Into the Dashboard
Getting Hands-On with WordPress

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Welcome Back!

What we're covering today

- Dashboard tour and navigation
- Essential WordPress settings
- Creating your first post
- Working with the Block Editor
- Adding and optimizing images (including alt text!)
- Introduction to plugins
- Introduction to themes
- Brief overview of Full Site Editing
- Q&A

Remember: These slides will be posted online, and this session should be recorded!

Let's Log In!

Getting into your WordPress Dashboard

- Your sandbox site: https://shanta.dragonteach.com
- Dashboard URL: https://[yoursite].dragonteach.com/wp-admin

What you'll see:

- Login screen asking for username and password
- Use the credentials you created in Part One (this access should have been emailed to you!)
- Bookmark this! You'll want easy access to your dashboard.

Dashboard Tour - Welcome Screen

Your WordPress Command Centre
What you're looking at:

- Left sidebar: Main navigation menu (this is where you'll spend most of your time)
- Top bar: Quick links and your profile
- Main area: Dashboard "home" with widgets showing site activity

The sidebar is organized into sections:

- Posts
- Media
- Pages
- Comments
- Appearance
- Plugins
- Users
- Tools
- Settings

Don't worry - we'll explore these one by one!

Settings - General (1)

Let's make your site Canadian!

Navigate to: Settings → General

- Key settings we're changing:
  - Site Title & Tagline:
    - Site Title: Your website name
    - Tagline: Brief description of your site (appears in search results)
  - WordPress Address & Site Address:
    - Usually the same (don't change unless you know what you're doing!)
  - Email Address:
    - Administrative email (where WordPress sends notifications)
  - Site Language: This is important!
    - Change to English (Canada) for Canadian spelling and formatting
  - Timezone: Select America/Toronto (or your Canadian city)
    - This affects when scheduled posts publish

Settings - General (2)

- Date Format:
  - Choose your preferred format (YYYY-MM-DD is common in Canada)
- Time Format:
  - 24-hour or 12-hour format

- Click "Save Changes" at the bottom!

Settings - Reading

Control what visitors see first

Navigate to: Settings → Reading

- Key settings:
  - Your homepage displays:
    - Your latest posts (traditional blog style)
    - A static page (more like a traditional website)
    - We'll come back to this when we create pages!
  - Site Visibility:
    - Search Engine Visibility checkbox: Make sure this is UNCHECKED for live sites
    - Your sandbox had this checked by default - that's okay for learning
  - Posts per page:
    - How many blog posts show on your blog page
    - Default is 10, adjust based on your needs

Settings - Discussion

Managing comments and interaction

Navigate to: Settings → Discussion

- Key settings to know:
  - Default Post Settings:
    - Allow people to submit comments on new posts
    - Consider turning off if you don't want to moderate comments
  - Comment Moderation:
    - Hold comments for approval
    - Helps prevent spam
    - Can set automatic filters for suspicious content
  - Email notifications:
    - Get notified when someone comments
    - Choose what you want to be notified about
  - Avatar Settings:
    - How commenter profile pictures appear
    - Gravatar is the default system

Settings - Permalinks

Making your URLs look good

Navigate to: Settings → Permalinks

- What are permalinks?
- Permanent links - the URL structure for your posts and pages
- Common structures:
  - Plain: ?p=123 (not recommended - not user-friendly)
  - Day and name: /2025/10/10/sample-post/
  - Month and name: /2025/10/sample-post/
  - Post name: /sample-post/ ✓ Recommended!
  - Custom: Create your own structure
- Why "Post name" is best:
  - Clean, readable URLs
  - Better for SEO (search engines)
  - Easier for people to remember and share
  - More accessible

Important: Don't change this after your site is live with content! It will break existing links.

Creating Content - Posts vs Pages

Understanding the difference

Examples:

- Posts: News, blog articles, announcements, events
- Pages: About Us, Services, Contact, Privacy Policy

Think of it this way:

- Posts = newspaper articles
- Pages = chapters in a book

Creating Your First Post

Let's build something!

