

How to Start a Blog — A Step by Step Beginner's Guide

I know that *starting* a blog can be confusing, it can be intimidating. But you can be sure that this guide will help you get past all the steps required to start a blog.

*You simply have to put one foot in front of the other and keep going.
Put blinders on and plow right ahead.
—George Lucas*

In the past, to start blogging, you had to learn coding and programming, and lots of other technical stuff. But nowadays, in 2015 **getting a blog started is easy**. You could say that the process of setting up a blog is *almost* automatic.

It doesn't matter if you are 13, 31, or 81 years old. It doesn't matter if you have a degree or what you do for a living. If you want to setup a blog, this tutorial I will show you how.

Just follow this step-by-step tutorial for beginners and you will find it easy to setup a blog. Don't forget to bookmark this page so you can come back anytime you need.

Press Ctrl+D in Windows or Command +D if you are on a Mac to bookmark this page now .



My name is Oscar Gonzalez and I am a web developer, and all around techie. I help people in all walks of life start up and run blogs and websites. I created this guide to help you start a blog.

Once your blog is setup, you can read through my [blogging tutorials and articles](#) to teach you *how* to blog. I constantly update that section and add new ones to keep you ahead of the game.

This is the beginning, today, **right now** is the first day of the rest of your journey. Don't be afraid. You're in good hands.

If you aren't sure you should start a blog, take a look at this article I wrote about it: [10 Reasons why you should start your own blog in 2015](#).

Oh and before we get started, if you EVER feel like you're stuck, or have trouble setting up your blog, get in touch with me and I will help you out.

Ready to Get Started?

Let's get started. What follows next is a step by step guide to get your blog up and running quickly. Here's what to expect next. I also made a copy of this available for download in PDF format. You'll see a box below that lets you download it.

- (1) Decide **what** you will blog about first. In this short section, we'll talk a little bit about blog topics. I will give you some ideas if you're stuck.
- (2) Decide **what type** of blog you're going to use.
- (3) Selecting a **domain and setting up your blog** with your own domain.
- (4) **Start blogging!**

1) Decide What You Will Blog About

This is the very first thing you need to do. Decide what you want to blog about, you need to select a *blog topic* –some people call it a *niche*.

You can think about your blog topic by deciding if there's something you really like.

Is there something you're really interested in? Something you're really, really passionate about? If there is, then that you can start a blog about that!

My first and current blog were really just about my life, interesting things I found online and some of the stuff I was doing online.

If there's something you always tell people about, stuff you are always talking about, then that is a good indication that it should be your blog topic.

It is difficult starting a blog about a topic that doesn't interest you. I don't recommend trying to start a blog if you're not interested in the particular topic because you can get tired of it really fast.

It is a lot **easier to write about something that you're passionate about**. If you have a lot of experience in something, like a specific type of job, or industry, or niche then that is also a good topic because you are an expert — that's a good thing!

