

eBook

WordPress for Beginners

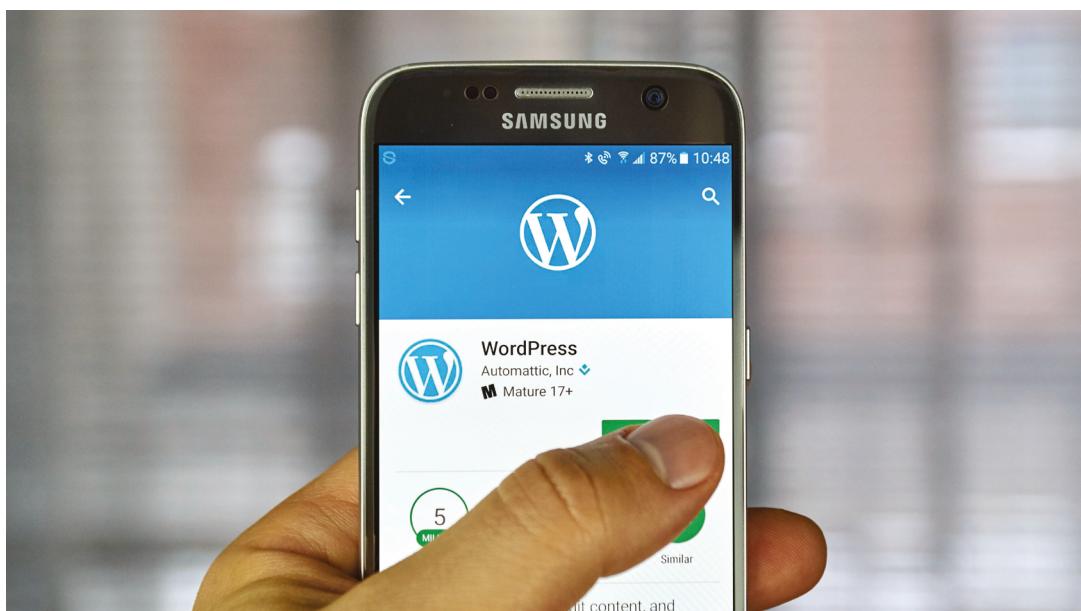
An easy step-by-step guide to creating
your own website



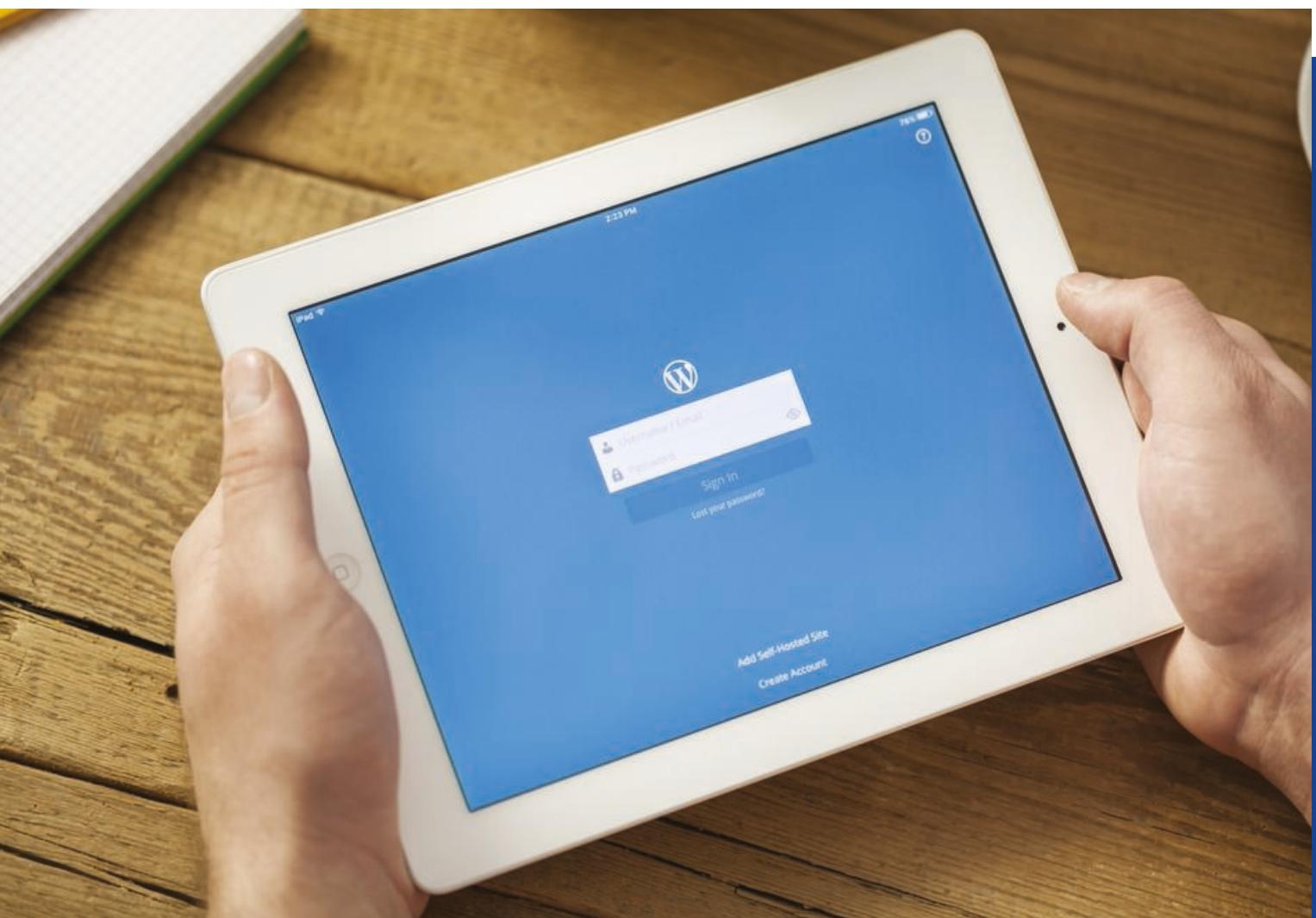
IONOS

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Setting up WordPress



Chapter 1: Setting up WordPress

Thinking about building your own website? Whether you need a professional online presence, a blog or an online shop, you can be up and running fast with WordPress. It's the **perfect solution for beginners** who want to create a website using their own content.

Introduction: The Number 1 for Websites

Before you start on your website – whether it's for professional or private use – you'll have to think about how you want to build it. While in the early days of the internet you had to write every line of HTML and CSS yourself, there are now a wide variety of tools and service providers:

- **HTML editors**
- **Content management systems (CMS)**
- **Website builders**
- **Professional web designers**

All options have their advantages and disadvantages. So, while a professional web designer will build you a website exactly the way you want, you will also have to budget for it. An HTML editor, on the other hand, is often free, but requires considerable know-how or training in web design and IT.

The perfect middle ground is a CMS, like WordPress. These systems are often free and **are suitable for beginners**.

What is WordPress?

[**WordPress**](#) is by far the most popular content management system in the world. With software like WordPress, it is very easy to create and manage websites without understanding HTML, CSS, MySQL, or PHP. By using a CMS, even total design novices can create professional websites. With templates and plugins you can customise your website however you like. WordPress is considered one of the simplest content management systems and has been delighting its users since 2003.

WordPress partly owes its enormous popularity to its quick and easy installation. The developers advertise their CMS with the fact that you can install it **in just 5 minutes**. This is entirely possible, even for the technophobes among us. Once you have completed the installation, the basic framework for a website is already ready.

WordPress distinguishes between a **frontend** and a **backend**. The frontend is what visitors to your website get to see, the backend is your administration area, also known as the 'dashboard' in WordPress. Here, you can customise the appearance and functions of your website, as well as insert, create, or delete content.

Thanks to an easily navigable interface and simple editing features, creating a WordPress website is a simple process. That's why WordPress is very popular **especially among bloggers**. Instead of spending a long time on the technical intricacies of web design, you can devote your complete attention to the content. You can easily get a professional-looking layout and practical functions – WordPress users have access to over **8,000 free themes** (design templates) and **more than 58,000 free plugins** (function extensions). In addition, you can also find lots of designs on the internet, but most of these aren't free.

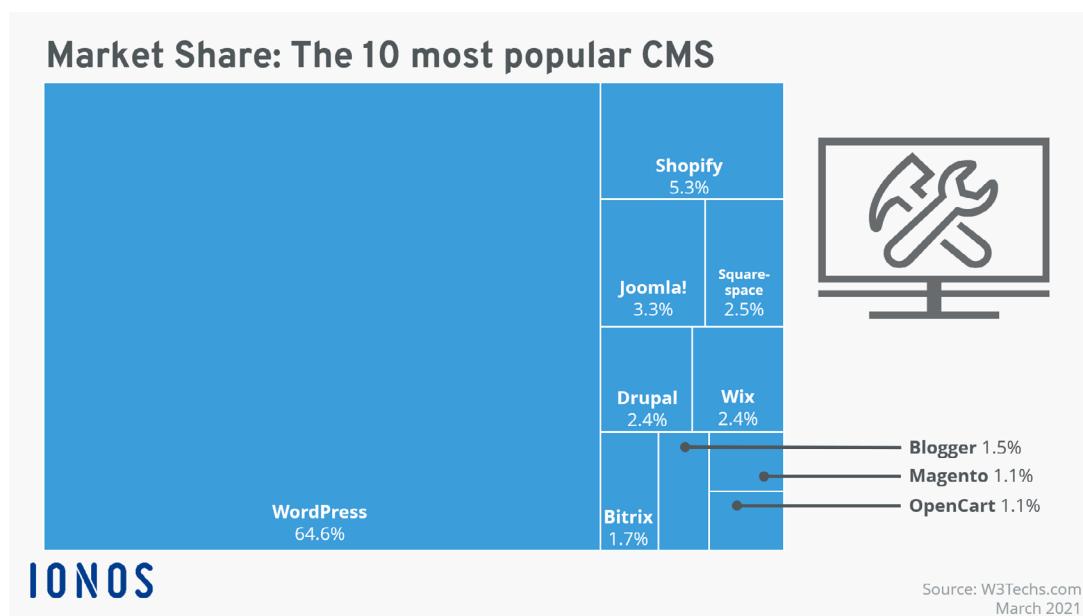
The fact that WordPress is an open-source project also increases the popularity of the software. Anyone can download WordPress and use it for their website – or even participate in developing it further!

Fact

If a software is [Open Source](#) it means that the source code is freely available to everyone and can be adapted and further developed. Since lots of different developers rather than one company take care of open-source software, you can usually assume that the programs available are both innovative and safe. Although open-source software is often free, this is not always the case.

WordPress is the most popular CMS in the world

There are lots of content management systems on the market – many of them also free and open-source. Almost every CMS provides for a specific niche, appeals to a certain type of user, or has a unique feature. However, no CMS is used as much as WordPress. [Over 40% of all websites on the internet](#) are based on the software. If you consider that only about 30% of all websites are not based on a CMS, but were created with a static site generator, for example, you might be able to guess the high market share WordPress has: over 60%! All other CMS fall far behind in the lower, single digits.



WordPress is by far the market leader in terms of CMS.

This does not mean that the other systems are bad, though. It just means that it's most likely that no other CMS comes close to the usability of WordPress, as its popularity may attest to. The many free extensions are another factor that influences the WordPress monopoly. Thanks to numerous templates (themes) and plugins, you customise the CMS as you need it to help meet your goals.

The CMS for every occasion

With the help of plugins, you can customise WordPress for various purposes. The basic structure will always remain the same, but you can add additional functions to the system using them.

Blog

The standard use of a content management system is for a blog. People who want to publish their thoughts on a certain topic regularly on the internet will find a suitable solution in WordPress. The integrated text editor and the clear editorial system make it possible to upload content quickly and in a structured way. For this you don't even need additional extensions. **Content planning and media library** are already integrated in the basic form.

Magazine

Even those who want to publish content on a larger scale are in good hands with WordPress. The most important functions are also pre-installed for this. Since you can create **multiple users per WordPress account**, even entire editorial teams can work together in the CMS. The advantage here is that you can set up different roles with different rights. What's more is that by using plugins, you can extend the CMS so that it also supports, for example, different languages or helps with search engine optimisation.

Landing page

If you are planning an advertising campaign, you may want to create your own website beforehand. WordPress is perfectly suited for this because the installation is fast, and thanks to thousands of themes, you can **perfectly adapt the layout and design to your campaign**. One-pagers – websites without subpages – are particularly practical and can be set up to go online within minutes.

Business website

Content management systems are mainly designed for creating, publishing, and managing content. But WordPress is also great for creating static websites. Like a **construction kit**, you can create different pages, create the navigation, and insert design elements. If you find the right theme, you can put even time into the design yourself. Then you just add your copy, images, and videos.

Online shop

Thanks to various plugins, you can also use WordPress for e-commerce. With the right extensions, you can easily add products to your online range. Additionally, **different payment methods** can be integrated and even your logistics can be organised via the WordPress backend. In an overview area, you'll be able to see all the orders – if an item is sold out, it will be automatically marked as such on the website.

Community

With a little effort and the appropriate extensions, a WordPress installation can also be developed into a forum or a small community. Visitors to your website can then create an account, manage profiles, add friends, and communicate with each other.

What do you need for a WordPress website?

Every website needs a basic technical framework, essential equipment which your project can run on. WordPress is no different. The good thing about this content management system is that the required resources are neither demanding nor excessive. Web space, database, and domain are already included in most hosting packages anyway, making things simple.