Navigate to: Posts → Add New

What you'll see:

- Title field at the top
- Large content area below (the Block Editor)
- Right sidebar with post settings
- Top toolbar with save/publish options
- The Block Editor (Gutenberg):
- WordPress's modern content creation system
- Everything is a "block" (paragraphs, images, headings, etc.)
- Click the + button to add blocks
- Blocks can be moved, styled, and arranged
- Let's create a sample post together!

Block Editor Basics (1)

- Understanding blocks
- What is a block?
- Every piece of content is a block:
- Paragraph block (text)
- Heading block (titles)
- Image block (photos)
- List block (bullet points)
- Quote block (pull quotes)
- ...and many more!

Block Editor Basics (2)

- Adding blocks:
- Click the + button in the top left or in the editor
- Search or browse for the block you want
- Click to add it
- Start typing or adding content
- Common blocks we'll use:
- Paragraph
- Heading
- Image
- List

Block Editor Basics (3)

- Block toolbar:
- Appears above each block when selected
- Options vary by block type
- Can change alignment, add links, make text bold/italic, etc.

Writing Your First Post (1)

Let's create content together!

Step 1: Add a title

- Type in the title field: "Welcome to My WordPress Site"

Step 2: Add a paragraph

- The paragraph block should be ready - just start typing!
- Write something like:
- "This is my first post on WordPress! I'm learning how to create content at WordCamp Canada 2025 in Ottawa."

Step 3: Add a heading

- Click the + button
- Search for "heading" or find it in the list
- Click it to add
- Type: "What I'm Learning"

Writing Your First Post (2)

Step 4: Add a list

- Click the + button again
- Find "List" block
- Choose bullet or numbered list
- Add items:
- How to use the WordPress dashboard
- Creating posts and pages
- Adding images with alt text
- Canadian website considerations

Working with Images (1)

Adding visual content

Navigate to: Media → Add New (or use the Image block directly)

Adding an image to your post:

- Method 1: Upload directly in post
  - Click the + button in your post
  - Find "Image" block
  - Click "Upload" to choose a file from your computer
  - Or "Media Library" to use something already uploaded
- Method 2: Upload to Media Library first
  - Go to Media → Add New
  - Drag and drop or click to upload
  - Then add to post from Media Library

Working with Images (2)

Image best practices:

- Use high-quality images (but not too large!)
- Recommended max width: 2000 pixels
- Optimize images before uploading (compress them)
- Use relevant, meaningful images
- Always consider copyright - use your own photos or properly licensed images

Alt Text - Accessibility Matters! (1)

Making images accessible

- What is alt text?
  - Alternative text that describes an image for:
  - People using screen readers (visually impaired)
  - When images fail to load
  - Search engines (helps SEO!)
- How to add alt text in WordPress:
  - Click on your image block
  - Look at the right sidebar (Block settings)
  - Find "Alt Text" field under "Image settings"
  - Type a clear, concise description

Alt Text - Accessibility Matters! (2)

Writing good alt text:

- ✓ Good: "Golden retriever puppy playing with a red ball in a grassy backyard"
- ✗ Bad: "Image123.jpg" or "dog"
- ✗ Avoid: "Image of..." or "Picture of..." (screen readers already announce it's an image)

When to leave alt text empty:

- Decorative images that don't add information
- Use empty alt text (alt="") - this tells screen readers to skip it
- This is legally required under AODA in Ontario!

