

How to Start a Fashion Blog



First Site Guide's fashion blog guide is here to show you how to build your own blog within less than 30 minutes. The basic know-how is explained in a step-by-step approach, with screen caps to guide you along the way, and with a wide selection of free tools designed especially for the fashion niche. You will be delighted to see just how easy, and rewarding it is to make your own blog.

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FOREWORD

You have stunned others with your incredible **fashion sense**. You helped your friends refurbish their clothing closets, and many other people with planning their attire for special events. Your advice is priceless, and you always know what's hot on the fashion market. Why not show it to the world? Why not make your own **fashion blog website**?

The Internet will serve you as a trampoline for establishing the face value of your fashion sense, and also can become a very important source of revenue for you. You will be able to show what you've got, but also to get more: a wider audience, and an opportunity to turn your free advice into real money. Styling your own website will be surprisingly easy after you read our detailed guide, with instructions and screen captures, as well as with a companion website made precisely according to the steps and explanations from this guide.

By building your own website, you can get all that, and even more. You can build your online presence in such a way, that it will respond to your two basic needs: to have a **functional** website, and also an **esthetically pleasing** one - just like the attributes that you are looking at when you're exploring clothing and accessories.

With **affordable solutions** for your online presence needs, our guide tells you how to **build your website**, **engage in social media**, and **monetize your website**. Managing your website, and adding new content will seem as easy as spotting a pair of fake Prada shoes, after you follow the instructions comprised in our guide's sections closely, and simultaneously build your own site. Unleash your creativity, make a website as strong as a fashion statement, and impress others with your newly acquired savoir-faire.

So: have you decided to get started with your website?

First Site Guide's here to help!

Here is what you will find in our **Fashion Blog Website Guide**:

- Smart ways to choose your domain name
- Easy introduction for setting up your account with a hosting provider
- Crucial information about the right content management system
- Interesting information about using search engine optimization tools

We did not avoid, of course the building process of your website: how to choose a theme, how to get your content online, and how to tweak the things you don't like on a custom theme, and make it more of your design!

Additionally, information on how to turn your website into a money-making machine is included in our guide.

In order for you, the reader of this guide, to have at all moments and a benchmark for your website management and styling capacities, we already followed the steps explained in this guide ad litteram (to the letter) and are happy to provide you with a version of the website explained in the guide.

You can access it here: fashionblog.firstsiteguide.com.

Additionally, we feature on our blog a special blog post about alternative themes, and advanced setup of plugins mentioned in this guide, in case you want to fine-tune the look and feel of your website. You can read our blog entry [here](#).

KICKSTARTING YOUR WEBSITE

Website designer's mumbo-jumbo makes everyone, who is a novice, afraid of getting onto creating their own website with their own hands. The processes behind getting your content online are, however, easy to follow and quick to yield results -- so why not add to your self-esteem by saying "Hey, I made this!". Let's get started!



Step 1 - Choosing a representative online name for you

From Facebook to the Sartorialist, we call websites by their name. In order to access them online however, these names are written in the address bar of browsers following some conventions.

Such addresses are called URL's -- where the domain name is squeezed between a **www.** and a **.com**-- though, the number of top-level domains (such as the ending .com) is about 0.5k today, ranging from country domains to specialty and novelty ones. For the domain name of your choice, you will need to pay a moderate amount in order to own it (usually on a yearly basis).

But the toughest choice you need to make is about the name that gets sandwiched in between. So let's find out how to deal with that first!

Here are some important clues about what you should be looking for:

a. **Short is better.** People's attention span is getting smaller by the day. If you want to be memorable, go for something witty, and short. You will not want to crowd too much information that is hardly legible in your domain name. This is an example of what your domain should not be like:



A much easier to read and memorize option would be:



You need to sort out the details that really need to be in the name, and the ones that can be further enlarged on in your website.

Remember: **Catchy and memorable is the best way to go.**

b. **Keep in mind SEO.** Words like "fashion" and "clothing" will help you appear when a more general search is entered by the potential fashion fan. If you have a specialty like specific types of attire, try to include that word as well to help automatically narrow the results.

c. **Keep it specific.** Unless you come up with a very witty moniker, or you're an already established name in the fashion niche, make sure to indicate the topic of your website -- otherwise you'll just flunk in search results.

d. **Make it more YOU.** If you're a reputable fashion advisor with a very well known name that you think people will be searching, make your name a domain, even if its just a last name (ex. www.lopezfashion.com). If you're new to the game however, or don't strongly connect your name to your business, leave it out of the domain name and introduce yourself on the website instead.

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Step 2- Selecting your hosting

If you have come up with a great **domain name**, the next thing in line for you to do would be to get **hosting** for it, and this way, be one step closer to being online. Like buying clothes from a reputed couturier, selecting a reliable web host is a very important step in the website building process. Hosting is usually a **paid service**, just like paying rent for an apartment. Some people prefer to get their domain name and hosting deals from separate providers, others, for the sake of convenience, bundle them together, often getting awesome deals for features, management, and cost reductions.

There are several factors you need to take into account when selecting your hosting provider:



Money - Hosting is not going to cost you an arm and a leg, but everyone appreciates a fair price and the best features for that price.



Loading time - Since you want your visitors to access your website almost instantly, it's good to take a look at loading time averages for sites hosted with your potential provider.



Support and service - A reliable company with technical support and service for the web products you pay for is a smart choice. 24/7 availability is a definite plus.



Uptime - A good host has a high amount of uptime (the time your site is up and running on the internet), whereas an unreliable host will have high downtime due to server issues.



Features - Different hosts will offer different special features, such as apps, themes, design options and tools.



Reviews - A simple Google search for reviews of the services you are currently prospecting is going to enlighten you, and help you make a more refined choice.

We at FirstSiteGuide have gathered ourselves a lot of savoir-faire about personal hosting, and our wholehearted recommendation is for a service called WebHostingHub.com. Their offer excels in reliable support, and hosting plans are available at as little as \$3.99 per month. An extra \$11.99 per year will be needed for your domain.



However, by clicking on the link below you can benefit from our exclusive deal with 50% off during the first year of your online presence: FirstSiteGuide.com/hub.

3 Step 3- Getting your website online

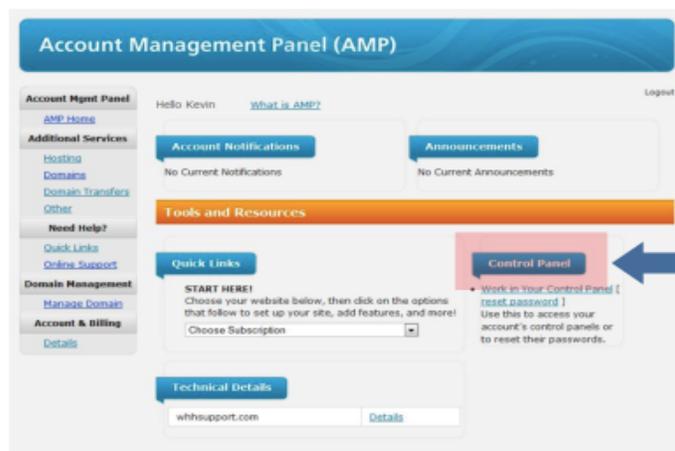
Different companies offer different sign-up and purchase processes. In what follows, we are going to show you the quick and easy sign-up process with WebHostingHub, as well as the best, tried and tested way to get your content online. Visit: FirstSiteGuide.com/hub in order to move along and get your website online in no time!

Part 1

After clicking on the provided link above, you will be asked to either check the **availability** of a domain name you want to buy, or to input the domain name you already own. A welcome email with your login information for the **account management panel** of WebHostingHub will immediately arrive to your inbox. Such a panel (usually called for ease of reference AMP) is where vital information about your domain(s), as well as services is going to be displayed for your eyes only.

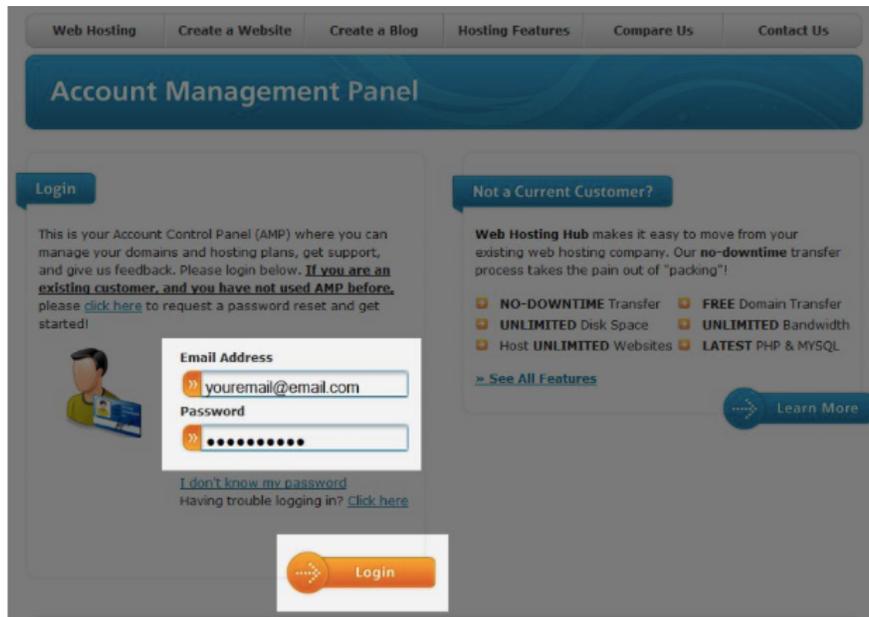


Your own AMP is easy to find. You just need to go to webhostinghub.com login using the top right-hand corner button, and this will guide you to this page:

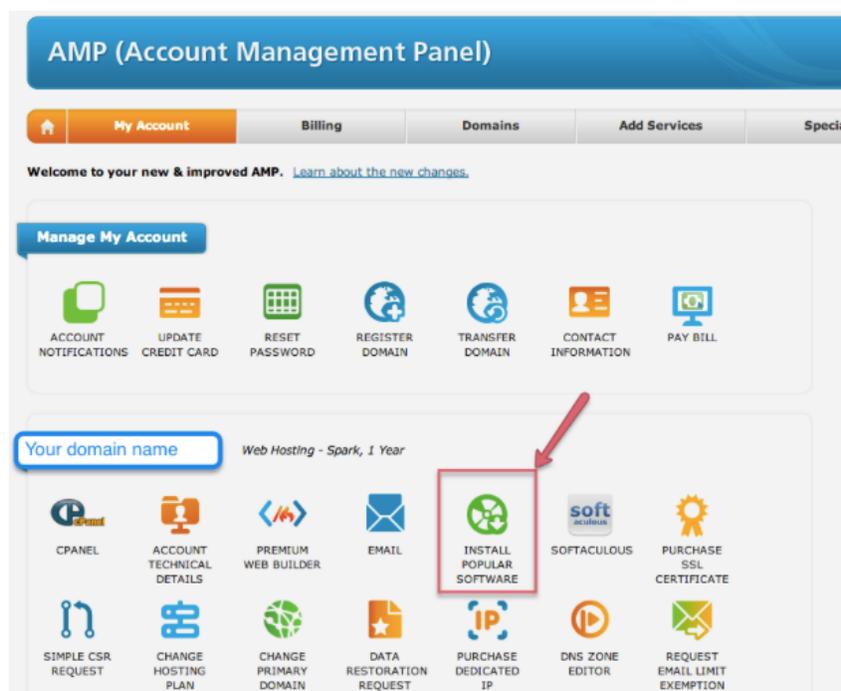


Part 2

Upon successfully logging in, using of course the information provided to you in the welcome email, you will find yourself in the main panel of your account, which will look like this: a section titled *Control Panel* will be available in the menu. Just click on it in order to access your control panel.



