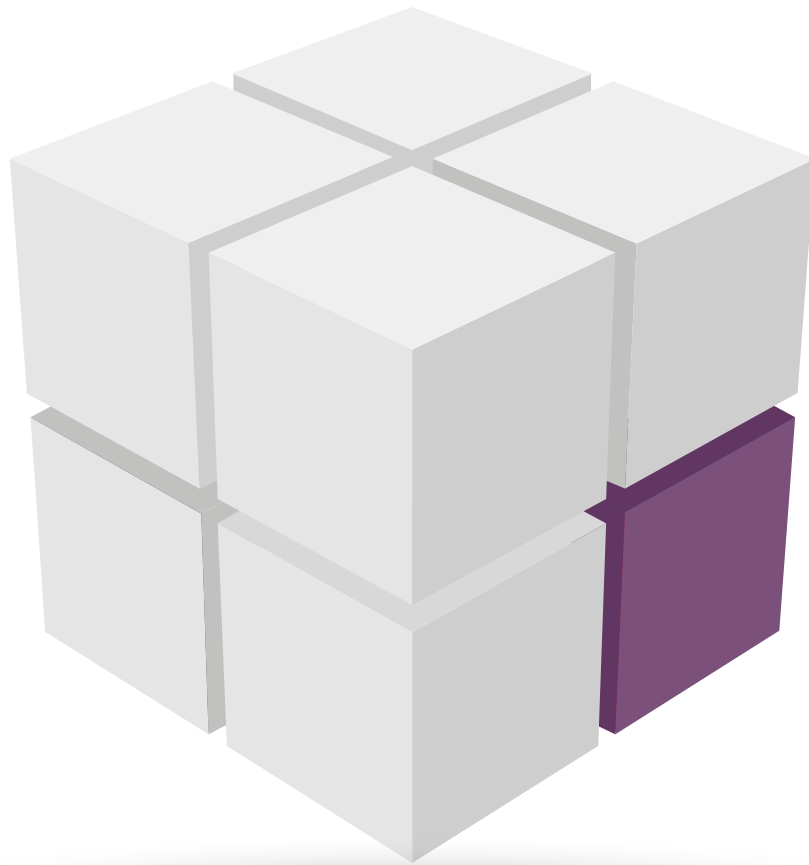


Learn Wordpress from Scratch

v 1.0

Free eBook 2015



By: TemplateToaster



About TemplateToaster

TemplateToaster is a theme generator for various CMSs, which are, WordPress, Joomla, Drupal, Magento, Prestashop and Blogger. It is developed by our dedicated team of geek developers with the vision for enabling the web professionals to create templates/themes in a breeze. And, it does so by eliminating the need to code for creating templates/themes. When you work with TemplateToaster, you just need to design themes. It will automatically generate the source code when you export your design.

This software has several features that make it special and distinguished. It has BOOTSTRAP support, responsive and all browser compatible, allows to make custom widget areas, in-built FTP, Google fonts support, slideshow creation, inbuilt stock images library, HTML5/CSS3 support, generates W3C validated code, and more features are there.

You can know more about TemplateToaster at <http://templatetoaster.com>. You can download trial version for assessment the TemplateToaster yourself at <http://templatetoaster.com/download>.

In short, you would love TemplateToaster for creating optimized themes and the templates.

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Preface

“If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it. –Margaret Fuller”

This quote inspires us to bring this free e-book. This free e-book is devoted to everyone who want to learn developing websites with WordPress. It will help you learn WordPress starting from very basic level to the advanced level. This book covers learning WordPress installation, creating & uploading themes, and about essential as well as optional plugins.

Before writing the e-book, we analyzed about how a beginner would be able to understand the subject matter. Hence, we kept the language understandable and explained everything with the help of images. After reading all the chapters of the book, you will get better acquainted with WordPress dashboard and its workflow. And, you will be prepared for gaining the advance knowledge of WordPress.

PART 1

MAKING A WORDPRESS WEBSITE

Chapter 1 : About WordPress

What is WordPress?

WordPress is a free and open-source content management system (CMS) written in PHP. It was brought into the existence by Matt Mullenweg and Mike Little in the year 2003. Soon it became the most popular CMS owing to its ease of use and the powerful features.

A survey dictates that around 23% of all the websites over the World Wide Web use WordPress for their content management. This is a colossal share of websites. The flexibility to be used for making any type of website drives this huge success to the WordPress.

Another biggest feature of WordPress is its simplicity. It is a matter of minutes to get published with WordPress with having no expertise in PHP or other programming languages. The learning curve of WordPress is so easy that even novices get used to working with WordPress in less time. And this is what our guide aims at.

What You Can Use WordPress For

Matt and Mike founded the WordPress as a blog publishing platform. But, what the world knows the WordPress today is a full fledge content management system. One can build any type of website, be a simple blog or a complex enterprise level website.

In shorthand, WordPress is for everyone for anything. You can make eCommerce websites, news and magazine websites, personal websites,

portfolios, music and video websites, educational websites, online community, and any niche that you can imagine about.

What makes WordPress so Flexible?

The plugins and the themes make the WordPress flexible. WordPress has two big repositories, one repository of plugins and another repository of themes. Free plugins and themes are aggregated in those repositories.

Plugins are used for adding custom functionalities in a website. You would need to install a respective plugin when want to add a functionality to your website and your website will be ready to be perform that function. For vivid functionalities, different types of plugins are available there. Like, ecommerce plugins for making e-shops, membership plugins for making subscription websites, gallery plugins for making portfolios, video plugins for setting up video websites and so many more.

Themes are responsible for the look and feel of the websites. The design of a theme dictates the look and feel of a website. You can find several themes for different type of website in the WordPress repository. You can upload yours too. An easy way to create your custom themes is to use TemplateToaster. With this software wouldn't need to touch the code for making custom themes.

Why Should You Get Started with WordPress?

You might get a question in your mind that why should you learn WordPress. So, here are points that will convince you that why you should get started with WordPress.

- **WordPress is too easy**- there is no other content management stem as easy to learn as WordPress is. You would get acquaintance with

dashboard and tools in minutes and can create your first website in a breeze.

- **Abundance of learning resources-** there is an abundance of resources to make your learn WordPress. There is a great availability of content about each little aspect of WordPress. In fact, one of the best resources is being read you currently.
- **A huge user community-** WordPress has whopping user community. If you ever get stuck at any point, it wouldn't take you even a couple of minutes to get out of the problem once you state it in the community forum.
- **Career opportunities-** You can learn WordPress for making a better career around it. After attaining a good level of knowledge of WordPress, you can get into WordPress web development, or WordPress service industry or WordPress freelancing. These all areas have a great demand of learned professionals.

We think, now you should get started with WordPress.

Chapter 2 : How to Install XAMPP and Wordpress Locally



The XAMPP & WordPress combination is greatly used for website development. While XAMPP provides the local server environment, the WordPress is a web development platform. XAMPP is the most common localhost application used by the developers. Being cross platform, it can be used on Windows, Linux and OSx. In this article we will discuss the installation of XAMPP and WordPress on Windows.

XAMPP Installation

Get start with setup

Download XAMPP for windows from apachefriends.org. Then, run the installer to get start with the XAMPP setup.

Select components

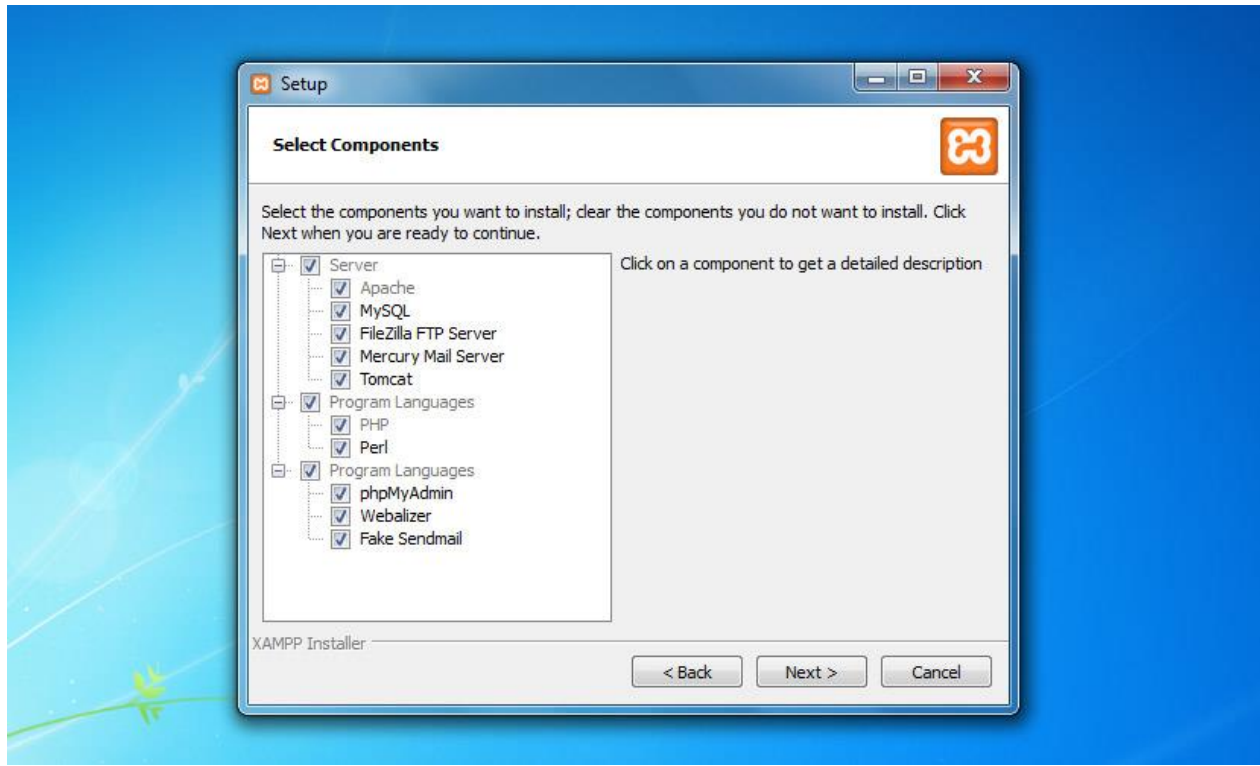


Figure 2.1- Component Wizard of XAMPP installer

In the component wizard (see figure 2.1), all the components are by default selected. You can uncheck the components that you don't plan to use. Figure 2.1 shows you the component wizard.

Let's quickly go through these components.

Apache– It is the HTTP web server, and essential to run the website.

MySQL– It is the database server.

FileZilla FTP server– It is used for setting up an FTP server.

Mercury Mail Server– It is used for setting up a mail transport system.

Tomcat- It is an application server, which runs Java based web applications.

PHP- It is a server side scripting language used for making dynamic web pages.

Perl- This language is widely used by the programmers for writing CGI scripts.

PhpMyAdmin- It is a necessary component to handle the administration of MySQL.

Webalizer- It is a web log file analyzer, which generates statistical reports about how many people visit a website and what do they look for in the website

Fake Sendmail- For testing email transfer on localhost, Fake Sendmail is used. If you are going to work on such a project which involves sending emails, then this component will come in your use.

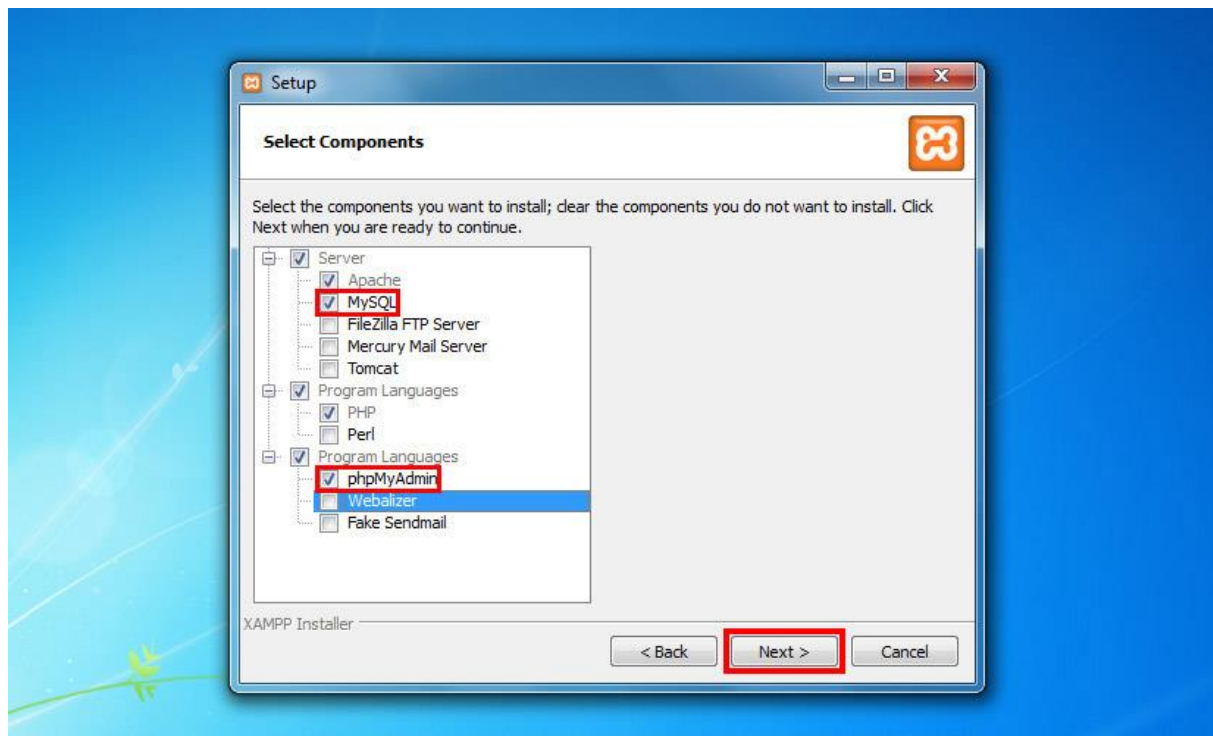


Figure 2.2- Select required components from the wizard

We have chosen the Apache, MySQL, PHP and phpMyAdmin since these are necessarily required for WordPress installation (see figure 2.2). As we don't have any plan to use the rest components, we have unchecked them all.

Install

After selecting the components, you will be prompted to specify a location where you want to install XAMPP. Once you specify the location, the setup will be ready to install.

Start Apache and MySQL

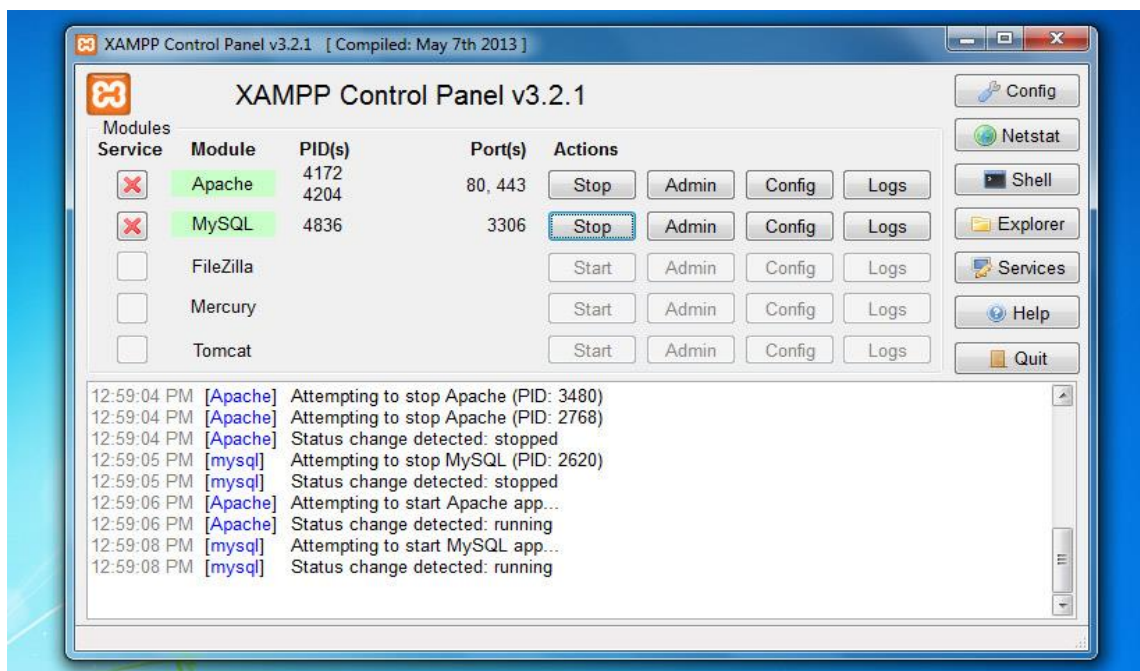


Figure 2.3- Start Apache and MySQL

Once the installation is complete, open XAMPP control panel. For this, find the **xampp-control.exe** inside XAMPP folder and launch it. Default location of XAMPP folder is C:\xampp.

Having to open the control panel, **start the Apache and MySQL** components (see figure 2.3). As you will start these components, their Admin links will become clickable. Then, select MySQL “**Admin**” for moving ahead to phpMyAdmin or you can open it from here <http://localhost/phpmyadmin>.

WordPress Installation

Create MySQL database

On phpMyAdmin interface, find the “**Databases**” tool on the top-left side, and create the database (see figure 2.4). For example, we have created the database by the name wordpress.



Figure 2.4- Create MySQL Database

Unzip WordPress zip file

After creating the database, we are set to start the installation of WordPress. Now, we are going to [download WordPress](#). Once the download is complete, extract the zip file to `C:\xampp\htdocs\`. If you’ve extracted the package correctly, you will see the “wordpress” folder inside `htdocs`.

Select language

Next step is to browse this URL- <http://localhost/wordpress> in your browser for initializing the actual installation of WordPress.

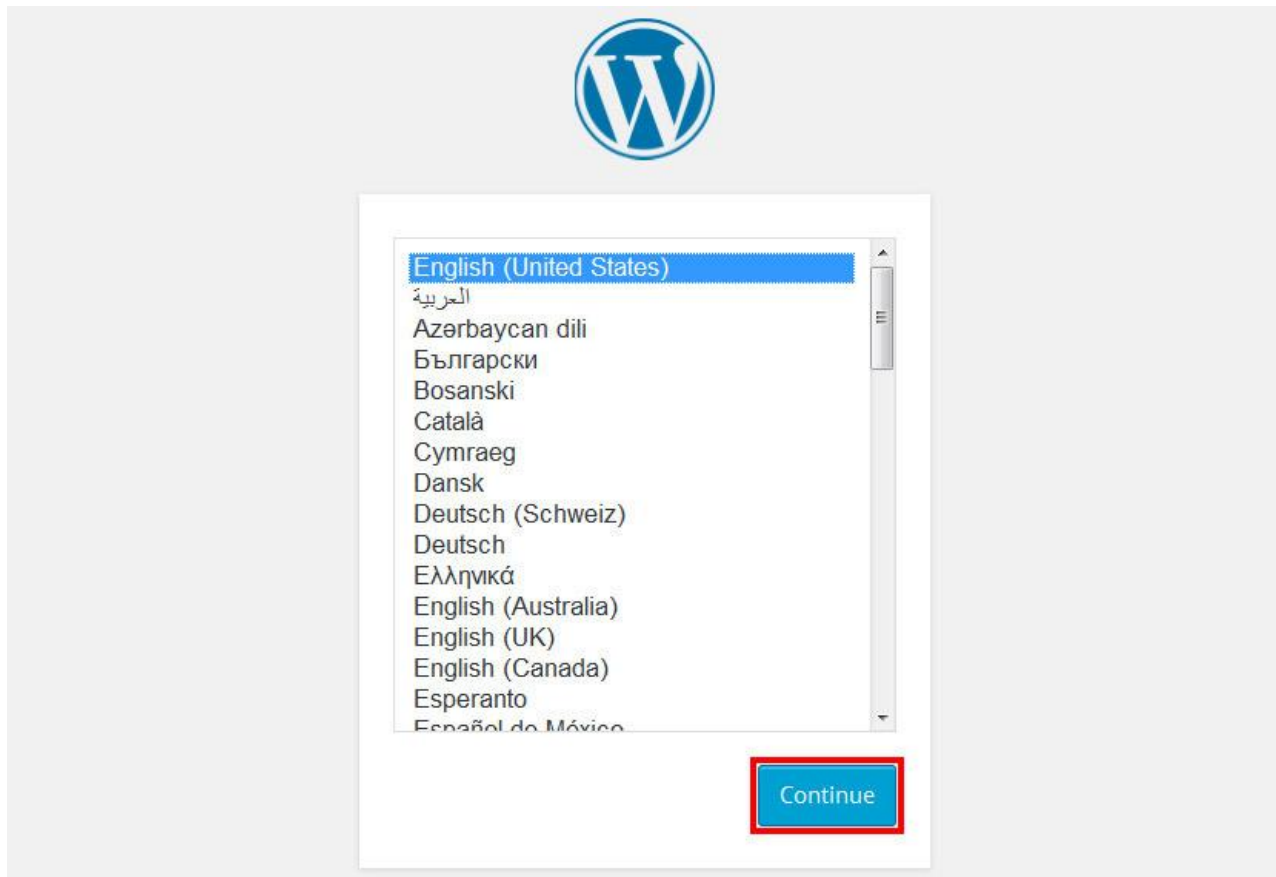


Figure 2.5- Select WordPress language

Select language on the screen and continue (see figure 2.5).

Fill database information

Fill the name of database which you have created in the above step (see figure 2.6). In our case it is 'wordpress'. Fill "root" in username field and leave the password field blank, and fill localhost the database host field. In the last field, you may define a prefix to all the database tables, and submit.



Below you should enter your database connection details. If you're not sure about these, contact your host.

Database Name	<input type="text" value="wordpress"/>	The name of the database you want to run WP in.
User Name	<input type="text" value="root"/>	Your MySQL username
Password	<input type="password"/>	...and your MySQL password.
Database Host	<input type="text" value="localhost"/>	You should be able to get this info from your web host, if localhost does not work.
Table Prefix	<input type="text" value="wp_"/>	If you want to run multiple WordPress installations in a single database, change this.

