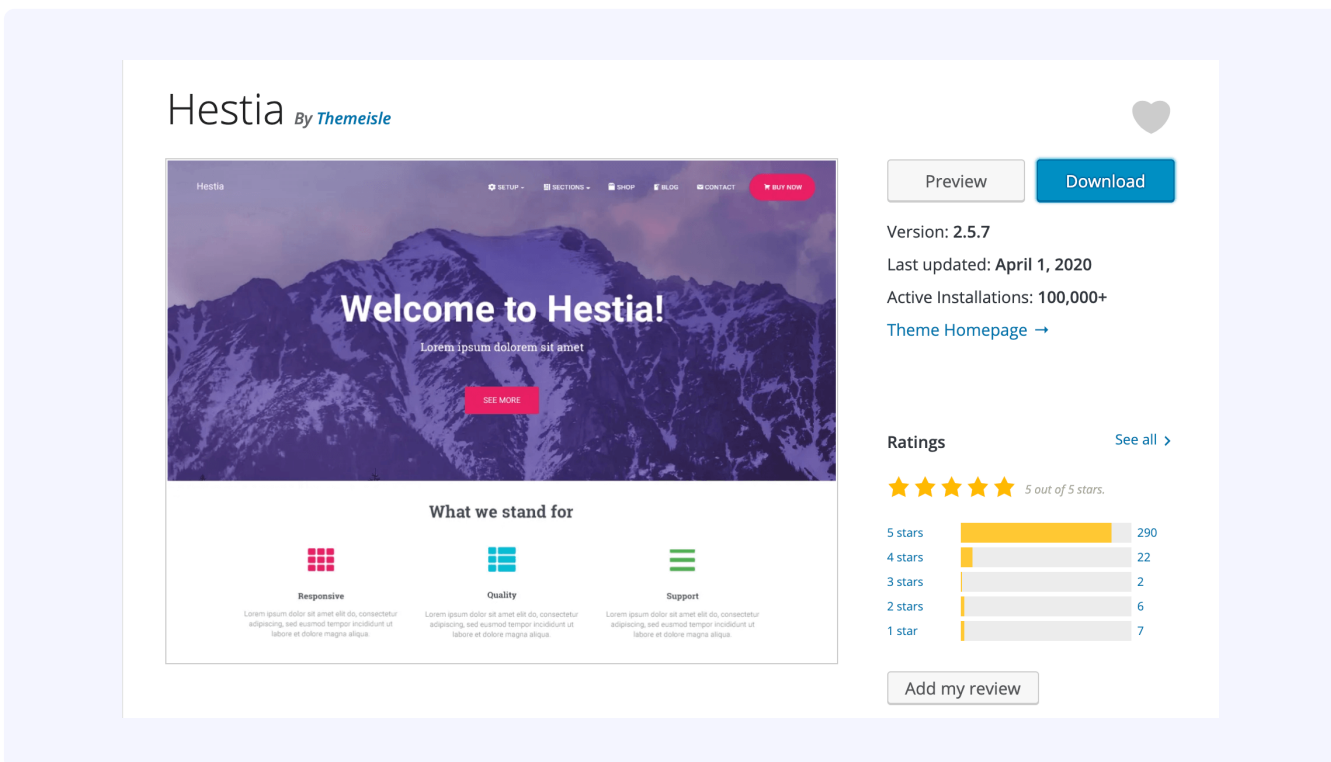
After WordPress finishes installing your theme, this button will update to read **Activate**.



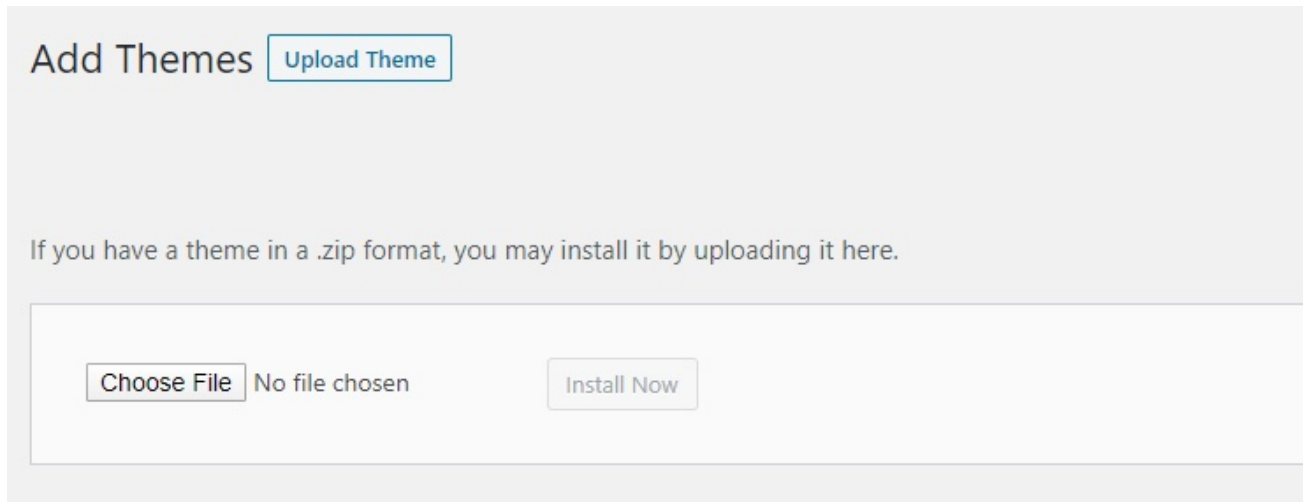
Click on the **Activate** button to apply your theme to your website.

Method 2: Upload Your Theme's Files

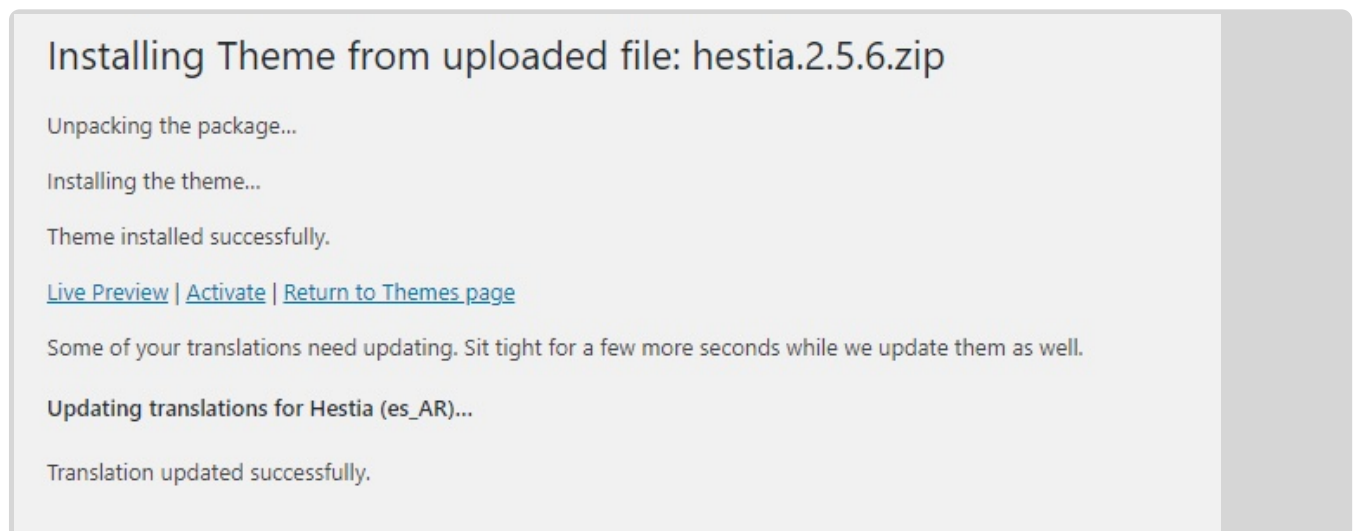
If you choose a premium theme, you will get its **.zip** file after purchasing it. You can also download **.zip** files for free themes from the WordPress Repository:



To install your theme using a **.zip** file, navigate to **Appearance → Themes** in your dashboard and click on the **Add New** button at the top of the screen. Instead of using the search functionality here, click on the **Upload Theme** button.

