WORDPRESS 101

GETTING STARTED VISUALLY

INTRO TO WORDPRESS
BASIC WORDPRESS FEATURES
MANAGING THEMES
INTRODUCTION TO PLUGINS & WIDGETS
SUGGESTED PLUGINS

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WordPress 101: Getting Started Visually

Learn to get started using WordPress with this easy-to-follow guide

First published: March 2012

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<u>Basics</u>

What is WordPress?

WordPress is an opensource tool used to create dynamic websites based off of themes. Originally WordPress was blogging software but since its creation a lot has changed. Today it is used by everyone from web developers to average users, and has no real limit as to what can be done with a bit of learning.

Installation is easy if you have an installer such as Fantastico De Luxe and can be done in under a minute.
WordPress has touted itself as having a "5-minute" install, and it's true. Even manually installing a novice can install it with very little effort.

What type of site can be build using WordPress?

WordPress was originally developed as a blogging platform in 2003. However, the community quickdiscovered that WordPress could be used to create just about any type of website you can imagine. With thousands of themes available WordPress can be used to meet other needs:

A blog:
This is a type of journal published online for everyone to see, also being able to leave comments and discuss posted content.

Informational:
WordPress makes it easy to display information about a specific product, instructions, and just about an other static information you can think of.

Business Website:
If you are wanting to build your brand online, promote your business, sell an eBook, or just setup a few pages about your company, WordPress may be something to consider.

Review Website:
Sharing opinions about products your have used, the best of certain types of products, or even restaurant reviews can be done using the right plugin.

Personal Website:
WordPress allows you to setup a family website, show others your portfolio, or promote yourself online easily.

Photo Gallery:
There are many different plugins that will allow you to convert your photos into an online gallery to share with your friends.

These are just a few examples of what you are able to do with WordPress, use your imagination and there will be no limit to what can be done.

The structure of a WordPress site

WordPress refers to certain portions of the website by specific terms.
When looking further into WordPress, especially when searching for and using plugins, it will be important to understand the terms used to identify various parts of the website.

Each template may be structured a bit differently. If you use a different template other than the default, your page may look different then the example below:
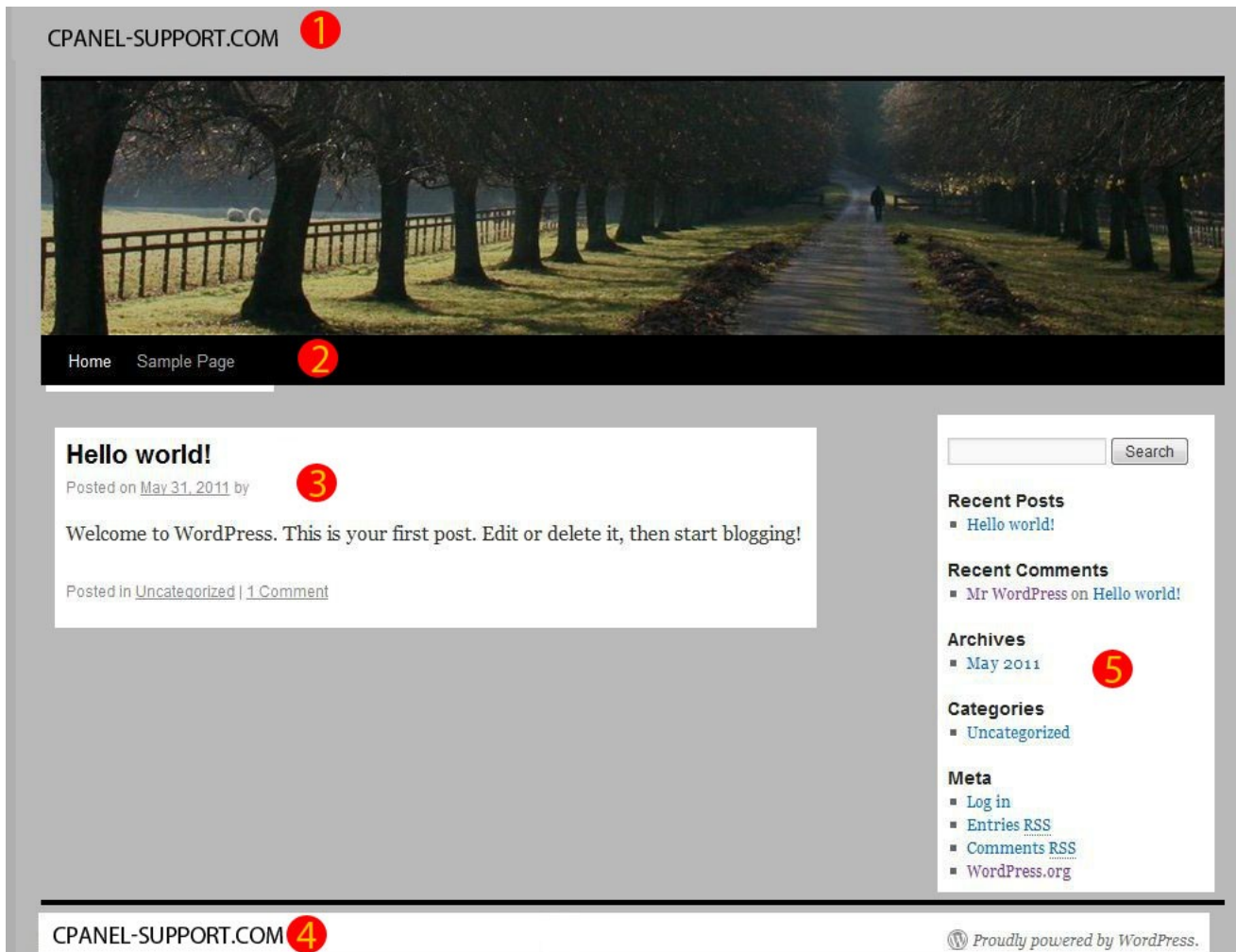
1. This is called the **"header"** and will display the title of your website as well as the image banner directly below the site URL.
2. The **"menu bar"** will contain links to pages you have created and may be different on each theme.
3. This is a **"post"** and allows comments to be made by visitors.
4. The right column is called a s**idebar**. **Widgets** will be displayed here.
5. This is the footer and will be located on the bottom of each page you decide to add.

