

# HowToMakeMyBlog.com *Wordpress E-Book*

Everything you need to know to start blogging today!

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<http://www.HowToMakeMyBlog.com>

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# Why you should *start blogging*

**H**aving a blog can be good for your career. Both in your current job or when you're looking for what to do next, blogging can give you an opportunity to stand out and set you apart as an expert in your field.

A blog is your professional online presence. You might have a Facebook account but that is not something that will get you new customers, new opportunities or a new job.

On the other hand, having a well-executed blog gets you noticed, gives you a competitive advantage and improves your CV.

## **Just Google my name...**

It is now common to Google someone's name after having met someone or when doing a job interview. With a blog you will impress as you stand a chance of ranking high in Google.

You will not only impress people when you say that you have a blog, or that you have blogged about that topic, but also if they Google your name and your blog is on top of the search engine results.

## What's blogging good for?

- A blog is good for marketing yourself and branding your name.
- A blog gives you visibility and a public voice.
- A blog can showcase your abilities in the area of your passion. It shows your skills, shows what and how you are thinking, your wisdom, and the ideas that you have.
- A blog lets you practice and learn regularly. Writing, marketing, reading, communicating.
- A blog lets you increase your network and meet new people.

## Start your own blog today

I hope this HowToMakeMyBlog.com e-book can motivate you to start your own blog. Starting a blog is simple. Find your passion, choose it as your blog topic and install a WordPress blog. Blogging regularly is hard and time-consuming work but you are branding your name, improving your skills and your career opportunities by doing it.

# How to install *a WordPress blog*

This is the whole step-by-step detailed guide to how to setup domain name and hosting, setup MySQL and how to install self-hosted WordPress on your own server.

## Get domain name and hosting

First step is to buy your domain name and hosting. I use [GoDaddy](#) personally  
At GoDaddy domain name is \$1.99 when buying it with hosting

## Setup your hosting account

- Hosting plan I use is “Economy” (\$4.74 a month when buying a year)
- Login to your [GoDaddy](#) account
- Click on **Hosting** and chose **My Hosting Account**
- Find your hosting plan and click on **Setup Account**
- Select the checkbox and click **Next**
- Chose **username** and **password** you would like to use for your FTP hosting access and click **Next**
- Chose **Select a domain from this account** and find your domain name
- Finish the setup by clicking **Submit**

## Get your FTP Account Information

When your hosting has been setup you will get an email titled “Hosting Account Setup” from [GoDaddy](#)

Find your “FTP Account Information” in the email:

**Hosting/FTP User Name:** your username

**Web Site URL:** your domain URL

**FTP Site URL:** your FTP URL

**Your Web Site Visitor Statistics** Your stats URL

## Create MySQL database

- Login to your GoDaddy account
- Click on **Hosting** and chose **My Hosting Account**
- Find your domain name and click on **Manage Account**
- In the upper menu click on **Databases** and chose **MySQL**
- Click on **Create Database**
- Write **description**, chose **username** and **password**
- Click **OK** and wait until [GoDaddy](#) sets your MySQL

When the MySQL has been setup, click on the pencil to “**Edit/view details**” and save the following details:

## MySQL Database Information Status:

**Setup Host Name:** your host name

**Database Name:** database name you have chosen

**Database Version:** 4.1Description: description you have chosen

**User Name:** username you have chosen

## Download WordPress

- Go to [WordPress.org](http://WordPress.org) and download the latest version
- WordPress comes in a .zip file so unzip it
- Now you have a WordPress folder
- Find the **wp-config-sample.php** file and rename it to **wp-config.php**

Open **wp-config.php** in text editor (like [Notepad++](#)) and find this part:

```
// ** MySQL settings - You can get this info from your web host ** ///  
** The name of the database for WordPress */  
define('DB_NAME', 'putyourdbnamehere');**  
MySQL database username */  
define('DB_USER', 'usernamehere');**  
MySQL database password */  
define('DB_PASSWORD', 'yourpasswordhere');**  
MySQL hostname */define('DB_HOST', 'localhost');
```

