

# How to Create Your Own Blog

A complete and FREE  
step-by-step tutorial



**How to Create Your Own Blog**  
A Free Tutorial by Diggy from [Upgradereality.com](http://Upgradereality.com)

# **Introduction**

Blogging is a wonderful thing as a hobby, to share your thoughts with the world, to promote your business or even to create a full time income. Whether you blog as a hobby in your free time for an hour a week or if you do it full time for many hours a day I am going to show you how to get started with your own blog.

You are about to learn how you can create your blog or website, buy your own domain and hosting, and install Wordpress on it to get a professional looking website for less than \$6 a month.

I created this tutorial as a guide for some of my friends and family, and thought that I may as well share it with anyone who wants to make their own website for much much cheaper than any web designer will charge you.

You are free to distribute and share this ebook with anyone you like. You may NOT sell this ebook or profit from it in any way without contacting me first.

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# Chapter 1: Choosing and Buying a Domain

## ESTIMATED TIME TO SET UP:

2 Hours

(the most time-consuming is deciding what your site is about and what domain-name you want.)

## MINIMUM CAPITAL REQUIRED:

\$ 4.95 per month for the hosting of your blog.

\$10.00 for a domain for one year.

(not necessary if you already have these)

### Note

It is possible to have a free blog without any setup costs on a site like [www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com) but I would highly recommend against it, in my opinion, having your own website is the best thing to do, because you are in control of everything about it, from the domain name, to the content, to the layout and advertisements. Free blogs control all that for you, and at anytime can change their rules which can be detrimental to your hard work.

## STEP 1: Deciding what your blog is going to be about:

- Is it a personal diary about your life and experiences?
- Is it to promote products, with the sole purpose of reviewing products to make sales?
- Is it to promote a cause or be informative?
- What niche are you going to write about?

*HINT: Choose something you are passionate about and can see yourself writing about for years without getting bored. Many bloggers give up after a few months.*

You need to take these things into consideration because when you are going to buy a domain, you need to know what you are creating the blog about.

For instance if you want to start a blog about cheese, you will not name your blog 'www.galaxybattlewars.com', but you will do some keyword research (which I will show you just now) and try to include your main keywords in your domain, eg: 'www.exoticcheeses.com'.

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## STEP 2: KEYWORD RESEARCH

This is a step that you only need to do if you aim is to sell a product or promote a certain niche. It is not essential if you are making a website just for fun or for friends or family. The idea behind this is that if you choose a word or phrase that gets a high amount of exact searches per month, and you build your blog up for ranking for that keyphrase, that you will get a lot of natural free traffic through search engines which will in turn bring you more sales.

I am not going to do a detailed guide on this since there are many guides on the internet already. If you really want more information, feel free to [email me](#) and I will be happy to help you out.

## STEP 3: BUYING THE DOMAIN

You will have to search if your domain is available, and then register it to your name. A domain usually costs around \$10.00 per year and I prefer to buy them from [Namecheap.com](#) because they provide a free whois guard. (This means the domain is protected so people cannot see it belongs to you or which address you registered with)

When you buy a domain, you are buying the right to use that address for a period of time (standard is one year), and it belongs to you or your company that purchased it. Nobody else can use the same domain until it expires or until you sell it.

\*\*Just to explain, you need to purchase a **domain** to have a presence on the internet. Think of a domain as virtual property or space on the internet. You need **hosting** to be able to upload your webpages onto your domain so people can access and view your website. Hosting is like the bridge connection your domain and the public.\*\*

Go to [www.namecheap.com - click here](#) to buy your domain.

Type the domain name in the box and click go to see if it's available. If it is, then follow the onscreen instructions for payment. You need to register a free account with Namecheap and can pay via your credit card or via Paypal, it is quick and perfectly safe.

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Home | Register a Domain | Transfer Your Domain | Privacy Protection | FreeDNS | Web Hosting | SSL Certificates | Marketplace | My Account

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when purchased with a **RapidSSL CERTIFICATE**

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**REGISTER YOUR DOMAINS FOR JUST \$9.69. SEARCH NOW!**

1 Enter the domain name you want  
www.

2 Choose your preferred extension(s)

com  net  org  us  
 biz  info  eu  me

**Search**

> Bulk Domain Search  
> Whois Lookup

More Extensions Available >>

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**Login to your account**

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Password:   
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Your Domain will not go unresolved
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- Free Dynamic DNS With Client
- Free Security Features  
Registrar Lock etc.,,
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We now offer Geotrust RapidSSL certificates for as low as \$9.95 per year. This quality certificate is directly provided by Geotrust, but with substantial savings compared to the \$79 retail price. Don't wait! Increase your website's reputation and security. Purchase an SSL certificate for your server today!

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Home | Register a Domain | Transfer Your Domain | Privacy Protection | FreeDNS | Web Hosting | SSL Certificates | Marketplace | My Account

Free Domain Features | Domain Name Search | Bulk Domain Search | Domain Pricing | Renew Your Domain | RichContent | Whois Business Listing |

Home > Register a Domain > Domain Name Search

Domain Search: www.  .com

**Domain Name Search**

[SIMPLE DOMAIN SEARCH](#) | [SEARCH BY KEYWORDS](#) | [BULK DOMAIN SEARCH](#)

Enter a domain name you want to search.  
Example: **myfamilyweb** or **mysmallbusiness** etc

www.  .com

Search all available TLDs

**Domain Search Results**

| DOMAIN NAME  | STATUS    | MORE INFO             |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.com | TAKEN     | <a href="#">Whois</a> |
| MORE CHOICES ▼   |           |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.me <b>NEW</b>  | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.net            | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.org            | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.us             | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.mobi           | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.cm             | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.biz            | AVAILABLE |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upgradereality.info           | AVAILABLE |                       |

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- Transfer your domain
- Special offers
- Promo: Domains for \$2.99
- Your Domains

**Recent Domain Searches**

[CLEAR HISTORY](#)

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[Search Again](#)

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I personally prefer a .com domain, just because it sounds nicer and most people are familiar with it. .Com domains are more difficult to find, because many are already taken. Once you get into buying domains just for marketing or promotion purposes, then .net domains are a good alternative if the .com is already taken, but for a blog, try to get a .com domain.

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## Chapter 2 : Setting up your Hosting:

There are many companies online who provide webpage hosting, but personally I use [Hostgator](#), because they are cheap and reliable. They have excellent support and I have not had a single server problem since I have been with them.

When I started making websites and used other hosting companies, I was paying \$4.95 per month PER WEBSITE! Once I had about 7 sites, and this was a great cost to me, something I really did not enjoy. I discovered hostgator and instantly switched over when I saw you could host unlimited domains for just \$7.95 a month. This is the 'baby' package and I'm still on it until this day.