Post Settings Sidebar (1)

Fine-tuning your post

Look at the right sidebar - several sections:

- Status & Visibility:
- Public (everyone can see)
- Private (only site admins)
- Password protected
- Publish date: Schedule for future or backdate
- Categories:
  - Broad classifications for posts
  - "Events," "News," "Tips," etc.
  - Can create new categories here (but I don't recommend it! Plan it first)
  - One post can have multiple categories (but I don't recommend it! Major classification)
- Tags:
  - Specific keywords describing content
  - More granular than categories
  - "wordpress," "beginners," "canada," etc.
  - WordPress recommends 5-7 tags per post

Post Settings Sidebar (2)

- Featured Image:
  - Main image representing the post
  - Shows in blog listings
  - Appears at top of post (depending on theme)
  - Add just like regular images, but in this sidebar section
- Excerpt:
  - Short summary of your post
  - Used in previews and search results
  - Optional - WordPress can auto-generate one

Publishing Your Post (1)

Making it live!
Top right corner buttons:

- Save Draft:
  - Saves your work without publishing
  - Come back and edit later
  - Good for works in progress
- Preview:
  - See what your post looks like before publishing
  - Opens in new tab
  - Shows exactly what visitors will see
- Publish:
  - Makes your post live on your site
  - Click once, WordPress asks you to confirm
  - Click "Publish" again to confirm
- After publishing:
  - You'll see a success message
  - Option to view the post
  - Can still edit after publishing

Publishing Your Post (2)

- Post status indicators:
  - Draft (not published)
  - Scheduled (will publish at set date/time)
  - Published (live on site)

Introduction to Plugins (1)

Extending WordPress functionality

What are plugins?

- Add-ons that extend what WordPress can do
- Like apps on your phone
- Thousands available (free and paid)
- Can do almost anything: contact forms, SEO, security, backups, etc.
- Your sandbox includes:
  - WordFence - Security and firewall protection
  - UpdraftPlus - Backup and restoration
  - Akismet - Spam protection (pre-installed with WordPress)
- We will install:
  - WS Forms - Creating contact forms

Introduction to Plugins (2)

- We'll mention (covered in other sessions):
  - Yoast SEO or Rank Math - Search engine optimization
  - WooCommerce - E-commerce functionality
  - WPML - Multilingual sites (English/French)
  - Gravity Forms - Another forms plugin (alternative to WS Forms)
- Finding plugins:
  - WordPress.org plugin repository (through Dashboard → Plugins → Add New)
  - Always check: ratings, recent updates, active installations, support responsiveness
- Plugin warning:
  - Don't install too many! Each plugin adds code
  - Only install what you actually need
  - Delete unused plugins
  - Keep plugins updated (security!)

Plugin Spotlight - WordFence (1)

Security matters!

WordFence (pre-installed on your sandbox):

- Firewall protection
- Malware scanner
- Login security
- Real-time traffic monitoring
- Blocks malicious traffic

Basic setup:

- Already configured on your sandbox
- For your own site: install and run through setup wizard
- Enable email alerts for security issues
- Regular scans (free version scans with slight delay)

Plugin Spotlight - WordFence (2)

Other security practices:

- Strong passwords (use a password manager!)
- Two-factor authentication (WordFence Premium or other plugins)
- Keep WordPress, themes, and plugins updated
- Regular backups (that's where UpdraftPlus comes in!)
- Limit login attempts
- Change default "admin" username

Plugin Spotlight - UpdraftPlus (1)

Backups save lives (and websites!)
UpdraftPlus (pre-installed on your sandbox):

- Backs up your entire WordPress site
- Database and files
- Schedule automatic backups
- Restore with one click
- Free version is powerful!

Why backups are critical:

- Protect against hacking
- Recover from mistakes
- Move/migrate your site
- Peace of mind!

Best practices:

- Backup before major changes
- Store backups off-site (cloud storage)
- Test your backups occasionally
- Automatic daily or weekly backups for active sites

Plugin Spotlight - UpdraftPlus (2)

Other backup options:

- Many hosting companies include automatic backups
- Jetpack (Automattic's plugin) has backup features
- VaultPress
- BackupBuddy (paid)

Plugin Spotlight - WS Forms (1)

Creating contact forms

WS Forms (pre-installed on your sandbox):

- Drag-and-drop form builder
- Contact forms, surveys, registrations
- GDPR/CASL compliant options
- Spam protection built-in
- Responsive (mobile-friendly)

