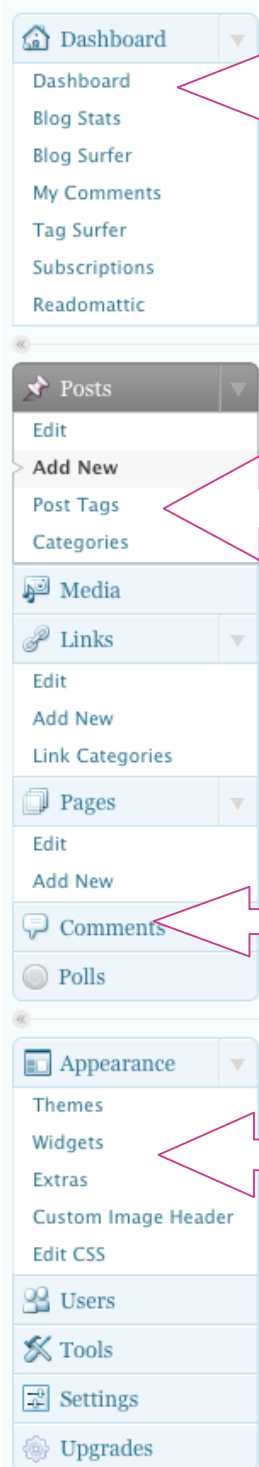









Wordpress.com is a free, hosted version of the powerful Wordpress blogging platform. If you outgrow the free version you have the option of moving to your own fully customised version of Wordpress. You can see many of the features available in Wordpress by looking at the menu below.




Your **dashboard** gives you an overview of your blog – including **statistics** on who is reading your blog and where they visit from.

Upload/Insert       

When creating a post – use the upload/insert tools to attach photos, videos and files

You can create a list of **categories** and place each blog post in one or more categories.

You can also use '**tags**' to make it easy for readers to find different blog posts on related topics

When you write a blog post or page, include plenty of links  particularly to other blogs and sources of information.

Choose your **comment moderation** policy in the settings section. Check back for comments often and **be sure to reply**.

Once you have chosen a theme you can **add 'Widgets' to your blog**. These are boxes in the side-bars that feature recent posts, the latest comments, or other useful information.

Tip: take time to experiment and find your own writing style for your blog – but don't be afraid to share ideas, questions and news!

A blog is a **simple publishing tool**.

With a blog you can **publish news, media information and commentary** to create a 'stream of news' about your work or interests.

A blog can also have **static pages** – so, combining these with your stream of posts, you can use a blog as '**instant website**' for a project or organisation.

Through RSS feeds you can **syndicate** headlines from your blog across the web. Visitors can **subscribe** to find out almost instantly when new content is published.

Blogs also allow **comments** to be added to each post, so they can become a **platform for conversation** as well as shared content.

Getting Started

1) Sign up & set-up your blog

- Visit www.wordpress.com and select 'Sign Up'
- Enter your details to create an account then select 'next' to go and create your blog.
- Wordpress will confirm your blog activation by e-mail. Check your e-mail for details

2) Customize your blog

- Log-in at www.wordpress.com and choose 'Appearance' from the menu bar. You can then browse themes and add a different theme (design) to your blog.
- Check the 'Settings' tab from the menu to customise the title and tag-line of your blog.

3) Add your first post or page

- Choose 'Add New' under 'Posts' in the menu bar to create a new blog post. You can upload images and files to your blog post.
- In the 'Pages' section from the menu choose 'Edit' to update the default *about page* that Wordpress have created for your blog. You can add extra pages using 'Add New'