



My 14-Point Blog Startup Checklist

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This checklist covers all the things I typically do when launching a new blog. Or you can call it my answer to the question...

“What things would you do if you were starting a blog from scratch today?”

1. Wordpress

I only use self-hosted Wordpress for all of my blogs and so does every other professional blogger that I know. I know there are a lot of alternatives out there, but all of the best of the best use Wordpress.

2. Hosting

I host all of my blogs (except SeedTime.com because it gets over a million visitors a month) with [Hostgator](#). They are inexpensive and have great technical support that you will need sooner or later and you will be thankful they are there.

I also suggest just buying your domain name at Hostgator to make things quicker, if not, I like [NameCheap.com](#) for domains.

I am not going to go through all the process of getting setup here, but if you need a step-by-step tutorial [check out my FREE tutorial here](#).

3. Themes

Once I have my blog setup I always use [StudioPress Genesis framework/theme](#). If you don't have the money to spend right now, just find a free theme you like and upgrade once you make a little money with your blog.

4. Plugins

These are the plugins that I typically install right away on all my blogs:

- Yoast SEO
- Better WordPress Google XML Sitemap
- Akismet
- Contact Form 7

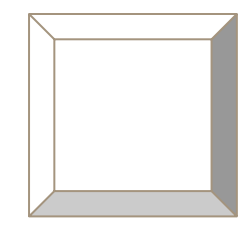
You can search for each of them in the Plugin area in your wordpress dashboard and install each for free.

5. Sharing tools

I also now install these SUMOme tools:

- Share (adds FB, Twitter, etc sharing buttons on each post)
- Listbuilder (customizeable popup box to start gathering email addresses)
- Scrollbox (additional email capture tool)

You can download their plugin that does it all from sumome.com



6. Logo

I don't normally spend a lot of time or energy on branding until the blog is a little established. You can spend thousands on a logo, but for most people I would recommend the [99designs pre-made logos](#). They are only \$99 and they look great.

7. Backup

This one depends on your risk tolerance, but I would suggest getting a backup system in place just in case. [Vaultpress.com](https://www.vaultpress.com) is a pretty good option.

8. Pages to create

I normally create these pages as soon as I get up and running:

- About
- Contact (and install the contact form from the plugin mentioned earlier)
- Privacy with a privacy policy (feel free to check out mine for inspiration)

9. Disclaimers

If you are an affiliate for any companies, per the FTC we need to disclose that on our blogs. Which reminds me- ;) some of the links in this PDF are affiliate links, but my opinion is not for sale and I only recommend stuff and I use and think will help readers.

10. Install a search box

But don't ever use the default Wordpress search box. If there is anything Google is really good at it is still search, so use theirs instead. You can download the "Google Custom Search" plugin to make it really easy.

□ 11. Start building an email list

I can't stress this one enough. People regularly ask me what I would do differently and the ONLY thing that really stands out in my mind is that I would have started building my email list sooner. I have had some bad experiences with Mailchimp, so I am hesitant to recommend them, but they are free up to your 1st 2000 emails, and free isn't bad. If you want to step up your game and actually get phone support, I would recommend [GetResponse](#). They aren't cheap, but I have loved them and currently use them.

12. Install Google Analytics

It's free, it's great, and you NEED to have this information being collected as soon as possible. You can download the "Google Analytics" plugin to make it easier as well.

□ 13. Tell the search engines about it

Add the blog to [Google Webmaster Tools](#) and [Bing Webmaster tools](#)

14. Email addresses

Create email addresses with blog domain name and forward them to gmail account (or other primary email account). Hostgator customer support can help with this as well.



So that about covers it! These are the first things I do with any new blog I create or buy.

I wish you all the best on your blogging journey!

- BOB