First off, however, you'll be faced with the question of what type of server to choose. Providers usually have [shared hosting](#), [dedicated hosting](#) and [cloud hosting](#) in their portfolio. So, what's the difference between them?

- With **dedicated hosting** you get your own physical server. This gives you so much performance that even extensive projects with high numbers of visitors are no problem. You can keep complete control over the server. This means that all rights (but also obligations) are in your hands – which is why this option is usually aimed at experienced website owners.
- **Shared hosting**, on the other hand, means that several hosting customers share the servers. Nevertheless, the individual data areas are strictly separated from each other. No other user can get to your files. This variant is particularly suitable for smaller projects that require less performance.
- **Cloud hosting**'s main appeal lies in its enormous flexibility. You can adjust every aspect of the server at any time, and thus, for example, react to increased memory requirements or reduce CPU performance. The files are distributed dynamically on different servers. Of course, you as the customer will not notice this, because everything appears to be bundled in one place.

So, it really all depends on your needs as to which server option is the right one for your WordPress installation. If you know that your project will be big, many plugins are in use, and numerous visitors are expected, the high-performance of a dedicated server is no doubt the best choice. If your project is less demanding on the internet, you'll find a home for your WordPress site with one of the affordable shared hosting plans. Full flexibility, on the other hand, is available with cloud hosting – here you have the option to let the server resources grow with the project size. When your website becomes more extensive and more and more people visit your WordPress site, you simply increase the capacity.

Webspace

Installing WordPress doesn't require **much hard disk space**; usually just 100 MBs are enough. However, the memory requirements will increase over time. Using lots of plugins as well as including media files like images, videos, or music require more space. Starting with a small package first (many offers start at 25 GB) will cover your initial space requirements, and then you can top up as needed.

Once you have decided how much storage space, you'll need at first, you'll need to answer the question of whether the web space should be based on [SSD or HDD technology](#). This refers to two different types of hard disk drives. A hard disk drive (HDD) is a classic hard disk where the data is written to rotating disks. HDDs are a great option in terms of their price and storage capacity. With HDD technology, large storage capacities are still generally affordable, making it a budget friendly option. A solid state drive (SSD) – also known as flash memory – is very fast because there are no mechanical components. Since you will most likely not need a huge amount of storage space with a WordPress website, you should – if possible – go for SSD. The speedy access times support a website's performance, and this means that SSD technology ensures a **good user-experience and good search engine ranking**.

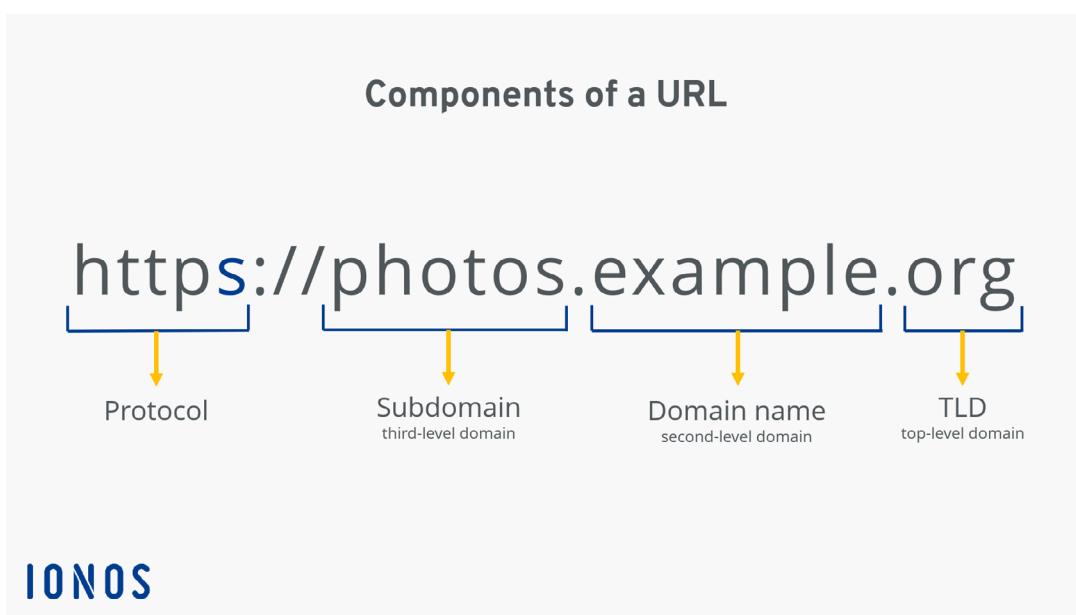
Database

WordPress works based on a database. Every post you publish is stored there. WordPress works with [Database management systems \(DBMS\)](#), [MySQL](#), or [MariaDB](#). Other websites also use these databases, which is why the software is **already installed in most web hosting packages**. WordPress creates and maintains the required database automatically. All this happens in the background, so you usually don't notice anything when you're using it.

Domain

For visitors to be able to access your website on the internet, you need a domain. A domain is like an address on the internet. Instead of memorising a complex [IP address](#), users can type the domain into the browser's address bar. The IP address (for IPv4) is a sequence of up to 12 digits that is used to connect a computer to the various servers on the internet. Most people wouldn't be able to remember the sequence of IP address digits, so domains are used, which are then automatically converted into IP addresses. A domain consists of several parts. The important ones for you to know are top-level domains (TLD) and second-level domains (SLD):

- The **second-level domain** (SLD) is the name you choose for your website. You can either choose a concise term or combine several words with hyphens. Try to be flexible when choosing your website's name, though, because your first choice may already be taken. In the address www.example.com, 'example' would be the SLD.
- **Top-level domains** are small abbreviations at the end of a URL. You will recognise the .org and .com endings of websites, and these are the TLDs. New TLDs are released regularly that fit well to specific topics.



Above all, the choice of domain name and top-level domain should be well thought out.

Subdomains will only play a role should your project grow further. When the time comes, you can use subdomains to divide your website into different versions in addition to the familiar 'www', for example, or give each company location its own subdomain. Bear in mind that this only makes sense for bigger, highly developed websites.

SSL Certificate

See to your visitor's trust and security with an SSL certificate (or more precisely, a TLS certificate). This shows your WordPress website visitors that data transmission is encrypted. In addition, the certificate identifies you as the owner of the domain. Users can view the information in their browsers: In Chrome, Firefox, and other browsers, a secured website shows a lock icon. Visitors therefore immediately recognise that they need not worry about their data.

Meanwhile, SSL certificates are also important for **search engine optimisation (SEO)**. Google penalises unsecured pages and places them in a lower ranking in search results. With modern web hosting providers, an SSL certificate is usually included. This is also enough for your WordPress website. If you want to create multiple websites, you need to order additional certificates.

WordPress hosting by IONOS

If you choose the IONOS package for [WordPress Hosting](#), you won't have to worry about the technical aspects of setting up your WordPress website. Everything will be included, and **WordPress will even be pre-installed** for you according to your specifications.

All plans also come with **DDoS protection**, which protects against cybercriminals who try to bombard your website with requests to weaken the server. You'll also get **malware protection**, meaning that IONOS' scanner will scan your WordPress installation for computer viruses and other malicious programs. With the help of **regular backups**, web space and the database can be restored should you encounter data loss. If you activate the 'Managed WordPress' mode, IONOS additionally can ensure that the WordPress core, themes, and plugins as well as the PHP version of your installation is always up to date and that you don't miss any updates. This ensures increased security!

WordPress Pro by IONOS

If you want to take your own project to the next level, you're in good hands with [WordPress Pro](#) from IONOS. With the Pro version, expect up to **300 percent more performance** thanks to dedicated CPU and RAM resources. This increased performance is also ensured by a professional NGNIX web server and modern caching technology. As with the 'normal' WordPress hosting package, fast SSD hard drives guarantee optimal loading times. This WordPress installation will run on cloud servers, so nothing stands in the way of your project's further growth.

A special feature of WordPress Pro is the AI-checked updates. Before a new update is installed on your site, the system will check for compatibility in the background. If your website would be compromised by an update, it wouldn't be installed at all. A similar feature is offered by the staging function. With this, you can first try out changes (such as new plugins) in a test environment before going live with them.

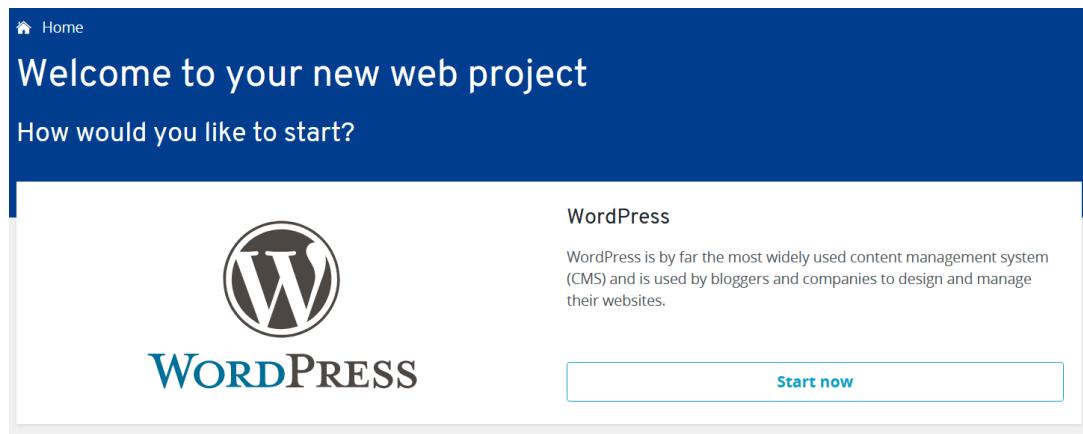
To guarantee the security of your website, WordPress Pro also comes with an SSL certificate, regular backups, and malware protection from the security experts at Imunify!

Set up your WordPress project with IONOS

You want to get started with your own WordPress project at IONOS? We will explain the individual steps – from the basic framework to the finished WordPress site.

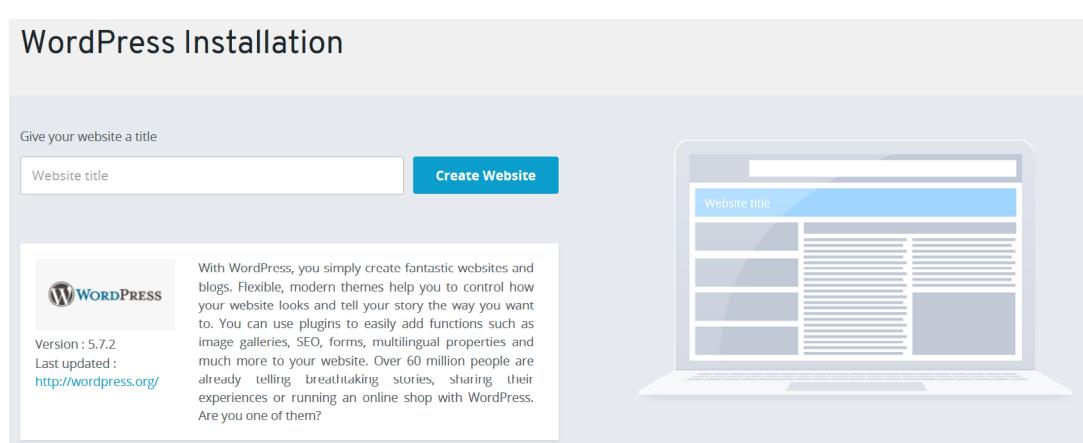
In the first step, you choose the **hosting package**. Selecting one of the WordPress packages from IONOS eliminates the need to manually install the software on the server, making it an ideal option. Feel free to start with a lower package because you can always upgrade if needed! At this stage, you'll also need to **choose a domain**. Take your time for this step because your domain will accompany you for many years (hopefully!). Once you have made these decisions, you can start with the actual creation of the website.

In your customer account, you will find 'Websites & Shops' in the menu – there you'll also find an option to create a new website or shop. After you've navigated to this point, select the WordPress option and press 'Start now'.



The screenshot shows a blue header bar with a 'Home' icon and the text 'Welcome to your new web project'. Below this, a section titled 'How would you like to start?' contains a large 'WORDPRESS' button with a 'W' logo. To the right of the button, the text 'WordPress' is described as a content management system used by bloggers and companies. A 'Start now' button is visible. At the bottom left, a note says 'With WordPress hosting from IONOS, you can start creating a website in just a few clicks.'

Next, decide on a **project name**. The project name is primarily for managing the website. Additionally, if you have a Managed WordPress plan, the name is used as part of an automatically generated web address.



The screenshot shows a 'WordPress Installation' page. It features a 'Website title' input field and a 'Create Website' button. On the left, there's a sidebar with the 'WORDPRESS' logo, version information ('Version : 5.7.2', 'Last updated : http://wordpress.org/'), and a brief description of what WordPress can do. On the right, there's a graphic of a laptop displaying a website layout.

The title of your website is mainly for your own organisation and can be adjusted by you at any time.

Before you start the installation, select a **username and password**. You'll use this information to log in to the WordPress backend later. This information needs to be chosen with care because this login page is accessible for all. Avoid 'admin' or 'user', though – these are not suitable, because they are much too easy to guess! A **secure password** is even more important. Pick a password that isn't too short, easy to guess, or a real word.