Creating a basic contact form:

- WS Forms → Add New
- Choose a template or start blank
- Drag fields into form (name, email, message)
- Configure settings (where form emails go)
- Add to page using block or shortcode

Plugin Spotlight - WS Forms (2)

Alternative: Gravity Forms

- More advanced features
- Conditional logic
- Payment integration
- Paid plugin (worth it for complex needs)
- Why use forms instead of showing email addresses?
- Reduces spam
- Collects structured information
- CASL compliant (can add consent checkboxes)
- Better user experience
- Can integrate with email marketing tools

Introduction to Themes (1)

The look and feel of your site

- What are themes?
- Control your website's appearance and layout
- The "front end" - what visitors see
- Can include functionality (but that's really what plugins are for)
- Easy to switch between themes
- Thousands available (free and paid)

Your sandbox is using:

- Twenty Twenty-Five (or current default WordPress theme)
- Clean, modern, block-based
- Fully responsive (mobile-friendly)
- Great for learning!

Introduction to Themes (2)

Theme components:

- Layout structure (header, footer, sidebar)
- Typography (fonts)
- Colour schemes
- Page templates
- Widget areas

Changing themes:

- Appearance → Themes
- Browse available themes
- Preview before activating
- Activate when ready

Introduction to Themes (3)

Finding themes:

- WordPress.org theme directory (Appearance → Themes → Add New)
- Premium theme marketplaces (ThemeForest, etc.)
- Theme companies (StudioPress, Elegant Themes, etc.)

Theme selection tips:

- Choose based on your site's purpose
- Check for mobile responsiveness
- Look for accessibility features
- Read reviews and ratings
- Check last update date (recently updated = actively maintained)
- Make sure it's block-editor compatible
- Some functionality may change depending on your theme, so choose one and stick with it

Theme Customizer (1)

Making your theme your own

Navigate to: Appearance → Customize

- The Customizer allows you to:
- Change site identity (logo, site title, tagline)
- Adjust colours
- Modify typography
- Set homepage and blog page
- Configure menus
- Add widgets
- See changes in real-time preview!

Theme Customizer (2)

Key sections:

- Site Identity:
  - Upload logo
  - Site title and tagline
  - Site icon (favicon - the little icon in browser tabs)
- Colours:
  - Background colour
  - Link colours
  - Accent colours
  - Depends on your theme
- Menus:
  - Create and manage navigation menus Assign to menu locations (header, footer, etc.)
  - Add pages, categories, custom links

Theme Customizer (3)

- Widgets:
  - Add content to sidebars and footers
  - Search bars, recent posts, categories, etc.
  - Drag and drop interface
- Homepage Settings:
  - Choose static page or latest posts
  - Select which page is your homepage
  - Select which page shows your blog posts
  - Remember to click "Publish" to save changes!

Full Site Editing (FSE) - Overview (1)

The future of WordPress themes

What is Full Site Editing?

- Edit your entire site using blocks (not just posts/pages)
- Headers, footers, sidebars - all editable with blocks
- Block-based themes required
- More design flexibility
- No coding needed for layout changes
- Navigate to: Appearance → Editor (in block themes)

What you can edit:

- Templates (how different page types look)
- Template parts (headers, footers, etc.)
- Navigation menus
- Entire site layout

Full Site Editing (FSE) - Overview (2)

Block themes vs Classic themes:

- Block themes: Support Full Site Editing
- Classic themes: Use Customizer and widget areas
- Twenty Twenty-Five (your sandbox theme) is a block theme

We're not diving deep today, but know:

- FSE is becoming the WordPress standard
- It's powerful but has a learning curve
- Classic themes still work fine
- Many new themes are block-based
- The future is blocks!
- Posts and pages: Block Editor ✓
- Site structure: Full Site Editing ✓
- Everything is moving toward blocks

Pages vs Posts - Creating Your First Page (1)

Building static content

We've created a post - now let's make a page!