Take your MySQL Database Information you have from [GoDaddy](#) and insert them in places where I have marked with bold:

- Your MySQL Database Name should replace putyourdbnamehere
- Your MySQL User Name should replace usernamehere
- Your MySQL password should replace yourpasswordhere
- Your MySQL Host Name should replace localhost

Filename	Size
_db_backups	4.0 KB
favicon.ico	0 B
gdform.php	774 B
googlecc4f60366b42670d.html	0 B
index.php	397 B
license.txt	15.0 KB
missing.html	1.6 KB
php_uploads	4.0 KB
php.ini	389 B
readme.html	7.4 KB
stats	4.0 KB
webformmailer.php	32 B
welcome.html	2.7 KB
wp-admin	8.0 KB
wp-app.php	39.3 KB
wp-atom.php	220 B
wp-blog-header.php	274 B
wp-comments-post.php	3.3 KB
wp-commentsrss2.php	238 B
wp-config.php	2.6 KB
wp-content	4.0 KB
wp-cron.php	1.2 KB
wp-feed.php	220 B
wp-includes	8.0 KB
wp-links-opml.php	1.9 KB
wp-load.php	1.9 KB
wp-login.php	19.2 KB
wp-mail.php	6.7 KB
wp-pass.php	487 B
wp-rdf.php	218 B
wp-register.php	316 B
wp-rss2.php	220 B
wp-rss.php	218 B
wp-settings.php	17.8 KB
wp-trackback.php	3.3 KB
xmlrpc.php	90.3 KB
36 Files	

Now find following in your wp-config.php:

```
define('AUTH_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
define('SECURE_AUTH_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
define('LOGGED_IN_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
define('NONCE_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
```

Visit [WordPress secret key](#) and copy details you get there and insert them instead of the above.

Save wp-config.php

## Login to your web hosting

- Get a FTP client (like [FileZilla](#))
- Open FTP client and login to your hosting account using your FTP account information
- Place all the files from your WordPress folder onto your server
- In this example I will place all files in root directory (<http://www.yourdomain.com>). The directory will look something like this when the WordPress files are uploaded:

- Run WordPress installation by going to <http://www.yourdomain.com/wp-admin/install.php>

This is what you will see when you enter the address:

