

Wordpress for beginners.

A selection of articles from the Wordpress documentation available at <http://codex.wordpress.org>

Introduction to Blogging

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if (window.showTocToggle) { var tocShowText = "show"; var tocHideText = "hide"; showTocToggle(); } What is a "blog"?

"Blog" is an abbreviated version of "weblog," which is a term used to describe web sites that maintain an ongoing chronicle of information. A blog is a frequently updated, personal website featuring diary-type commentary and links to articles on other Web sites. Blogs range from the personal to the political, and can focus on one narrow subject or a whole range of subjects.

Many blogs focus on a **particular** topic, such as web design, home staging, sports, or mobile technology. Some are more eclectic, presenting links to all types of other sites. And others are more like personal journals, presenting the author's daily life and thoughts.

Generally speaking (although there are exceptions), blogs tend to have a few things in common:

- A main content area with articles listed chronologically, newest on top. Often, the articles are organized into categories.
- An archive of older articles.
- A way for people to leave comments about the articles.
- A list of links to other related sites, sometimes called a "blogroll".
- One or more "[feeds](#)" like RSS, Atom or RDF files.

Some blogs may have additional features beyond these.

The Blog Content

Content is the [raison d'être](#) for any web site. Retail sites feature a catalog of products. University sites contain information about their campuses, curriculum, and faculty. News sites show the latest news stories. For a personal blog, you might have a bunch of observations, or reviews. Without some sort of updated content, there is little reason to visit a web site more than once.

On a blog, the content consists of articles (also sometimes called "[posts](#)" or "entries") that the author(s) writes. Yes, some blogs have multiple authors, each writing his/her own articles. Typically, blog authors compose their articles in a web-based interface, built into the blogging system itself. Some blogging systems also support the ability to use [stand-alone "weblog client" software](#), which allows authors to write articles offline and upload them at a later time.

Comments

Want an interactive website? Wouldn't it be nice if the readers of a website could leave comments, tips or impressions about the site or a specific article? With blogs, they can! Posting comments is one of the most exciting features of blogs.

Most blogs have a method to allow visitors to [leave comments](#). There are also nifty ways for authors of other blogs to leave comments without even visiting the blog! Called "[pingbacks](#)" or "[trackbacks](#)", they can inform other bloggers whenever they cite an article from another site in their own articles. All this ensures that online conversations can be maintained painlessly among various site users and websites.

The Difference Between a Blog and CMS?

Software that provides a method of managing your website is commonly called a CMS or "[Content Management System](#)". Many blogging software programs are considered a specific type of CMS. They provide the features required to create and maintain a blog, and can make publishing on the internet as simple as writing an article, giving it a title, and organizing it under (one or more) categories. While some CMS programs offer vast and sophisticated features, a basic blogging tool provides an interface where you can work in an easy and, to some degree, intuitive manner while it handles the logistics involved in making your composition presentable and publicly available. In other words, you get to focus on what you want to write, and the blogging tool takes care of the rest of the site management.

WordPress is one such advanced blogging tool and it provides a rich set of [features](#). Through its [Administration Panels](#), you can set options for the behavior and presentation of your weblog. Via these [Administration Panels](#), you can easily compose a [blog post](#), push a button, and be published on the internet, instantly! WordPress goes to great pains to see that your blog posts look good, the text looks beautiful, and the html code it generates conforms to web standards.

If you're just starting out, read [Getting Started with WordPress](#), which contains information on how to get WordPress set up quickly and effectively, as well as information on performing basic tasks within WordPress, like creating new posts or editing existing ones.

Things Bloggers Need to Know

In addition to understanding how your specific blogging software works, such as [WordPress](#), there are

some terms and concepts you need to know.

Archives

A blog is also a good way to keep track of articles on a site. A lot of blogs feature an archive based on dates (like a monthly or yearly archive). The front page of a blog may feature a calendar of dates linked to daily archives. Archives can also be based on categories featuring all the articles related to a specific category.

It does not stop there; you can also archive your posts by author or alphabetically. The possibilities are endless. This ability to organize and present articles in a composed fashion is much of what makes blogging a popular personal publishing tool.

Feeds

A Feed is a function of special software that allows "Feedreaders" to access a site automatically looking for new content and then post updates about that new content to another site. This provides a way for users to keep up with the latest and hottest information posted on different blogging sites. Some Feeds include RSS (alternately defined as "Rich Site Summary" or "Really Simple Syndication"), Atom or RDF files. Dave Shea, author of the web design weblog [Mezzoblue](#) has written [a comprehensive summary](#) of feeds.

Blogrolls

A [blogroll](#) is a list, sometimes categorized, of links to webpages the author of a blog finds worthwhile or interesting. The links in a blogroll are usually to other blogs with similar interests. The blogroll is often in a "sidebar" on the page or featured as a dedicated separate web page. [BlogRolling](#) and [blo.gs](#) are two websites that provide some interesting functions or help related to blogrolls. These sites provide methods for users to maintain these rolls effortlessly and integrate them into weblogs. WordPress has a built-in [Link Manager](#) so users do not have to depend on a third party for creating and managing their blogroll.

Syndication

A feed is a machine readable (usually XML) content publication that is updated regularly. Many weblogs publish a feed (usually RSS, but also possibly Atom and RDF and so on, as described above). There are tools out there that call themselves "feedreaders". What they do is they keep checking specified blogs to see if they have been updated, and when the blogs are updated, they display the new post, and a link to it, with an excerpt (or the whole contents) of the post. Each feed contains items that are published over time. When checking a feed, the feedreader is actually looking for new items. New items are automatically discovered and downloaded for you to read. Just so you don't have to visit all the blogs you are interested in. All you have to do with these feedreaders is to add the link to the RSS feed of all the blogs you are interested in. The feedreader will then inform you when any of the blogs have new posts in them. Most blogs have these "Syndication" feeds available for the readers to use.

Managing Comments

One of the most exciting features of blogging tools are the comments. This highly interactive feature allows users to comment upon article posts and link to your posts and comment on and recommend them. These are known as **trackbacks** and **pingbacks**. We'll also discuss how to moderate and manage

comments and how to deal with the annoying trend in "comment spam", when unwanted comments are posted to your blog.

- [Trackbacks](#)
- [Pingbacks](#)
- [Verifying Pingbacks and Trackbacks](#)
- [Comment Moderation](#)
- [Comment Spam](#)

Trackbacks

[Trackbacks](#) were originally developed by [SixApart](#), creators of the [MovableType](#) blog package. SixApart has a good [introduction to trackbacks](#):

In a nutshell, TrackBack was designed to provide a method of notification between websites: it is a method of person A saying to person B, "This is something you may be interested in." To do that, person A sends a TrackBack ping to person B.

A better explanation is this:

- Person A writes something on their blog.
- Person B wants to comment on Person A's blog, but wants her own readers to see what she had to say, and be able to comment on her own blog
- Person B posts on her own blog and sends a trackback to Person A's blog
- Person A's blog receives the trackback, and displays it as a comment to the original post. This comment contains a link to Person B's post

The idea here is that more people are introduced to the conversation (both Person A's and Person B's readers can follow links to the other's post), and that there is a level of authenticity to the trackback comments because they originated from another weblog. Unfortunately, there is no actual verification performed on the incoming trackback, and indeed they can even be faked.

Most trackbacks send to Person A only a small portion (called an "excerpt") of what Person B had to say. This is meant to act as a "teaser", letting Person A (and his readers) see some of what Person B had to say, and encouraging them all to click over to Person B's site to read the rest (and possibly comment).

Person B's trackback to Person A's blog generally gets posted along with all the comments. This means that Person A can edit the contents of the trackback on his own server, which means that the whole idea of "authenticity" isn't really solved. (*Note: Person A can only edit the contents of the trackback on his own site. He cannot edit the post on Person B's site that sent the trackback.*)

SixApart has published an [official trackback specification](#).

Pingbacks

[Pingbacks](#) were designed to solve some of the problems that people saw with trackbacks. The [official pingback documentation](#) makes pingbacks sound an awful lot like trackbacks:

For example, Yvonne writes an interesting article on her Web log. Kathleen reads Yvonne's article and comments about it, linking back to Yvonne's original post. Using pingback, Kathleen's software can automatically notify Yvonne that her post has been linked to, and Yvonne's software can then include this information on her site.

There are three significant differences between pingbacks and trackbacks, though.

1. Pingbacks and trackbacks use drastically different communication technologies (XML-RPC and HTTP POST, respectively).
2. Pingbacks support auto-discovery where the software automatically finds out the links in a post, and automatically tries to pingback those URLs, while trackbacks must be done manually by entering the trackback URL that the trackback should be sent to.
3. Pingbacks do not send any content.