- Navigate to: Pages → Add New
- The editor looks similar to posts, but notice:
- No categories or tags
- No publish date shown
- Different templates available (depends on theme)
- Page Attributes section (parent pages, page order)

Pages vs Posts - Creating Your First Page (2)

Let's create an "About" page together:

- Step 1: Title Type: "About Us" (or "About Me" if personal site)
- Step 2: Add content Use blocks just like in posts:
  - Paragraph block: Write about yourself or your organization
  - Heading blocks: Break up sections
  - Image block: Add a photo
  - List block: Highlight key points
- Step 3: Page template (right sidebar)
  - Default Template (most common)
  - Some themes offer: Full Width, Landing Page, etc.
- Step 4: Page Attributes
  - Parent page: Makes this a sub-page of another page
  - Order: Controls order in menus (if using page order)
- Step 5: Publish!
  - Common pages every site should have:
  - About (or About Us)
  - Contact
  - Services (if applicable)
  - Privacy Policy (required for PIPEDA!)
  - Terms of Service (if applicable)

Creating a Privacy Policy Page (1)

Legal requirement for Canadian sites

Why you need a privacy policy:

- Required under PIPEDA
- Builds trust with visitors
- Required by many payment processors
- Google and other services often require it
- WordPress makes this easy!

Navigate to: Settings → Privacy

WordPress Privacy Policy Generator:

- Click "Create New Page" or select existing page
- WordPress provides a template with standard privacy content
- Edit to match your specific site
- Add details about what data you collect

Creating a Privacy Policy Page (2)

- Include information about cookies, forms, comments
- Explain how data is stored and protected
- Provide contact information for privacy requests

Important sections to include:

- What personal information you collect
- How you use it
- How you protect it
- Who you share it with (if anyone)
- User rights (access, deletion, etc.)
- How to contact you about privacy concerns
- Information about cookies

Link to your privacy policy:

- Add to footer menu
- Include on contact forms (consent checkbox)
- Link from registration forms

Creating a Privacy Policy Page (3)

- Get legal advice! This is a starting point, but consider having a lawyer review it, especially if you're collecting sensitive data.
- Speaker Notes: Show where the Privacy Policy helper is in Settings → Privacy. Show the template WordPress provides. Emphasize this is a legal requirement, not optional. Don't be a lawyer - encourage them to get proper legal advice for their specific situation.

Menus - Organizing Your Navigation (1)

Helping visitors find their way

Navigate to: Appearance → Menus

Creating a menu:

- Step 1: Create a new menu
  - Give it a name (e.g., "Main Menu" or "Header Menu")
  - Click "Create Menu"
- Step 2: Add items to your menu Left sidebar has options:
  - Pages: Check pages to add (About, Contact, etc.)
  - Posts: Individual posts (less common in main menu)
  - Custom Links: External websites, specific URLs
  - Categories: Link to category archives
  - Click "Add to Menu" to add selected items
- Step 3: Organize your menu
  - Drag and drop to reorder
  - Drag right to create sub-items (dropdown menus)
  - Click arrow to edit item (change label, add CSS classes)

Menus - Organizing Your Navigation (2)

- Step 4: Assign menu location
  - Bottom of page: "Menu Settings"
  - Check which location (Primary Menu, Footer Menu, etc.)
  - Locations depend on your theme
- Step 5: Save Menu

Menu best practices:

- Follow the 3-5-7 rule: No more than 5-7 main items
- Use clear, descriptive labels
- Most important items first (left to right)
- Don't nest more than 2 levels deep
- Test on mobile (hamburger menus)

Media Library Management (1)

Keeping your images organized

Navigate to: Media → Library

What you'll see:

- All uploaded images, documents, videos
- Grid view or List view
- Search and filter options
- Upload new files
- Best practices for media management:
- Before uploading:
- Name files descriptively (about-team-photo.jpg, not IMG_1234.jpg)
- Optimize image size (compress without losing quality)
- Use appropriate formats (JPEG for photos, PNG for graphics with transparency)

Media Library Management (2)

After uploading:

- Add alt text (accessibility!)
- Add title and caption if needed
- Add description for your own reference
- Consider organizing with media library plugins if you have many files

File size considerations:

- Large images slow down your site
- Aim for under 200KB per image where possible
- Use image optimization plugins (Smush, ShortPixel, Imagify)
- WordPress automatically creates multiple sizes

Deleting media:

- Check if it's used anywhere first!
- Deleting from library removes it from posts/pages using it
- Be careful!

