

So, you want a blog!

Wordpress.com may be the answer. It is easy to use and maintain, and lets up upload pictures and files. Here are some simple steps to getting started:

Sign up:

Go to <http://wordpress.com/signup/>.

1. Select a **username**. If you select a name that uses illegal characters (such as a space, hyphen, underscore) or if your username is already in use, you will be prompted to pick something else.
2. You must use your real email address. After you sign up, you will need to check your email to activate your account.



3. You are required to check off that you read and agree to the terms of service. Make sure “Gimme a blog!” is selected
Note: If you want several people to collaborate on a single blog, each person needs a separate username. You can use the “Just a username” radio button for this purpose.

Then click next to move to the next screen.

1. What do you want the URL of your blog to be? It will be *[some word].wordpress.com* Wordpress defaults to your username, but you do not have to pick that word.
2. The **title** of your blog can be several words, with spaces. This is what appears at the top of the blog.
3. The default language will determine your spellcheck feature.
4. The **privacy** issue depends on what you want to do with your blog. If you want to attract users from all over the world to see what you are posting, then check this box. If this is a blog just for you and your class or school, then don't check this box.



Then click next to move to the next screen.

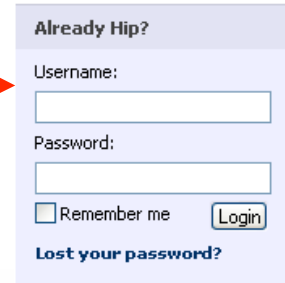
That's it. You now have a blog! Don't forget to activate your blog to take advantage of all the features.

There are two ways to log in. First, you can go to: <http://wordpress.com> and sign in using the “Already Hip? Log in box on the right hand side:

or

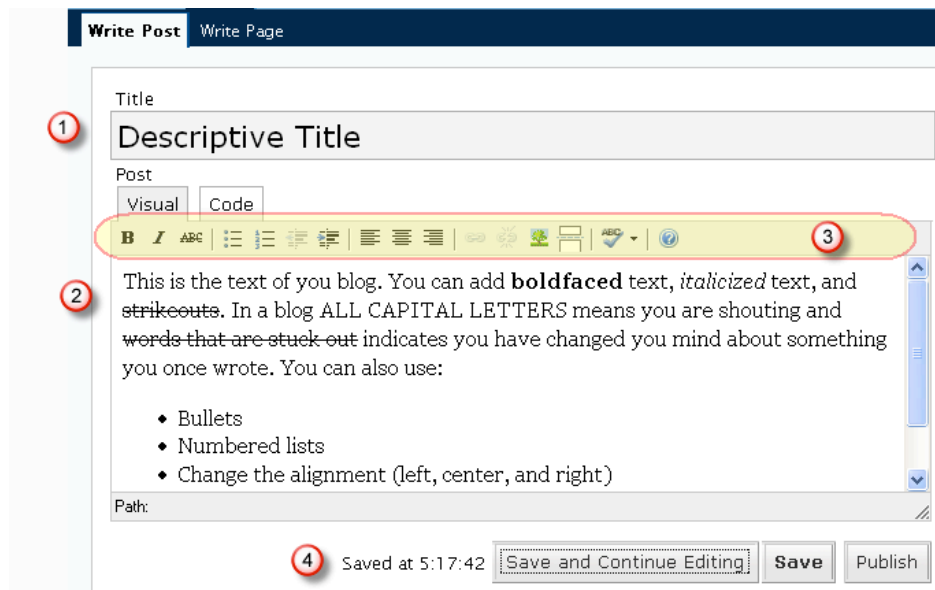
You can go to your own blog’s URL and click the **Log In** link.

If you see the “Dashboard” at the top of your page, you are already logged in:















Create Your First Post:

You may be directed immediately to write your first post. If not, just click “New Post” in the **Dashboard**.



1. Your **title** is important. Your blog will show your 5 most recent posts, listed by title.
2. Type in the text of your post.
3. Use the **Rich Editing** toolbar to change the look of your text:

 boldfaced type	 italics	 strikeout text
 align left	 align center	 align right
 bulleted list	 numbered list	 spellcheck your text
 insert hyperlink	 edit hyperlink	 insert a picture (that has already been uploaded)

4. When you have three options for saving:
 - **Save and Continue Editing:** This saves your work and leaves you on this page. Scroll down to see a preview of what you have done so far.
 - **Save:** This saves your work and opens a new, blank post. You can continue editing another day. Your work is not posted on your blog.
 - **Publish:** This saves your work and publishes to your blog. You will see new, blank post.