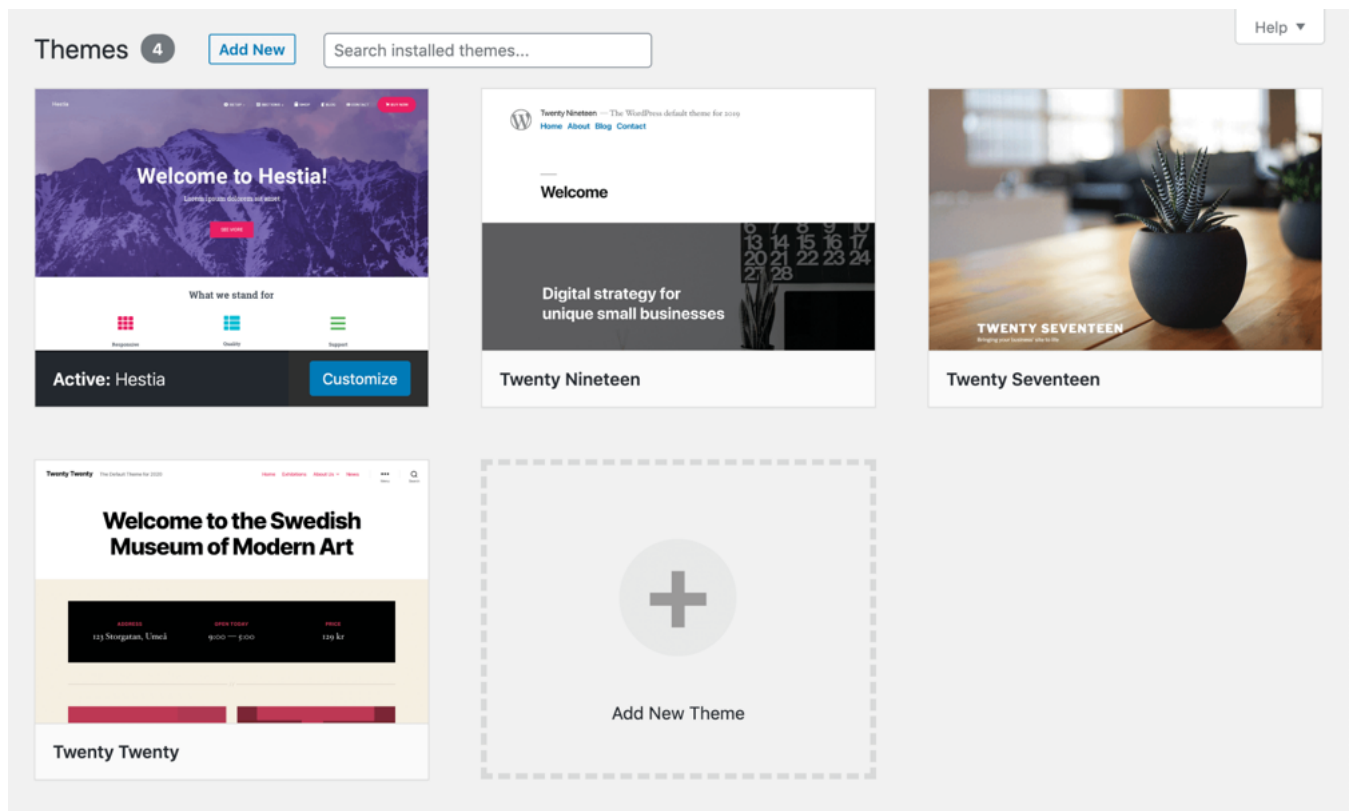


This will open the [File Manager](#). Click on **Choose File**, select your theme's **.zip** file from your computer, and click **Install Now** to add it to your site. WordPress will return a success message when the process is complete.



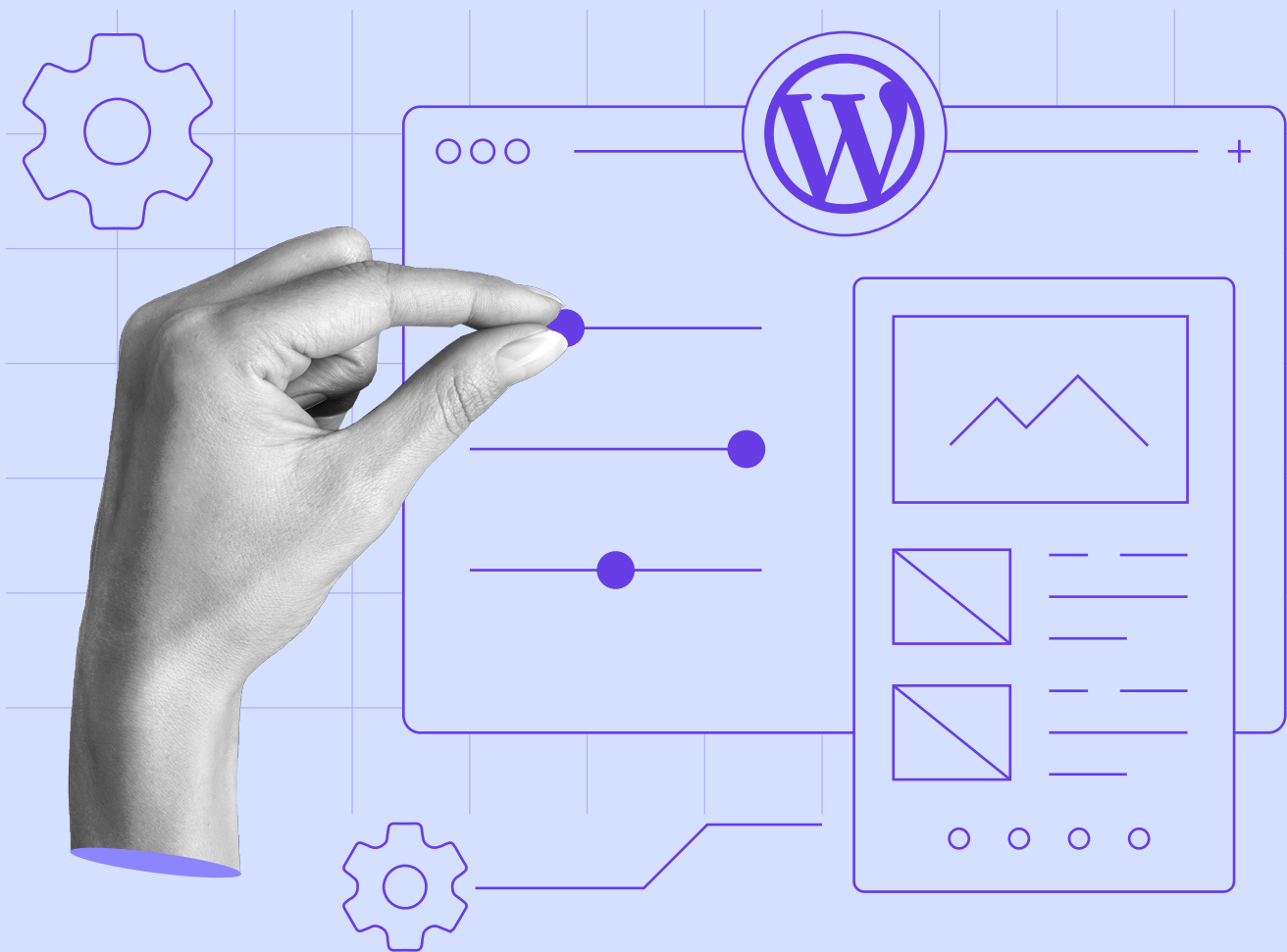
Click on the **Activate** link here to apply the theme to your website.

After your theme's installed, you can return to **Appearance → Themes** and find it listed as an available option.



You can switch to a different theme at any time by clicking on its **Activate** button on this screen.

That's it with selecting the theme – continue reading to find out how you can customize your site's appearance further.



7

Customizing Your WordPress Site's Appearance



[Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

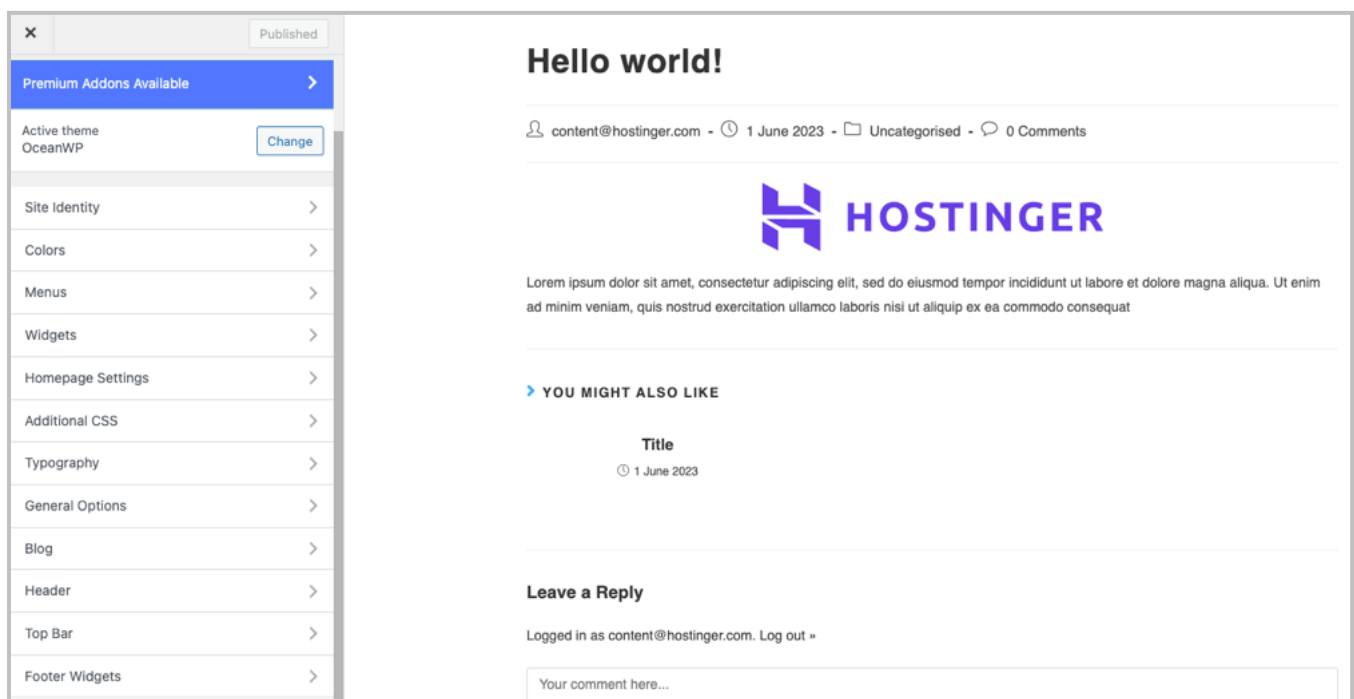
Installing a theme is an excellent start. However, before your website is ready for the public, there may be certain elements you want to personalize. Plus, there are key features, such as your navigation menu, that you'll need to attend to.

There are several ways to change your WordPress website's appearance, but the easiest is to use the Customizer. With this tool, you can modify all the most important aspects of your site while previewing how it will look for visitors.

In this chapter, we'll explain how you can use the WordPress Customizer to get your website looking pixel-perfect. Then we'll go over three key areas of your site that you might want to edit.

Introduction to the WordPress Customizer

Themes enable you to completely overhaul your WordPress website's style, but in most cases, you will need to make some changes to get things looking exactly the way you want. WordPress enables you to do this using a tool called the Customizer, which you can access by navigating to **Appearance** → **Customize** in your dashboard.



To the right, you can see a preview of your website, which you can navigate as usual by clicking on links. You can click on any blue pencil icon to edit the corresponding element.