The best way to think about pingbacks is as **remote comments**:

- Person A posts something on his blog.
- Person B posts on her own blog, linking to Person A's post. This automatically sends a pingback to Person A when both have pingback enabled blogs.
- Person A's blog receives the pingback, then **automatically** goes to Person B's post to confirm that the pingback did, in fact, originate there.

The pingback is generally displayed on Person A's blog as simply a link to Person B's post. In this way, all editorial control over posts rests exclusively with the individual authors (unlike the trackback excerpt, which can be edited by the trackback recipient). The automatic verification process introduces a level of authenticity, making it harder to fake a pingback.

Some feel that trackbacks are superior because readers of Person A's blog can at least see some of what Person B has to say, and then decide if they want to read more (and therefore click over to Person B's blog). Others feel that pingbacks are superior because they create a verifiable connection between posts.

Verifying Pingbacks and Trackbacks

Comments on blogs are often criticized as lacking **authority**, since anyone can post anything using any name they like: there's no verification process to ensure that the person is who they claim to be. Trackbacks and Pingbacks both aim to provide some verification to blog commenting.

Comment Moderation

[Comment Moderation](#) is a feature which allows the website owner and author to monitor and control the comments on the different article posts, and can help in tackling comment spam. It lets you moderate comments, & you can delete unwanted comments, approve cool comments and make other decisions about the comments.

Comment Spam

[Comment Spam](#) refers to useless comments (or trackbacks, or pingbacks) to posts on a blog. These are often irrelevant to the context value of the post. They can contain one or more links to other websites or domains. Spammers use Comment Spam as a medium to get higher page rank for their domains in Google, so that they can sell those domains at a higher price sometime in future or to obtain a high ranking in search results for an existing website.

Spammers are relentless; because there can be substantial money involved, they work hard at their "job." They even build automated tools (robots) to rapidly submit their spam to the same or multiple weblogs. Many webloggers, especially beginners, sometimes feel overwhelmed by Comment Spam.

There are solutions, though, to avoiding Comment Spam. WordPress includes many tools for

combating [Comment Spam](#). With a little up front effort, Comment Spam can be manageable, and certainly no reason to give up weblogging.

Pretty Permalinks

[Permalinks](#) are the permanent URLs to your individual weblog posts, as well as categories and other lists of weblog postings. A permalink is what another weblogger will use to refer to your article (or section), or how you might send a link to your story in an e-mail message. Because others may link to your individual postings, the URL to that article shouldn't change. [Permalinks](#) are intended to be **permanent** (valid for a long time).

"Pretty" Permalinks is the idea that URLs are frequently visible to the people who click them, and should therefore be crafted in such a way that they make sense, and not be filled with incomprehensible parameters. The best Permalinks are "hackable," meaning a user might modify the link text in their browser to navigate to another section or listing of the weblog. For example, this is how the default Permalink to a story might look in a default WordPress installation:

`/index.php?p=423`

How is a user to know what "p" represents? Where did the number 423 come from?

In contrast, here is a well-structured, "Pretty" Permalink which could link to the same article, once the installation is configured to modify permalinks:

`/archives/2003/05/23/my-cheese-sandwich/`

One can easily guess that the Permalink includes the date of the posting, and the title, just by looking at the URL. One might also guess that hacking the URL to be `/archives/2003/05/` would get a list of all the postings from May of 2003. Pretty (cool). For more information on possible Permalink patterns in WordPress, see [Using Permalinks](#).

Blog by email

Some blogging tools offer the ability to [email your posts](#) directly to your blog, all without direct interaction through the blogging tool interface. WordPress offers this cool feature. Using email, you can now send in your post content to a pre-determined email address & voila! Your post is published!

Post Slugs

If you're using Pretty Permalinks, the [Post Slug](#) is the title of your article post within the link. The blogging tool software may simplify or truncate your title into a more appropriate form for using as a link. A title such as "I'll Make A Wish" might be truncated to "ill-make-a-wish". In WordPress, you can change the Post Slug to something else, like "make-a-wish", which sounds better than a wish made when sick.

Excerpt

Excerpts are condensed summaries of your blog posts, with blogging tools being able to handle these in various ways. In WordPress, [Excerpts](#) can be specifically written to summarize the post, or generated automatically by using the first few paragraphs of a post or using the post up to a specific point, assigned by you.

Plugins

[Plugins](#) are cool bits of programming scripts that add additional functionality to your blog. These are often features which either enhance already available features or add them to your site.

WordPress offers simple and easy ways of adding [Plugins](#) to your blog. From the [Administration Panel](#), there is a [Plugin](#) Page. Once you have uploaded a Plugin to your WordPress plugin directory, activate it from the [Plugins Management](#) SubPanel, and sit back and watch your Plugin work. Not all Plugins are so easily installed, but WordPress Plugin authors and developers make the process as easy as possible.

Basics-A Few Blogging Tips

Starting a new blog is difficult and this can put many people off, there are then other people who have blogs with no comments or visits. You want to stand out from this crowd of millions of bloggers, you want to be one of the few hundred thousand blogs that are actually visited. So here are some simple tips to help you on your way to blogging mastery:

1. Post regularly, but don't post if you have nothing worth posting about.
2. Stick with only a few specific genres to talk about.
3. Don't put 'subscribe' and 'vote me' links all over the front page until you have people that like your blog enough to ignore them (they're usually just in the way).
4. Use a clean and simple theme if at all possible.
5. Enjoy, blog for fun, comment on other peoples' blogs (as they normally visit back).

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First Steps With WordPress

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Now What?

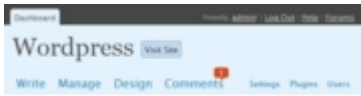
You've just completed the famous [5 Minute Installation of WordPress](#) without stress or fuss. WordPress is packed with many [amazing features](#). So now that you've got it installed, what should you do?

Let's take a step-by-step tour through your WordPress site and learn about how all the different functions work and how to make your new site your own.

During the first part of this tutorial, we ask that *you don't change anything within the program*, unless it is part of the tutorial. Just follow these simple steps and soon you will be changing everything.

Starting from the Top

Begin by logging into the [Administration Panel](#). This is the brain behind your website, the place where you can let your creativity explode, writing brilliant prose and designing the best and most lovely website possible. This is where the organization of your site begins - and this is just the start.



View Site Link

From the Administration Panel, from the top of the screen menu choose **View Site**. Like it? Don't like it? Doesn't matter, just look at it. This is where you are going to be spending a lot of time over the next few minutes, hours, weeks, months....

Test Driving Your WordPress Site

Take time to look at the site before you get into the changing of things and figuring out [how all of this works](#); it's important to see how the default WordPress Theme is laid out and works. Consider this the test drive before you start adding on all the special features.



WordPress Default Theme - Kubrick

The layout you are looking at is called a [Theme](#). It is the [Presentation](#) of your website, styling the look of the site. The default WordPress Theme features a blue "header" at the top with the title placeholder of your site. Along the side you will see some titles and links. This is your "sidebar menu." Within the main middle section of the page is the "post." At the bottom of the page is the "footer."

Let's look at the post for a moment. There is a title, and below the title is some information. This is called the *post meta data* and contains information about the post such as the date and time the post was made, the author, and the categories the post is in.

Scroll down the page and notice the bar at the end of the page. This is called the "footer," and for now it says "(your blog) is proudly powered by WordPress."

Back to the sidebar, you will see different sections with information. Among these you may find a list of [Pages](#), [Categories](#), Archives, Calendar, and [Dates](#). This is part of the menu or navigation panel that people will use to move around your site, visiting posts from different categories or time periods.

It's All in the Details

Take time to notice the smaller details of this web page layout and design. Move your mouse over the title of the article post. Notice how it changes color. This is called a *hover*. Most Themes feature a distinctive color or change when you move your mouse over a link. Move your mouse over any of the links in the sidebar. Do they change? Is the change the same? You can change your link hovers to look different in different sections of your page, but typically they should be uniform. Also look at the color of the links. How are they colored to stand out from the rest of the text?

Observe the small design details and where they are placed within the page. In the near future, you may want to change some of these details, such as the color of the title in the blue box at the top of the page.

If you remember that is called the *header* then you will know to look within the *header* section of your style sheet, the file that controls the look of your web page, when you want to make changes to it.

Take a Quick Trip Around

For now you only have one post. It is residing within a page that is laid out as your *home page* or the front page. If you click on the title of the post, it will take you to the specific page for that post. The first page or home page of your site features the most recent posts on your site. Each post title will link to the actual page of the post. Some Theme designers design their *single* post pages to look different from the home page. By clicking on the title, you are taken to another web page that looks different from the home page.



WordPress Default Theme - Single Post Look

Again, in the single post, pay attention to the layout and notice what is now different about the design elements. Is the header different? Smaller, larger, or a different color? Is there a sidebar? In the default Theme for WordPress, the sidebar disappears in the single post. Look at all the details and take note of the differences.

