

Setting Up Your First Blog

brought to you by Vic Bilson

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So you have finally decided to take the plunge and create your first blog, don't worry this is not as difficult as it might sound. This short guide will help take you through the process and result in you having your own blog ready to be filled with content.

Step One: Choosing a Free or Paid Blog

If you are setting up a blog for your business then it will be worth your while to get a paid blog. All this actually means is that you will be purchasing your own domain name and opening up a hosting account for your blog.

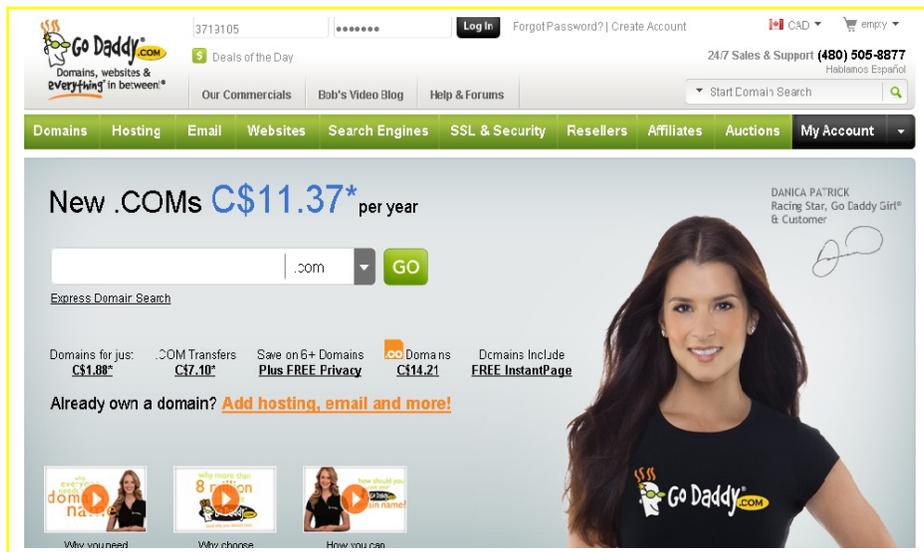
If you just want a personal blog you can opt for a free method by using a service such as blogger dot com. The downside to this is that you could run the potential of waking up one morning and your blog has been shut down. This does happen so this is just a word of warning.

For the purpose of this report we will follow the paid method and create a blog using Wordpress.

Step Two: Choosing a Domain Name

You will need to purchase a domain name for your new blog. This could be your name at dot com or something to describe your business. A domain name will run you around \$10 and can be purchased at:

[Go Daddy dot com](http://GoDaddy.com)



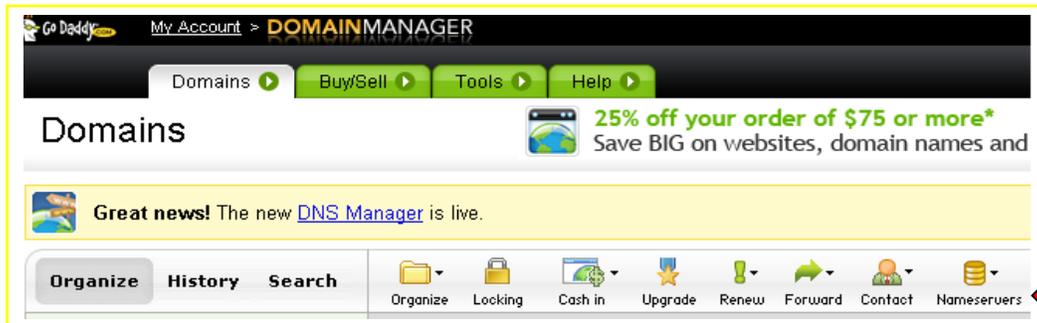
The screenshot displays the GoDaddy.com homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the GoDaddy logo, a phone number (480) 505-8877, and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, a green banner highlights the main offer: "New .COMs C\$11.37* per year". A search bar is provided for domain selection, with a "GO" button. To the right of the search bar is a photo of Danica Patrick, a racing star, with her signature and name. Below the main offer, there are several promotional boxes: "Domains for just C\$1.88*", ".COM Transfers C\$7.10*", "Save on 6+ Domains Plus FREE Privacy C\$14.21", and "Domains Include FREE InstantPage". A link "Already own a domain? Add hosting, email and more!" is also visible. At the bottom, there are three small video thumbnails with titles like "Why you need", "Who chooses", and "How you can".

To save some money you can try doing a quick search for coupon codes which will help get you a cheaper price at final checkout.

