

Day 4: What is Elementor?

Vocabulary

Theme

A WordPress theme is a folder of files that work together to create the design of your site. A theme includes template files, stylesheets, images, and possibly JavaScript files. All those files change how your WordPress content (menus, footers, blog posts, pages) is displayed.

Child Theme

A child theme in WordPress is a sub theme that inherits all the functionality, features, and style of its parent theme. Child themes are a safe way to modify a WordPress theme without actually making any changes to the parent theme's files.

Plugin

A plugin is a piece of software containing a group of functions that can be added to a WordPress website. They can extend functionality or add new features to your WordPress websites. WordPress plugins are written in the PHP programming language and integrate seamlessly with WordPress.

Hosting

Web hosting is the place where all the files of your website live. It is like the home of your website where it actually lives. WordPress Hosting is any form of hosting that's been optimized to run WordPress.

Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCzCO451F_c

What is Elementor?

A user-friendly, drag and drop page builder plugin for WordPress that allows you to build custom websites without touching a line of code. Elementor has quickly become one of the best

<https://elementor.com/>

What is a theme?

A WordPress theme is a folder of files that work together to create the design of your site. A theme includes template files, stylesheets, images, and possibly JavaScript files. All those files change how your WordPress content (menus, footers, blog posts, pages) is displayed.

Changing your WordPress theme won't necessarily change your blog content, pages, users, or other information stored in your database. Your theme only changes how all that information is displayed to your website visitors.

A theme helps simplify the process of creating a site. Each theme comes with a different design or layouts and features so a user needs to choose one that suits their taste and requirements. There are thousands of free and premium WordPress themes available for you to use.

Free themes can be downloaded from the official WordPress theme directory, or you can purchase premium themes with more advanced features from third-party developers. You can even create your own custom themes.

Hiring a website developer to create a custom theme can cost thousands of dollars. Learning how to code your own using PHP, HTML, CSS and JavaScript code can be time-consuming and frustrating.

WordPress has many drag & drop page/theme builders (like Elementor!) that can help you create custom page layouts so it's like creating your own theme without the frustration and cost.

Is Elementor a Theme?

No. It is strictly a page/theme builder plugin that works seamlessly with almost any WordPress theme (and plugin) to allow you to customize any WordPress theme without code.

Can I use Elementor without a theme?

No. Since Elementor is a WordPress plugin and WordPress requires that you have some theme available (even if it's its default theme), you will have to have at least one theme installed.

So what theme should we use?

Elementor has built their own theme called Hello. It is 100% compatible with Elementor and every time a new version of Elementor is released, most of the testing is done using the Hello theme so you can be sure that it's always updated and up to speed. The Hello theme comes almost empty of styling and scripts which makes it the perfect starter theme. This also means that it will not conflict with other plugins. If you are working with a client that has a custom design created, using the Hello theme and Elementor Pro is the best combination.

<https://elementor.com/hello-theme/>

Child Theme

Download the Hello child theme .zip file from [GitHub](#) and install and activate it. While there is a style.css file, do not place your CSS changes here. It is best practice to use the styling capabilities in the Elementor plugin.

How do I add the Widgets menu option?

To enable the Widgets menu item in the WordPress admin menu, use the following code to your *child themes functions.php* file:

```
function ele_disable_page_title( $return){  
    return false;  
}  
  
add_filter( 'hello_elementor_page_title', 'ele_disable_page_title' );
```

<https://elementor.com/blog/wordpress-child-theme/> <https://elementor.com/help/hello-theme-tips/>

Flywheel set up

1. Go to <https://getflywheel.com>
2. Sign up for a free account
3. Create a “demo site” – you will not be billed for this.
4. Enable SSL
5. Turn on force HTTPS in the dashboard, in your site under the **Advanced** tab.

How to install Elementor website builder

1. From the WordPress Dashboard, click **Plugins > Add New**.
2. In the Search field, enter Elementor and choose Elementor website builder to install.
3. After installation, click Activate.