Logging into the dashboard

Once you have installed WordPress, you will be able to login to the admin section of WordPress called "the dashboard" where you can begin to build your website.
In order to do this, you will need some specific information that would have been entered when installing WordPress.

WordPress Installation URL
If you installed WordPress on the root of your domain, the URL to access WordPress would be: http://yourdomain.com/wp-admin

WordPress Username
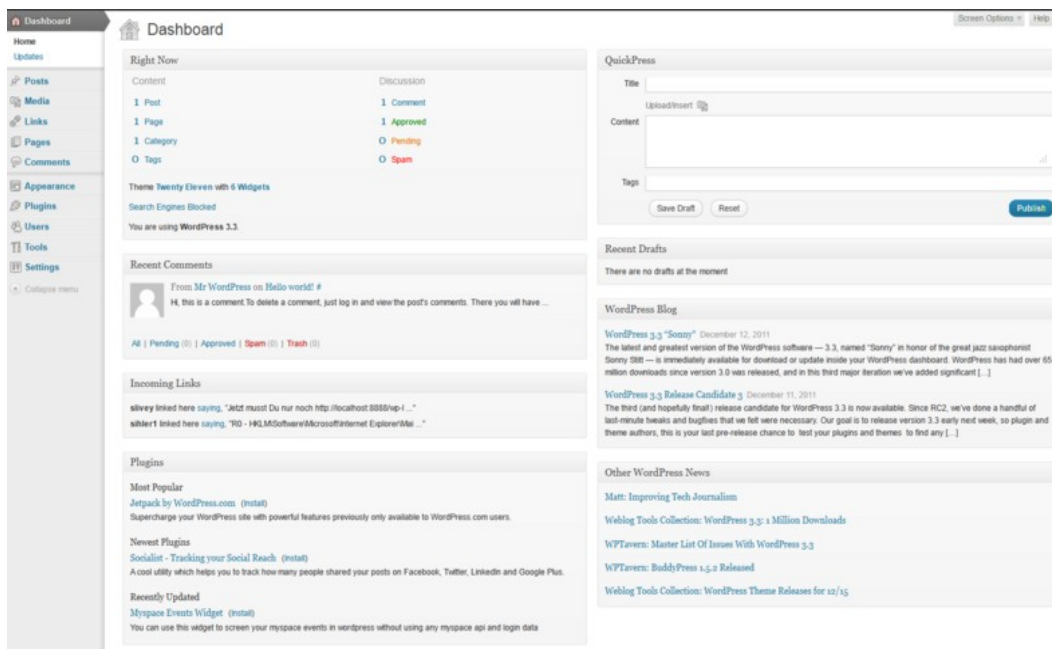This is the user that you specified when first installing

WordPress Password
The password goes along with the username that was entered during the initial setup.

When you first reach the WordPress login, it should appear similar to the screenshot below:

After you login to the dashboard successfully you will see the dashboard shown below:

Creating your first post

Now that you are logged in, you can begin adding content. Below is information on adding a blog post.
A post is a message that you are displaying in the body of your website. Blog posts are displayed in order with the most recent post at the top.
To get started, click "Posts" on the left side menu bar. Once clicked, this will display a list of posts that you have on the site currently.
You will see there is already one post on your website titled, "**Hello World!**".
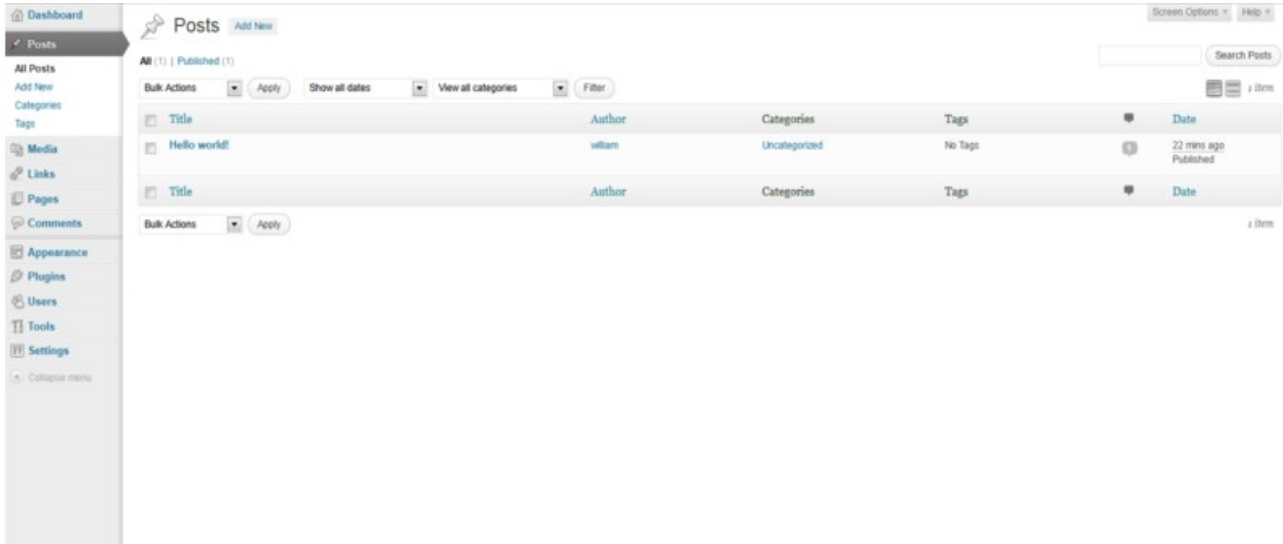
Under posts, click "**Add New**" to add your own post:
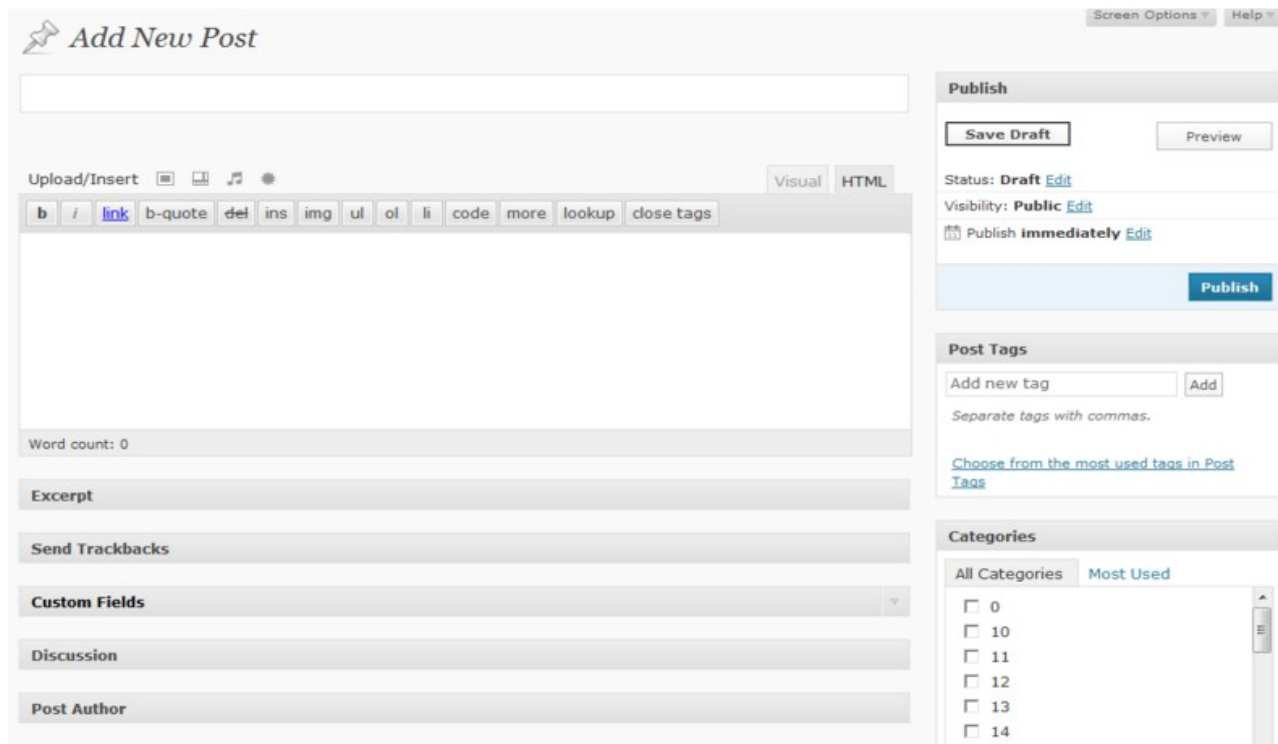
This will load the an editor, which is where you can create your own post. It functions very much like a word processor. You can add formatting to your posts by using the buttons above the text entry field.
You are allowed format text using bold, underline, highlight, and much more.
Once you are done writing, click "Publish" and you are finished. It will appear on your website.

Adding pages to your website

A WordPress page will show up in your menu bar for your website visitors to access by clicking.
If you have a business website you may have pages for about us, contact us, or location. Pages are always available in your menu bar and are not stored in chronological order.

First, you will need to login to your WordPress Dashboard and click on the link titled "Pages" on the left menu.
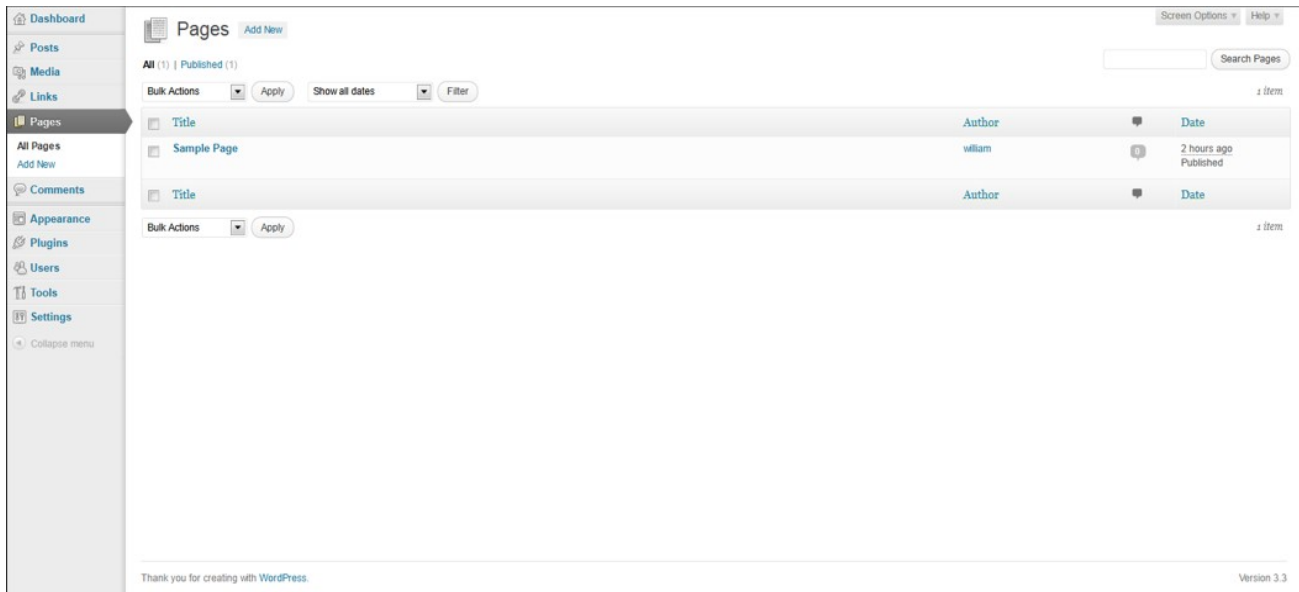
Click "add new" on the sub menu that opens once you click on "pages"