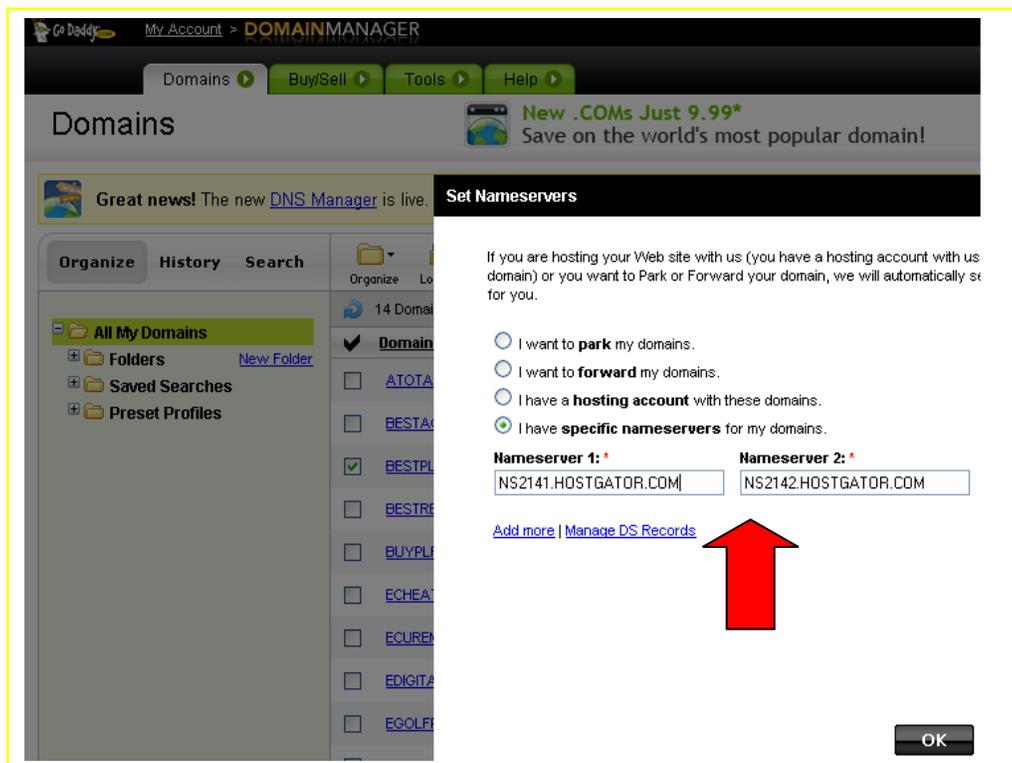
Step Three: Setting Your Name Servers

To do this you will need to login to your godaddy account or the account associated with your domain name.

Click on My Account – Domain Manager and then place a check against your domain name. Look to the right and you will see where it says Name servers and click on this tab.



This will open up the next screen:



After hitting ok your domain will now be redirected to your hosting account. This can take up to twenty four hours to populate but is normally done faster. To get your name server id's you will first need to sign up for a hosting account.

Step Four: Hosting Account

Again there are several hosting accounts that you can use. I prefer to use [GVO](#) as they allow you to pay a monthly fee that also includes an income opportunity attached. Some hosting companies offer cheaper rates but don't include the additional web marketing services included in a GVO account. Right now you can get a [HostThenProfit](#) account at GVO that allows you to host up to 4 different domains for as low as \$19.97.

After creating an account for your domain, use the information provided to set your name servers above.

Step Five: Installing Wordpress

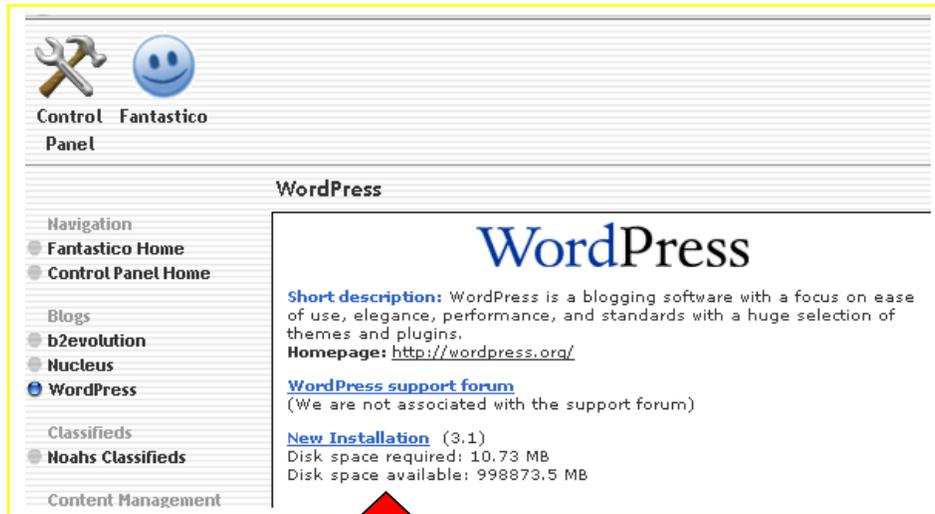
Create your account and then login to your cpanel. You will see a page like this:



