



WordPress for Absolute Beginners

Create websites and blogs from scratch
using WordPress open-source CMS



RAYMOND JOHN

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First edition

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*For everyone who is trying and trying and trying..... to make their
dreams come true.*

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	iv
1 Why WordPress?	1
What is CMS?	1
Why do we need a CMS?	2
Types of Websites Content Management System (CMS)	2
WordPress	3
Who uses WordPress?	4
WordPress.org Vs WordPress.com	5
Why should you use WordPress CMS?	6
2 Building your first WordPress site	8
Installing WordPress CMS locally	8
Environment	9
XAMPP	9
How to install XAMPP	9
Create Database for WordPress CMS	14
Download and Install WordPress CMS	16
3 WordPress Dashboard	21
What is it?	21
How to Access WP Admin Panel	21
How to use WordPress Dashboard	22
WordPress Toolbar	23
4 WordPress Themes	25
What is a WordPress Theme?	25

Types of WordPress Themes	26
Free WordPress Themes	27
Premium WordPress Themes	28
Custom WordPress Themes	29
5 WordPress Plugins	30
What is WordPress Plugin?	30
Where to find WordPress Plugins	31
How to use WordPress Plugin	32
Some Essential WordPress Plugins for every Website	34
6 WordPress Page Builders	35
What is a Website Page?	35
WordPress Page Builder	36
Elementor Page Builder	36
7 Creating Pages: The Home Page	38
Creating our First web page, a Home Page	38
How to create “A Great Homepage” for your website	38
Essential homepage elements:	39
8 Creating “About Us” Page	44
Essential “About Us” page elements:	45
Tips for making a great “About Us” page	46
9 Creating “Contact Us” Page	48
Important elements to include in your Contact Page	49
10 WordPress Blog Posts	51
What is a blog post?	51
Essential features to include in your blog:	52
How to create blog posts in a WordPress dashboard?	53
Yoast SEO	54
11 WordPress Navigation Menus	57

What is a Website Navigation Menu?	57
Types of Website Navigation Style	57
How to create menus for your WordPress site	61
12 Widgets, Users & Settings	65
What is a WordPress Widget?	65
Frequently used widgets on WordPress sites	66
WordPress User Roles	66
Default WordPress user roles	67
WordPress Settings	68
13 Domain and Hosting	70
What is a domain name?	70
What is a domain extension?	70
Types of Domain Extensions	71
How to choose the best domain name?	71
How to register a domain name for your website?	72
Website Hosting	73
Types of Web Hosting	73
WordPress Hosting	74
Best price WordPress hosting providers	74
Conclusion	75
<i>About the Author</i>	76

Preface

Back in 2016, I started my first blog raymondjs.blogspot.com, I didn't know what I was actually doing, it was unprofessional, not using a custom domain, not doing anything serious in particular, but I was just trying things out. Blogger CMS was recommended to me by one of my colleagues, and it was somehow good for newbies like me in blogging industry, but it was very difficult to add new functionalities, change the design and layout with zero coding experience.

Three years later, open-source WordPress CMS came on my radar, and I loved how simple it is. The good thing about WordPress CMS is that, you can create just any type of website you want, not just blogs, any type whether it's an eCommerce site like Amazon, or LMS site like Khan Academy, corporate websites, portfolios, news blog, etc. And you can do all this with zero coding experience.

I went on to study WordPress CMS, and my first WordPress site wesovu.com was an e-learning website where students could study online courses, buy books, etc. As time went on also my WordPress skills grew, up to now, I have created [dozens of different WordPress websites](#).

I have prepared this book to share my experience with Word-

Press, and to help you learn the whole process of making WordPress websites and blogs, from preparing your local server, installing WordPress, up to hosting your live website on the internet. This book is perfect for anybody, especially Absolute Beginners who don't know anything about WordPress CMS.

What you'll learn

- Create websites and blogs with WordPress
- Install WordPress on your PC or Mac computer, host WP locally
- Navigate around the WordPress dashboard, know what everything does and how to use it.
- Understand plugins & themes and how to find/install them.
- Create a static homepage useful for most websites or blogs like homepage useful for bloggers.
- Buy Domain & Hosting package for your website
- Deploy your live site

Requirements/Prerequisites

- You only need a working computer and a web browser.
- No coding experience is required at all.
- No prior knowledge of WordPress is required, as everything will be covered in this book.

Learn and Enjoy!

Why WordPress?

What is CMS?

CMS (Content Management System) is computer software used to **manage the creation and modification of digital content** without the need for specialized technical knowledge.

In simple terms, it simplifies the process of creating, managing, and modifying digital content. For instance, WCMS (Website CMS) helps you to create websites and blogs without the need for coding experience (like no experience of HTML/CSS3/JavaScript/PHP, etc.)

