

HOW TO START A BLOG | ILLUSTRATED GUIDE

 iamreallife.com/how-to-start-a-blog-illustrated-guide/



How to start a blog: this article is written mainly for new people who are starting a blog now and do not have the experience, and want to have things pretty much simplified.

So you do not have to suffer in the attempt, which is what had happened to me when I started.

The first thing is that I thought to use anything else then WordPress, and it came out to be not working. I wanted to use one of that drag and drop site type, but to be a professional in this, I soon realize only a WordPress site can give me all the options needed.

So, how to start a blog?



HOW TO START A BLOG | ILLUSTRATED GUIDE

www.iamreallife.com

HOW TO START A BLOG IN SIMPLE STEPS

If you follow this guide exactly, you'll have your blog set up pretty fast. There is, of course, more to know about every single step if you want to go deeper, just read the related articles so you can get an in-depth explanation, not only a summary.

You can also get started with the unique [Blog Interactive System™](#), to be guided step by step.

1. Choose a great blog platform
2. Choose a web host for your blog
3. Clarify your blog topic
4. Start a blog on your domain
5. Publish your main Pages
6. Write your first post
7. Customize your blog design
8. Must Plugins
9. Get Traffic and Make Money

1. HOW CHOOSE A GREAT BLOG PLATFORM?

With which platform one should learn how to start a blog?

Choosing where you want to build a blog is pretty much the first thing you have to do. You can choose between website builders or self-host your blog.

I'm going to take a guess and assume you've heard of WordPress, and this is the platform I recommend the most. It comes out from experience made with different websites.

Initially, I did not want to make an effort to learn how to use WordPress. It can be a bit challenging for people who don't know anything about it. But after time and money spent, I had to go back and start over with WordPress.

Why do the same mistake?

WordPress is a blogging software as well as a framework for web development.

It's by far one of the biggest blogging platforms in the world, with countless plugins and add-ons and almost infinite ways to design and layout your blog.

In computing terms, a plug-in (or plug-in, add-on, or extension) is a software component that adds a specific feature to an existing computer program. ... In other words, plug-ins allow additional functions to be performed on top of the default functions the particular software or website is designed for.

There are more than 82 million active users of WordPress, which should tell you, and should have told me, that this is the best option.

There *are* other alternatives, however, and they are listed below:

Even though WordPress is bigger (and probably better) than those two, here are my reasons why you should still **go with WordPress**:

1. Easy set-up and is free to use if you wish to go with the free alternative, but if you want to blog professionally I do not recommend this solution (more to come below)
2. *Tons* of free themes and layouts, you can customize WordPress as you want and integrate the platform with many Softwares and plugins. You have unlimited solutions.
3. There's a massive support forum in case you get stuck and tutorials around the web.
4. Your blog will be insanely fast, and you can optimize it.
5. People can interact with you quickly. Your content can be shared, commented on, and so on.

SELF HOSTING OR A FREE ALTERNATIVE?

It is the most significant decision you'll have to make before we go any further. You need

to decide whether to pay for your blog or grab a free one.

WordPress, Tumblr, and Blogger all offer free blogs for anyone.

Free versions are perfect for those of us who aren't super serious about blogging or want to try it and gain some experience with it before going professional.

How to start a blog for free?

If you want to get going with WordPress, you can go to WordPress.com and WordPress.com is a website-building, blogging, and publishing service owned by a company called Automattic. It offers both free and paid plans.

Or choose between even better possibilities that may offer free plans as well with better perks, whether you are looking for a non-WordPress website builder or other WordPress options:

FIND FREE WEBSITE BUILDERS

Or

FIND FREE WORDPRESS HOSTING

If you go with the free plan and go down the road of starting a blog for free, **there are downsides**.

Here are a few:

1) You won't be able to get your OWN domain name

On a free blog, your blog's web address (your URL) will be ugly; it is easy to see from a visitor standpoint that the blog is nonprofessional. In short, create a free blog with any other of the above free blog services, and it'll look like this:

- yourblog.wordpress.com
- yourblog.blogspot.com
- yourblog.tumblr.com

Not the best if you are creating a brand.

2) Limits

There are some limits to free blogs. You can't fully monetize it, and you can't upload all those videos and images you want to show everyone. You won't even have access to the free themes offered by WordPress.

3) You DON'T OWN your blog

You don't own your blog. It's hosted on someone else's web property, and it can be deleted without any advice, they have done so in the past. It means all your hard work on your blog, all those countless hours of writing blog posts might have vanished within seconds.

On the other hand, with a **self-hosted blog on your own domain name** – you are the REAL owner of your blog.

You'll be able to name your blog whatever you want, for example, "YourName.com" or "YourAwesomeBlog.com."

You can end it with .com, .co.uk, .net, .org, or virtually any other web suffix. Add to that unlimited bandwidth for videos, images, and content plus the free themes, and you have a winning combo.

2. CHOOSE A WEB HOST FOR YOUR BLOG?

So how much is hosting and a domain name? It usually works out to about \$5 to \$10 per month, depending on your hosting provider, which is less than a couple of coffees.

You can find plans for cheaper starting from \$1 or less.

Find a Web Hosting plan that fits your needs.

I am personally using a Managed Word Press from GoDaddy.

Why Managed?

In this way, I do not have to do any technical work or update, and it is very beginner-friendly.

I do like Godaddy for their customer service, if I run into any bug I can chat or call, and they always help. Also, it is very easy to use.

Their web hosting service comes with a free domain.

Now that you selected a hosting plan before you get to the checkout, you have to choose a domain name and to choose the domain name, you need to have an idea of your niche or website topic.

3. CLARIFY YOUR BLOG TOPIC

What to start a blog about?

Possibly if you are looking to start a blog you already have a pretty good idea on your niche.

However if you are contemplating the idea of starting a blog but not sure what to write about, then we have to get this cleared, so you can choose a domain name that fits the niche.

However if you want to get started and and define better a topic later, you can select a domain name that doesn't limit your future writing. For example:

Yourname.com

If you name domain with your name, this may leave many doors opened.

There may be other creative domain name you can use that leave open possibilities for example:

- myideas.com
- mycorner.com
- mynamesolutions.com

etc.

You get the idea?

You can just have a general domain name so that you are not stuck with a niche.

However, if you just want to write about a niche and want to create a niche website, then it may be easier to choose a domain name.

If you're part of a business, company, or organization, your blog should be related to the product(s) or service(s) you provide, or the cause you promote.

There may be other way to choose a niche. You can look at it from the monetization viewpoint, and search in google what people are interested in and start a blog based on traffic and monetization strategies.

How to start a blog in a niche based on traffic and monetization strategies? We have written a guide which you can find [**HERE**](#).

4. START A BLOG

So far we have seen and decided on a platform, Web Host, domain name and a niche.

Let show you how to get onto an hosting platform and choosing a domain name looks like.

You can choose one web hosting platform based on the needs you have, most probably though if you are starting now you need assistance, customer care and leave out the technical aspects.

If you don't care about assistance and don't want to go looking, just use [**Bluehost**](#), which

is one of the most web hosts used by bloggers.

If you want to get started and go right away into writing and be assisted, select a Managed WordPress hosting by GoDaddy, it is already tailored for a WordPress site. No need to back up or technicalities, let's just start writing.

