

# A WordPress.com Quick Start Guide

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## About WordPress:

WordPress is used by 33.3% of all the websites, that is a content management system market share of more than 60.0%. Started in 2003, it is now the largest self-hosted blogging tool in the world.

*“WordPress is an Open Source project, which means there are hundreds of people all over the world working on it. (More than most commercial platforms.) It also means you are free to use it for anything from your recipe site to a Fortune 500 website without paying anyone a license fee and a number of other important freedoms.”*

WordPress comes in two flavors: the fully hosted [WordPress.com](http://WordPress.com), and the self-hosted version, whose software is available for free at [WordPress.org](http://WordPress.org). Most of the custom build work I do for businesses which need a unique look and more sophisticated functionality uses the self-hosted version. Details: <https://en.support.wordpress.com/com-vs-org/>

## Different Builders:

<b>Squarespace, Wix, Weebly (paid)</b>	<b>WordPress.com (free or paid)</b>
The companies own your content and data. Free versions place ads.	You own your content and data. Free version puts ads on your contact page.
Easier to learn	A little more of a learning curve, becoming more intuitive
Hard to export content if you want to change builders later	Easy to export content, transform into self-hosted site later if desired.
Support with paid plan	Can purchase paid support; huge community of developers and forums for DIY support
Not set up for SEO well; need to purchase more modules	Set up for SEO out of box. Also, increasingly, accessibility
Not open source - code relies on paid employees	Open source - developers all over the world continually improving the code
<i>Ideal for:</i> 1-time events like weddings, don't need to be found online	<i>Ideal for:</i> blogging, business, when you need to be found online

## Building a site

### **Step 1: Assemble your content**

- Google Drive to store text & images
- thestocks2.im (for royalty-free images)
- Paletton.com for color schemes (also palettes are provided in the dashboard)
- Upload videos to YouTube or Vimeo to keep your site lightweight
- LastPass/OnePassword recommended password managers
- WeTransfer.com -- sending large files over email size

### **Step 2: Sign up for an account at WordPress.com**

A basic site is automatically generated for you! To add content, just click on “add post”. This is the 5-minute version of getting up and running. Under one account, you can have a number of different sites.

Free vs paid: The \$5/month Personal plan allows you to use your own domain name, remove the (light) advertising, customize the footer and more options. With bigger plans, you can add ecommerce and other specialized plugins to do business online or really customize the look.

### **Step 3: In the WordPress dashboard, you can (we will walk through this)**

- Choose a new theme (your content will stay), get theme help
- Use the customizer to change colors
- Add posts or pages
- Add users
- Decide what shows up on the front page
- You can publish a post or leave it in “draft” form if you’re not ready to share it, or set it to be password protected.
- Upload media
- See statistics how many visits your site gets
- See how your site looks in mobile and desktop forms
- Add menus
- Allow or disallow comments

### **Step 4: Share your work, invite people to visit your site.**

**For additional help with WordPress.com (the WordPress-hosted version):**

**<https://en.support.wordpress.com/>**

**Free help for WordPress.org (the self-hosted version)**

**[https://codex.wordpress.org/New\\_To\\_WordPress\\_-\\_Where\\_to\\_Start](https://codex.wordpress.org/New_To_WordPress_-_Where_to_Start)**