There are many types of CMS including Web Content Management System, Enterprise Content Management System (ECM), Digital Asset Management (DAM), Electronic Document Management System (DMS or EDMS), and Component Content Management System (CCMS).

But for the case of this book, what we are going to learn is “**Web Content Management System**” which is special for the creation, management, and modification of websites. So anytime when we write CMS, we mean Web Content Management System only and no other types.

Why do we need a CMS?

- **No coding skills required** — CMS has enabled non-developers and other users to build websites without coding. You can create web pages and add certain functionality by using plugins without writing any single line of code.
- **Predesigned templates** — Most CMS platforms come with a selection of predefined templates you can use to quickly customize the appearance of your site.
- **Simple updates** — CMS enables you to make changes on your site faster and easier — from major updates, like a website redesign, to minor updates, like changing the image on your home page.

Types of Websites Content Management System (CMS)

- **Open Source CMS** — these platforms are available for FREE. They can be used by anyone for any purpose and do not require a license. These include WordPress, Joomla, Drupal, Magento, PrestaShop, etc.
- **Proprietary CMS** — unlike Open Source CMS, these platforms are not available for free. You have to buy the

license from the owner to use them. These include Wix, Weebly, Shopify, Squarespace, etc. Most proprietary CMS is cloud-based, which means you cannot host them on your own servers.

By using CMS, you can build any type of website that you want to, from simple websites like personal/portfolio/minimal to complex websites like corporate/eCommerce/education/LMS/ etc. You can build any type of website without the need to write any single line of code.

* * *

WordPress

WordPress is the **simplest and most popular way to create your website or blog**. In fact, WordPress powers over 41% of all the websites on the Internet. Yes – more than four in ten websites that you visit are likely powered by WordPress.

With WordPress CMS, you can create any type of website with any type of functionalities:

- Business websites
- eCommerce stores
- Blogs
- Portfolios
- Resumes
- Forums
- Membership sites

- Social networks etc.

Who uses WordPress?

WordPress is used by individuals, big businesses, and everyone in between! Lots of well-known entities use WordPress as well. Here are some of our favorite examples:

- US White House website <https://www.whitehouse.gov/>
- Microsoft Blog <https://blogs.microsoft.com/>
- BBC America <https://www.bbcamerica.com/>
- Sony Music <https://www.sonymusic.com/>
- Usain Bolt <http://usainbolt.com/>
- Facebook Newsroom <https://about.fb.com/news/>
- Mozilla Blog <https://blog.mozilla.org/>
- Snoop Dogg Website <https://snoopdogg.com/>
- The Walt Disney Movie company <https://thewaltdisneycompany.com/>

WHY WORDPRESS?



screen showing Snoop Dogg WordPress powered website

WordPress.org Vs WordPress.com

- **WordPress.org**, often called **self-hosted WordPress**, is the free, open-source WordPress software that you can install on your own web host to create a website that's 100% your own.
- **WordPress.com** is a for-profit, paid service that is *powered* by the WordPress.org software. It's simple to use, but you lose much of the flexibility of the self-hosted WordPress.

Most of the time, when people say "WordPress", they mean the

self-hosted WordPress available at WordPress.org. **If you want to truly own your website, self-hosted WordPress.org is almost always the best option.**

Why should you use WordPress CMS?

- **WordPress is FREE and open source** — One of the biggest benefits of WordPress is that it's free, open-source software. While you will need to pay a little bit for hosting, you will never have to pay just to use the WordPress software, which isn't the case with alternatives like Squarespace. Beyond that, you can also find lots of open-source plugins and themes to change how your website looks and functions.
- **WordPress is Extensible** — Even if you aren't a developer, you can easily modify your website thanks to WordPress' huge ecosystem of themes and plugins. Currently, there are over 50,000 FREE WordPress plugins and more than 5,000 FREE WordPress themes, as well as tons of premium options.
- **WordPress is easy to install** — Think you need to be a tech genius to create your own website? Think again! If you can click a few buttons, you can install WordPress on your site.
- **WordPress is Flexible** — WordPress is great because it lets you create pretty much any type of website. Better yet, your website can also evolve with you. Want to add a forum to your existing WordPress site? No problem – just install the bbPress plugin! Want to add a social network? No worries! Just use the BuddyPress plugin. You're never locked into a specific set of functions – you can always

adapt and evolve.

- **It's easy to find WordPress help** — there are tons of forums, developers, communities, and Facebook groups about WordPress. So if you get into any problem, it's very easy to find a solution.