Posts are usually stored in [categories](#) so you can keep related topics together. Right now you only have one category, but will soon want more. Click on the single category that appears in the sidebar of the home page. You are now in a page that has been generated to display only the posts within that category. Again, take a look at the layout and see how it may be different from the home page and the single post.

Do the same with the **Archives**. You may only have one post, but look at how the pages are laid out. They may or may not change, but look at all of it to see how it all works.

All of these changes are created from only a few files called [template files](#) and you can learn more about how they work in [Stepping Into Templates](#). For now, however, let's get on with how the rest of WordPress works.

Test Drive the WordPress Admin Panels





WordPress Admin Dashboard

Now that you have an idea of how your site looks and what the different layout sections are called, it's time to test drive the [WordPress Administration](#). This is like familiarizing yourself with the dashboard of your new website. In fact, the first page you see after logging in is called [The Dashboard](#).

The Dashboard is a new feature in WordPress v1.5. It helps to keep you up to date on new and interesting bits of information from the many WordPress resources. In the corner it also features a list of the most recent activity you've done on your site.

Across the top of the Admin screen is the main menu, which says:

- [Dashboard](#)
- [Write](#)
- [Manage](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Presentation](#)
- [Plugins](#)
- [Users](#)
- [Options](#)
- [Logout \(name\)](#)



User Profile Panel

The links in the above list will take you to a series of articles that will guide you step-by-step through every aspect of the Admin panels. You're anxious to get started, so for now, let's start with the [Users panel](#).

Click on the **Users** tab. The screen will change and you will see the panel called [Profile](#). This is where you will enter information about you, the author and [administrator](#) of the site. In the next tab called [Authors and Users](#) you can set up more authors. Let's stick with you for right now. Fill in the information and click **Update Profile** when done.

Now, let's look at the powerful feature functions of the WordPress Admin.

Quick Changing the Look



The Presentation Panel

The [Presentation panel](#) allows you to change the look of your site using [Themes](#). Themes are presentation styles that completely change the look of your site. Designed by WordPress users, there are hundreds of themes available for you to choose from. In your Presentation panel, you will see two themes, classic and default. To try this quick-change process, simply select **Classic** and then click **View Site** to see how it looks. Wow, you have another look and nothing else on the site has changed. It's that easy.

Go back to the Presentation panel (**Back button** on your browser) and select **Default** to bring the design back to what you had. To see it again, click **View Site**, and there it is. Honestly, it is that simple.

Writing and Managing Posts

Back in the Admin panel, take a look at the [Write panel](#), and the [Manage panel](#). You can use the tabs under the Write Menu to write posts and Pages. Using the tabs under the Manage menu, you can manage the posts and Pages in your site.

Let's start by making your first test post in the [Write Post](#) tab.



Write Post Panel

If the screen looks a little intimidating, the Codex article on [Writing a Post](#) will take you step-by-step through the process of writing a post. Take a moment to read through the article and post your first entry and then return to this article and we'll take you onto the next step.

If you are in a hurry, then simply fill in the blanks, one by one, in the post beginning with the title and then write a little test message in the post window. This is just for a test, so you can write anything you want. When you are done, click **PUBLISH** below the post entry window and it is done. You will then see a blank Write a Post screen and you're ready to write another one. Go ahead. But do only three to

four entries. We have more exciting work ahead of us.

Now that you've gotten a feel for writing posts, you can view your posts by clicking View Site at the top of the screen. Now it's time to get down to the real work.

Planning Session

All good websites come from a good plan. Sounds redundant, but it's true. If you want to create a good and solid website, you need a good and solid plan. I know it's hard to do, and I know you want to keep poking and playing with this exciting program, but it is time to take a break away from your computer and turn to the old paper and pen. That's right, we're going back in time to when people actually wrote things down.

On a piece of notebook paper, or whatever is lying around, describe your site. Take five to twenty minutes to come up with a purpose for your site, or better yet, call it your Mission Statement.

Answer the following questions:

1. What am I going to do with this?
2. Who is going to read this?
3. What kinds of information will I be posting?
4. Why am I doing this?
5. Who am I doing this for?
6. How often am I going to be posting and adding information?

Now, compile this information into a paragraph so it looks like this:

This website will be dedicated to X, Y, and Z,
and cover the topics of A, B, and C. The audience will
be _____. I will be adding
posts every _____ about _____.
I am doing this because _____.

Using the Information

From this exercise, we've gathered a lot of information. We've uncovered information on how you might layout and design your site. If you know your audience is mostly made up of young people under the age of 25, you will probably want a fashionable look ranging from wild colors and crazy graphics to dark foreboding tones. Something appropriate for that generation. If you are providing factual information about a serious subject, then you will probably want a more conservative look where the information is more important than a lot of pop and flash.

You probably already have a design idea in mind, or you will be copying over from your previous site, but take a moment to use this information to reconsider your design, and to see how what you want will work with the WordPress options.

You have also uncovered the possible categories for your site. The topics and subjects you will be

covering are listed in your purpose statement. Let's say your purpose statement said,

"The website will be dedicated to providing news and information on computers, web pages, and the Internet and cover the topics of computer tips, web page design, and Internet news."

Your topics are your categories. Write your categories down below your purpose paragraph and notes about your web page design.

Now, what subcategories might be under these topics? Under **Computer Tips**, you might want to segregate them by **Windows**, **Linux**, and **Mac**. Or maybe **Software** and **Hardware**. You can have sub-sub-categories, but let's stop with subcategories for right now. Write these down.

Remember the question about *why* you are doing this? Is it because you have valuable and timely information or knowledge to share, because you want to talk about a subject that interests you, or maybe because you just think it will be fun to do. Why not? Everyone's doing it!

Understanding the timeliness of the information you want to present on your site helps you organize the information on your website. Your website is organized by several different methods. If the date of *when* you posted the information is critical to the success of the page, then having links to your [posts referenced by date](#) is important. If the information itself is more important and timeless, then having your posts [referenced by category](#) is the best choice.

Have you noticed that you are starting to lay out your website? If you remember our earlier test drive of your new WordPress website, we examined the sidebar menu. This is the area where your past posts are organized. If you take another look (yes, you can go back to your computer for a moment), you will see the [sidebar is laid out in a list](#) by Archives by date, Categories by category, and may even feature a calendar (turned off in the Default Theme but visible in the Classic Theme).

As you lay out your website on paper, consider whether you want both categories and dates, or just one of them in your sidebar. What information you have and how you want to help the user find the information is critical to your website design.

What Information Do You Want to Share

As you think about what information the user will need to know, you have to consider what information you are willing to share with them. That information may include how to contact you, what the purpose of the site is, who you are, and what your expertise is.

WordPress v1.5 offers a new feature called [Pages](#) which makes the process of presenting this information in an easier fashion. Pages, similar to posts, are most commonly used to present unchanging information such as Pages for **About Us**, **Contact Us**, **Sign Up for Our Mailing List**, and other *static* information. Before creating your [individual Pages](#), you need to think about what information you would like the Page to hold. Write down the possible Page titles and describe the information you are willing to share online on each Page.

Comments

Part of the fun of WordPress is the ability to have viewers leave comments on your site. It creates a dynamic interchange between you and the viewer. Do you want comments on your posts? Comments on posts come in a variety of forums, from *pats on the back* (*Good job! Like the post!*) to extensive conversations and commentary about the posts turning into long chats. Or maybe you are seeking comments that add to the information you've posted. How you present your comment form, and

whether you do or not, invites people to comment.

Responding to comments and [moderating them](#) can also take up a lot of time. If they are critical to your site, then include them and consider how you want them presented. Go back to your test site; the first post created at the time of installation includes a sample comment. You can even make a few comments yourself on the posts you created. Take a look at how they are laid out and consider how you might want them to look to fit into the design and layout of your site.

When you have reached your decision about how you want to handle comments, take time to read through the [article on comments and WordPress discussion options](#) to help you set those features.

With this basic information, you are ready to return to your computer and start laying out your site and setting it up.

Setting Your Site Up

Before you get to the graphic look of your site, let's do a little more administration to your site to set it up. Consider making your first plugin installation the [Codex and Forum Searcher Plugin](#). It allows you to search both the WordPress Codex and [WordPress Support Forum](#) from your WordPress Administration Panels. Click on one of the search results and the page will open in a new window or tab so you can have the article or discussion open while working on WordPress. This will make your transition to WordPress a much gentler one with information right at your fingertips.

You can also work from this page by clicking on a link with a Right Click and opening the documents in a new window or tab, so you can read along as you work on your site.

Let's start with making those categories written down on your list.

Create Categories

In the [Manage > Categories](#) tab, click **Add Category** and fill in the information about your category. Continue to add your *parent* categories, going down the list. Hold off on entering sub-categories until all the main categories are entered.