IONOS offers two different options for your WordPress installation:

- **Managed WordPress:** This variant is especially suitable for beginners because this way you don't have to worry about updates anymore. Both the WordPress installation itself and themes, plugins, and PHP are always kept up to date. You also do not need to worry about passwords for databases and directory in the web space. In this package you also get an automatically created domain that you can use until you have your own domain associated with the project: `your-project-name.website-live.com`.
- **Standard WordPress:** If you decide not to opt for support from IONOS, you have full control. However, you also have to take care of all updates yourself and you'll need an available domain.

The actual installation will begin once you've set all this up. Once this is complete, you will be redirected to the overview page of your project. Here, you'll be able to log into the WordPress backend now (and also in the future). Alternatively, enter your domain with the extension `/wp-admin` (i.e., `example.com/wp-admin`) in the address bar of your browser. At this point, you can enter the login data you set earlier.

Customise WordPress properly: The most important settings

After installation, you could technically go online straightaway with your new website. However, the default configuration may not be suitable for what you want to do. We will guide you through the initial settings so that you can get started with your WordPress project quickly and easily.

Connect your domain

For people to access your new WordPress site, you need a domain. If you didn't purchase one when booking the hosting package, you'll have to **connect the website to a domain afterwards**. With IONOS, this is easily done via your user account. To do this, switch to the 'Websites & Shops' section.

With Managed WordPress, your website will have initially been assigned a **system domain**. However, this is not intended to be used when your website goes live. You can use this internet address for testing purposes, so if you want to work on your WordPress website already, but don't know which domain to use yet, the system domain can help in the meantime.

Then, as soon as you decide to share your website with others, you can either add a domain you've already purchased or buy a new one by clicking on 'Select domain'.

Domain (Internet Address)

  .co.uk

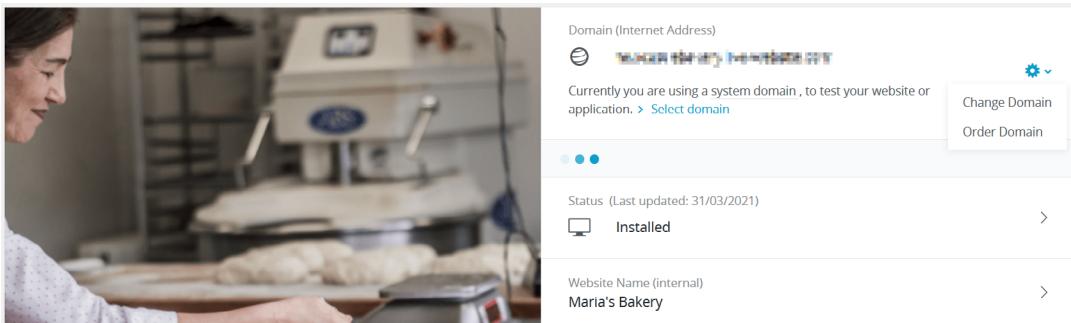


Currently you are using a system domain , to test your website or application. > [Select domain](#)

1 more domain refers to this website.

The system will also suggest a domain name that you can register directly.

You can still change your domain settings afterwards. If you navigate back to your website in your customer account and click on the cog, you will get to the domain options. In the settings, you can, for example, activate and deactivate additional domains for the same website.

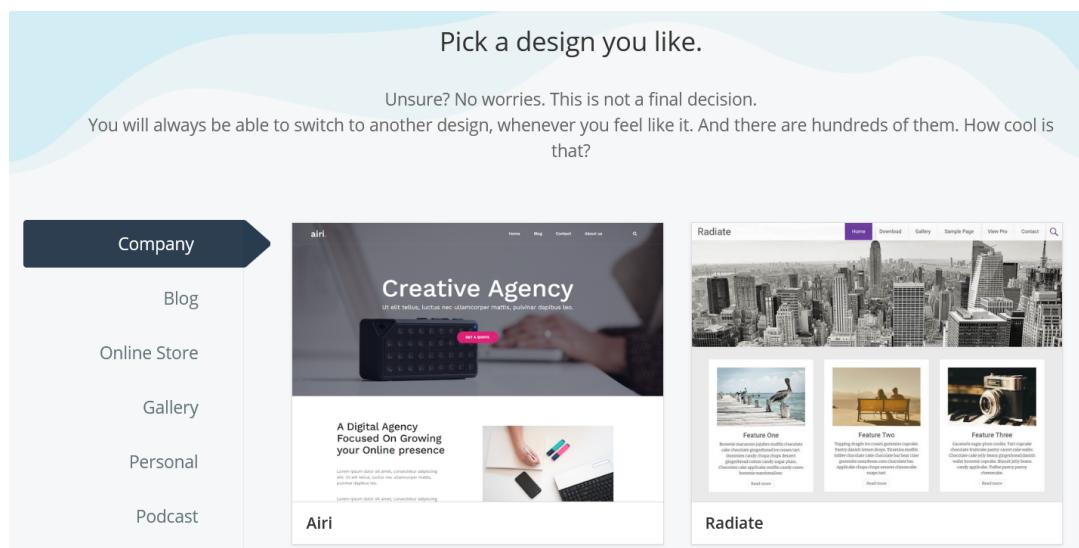


The screenshot shows a user interface for managing website domains. At the top, there's a small image of a woman in a bakery. Below it, a status bar says "Domain (Internet Address)" with a URL placeholder. A message indicates the user is using a system domain to test their website. There are buttons for "Change Domain" and "Order Domain". The main area has sections for "Status" (last updated 31/03/2021) showing "Installed" and "Website Name (internal) Maria's Bakery".

You can add one or more domains to each website you host with IONOS.

Pick a theme

If you use WordPress with a Managed WordPress plan, the setup wizard will suggest suitable themes for your project after the first login. Even after the setup is complete, you can select a design template via the Assistant (which can be easily accessed via the WordPress backend). IONOS has sorted the different themes according to different types of websites.



The screenshot shows a theme selection interface. On the left, a sidebar lists categories: Company (selected), Blog, Online Store, Gallery, Personal, and Podcast. The main area features two theme previews. The first, 'airi', is a dark-themed 'Creative Agency' site with a grid of images and a 'GET STARTED' button. The second, 'Radiate', is a light-themed site featuring a city skyline background and three 'Feature' boxes with sub-copy and 'Read more' links.

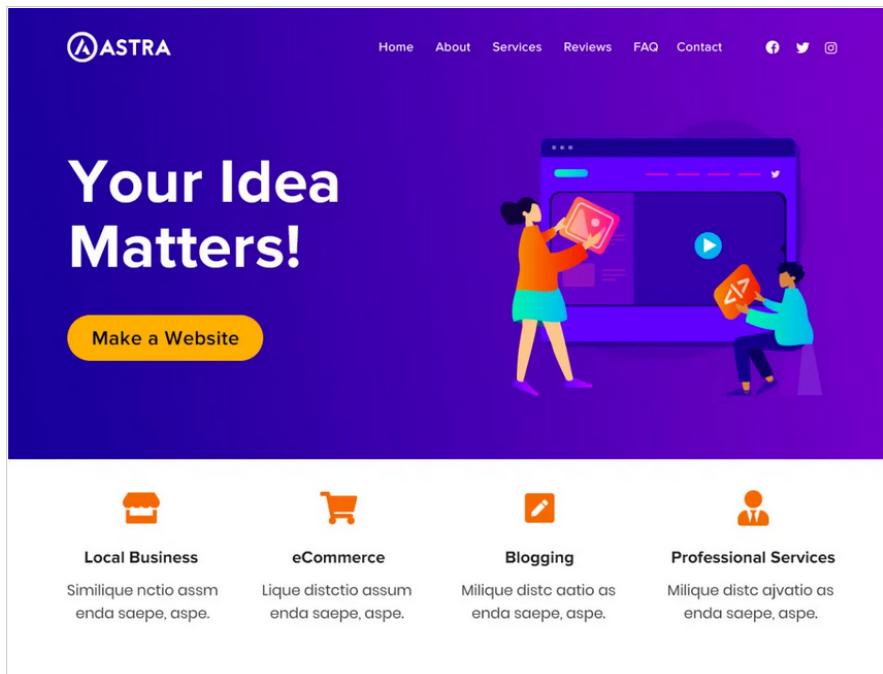
For better orientation, IONOS has grouped the different themes into categories: <https://www.ionos.co.uk/websites/templates>

The perfect theme fits your content, is simultaneously easily navigable, and is unique. Ideally, you'd stand out from crowd, but you also don't want to overwhelm visitors with too many elements or a confusing navigation structure. Current [web design trends](#) often address interactive elements, but in this case, the following is a golden rule: less is more! Paying attention to a good website structure is preferable to lots of gimmicks (even if they're fun).

The most popular free themes

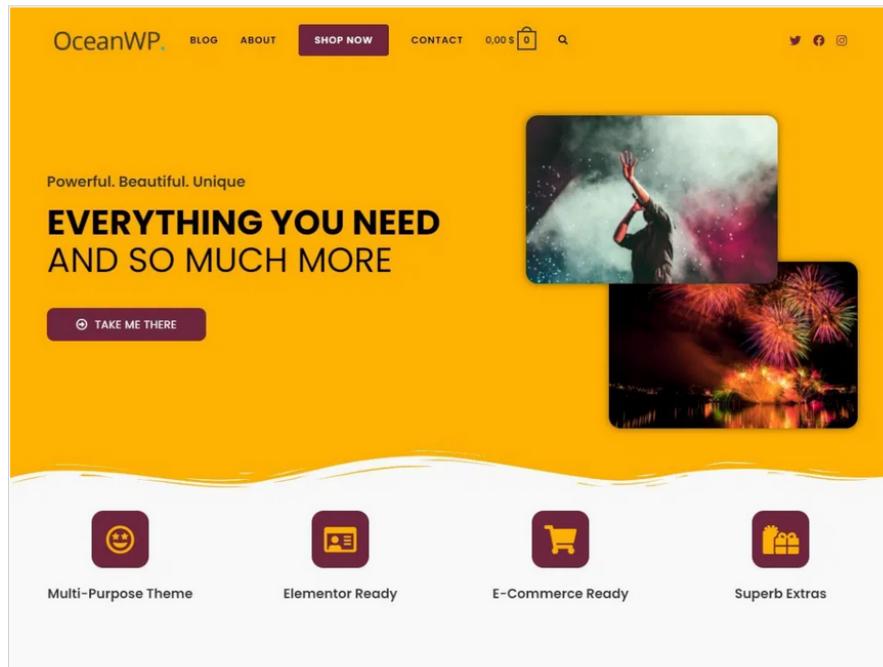
You can also use the most popular themes as a guide when choosing a theme. Most WordPress websites use one of the default themes which change each year (these are always named after the current year). This is a good place to start. Look at the other popular themes as well, though:

Astra By Brainstorm Force



With over a million installations, Astra is one of the most popular themes and best suited for e-commerce. /
Source: <https://wordpress.org/themes/astra/>

OceanWP By oceanwp



OceanWP is popular on account of its dynamic design, which is reminiscent of ocean waves. / Source: <https://wordpress.org/themes/oceanwp/>

Hello Elementor

By [Elementor](#)

The screenshot shows a clean, modern homepage layout. At the top left is a purple square icon with the letters 'IE'. Below it is a large, bold black 'Hello' heading. Underneath the heading is the word 'Theme' in a smaller font. To the right of the heading is a circular image of a plant with sharp, green, thorn-like leaves against a sunset or sunrise background. Below the heading is a red button labeled 'Launch Project →'. At the bottom of the page are four cards with icons: a lightbulb (text), a diamond (services), an airplane (shop), and a snowflake (contact). Each card has placeholder text: 'Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing' under the lightbulb, 'There are many variations of passages of Lorem Ipsum' under the diamond, 'Where does it come from? Contrary to popular belief' under the airplane, and 'Here are many variations of passages of Lorem Ipsum' under the snowflake.

Hello Elementor is considered a particularly fast theme and is therefore also suitable for mobile websites. /
Source: <https://wordpress.org/themes/hello-elementor/>

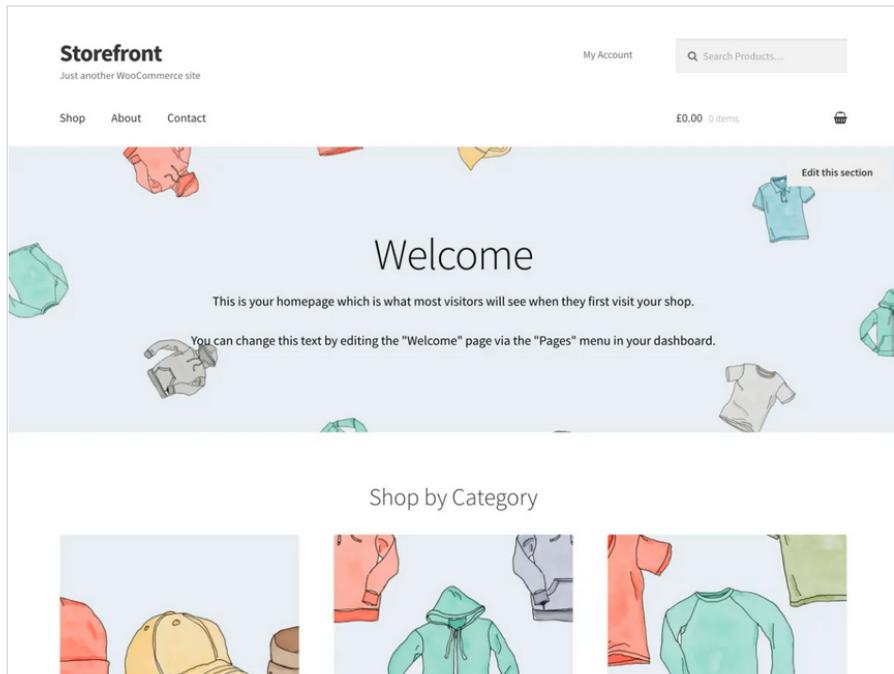
GeneratePress

Von [Tom](#)

The screenshot shows a professional homepage layout. At the top left is a black profile picture icon. To its right are navigation links: Home, About, Services, Shop, Contact, and a magnifying glass icon for search. Below the navigation is a large hero section featuring a tablet and a smartphone displaying website mockups. To the left of the devices is the text 'Welcome to' and the 'GeneratePress' logo. Below the logo is a paragraph of placeholder text: 'Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Quisque porttitor tellus sed ex pulvinar tempor. Suspendisse ullamcorper dapibus tristique.' At the bottom of the hero section are two blue call-to-action buttons: 'Get Started' and 'Learn More'. The main content area below the hero section is divided into three columns. The first column, 'Who We Are', features a feather icon and placeholder text about the company's history. The second column, 'What We Do', features a shield icon and placeholder text about their services. The third column, 'How We Do It', features a gear icon and placeholder text about their methodology. Each column has a small paragraph of placeholder text at the bottom.