Building your first WordPress site

Now you already know what Content Management Systems (CMS) are, and why people use them, and at least you have an idea of what WordPress CMS does. Let's start experimenting with WordPress Website CMS.

We want to build our first WordPress site, running on the local server (server is like a place where your web pages, files, database are stored) so when we're saying **local server** that means our computer (PC/Mac) is going to be our server.

Installing WordPress CMS locally

Installing WordPress CMS on your machine is usually meant for development, we'll develop our site locally before pushing it live. The good news is that installing WordPress is quite easy and can be done in few simple steps.

- We need to create an environment where WordPress CMS

will be installed

- Download WordPress CMS from its website
- Install WordPress CMS on localhost

Environment

We need a local server software to create a localhost environment and install WordPress on localhost. There are many localhost platforms you can use: WAMP for Windows, XAMPP, MAMP for macOS, LAMP for Linux, Desktop Server, DevKinsta, and many more. For this book, we'll be using XAMPP

XAMPP

XAMPP is an abbreviation for cross-platform, Apache, MySQL, PHP, and Perl, and it allows you to build websites offline, on a local web server on your computer. It can work on any OS: Windows, Linux, and macOS.

Since WordPress CMS isn't a stand-alone application, XAMPP provides two essential components for its installation – **Apache**, which is used to create the local server, and **MySQL**, which you can use as a database for your website.

How to install XAMPP

Grab your copy of XAMPP software from its official website <https://www.apachefriends.org/index.html>, then click on the download button for the operating system you are using.



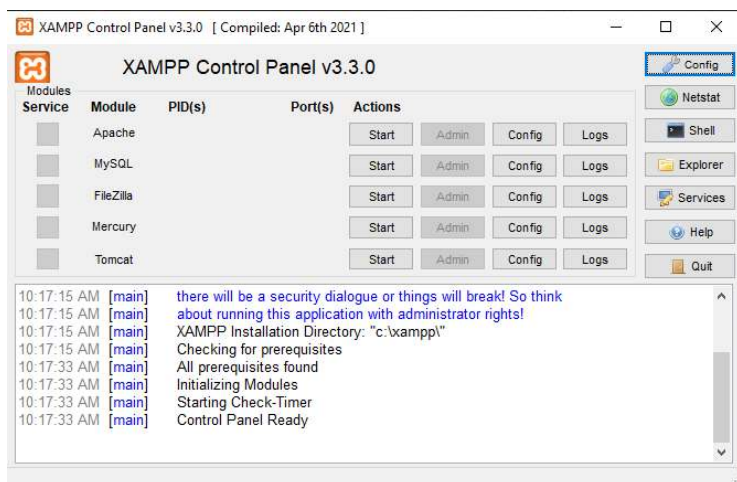
“Apache Friends Website” screen

Double-click the executable file you have downloaded to install XAMPP on your machine. *If you encounter any problem when installing XAMPP, [click here to get help](#)*



XAMPP Installer Screen

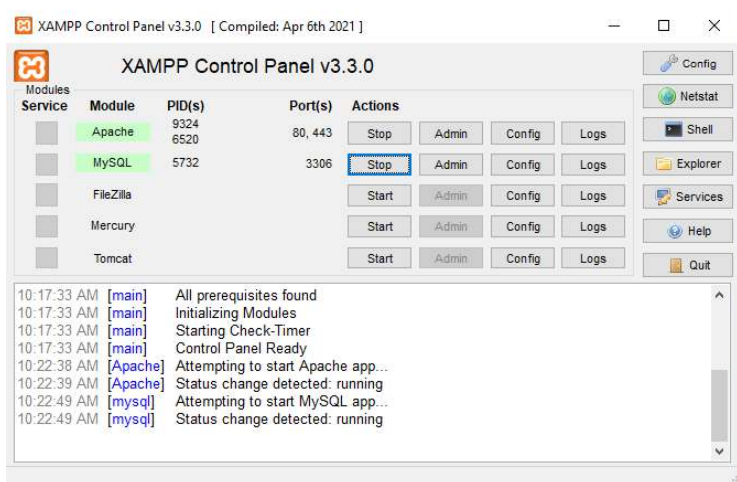
After successful install, open the XAMPP control panel by double-clicking the “XAMPP Control Panel” icon



XAMPP Control Panel

Now we are going to start both **Apache** and **MySQL** services, you can do this by clicking on the Start button next to each Module and both services should start.

BUILDING YOUR FIRST WORDPRESS SITE



XAMPP Control Panel screen when both Apache and MySQL services are running

If you encounter any problem with starting Apache and MySQL modules, [click here to get help](#).

To check if everything is working fine and your server is running, just type <http://localhost> into your browser, and you should be taken to XAMPP Page.