Click on the Fantastico button above and you will be come to this page:



Click on Wordpress and then New Installation on the following screen.



The screenshot shows the Fantastico Control Panel interface. At the top left, there are icons for a wrench and a smiley face, with the text "Control Fantastico Panel". Below this is a navigation menu with categories: "Navigation" (Fantastico Home, Control Panel Home), "Blogs" (b2evolution, Nucleus, WordPress), "Classifieds" (Noahs Classifieds), and "Content Management". The main content area is titled "WordPress" and features the WordPress logo. Below the logo, there is a "Short description" of WordPress, a "Homepage" link to <http://wordpress.org/>, a "WordPress support forum" link with a note that the user is not associated with it, and a "New Installation (3.1)" link. Below the "New Installation" link, it specifies "Disk space required: 10.73 MB" and "Disk space available: 998873.5 MB". A red arrow points to the "New Installation" link.

In the next section fill out the details as prompted

Installation location

Install on domain

Install in directory

Leave empty to install in the root directory of the domain (access example: http://domain/).
Enter only the directory name to install in a directory (for **http://domain/name/** enter **name** only). This directory SHOULD NOT exist, it will be automatically created!

Admin access data

Administrator-username
(you need this to enter the protected admin area)

Password
(you need this to enter the protected admin area)

Base configuration

Admin nickname

Admin e-mail (your email address)

Site name

Description

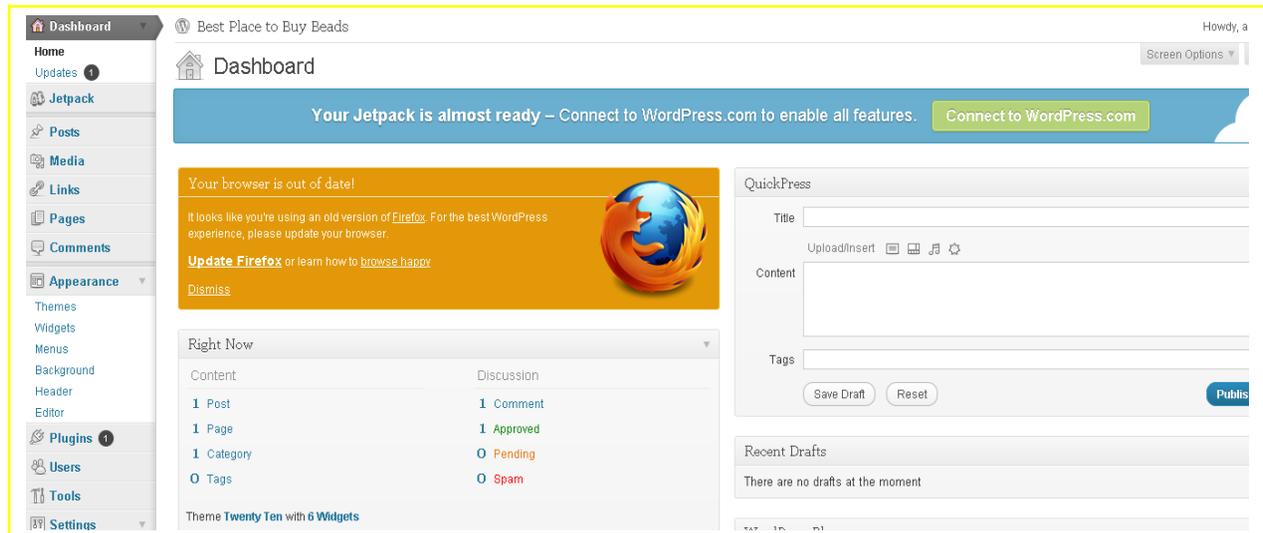
The system will then tell you to bookmark your login information. Choose the option to email the information to yourself and then simply save it into a folder in your email account.