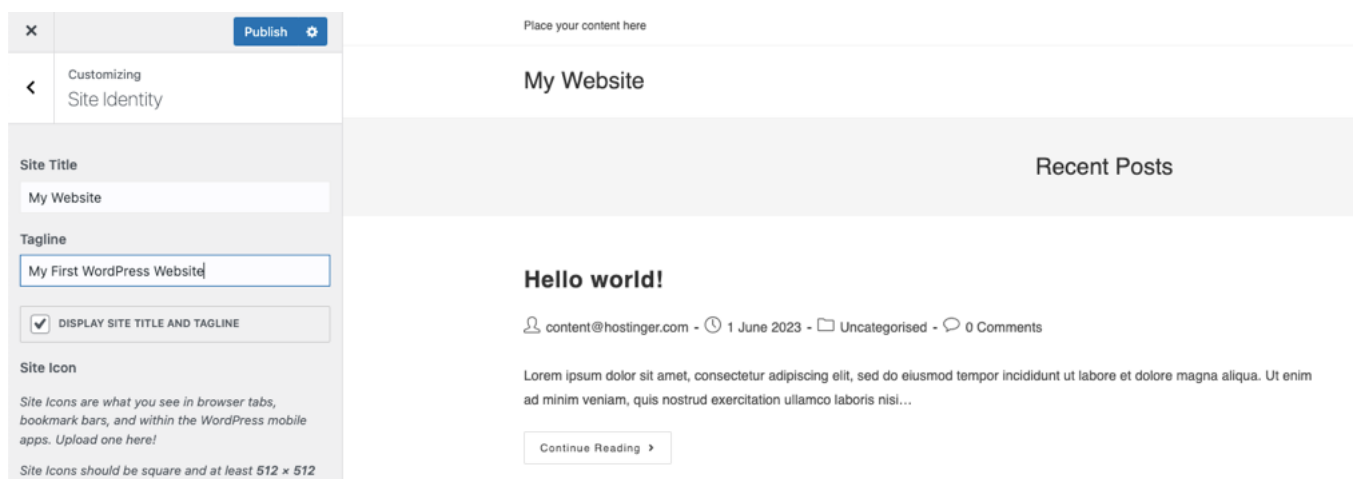
The menu to the left includes all the style options you can play with, such as colors, background images, widgets, and more. Keep in mind that the options available here will depend on the theme you're using.

3 Key Elements of Your WordPress Site to Edit with the Customizer

Although the full list of customization options available to you will depend on your theme, there are a few that tend to come standard. These include **Site Identity**, **Menus**, and **Widgets**. Let's take a look at each of them in turn.

1. Build Your Site Identity

First off, the **Site Identity** tab enables you to change your website's title and tagline, as well as modify its icon.



You'll also likely have the option to upload a logo or header image. Essentially, this tab contains the core elements that make up the visual identity of a brand.

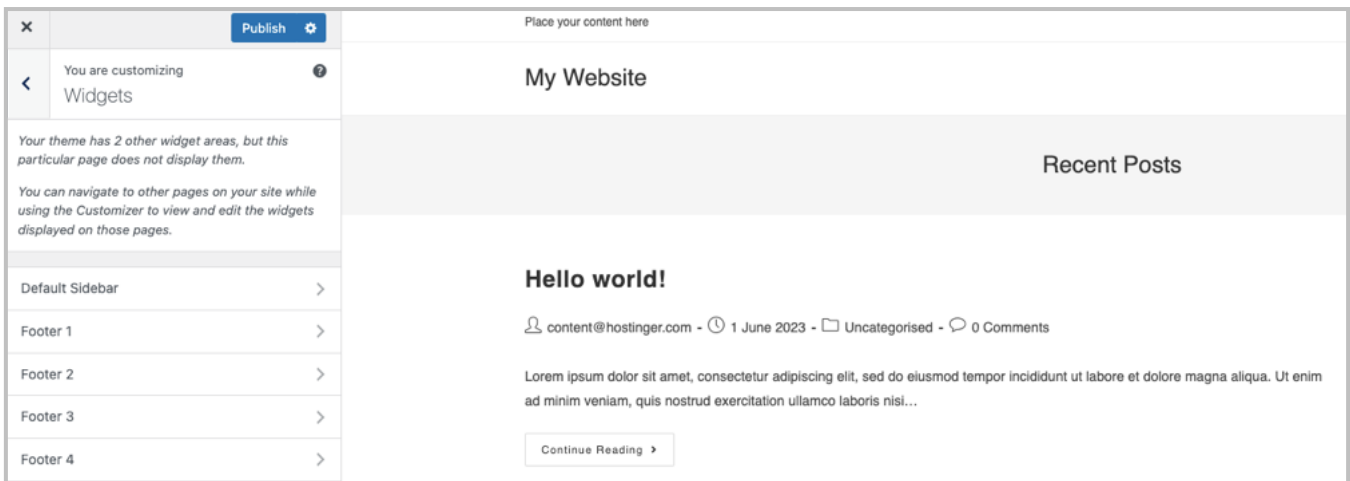
Whether you're running a blog or a small business site, branding is important to building your website's audience. That makes this a crucial step when you're putting the finishing touches on your site's look.

2. Incorporate Widgets to Highlight Important Content

If you navigate to the **Widgets** tab, you can add or remove WordPress widgets from your site's footer or sidebar. These are pre-built elements you can place in permanent spots across your website, so they'll be visible on every page.

Some examples of widgets include search bars, **Recent Posts** sections, post **Archives**, and more. Several themes also come with their own unique widgets, especially if you choose a niche option over a multi-purpose style.

To sum up, your widgets will depend on your chosen theme, but worry not – every theme has options for them.



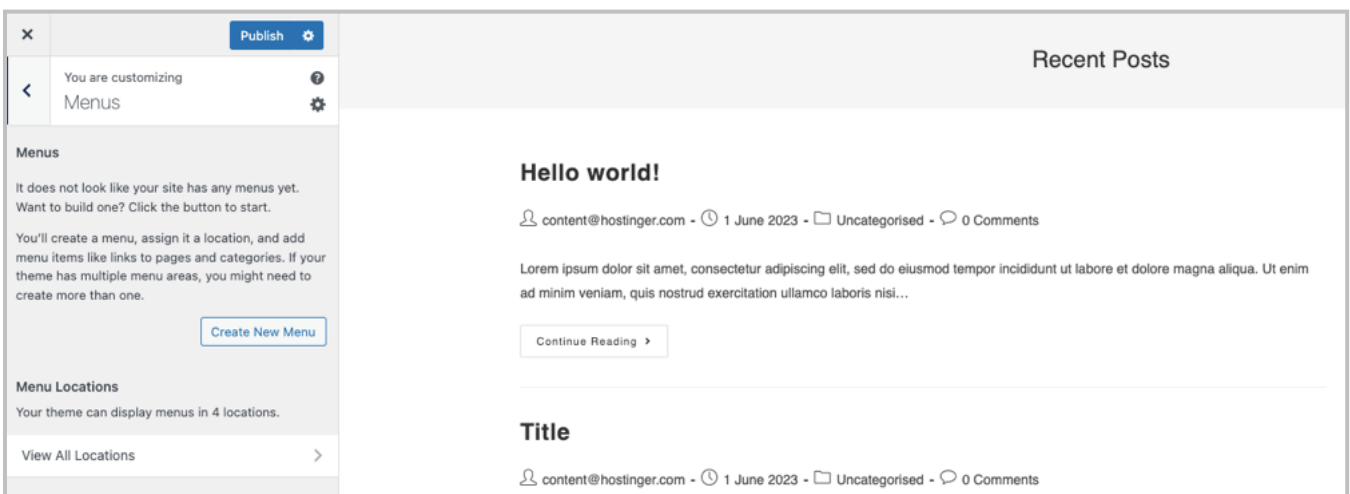
Widgets can be especially useful for highlighting key content since every visitor will see them. You may want to include your email subscription form, social media links, or other opportunities for engagement to build your audience.

3. Improve Navigation With a Custom Menu

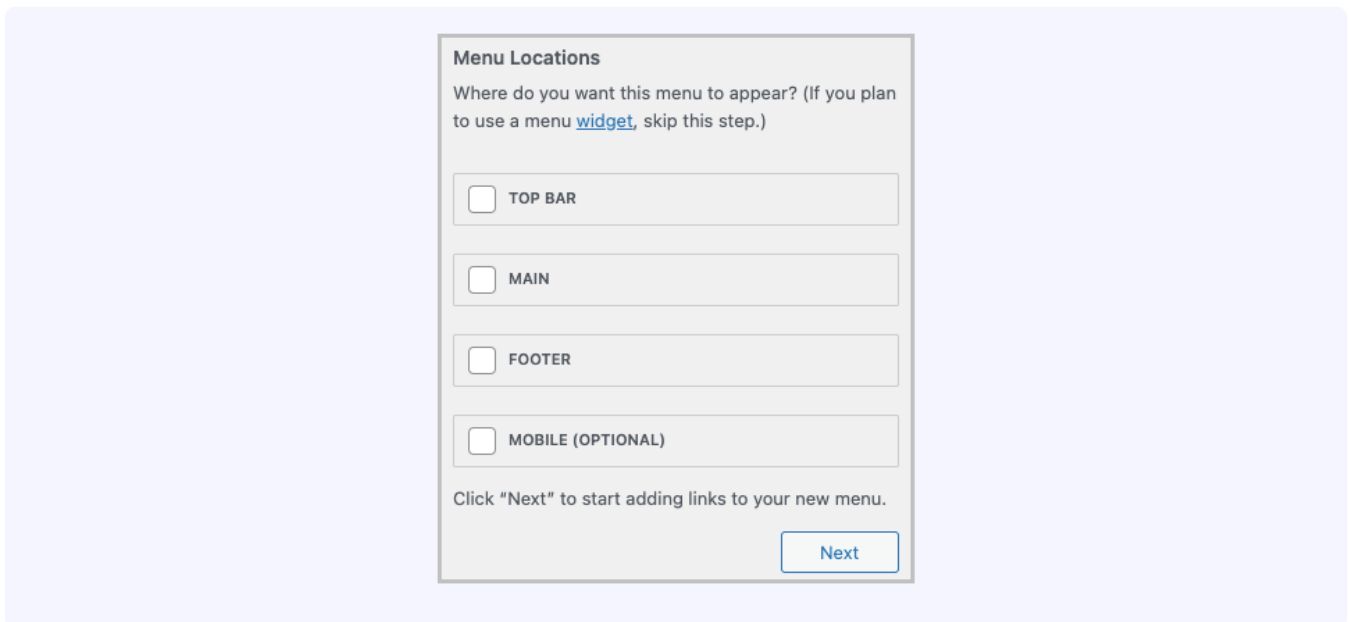
Menus are an essential component of any website because they enable your visitors to easily jump between pages. While many of the features in the Customizer are optional depending on your personal preferences, a navigation menu is a must.

