

Profit
ACADEMY

MODULE 13

SEGMENT 2



Joyanne Sloan: Welcome back to How To Build A Profitable Website & Use It Powerfully. In this class, we're going to go over WordPress essentials. We'll do a basic orientation and learn the dashboard tools and why you need multiple user accounts. We'll also understand your homepage and the difference between dynamic and static homepages, and how best to use the available space on your homepage. We'll go through configuring your navigation, also called your page menu, and add your must-have pages. We'll create custom menus as well as SEO-friendly links. Lastly, we'll add some additional functionality using recommended plugins. I'll show you how to select, install, activate, and update your plugins.

The benefits to you in this session are that you're going to learn a critical safety precaution that will protect both your website and your business. You'll also know which parts of your homepage are customizable and what should go where. You'll know how to set up your page menus so that they're friendly for people as well as search engines. You'll learn how to enhance your website without having to learn how to code, or hiring a programmer.

This is what your basic WordPress login page will look like. You'll want to keep a secure record of your WordPress login details somewhere other than the original email you received. Always choose "Remember Me" when you first log in. After you've logged in, you'll see the WordPress dashboard.

WordPress is like a car. It's a powerful vehicle that can take your business where you want it to go. Now let's take WordPress out of the garage. Just like a car, the dashboard lets you see and access the various parts of your website from one main menu. Later in this session, we'll take a look at how you can add more bells and whistles to your base model [00:02:00] vehicle to make it more functional and powerful. We'll also create an additional user account to safeguard your website. Let's get started now.

Great. Now that you've logged in to WordPress, you're going to be taken to your basic dashboard. We'll go ahead and do an orientation here, working from left to right. The dashboard is loosely organized into what I would say are two

main sections. This top section here is what I would call the content section here, all the way through "comments." Then below "comments" is the next portion of what I would call your configuration section, through "appearance," "plugins," "users," "tools," and finally, "settings." Generally speaking, once you have configured these main areas, you don't really need to touch them again. You'll be mostly spending your time working on adding new content to your page through these upper items.

When you first log in, you're going to get a nice welcome message. There are some quick links here to show you how to do your initial steps, such as changing your front page, viewing your site, and managing different elements. I also want to point out here to you that there's a little bar that you can see once you're logged in. If you hover here, you can visit your own website. We'll do that in a moment. There are also some additional basic tasks that you'll do repeatedly. This is a queue for approving or deleting comments that users may have left on your various pages. Then you can add new posts, media, pages, and users. Again, we'll talk about that in a moment.

Let's go ahead and visit our site. Again, this is just a homepage look at our site. What you'll notice is, whenever we're logged in, we [00:04:00] can continue seeing this basic black bar of WordPress at the top of our page. Only we see this, because we're logged in as the administrator. The end user will not see this. Any time you want to go back to the full dashboard, go ahead and just hover here, and then again, choose dashboard.

Here we are back at our main dashboard. Let me just show you a couple of things that you can do to customize this dashboard. First of all, once you've looked through your welcome message, go ahead and close that down to dismiss that. That'll clean up your page a little bit. I also like to minimize this WordPress News area. I really never use Quick Drafts, so I'll go ahead and close that down, as well. Just know that here in the upper right, if you click on "Screen Options," there are some different things that you can turn on or turn off if you don't want to look at these. Then we'll go

ahead and toggle that shut, as well. Again, you see you end up with a much cleaner, less-distracting dashboard.

Now let's move from the top to the bottom and do a closer look at some of these different menus. When we hover over "Posts," we see that to the right, a sub-menu pops up. This first link here, for "All Posts," will give us an overview of all the different posts that we've added to our site. Later on, we'll go into the difference between something called a post and something called a page, because they're very different in the WordPress environment. If we just wanted to create a new post, we can do that through here, "Add New," or we can do it through this top menu, again, "Add New Post."

Categories are something we'll also talk about later. Essentially, any new post that you add needs to be added to a category, which is generally a topic that that post would belong to. Tags [00:06:00] aren't something that's used very often anymore, so we will skip that altogether. Basically, they're ignored by the search engines, so I don't encourage that you spend any time adding or organizing tags.