Step Six: Logging Into Your Wordpress Account

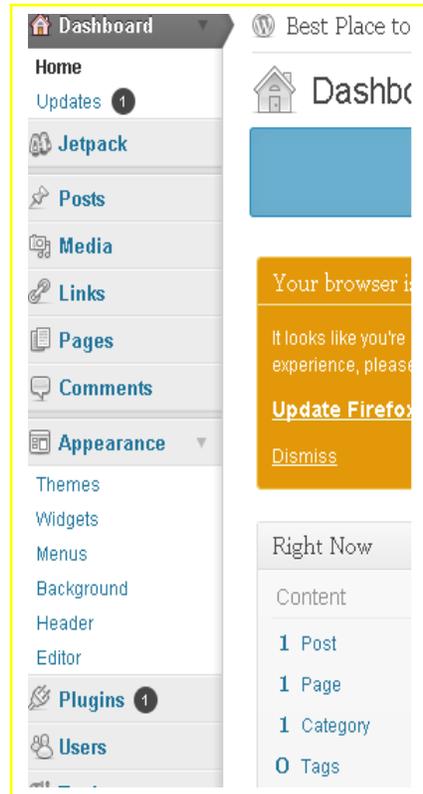
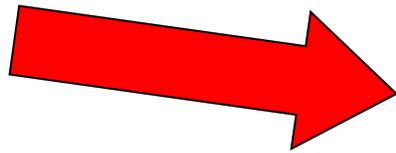
Open up your email from wordpress and click on the admin link to your site:

A screenshot of the WordPress login page. At the top left is the WordPress logo, a circular 'W' icon followed by the word 'WORDPRESS' in a serif font. Below the logo is a white login box with a light gray border. Inside the box, there are two input fields: 'Username' and 'Password'. Below the password field is a checkbox labeled 'Remember Me'. To the right of the checkbox is a blue button with white text that says 'Log In'. At the bottom of the login box, there is a blue link that says 'Lost your password?'.

You will now be at your dashboard and it will look similar to this screenshot.

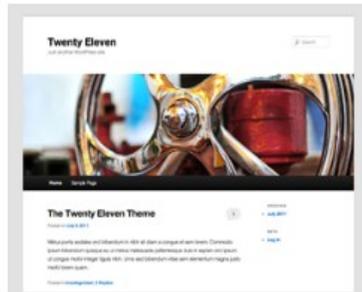
A screenshot of the WordPress dashboard. The top left shows the 'Dashboard' menu with a home icon. The top right shows the user name 'Howdy, a' and a 'Screen Options' dropdown. The main content area has a blue banner that says 'Your Jetpack is almost ready - Connect to WordPress.com to enable all features.' with a 'Connect to WordPress.com' button. Below the banner is a yellow warning box that says 'Your browser is out of date!' and 'It looks like you're using an old version of Firefox. For the best WordPress experience, please update your browser.' with a 'Update Firefox' link and a Firefox logo. To the right of the warning box is the 'QuickPress' editor with fields for 'Title', 'Content', and 'Tags', and buttons for 'Save Draft', 'Reset', and 'Publish'. Below the editor is the 'Recent Drafts' section, which says 'There are no drafts at the moment'. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with categories like 'Home', 'Updates', 'Jetpack', 'Posts', 'Media', 'Links', 'Pages', 'Comments', 'Appearance', 'Plugins', 'Users', 'Tools', and 'Settings'. The 'Appearance' menu is expanded, showing 'Themes', 'Widgets', 'Menus', 'Background', 'Header', and 'Editor'. The 'Plugins' menu has a notification icon. The 'Right Now' section shows a summary of site statistics: 1 Post, 1 Page, 1 Category, 0 Tags, 1 Comment, 1 Approved, 0 Pending, and 0 Spam. The theme is 'Twenty Ten with 6 Widgets'.

So far you have successfully installed wordpress onto your hosting account. The next step is to install a theme and then add content to your site. On the left hand side under appearance click on themes.



This will take you to a page which says Manage Themes. Wordpress comes with some basic themes which work very well. For now it is best to use one of these themes but you can always search for other free themes later on and install them in the same way.