Media Library Management (3)

Supported file types:

- Images: JPEG, PNG, GIF, WebP, SVG (sometimes)
- Documents: PDF, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX, XLS, XLSX
- Audio: MP3, WAV, OGG
- Video: MP4, MOV, AVI (but consider hosting video elsewhere - YouTube, Vimeo)

Comments - To Enable or Not? (1)

Managing visitor interaction

Navigate to: Posts → (select a post) or Settings → Discussion

Comment considerations:

- Pros of allowing comments:
- Builds community
- Encourages discussion
- Shows your site is active
- User-generated content
- SEO benefits (fresh content)

Cons of allowing comments:

- Requires moderation (time commitment)
- Spam is rampant
- Can attract trolls/negative comments
- Legal liability concerns

Comments - To Enable or Not? (2)

If you enable comments:

- Use Akismet (pre-installed) for spam filtering Moderate comments before publishing
- Set up email notifications
- Have a clear comment policy
- Respond to legitimate comments

If you disable comments:

- Settings → Discussion: Uncheck "Allow people to submit comments"
- Use contact forms instead for feedback
- Still engage on social media
- Consider alternative engagement methods
- Many business sites disable comments entirely - that's perfectly fine!

Users and Roles (1)

Who can access your site
Navigate to: Users → All Users
WordPress user roles:

- Administrator (that's you!):
  - Full access to everything
  - Can delete the site
  - Can manage all users
  - Can install/delete themes and plugins
- Editor:
  - Can publish and manage all posts and pages
  - Can moderate comments
  - Cannot change themes or plugins
  - Good for content managers
- Author:
  - Can publish and manage their own posts
  - Cannot edit others' posts
  - Cannot access pages
  - Good for guest bloggers

Users and Roles (2)

- Contributor:
  - Can write and manage their own posts
  - Cannot publish (needs approval)
  - Good for guest writers who need approval
- Subscriber:
  - Can only manage their profile
  - Can read content
  - Rarely used on simple sites

Best practices:

- Don't share admin credentials
- Give people the minimum role they need
- Review users regularly
- Remove users who no longer need access
- Use strong passwords for all users

Keeping WordPress Updated (1)

Maintenance matters!
Updates are critical for:

- Security patches
- Bug fixes
- New features
- Compatibility with plugins and themes

What needs updating:

- WordPress core
- Themes
- Plugins

Navigate to: Dashboard → Updates

- WordPress makes this easy:
- Automatic updates for minor versions (security/maintenance)
- Notification for major updates
- One-click updates for plugins and themes

Before updating:

- Backup your site! (UpdraftPlus makes this easy)
- Read update notes (especially for major updates)
- Check plugin compatibility if updating WordPress core
- Consider staging sites for testing (advanced)

Keeping WordPress Updated (2)

Update strategy:

- Keep everything updated promptly
- Security updates are critical
- Minor delays are okay for major version updates (let others test first)
- But don't delay too long!

Auto-updates:

- WordPress core: Auto-updates for minor versions
- Plugins: Can enable auto-updates per plugin
- Themes: Can enable auto-updates per theme
- Be cautious with auto-updates on production sites without testing
- Your sandbox has auto-updates enabled - that's fine for learning!