NOTE: *You can add any new categories any time, but make a note of the fact that categories can be sorted in WordPress in two ways: by name (alphabetically) or by ID number. As you enter the categories, they are assigned an ID number. It is difficult to change this, so if you don't want your categories sorted alphabetically, enter them in the order you want to see them presented on the screen.*



WordPress Admin Manage Categories

When you have the parent categories entered, enter your sub-categories. In the pull down menu for Parent Category, you can select the *parent* to the sub-category you are adding. When you view your

categories in the Manage > Categories panel, you will see the categories listed like this:

Computer Tips

- Windows
- Linux
- Mac

Internet News

Web Page Design

- Web Standards
- WordPress
 - Plugins
 - Themes

Put Posts in Categories

Let's put some of your test posts into categories so you can see how this works.



WordPress Admin Manage Posts

From the **Manage > Category panel**, click on the tab for **Posts**. You should see the test posts you entered here. To the right are three links that say: **View - Edit - Delete**. Click on **Edit** to edit one of the posts. On the right side of the Edit Post screen you will now see your **Categories**. Choose one of them by clicking in the box next to it. Then scroll down the page and click **SAVE**. Repeat this for your other test posts, putting each one in a different category.

Now view your page by clicking **View Site** at the top of the **Admin** panel. Do you see the categories listed in the sidebar now? Great. If you are missing a category, that usually means that there are no posts in it. This is the default function of WordPress, so not to worry. When you add a post to the "missing" category, it will appear on your web pages. Click on one of the categories and you will be taken to a page for just that category. You should see the posts that went into that category. This is a generated *Category* page.

Now, click on the **Archives** for the month showing. Now you are visiting a generated page of your posts listed in chronological order for this month - well, specifically for today only. Two methods of finding the same information.

Preventing Spam

There is more to think about when it comes to having comments on your site. Unfortunately we live in a world where [spam](#) is a fact of life. It is recommended that you begin battling the comment spammers with the helpful article, [Introduction to Dealing with Comment Spam](#).

What is Next

You've now done all the basics for your new WordPress website. You know how to write a post, create a category, and how to view your site's information by category and archive. You can start the customization process, and when you are done, don't forget to delete your test posts! Then start writing some wonderful information to share with your new-found public!

Customizing Your WordPress Site

Once you are familiar with how WordPress works, it's time to get creative and start customizing. The tutorial now splits into different subjects that require no order. From here on you can do whatever you want, adding and subtracting, perfecting and scrambling your site at will. The amount of effort you put into the site is now up to you. You can work with the two WordPress Themes that came with the installation, or seek out another Theme that better meets your needs. You can totally customize all the links and information, or get serious and completely re-design the entire site to do whatever you want. You have the basics, the rest is up to your imagination.

[Finding a WordPress Theme](#)

Look for one that better suits the look you desire on your site.

[Customizing the Look](#)

When you are ready to plunge into the code, you can customize the look and layout of the site through CSS and modifying the Themes (or create your own).

[Enhance Your Site with Plugins](#)

Plugins add function and sometimes fun to your site. There are hundreds of different plugins from adding custom links like related articles to your sidebar to adding weather reports.

WordPress Themes

There are hundreds of [WordPress Themes](#) to choose from. All do basically the same thing but graphically present the information in a myriad of ways. Choose a few that look interesting to you, and meet your audience's needs and your desires, and then test drive them following the test drive instructions above. Click through the whole site, the categories and archives as well as the individual posts to see how the Theme handles each one. The look may be nice on the front page, but if it handles things in a way you don't like on the single post, then you will have to dig into the code and make changes. Not ready for that, try another theme.

If you run into problems, check out the Codex's [Troubleshooting Themes](#) article.

Customizing The Look

If you are familiar with CSS, HTML, and even PHP and MySQL, consider customizing the Theme to your own needs. This is not for the timid, and it is for the informed and experienced. If you want to expand your web page design and development skills, WordPress can help:

- [Using Themes](#)
- [Theme Development](#)
- [Stepping Into Templates](#)
- [Templates Files](#)

- [Blog Design and Layout](#)
- [CSS Overview, Tips, Techniques, and Resources](#)
- [FAQ - WordPress Layout](#)
- [Stepping Into Template Tags](#)
- [Template Tags](#)
- [CSS Troubleshooting](#)
- [CSS Fixing Browser Bugs](#)

WordPress Plugins



Plugin Panel

[WordPress Plugins](#) are also known as add-ons or extensions. They are software scripts that add functions and events to your website. They cover the gamut from up-to-date weather reports to simple organization of your posts and categories. Plugins are designed by volunteer contributors and enthusiasts who like challenges and problem solving. They are usually fairly [simple to install](#) through the WordPress Admin Plugin panel, just follow the instructions provided by the plugin author. Remember, these are free and non-essential. If you have any problems with plugins, contact the plugin author's website or plugin source first, then search the Internet for help with that specific plugin, and if you haven't found a solution, then visit the WordPress forums for more help.

- [WordPress Plugin Repository](#)
- [WordPress Plugins](#)
- [Managing Plugins](#)
- [Plugins](#)

Above and Beyond the Basics

The exciting thing about WordPress is that there are few limits. Thousands of people are using WordPress for blogging and for running their websites. All have a different look and different functions on their sites.

- [Well-Designed Sites Using WordPress](#)

What you do from here is up to you, but here are a few places to take that first step beyond the basics:

- [WordPress Features](#)
- [Working with WordPress](#)
- [Using Pages](#)
- [Understanding the WordPress Loop](#)
- [Troubleshooting](#)
- [Using Permalinks](#)
- [Press It - Post to your site from the web instantly!](#)

Getting More Help

- [Codex Main Page](#)
- [FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Getting More Help](#)
- [Using the Support Forums](#)
- [Troubleshooting](#)

Administering Your Blog

Generally, the daily tasks associated with administering your WordPress site are quick and easy to do, freeing you to concentrate on the content, editorials, and stories you want to share with the world, and allowing you to get back to other activities.

Here is a quick look at the various activities involved in administering your WordPress site. Some of these may need to be done daily, while others can be done weekly, monthly, or less frequently. It depends upon your blogging activity level and the intent of your WordPress site. Your usage may vary. ;-)

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Daily Tasks

Login and Write

Most people begin by logging into their WordPress site because they have news, information, or even a story to tell. They often head directly to the [Write Post screen](#). That's where the post's title is set, the actual writing of the post happens, categories chosen, and any other minor details noted. With a simply click of the mouse on the **Publish** button, everything's live on the blogosphere!

If you have images to upload to your site, you can easily switch to the [Manage > Files](#) screen and upload images to your WordPress site. You can then either add these to your new posts, or visit the [Manage > Posts](#) panel and click **Edit** to edit the post in which you now wish to add an image. Again, click **SAVE** and it is released to the world.

Ah, but then there are those [Drafts](#) sitting at the top of the **Write Post** screen, just staring at you. Yes, it's time to clean house and send those drafts to the trash or out into the world. It's your choice. Since you once thought of them as things of importance, be sure to give them another consideration before deleting them. There may be something in there that you still want published on your blog.

With WordPress, you have a variety options for dealing with your posts. Just because you have five, 10, or even 15 posts written doesn't mean you have to release all of them today. In fact, many people work ahead, creating content for their blog, but what they do is set the **Publish** for a specific date in the future. When the day and time you select arrives, like magic, WordPress automatically publishes the post on your blog. You could be sleeping, on a business trip, or sitting on the sunny sands of a Caribbean beach sipping pina coladas next to that special someone.

Checking Comments

After you've cleaned up the content on your site, it's time to find out what other people have been saying about your blog entries. On the [Manage > Comments](#) panel, you can inspect the comments posted to your site. If a comment has been marked for [moderation approval](#), it will be a lighter color than the rest of the comments. Simply click [Edit Comment](#) to access the comment. If it's fine, set it to be approved. If it's SPAM, select **Delete Comment** and it's gone forever!

The [Moderation Panel](#) will segregate the comments awaiting moderation from the rest of the comments if you've set your [Discussion Options](#) to *moderate all* comments. This allows for quick and easy comment moderation.

Determining which comments to keep and which to delete can be a challenge. Be aware that often nice comments like *"I really like your site. Keep up the great work."* and *"It shows you put a lot of time and effort in this. Thanks."* might be benign comments, or more likely comment [spam](#). To help you determine and check on what might be comment spam, and how to increase your protection against comment spammers, the Codex has articles to help you out.

- [Introduction to Dealing with Comment Spam](#)
- [Moderating Comments](#)
- [Combating Comment Spam](#)
- [Common Spam Words](#)
- [Denying Access to Comment Spammers with .htaccess](#)

Users and Authors

If you have set your site set up to [allow users to register](#) and submit articles, stop by your [Users panel](#) to check on those who have registered and make any adjustments to their [User Levels](#) as needed.

If you do allow users to post articles, be sure to check the [Manage > Posts](#) for any newly posted articles in the the **Drafts** area awaiting your review and release.