Domain:

Hosting: *Hosting is basically the company that puts your website up on the internet so everyone else can see it. Everything will be saved there. Think of it as a computer hard-drive on the internet where your blog will be saved*

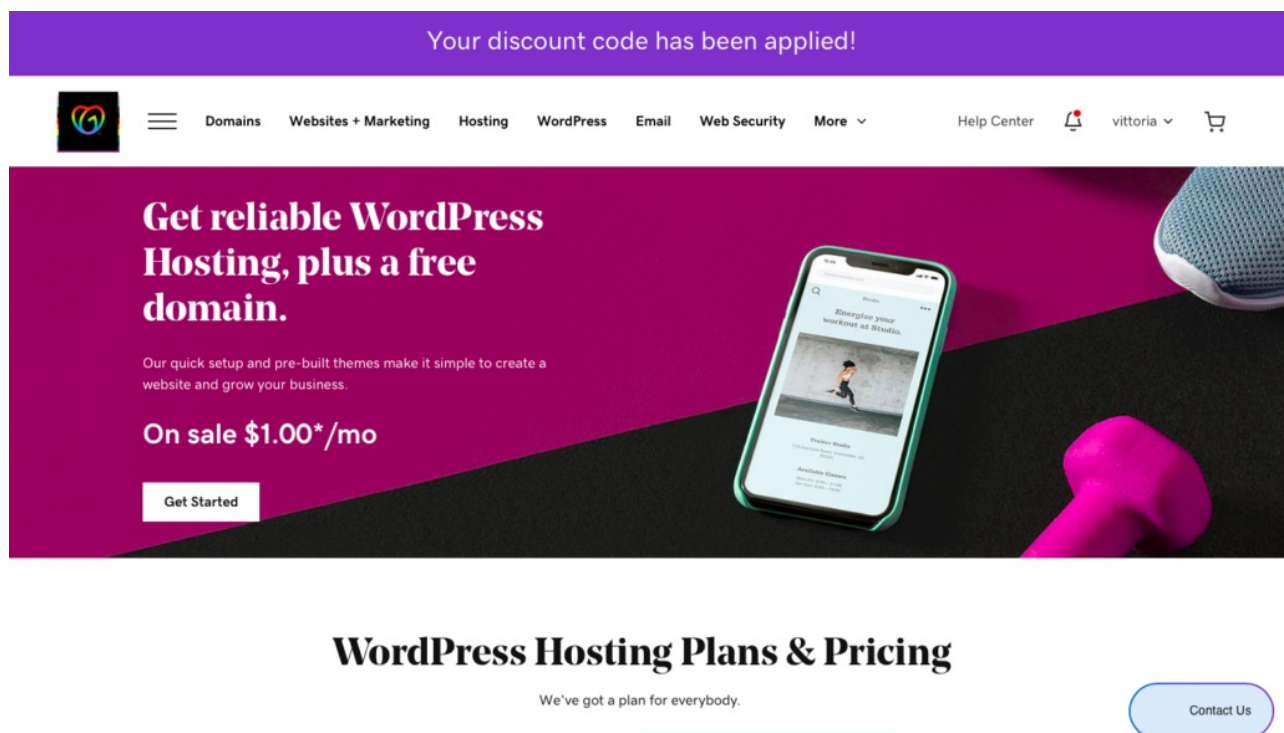
Let me show you the process on choosing a domain name and get into your WordPress area.

HOW TO START A BLOG WITH GODADDY

For this example, I am going to choose GoDaddy, take into account that if you select a different host, the process is still similar. But for now, we are going to use GoDaddy to show you how to start a blog.

If you select GoDaddy from this page, you have up to **89% discount** and get started for \$1 for the first months!!!!

Go to the GoDaddy Managed WordPress hosting:



The screenshot shows the GoDaddy website interface. At the top, a purple banner states "Your discount code has been applied!". Below this is the navigation bar with links for Domains, Websites + Marketing, Hosting, WordPress, Email, Web Security, and More. The main content area features a large purple banner with the text "Get reliable WordPress Hosting, plus a free domain." and "On sale \$1.00*/mo". A "Get Started" button is visible. To the right of the text is an image of a smartphone displaying a website and a pink dumbbell. Below the banner, the section "WordPress Hosting Plans & Pricing" is visible, with a subtext "We've got a plan for everybody." and a "Contact Us" button.

Once you arrive to this page, scroll down and select a plan:

WordPress Hosting Plans & Pricing


We've got a plan for everybody.

Free SSL			
Basic A great way to get started.	Deluxe Get more visitors with an integrated SEO wizard.	Ultimate Add online marketing with more storage and security.	Ecommerce Get a full-featured online store with fast, simple setup.
As low as \$1.00 /mo On sale - Save 89% \$9.99/mo when you renew*	As low as \$9.99 /mo On sale - Save 33% \$14.99/mo when you renew*	As low as \$12.99 /mo On sale - Save 35% \$19.99/mo when you renew*	As low as \$19.99 /mo On sale - Save 20% \$24.99/mo when you renew*
Add to Cart	Add to Cart	Add to Cart	Add to Cart
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 1 website✓ 30 GB storage ⓘ✓ Ideal for up to 25K monthly visitors ⓘ✓ Free business email - 1st year ⓘ✓ Website backup protection with 1-click	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 1 website✓ 75 GB storage ⓘ✓ Ideal for up to 100K monthly visitors ⓘ✓ Free business email - 1st year ⓘ✓ Website backup protection with 1-click	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Free SSL Certificate for life of hosting* ⓘ✓ 1 website✓ Unlimited storage ⓘ✓ Unlimited visitors ⓘ✓ Free business email - 1st year ⓘ	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Free SSL Certificate for life of hosting* ⓘ✓ 1 website✓ Unlimited storage ⓘ✓ Unlimited visitors ⓘ✓ Free business email - 1st year ⓘ

Contact Us

You can start with the \$1 plan, you can have up to 25k visitors, which is more than enough to get started. When traffic increase you can update later.

Select “Add to Cart”



DomainsWebsites + MarketingHostingWordPressEmailMore

Help CentervittoriaCheckout Now

Good news! You get a free domain with this order.

Search

> No thanks. I'll pass on the freebie.

Get our newsletter, join the community:

SIGN UP

We love taking your call.
GoDaddy guides

About GoDaddy

Help Center

Resources

Partner Programs

Account

Shopping

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Help Center

Webmail

Affiliates

My Account

Domains

Newsroom

Community

WHOIS

Reseller Programs

My Renewals

Websites

Contact Us

Here is where you get to choose your domain name.

I will just pick a random one for this example.

The screenshot shows the GoDaddy website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Domains, Websites + Marketing, Hosting, WordPress, Email, and More. A search bar contains 'vittoria.academy'. Below the search bar, a message states: 'That name is available, but doesn't qualify for this offer.' A large green box highlights the domain 'vittoria.academy' with a price of \$42.99, crossed out, and a new price of \$19.99. A 'Select' button is next to it. Below this, a section titled 'These do, though. Take a look.' lists several alternative domain variations with their respective prices and 'FREE*' offers, each with a 'Select and Continue' button.

Domain	Price	Offer	Action
vittoriaacademy.com	\$17.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoriaacademy.org	\$20.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoria.club	\$17.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoriaacademy.net	\$19.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoriaacademy.xyz	\$14.99	FREE*	Select and Continue

The domain I choose is available, GoDaddy is going to suggest below other variations, which is excellent as you can just write something on the search bar, and get suggestions if you are not too sure.

Now click on select

This screenshot shows the GoDaddy interface after the domain 'vittoria.academy' has been selected. The search bar still contains 'vittoria.academy'. A message at the top says: 'That name is available, but doesn't qualify for this offer.' A large green box now displays 'vittoria.academy' with a green checkmark and the text 'Added'. Below this, the same list of alternative domain variations is shown, each with a 'Select and Continue' button. A 'Continue to Cart' button is visible in the top right corner, and a '1 domain selected' indicator is shown below it.

