

How to Start a Blog

Have you thought about starting a blog? Maybe it's just a glimmer of an idea you have way in the back of your brain. Or maybe you've been thinking about it for awhile. Either way, I'm here to share with you how easy it is to setup a blog. And it'll take less than 30 minutes.

Seriously - 30 minutes is all it takes. **And the info I'm sharing with you today is the step-by-step guide I wish I'd had when starting my own blog.**

If you think blogging is only for tech-savvy millennials, you're wrong. Wives and moms of all ages and backgrounds have started blogs and all have had varying degrees of success with it! **Really, it isn't complicated at all.** With just a few clicks you can have your own website to share your story, favorite recipes, and even open up opportunities for additional income (and that would be great for your budget!).

Starting a blog is the best decision I've made. Okay, maybe that's exaggerating a little bit - surely there are other great decisions I've made (like deciding to get out of debt!!!). But, really, having a blog has brought me so much freedom and given me the opportunity to share my story with you.

But enough about me, let's get back to YOU!

Why Start a Blog?

There are a lot of options out there for blogging. **First, you should consider why you want to start a blog in the first place.** Here are a few of the most popular reasons to start a blog:

- **Make money while working from home.** I originally started my blog to help others and that is still my main motivation. But I quickly realized there is huge money-making potential with blogging! While it does take some hard work, the barrier to entry is low and the cost is minimal, so it's a very low-risk investment that can pay off big time.
- **Share your story!** My very first blog was a personal journal about my attempts to lose weight. Guess what? It worked! I blogged my way to a 65 lbs weight loss and kept it off for two years. Sharing your story online and having others rally behind you is great motivation to keep going, whatever your goal might be.
- **Write a book.** It's true that publishers rarely work with authors who lack an online presence. This is basic common sense: it's easier to sell books to people that already know and respect you! And a blog is one of the easiest places to start. Get your name out there, share your work with others and authoring a book will come easier to you.

- **Promote your existing business.** Whether you have a direct-sale business like Mary Kay, Avon, or Jamberry, having a blog allows you to reach a large number of people at very little cost. Think about it - you can use a blog to share information about the latest products and styles, how-to posts, and testimonials from your loyal customers to promote your business and increase your money-making potential.
- **Just write.** Whether you want to use your blog as a personal journal (like I did), as a central index of all your favorite recipes, build a community, or simply share your story, a blog is a great place to do that.

Are you starting to see how you'd benefit from starting a blog? YES? Me, too! So, let's get you started.

5 Simple Steps to Starting a Blog

There are five main steps to starting a blog and I'll walk you through each one. You might not know what each of these steps mean right now - don't worry! **We'll cover each of them and I'm right here with you to help.**

1. Decide what to blog about
2. Find a host
3. Choose your domain name
4. Install WordPress
5. Design and post your first blog

See? Easy, right? Now, on to step one.

The First Step: Decide what to blog about

If you've been thinking about blogging for awhile, this one will be easy. Or, if you're part of a company or have a business, this step is easy, too, because your blog should be about the products or services you provide.

Not with a company? Don't have a business? That's okay! That means you have more options when it comes to picking what to blog about.

When deciding on a topic, keep these two tips in mind:

1. Pick something you enjoy to blog about - you'll be writing about it a lot, so it should be something you like to talk about.
2. Blog about something you already know - picking a niche where you can establish yourself as having some authority on the topic will show your readers they can trust you, and that will keep them coming back for more.

The Second Step: Find a Host

This isn't nearly as complex as it sounds. A host is simply the service you use to store your files on. Because you can't share the data on your own computer with the entire world, there are companies out there that host your files and your website. **This lets other people find your site on the internet.** And, because that's their business, these hosting companies are fast and reliable.

Disclosure: Because I'm a long-time paying customer and only recommend products and services I have great success with, some of the links below are affiliate links - which means, at no additional cost to you, I may earn a small commission if you make a purchase.

There are many options for hosting companies, but the company I started with and continue to use to this day is [Bluehost](#). And I highly recommend them for beginners and experts alike.

When I first started by blog, I had no idea what I was doing and I royally messed up (because I didn't have a great guide like the one you're reading now!).

The customer service team at Bluehost was able to restore my blog and get it up and working again in no time at all. They were so fast and friendly - and they did it for FREE, which was great because, well, I need that money to get out of debt.