Check The Dashboard

At this point your daily tasks are about complete. Your site is up-to-date and on its way to entertaining and educating the world. But there is one last task you might want to check. Stop by your WordPress [Dashboard](#) panel and check to see if there are any new activities going on in the WordPress Community, especially any announcements about upgrades.

While there, take advantage of your handy "To Do List" featured on the Dashboard called the [Latest Activity](#). This lists your most recently released posts, the next batch of scheduled entries, recent comments, blog stats, and incoming links (referrers). This helpful information lets you know what has been released to the public from your site, what is next on the list, and shows you at a glance, the most recent comments.

The blog stats and incoming links give you different information. The Stats give you information about how many posts, comments, and categories are on your site. While this isn't really critical information, you can use it as a general scoreboard or counter. The incoming links information tells you who has [pinged](#) or [trackbacked](#) to your site. This helps your link popularity for your site and gives you an idea of who thought your site's material was worthy of praise.

And just in case you need a little guilt or prodding, if you look at the bottom of the page, guess what

you'll see? That's right! It's your list of Drafts, waiting patiently for you to perfect and publish them.

Administration Tasks

As the administrator or site owner, there are a few more tasks you should add to your schedule. These do not have to be done daily, but they still need to be done on a regular basis. Many of these are outlined in the articles [WordPress Housekeeping](#) and [WordPress Site Maintenance](#). In general they are:

- [Check and Install WordPress Updates](#)
- Check for Dead Links Throughout Your Site
- [Check in with WordPress for Changes and Information](#)
- [Backup Your WordPress Site and Database](#)
- [Update Your Site's Content and/or Look](#)
- Update [Plugins](#) and [Themes](#)
- [Check for Validation Errors](#)
- [Optimize Your WordPress Site](#)

More Administration Resources

- [Administration Panels](#)
- [What Registered Users Can Do](#)
- [Manage Categories](#)
- [Change User Levels](#)
- [Manage WordPress Options](#)
- [Manage Discussion Options](#)
- [Using Permalinks](#)
- [Moderate Comments](#)
- [Manage Plugins](#)
- [Manage Themes](#)

This article is [marked](#) as in need of editing. You can [help](#) Codex by [editing it](#).

Retrieved from "http://codex.wordpress.org/Administering_Your_Blog"

Categories: [Copyedit](#) | [Getting Started](#)

Administration Panels

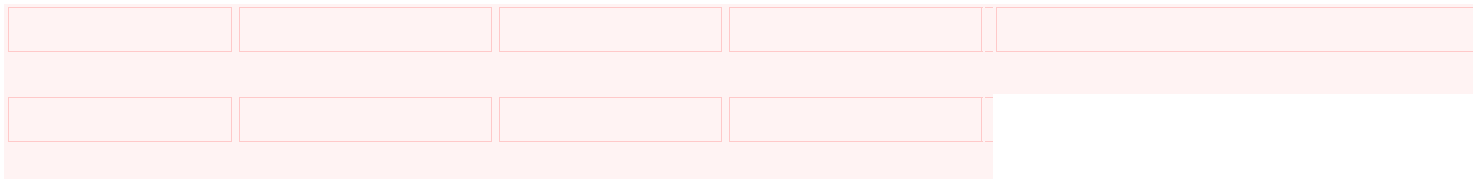
The Administration Panel provides access to the control features of your WordPress installation. Each Administration Panel is presented in sections, the header, the main navigation, the work area, and the footer. The top portion of all Panels, **the header**, is featured in dark shading. The header shows the name of your blog and a **visit site** link to your blog's main page, a [favorites menu](#), and links to [your profile](#) (shown as your user name), [Turbo](#), and [Log Out](#). Just below the top shaded area are two hanging tabs, [Screen Options](#) and contextual [Help](#), that can be clicked to expand them.

On the left side of the screen is the **main navigation** menu detailing each of the administrative functions you can perform. Two expand/collapse arrows just below Dashboard and Comments allow the navigation menu to collapse to a set of icons, or expand (fly-out) to show an icon and description for each major administrative function. Within each major function, such as Posts, a pull-down arrow is presented upon hovering mouse hovers over the title area. A click of that arrow expands the menu to display each of the sub-menu choices. Clicking that arrow again collapses the sub-menu.

The large area in the middle of the screen is the **work area**. It is here the specific information relating to a the particular navigation choice, such as adding a new post, is presented and collected.

Finally, in **the footer**, at the bottom of each Administration Panel in dark shading, are links to [WordPress](#), [Documentation](#), and [Feedback](#). In addition, the **version** of WordPress you have installed is shown. Just below the menu tab section, if your version is **NOT** the latest version, you will see the message **A new version of WordPress is available! Please update now.** Click on the provided link to navigate to the [Upgrade SubPanel](#).

Each Panel, referred to as SubPanel, that is accessed via the main navigation menu, is presented in the boxes below. The links in those boxes will lead you to sections of this article describing those SubPanels. From those sections, you can navigate to articles detailing more information about each SubPanel. Also, [WordPress Screenshots](#) shows examples of all the SubPanels.



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Dashboard - Information Central

The Dashboard tells you about recent activity both at your site and in the WordPress community at large.

The [Dashboard SubPanel](#) provides you a number of links to start writing [Posts](#) or [Pages](#), statistics and links on the number of posts, pages, [Categories](#), and [Tags](#). A Recent Comments box shows the number of [Comments](#) awaiting moderation and a list of the recent comments. Configurable boxes of Incoming Links, and RSS feeds from the WordPress Development Blog, the Plugins blog, and Planet WordPress are also displayed.

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Posts - Make some content

Well, you've done it! You've successfully installed the best personal publishing tool on the internet. You're ready to start sharing your thoughts and ideas with the world.

Now what?

Simple. You login to your admin panel, and in the navigation menu on the left, click on Posts, and then Add New. WordPress displays the [Add New Post SubPanel](#). This panel allows you to populate your site with actual information! You'll be spending most of your administration time here, so you should spend a bit of time familiarizing yourself with it.

[Posts](#) are the principal element (or [content](#)) of a blog. The Posts are the writings, compositions, discussions, discourses, musings, and, yes, the rantings, of a blog owner and contributors. Posts, in most cases, are the reason a blog exists; without Posts, there is no blog!

Edit Posts

Via the [Posts Edit SubPanel](#) you can select the Post or Posts you wish to edit, delete, or view. Multiple Posts can be selected for deletion and for editing. A powerful bulk edit feature allows you to change certain fields, en masse, for a group of Posts. A handy in-line edit tool, called Quick Edit, allows you to update many fields for an individual Post. Various search and filtering options allow you to find the Posts you want to edit or delete.

Add New Post

The most important part of WordPress, the [Posts Add New SubPanel](#) is where you write new Posts. While you are writing those Posts, you can also create new Categories, new Tags, and new Custom Fields. In addition, any Media (pictures, video, recordings, files) can be uploaded and inserted into the Posts.

Tags

Tags are the keywords you might assign to each post. Not to be confused with Categories, Tags have no hierarchy, meaning there's no relationship from one Tag to another. But like Categories, Tags provide another means to aid your readers in accessing information on your blog.

When using the WordPress Default Theme (sometimes called Kubrick, this is one of the two themes delivered with WordPress), Tags are displayed under each Post those Tags are assigned. Someone viewing your blog can click on one of those Tag links, and an archive page with all the Posts belonging to that Tag will be displayed.

The [Posts Tags SubPanel](#) allows you to add, change, or delete Tags. Multiple Tags can be selected for deletion. A search option allows you to find the Tags you want to edit or delete. Also remember Tags can be added in the [Posts Add New SubPanel](#).

Categories

Every Post in WordPress is filed under one or more Categories. Categories allow the classification of your Posts into groups and subgroups, thereby aiding viewers in the navigation and use of your site.

Each Category may be assigned to a Category Parent so that you may set up a hierarchy within the category structure. Using automobiles as an example, a hierarchy might be Car->Ford->Mustang. In creating categories, recognize that each category name must be unique, regardless of hierarchy.

When using the WordPress Default Theme (sometimes called Kubrick, this is one of the two themes delivered with WordPress), Categories are shown in two different places on your blog First, the Categories are listed as links in the Category section of your sidebar, and second, all the Categories to which a given post belongs are displayed under that post. When someone viewing your blog clicks on one of those Category links, a archive page with all the Posts belonging to that Category will be displayed.

The [Posts Categories SubPanel](#) allows you to add, edit, and delete Categories, as well as organize your categories hierarchically. Multiple Categories can be selected for deletion. A search option allows you to find the Categories you want to edit or delete. Also remember Categories can be added in the [Posts Add New SubPanel](#).

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Media - Add pictures and movies to your posts

Media is the images, video, recordings, and files, you upload and use in your blog. Media is typically uploaded and inserted into the content when writing a Post or Page. Note that the Uploading settings in the [Settings Miscellaneous SubPanel](#) describes the location and structure of the upload directory.