GeneratePress also puts a lot of emphasis on high performance and combines this with a modern design. /
Source: <https://wordpress.org/themes/generatepress/>

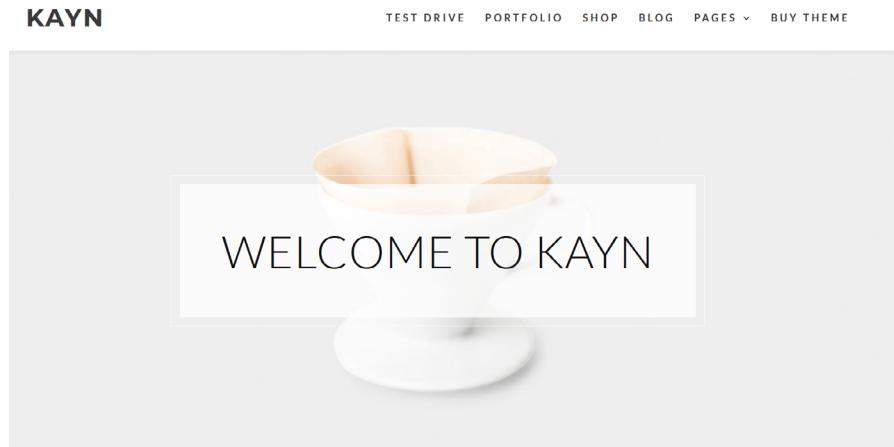
Storefront Von *automattic*



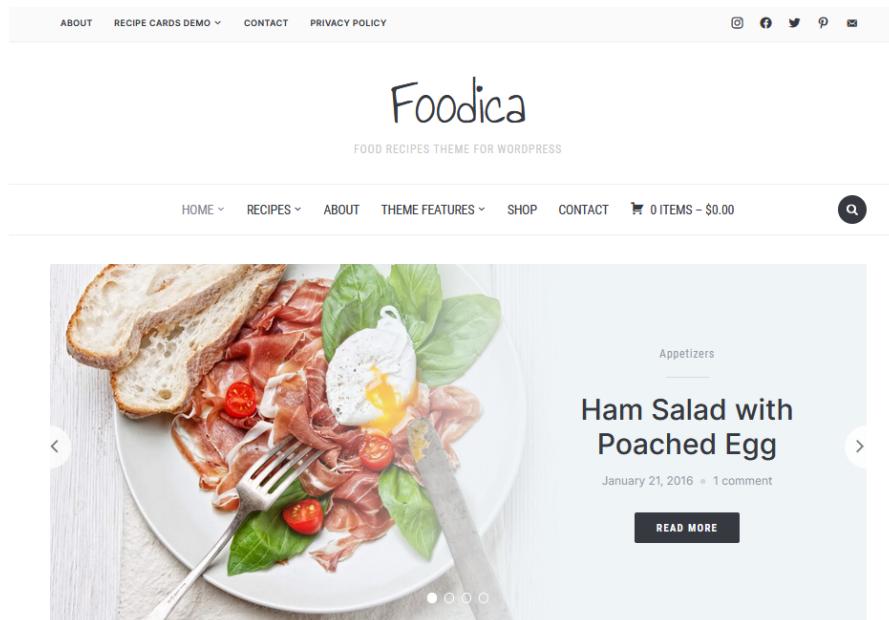
The Storefront theme is especially popular for online shops based on WooCommerce. / Source: <https://wordpress.org/themes/storefront/>

Interesting premium themes

Besides thousands of free themes, you can also opt for paid design templates. [In the WordPress.org database](#) you can find themes that have additional features or premium support.



Kayn by WP-Royal follows a very minimalistic design that is suitable for photographers or artists as well as fashion brands. /
Source: <https://wp-royal.com/themes/item-kayn-pro/>



Foodica by WPZOOM puts dishes in the spotlight with its focus on images and offers the feature to sell recipes /
Source: <https://www.wpzoom.com/themes/foodica/>



Eimear by WebMan Design helps create modern webstores thanks to parallax scrolling and contemporary tile design. /
Source: <https://www.webmandesign.eu/portfolio/eimear-wordpress-theme/>

Neubau



Must Love Ramen

December 15, 2015, by Ellen

I literally could eat Ramen soup every day in my life. Okay, that is maybe a little exaggerated, but since there are more and more places offering vegan ramen, it's easy to want more of this yummy soup. When we traveled in Japan, we even...

FIELD
THEORY
THEORY
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My Latest Typography Project

[Features](#) [Photography](#) [Thoughts](#) [Contact](#)



Foggy City View

December 13, 2015, by Ellen

Sometimes a view or a picture does not seem to look special at first. But if you look more closely the colors or the shapes in the picture or the atmosphere is indeed special and you maybe just need to filter the image differently or...



Neubau by Elmastudio is reminiscent of newspapers and magazines in its layout and is therefore perfect for bloggers or editorial offices. /
Source: <https://www.elmastudio.de/en/themes/neubau/>

Let's Reduce Carbon Emissions Together!

Taking sustainability to a whole other level.

[Read More](#)



Decrease Device Power Usage
We recommend using as few images as possible on your website, avoiding videos.



No Fancy Animations or Frameworks
The Internet is not eco-friendly; let's help each other reduce carbon emissions.



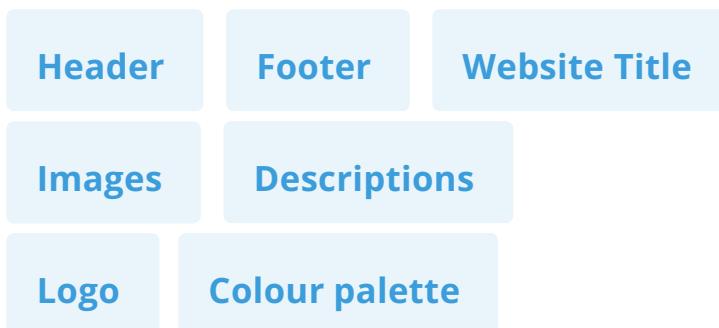
Reduced & compressed code
The Internet contributes two percent of global carbon emissions.

EcoCoded by SuperbThemes has everything that you'll need for your own business presence, while delivering a resource-efficient code. /
Source: <https://superbthemes.com/ecocoded/>

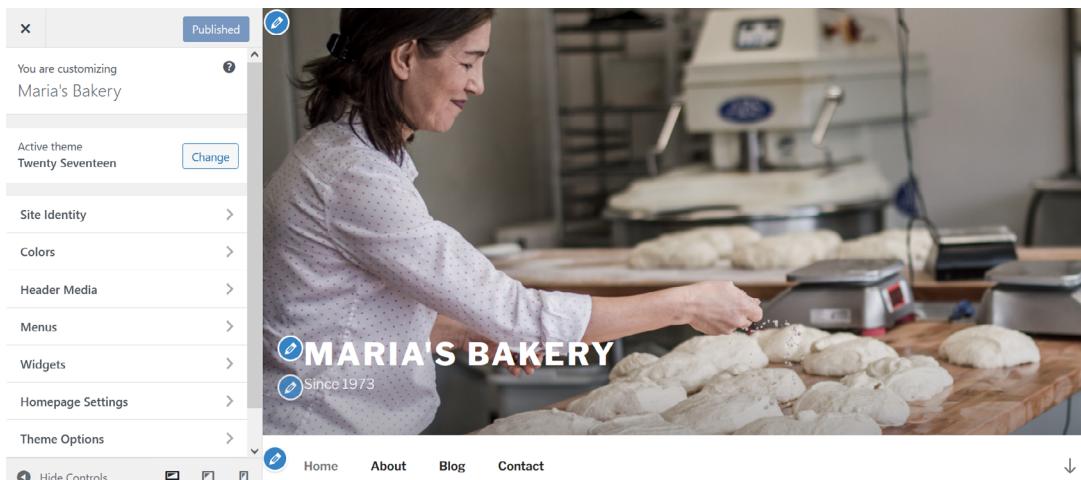
Adapting themes to your needs

While most themes are ready for live use after installation, you should still make the design your own. Even before the actual content, visitors will experience the **layout, colour scheme, and images of your website**. So first, think carefully about how you want your web presence to look, and then start customising it. If you notice that even after trying to configure it, you can't influence the selected theme the way you want, you should think about another design template.

The easiest way to customise the theme is to use the **Customizer**, which you can find in the backend under the menu item 'Design'. There you can see which elements of the template you can customise. The most important thing at first might be to insert your own texts and images. To do this, click through the left sidebar or select the elements marked with a pen directly in the preview. In most cases, you will want to customise the following items:



Which elements you can customise depends on the theme you choose. While some design templates are kept so minimalistic that there are hardly any customisation options, other themes offer lots of different options.



In the Customizer you can customise the individual elements of your design and try them out in different formats.

The Customizer has the advantage that you can view your layout in different formats. This allows you to see whether the design will have the right effect on mobile devices that have a significantly smaller display. Everything you change in the Customizer is only visible to you until you publish your site. You can publish your changes using the blue button in the upper left corner.

Other important elements for the design of your website are so-called widgets. These objects have special functions and – depending on the chosen theme – can be placed in the design.

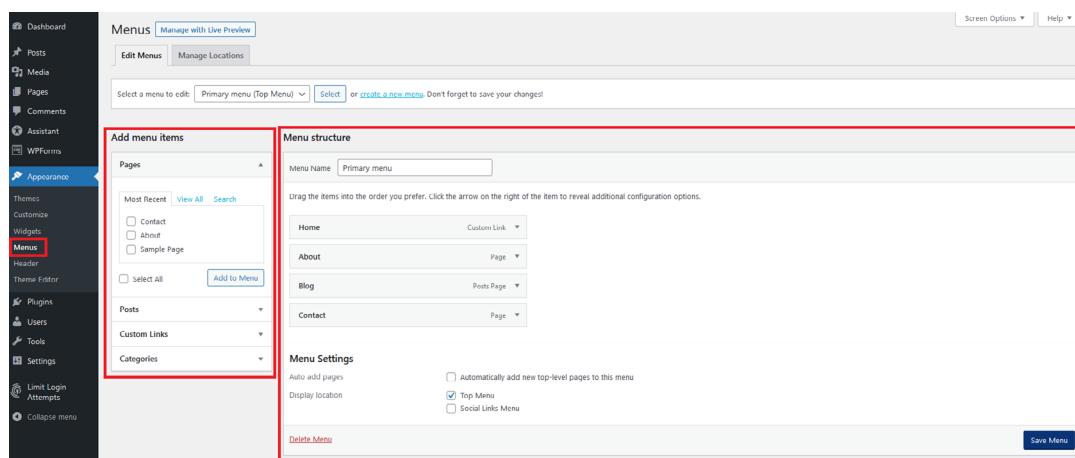
[You can learn more about widgets in the](#) paragraph below.

If you get to know the WordPress backend, you will also find the option 'Theme Editor' under the option 'Design' in the menu. In fact, you can completely change the selected theme here, but you need extensive web design knowledge to do so. The editor will show you the CSS and PHP files belonging to the template and can let you make changes in the source code. Most themes for WordPress are under a free license and can therefore be completely rewritten, in theory. Caution is advised here, though, because if you change the code incorrectly, you risk compromising the functionality. It is therefore advisable for beginners to steer clear of this option for theme customisation.

Creating a menu

The menu is an important part of the website layout. If your navigation structure is difficult to understand, it will be harder for visitors to engage with your website, and they may leave before they have even noticed your content. Investing some time in planning your website's menu and letting your own experience of website surfing guide you will put you in good stead to design a navigable website. Think about your future website visitors and set the individual menu items from this perspective.

Once you have thought about a structure, you can start creating the menu. To do this, go to 'Menus' under 'Appearance' in the WordPress dashboard where you'll have a few different options.



WordPress gives you extensive options to customise your menu.

The theme you've selected will most likely have all the menus you need stored and ready, but you can customise them. On the left side, you'll find possible menu entries and on the right side you'll find the web pages that have already been added to the menu. If you want to add more pages, select the entry, and click on the corresponding button. The left bar is divided into different categories corresponding to different content types. In most cases you will want to link directly to a page. But it is also possible to include posts, events, and categories (from your blog) in the menu. Or you can build individual links – to an external website, for example – into your menu.