Next is your media library. This basically houses all of the different photos, clipart, PDF files, and so forth that you might upload to your website. One word of caution is that I would not add any videos here. While you can generally upload some small videos to WordPress, they don't stream in the same way that we're used to. I would suggest that you upload them to YouTube instead. Later on, I'll show you how to go ahead and embed videos straight onto your website from YouTube. It's actually very simple. Again, if you wanted to add something to the media library, you would just click on "Add New" and select the files from your computer. Very straightforward.

Now let's go to pages. These pages will be ones that we'll configure in the next segment. Generally, pages are going to be shown at the top part of your main menu. Also, again, we would just add new. I'll show you what that looks like. Very straightforward. Title and then the visual editor here. In a later segment, I'll go through all of the tools in the visual editor and give you a strong orientation for that, as well.

Lastly, you shouldn't be getting a lot of comments initially, but you will find that some spam comments will be left. This is an attempt on some people's part to create backlinks to their website, which helps them with their search engine rank. Generally, as the administrator, you will receive an email any time a comment is left on one of your pages or posts. You will have the opportunity to approve or send it to the trash and mark it as spam. You can also edit comments. [00:08:00] We'll be setting up a plugin later that will help you filter out spam comments.

Let's move forward, down through the dashboard tools. We've already talked about appearance a little bit, and we've updated a new theme. Let me just click on this here for a moment to show you that when you first open your WordPress account, what's going to be installed is this default 2015 theme. Just know that that will be the theme that's in place on your website until you upload and activate a new one. In another segment, we'll walk through all the various ways in which you can customize your theme and so forth. For right now, we're going to skip past that.

We want to talk about a really important topic, and that's users. Let's go ahead here and go to "All Users." What you'll see here is that there are two accounts. I happen to be working on this account. Typically, you would only see the admin setup. That is the default user account, and it has the full access and full privileges to modify every portion of the site. What I did as the webmaster on this particular site is we added a new account with my name on it.

Here's why that's really important. In this particular case, if this business owner had given me her administrative credentials, meaning her username and password, I could go in and change that information and actually lock her out of her own website by changing the password. You never, ever want to give anyone your administrative username and password. You'll always, if you have anybody working on your site, you want to create a new account for them and send them their own username and password.

We'll go ahead and do that by clicking on "Add New." You can give them an upper and lowercase name. We'll just say Fred, and we'll put in fred@gmail.com so that we can send him

[00:10:00] his username and password by email. We don't need to fill in 'website'. We do need to fill in his password. It will tell you if it wants you to keep going or not in terms of strength. We always want to check this box here, "Send this password to the new user by email." The default role here is 'subscriber'. That's the lowest level of privileges in your website. Then it moves up the scale to contributor, author, editor, and administrator. Be very careful about who you give administrative rights to. Then you go ahead and click "Add New User."

This is a great time to change our focus over to talking about homepages and understanding the difference between a static homepage and a dynamic homepage. WordPress themes tend to be set up for blogging, with the most recent articles showing up first. Everything is published in the blog format in a reverse chronological order, because it wants to keep the freshest, most relevant information at the top.

The homepage is basically created dynamically or populated by the content that you add to your website. For that reason, your website will do better the more frequently you add new content to it. You can switch away from the default homepage of recent posts and choose a single static page instead. I don't often recommend this, because usually there isn't one single solitary message that you want users to see over and over again, assuming that you will have repeat visitors to your website. If each element on your homepage doesn't have a clear purpose, it probably shouldn't be there.

I really cannot [00:12:00] overemphasize how important it is to consider your homepage carefully. The real estate on your homepage is extremely valuable, and you need to use it wisely. Use it to draw attention to featured content. Use it to promote your offerings, like a storefront window that draws customers in. Use it to build your list or your audience. Use it to take visitors to those parts of your site where revenue can be realized in just one or two clicks. What you should know is that in general, less than 15 percent of users will scroll to the bottom of the page to consume content. This means to you that anything that's important needs to be at the top of your page.

I thought it would be a good idea just to give you a brief example of what a static homepage looks like and what a dynamic homepage looks like. Our demo site here is set to a static page. You can just see it's one single page. To the right here is the sidebar with some additional details and then our main menu. This would be a fixed page. Any time somebody would go back to the homepage from any other page, they would only ever see the page that was set to be at home. This is very different from how WordPress sites are typically set up.