Available Themes



Twenty Eleven 1.2 by [the WordPress team](#)

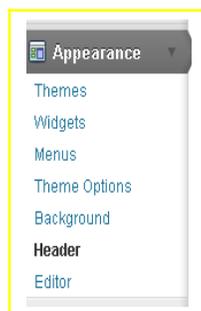
The 2011 theme for WordPress is sophisticated, lightweight, and adaptable. Make it yours with a custom menu, header image, and background — then go further with available theme options for light or dark color scheme, custom link colors, and three layout choices. Twenty Eleven comes equipped with a Showcase page template that transforms your front page into a showcase to show off your best content, widget support galore (sidebar, three footer areas, and a Showcase page widget area), and a custom “Ephemera” widget to display your Aside, Link, Quote, or Status posts. Included are styles for print and for the admin editor, support for featured images (as custom header images on posts and pages and as large images on featured “sticky” posts), and special styles for six different post formats.

[Activate](#) | [Preview](#) | [Delete](#)

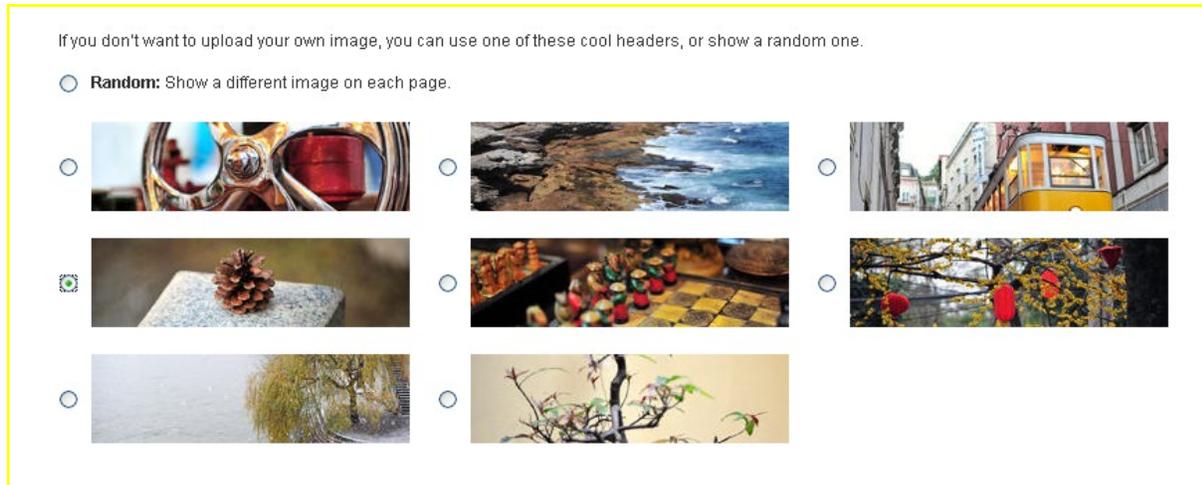
All of this theme's files are located in `/themes/twentyeleven`

The newest theme in the WordPress is their 2011 theme. To install your new theme just click on the Activate button at the bottom. To see what your theme looks like at any time just click on the name of your blog, above the words manage theme while holding the CTRL key.

If you now look under the appearance theme you will see that some new choices have been installed.



Clicking on the Theme Options will bring up options for installing a header. If you click on headers you will see that there are some preinstalled headers which you can use for now.



Select which header you would like to use for now and click on Save Changes. You can always come back and upload a new header of your choice. This theme actually tells you the size so if you have some create one then you can give them these dimensions 1000 x 288 pixels.

Clicking on the background will allow you to change the color behind your blog, you can experiment with this to get a look that suits your blog.