Mobile Responsiveness (1)

Your site on phones and tablets

Why mobile matters:

- Over 60% of web traffic is mobile
- Google prioritizes mobile-friendly sites
- Users expect sites to work on all devices
- AODA includes mobile accessibility

Good news: WordPress themes are usually responsive

- Twenty Twenty-Five (your sandbox theme) is fully responsive
- Adapts to different screen sizes automatically
- Navigation becomes hamburger menu
- Images scale appropriately
- Text remains readable

Mobile Responsiveness (2)

Testing mobile responsiveness:

- Method 1: Browser developer tools
- Chrome: Right-click → Inspect → Toggle device toolbar
- See how site looks on different devices
- Test iPhone, iPad, Android sizes
- Method 2: Your actual phone!
- Visit your site on your phone
- Test navigation
- Try forms
- Check image loading
- Method 3: Online tools
- Google Mobile-Friendly Test
- Responsive Design Checker
- BrowserStack (paid, very thorough)

Mobile Responsiveness (3)

Mobile considerations:

- Keep menus simple (hamburger menus can hide complex navigation)
- Use readable font sizes
- Make buttons/links large enough to tap (44x44 pixels minimum)
- Avoid horizontal scrolling
- Test forms on mobile (they're harder to fill out)

Basic Troubleshooting (1)

When things go wrong (and they will!)

Common issues and solutions:

- White screen of death:
  - Usually a plugin or theme conflict
  - Access via FTP/hosting control panel
  - Rename plugins folder to deactivate all plugins
  - Rename back and reactivate one by one to find culprit
- Can't log in:
  - Clear browser cache and cookies
  - Try different browser
  - Use password reset
  - Check hosting for login URL changes
- Site is slow:
  - Check image sizes (optimize them!)
  - Too many plugins?
  - Need caching plugin?
  - Hosting issues?

Basic Troubleshooting (2)

- Changes not showing:
  - Browser cache - try hard refresh (Ctrl+F5 or Cmd+Shift+R)
  - WordPress cache - clear if using caching plugin
  - CDN cache - clear if using CDN
- Plugin conflicts:
  - Deactivate all plugins
  - Reactivate one by one to find conflict
  - Check plugin support forums
  - Contact plugin developer
  - Theme issues:
- Switch to default WordPress theme (Twenty Twenty-Five)
  - If problem goes away, it's theme-related
  - Check theme support/documentation

Basic Troubleshooting (3)

Where to get help:

- WordPress.org forums - free community support
- Happiness Bar - here at WordCamp!
- Plugin/theme support - check their support channels
- Your hosting - they can help with server issues
- Local WordPress meetups
- Hire a professional - for complex issues

Prevention is better than cure:

- Keep backups (UpdraftPlus!)
- Test changes on staging sites
- Keep everything updated
- Don't install too many plugins
- Use reputable themes and plugins

Next Steps After Today (1)

Continuing your WordPress journey

- Immediate next steps:
  - Keep practicing on your sandbox site
  - Create more posts and pages
  - Experiment with different blocks
  - Upload and optimize images
  - Try creating a menu
  - Explore theme customization
- When you're ready for your own site:
  - Choose hosting (remember Canadian options!)
  - Register your domain (.ca for Canadian sites!)
  - Install WordPress (usually one-click from hosting)
  - Set up essential settings (like we did today)
  - Choose and install a theme
  - Install essential plugins (security, backup, forms)
  - Create privacy policy
  - Create core pages (About, Contact, Services)
  - Start publishing content!

Next Steps After Today (2)

Keep learning:

- Attend other WordCamp sessions this weekend
- Join local WordPress meetups (https://meetup.com)
- Watch WordPress.tv for recorded sessions
  - I have quite a few on Content Architecture (categories, tags, pages, posts and more)
- Take courses on Learn.WordPress.org
- Follow WordPress blogs and YouTubers
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Other WordCamp Canada sessions to attend:
  - WooCommerce workshop - if selling products/services
  - SEO session - get found on Google
  - Advanced sessions - when you're ready
  - Happiness Bar - get help with specific issues

Next Steps After Today (3)

- Don't be afraid to:
  - Experiment (on your sandbox!)
  - Ask questions
  - Make mistakes
  - Start over if needed
  - Ask for help
  - Remember: Everyone was a beginner once!