Figure 2.6-Database connection details asked by WordPress

Fill in the website information

In the next step, you are prompted to set the title of your site and fill up user information, like site title, username, password and Email. Fill up the required fields, and press “Install WordPress” (see figure 2.7).



Welcome

Welcome to the famous five-minute WordPress installation process! Just fill in the information below and you'll be on your way to using the most extendable and powerful personal publishing platform in the world.

Information needed

Please provide the following information. Don't worry, you can always change these settings later.

Site Title	<input type="text" value="My WordPress Website"/>
Username	<input type="text" value="admin"/> <small>Usernames can have only alphanumeric characters, spaces, underscores, hyphens, periods, and the @ symbol.</small>
Password, twice <small>A password will be automatically generated for you if you leave this blank.</small>	<input type="password" value="....."/> <input type="password" value="....."/> Strong <small>Hint: The password should be at least seven characters long. To make it stronger, use upper and lower case letters, numbers, and symbols like ! * ? \$ % ^ & .</small>
Your E-mail	<input type="text" value="abc@gmail.com"/> <small>Double-check your email address before continuing.</small>
Privacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow search engines to index this site.
<input type="button" value="Install WordPress"/>	

Figure 2.7-Five minutes installation wizard of WordPress

That's it. You have **installed WordPress**. Now, you are in business.

Log in to dashboard

Now, you have installed WordPress locally. You can move on to the dashboard by clicking on the Log in button.

Chapter 3 : How to Make a Website with WordPress



WordPress is a beginner's friendly web development platform. Developing a website is very easy, once you gain the knowledge of installing WordPress and dashboard options. In this Chapter, you will learn about installing WordPress on both webhost and localhost, installing theme, adding pages, creating posts, making menu, site title and URL settings, and essential plugins.

Now, let us get started with learning website development.

Installation of WordPress

For Installing WordPress, a host is necessarily required. You can install WordPress on two types of hosts. A webhost is used for making live websites, and localhost is used for offline development of websites and testing purposes.

Installation of WordPress on web host

Almost all web hosts provide “one click installation” option to their customers. When you will register a domain and pay for a hosting plan for your website, your web host will tell you about “one click installation”. So, you can easily install WordPress on a web host. There are some web hosting provider, which provide special WordPress hosting plans.

Install WordPress on localhost

You can also install the WordPress on a localhost. The widely used localhost is XAMPP. You learnt about how to [install XAMPP and WordPress](#) on the local system from previous chapter. We have chosen the localhost to demonstrate website development.

Once you reach out the dashboard after completing the WordPress installation, development of website starts.

Choose a theme for your website

First of all, select a theme for your website. You may select a theme from the WordPress repository or browse this free themes gallery. You will find very nice themes in this gallery, which are responsive and designed with bootstrap elements.

We have chosen <http://templatetoaster.com/showcase/downloads/architect> and activated it in following way, Appearance -> **Themes** -> **Add New** -> **Upload Theme** -> **Activate**.

If you would like to **make a new theme** for your website, you can use TemplateToaster. It is a theme generator software, helps in creating WordPress themes without coding. You can surely make a beautiful custom theme like Costrica using this software, for your website. For more details, refer to our post, create professional themes and templates with TemplateToaster.

Add Pages and Posts

WordPress gives one default page (sample page), and one default post (Hello world!), which you can see on your website. You can delete the default page and post and can add new ones.

To Add a New Page

For handling pages, WordPress has given “Pages” tool on the dashboard.

Select **Pages -> Add New** to add a new page.

When you choose add new page, you are directly moved to the editor. You can add text, media and link in your page with the available editing tools. After creating the page, you can preview it as well. “**Publish**” your page in the end (see figure 3.1).

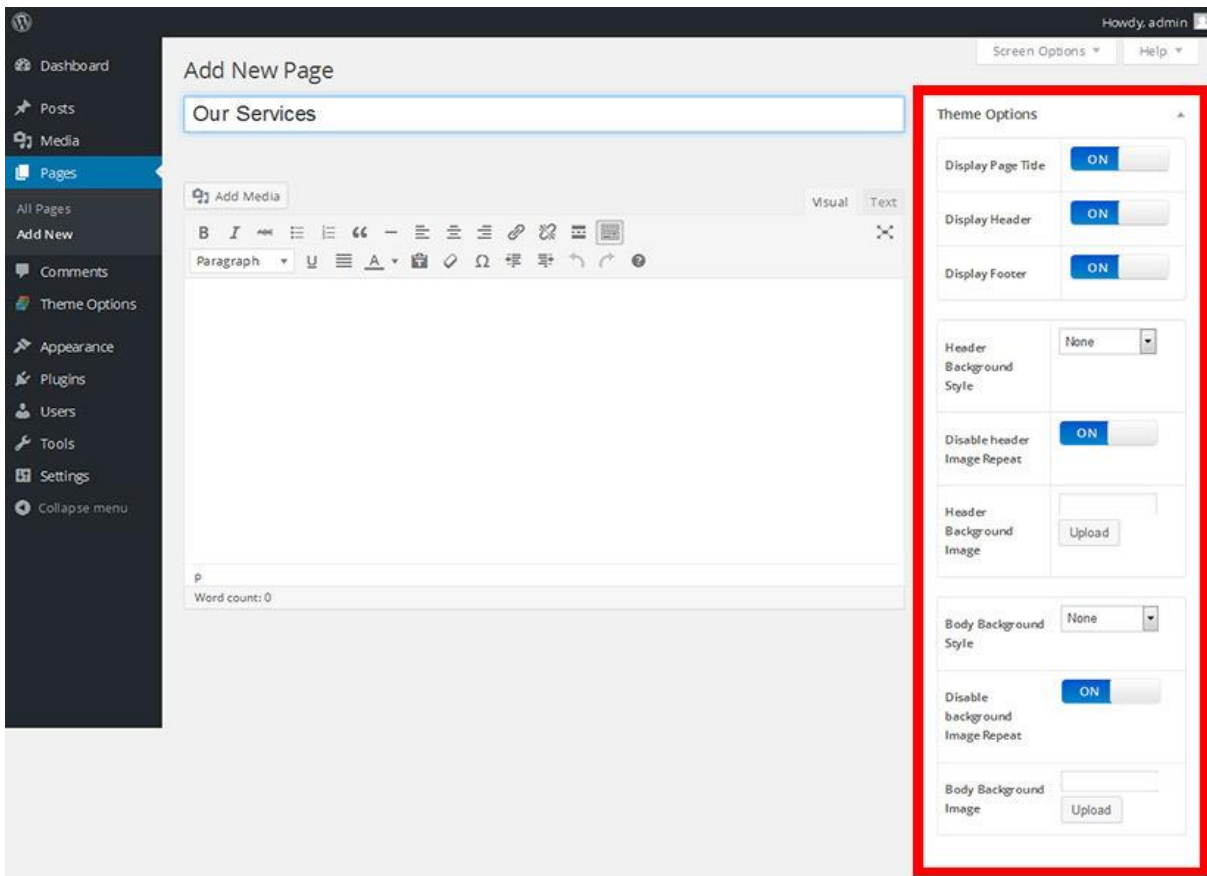


Figure 3.1- Publishing a page in WordPress

The options being shown on the right side, are called theme options, which are available in TemplateToaster generated theme.

To add new posts

Here's what you need to do for creating a new post. Look along the sidebar in dashboard for **Posts -> Add New**.

Fill in the post title, write the post, add a media, and simply press the "Publish" button showing on the right side of the page (see figure 3.2). This is how, you've created a post on your website.

Here too, we've the theme options available for post title and post link.

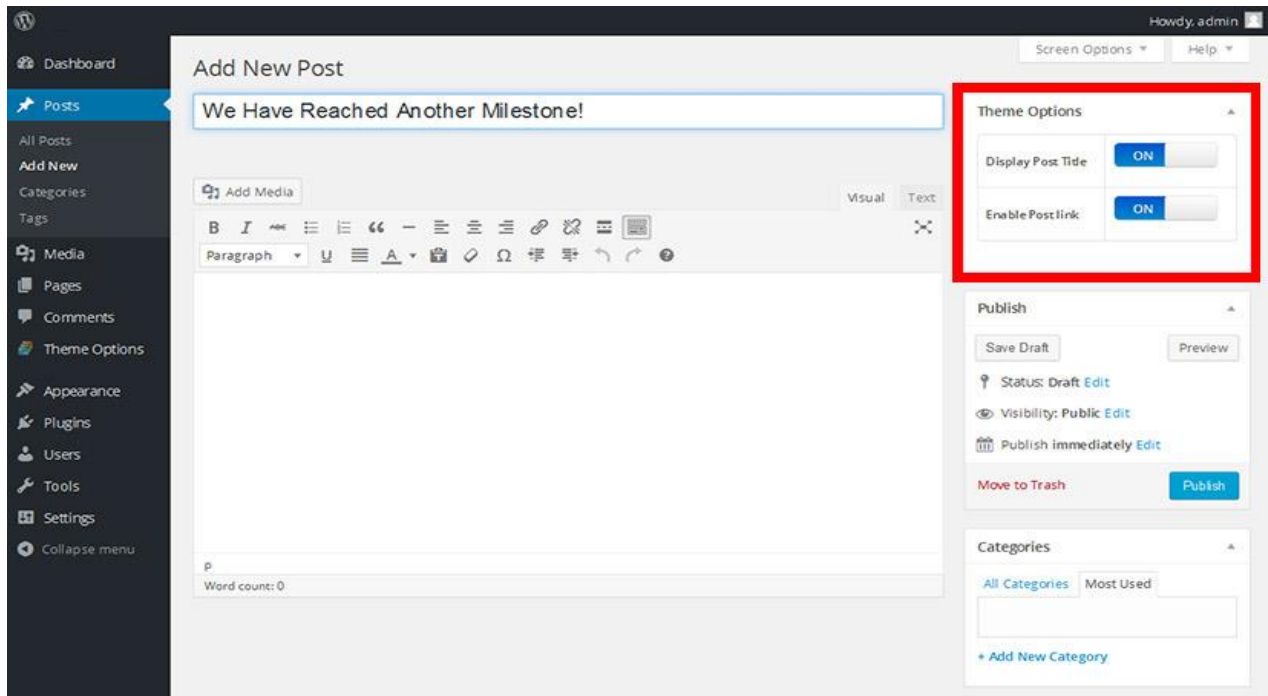


Figure 3.2- Publishing a post in WordPress

Reading Settings for Pages and Posts

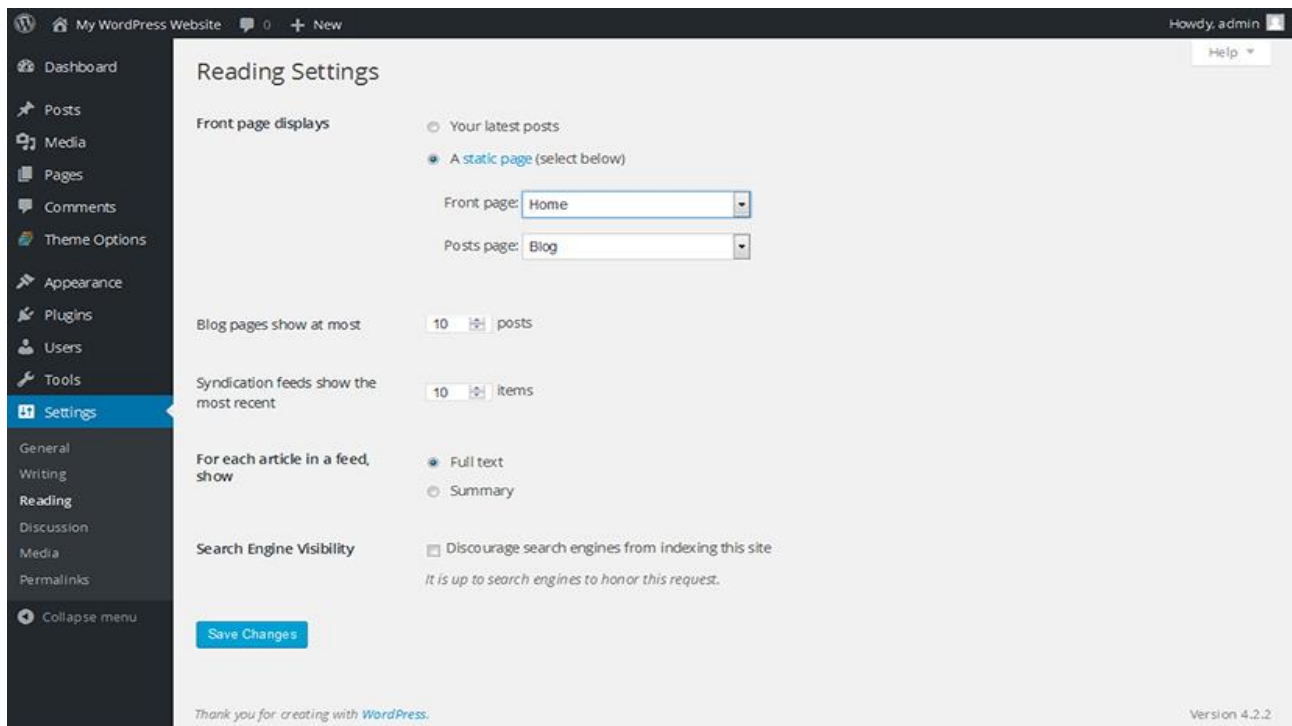


Figure 3.3-Reading settings of WordPress pages and posts

Front page

From this option, you can select a particular page, which your visitors will see while they first visit your website (see figure 3.3). Let's say, you want that visitors would see your "Home" page very first page when they visit your site.

Go to the **Settings -> Reading ->** select the **static page** radio button. Select the page that you want to make static from the drop down list (see figure 3.3).

Post Page

Select the Blog page from the "**Posts page**" drop-down list as shown in the image (see figure 3.3).

Once you save the changes, the front page will become static and all your posts will be shown on Blog page.

Discussion Settings for posts

WordPress gives you the choice whether you want to enable readers to comment on your blog posts or not (see figure 3.4). By default, the comments are enabled on blogs, which you can turn off in the following way.

Settings -> discussions -> uncheck Allow Comments

We would suggest you to read about how you can prevent you site from comment spam (in Part 2) if you don't want to disable the comments on your posts.

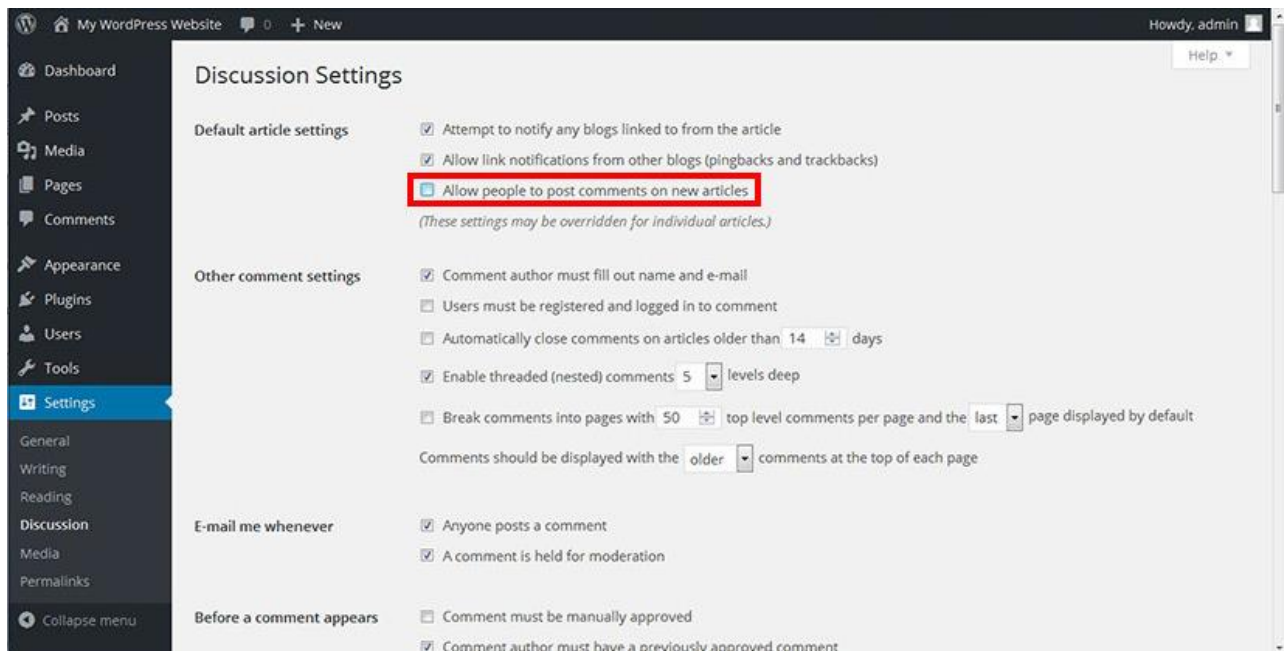


Figure 3.4-WordPress discussion settings

General Settings of website

We've the "Settings -> General" tool on the dashboard for basic configuration settings of the website (see figure 3.5). From general settings as shown in the above FIGURE, you can customize site's title, tagline, URL, mention an E-mail address, and can turn on the registration on site.

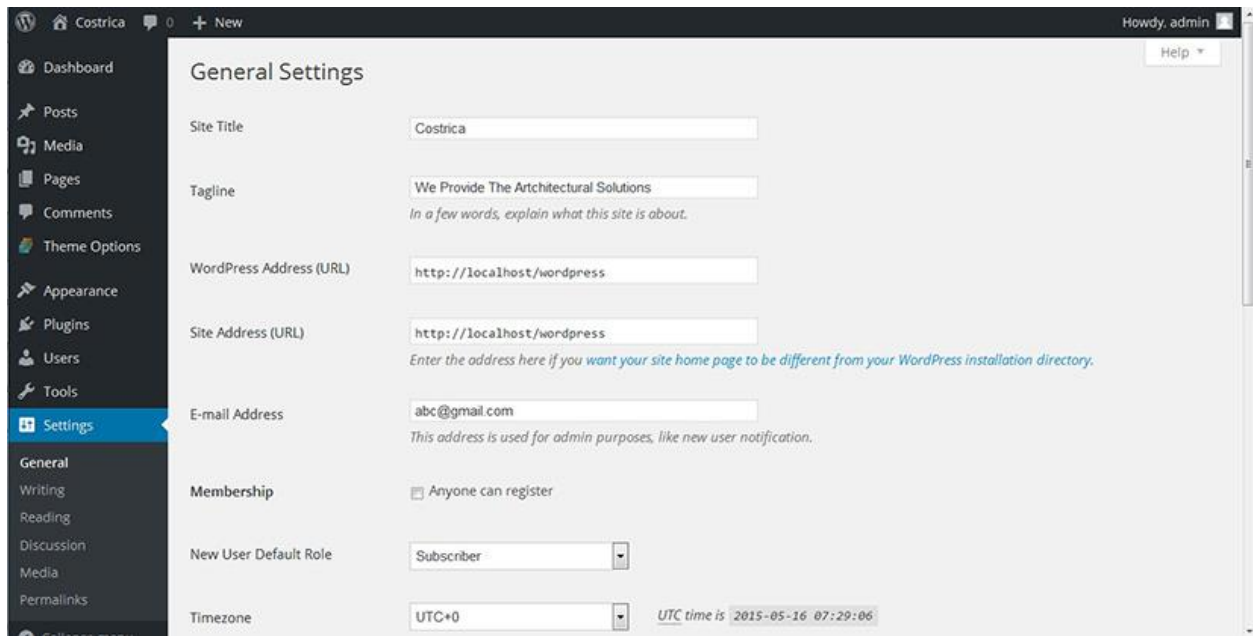


Figure 3.5-WordPress general settings

How to Create Menu

You can create your own menu and add your pages into it from the “Menus” tool, which resides inside “Appearance”.

Appearance -> Menus -> create a new menu.

To add menu items

You can add pages, custom links and categories in the menu. For this, select the menu that you’ve created in the above step. Then, find the items you want to add in the menu, e.g. if you want to add the “Blog” page in the menu. So, select this page and press “Add to Menu”. Make sure that you’ve pressed “Save Menu” in the end. Similar to the pages, you can add custom links and categories to the menu.

Menu structure

You can arrange the menu items in preferred order by simply dragging them from their position and dropping at the desired level (see figure 3.6).

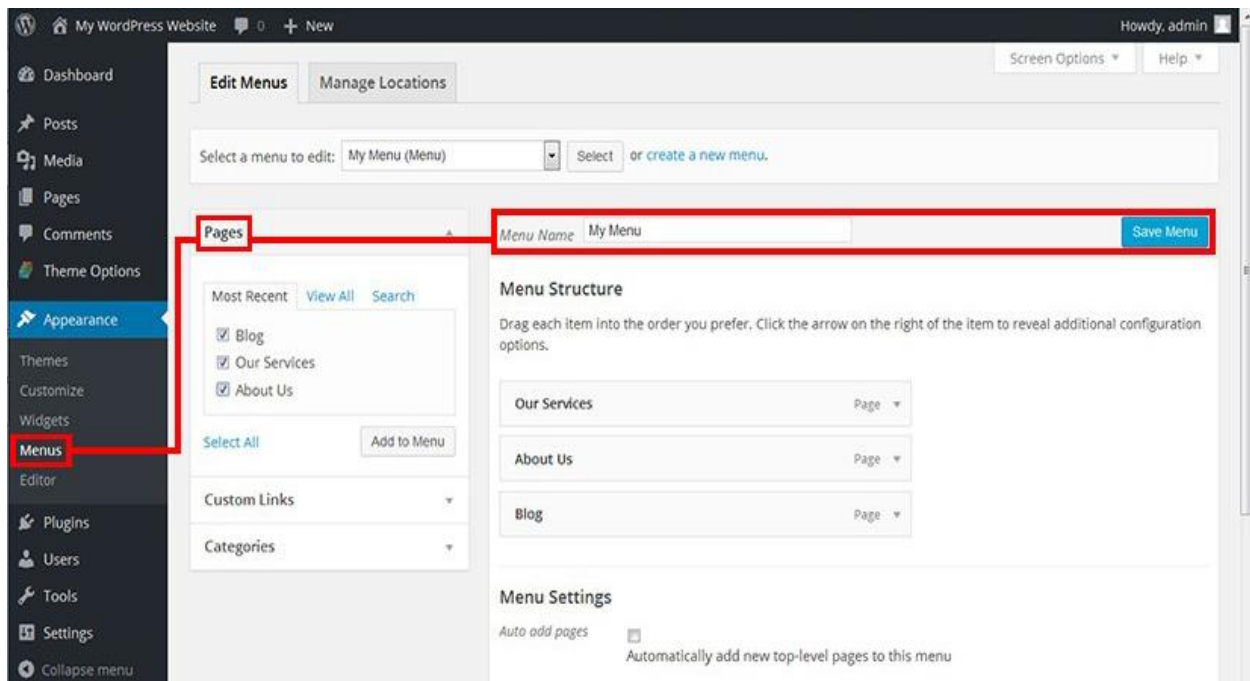


Figure 3.6- Creating and saving menu structure

Plugins will make your site better

WordPress has a great attribute that a user may extend website's capabilities using plugins. If you have a plan to add a custom functionality in your website, you may browse the plugin repository from the dashboard itself (see figure 3.7).