A new window will open. The window to create a new page is very similar to the page used for creating a new post. Once you have created your new page, clicking "Publish" on the right hand side of the page will publish it to your live website.

Once the page is published, you can visit the website and the new page is now listed in the menu bar. You can create as many pages your website needs, there is no limit on the number you can have.

Basic WordPress Features Explained

How to change your Timezone

You will need to login to your WordPress Dashboard in order to modify the timezone. Once you are logged into the dashboard, on the left menu pane, select "Settings" and then "General Settings".
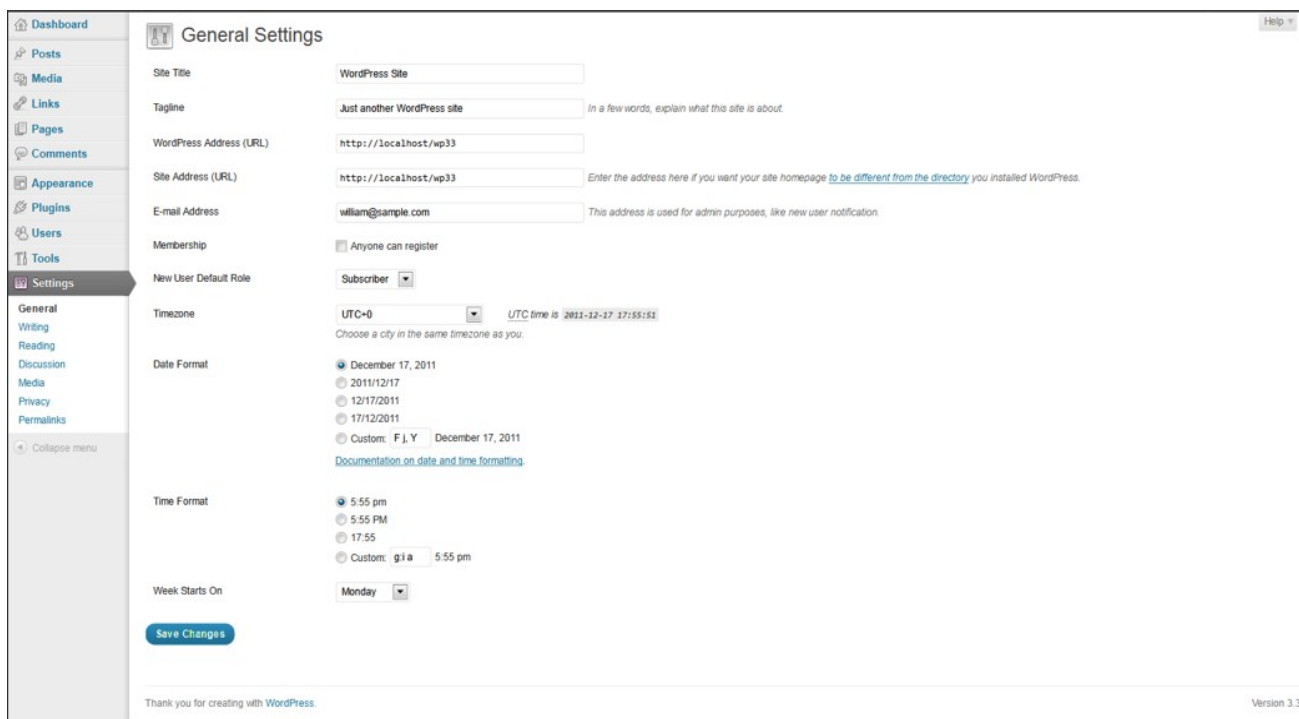
Once on the General Settings screen, you will find an option labeled, "Timezone".
Choose your city or one in the same timezone from the drop down list. If you know what your time zone is, you can simply choose your time zone.
Click "**Save changes**" and you are all done. The changes are instant and will reflect on your future pages/posts.

Changing your WordPress password in the dashboard

In WordPress, there is more than one way to set your password. In normal circumstances, you can do it through the WordPress interface. If you forget your password, WordPress has a built in recovery mechanism that uses email.

To change your password in the dashboard first login, then click on the "Users" option on the left menu.

Click on your username in the list to edit

In the Edit User screen, scroll down to the New Password section and type in a new password in the two boxes provided. The strength box will show how good (strong) your password is.

Click the "UPDATE PROFILE" button to complete the change.

Your new password takes effect immediately.

If you have forgotten your login password, but know your username and the email account in your profile you can use the "lost password" feature of WordPress.