Domain	Price	Offer	Action
vittoriaacademy.com	\$17.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoriaacademy.org	\$20.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoria.club	\$17.99	FREE*	Select and Continue
vittoriaacademy.net	\$19.99	FREE*	Select and Continue

Now click on Continue to cart, and you are going to get the following screen:

Purchase

[Basket](#) > [Sign In](#) > [Billing Information](#) > [Payment](#) > [Complete](#) >

✔ VALID PROMOCODE You got a great deal! X

Basic Managed WordPress Websites

Bundle

12 Months ▾

Renews at \$9.99/mo

\$12.00

89% off

Office 365 Starter Email

Free for 12 months

\$0.00

12 months

vittoria.academy

.ACADEMY Domain Registration

1 Year ▾

Renews at \$42.99/yr

\$19.99

53% off

170,000 times a year -
That's how often criminals
attempt to steal domains.
Protect your domain. ⓘ

Full Domain Privacy &
Protection

\$9.99/yr per domain

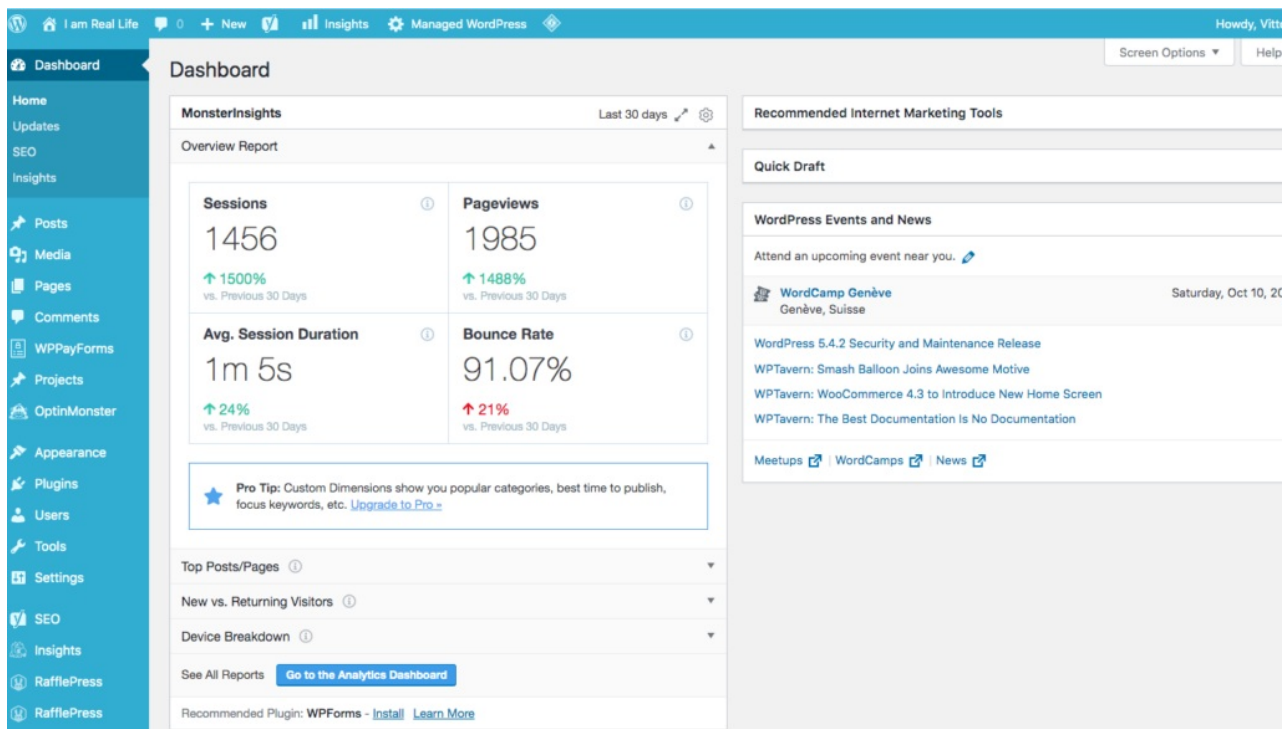
Add

You can choose how many months you want to pay for, as you can see with \$12 I can cover up to one year with this promo code.

You get also one year email hosting with your domain name, if you want you can add protection. The domain name is not free in this case because I selected a domain name a bit more advanced which did not qualify for a free year. But in your case if you choose a .com you can have a free domain for a year.

Therefore with \$12 you can have a year hosting covered, with a Managed WordPress (usually these plans with other Hosting platforms are very expensive).

Now, pay and go into GoDaddy Dashboard and enter into your WordPress Dashboard from here. You can start creating your site. It looks like this inside, but with no data and clean dashboard.



Let's go now to the next step to see actually how to start a blog by creating pages and blog posts.

5. PUBLISH YOUR MAIN PAGES

Alright, now that you are all set up, your settings are correctly configured, and you have a good idea of what you'll blog about, let's put your information on your site by publishing some content.

When you are learning how to start a blog, you want to know what are the basics terms, I was perplexed initially, and I have spent a lot of time figuring it out.

First, a quick explanation of terminology.

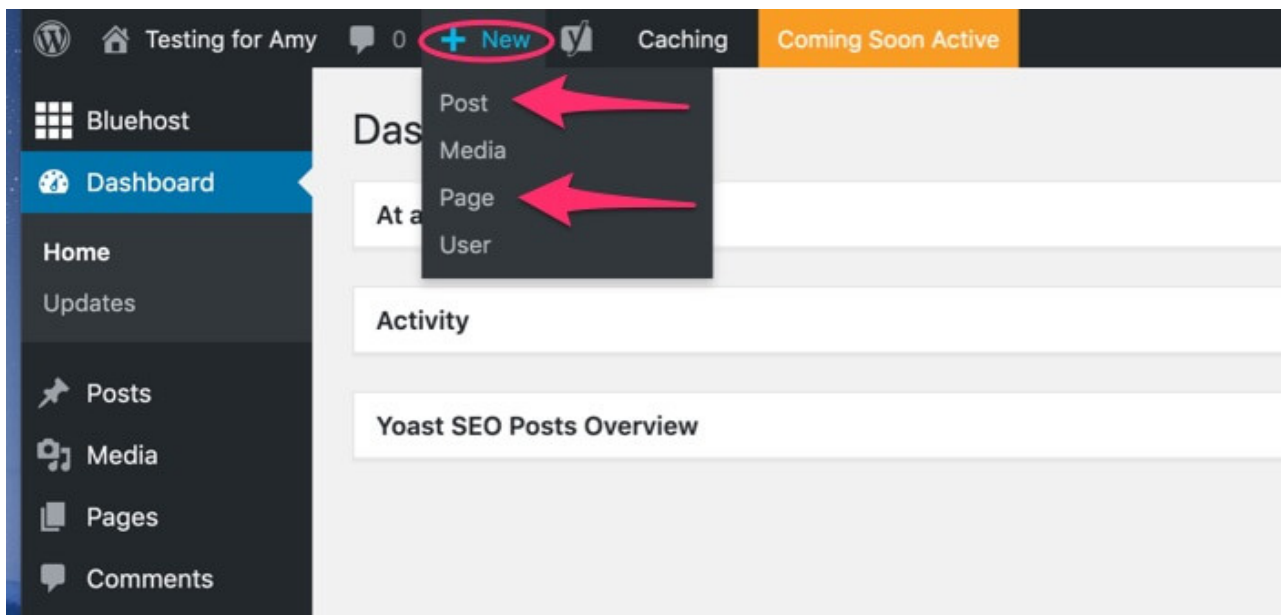
Your WordPress site is made up of Posts and Pages. Anytime you write your own words on your website, you will write them on either a Post or a Page.