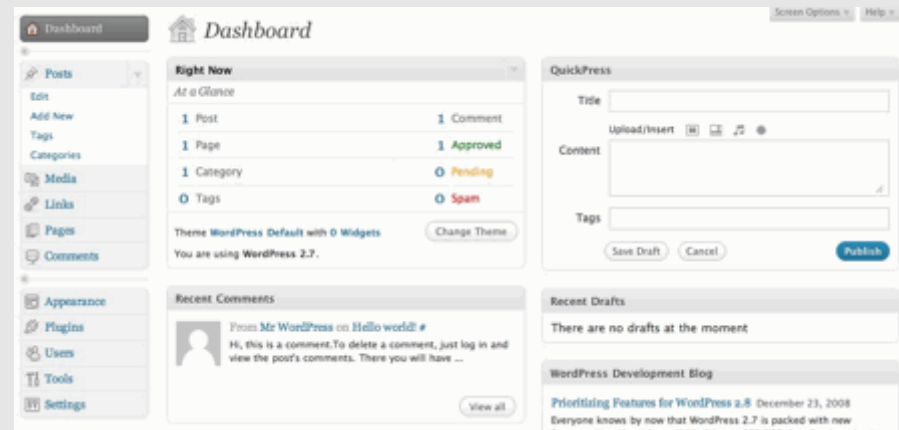


The screenshot shows the WordPress installation interface. At the top is the WordPress logo and the word 'WORDPRESS'. Below that is a 'Welcome' section with a horizontal line. The text reads: 'Welcome to the famous five minute WordPress installation process! You may want to browse the [ReadMe documentation](#) at your leisure. Otherwise, just fill in the information below and you'll be on your way to using the most extendable and powerful personal publishing platform in the world.' Below this is the 'Information needed' section, also with a horizontal line. It says: 'Please provide the following information. Don't worry, you can always change these settings later.' There are three input fields: 'Blog Title' with an empty text box, 'Your E-mail' with an empty text box and the instruction 'Double-check your email address before continuing.' below it, and a checkbox labeled 'Allow my blog to appear in search engines like Google and Technorati.' which is checked. At the bottom is a button labeled 'Install WordPress'.

- Fill in your **Blog Title**
- Fill in **Your E-mail**
- Make sure your **Allow my blog to appear in search engines like Google and Technorati** is

checked

- Click on **Install WordPress**
- Next screen you see should say **Success!** and should give you your **Username** and **Password**.
- Click on **Log In**.
- Now you will see your blog's **Log In** page. Make sure to bookmark that URL.
- Fill in the **Username** and **Password** you have just received
- Click on **Log In**.
- Now you will see your **WordPress Dashboard** where all the optimisation, customisation, post writing, plugin installing, comment moderating takes place.



This means your blog has been setup and is live online. Check your <http://www.domainname.com> to see it. You will also get an email titled **New WordPress Blog** which includes your URL and your username / password. Enjoy your WordPress blog!

# Settings to adjust after you *install a new WordPress blog*

WordPress features many customisation options and settings, even before you start installing the different plugins. I would recommend you to spend some time and browse the WordPress platform, get familiar with it and adjust some settings that you find relevant.

This is a look at all the settings I adjust as soon as I install a new WordPress blog.

## Setup blog title and tagline

(In Settings - General)

- You don't want your blog to be branded as "just another WordPress weblog"
- Write your blog title and explain why your blog is unique in the blog tagline

## Change permalinks

(In Settings - Permalinks)

- You don't want your blog articles to be called something like:

`http://www.yourdomain.com/?p=123`

- You want to make your URL's unique, [keyword-rich, SEO and user friendly](#)
- On HowToMakeMyBlog.com I use the custom option field like this:

`/%category%/%postname%/`

- By doing this my blog permalinks look like this:

`http://www.howtomakemyblog.com/category/postname/`

## **Clean up**

- Delete Hello World! generic post (In Posts)
- Delete the generic About page (In Pages)
- Delete generic blogroll (In Links)
- Delete Hello Dolly plugin (In Plugins)

## **Activate comment spam filter**

(In Plugins)

- Akismet is the best comment spam filter and it comes with your WordPress
- You just need to get the free [WordPress API key](#) to be able to activate it

## **No to email updates**

(In Settings - Discussion - E-mail me whenever)

- As default WordPress notifies you via email when there is a new comment on your blog
- I prefer to use [WordPress Notifier](#) (Mac only - not sure what the Windows software is) to get updates on my desktop so I change the default option to no emails

## Update ping services

(In Settings - Writing - Update Services)

- [Pings help you promote](#) your blog by automatically notifying different online services when you publish a new blog post

I use the following update services on HowToMakeMyBlog:

<http://www.a2b.cc/setloc/bp.a2b>  
<http://api.feedster.com/ping>  
<http://api.moreover.com/ping>  
<http://api.my.yahoo.com/RPC2>  
<http://www.blogdigger.com/RPC2>  
<http://blogsearch.google.com/ping/RPC2>  
<http://www.blogshares.com/rpc.php>  
<http://www.blogstreet.com/xrbin/xmlrpc.cgi>  
<http://coreblog.org/ping/>  
[http://mod-pubsub.org/kn\\_apps/blogchatt](http://mod-pubsub.org/kn_apps/blogchatt)  
<http://www.newsisfree.com/xmlrpctest.php>  
<http://ping.blo.gs/>  
<http://ping.exblog.jp/xmlrpc>  
<http://ping.feedburner.com>  
<http://ping.syndic8.com/xmlrpc.php>  
<http://ping.weblogalot.com/rpc.php>

http://rpc.blogbuzzmachine.com/RPC2  
http://rpc.blogrolling.com/pinger/  
http://rpc.icerocket.com:10080/  
http://rpc.pingomatic.com/  
http://rpc.technorati.com/rpc/ping  
http://rpc.twingly.com  
http://rpc.weblogs.com/RPC2  
http://www.snipsnap.org/RPC2

