# Setting up a free Wordpress blog

A guide from http://themumreviews.co.uk

It can be confusing when you’re first starting out, because there are different types of Wordpress site, with different levels of cost associated with them. The only *completely* free option is a blog with a url like: www.yourblogname.wordpress.com. These instructions will help you set up one for yourself.

## Opening your Wordpress account and establishing your blog

1. Go to wordpress.com
2. Click “get started”
3. Click “start with a blog”
4. Enter keywords for what your blog’s about, and Wordpress will suggest a domain for you. There are SO many free wordpress blogs, that the name available to you may be somewhat random, but that’s the price you pay for truly free. It will also suggest some paid options, which you can click on to choose and see what they will cost.
5. If you’re going with the free option, click “Start with free” on the next page.
6. On the next page, enter your email address and the password you’d like to use to log into your blog.
7. Your blog will then be live! Make a note of your domain name. In future, you will log on to your blog typing in your blog url and then adding /wp-login.php to the end. For example: https://yourdomain.wordpress.com/wp-login.php
8. Pop over to your email and verify your address with the link sent to you from Wordpress.
9. You’ll be linked back over to your blog’s dashboard. Your first blog post will be in the main part of the window. Click edit to put some content on it. Your first post could be a short one about why you’re starting the blog and what it’s going to be about.

## Publishing your first post

1. Add a good descriptive or catchy title to your post. Think about what people might be searching for or what might catch their eye.
2. Write the body of your post in the main bit of the window.
3. If you’d like to add your own photo at the head of the post, click “Featured image” on the right-hand panel. Click the x to remove any existing image. Then click “Set featured image”. Click “Add new” and find the image you want on your computer in order to upload it to your blog. Then click the image to add it. It’s important to have a header photo on each post, because this looks good when the link is shared on social media.
4. It’s important to add categories and tags, as these help people find your post. Click “Categories & tags” on the right-hand panel.
	1. Click “Add new category” to create one, such as “news”, “advice on x” or some other top-line category.
	2. Under “tags”, type in keywords about your post. You can use single words, but longer ones such as “how to take care of your back” work very well too. Think about what people might be googling – you could even test google your tags to see if they are popular searches. You can add up to 15 tags – any more and you will be pegged as a spammer.
5. Under “More Options”, click the arrow to expand and add a short description of your post under “excerpt”. Either write a short description or make it blank. The “slug” is how your post’s address will show. Feel free to change this but keep it short.
6. Click “Update”
7. Click over to your url to see how your site/post looks to the rest of the world.

## Name your site

1. Your site needs a name, which doesn’t necessarily have to be exactly the same as your url.
2. At the bottom of the left-hand “My Site” menu, click “Settings”. There will then be a box where you can type your site title and a brief tagline describing what your blog does.
3. You can also add a profile pic or a logo here, by clicking the “change” button underneath the “site icon” and uploading a picture.

## Customising the look of your blog

1. When you’re logged into Wordpress, you can click “My Site” on the upper left to see a menu that helps you customise various aspects of your blog.
2. To change the look of the site, click on “Themes” under “Personalize”.
3. Here you can choose from loads of free layout themes. Choose what floats your boat and click on it. Then click “Activate this design”.
4. Go back to your homepage to see how it looks, then on the My Site panel, click the “Customize” button.
5. There are lots of settings to play with, but the important one is to edit the menus. If you want to have an about and contact page on your blog, you need to activate them.
	1. Click “Menus”
	2. Click “Menu locations”
	3. Choose Primary from the drop-down. Now links to your “About” and “Contact” pages should appear on your homepage.
	4. There is also a social links menu. If you click on it, it will add specific links to Twitter or other social media on your page. You can add your specific url from Twitter here (Such as http://www.twitter.com/your\_profile\_name)
	5. If you click on “Sharing” on the My Site menu, then click the ‘Sharing Buttons’ tab, you can add buttons to the bottom of each post so that others can easily share them on social media. Be sure to add your Twitter username near the bottom – then if anyone shares your post, you will automatically be mentioned.
6. Remember to add information to the About and Contact pages, by clicking “Site Pages” to get the list, and then clicking on each page to edit.
7. The contact page will automatically have a contact form, click on it and then click the pencil to edit it and tell it where to send any contact requests.

There are lots of other things your blog can do. I suggest googling for help if you have any trouble. You are also quite welcome to email me at themumreviews@gmail.com