How to install Hello theme

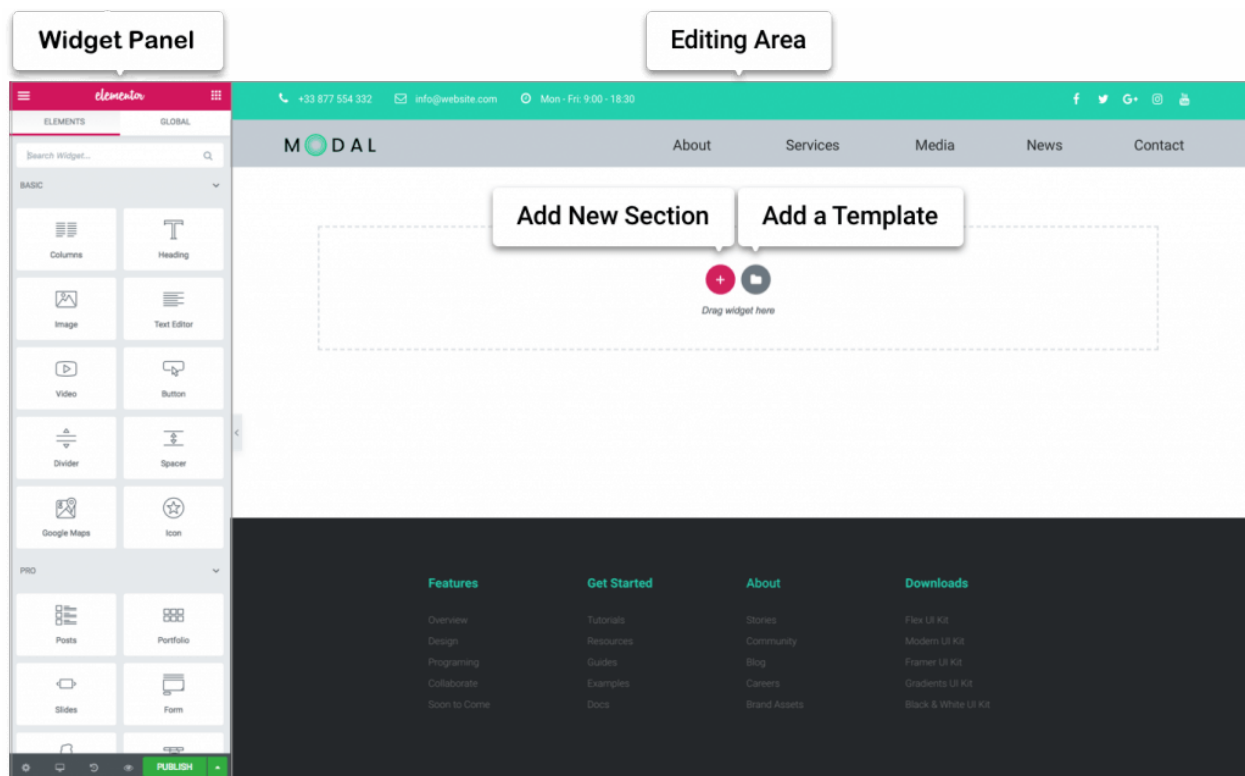
1. Download the Hello theme from here: <https://elementor.com/hello-theme/>
2. From the WordPress Dashboard, click **Appearance > Themes** then click **Add New**.
3. At the top of the page click **Upload Theme** and locate the .zip file you downloaded in step 1.
4. Once installed, hover over Hello and click **Activate**.

Install Hello child theme

1. Download the Hello child theme from GitHub: <https://github.com/elementor/hello-theme-child>
2. Upload and activate the theme.

Creating a new page

1. On the top left side of the WordPress dashboard, click **Pages > Add New**
2. Click **Edit with Elementor** to enter Elementor Website Builder



Adding code to your child theme

1. Go to **Appearance > Theme Editor**
2. Find the code snippet to globally prevent all page titles from appearing on any page here: <https://elementor.com/help/hello-theme-tips/>.
3. Paste that code in your themefunctions.php file and **save** the file.

To create a 'shortcode' to display the year in your footer:

1. Copy and paste the following code into your themefunctions.php file:

```
function year_shortcode(){
```

```
$year = date("Y");  
return $year;  
}  
add_shortcode('year', 'year_shortcode');
```

To understand and learn more about short codes:

<https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2012/05/wordpress-shortcodes-complete-guide/>

Homework

- Set up a free [Flywheel](#) hosting account
 - Set up a Wordpress site in Flywheel
 - Install Elementor
 - Install Hello theme
 - Install Hello child theme
 - Add a new Home page
 - Globally prevent all page titles from appearing on any page
- Learning Objectives
 - Setting up/installing a brand new WordPress site
 - What is Elementor?
 - Install and set up Elementor, Hello theme, and Hello child theme
 - Understanding the Elementor dashboard, sections, and columns
- Materials
 - Elementor: <https://elementor.com/>
 - Hello Theme: <https://elementor.com/hello-theme/>
 - Hello Child Theme: <https://github.com/elementor/hello-theme-child>
 - The ULTIMATE Elementor Compendium:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCzCO451F_c. Watch 00:01:15 - 00:14:25 - Interface basics.
 - Build your first page: <https://elementor.com/help/build-your-first-page/>
 - Section overview: <https://elementor.com/help/section-overview/>
 - How to create, edit, & style columns in Elementor:
<https://elementor.com/help/column-overview/>
 - Right click: <https://elementor.com/help/right-click/>
 - Preview & publish your page: <https://elementor.com/help/preview-publish-your-page/>
 - How to create a full page
 - <https://elementor.com/help/how-to-create-a-full-width-page/>

- How to place widgets side by side in the same column:
<https://elementor.com/help/how-to-place-widgets-side-by-side-in-the-same-column/>

