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Introduction:

Who this guide is for

Welcome to the Everyman's Guide to WordPress. This guide is aimed at every WordPress user who has ever wished for a book on WordPress, but it is especially aimed at those who are brand new to WordPress. I've been there myself, and I know how hard it is to get started. Sometimes you don't even know what to search for when you get stuck.

With that in mind I've tried to put everything you need to know into easy step-by-step instructions. There are screen shots of just about every step, and I've tried to define any terms that might be confusing. I've also tried to notify you of helpful hints and dangers with call-out boxes. Nevertheless, I'm sure I've missed some things. If you get stuck, DON'T DESPAIR! You can always search the Codex (<http://codex.wordpress.org>) or ask a question on the WordPress forums (<http://wordpress.org/support/>).

Finally, please remember that this is a work in progress. There are certain to be spelling and grammatical errors. I know there are clunky and poorly written sentences. I just don't have the time I need to properly proofread. If you find a horrifying error please let me know by emailing me at bbooth@lucidgreen.net. My dignity thanks you.

Eventually I plan to write chapters on Using WordPress and on Customizing WordPress (my family and degree work take precedence however). If you like this guide, and find it useful, I would love to know about it. Please email me at the above address and let me know your thoughts. You can see all the guides currently available by visiting <http://codex.wordpress.org/User:Anselm1109>.

Using this guide

Most of what follows is self explanatory, but keep an eye out for the following kinds of notes.



This is denotes a helpful tip. Usually a link or a definition of a term or an important clarification.



This denotes a REALLY helpful link or resource.



Warning! This denotes a pitfall to avoid or an easy and often made mistake. Pay attention to these!

A note about the copyright

While this document is copyrighted by the author, Brandon Booth, I hereby authorize you to copy and distribute it in any format for personal and non-profit uses. You must give full credit to the author on every copy. You MAY NOT sell or profit from it in anyway without the express written consent of the author. Questions may be directed to bbooth@lucidgreen.net.

Getting WordPress Pre-Installed


Where to get WordPress pre-installed.

The best part about WordPress, other than its being free, is that it is designed to be a stand alone blogging system. This means you can install it on just about any sever and use it for just about any purpose. Plus, installing WordPress is so simple that almost anyone can do it.

Still some people do not have access to their own server space, or are nervous about acronyms like FTP, or are just plain impatient and want to get started blogging right away. For those people there are several ways to get a WordPress blog without having to install anything.

Many hosts offer pre-installed copies of WordPress, or automatic installation services at no charge. The wordpress.org/hosting/ keeps a list of hosts who offer these various services, but the easiest and cheapest way to go is WordPress's own wordpress.com. There you can get a free version of WordPress which will be available to the public at "your-username.wordpress.com".

There are several other host who offer a similar services, such as Yahoo! Hosting¹ where you can get your own unique domain name and a fully functional version of WordPress for about \$9 a month. In the end the choice is up to you, but with the popularity of WordPress growing everyday, it is likely that many more hosts will start offering pre-installed copies of WordPress.

 Did you know that If you are already using another blog systems, or heaven forbid, *paying*, for another blog system you can easily import all of your posts and comments? Once you login simply click on the "Import" link on the toolbar. You can import from Blogger, Movable Type, or Typepad. If you install your own copy of WordPress you can import from even more other blogs.

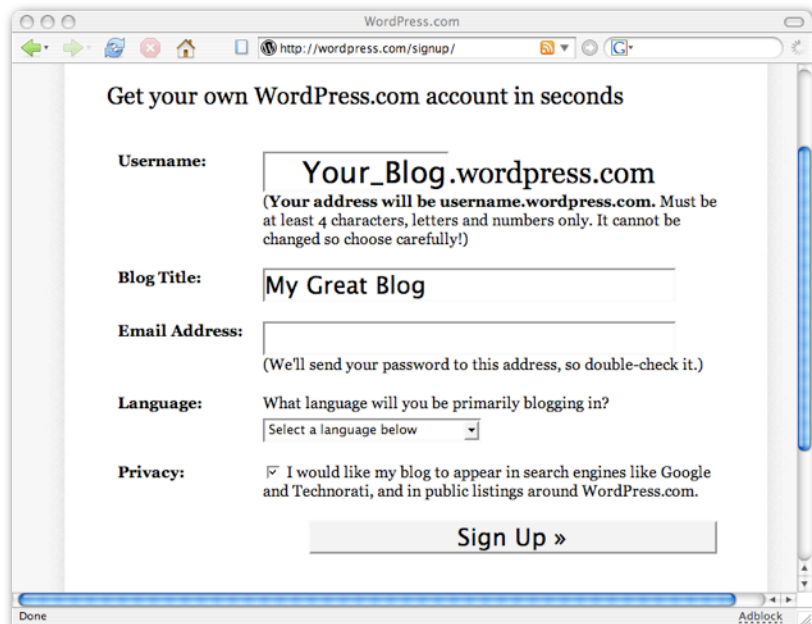
¹ <http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/webhosting/problogs.php?p=BALLOON>

Getting a WordPress.com blog

The easiest way to get a WordPress blog is to visit wordpress.com. Simply click the big blue box that says "Get a WordPress Blog now", fill out the form and click the "Sign Up" button.



wordpress.com home page



Filling out the registration form.