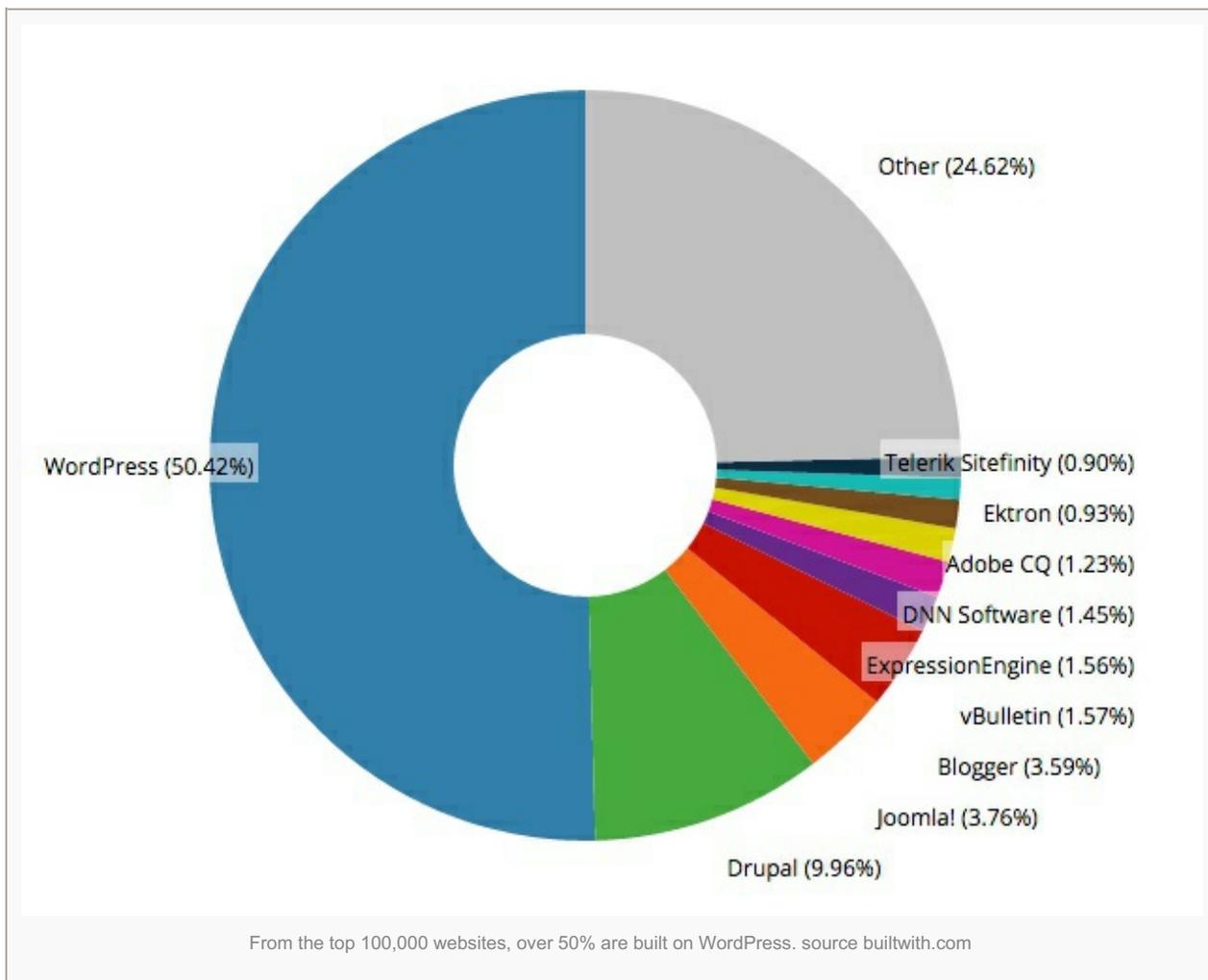
If you are still stuck coming up with a topic, think about what you do in any given week. What do you like to spend time on? Do you have a hobby? Do you have something you do daily? A ritual that you can't live without?

Think about those things and you'll find a topic there; or you can blog about everything I just mentioned.

In the next section, I give you some ideas you can explore when selecting your topic. If you have already decided your blog topic, or topics, then you can **skip this part** and jump to section 2, [What type of blog should you use?](#)

click to expand: [Blog topic ideas and suggestions](#)

2) What Type of Blog Should You Use? Free Hosted or Self-Hosted?



Did you know that WordPress is the most popular blogging platform? As of the time of this writing, it has been downloaded over 80 million times. WordPress is used by some of the most popular blogs and websites.

In my opinion, **WordPress is the best way to start your blog** for a few reasons:

- You can choose from a virtually unlimited number of layouts and free themes.
- You can write blog posts easily and add images, video or other content.
- You can categorize your posts and easily create custom tabs.
- People can easily comment and share your blog.
- You can use your blog to earn extra income.
- It looks good on a mobile device.
- and more...

Free blog vs Self-hosted blog

You might have heard that you can start a free blog on blogger.com, tumblr.com or even medium.com. And it's true, you don't have to spend money to use those blogging platforms. These are generally known as "free hosted blogs."

You can start a blog for free right now. But in exchange for that *free* service you will be giving up a few things.