You can then use the drag-and-drop feature to arrange the individual components of the menu. To do this, drag the menu item to the place where you want it to appear in the menu. The order is either left to right or top to bottom depending on your layout. However, a menu can also contain subcategories. To create these, drag the item slightly to the right. Indented menu items are the subcategories of the items above them.

Menu structure

Menu Name Primary menu

Drag the items into the order you prefer. Click the arrow on the right of the item to reveal additional configuration options.

Home	Custom Link ▾
About	Page ▾
Contact <i>sub item</i>	Page ▾
Blog	Posts Page ▾

You can set which element of the menu appears where.

If you click on the arrow next to each menu item, you will find further setting options there. First, you can customise the name, meaning that the page name doesn't have to be the label in the menu.

Under the menu settings (at the very bottom of the page) WordPress also offers a few additional options:

- **Add pages automatically:** If you want to add pages you create directly to the menu, enable this option. Our recommendation is to leave the setting disabled to keep full control and remember to add new pages as you go.
- **Position in Theme:** Each theme has a certain number of menus and has named them. With this option you determine which menu should appear in which position. Themes usually have this pre-set already – you don't really need to change anything here!

All these settings can also be made in the Customizer. There you can also see the changes directly in the preview.

Adapt the favicon

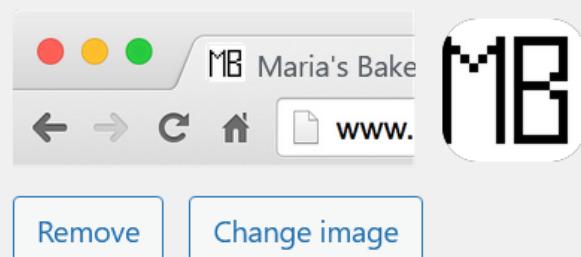
The favicon is a small logo that the browser uses. You might've seen one in the address bar, in an open tab, or even in the browser history – it's a small, square image. This makes it easier for users to find your website again. The favicon increases user experience, which in turn is rewarded by search engines with a better ranking in search results.

In WordPress [integrating a favicon](#) is relatively easy. The CMS already has everything on board for this and even offers different ways to do this. The easiest way is via the 'Customizer'. You can find the corresponding item under 'Website Information'. WordPress also

Site Icon

Site Icons are what you see in browser tabs, bookmark bars, and within the WordPress mobile apps. Upload one here!

Site Icons should be square and at least 512 × 512 pixels.



Once you have uploaded the image for your favicon, WordPress will show you what it looks like.

gives you information about the perfect dimensions. The icon should have a size of **512 x 512 pixels** and it should be square. You'll most likely have to create the image specifically for this purpose. Technically, you can use any image editing program to create a favicon, but there are generators specifically for this purpose, such as the [Favicon Generator by IONOS](#). In this easy-to-use tool you can create your own favicon.

Click on 'Select website icon' in the Customizer and then load the image file into your media library. Once you have confirmed the selection, WordPress will show you what the result looks like. In the same menu you will also see the function 'Select logo' – this is a different image and not a favicon. The logo is an image that is displayed on the website itself.

Create users and assign roles

As a content management system, WordPress is set up so that several people can work together on a project online. Instead of giving all users the same rights, you can assign roles so there is a sense of hierarchy. This way, each team member can complete their tasks without running the risk of changing important settings.

To assign roles in WordPress, go to the 'Users' menu item in the WordPress backend. Initially after installation, only your own account will be visible. You can create a new user with the button 'Add new'. In the following, you can then enter all the important information about the new account. For example, you'll need to enter the name, email address, and a password that the user can change afterwards. In addition, you'll determine a role for the new account. You have the choice between different levels:

- **Subscriber:** This role is passive. A subscriber can edit their own profile in the WordPress backend and read posts from other users.
- **Contributor:** Users with the contributor role can write and edit posts themselves. However, members of this group cannot publish posts or edit the posts of other users.
- **Author:** As an author, you can publish your own contributions. However, even in this role it is not possible to edit the content of other users.
- **Editor:** As an editor, you have extensive rights in WordPress to create and publish posts – and not only your own posts, but also the content of other users.
- **Administrator:** The administrator has access to all the rights. These include the organisation and technical development of the website. Only administrators can change the design of the website.

The screenshot shows the WordPress admin interface for managing users. On the left, a sidebar lists various menu items: Dashboard, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, Assistant, WPForms, Appearance, Plugins, and **Users**, which is currently selected. Below these are links for All Users, Add New, Profile, and Tools. The main content area is titled 'Users' with a 'Add New' button. It displays a table with one item: a user named 'admin' with the email 'admin@ionos.com' and the role 'Administrator'. There are 1 post associated with this user. At the top right, there are 'Screen Options' and 'Help' buttons, and a search bar labeled 'Search Users'. Below the table are 'Bulk actions' and 'Apply' buttons, followed by a dropdown menu for 'Change role to...'. This dropdown menu lists the available roles: Subscriber, Contributor, Author, Editor, Administrator, and a final option '— No role for this site —'. A note at the bottom of the dropdown says '1 item'.

You can also change roles later via the user overview.

Since an administrator can change the structure of the website, it is advisable to be cautious when assigning this role. After all, careless changes could compromise the entire website. To avoid this, think about creating an additional account for yourself and then only use the administrator account when you **make changes to the structure of the website**.

Further settings

In the WordPress backend, you can change more settings, some of which are important for working with the CMS. Click on 'Settings' in the navigation bar of the dashboard. Initially you'll see the title and subtitle of the website. These details and the domain are things we have already covered, so the following settings are more interesting for you:

- **Membership:** If this option is enabled, users can register for the backend without your intervention. For security reasons, it is better to leave this setting turned off.
- **Default role of a new user:** You can set which rights a new user gets if you do not assign a role to them. This is mainly for the case when you have memberships enabled, so if you do, a good option for security reasons is to set this option to 'Subscriber' at this point.
- **Website language:** With this setting, you change the language in the backend, although some themes and plugins also rely on what is set here.
- **Time zone:** If you want to change the time zone because you are travelling, for example, this is also possible in the general settings.
- **Date format/Time format/Week starts on:** If you want to change the date format you can do so here.

Chapter 2

Creating Content



Chapter 2: Creating Content

The foundation of your website is now ready, but you still need to bring your internet presence to life. To do this, adding lively content to your WordPress website is a good start. No matter what medium it is – whether short text, long article, image, or video – the idea is to bring interesting, moving, or motivating content to your website. This is, after all, what your future visitors will want to see and will be the reason they keep coming back.

Page or post? To create and publish text content

WordPress has two different formats, the page, and the post. For beginners, this distinction might seem confusing – both options result in getting your text-based media online, right? The distinction between the two formats can be explained through looking back at an earlier form of WordPress. WordPress was primarily intended for creating blogs. It was supposed to be used as a kind of online diary, which is why there is a page with lots of different posts that usually appear one below the other. So, if you publish a new post, it will appear at the top, and all the others will move down one place. Since the focus of a blog is exactly this kind of content, WordPress has also created a separate area for them. This is where you write, organise, and publish blog posts.

Home About Blog Contact

BLOG

JUNE 16, 2021

New in our assortment: Crusty Spelt Loaves

Dear customers,

Starting next Wednesday, a new product will be available in our shop: great crusty spelt loaves made according to an old recipe. Our new loaves are healthy and delicious, and have an appetising crunchy crust. Come and try them in our shop!



Posts are usually dated and appear on a website's blog.

Once you have written a post, you assign it to a **category** and add **keywords**. These are how readers find the individual posts again. Posts don't usually feature on a menu navigation.

Accordingly, your **workspace for posts** in the WordPress backend reflects this. In the overview of all your posts, you can see the categories and keywords you've assigned to them next to the titles. Since WordPress features collaborative editing, you can also see who wrote the post. This information can show up in the posts themselves or just be used for internal organisation.

It's also noteworthy that you can access comments on your posts in this overview. If this function is activated, readers of your blog have the possibility to **comment on posts**. All the comments are noted in the post overview.

Title	Author	Categories	Tags	Date
The secret behind our bread		Uncategorized	—	Published 2021/06/16 at 1:56 pm
Our founding story		Uncategorized	—	Published 2021/06/16 at 1:54 pm
New in our assortment: Crusty Spelt Breads		Uncategorized	—	Published 2021/06/16 at 1:46 pm

In the post overview you get the most important details about your blog posts at a glance.

If you run a corporate site, for example, you may not publish new content regularly at all. Instead, you'll create several static pages that are linked to each other via a menu. In this case, you won't be working with categories or keywords. While you can easily house thousands of posts in WordPress, you usually only author a select number of pages, which you then neatly place in a navigation menu.



Home About Blog Contact

ABOUT

The basis of our trade is compliance with the highest quality standards, both in production and in sales. Therefore, the quality and freshness of the products is already decisive in the selection of raw materials. We obtain these products primarily from producers in the region and process them according to our traditional recipes of local baking art.

The 'About Us' page is a classic example of a static page in WordPress.

Accordingly, the overview of the pages in WordPress is shorter. Author names and dates are also stored, but this information is only relevant to your internal administration. Theoretically, you could also activate the comment function for pages, so that this feature is also displayed in the overview table. However, it is not the best idea to use the comment function in this case because neither you nor your visitors will get any real use out of it.

The page overview presents the most important information.

There are also similarities between posts and pages. Helpfully, neither posts nor pages have to be published immediately after they're written. If you still want to fine-tune the text, save it as a draft first. Then it will be obvious to all other users of the backend that it is not yet the final version. Even if you have already finished formulating a post or a page, you do not have to publish it yet. For blog posts it can make sense to **schedule posting for later**. You can even plan this in advance!

Here's how the Gutenberg editor works

WordPress has always appealed with its simple, built-in text editor. Using this editor, you can create posts and pages in WordPress without needing any HTML knowledge. The editor is built on the principle of '['What You See Is What You Get' \(WYSIWYG\)](#)'. This means that you can highlight words – as may be familiar from Microsoft Word, for example – and then set them in bold, italic, or underlined without having to know the corresponding HTML tags. Headings, lists, or tables can also be easily integrated in this way.

With WordPress version 5.0 in 2018, the development team launched a small revolution in the world of CMS text creation. The [Gutenberg Editor](#) replaced the long-standing editor TinyMCE. Although revolutionary, not everyone in the WordPress community was on board. If you didn't want to adapt your working style to Gutenberg's, you could still work with the classic editor. However, from our point of view, we recommend that you jump right in with Gutenberg because the tool has some helpful features. You open the editor by clicking on the create button in the 'Pages' or 'Posts' sections – or by selecting an existing text to modify it.

The secret behind our bread

With its fibre, minerals and vitamins, bread is an essential element of a healthy diet. The basis for our bread specialities are the best raw materials and ingredients that we put together ourselves, as well as our own multi-stage natural sourdough with its mild, distinctive taste. Since the dough is made the day before, our wheat breads develop a particularly hearty aroma.

The Gutenberg editor contains few elements, so you can concentrate fully on the content.

Gutenberg is also known as the block editor because an article is divided into **different content blocks**. Each block has a type associated with it. These types can, in turn, be divided into different categories. From the **text segment**, the following blocks will be of particular interest at first:

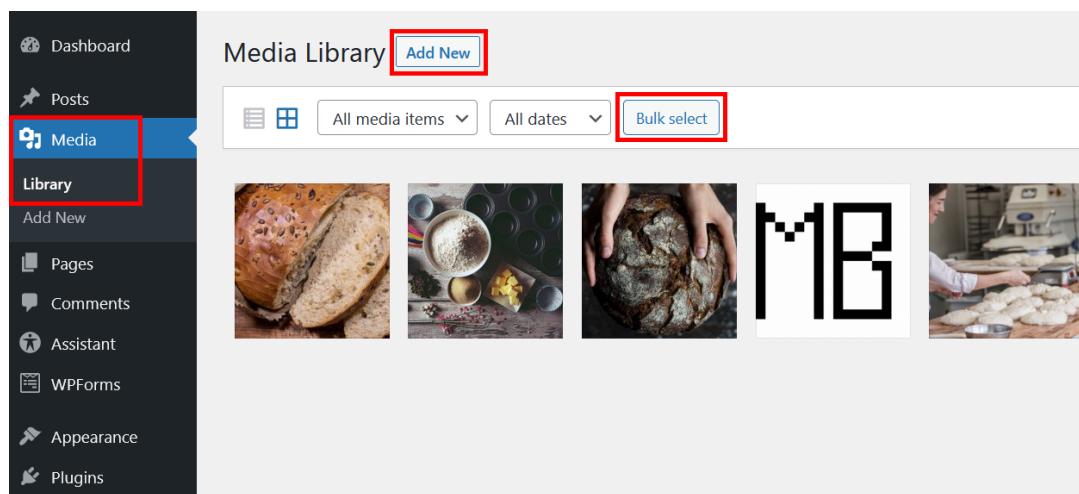
- **Heading:** You can use different levels of headings, titled H1 to H6 (as known from HTML).
- **Paragraph:** The paragraph refers to an ordinary body of text. This is where you create most of your content.
- **List:** Include numbered or unsorted lists to break up the text.
- **Table:** You can use the table type of block to present data in a formatted way.
- **Quote:** A quote type of block is a great way to break up the text and set certain words apart from the rest of the text, making it suitable for statements you want to highlight separately.