## Get own blog theme

(In Appearance - Themes)

- You don't want WordPress Default to be your blog theme
- Find the theme you like and download it
- Upload the theme onto your server (/wp-content/themes/)
- Activate

## Setup RSS newsfeed

- WordPress has a default RSS Feed (<http://www.yourdomain.com/feed/>) but to be able to offer email subscriptions and to be able to track your feed stats, it is best to move to [Google FeedBurner](#). Register for FeedBurner and move your default RSS Feed by installing a [FeedBurner FeedSmith plugin](#).
- In Feedburner you can optimize your RSS footer to include links like Subscribe to

comments, Tweet This, Stumble It, Digg It and much more (Optimize – Feedflare).

- Many people still do not use RSS, so make sure to offer the email option via Feedburner (Publicize- Email Subscriptions). About 20% of my subscribers are subscribed via email option.
- Also when you have some 50 or so subscribers make sure to put the feedcounter in your blog sidebar as that will give incentive to more people to subscribe (Publicize – FeedCount).

### Track visitors

- Setup [Google Analytics](#) tracking for your new blog and add the tracking code to your blog with help of [Google Analytics for WordPress](#) plugin. It is very important to track your visitors, how they interact with your blog, how and where they find your content and much more.

### Webmaster Tools

- Setting [Google Webmaster Tools](#) account and verify your domain name. This is a must for all bloggers. In Webmaster Tools Google gives you information they have on your site, on inbound links, on search engine rankings and much more.

## Sitemap

- Having a Sitemap is very important if you want Google to be able to crawl, find, and index your articles. [Google XML Sitemap Generator](#) plugin makes the process of setting a sitemap simple.
- Submit your XML sitemap directly to Google via Webmaster Tools. By doing this Google will crawl your new site and index it within a day or so.

## Preferred domain

- In Settings in your Google Webmaster Tools chose your site Preferred domain. I still use www version but have recently started liking no-www version so my blogs in future may be without www.

## Traditional SEO

- If you want the traditional META-Tags added to your blog posts and pages, use [All in one SEO](#) plugin. I have recently stopped writing meta keywords and description for my posts. Google does not place much significance to meta tags anymore and is showing the content that is relevant to the search phrase in the description of your listing.

# How to make your *WordPress* blog more secure

WordPress blogs can be targets for hackers looking to take over for SEO, traffic-redirection and other purposes. Most bloggers aren't aware of the threat posed by hackers and the blog owner may not even know that a successful attack has taken place.

I had an experience some months ago on one of my blogs, where my server had been flooded with hundreds of pages relating to adult material. I only realized this when Google stopped sending me traffic to that blog.

There are some simple security measures that any blogger can implement today to make a blog more secure.

## **Create a new user account**

It is harder for a hacker to break into your blog when both the username and the password have to be cracked. That is why you should create a new user and delete the WordPress default "admin".

You create a user by going into "Users" then "Add New" in the WordPress menu. When creating the new user, make sure to give it the role as an "Administrator". That will make sure that you have the full authority over your blog.

Now simply logout from your default “admin” account and log in with the new user details. In “Users” you can delete the default admin username. Make sure to choose the option to transfer your old posts to your new username when deleting the “admin” account.