When you use one of these free hosted platforms, **you don't get your OWN domain**. Usually you will be assigned a sub-domain, so instead of having something like *myownblog.com*, you'll get something like *myownblog.blogger.com*, that's clumsy and awkward.

Free blogging platforms have very limited customization and additional options. This means your blog may look pretty plain, boring and you will have a hard time making it do anything interesting. If you want to add a custom module, or a shopping cart, or a photo gallery you may not be able to do it at all.

Some of these free platforms can be enhanced with additional paid modules, but these “extras” cost a lot of money so at the end, the promise of *free* falls short when it comes to flexibility and design.

You don't own your blog when it's free. When you get your blog for free someone else is hosting it and because of this, you don't have full control over it. The owner of the platform has control; they set the rules and control the message.

That means they control the policies and regulate what gets published. They can block your blog, they can remove it altogether and you have no recourse.

All the work you do on your blog could be gone overnight because you made a mistake, or the website owner or its policies don't agree with your content.

If you don't have any money and don't think that you'll blog for more than a couple of months then you could start with a free blog; that is a possibility but I don't recommend it.

My recommendation is to **use a self-hosted blog with your OWN domain**. That configuration gives you complete control over your blog and with your own domain like *myownblog.com* it will look more professional.

This is the best option for people that want to blog for the long-term, to share expertise and knowledge and to become a real blogger and even earn money from blogging.

How much does it cost to start a self-hosted blog on your own domain?

It doesn't cost a lot. You need 2 things. You need a domain, which costs around \$8 to \$12 per year and you need web hosting, which costs about \$4 per month.

Web Hosting is how you connect your blog to the web so people can visit it. Altogether, you can start the blog for about \$60 to \$70 per year. And of course, there's a little bit of your time to get things going.

Before you worry too much about the cost, one thing to consider is that if you aren't totally committed to blogging and decide that it isn't something you want to do then you can stop at anytime. Many web hosting services have 30-day money back guarantees.

3) Selecting a Domain and Setting up the Blog.

A domain is the address of your blog, the name. Like in my example earlier, the domain would be *myownblog.com*. Famous domains are *Amazon.com*, or *AOL.com*

To obtain a domain, you need to register it as yours through a type of company called a registrar. Registering a domain is very simple. You can use a company like Godaddy, or Namecheap to register your domain. But don't go to buy your domain just yet. In a moment I'll explain how to get the domain for your blog for free.

The trickiest part of this will be coming up with a good domain. Your domain should be easy to pronounce, try to avoid confusing or ambiguous characters. For example, the letter “L” can be easily confused with an “i” or a “1” in some situations.

Try to think of a name that is memorable and descriptive of what you want to blog about. If your blog will be personal, the domain name could be your own name.

Keep in mind that the exact name you want could be taken by someone else, so before you take the next step come up with a list of names you like and a few variations.

How to pick your blog domain tips

- A shorter domain is better than a longer one.
- Should be easy to pronounce and easy to spell.
- Clever names need more promotion than descriptive names.
- Don't use a tool or special search box to see if your domain is taken.
- Try to use a keyword about your topic in the domain name.
- Avoid characters that can be confused.
- Try to pick a .com, .net, .org. These are the most popular and are received better by your audience.

You may review this blogpost that talks about [how to test if the domain name you want is available](#) .

Where should you host your blog?

I have used most of the most popular webhosts out there for my own blogs and for the blogs and websites of my clients so I can tell you which ones are good and which ones I recommend.

There are many web hosts out there, but they're not all the same. The main things you want to look for in a web host is high quality, outstanding support and that they support WordPress.

I have used this host for many of my sites and client sites and I highly recommend it. They will take great care of you. [Siteground](#).

They pride themselves in providing outstanding customer support and they provide services geared toward WordPress.

Siteground provides a money-back guarantee if you are not satisfied with their services and have a great number of perks that will help you in the long run.

Another great thing about using Siteground is that when you follow my guide, they will give you a **domain for free!** just follow the links in this guide to get the 60-70% off discount and the free domain.

How to get your domain name for free

Follow one of my links to [Siteground WordPress Hosting](#). During the purchase process, you will notice that you can get a domain at **no additional charge; it is included for free** .