In the other categories, you'll find blocks for **embedding various media**, or **interactive elements**. You can create a new block by clicking on the button with the plus sign in the upper left corner. One advantage of Gutenberg is that you can also customise the pre-set formatting. Should the heading have a different font or perhaps this paragraph needs to be a different colour? The three dots in the editor's toolbar take you to the advanced format settings if you need them.

If you want to use the customised formatting in your texts in the future, you have the option to save your new design as a 'Reusable Block'. You can also find this option via the three dots in the toolbar. You can then insert the newly created block in this way for new posts and pages using the plus sign.

Embedding images and videos

If you look around the WordPress backend, you will find the media library under the menu item 'Media'. Getting to know your way around the WordPress backend is highly recommended because it will save you time as you continue to use WordPress. In the WordPress backend, you'll find a list of all the images and videos you've uploaded – whether the media objects already appear on pages or in posts, or haven't even been published yet, doesn't make a difference, they'll all be there.



If you have made changes to a photo, you will find both the original and the edited version of the image in the media library.

Via the overview you can upload new objects ('Add file') as well as delete them (via 'Multiple selection'). If you select a single item, a detail window opens. If it is a photo, for example, WordPress shows you image information, gives you the option to **change title, image description, and alt text**, and lets you **crop the image**.

Depending on where you want the image or video to appear on your website, you'll now need to choose different options. To display the object on pages and in posts, open the text in the Gutenberg editor. Here, you'll find a separate block for each media type. Once you have inserted it into the text, you can either upload the file directly or select an object from the media library. A special type of block is the gallery block, and with this you can insert several images, which are then displayed on your website for all to admire!

Images (and sometimes videos) can also be part of your header. You can make changes to these via the Customizer. In the Customizer tool, you'll find 'Header Media' in the menu, and this is where you can make those changes. If you want to [include a video](#) WordPress provides the required dimensions: 2,000 x 1,200 pixels are the requirements for the size of the header video.

Tip

Plugins provide more sophisticated ways to bring images and videos to life on your site. Learn more about this [topic in chapter 3!](#)

Determine the home page

Every website needs a home page. When visitors enter your domain address in their browser or find it on search engines, this will be the first content displayed. A good home page looks inviting and does not overwhelm your visitors. A short welcome text and a large image are perfect at this point. Subpages are great for providing more information for your visitors.

In principle, you create a home page just like other pages. So, go to the Gutenberg editor via the dashboard section 'Pages'. Often the theme will already have created a corresponding page for you. You can then access this directly in the Customizer.

Once the home page is created, you still need to [set it as the WordPress home page](#) because the system needs to know which of your pages should be visited first. To do this, go to the 'Reading' menu in the 'Settings' section. On this page, you'll be able to define what visitors will see first on your website.

Most websites start with a static page (sometimes called a stationary page). For this, select the static page option and then search for the corresponding page in the drop-down menu. If the page was set up automatically with the theme, you may find it under the term 'Home' or 'Homepage'. If you created the page yourself, it would appear in the list with the name you chose.

If you run a blog, you can select the 'Your recent posts' option at this point. Instead of a welcome text, visitors to the site will then see your latest blog post first.

The Reading menu offers you lots of setting options for a blog. First, you can tell the system which subpage your blog is on. This page is often called 'Blog', but you can also choose a completely different name for this website section (such as 'News'). You can also set how many posts per page the blog should display and whether readers see the whole post, or just an extract as in an [RSS feed](#).

The screenshot shows the 'Reading Settings' page in the WordPress admin. It has several sections:

- Your homepage displays:** A radio button for "A static page (select below)" is selected, while "Your latest posts" is unselected. Below this are dropdown menus for "Homepage" (set to "Welcome") and "Posts page" (set to "Blog").
- Blog pages show at most:** A numeric input field set to "10" with up/down arrows.
- Syndication feeds show the most recent:** A numeric input field set to "10" with up/down arrows.
- For each post in a feed, include:** A radio button for "Full text" is selected, while "Summary" is unselected.

At the bottom, a note says: "Your theme determines how content is displayed in browsers. [Learn more about feeds.](#)"

WordPress lets you specify whether you want to use a static home page or always display the latest blog posts.

Add original content with Widgets

Widgets are small, helpful objects that you can place on your website. Often found in the sidebar or in a footer, widgets extend the functionality of the website. And although the helpful elements can sometimes perform complex tasks, you don't need any programming knowledge to use them.

Home About Blog Contact

BLOG

JUNE 16, 2021

¶ The secret behind our bread

With its fibre, minerals and vitamins, bread is an essential element of a healthy diet. The basis for our bread specialities are the best raw materials and ingredients that we put together ourselves, as well as our own multi-stage natural sourdough with its mild, distinctive taste. Since the dough is made the day before, our wheat breads develop a particularly hearty aroma.



With a newsletter widget like the one in this blog (shown on the right), users can quickly sign up for your email service.

Email

Subscribe

The normal kinds of functions of widgets include:

- **Search function:** Users can use this to search your website for specific terms.
- **Calendar:** Since your blog posts are date stamped, visitors can use this widget to view posts based on the date they were published.
- **Category overview:** If your readers are interested in a specific topic area, they can use this to view all posts from a category.
- **Keyword cloud:** A keyword displays all keywords from blog posts; the more often you have used the keyword, the larger the term appears in the cloud.
- **Audio player:** If you want to provide website visitors with an acoustic background, this widget is suitable. (Make sure you only use songs that you have permission to use, i.e., that are not protected by a licence).
- **Page overview:** Like a menu, users can navigate through the website with this widget.
- **Event list:** If you host events frequently, you can keep visitors to your site updated with this list.
- **Newsletter signup:** Give people the option to sign up for your newsletter at any time with this widget.
- **Social media feeds:** If you are also active on social media such as Twitter or Facebook, you can use this widget to display your latest posts on social media.

We know it can be tempting to put as many widgets as possible on your website – they are fun, after all! While the temptation is there, do your best to follow the 'less is more' approach. While the widgets are very helpful, both the design and the usability of your website will be compromised when overloaded with Widgets. To ensure that visitors to your WordPress website don't lose track of them, choose your widgets wisely.

To add widgets to your website, go to the ‘Widgets’ item in the ‘Design’ section of the WordPress backend. Here you’ll see all the widgets that are already installed on the design template you are using, for example. You will also find one or more lists on the right side of the window – although this also depends on the design you’re using. Drag widgets from the left side to the list you want, and presto, the widget is active!

The screenshot shows the WordPress dashboard with the 'Widgets' menu item selected. The main area displays a grid of available widgets under the heading 'Available Widgets'. Each widget has a title, a brief description, and a dropdown arrow for settings. A red box highlights this list. To the right, another red box highlights the 'Blog Sidebar' area where widgets can be placed. The sidebar contains several widgets listed vertically: Search, Newsletter, Recent Posts, Recent Comments, Archives, Categories, and Meta.

In the dashboard section ‘Widgets’ you can simply drag and drop the individual building blocks to the desired location.

Use the arrow next to the widget name to open the options. This way you can change the name of the widget, and there are often also further options. Widgets that work with external services (e.g., social media accounts) will still need to be set up to work correctly.

In the widget overview you can adjust the order (i.e., how they should appear in the various bars), but this won’t be immediately visible. To do this, switch to the Customizer. Use the ‘Manage with Live Preview’ button in the widget area to get to the right settings. If you now move one of the widgets, you will **immediately see how the design changes**.

Tip

Looking for more Widgets? Can't get enough of their functionality? Check out WordPress plugins!

Chapter 3

The world of plugins

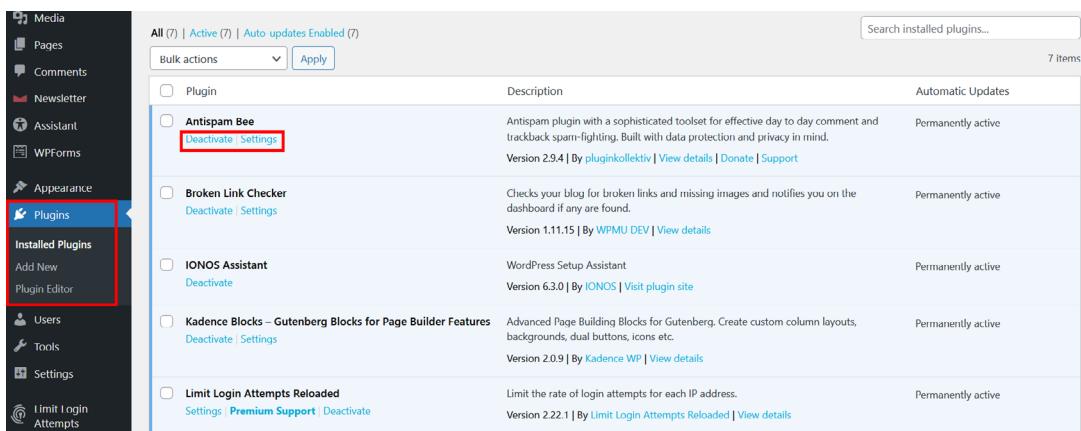


Chapter 3: The world of plugins

WordPress is a modular system. Although the CMS already contains lots of practical functions, the full spectrum of possibilities will only dawn on you **through the use of extensions**. Thanks to the large community and the fact that WordPress is open source, you can find a wide variety of plugins for free. This means you can add interactive elements to your website, create professional-looking designs, or get support for search engine optimisation.

Here's how to install plugins

In the dashboard, you will find a separate section for plugins in the sidebar. There will most likely be a few pre-installed extensions. In the table, you can click on each individual plugin to access more information and the settings. Note that you'll find the option to enable or disable each plugin in the overview table. This is an important aspect of plugins. Installing a plugin does not automatically activate it – and to deactivate a plugin, you do not have to delete it, but can simply disable it instead.



Plugin	Description	Automatic Updates
Antispam Bee	Antispam plugin with a sophisticated toolset for effective day to day comment and trackback spam-fighting. Built with data protection and privacy in mind. Version 2.9.4 By pluinikollektiv View details Donate Support	Permanently active
Broken Link Checker	Checks your blog for broken links and missing images and notifies you on the dashboard if any are found. Version 1.11.15 By WPMU DEV View details	Permanently active
IONOS Assistant	WordPress Setup Assistant Version 6.3.0 By IONOS Visit plugin site	Permanently active
Kadence Blocks – Gutenberg Blocks for Page Builder Features	Advanced Page Building Blocks for Gutenberg. Create custom column layouts, backgrounds, dual buttons, icons etc. Version 2.0.9 By Kadence WP View details	Permanently active
Limit Login Attempts Reloaded	Limit the rate of login attempts for each IP address. Version 2.22.1 By Limit Login Attempts Reloaded View details	Permanently active

In the overview you'll see listed all the installed plugins which can be activated, deactivated, or configured.

If you now want to add more plugins to your WordPress, click on the 'Add new' button at the very top. You are now in the **WordPress plugin database**. Here there are several ways you can find plugins: The overview has several tabs that you can click through and with any luck you'll find exactly what you're looking for. The plugins you find on the first pages are mostly the ones used by many thousands or even millions of websites, vouching for their usefulness!

It can take a while to trawl through all those widgets, though, which is where the search function comes in handy. If you enter a term, suitable plugins will be displayed. There are several indicators whether a plugin is the right one for you, so **look at a few plugins** before deciding. The description of the plugin, as well as its ratings are a good place to start. It is also good to know when the extension was last updated, and our advice is to steer clear of plugins that are not updated regularly. They may have security and compatibility issues if they're not up to date!

When you have decided which plugin you want to use, you can go ahead and install it. The additional software will then appear in the overview of your plugins. Remember that you have to activate plugins after installing them, though – only then can you access the functions of the extension. How you use the new features depends entirely on the plugin. For example, many tools can only be configured via their settings in the plugin overview. Others, however, create an extra tab in the sidebar of the dashboard. This often has to do with the **range of functions**. Some plugins only need to be set up at the beginning and then they'll work continuously whilst activated.

Tip

If you use the search for plugins in the WordPress backend, you'll get the same results as in the database on WordPress.org.

IONOS recommends: The best plugins for your project

Depending on your WordPress project, installing multiple plugins will be a great option. While some extensions are only suitable for niche websites, other plugins offer features that almost every site needs. We've picked out the best plugins in nine categories to help you get started with your new website as easily as possible.

Tip

Just like with widgets, don't go overboard when it comes to plugins. While they have useful features, each plugin also bloats the system a bit and makes for longer loading times. You can read more about this in [Chapter 4](#)!

Contact forms with Contact Form 7

Make it as easy as possible for your website visitors to contact you. [Contact form plugins](#) help to achieve this. A contact form plugin creates a form on the website where visitors can leave you a message or get in touch – you've probably seen them yourself! One of the most popular plugins for this is the [Contact Form 7](#). The beauty of this plugin is that you can make lots of changes to its design and functionality meaning you can set it up in a way that suits you.

Another advantage of Contact Form 7 is that it is privacy-friendly in its default configuration. The plugin does not set cookies and does not track users across the internet. Even better is that the tool not only protects your website visitors, but also you by including the reCAPTCHA function from Google, which ensures that you are not bombarded by spam mails.