Here's another example of what would be a dynamic homepage. In this case, we have the page menu here. We have a logo, if you have one, or the name of the site, and then a brief welcome message and description. This same information is here. This is an area called the right sidebar. We've got some different little elements here that are called widgets, like a search widget and a recent post widget.

You'll also notice that these recent posts are the same titles as the ones over here. Again, as new posts are added to your website, they are put here on the homepage, and so it's created dynamically. [00:14:00] The older items will be pushed further down the page, and the newer items will appear on top. Again, these are just a synopsis view. You would click on the title of that to read the full post by itself.

One thing I do want to point out about this is that the sidebar is a permanent fixture here on every post. That's important because this is an area of a lot of flexibility that I'll show you more about later, where you can add elements that you want to display here that are important and matter to your business goals.

Here's five pages that every site absolutely needs. We're going to go ahead and create these in a moment. You'll definitely need an About page. Photos of you make it really real and relatable, and they foster trust. You'll definitely need a Contact page. Don't make it hard for people to reach you. If you want the phone to ring, make sure your phone number's at the very top of your page, because that's why a lot of people will look up a website in the first place. Definitely list your products and services, and try to put the things that

monetize your site quickly right up front where people cannot miss them.

Testimonials are really important. They offer social proof, and they encourage people to know that you are a trusted resource to solve their particular problem. Always get permission from people before you use their testimonials, and if possible, also get a photo or a video. An FAQ page, or Frequently Asked Questions, can help you proactively solve buying objections. The more education that you can do with your prospective customers or clients, the more likely you are to move them along the sales process. Let's go ahead and add these pages to our demo site now.

Now we're back on our WordPress dashboard. Let's go ahead and scroll here to the [00:16:00] content area and go "Pages," "Add New." I'm not really going to add anything to these pages, necessarily. I'm just going to basically create an empty placeholder for them. You'll see here on the right that we have different publishing options. We could save this as a draft. We can preview our page. We can also set these things to public, private, and we can password-protect them, as well.

We'll go ahead and leave this as public. If we decided that we want to discard it, we would just say "Move to Trash." In this area of page attributes, we have an option to select this as a parent page or to put it underneath another page, which would make it a child page. We want this to be at the highest level, so that would be called a parent page. We'll leave it as "no parent," and we'll go ahead and just click "Publish."

Now that we've published our About page, I'm going to go ahead and repeat this process for our remaining must-have pages. Contact, then publish. Add new. Products. Publish. I'll keep going. Great. Now I've completed adding all of our space-holder pages, so I'm going to go ahead and take a look at how doing that process actually created our page menu. We'll go to "Visit Site." Go ahead and look here at the top of the page, and you'll see that all of the pages that I just added are here in the order in which I added them.

If I click on any of them, we'll go there. [00:18:00] Of course, we'll see an empty page. I just wanted to show you how you

basically create your menu automatically just by adding new pages. That's great, but it can also create a problem, because if you have pages here that you don't want in the menu, they're going to come automatically unless you create what's called a custom menu. Let's go ahead and do that next.

I just want to make a couple of quick notes here about customizing your menu. Many themes support custom menus. By default, any time you create a new page, WordPress will automatically add it to your main navigation, as we just saw. Let me demonstrate how to create a custom menu to further refine your site, especially when you have pages that you don't want in the main menu bar.

Know that not all themes offer the ability to add a custom menu. Here's an article with some useful plugins that have been tested and found compatible with the most recent version of WordPress. One small note about plugins is that they're like an add-on effect that you would have for your car. You would have the base model car, and a plugin might be something like adding a sunroof or adding a five-CD disk player to your vehicle. It's an upgrade. It makes your car more powerful and more enjoyable. We'll talk a little bit more about plugins later.

If you've properly used the WordPress tag filter for the different themes in the theme directory like we talked about earlier, hopefully you've installed a theme that actually supports custom menus. You'll know that by hovering over this menu here, and you'll see "Menus" appears in the dropdown area. We'll go ahead and choose that. You'll notice that it already has created a simple basic menu, and it gives it the default name of Menu 1. I'll go ahead and update that to "Primary Navigation," but you could just leave it alone. [00:20:00]

Of course, your homepage is the thing that you want to be on the left-most side. This goes from top to bottom, but on your website, it actually appears from left to right. The About page should definitely be right next to the homepage. This is the second-most viewed page on any website, according to all of the different analytics that I've ever seen on web usage. You definitely want to keep that in a very important position right next to the Home. However, the Contact Us page is

traditionally on the far right, so we're going to click and drag that into position here. Let's say we wanted it to be a sub-page of another page. We could click and drag it to the right, and it would indent slightly. That would make it a child page or a sub-page. We'll go ahead and put that back into position as a main page.