Whether you want to install your content management system (for short, CMS), or check the status of your services, here's where you need to land.



Whether you want to install your **content management system** (for short, **CMS**), or check the status of your services, here's where you need to land.



A handy panel comprising various tools, and application, is provided for your ease of access, and comfort. What's more, a section entitled **Install Popular Software** will provide you with an installation gateway as simple as a single click for your desired content management system. The convenient **Softaculous** auto-installer is also provided here.

A content management system (**CMS**) represents at the same time the skeleton, and the shell for your website. Controlling how it looks, what it does, and managing all this from behind the scenes are basic actions you would expect a CMS to perform on your behalf. CMS's usually spare you the trouble of learning complicated programming, or design. Since you're looking for a system that will also allow you during the course of time to add and manage contents on your website, the choice of CMS actually is sifted down to a few options. **Joomla!**, and **Drupal** are common choices, but **WordPress** wins in terms of trust, and popularity, with several millions of users around the globe.

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Step 4- Installing WordPress with one click

WordPress is not the easiest thing to install on your domain when you are green, and less versed in technicalities.

Part 2

On refresh, the page will now display the *WordPress* tab of the *Softaculous* installer, with information on the current running version of *WordPress*, as well as a technical summary. Click on the Install WordPress link provided under the Wordpress logo in the Install Popular Software panel.

Part 3

A form with required information will be then displayed, and you need to fill it out in order to proceed with *WordPress* download, and installation.

The screenshot shows the Softaculous installer interface. The main content area is titled "Software Setup" and contains the following sections:

- Choose Protocol:** A dropdown menu showing "http://".
- Choose Domain:** A dropdown menu showing "firstsiteguide.com".
- In Directory:** An empty text input field.
- Database Name:** A text input field containing "wp779".
- Database Settings:**
 - Table Prefix:** A text input field containing "wp_".
- Site Settings:**
 - Site Name:** A text input field containing "My Blog".
 - Site Description:** A text input field containing "My Wordpress Blog".
 - Enable Multisite (WPMU):** A checkbox that is currently unchecked.
- Admin Account:**
 - Admin Username:** An empty text input field.
 - Admin Password:** Two empty text input fields.
 - Strength Indicator:** A progress bar showing "0/100".
 - Admin Email:** An empty text input field.

Here is a short description of the numbered items you need to fill out when you attend to this step:

- (1) protocol - you need to choose between `http://` and `http://www.`, either will ensure redirection;
- (2) domain name - your domain name will be listed here by default; if you have more than one domain in your AMP, make sure to choose the relevant one;
- (3) directory - if your domain will be your website/Wordpress installation, then leave it blank. If you instead install your website on a subdomain (e.g. `blog.domainname.com` or `domainname.com/blog`), specify this new path;

- (4) database name, and (5) table prefix need to be left as they are;
- (6) provide a name for your blog; and also a subtitle (also called tag). Step (6) can be reverted to at any later stage after the installation process;
- (7) provide an admin username, a strong password, and an email address. Please remember these, as they are crucial in the next steps, because they will be used every time you will log in to your Wordpress Dashboard.

Once you have filled out and checked the accuracy of the data, hit the bottom button that says *Install*. The page will then refresh to confirm the successful installation.

Congrats! You can now access your *WordPress* installation - actually, your website's atelier. In order to do so, you need to put in the address bar your domain name of choice, followed by `/wp-admin`. There's a huge difference between what others will see on your website (your **URL**) and what you can see and do (when you access your **URL/wp-admin**).

YOUR WORDPRESS PRIMER

1

Step 1- Your new jargon

Before we get started, there are a few things that you need to know about the interface of *WordPress*, and how to work with it.

Already the most popular hosting platform for blogs in 2009, *WordPress* is today one of the top choices for content management both for popular bloggers, and for companies. It makes the work with **blogs**, as well as with **static websites**, a lot easier, and since it is **highly customizable**, it can reach unprecedented dimensions in terms of creativity, and functionality. Users of *WordPress* are not expected to know coding, and as you become more familiar with the interface, you will see what a world of good it can bring to your website. *WordPress* is additionally available worldwide, without restrictions, and it is already localized in numerous, if not all, languages.

2

Step 2- Finding the perfect theme

With your site up and running, you've already done a great deal for your new website, and you should be proud of yourself.

But bigger tasks are looming over: for instance, finding a great **theme** for your website. As mentioned before, your *WordPress* is already themed with its default installation, but just like in fashion, not everything looks good on everyone. Your default *WordPress* installation also comes with some sample pages, and sample posts (*Hello, world*) which you should actually delete before moving on.

Themes are like clothes for your website. *WordPress*'s own repository of themes counts to date 2k+ themes, and more themes are available at a premium from diverse sites. When you are looking for new clothes for your site, there are several things you need to keep in mind.

You don't only want it to look good, but to allow for desired functionalities to blend in, and work out smoothly. You're not the one who wants to make wrong choices, because not all themes are compatible with all functionalities, and in fact, you should aim at finding a theme that allows you to use it exactly as intended, but at the same time saving up time that you would otherwise spend building the website up from scratch.

In what follows, we have prepared a handy guide, to assist you in the search for the perfect theme:

***Free or premium?** While there are both free and premium choices for your website's *WordPress* theme, with extreme prices ranging from \$3 to \$1,000, it definitely makes sense to sift through the free themes first, because you never know what inspiration you're getting from there. Plus, if you're only looking, it's just like with clothes: you have the chance to try on before deciding. Most theme repositories, including *WordPress*'s own wordpress.org, give you the opportunity to preview a theme before even downloading, installing, or even paying for it.

***Do YOU know what you want?** The wrong thing about you could do when looking for a theme would be just to get carried away by just how good a theme looks, but to realize in the very end that there's little you could do with it.

It's just like that awesome dress you feel and look good in, save up to buy, but then it ends up being prey for moths in your closet because there's nowhere you could possibly wear it. Make a shortlist of the functionalities you would like to have on your website (e.g. dropdown menus, number of columns, slideshows, full-width previews, etc.) and make your choice function of what you need - from what you like.

***What will your readers want?** Today's readership will often like to read their favorite blogs on devices as diverse as mobile phones and tablets. This is why you should opt for a theme that is responsive -- that is, will load quickly and look professional even on screens other than computer ones.

***What do you want to achieve?** Keeping in mind what your website should look like in the very end is a good benchmark for the theme of your choice.

This will mean that in the process, you will be able to select something that already looks pretty close to your vision of your website, thus saving up time, effort, and in many cases money.

***Who are your readers?** Knowing your readership also helps in the selection process. Not only you will know better what to choose, but you will also be able to provide something in line with your industry's standards, and current trends. Or conversely, if you are an extremely creative person, you could go against the grain, and choose something that will set a new fashion!

Here's a short and handy list of themes we have found particularly well suited for your new fashion blog website. All are free, and can be downloaded directly from the wordpress.org repository of themes.

Because you want to have a fashion blog, this means that you will often have visual contents - that is one big reason for which you should opt for themes that are milder in color, and will not create shrieking contrasts with what you're posting!

- [Unique](#)
- [Codium Extend](#)
- [Fashionistas](#)
- [Adroa](#)



Step 3- Theme download and installation

If you have found the perfect theme for your website (and you should have by now), that means that you're now ready to download and install it. Though the process is generally thought to be easy for beginners, *FirstSiteGuide* offers you a **complete walkthrough** for the download and installation process. In our demo, we use the **Fashionistas** theme, but no matter which the theme of your choice is, the process is comparable if not identical.

Click [here](#) to download the theme.

Though there are several ways in which a theme can be incorporated into your website (**WordPress Dashboard Search & Install**, **WordPress Dashboard Upload & Install**, **FTP access**, etc.), we are going to show you through the simplest and quickest of them all: uploading and installing directly from your **Dashboard**.

Part 1

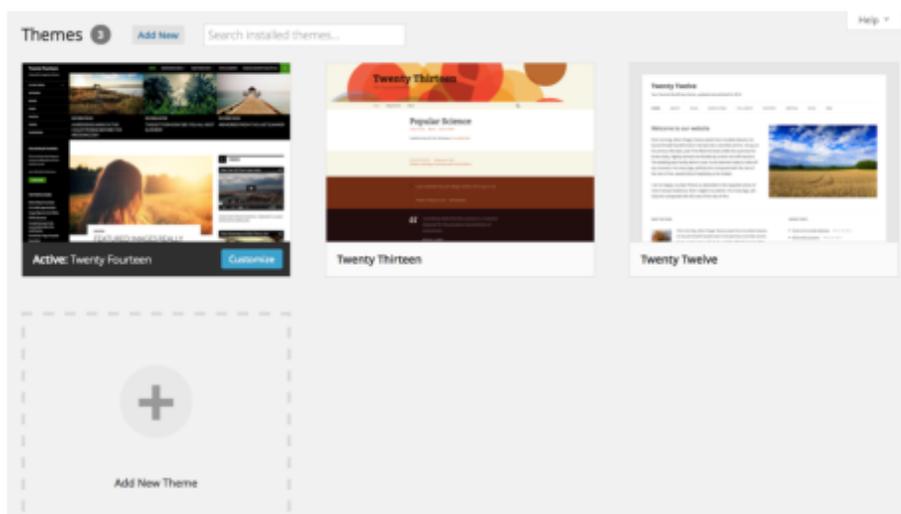
On the page linked above you will find the theme presentation (some important details, such as theme overview, installation guidelines, version history, support, screenshots, FAQ) and two buttons: a red one (**download the latest version**) and a green one (**preview**).

Click on the red download button and **save** the archives of the theme on an easily accessible area of your computer's disk.

Part 2

If you are not already there, sign in to your *WordPress Dashboard* (URL/wp-admin) and find on the left-hand menu the section that says *Appearance*.

Click on it in order to expand this section, or just hover above it, until you see the subsection called *Themes*, and click on it.



Part 3

Select the *Install Themes* tab from the right hand side panel.

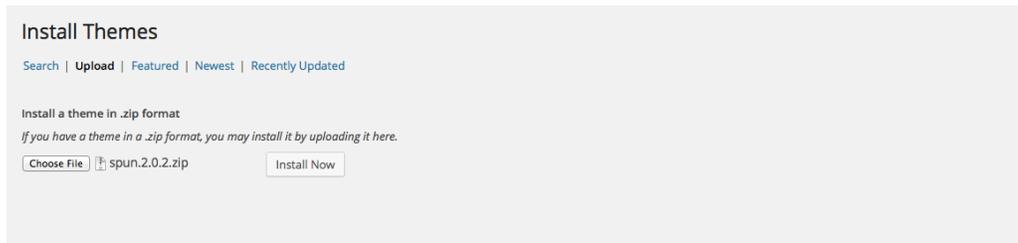
Part 4

Select *Upload* as your installation method of choice. It's located conveniently on top, next to *Search*.