Simply, go to **Plugins -> Add New**.

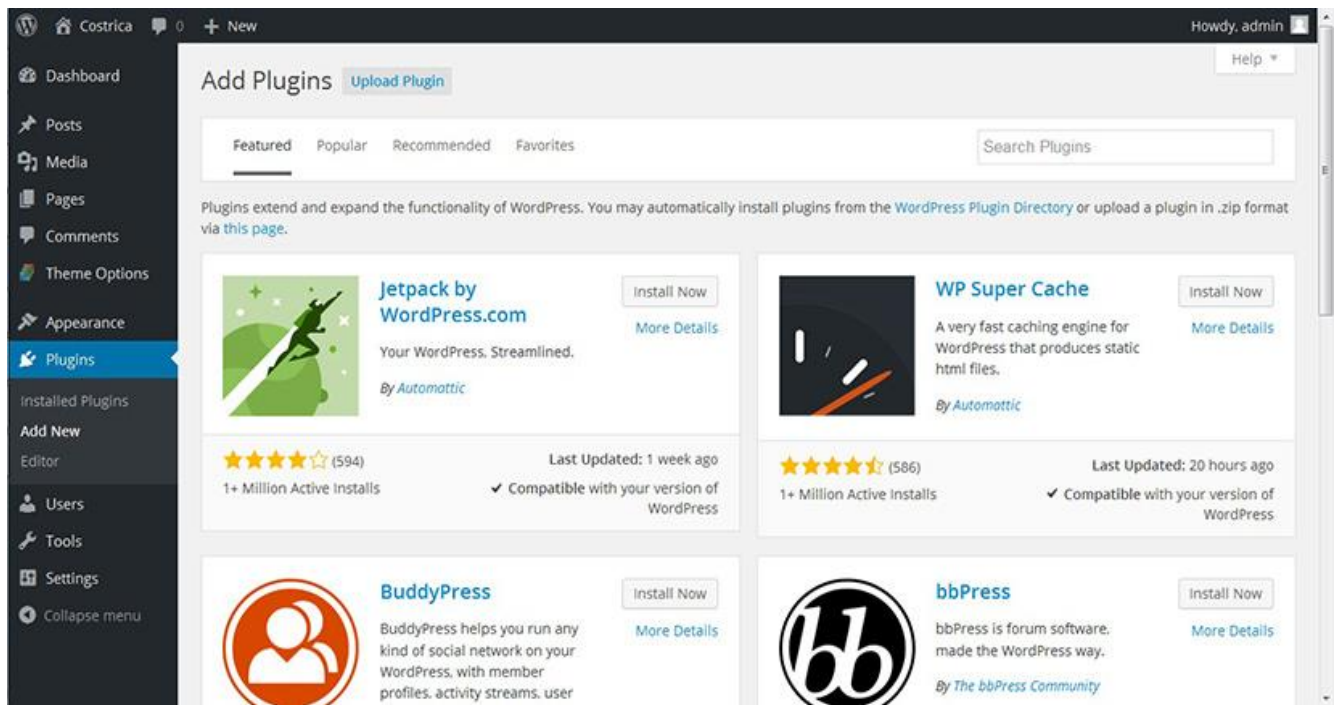


Figure 3.7-WordPress plugin repository

In fact, if you don't need your website to perform custom functions, even then, you should use four types of plugins in your website for reason that they would help you out for keep your website in optimum state. And that's why, they are considered essential plugins (you will read about them in part 2).

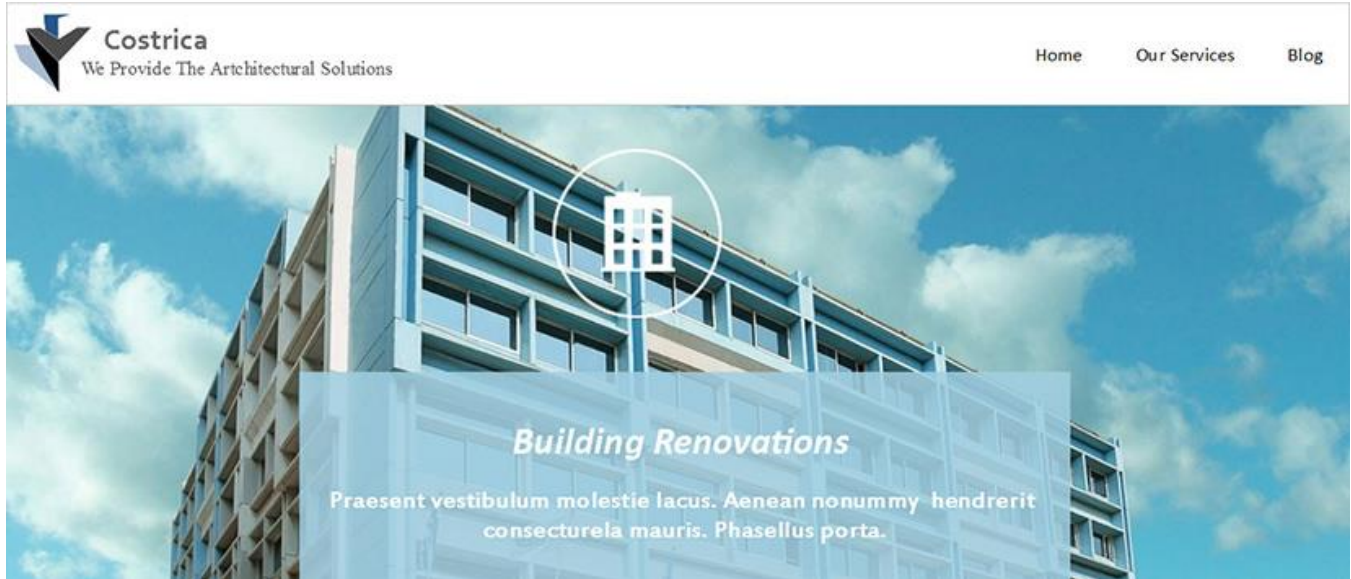


Figure 3.8- WordPress website

This is how our website looks like (see figure 3.8). It has three pages, “Home”, “Our Service”, and “Blog”. Website title and tagline are as per we’ve defined while configuring making General Settings. And, the web design (theme) has been taken from TemplateToaster’s themes gallery.

Chapter 4 : How to Make an Ecommerce Website Using WordPress.



WordPress is versatile. Primarily, it was built as a blogging platform. But, it is not limited to the blogging. One can make any type of website with WordPress. An eCommerce website too. For making an eCommerce website in WordPress, WooCommerce plugin is heavily used. There is a great buzz of this plugin, although there are so many eCommerce plugins are available.

WooCommerce holds the crown of “most downloaded WordPress eCommerce plugin” with over seven million downloads till the date. Reason is the best compliance with WordPress core and best eCommerce features. Plus, it’s absolutely free to use.

WordPress would manage your content, WooCommerce will add the cart to your website, and TemplateToaster will give a beautiful eCommerce theme for your store.

Start from Installing WordPress

- You can buy a hosting plan and install WordPress on the host's server.
- You can install WordPress locally to test your website also.

Install WooCommerce

After you done with WordPress installation, Log in to the dashboard, go to “**Plugins**” from the left sidebar. Click “**Add New**”. You will see the plugin repository of WordPress. Search “WooCommerce” and install the plugin (see figure 4.1). It will take less than a minute of your time.

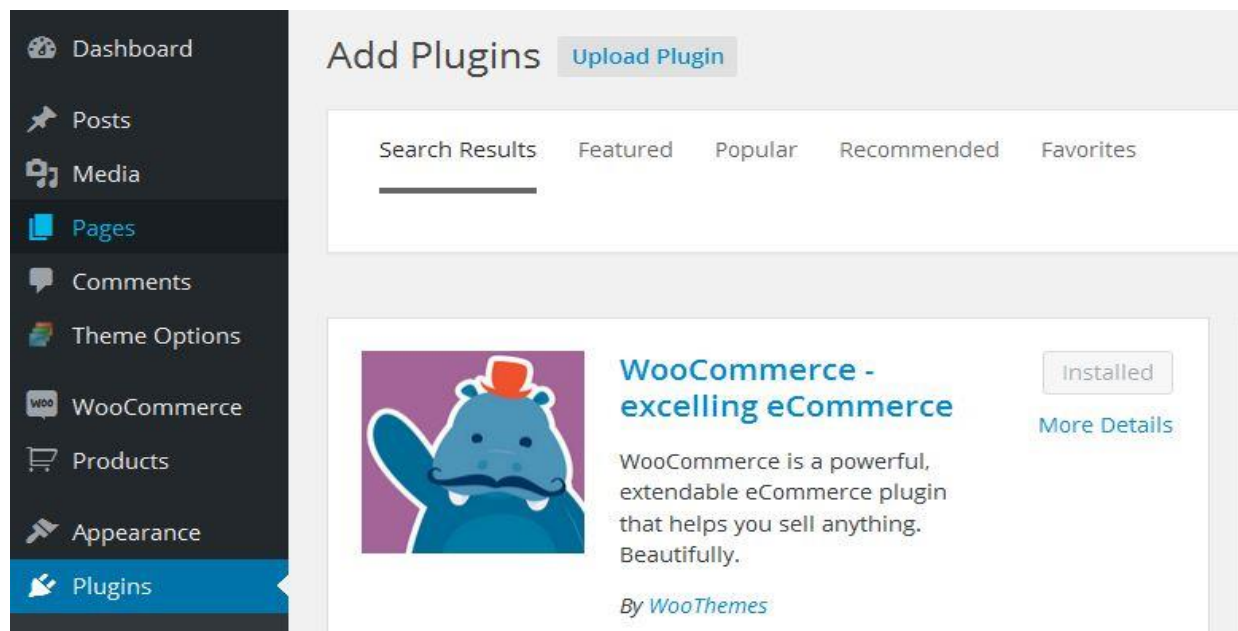


Figure 4.1- Installing WooCommerce from WordPress plugin repository

WooCommerce Settings-

Next thing to do after installation is to configure WooCommerce settings.

Settings

The first tab is seen “General” (see figure 4.2). You will define here your base location, in which countries you want to sell your products, and currency

related information like currency position, thousand separator, decimal separator, and number of decimals. Fill up the fields and “Save changes”. You will be easily going through the setting up your shop as all the settings are self-explanatory.

From “Products” tab (see figure 4.2), you can make settings for your products and how they are displayed that includes product image sizes, inventory, and downloadable product settings. Moving further, “Tax” tab consists comprehensive options for configuring tax settings. You can set the options to your needs.

WooCommerce gives the options for your “Checkout” pages and coupon usage as well as your payment gateway settings (see figure 4.2). Similarly, the “Shipping” options are provided to you for defining custom shipping ways, including restricting shipping for particular countries.

You can enable user registration on particular page from “Account” tab (see figure 4.2). Also, you can generate the user name from a customer’s email for account creation. More to this, you can choose to automatically generate the account passwords for the users.

Inside “Email”, you can enable/disable email notification to your customers when they perform any action, like ordering products, cancel products, reset password, or make a new account. You can design the e-mail template and describe the content to put in the email.

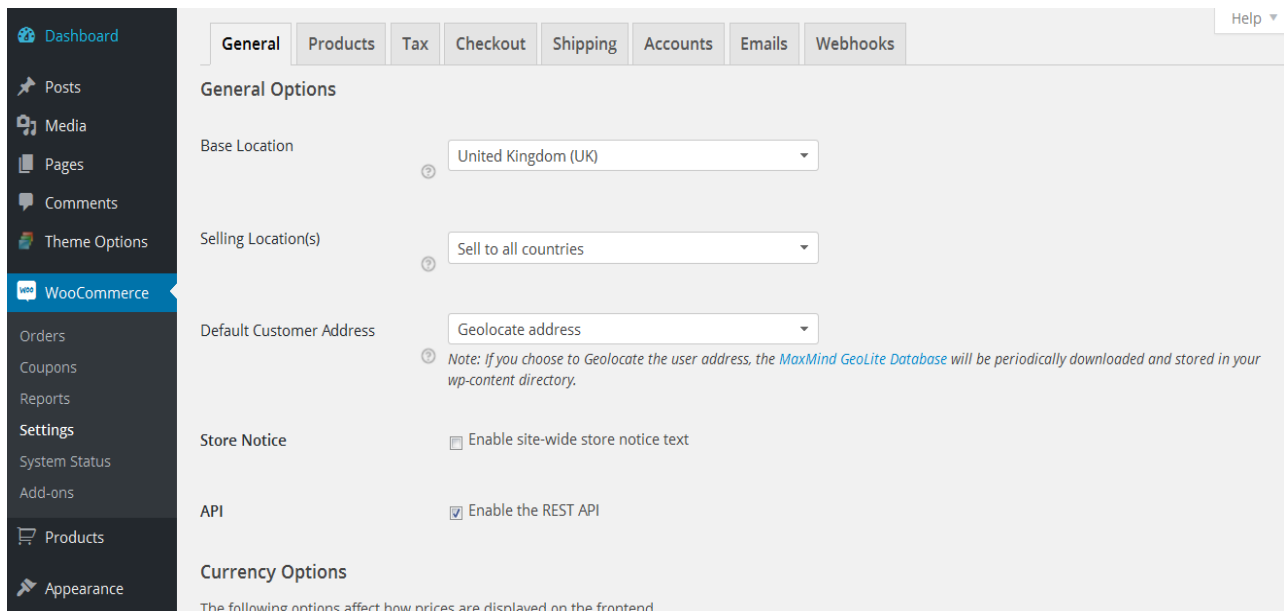


Figure 4.2-WooCommerce settings

Adding products

Products are added like you add a new post in WordPress (see figure 4.3). When you install the plugin, an option “Products” appears below WooCommerce. You can add the products from there.

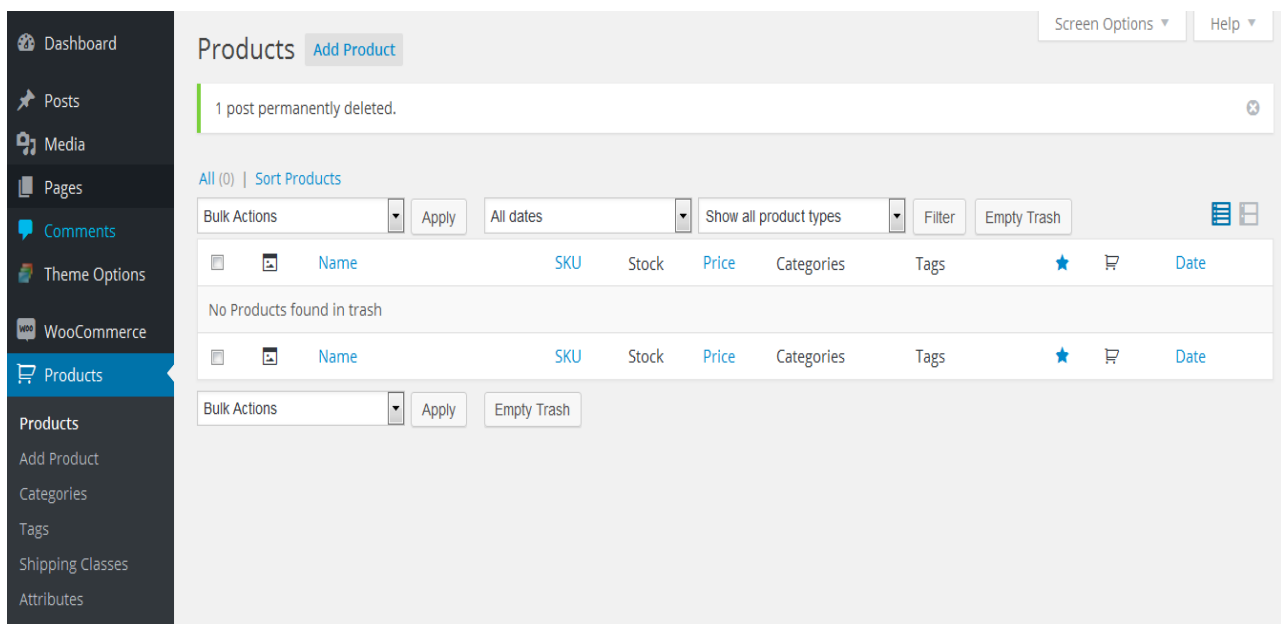


Figure 4.3- Adding products in WooCommerce

Get a WooCommerce compatible Theme

You'll need a WooCommerce compatible theme in order to establish your shop. Every WordPress theme doesn't support WooCommerce. A theme must have special styles to be compatible with WooCommerce. So after installing the plugin, install a WooCommerce compatible theme.

Would you like to make WooCommerce theme yourself?

You can use TemplateToaster for getting a perfectly WooCommerce compatible theme. TemplateToaster will help you in making **custom WooCommerce themes** as per your imagination. You wouldn't need to learn any technical skill for this, because TemplateToaster generates the code itself. You can easily design a theme without any external help, here is [more information](#) on making your theme compatible with WooCommerce.

TemplateToaster allows you to make a theme from scratch. But if you would like to pick a theme for personalization, you can choose one from free WooCommerce themes gallery. The best advantage of TemplateToaster for making themes is that it generates BOOTSTRAP based themes. That is why themes happen to be flawless responsive and look professional made.

TemplateToaster does more for you than helping you out crafting a nice design, it takes care of performance of websites by generating decent code for your theme and providing SEO options. There is one more utmost useful option provided, that is, you can take backup of your website anytime from your dashboard. So, you wouldn't be worry about backing up your website while updating your website.

What benefits you will draw from TemplateToaster?

- You make BOOTSTRAP powered themes
- Your theme has responsive layout
- You can create backup of website
- You get search engine optimized theme
- Your store will always perform good

Summing Up

You can build a flourishing online store with the combination of WordPress, WooCommerce and TemplateToaster generated theme without any hassle. WordPress and WooCommerce both have the intuitive dashboards. So, you can build your WordPress based online shop easily with a TemplateToaster generated theme. You can [download TemplateToaster trial version from here](#), if you want to experience the advantages of this software.

Chapter 5 : How to Make a Photography Website



If you are a photographer, it is utmost for you to have your own website where you can showcase your work to the audience. Your website will contain your portfolio, your blogs, and your contact information. Making a photography website is not a hard job. You can easily do it with WordPress. The WordPress is the easiest content management system for developing websites. We will show you how you can use WordPress for developing your own website in three easy steps.

STEP 1- Setting Up WordPress Environment

STEP2- Create a Theme for Your Website

STEP3- Install a Plugin and Make the Gallery

Let us start with setting up the WordPress environment.

STEP-1. Setting up the WordPress environment

You can install WordPress either on a web host or a localhost. Using a web host, you can directly work on your site on the server. On the other side, you will be creating your site on your personal computer system with a localhost. There is no difference in using WordPress on a web host and a local host. Almost every web host gives an option of One Click Installation. So, you can install WordPress with a single click on the web host.

If you want to know about local installation of WordPress, then, read out the procedure for installing XAMPP and WordPress.

STEP-2. Create a theme for your site

For your site, you will need a theme. We are going to show you making a photography theme with the help of TemplateToaster.

Start



Figure 5.1-Initial screen of TemplateToaster

Initialize TemplateToaster. It supports all major content management systems. Therefore, when we initialize the software, above screen appears. We select WordPress from here (see figure 5.1).

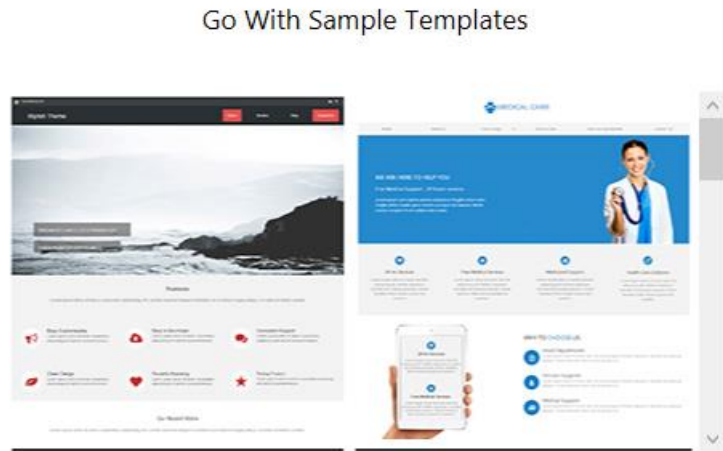


Figure 5.2- Selecting "Start from Scratch" for making the WordPress theme

We preferred to show you making out photography theme from scratch (see figure 5.2), though the software also gives the option to start with a sample theme.