Go to your WordPress Login page
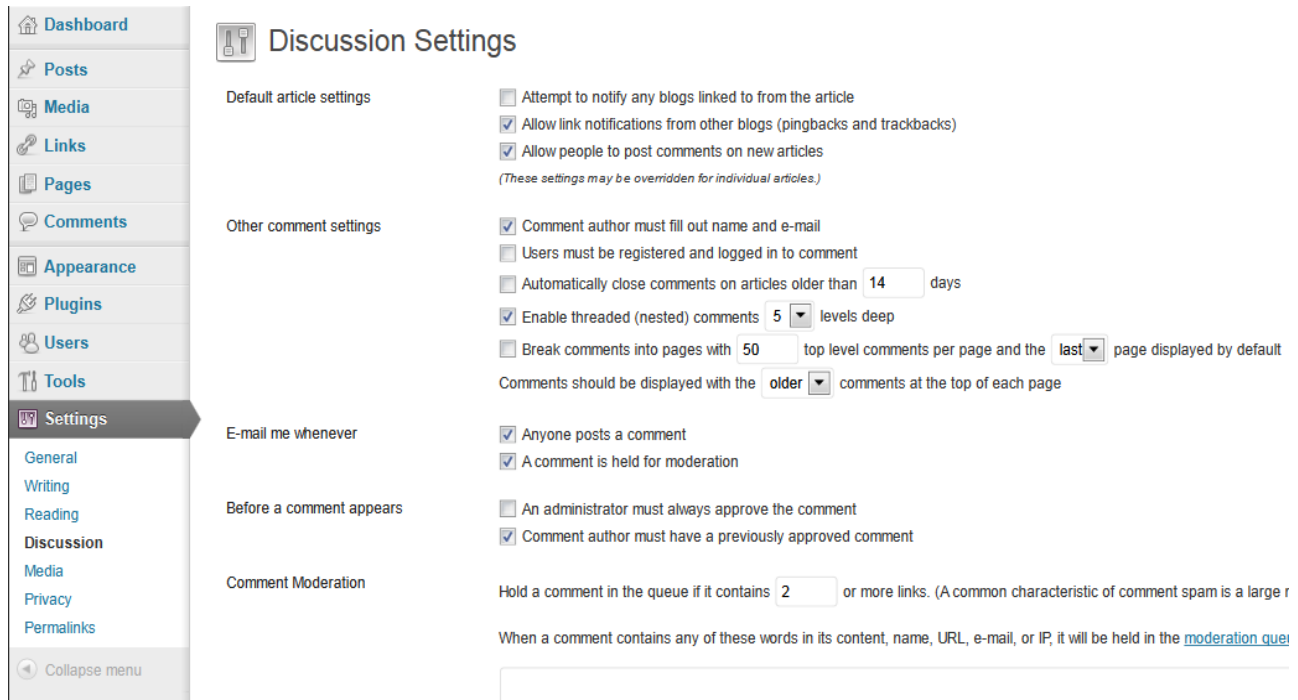
Click on lost password

You will be taken to a page to put in some details. Enter your user name and the email address on file for that account.

Wait as your new password is emailed to you.

Once you get your new password, login and change it to something you can remember on your profile page.

Managing comments made on your blog posts & pages

To set up how comments are managed on your website you will need to login to your WordPress Dashboard.
Once you have logged into your dashboard click on "**Settings**" in the left menu pane. then click "**Discussion**" to bring up the window to manage your comments.

Default article settings
This is where you decide if comments are allowed on new posts on your website.
Other comment settings
The most important options in this section are deciding if you want your visitors to register in order to make a comment. While this will increase the chances of relevant comments, it also may decrease the number of comments on your website.
E-mail me whenever
This is where you can decide to be notified when a new comment is posted.
Before a comment appears
If you would llike to approve comments before they are posted, make sure this box be checked.
Comment moderation
To help fight spam, you can add a filter to block messages that contain an excessive number of links.
Comment blacklist
If you notice alot of Spam containing a specific pattern such as the same IP address or the same content you can choose to block those posts.
Avatars
If a visitor has an avatar (a picture that appears next to their name), you can have it set so that they are allowed to display it on your website.
You can also change the default avatar.

Once you are done making changes to your settings, click on Save Changes.

If you receive a comment that you do not wish to be shown, you can "unapprove" it or send the comment to the trash to remove them from your website completely.

To delete or change any comment, login to your Dashboard and click on the "Comments" link on the left menu pane. You will see the following page:
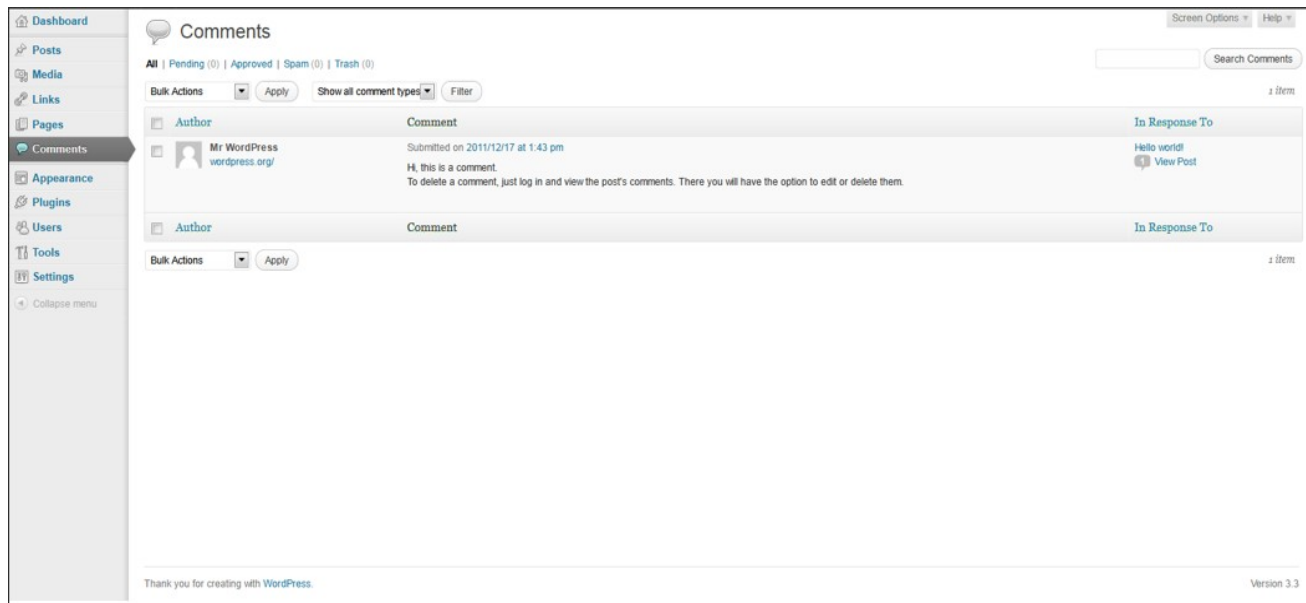
What are permalinks and how are they setup?