Media Library

The [Media Library SubPanel](#) allows you edit, delete or view Media previously uploaded to your blog. Multiple Media objects can be selected for deletion. Search and filtering ability is also provided to allow you to find the desired Media.

Upload New Media

The [Media Add New SubPanel](#) allows you to upload new media to later use with posts and pages. A Flash Uploader is provided and the ability to use a Browser Uploader is supplied if the Flash Uploader does not work.

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Links - Putting the Inter in the Internet

Even if you have a beautifully designed content rich blog, your site might be a dead-end if it never references all the other blogs, humor sites, search engines, sports teams, or chicken cacciatore recipies, you love so much! Since you visit those sites all the time, then use the WordPress [Add New Link](#) ability to allow your reading public to also enjoy those sites.

WordPress Links can be organized by category, have internal references about your relationship to their destinations, can be automatically associated with images, and can even be rated on a scale from zero to nine.

Edit Links

The [Links Edit SubPanel](#) allows you to select the Links to edit or delete. Multiple Links can be selected for deletion. Various search and filtering options allow you to find the Links you want to edit or delete.

Add New Link

As you might expect from its name, the [Links Add New SubPanel](#) handles the creation of new links.

Link Categories

Links, like Posts, can be categorized. Categorizing Links aids your audience in navigation of your Links. Each Link Category may be assigned to a Link Category Parent so that you may set up a hierarchy within the Category structure. In creating categories, recognize that each Category name must be unique, regardless of hierarchy.

The [Links Link Categories SubPanel](#) allows you to add, edit, and delete Link Categories, as well as organize your Link Categories hierarchically. Multiple Link Categories can be selected for deletion. A search option allows you to find the Link Categories you want to edit or delete. Also remember Link Categories can be added when adding or editings Links.

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Pages - Your Static Content

A [Page](#) is another tool to add content to a WordPress site and is often used to present "static" information about the site; Pages are typically "timeless" in nature. A good example of a Page is the information contained in "About" or "Contact" Pages. A Page should not be confused with the time-oriented objects called Posts, nor should a WordPress Page be confused with the word "page" referring to any web page or HTML document on the Web.

Because Pages live outside of the normal blog chronology, and as such, are not displayed with the rest of your Posts, but are displayed individually.

Edit Pages

The [Pages Edit SubPanel](#) provides the necessary tools to edit, delete, and view existing Pages.. On this SubPanel you can select the Page to edit or delete. Multiple Pages can be selected for deletion and for editing. As with Posts, a powerful bulk edit tool allows certain fields to be edited for a whole group of Pages. A handy in-line edit tool, called Quick Edit, allows you to update many fields for an individual Page. Various search and filtering options allow you to find the Pages you want to edit or delete.

Add New Page

The [Add New Page SubPanel](#) allows you to create new Pages. Also see the [Pages article](#) for an in depth discussion.

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Comments - Reader Feedback

Comments are a feature of blogs which allow readers to respond to Posts. Typically readers simply provide their own thoughts regarding the [content](#) of the post, but users may also provide [links](#) to other resources, generate discussion, or simply compliment the author for a well-written post.

Comments can be controlled and regulated through the use of filters for language and content, and often times can be queued for approval before they are visible on the web site. This is useful in dealing with [comment spam](#).

In the [Comments SubPanel](#) you can edit and delete as well as mark comments as spam. Comments that are awaiting moderation can be marked as approved or previously approved comments can be unapproved. Multiple comments can be selected and approved, marked as spam, unapproved, or deleted. A section at the top of the Comments SubPanel displays the number of comments awaiting moderation and the number of approved comments. A search box allows you to find specific comments

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Appearance - Change the Look of your Blog

From the Presentation Administration Panel you can control how the content of your blog is displayed. WordPress allows you to easily style your site by either installing and activating new Themes or changing existing Themes.

Manage Themes

A Theme is the overall design of a site and encompasses color, graphics, and text. A Theme is sometimes called the skin. WordPress site-owners have available a long list of Themes to choose from in deciding what to present to their sites' viewers. In fact, with the use of the [Theme Switcher Reloaded Plugin](#), visitors can select their own Theme.

From the [Appearance Themes SubPanel](#) you can choose which Theme will be presented to user visiting your site.ou have already downloaded will be used for your site. You can also view screenshots of each Theme you have uploaded to your site. Note: See [Using Themes](#) for information on finding, downloading, and uploading Themes.

Widgets

Widgets are gadgets or gizmos that allow you to add various pieces of information to your Theme's sidebar content. Widgets, for example, can be used to add Categories, Archives, Blogroll, Recent Posts, and Recent Comments to your sidebar. The WordPress Default 1.6 and WordPress Classic 1.5 Themes, delivered with WordPress, are both widget compatible.

From the [Appearance Widgets SubPanel](#) you can add, delete, and configure, the Widgets use in one or more of your Theme's [sidebar](#).

Edit Themes

Use the Theme Editor to edit the various files that comprise your Themes. The [Appearance Editor SubPanel](#) allows you to designate which theme you want to edit then displays the files in that theme. Each file (Template and CSS) in the theme can be edited in the large text box.

For more information about the code used for [Themes](#), see [Theme Development](#), [Templates](#), [Stepping Into Templates](#), [Template Hierarchy](#), and the page on [Template Tags](#).

Customize Header

The Header Image and Color feature allows you to manage the look and feel of a Theme's header. This option will only be present if the Theme author has configured to header to allow this capability. For instance, the WordPress Default Theme (sometimes called Kubrick, this is one of the two themes delivered with WordPress) allows you to set the font color, the lower color (lower part of the header),

the upper color, the whole header color.

The [Appearance Header Image and Color SubPanel](#) describes the details of this feature.

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Plugins - Add Functionality to your Blog

[Plugins](#) allow you to add new features to your WordPress blog that don't come standard with the default installation. There are a rich variety of Available Plugins for WordPress, and with the following SubPanels, plugin installation and management is a snap.

Manage Plugins

The [Plugins Installed SubPanel](#) allows you to view the plugins you've downloaded and choose which plugins you want activated on your site. For information on downloading and installing plugins, see [Managing Plugins](#).

Install Plugins

The [Plugins Add New SubPanel](#) allows you to add new plugins. For information on downloading and installing plugins, see [Managing Plugins](#).

Edit Plugins

Using the [Plugins Editor SubPanel](#), you can modify the source code of all your plugins.

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Users - Your Blogging Family

Every blog probably has at least two users: **admin**, the account initially set up by WordPress, and the user account you, as the author/owner of the blog, use to write posts. But maybe you want more; perhaps you want several authors for your blog. If you want a person to be able to post to your blog, that person must have access to a user account; typically, every person will have her or his *own* user account.

Via the Users option in the main navigation menu you can set up all of the user accounts you need, as well as change user information, or delete users.

An important administrative feature here is the [Roles](#) feature. Depending on their [Role](#), different users have different [Capabilities](#). Briefly, a user can be assigned the following [Roles](#): [Administrator](#), [Editor](#), [Author](#), [Contributor](#), or [Subscriber](#).

You can also specify your, and others', personal information, such as name, e-mail, etc. from these User Administration Panels.

Authors & Users

You can manage the accounts of all your site's users at the [Users Authors and Users SubPanel](#).

Add New User

You can create new users with the [Users Add New SubPanel](#).

Your Profile

The [Users Your Profile SubPanel](#) allows to change any information related to your user account.

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Tools - Managing your Blog

WordPress Tools provide you the ability to speed up WordPress for you local machine, import content from other sources, export you content, or to upgrade your WordPress software to a new release.

Tools - Turbo and Press This

The **Turbo** ability, introduced with [Version 2.6](#), adds new features to your web browser and speeds up WordPress for the local computer user. The [More information...](#) link describe the Google Gears product.

The **Press This** function allows quick posting and publishing through the use of a special web browser favourite. You can create a shortcut to allow use of "Press This" from the new post screen. You then activate the function when browsing by selecting the favorite from your web browser favorites list.

The [Tools Tools SubPanel](#) allows the **Turbo** and **Press This** functions to be activated.

Import

WordPress supports the importing data from a number external sources. In many cases, posts,

comments, pages, categories, tags, and users, can be imported.

The [Tools Import SubPanel](#) list the software packages that WordPress can import and details what types of data from each of those platforms qualifies for import. Also see [Importing Content](#) for a more extensive list of import possibilities.

Export

WordPress Export will create an XML file for you to save to your computer. The format, which is called a WordPress eXtended RSS or WXR file, will contain your posts, comments, custom fields, categories, and tags.

The [Tools Export SubPanel](#) guides you through the easy process of exporting your blog. Take note that the Exporting is a useful method to backup your WordPress data.

Upgrade

Upgrade will allow you to automatically upgrade your WordPress software to a new version (if available).