Here's the difference:

Posts are what we commonly think about when we think of a blog. These are individual articles on specific topics. When we talk about adding new content to our blogs, we are usually referring to publishing a new *post*. And when we scroll through a blog, we are generally scrolling through the *posts*.

Pages, on the other hand, contain more permanent or unchanging information, like a Contact page or an About page. Pages don't show up automatically in the blog portion of the site alongside posts. Instead, they are accessed through direct links in the navigation bar, sidebar, or footer. Some pages are standard on all blogs, like a Contact page and an About page, but some bloggers include other pages as well, like Tools, I Use page or a signup page for an email newsletter.

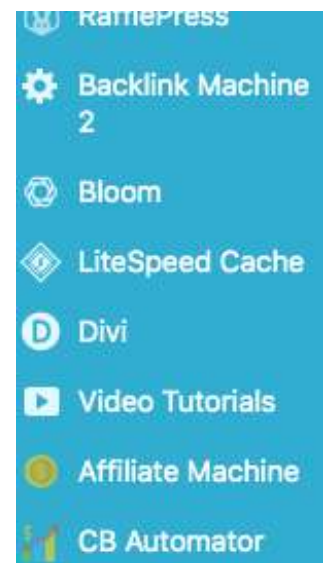
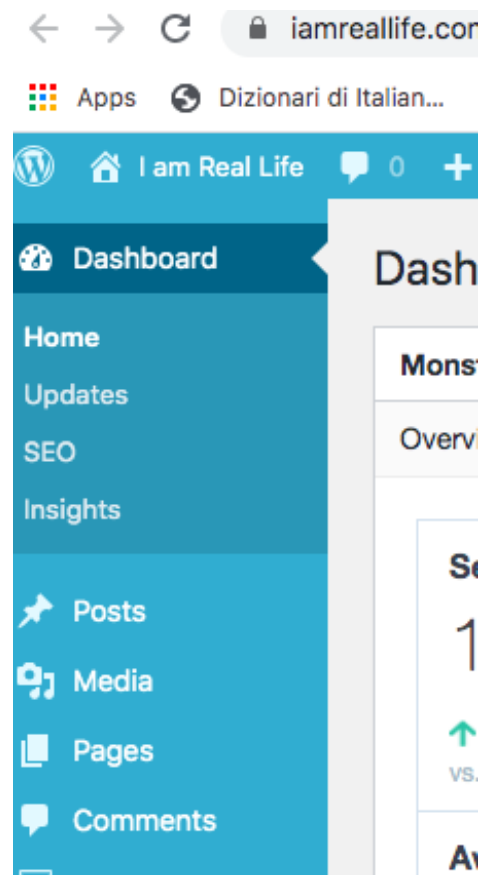
To create a new post or page, make sure you're logged into WordPress, then click the + button at the top of your screen. Choose Post or Page from the dropdown like this:

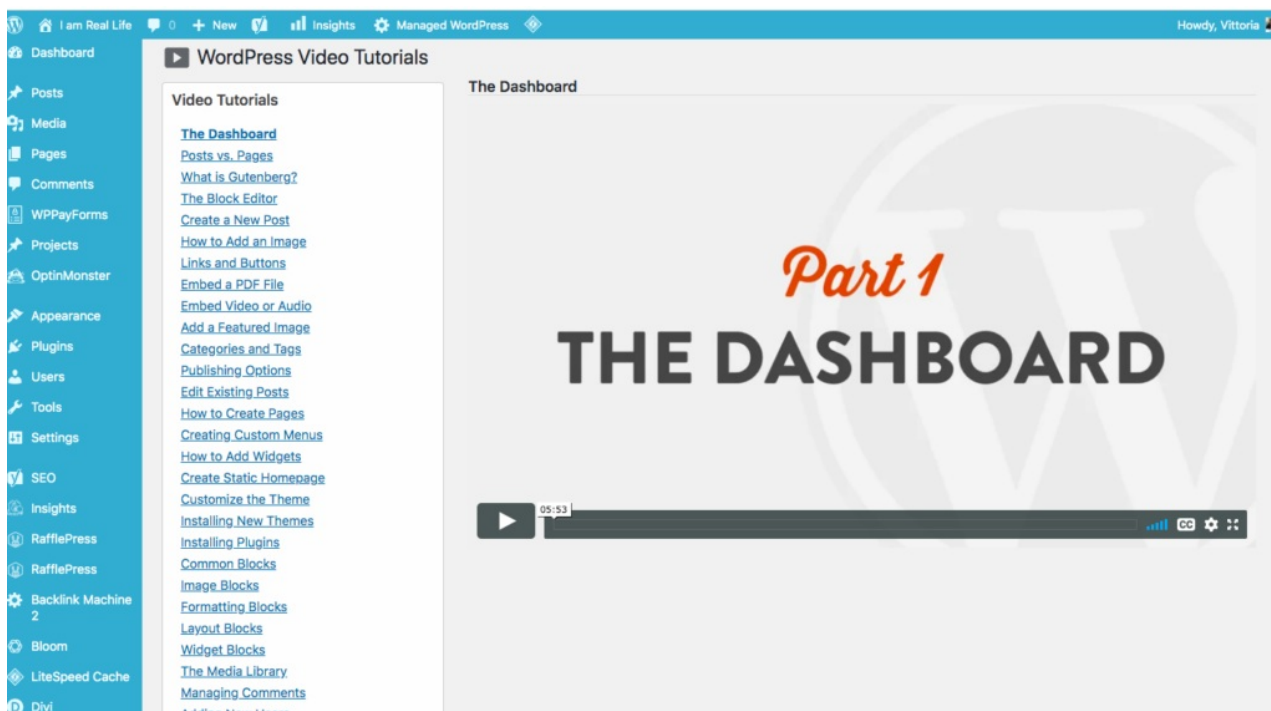


You can also use the menu on the right side and click on post or pages:

The great thing about GoDaddy, is that you have tutorials already installed when you enter your WordPress dashboard.

When you click on Tutorials you will see the following:





If you do not know anything, is better to go through those videos, it will take some time, but is time well spent, because you will learn what to do and will be moving faster later on.

Create some key pages first. Before you start writing your posts, it's a good idea to get your basic pages set up. That way, when you start getting visitors, they'll have access to more general information about you and your site. This helps your blog look more credible and trustworthy.

The pages I recommend creating first are:

- Home
- Blog
- About
- Contact
- Privacy Policy
- Services (if applicable)
- Others (when applicable), like Resources, or main pages you want to show in the menu.

Home page

This only applies if you chose to put your posts on a different page. If you opted to have your blog posts on your homepage, you can skip this!

Some blogs list their posts on their homepage (or main page).

Other blogs, like mine, have what we call a “static” homepage. (Go to my website homepage to see what I mean.)

A static homepage usually provides an overview of the site and includes a link to the blog (where the posts are listed), as well as links to other parts of the website.

Example



Sidenote: In some instances, you might want a static site without blog posts at all. In that case, create pages and be done.

Now that you know the difference, what do you want on your homepage? Blog posts or a static page?

You can customize how you want your Homepage by going in the Menu into your WordPress dashboard and click on Appearance. Then follow the instructions.

Blog page

To check if you have a blog page already, go to Pages > All Pages.