COLORS		TYPOGRAPHY	
Primary	<input type="text" value="#428BCA"/>	Font Family	<input type="text" value="Arial"/>
Secondary	<input type="text" value="#777777"/>	Font Size	<input type="text" value="14"/>
Success	<input type="text" value="#5CB85C"/>	Line Height	<input type="text" value="1.42"/>
Info	<input type="text" value="#5BC0DE"/>		
Warning	<input type="text" value="#F0AD4E"/>		
Danger	<input type="text" value="#D9534F"/>		

Figure 5.3-Bootstrap color scheme and typography

We can determine the color scheme and typography of the design from the next screen (see figure 5.3). The default color scheme and typography of TemplateToaster is set according to the default bootstrap values.

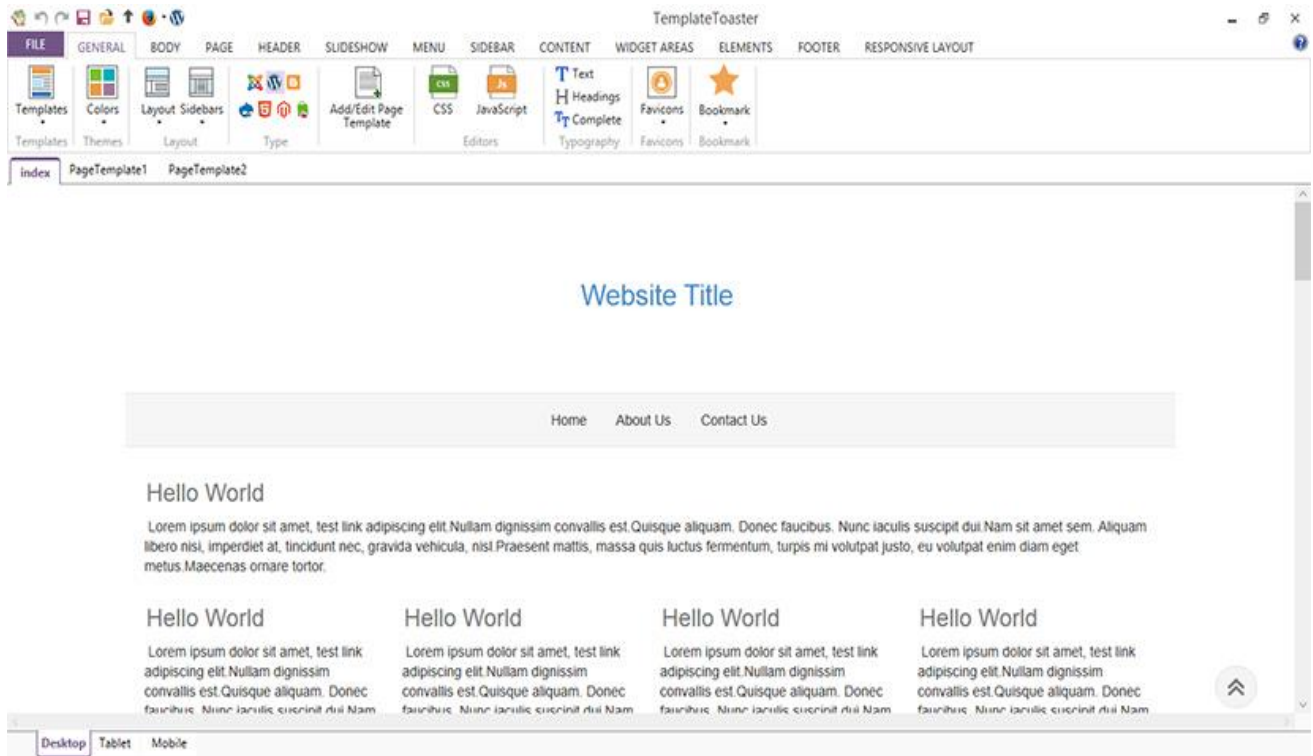


Figure 5.4- Interface of TemplateToaster

Above is the design interface of TemplateToaster (see figure 5.4). It looks very clean and structured. For each structural element corresponding tab is there in the Ribbon.

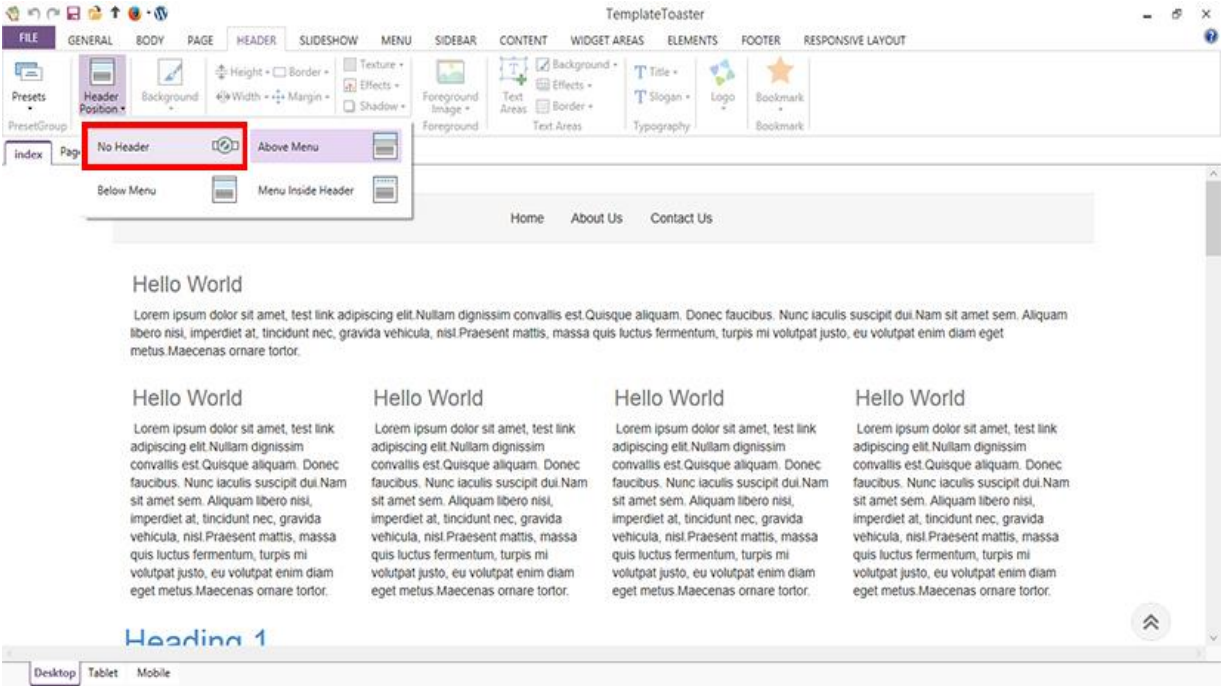


Figure 5.5- Header positioning options given by TemplateToaster

We have made quirky use of the TemplateToaster’s options. We’ve removed the header from the design (see figure 5.5). For this, open the “Header” tab and select “No Header” option.

Designing Menu

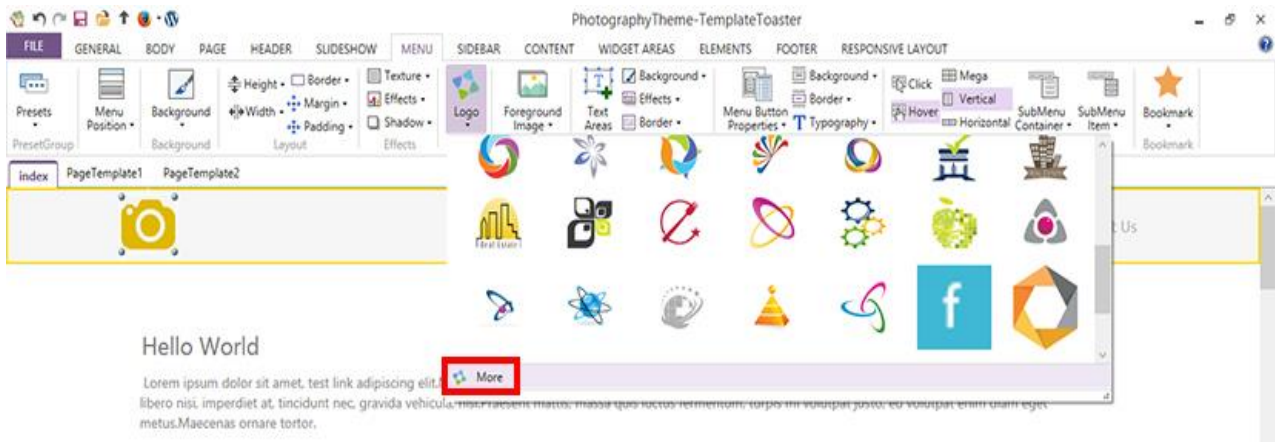


Figure 5.6- Free logos offered by TemplateToaster

We have placed the logo in the top left corner. TemplateToaster allows to browse the custom logo and offers its own stock too (see figure 5.6). There are very interactive logos in TemplateToaster's stock. From "more", custom logo can be browsed.

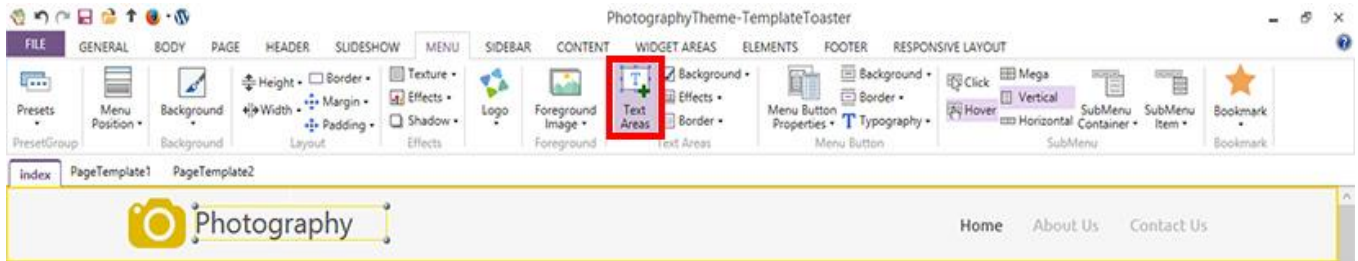


Figure 5.7- Creating text area in the Header

Besides the logo, we create the text area and write the title of our website (see figure 5.7). TemplateToaster provides the flexibility of drawing text area anywhere in the design. Its text editor is very nice, which allows to insert image, video, tables and hyperlink inside the text area.

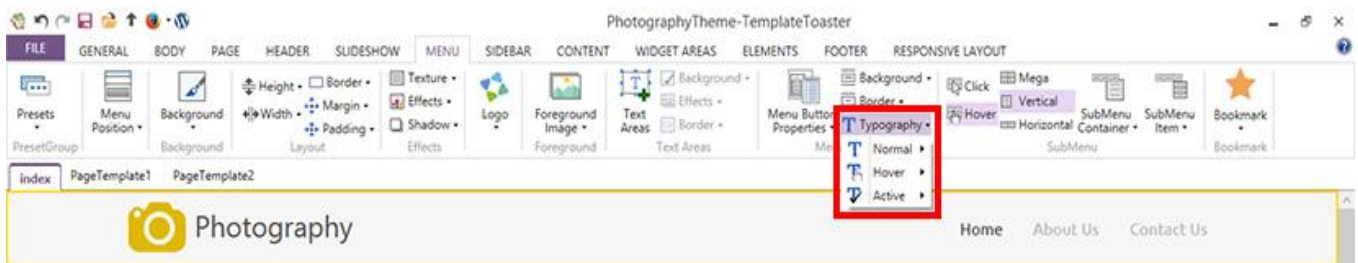


Figure 5.8- Selecting Typography for the menu items

Then comes the menu items; for them, we want Google fonts. When we select the typography option, TemplateToaster further details the options for setting font and size for normal, hover and active item of the menu (see figure 5.8). You can choose a big size and different for the hover item, so that it would look gripping.

Designing Slideshow

Our theme includes a beautiful slideshow. To include the slideshow in the theme, select the “Slideshow” tab from the ribbon, and activate the slideshow option.

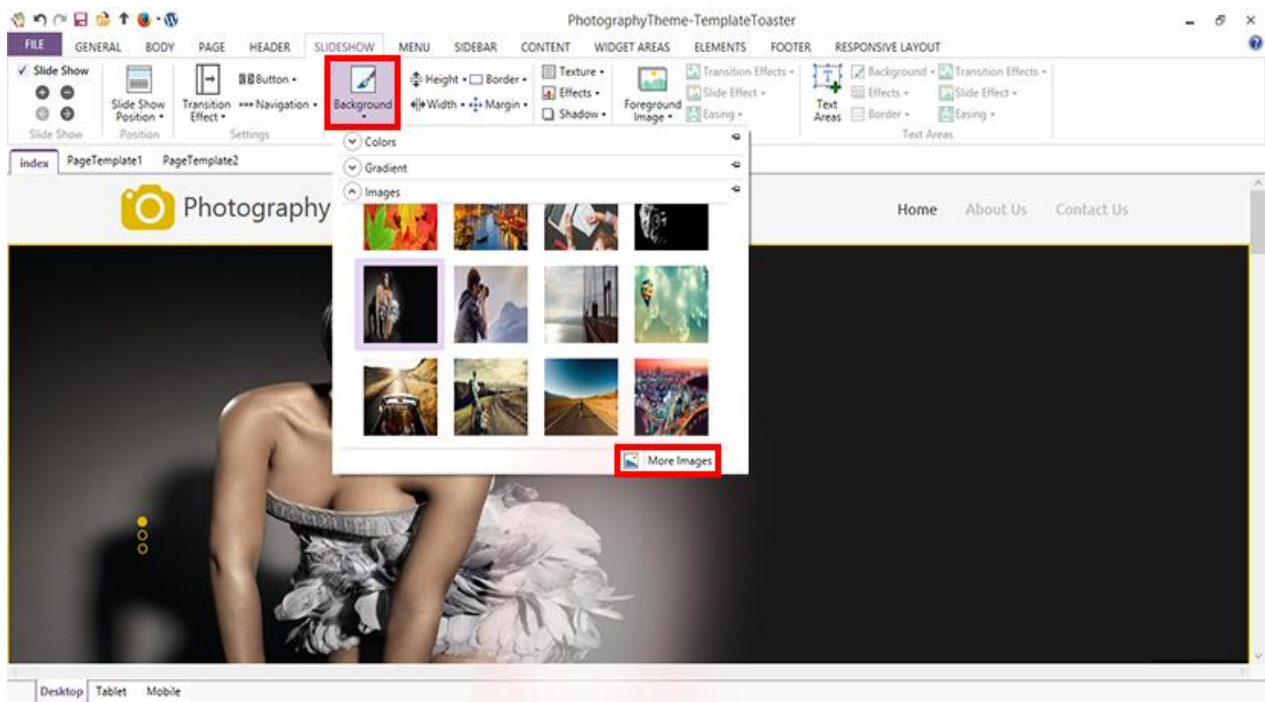


Figure 5.9- Adding an image into the slide

By default, three slides are included in the slideshow, you can add more using “+” symbol. Then, select the “Background” options for browsing the images for slideshow (see figure 5.9).

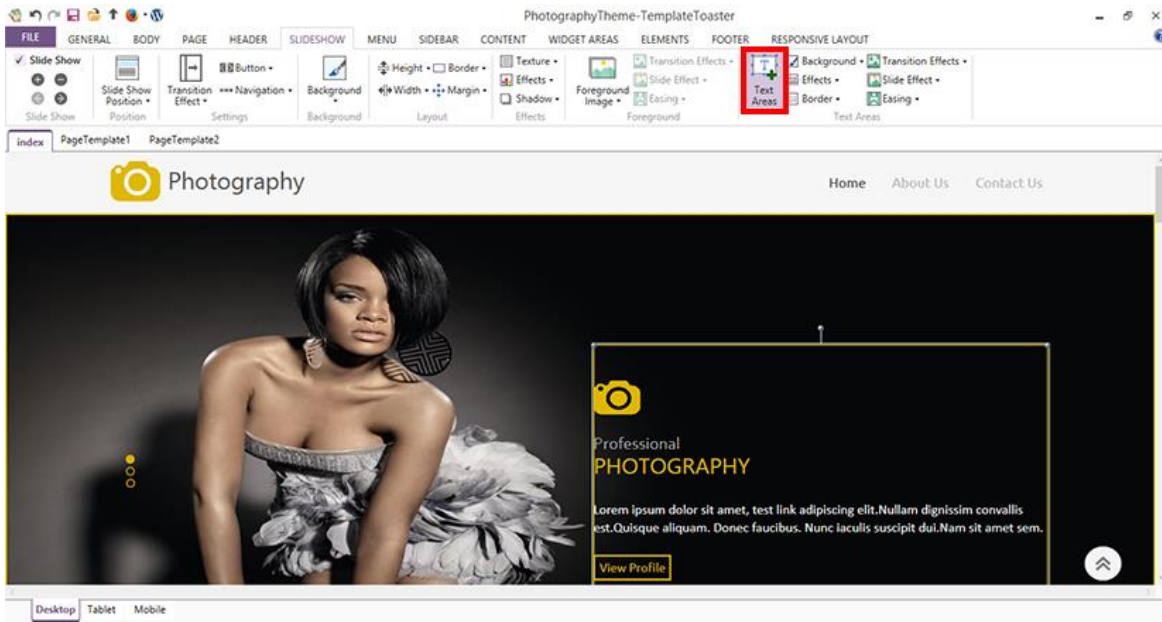


Figure 5.10- Writing text onto a slide

The text you are seeing on the slide is added with the help of “text area” option (see figure 5.10). Also, we have modified the navigation style using “Navigation” option.

Designing Footer

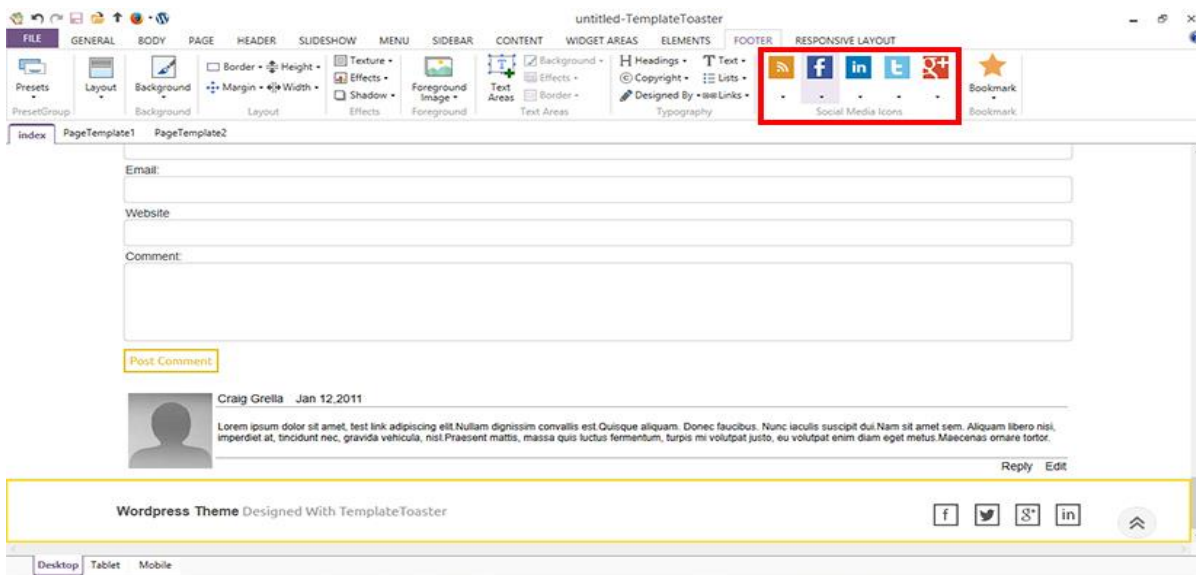


Figure 5.11- Adding social media icons in the footer

We have configured the social media icons in the footer. The icons can be browsed from system, or can be picked from the TemplateToaster's social media icon stock (see figure 5.11).

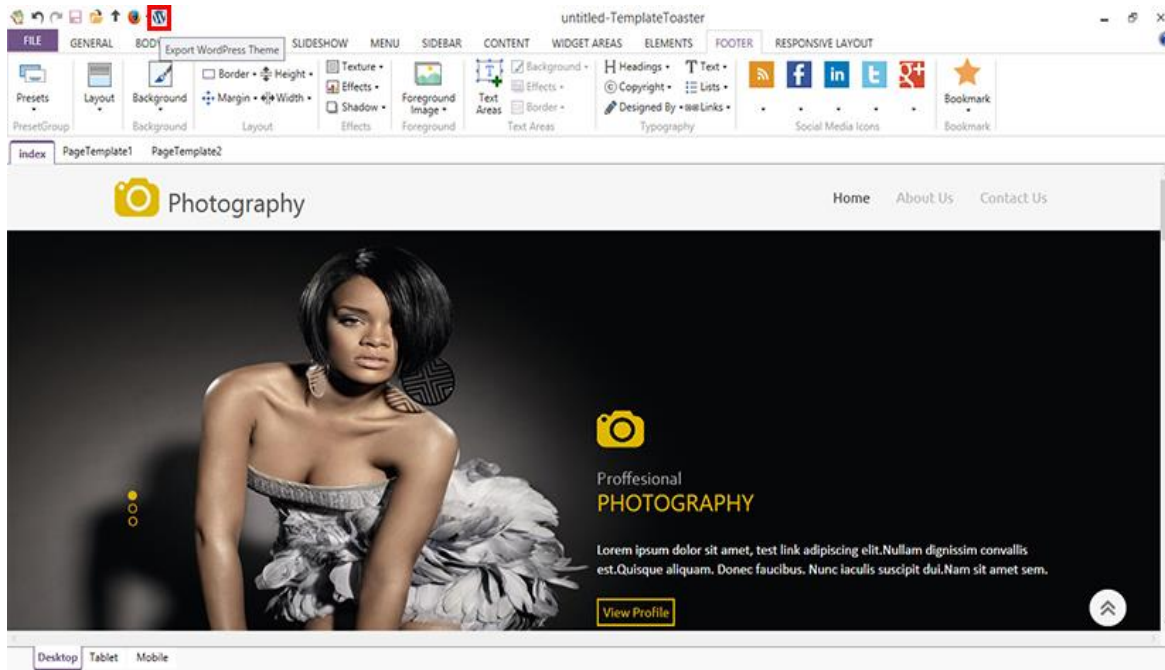


Figure 5.12- Exporting theme

We have reached to the last step of the designing process that to export the theme. Theme can be exported by clicking the WordPress icon in the quick access toolbar (see figure 5.12).