The [Tools Upgrade SubPanel](#) give you a easy method to upgrade. Note not all hosts will allow the Upgrade process to work successfully and will require you to manually upgrade by following the [Upgrading WordPress instructions](#).

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Settings - Configuration Settings

You might think, "All these other things I've been doing so far at the Administration Panels have involved 'Settings'. Are these 'Settings' any different?" The answer would be, "Yes." All the settings you've encountered in the other Administration Panels have dealt with very specific parts of your site, or have been of limited scope (only applying to one Category, for example). In the Settings Administration Panel are all of the settings that define your blog as a whole: settings which determine how your site behaves, how you interact with your site, and how the rest of the world interacts with your site.

The following SubPanels control these settings.

General

The [Settings General SubPanel](#) is the default SubPanel in the [Settings Administration Panel](#) and controls some of the most basic configuration settings for your site: your site's title and location, who may register an account at your blog, and how dates and times are calculated and displayed.

Writing

Using the [Settings Writing SubPanel](#), you can control the interface with which you write new posts. These settings control the size of the 'post box' in the [Write Post SubPanel](#), the default Category, the default Link Category, the default image sizes, and the optional [Post via e-mail](#) feature.

Reading

The settings in the [Settings Reading SubPanel](#) are few in number, but still important. You can decide if you want [posts](#), or a "static" [Page](#), displayed as your blog's front (main) page. You can also adjust how many posts are displayed on that main page. In addition, you can adjust [syndication feed](#) features to determine how the information from your site is sent to a reader's web browser or other applications.

Discussion

The [Settings Discussion SubPanel](#) allows you to control settings concerning incoming and outgoing comments, pingbacks and trackbacks. You can also control from this SubPanel the circumstances under which your blog sends you e-mail notifying you about the goings on at your site, and you can decide if your blog should show [Avatars](#) and their ratings.

Media

The [Settings Media SubPanel](#) allows you to determine where images, documents, and other media files will be linked to when inserted into the body of a post and to specify the maximum dimensions in pixels to use when inserting an image into the body of a post.

Privacy

The [Settings Privacy SubPanel](#) controls your blog visibility to search engines such as Google and Technorati. You can decide if you would like your blog to be visible to everyone, including search engines (like Google, Sphere, Technorati) and archivers. If you don't want your blog available to the search engines you can block search engines, but allow normal visitors to see your site.

Permalinks

For a nice introduction to Permalinks, check out the [Pretty Permalinks](#) section of [Introduction to Blogging](#). But briefly, and to quote the [Settings Permalinks SubPanel](#) itself:

By default WordPress uses web URLs which have question marks and lots of numbers in them, however WordPress offers you the ability to create a custom URL structure for your permalinks and archives. This can improve the aesthetics, usability, and forward-compatibility of your links.

This [Settings Permalinks SubPanel](#) controls how that custom URI structure is defined. For a more in

depth description of the way this structure is specified, see the [Using Permalinks](#) article.

Miscellaneous

WordPress has so many features, that some of them defy categorization. Features like file uploads, link tracking and support for custom "hacks" can be controlled from the [Settings Miscellaneous SubPanel](#).

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Log Out

The Log Out link is found at the top right corner in the Administration Panels. It is simply a link that will log you out from your WordPress blog.

When you log in to your blog, WordPress stores a so called "cookie" in your web browser. This cookie allows WordPress to remember who you are; if you leave your blog's site for a while but come back to it later, WordPress will see the cookie and not require you to log in again.

However, the cookie cannot tell WordPress *who* is using the WordPress; in other words, WordPress has no way of looking back at you through your monitor to determine if you are really you. If you have a WordPress cookie set in your web browser, anyone using your computer can access the Administration Panels of your blog. If you *don't* want this to happen (perhaps you are using a public computer or a computer which other people use), you can click this **Log Out** link, and WordPress will delete the cookie from your web browser.

You can, of course, log in at some later time.

Favorites Menu

The Favorites Menu in **the header** is provided to give quick access to the most used WordPress functions. Those options include, New Post, Drafts, New Page, Upload, and Comments.

Screen Options

Screen Options, displayed as a hanging tab under **the header**, allow the user to decide what fields or modules are presented in the **work area** for a given function. Each SubPanel may have a different set of Screen Options.

Click on the Screen Options tab to expand the options available for a particular SubPanel, check (or uncheck) the desired options, then click the Screen Options hanging tab to collapse the Screen Options.

Help

Contextual **Help**, displayed as a hanging tab under **the header**, displays one or more Help items that are related to the SubPanel that is displayed in the **work area**.

Click on the Help tab to expand the Help available for a particular SubPanel, then click the Help hanging tab to collapse the Help display.

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Pages

In WordPress, you can write either posts or pages. When you're writing a regular blog entry, you write a post. Posts automatically appear in reverse chronological order on your blog's home page. Pages, on the other hand, are for content such as "About Me," "Contact Me," etc. Pages live outside of the normal blog chronology, and are often used to present information about yourself or your site that is somehow timeless -- information that is always applicable. You can use Pages to organize and manage any amount of content.

Other examples of common pages include Copyright, Legal Information, Reprint Permissions, Company Information, and Accessibility Statement. (By the way, it's a good idea to always have an about page and a contact page -- see this [advice from Lorelle](#).)

In general, Pages are very similar to Posts in that they both have Titles and Content and can use your site's Presentation Templates to maintain a consistent look throughout your site. Pages, though, have several key distinctions that make them quite different from Posts.

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Pages in a Nutshell

What Pages Are:

- Pages are for content that is less time-dependent than Posts.
- Pages can be organized into pages and [SubPages](#).
- Pages can use different [Page Templates](#) which can include [Template Files](#), [Template Tags](#) and other PHP code.

What Pages are Not:

- Pages are not Posts, nor are they excerpted from larger works of fiction. They do not cycle

through your blog's main page. (**Note:** You can include Posts in Pages by using the [Inline Posts Plugin](#).)

- Pages cannot be associated with Categories and cannot be assigned Tags. The organizational structure for Pages comes only from their hierarchical interrelationships, and not from Tags or Categories.
- Pages are not files. They are stored in your database just like Posts are.
- Although you can put Template Tags and PHP code into a Page Template, you cannot put these into the content of a Page and expect them to run. (**Note:** You can achieve this by using a PHP evaluating Plugin such as [Exec-PHP](#) or [RunPHP](#).)

Creating Pages

To create a new Page, log in to your WordPress installation with sufficient admin privileges to create new articles. Select the [Administration](#) > [Pages](#) > [Add New](#) option to begin writing a new Page.

Changing the URL (or "Slug") of Your Pages

With 2.5, changing the page URL became less intuitive. If you have Permalinks enabled, and you have selected the **Day and Name** option (Click the **Settings** tab, and then click the **Permalinks** subtab), then the permalink automatically shows up below your post title when you start typing in the body of your post (not just the title).

However, if you have a different permalink option selected, or if you don't have permalinks enabled at all, you must do the following to edit your page URL:

1. Write a page by going to **Write > Page**.
2. Click the **Publish** button to publish your page.
3. Go to **Manage > Pages**.
4. Click **Edit** next to your page.
5. See the permalink under the title, and click the **Edit** link to change it.

Thus, if you don't have the right permalink option enabled, you have to publish your pages before you can set the URLs.

Listing Your Pages on Your Site

WordPress is able to *automatically* generate a list of Pages on your site, for example within the sidebar, using a [Template Tag](#) called `wp_list_pages()`. See the [wp_list_pages](#) page for information on how to do the following:

- Sort the list of Pages (to fully customize the order in which the Pages are listed, you might find the "Page Order" section on the Write > Page administration panel useful),
- [exclude](#) (or 'hide') a Page from the list,
- Control which Pages are displayed (i.e., all Pages or just certain SubPages), and
- Control how deep into your Page hierarchy the list goes.

Naturally, you can also link to Pages manually with an HTML link. For example, if you want your Copyright Page listed in your footer, that link might read as below:

If you do not have [Permalinks](#) set up

```
<a title="Copyright information" href="wordpress/?page_id=14">Copyright  
1996-2006</a>
```

If you *do* have [Permalinks](#) set up

```
<a title="Copyright information" href="wordpress/copyright/">Copyright 1996-2006</a>
```

Note: Your .htaccess file *must* be writeable for Page Permalinks to work, otherwise you must update your .htaccess file every time you create a Page.

Organizing Your Pages

Just as you can have Subcategories within your Categories, you can also have **SubPages** within your Pages, creating a hierarchy of pages.