If your homepage is a static page, and you need a blog page, go to Pages > Add New. Title it “Blog” or something similar. **Do not type anything in the post window.**

Hit Publish.

Additionally if you write a blog post, automatically goes into your blog’s page.

Example



About page

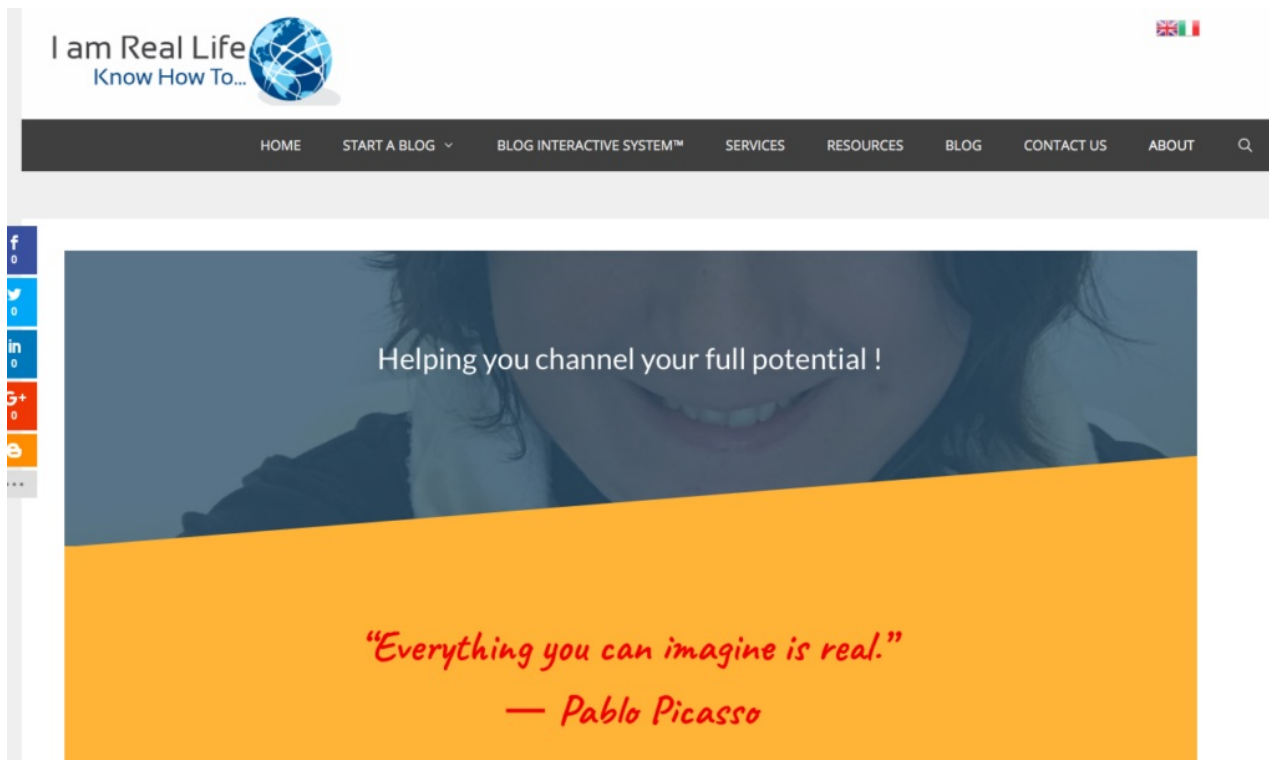
Your About page is one of the essential parts of your site and is often one of the most visited pages. I did not like initially to appear on my blog, but then I found myself when I went online to look at other bloggers about page. Then I realize how important it is.

It's also one of the first places a visitor goes to decide whether or not your blog is worth their time. Writing a good one is essential.

Make sure a visitor will know within the first few lines of your About page **how your site will help them**. They'll want to understand why they should stick around. But of course, they also want to know who you are and how you got there.

Then, once you've told them *why* they should read, next show them *what* to read. Anticipate what a new visitor would want to know. Provide links to other pages on your site (once you have them, of course).

Example



Contact page

Providing contact information to your visitors is essential. Blogging is a form of social media, and building relationships is critical.

Privacy Policy page

These days, privacy is important to us all. Having a privacy policy is important.

Go to Settings > Privacy to get more information and start creating your Privacy Policy page. You can use the drafted page already set up for you as a template, or you can use a generator like [this one](#) or [this one](#).

Other Pages

The following are additional pages you might consider creating, although you could hold off on them until you get a tiny bit further along in the process. But you are a business and have a product already; you may want to have a service page.

Tools I Use/Resources: Many of your readers will appreciate a list of the tools and resources you use and recommend. Additionally, this is an excellent source of affiliate income.

Service page: this is the page where you offer your services, if you have one.

Email list signup page /Newsletter: These pages are used when someone signs up for your email list. I highly recommend them.

Disclosure Policy. When you start making money, you must have a disclosure policy. You can use a [disclosure policy generator like this one](#) to create this page when you're ready.

6. WRITE YOUR FIRST POST

Now that you've got your main pages set up, you're ready to start posting!

Writing and publishing a post in WordPress is pretty straightforward. Here are the necessary steps, as well as some handy tips.

Ideas for your first post(s)

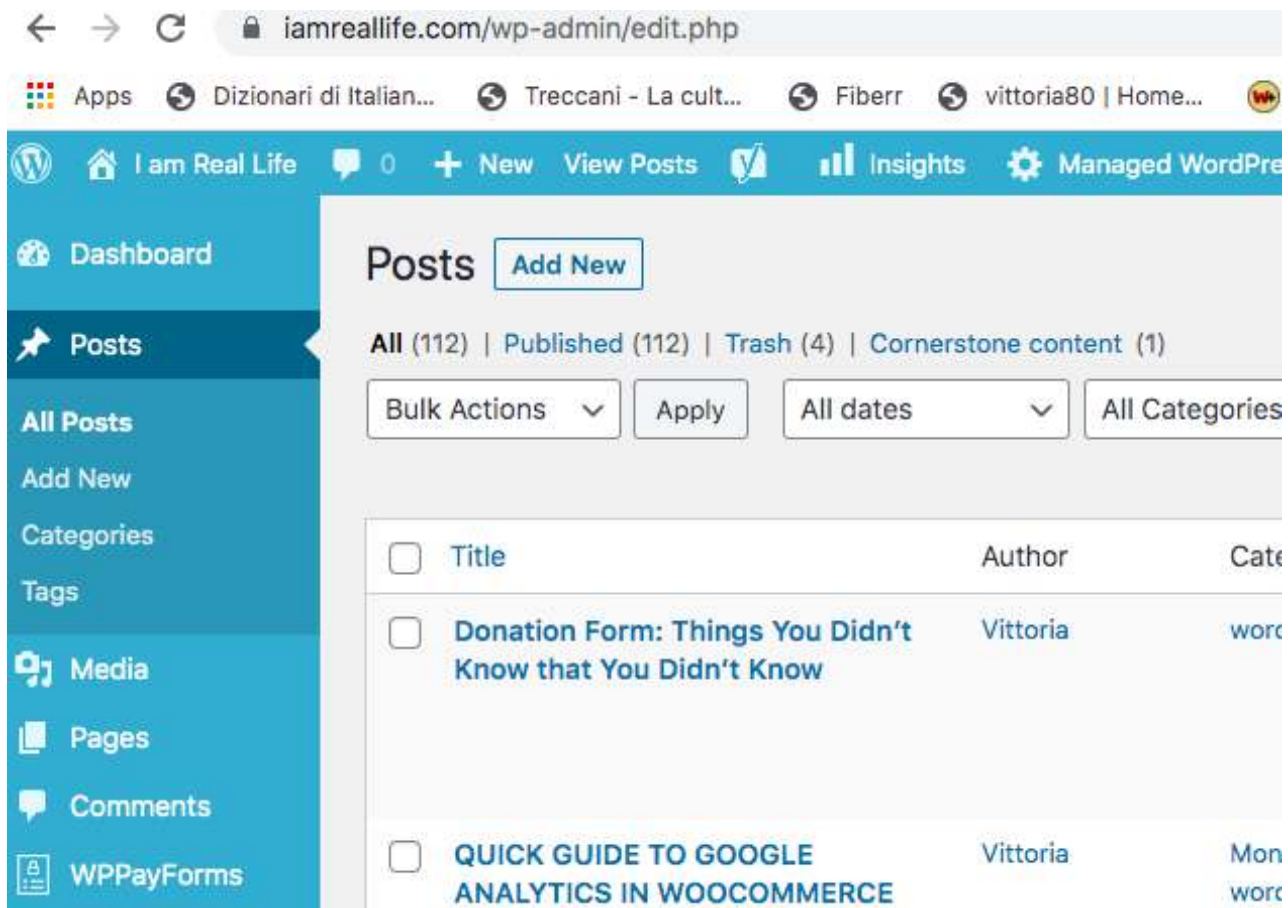
I recommend having 2 or 3 full, in-depth posts when you launch with over 1500 words, and 7-15 more posts in various stages — drafts to be edited, outlines to flesh out, and topic ideas ready to write.