How Do I Install WordPress?

After you buy your hosting account and get your domain, you have two basic ways you can install WordPress.

- 1) Using the one-click installation system (easy).
- 2) Installing WordPress by hand (advanced).

The first option is the best one for beginners because it saves you all the steps and the blog gets installed almost automatically just by answering a few simple questions, then you're ready to start blogging.

I have outlined two guides next; one for Siteground easy one-click install, and one if you want to install WordPress by hand.

[click to expand \(stay on this page\): An explanation of the two options](#)

How do I Install WordPress on Siteground (easy)

The installation of your blog using Siteground is easy and should take you about 10 minutes. I have included steps that show you how to get your account, then how to install your blog using WordPress.

Before you get started with Siteground, make sure you use this link to visit Siteground and the free domain and 60% discount will automatically be applied to your purchase. When you follow my guide, you will be able to get the best price. Click on the link below to expand the guide and continue installing your blog.

click to expand: Getting your blog started with Siteground

How do I install WordPress by hand (without FTP)

If you decide to use a different company for your web hosting account, or if you want to install your blog by hand then you want to follow this guide.

Traditionally, you need an FTP program to install WordPress by hand, but with this guide you will not need to use an FTP program like [Filezilla](#), [Cyberduck](#) or [SmartFTP](#).

Instead of using FTP, you will use the built-in system provided by your web hosting account to install your WordPress blog.

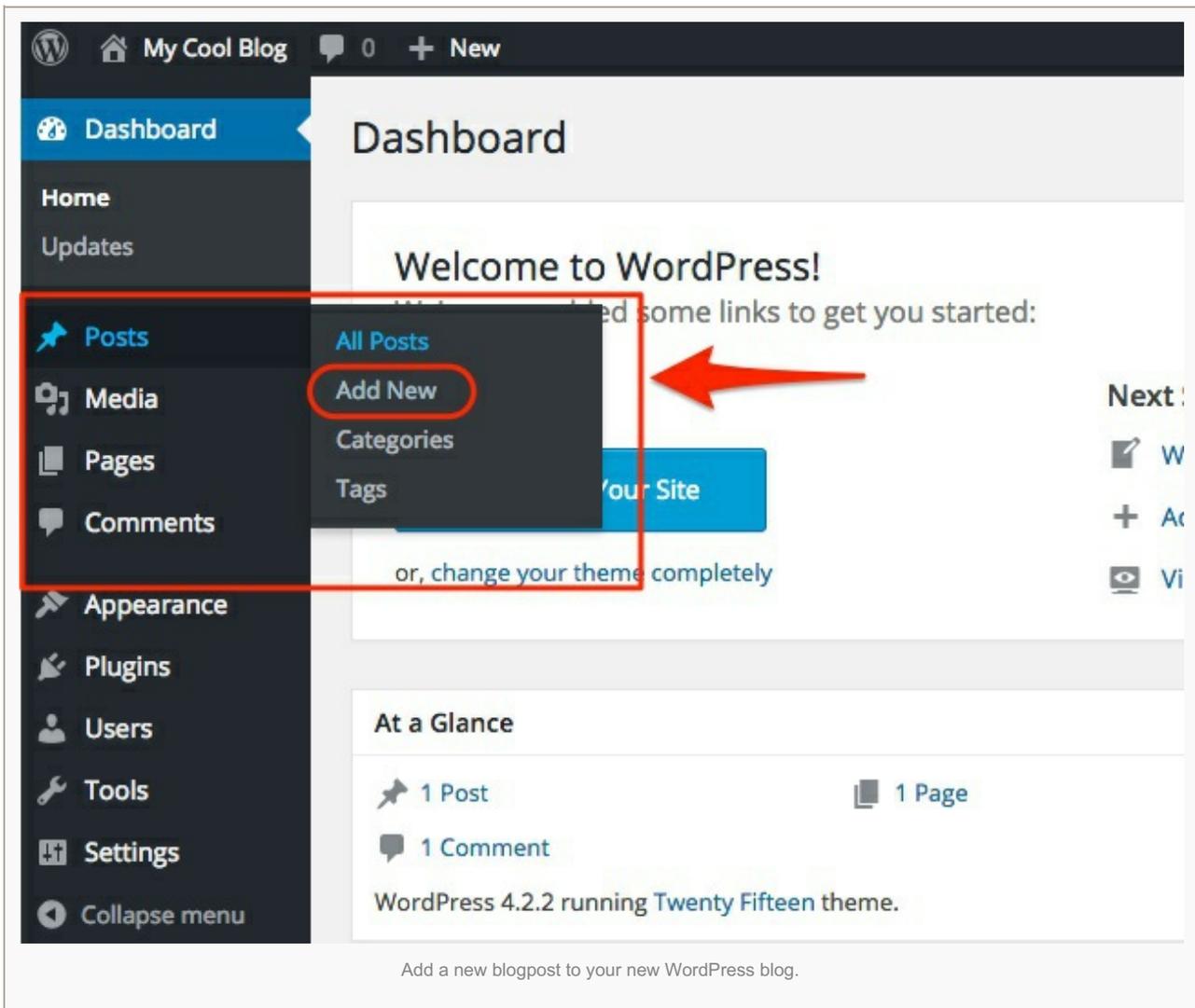
click to expand: Installing a WordPress blog without using FTP

