WORDPRESS
101
SCHOOL
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New to WordPress? Welcome! There's a lot to learn, but we'll take it slow and steady to help you become a WordPress pro in no time. By the end of this ebook, you'll know what WordPress is, the basics of using it, and where to go next to learn more!

Ready to learn all things WordPress? Let's jump in.

What is WordPress?

"WordPress is web software you can use to create a beautiful website, blog, or app. We like to say that WordPress is both free and priceless at the same time." – WordPress.org

In other words, WordPress is software that makes it incredibly easy for anyone to build and manage their own website. While it started as simple blogging software, WordPress is now a full content management system (CMS), allowing you to build virtually any type of website on it – blogs, eCommerce sites, portfolios, business sites, anything.

WordPress Stats

25%	percentage of websites powered by WordPress
50 thousand	WordPress websites created daily
76.5 million	WordPress blogs
409 million	people who visit WordPress blogs monthly

Source: DMR

The best part about WordPress, though, is that everything is completely open source. This means that there are people all over the world who contribute to it, and that you can use it for free!

So now, let's talk about what it takes to build a WordPress site.

Building WordPress sites

To set up a WordPress site, there are three things you need to get started:

1. A domain
2. A web host
3. WordPress installed on your site

A domain is the address for your site, and what people will type into the browser to access it. For example, Flywheel's domain is getflywheel.com. To buy a domain, we recommend using Hover.

As for the second step, a web host, that's where Flywheel comes in! We're a managed WordPress hosting platform that's built from the ground up. We make it incredibly easy to build, launch, and manage your WordPress site, whether you're a freelancer, member of an agency, or learning to build your very first WordPress site ever.

> We're a managed WordPress hosting platform that's built from the ground up.

Plus, Flywheel is a managed WordPress host, which means we only host WordPress sites. This allows our support team to specialize in all things WordPress, making them an incredibly valuable asset when you need some help with your site.

Because we're a managed WordPress host, we'll also take care of that third step for you, installing WordPress on your site! With other hosts, you have to manually install WordPress all on your own. We figured we'd take care of that little task for you, so you don't have to worry about it!

Getting ready to set up your first site on Flywheel? We're here to help make the process as easy as possible. First, find out which pricing plan is right for you. Once you're ready to build your site, follow this simple ebook to build, launch, and manage your first site on Flywheel.

So now that you know what WordPress is and what you need to set up a site, let's talk about some of the specific tools you'll use to customize your site.

Dashboard / wp-admin

The Dashboard is the screen you see when you log in to your WordPress site. You can customize the widgets that appear on the Dashboard, giving you the perfect overview of your site.

To log in to your site, you simply type "/wp-admin" after the site name in the browser. For example, we use www.getflywheel.com/wp-admin.

Pages / Posts

Posts are used to publish articles to your WordPress site's blog. You can assign categories, add media, or keep them simple with text.

WordPress pages are the pages that make up your site. Use these to make about pages, contact pages, and more.

To add a page to your site, go to Pages in the Admin Dashboard. Likewise, to add a post to your site, go to Posts in the Admin Dashboard. From there, you can add new pages/posts, or edit existing ones.

Plugins

Plugins are the easiest way to add functionality to your WordPress site. These are pieces of software that you install on your site, and then control through the dashboard. Plugins can do anything from adding contact forms to your site to integrating your Instagram feed to showing an event calendar. The possibilities are endless!

To add a plugin to your site, go to Plugins in the Admin Dashboard. From there you can add new plugins, or manage any that you've already installed. To install a new plugin, you can either search through the WordPress Plugin Directory, or upload one yourself.

> “Plugins are the easiest way to add functionality to your WordPress site.

Themes / Child Themes

WordPress themes control the appearance of your site. There are thousands of themes available for download, or you can build your own.

If you want to customize a theme, building a child theme is the way to do it. Child themes use existing themes (parent themes) to build off of and allow you to add or remove your own code. Then if the parent theme is updated, you won't lose your customizations.

To add a theme to your site, go to Appearance > Themes in the Admin Dashboard. From there you can add new themes, or manage any that you've already installed. To install a new theme, you can either search through the WordPress Theme Directory, or upload a child theme yourself.

Customizer

The Customizer allows you to preview and modify your site's appearance, including colors, widgets, header, and more. It's incredibly useful for making small changes to your site's design, and super easy to use.

To use the Customizer, go to Appearance > Customize in the Admin Dashboard. From there, you can make changes to your site and see a live preview. If you're happy with the changes, hit save, but if not, no worries! You can simply go back to your previous settings.

The Core

The WordPress core is the foundation upon which every single WordPress site is built. It only has one rule: don't mess with it!