These are the hosting plans that Hostgator offers:

| Linux Web Hosting            |               | Windows Web Hosting |                |  |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|--|
| » Linux Web Hosting Packages |               |                     |                |  |
| Plans                        | Hatchling     | Baby                | Business       |  |
| Disk Space                   | UNLIMITED     | UNLIMITED           | UNLIMITED      |  |
| Bandwidth                    | UNLIMITED     | UNLIMITED           | UNLIMITED      |  |
| Domains Allowed              | 1             | UNLIMITED           | UNLIMITED      |  |
| Your Own Toll-Free Number    | ✗             | ✗                   | FREE           |  |
| Free Dedicated IP            | ✗             | ✗                   | ✓              |  |
| Free Private SSL             | ✗             | ✗                   | ✓              |  |
| Pricing                      | <u>\$4.95</u> | <u>\$7.95</u>       | <u>\$12.95</u> |  |
| Proceed to Checkout          | Order Now     | Order Now           | Order Now      |  |

If you are planning on only having one domain – your blog or website and are still unsure if you will enjoy it or if you will make money, then I suggest you take the 'Hatchling' package for just \$4.95 a month. I have had some people tell me they are low on funds, but honestly, I think everyone can afford \$4.95 a month for hosting. Just cut out two cups of Starbucks coffee or a drink at the pub and you will have saved that amount.

**[SIGN UP FOR HOSTGATOR HOSTING HERE](#)**



A promotional banner for Hostgator. On the left, it says 'HOSTGATOR' in large yellow letters on a red background, with the phone number '1-866-96-GATOR' below it. In the center, the price '\$7.95 per month' is displayed in large red and black text. To the right of the price is a cartoon blue dinosaur holding a large letter 'H'. Further right, it says 'HOST UNLIMITED WEB SITES!' in yellow and white text on a blue background. On the far right edge, there is a vertical red button that says 'order now' in white text.

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## **STEP 5: CHANGING YOUR NAMESERVERS FOR YOUR DOMAIN**

As soon as you have setup your hosting account with Hostgator, you will have received a welcome email from them, with the domain you registered, the IP address (eg 196.2.6.45) and the two nameservers ( eg NAMESERVER1.hostgator.com and NAMESERVER2.hostgator.com)

This step is ESSENTIAL for your webpages to be publicly accessed on your domain.

You need to:

1. Log in to your Namecheap account
2. Click on 'view' next to 'number of domains in your account' on your home screen
3. Click on your domain you have registered earlier
4. Click on 'domain name server setup' on the left sidebar under 'General'
5. Fill in your nameserver addresses from your Hostgator welcome email in #1 and #2
6. Click 'Save changes

Voila! Name server setup is complete.

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## **Chapter 3: Installing Wordpress**

**If you want to create a blog, Wordpress is a free and very popular blogging platform, which is easily customizable with themes and plugins.**

Wordpress makes life a heck of a lot easier, doing a lot of all the geeky tech stuff for you automatically. You can even create a normal webpage with Wordpress, by choosing a suitable theme. The platform remains the same.

The beauty about wordpress is that you can install it within minutes, select a theme from hundreds of free themes, one that suites your likings in color and design, and start putting out your content to the world. It requires no knowledge of programming or computer code and you can have it working just by following the instructions I'm going to give you right now.

**TO SUM UP, you should have:**

- Bought your domain from Namecheap.com
- Set up your hosting account with [Hostgator](#),
- Changed your nameservers in your Namecheap account for your domain,

You are ready to log in to your Cpanel (control panel from which you will do your wordpress install, upload any files and check traffic stats)

You log into your Cpanel by typing

[www.yourdomainname.com/cpanel](http://www.yourdomainname.com/cpanel)

into your internet browser.

You need to login with your Hostgator user and password.

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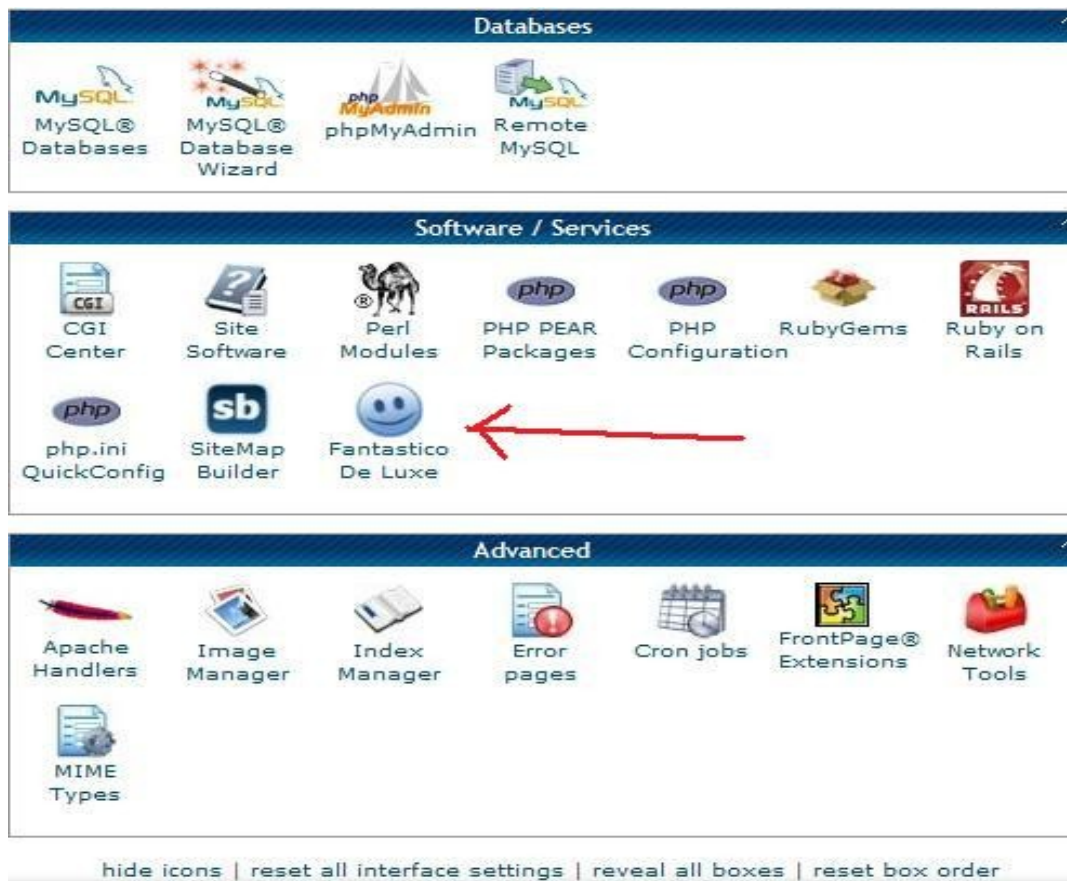
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In the Cpanel

Scroll down the page to the subheading 'Software/services'