Canadian WordPress Resources (1)

Stay connected locally

- WordPress Meetups in Canada:
  - Ottawa WordPress Meetup
  - Toronto WordPress Meetup
  - Hamilton WordPress Meetup
  - Vancouver WordPress Meetup
  - Montreal WordPress (bilingual!)
  - London WordPress Meetup
  - And many more across Canada!
- Find meetups at: meetup.com/pro/wordpress
- WordCamps in Canada (and around the world):
  - WordCamp Canada (you're here!)
  - Watch for regional WordCamps

Canadian WordPress Resources (2)

Canadian-specific resources:

- Privacy Commissioner of Canada: https://priv.gc.ca (PIPEDA info)
- Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation: https://fightspam.gc.ca (CASL info)
- AODA resources: https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-make-websites-accessible (accessibility)
- CIRA (.ca registry): https://cira.ca
- Online communities:
  - WordPress.org forums
  - WordPress Canada Facebook groups
  - WordPress Slack channels

Key Takeaways (1)

What to remember from today

Part One - Intro to WordPress:

- ✓ WordPress.org (self-hosted) gives you full control
- ✓ Choose hosting carefully (Canadian options available!)
- ✓ Canadian considerations: PIPEDA, CASL, AODA matter
- ✓ Set language to English (Canada)
- ✓ Security and backups are essential

Key Takeaways (2)

Part Two - Into the Dashboard:

- ✓ Settings are important - configure them right away
- ✓ Posts are dynamic, Pages are static
- ✓ Everything is a block in the editor
- ✓ Always add alt text to images (accessibility!)
- ✓ Plugins extend functionality (but don't overdo it)
- ✓ Themes control appearance
- ✓ Keep WordPress, themes, and plugins updated
- ✓ Mobile responsiveness matters
- ✓ Help is available - use it!
- The most important takeaway: You CAN do this! WordPress is designed for people like you.

Resources - All in One Place (1)

Bookmark these!

- WordPress.org – https://wordpress.org
- Learn WordPress – https://learn.wordpress.org
- WordPress.tv – https://wordpress.tv
- Support Forums - https://wordpress.org/support
- Theme Directory - https://wordpress.org/themes
- Plugin Directory - https://wordpress.org/plugins

Canadian Legal/Compliance:

- PIPEDA - https://priv.gc.ca
- CASL - https://fightspam.gc.ca
- AODA - https://ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r11191

Resources - All in One Place (2)

Tools Mentioned:

- Security - WordFence (https://wordpress.org/plugins/wordfenc)
- Backups - UpdraftPlus (https://wordpress.org/plugins/updraftplus)
- Forms - WS Forms (https://wordpress.org/plugins/ws-form) or Gravity Forms (https://gravityforms.com)
- Multilingual - WPML (https://wpml.org)
- Image Optimization - Smush, ShortPixel, Imagify

Canadian Hosting:

- Web Hosting Canada - https://whc.ca
- HostPapa - https://hostpapa.ca
- WPCloud
- Hosting.ca

Books:

- Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web
- Don't Make Me Think (Steve Krug)

Final Thoughts (1)

Before we wrap up

You've learned a LOT today:

- WordPress basics and Canadian considerations
- Dashboard navigation
- Creating posts and pages
- Working with the Block Editor
- Images and accessibility
- Plugins and themes
- Settings and configuration

This is just the beginning:

- WordPress has SO much more to explore
- Take it step by step
- Don't try to learn everything at once
- Build on what you learned today

Remember:

- Your sandbox site is available into the new year
- Keep practicing!
- Attend other sessions

Final Thoughts (2)

- Visit the Happiness Bar
- Connect with the community
- The WordPress community is amazing:
- Welcoming to beginners
- Always willing to help
- Passionate about open source
- Friendly and supportive
- You're now part of that community. Welcome!

Keep in touch

Stay in touch with me:

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