Be sure to double check that you have entered your email address correctly! The password for your new blog will be sent to whatever email address you put in that box. Once you have completely filled out the form click the "Sign Up" button.

The next page will instruct you to check for an email which contains your new blog's password. This page also gives you some handy information about where your blog is located and how to login. Don't worry about reading all the information now. The email contains this information as well.

Activating your new WordPress.com blog

The next step is to activate your new blog. Check your email for a message from "wordpress@wordpress.com". Simply find the weblog activation link a few lines into the email and click on it. Viola! Your new blog is up and running!

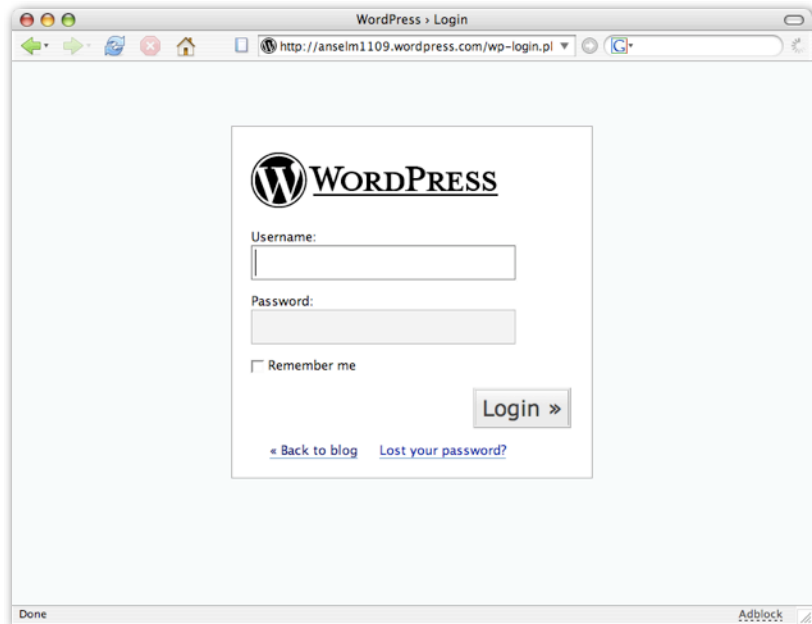


A newly activated blog

Logging in to your new WordPress.com blog

Now that you've got your new blog up and running it's time to login and start using it.

Scroll down and look for the "Login" link on the right side of the page under the sidebar heading "meta". It's the first link in the list. Click it and you will arrive at the WordPress login screen.



The WordPress login screen

Enter your Username and the password that was supplied for you in your activation email. It's very easy to just copy and paste the password out of the email and into the password box.

If you want the site to remember your login information for you, you can check the "Remember me" box, but you are going to be changing your password to something easier for you to remember in a moment anyway, so it's not all that important to do this right now.



Notice the "Lost your password?" link at the bottom of the login box. Should you ever forget your password you can click this link to have a new one emailed to you.

Changing your wordpress.com blog's default password

Now that you've logged in you will be looking at the "Dashboard". From here you can start using your blog to make your brilliant ideas available to the world, but first you should probably change your password to something you can remember more easily.

Changing your password is easy. Right after the welcome text on the dashboard is a group of links that you can use to get started. The second link in that list says "Updated your profile or change your password."



The WordPress Dashboard with the link to change your password highlighted

Clicking this link takes you to "Your Profile and Personal Options Page". As the title suggests, there are a lot of options you can tweak here. For now scroll down until you find the "Update Your Password" Section. Type in a new password twice.



The Update Your Password section

Once you've entered your new password click the "Update Profile" button and your password has been changed. Next time you login to your blog you will need to use this new password.

Depending on the size of your monitor and browser window your personal options panel may look different from the screen shot above. If your browser window is wide enough WordPress will show the options sections in two columns rather than one.

Next Step: Start Blogging

Now that you have your blog set up and your password set to something you can remember it's time to start blogging! For a detailed look at how to use WordPress to create posts, organize them and use the other features of your blog skip ahead to Chapter 3: Blogging with WordPress.

Conclusion:

The process of getting a pre-installed WordPress blog with other hosts will differ somewhat from the process outlined here, but regardless of the differences it will very simple. WordPress has a reputation for being a fully featured blog that is drop-dead simple to install and upgrade.

In the next chapter you will discover just easy it is to install WordPress yourself.