Part 5

Click on the **Upload** button in order to navigate to your computer's disk and choose the archives that you have previously downloaded (**Part 1**). After you have correctly identified the archives, hit **Install Now**, and wait a very short while.



Part 6

Do not refresh the page, and wait until the confirmation of a successful installation. There's one more thing to do! At the bottom of the overview of the successful installation, you will find a button that says to **Activate** the theme. Just do it, and your new theme of choice will be implemented in the website within seconds.

Part 7

Now you can go on and tweak your theme here and there, in order to make your theme look closer to the way you see it in your mind, and also to prepare it in order to provide it with contents!



Step 4- Tweaking your theme

Making your theme more yourself is not an easy task, but it is a very creative one, and you will be glad to work through the exciting experience, and see your blog complete. Further design, and functional features can be decided on with help from the tools you find in your Dashboard, and extra plugins you will find in the WordPress repository.

This process, often called **customization**, means to adapt the already existing design and functionalities comprised in the theme (luckily, as close as possible to your desired end product), and tweak them in order to respond better, to be better organized, to allow for different views for different sections, and most of all, to allow very user-friendly access to the front-end of your website for your readers.

Part 1 - Giving your website an adequate name

You will first of all want to set your website's name (usually the domain name sandwiched between the **www.** and **.com** in the URL), and also optionally a **tagline**.

A tagline is a phrase that further enlarges on the topic of your website. Think of it as yours *'I'm loving it!'* or *'the real thing'*-- and a quick and fun way to communicate to your audience what your website is about.

Unlike the domain name, the tagline can be changed as many times as you want (although, for branding purposes, this is not recommended), but just like the domain name, it needs to be memorable. For our sample fashion blog website, we have chosen the tagline: "You either have, or you learn it"-- a phrase that will need no further explanation for the fashion addicts, and which is at the same time a statement, and a way to engage your readership. Clever, huh?

1. Visit the **Settings** section of your **Dashboard**.
2. From there, navigate down to **Appearance** options, and choose **Customize**.
3. In the **site title box**, type the name of your website as you want it to appear in web searches, and on the top of the browser.
4. Next, type a catchy tagline in the corresponding **tagline text box**.
5. **Save** in order to keep your changes.

Part 2 - Deciding what your first page displays

For reasons that you will know better, you may want your first page to display a page rather than posts. You can decide what your first page displays following a few quick, and easy steps.

1. Access your **Customize** board from **Appearance**.
2. Expand **Static Front Page**, and select the checkbox next to static page (and select the respective page), or next to blog posts.
3. Click **Save** in order to preserve your changes.

Part 3 - Deciding on menu locations and contents

Your website will have a menu (i.e. a taxonomy of links to most important pages, so your readers could easily access them). Actually, your theme supports not one, but two such menus. You can use one for instance for the main pages (About, Contact, etc.), and another for the sections of your blog (Street Style, Coupons, Hot Deals, News, etc.).

More information about building up your menu's contents is detailed in the next chapter.

1. Still from the **Customize** panel of your **Appearance** menu, select **Navigation**.

2. Choose the menu you want to use as your *Top-Page Menu*.
3. Choose the menu you want to use as your *Main Menu*.
4. *Save changes*.



Step 5 - Permalinks

Another initial tweak you can make for your website is to decide on a uniform way to name and display your URL's. *Permalinks*, thus named because they are permanent and links, are ways to organize your website's contents. By default, the *WordPress* installation has some nasty page and post names!

But do not despair! You can make them user-friendly and memorable with just a few clicks.

1. Go to your *Dashboard*, and under *Settings*, choose *Permalinks*.
2. You will be given a few standard options to name your pages and posts, but also custom ones, you can make yourself. We suggest you choose a Post Name as your permalink algorithm. This will render your URL's as URL/contact and URL/News-from-YSL-- which, you may conclude, is a very easy way to deliver information both to your readers, and to search engines.
3. Click on Save in order to propagate the respective pattern of URL rendition site-wide.

Did you create some pages or posts already and don't like their links? Don't worry. Once you set on a certain permalink structure, even your old pages and posts will be given their new URL's!

GETTING AROUND WORDPRESS

Now that you made the first steps into giving your website the look it deserves, it's time to create some contents for it! Content is usually presented in your website under the guise of **pages** (static content, usually unchanged, or rarely updated), and **posts** (as frequent as you want them to be, which are per se blog entries, and usually presented in a chronological manner (most recent first)).

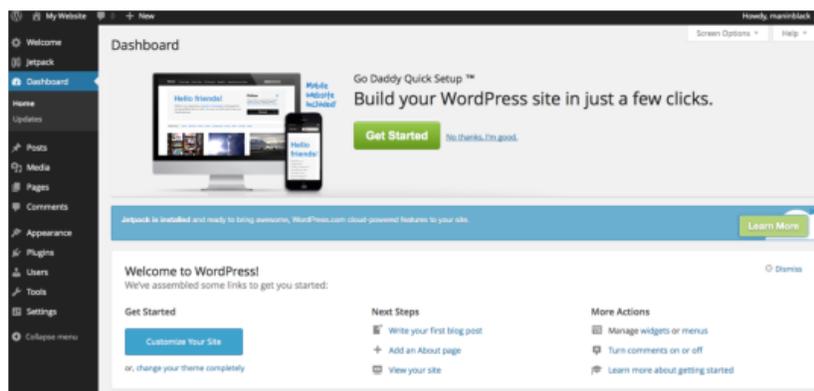


Step 1- Your website's back office

In the previous section, when we talked about a first set of tweaks (like naming your website, adding a tagline, deciding on the aspect of your front page, and on menus you use), we made reference quite often to the *WordPress Dashboard*.

You should think of this dashboard as the cutting pattern for a news dress. You are the designer, creating the instructions on the dashboard, and the content that shows up on your website will be your new dress. The *WordPress* dashboard is definitely user-friendly, and it will take no time for you to get accustomed to its various sections, and be able to navigate through it, even blindfolded!

At first glance, this is what your **Dashboard** looks like upon signing in to the back end of your website. This dashboard is only visible to you, and the people you make it available to (other users with varying degrees of access to the website, such as other administrators, contributors, editors, etc.).



The Dashboard is made up of **three** important parts.

The top toolbar - The top toolbar is only visible to you when you are logged onto the website, and will not affect the way your website looks for other readers. You can think of it as a **quick access toolbar**, since it allows you to perform very basic actions (logging in and out of the website, visiting the front-end of your website, or keeping tracks of updates, or comments in queue for moderation).

It is made up of customizable modules, which can be added, deleted, or moved around, in order to give you basic information about your website. In it, the most important section will count for you the number of pages, posts, tags, comments, unmoderated comments, spam, and also inform you on the version of WordPress you are currently using, with what theme, and how many plugins. Different other such panels will enlighten you on the whereabouts or status of contents on your website.

The left hand side menu - This is the most important, and most accessed area of everyone's Dashboard. We have had a quick sneak into sections such as *Appearance*, or *Settings* in the previous chapter.

Visual, and functional aspects alike are combined in the left hand side menu of your Dashboard and can be visited, changes can be applied, and contents can be added through them.

A first section hosts *Posts*, *Media*, *Pages*, and *Comments* - the most likely sections you are going to use on a daily basis when dealing with your website's back end. Each of them can be expanded, and thus lead to different sub-sections, each of them with its specific purpose. Under posts, for instance, you can add new entries, manage old ones, or deal with their categories and tags. More about this in the section devoted to posts.

If you want to get quick in the know of the technicalities of your website, the second half of the Dashboard left hand side menu is where you should be looking. Dropdown menus for each of the sections will guide you through crucial aspects of the website look and feel: like *Appearance*, *Plugins*, *Users*, *Tools*, *Settings*. It's worth your time and money to spend some time looking at each, and at what they can do, because you will need them when you want to quickly fix or change something in the way your website works.

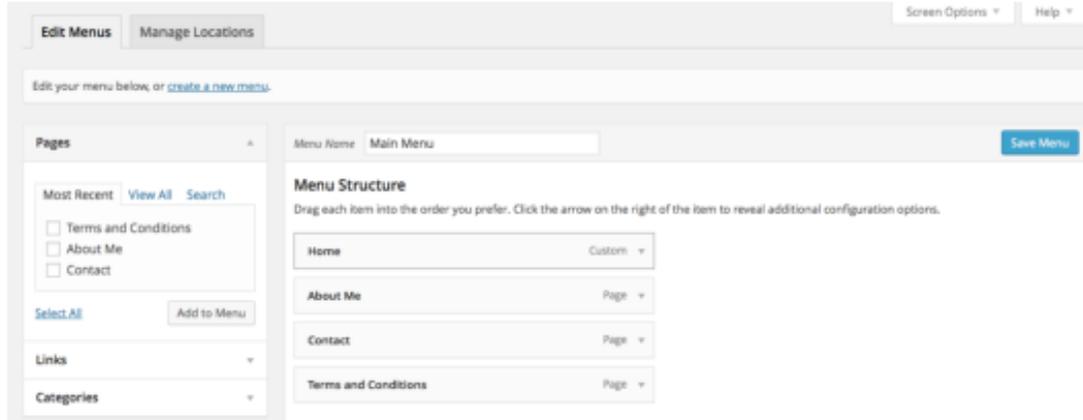
2

Step 2- Website Menu

Your readers will need some guidance for navigating in your website. Most websites use *menus* for this specific purpose. Menus are collections of items, each with or without their subcategories, that you, as the owner of the website, think most users are more likely to want to visit. Front end menus are made up of pages, collections of posts, external links, etc. -- whatever content you think your readers will want to take a look at, or conversely, YOU want them to take a look at.

Menus are highly customizable areas of your website. A website can have more than just one menu, and you can create specific menus for specific sections of your website. For instance, you could create a main menu for your front page, and another one for the post pages. It is all up to you!

1. In order to get things started, navigate to your **Dashboard**, and find the section called *Menus* under *Appearance* in the left hand side menu.
2. A left hand panel will present you the things that you can readily add to your front-end menu. These are *pages*, *categories*, or *custom links*.
3. The right hand side panel, however, will show you what **the menu structure** will look like. You need to name your menu, and hit **Save** in order to make sure that whatever changes you make to your menu will be preserved.



4. In order to populate your saved menu, click on the left hand side checkboxes next to each item (page, category, custom) and click on **Add to Menu** each time.
5. If you want to re-order the items in your menu, there are two basic options you have:
 You can **drag and drop them up and down** (first listed will also mean first shown in the menu). Or, you can **drag and drop them laterally** (and they will be displayed with a little left indent). This, rather than making menu entries, will make sub-entries, which will be displayed as dropdown items in your front-end menu.
6. Each of these changes needs to be saved, so make sure to click the **Save Menu** button under -- or before -- the menu structure.



7. After creating such a menu, it is time to get it online on your webpage! In order to do so, you need to look for the subsection called **Menu Settings** in your **Menus** section (right under **Menu Structure**) and make sure to click the checkbox that says **Primary Menu**, so it should be properly displayed on your front end. Needless to say, the **Save Menu** button needs to be hit one more time in order to make the changes live.

3

Step 3- Your first post or page

When you decided to get online with your own, self-hosted and customized website, you thought about the long hours of musing, when you will write pointed, unique, and witty articles, and share intriguing photography with your growing readership. Anything that you want to share to the world on your website can be done with help from two types of published content: **Posts**, and **Pages**. Additionally, **photo** and **video content**, **links**, **categories** and **tags** will be explained in their interaction with published content in this very important section of the *FirstSiteGuide* primer for fashion bloggers.

