

# WORDPRESS

If you're not sure what's right for you, you can always bump up to a paid plan in the future. Here's what each plan offers:

## Free

- Your own WordPress.com address, like **example.wordpress.com**.
- 3 GB of storage space for uploading images.
- 200+ free themes to choose from, with new options added weekly. (No premium themes are included in this plan, but you can buy one at any time.)
- Basic customization: add pages and widgets, upload a custom header or background, integrate with your social accounts, and more.
- Site statistics.
- Staff, volunteer, and community support in the WordPress.com forums.
- This plan provides no video storage and may show ads on your site.

## Premium — \$99 (U.S.)

- A custom .com, .org, .net, .info, .biz, .co, .me, .mobi, or .tv address, like **example.com**.
- Advanced customization: choose custom fonts and colors and modify your CSS.
- 200+ free themes to choose from, with new options added weekly. (No premium themes are included in this plan, but you can buy one at any time.)
- 13 GB of storage space (enough for thousands of images and dozens of videos).
- Site statistics.
- Direct email support from our Happiness Engineers.
- No ads.

## Business — \$299 (U.S.)

- A custom .com, .org, .net, .info, .biz, .co, .me, .mobi, or .tv address, like **example.com**.
- eCommerce: sell individual products or your entire store, using Ecwid or Shopify.
- Advanced customization: choose custom fonts and colors and modify your CSS.
- Access to 200+ free themes and 100+ premium themes, plus the ability to switch premium themes at any time.
- Unlimited space for media (including images, audio, and videos).
- Google Analytics.
- Live chat and direct email support from our Happiness Engineers.
- No ads.

Note that with these plans, you don't upload your own themes or plugins — all this goodness is built right in to WordPress.com. If you need a site that requires a custom theme or specific plugins, a self-hosted WordPress site might be a better fit. Learn the differences between a WordPress.com and a self-hosted WordPress site.

# WORDPRESS

Handy tips for setting up your account

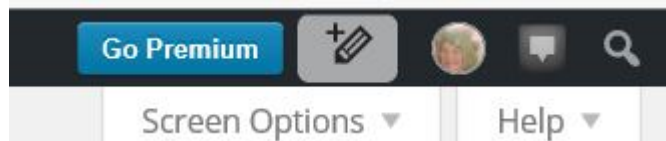
**Use a strong password.** Your security is really important to us. As with all of your online accounts, please use a strong, unique password to log into your WordPress.com account. This post on creating a strong password — and why you should care — is a good primer.

**Choose a web address, title, and tagline.** Your site’s web address is like the address to your online home — it’s where visitors can find you. When you register, you’ll receive your own unique wordpress.com address (such as **example.wordpress.com**). But some people like to nix the “wordpress.com” part. (It’s fine, our feelings aren’t hurt!) If you’d like to do this, you can buy a custom domain name, like **example.com**, as long as it’s available.

You can read more about your web address, and learn how to change it in the future, if necessary. Note that your web address and site title can be different, and if you’d simply like to edit your site title, go to *My Sites*, then go to **Settings** → **General**. Here, you can also update your tagline, and this post offers tips on nailing the perfect phrase.

We’ve asked a number of users how they selected their blog names, from to. They give great advice, while this post on blog name inspiration offers more ideas.

**Set up your public profile.** Updating your public profile isn’t mandatory, as some people prefer to blog anonymously. But do fill in these details if you’d like to establish your identity. To edit your public profile, click your Gravatar in the top right to head to *Me* → *My Profile*.



When you comment on sites across WordPress.com, this is the information associated with your account.

Be sure to also upload a Gravatar, which is the thumbnail that appears next to the comments you make across WordPress.com. It’s the primary image that people will associate with you.

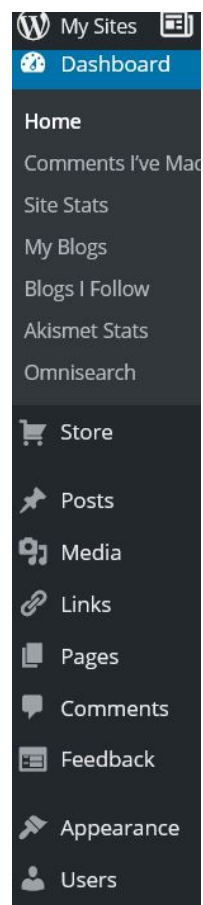
If you’ve updated these general settings, you’ve covered the basics. (Virtual) high five!

Get comfy: learn your way around WordPress.com.

1. **Visit the Reader:** It’s the first place to look, the WordPress community hub. Check out the lay of the blogosphere, and find some great new reads.



2. **Hit the dashboard:** The dashboard is the guts of your blog, where you do everything from customizing the way it looks, to uploading media to share, to editing the posts and pages you’ve written. Click on **My Sites** to get to your dashboard.
3. **Explore the menus:** On the left side of your WordPress.com dashboard are a bunch of links that take you to the parts of your dashboard that control how you blog looks and acts. Click around a little bit and explore — you won’t break anything.



# WORDPRESS

---

Get personality: pick a theme to define the look and feel of your blog.

1. **Check out the available themes:** A theme is a layout and visual look for your blog. WordPress.com has over 350 to choose from, and you can customize any of them. On your dashboard, head to **My Sites → Themes** to browse the looks on offer. Preview how a theme will look by clicking **Try & Customize**. If you like what you see, click **Activate**; if you don't, keep on browsing. For purposes of this class, we will choose the Theme called **Twenty Fifteen**.

---

Get configured: customize your theme to make your blog your own.