As with widgets, the exact menu locations will depend on your chosen theme.

To start building yours, click on **Menus → Main Menu**

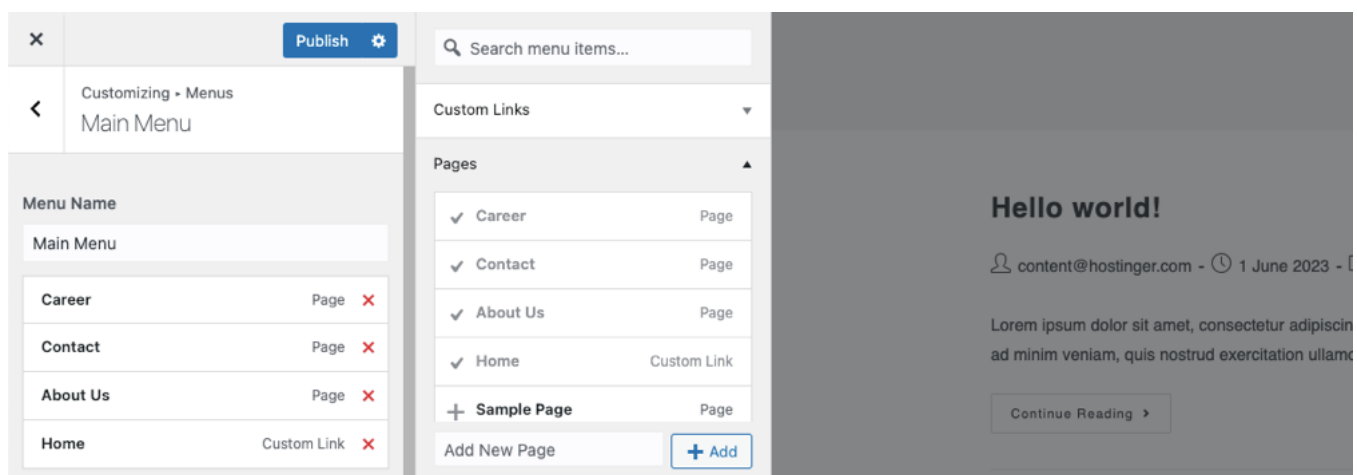


Then, click on **Create New Menu**, add its name and choose appropriate locations, and select **Next** to add links to your menu:



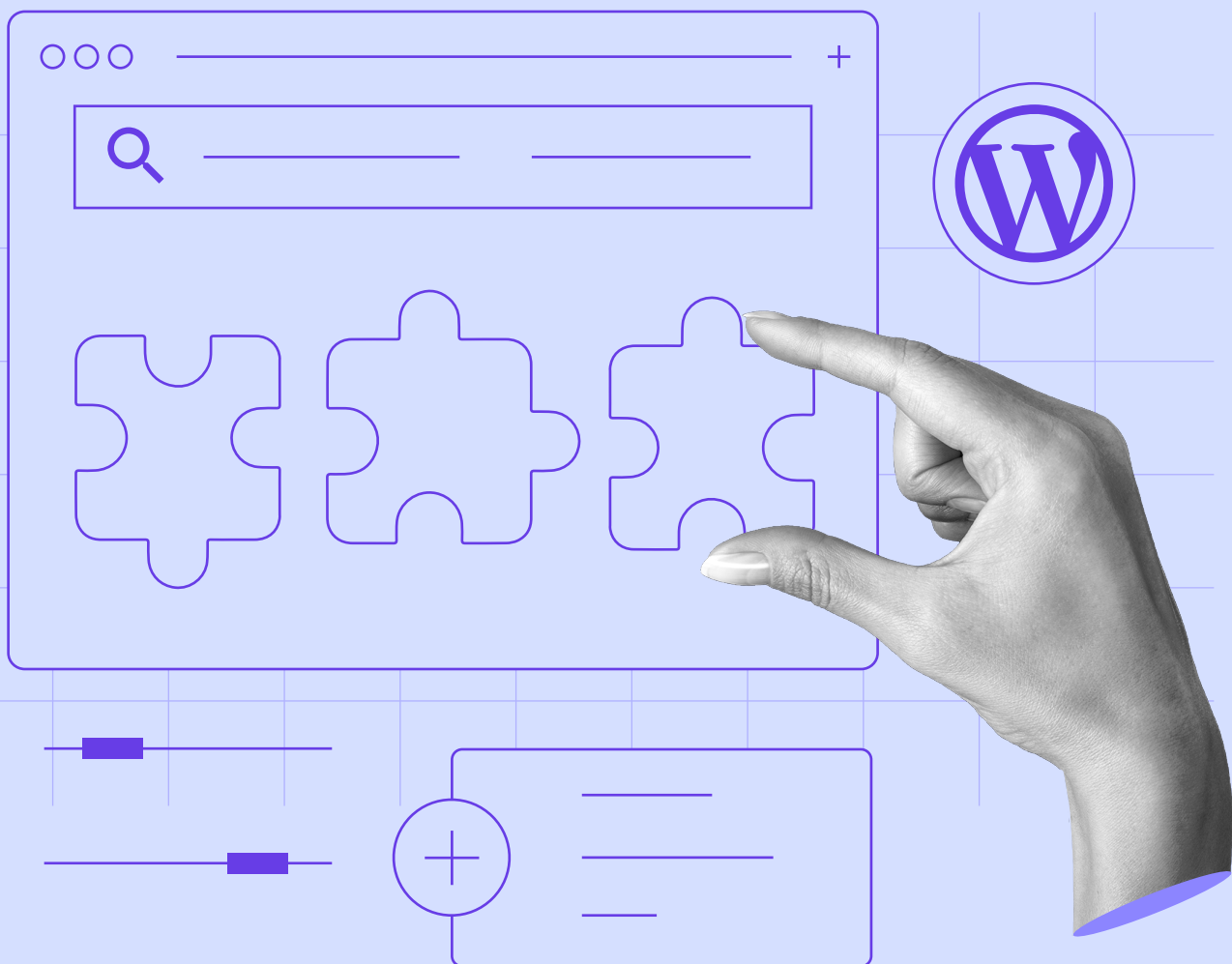
WordPress enables you to add internal pages, posts, categories, tags, and external links to your menus. In most cases, however, you'll only add links to [static pages](#) such as your Homepage, About page, Contact information, and any other essential content.

Right now, there aren't any pages on your website. If there were, you'd see a list of them appear under the **Pages** tab. You can click on the plus sign next to each title to add that link to your menu.



Make sure to click on the **Publish** button when you're done to add your menu to your site. Its location will depend on your theme, but most primary menus appear in the header or the sidebar.

Now that your site's appearance is taken care of, it's time to consider what key functionality you need it to provide. That's where the other WordPress extensions come into play.



8

Using WordPress Plugins

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

The number of WordPress themes you can choose from is massive, but it's nothing compared to how many [plugins](#) are available. There are over 60,000 you can download from WordPress.org right now, and those are just the free ones.

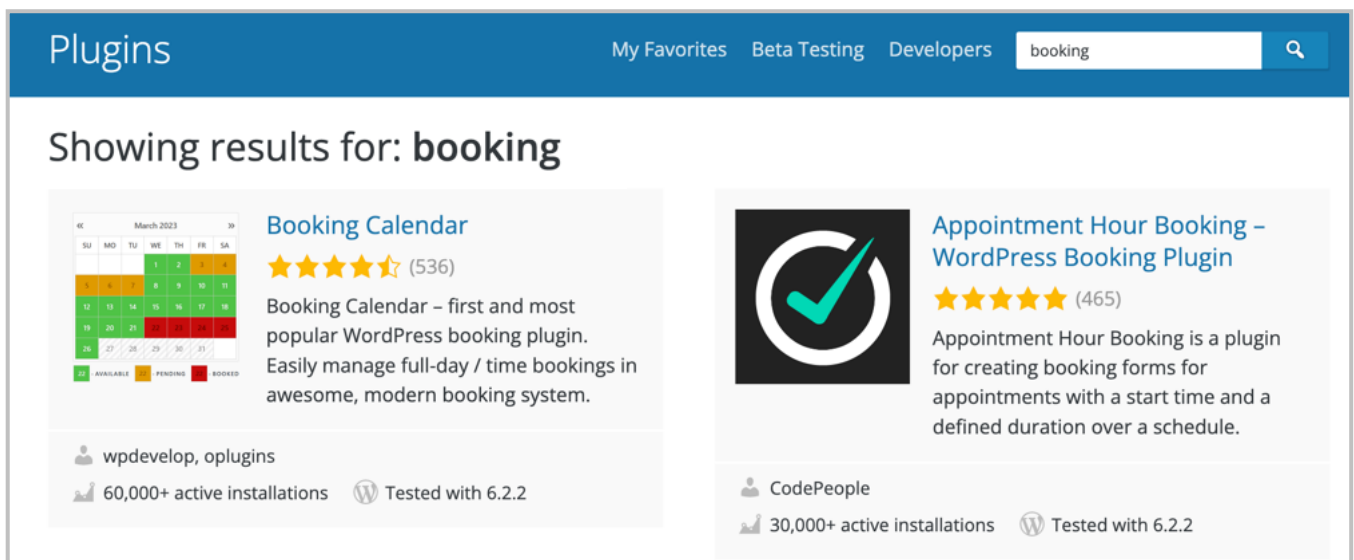
Whether you're using free or premium plugins, it's important to know how to spot quality tools. With the right ones, you can completely overhaul your website's functionality and gain access to any feature you can think of.

In this chapter, we'll talk about how to spot the best plugins and go over some suggestions to get you started. Then we'll show you how to [install WordPress plugins](#), which only takes a minute or two.