Pages

Pages are considered by most bloggers to contain **static content**, i.e. content that is rarely, if ever, changing. Unlike posts, about which we will talk up next, they do not need categories, tags, and comments can be closed, should you wish so. They contain the main sections of your website, the ones that your readers will use in order to find their way in the website (e.g. sitemap), to know who's behind it all (e.g. About Me), or get in touch with the owner (e.g. Contact).

For a fashion blogger's website, we think that these are sections that you should consider having on:

About Me - explain your background, your fashion sense, and your mission statement.

Terms and Conditions- since you ARE going to use contents that's been produced by others, talk freely about your affiliations, about your sources of information, about own photography and other's rights to redistribute, about comment policies (what kind of comments are tolerated, and not), and last but not least, about your money making policies. For more about this, check the wealth of information about monetizing your blog in Chapter 5.

Contact - most websites have a contact page, provided with a contact form and basic information you need people to get easily to.

You may want to add even a postal address, and let retailers know that you are open to gifts to try on, accessorize, make photo shoots of, and advertise. It all depends on what you have in mind for your blog.

The process of **adding a new page** is really easy. In order to add a new page, while being logged in your website's **Dashboard**, you need to go to the section **Pages**, and from there to the subsection **Add New**. The page that opens will present to you an easy to get around editor, one in which you won't get muddled. It is provided with a text box for the page's title, another larger text box for the content, and several other technical fields (such as editing level or date, submission time, author, etc.).

You can publish your first page once you gave it a title, and you wrote some contents for it. Publishing the page is done via the **Publish** button. Remember that in the rush-rush crowd of today, nobody wants to read long texts. So when you write the contents of your first page, make sure to keep it short, informative, and with special flair. A catchy and engaging title will set your readers on fire, so spend some time thinking about some clever wording for your page name.

WordPress is set to periodically **auto-save drafts** of your work in progress, but do not abuse this function. You may want to save changes in your visual editor (i.e. the main tab of the content text box) from time to time, to cater for those moments when you don't have enough battery, or your internet connection fails.

Using the **visual editor** is recommended to novices because it is a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor. There is also the HTML editor, where people with more technical know-how, and who want to further tweak their pages's contents should venture. But since most common actions (**paragraphing, indenting, text sizes, colors, alignment, etc.**) can be performed from the visual editor, you should content yourself in the beginning with it, alone.

Publishing a page will get it online, no sweat, but there are at least two issues you should be concerned with.

Part 1 - Pinning new page to the menu

First, you need to 'pin' it to your menu. Unless you've checked in your **Menu Settings** panel the checkbox **Automatically Add New Top-Level Pages to This Menu**, your new published page will be accessible by its own URL, but it will not be available in the menu -- so it's less likely people will do guesswork with its URL and check if it's there or not. For instructions on how to get a page in your front-end menu, check again the dedicated section above.

Part 2 - Making the URL of your page sound better

Second, you will probably want to make its specific URL sound better, and this you can actually do by changing your **Permalinks** settings. For detailed information on how to do that, make sure you go once again through the instructions from the section above, suggestively named **Permalinks**.

Posts

As a fashion blogger, you will need to keep the pace of the fast-forward world of fashion, and write about what's hot and what's not, revive tendencies, come up with innovative ideas, follow the trends of street style, and more. In order to have your own platform for your own thoughts related to the world of fashion, you will need to publish, i.e. **post**.

The procedure of publishing posts is not entirely alien to you if you have already followed closely the instructions to publishing pages.

In fact, the backend panels of both pages and posts are so similar, you should indeed double check whether you're in the process of publishing a page, or a post.

However, posts respond to a different need. Though they can be pinned to menus, using the custom link facility, they usually are not, as they are considered as a **journaling** option, that is to say, a way to chronicle, in your case, the course of fashion. Posts can address several topics, can be of diverse lengths, and can be organized in various ways.

Here's a look at **how you can organize the posts** of your blog:

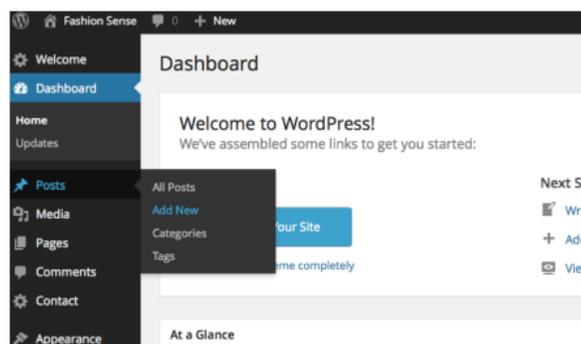
By default, the posts are listed on the blog page in **chronological order** (first displayed = most recently published). For various reasons, most bloggers content themselves with this natural order, which speaks exactly of the journaling we mentioned above.

Since posts are assigned categories, you can always decide to sort them on the front end of your website according to their **main category**. Learn how to assign categories for your posts below.

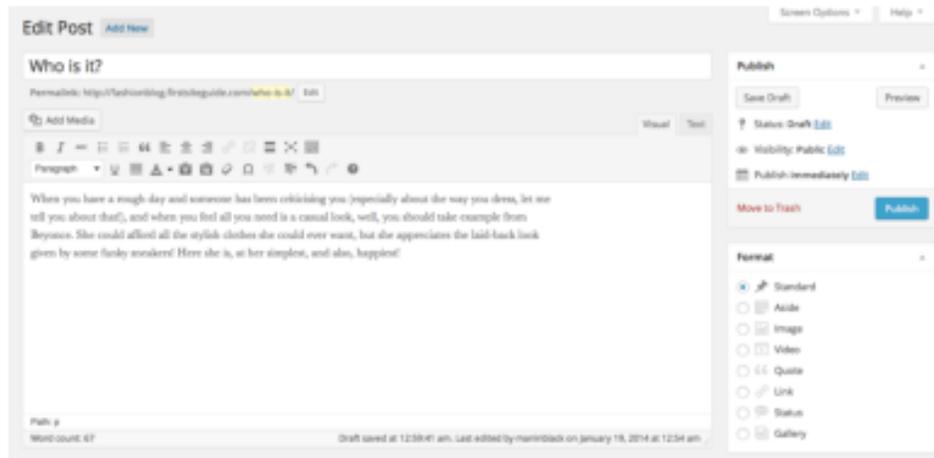
Another thing you could do in order to single out posts from their chronological timeline is to per **tags**. A post can have essentially any number of tags (although assigning too many will harm your SEO strategy), and tags can be added themselves to your menu in order for people to browse content specific to a topic or another. What is more, you don't have to extend your menu horizontally for a great deal of screen space: you can use the drag and drop laterally option in your menu, and nest your tags as subpages under a main menu entry. Keep reading in order to learn how to assign tags for your posts.

But first things first! In order to **publish a new post**, while being logged into your **Dashboard**, and choose **Posts** from the left hand side menu. Just like with pages, you will need to provide a catchy title, and some contents.

The textual contents needs to be written or pasted from an offline text editor in the visual text editor of the respective post.



When you want to see how the post will look like on your front end, you can always click on the **Preview** button from the **Publish** section, re-read your text, see what other formatting changes need to be applied, and ultimately try to see what other tweaks need to be performed.



Auto-saves, as well as saves made by you are available a little lower in the review history section. If you accidentally lose contents, delete something, or simply like it better the way it was previously, it's sufficient to scroll back and enter *WordPress's* own time machine, and select the version you really want online.

What you should be writing about

There's actually no limit to the types of content you can add to your blog as an active member of the fashion blogging community, but most bloggers, especially ones who are still green, find it a lot more comforting and worthwhile to concentrate on three to five topics alone. Dwelling on too many topics may cause frustration or confusion among your readers: they will not know what to expect from you as a writer, they will lose track of other great things you have already written, and easily catalog you as an *eclectic blogger*.

Keeping yourself in a specific niche also helps with your website's **monetization**. Drawing in, and keeping a pool of faithful visitors always translates into money. Read more about how to transform your blog into a money-maker in our awesome **Chapter 5**.

Below you will find some suggestions for **topics suitable for fashion bloggers**. As mentioned before, you don't need to become overnight an expert in all of them, but you do need to make sure your topics of choice are compatible, and you have enough food for thought for keeping them as active rubrics with numerous post updates in the foreseeable future:

- *Personal style or styling jobs you have done for others*
- *Revamping one's closet*
- *Reviews, news, or gossip about collections*
- *Make up and accessory advice to go with certain types of attire or etiquette*
- *Provoking or lesser known aspects from the history of fashion*
- *Fashion pulse from the street (street style like the Sartorialist, or Facehunter)*
- *Doing over and repurposing clothes (home/do-it-yourself couture)*
- *Polyvore-like fashion collages*
- *Fashion show reporting, updates, and photo documentaries*
- *Trend alerts*
- *Hot deals, sales, and coupons*

Not only **text**, but also **images**, **videos**, and **links** can be added to your posts.

Getting your photos in shape for publishing

For your fashion blog, you will want to publish **rich and vivid visual contents**. Fashion photography is a discipline per se, with numerous tutorials, manuals, and even workshops around the world debating which are the most lucrative ways to make photos for the fashion world. If you commit to being a long-term fashion blogger, it will do you no harm to include fashion photography on your self-improvement to-do list and take advantage of the numerous resources and courses available worldwide.

Publishing photography requires first of all that you have the right kind of photographic material. This should not be a difficult task, even for a blogger debutante, now that you can get a wide range of cameras, and even obtain top notch photo quality with mobile phones.

Make sure that when you shoot for your blog, you follow at least three conventions from the fashion blogosphere:

- *Your character of choice is in focus, and all items of attire are visible.*
- *Your setting is, even when blurred, memorable and matching the character's style, age, or profession.*
- *The colors create a pleasurable effect: nobody wants an eyesore on browsing your photos.*
- *The overall concept of your photo tells a story (people ask themselves how your character looks like or dresses like in a different surrounding, what his/her voice sounds like, how old he/she is, whether he/she is happy etc.).*
- *Develop in time your own personal style. There are photographers out there who are easily recognizable through each of their photos - you can be one of them.*

One-click photography is not that bad these days, although you should aim at making enough money from your website to own one day your own DSLR camera. However, all the photos you shot, whether with a camera or a phone, are editable, not only on your computer, but also with basic touches in your *WordPress* Dashboard! Please remember that jpeg and png photos are best rendered online! Although supported, other formats such as tiff, or bmp are not ideally rendered on your website.

Part 1 - Loading Photos

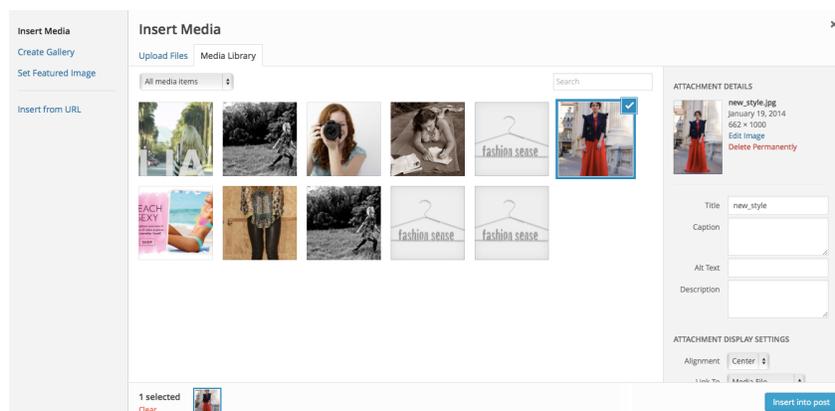
Photos can be loaded in two main ways: in your *Media* panel from your Dashboard, or directly in your *posts*. Either way, the photos will be available for later use, and even re-use, and not just for the post they were assigned to.