Day 5: Elementor Widgets and Design Systems

- Homework
 - Build a 1 page website in WordPress using Elementor or Travel Site
- Learning Objectives
 - How to build a design system using global fonts/colors and templates
 - Using different Elementor widgets with the free version
- Materials
 - [Travel website assets](#)
 - Elementor Widgets: <https://elementor.com/widgets/>
 - Widgets: <https://elementor.com/help/widgets/basic/>
 - Widget Tutorials:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZyp9H25CboE1nHkb7rH1nkE96NEn7XD3>
 - Site settings & design systems: <https://youtu.be/GX4AKb2mYHw>
 - Theme Style - Global Settings: <https://elementor.com/help/theme-style-global-settings/>
 - Creating Parallax effects (this is pretty sweet): <https://youtu.be/owJgKj5ohKs>

Day 6: Mobile Responsive Editing & Plugins

- Homework
 - Finish the 1 page website
 - Ensure the site is mobile responsive
 - Create a header and footer with this plugin:
<https://wordpress.org/plugins/header-footer-elementor/>
 - Add a form to your site
- Learning Objectives
 - Mobile responsive editing
 - Saving templates and importing and exporting them
 - Adding additional plugins to enhance WordPress/Elementor
- Materials
 - [Headers, Footer & Blocks Template](#) plugin

- Adding headers and footers while using the Elementor free version:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OMOqF9P5rA>
- Mobile responsive editing: <https://elementor.com/help/mobile-editing/>
 - <https://youtu.be/EqFxeluk4U4> Ignore 04:09 - 05:59 - Responsive Menu.
This is part of the pro version.
- Adding forms (for free!): <https://elementor.com/blog/best-form-plugins-for-wordpress/>

NOTE:

If you'd like to keep a reference of what I'm/we're designing in class, here is my sample travel site: <https://reliable-percent.flywheelsites.com/>. Username/password: flywheel.

Elementor free vs. pro

The key differences with free and pro is the pro version gives you:

- 50+ Pro Widgets
- 300+ Pro Templates
- 10+ Full Website Template Kits
- Theme Builder
- Form Builder
- WooCommerce Builder
- Popup Builder

<https://elementor.com/help/elementor-pro-vs-free/>

The cost, at the time of this writing, is \$49 USD/year. This is typically the same cost as a paid theme would be and is well worth the price. If you are building a website on behalf of a client, you can build this cost in or pass the cost directly to them. Furthermore, with the pro version, it eliminates the need to install multiple additional plugins as they are all built into the pro version (ie. forms, popup builder, integrations, motion effects & animations, etc.).

<https://elementor.com/pricing/>

Templates

Alternatively, if you want pre-built pages and templates to work from, you can install a free theme recommended by Elementor: <https://elementor.com/free-wordpress-themes/>. Astra is probably the most popular. Astra and Ocean WP both have pro versions that also come with extensive pre-made templates to use. You can use these templates as-is out-of-the-box and just change your content, or you can use them as a starting point and customize it to your brand/design while still saving a ton of time.

My Tools

The following is a list of a few of the things I use for myself and clients:

- [Siteground](#) - Hosting. Great for you or small-medium sized businesses.
- [Elementor Pro](#) - Avoid installing additional plugins to do what the pro version offers.
- [Ultimate Addons for Elementor](#) - Lots of unique widgets as well as a dropdown menu.
- [Ninja Forms](#) - My commonly used go-to for WordPress Forms.
- [iThemes](#) - Hands down the best WordPress security plugin.
- [Cloudflare](#) - DNS Management (and much more - and it's free!). Every single site should be using this IMO.
- [1Password](#) password manager. This thing is a lifesaver. You can even get a business option to share passwords with clients.
- [WPRocket](#) - Depending on your host/setup, WPRocket is the best way to increase site speed.
- [WP Mail SMTP](#) - Best plugin for handling WP mail. The built in mail is not reliable enough.
- [WordPress E-books](#) - A round up of short, easy to read e-books on site speed, security, etc.
- [Visual Studio Code](#) - best coding editor....ever.
- [Google Fonts](#) - Open source fonts to use for your website (and recommended font pairings!)
- [Adobe Color](#) - Easy way to create and save a color palette for your design/website.
- [Flexbox Zombies](#) - There's zombies. I don't think I need to say anymore.
- [Code with Mosh](#) - This guy is one of my absolute favorite instructors. He teaches coding in a very simple to understand way without all the technical jargon.
- [Pluralsight](#) - Learn (almost) anything IT related. Training videos are updated constantly. It's well worth the subscription (hint - get your work for pay for it) and extremely useful for keeping up with (the Kardashians?) the latest technology.
- [Google Workspace](#) - I set up all client emails on Google.
- [Namecheap](#) - I buy all my domains here for the first time as they are usually the cheapest and they usually have a sale. After 1 year, I transfer the domain to Cloudflare.
- [Smashing Magazine Workshops](#)