4) Start Blogging!

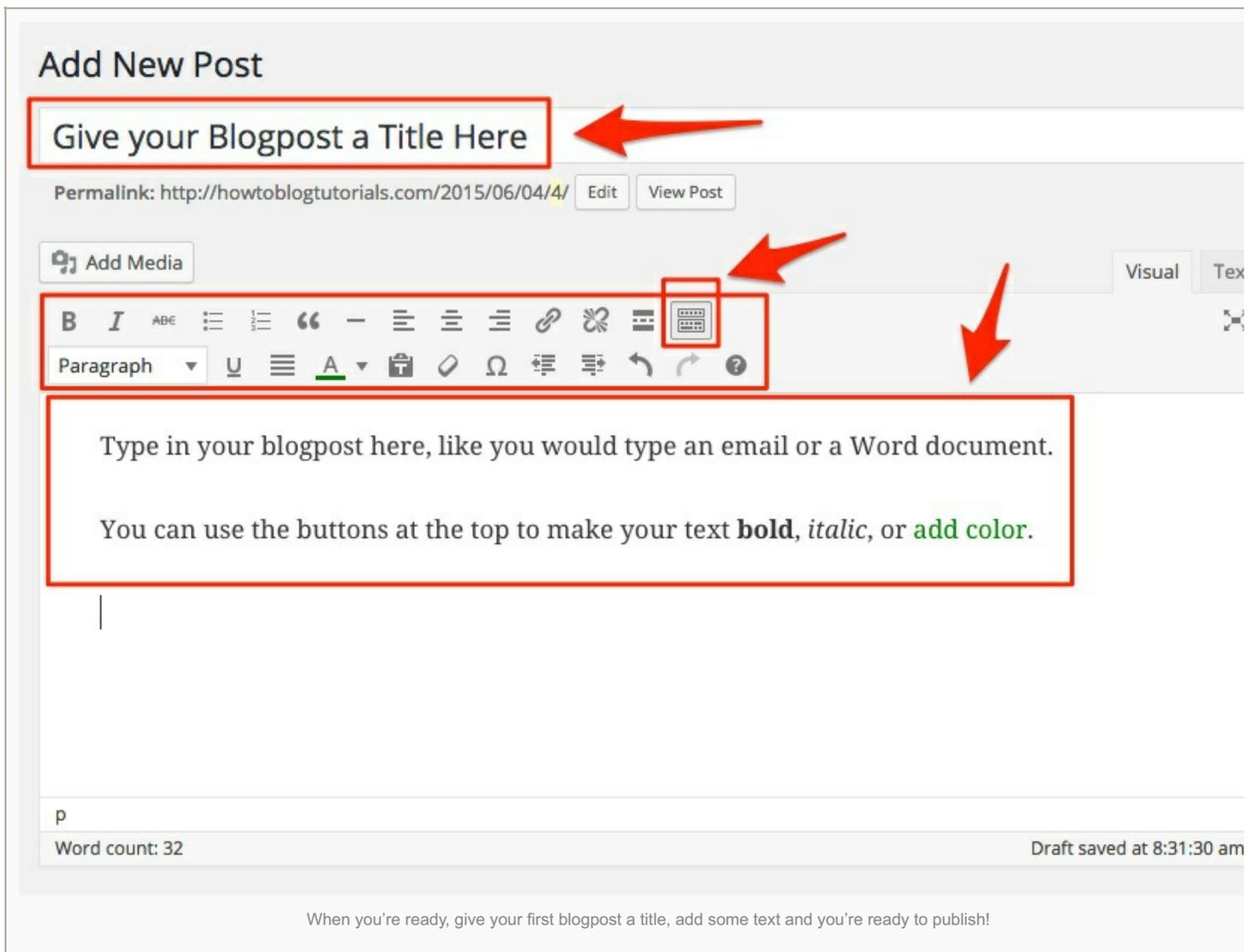
Now that your blog is installed and you have logged in, you can start blogging! Next I show you a few steps to get your first blogpost published and ready to go.