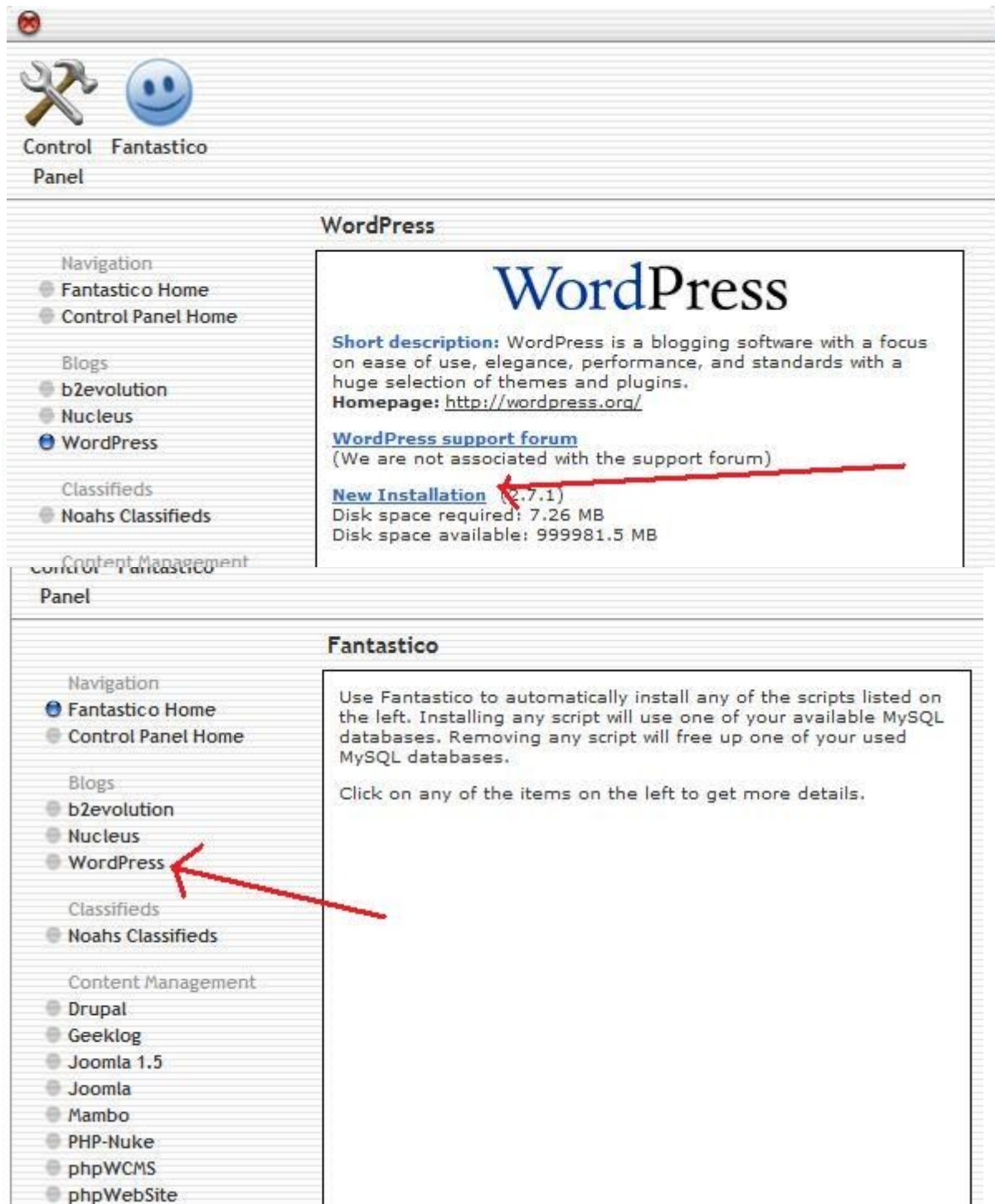
Click on 'Fantastico de Luxe'.

Select the Wordpress install from the list on the left.



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Select 'new installation'



Select the domain you want to install Wordpress on.

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Select a username and password for Wordpress.

Click 'Install'

Click 'Finish Installation'

**WORDPRESS IS NOW INSTALLED ON YOUR DOMAIN :)**

Your Wordpress login (from where you will create and manage your posts, pages and themes) will be in your internet browser:

[www.yourdomainname.com/wp-admin](http://www.yourdomainname.com/wp-admin)

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## Chapter 4: Choosing a Wordpress Theme

Like I mentioned earlier, the beauty about Wordpress is that you can change the look of your website in minutes by selecting a different theme (a theme is a predesigned layout).

You get all sorts of themes, from themes with 1,2 and 3 sidebars, to blog themes, photo themes, video themes, professional or funky themes and much more.

You will need to browse for a free WP theme that you like because the standard theme is very plain and boring in my opinion. I personally struggled to find a theme I thought was beautiful, and for many months I went through theme after theme until I finally decided to buy a theme for \$20.

[FREE WORDPRESS THEMES CLICK HERE](#)

For an excelent,customizable premium theme I suggest the THESIS THEME, a theme that some of the most popular blogs on the web use. It is a bit pricy for \$87 once off, so if money is tight, then rather take some time to browse the free themes and choose one that looks good to you. You can always get Thesis later.