As you know, I added a couple of additional pages that I don't really want on our main menu. Those are Terms of Use and also the Privacy page. We'll just click here on this down menu, and we'll say to remove this from the menu. This doesn't actually delete the page. It just removes it from the menu. We'll click "Remove," and we'll repeat that process for Terms of Use. We'll link to those somewhere else in the site. Remove. There you go. Create menu.

Now that we've saved our menu, we need to go in to manage the locations. We'll go over to this secondary tab, and we'll see that the primary menu here is not selected. We'll go ahead and assign that to the navigation that we just created, and click "Save Changes." If we hover over again here in "Visit Site," we can see that we now have an updated menu. Ta-da!

From [00:22:00] our homepage, we're going to go back over here and hover to get back to our dashboard, where we have the full menu available. Down here on the left, we'll see the settings menu. In the pop-out menu, we will go down to "Permalinks" and release our mouse or click. The default setting here is for your URL to consist of your domain name and then a post ID number. This is not friendly for search engines, because they can't tell what your article is about or what your page is about simply by a number.

We're going to go down here, and we're going to choose "Custom Permalink Structures." We'll go ahead and paste in that code I provided you in the PowerPoint. What this does is this will include, in your permanent link, both the name of your category of your post and the post name, meaning any words that you put into the title of your post will then make it into your permalink, which is really important. That way, if you use keywords, the search engines will know about it. Then we go ahead and click "Save Changes."

Our final step in session two will be to talk a little bit more about plugins. If you hover here on your dashboard, you'll see that a sub-menu pops up for various plugins. We can look at the installed ones, but we can also add new. Let's just look at that right now. As I mentioned, there are more than 30,000 plugins that have been created by the WordPress developer community. To see all of them, you can click here on the WordPress plugin directory and search for them by keyword.

However, let's just go back for a moment, and let's look at some of the ones that are already recommended to us. Here's one that'll help produce a faster-loading page for our website. Let's go ahead and click on "More Details." [00:24:00] We can see a lot of information about this particular plugin, including the homepage for this plugin and different ratings by users. This is what's really nice about WordPress. There are so many people using it, it drives so many of the websites online today that they are freely giving input about how it actually works.

One piece of caution about plugins is that, while they're tremendous in what they can do for your website, you don't want to go overboard with them. You probably want to keep the total number of plugins on your site to 20 or fewer. That's because they can conflict with each other. This particular plugin has been downloaded more than six million times, so it tells you something about its quality and desirability. It also has a great number of five-star ratings. All you would have to do there is go to the "Install Now" button. Then once you've installed it, you have to activate it. It's really that simple.

Once we've activated that plugin, it brings us to our main plugin page. There's also a notice here about updates being available. You could quickly update this just by clicking here, but I always caution users to not update immediately, even if there's a notification that an update is available. Sometimes it's nice to let the developer work out any kinks that may become noticeable after they've released something new.

As I mentioned, there are over 30,000 plugins already created and more all the time. Here is just a handful of some that I would strongly recommend to you. This first one is

called Akismet, and it's really helpful in reducing the spam comments that will naturally start funneling through your website when it goes live. You'll also want to make your website [00:26:00] can be easily indexed by Google, because they drive more than half of all search engine traffic. The next one will encourage social sharing on your site by giving you some easy share buttons above any post or page that you publish. Lastly, this W3 Total Cache, like the last one we just demonstrated, will improve the speed and user experience of your site.

Let's review session two, because you're definitely on your way. You've learned so much today, including how to use the dashboard and why you need multiple user accounts. You've also learned how to construct your homepage and how to make the very best use of your homepage real estate. You know the five pages you absolutely must have and how to customize your main navigation menus. You know how to add bells and whistles and easy steps to select, install, activate, and update plugins. Coming up in our next session, you'll learn about customizing your website design.