In order to load one or more photos to your *Media* gallery:

1. Go to *Dashboard*, choose *Media*, and click the *Add New* subsection.
2. You can either drag and drop one or more photos from a folder window from your computer, to the area which says *Drop Files Here*, or choose the button that says *Select Files* and select said photos.
3. On confirming the upload batch by clicking, *OK*, the photos will take some time to upload (varying from seconds to minutes, depending on their quality, which reflects in their size). Wait until each photo's progress bar halts at 100% to make sure the photos are properly uploaded to your media library

Ready! You can now visit your photo collection in your Dashboard's *Media* section, under *Library*.

1. You need to open the editing panel of the respective post, and choose *the media button* (the one looking like a camera) from the menu.
2. A pop-up window will open, allowing you basically the same functionalities as the *Add New* section from your *Media* panel, where you can follow the exact same instructions as above.

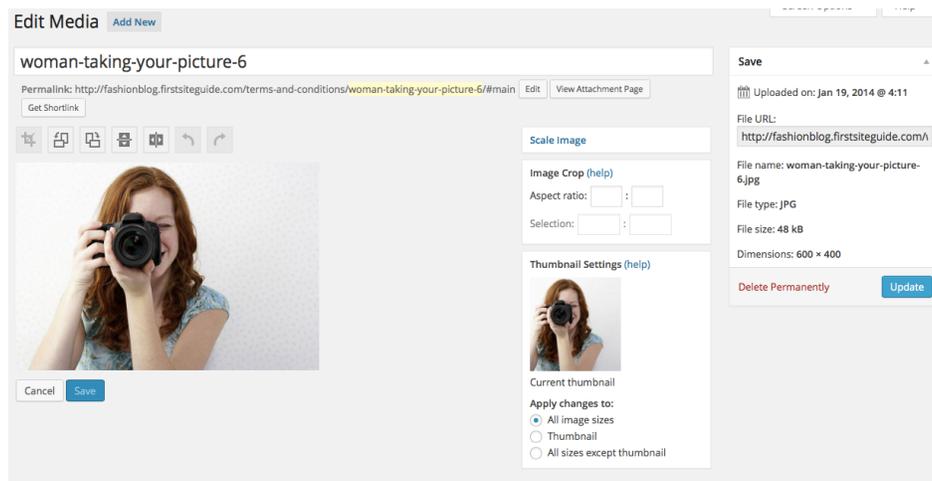


3. The pop-up window also contains information about inserting the uploaded photo(s) into your post in a right hand side panel. Here's what you can choose:
4. *Photo specifics* (title, description, caption, or alt text - i.e. the text someone sees when hovering with the mouse over the photos). The title and the alt text are recommendable, since they have SEO power.
5. *Display settings* (alignment, link to, size). The alignment depends on your personal choice, though by choosing to align photos in-line with text you often run the risk of faulty display on some devices. The link is important because: you can leave it empty, you can link to a larger (original) size of the respective photo, or even link to another page (and even product in a store -- see more in Chapter 5 about monetization). Size is sampled also, starting from small (thumbnail) to full-size.
6. Click on Insert into Post in order to get your photo inside the desired post.

Part 2 - Editing Photos

But this is not all! There are further editing capacities for photography ingrained in *WordPress*.

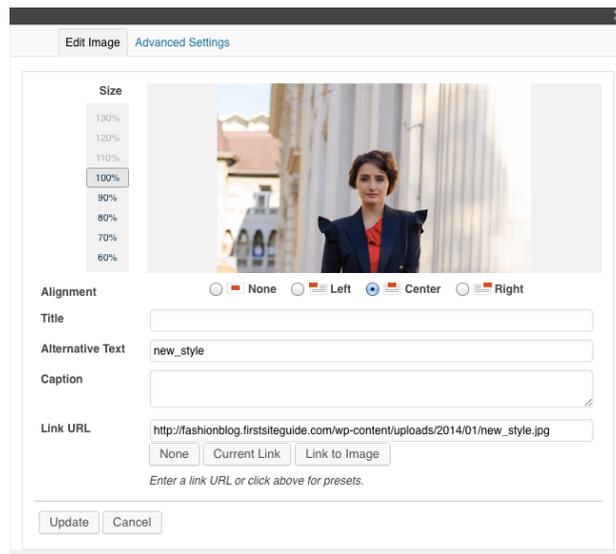
Did you by any chance upload the photo without putting the finishing touches? There's still hope! In your **Media Library**, click on the photo you want to edit. You will be guided to a special panel, in which you can:



- **Crop.** You can select the area of the photo that you want to keep, and discard the marginal details you want to leave out.
- **Resize.** You can resize the photo proportionally to any desired size. It's better to downsize rather than to expand, because you lose quality when making a larger photo from a smaller one.
- **Rotate.** You can rotate your photo if it is upside down.

You will need to click on **Update** to save any of the committed changes.

And there's more! Once a photo is already inserted in the post, hover over it in the text editor, and choose the button from the top right hand side corner. Here's what you can edit:

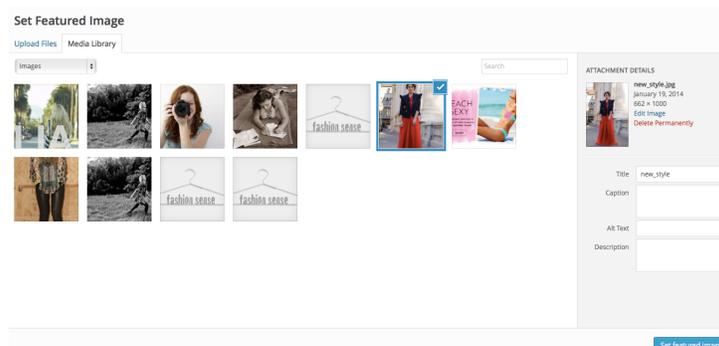


- **Edit Image.** Here you can revise the settings you checked during the upload process (specifics and settings -- see above).
- **Advanced Settings.** Here you can edit the size in non-sampled dimensions, or revert to the original size, add a border, and even get your photo ready for SEO (adding a link title, or a link reference).

Clicking on **Update** will render the changes you committed.

Part 3 - Featuring a photo

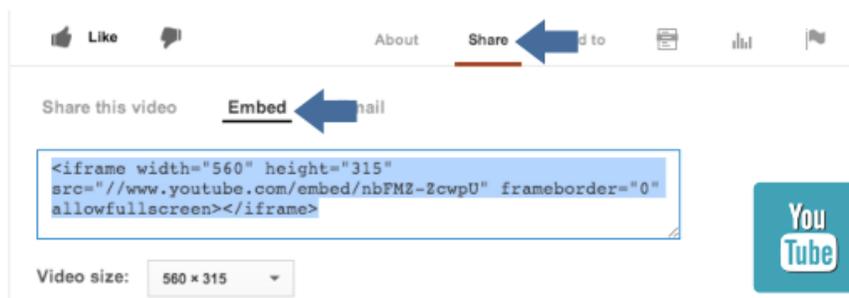
Photos are not only inserted in the post as content, they can also represent the respective post's **featured photo**. This is a very useful feature when you want to select, for instance, one photo from a gallery as the main photo of the respective post. This is terribly helpful when your readers skim through posts, and this way, next to text snippets, they can also find an accompanying photo



1. In order to assign a featured photo to a post, while you are in the editing panel of the respective post, look at the bottom of the right hand side column, where you can find the *Featured Image* section.
2. Click on the *Set Featured Image* button.
3. *Upload*, or select an already uploaded photo following the procedure for post photo upload explained above.
4. Click once more *Set Featured Image* to confirm.
5. *Save* the post as well to commit the changes.

Videos

Just like photos, videos can be a great way to show new collections, to give more detail to the style that you're showing, and they are easy to integrate in a post.



If you are about to share in your post a video that is already online, you need to visit the respective service (such as *YouTube*, *Vimeo*, or *DailyMotion*). All of them come packed with embedding options. For instance, for a YouTube video, you will need to visit the Share section beneath the video, and then *Embed*. Copy the code provided there, and paste it into your new post window.

If you are, instead, about to share a video that you made yourself, then you need to follow the exact same steps for uploading new photos. WordPress's Media section allows not only photos, but also videos.

Categories

Categories are an important part of your blogging life. You should think of categories as *labels* under which posts with common grounds or topics can be found.

By default, any WordPress installation comes with a category called *Uncategorized*. You should either delete, or rename it, and make sure never to leave uncategorized content.

This will not only burden the task of your readers to sift through your content, but also make your website look rather unprofessional.

Categories can be added either from their designated rubric in the *Dashboard* (under *Posts*, there is a *Categories* panel), or directly from a post. In the latter case, you can go on the right hand side column and choose under *Categories*, either to assign an already existing category, or to create a new one, and assign it to the post.

While you can have an unlimited number of categories in your *WordPress* installation, it's debatable whether aiming for a higher number of categories will do any good to the readability or trustworthiness of your website.

Categories can become **menu items** on your website. In order to see how, make sure to read once more the section on site menus above.

Tags

Tags, just like categories, are ways to sort out the contents of your website. Rather than labels, they respond to another basic need of categorizing information: they are **keywords**.

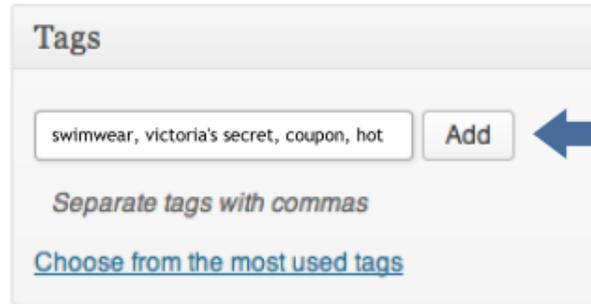
For instance, for a post that features the new spring/summer collection and deals offered by *Victoria's Secret*, you can tag the respective post with: hotdeal, Victoria's Secret, summer, 2014, hot, etc. As you can see, tags do not need to be capitalized, and words can be even merged together.

Additionally, they serve an intrinsic **search engine optimization (SEO)** purpose, since they're used by search engines in order to help users get relevant results upon searching for something.

You can assign as many tags as you want to a post, but it is better to be moderate in your choice, and most of the times, avoid synonyms.

For instance, if you have previously used *sporty* as a tag, you should not use *sports* as another tag.

Merge them mentally, and use, and re-use tags whenever you have the option.



Most themes present the tags of your choice under the post on the front end of the website, and upon clicking on any of them, your readers will be faced with an ad-hoc page, of the type URL/tags/streetstyle/ where they can peruse all the posts you have tagged as street style for instance.