If you're having trouble coming up with ideas for your first post, type your main topic or niche into Google, and see what others have written or what is being researched the most in google, meaning what people want to know.

Alright, now that you have some ideas for your first post, let's get writing!

Open the Add New Post window. Make sure you're logged in to WordPress (simply type `yourdomain.com/admin` in your browser to log in).

From your Dashboard, go to Posts > Add New in the left column. Alternatively, you can hover over the "+ New" link at the top of your screen and choose "Post" from the dropdown menu that appears.



Add a title. My tip here is to title your post what people will search for to find it.

For example, I titled this post “How to Start a Blog” because I figured that’s what someone would type into Google if they wanted to know what I’m explaining in this post.

Check your permalink. Before publishing your post (not after, otherwise, you may break your link!), check and edit the permalink if you’d like.

Use keywords and make it as close to the way someone would search for your content on Google. If you want to change the permalink structure of a post or page, simply click the “Edit” button next to the automatically generated permalink on your post or page and change it to what you want.



How to **start** a **blog**: this article is written mainly for new people who are starting a **blog** now and do not have the experience, and want to have things pretty much simplified.

So you do not have to suffer in the attempt, which is what had happened to me when I started.

The permalink is the full URL you see – and use – for any given post, page, or other pieces of content on your site. It’s a permanent link, hence the name permalink. A permalink could include your domain name (www.yoast.com) plus what’s called a slug, the piece of the URL that comes after the domain name. **This might consist of a date or a category or anything you please. A simple permalink makes a URL easy to understand and share.** (Ref. Yoast Seo)

Compose your post. You can write directly in WordPress, but a lot of people choose to write in a text editor and then paste their completed job into WordPress when it’s done. A significant benefit to this is not slowing down your site while WordPress constantly autosaves as you go.

However, if you like to see how it looks while you are doing it and customize it, better is to edit it using the WordPress editor and all the integrated tools you may have installed.

Add a link. To create a link in your post, highlight the text you want to be the link and click the link icon (looks like a chain link) in the formatting options box. A popup will appear where you can paste the URL of the page you want to link to.

Select the category (or categories) and tag(s). On the right side of your screen, you’ll have the option to select or add new categories and tags for your post.

Categories are used to define the general topics on your blog. Ideally, your blog will only have 5-7 categories so choose them thoughtfully. Well-chosen and well-used categories can make a reader’s experience on your blog pleasant. They also provide a basic structure or “outline” for your content.

Tags are more specific — too specific to be categories themselves. Use as many as is necessary to keep your information organized without getting messy.

Preview. Once you’re done writing, hit the Preview button in the top right of your screen to see what your post will look like.

Save, schedule, or publish your post. WordPress has an autosave feature, which automatically saves your writing every few minutes.

Keep a post in Draft mode and come back to it later if it's not ready to go live.

See all your drafts by going to Posts > All Posts.

If your post is ready to be published, you can publish it immediately or schedule it to be published at a future day and time.

To publish it immediately, make sure "Immediately" shows next to Publish in the Status & Visibility box (top right). Then hit the Publish button at the top of the screen.

To schedule it to publish later, click "Immediately" next to Publish and choose the day and time you want it to go live.

Don't forget to set your timezone first (Settings > General)! Also, setting the date and time is not enough. You must also click the "Schedule" button at the top of the page.

Post visibility. You have other options in the Status & Visibility box as well. You can make your post public, private, or password protected.

The "Public" option is normal and makes it available to all. Private keeps it, well, private, allowing access to only site admins and editors.

Password protected means anyone who wants to see the post has to type in the password you set before seeing the post.

7. CUSTOMIZE YOUR BLOG DESIGN

Now that you've got some content, you may want to change your blog's design.

It took us this long to get to design because it's easier to see what a design will look like with it filled out a bit. Many tell you to work on the design as soon as you enter WordPress, but I am not of the same advice.

In WordPress, this is done by installing a new WordPress theme.

There are a lot! However, it's easy to go overboard.

However I can tell you that I thought that the design was not so important, later on into blogging I realized it is actually quite important, people judge on appearance.

Your site should be fast and should work well on all devices, from phones to tablets to desktops.

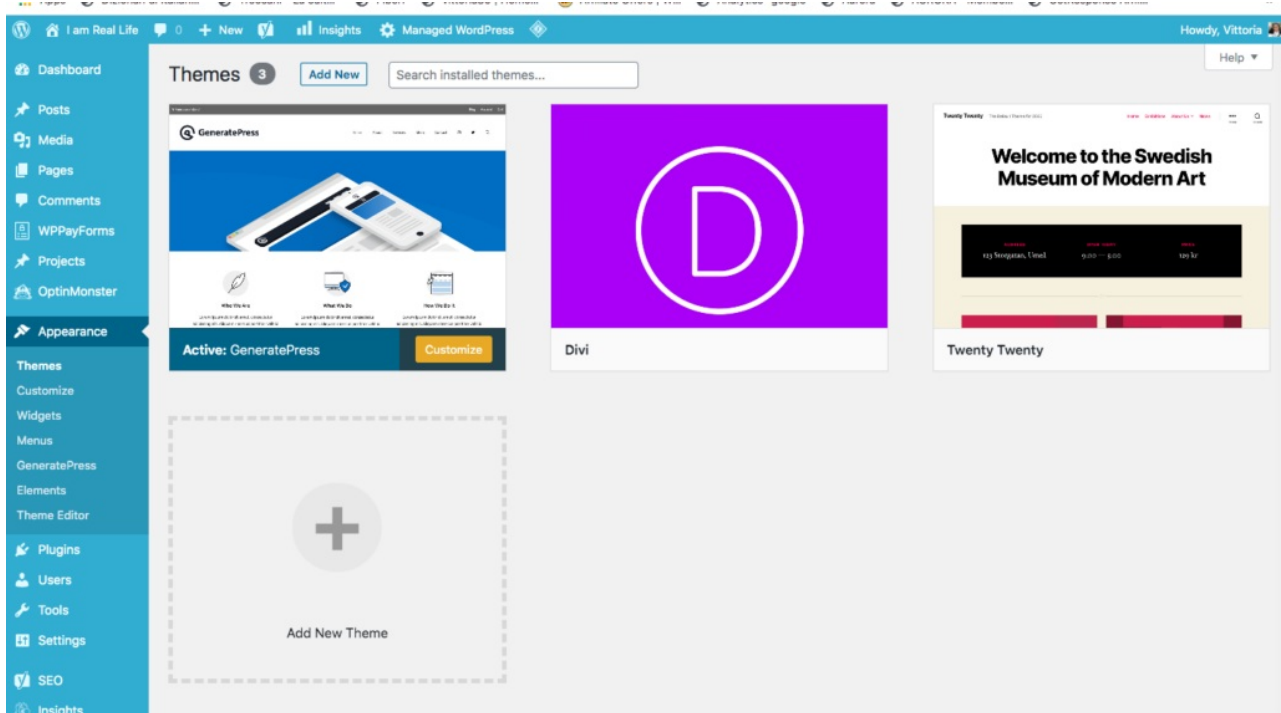
The most prominent themes ensure this from the get-go, but it's still important to keep tabs on this yourself.

