

LEARNING MADE EASY



9th Edition

# WordPress®

for  
**dummies**®  
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Customize your theme  
and add plugins

Insert images, audio, and  
video into your posts

Use WordPress as  
a content manager

**Lisa Sabin-Wilson**

*Cofounder of WebDevStudios, a WordPress  
design and development agency*



# WordPress<sup>®</sup>

9th Edition

**by Lisa Sabin-Wilson**

FOREWORD BY Matt Mullenweg

Cofounder of WordPress

**for  
dummies<sup>®</sup>**  
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## **WordPress® For Dummies®, 9th Edition**

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# Foreword

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There used to be a program from Microsoft called FrontPage, which was the first visual interface for creating websites that I saw. It worked like Microsoft Word and Publisher, so with very little knowledge, I was able to hack together the world's worst website in just a few hours without worrying about what was going on under the hood.

Years later, when I look back at that website, I cringe, but at the time, it was incredibly empowering. The software, though crude, helped me publish something anybody in the entire world could see. It opened a world I had never imagined before.

Now, using software like WordPress, you can have a blog or website light years beyond my first one in both functionality and aesthetics. Just as my first web experience whetted my appetite for more, I hope that your experience entices you to explore the thousands of free plugins, themes, and customizations that are possible with WordPress, many of which are explained in this book.

WordPress is more than just software; it's also a community, a rapidly evolving ecosystem, and a set of philosophies and opinions about how to create the best web experience. When you embrace it, you'll be in good company. WordPress users include old-media organizations such as CNN, *The New York Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, along with millions of personal bloggers like me for whom a WordPress blog is a means of expression.

Matt Mullenweg

Cofounder of WordPress

# Introduction

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It was 2003 when I discovered the WordPress blogging software. Way back then (and in Internet years, that's actually quite a lot of time), I used Movable Type as my blogging platform. A friend introduced me to the WordPress software. "Try it," she said. "You'll really like it."

As a creature of habit, I felt reluctant to make the change. But I haven't looked back. I've been with WordPress ever since.

WordPress started as a tool for blogging. Authors, students, parents, business owners, academics, journalists, hobbyists — you name it — use blogs as a matter of course. Over the past decade, WordPress has emerged as the premier content management system (CMS) available on the Internet. WordPress software currently powers 35 percent of the websites you see.

Today, WordPress is much more than a blogging tool. Individuals, organizations, and corporations are using WordPress to build their entire web presence. WordPress has grown into a valuable solution for everything from selling products on the Internet to running membership sites and blogging. Pretty much anything you think you can do with your website, you can accomplish with WordPress.

To a brand-new user, some aspects of WordPress can be a little bit intimidating. After you start using it, however, you begin to realize how intuitive, friendly, and extensible the software is.

This book presents an insightful look at WordPress. In the book, I cover managing and maintaining your

WordPress-powered website through the use of plugins and themes, as well as using the intuitive WordPress Dashboard to manage your content. If you're interested in taking a detailed look at the website-building tool provided by WordPress, you happen to have just the right book in your hands.

## ***About This Book***

This book covers all the important aspects of WordPress that new users need to know to use the software for their own websites. I cover the software package available at <https://wordpress.org> by highlighting important topics, such as these:

- » Installing and setting up the software
- » Navigating the WordPress Dashboard
- » Using the Block Editor to create posts and pages
- » Finding and installing free themes to use on your WordPress website
- » Using basic coding to design your own WordPress theme or modify the one you're using
- » Installing, activating, and managing WordPress plugins
- » Choosing to use the multiple-site WordPress Network option to host a network of websites in your domain
- » Migrating your existing website to WordPress (if you're using a different platform, such as Drupal, Movable Type, or Expression Engine)

With WordPress, you can truly tailor a website to your own tastes and needs. Some sites are packaged with the WordPress software; others are third-party plugins and add-ons created by members of the WordPress user



community. You need to invest only a little research, knowledge, and time to put together a site that suits your needs and gives your readers an exciting experience that keeps them coming back for more.

## ***Foolish Assumptions***

I'll never know what assumptions you've made about me at this point, but I can tell you a few things that I already assume about you:

- » You know what a computer is. You can turn it on, and you understand that if you spill coffee on your keyboard, you'll have to run out and get a replacement.
- » You understand how to connect to the Internet and know the basics of using a web browser to surf websites.
- » You have a basic understanding of what websites and blogs are, and you're interested in using WordPress to start your own. Or you already have a website, are already using WordPress, and want to understand the program better so that you can do more cool stuff and stop bugging your geeky best friend whenever you have a question about something.
- » You already have a website on another platform and want to move your website to WordPress.
- » You know what email is. You know what an email address is. You actually have an email address, and you send and receive email on a semiregular basis.

## ***Icons Used in This Book***

Icons emphasize a point to remember, a danger to be aware of, or information that I think you may find helpful. Those points are illustrated as such:



**TIP** Tips are little bits of information that you may find useful.



**WARNING** I use this icon to point out dangerous situations.



**TECHNICAL STUFF** All geeky stuff goes here. I don't use this icon very often, but when I do, you'll know that you're about to encounter technical mumbo-jumbo.



**REMEMBER** When you see this icon, read the text next to it two or three times to brand it into your brain so that you remember whatever it is that I think you need to remember.

## ***Beyond the Book***

I've put a ton of information between the covers of this book, but at <https://www.dummies.com>, you can find a Cheat Sheet that lists

- » Where to find WordPress support online
- » How to navigate the WordPress Dashboard
- » How to locate a reliable web-hosting provider

When you arrive at <https://www.dummies.com>, type the book's title in the Search field to find the Cheat Sheet.

## *Where to Go from Here*

This book is a veritable smorgasbord of WordPress information, ideas, concepts, tools, resources, and instructions. Some parts of the book may apply directly to what you want to do with your WordPress blog. Other parts may deal with topics that you're only mildly curious about, so feel free to skim (or skip) those pages.

If you already have WordPress installed on your web server, for example, you can skip [Chapter 3](#). If you aren't interested in digging into the code of a WordPress template and don't want to find out how to apply CSS or HTML to enhance your design, you can skip [Chapters 9 through 12](#). If you have no interest in running more than one website with WordPress, you can skip [Chapter 13](#).

I don't intend for you to read this book from cover to cover (unless you're my mother — then I won't forgive you if you don't). Rather, scan the table of contents and the index to find the information you need.

Long story short: Take what you need, and leave the rest.

## **Part 1**

# **Introducing WordPress**

## **IN THIS PART ...**

Explore all WordPress has to offer.

Discover the basic concepts about publishing a website with WordPress.

Understand the different versions of WordPress and choose the right one for you.

Get ready to use WordPress for your online publishing.

# Chapter 1

## What WordPress Can Do for You

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### IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Seeing how WordPress can benefit you
  - » Participating in the WordPress community
  - » Understanding the different versions of WordPress
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In a world in which technology advances in the blink of an eye, WordPress really does make building websites easy — and free! How else can you get your content out to a potential audience of millions worldwide and spend exactly nothing? There may be no such thing as a free lunch in this world, but you can bet your bottom dollar that there are free websites and blogs. WordPress serves them all up in one nifty package.

The software's free price tag, its ease of use, and the speed at which you can get your website up and running are great reasons to use WordPress to power your personal blog or business website. An even greater reason is the incredibly supportive and passionate WordPress community. In this chapter, I introduce you to the WordPress software so that you can begin to discover how effective it is as a tool for creating your website.