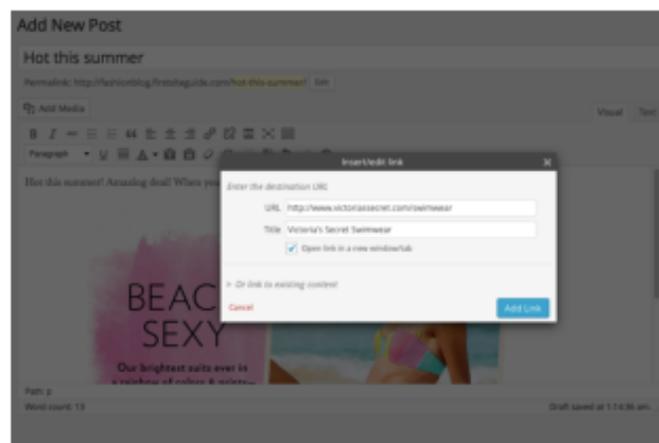
Links

Alongside visual content, you will always want to add some specific, and relevant links to your posts, and pages.

Stuffing your website with too many links is considered not only detrimental to the reading process (after all, you would rather keep your readers on-page, rather than rambling on other pages), and also in terms of SEO: just like keyword stuffing, link stuffing can be considered as a way to increase someone else's reputation (i.e. the number of links pointing to their domain), or to lead readers toward insecure online destinations -- none of which are ideas particularly entertained by behemoths such as Google, and may therefore seal the fate of your monetizing attempts later on.

You can add links to two types of links:

Part 1 - In-post



To text.

1. In order to add a textual link, select (highlight) some text you would like to transform into a link, and then click on the “Link” button from the top of the text editor.
2. Type in, or paste an already copied link.
3. Or, **search and link to existing contents** (i.e. pages or posts from your own website).
4. Confirm your choice by clicking on the blue “Add Link” button.

If you made a mistake, or simply want to unlink something, simply select the linked text, and choose from the menu of your text editor the button next to the **Link**, namely, **Unlink**.

To pictures.

In order to assign a link to a picture, when you upload it, and/or insert it into a post, select under **Display Settings** the link you want your image to point to: its own link to the full-size version, or a custom one (contents from your website, or from another domain).

Part 2 - Blogroll links

Blogrolls are ways to back up, or to show affiliation. Most blogs have blogrolls, in which they include:

- *Similar websites.*
- *Their collaborators.*
- *Retailers and other industry factors they trust.*
- *Affiliate links (see more under Chapter 5 about monetization).*
- *Even links that you want to support as link exchange (i.e., agreeing with another website owner to put each a link to the other’s website in order to help increase their reputation, credibility, and page rank with search engine).*

Detailed instructions on how to build and attach to your website’s sidebar a blogroll can be found in the section devoted to **Sidebar and Widgets** below.

4

Step 4 - Customizing your sidebar with widgets

Most *WordPress* themes come with already designated **sidebar areas**.

One or more sidebars can be provided to the left hand side, or to the right hand side, or either side of your website, and contain valuable information, as well as tools for better navigation in the website.

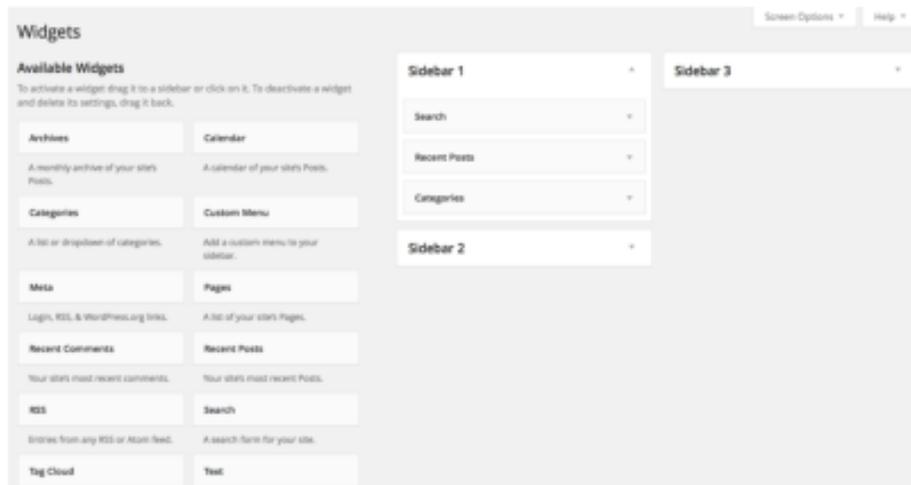
Most common areas of a sidebar are:

- A search form.
- A countdown of recent posts.
- Ad spaces.
- Blogroll.

The default installation of *WordPress* comes with other sidebar units you are less likely to use (or rather, your readers are less likely to use; such as a *Calendar*, *Meta Administration*, *Archives*, etc.) -- which you can easily remove from your sidebar.

This is because the functional units of a sidebar, called widgets, can be customized (added, deleted, moved, filled out, etc.).

Widgets are available in great numbers in your Dashboard, under *Appearance*, and then *Widgets*.



1. **Select** the sidebar you want to customize (provided there's more than just one on the website).
2. **Remove** (by dragging and dropping outside of the sidebar area) the widgets you no longer want to use.
3. **Add** new ones from the panel of available widgets. In order to do so, dragging and dropping them inside the sidebar area.
4. You don't need to **save**! Changes are saved automatically and become live immediately!

There are two important sidebar areas that you need to get ready for your fashion blog website: the ad **spaces**, and the **blogroll**. We will walk you through each of them right away!

Part 1 - Your website's ad spaces

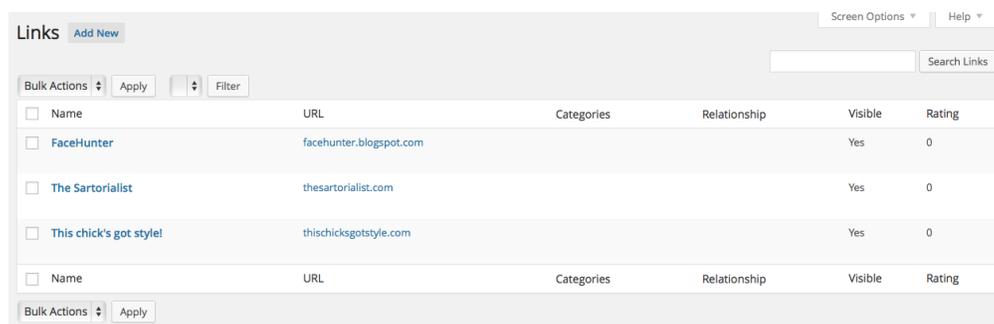
Ad spaces can be easily created in your sidebar with the text widget. You just need to have two things at hand: a representative image for your ad uploaded to your *Library* section from *Media*, and a URL link to lead to the ad target audience.

1. Just drag and drop a new text widget onto your sidebar in the *Widgets* section.
In the open space, key in a title (optional), and add the following string of code inside the text field: ``
2. Now, paste in the **target URL** in the code, replacing URL, but not "".
3. **Copy** the image's URL and paste it instead of IMAGE, but keep the "", as well.
4. If your image is too large for your sidebar, add **dimensions** (width and height) between "". If it's fine, you can leave the width and height quotes empty.
5. **Check** your website's front end! We think you just got your first ad online!

Part 2 - Your website's blogroll

In the previous section devoted to links, we mentioned your **blogroll** as being an important tool for socializing, expressing trust in others, and getting your readers extra resources for those (we hope) rare moments when there's nothing new and trendy on your fashion website.

Links for the blogroll can be added with help from a plugin called *Link Manager* (see below for a description of plugins -- what they do, and why you need them). Before *WordPress* version 3.5, links were supported natively by *WordPress*, but were mysteriously removed from default installations in versions 3.5 and later. Let's assume that the plugin is installed (for detailed installation instructions, see below).



1. Go to **Dashboard**, and then to *Links*.
Click on *Add New*.

2. In the rubric that says **Name**, give the name (or nickname), or just the domain name of the website you want to link to.
3. In the rubric **Web Address**, provide the full URL of the respective website.
4. Click on the right hand side blue button **Add Link**.

Repeat this action for each new link you want to add.

In order to get your link collection online under the form of a **blogroll**, you will need to edit your sidebar.

1. Go to **Dashboard**, and then **Appearance**.
2. Choose **Widgets**.
3. Drag and drop the **Links** widget in the sidebar of your choice.
4. **Re-order** the widgets if necessary.
5. It's **all set**, and you can visit your site to see: your blogroll is now online!

5

Step 5- Custom tools for your website: plugins

Plugins are a very important part of your *WordPress* experience. They serve the most diverse purposes, but they have one thing in common: they make your website look, and feel better! Whether they add a **new feature** (e.g. subtitles for your posts, or social buttons on your pictures), or a **new functionality** (e.g. a contact form), or simply make your website simply smashing (e.g. a rotating slideshow, a pop-up window, or a subscription reminder), they all work together in order to enhance the visual aspect, and functionalities of your fashion blog website.

Unlike widgets, which are visible on your website (on your website's sidebar, to be more exact), plugins may, or may not be visible. For their most part, they act outside of public scrutiny: they simply make the website work better.

In order to get a new plugin on your website, you simply need to go to your Dashboard, and start the **plugin installation experience**.

1. From your **Dashboard**, select **Plugins**, and then **Add New**.
2. **Search** for a plugin (either by exact name, or keywords).
3. Read the right hand side description. If you need more information, or want to see a preview of the respective plugin in action, visit the WordPress.org repository of plugins. If your mind is set on installing it, click on **Install Now**.
4. In the pop-up window, **confirm** you want to install the plugin by clicking **OK**.
5. **Wait** for the plugin to be downloaded, installed. A confirmation dialogue will ensue.
6. Choose **Activate Plugin** in order to make it work on your web site.
7. That's it!

Many plugins will additionally create new spaces in your **Dashboard**, either independent entries (such as *Contact*, or *Links*), or nested ones (most likely, under Settings).

Their additional settings will allow you to fine-tune the way they work for your website.

Below we thought to surprise you with a fine selection of plugins precisely for your fashion blog's look and feel:

For your website's look and general functionalities:

- [Google Analytics](#) - tracks site traffic
- [Awesome Instant Search](#) - improved search capabilities
- [Header and Footer](#) - new customizable spaces for your header and footer
- [Photospace Gallery](#) - full-screen gallery view
- [EWWW Image Optimizer](#) - quality & loading time of photos
- [WP Image Annotation](#) - an intelligent way to add a legend to your photos
- [Starbox](#) - a branding option for adding a short bio to your posts
- [Bottom of every post](#) - a great way to add sponsored links
- [Link Manager](#) - your blogroll
- [Pretty Link Lite](#) - URL shortener

For making your website more social:

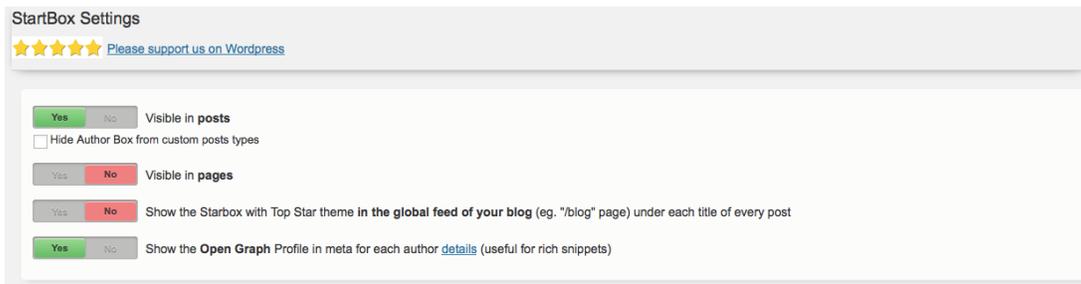
- [Contact Form 7](#) - a contact form with flexible email options
- [Digg Digg](#) - a floating bar of popular social media sharing options
- [Disqus Commenting System](#) - versatile commenting system
- [WP Polls](#) - opinion polls for your readers
- [Subscribe to Comments](#) - engagement tool for your readers
- [LiveBlog](#) - live blogging option
- [Pinterest Hover Pin-It Button](#) - easy pin-it button for your images
- [Subscription options](#) - a roundup of your online presence
- [Facebook Like Box Widget](#) - constant touch with your Facebook fanbase
- [Tweet My Post](#) - automatic tweets of your new posts' titles and links

Now we are going to walk you through **the creation of your author box**, which will be placed by default under your posts, so that your readers could easily know who wrote the article (just imagine how helpful this is in the case of blogs with multiple authors), and be able to get in touch with you!