Where to find a new WordPress theme. I always recommend purchasing a premium theme.

Premium themes are better maintained, often have helpful documentation or tutorials, and usually offer support.

Find the theme you want on its site and purchase it. You'll be given instructions to download it to your computer after purchase.

You can also find new themes from your WordPress Dashboard by going to Appearance > Themes.



Search if you know the name of your desired theme, or click the “Add New” button at the top of the page to browse.

After several types of research, I conclude that GeneratePress Theme and DIVI theme (by Elegant Themes) are the best to use. I use both.

Divi gives you also social media integrations and subscriber forms included in the package. Great for cost-effective reasons.

GeneratePress is fast loading, and DIVI has so many layouts, elements, customer care, support, documentation that a new blogger can appreciate. Not only new bloggers.

Install your new WordPress theme. If you found a theme via your WordPress Dashboard, simply click the Install button.

If you purchased a premium theme elsewhere, it will come packaged in a zip file. (The zipped file is what you will need for the following step, so if your computer automatically unzips zipped files, locate the zipped version on your computer before moving on.)

In your WordPress Dashboard, go to Appearance > Themes > Add New > Upload Theme. Find the zipped file and upload it.

To activate a new theme, go to Appearance > Themes. Hover over the theme you want and click Activate.

Customize your theme. Once your Theme is activated, go to Appearance > Customize. If the Customizer doesn't work with your chosen Theme, I will not use it as it's probably not kept updated. The Customizer will allow you to tweak things like color, fonts, and other things. Options will vary depending on your theme.

Set up widgets & menus. WordPress widgets allow you to quickly put chunks of information in your sidebar, footer, or other places on your site. Your options for widgets will depend on the theme you use. Go to Appearance > Widgets. Drag and drop widgets from the left side of the page to the sidebars and footer on the right side. Use the tiny down arrows to edit the content within. Always save!

Menus are used to put navigation bars on your site. They can also be found by going to Appearance > Menus.

Again, menu options will depend on your theme. If you're using a premium theme, consult the help documentation for instructions to set your menus up.

8. PLUGINS

There are a few plugins that I am always adding to any site, which are must-have. While you need to know how to start a blog in itself, you also need to add some functionality to WordPress to make it run better. Keep in mind that you can't just add plugins at will, they may slow your site down, so install the one that you need as you go and get read of the rest.

Here are plugins you may want to get:

a) **Yoast SEO**

The first true all-in-one SEO solution for WordPress, including on-page content analysis, XML sitemaps and much more. It is a must, you have to have some SEO guidance to get your articles ranked in Google.

b) **WPForms**

Every web site need contact forms to interact with the visitors.

What is a contact form? It is a form, field where one can add information and ask question and can be used for various purposes as collect subscriptions, payments, get questions and so on.

Here is an example on my site of 2 contact forms. One is a “contact us” contact forms, and the other is a “subscription form.”

A screenshot of a contact form on a website. The background is a dark blue gradient with a faint image of a person's back and a mountain range. The form is centered and consists of a white rectangular box containing two input fields: "Email Address" and "Message". Below the "Message" field is a yellow button with the text "SEND MESSAGE". The text "Don't Wait Any Longer. Start Forging Your Own Path Today!" is written in white above the form fields. A small upward arrow icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the page.

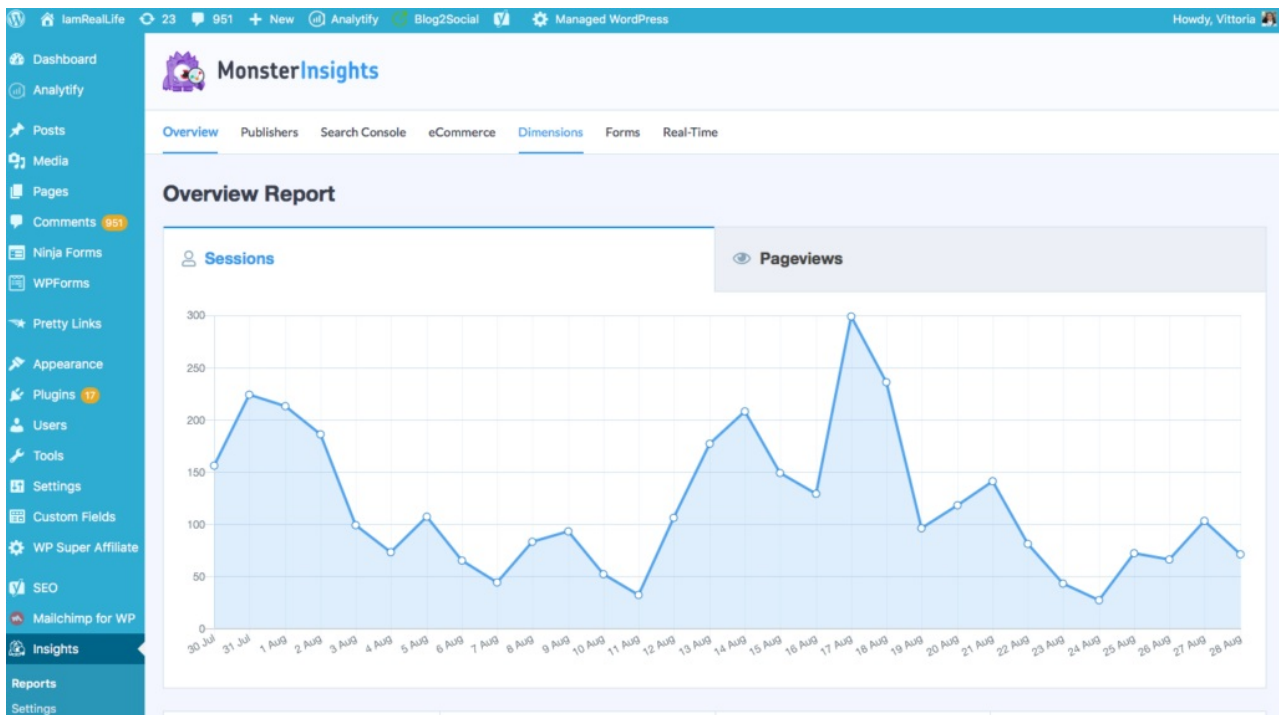
WPForms is the best WordPress contact form plugin. Here are the features that make WPForms the most powerful and user-friendly WordPress form builder in the market.