### **Use strong password**

Do not use simple passwords when creating the new user account. It might be simple for you to remember it, but it is also easier for a hacker to crack it. Your password should be at least eight characters long and should include numbers mixed with characters in uppercase and lowercase.

### **Set a new nickname**

You do not want your new username to be the author name that is shown on all posts. Set the nickname WordPress uses as author name to something different than your username. You do this in “Users” under “Your Profile” in the Nickname field. Choose a new nickname and set “Display name publicly as” to your new nickname.

### **Use Login Lockdown plugin**

[Login LockDown](#) plugin records the IP address and timestamp of every failed login attempt to your WordPress blog. If more than a certain number of login attempts are detected within a short period of time from the same IP range, then the login function is disabled for all requests from that range.

## **Do not allow guest user registrations**

If you do not have a membership blog, then there is no reason to allow visitors to register for a guest account on your blog. To check that you've got registration turned off, click "Settings" and make sure that "Anyone can register" option is not checked.

## **Always upgrade**

Always upgrade to the latest version of WordPress, latest version of your WordPress theme and latest version of plugins you use. One of the reasons for new versions of software and plugins, is the security vulnerability found in older versions. With [WordPress 2.7+](#) all of these upgrades are simple, automated, one-click processes within the WordPress interface.

## **Backup regularly**

Taking regular backups is important. In case if something happens, use can always use the backup to recover your blog files. [WordPress Database Backup](#) plugin makes it simple to backup your files. Activate the plugin and set it to automatically take backups and send them in a file to your email address.

These 7 simple steps can be executed quickly and should make your blog harder to break down.

## Top 18 most downloaded *WordPress plugins ever*

WordPress is my favourite blogging platform and my blog runs on it. It has more than **13 million users** in total and the self-hosted WordPress has been downloaded more than **5 million times**.

Plugins are a big part of the WordPress community. Over the years I have used many of the WordPress plugins. WordPress plugins help you make a better blog and get more reader interaction. There are in total **4,245 plugins** and these have been downloaded **22,152,788 times**.

This is a tribute to the top 18 most downloaded WordPress plugins ever (Akismet is not included as it comes with the default WordPress installation). Each of these 18 has been downloaded a minimum of 200,000 times.

- [All in One SEO Pack](#) - Automatically optimizes your Wordpress blog for Search Engines (Search Engine Optimization) - Downloads 1,603,368
- [Google XML Sitemaps](#) - Create a Google sitemaps compliant XML-Sitemap of your WordPress blog - Downloads 954,459
- [NextGEN Gallery](#) - A full integrated Image Gallery plugin for WordPress with a Flash slideshow option - Downloads 715,819
- [WordPress.com Stats](#) - You can have simple, concise stats with no additional load on your server by plugging into WordPress.com's statsystem - Downloads 712,71

- [WP Super Cache](#) - A very fast caching engine for WordPress that produces static html files - Downloads 492,637
- [Contact Form 7](#) - Just another contact form plugin. Simple but flexible - Downloads 393,916
- [Wordpress Automatic upgrade](#) - Allows a user to automatically upgrade the Wordpress installation to the latest one - Downloads 288,600
- [Sociable](#) - Automatically adds links to your favorite social bookmarking sites to your posts, pages and RSS feed - Downloads 284,117
- [Viper's Video Quicktags](#) - Allows easy and XHTML valid posting of videos from various websites such as YouTube, DailyMotion, Vimeo, andmore - Downloads 254,807
- [Simple Tags](#) - The successor of Simple Tagging Plugin and is THE perfect tool to perfectly manage your WP tags - Downloads 254,353
- [WP-DB-Backup](#) - On-demand backup of your WordPress database - Downloads 250,795
- [Google Analytics for WordPress](#) - Adds the necessary JavaScript code to enable Google Analytics - Downloads 239,837
- [Google Analyticator](#) - Same as the one above, enables Google Analytics tracking - Downloads 229,970
- [Add to Any: Share/Bookmark/Email Button](#) - Helps readers share, save, bookmark, and email your posts and pages using any service, such as Facebook, Twitter, Digg, Delicious and over 100 more - Downloads 226,056
- [WP-Polls](#) - Adds an AJAX poll system to your WordPress blog. You can also easily add a poll into your WordPress's blog post / page- Downloads 222,196
- [Sidebar Widgets](#) - Adds "Sidebar Widgets" panel under Presentation menu - Downloads