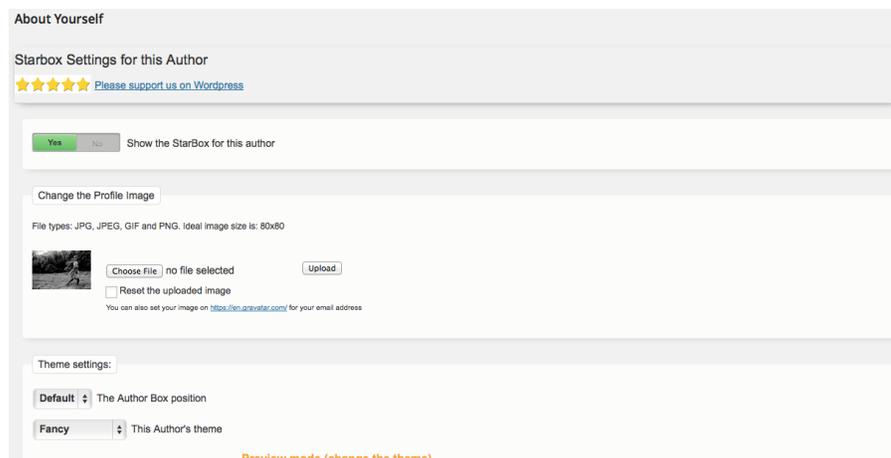
1. Download the plugin Starbox from [here](#).
2. Navigate to your **Dashboard**, to the **Plugin** section.
3. Click on **Add New**, and then, **Upload**.
4. **Upload** the *.zip file of your new plugin, and choose **Install**.

5. Wait for a few seconds, until the **successful installation** is confirmed.
6. Click **Activate**.

Now, you will need to **customize your author box**.



1. Go to **Dashboard**.
2. Under **Settings**, there is a special panel called **Starbox**.
3. Decide on the **position of your author box** (i.e. on pages, posts, etc.) by toggling the **Yes/No** buttons.
4. **Save** your changes.
5. Go to **Users**, and select your username.
6. You will be guided to a very detailed description of your profile.
7. Under **Starbox Settings for this Author**, choose:
 - **A profile image**. Choose, upload, and save.
 - **An author bio**. Find the field **Biographical info**, write, and save.
 - Click on the **Update Profile** bottom-most button and that's it!



We are also going to show you how to **create your first poll for your readers!** Polls are great ways to engage your readers in new discussions, to show them that you value their opinions, and last but not least to keep them on your page longer. This plugin will also show its true value in the event of contests with freebies and give-aways that you are going to organize!

Download the WP Polls plugin from [here](#), and install, and activate it just like any other regular plugin.

Answer No.	Answer Text	
Answer 1	Beach look	Delete
Answer 2	Smart casual look	Delete
Answer 3	Next door look	Delete
Answer 4	Sporty look	Delete
Answer 5	Casual wear	Delete
Add Answer		

1. Go to **Dashboard**.
2. A new section called **Polls** will be available at the bottom-most part of your left hand side menu.

Poll Multiple Answers

Allows Users To Select More Than One Answer?

Maximum Number Of Selected Answers Allowed?

Poll Start/End Date

Start Date/Time @ : :

End Date/Time Do NOT Expire This Poll @ : :

3. Choose **Add Poll**.
4. A panel with multiple options for creating a poll will be displayed.
5. Type in your question or cue for your readers in the text box.
6. Type in your suggested answers in the **Poll Answers** text boxes.
7. If you need more boxes for the answers, click the button **Add Answer**.
8. Under **Poll Multiple Answers**, decide whether your readers are allowed to vote more than once.
9. Fill out the **Start Date and Time**.
10. If you want to keep the poll indeterminately, leave the end date as it is.
11. If you wish to set an **End Date and Time**, uncheck the box **Do Not Expire This Post**, and fill it out.
12. Click on **Add Poll**.

It's now time to add the poll as a widget in your sidebar, because this is the most likely place your readers will see it.

The screenshot shows the 'Sidebar' widget configuration interface. At the top, there is a 'Search' dropdown menu. Below it is the 'Polls: Your say' widget configuration area. This area includes a 'Title' field with the text 'Your say', a 'Display Polls Archive Link Below Poll?' dropdown menu set to 'No', and a 'Poll To Display:' dropdown menu showing 'What will you be sporting this summer o'. At the bottom of the configuration area, there are links for 'Delete' and 'Close', and a blue 'Save' button.

1. Go to **Dashboard**, and then to **Appearance**.
2. Choose **Widgets**.
3. In the sidebar of your choice, drag and drop the **Polls Widget**.
4. Expand it, and **select** the poll you want to display.
5. If you have more than one poll running, you can choose to rotate them, by choosing **Display Random Poll**.
6. **Save**, and visit your website! Your poll is now ready to entertain your readers!

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Step 6 - Interacting with social media

One last section you will have to deal with in connection to both widgets and plugins is **social media**. As you probably already know, this is a common designator of websites which promote in different ways communication between people, who this way, become social online. This can be done by the power of image, like in Instagram, or the brief and ephemeral word, like **Twitter**, or a combination of the above, like **Facebook**, or **Google+**, to name just a few of the most popular international social media.

What does this mean to you? You won't be the first to realize the power of social media. There are numerous advantages to using, and integrating social media in your website. To name just a few:

You can reach more people, because when you get your message to these social media websites, the information you promote can become viral (i.e. people will appreciate your content 'like' on Facebook and Instagram, '+1' on Google+, or 'mark as favorite' on Twitter), and further share it ('share' on Facebook and Google+, 're-tweet' on Twitter).

Pinterest is another great example of social media that is extremely useful for fashion bloggers: users create collections of images and links they ‘pin’ onto personal boards, for which they show their ‘interest’. Other users, their followers, may ‘re-pin’ their contents, thus getting you an extra audience.

You can communicate in different ways with different people. For instance, on Twitter you need to be brief: 140 characters at your disposal alone. Why not choose a catchy and witty short statement and attach to it the link to your newest post?

Once something goes live on social media, there are little ways in which you can control how popular your contents become. As long as you provide links to your contents (or monetizable contents from others), you can become even more popular, and you can win the hearts and minds of more faithful readers.

How can you work with social media on your website? There are several ways in which you can implement your social media presence on your website, either through plugins, or widgets. The following are the most common ones.

Part 1 - Make your contents shareable

If you want to succeed as a fashion blogger, you will need to make your contents **readily accessible for sharing** on various social media networks.

Your posts and pages can be provided with a **social media bar**, with icons for the most representative social media. Users who appreciate your contents or want to further share it, simply click on the icon of the social media of their choice and make it available to their friends.

You will need the **Digg Digg plugin** in order to have such a bar. Detailed instructions for the installation and the customization of the Digg Digg plugin are in the previous section.

Part 2 - Be reachable

Sometimes, people do not fish for contents alone, but might, because of your personal flair, become interested in you as an individual. This is why it’s a great idea to have a ‘general’ social media bar in your sidebar area.

The same plugin **Digg Digg** also comes with a widget for your sidebar. Simply drag and drop the Digg Digg widget onto the sidebar of your choice in the **Widgets** section, and you’re ready to go!

Part 3 - Communicate with your fanbase

Facebook fan (or ‘like’) pages are another example of social media you can readily implement on your blog. In order to see your community of readers and fans grow, take advantage of *Facebook’s* own *Facebook* fan box.

In order to get your hands on such a box, install the **Facebook Like Box Widget plugin**. After installation and activation, fill out your *Facebook* Page ID and URL, tweak settings (for instance if you want to show the number of your growing community of fans, or also add recent *Facebook* posts), and save your settings. Drag and drop the widget in your desired location onto your sidebar and you're ready to rock!

Part 4 - Make your photo content available for Pinterest

There's a plugin for that, too! Since people are more likely to share visual contents on *Pinterest*, and from there to being viral and to eternal glory, take advantage of the options of our recommended plugin: **Pinterest Hover Pin-It**. Install and activate it -- and that's it! From now, upon hovering on your photos, there'll be a little '*pin*' in the corner. If your photographic content is really good, how many people will resist the temptation of pinning it to their *Pinterest* boards?

Part 5 - Automate tweets and Facebook statuses for your new posts

Another great thing to do with social media is to let people know when you post new contents. A plugin such as **Tweet My Post** is crucial in such an enterprise: it automates on your behalf tweets letting people know you've published something new, and provides them with a link. And there's more to it! If you add to the end of your tweet a mere three characters (the hashtag *#fb*), and enable **Selective Tweets** for your *Facebook* page, the same message will be displayed on your *Facebook* page wall, as well! You don't need to add the hashtag manually, you can '*tame*' your **Tweet My Posts** plugin to contain *#fb* by default. You just need to visit the **Selective Tweets Facebook** page and choose the button **Use Now**. Make the needed connection between your *Twitter* account, and your *Facebook* page, and now when you hit **Publish**, there'll be an automatic update for your fans and followers, on *Twitter* AND *Facebook*.

Part 6 - Use hashtags when you communicate on social media

Hashtags (initially a *Twitter* specialty, now propagated on *Facebook*, and *Instagram* as well) are clever ways to deliver information. For instance, if you add *#fashion* in a tweet, the respective tweet will not only be read by your followers, but also by everyone who visits the link generated for the respective *#hashtag*!

Most popular hashtags for fashion bloggers are: *#fashion*, *#fbloggers* (fashion bloggers), *#stylechat*, *#beauty*, *#style*, *#outfit*, *#ootd* (outfit of the day), *#wiwt* (what I wore today), etc. While you will not be able to cram them all in one tweet, make sure to come up with clever and brief wording for your tweets, to include a link to your new post, and also provide it with a *#hashtag*.

MONETIZING YOUR FASHION BLOG

You may be doing your duty of posting fashion bits and updates, and even revolutionizing trends with your insight out of sheer passion, but what if you could also **make some money** out of your fashion website? This is a question that you are definitely not the first to ask, and therefore the answers are going to be varied. There are multiple ways in which you can **monetize** (i.e. transform into currency) your efforts, and we have selected before a beginner's lot from which to gain inspiration for your future career in online advertising.