Permalinks are URLs that point to your individual posts and pages. Creating permanent links to your content can make it easier to share links and help with Search Engine Optimization (SEO).
There are several options to create the structure such as date, post number, or a customized format.

The default settings in WordPress, create links to new blog posts so your URL something similar to this: http://youdomain.com/?p=123.
You can change the URL that is automatically generated by modifying your settings in the Permalinks section of the WordPress dashboard.

To change how WordPress generates links, first you will need to log into your Dashboard.
Once logged in, under the "**settings**" in the left menu select "**Permalinks**."
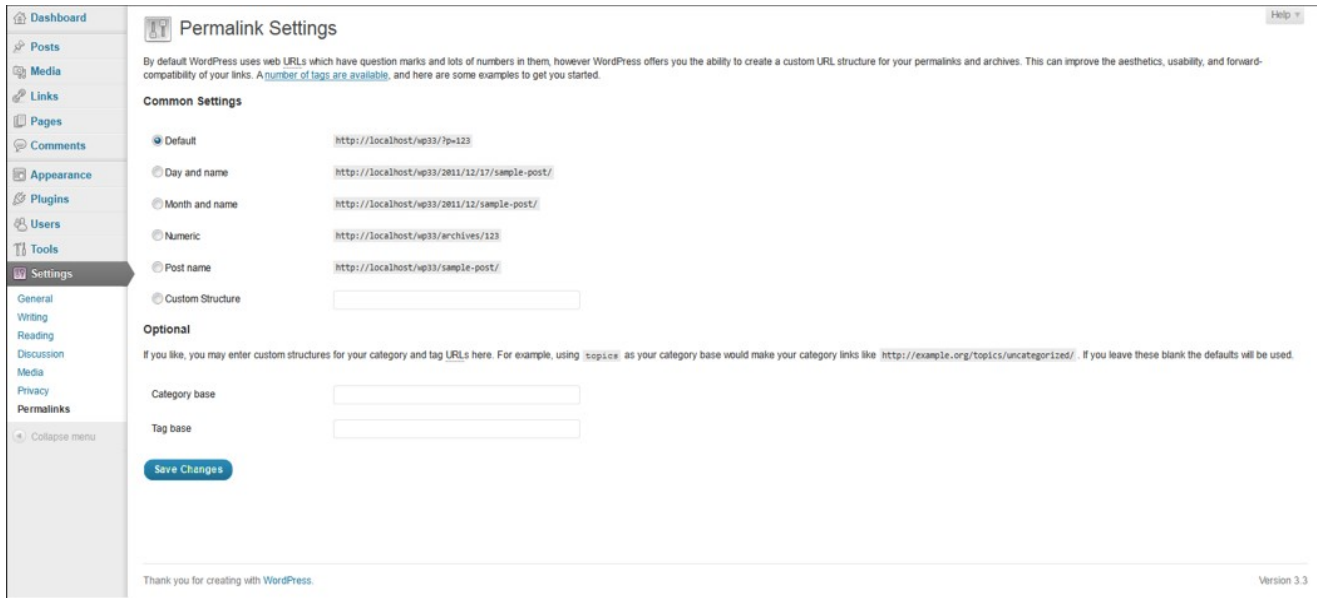
On the page above, you will notice the following options to change your link structure:

Default
http://yourdomain.com/?p=123
Day and Name
http://yourdomain.com/2011/04/05/sample-post/
Month and Name
http://yourdomain.com/2011/04/sample-post/
Numeric
http://yourdomain.com/archives/123
Custom Structure
This allows you to set up your URLs with your own structure, such as using the Topics as your category base.

Once you have selected the specific format you want, click "**Save Changes**."
There are rare conflicts with Permalinks and plugins, so if you do change the format from the default setting you may want to verify that all your plugins are still functioning correctly.

<u>Managing Themes</u>

What exactly is a theme?

WordPress themes control the appearance of your website. This includes not only color, but also fonts, layouts, columns, and much more. When you first install WordPress, it comes with the default theme called "Twenty Eleven". There are all types of themes available for free through the dashboard and other external sites for download.

Many themes are geared towards a specific type of businesses or personal websites, and you can search through the available themes in your dashboard.

Some themes are free, other themes from private third parties may cost, also some themes are free but require their copyright information be left intact.

Finding a new theme through the dashboard

So now that you know what themes are, this section explains how to search and install them through the dashboard.