Now that you have a basic site, and you've chosen a look and feel for your blog, you might want to start digging deeper into customizing it to suit your unique needs:

1. **Upload a custom header:** Most themes let you tweak the look of the header (the image running across the top of your blog) and the background (the color or pattern behind the main text area). Go to **My Sites → WP Admin → Appearance → Customize → Header** to upload your custom header.

Not sure where to get good images? Here's a list of places you can get good quality images for free:

- Pexels.com
- Flickr CC
- Wikimedia Commons
- The Stocks
- Unsplash
- Gratisography
- Stock Up
- Designers Pics

2. **Add more content with widgets:** Widgets are easy ways of getting interesting or useful text, images, or navigation elements into the sidebars of your blog (the parts other than your posts). To add and configure widgets, go to **My Sites → WP Admin → Appearance → Widgets**.

1. Widgets are some of the handiest features on WordPress.com. They are free built-in tools, accessible from your dashboard, that allow you to add custom touches to your sidebar or footer. You can display important information, direct readers to content you want them to see, and reinforce your site's design. With widgets, you can add a bit of flair and personalize your site with a few clicks.

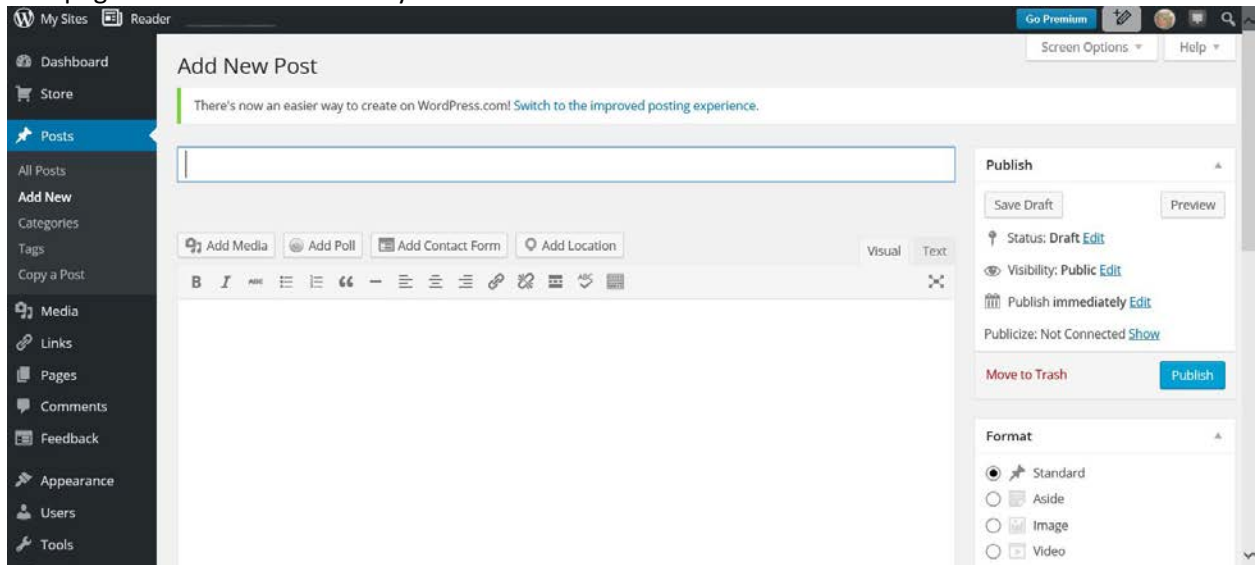
# WORDPRESS

2. You can add a variety of widgets from the Customizer: go to **My Sites**, then click on **Customize** next to **Themes**, which will open up the Customizer and a left-side panel of selections.
3. **Personalize your blog with custom fonts and colors:** Custom Design, which is part of the WordPress.com Premium plan, allows you to change the colors and fonts on your blog. To start experimenting with colors, go to **My Sites → Customize → Colors & Backgrounds**. To try out some new fonts, go to **My Sites → Customize → Fonts**.

---

Get published: write a post, write a page, and add some menus to help visitors get around.

1. **Decide if you want to write a post or a page:** A post is an update, and as you add each new one, the others will be pushed down the stack. A page is a piece of content you want to stick around, and are likely to link to from your blog's navigation — the most common example is an “About me” page that tells readers who you are.



2. **Publish a post:** Head to **My Sites → Posts → Add New**. Give your masterwork a title, throw down some words, and click **Publish**. Voilà!
3. **Publish a page:** Mosey on over to **My Sites → Pages → Add New** in your dashboard. The rest is almost identical to posting, so you've got this in the bag.
4. **Create a menu:** Help readers find all your great posts and pages with navigation that gets them where you want them to go. You can create new menus with pages, blog categories, or your own custom links. Go to **My Sites → Appearance → Menus** to get started.

# WORDPRESS

Get connected: become part of the community and grow your readership.

1. **Tag your posts:** Tagging your posts makes it a lot easier for other people to find them, both on your blog and through the magic of the WordPress.com Reader, which allows people to search for content by topic.
2. **Find other blogs to read:** The Reader lets you find content you're interested in by subject, giving you not only an excellent way to reach out and like, comment, reblog, or follow bloggers whose work interests you, but also helps inspire you when you're stuck for ideas.
3. **Show your favorites some love:** Build up a network of contacts and connections on WordPress.com by giving feedback via "likes" and comments. Everyone loves to be noticed, and taking the time to show your appreciation builds your network, ultimately bringing more people to *your* blog.
4. **Use social networks to extend your reach:** If you have a Twitter or Facebook account, announce new posts to your networks there to spread the word. WordPress.com has built-in tools to automate that process, so you don't need to individually share every post. Visit **My Sites** → **Sharing** to configure these features.