221,024

- [podPress](#) - A dream plugin for podcasters using WordPress - Downloads 207,491
- [WP-PageNavi](#) - Adds a more advanced paging navigation your WordPress blog - Downloads 204,005

From the top 18 plugins “Wordpress Automatic upgrade” and “Sidebar Widgets” are the classics which are no longer needed as they are a part of WordPress now.

## 24 plugins that I currently use on my blog *and why you should use them too*

This is a look at all the plugins I currently use on HowToMakeMyBlog.com. I will list them in order they are found in the WordPress Plugins section. I will link to each of them and will explain why I use them and why I would recommend you to use them as well.

### **Remove spam comments**

[Akismet](#) - If you are listed in search engines and have a lot of traffic, you are bound to get massive amount of spam comments. This plugin makes your life much easier and saves you a lot of time. You need to get your free [Api-key](#) for this plugin.

### **Remove broken links**

[Broken Link Checker](#) - Search engines do not like broken links. Your visitors do not like them either. This plugin scans your posts automatically, shows you broken links in WordPress dashboard and lets you easily unlink them.

### **Create contact forms**

[Cforms](#) - If you need a contact form on your site, this plugin is simple to setup and works great. I use it for all contact forms on my blog, see it for example in my [about Marko Saric](#) page.

### **Thank commentators**

[Comment Redirect](#) - I use this plugin to redirect visitors when they make their first comment on my blog. I redirect them to a thank you page where I thank for the comment, explain about my blog, and ask the reader to subscribe to my RSS newsfeed. Write a comment to this post, and see this plugin in action.

### **Remove unnecessary code**

[CSS Compress](#) - I am not much into technical side of WordPress and CSS but I was told that this plugin removes all the unnecessary lines in the WordPress theme code, and that way makes the blog smaller and faster to load.

### **Combine all RSS subscribers**

[FeedBurner FeedSmith](#) - I used the original WordPress RSS feed at the beginning of my blog, but then I moved over to Google services. So now I use this plugin as it detects all the old RSS subscribers and redirects them to my [new RSS feed](#).

### **Make Google happy**

[Google XML Sitemaps](#) - Google loves sitemaps and indexes sites/articles much quicker if you have a sitemap and you have it submitted to [Google Webmaster Tools](#). Nice and simple way to ensure that Google finds and indexes your blog.

### **Optimize ping updates**

[MaxBlogPress Ping Optimizer](#) - WordPress automatically updates all your ping services, even if you just update or edit your article. If you edit your articles a lot, your blog risks of being banned from [ping services](#) for excessive pinging. This plugin solves the problem by only pinging your post when you publish it.

### **Confirm the unconfirmed subscribers**

[Notify Unconfirmed Subscribers](#) - If you are using Feedburner email subscribe option, you know that some subscribers never confirm their subscription. This plugin lets you easily notify all the unconfirmed subscribers and inform them that they need to take additional step to approve their subscription.

### **Welcome your visitors**

[Referrer Detector](#) - This plugin detects where your visitors are coming from and automatically displays the corresponding greeting. So for example when somebody visits my blog via Google.com, they get this message:

Welcome **Googler!** If you find this page useful, why not [subscribe to the RSS feed](#) for more interesting posts in the future?

### **Track what your visitors are looking for**

[Search Meter](#) - This plugin tracks what your visitors are searching for in your “search” field. This

way you can know what your visitors are looking for and what they find. Tracking this might help you make your blog design more usable and give you some topics to write about.