The Codex

The Codex is the all-inclusive online manual for all things WordPress. You can find documentation for everything that pertains to WordPress there, so if you have a question, The Codex can probably answer it, or at least give you more information.

This is really just the beginning of your WordPress vocabulary. For a more complete guide, check out The WordPress Designer's Glossary.

Now that you've got the basics of WordPress down, you're ready to start experimenting on your own!

Take your WordPress knowledge to the next level

One of the wonderful things about WordPress is that there's always more to learn. And as the web evolves, so do best practices for designers. Thankfully there are plenty of online resources to help you keep up, whether you're just starting out or just looking to learn more. If you're ready to expand your skills, sign up for one of these online courses for WordPress designers.

Learn WordPress

Treehouse has put together a fantastic introductory guide for new WordPress users. You'll learn how to install WordPress, gain a basic understanding of how to build a site, and begin to cover topics such as user roles and admin settings.

WP 101

This site will help you learn WordPress in just one hour! Their video library is always up to date with the latest version of WordPress so you can always stay current with your practices. Pay per month, annually, or even a flat rate of $75 for lifetime access.

WordPress essentials

This course by WP Apprentice will teach you all about the essentials of WordPress and help you become confident in your web design work. Lifetime access is $47, plus you can learn at your own pace – you can rewatch videos when you need to or revisit tricky topics.

How to Properly Make a Website with WordPress - Beginner's Tutorial

This course by James Stafford will teach you how to set up a WordPress site step-by-step. You'll learn how to drive traffic, gain new customers, and increase cash flow. The best part – you can enroll for free!

Speeding Up WordPress

Once you've gotten the hang of creating a WordPress site, learn how to make it faster. This course by Topher DeRosia will help you speed up your site with some super simple tricks. You will need to take the WordPress Beginner course from OSTraining first, but for $15 a month, you get access to all courses.

Get involved in the WordPress community

One of the coolest things about the WordPress community is just how large and inclusive it is. From developers to designers, agencies to freelancers, and pros to beginners, the WordPress community includes a lot of people from all over the world.

And part of the reason the WordPress community has grown so big is that so many people are invested in helping it grow. Developers are constantly developing new themes and plugins, designers are creating beautiful sites, WordPress users helps each other in forums, and volunteers organize local meetups to help connect members of the community.

Honestly, it's just a really great community to be a part of. And getting involved can help you in several different ways:

1. You'll make lifelong connections with people who, one day, might just be your next business partner.
2. You're sure to learn something new, even once you get the hang of WordPress.
3. You'll help the WordPress community continue to grow and improve. And as WordPress is something that you're learning to use (and hopefully love!), it'll be pretty rewarding to give back to it.

Ready to get involved? We can guarantee it'll be an enjoyable, rewarding, and incredibly fun adventure. Here are some simple ways to start:

Join online WordPress groups

One of the easiest ways to get involved with the WordPress community is to connect with other WordPress users on social media. This is a great way to see new products that developers create, offer any wisdom you can share to WordPress beginners, and ask for help if you need it.

If you're digging this ebook, you should consider following Layout, Flywheel's design publication. We cover topics concerning all aspects of WordPress designers' lives, including best practices, business advice, inspiration round-ups, and tutorials.

Attend local meetups and conferences

Looking to get involved locally in your community instead of online? Try to find a WordPress meetup or conference to attend. This may not be applicable in all cities and might require some travel on your part, but that can also be part of the experience.

While there are plenty of conferences you could attend that discuss design and development, WordCamp is entirely dedicated to all things WordPress. Plus, these conferences are located all over the world! They are locally organized and a fantastic way to meet other enthusiastic WordPress users. Plus, they're just an overall good time!

To find a conference near you, just visit the official WordCamp website.

Follow popular WordPress blogs

Looking for more of a passive approach to getting involved in the WordPress community? Simply follow along with some popular WordPress blogs. This will help you stay current in the WordPress world and help you learn a new trick or two.

The WordPress community is a truly fantastic group of people. Together, we're helping each other learn more about this open-source platform that we love, developing incredible new products to make each other's lives easier, and building a greater online experience for everyone. In short: It's a great community to get involved with. For more ways to get involved, check out our full guide here.

Class dismissed

If you've made it this far, congratulations! You've passed WordPress 101 with flying colors. While there is plenty more that you could learn, you now have the foundation to successfully master any of your WordPress dreams.

What is Flywheel?

Flywheel is a delightful platform that empowers designers, developers, and digital agencies to focus on what they do best — building beautiful, functional sites for their clients. We make it a breeze to create and develop WordPress sites, handle hosting, manage projects, and ultimately scale your business.

Stop wasting time on server management, security plugins, caching, and all those other boring repetitive tasks that take your focus away from growing your business and jeopardize your relationship with clients. Get Flywheel and get back to doing what you love.

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