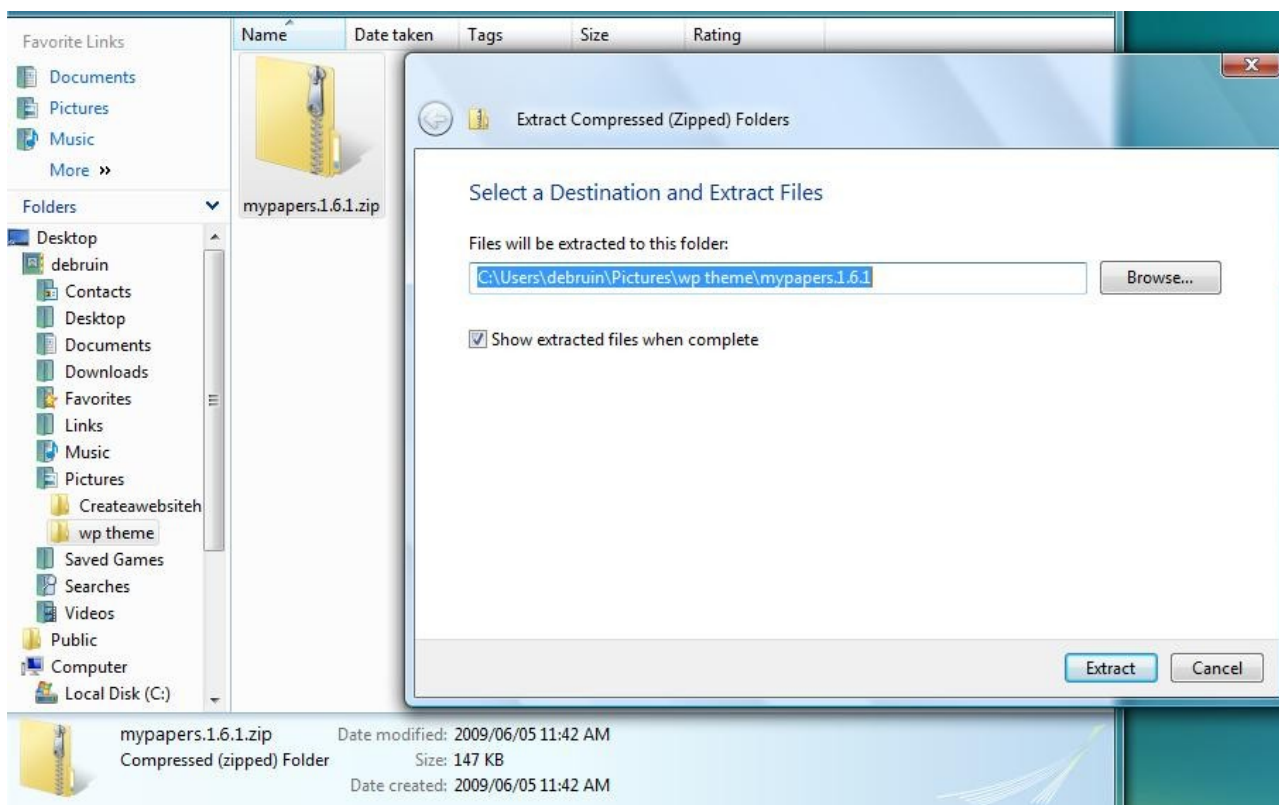
[Otherwise, click this link to get the THESIS THEME](#)

Once you found a theme you like, you need to download it to your computer.

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Open the folder where you downloaded the WP theme to, right-click on it and extract it.



I'm not going to use Cpanel to upload your file, because with cpanel you have to upload each file manually which takes ages.

[Download a ftp program called Filezilla here](#)

Click on Filezilla for windows, download and then install filezilla.

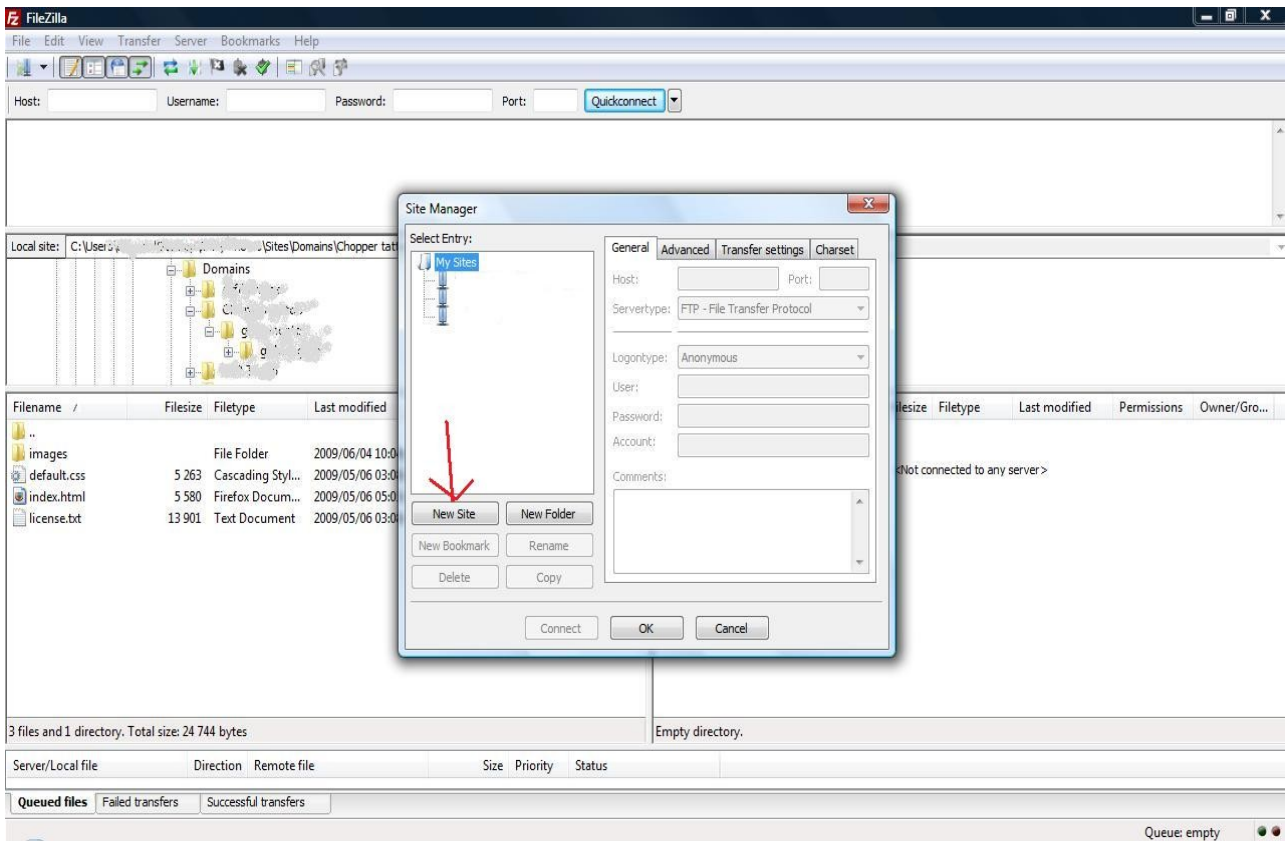
Open Filezilla

Select 'File', click on 'Site Manager'.

Now we are going to add your main domain that you registered with Hostgator.