Image galleries with NextGEN Gallery

A [gallery plugin](#) ensures that your visual media make an impact on your website. Images aren't just set out one below the other but are presented in a formatted gallery. Visitors can then click through the photos one by one. Although the Gutenberg editor also offers a gallery block, you may want more customisation options. The plugin [NextGEN Gallery](#) gives you a wide variety of design options. In the standard version, you can create five different types of galleries:

- **Thumbnail Gallery:** Images are first displayed as a small preview and can then be enlarged by clicking on them.
- **Slideshow:** Visitors can easily click from one image to the next or watch the images change automatically.
- **Image Browser:** This also allows users to click from one image to the next while reading information you upload about the image.
- **Compact Album:** With this gallery type you can sort your photos into different categories.
- **Extended Album:** This album type expands the compact version with helpful captions.

You can also use more types of galleries if you pay for the premium version. However, the NextGEN Gallery plugin isn't just a great option because of its frontend, the tool also helps you **manage your images** in the backend. You can upload lots of images with NextGEN Gallery and keep control of the formatting and more.

Search engine optimisation with Yoast SEO

We all want our websites to be found online. Search engine optimisation is one of the best ways forward for this. Most people don't go past the first few options on search engines, so landing on their first pages for relevant keywords will expand your reach. It can be a hard task, though, and so that you are not entirely left to your own devices in optimising your website, [SEO plugins](#) like [Yoast SEO](#) help. The extension offers support on different levels:

- The website code is revised so that search engines can process your web presence better.
- You are directly supported in search engine optimisation when writing new content.
- The plugin improves the source code in such a way that loading times are minimised, which in turn ensures a good ranking.

In addition, there are **meaningful analytics, smart features**, and a **preview for Google search results**, so you can see how your content will be displayed there. If you are satisfied with what the plugin offers, you can also switch to the premium version. With this, you'll not only get more features, but also professional support, too.

Cookie Consent with Cookie Notice

For website owners and operators, data protection is becoming increasingly important. To protect your visitors' sensitive information and to comply with data protection laws, cookies must not be enabled without the users' consent. For this purpose, almost all websites now use cookie banners that enable opt-in. These features are difficult to implement yourself, but using a plugin is the perfect solution. With WordPress, suitable [Cookie plugins](#) help you make your website data-privacy compliant. A particularly good tool is [Cookie Notice](#), which has made a name for itself in the WordPress community. The plugin creates a banner on your website, through which users can agree to the cookie use. The advantage is that you set which message is displayed to visitors when they enter the website yourself. In addition, the plugin adds a link to the privacy policy in the cookie banner.

You get these features for free with this plugin. If you purchase the paid version of the plugin, you will get additional help in complying with the [California Consumer Privacy Act \(CCPA\)](#).

Note

No plugin guarantees legal protection. If in doubt, have an expert review all your privacy settings

Email Marketing with a Newsletter

To keep in touch with your website visitors in the long run, think about running your own newsletter. [Email marketing](#) is a great way to inform customers of updates to your shop or blog and therefore **encourage them to visit your website again**. To make it as easy as possible for users to sign up, think about installing a [Newsletter plugin](#) for your WordPress website. This adds a signup screen to your website and additionally helps you manage registrations.

The plugin called [Newsletter](#) is ideal. With Newsletter, you simply drag and drop the registration form, create multiple lists for different subscribers and compose newsletters with a **straightforward building block system**.

A forum with bbPress

If you want to encourage visitors to engage in conversations and exchange ideas, you could integrate a forum into your website. In a forum, users can talk about anything, and you can organise the forum into different categories. Programming forum software is not easy even for experts, so it is best to use a [Forum Plugin](#).

[bbPress](#) is popular across the WordPress community. With this extension, you manage your forum entirely via the backend. Not only do you set the details of the forum, but you can even see which thread has how many posts in the overview. This makes it easier for you to keep track of the ongoing discussions. You can also customise your forum to suit your aesthetic preferences, too.

Chat with Tidio

Poor customer support is the ticket to losing clients. If you use your WordPress website for e-commerce, for example, providing reliable contact options is an essential place to start. In addition to classic means of communication such as a telephone hotline and a contact form, you can also integrate a chat into your site. This way, customers will have the opportunity to ask you questions quickly and receive an answer just as quickly. There are various [chat plugins](#) for this, and it might just set you apart from the rest of the competition. We'd recommend using [Tidio](#). This plugin not only offers you various design options, but it also has plenty of special features:

- **Automated messages:** Greet your visitors via chat when they enter the site and send back a pre-written response after the initial contact before you can join the conversation yourself.
- **Mobile app:** So that you can respond to queries anytime, anywhere, download the Tidio app to your smartphone.
- **User Info:** The plugin provides you with information about your conversation partners, such as which browsers they are using and which of your subpages they have already visited.
- **Out of office message:** If you don't have time to respond directly, the plugin notifies your website visitors.
- **Reports:** To help you professionalise your customer support, Tidio provides you with helpful statistics.

You'll get these features in the free version of the plugin. If you choose to go for the paid version, you will also get a chatbot that can answer many standard questions for you automatically.

Quizzes with Quiz Maker

An important criterion for a search engine good ranking is **how long visitors stay on your website**. To make sure that visitors enjoy staying on your website and can do something fun and interactive. A [quiz plugin](#) is ideal for this, and will be fun for your website visitors, too.

A popular solution is the [quiz maker](#). With this plugin, you enter questions and answers yourself – ideally matching the **website theme** – and then let your visitors game on! You can customise the design as well as the way your answers are delivered:

- Simple answer
- Multiple choice
- Text input
- Number input
- Drop-down menu

At the end of the quiz, participants get their results. A nice addition is that you can also view all submitted answers and evaluate these statistics in the dashboard.

Note

Quiz Maker and other quiz plugins offer the possibility to collect contact data of the quiz participants. However, be sure to observe data protection when doing so, because you must not misuse email addresses and phone numbers for any purpose.

Instagram with Smash Balloon Social Photo Feed

Instagram is one of the most popular and successful social networks in the world. Whether for private use or for professional, [marketing via Instagram](#) is a **popular method for outreach** and connecting your website with your social media account is a perfect option. To do this you can find various [Instagram Plugins](#), such as the [Smash Balloon Social Photo Feed](#). This software has lots of popular features, such as being able to directly link several accounts and even **display them in one feed**. It's completely customisable and you can easily add a button so visitors to your website can also follow your Instagram account. The plugin also ensures that it **complies with data protection**.

Performance & Security



Chapter 4: Performance & Security

Presentation and functionality are only half the story of a successful web presence. To appeal to both visitors and search engines alike, you'll also have to consider loading times, stability, and security aspects. This is the only way to ensure long-term online success..

Improve your long-term performance

Your content can be as good as anything, but if website visitors have to wait ages for images to load and the layout to fully build up, they're likely to click away in frustration. Whether the person will eventually make a second attempt to visit your site is unlikely. If the website loads too slowly, visitors are highly unlikely to find you in the first place because **search engines penalise websites with long loading times**. For Google, page speed plays an increasingly important role and, as part of [Core Web Vitals](#). This is crucial for ranking in search results. Improving performance is therefore also a cornerstone of good search engine optimisation.

Before you start optimising, you can measure the performance of your website as it is. Two different tools are recommended for this. You can already get a good first impression with the [Website Checker from IONOS](#). This tool doesn't require registration and is completely free of charge, and you can use it to find out where optimisation potentials are lurking, hidden away from you! [PageSpeed Insights](#) provides a deeper insight. The Google service also provides tips for improvement and measures loading times under various aspects. In this way, you can check the extent to which your optimisations are making a difference.

Results for [REDACTED].co.uk
Perform check again Or Check another website

Overall result
Your website has some potential for improvement.
Follow the tips and advice provided by the 1&1 Website Checker to optimise your website.
You use: WordPress

58

Be present online (73) Get found (33) Be secure (67) Be fast (57)

The website checker gives you valuable tips on how to improve performance.

Speed Tips

There are several things you can do to improve the performance of your WordPress site.

To make the site load faster, you need a streamlined design and small file sizes.

Follow these tips to [make WordPress faster](#).

- **Reduce image size:** The largest files on a website are often images. To prevent them from being a bottleneck and hindering the loading time of the entire website, reduce the file size. As introduced with [JPEG or WebP](#) you can reduce the size of photos and graphics **without hugely affecting the quality**. If possible, you should rely on 'lossless' compression so that your images look their best despite compression. WordPress plugins can also help, for example Optimus, which allows you to optimise directly in the dashboard.

- **Minimise code:** Overloaded source code also makes for poor loading times. Complex CSS and the overuse of JavaScript are often the culprits behind poor performance.
- **Clean up database:** WordPress stores a lot of information directly in a database, including drafts, revisions, or other content that you don't even need anymore. A regular clean-up of the database will ensure a faster WordPress.
- **Use fewer plugins:** As much as we love plugins, too many slow down the loading speed of your website. Be selective and choose exactly which extensions you really need.

Fact

The reason for Google's great interest in fast loading times can be found primarily in the [Mobile-First approach](#) – or even mobile-only approach. Since mobile browsing usually only allows for lower transfer speeds and often requires data volume, high performance and small file sizes are important.

It is worth a look into the plugin database of WordPress for performance optimisation, too. Since code reduction and database clean-up are difficult for non-experts, you can find helpful tools on the internet.

Performance boost thanks to caching

A special tool to give your WordPress website more speed is [caching](#). This is where data stays in a cache and does not have to be regenerated each time it is requested – for example, when a website is accessed. This is especially true since almost every website contains **dynamic elements**. These are functions that need to be updated, which is why requests are constantly being made to the server. Shopping baskets are the perfect example of this. **Static elements**, on the other hand, usually do not change. The images and texts on your website are the same for all users.

Caching creates a pre-set image of the page. So instead of loading each element individually from the server and databases, the user's web browser can access the cache and get to the desired data faster. Dynamic elements are treated in the same way as static ones. Instead of retrieving the information anew, you are actually working with a slightly outdated version, but the cache is renewed at regular intervals to keep things up to date.

There are two different types of caching: **server caching and browser caching**. In the first case, a static HTML page is stored in a server cache. User requests are forwarded directly to it instead of starting another retrieval from the database. In browser caching, the website is already on the user's local device.

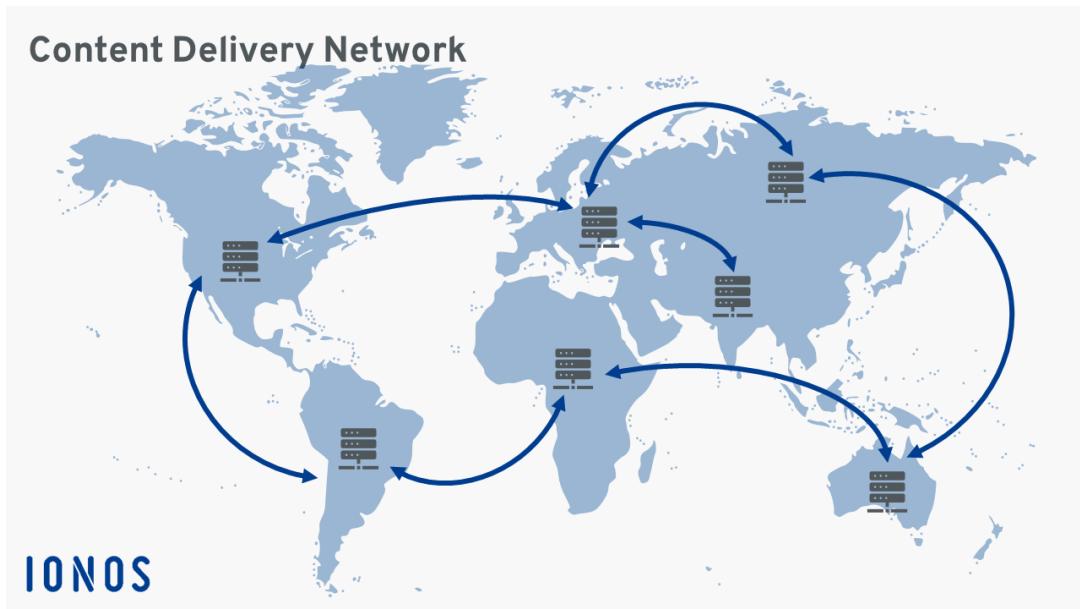
Many [WordPress caching plugins](#) will help you configure caching. In addition, they often provide further help in speeding up your website. [W3 Total Cache](#) is worth mentioning at this point. With this tool, you can select caching options and optimise CSS, HTML, and JavaScript code, for example. However, the complex setting options of the plugin are perhaps a bit too much for beginners. If you are looking for a simpler option, we recommend [WP Super Cache](#), which provides help with performance boosting, too.

Note

If you choose [WordPress Pro by IONOS](#), you have caching included – directly from your host. This way, you'll be able to count on high speed at all times.

Content Delivery Networks

A special method of caching is also obtained by using a [Content Delivery Network \(CDN\)](#). This is a **network of servers** spread across the entire globe. If you choose this kind of service, a copy of the static website is kept on the servers of the CDN – i.e., like caching. Depending on the location of the individual user, a different server is then requested. This speeds up browsing your website in two ways. First, users access a cache, and second, the connection to the server is as short as possible. The closer the server is to the visitor's location (and we're talking about geographic location here!), the faster the data transfer is as well – after all, the data doesn't have to go through long cable connections first.



With a content delivery network, servers with copies of your website are located all over the world.

However, content delivery networks also offer security features. A popular attack tactic used by hackers and other cybercriminals is the [DDoS attack](#). This floods your server with requests until it can no longer respond and stops operating. However, if you use a CDN, an attack like this may not even reach your main server. If a node fails from the network, users are simply redirected to the next one. Visitors to your website usually don't even notice there's an attack going on.