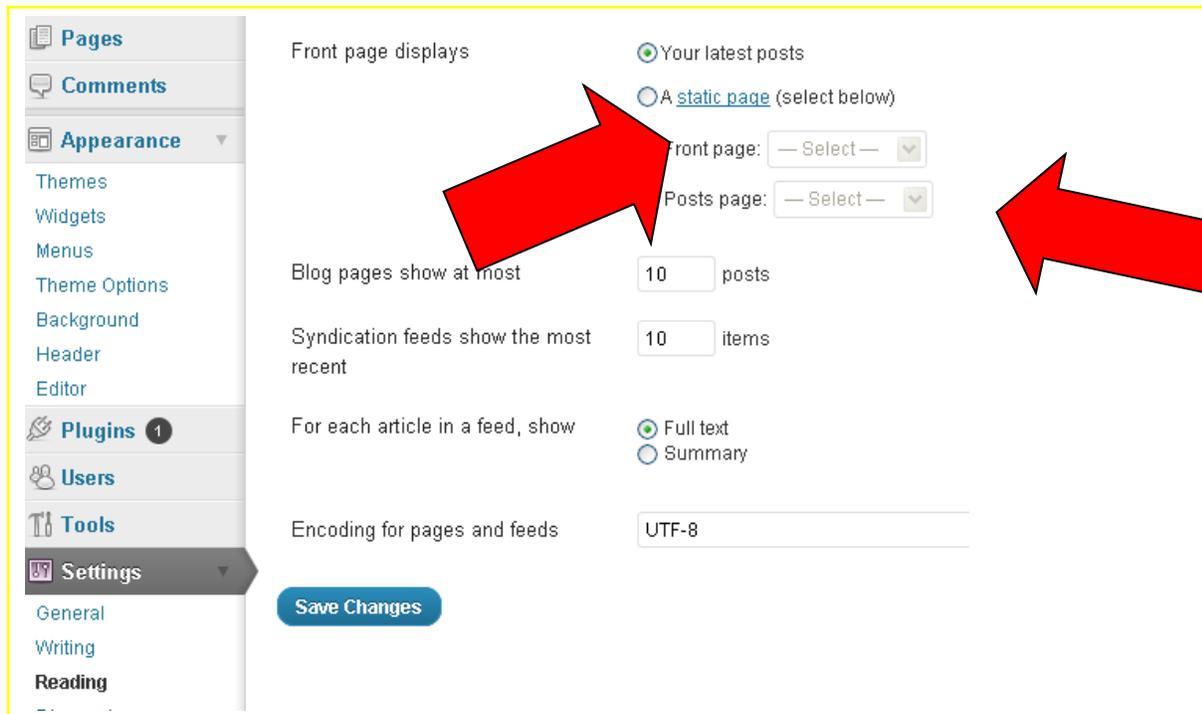
The next area that you want to make a few changes to is under the Settings tab in your dashboard.

Menu	Site address (URL)	<input type="text" value="http://"/>	E.
Theme Options	E-mail address	<input type="text"/>	T)
Background	Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Anyone can register	
Header	New User Default Role	<input type="text" value="Subscriber"/>	
Editor	Timezone	<input type="text" value="Toronto"/>	UTC time is 202:
Plugins 1	<i>Choose a city in the same timezone as you.</i>		
Users	This timezone is currently in daylight saving time.		
Tools	Standard time begins on: November 6, 2011 2:00 am.		
Settings	Date Format	<input checked="" type="radio"/> July 26, 2011 <input type="radio"/> 2011/07/26 <input type="radio"/> 07/26/2011 <input type="radio"/> 26/07/2011 <input type="radio"/> Custom: <input type="text" value="F j, Y"/> July 26, 2011	Documentation on date and time formatting.
General	Time Format	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2:08 pm <input type="radio"/> 2:08 PM <input type="radio"/> 14:08 <input type="radio"/> Custom: <input type="text" value="g:i a"/> 2:08 pm	
Writing	Week Starts On	<input type="text" value="Monday"/>	
Reading			
Discussion			
Media			
Privacy			
Permalinks			
Limit Login Attempts			
WP Super Cache			
← Collapse menu			

General Tab: this is where you can add your email address and the correct time zone. Select the date and time formats that you wish to display on your blog.

If you have a blog which is a store then you may wish not to show the date. To do this simply select the custom box and erase the F j Y letters. This removes the date without messing around with coding.

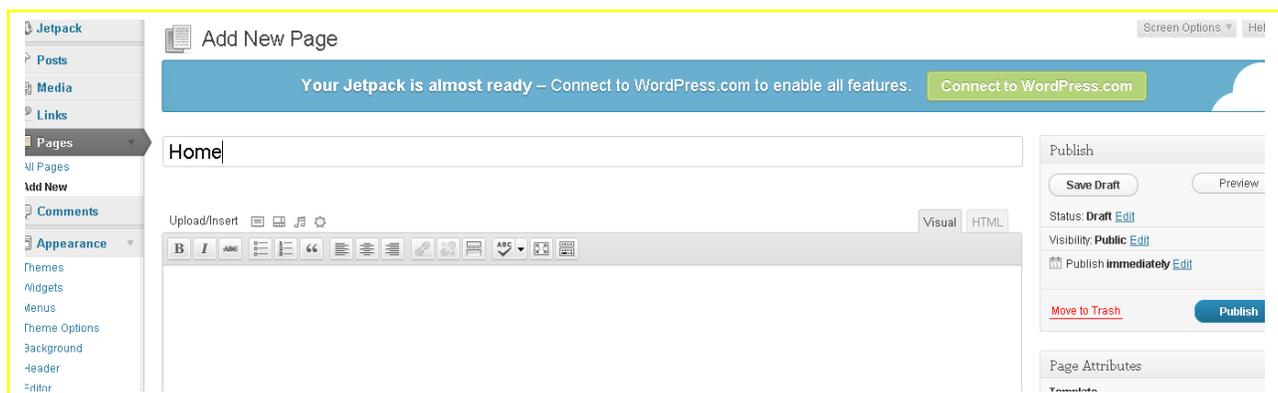
Reading Tab: this is where you select how you want your content to display. You want to decide if your blog is more of a static website than a general blog where the latest post will appear first.