Another way to export the theme is, go to **File---->Export----> Specify File Name and path---**> press **Export**.

Now, install your theme in WordPress

Having to export the theme. We login to our WordPress dashboard. And apply our theme in this way- **Appearance---->Add New---->Upload----->Browse your theme---->Install Now-->Activate**. See figure 5.13.

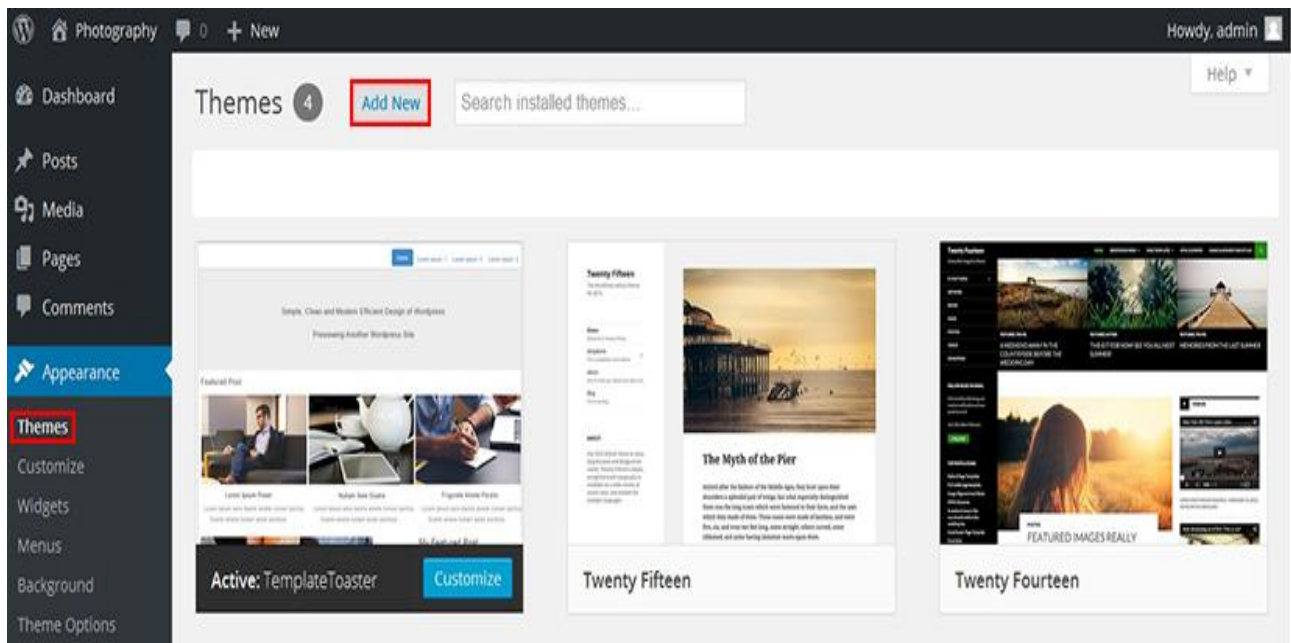


Figure 5.13- Installing a theme in WordPress

STEP-3. Install Plugin and Make Gallery

We will need a gallery plugin to show up your photographs in an interactive way. There is an abundance of gallery plugins. From such a huge number of plugin we've picked Photo Gallery from the repository.

It creates mobile-ready galleries and very easy to configure. Therefore, we have picked it for our purpose.

To install this plugin, go to **Plugins-->Add New-->Install Now-->Activate**. See figure 5.14.

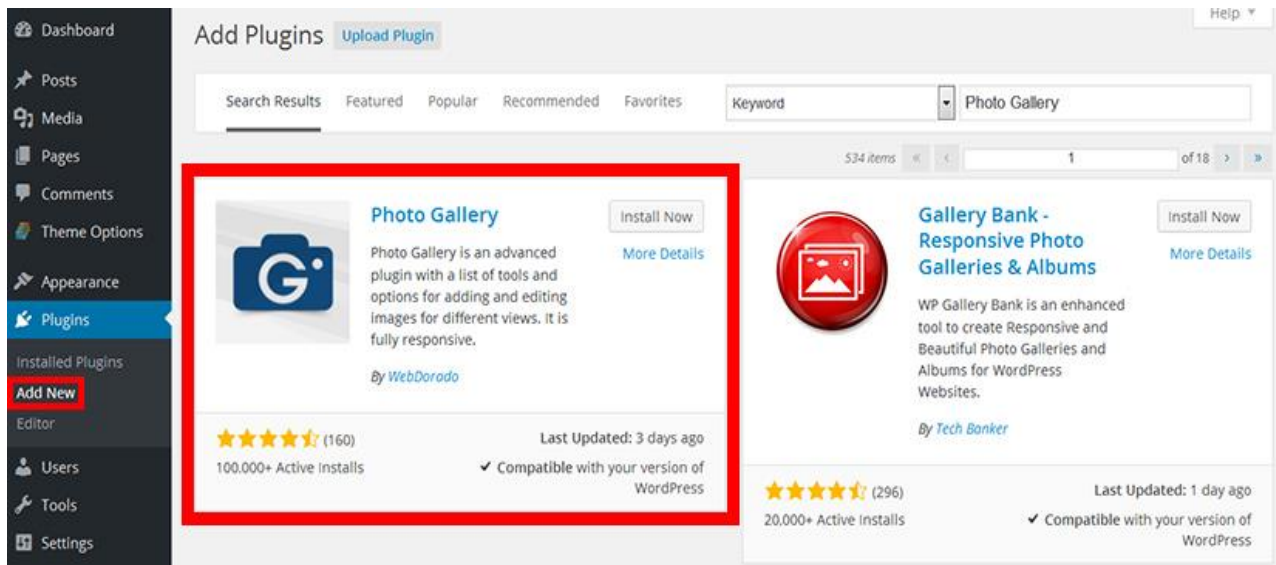


Figure 5.14- Installing Photo Gallery plugin from WordPress repository

As the plugin gets activated, following menu displays on the left sidebar of the WordPress dashboard.

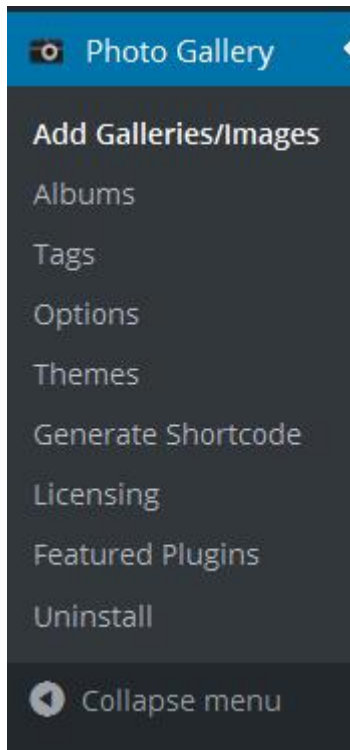


Figure 5.15- Menu of Photo Gallery plugin

Select “Add Galleries/ Images” options for creating a new gallery (see figure 5.15). The plugin has native WordPress user interface (see figure 5.16). You can easily add images as well as videos. You can embed YouTube videos, Vimeo videos, Instagram posts, Flickr photos, and Dailymotion videos in your gallery.

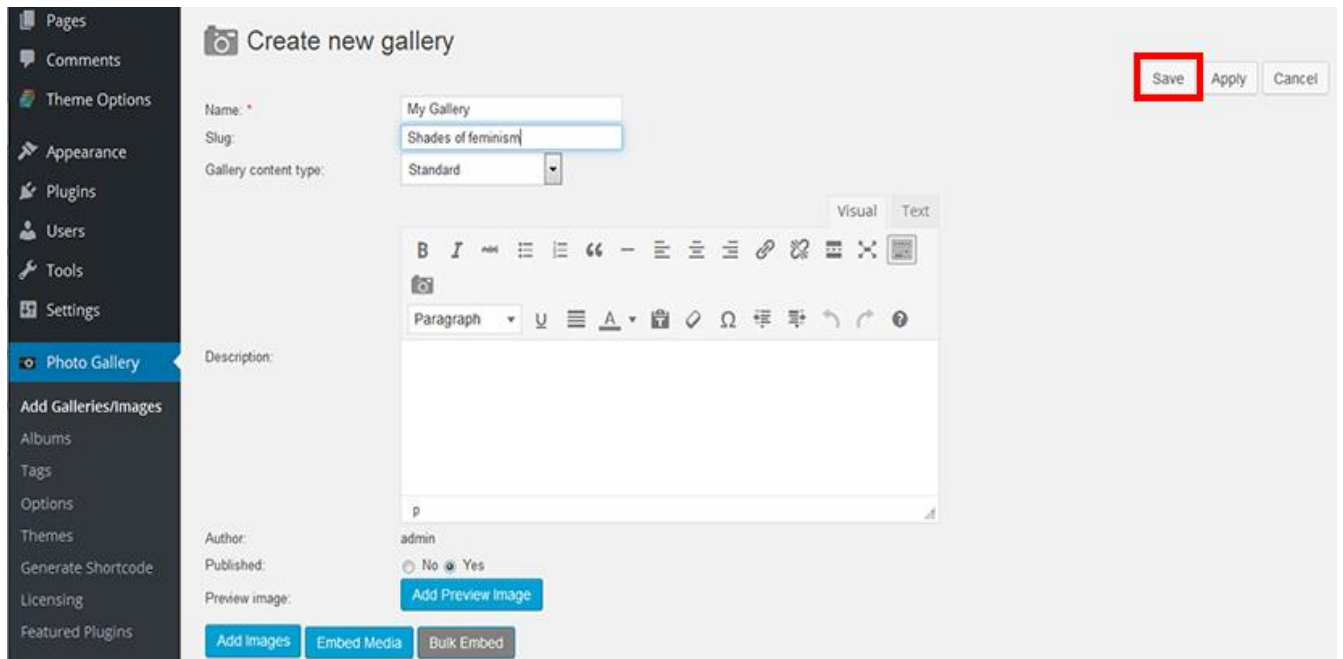


Figure 5.16- Creating gallery

You can display the galleries on the pages, posts and widgets. You can upload JPG, JPEG, PNG and GIF FIGURES and can set a watermark to prevent them being used anonymously. You can customize your images as well (see figure 5.17).

[Add Images](#)
[Embed Media](#)
[Bulk Embed](#)

Select All
 [Show order column](#)
[Set Watermark](#)
[Resize](#)
[Recreate Thumbnail](#)
[Reset](#)
[Add tag](#)
[Publish](#)
[Unpublish](#)
[Delete](#)

Filename:

#	Thumbnail	Filename	Alt/Title	Description	Tags	Published	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageI 10 June 2015, 10:17 1200 x 800 px 282 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageI		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageH 10 June 2015, 10:17 1200 x 800 px 542 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageH		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageG 10 June 2015, 10:17 1200 x 800 px 602 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageG		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageF 10 June 2015, 10:07 1200 x 800 px 251 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageF		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageE 10 June 2015, 10:07 1200 x 800 px 457 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageE		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageD 10 June 2015, 10:07 1200 x 800 px 467 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageD		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageC 10 June 2015, 10:07 1200 x 800 px 399 KB JPEG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageC		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageB 10 June 2015, 10:07 1200 x 800 px 467 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageB		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete
+ <input type="checkbox"/>		ImageA 10 June 2015, 10:07 1200 x 800 px 501 KB JPG Crop Rotate Reset	ImageA		<input type="button" value="Add tag"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delete

Figure 5.17- Adding images in the gallery

Create Pages for your website

Now, we'll add pages to our site. We want to create four pages that are- Home, Gallery, Blog, and Contact Me.

Display Your Gallery

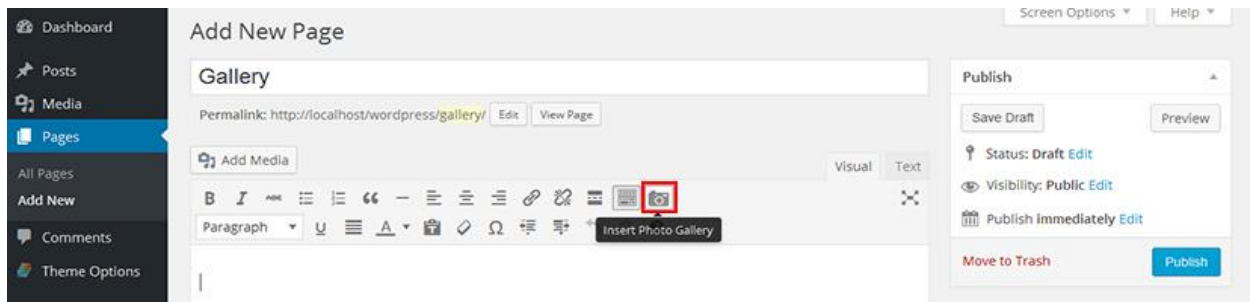


Figure 5.18- Icon of Photo Gallery plugin

You can add the photo gallery to the “Gallery Page” while creating it. A new button, which is called gallery button, gets created in the page/post editor when the plugin is installed (see figure 5.18).

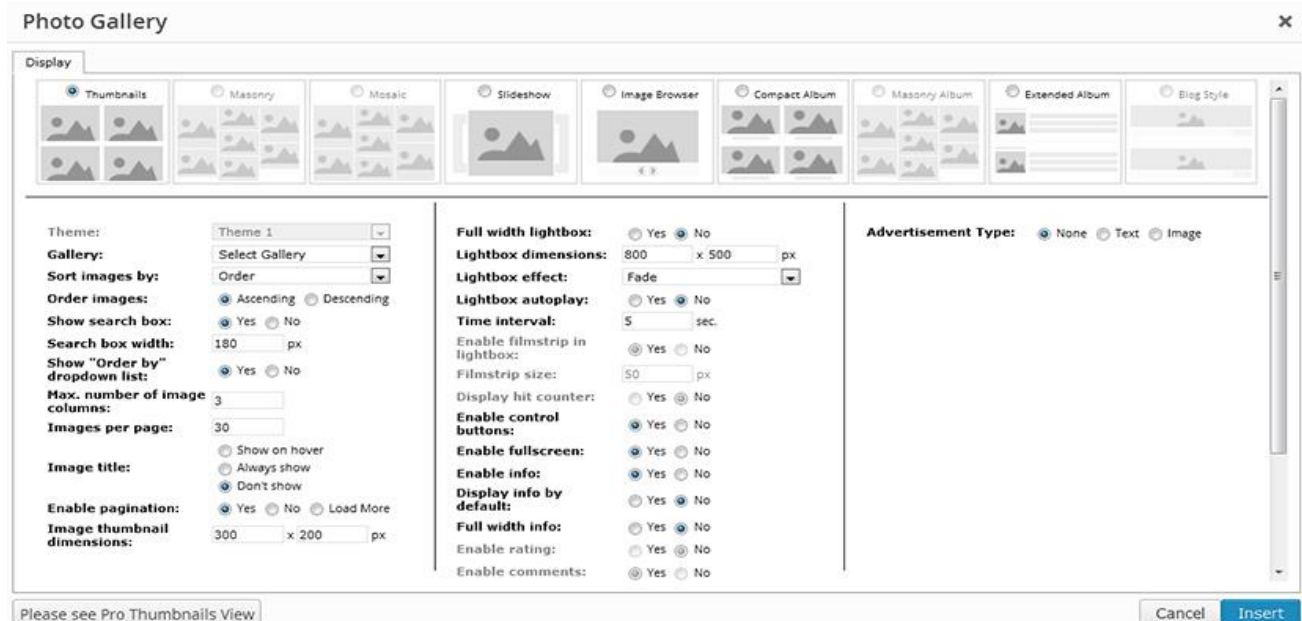


Figure 5.19-Thumbnail settings of images

Clicking this button, we are prompted to configure display settings, like, number of columns, thumbnail dimensions, light box dimension and effects, control buttons, and more (see figure 5.19). After configuring the gallery display options, press “Insert” gallery, and publish the page.

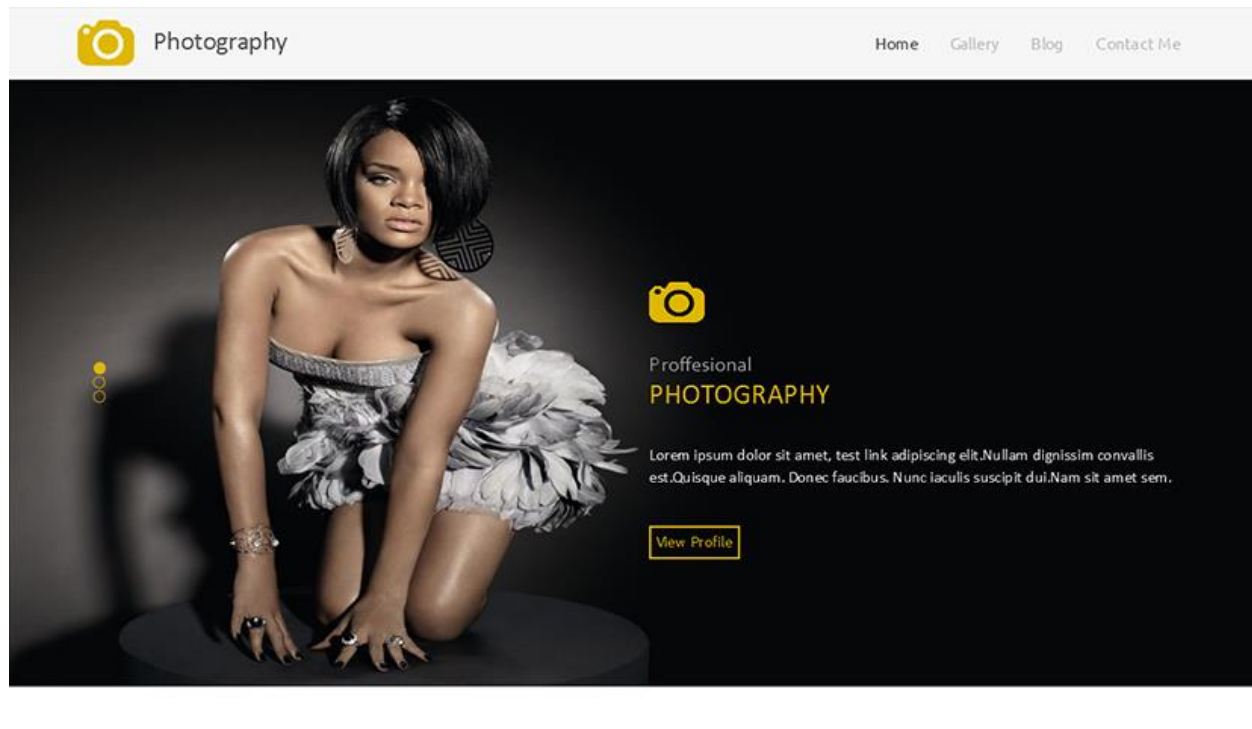


Figure 5.20-Home page of photography website

And, we are done. Our photography website is now ready. This is the final output of our efforts. You are seeing above the homepage of the website, which includes the slideshow. Below is the view of our site’s gallery page (see figure 5.21).

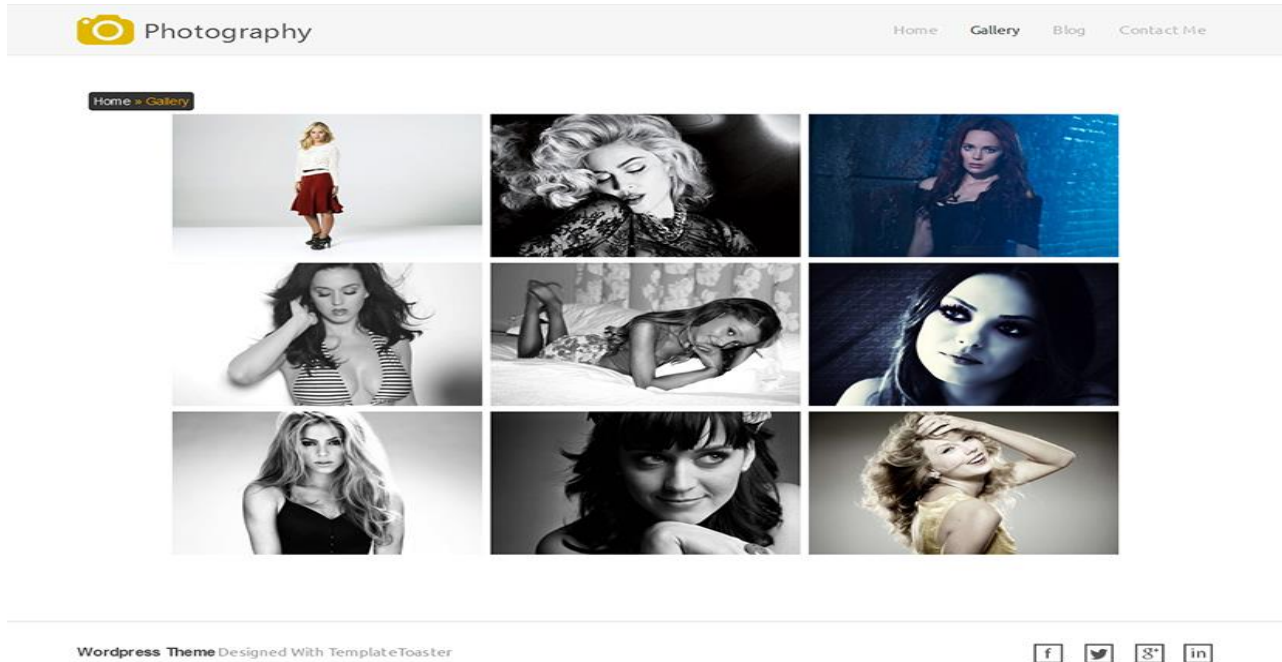


Figure 5.21-Photo gallery

Following image shows the view when a photograph is selected from the gallery (see figure 5.22). We used TemplateToaster generated theme and Photo Gallery plugin to craft a portfolio site. So, we are sure that the portfolio can be seen by the viewers on the smartphones and tablets. TemplateToaster generates bootstrap-powered themes, which ensures the flawless responsiveness of the sites. Hence, it enables the developers and designers to create professional themes and templates in less time. The Photo Gallery is also a responsive plugin. The plugin allows to create unlimited responsive galleries to the user.