There are many different CDN providers. These differ primarily in the number of servers, which in turn has an influence on speeds and reliability. Some caching plugins have this kind of service integrated for free. Lots of **WordPress packages** from IONOS include a CDN, for example. For all other options you can add [CDN Hosting](#).

SEO tips

If you improve your website performance, you can also expect more success in the search engines. But there are more ways you can drive search engine optimisation. As for other website types, the number 1 SEO tip for WordPress is: Content is king! Search engines reward you for good, interesting, helpful, and unique content. So put extra effort into creating your content. Including relevant keywords is important. The [Yoast SEO plugin](#) we mentioned above might be of use to you for this reason!

But you can do even more to develop your WordPress site. The structure of your website will harbour some optimisation potentials:

- **Internal links:** When you link your texts to each other, over time you'll create a web of high-quality content. Users can find their way from one page to the next, and don't leave too soon. Search engines reward this web of content!
- **Permalinks:** In WordPress, permalinks are the addresses of individual posts. Normally, these are not particularly suitable for search engine optimisation. In the WordPress back-end, however, you will find an option under the settings with which you can adjust the addresses. Use URLs that contain keywords.
- **Sitemap:** A sitemap represents all subpages and directories of your website. These files (in XML or HTML) help the search engine crawlers to capture your complete website for the search engines. You can find free plugins for this as well, which make your work easier.
- **Structured information:** If you mark up information such as opening hours, addresses, prices, star ratings as being this kind of information, Google can display them as rich snippets, for example, and offer searchers more detailed information in the search results. So that you don't have to manually enter the required schema markup into the source code, either look for a theme that offers structured data or use an appropriate SEO or rich snippet plugin.

More security for your website

The internet offers countless possibilities – but it also harbours dangers. Without wanting to scare you, we've got some warnings for you to justify why you should set up a few security precautions. With these precautions, you protect both your own data and sensitive information of your website visitors.

This way, you secure customer data and other details of website visitors first and foremost through effective encryption. You have already set this up through the SSL certificate. So now it's a matter of **protecting the website itself from harm**. Various WordPress plugins will help you with this. As a IONOS customer, you are on the safe side in many ways anyway. We'll tell you where IONOS supports you in securing your website and where you can help with extensions in the following.

Regular backups

Whether it's an error in the system or an attack from outside, sometimes an attack can result in total data loss and your website will be gone from the internet forever. Therefore, it is important to create regular backups. These also help if you accidentally make a mistake yourself. If the last backup is not too old, you will have next to no data loss. Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to have **backups created automatically and regularly**. Don't rely on your gut feeling when backing up your website – reach for tools. A full WordPress backup includes all files like photos and videos, and posts and pages, so the database needs to be saved regularly as well. Many hosts – like IONOS – support you with this important task and offer helpful backup solutions.

You'll be able to find an extension to help you in the WordPress library. For example, a popular [backup plugin](#) is [UpdraftPlus](#). You connect this tool to a **cloud service** such as Dropbox or Google Drive, and the plugin then creates backup copies at the rate you specify.

The free version of the plugin already has all the functions to create effective backups. However, if you want to work more professionally, you should go for the premium version. With this, you can also create **incremental backups**. This function allows you to save the changes you made compared to the last backup. This saves storage capacity and is quicker. An additional advantage of the paid version is that you get **database encryption** for extra security.

If you manage your WordPress via IONOS, then you'll be on the safe side. IONOS automatically creates at least one backup for you every day, so you can go straight back to the working version after an error.

Additional security with security plugins & best practices

It is already an important step to back up your data regularly. This way, if your website becomes the target of an attack, **you won't have to worry about significant data loss**. But it's even better if cybercriminals can't get in your way in the first place and bounce off a protective wall. To reduce the likelihood of an attack as much as possible, relying on different plugins and following a few tips is a good place to start:

- **Save passwords:** It can't be said often enough – use strong passwords. You'll probably be familiar with password requirements from other websites – not easy to guess, requiring a certain number and type of characters, not real words – all these features improve the strength of a password. The plugin [Limit Login Attempts Reloaded](#) helps, as an attacker has only a limited number of attempts before the IP address is blocked for further attempts to log in.
- **Multi-factor authentication:** Although standard in many web solutions, this is only adjustable in WordPress through extensions. With the plugin [Google Authenticator](#) you can introduce two-factor authentication when logging in to the backend. You and other authorised users will then receive, for example, a code via text message on your smartphones, which is necessary in addition to the password for the login.
- **Set roles:** If you are working on WordPress with different people, be sure to set the permissions of the user roles to be as restrictive as possible. This way, if one of the accounts gets hacked, less damage will be done.
- **Prevent spam:** To prevent your contact email address and your comments section from being abused by spam bots, you should install protection at these points. If you use Contact Form 7, which we recommend, for a contact form, anti-spam technology is already integrated. [Akismet Spam Protection](#) secures your comment sections. Akismet uses its own database and recognises suspicious patterns.

But there are even stronger attack methods you should be prepared for. With DDoS attacks and malware infections, you are dealing with high-level cybercrime. These two kinds of attack therefore require extra attention and focus.

Special case: DDoS attacks

More and more frequently, attacks called '[Distributed Denial of Service' \(DDoS\)](#) occur on websites. In these attacks, the attackers use a larger computer network to overload a server with requests. There are many reasons for this:

- Damage to the competition
- Internet activism against specific companies
- Paralysing security mechanisms and infrastructure

To provide the necessary computing power, attackers usually use a botnet – a network of hundreds of thousands of computers that **attack in a coordinated manner**. The computers used for this purpose are usually infected with viruses so that they can be controlled. The actual owners of the devices don't notice.

The targets are as varied as the reasons for the attacks. A DDoS attack causes failure due to overload, but the exact points of attack can vary:

- **Bandwidth:** This attack pattern focuses on the network infrastructure (especially the router). The numerous requests do not allow other data packets to be transported.
- **System resources:** Here, the server is attacked directly. A web server can only process a certain number of requests at the same time. The attack ensures that regular website can no longer be accessed.
- **Vulnerabilities:** This method works only if the attackers know about a flaw in the software. The [Ping of Death](#) is a typical example of this, exploiting errors in the Internet Protocol.

As mentioned above, a content delivery network helps against these attacks. While it won't stop the actual attack, thanks to the globally distributed servers, it's almost impossible to make your site completely disappear from the internet. IONOS goes a step further, though. If you opt for WordPress hosting, you get **WebShield**. This technology detects DDoS attacks and actively combats the attack.

Special case: Malware infections

[Malware](#) is usually transferred to a computer unnoticed and creates quite a few problems. Whether a PC or a server, all devices can be affected – even mobile devices. There are different types of malwares, which differ mainly in their structure and functionality.

- **Viruses:** Probably the oldest form of malware and a familiar one to most internet users. A virus spreads by duplicating itself and then infiltrating other software. Usually, viruses disrupt operations and read sensitive data. In the worst case, however, a virus can even paralyse hardware.
- **Worms:** This type of malware can also reproduce on its own, but unlike the virus, it does not require other software to spread. A worm can infect another computer via unsecured network connections.
- **Trojans:** Following the example of a Trojan horse, this malware disguises itself as another program. Once infiltrated, the Trojan ensures that data is monitored, and further malware finds an entry into the system.
- **Ransomware:** This software hijacks your system and locks you out, so to speak. You'd only be able to access your data again after paying a ransom. Never pay this – instead, consult an expert.

You're probably already familiar with these kinds of malware, mainly from protecting private computer use on your home PC. A web server can also face this kind of malware. Therefore, you'll also need to secure your WordPress website against the attacks. If your website is infected with viruses, Trojans, and other malware, both **your own data and that of your users** are at risk. With a plugin like [Wordfence Security](#) you'll build both active and passive protection. The tool builds an effective firewall that most attacks will bounce off. In addition, the plugin lets you regularly scan your files for malware, so you can quickly fix an infection.

As an IONOS WordPress customer you'll benefit from quality security measures. With [SiteLock](#), you get extensive protection against malware. By running a scan of your entire website, SiteLock can show you vulnerabilities and risks. A malware scan also detects if your website is already infected by malware. SiteLock additionally monitors your website for other attack tactics:

- **SQL injection scan:** Find out if attackers have exploited vulnerabilities in your database and can now grab information.
- **Cross-site scripting scan:** If an attacker managed to install a script through a vulnerability in your website, you can detect it with SiteLock.

After you have gone through the security scan and no errors have been uncovered, you can display the SiteLock certificate on your website. This will **increase your visitors' trust** in the website and ensure that there is always plenty of traffic on your site.

Chapter 5

Glossary – the most important terms explained



Chapter 5: Glossary – the most important terms explained

For beginners in particular, the many terms from the world of WordPress can seem confusing – especially if the expressions appear as abbreviations. So that you can quickly look up what the difference between CMS and CSS is, we have prepared the most important terms for you, sorted alphabetically.

Backend

Also known as the admin area or dashboard, the backend is your workspace, which only you and other selected people have access to. In the various menus and editing areas, you can adjust everything, install themes or plugins, and set your web design.

Blog

If you regularly publish new posts, you are already running a blog! The term has evolved from the crossover word ‘weblog’. WordPress was originally intended for organising blogs and therefore offers loads of features for this type of website, which mainly contains regular posts. You can either set up your website as a blog or only publish your blog posts on a subpage dedicated to being a blog.

Blogroll

It is commonplace among bloggers to network. This is a great way to gain readership and strengthen collaboration. In a blogroll, you'll collect links to other blogs that you would like to show your website visitors. Most often a blogroll is displayed as a list in the sidebar of a blog.

Categories

Posts (i.e., blog posts) are always assigned a category on WordPress. This makes it easier for visitors to your website to **find content on a particular topic**.

Core

The basic framework of WordPress – so without installed themes and plugins – is called the Core. With the Core you can publish a **functional website**, but only by installing extras such as widgets and plugins will you have the possibility to individualise WordPress.

CMS

A content management system (CMS) is a **beginner-friendly** way to create websites. Once installed, you can manage the website from a backend and don't need to know HTML or CSS. While WordPress is the most popular CMS, there are alternatives.

CSS

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) is a **language for designing websites**. In collaboration with HTML and JavaScript, CSS defines the appearance of web pages. WordPress has the

advantage that you can create compelling designs without knowing the language.

Database

Much of your content in WordPress is not in the form of individual files on the web server but is stored in **relational databases**. Software like MariaDB or MySQL takes care of the management automatically. You don't have to work directly in the databases – WordPress does that in the background.

Dashboard

The **WordPress backend** is also called dashboard. Like the dashboard, here you have access to all the functions of the system.

Frontend

While the backend can only be viewed by you, the frontend is the area that your visitors get to see – i.e., the actual website.

FTP

The File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is responsible for uploading files to a server. For this, you use a special FTP client, which also shows you the directory structure of your webspace. If you use WordPress, you usually don't have to work with FTP, because you can upload images directly via the media library, for example.

HTML

Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) is the **central markup language of the internet**. Virtually every website consists of several HTML documents. With this language (in cooperation with CSS) you can define the appearance of web pages. Since WordPress lets you use simple editors, you don't need to know HTML.

JavaScript

In addition to HTML and CSS, a large part of the internet is based on JavaScript. With this script language, you can **add certain functions to a website**. With WordPress, you can create the same effect without any programming knowledge at all by using plugins.

Media library

In the media library, you can manage all images, videos, and sound files on your website. Here you can also upload new files to the server **without having to use an FTP client**. The media library also gives you the option to crop images.

Multisite

WordPress makes it possible to manage multiple websites with the **same WordPress installation**. This means that plugins don't have to be installed multiple times, for example. This function is called multisite.

Page

Your website consists of several pages that are linked to each other. Although creating pages in WordPress works the same way as creating posts, **pages are not divided into categories**, but appear in the menu structure instead.

Permalinks

A permalink corresponds to the internet **address of a post**. You can specify the scheme WordPress uses to generate these URLs.

PHP

WordPress is based on the **PHP scripting language**. Therefore, it is necessary that this is also installed on the web server. In most (WordPress) hosting packages PHP is already pre-installed.

Pingbacks

When you **link another blog in an article**, the owner is informed about it thanks to the pingback. Trackbacks also work on the same principle, which is why the two terms are often used synonymously.

Plugin

With the help of plugins, you can extend the functionality of your website or backend. The additional software can be installed directly from the dashboard. Most plugins are available for free.

Post

A post is an article for your blog. They are created using the editor and, unlike pages, have categories, tags, and a date. Posts usually appear in chronological order, one below the other, on the blog.

RSS feed

Visitors who **don't want to miss a post on your blog** can use an RSS feed. Through their browser or an additional RSS reader, people then read your articles without having to go to your website. WordPress offers an RSS feed automatically. With a plugin or a widget, you can make it easy for visitors to subscribe to the feed.

SEO

If you want to be successful online with your website, you need to appear as high as possible in the search engine results. With search engine optimisation (SEO), you can **positively influence your website's ranking**. Effective SEO works both on a technical level and by creating the appropriate website content.

Tags

Posts are also given one or more keywords known as tags (in addition to the category). These help users find content that **matches their interests**.

Theme

With WordPress, you don't have to create the web design completely from scratch. You can choose a template (theme) and customise it according to your taste. You **install the design templates** from the dashboard.

Widget

A widget is a small element that you can place on your website. This usually provides a helpful function to the visitors of the page. **Widgets are less complex than plugins** and can be activated from the Dashboard.