Log into your WordPress Dashboard, then click on "Appearance" and then "themes". The top of your screen will have the option to click "Install".
This lets you search the stored themes on WordPress' site using the various options such as color or the number of columns.
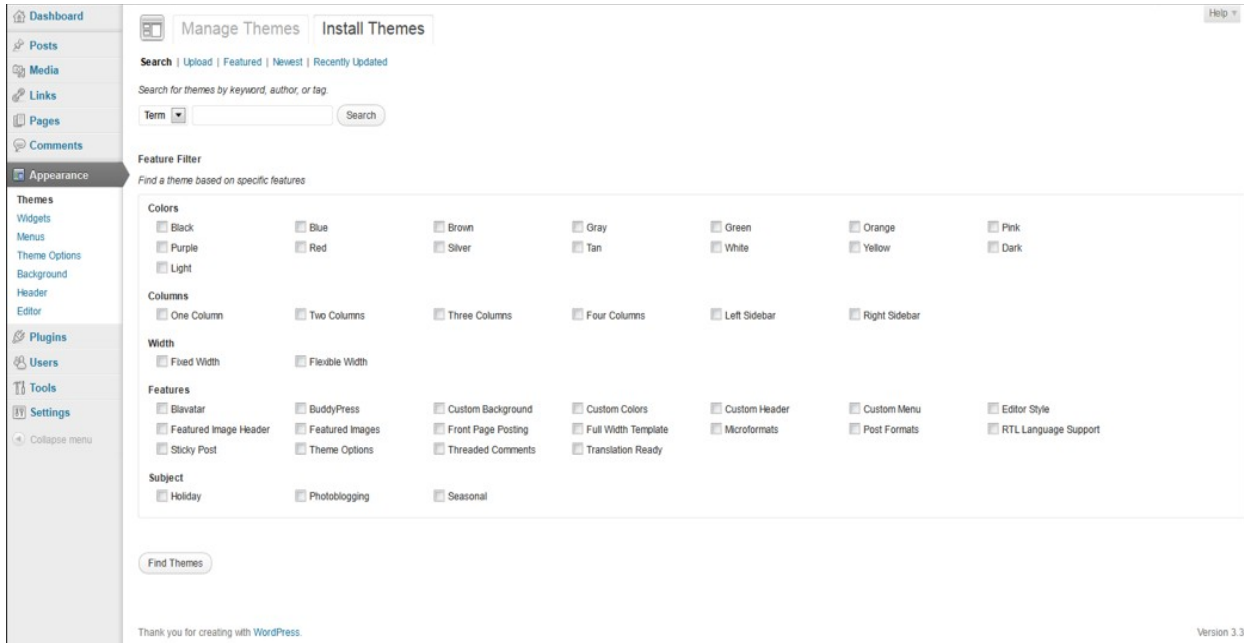
After finding the the theme that you want to install, click the "Install" button link under the theme and the pop-up box below will appear.
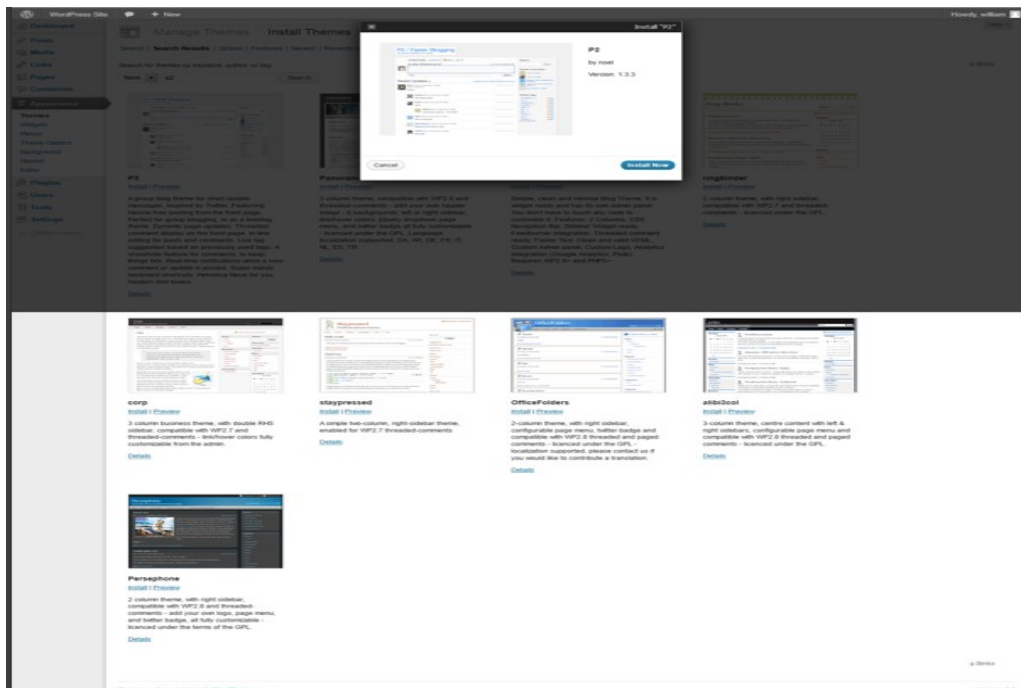
Go back to the **"Manage Themes"** tab, the theme you just installed will be available to use.

Click on **"Activate"** under the new theme, and that theme will now be the one used on your website.

Installing a downloaded theme from the internet

When downloading a theme from the internet, it normally will be a compressed file either in .zip or tar.gz format.
Once you have downloaded the file, log into your WordPress dashboard and click on "Appearance" which will bring you to the "Themes" page.

Click on **"Install Themes"**, them proceed to click **"Upload"**

Click on the **"Browse"** button and find the file you saved on your computer. Once you have located the zip file, click **"Open"** and then **"Install Now"**

Your new theme may take a few minutes to upload. Once the upload process is complete you will see the following screen. You can now preview how the theme will appear on your website.
Click "Preview" to preview how your website will look with the new theme.

Once you determine if you like how your website look, click **"Activate"** under the theme and this will enable the theme to publish to your website.

Your website it now using your new theme! You can now visit your website in the browser and make sure the theme displays properly.

Switching between your installed themes

Any time you wish to change your WordPress theme, can you. It's a simple process done through your WordPress dashboard.
To change the active theme, you first will login to the dashboard.

Once you are logged in click on "Appearance" from the menu on the left.

Be sure to click on the "Manage Themes" tab, it will automatically display your installed themes.