You can download the free version from the Plugin menu. Go to Plugins, add new and type WPForms.

Once you have the free version you can upgrade to the one you need.

c) **MonsterInsights**

I always download MonsterInsights to check the daily traffic and performance of the site as overall, and you can have the statistics who has visited your website right inside WordPress.



MonsterInsights is the best Google Analytics Plugin for WordPress. Here are the features that make MonsterInsights the most powerful and user-friendly WordPress analytics plugin in the market.

d) Akismet Anti-Spam

Used by millions, Akismet is quite possibly the best way in the world to **protect your blog from spam**. Your site is fully configured and being protected, even while you sleep.

e) Insert Headers and Footers

Allows you to insert code or text in the header or footer of your WordPress blog

f) Kadence Blocks – Gutenberg Page Builder Toolkit

Advanced Page Building Blocks for Gutenberg. Create custom column layouts, backgrounds, dual buttons, icons, etc. After learning how to start a blog, you may want to learn how to build beautiful pages with customizable blocks.

g) LiteSpeed Cache

High-performance page caching and site optimization from LiteSpeed.

h) Table of Contents Plus

A powerful yet user-friendly plugin that automatically creates a table of contents. It can also output a sitemap listing all pages and categories.

9. GET TRAFFIC AND MONETIZE

There are way to drive traffic if you do not want to wait for Google to rank your content.

Now you need to speed up the process to increase your site domain authority, backlinks, and work on what is called SEO.

In fact based on DA (Domain Authority) and backlinks built, and some other factors, you are going to be found in search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing.

Yo can actually get an idea of what you need to increase those 2 factors by researching in appropriate tools what is needed to rank, let's say at least in the TOP 10, based on keywords.

Now if you are totally new this is greek for you.

Let's try to clarify some of the points:

Domain Authority: *From Google's perspective, domain authority is like your website's reputation as a thought leader. The search engine uses your domain authority to make sure you can provide the highest-quality content about your specific subject matter. If you do, you'll have proper domain authority, and Google will boost your content's rankings. If you don't, you'll have lousy domain authority, and they won't rank your content.*

and let's clear also

A **backlink** is any hyperlink on a website that points back to your website. It is a form of citation, in which someone talking about a topic related to you, your service, or your product wishes to refer to your website. **Backlinks** are one of many metrics used by Google to measure the value of a page. Backlinks are sometimes referred to as incoming links, inbound links, inlinks, or inward links.

Let's summarize things so far:

- You have decided on your Niche.
- You have chosen a domain name and hosting platform.
- You got the main pages worked out and on line.
- You got a few posts.
- You have customized your site.
- You have installed the needed plugins.
- Now you have to get traffic and monetize.

a) There are many things you can do to improve your DA and backlinks, but let's put here some simple bullets points, we can expand later the subject. Now that you have pillar content on your site, start outreach to create backlinks and increase your Domain Authority. The main focus for the first 3 to 6 months. I would say dedicate 75% of your time to this.

This outreach is

- Guest Posting on other sites, choose high Domain Authority sites to do it
- Try using Backlinko's skyscraper method.

b) Schedule additional content to go live every month on your site, more pillar pages, or blog posts. Since you are busy Guest posting and outreaching in general, this is not the main focus. Once you get some backlinks, you will have traffic and can assess better a content strategy

What is Guest Posting?

It's contributing original, high-quality content to a targeted publication as an outside guest author on another site. On your article there are 1 or 2 links linking back to your website.

It gives you a backlink.

There is a lot to know about backlinks. You can read The Full Guest Post Tutorial to go deeper into this subject. For now, know that you have to do a lot of this as soon as you go live.

You can get an idea of how many backlinks and what is an average DA you need to get ranking high.

For example, you want to rank for the keyword: "Start a blog." Go to Ubersuggest, popular tool, and type in the search bar the keyword:

The screenshot shows the Ubersuggest website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the name 'NEILPATEL' and links for Blog, Pricing, Training, Tools, Consulting, and Contact. A 'Sign in with Google' button is on the right. Below the navigation bar, the word 'Ubersuggest' is prominently displayed. Underneath, a tagline reads: 'Want more traffic? Ubersuggest shows you how to win the game of SEO. Just type in a domain or a keyword to get started.' A search bar is present with the placeholder text 'start a blog', a language/location dropdown set to 'English / United States', and a 'SEARCH' button. Below the search bar, the 'Domain Overview' section is visible. It includes a sub-header 'Imagine being able to reverse engineer your competitors' SEO, content marketing, and social media marketing strategy.' and a table of metrics:

ORGANIC KEYWORDS	PAID KEYWORDS	TOTAL TRAFFIC	PAID AD COST
12,100 <small>OVER LAST 30 DAYS</small>	45 <small>OVER LAST 30 DAYS</small>	12,3M <small>85% ORGANIC</small>	\$12,123 <small>OVER LAST 30 DAYS</small>

Below the table, there's a 'TRAFFIC' section showing '300 per month' and a line graph. A legend indicates 'Organic Traffic' (orange) and 'Paid Traffic' (yellow).

Then hit search. This tool is going to show you the search traffic, meaning how many searches per month in Google by people, who are ranking for it, you can even click and

go and visit the page. Still, it also tells you HOW MANY BACKLINKS and what is the DOMAIN AUTHORITY needed to rank for those words.

The screenshot displays the Neil Patel Keyword Overview tool interface. On the left, a sidebar contains navigation icons. The main area shows a search bar with 'start a blog' and a dropdown for 'English / United States'. Below the search bar, it lists '371 Keyword Ideas' with filters for Suggestions (371), Related (2,580), Questions (72), Prepositions (34), and Comparisons (22). A table lists keyword ideas with columns for Keyword, Vol, CPC, PD, and SD. The first row is 'start a blog' with Vol 60,500, CPC \$8.79, PD 68, and SD 52. Other rows include 'how to start a blog', 'to start a blog', 'how start a blog', 'start a blog how to', 'how start a blog for free', 'start a blog for free', and 'how start a blog and make money'. On the right, the 'Keyword Overview: start a blog' section shows a profile picture of Neil Patel and a text box stating: 'The average web page that ranks in the top 10 has 377 backlinks and a domain score of 85.' Below this is a table with columns: Google SERP, Est. Visits, Links, DS, and Social Shares. The table lists the top 8 ranking pages for 'start a blog'.

	GOOGLE SERP	EST. VISITS	LINKS	DS	SOCIAL SHARES
1	bloggingbasics1...	18,391	754	71	6,696
2	wix.com/start/bl...	9,801	234	95	100
3	ryrob.com/how-...	5,886	496	83	3,599
4	theblogstarter.c...	3,986	827	89	2,854
5	neilpatel.com/h...	2,837	322	91	2,360
6	quicksprout.com...	2,044	71	90	32
7	amylynnandrew...	1,548	180	67	16,814
8	wpbeginner.co...	1,191	700	90	35,119

It shows even variation of keywords.

So to rank for the keyword "start a blog" you need 377 backlinks and 85 DA.

Those are indicative data of the estimation of effort needed to rank.

Another fundamental datum, don't just guest post on any site, find the websites with 40+ DA to post your articles with your links.

Now your site is getting some traffic. It is possible to monetize through services you are offering or through affiliate marketing.

There are other ways to monetize a site, and if you want to make it truly passive, the solution is affiliate marketing.

More to come on this.

Hope you have a better idea of HOW TO START A BLOG!

If you have suggestions or questions on the topic "How to start a blog" post a comment below or contact me.