Introduction to WordPress Plugins

Usually, you'll turn to plugins when you want to implement a feature on your website that WordPress doesn't include out of the box. Let's say, for example, you want to add appointment booking functionality to your site. You can do so with a plugin.

Simply go to wordpress.org and type **booking** into the search bar.



The screenshot shows the WordPress.org search results for the keyword "booking". The page has a blue header with the "Plugins" logo on the left and navigation links for "My Favorites", "Beta Testing", and "Developers" on the right. A search bar in the top right contains the text "booking" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the header, the main content area is titled "Showing results for: booking". Two plugin cards are displayed side-by-side. The first card is for "Booking Calendar", featuring a calendar icon for March 2023, a 4.5-star rating (536 reviews), and a description: "Booking Calendar – first and most popular WordPress booking plugin. Easily manage full-day / time bookings in awesome, modern booking system." It is developed by "wpdevelop, oplugins" and has "60,000+ active installations" and is "Tested with 6.2.2". The second card is for "Appointment Hour Booking – WordPress Booking Plugin", featuring a checkmark icon, a 5-star rating (465 reviews), and a description: "Appointment Hour Booking is a plugin for creating booking forms for appointments with a start time and a defined duration over a schedule." It is developed by "CodePeople" and has "30,000+ active installations" and is "Tested with 6.2.2".

The same goes if you're looking to set up a forum for your website, or any other kind of feature. With the right plugins, WordPress can become a [social media](#) platform, [an online store](#), and much more.

You can find both free and premium plugins available online. However, keep in mind that premium plugins aren't necessarily better than their free counterparts. In many cases, free tools will do the trick, so we recommend you look into several options before paying for an expensive license.

However, not all WordPress plugins offer the same quality. In some cases, they can even have adverse effects on your website. Outdated tools may lower your site's security, while others can slow it down or conflict with each other and cause errors.

How to Choose Which WordPress Plugins to Use

It's difficult to get the full picture of a plugin's quality before you install it. However, you can follow a few recommendations to gauge whether a plugin is safe and worth your time. Ideally, it should:

- Receive regular updates and be compatible with the latest version of WordPress.
- Provide thorough documentation so you won't have to spend hours trying to configure it.
- Have mostly positive reviews.

It's also wise to take a look at any negative feedback to see if other users have encountered serious issues.

If those criteria look familiar, it's because we discussed a similar method for judging themes a couple of chapters ago. With plugins, however, the stakes tend to be higher. Every WordPress website uses a single active theme, but you can have dozens of plugins working at a time.

Some of the most common plugin types you may want to consider include:

SEO plugins. These tools provide suggestions to improve your site's position on search engine result pages (SERPs). The top options here include **Yoast SEO** and **The SEO Framework**.

Backup plugins. For backing up your website, we recommend using **UpdraftPlus** or **BackWPup**. These plugins can create copies of your site you can use to restore it if it becomes compromised.

Performance optimization plugins. Hostinger WordPress installations come with the LiteSpeed Cache plugin pre-installed, which can help you **improve your site's performance**.

Security plugins. With these tools, you can implement automated malware scans and other measures for preventing cyber attacks. Popular options include **Sucuri** and **Wordfence**.

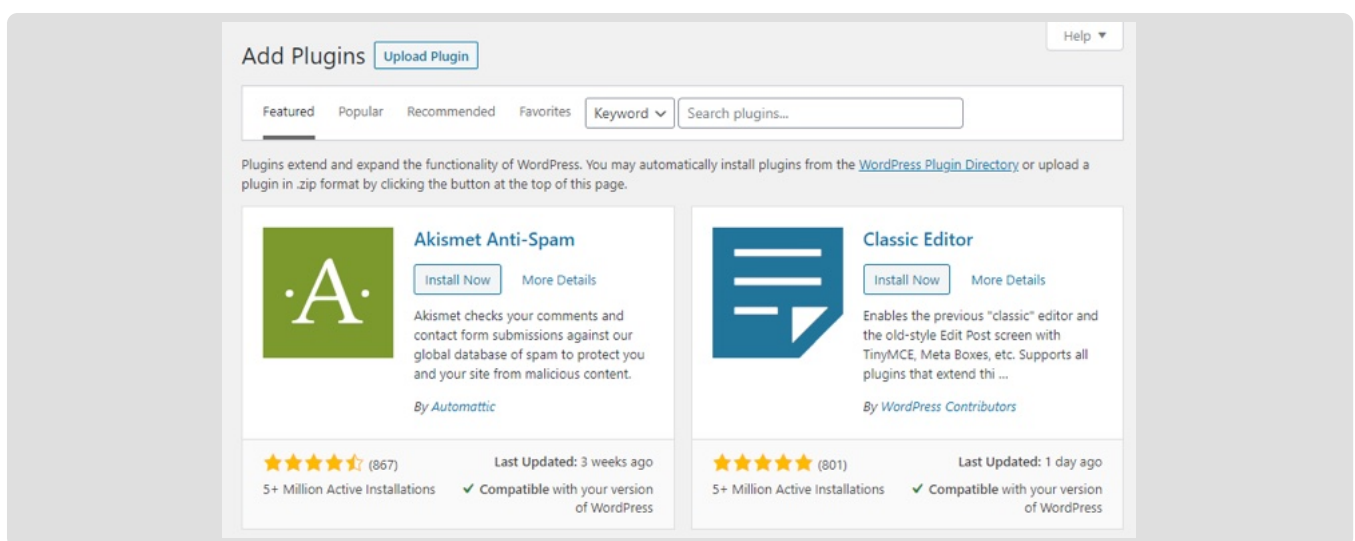
Most websites can benefit from these plugins. However, as always, we recommend you assess your site's needs before making any decisions. There are also many niche tools you may want to consider depending on what type of site you're building.

How to Install a WordPress Plugin (2 Methods)

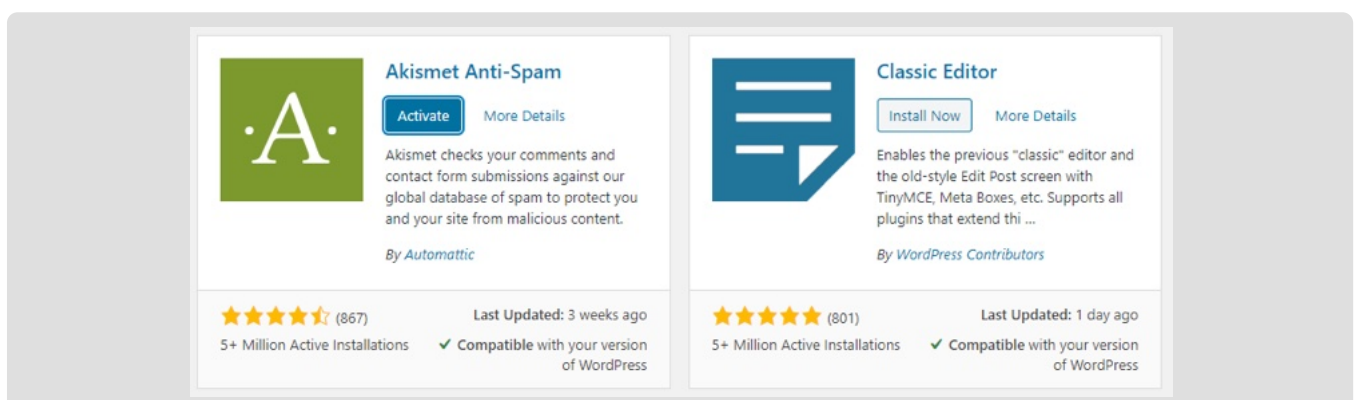
Once you land on a plugin you want to install on your website, there are [two ways you can go about it](#). They should look familiar, as they're basically identical to the methods for installing themes we covered earlier.

Method 1: Install a Free Plugin From Your Dashboard

If the plugin you want to use is available in the WordPress Repository, you can look it up directly from your dashboard. To do so, go to **Plugins** → **Add New** and use the search bar at the top:

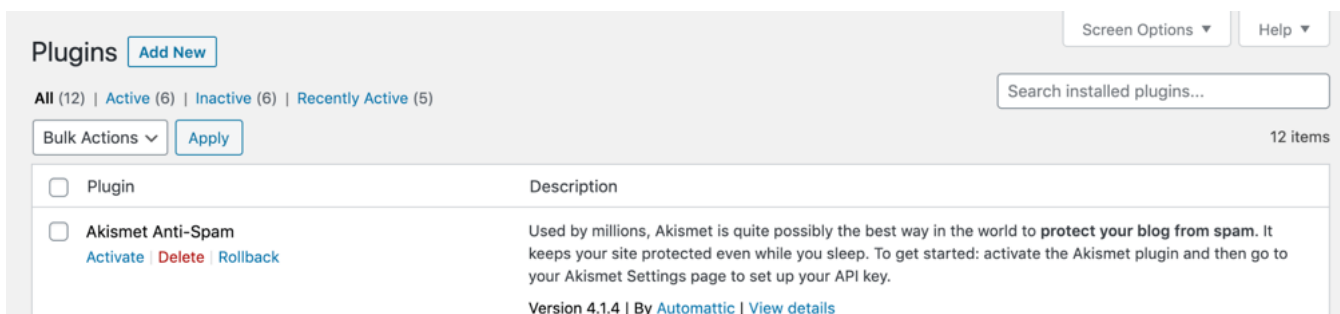


Click on the **Install Now** button next to the name of the plugin you want. WordPress will install it for you, and when it's ready, the button will turn into a blue one that reads **Activate**.



Before you can start using a plugin, you need to activate it by clicking on the button. Just as with themes, you can have inactive plugins installed on your website, in case you don't want to use them right away.

To activate a plugin later, navigate to **Plugins** → **Installed Plugins**.