Click on 'New Site'

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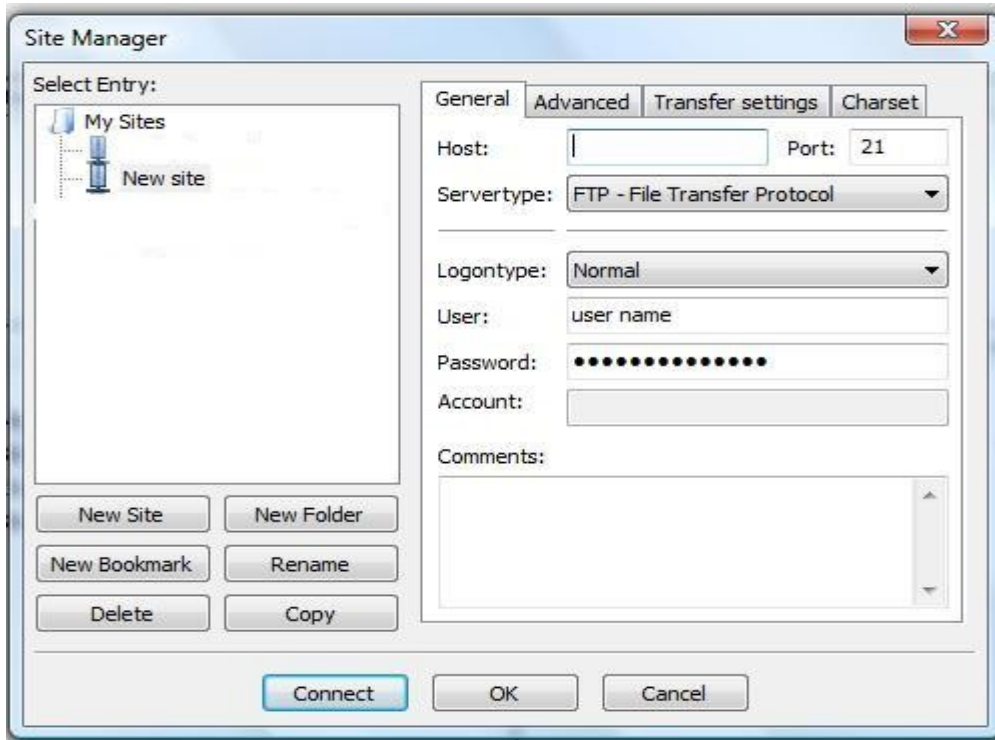
Under 'Host', you will put in the IP address that you received in your welcome email from Hostgator (eg 194.6.45.64)

Under port you will type '21'

Select the dropdown arrow on 'Logon type' and change it to 'Normal'

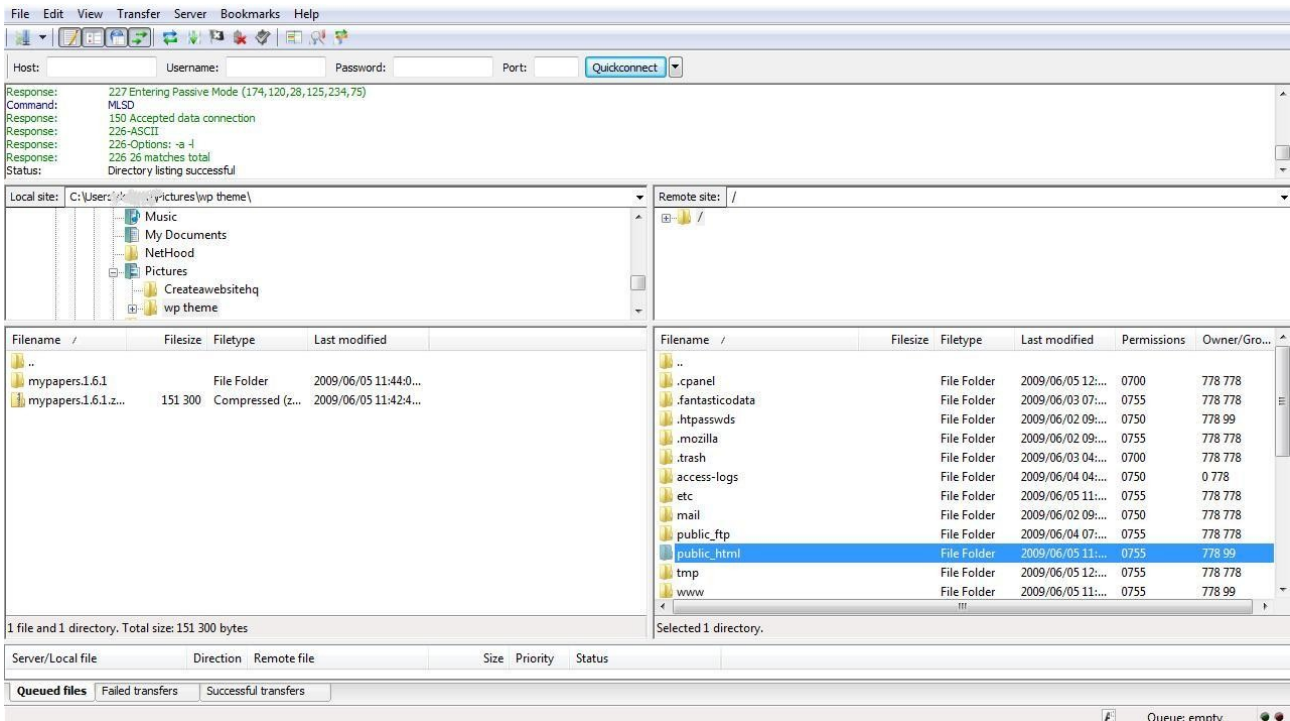
Enter your user name and password that you use to login to your Cpanel from hostgator.

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Click 'Connect'

Filezilla will connect to your site and it will look like this:  
In the right column click on 'Public HTML'