On this screen you can change to any theme you have installed. Simply click "activate" under the theme you wish to use. Selecting a new theme will not affect your content, only change the appearance. When changing to a new theme it can impact widgets and plugins however.
Once you have changed your theme, it may be a good idea to visit your website in a web browser and test it to make sure it is functioning normally.
If it is not, you may need to disable some plugins or widgets that may not be supported or switch to a different theme.

Introduction to Plugins & Widgets

What are Plugins & Widgets?

Plugins are third party addons that you are able to install and use on your WordPress website. Plugins are typically created to add additional functionality to your website that is not included by default. Some examples of plugins are image rotators, contact forms, and product selling tools.

Widgets are similar to plugins, but they provide a way to change your sidebar content without having to alter the actual code of WordPress. Widgets can include a calendar, search bar, RSS feed, and many other similar tools.

How to find and install Plugins

One of the best features of WordPress is the ability to customize your website with Plugins. They are easily downloaded and installed and within minutes and allow you to easily customize your site.

Login to your WordPress Dashboard. Once logged in, click "Add New" under "Plugins"

Search for a plugin using the search feature.

An example would be to search for "Google Plus" to find a plugin that will incorporate links to posts to your Google Plus account. Once the search shows results, click "Details" to read more about each plugin.

If you wish to use the plugin after reading about it, click on "Install Now"

After the plugin has been successfully installed, you will need to click "activate plugin" to start using it.
To change the settings of your plugin, click on the "Settings" menu option on the left side to access the settings for each plugin you have installed.

Updating your installed Plugins

Plugins need to be updated from time to time, just like any other software. When a new version of a plugin is released you may need to update.
Most plugins are updated to patch a security vulnerability, or to add extra features to the plugin. It is important to keep your plugins up to date to ensure the security of your website.

First, log into your WordPress Dashboard and select the plugins menu option. If you have a Plugin that needs to be updated, the plugins menu will have a number next to it.

When an update is available, a notice appears next to its name.
Click on the "update automatically" link, and it will redirect you to a page that automatically installs the update for that plugin.

Finding and installing Widgets in the dashboard

Widgets add functionality to the sidebar of your WordPress website. Follow the steps below to add new widgets to your website.

First, login to your WordPress dashboard. After you have logged in, click **"Widgets"** under **"Appearance"**

This screen contains three areas of interest:
Available Widgets
Inactive Widgets
Primary Widget Area

Widgets that are listed in the Primary Widget Area are widgets on your website the you are currently using.
To use another widget, simply drag the widget you want to use from the Available or Inactive list to the Primary Widget Area. Your theme may contain multiple areas that use widgets.
If this is the case, you can add widgets into the Secondary, First Footer, and Second Footer areas.

Widgets load in the order in which they are listed in the sections. If you wish to change the order of the widgets simply drag the widgets under "Primary Widget" to the order you wish to have them display.

Suggested Plugins

Recommended Plugins for WordPress

There are literally thousands of plugins to choose from, but I would recommend these to everyone who decides to use WordPress for their website.

WP Super Cache
This is the recommended caching plugin for WordPress. One of the main issues with WordPress sites is that if caching is not enabled, it can causes some sites to load slower and use more resources than is healthy. This is caused by your site having to load its content from a database each an every time it is displayed. WP Super Cache helps prevent these issues, and does a great job of it.

Google XML Sitemaps
Search Engine Optimization your visibility to customers relies on a sitemap in order to better index your site with each search engine like Google. The official Google XML Sitemaps plugin will automatically generate a sitemap and allow you to submit it to a search engine, or to simply allow search engines to find it when they crawl your site.

Akismet
This is a plugin that will help block spam from being posted in your Comments section. This is done by checking your comments against the Akismet web service to see if they look like spam or not. If it finds a suspicious comment, the plugin lets you review the message it catches under your blog's "Comments" admin screen.

Login Lock
Login Lock provides a number of security enhancing features to keep your site safe from brute force attacks. This makes sure no ones cracks your password.

BulletProof Security
The BulletProof Security WordPress Security plugin is designed to be a fast, simple and one click security plugin to add .htaccess security protection for your site. It protects your WordPress site from the most common types of hack attempts that may compromise your site and allow malicious code to be ran.

Social media plugins

Sites such as Facebook and twitter can be an important part of any business and can easily be integrated into WordPress using plugins. Many of these plugins will allow visitors to "like" your WordPress posts, automatically "tweet" your posts, and much more.

If you already have a Facebook and/or a Twitter account, you can integrate it into your WordPress website quickly and easily.

Here are some popular plugins to use integrate your social media accounts into your website:

Facebook Like Button
This is a simple plugin, but very effective for increasing your traffic.
It will create a button next to each post that your visitors can "like." When they "like" your post, it will appear on their Facebook page and is a free way to extend the social reach of your website.

Social Media Widget
This plugin will place on your Widget list the option to link to all of your social media pages.
You can place it anywhere on your side bar, and allow you to automatically point your visitors to different social media sites including Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, Skype, and many others.

WP to Twitter
When you install this plugin and make a post, it will automatically display on your twitter account.
This is a great way to let your everyone know when you have updated your website, and can help with creating return visitors.

Google +1 button
This plugin allows you to add a +1 button to your website instantly. The button will also display a current count of how many times your page or post has been liked through Google Search.

Advertising Plugins

Typically, you would need to edit the actual HTML code to insert advertisements.
With WordPress, while making these modifications is somewhat difficult, there are plugins available that take care of the work of placing advertisements where you want to on your website.

AdRotate
As the name suggests, if you use multiple ad companies you can insert different banners and the plugin will automatically rotate them for you.
This plugin is updated regularly and allows you to manage your ads through your WordPress Dashboard.

Adsense Optimizer
This plugin is created to use with your Google AdSense account. It allows you to display ads and even format them correctly on any pages you like.

Advertising Manager
To automatically integrate all your ads in one program, this plugin has a wide range of advertisers that can be managed.
It also comes with a widget to place ads on your side bar as well as directly into your code.