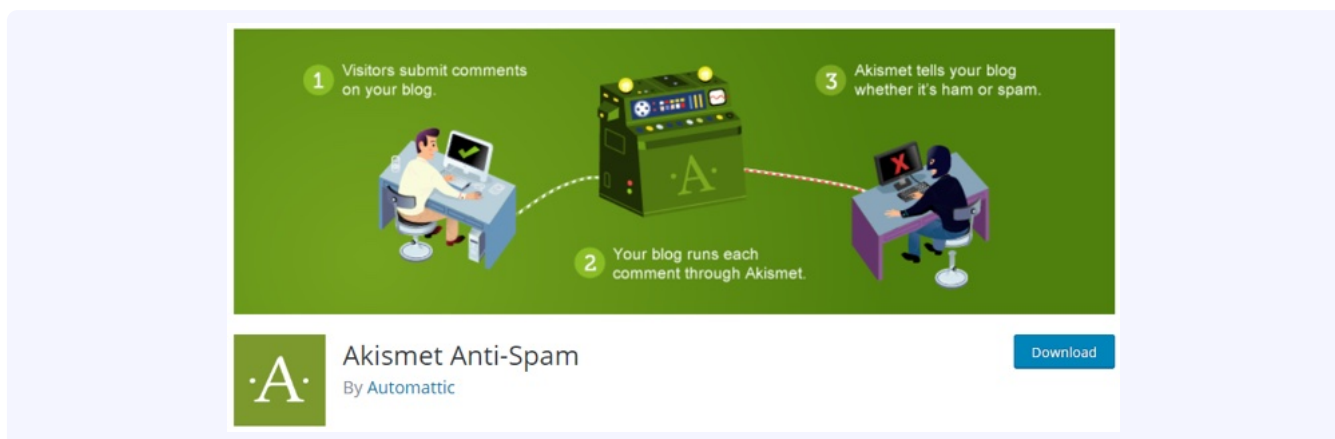
The screenshot shows the WordPress Plugins management interface. At the top, there's a 'Plugins' header with an 'Add New' button. Below it, there are filters for 'All (12)', 'Active (6)', 'Inactive (6)', and 'Recently Active (5)'. A search bar for installed plugins is present. A table lists the plugins, with 'Akismet Anti-Spam' selected. The table has columns for 'Plugin' and 'Description'. The 'Akismet Anti-Spam' entry shows its name, version (4.1.4), author (Automattic), and a 'View details' link. Below the name are links for 'Activate', 'Delete', and 'Rollback'.

Then click on the **Activate** link below its name.

Method 2: Upload Your Plugin's Files

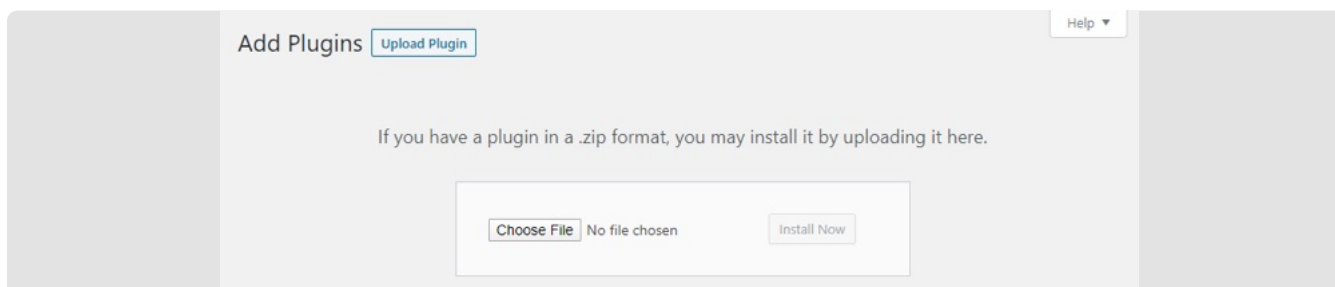
You can also upload plugin files manually. This is the method you'll need to use to add premium plugins to your site. You should have the option to download a **.zip** file once you've paid for your license.

You can also download free plugins from the WordPress Repository.



The advertisement for Akismet Anti-Spam features a three-step process diagram. Step 1: 'Visitors submit comments on your blog.' Step 2: 'Your blog runs each comment through Akismet.' Step 3: 'Akismet tells your blog whether it's ham or spam.' The diagram shows a person at a computer, a server rack with an 'A' logo, and a person in a hoodie at a computer. Below the diagram is the Akismet logo, the text 'Akismet Anti-Spam By Automattic', and a 'Download' button.

Navigate to **Plugins** → **Add New** and click on the **Upload Plugin** button at the top of the page. Then click on **Choose File** locate the **.zip** file for the plugin you're installing. Upload it, then click on the **Install Now** button:




The screenshot shows the 'Add Plugins' section of the WordPress interface. It features an 'Upload Plugin' button. Below the button, there is a text prompt: 'If you have a plugin in a .zip format, you may install it by uploading it here.' At the bottom, there is a file selection area with a 'Choose File' button, the text 'No file chosen', and an 'Install Now' button.

Once the installation process is complete, you can activate the plugin right away or wait and do so later.



9

Publishing Your Site

 [Click here to return to the table of contents](#)

At this point, you probably already have an idea of what pages you want your website to include. All that's left is to build them. Doing so is relatively straightforward when using WordPress, thanks to the [Gutenberg Block Editor](#).

With the Block Editor, you can design professional-looking pages using pre-built modules. You have blocks for paragraphs, images, tables, subheadings, and many more options. With the editor, you can place blocks anywhere you want and customize them to create unique pages.

In this final chapter, we're going to show you how to build your first page in WordPress using the Block Editor.

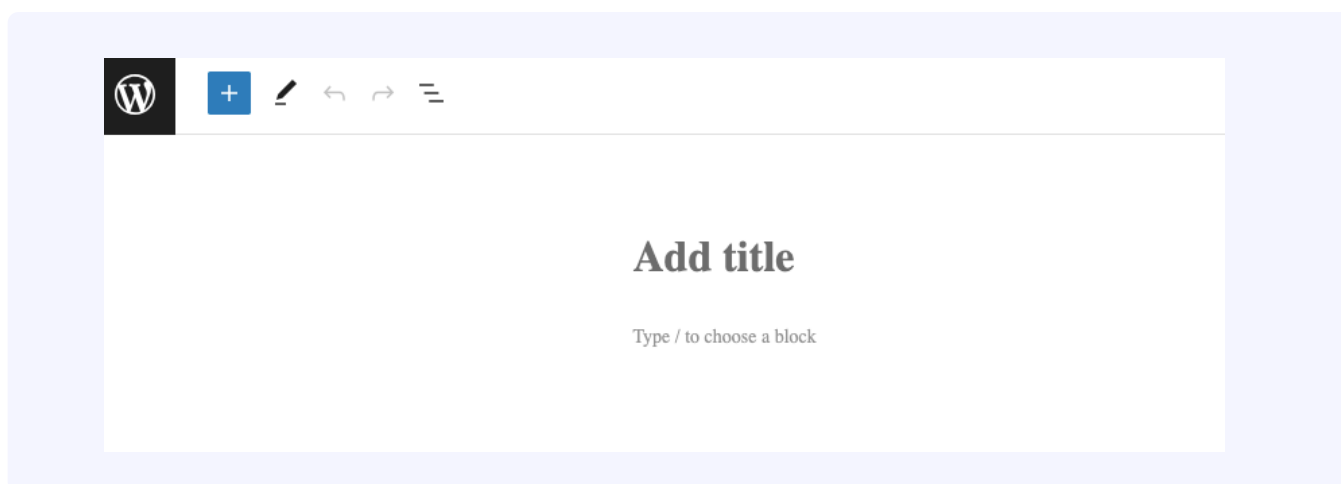
How to Publish Your First Page With WordPress (In 3 Steps)

Creating pages or posts in WordPress is similar from a technical standpoint since you always use the same editor. The primary differences are that [posts have their own taxonomies](#), and pages tend to be more likely to include complex elements.

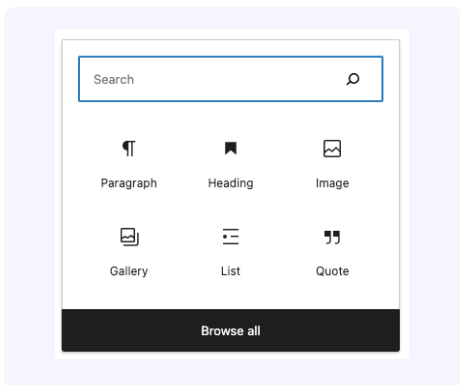
In any case, the first thing you want to do is set up a new page to work on, which you can do by navigating to **Pages** → **Add New** in your dashboard.

1. Add Content Blocks

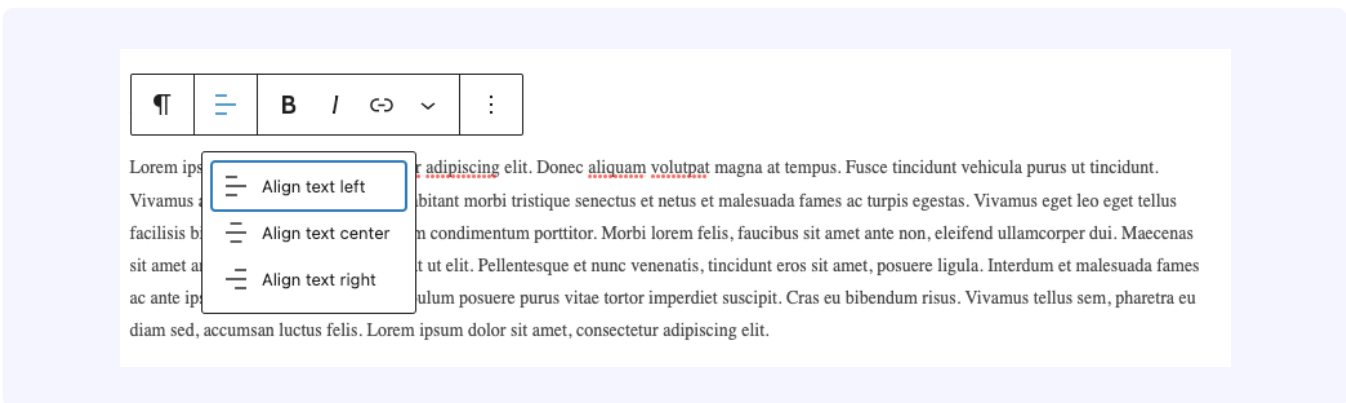
Clicking on **Add New** will launch a blank canvas in the Block Editor. You can use the editor to set up and configure every aspect of your new pages and posts. The first thing you want to do is add a title to your new page.