Ready? Get started by [clicking here to go to Bluehost](#) - this link will open in a new window so you can continue to see these instructions while you go through the setup process. (And if you want to download and print this guide in an easy-to-follow format, [click here](#).)

Still not convinced Bluehost is the best way to go? **I'll sweeten the deal** a little bit by telling you if you [sign up through this guide](#), you'll get a special rate of only \$3.95/month and you'll get your domain name FREE for a year!

Now that you've got the Bluehost page open (it should look similar to the picture on the next page, though they're constantly improving the site so it might vary slightly), click on the Get Started Now button.



Select Your Plan

There are three plans to choose from. If you're just getting started, the basic plan will work just fine - you can upgrade any time. That's the plan I started with (because it's the cheapest!).

Though if you're more of the "go big or go home" mentality, the plus plan is for you. It includes unlimited features. NOTE: All plans come with a free domain, which we'll talk about in a minute.

Click on the green select button on the plan you want to continue to the next step - which is the best part!

	basic	plus most popular	prime
	normally \$7.99 \$2.95* per month	normally \$10.99 \$5.45* per month	normally \$14.99 \$5.45* per month
	select	select	select
websites	1	unlimited	unlimited
website space	50 GB	unmetered	unmetered
bandwidth	unmetered	unmetered	unmetered
performance	Standard	Standard	Standard
included domains	1	1	1
parked domains	5	unlimited	unlimited
sub domains	25	unlimited	unlimited
email accounts	5	unlimited	unlimited
email storage	100 MB per account	unlimited	unlimited
marketing offers	—	\$200 included	\$200 included
	select	over \$24/yr in extras select	over \$80/yr in extras select
		1 SpamExperts	1 SpamExperts 1 Domain Privacy SiteBackup Pro

The Third Step: Choose Your Domain Name

Your domain name is the website address (or URL) that people use to find your site. For example: marvelousmrs.com is my domain name, and gmail.com is the domain name for Google's email service.

And you get to pick your very own!

Type your domain name in the "new domain" box and then click next. (If you already have a domain name, enter it in the "i have a domain name" box and click next to continue. If not, read on!)

Important: Your domain name can end in .com or .net or .info or a variety of other options. Make sure you have selected the right way you want your domain name to end before clicking next!

sign up now

Thank you for choosing Bluehost. You have made the right choice in selecting us as your web hosting and eBusiness provider. We provide excellent customer service, reliable hardware and affordable prices.

We appreciate your business and look forward to a great relationship.

new domain

Help me get my free domain!

Type your domain name above

next

i have a domain name

I want to signup with my existing domain

Type your domain name above

next

Okay, so your domain name... How to choose? You want it to be easy to say and easy to spell. You can try these ideas:

- **Use your niche or topic.** Want to blog about personal finance like me? Try something like moneywithjessica.com or budgetwithbrenda.net
- **Choose a catchy name.** This is where your creativity can shine! For example: pinkdiamond.com or glamourgirl.net
- **Use your name!** I went this route for my writing business and used amybeardsley.com because I'm just not creative enough to come up with something clever. Using your own name is a great way to build your reputation online.



Enter Your Account Info

To finish setting up your domain, you need to enter your account information. Make sure to use an active email address because this is going to be your login name and where your blog confirmation email will be sent.

create your account

account information

All fields are required unless otherwise noted.

First Name

Last Name

(optional) Business Name

Country

Street Address

City

State

ZIP Code

Phone Number Ext

*Email Address

Use an international number

Your receipt will be sent to this address.

Verify Your Package & Choose Add-Ons

You get free setup and your domain is free, too. You can pick extras for your website if you want. The only one I really recommend is Domain Privacy Protection. Because website ownership is public information, using **Domain Privacy Protection keeps your personal information private.** This is especially important if you're using your home address (and not a business address) to register your website.

package information

Account Plan	<input type="text" value="Basic 36 Month Price - \$2.95/mo."/>
Hosting Price	\$106.20 (\$2.95 for 36 months)
Setup Fee	Free
Primary Domain Registration	Free
Domain Privacy Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - \$0.99 per month More information
Site Backup Pro	<input type="checkbox"/> - \$299 per month (Billed to end of hosting term) More information
Search Engine Jumpstart	<input type="checkbox"/> - \$299 per month (Billed annually at \$35.88/yr) More information
SiteLock Security - Find	<input type="checkbox"/> - \$1.99 per month (Billed annually at \$23.88/yr) More information
Savings	\$181.44 (63% off)
Total	\$118.08