To have your posts display as a blog then just leave the settings the way they are. To create a static page you will need to do the following first.

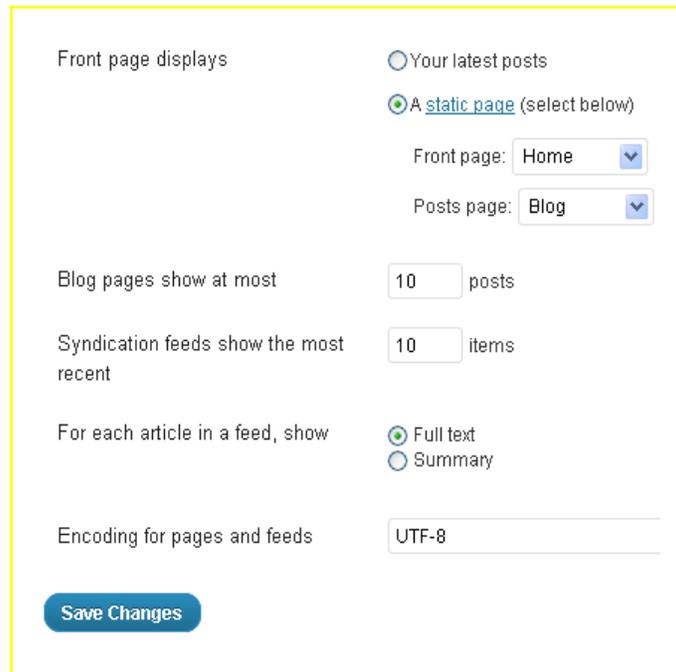
Go back to your dashboard and click on Pages, delete the default page and then click on create new. You are going to create two pages.

1. Home
2. Blog



After naming the page hit publish and then repeat the process for the second page.

Next you will return to the reading page and make the following changes:



Front page displays

Your latest posts

A [static page](#) (select below)

Front page:

Posts page:

Blog pages show at most posts

Syndication feeds show the most recent items

For each article in a feed, show

Full text

Summary

Encoding for pages and feeds

[Save Changes](#)

Your blog is now set up to have a static home page.

Let's go back to the Settings Tab and the next one you want to check is the privacy tab. Insure that the box which says to make your website visible to everyone is checked. Otherwise no one will ever find your blog!

Next go into the Permalinks setting and make the following change:

You want to use the custom structure feature and use the following permalink:

`/%postname%/`

There are variations to this and some people prefer to use this one:

`/%post_id%//%postname%/`

Both will work and this allows your category to be displayed in the URL of your post which helps for SEO purposes.

Common settings

<input type="radio"/> Default	<code>http://bestplacetobuybeads.com/?p=123</code>
<input type="radio"/> Day and name	<code>http://bestplacetobuybeads.com/2011/07/26/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Month and name	<code>http://bestplacetobuybeads.com/2011/07/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Numeric	<code>http://bestplacetobuybeads.com/archives/123</code>
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Custom Structure	<input data-bbox="609 506 992 541" type="text" value="/%postname%/"/>

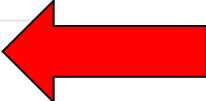
Optional

If you like, you may enter custom structures for your category and tag URLs here. For example, using `topic:` these blank the defaults will be used.

Category base

Tag base

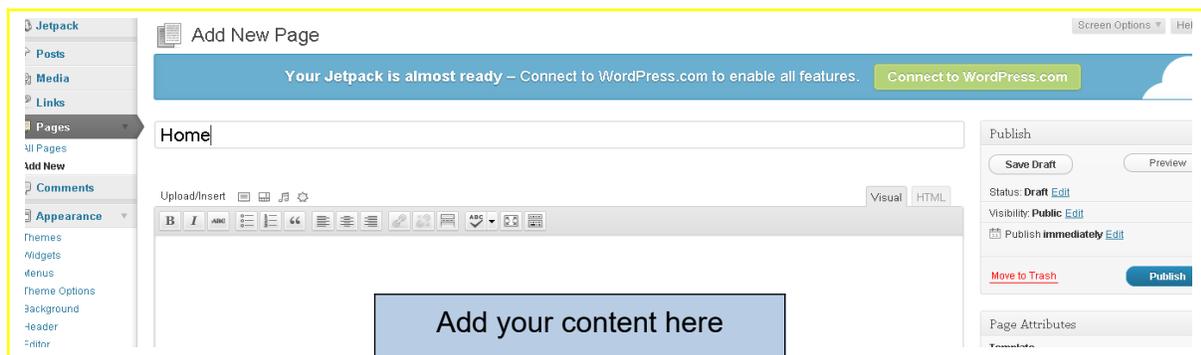
[Save Changes](#)