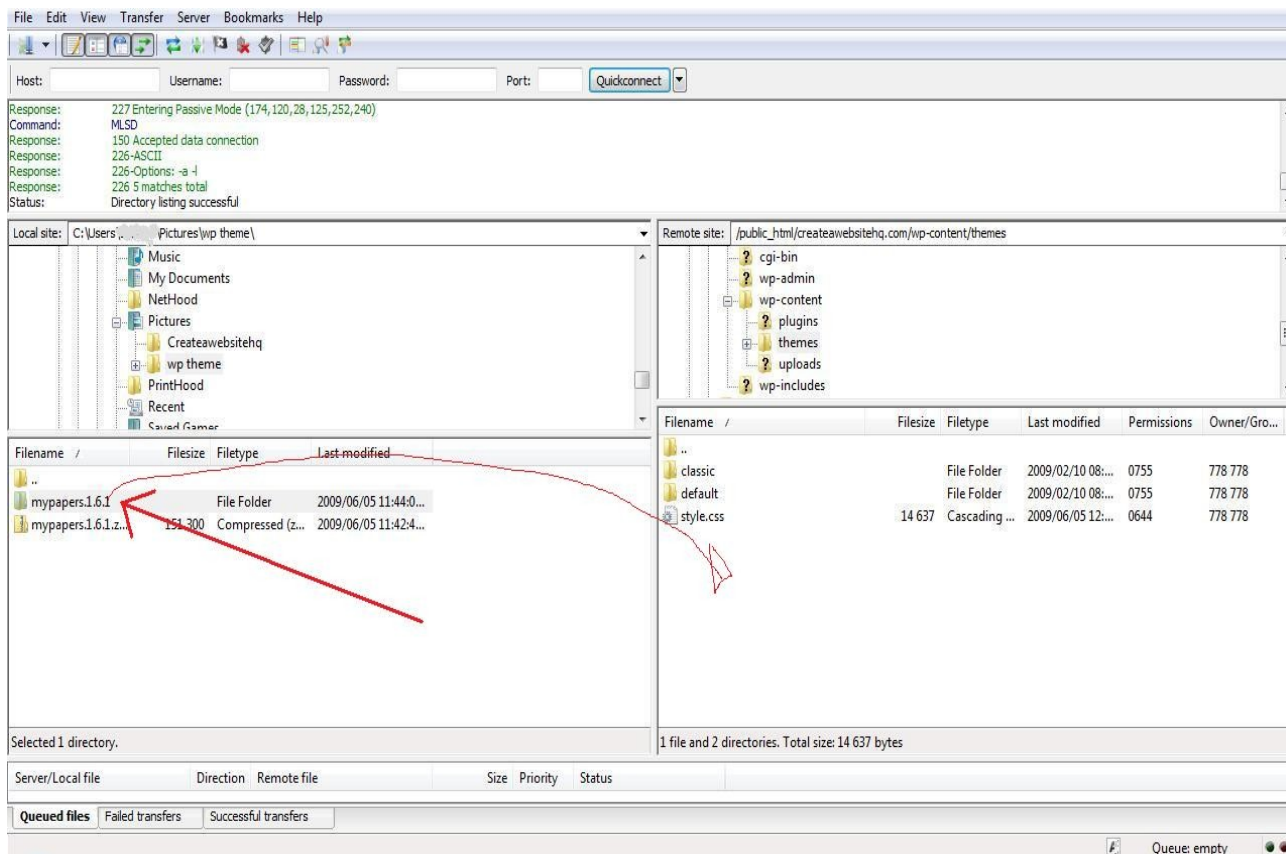


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Click 'WP-Content'

Click 'themes'

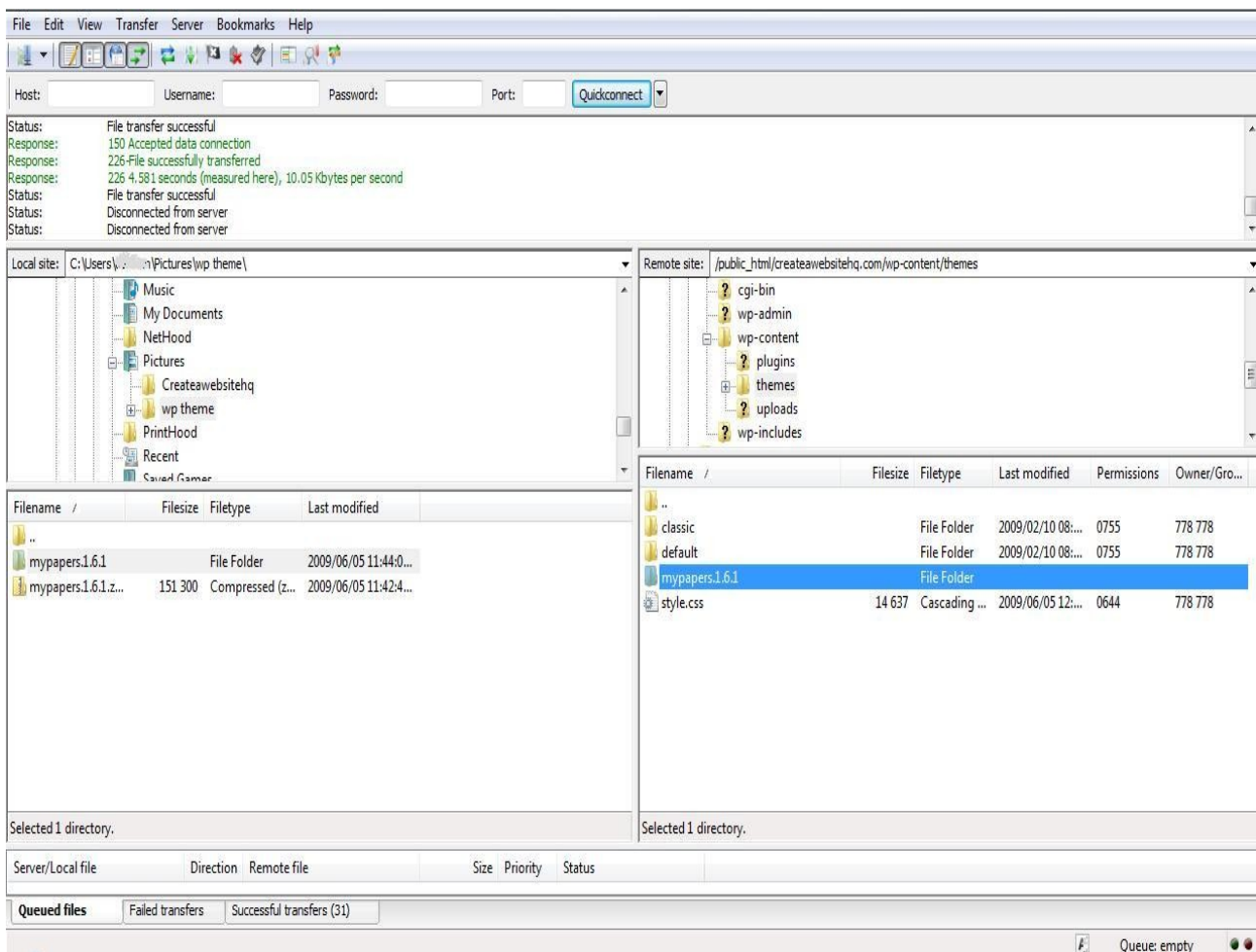
On the left column you want to get to the folder that has your extracted wordpress theme.



Copy the whole folder containing your extracted WP theme to your domain by dragging it from the left column and dropping it on the right column.

If you did it correctly there should now be the folder containing your extracted WP theme on the right hand side like this:

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**You can now close Filezilla, you have uploaded your new theme. CONGRATULATIONS:)**