Enter Payment Information

Fill in your debit or credit card information, check the box to confirm you've read the fine print, and click submit. Your domain name is now YOURS! And no one else can have it! Yeah! **I'm so excited for you!**

On the next screen, you'll be asked to add upgrades. Skip those, you don't need them right now.

payment information

Pay by credit card, or see [more payment options](#)

Credit Card Number 

Expiration Date /

Signature/CVV2 Code

Provide code for instant verification. Example.

Promotional prices are available to new customers only and are valid for the initial term. All products and services automatically renew for the same term length, using the payment method provided in this purchase unless a change is requested. Renewal rates and discounts will be available through your control panel.

I have read and agree to Bluehost's [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).

submit

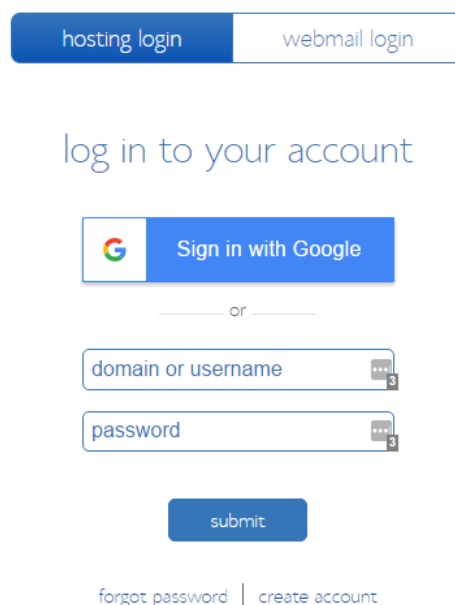
Check Your Email

Your login information was sent to the email address you provided during the setup process. So go check it now! You'll find a welcome email from Bluehost and information on how to login to your control panel. *Note: The control panel is referred to as the cpanel.*

Once you have your login info, go back to the [Bluehost](#) website and click on the login button in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.



After clicking on login, you're taken to the online portal to login to your cpanel. You'll need your login information from the email you got - enter your cpanel login information from the welcome email here and, if it isn't already selected, click on the "hosting" option. Then click submit.



hosting login | webmail login

log in to your account

Sign in with Google

or

domain or username

password

submit

[forgot password](#) | [create account](#)