For example, suppose you are creating a WordPress site for a travel agent and would like to create an individual Page for each continent and country to which the agency can make travel arrangements. You would begin by creating a Page called "Africa" on which you could describe general information about travel to Africa. Then you would create a series of Pages which would be SubPages to "Africa" and might include "Lesotho", "Cameroon", "Togo", and "Swaziland". Another individual Page is made for "South America" and would feature SubPages of "Brazil", "Argentina", and "Chile". Your site would then list:

- Africa
 - Cameroon
 - Lesotho
 - Swaziland
 - Togo
- South America
 - Argentina
 - Brazil
 - Chile

To begin the process, go to [Administration](#) > [Write](#) > [Write Page](#) panel, in the upper right corner of the panel and click the "Page Parent" drop-down menu. The drop-down menu contains a list of all the Pages already created for your site. To turn your current Page into a SubPage, or "Child" of the "Parent" Page, select the appropriate Page from the drop-down menu. If you specify a Parent other than "Main Page (no parent)" from the list, the Page you are now editing will be made a Child of that selected Page. When your Pages are [listed](#), the Child Page will be nested under the Parent Page. The [Permalinks](#) of your Pages will also reflect this Page hierarchy.

In the above example, the [Permalink](#) for the Cameroon Page would be:

```
http://example.com/africa/cameroon/
```

Page Templates

Individual Pages can be set to use a specific custom **Page Template** (a PHP template file, e.g., snarfer.php) you create within your Theme (see [Creating your own Page Templates](#) below on how to create a custom template). This new Page Template will then override the default `page.php` Page Template included with your Theme. See [What Template is used to Display a Particular Page?](#) below, to find out exactly which Template will be used, but read the following first, so you understand the answer :)

WordPress can be configured to use **different Page Templates for different Pages**. Toward the bottom of the Write > Page administration panel (or on the sidebar, depending on which version of WordPress you are using) is a drop-down labeled "Page Template." From there you can select which Template will be used when displaying this particular Page.

NOTE: In order to access the Page Template selector, there must be at least one custom Page Template available in the active theme (see [Creating your own Page Templates](#) below to learn how to create one).

Default Theme Page Templates

The Default theme contains three Page Templates for your use:

- `page.php` - Default Page Template: displays Page content
- `archives.php` - ignores Page content and instead displays a list of Archives by Month and Archives by Subject (by Category)
- `links.php` - ignores Page content and instead displays your links using [wp_list_bookmarks\(\)](#)

What Template is used to Display a Particular Page?

WordPress will look for several template files in your active Theme. The first one it finds will be used to display any given Page. WordPress will look for files in the following order:

1. The Page's selected "Page Template"
2. `page.php`
3. `index.php`

Creating Your Own Page Templates

The files defining each Page Template are found in your [Themes](#) directory. To create a new Custom Page Template for a Page you must create a file. Let's call our first Page Template for our Page `snarfer.php`. At the top of the `snarfer.php` file, put the following:

```
<?php
/*
Template Name: Snarfer
*/
?>
```

The above code defines this `snarfer.php` file as the "Snarfer" Template. Naturally, "Snarfer" may be replaced with most any text to change the name of the Page Template. This Template Name will appear in the Theme Editor as the link to edit this file.

The file may be named *almost* anything with a `.php` extension (see [reserved Theme filenames](#) for filenames you should *not* use; these are special file names WordPress reserves for specific purposes).

What follows the above five lines of code is up to you. The rest of the code you write will control how Pages that use the Snarfer Page Template will display. See [Template Tags](#) for a description of the various WordPress Template functions you can use for this purpose. You may find it more convenient to copy some other Template (perhaps `page.php` or `index.php`) to `snarfer.php` and then add the above five lines of code to the beginning of the file. That way, you will only have to *alter* the HTML and PHP code, instead of creating it all from scratch. Examples are shown [below](#). Once you have created the Page Template and placed it in your Theme's directory, it will be available as a choice when you create or edit a Page. (**Note:** when creating or editing a Page, the Page Template option does

not appear unless there is at least one template defined in the above manner.)

Examples of Pages and Templates

The following is a list of instructional examples. Feel free to make additions.

Archives with Content

A Page Template that shows the Page's content at the top, and then displays a list of archive months and categories below it. This is designed to work with WordPress's Default theme (aka Kubrick), but will probably work with many other themes with a little modification.

Save this to `arc-cont.php`:

```
<?php
/*
Template Name: Archives with Content
*/
?>

<?php get_header(); ?>

<div id="content" class="widecolumn">

  <?php if (have_posts()) : while (have_posts()) : the_post();?>
  <div class="post">
    <h2 id="post-<?php the_ID(); ?>"><?php the_title();?></h2>
    <div class="entrytext">
      <?php the_content('<p class="serif">Read the rest of this page &raquo;</p>'); ?
    >
  </div>
</div>
<?php endwhile; endif; ?>
<?php edit_post_link('Edit this entry.', '<p>', '</p>'); ?>

</div>
<div id="main">

<?php include (TEMPLATEPATH . '/searchform.php'); ?>

<h2>Archives by Month:</h2>
  <ul>
    <?php wp_get_archives('type=monthly'); ?>
  </ul>

<h2>Archives by Subject:</h2>
  <ul>
    <?php wp_list_cats(); ?>
  </ul>

</div>
<?php get_footer(); ?>
```

WordPress as a CMS

You can use WordPress for basic content management. If you do, you'll probably create a large number of pages for your content.

Using a Page as the Front Page

WordPress 2.1 introduced the Option to conveniently set any Page as your Front Page. Go to **Settings > Reading** in the Wordpress Admin interface. Under the Front Page Category, you can choose to set any (published) Page or Posts Page as the Front Page. The default setting shows your blog with the latest blog posts.

Alternate Methods for Setting the Front Page for pre-2.1. WP

If you don't want to use the built-in feature to set the home page as a static page, you have two other options. Using the [Static Front Page Plugin](#), it is possible to set any Page as the "front page" of your site. The Plugin modifies the home page query and sticks the Page with a Page slug of "home" to the front page.

When the Page is being displayed as the homepage, if a Page Template with the filename `home.php` exists for your active Theme, the Plugin will override the Page's set Page Template and use `home.php` instead. The Page's set Page Template will still apply if the Page is visited like a standard Page (e.g., <http://example.com/home/>)

As an alternative to the Plugin, WordPress will recognize a "home.php" document in your template directory and use it rather than `index.php` to theme your front page. However, if your home page isn't your blog, be advised that the `home.php` template will always apply to the blog page whether you like it or not. Using the [query_posts\(\)](#) template tag, you can call on any page before you invoke [The Loop](#). For instance:

```
<?php
    query_posts( ' pagename=home ' );
?>
```

Will call up only the post with the pagename "home." See [query_posts\(\)](#) for more examples of the template tag in action.

Including a Page

You might also want to include Pages in various places on your site. That way, you can have an easy way to edit elements of your website. There is a Plugin called [Improved Include Page](#) that makes doing this easy.

The Dynamic Nature of WordPress "Pages"

A web page can be *static* or *dynamic*. Static pages, such as a regular HTML page that you might create with Dreamweaver, are those which have been created once and do not have to be regenerated every time a person visits it. In contrast, dynamic pages, such as those you create with WordPress, do need to be regenerated every time they are viewed; code for what to generate has been specified by the author, but not the actual page itself. These use extensive PHP code which is evaluated each time the page is visited, and the content is thus generated on the fly, upon each new visit.

Almost everything in WordPress is generated dynamically, including **Pages**. Everything you and others write in WordPress (Posts, **Pages**, Comments, Blogrolls, Categories, etc.) is stored in your [MySQL](#) database. When your site is accessed, that database information is then used by your WordPress [Templates](#) from your current [Theme](#) to generate the web page being requested. Thus, WordPress information is dynamic, including the information contained in your **Pages**.

An example of a static page might be an [HTML](#) document (without any [PHP](#) code) you've written as an addition to your dynamically generated WordPress pages, perhaps an "About Me" page. The problem with purely static pages is that they are difficult to maintain. Changes you make to your WordPress settings, [Themes](#) and [Templates](#) will not be propagated to pages coded only in HTML. The **Page** feature of WordPress was developed, in part, to alleviate this problem. By using **Pages**, users no longer have to update their static pages every time they change the style of their site. Instead, if written properly, their dynamic **Pages** will update themselves along with the rest of your blog.

Despite the dynamic nature of **Pages**, many people refer to them as being static. In the context of web publishing, static and dynamic mean what has been described above. More generally, however, static can mean "characterized by a lack of change". It is easy to see how this definition influenced the word's use in describing types of web pages. It is also easy to see why people think of **Pages** as being static; Posts come and go, but **Pages** are here to stay since **Pages** are typically used to display information about your site which is constant (e.g., information about yourself, description of your site).

In other words, a **Page** contains *static information* but is *generated dynamically*. Thus, either "static" or "dynamic" may be validly used to describe the nature of the WordPress **Page** feature. However, in order to avoid confusion, and because **Pages themselves** are dynamic while it is only their *contents* which are in some way static, this document does not refer to **Pages** as being static.