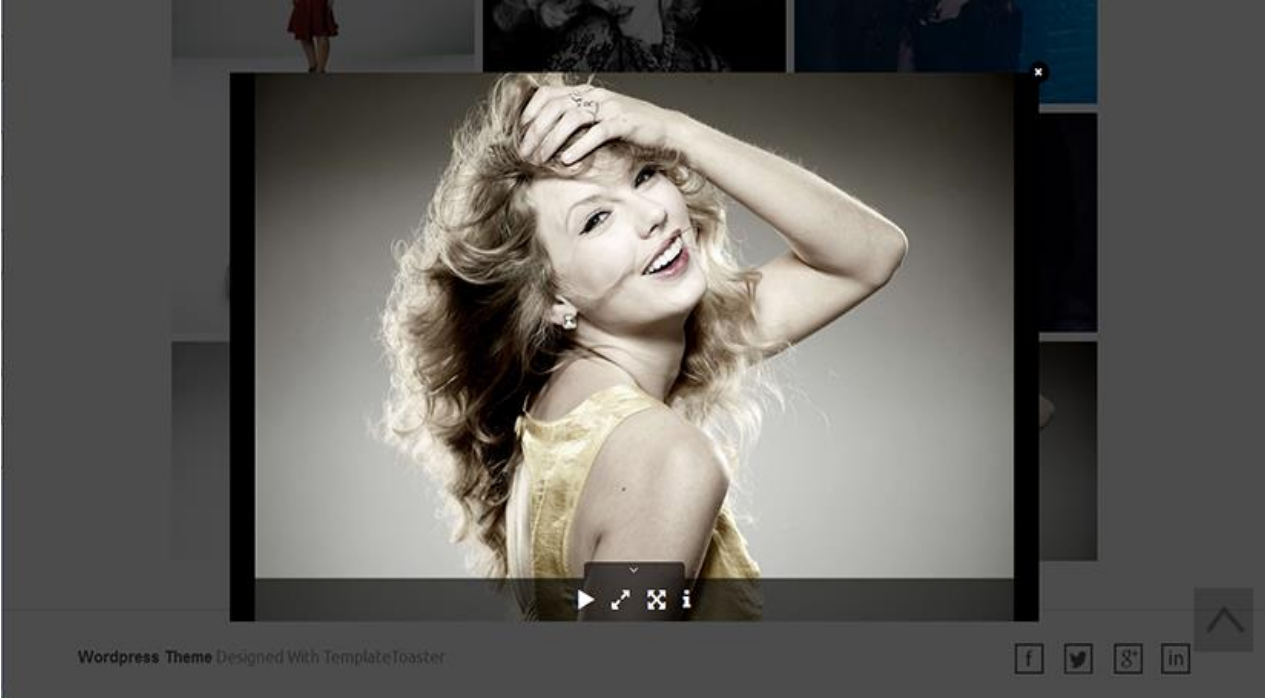


Figure 5.22- View of single image from photo gallery

PART 2

ESSENTIAL PLUGINS FOR A WORDPRESS WEBSITE

Chapter 6 : Essential Plugins for a Wordpress Website



Plugins of following types should be included in your website.

- **Cache Plugin**
- **Security plugin**
- **Antispam plugin**
- **SEO Plugin**
- **Ecommerce plugin**

One Cache plugin, one security plugin, one Antispam spam, and one SEO plugin, such four plugins should be there in every website. Apart from these four types, an Ecommerce plugin is used by most of the WordPress powered website, which is required only when you are going to create an online shop.

Cache Plugin

How much time a website takes to load on the visitor's device is something that matters greatly. This plugin helps to reduce the load time. It creates a static copy of the website on server, which is instantly served to the user without executing PHP code. WordPress repository has many cache plugins. Most popular caching plugins among those are W3 Total Cache, and WP Super Cache. Both plugins have advanced caching approach, but, Where WP Super Cache is easy to configure, W3 Total Cache boasts the complex settings.

Security Plugin

Security plugins are expected to provide security from brute force hacks, and do scan and prevent from vulnerabilities and malware. So, to immune your website from hacking and malicious code injection, you should install a security plugin. Popular security plugins in the WordPress repository are, Sucuri security, Wordfence security, BulletProof security, iThemes security. All of these have a great caliber of keeping websites secure.

Antispam plugin

An Antispam plugin will provide the safety to the blogs against spam. If you are going to maintain a blog in your website, then you will need a **plugin to keep the spam at bay**. Akismet, Antispam Bee, and WP Spamshield are heavily used by WordPress websites. You can stop the spam commentators and bots from posting rubbish comments on your blog posts, with the help of a plugin.

SEO Plugin

An SEO plugin will help you in **optimizing your website for search engines**. WordPress SEO by Yoast is very popular plugin with over one million downloads from WordPress repository. Yoast helps you writing optimum page titles and Meta tags and give keyword recommendations to you for writing better content. Plus, it also does page analysis and gives SEO suggestion to you. All in One SEO is another solution of SEO. It has different configuration settings, which are very easy to do. Unlike Yoast, it automatically generates Meta tags and automatically optimize the titles.

Ecommerce Plugin

You can turn WordPress into your eCommerce solution too. An eCommerce plugin will help you **turn your website into an online shop**. WordPress repository consists so many eCommerce plugins that are helpful for integrating shopping cart to the websites. WooCommerce, WP eCommerce, MarketPress and iThemesExchange all are nice plugins. But, the WooCommerce has more popularity than rest of the plugins. It is absolutely free to use and has very nice features.

Chapter 7 : Improve Performance of Your Wordpress Website: Cache Plugins



A cache plugin can certainly improve the performance of your website. A typical cache plugin creates a static copy of the dynamic website and saves on the server, therefore, when a user again sends the request for website, the website is immediately served from the cache. In this way, processing load on server reduces thereby website's performance increases.

Some smart plugins do more than creating the static pages, they offer options to minify and compress the JavaScript and CSS files for optimizing the weight of web pages, as a result, page load time significantly decreases.

Besides using a cache plugin, you should use an optimized theme for your site. WordPress Codex also suggests to optimize the theme for your site. If a theme isn't optimized, then, it will put extra load on server causing the delay in serving pages.

Now, let us discuss about such smart WordPress cache plugins that can greatly enhance the page speed of a website. These plugins are free to download from WordPress repository.

[WP Super Cache](#)

WP Super Cache is the most downloaded caching plugin in the WordPress repository. Perhaps, the reason is easy configuration. The plugin employs sophisticated caching techniques and serves you with best of its capabilities even if you are using a low resources web host.

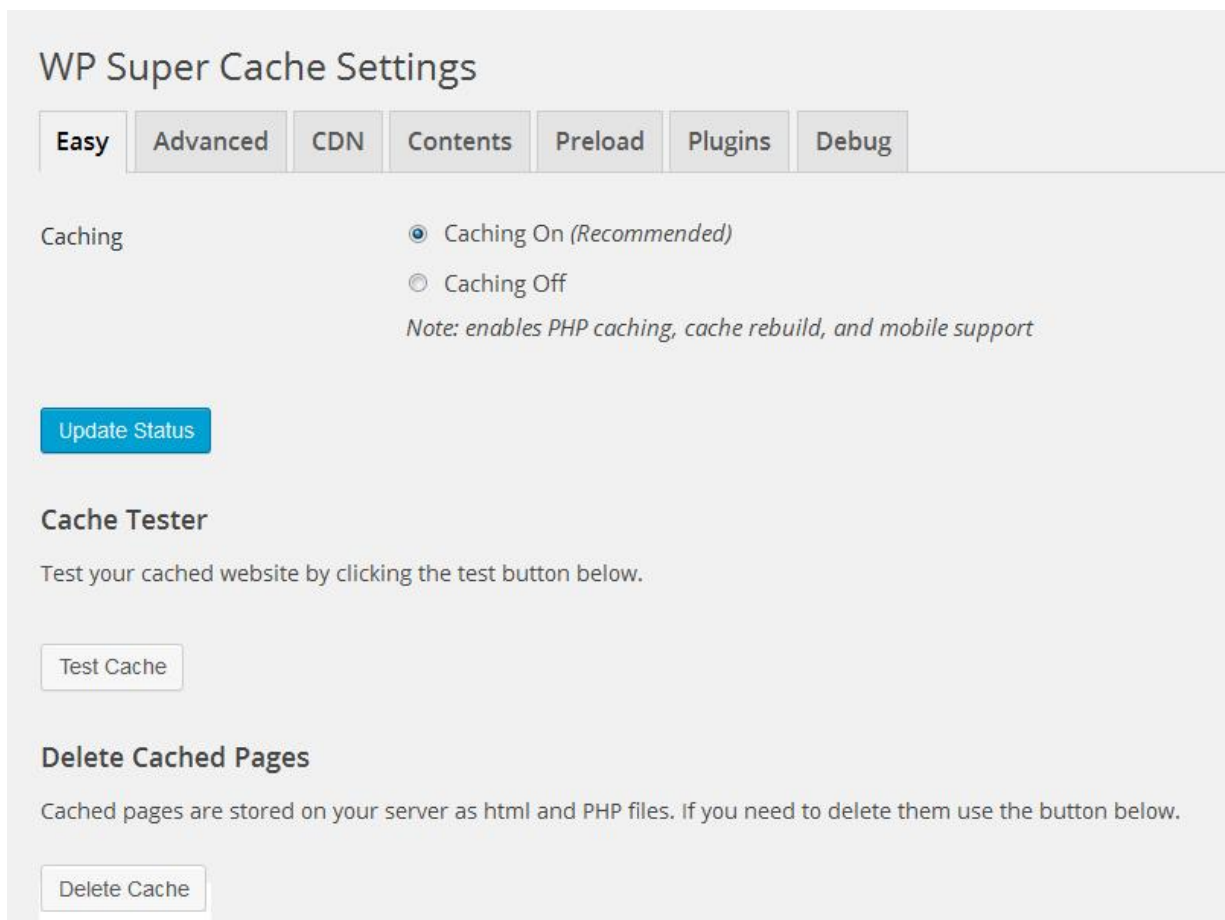


Figure 7.1- WP Super Cache settings page

The settings are divided into seven sections (see figure 7.1). The plugin doesn't start caching your pages automatically when it is installed/activated. You need

to choose “caching on” from the Easy tab (see figure 7.1). Then you can view the cached content from Content Tab.

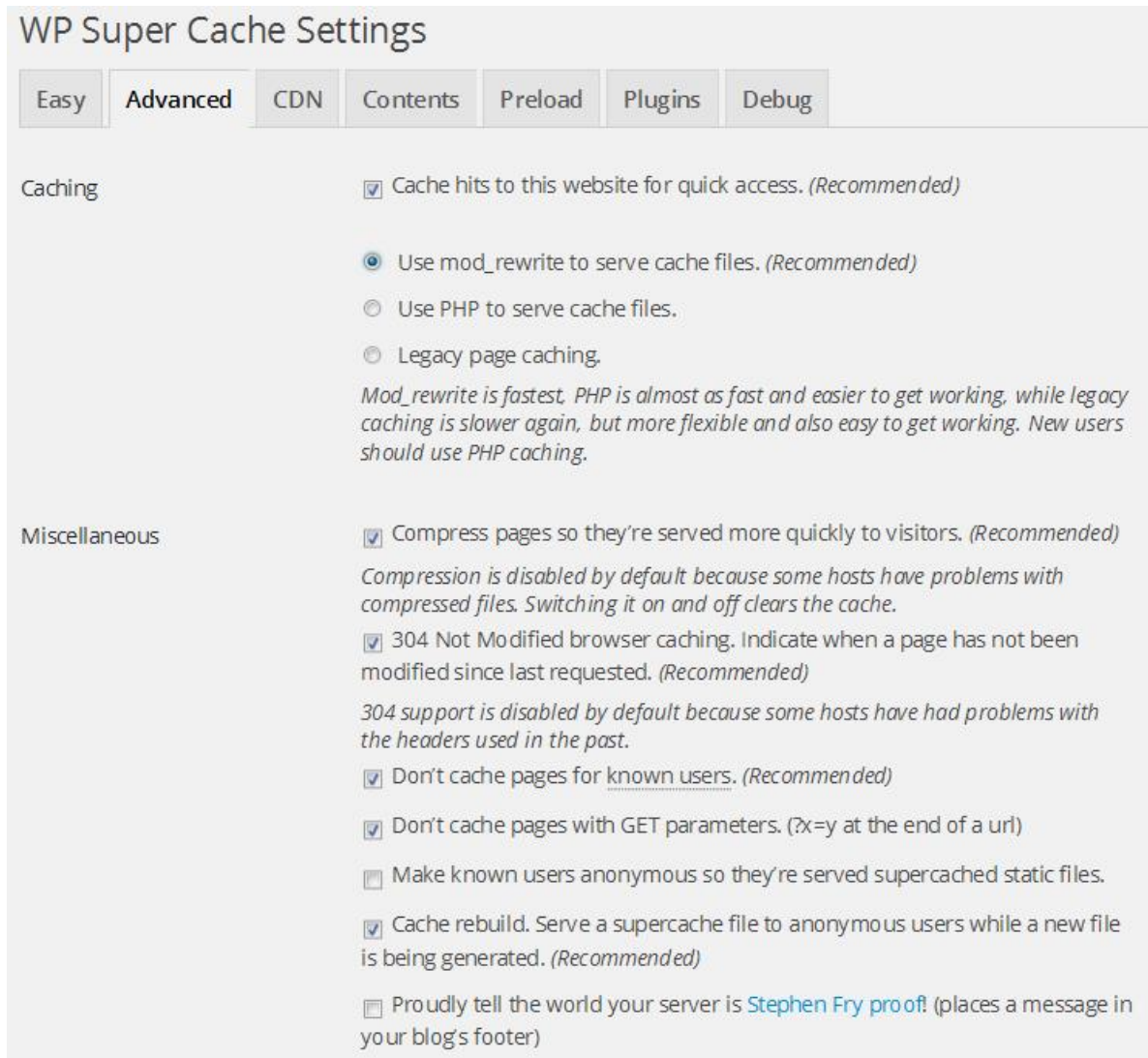


Figure 7.2- Advanced caching options given by WP Super Cache plugin

The advanced tab includes the options to configure advanced cache settings (see figure 7.2). You can configure preferable mode in which you would like to deliver the static files to the visitors. Three options are given for delivering static files- mod_rewrite, PHP and legacy caching.

More settings such as compress web pages, disable caching the web pages for known users, and mobile device support, can also be enabled from the same tab (see figure 7.2). Plus, you can set the cache timeout and can schedule the garbage collection of stale static files on the server.

Apart from providing such settings to the users, it also supports the CDN.

Special cache rebuild feature

The plugin has a distinguished option of “cache rebuild”, which doesn’t let the plugin to remove the cached static files even if the files have been updated, until the fresh static files are cached on the server.

Active Installs- 1,000,000+

Rating- 4.3/5

W3 Total Cache

W3 Total Cache comes second in number of downloads, but offers more settings for web caching in comparison with WP Super Cache. As you activate the plugin, it creates a new menu called Performance. You can set the options of this plugin from that menu.

From General Settings, you may simply enable all the feature being offered to you such as page cache, database cache, the object cache, Browser cache, minify, user agents, and CDN(see figure 7.3). W3 Total Cache will then work according to default settings in this case.

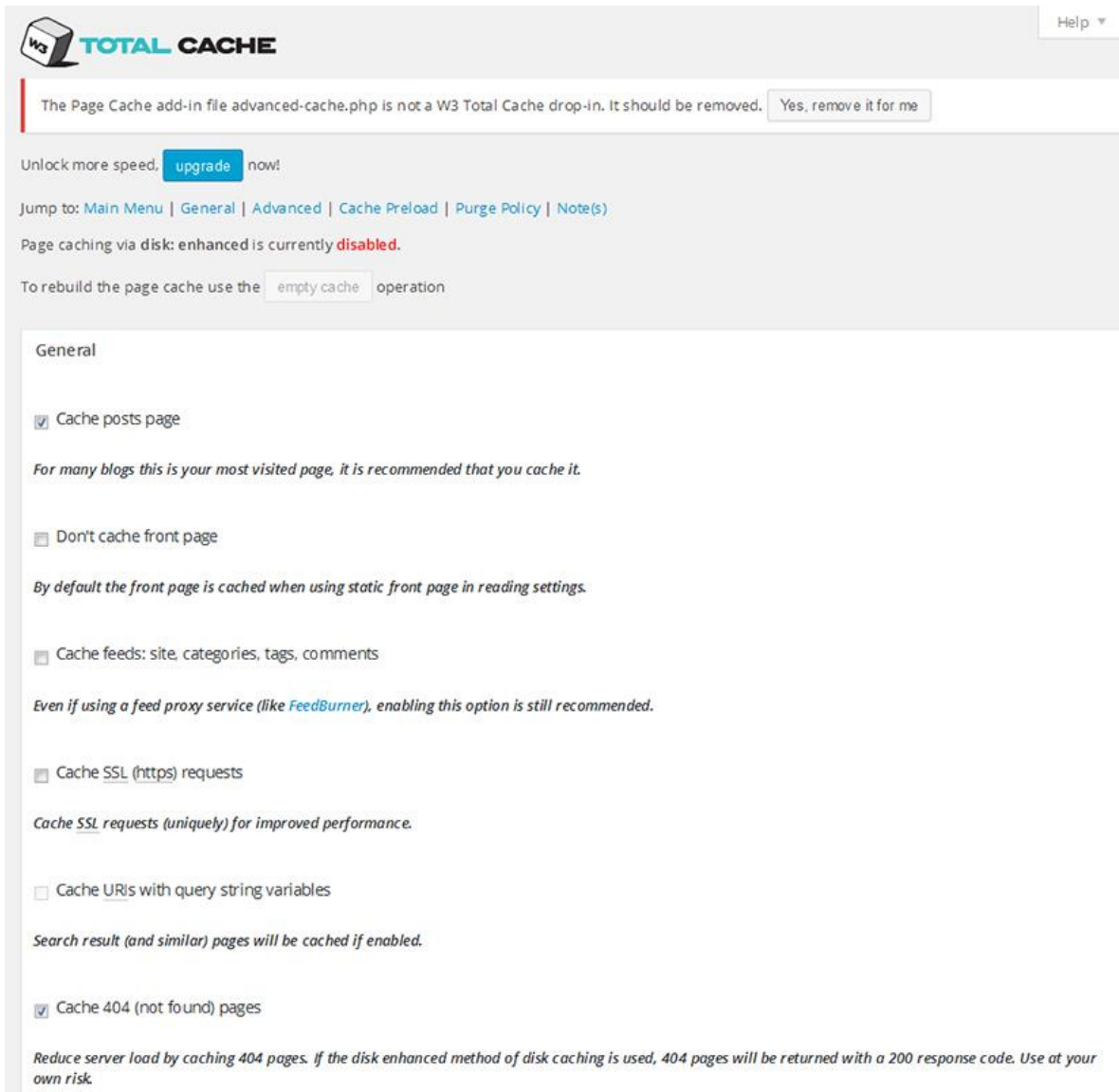


Figure 7.3- General settings of W3 Total Cache Plugin

But, if you want to configure custom settings for each type of cache feature in detail, then select the respective feature from the dashboard. The number of options will be massive for each type of cache. For example, there are more than two dozens of options to configure on “Page Cache” page. It allows to specify the pages and feed to purge when posts are created, edited, or comments posted and purge limit. Also, you can select the user roles for whom you don’t want to deliver the cached files.

Minify settings are also vast. W3 Total cache can minify as well as combine the Javascript files, and CSS files. It also has an option to enable the GZIP compression. You may enable cache for SSL requests and query string URLs also.

It also supports shared hosting, virtual private /dedicated servers and clusters. Also, it supports extension like, CloudFlare, FeedBurner, and SEO plugin by Yoast.

Since, W3 Total Cache provides so many options. It is wise to not to mess with all the options if you are not very techie. Simply, stick to the default settings in that case.

Active Installs- 900,000+

Rating- 4.3/5

WP Fastest Cache

WP Fastest Cache is quite simple to configure. You need to just tick the checkboxes for configuring it. It implicitly deploys mod_rewrite to deliver static pages to visitors.

You can enable HTML and CSS minify for reducing the file sizes (see figure 7.4). It also offers an option to combine the JS files and CSS files, which reduces the number of HTTP requests from the server, and hence website performance gets amplified. You may also enable the GZIP compression for reducing file sizes more (see figure 7.4).

WP Fastest Cache Options

Settings Delete Cache Cache Timeout Image Optimization Premium Exclude CDN

Cache System: Enable

Logged-in Users: Don't show the cached version for logged-in users

Mobile: Don't show the cached version for desktop to mobile devices

Mobile Theme: Create cache for mobile theme

New Post: Clear all cache files when a post or page is published

Minify HTML: i You can decrease the size of page

Minify HTML Plus: More powerful minify html

Minify Css: i You can decrease the size of css files

Minify Css Plus: More powerful minify css

Minify Js: You can decrease the size of js files

Combine Css: i Reduce HTTP requests through combined css files

Combine Js: i Reduce HTTP requests through combined js files

Combine Js Plus: Minify the combined js files

Gzip: i Reduce the size of files sent from your server

Browser Caching: i Reduce page load times for repeat visitors

Language:

Figure 7.4- Settings page of WP Fastest Cache Plugin

For cache clearance, you can set the cache timeout. Your cache will be cleared automatically once the time you've set out. Moreover, if you want that a particular page of your website should not be cached by the

plugins, you can use “Exclude” option. WP Fastest cache also supports SSL and CDN.