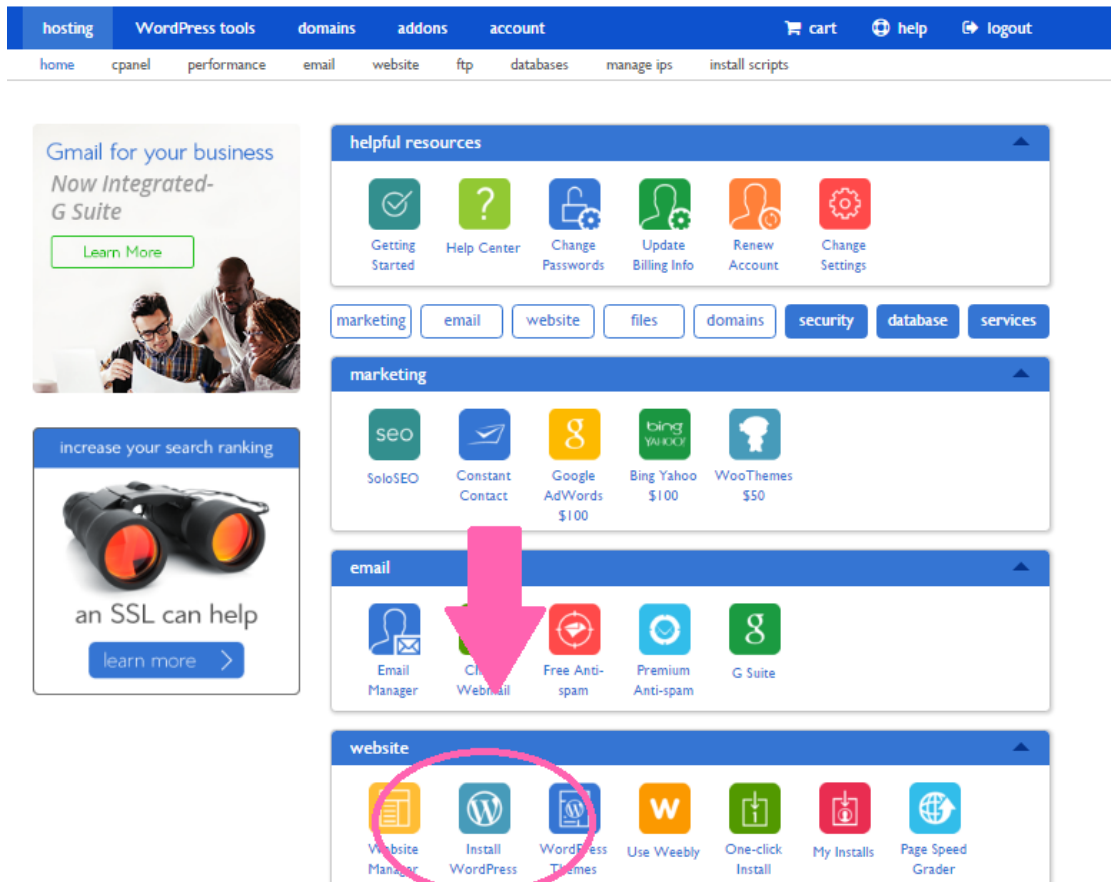
The Fourth Step: Install WordPress

This might seem like the most complex step in the whole process but I promise you it's easy. **Bluehost makes it so simple!** Follow along and you'll be publishing your first blog post in no time!

WordPress is the world's most popular website platform. Seriously. As of 2016, [WordPress powers 26% of the web](#) and it's what you'll use as your blogging platform. Without it, your domain is just a black hole of nothing.

Now, I need you to take a deep breath. **You've just bought your own website!** And, if you need a break, now is the time. Get a drink of water. Use the restroom. Take the dog out. But don't be gone long - you have a blog to install!

Once logged into your cpanel, find the Install WordPress icon. Refer to the picture on the next page for help finding this – there are a lot of options! Don't worry, just look for the "website" section of your cpanel options. **Click on Install WordPress.**



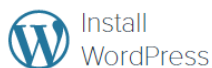
Installing WordPress

On the next screen, simply click the Get Started button.

Welcome to the Bluehost Marketplace!

As part of your Bluehost account, you have access to the Bluehost Marketplace

Here you can:



WordPress started as just a blogging system, but has evolved to be used as a full content management system.



Build your website

We at Bluehost utilize MOJO to power our marketplace and empower our users by providing a one stop shop for WordPress themes, plugins, and Professional Services to help your next project hit the market running.

Get Started

Next you'll need to choose where to install WordPress. Don't panic - this is easy. Select your domain from the dropdown menu (if it isn't already chosen for you). Leave the directory field blank. Click next.

Entering Your WordPress User Information

This is the part where you pick your own username and password to access WordPress after you install it. Click Show Advanced Options to set this up.

- Enter your site name: this is the name you chose for your blog. You can use your domain name (www.domainname.com) or the name of your blog (i.e. Money With Jessica) for your site name.
- Pick your admin username. Please don't use "admin" as your username - pick something else. And use a strong password.
- Your admin email address should be the same one you used when setting up your domain.
- Check the box saying you read the fine print and click Install Now.

A status window should appear at this point showing you the progress of your WordPress install. Once it's finished, you'll get your site URL, the admin login URL, your username, and your password. This information (all but the password, so write that down!) will be sent to you in an email - keep it in a safe place!

See how easy that was? (Helpful hint: Make a note of your WordPress username and password - you need it to post your first blog!)

The Fifth (and Final!) Step: Design and Posting Your First Blog

This is absolutely the most exciting part. And the most fun!

You get to customize your website to suit your style and personality. Want it loud and fun? You got it! Prefer a softer, more feminine approach? You can have that, too.

There are a lot of options at this point. It's important to remember that blogging is all about learning as you go - Google is a vast resource for everything WordPress related and you can easily find answers to all your questions by doing a simple search.

Now, your adventure begins. Explore theme options, create an "about me" page to introduce yourself to readers, and - most importantly - create your first blog post!

Happy blogging, my friend!