Part 1 - Selling Ads

The simplest of things you could do is to sell ads directly. Many parts of your website are going to become the perfect spot to place an ad, but there are two basic questions you should ask yourself: (1) who is going to offer me paid ads? and (2) what can I indeed offer to my advertisers? The simplest of things, therefore, becomes cruelly complicated, and selling ads, while being simple, needs to be left for the moment when you're going to fly high.

What you should expect.

The direct sale of ads is time consuming for the beginner, because you need to target yourself the potential advertisers for your website. When you approach them, you can propose to them different banner sizes, and different locations on page that from your point of view create a heat map of the most accessed areas of your website. You should make a fair assumption of what you offer, and be open to hear what they are willing to offer instead.

Ads, under the guise of banners or sponsored links are usually traded by beginner bloggers from \$10 monthly to any amount that the other part is willing to accept.

Pros:

You are in control of most of the parts of the process.

Sponsored links are useful to your advertisers when they want to increase their PR (page ranking).

Cons:

Being conventional ways of advertising, they are usually scorned by more serious advertisers.

Ad hoc banner ads and sponsored links, while they can be monitored both by you (outgoing traffic) and your advertiser (incoming traffic), offer a small and slow amount of conversion (i.e. transformation of the referred visitors from your website into buying customers).

You can have too many ads on your website, because this usually causes distrust and even bounces from your most loyal readers, and a crowded website will load slower on most devices.

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Part 2 - Google AdSense

Google AdSense is *Google's* own ad provider. It pays its customers in clicks per ad, and the ads are contextual (i.e. based on the main content of the page), and at the same time rotating (i.e. they will change during time, or depending on who's viewing them). *Google AdSense* used to be the main protagonist of a fashion blogger's finances, but just like sold ads, it requires that you have a solid traffic and a very engaged audience.

What you should expect.

Signing up for a *Google AdSense* account is free, as well as setting up the referral algorithm, and types of banners you would like to feature on your website. Everything can be done within minutes if you follow closely *Google's* prompts and vow to respect their policy (the key element of which is that you will not generate income for yourself by clicking yourself on your website's banners). *Google* will then assess the PCP (i.e., pay-per-click, or pay you are going to receive per referred visitor from ad to outgoing link), reportedly 61% of whatever an advertiser pays per click to *Google*. For instance, if someone pays \$0.4 per click, you, as a user of *Google AdSense*, will receive $\$0.461/100 = \0.244 . PCP usually starts from \$0.05, and you will receive your first payment when you gross \$100 (that means, in theory, after your first 2000 average clicks) either by check or transfer to your bank account.

Pros:

Versatile and customizable (you can specify up to 200 URL's from which not to receive ads, for instance, if you want to block some advertisers, or your own competition). You can place blocks of ads in your header, sidebars, footer, but also within the contents of pages and posts -- whichever suits your needs. If you build a community around your site, *Google AdSense* is money you cannot simply refuse: you will cash in fast, and regularly. A very transparent account of what has happened with traffic and clicks and conversions is available at all times in your own *Google AdSense* account.

Cons:

Some AdSense users report that they were banned from AdSense before they made their first \$100. That is usually fault of the user, who did not read the terms and conditions and unwillingly did not observe them. The AdSense team has a knack of verifying that just before making your first payment. With this lesson learned, you should also be advised that with beginner websites *Google AdSense* tends to be a little slow, but don't despair: even if your website generates less than \$40 a month, this is a passive income you have to do little about (except, of course, writing compelling contents that will drive more traffic into your website), and this, after all means some \$480 a year, which is a lot more than nothing.

3

Part 3 - Ad Networks

Ad networks better satisfy the needs of a beginner, because of the versatile way in which ads are connected to your content. Some of them are exclusive (i.e. they expect you to deliver a certain average traffic, or to deal exclusively in some brands), while some of them are open to doing business with just anyone. They could be your beginner's luck! On the downside, they control what ads and in what areas of your page the ads will be displayed.

Major ad networks for the fashion niche are [Linkshare](#) (dealing in brands and retailers such as *Macy's*, *Bloomingdale's*, *Net-a-Porter*, *Alexander Wang*, or *ASOS* -- but also in beauty from *Sephora* and *Clinique*); [Commission Junction](#) (the best deals in *Zappos*, *Ferragamo*, *Banana Republic*, *GAP*, etc.), and the eBay [Affiliate Network](#) (bringing you the happy customers of *Target*, *Forever21*, or *Levi's*).

What should you expect.

Ad networks are real time savers, in that the tiring job of finding customers for your ad space is already done by someone else. However, there is a 'but': unlike *Google AdSense*, these networks do not pay you per clicks, but instead a small commission on successful purchases from your visitors. They will know it is your visitors (there's synergy and a dashboard full of statistics in your account in any of the networks), and they will know whether the respective visitor has or has not successfully purchased anything from their advertisers. This is harder to achieve, and most users report a conversion rate (i.e. number of referred visitors who actually buy something rather than 'window-shop' online) of 5-10%.

This means that when you advertise through ad networks, your website should also have a sales drive, in that, you need to read more about the products, and advertise them in your own ways.

Pros:

Ad networks are surefire solutions as long as you stick to them. Just testing the waters and changing from one network to another because you are disappointed (this usually happens when you do not read the terms and conditions of each such network carefully) will not be of any help. They are also known to work when your target is people who are in the demographics of people who usually shop online, have a credit card to their name, etc. Before you make any wrong assumptions, research how many people will shop for clothes online rather than in an actual shop. Another winning argument in favor of such networks is that they usually come with training on how to be a better affiliate, or publisher. Last but not least, they usually have very low payment thresholds (for instance: *Linkshare* starting at \$1) and setups for automatic payments (for instance in some countries any earning can be directly transferred to your account rather than paid on topping up a certain amount at regular intervals).

Cons:

You will need to read about affiliate marketing and drive traffic that sells into your website. Some of the networks reputedly pay only when they receive the money, they invoice their clients themselves, and this could cause unwanted delays, which are crucial if you bank yourself on such income.

4**Part 4 - Ad Aggregators**

Aggregators are real time savers for the beginner blogger. On top of the advantages offered by ad networks, they bring you ads from several programs entertained by several advertisers: this means less sign-up and less time-consuming control, and also you don't need to be approved individually by the advertisers. Major aggregators are [Beso](#), [ShopSense](#), [SkimLinks](#), [Reward Style](#), and [VigLink](#).

What you should expect.

Ad aggregators need to be 'domesticated' if you want them to work for you. On signing up (or applying: for instance, *Reward Style* requires you to be approved first), you will be faced with a wide variety of ads, links, and even content that drives sales through things as simple as a *YouTube* video.

Just as with ad networks, you are expected to have some traffic (i.e. visitors, new and recurring), to drive sales, and to offer a decent amount of conversion (the number of visits that become clicks and which ultimately become sales).

The networks and the aggregators offer similar and comparable conditions regarding the expected conversion, and the amount they pay. For instance, if you advertise a pair of boots which sells at \$90, you will get +/- \$3.5 from a successful conversion.

Pros:

Being exclusive services meant for loyal publishers, they are going steady, so you should not expect any interruptions of the service.

Successful conversions do bring in money: real money! By facilitating the sale of a single product you can earn money that not only comes in easily, but also will trigger the respective aggregator's willingness to include you and your website in more exclusive programs.

Cons:

Since some of the aggregators are invitation-only, you may find yourself in the position of having to wait until you are a perfect match for their services. Some of the aggregators work on an exclusive basis; if so, make sure that you make the perfect choice before signing up for something you can't do. Being aimed at direct sales, it may turn off some of your readers to see a very overt sales drive behind your posts. Therefore it is recommended to include in your author bio, or in a terms & conditions page, the fact that you're earning income through the website, and how people who have their reserves against this can opt out of this (deleting their cookies or simply refraining from clicking the said affiliate links).

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Part 5 - Affiliate commissions

Affiliate commissions are again a great deal for fashion bloggers. Affiliate commissions are a percentage from a sale carried out by a visitor of your website on a retailer's website. How is this possible? Well, you need to sign up for your own affiliate account with specific retailers, and once you do so, for each of them you will have your own personal key. This key can be appended to your outgoing links (manually, or in some cases with a link builder from the retailer), and visitors who click on that link will carry in their browsers a cookie that will point to the retailer who referred them to their website. Many websites offer this affiliate opportunity, and many reputed fashion bloggers use it, and claim it works like a charm.

What should you expect.

Affiliate commissions from individual retailers are a good option for additional income on top of affiliate aggregators/networks and they work regularly according to the same pattern: you sign up, receive your key, select products from their store/s, and advertise them in your own website with links that include your affiliate key. Upon conversion (i.e. successful sale from a visitor from one of your affiliate links) you earn a commission - most common examples are 2-5%, which is then added into your account, and when you reach a certain amount, you are sent the respective money in a variety of formats (postal order, PayPal, bank account transfer, etc.).

Pros:

They are ideal for people who know they are going to have sales-driving traffic, and who still want to be the ones who choose what products, when, and where they are going to advertise.

Usually, with retailers such as *eBay*, *Amazon*, etc. you are going to get more sales than just from the products you're advertising; since your affiliate key will still be a valid referrer for any sale from that website -- regardless of whether you have or not advertised for the sold product. Imagine having millions of products that may interest your readers, you just have to '*open the gates*' for them!

Cons:

Slow conversions and slow top ups are probably the worst thing about affiliate commissions. Regardless, if you want to have an extra passive income, you should actually look further into available affiliate programs and decide on a strategy on how to use the respective retailer's potential to your own benefit.

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Part 6 - Sell your own products or services

Another sure-fire way to make money through your fashion blog is to sell something. It could be products (for instance, home-made couture, or re-design of repurposed clothing, or even e-books with fashion tips!), or services (anything from fashion consultancy to being a personal shopper for a celebrity). While this is an indirect way to monetize your blog, you will most certainly get your kicks from it, and why not, make money out of it, which just makes it sort of perfect.

What you should expect.

Most likely, people will be not interested to buy your products, or resort to your services if you are not a name in the respective business. Therefore, even if you can, of course, advertise such products and services even from the day you launch your website, you should not expect them to yield properly until you have built trust, and have a growing community around your online presence.

However, when you reach that level, you can definitely expect to get always more interest in your products and services. Please also note, that in most countries of the world you need to set up a sole proprietorship or limited company to sell products or provide services, because the internet is not a no-man's-land.

Pros:

You can kickstart your career, find alternative income solutions, devote more time to yourself (to what you know, what you like to do) if you reach the level of sustaining yourself through self-advertised products and services.

You can come up with either something totally innovative, or try a beaten path (like offering the top stories from your website in an electronic book format, or even printed book!). Take the cue: if it has worked for someone who reached a similar level of success, it may just as well work for you!

Cons:

Selling a product or providing a service on the internet is no different than doing this in real life. This means that you will need to spend time finding appropriate providers (for instance for dispatching your products), a bookkeeper, venues for your events and talks, and the sky is the limit -- actually, whatever your new creative business entails.

BUCKLING UP

Ain't that something! You have read and followed our instructions step by step, and now you're lounging back in your chair in order to admire the fruits of your work! You now have a fully functional website, which will help with your new career in fashion.



Your website will help put your business on the map, attracting new clients and helping you communicate within your niche elegantly and eloquently. With the new skills you've learned here, you now have the tools to ensure your web presence and real life presence match, just like when you're dressed to the nines!

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