### **Notify visitors of new comments**

[Subscribe To Comments](#) - This plugin allows your blog readers to subscribe to the comments on articles. Each time there is a new comment they will get an email notification. It helps getting visitors to return, getting more comments and building community around your blog posts.

### **Make Thesis easier**

[Thesis OpenHook](#) - This plugin allows insertion of Thesis content hooks without editing the theme files. It is only for Thesis theme users. Read more on why I have chosen to go for a [premium WordPress theme Thesis](#).

### **Remind new visitors to subscribe**

[What Would Seth Godin Do](#) - This plugin displays a message to your new blog visitors. On [howtomakemyblog.com](http://howtomakemyblog.com) I use it on the bottom of each post as a reminder to subscribe to my RSS news feed. Like this:

If you want to learn more about blogging please subscribe to [HowToMakeMyBlog RSS feed](#) or [via email](#) to receive all the latest articles!

## List your most popular posts

[WordPress.com Popular Posts](#) - I use this plugin in the sidebar to show the 10 most popular posts on my blog. It is a very good way of showing your visitors your most popular posts, and it does improve usability of the site, plus improves your stats like pages viewed per visit, time spent on site and bounce rate.

## Get your blog stats

[WordPress.com Stats](#) - I use this stats plugin because the WordPress.com Popular Posts plugin takes the data from this plugin to show the most popular posts by number of views. It does not count the views of logged in users, so your visits to your pages will not be counted. You need to get your free [Api-key](#) for this plugin.

## Never lose any of your material

[WordPress Database Backup](#) - This plugin helps you keep a database backup of your blog. It is very simple and easy to use. You can set the plugin to make a regular backup of your blog and send it to you via email automatically. This way you will never lose the articles and archives you have written over the months/years in case of hacker attack or any other security vulnerability.

## Speed up your blog

[WP Super Cache](#) - Another technical plugin. It will improve your blog's loading time and will speed up your blog significantly. It helps your server handle a higher load without crashing, which

can help in case you hit front page of Digg.com and start getting tons of traffic. Unfortunately the Digg.com part I still haven't tested.

### **Create a Twitter field in comments**

[WP Twitip ID](#) - This plugin adds another field to your blog's comment form so your readers can add their Twitter ID's when writing a comment. See this plugin in action on my blog in the comment field at the end of this article.

### **Show related posts**

[Yet Another Related Posts Plugin](#) - I use this plugin to show a list of related posts from my blog archives after each article I write. It improves the user experience and increases the time user's spend on site, pages viewed per visit and bounce rate stats. See it in action after this article where it suggests you what to "see more".

### **Extra plugins for those who do not use Thesis**

[Thesis WordPress Theme](#) that I use on my blog has the following functions automatically built in, so I do not need to use plugins. But if you are using other themes, the following plugins will give you a similar look/effect.

[All in One SEO Pack](#) - This plugin makes it easy for you to optimize your article titles and other meta tags.

[Google Analytics](#) - This plugin makes it easy for you to insert your Google Analytics code and start tracking your blog visitors.

[WP-Note](#) - This plugin lets you insert notes in your article to make them stand out. Kind of similar to the yellow colored notes I have twice in this article.

[Wordpress Gravatars](#) - This plugin lets you display Gravatars of your readers in the comments section and can put your Gravatar on top of your article to show who the article was written by.

Hopefully this list gives you enough plugins to research and experiment with. Good luck with your blog optimization!

# Why you should consider *getting a premium theme*

**H**owtoMakeMyBlog.com was started in late October 2008. As the traffic started increasing, I wanted to optimize the blog design to offer the best possible value to all the visitors. I decided to change the theme and I just got my first ever copy of the popular [Thesis WordPress theme](#).

## Why I chose Thesis theme

Some of my favourite blogs use Thesis theme. It makes these blogs very unique and very professional so Thesis was on my list of potential themes from the start.

