WordPress Post View Counter (Cookie Protected)

# 1. Add to functions.php: View Count Setup

// Function to set post view count, with cookie protection  
function custom\_set\_post\_views($postID) {  
 $count\_key = 'custom\_post\_views\_count';  
 $cookie\_name = 'viewed\_post\_' . $postID;  
  
 if (!isset($\_COOKIE[$cookie\_name])) {  
 $count = get\_post\_meta($postID, $count\_key, true);  
 if ($count === '' || $count === null) {  
 $count = 0;  
 }  
 $count++;  
 update\_post\_meta($postID, $count\_key, $count);  
  
 // Set cookie for 1 hour  
 setcookie($cookie\_name, '1', time() + 3600, "/");  
 }  
}  
  
// Function to get view count  
function custom\_get\_post\_views($postID) {  
 $count\_key = 'custom\_post\_views\_count';  
 $count = get\_post\_meta($postID, $count\_key, true);  
 return $count ? $count . ' Views' : '0 Views';  
}

# 2. Call View Counter on Single Post

<?php  
if (is\_single()) {  
 custom\_set\_post\_views(get\_the\_ID());  
}  
?>

# 3. Display View Count

<?php echo custom\_get\_post\_views(get\_the\_ID()); ?>

# 4. Popular Posts Query (Template or Widget)

<?php  
$args = array(  
 'post\_type' => 'post',  
 'posts\_per\_page' => 5,  
 'meta\_key' => 'custom\_post\_views\_count',  
 'orderby' => 'meta\_value\_num',  
 'order' => 'DESC'  
);  
  
$popular\_query = new WP\_Query($args);  
  
if ($popular\_query->have\_posts()) :  
 while ($popular\_query->have\_posts()) : $popular\_query->the\_post(); ?>  
 <div class="popular-post">  
 <h4><a href="<?php the\_permalink(); ?>"><?php the\_title(); ?></a></h4>  
 <span><?php echo custom\_get\_post\_views(get\_the\_ID()); ?></span>  
 </div>  
 <?php endwhile;  
 wp\_reset\_postdata();  
else :  
 echo 'No popular posts found.';  
endif;  
?>

# 5. Optional: Popular Posts via Shortcode

function custom\_popular\_posts\_shortcode() {  
 ob\_start();  
  
 $args = array(  
 'post\_type' => 'post',  
 'posts\_per\_page' => 5,  
 'meta\_key' => 'custom\_post\_views\_count',  
 'orderby' => 'meta\_value\_num',  
 'order' => 'DESC'  
 );  
  
 $query = new WP\_Query($args);  
  
 if ($query->have\_posts()) :  
 echo '<ul class="popular-posts">';  
 while ($query->have\_posts()) : $query->the\_post();  
 echo '<li><a href="' . get\_permalink() . '">' . get\_the\_title() . '</a> (' . custom\_get\_post\_views(get\_the\_ID()) . ')</li>';  
 endwhile;  
 echo '</ul>';  
 wp\_reset\_postdata();  
 else :  
 echo 'No popular posts found.';  
 endif;  
  
 return ob\_get\_clean();  
}  
add\_shortcode('popular\_posts', 'custom\_popular\_posts\_shortcode');

Use this in any page/post: [popular\_posts]

# Notes

- Views are tracked only once per post per visitor every 1 hour via cookie.  
- You can change cookie duration (e.g., 24 hours = 86400 seconds).  
- You don't need any login system for this to work.  
- Works with basic caching.