

11 Things To Do With Every New WordPress Install



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Brought to you by iThemes
Your one-stop shop for WordPress themes,
plugins & training

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About iThemes

iThemes was founded in 2008 by Cory Miller, a former newspaper journalist and public relations/communication practitioner turned freelance moonlighting web designer, turned full-time entrepreneur. Miller founded iThemes in his home, fulfilling a lifelong dream of running his own company. Since then, iThemes has grown into a full enterprise providing professional WordPress themes, plugins and training.

So you just installed WordPress — awesome!

You're in good company, about 20% of the web is powered by WordPress. There's a good chance your favorite store, magazine, artist or blogger uses WordPress.

Getting started can be overwhelming but we're here to help. Here are **11 key things you can do right now to make a great WordPress site.**

1. Have a Solid Backup Strategy

First and foremost, make sure you have a solid WordPress backup strategy. Think of backups as an insurance policy on the work you've put into creating your site.

WordPress doesn't have a built-in backup solution. You'll need to use a plugin like [BackupBuddy](#) to back up your site's database and files. BackupBuddy makes scheduling backups easy, so you can set it and forget it. BackupBuddy also goes beyond basic backups to make moving or restoring your WordPress site painless.

2. Take Important Security Measures

WordPress sites are often targeted by hackers and bots that can exploit some common default settings.

We recommend using [iThemes Security](#) to protect your WordPress site and keep the bad guys out.

Here are some cool things iThemes Security does to secure your WordPress site:

- Automatically locks out bad users after too many failed login attempts
- Provides protection from Brute Force Attacks
- Renames the default 'Admin' user account
- Enforces strong passwords for all accounts
- Monitors files for unauthorized changes

[See all 30+ ways iThemes Security protects your site.](#) We also have a comprehensive [video training series](#) on how to get the most out of iThemes Security.

3. Delete Default Content

Your default WordPress installation comes preloaded with default content like a “Hello world!” blog post. You’ll want to delete the default comment that comes with your WordPress installation as a WordPress best practice. Don’t forget to replace it with your own awesome content!

4. Combat Spam

Spam comments can be a pain. We suggest using [Akismet](#) — without it you will get a lot of spam emails and comments. Save yourself a lot of time and use this plugin.

From your Plugins page, click the blue Activate your Akismet Account button. Then you can enter your API key, or get one from [WordPress.com](#).

5. Optimize Your Site's SEO

Make sure your site can be easily found online. Setting your site up to be SEO-friendly is a great way to get more traffic to your site.

We recommend [WordPress SEO](#) and [All-in-One SEO](#) plugins to help people find you online. These plugins do the work for you by suggesting edits, key words and forcing meta text for search engine crawls.

6. Change the Site Tagline

Yes, your site is a WordPress site, but it's not *just another WordPress site*. It's *your* WordPress site. Your site is unique and your tagline should reflect that.

Nothings says "I forgot to customize my site" like leaving the default tagline in place — remember, this tagline will show up in your site's search results. If your brand already has a tagline or special motto, this is the perfect place for it. If you don't have a tagline, just leave it blank. Just be sure to update/delete the default text.

7. Set Up a Contact Form

Make it simple for people to communicate with you if they have questions while browsing your site. A contact form can be something that can be easily forgotten if your website is not your main method of contact with users, customers or potential clients.

Consider using your contact form to sort customer service questions from leads by having the user identify the reason for contact in a subject line or message body.

[ContactBuddy](#) is a great free plugin for making simple contact forms. With ContactBuddy you can collect names, email address, subjects and message. You can add recaptcha as well, to make sure you're being contacted by real humans and not spammers.

8. Don't Forget Settings

WordPress gives you a ton of settings options, so make sure you review them. These settings are especially important (and often overlooked), so don't forget to update them:

- **Permalinks** - In your WordPress Dashboard, navigate to the Settings page and find the Permalinks tab. Check out the common settings and choose one that is best for you (for example, iThemes uses the Month and Name setting). **Note that having the name of the post or page in your permalinks helps your SEO efforts.** Here is an example of how we have the permalinks set up on iThemesSwag.com
- **Timezone** - From the Settings menu, click General. Make sure the timezone is set to your local timezone. This will ensure the timing is correct when you schedule posts to be published or other scheduled events such as backups
- **User Profile** - Don't forget to update your User Profile. Navigate to Users and click Your Profile. From here, you can choose how your name will display on the site and which email address to be used for site notifications. This is also where you can update your password if needed.

9. Connect Email Lists

Email is still an important component of potential revenue generation *and* the best way to deliver content directly to someone's inbox. **Getting your site visitors to subscribe to your email list is key. It's one of the best ways to make sure they stay engaged with your content or products.**

Add a subscription box to a footer or side widget and watch your email list grow! Sweeten the optin-in incentive by offering coupons or free resources (like an offer free an ebook like this one).

We recommend using [MailChimp](#) or [Aweber](#) to build your email lists. Both have WordPress integrations to make the process of connecting your site to your email lists simple.

10. Start Tracking Metrics with Analytics

It goes without saying that tracking your site's analytics is important, but we're going to say it anyway. **Put the Google Analytics tag on your site now.** By using it, you can track important data like the total number of site visitors, how long they stay on your site, where your traffic is coming from, conversions — and a lot more.

Google Analytics also offers real-time tracking, so you can see how many people are on your site right now. By installing the Google Analytics tag, you'll get all the wonderful data from day one and avoid the "I should have done this sooner" feeling.

Check out our free ebook: [Getting Started with Google Analytics](#).

11. Make Site Updates Easy

Whether you manage one WordPress site or a hundred, you need a quick and easy way to update your plugins and themes. You shouldn't have to log in to WordPress every day to check for updates.

Using a WordPress management tool like [Sync](#) makes managing multiple sites easy by saving you time and a lot of unnecessary steps. Update all your sites from one convenient dashboard, and even from your phone, using the Sync iOS app.

Sync also offers features like bulk installation of themes and plugins, comment and user management and more time-saving integrations with other must-have plugins like BackupBuddy, iThemes Security and iThemes Exchange.



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iThemes is your go-to partner
in growing your WordPress business



BackupBuddy

Backup, restore and
move WordPress



iThemes Sync

Manage all your
WordPress sites from
one dashboard



iThemes Exchange

Simple ecommerce
for WordPress



iThemes Security

Protect and Secure
WordPress

Plus 200+ themes and 600+ hours
of web design training.

learn more at ithemes.com