Thesis is a premium theme which means you have to pay to use it. I decided it would be a good investment in the short-term and also in the long-run so I decided to pay \$87 to get my own [Thesis theme](#).

## Usability

- *Very professional look*
- *Very clean layout*
- *Very easy to read*
- *Customisable columns and sizes*
- *Search engine optimised*

## Post writing

- *Professional styling*
- *Handy alert / note function*
- *Easy headline customisation and font selection*
- *Drop Caps style which I love*
- *Easy incorporation of images and ads*

...and these are only the options I have used in the first 2 days of working with [Thesis!](#)

All in all, the blog now looks much more authoritative, trustworthy and professional. I will slowly work on further improving the blog and hopefully you will like the changes I make.

## Stop talking, *start blogging!*

Some advice blogs about blogging often give to their readers is to plan in advance, to research and to analyse the situation in their field before starting a blog.

That might be wise advice but I see many cases where the new blogger takes that advice a bit too far.

Some spend weeks on research, on planning, on the design and other small details. Weeks without writing, without marketing, without connecting to the audience, without building a name.

### **Don't plan your blog, just do it**

The best advice I can give you when starting a blog, is just do it! If you have a passion for something, if you feel like blogging about that passion, just start doing it. Get a domain name that you feel fits best, install WordPress, and start writing the best articles you can with the most valuable advice you can give.

That great blog design, that cool header logo, it is not important at the point in time when you are just starting your blog and when you have no content and visitors. When I started HowToMakeMyBlog.com back in late October 2008, I just did it without much planning. It did take me couple of hours to find a perfect domain name but other than that there was not much time spent on analysing or researching.

## **Start simple and build from there**

I started very basic, very simple. I got the domain name, I installed WordPress and I used a free WordPress theme without any manual customisation and I also just used the header image that came with the free theme. I did not think too much about the small details. I just wrote, wrote and wrote even more. And of course, I went to StumbleUpon, I went to Twitter, I commented on other blogs, in hope of actively getting some visitors to my new blog. There will be time to make your blog look cool and unique.

## **Forget all the details, just blog it**

Dreaming about building a large blog readership, dreaming about building a name for yourself is not enough. To give life to your blogging dreams, you must start doing it now!

So what my point is, forget all the details now, get the basics setup and start writing content and get the message about your blog out there. After a while, if your blog grows, the natural progression will be to improve the design and the technical part of the blog.

Now your blog is installed and ready. You have adjusted all the settings and optimised the blog. You have customised it by installing different plugins.

## **Write content**

- Start writing content. Be very focused on your topic. Be useful to your target audience and

readers. Write unique articles. Write newposts regularly.

## **Promote your blog**

- Join social media sites StumbleUpon and Twitter. They are the easiest to get started with and easiest to get instant traffic. Write useful comments on relevant blogs. Try to get a guest post spot in some of the biggest blogs in your niche.

The best advice you probably can get is to just do it. Stop all the research, all the planning. Just get out there, get a domain name and start blogging!

## About *the author*

**M**y name is Marko Saric. I am based in London, England, and I write articles on all things blogging at [HowToMakeMyBlog.com](http://HowToMakeMyBlog.com). I help bloggers with their WordPress blogs, with Thesis Theme, with branding, blog promotion, search engine optimization, and affiliate marketing.

I have been creating and marketing websites since 1998. First website I started was about my favourite music band. I loved the band, listened to it daily, and spent a lot of time and money buying their music, reading about them, going to their concerts and interacting with other fans.

This was a topic I loved, knew much about and had passion for. And one way or another I tried the new Internet thingy and started a website about the band in 1998. That turned me onto marketing and I studied marketing management first in high school and then at university.

At university I specialised in interactive and e-marketing, which turned me onto blogs and social media. Then I transferred my music site into a WordPress blog in 2006 and that gave me insight into how blogs are run and that is how I got the passion to start a “how to blog” blog in late 2008. ...and that is how I got into Twitter.

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