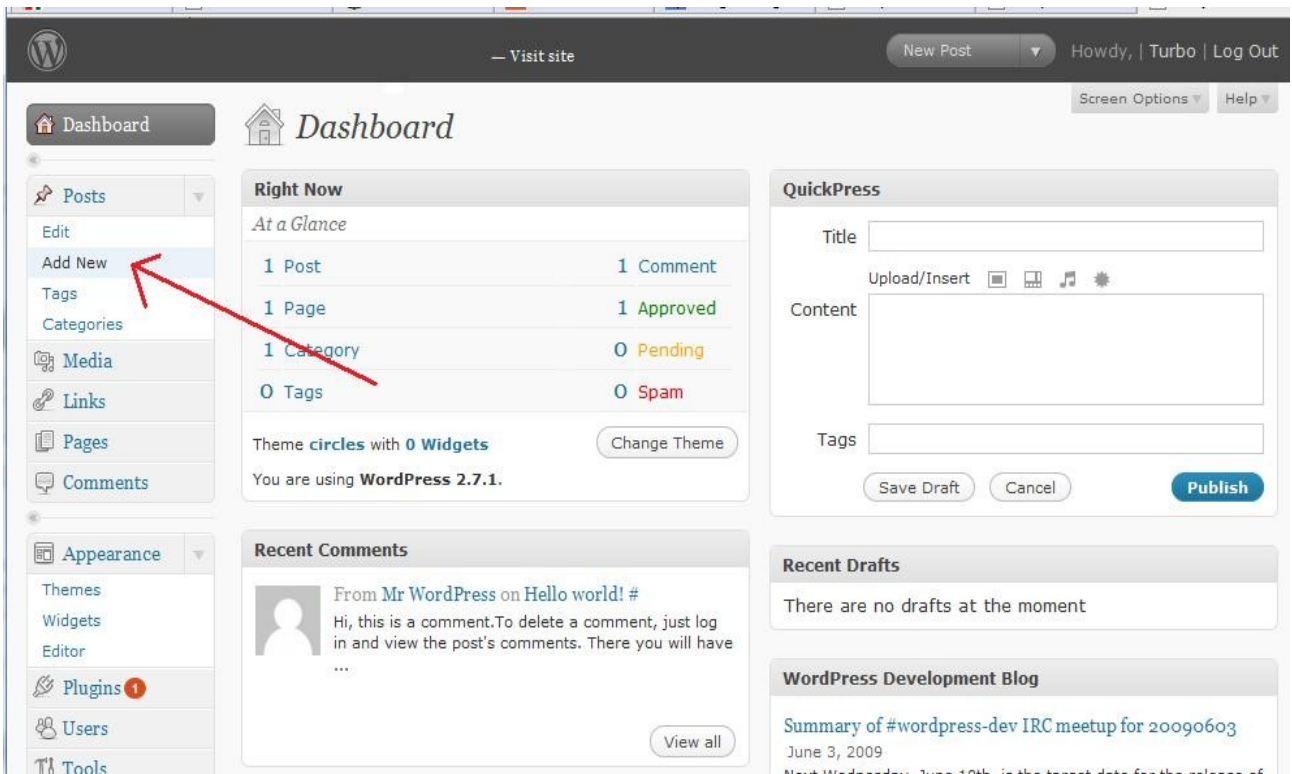
In your internet browser, go to

[www.yourdomainname.com/wp-admin](http://www.yourdomainname.com/wp-admin)

Login with your WP user and password you created in Cpanel when you did the Wordpress install.

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Your WP dashboard should look like this:



Click on the dropdown arrow next to 'Appearance' on the left.

Click on 'Themes'

Your theme that you just uploaded should be displayed, click on it.

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## Manage Themes

### Current Theme



WordPress Default 1.6 by [Michael Heilemann](#)

The default WordPress theme based on the famous [Kubrick](#).

All of this theme's files are located in `/themes/default/`.

Tags: blue, custom header, fixed width, two columns, widgets

### Available Themes



#### [MyPapers](#)

This is my free template for wordpress .Enjoy it !!! visit my website : [kareniak](#).



#### [WordPress Classic](#)

The original WordPress theme that graced versions 1.2.x and prior.



#### [WordPress Default](#)

The default WordPress theme based on the famous [Kubrick](#).

A preview of your theme will pop up, and in the top of that corner you need to click 'Activate theme'

**CONGRATULATIONS! You have just setup wordpress on your domain, with the theme you liked, and you are ready to start blogging and putting your content out to the world.**

In the next two chapters I am going to tell you about essential plugins that will make blogging more profitable and easier, and I'm going to show you how to customize your Wordpress theme so that you have it looking totally cool and awesome and just the way you want it. These steps are not nessecary immediately, because right now you are ready to start putting your content out to the world, but I highly recommend that when you have time that you read the following two chapters and apply the steps. It is only for your benefit! :)

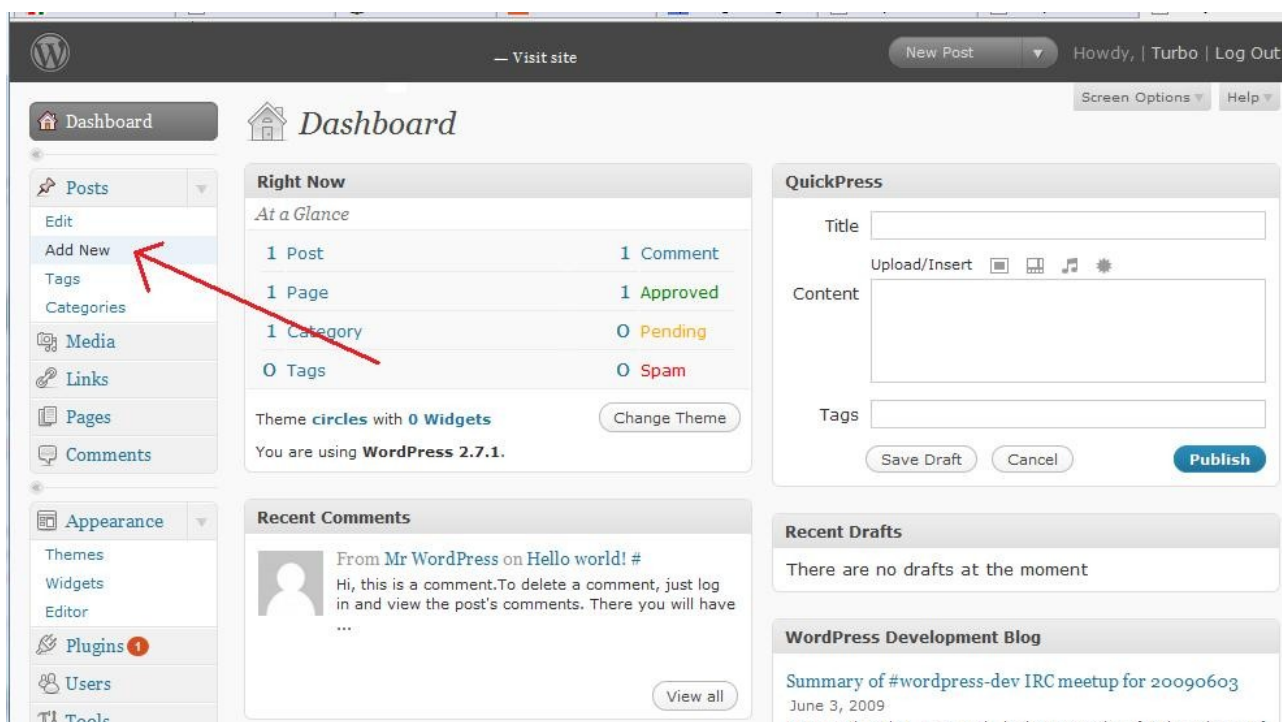
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## CREATING YOUR FIRST POST

All your posts and pages will be made from your Wordpress dashboard which you log into from your internet browser:

[www.yourdomainname.com/wp-admin](http://www.yourdomainname.com/wp-admin)

In your WP dashboard, click on 'Posts', then click 'add new'.