When you first log into your blog, you will be presented with your WordPress dashboard.

From the WordPress dashboard, look for the posts section on the left and click on the “Add New” post. This will bring up the new post window for you to write your first blogpost.



You can then type in your blogpost. Write the text you want to add to your blogpost. It will feel a lot like writing an email or a Word document. You can make the text bold, italic, underline it or add color to it. If you don't see all the icons that are shown in the screenshot below, click on the "Toggle Toolbar" button that is highlighted to display them.



When you are comfortable with your first blogpost, on the right hand side you'll find the publishing box. This section allows you to publish the blogpost for others to see, or save it as a draft. You can also schedule it so it remains unpublished until a date you set in the future.

There are options to add the blogpost to a category, add tags to it and even associate a featured image with this blogpost. These could be considered slightly advanced options so you can skip those for now if you'd like.

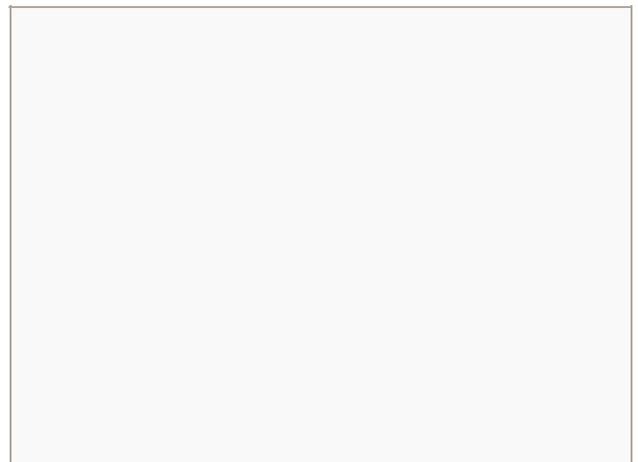
Just for the sake of exercise you should type a short blogpost and click on the publish button. Once you do that, you will have had published your first post!

Pick or add the options you want, then click on "Publish."

After you click on Publish, you will see a confirmation at the top of the page and a new link as shown on the following screenshot. Click on that link and you will see your newly minted blogpost.

Congratulations! You are now ready to start publishing more blogposts. You can delete this first post you created as a test, or leave it and create another one. You can check out this post too: [What To Do After Your First Blogpost](#)

(Edit)



Publish

Save Draft

Preview

Status: Draft [Edit](#)

Visibility: Public [Edit](#)

 Publish immediately [Edit](#)

Move to Trash

Publish

Format

Categories

All Categories [Most Used](#)

Uncategorized

[+ Add New Category](#)

— Parent Category —

Add New Category

Tags

Add

Separate tags with commas

[Choose from the most used tags](#)

From this screen you can publish, save as draft, schedule the post or assign it to a category

Edit Post [Add New](#)

Post published. [View post](#)



Give your Blogpost a Title Here

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After you click the publish button, you can find your blogpost on this link.