# Themes in WordPress

In WordPress, themes are the design templates that dictate the look and feel of a website. They control the visual presentation and layout, including aspects such as the color scheme, fonts, and widget locations.

## What can themes do?

Themes take the content stored by WordPress and display it in the browser. When you create a WordPress theme, you decide how that content looks and is displayed. There are many options available to you when building your theme. The biggest limit is your imagination.

As a theme creator, you can:

* Create different layouts, such as one, two or more columns.
* Control the typography of the site with custom font choices.
* Skin the site with any color scheme you want.
* Put a sidebar on the left or right side of the page. Or, have no sidebar at all.
* Display featured images alongside posts.

The WordPress theming system is incredibly powerful. As with every web design project, a good theme is more than defining a layout or two and a few custom colors. The best themes improve engagement with a website’s content in addition to being beautiful.

## Theme types

WordPress supports two primary types of themes: block and classic.

* **Block Themes:** Block themes are the modern method of building WordPress themes. They generally follow a standard set of conventions and are built entirely out of the blocks. Block themes rely on HTML-based block templates that contain block markup.
* **Classic Themes:** Classic themes use a PHP-based templating system, which is still supported in WordPress today. Unlike block themes, classic themes have far fewer standards to adhere to, but there are APIs you can use for specific features. The classic theme creation process also requires some minimal PHP, HTML, and CSS code knowledge, at least.
* **Hybrid Themes:** Hybrid themes are merely classic themes that have adopted some modern block – related features, such as global setting and styles or block template parts.

## What are themes made of?

Themes can include many different folders and file types. The list below is non-exhaustive, but it includes some of common things we might see:

* Templates (.html in block themes and .php in classic themes)
* CSS Stylesheets
* JavaScript
* PHP
* Media (images, audio, video, etc.)
* JSON

## Key Concepts

## Theme:

* A theme in WordPress is a collection of files (PHP, CSS, JS, images, etc.) that work together to create the design and functionality of a WordPress site.
* Themes are easily installed and switched from the WordPress admin panel, allowing users to change the appearance of their website without altering the content.

1. **Parent Theme:**

* A parent theme is a complete theme that includes all the necessary WordPress theme template files and assets.
* It can function independently and provides the base for additional customization.
* Example: The Twenty Twenty-One theme is a parent theme.

1. **Child Theme:**

* A child theme inherits the functionality and styling of another theme, called the parent theme.
* It allows users to modify or add to the functionality of the parent theme without altering its core files.
* Changes made in the child theme override those in the parent theme, ensuring that updates to the parent theme do not overwrite customizations.
* To create a child theme, at minimum, you need a `style.css` file with a specific header and a `functions.php` file.

## Benefits of Using Child Themes:

* **Safe Updates:**  Updates to the parent theme do not affect the customizations made in the child theme.
* **Modularity:** Customizations are kept separate from the core functionality provided by the parent theme.
* **Extendability:** Additional features can be added to the child theme without altering the parent theme’s files, making it easier to manage and troubleshoot.