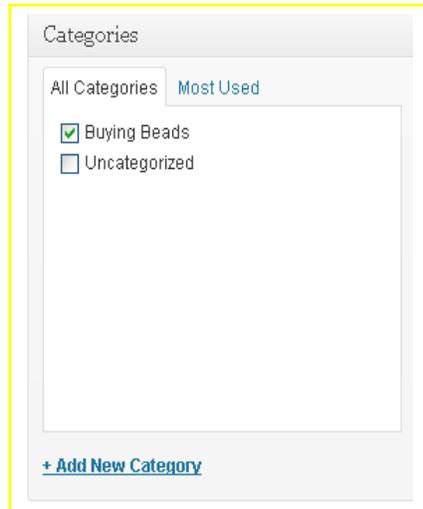
Adding Content to Your Site

You are now ready to go back to your home page and add content to your site.

Simply click on pages then click on edit home page and this will open up in your dashboard.

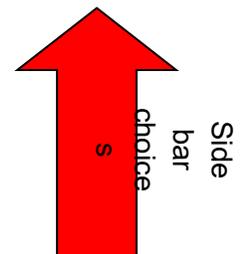
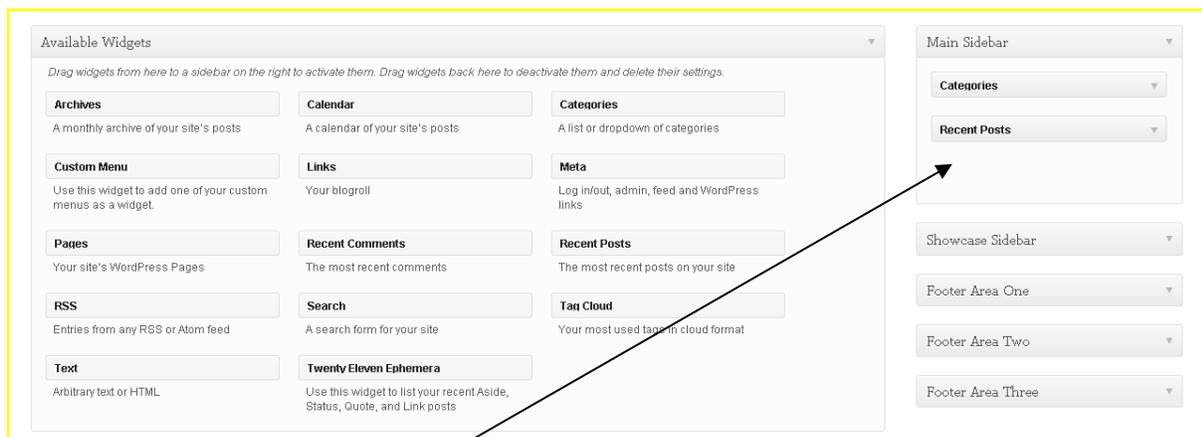


Then add your content to your page. Before publishing your page you will want to add a category to assign this content to.



When you are happy with your content you are ready to hit publish and your blog is now officially open for business. Congratulations!

Some other things you will want to do are to go back into your dashboard and visit the Widgets area. This is where you can have various items displayed on your blog such as recent posts, links, a search box and more. You simply drag the widget to where you want it to display and hit save.



Plugins

Plugins are pieces of software that add features to your word press blog. There are ones that help your page be found by the search engines. Then there are those that will add a contact page to your site.

Some common plugins you might wish to use are:

- All in One SEO
- Contact Form 7
- Google XML SiteMap
- Easy Privacy Policy – need this to confirm to Google Policies
- WP DB Backup – creates a weekly backup of your site which is emailed to you
- Share This & Sexy Bookmarks allow readers to share your posts via social sites

You will now have a good foundation for your blog and as you learn more you can easily come back and make changes. For now it is important to add content regularly to your blog.