Zen Cache

Zen Cache is another simple to configure caching plugin. It offers configurations in two sections, basic and advanced (see figure 7.5). Advanced settings can be custom configured by the techie users. For non-techie users pre-configured settings are already done.

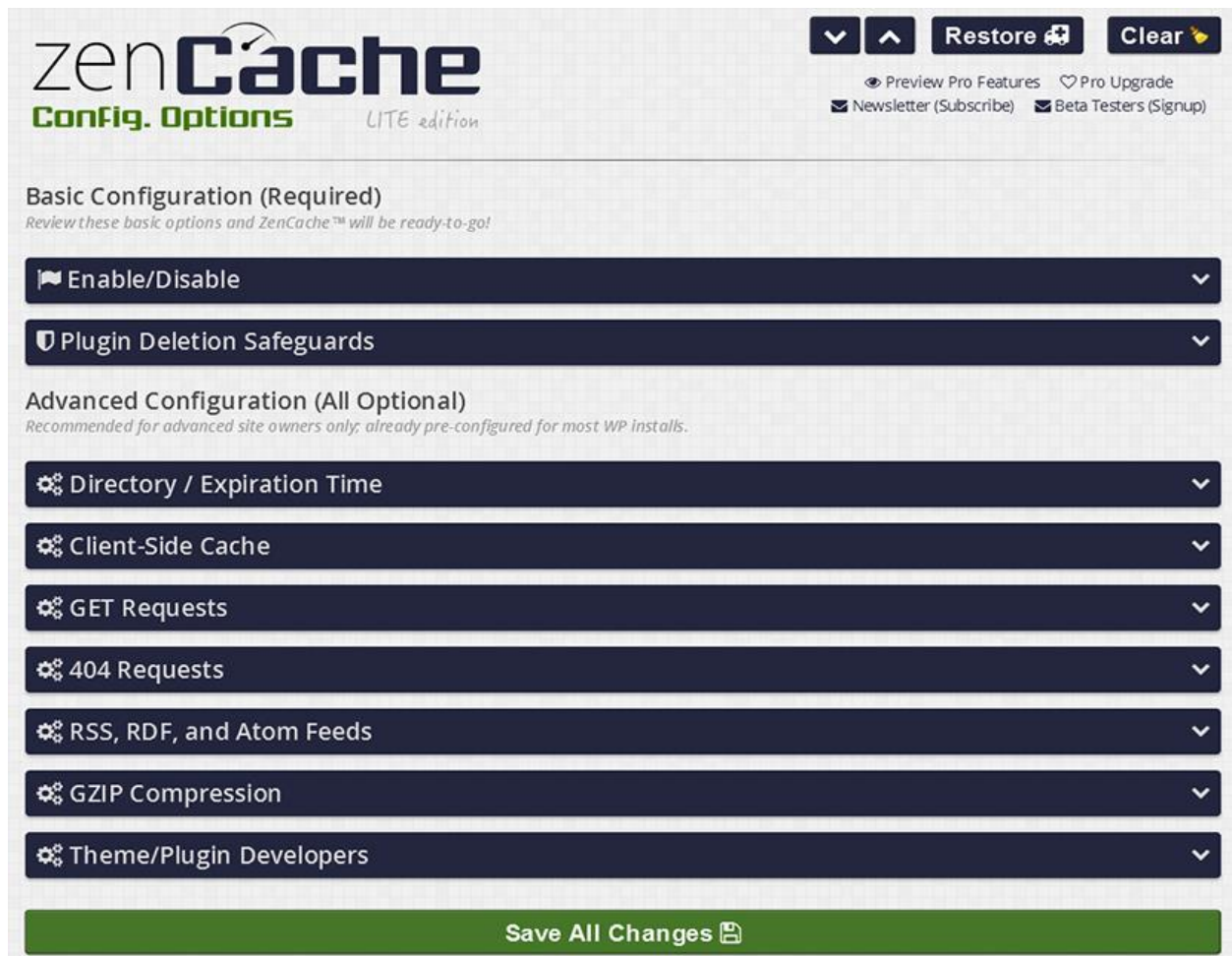


Figure 7.5-Settings page of Zen Cache plugin

The distinguished feature of Zen Cache is its documentation. As you click through an option for configuration, Zen Cache comprehensively describes you that what does the selected option do.

Anyways, advanced settings lets you enable/disable caching for query string requests. You can also enable caching for 404 requests so that always a cached page will be served for every 404 request.

Zen Cache caches everything in a website excluding administrative and login pages. It automatically detects if a user requires a cached page or not, therefore logged in users are not served the cached pages from Zen Cache. It gives the options to enable GZIP compression, which is though optional but hugely recommended. Well, if you are seeking to know whether Zen Cache supports or not, it absolutely supports CDN but in premium version, not in free one.

We wouldn't miss out letting you know that Zen Cache is the new name of Quick Cache. The developers notifies that the Quick Cache will no longer be supported by them and the Zen Cache is its replacement.

Active Installs- 30,000+

Rating-4.8/5

[Hyper Cache](#)

For configuring Hyper Cache settings, go to Settings tab of your WordPress dashboard. It offers separate cache configurations for mobiles. It has a simpler configuration settings area divided into four sections named as General, Bypasses, Mobile, and CDN.

The General section offers you the options to define the validity of cached pages (see figure 7.6). You can also enable the page compression and browser caching.

Besides simple page compression, you can even enable on-the-fly compression, which speeds up the FTP transfer for non-cached pages. Hyper Cache even offers to cache the web pages for HTTP and HTTPS separately. Well, 404 page caching is also supported by this plugin.

Talking about cache bypasses, many things can be bypassed, such as, home page, blog main feeds, cookies, URLs (user defined), user agents, and comment authors (see the Bypasses tab in figure 7.6).

The third tab relates to cache settings for mobile only (see the Mobile tab in figure 7.6). Hyper Cache gives off “working mode” to choose whether you want to bypass caching for mobile devices or use a separate cache or want to use standard cache.

Two more settings you may configure under “Mobile” section are: selecting different mobile theme and defining mobile user agents.

Active Installs- 60,000+

Rating- 4.7/5

General	Bypasses	Mobile	CDN
Disable translations	<input type="checkbox"/> Disable	<i>If you want to see this panel with the original labels, you can disable the translation.</i>	
Cached pages will be valid for	<input type="text" value="24"/> hours	<i>0 means forever.</i>	
Enable compression	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>If you note odd characters when enabled, disable it since your server is already compressing the pages.</i>	
Enable on-the-fly compression	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Enable on the fly compression for non cached pages.</i>	
When the home is refreshed, refresh even the	<input type="text" value="0"/> latest post	<i>The number of latest posts to invalidate when the home is invalidated.</i>	
When a post is edited	<input type="checkbox"/> clean archives (categories, tags, ..., but not the home) <input type="checkbox"/> clean the home		
When a post receives a comment	<input type="checkbox"/> clean archives (categories, tags, ..., but not the home) <input type="checkbox"/> clean the home		
Cache folder	<input type="text"/> path on disk	<i>Leave blank for default value. You can even evaluate to leave this blank and create a symbolic link <code>wp-content/cache/hyper-cache -> [your folder]</code>. A wrong configuration can destroy your blog.</i>	
Next autodean will run in	<input type="checkbox"/> enable it (will run again in 3 minutes)	<i>The autodean process removes old files to save disk space. If you enable the "serve expired pages to bots", you should disable the auto clean.</i>	
Allow browser caching	<input type="checkbox"/> Enable with an expire time of <input type="text" value="24"/> hours	<i>Lets browser to use a local copy of the page if newer than specified. Attention: the browser may not reload a page from the blog showing not updated content.</i>	
HTTPS	<input type="text" value="Build a separated cache"/>	<i>Pages are usually different when served in HTTP and HTTPS.</i>	
Use readfile()	<input type="checkbox"/> Enable	<i>Use the PHP function readfile() to send back a page. It should be better than the file_get_contents() actually used.</i>	
Serve expired pages to bots	<input type="checkbox"/> Enable	<i>Serve a cache page even if expired when requested by bots.</i>	

Figure 7.6-Settings page of Hyper Cache plugin

Suggestion and Recommendation

All of the five plugins are truly advanced, we can certainly say that the above discussed plugins are quite intelligent as they all offer options for compression and minifying the web pages beyond just creating the static copies. Telling you one name that is best among these five will not be fair, since every plugin deploys its best technique for caching the web pages.

Our suggestion depends on which type of user you are and what is the size of traffic your website gets every day. Our recommendations go with WP Super Cache and W3 Super Cache owing to a good number of settings available for configuration.

For Techie users

W3 Total Cache is suggested for the techie users. The plugin offers so many features and in depth settings for each feature. Only technically adept users can configure each type of cache features. Moreover, such comprehensive configurations are required only for very advanced sites, which get a huge traffic every day, and where more users play role in managing a site.

Non Techie users

WP Super Cache can be configured by the general users by themselves, since it offers relatively less configurations than W3 Total Cache. But, they are quite advanced, so you don't feel like your site's performance is lagging. During selecting cache options, WP Super Cache clearly sates the recommendations. If you don't know what configurations will be right for your site, then you should stick to the recommendation.

Chapter 8 : Wordpress Security Plugins



The WordPress is a super easy and flexible platform. It was absolutely a blogging platform at the time of its inception, but, it grew with the passage of time and has become such a platform that can be used for developing all kinds of websites. There is no type of website that you can't build with WordPress. It is all because of the plugins, which make WordPress super flexible.

There are several types of vulnerabilities associated with a website. You never know, who is conspiring for hacking your website. A hacker can leverage the advantage of even granular vulnerabilities for ambushing your website. So, you should always be careful about the security of your website. WordPress websites hold the advantages that whatever little or big functionality they require, there is a plugin for that. Same is in case of the security. If you want to ensure the safety and security of your WordPress website, you can simply

install a plugin. Continue reading to know about the best of the WordPress security plugins available in the WordPress repository.

Feature Comparison of WordPress Security Plugins

In the WordPress plugin repository, there are five plugins heavily capable and popular for website security. These are Wordfence, iThemes security, All in One WP Security, Sucuri Security and Acunetix WP Security.

Here is the feature comparison chart of these plugins.

Table 8.1 - Features Comparison table of WordPress Security Plugins

Features	Wordfence	All in One WP Security	iThemes Security	Sucuri Security	Acunetix WP Security
Scanning for suspicious code in files & Malware	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malware Scanning scheduling	Yes (only in Premium version)	This plugin uses its own external scan service which automatically scans the site once in a day.	Yes (only in Premium version)		
Firewall	Yes	Yes		Yes(paid add on)	
Enforce strong password	Yes	Yes	Yes		
File Monitoring	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Folder/file access permissions	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes(only suggests)

Brute Force Protection with Login Lockdown	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Two Factor Authentication for Sign-in	Yes (only in Premium version)		Yes (only in Premium version)		
User Agents Blocking	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Who Is Lookup Support	Yes	Yes			
IP Blocking	Yes (IPv6 compatible)	Yes			
Country Blocking	Yes (only in Premium version)				
Multisite Compatibility	Yes				Yes
Automatic database Backup scheduling		Yes			Yes
DNS Security Monitor	Yes				
Force logout of users		Yes			
Disable right click and text selection on web page		Yes			
Multilingual		Yes (11 Languages)			

Wordfence Security

Wordfence security is the most popular security plugin. It leads the download with over 900,000 downloads by now. Of course, the reason is its credibility. It gives the **live traffic** report about what is happening on your website. You can see that how a human and a crawler visited your site, by whom 404 error is being generated, and who is failing sign-in even after several attempts. Hence, you can immediately realize the conspiracy and can take action (block) for preventing your website from being hacked. The blocking options given by Wordfence are applicable for IPs, countries, user agents, and URLs (referrer websites).

It shows you the human as well as the crawler activities on your website. It has a **password audit feature** (premium version only), which is manually driven. When user drives the audit, Wordfence inspects the strength of the user's password by simulating a password attack on the website, and sends the alert regarding password strength on user email.

For ensuring that only genuine user could get into the dashboard, Wordfence has **cell phone sign-in** option (premium version only). This is actually a two factor authentication method of providing secure access to the user account. Provide your cell phone number to Wordfence and activate the cellphone sign-in option, whenever you will try to login to your account, Wordfence will send a verification code, which is to use for signing-in. You can enable this option for all the admin level users of your website. Wordfence also has Whois lookup support. Using Whois, you can get the owner information of a domain or a suspicious IP.

With Wordfence, you can make the scan schedule (option available in premium version) for your website or you can leave it on the plugin to run the scanning automatically. It **also scans the posts and comments** on the website. Often, there is a great risk that someone leaves a blacklisted/malware URL in the comments. If there remains such URL that is in Google's malware list, then, your website can also get listed as malicious by Google. Therefore, this feature of Wordfence is also of great worth.

[All in One WP Security](#)

All in One Security plugin is a rich one in terms of security features. It provides brute force security, database security, and file system security. **For brute force protection, this plugin employs a distinctive approach.** The plugin employs cookie based login access for brute force prevention. In this, you are needed to specify a secret word to the plugin. Using this word, it will automatically generate a special URL whose cookie will get deposited on your system. You can login to the dashboard as usual because of the stored cookies, but another person who doesn't know the special URL will not be able to attempt a login.

This plugin allows to change the default database prefix. You should change the default table prefixes to prevent hackers leverage the advantage for injecting malicious SQL. You can also schedule the database backup. The backup is sent on user specified email.

For file system security, the plugin allows to set the secured file permission within its interface. You can even disable PHP file editing, plus, deny the access to readme.html, license.txt and wp-config.php. You can run scan for file change detection, malware and database with the help of this plugin.

This plugin help you keep the bird's eye view on users' activities as it maintains the log of users that when they visited, what IP they used, date and time of log in and log out. With the help of this log, you can enable blockings for IPs and user agents.

[iThemes Security](#)

iThemes is another powerful security solution. With the help of this plugin, you can prevent your website from brute force attacks and 404 attacks. The plugin maintains the log of user activity, so you can know that who attempted the invalid logins, file changes, and 404 intrusions on your website. Having this information, you can ban the conspirators. There is a quirky option given by iThemes that is you can ban an IP from where the login attempt is made by "admin" username.

iThemes can permanently ban an IP according to the setting you would have done. The plugin can automatically take the database backup after set intervals. You can store the backup on your local system as well as you can get it in your e-mail. **There is a distinctive option in iThemes that is "Away Mode"**, activating this mode, you can disable the access to the dashboard for a set time. You can enable this mode for the time of day when you don't need to login to the dashboard.

You can configure iThemes to send you notification if any unauthorized change is detected in the files. You can do even more for preventing files being changed as iThemes gives the options to restrict the access (read/write permission) to all the sensitive folders and files.

The hackers often apply the brute force when they know login URL. iThemes gives an option to change your login URL, you are required to provide a slug for

changing the URL. When the attacker wouldn't know the login URL, it couldn't even attempt to crack into your dashboard.

Besides this, you can disable the login error message. The error message might help a hacker to intrude into the dashboard of the site.

Sucuri Security

The Sucuri plugin makes it to the list of best security plugins as it has very nice security features. This plugin monitors each and every activity done on the website. It keeps track of every logged-in user and what changes have been committed by the logged-in user. It has file integrity monitoring option, which detects if there is any problem with the files.

Sometimes, what the hacker does, they cunningly infect the websites with malicious/blacklisted URL such that owners don't get the clue that something is wrong with their websites. Sucuri has a blacklist monitoring feature, which comes from some big blacklisting engines, is helpful for those website owners who don't know what's wrong has gone with their sites. The plugin detects whether the sites have been listed by blacklist engines or not.

This plugin recommends you to harden those configurations which hackers often see as a golden opportunity to intrude the website. With one click, you can correct those settings.

The distinctive feature of Sucuri is post hack security actions. If you feel like your website has been hacked, then, Sucuri will help you take these actions- use security keys, reset user's passwords and reset plugins.

[Acunetix WordPress Security](#)

Compared to above plugins, Acunetix has less features, yet it is a nice plugin. The hackers can leverage any little loophole in a website. There are some things on your website that seems you little but could be advantageous for the hackers, such as, WordPress version display in the source, the default (WP_) prefix with database tables, file update notification display to all users, WordPress login error display, PHP and database errors, etc. This plugin allows to close these loopholes. Acunetix also allows you take the database backups of your website. One more feature of this plugin is “live traffic” report. Live traffic report gives the information that from where your website is visited, at what time it is visited and what is the user agent.

Conclusion

If you think that only highly popular websites stay the target of hackers, then, you are wrong. The hackers don't show their mercy on the lesser known websites. They just know taking advantage of the vulnerabilities of the websites, whether they are more popular or lesser popular. The security plugins help the website administrators to remove the vulnerabilities of the websites. All of the above described plugins are very helpful in protecting WordPress websites from malicious attacks and hacking attempts, but the winner could be one.

According to the feature comparison chart, the Wordfence and All in One WP security are close competitors. Both have very nice security features, yet the Wordfence wins the battle. Wordfence has more options, which are very advanced. It can run automatic scan, it has advanced live traffic tool, it scans the

posts and comments too, protects a website from malware as well as backdoors, it blocks an attacker in real time for all the websites.

The real time blocking means, if a website using Wordfence security is attacked, then, that the attacker is automatically blocked from all the websites using this plugin. Plus, it gives an extra advantage to the user by enhancing the website's performance owing to falcon engine. The Falcon engine is the fastest WordPress caching engine deployed by this plugin. Wordfence also supports WooCommerce and other major plugins.

But, if you want a completely free solution, then, all in One WP Security is a better option.

Chapter 9 : WordPress Settings and Plugins | Website Comment Spam Security



The problem of spamming is as old as the age of blogging. We can't eliminate this problem outright by any mean, we only can prevent our websites from being projected by the spammers. WordPress offers us many plugins for letting us do so with its internal settings and third party plugins. Such an availability of plugins leaves people in fix of choosing the right plugin(s) for their websites. So, it is important to know the needs before you decide on using anti-spam plugins. The spam prevention ways differs for low traffic blogs and high traffic blogs.

For Startup blogs that get low traffic

If you are taking a start with your blog posts, then simply WordPress discussion settings will solve your purpose. From WordPress settings, you can choose an option that will send all comments on your blogs for moderation and it will be

up to you to delete or approve the comments. You may easily moderate all comments coming on blog posts because they will be few in number, so you may or may not need to use a plugin in addition to the WordPress's anti-spam settings.

WordPress's anti-spam settings

The WordPress itself provides the mechanism to fight with spam. You'll have to make discussion settings correct in order to make a shield against irritating spam comments.

Go to Settings --> Discussion

You will see all the options the WordPress provides to protect the posts from spam comments. By default, WordPress allows to make comments on the posts from the readers.



The screenshot shows the 'Other comment settings' section of the WordPress Discussion settings. It includes several checkboxes and dropdown menus:

- Comment author must fill out name and e-mail
- Users must be registered and logged in to comment
- Automatically close comments on articles older than 14 days
- Enable threaded (nested) comments 2 levels deep
- Break comments into pages with 50 top level comments per page and the last page displayed by default
- Comments should be displayed with the newer comments at the top of each page

Figure 9.1- WordPress comment settings

From the “**other comment settings**”, you can make it necessary for the readers to fill out their names and e-mails to able to make comments (see figure 9.1). Plus, you may select the option to automatically close the comments after a certain time, WordPress doesn't do this by default, so you will have to choose

this option (see figure 9.1). If you keep the comments open for long, the chances of getting spammed comments increase.

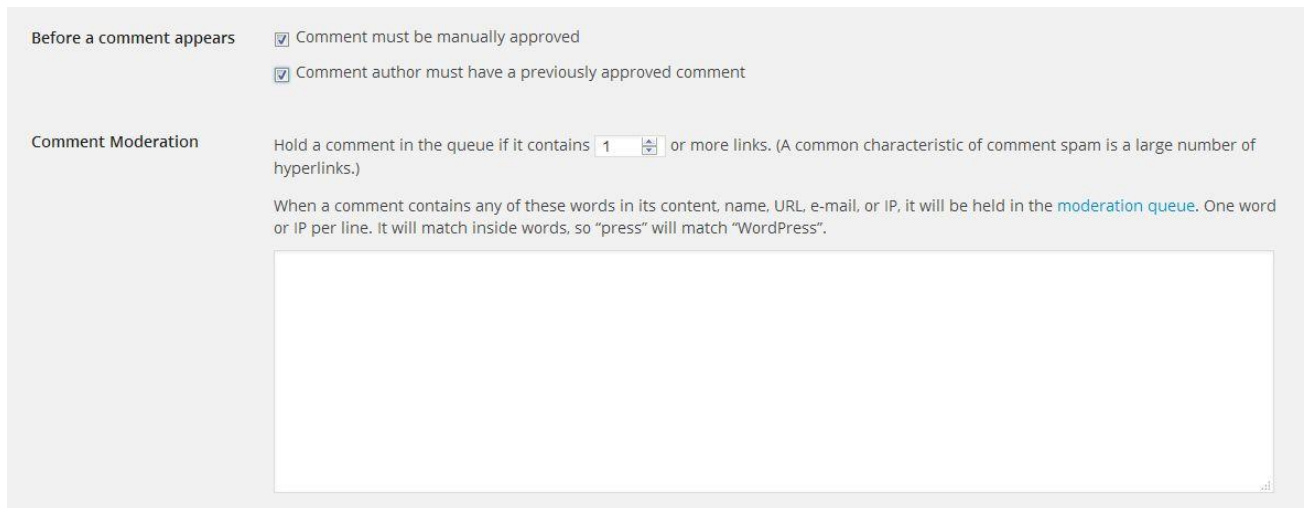


Figure 9.2- WordPress comment moderation settings

WordPress provides an option to make every comment go for manual approval before appearing on the post (see figure 9.2). You can put such **comments on moderation** that consist a link or multiple link to be on safer side always. WordPress allows you to put comments for moderation if they consist link (see figure 9.2).