If you click on the section that reads **Type / to choose a block**, a plus icon (+) will appear. Clicking on it will show you the available blocks you can add to your page:



Blocks are pre-built elements WordPress provides to help you build pages more efficiently. The most basic block is a paragraph, which lets you write and format segments of text. Once you add a block, if you select it, you can access additional customization options that vary from element to element:

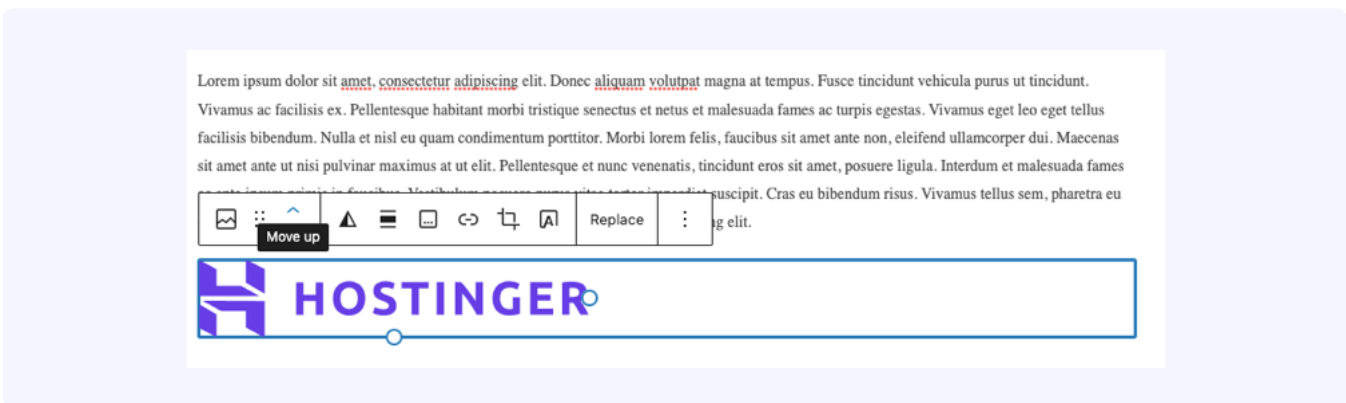


Out of the box, the Block Editor includes a broad range of blocks, such as:

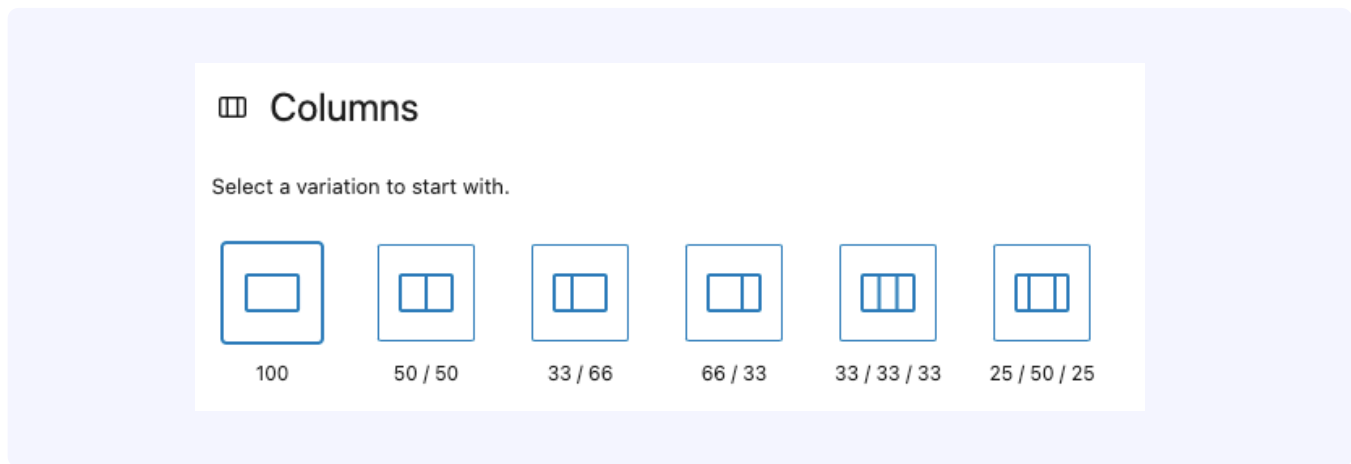
- Headings
- Tables
- Images and galleries
- Lists
- Quotes
- Audio and video files
- Widgets

What’s more, depending on which plugins you use, you may gain access to additional blocks. When you put those elements together, you can build almost any type of page you need.

Once you have multiple blocks laid out, you can rearrange their order by clicking on the arrows within each element:



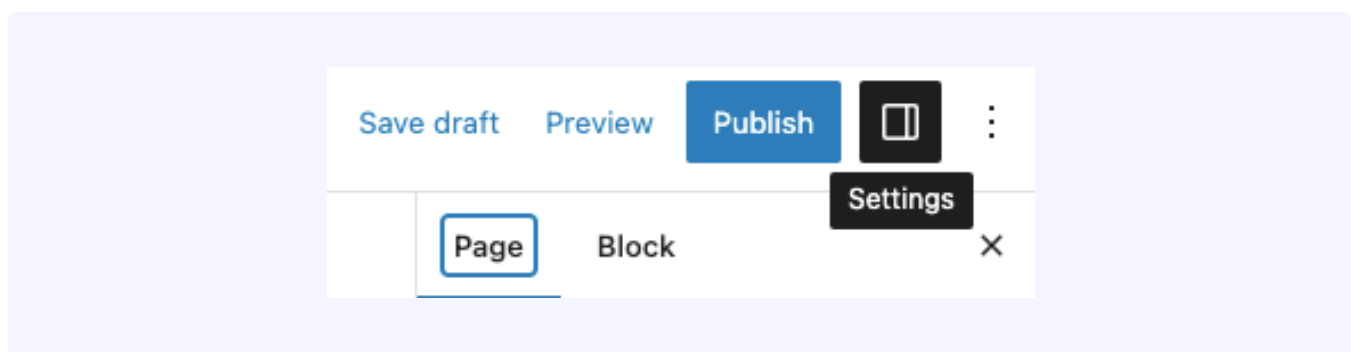
The Block Editor also enables you to use columns to customize your designs even further. You can find the **Columns** block under the **Layout Elements** tab, alongside other options such as page breaks, separators, and spacers.



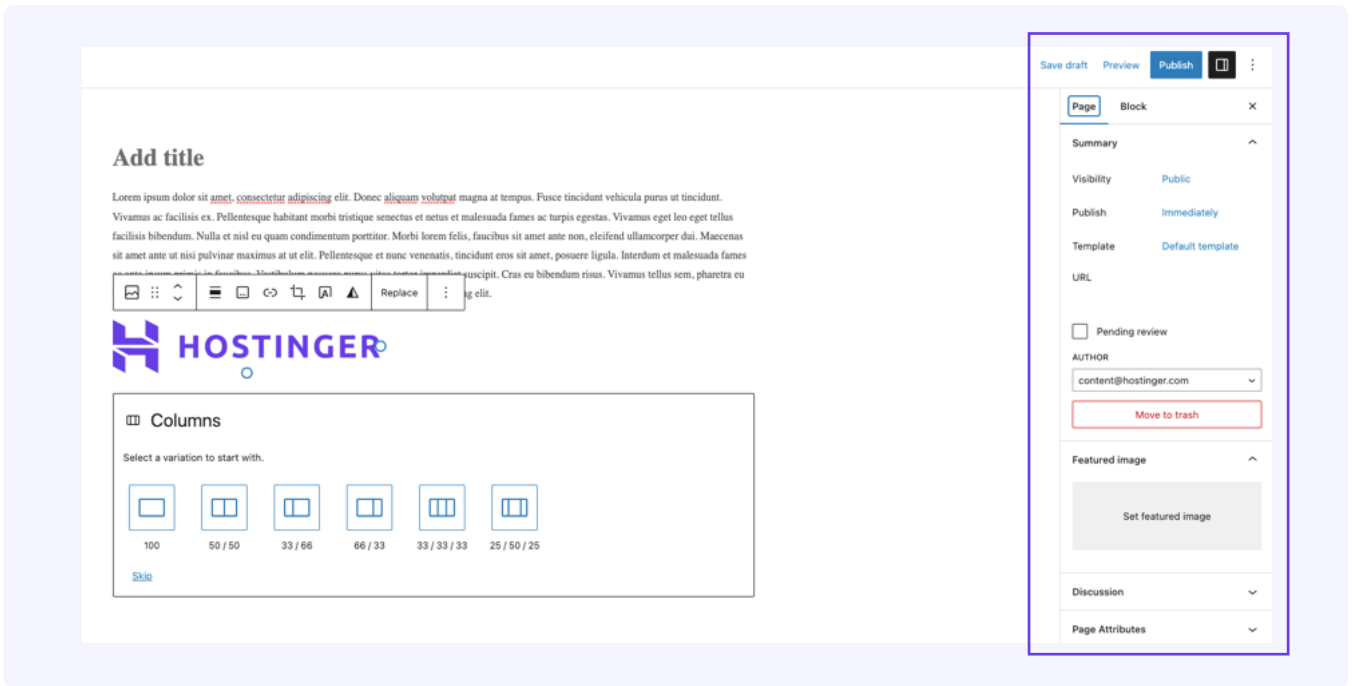
Creating pages boils down to adding the elements you want, arranging them in the right order, and customizing them until you're happy with the results. However, there's a lot more to pages than what meets the eye, which brings us to the next step.