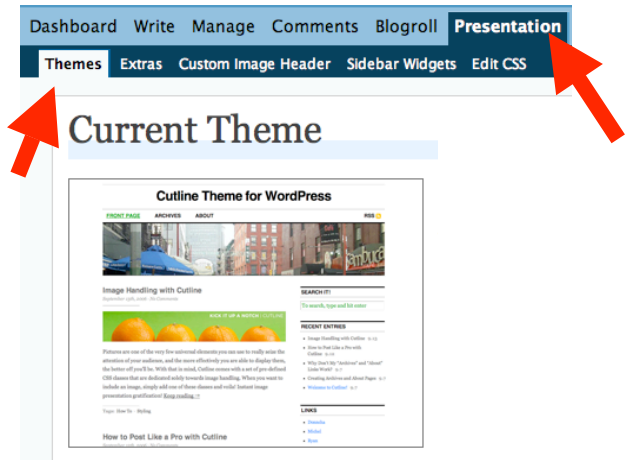
Manage Your Settings:

Wordpress gives users many features to customize and personalize their blogs. However, all these choices can be overwhelming for new users. The following instructions will give you the most common features new bloggers will want to use. This list is not meant to be all inclusive. Part of the fun will be learning new tricks and features as you blog on!

To use any of these features, you must be logged on and at your “Dashboard” page:

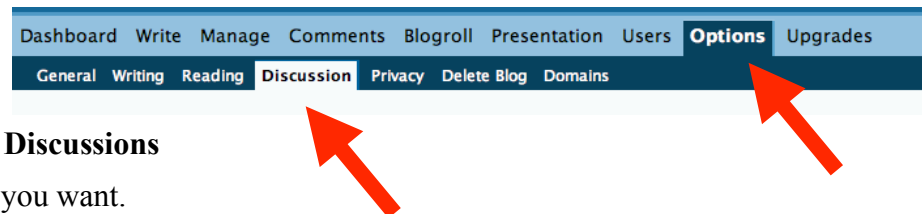
I. Presentation: This is the overall look to your blog. The default is a basic blue boarder, but Wordpress has a number of different templates from which to choose. Users from around the world are constantly submitting new templates, so check back from time to time to see what’s new.

1. Go to **Presentation** → **Themes**
2. Select the theme you want to use by clicking on it.
3. Your new theme is automatically applied.



II. Participations: There are several choices you need to make regarding how input you want from others. There are two levels of participation: comments and users.

A. Comments: In most cases you will want visitors to your blog to have an opportunity to post comments to your blog. This is one of the features that makes a blog interactive and *different* from a typically web page. To establish your discussion options:

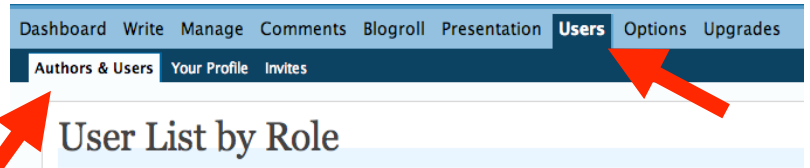


1. Go to **Options** → **Discussions**
2. Select the options you want.
3. Click **Update Options** to save your changes.

Some options to consider:

- **Usual settings for an article:** These are checked by default. Only uncheck “Allow people to post comments on the article” if you don’t want people to be able to post comments.
- **E-mail me whenever:** Generally you want to get emails about comments. This will help keep you up to date on your blog. However, if you are using this with your classes you may not want to get 30 emails (or more) a day. In that case you might want to uncheck these boxes.
- **Before a comment appears:** If you are using your blog with students, you should probably check “An administrator must always approve the comment.” This means comments don’t appear until you check them for appropriate content and language. It is also a good idea to check “Comment author must fill out name and e-mail.” This avoids anonymous comments.

B. Users: In addition to comments, you may want to assign roles to people. This is important if you want to establish a collaborative blog.:



1. Go to **Users → Authors & Users**
2. Scroll down the page to **Add User to From Community**.
3. Enter the email and select an appropriate role for the user:
 - **Administrator** - Somebody who has access to all the administration features
 - **Editor** - Somebody who can publish posts, manage posts as well as manage other people's posts, etc.
 - **Author** - Somebody who can publish and manage their own posts
 - **Contributor** - Somebody who can write and manage their posts but not publish posts
 - **Subscriber** - Somebody who can read comments/comment/receive news letters, etc.

Note: In order to be a User, a person must have a Wordpress account. You must enter the email they used to create this account!

C. Privacy: You can determine who can view and visit your blog by using the **Privacy Options**:



1. Go to **Options → Privacy**
2. Select the appropriate **Blog visibility** option.
 - Select “I would like my blog to appear in search engines...” if you want the most visibility and traffic. This is what you select if you are trying to find readership outside your school community.
 - Select “I would like to block search engines, but allow normal visitors.” This means anyone who knows your URL can find your blog. It also means other Wordpress bloggers may stumble upon it, but usually you don’t get much unsolicited traffic.
 - If you select “I would like my blog to be visible only to users I choose,” then only those you assign roles to can view your blog. This is the most privacy you can achieve and makes sense if you are using your blog as a personal journal. If you are using this with your students, it means they must each have a username and password.
3. Click **Update Options** to save your selection.