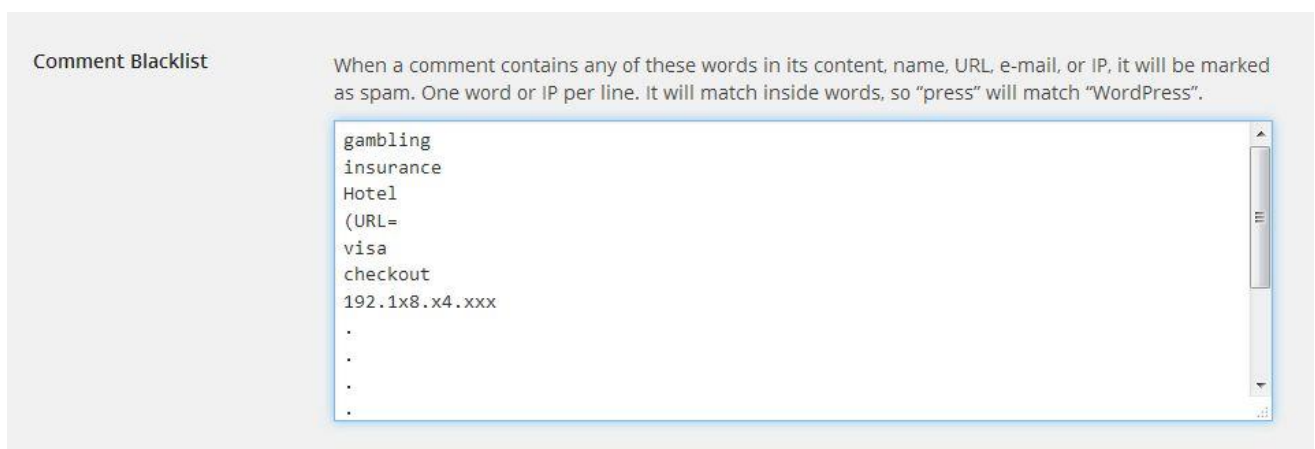


Figure 9.3- Text area for defining links, phrases, IPs to be blacklisted

You can do more with the settings by listing the all the possible words you think as the spam in the “**Comment blacklist**” box provided by the WordPress (see figure 9.3). The comments containing the blacklisted words will automatically be flagged as spam.

This is it. With the WordPress setting you can do this much for preventing spam comments to pour in your blog’s comment section.

What to do when your posts are getting hundreds of comments?

You will find WordPress’s anti-spam settings as nothing if your posts get a huge number of comments everyday, and you will not be able to moderate each comment manually. Then, you will need to take help of plugins for tackling with comment spam problem.

Spam prevention plugins

Availability of a huge number of plugins is one of the major characteristics of the WordPress. You wouldn’t have to come out from your dashboard to download plugins, you can browse and install them directly from the dashboard. Just click the **plugins**, and the repository will be opened before you.

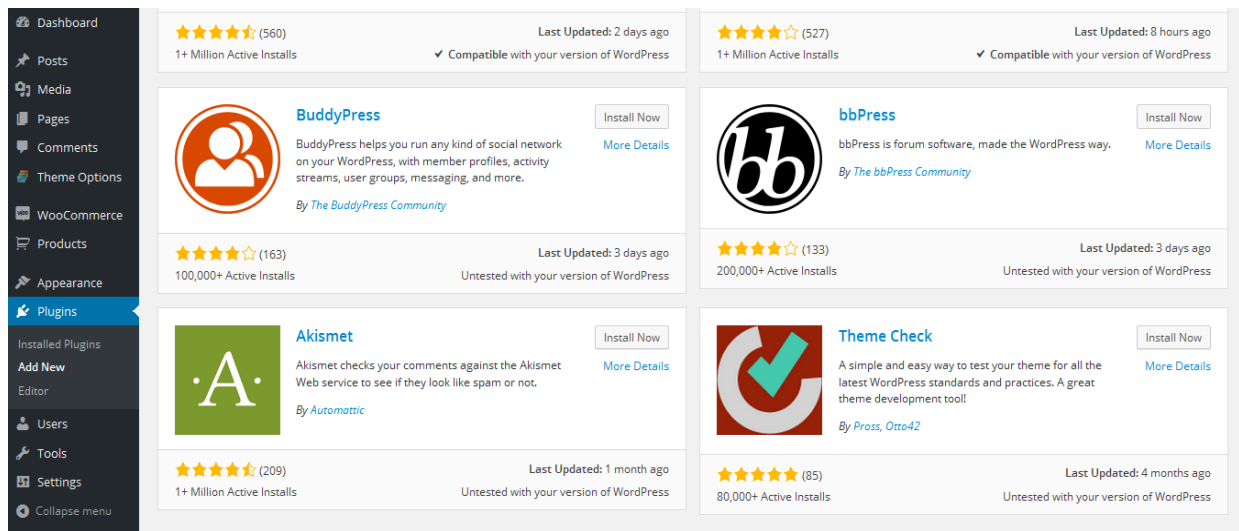


Figure 9.4- Plugin directory of WordPress

Before, you download any plugin for you, make a list of functions you want from a plugin to do for you. It will help you choose the right one for you.

Table 9.5- Features comparison table of WordPress anti-spam plugins

Feature You Need	Akismet	Antispam Bee	Anti-Spam	Clean Talk Anti-spam	WP Spamshield	WP Spamfree
You want all the comments to go for moderation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
You want to outright block the comment spam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
You want to block the commentator's IP		Yes			Yes	Yes

You want to validate the IP of trusted commentators		Yes				
You want to block comments for a particular country		Yes				
You want to receive comments for a particular language only		Yes				
You want to see the history of comments as to check how many comments caught as spam, but you changed to un-spammed	Yes					
You want to view the rate of spam detection on your dashboard		Yes			Yes	

You want to see the number of comments approved for every commentator	Yes					
You want to see spam counter on dashboard		Yes				
You want to make list of whitelist e-mails so that whenever trusted user make comment using e-mail that will go automatically approved					Yes	
You want to see the log of all comment spams	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes
You want to view logs of all comments (spam and approved)	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes

You want that database will automatically clean up after certain days	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
User rating (out of 5)	4.7 (226)	4.7 (89)	4.9 (103)	4.9 (545)	4.7 (64)	4 (4)
Number of reviews	Million+	200,000 +	100,000 +	20,000+	70,000+	80,000+
Active Installs						

Compatibility of plugins with Your Theme

The compatibility of a plugin with the theme of your website is another aspect that you may not ignore. Sometimes issues regarding compatibility of a plugin and the theme occur. Generally, in such case a user tends to discard the incompatible theme. So, we would like to tell you the specialty of TemplateToaster generated WordPress themes here. TemplateToaster generated themes are perfectly compatible with all of the above plugins. In fact, they are always compatible with every type of WordPress plugins like cache plugins, eCommerce plugins and all others. There is a plugin called Themecheck, used for checking the themes for WordPress coding guidelines. You may test the credibility of TemplateToaster generated with this plugin.

Let us take a look at the popular candidates.

[Akismet](#)

Akismet is hugely popular with the Wordpress users. It detects the suspected comments and send those in spam folder, it can also outright block the comment if you select this feature. You can view the history of comments moderated by you, besides you can view the number of comments approved for individuals. If the comment contains hidden URL even that will be shown to you. This is available at no cost for individual use.

[Antispam Bee](#)

Antispam Bee is the powerful solution to prevent spam pouring into the comment area of a WordPress blog. It offers a bunch of anti-spam settings for blocking comment spam such as automatically approving all comments from people you trust, blocking comments for a particular country, allowing comments in a particular language only, automatic deletion of comments after defined interval, and shows you all stats directly on your dashboard.

[Anti-spam](#)

The simplest plugin to use. No need to make settings, it just starts working when it is activated. It outright blocks the comment spam made by bots, and send the manual comment spam in the spam folder. Its pro version version is also available, which provides settings page and able to block manual comment spam. If you use the pro version, then you can get the manual as well as automatic comment spam in your e-mail. On the other hand, the free version doesn't offer this functionality, so you will never know that which comments have been blocked by this plugin.

[Clean Talk Anti-spam](#)

Clean Talk is a versatile spam protection plugin due to capability of tackling multiple types of spam in a website. Plus, it has the best compatibility with the heavily used plugins for WordPress websites, BuddyPress, bbPress, S2Memembr, WooCommerce, and contact Form 7. If you are using one or more of aforesaid plugins, then Clean Talk wouldn't let you down. You will be prompted for **Access Key** to enable it.

[WP-Spamshield](#)

Nobody would like to make comments on your posts if you would keep the CAPTCHA as safeguard. It repels more the genuine people than the spammers and bots. An interesting option it provides is to make whitelist. Others give you option to make a blacklist, but Spamshield is the opposite. When a comment will be made with a whitelisted e-mail, it will directly pass through the WP-spamshield's filters. And, the other good side of this plugin is its compatibility with popular cache plugins.

[WP Spamfree](#)

It is a powerful solution for stopping automatic spam, means spam bots. Alike WordPress Discussion settings, user can define the blacklist strings, so that whenever any awkward spam comment will be made, that commentator is automatically blocked forever. It provides an option to see the blocked comments on your dashboard if you turn the Blocked Comment Logging Mode on. In fact, you can see all the comments including genuine and spam by choosing Log All Comments option.

Conclusion

Tackling with spammers (humans and bots both) is not an easy job when our blog posts get overwhelmed with comments. Making necessary to fill out CAPTCHA, or putting restriction on commentators to login with their registered e-mails in order to make Comment will repel them from commenting. So, you may turn off login formality for comment authors and use anti spam plugin.

If your website is heavily prone to spam, then you may use a combination of plugins having to be sure about their compatibility; otherwise, single plugin with WordPress settings can also work best for your website. One more thing, when you install plugins of any kind, you may check the effect on page speed of websites for your own assurance that plugins are not making website lagging in page speed.

The simplest way to decide on a plugin that will work best for you is that assess your needs and then pick the right one for you.

Anti-spam is the simplest to use plugin, which doesn't provide any settings, and doesn't blocks the manual spam. You'll have to buy the pro version for advanced spam protection. If you are looking for a totally free solution, which provides advanced protection as well, then consider WP Spamshield and Antispam free. Both of these are absolutely free. Though, WP Spamfree is also absolutely free, but has not been updated for long.

Two paid plugins are- Akismet and Clean Talk Anti-spam. Both the plugins work great. Where Akismet is free to use for personal websites, but, paid for business and enterprise; clean talk Anti-spam is paid for any use.

SEO Plugins Comparison Chart

Table 10.1- Features comparison table of WordPress SEO plugins

Parameters	WordPress SEO by Yoast	All in One SEO Pack	SEO Ultimate	SEO Wizard
Title Tag template	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Meta Description template	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Meta Robot Tag	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support for custom post types	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Automatic Interlinking	No	No	Yes	No
Permalink settings	Yes	No	Yes	No
XML Sitemap generation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Canonical URL settings	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Google Analytics support	Yes (Install Add on)	Yes	Yes (Insert the code)	No

Site verification with webmaster tools	Yes(Google, Bing, Yandex)	Yes (Google, Bing)	Yes(Google, Bing)	No
Alexa verification	Yes	No	No	No
Page Analysis	Yes	No	No	Yes
SMO				
Facebook Open Graph	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Twitter card support	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Pinterest profile	Yes	Yes	No	No
Google+ profile	Yes	Yes	No	No
Instagram profile	Yes	Yes	No	No
LinkedIn profile	Yes	Yes	No	No

Figure 10.1- Features comparison chart of WordPress SEO plugins

WordPress SEO by Yoast

The WordPress SEO by Yoast is by far the most downloaded plugin. It has almost every feature that an Ideal plugin should have. A plethora of options is provided to the user. You can set the title templates and Meta-description templates for the pages, posts, media, taxonomies and archives. Moreover, you can configured Meta Robot tags for pages, posts, media, archives and taxonomies. A Meta Robot tag tells the search engine spider whether it should index a page or page not.

Social Media optimization (SMO) is also an integral part of SEO. The Yoast takes care of social media optimization and provides us the options for configuring the Facebook Open graph, twitter card metadata to the website. You can inform the Google about all your social accounts through Yoast. You can provide Yoast with the URLs of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Myspace, Pinterest, Google+, and YouTube profile of your site to let the Google know about them.

Further, the Yoast can automatically generate the XML sitemap for your site with custom settings. With custom settings, you can control the number of entries in the sitemap and what post types and taxonomies not to include in the sitemap.

You can also set up the pretty permalinks with the Yoast. The Yoast offers more permalink settings than those given by the WordPress. Beyond this, you can also select the links to hide in the head tag. These links can be hidden- RDD links, RSS links, short link of posts, WLW manifest links.

Page analysis is also a noteworthy feature of Yoast, which helps the user to write keyword focused content. Also, better title and Meta descriptions. This

feature stays available while the user writes/edits a page or a post. Selecting the page analysis option, the user can see whether the keywords is used in title and description properly, whether the content includes the keyword up to the recommended and other related things. Beyond just indications, Yoast even provides recommendations.

All in One SEO Pack

All in one SEO pack is also a feature rich plugin. The settings are simpler to configure. All you need to do is to tick the checkboxes and select the radio buttons for preferred configurations of this SEO plugin. You can write the title formats of page, post, category, archive, tag, and 404. Also, you can write the description format. Beyond default WordPress post types you can enable the SEO for custom post types also.

This plugin can generate the XML Sitemap of your website. There is no option to define the number of entries in the sitemap, but, you can select the post types and taxonomies to include in it. The plugin can submit the sitemap to Google and Bing. Google analytics support is also available.

This plugin also helps in doing social media optimization. For this, you can specify all the social media accounts in the Social Meta settings. You can also find the options to configure the open graph settings and Twitter card settings.

SEO Ultimate

A heavy set of options is offered by this plugin. You can find the options classified into several modules. You can think of modules as another word for features/options. There are separate modules given for defining title formats

(Title Tag rewriter) and Meta description formats (Meta Descriptions), unlike above plugins.

The plugin supports both, custom post types and custom taxonomies. Another good feature of the plugin is Deeplink Juggernaut. It allows you to configure auto link settings of anchor text and URLs, and the interlinking of posts. There is a “Silo Linking” mode, which would allow the interlinking of posts of same category only.

The plugin automatically generates the open graph data for all the pages including homepage and user profiles, posts, custom posts types and attachments. The auto generated open graph data is not stringent to modifications, you are allowed to customize it.

The bloggers and affiliate marketers can take the advantage of advanced link mask generator. They can create global link masks, which appertain across the site. It also offers a rich snippet creator, which supports new Schema.org used by Google and Yahoo both.

SEO Wizard

The SEO wizard is very easy to set up. It offers comparatively least options than all of the above plugins, though it is good for on page SEO. Alike Yoast, this plugin analyses the pages and posts and indicate the deficiencies of the content; thereby helps in writing better content, Meta titles and descriptions for the posts and pages. But, this feature is not as advanced as Yoast. The plugins can automatically add the keyword in post titles, can automatically add the nofollow attribute to the images and to the external links. More options given by SEO Wizard include 404 monitor and automatic XML Sitemap generation.

While drafting the pages and posts, you can avail these options from SEO Wizard- rich snippets generation, social SEO and Meta robot tags' settings (no index, no follow). You can do Social SEO only on two platforms that are Facebook and Twitter, but with the limitation of not having the open graph and Twitter card implementation. You can simply add the publisher, author, Title and description for Facebook and Twitter.

Conclusion

All of the above discussed plugins are quite good for the search engine optimization of a website. But, we are required to pick the one for us. We have observed that Yoast and SEO Ultimate provide us ample SEO settings than the rest of the plugins. Both the plugins give the options for writing better Meta Titles and Meta descriptions to us.

Both the plugins provide us the option for connecting the site with social platforms for social media optimization of the site. While the Yoast supports Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Google+, the SEO ultimate supports only first two platforms. But, the additional advantage of SEO ultimate is that it has a "Deep Juggernaut" feature, which allows automatic interlinking of the content.

Description

We have described the utmost four WordPress SEO plugins with feature comparison. These SEO plugins can help you very much in optimizing your website for search engines.

Chapter 11 : 5 Plugins That Make WordPress Ecommerce Easy



WordPress always has a solution to our needs. Its plugin repository seems a magic lamp that when you explore, you surely get a solution to your need, be the need is big or small. Owing to the plugins, one can make any type of website and can add any custom functionality in the website. If you want to make an eCommerce website for you, then WordPress is of course a good platform to choose. Though there are several dedicated eCommerce platforms around us, yet WordPress has a very big share of eCommerce websites.

Making an eCommerce website with WordPress is not a big deal owing to eCommerce plugins. But, it comes confusing while selecting one among the several plugins. Therefore, we decided to review you the best five WordPress eCommerce plugins.

Features Comparison Chart of WordPress eCommerce plugins

Table 11.1- Features Comparison table of WordPress eCommerce plugins

Features	WooCommerce	Easy Digital Downloads	WP eCommerce	MarketPress	iThemes Exchange
Order tracking	Yes				
Coupon Management	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sales Report/ Sales Chart	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Product Reviews	Yes	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)		Yes(Add On)
Product Comparison	Yes (Add On)				
Shipment Tracking	Yes (Add On)			Yes(Add On))	
Address validation	Yes (Add On)				
Recurring Payments	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)		Yes (Add On)
Downloadable Products	Yes (Add On)	Yes		Yes (Add On)	Yes
Selling license keys	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)			

PDF invoices	Yes (Add On)	Yes(Add On)	Yes (Add On)		Yes (Add On)
Cross Sell/Upsell	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)			
Related Products Suggestion	Yes(Add On)			Yes	
Manual purchasing	Yes	Yes (Add On)	Yes	Yes	Yes(Add On)
Standard PayPal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PayPal Express	Yes(Add On)	Yes(Add On)	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)	Yes(Add On)
Email Integration	Yes	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add On)		Yes (Add On)
Wishlist	Yes(Add On)		Yes (Add On)		
Points and Reward System	Yes (Add On)	Yes (Add on)			
Customer Preferred delivery date and time	Yes (Add On)				

WooCommerce

WooCommerce is the most acclaimed WordPress plugin for eCommerce. It is richer in eCommerce features and at the same time it is very easy to integrate with a website. The free version is pretty good. For advanced features, there are many add-ons.

WooCommerce allows **order tracking, discount coupon management, to up-sell & Cross sell the products, to incorporate related products section, to compare products, shipping tracking, and to add a wishlist** in a shopping website.

In fact, **WooCommerce add-ons** make it possible for the merchant to use **all major payment gateways**, like PayPal (standard and Express) WorldPay, 2Checkout, SagePay, First Data, Amazon Payments, Braintree, Stripe and more. Aside from physical goods, a merchant can even sell digital products. **WooCommerce also allows newsletter subscription with GetReponse, MailChimp, Aweber, Constant Contact, Mad Mimi, and Campaign Monitor** with the help of add-ons. A merchant can even take the benefit of PDF invoice with the help of paid add-on. All in all, the WooCommerce can be a firm anchorage for an online-shopping website with the help of add-ons.

Active Installs: 1+ million

Rating: 4.4 out of 5 stars

Easy Digital Downloads

The Easy digital download is primarily developed for selling software products. But, the folks have also developed a premium add-on for selling physical goods. Hence, this plugin is a complete WordPress eCommerce solution. **It supports**

all the major payment gateways, including Stripe, Coinbase, WorldPay, and Recurly. This plugin stores the payment history and customers' purchasing history, and shows it off to the merchant. A merchant can also integrate newsletter subscription with the help of add-ons. **The newsletter/email marketing add-ons for EDD include GetReponse, MailChimp, Constant Contact, and Campaign Monitor, Mad Mimi, Aweber.** In shorthand, EDD is a very nice plugin for selling anything together with premium add-ons, which are there for almost every eCommerce functionality.

Active Installs: 40,000+

Rating: 4.9 out of 5 stars

WP eCommerce

WP eCommerce provides all necessary and basic facilities to manage an e-shop, like adding new products to catalog, configure tax and shipping settings and monitoring sales.

The plugin offers quirky “marketing settings” to do, which allow to add Facebook ‘Like’ button, ‘how did you find us’ checkbox, ‘share this link’ button, and ‘who else bought this’ information on the items.

This plugin provides UPS and USPS shipping modules in its free version, for which the above plugins require add-ons in case of above plugins; **add-ons are available for the FedEx and Amazon S3 shipping.** Talking about payment gateways: there are add-ons for all major ones. Campaign Monitor and Mail Chimp add-on can be used for integrating the newsletter services with the website.

Active Installs: 70,000+

Rating: 3.4 out of 5 stars

[MarketPress](#)

MarketPress is yet another a fair WordPress eCommerce plugin. With the help of an add-on, one can sell the digital products as well. It is very simple to configure with the website, a merchant can quickly create new products, new categories, and can manage the orders.

Displaying related products feature is available in its free version, under the presentation settings. Freemium features are just as expected from a basic eCommerce plugin, but, it can be extended to the advanced level with the help of add-ons.

With the help of add-ons, a merchant can leverage major payment gateways: PayPal Express, Stripe, Authorize.net, and 2Checkout. MarketPress is short on some features, yet is good for the merchants when in case their expectations are not so much.

Active Installs: 7,000+

Rating: 3.4 out of 5 stars

[iThemes Exchange](#)

iThemes can be configured for physical as well as downloadable software products. A dozen of add-ons are offered to the merchant by the plugin that has to be enabled for making particular settings for the store. **Two payment gateways are supported in the freemium version: PayPal Standard and Stripe.** If the merchant wants PayPal Express and 2Checkout support with iThemes, respective add-on will has to be used. A merchant wouldn't find

support for shipping services, which cause this plugin lagging behind from its competitors.

Active Installs: 3,000+

Rating: 3.9 out of 5 stars

Conclusion

After going through a big line of WordPress eCommerce plugins, we found the best five solutions that we described here. Though, all of the five are very advanced. Be you choose any of these, you can easily establish your shop. But, the winner has to be decided at the end.

Seeing the comparison chart, **WooCommerce and Easy digital downloads pop up** as the richer eCommerce solutions that provide more features and facilities to a merchant. Also, both the plugins have big user communities. The size of the community often signals that the software is very successful in keeping their promises with the users. Even, between both of these plugin, the WooCommerce wins the race of providing the eCommerce features. So, we may suggest you to use the WooCommerce.

Thanks