2. Configure Your Document Options

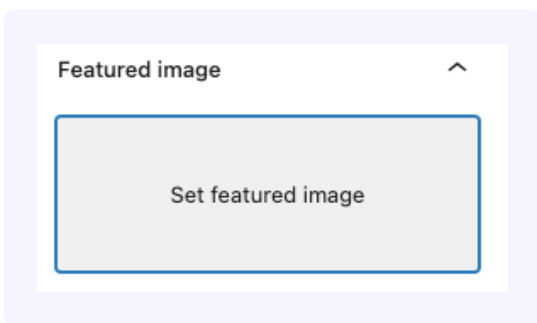
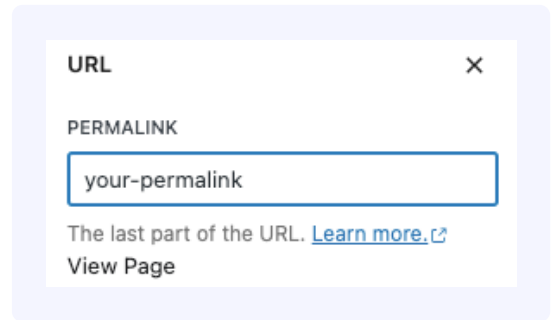
Any time you use the Block Editor, this menu will appear on top:



Selecting the **Settings** option next to **Publish** will open a menu to the right, including all the important document options for your new page. These include its publication status, URL, featured image, discussion settings, and page attributes:



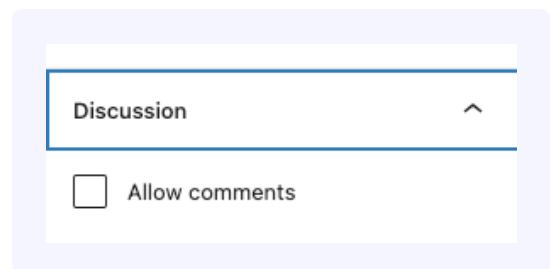
We'll cover the **Summary** tab in the next step, so let's jump right to the URL settings. Here you can customize the URL for the page you're working on by clicking on it and modifying slug, which is at the end of the URL:

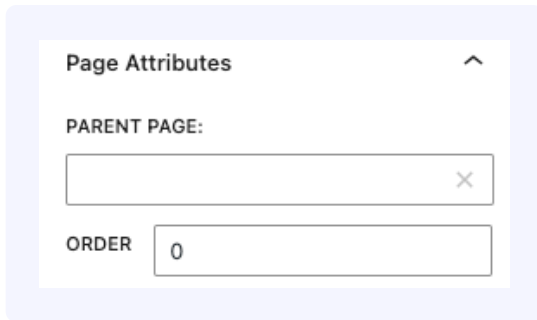


You can also add a **featured image** to display at the top of the page. If you're working on a post, it will also appear in your blog archives, usually as a thumbnail alongside the title:



From the **Discussion** tab, you can choose whether or not to enable comments on this specific page. For pages, you usually want to keep comments disabled, unlike with posts:





Finally, you have the **Page Attributes** section. Here, you can decide what page will be the parent page and in which order the remaining pages will be nested.

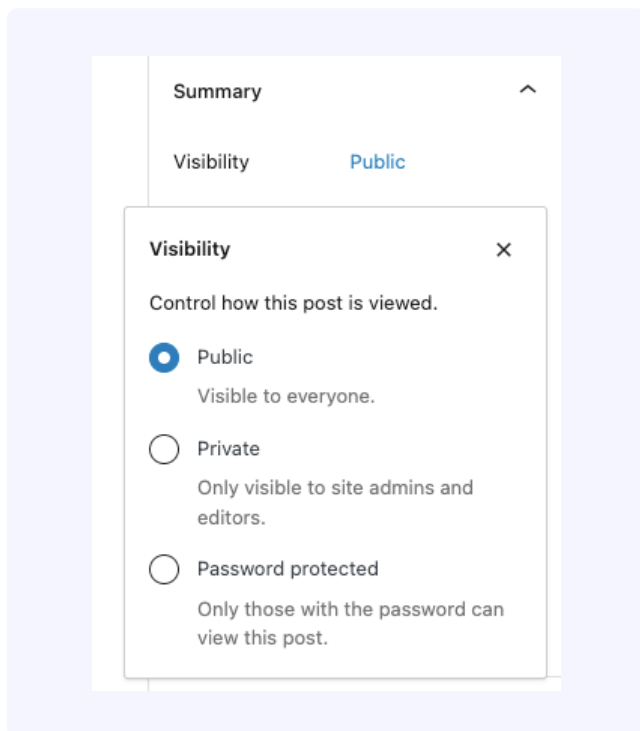


Keep in mind page attributes can vary depending on the theme you use. With some themes, you can also select a template for a page.

Once you've configured all of those settings and your page's content is to your liking, it's time to talk about publishing it.

3. Publish Your Page or Post

If you're still working on a page and you want to save it to finish later, you can click on the **Save Draft** button at the top of the screen:



You can also take advantage of the **Preview** option to check out how your page will look from a visitor's perspective at any time.

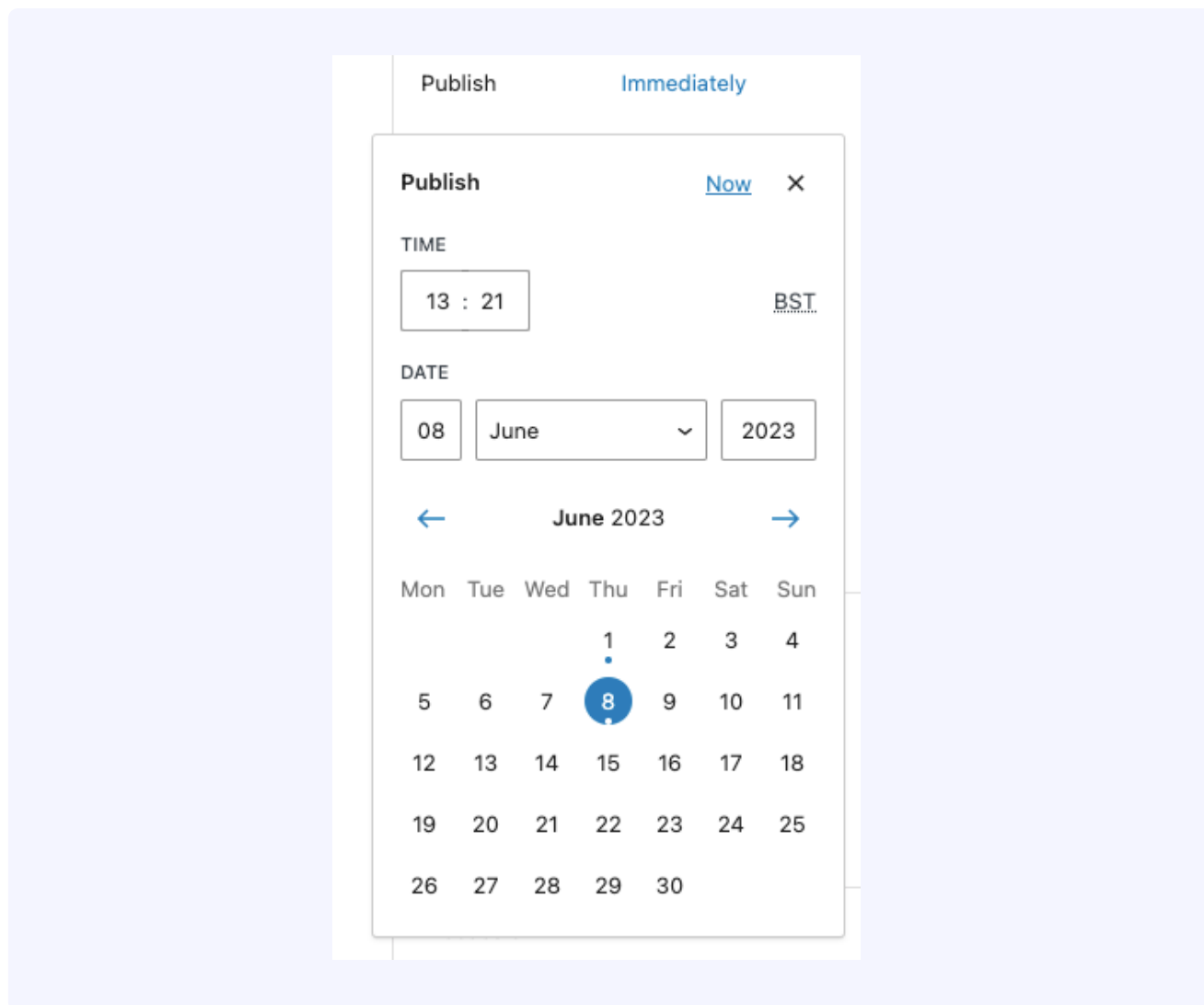
However, if you're ready for it to go live, return to the **Summary** section under **Settings**. Under **Visibility**, you can set pages or posts to be **Public**, **Private**, or **Password Protected**. Anyone can see public pages, whereas private ones are only visible to you and the editors on your site:



In most cases, you want pages to be public.

If you're ready for your page to go live right away, you can click on the **Publish** button once you select your page's visibility. However, you can also schedule publication for a later date by clicking on **Immediately** next to **Publish** in the **Document** menu.

This will open a calendar where you can select the publication date and time:



Once you change the date to a point in the future, the Publish button will change to read Schedule. Click on it and confirm your choices. Your page should go live at the designated time.

Conclusion

The process of launching a website is much easier than most might think, and with WordPress, you can be ready to receive your first online visitors in a matter of hours.

However, configuring and styling WordPress to work precisely the way you want is an ongoing process. If you want your website to endure, you need to update it continuously. That means publishing new content, doing the occasional redesign, keeping up with [maintenance tasks](#), and much more.

For now, however, you've fulfilled your primary goal, which is to get your first site off the ground. Let's recap the journey you just undertook:

1. Selecting a hosting provider and picking the right plan.
2. Registering a domain name.
3. Installing WordPress on your website.
4. Navigating through the WordPress dashboard.
5. Choosing the perfect theme for your website.
6. Customizing your website's appearance.
7. Setting up any plugins you might need.
8. Publishing content on your website.

Once your website is ready, you get to decide what you want to do with it. You can set up corresponding social media accounts, engage with your visitors, sell products, and much more.

Regardless of how you plan to use WordPress, there are thousands of [guides and tutorials](#) you can follow to make the website of your dreams.