Fill in a title for your post

Type as much as you want and create your post

Add 'Tags' which are keywords of your content that people will search for and then your post may just show up in search engines

Click 'publish'

**CONGRATULATIONS! You have just published your first post on your new website!**

**Anyone who types in [www.yourdomainname.com](http://www.yourdomainname.com) will be able to read what you have just written!**

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# Chapter 5: Essential Wordpress Plugins

A Plugin is a small piece of code that performs a specific function. The majority of them are free and are a great and necessary extension of the Wordpress blogging platform.

Their main functions are automation of little tasks, keeping track of things, optimizing keywords, and in general making things a heck of a lot easier for readers, bloggers and search-engines.

Here is a list of essential plugins that I recommend you install as soon as you can.

You do this in your WP dashboard, by clicking on 'Plugins' and then 'Add new'.

Simply type the plugin name as I have listed it, click on 'install' and then click on 'activate plugin'

## **1- Akismet**

This is a plugin that automatically stops spam comments. Very handy, because without this you can get tens of spam comments a day which take a lot of time to remove.

## **2-Comment Relish**

This plugin automatically sends a custom message to any new visitor who leaves a post for the first time. This is a great way of building relationships with new readers and getting them to want to keep coming back to your blog.

## **3-Comment Luv**

Not essential, but Comment love is something that gives back to people who leave comments, by displaying a line below their comment linking to their last blog post.

## **4-Digg Digg**

This is a handy little comment that allows the Retweet button and Digg Button either at the top or at the bottom of your post, allowing people to easily share your post on these social media networks, which can help a lot in sending new visitors to your site.

## **5-Google XML sitemaps**

This is a plugin purely for the search engines to navigate your site and find out what it is about. It can help a lot with ranking for 'organic' traffic, ie people who find your site through search engines.

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## **6-Google Analyticator.**

It is a good idea to keep track of visitors to your page, and Google analytics does this perfectly.

First you need to [create a free account](#).

## **7-Sociable Zyblog Edition**

This is a plugin that adds options to social bookmarking sites at the bottom of your page. Essential so that readers can share your posts on many bookmarking sites , and thus get you new visitors. There are different social bookmarking plugins, but I use this one.

## **8-Subscribe to Comments**

This is a little plugin that allows readers to subscribe to comments, meaning they get email updates when another comment or comment reply happens on the post.

## **9-What Would Seth Godin Do?**

This is a plugin named after marketing genius Seth Godin. It allows a custom welcome message to appear on your pages and posts for new visitors and you can choose for how many initial visits the message appears (1,2,5 etc). Very useful for creating a good impression and getting people to sign up.

## **10- Wordpress Thread Comment**

This allows people to reply to specific comments. Very useful for allowing readers to interact with each other and with you, the author.

## **11-WP table Reloaded**

This is not essential, but very useful if you need to create a table and align things in a post or page.

## **12-Contact Form 7**

A neat little plugin that creates a contact for that you can insert in a web page or post, that allows readers to send you an email, without having to list your email address anywhere on the page.

I use it personally, you can see it [HERE](#).

There are tens more plugins, but these are the very useful and essential ones that I think every blogger should have installed on their blogs. Take an hour to install all of these once and for all, and it will make life a lot easier.

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## Chapter 6:How to Tweak your Theme

As you progress in your blogging journey, you will do a lot of tweaking and editing of your theme and layout, trying to get it better and better every time until you finally think it is perfect.

A simple lesson when it comes to design:

Less is more.

A beautiful design is simple, yet effective and does everything it needs to.

I strongly suggest that if you do not know how to use HTML code, that you google a HTML tutorial and put in some time to learn the basic coding. HTML is the easiest programming code, and is what you will use a lot of to insert images,links,buttons and ads into your theme.

**The biggest parts you can tweak in your theme are:**

**The header,sidebar and footer.**

It is nice to have a beautiful custom logo as your header. If you are good with design you can do this yourself, otherwise it is a good idea to pay someone \$20-\$50 to create one for you. It is worth it to invest in a good design, because the first impression often makes the deciding difference as to whether a new visitor will want to stay on your blog or if they will close the tab and move on to the next site.

In the sidebar, it is essential to have a SUBSCRIBE button, for RSS and Email.

You need to set up a Feedburner account at [feedburner.google.com](http://feedburner.google.com)

In your WP dashboard, click on 'Appearance' and then 'Widgets'

You want to drag 'text' widgets into the sidebar column, and in those text widgets you will insert HTML code with links to various things like Feedburner.

For example my code for my feedburner link in my text widget would be:

```
<a href="http://feeds.feedburner.com/UpgradeReality" title="Subscribe to my feed"
rel="alternate" type="application/rss+xml"></a>
```

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This looks very complicated, but don't worry, the code you get straight from your Feedburner dashboard in your Feedburner account.

The basics of creating a link are the following HTML code:

```
<a href="http://www.domainyouwanttolinkto"></a>
```

You need the `</a>` at the end to close the link command

Before the `</a>` you can insert text or an image like this:

```
TEXT: <a href="http://www.domainyouwanttolinkto">This text appears as a link</a>
```

```
IMAGE: <a href="http://www.domainyouwanttolinkto"></a>
```

With these codes you can create almost all you need to know right now.

**Two more handy HTML codes are:**

```
<p align=center></p>
```

Anything between the two tags will be aligned in the center of the page or sidebar.

```
</br>
```

This creates a line break or space. Can be helpful sometimes.

The Header and footer you will edit from your WP dashboard by clicking on 'Appearance' and then 'Editor'. This is where you can edit the raw structure or coding of your theme. The header you will edit by selecting 'header.php' from the list on the right hand side, and the footer by selecting 'Footer.php'.

There is no way I can possibly tell you every little thing there is to know about editing your theme, much of it revolves around playing with it until you get it right. Be sure to always make a backup copy before you start playing with it. It is not fun to lose hours of work. If there is anything specific you would like to know, there are free tutorials for almost every problem if you do a quick Google search. If you still do not come right then, feel free to contact me and I will see if I can help you out.

I am not an expert but have a fair amount of knowledge about this.

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I truly hope this was as easy as I made it sound and I hope you found my tutorial helpful. I wish you lots of enjoyment and success with your new website! If you have any questions or just want to say hi, [please send me an email](#).

I am not an expert, but I have learnt a lot about blogging and the technical aspects of making a blog and website, and I'm happy to share what I have learnt. If you are stuck with something, just let me know!

Have a rockin' day!

Cheers

Diggy

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