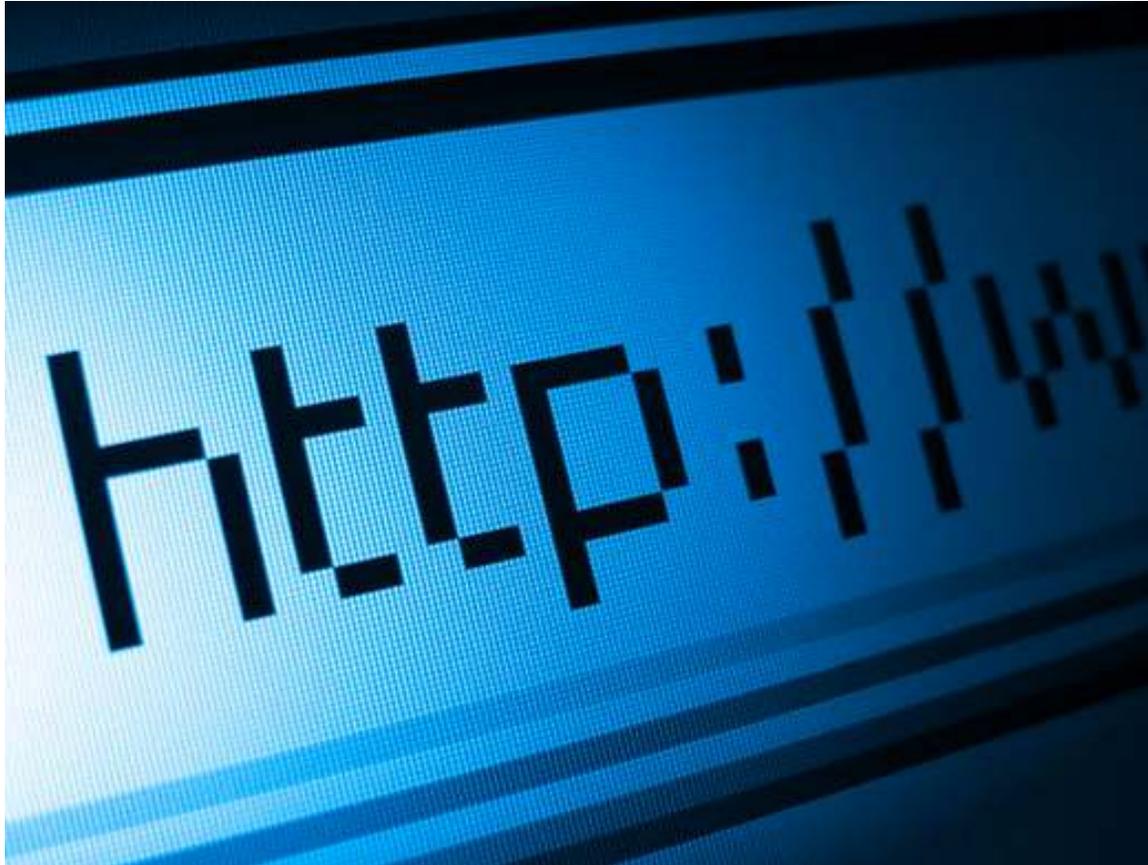


# How to Start a Self-Hosted WordPress Blog



By Claire Diaz-Ortiz

Starting a blog is one of the very best things that ever happened to me, and I love to share with folks why blogging is a great way to connect with others, build your platform, and change the world.

Seven years ago, I hit publish on my first post. I was holed up in a hostel in Madrid, having just run my first marathon, and on my first stop of a yearlong trip around the world. Hitting publish on that post was one of the smartest things I ever did.



Wherever you are in your career (or in the world), a blog can help you reach your goals of learning, connecting, change-making and profit-building. I want you to get started. And I'm going to tell you how to do so.

In this short manifesto, I'll show you the exact steps to set up your own self-hosted Wordpress blog.

It should take 9 minutes, tops. (8, maybe). At the end, you'll have your very own blog, which you can shriek loudly about.

In a good way.

We'll be doing it all with [BlueHost](#), the host that most bloggers these days recommend due to its prices, excellent service, and *serious* ease of set up.

Going with a hosting company like [BlueHost](#) means that you'll be "self-hosting" your website using your own .com address. Although this costs some money (< \$50 a year), I *firmly* believe this is a better route than going with free options like Blogger.com.

When starting a blog, one of the first questions you'll need to answer is *where* you want to host your blog.

There are two main options for hosting:

- Free (through a third-party like [blogger.com](#))
- Paid (called "self-hosting" – this happens on your own .com domain name)

I firmly believe most people will do best with a paid option (I recommend [BlueHost](#), and [here's my video helping you set it up, step-by-step.](#))

Although this [infographic](#) will show you some of the differences between free and paid hosts, here are my reasons that I personally recommend going with the paid option.

**Why I Recommend Paying for Blog Hosting:**

Although free options (like Blogger) are indeed FREE, they offer much less functionality than paid options. But that's not the main reason I don't recommend them. In the beginning of my blogging days, I started several blogs on Blogger for free and it gave me a good chance to try blogging without making a monetary commitment.

That said, free platforms like Blogger do have limits, and don't have all the bells, whistles, and functionalities that paid platforms offer.

Like many bloggers, when I *did* decide I wanted to take my blogging to the next level, I faced a frustrating hurdle: migrating my website from the free Blogger to the paid WordPress. This not only cost me hundreds of dollars, but forced me to deal with rebranding — as the name I had chosen for my original blog on Blogger was not available on the rest of the Interwebs.

All in all: frustrating.

Ultimately, if you think there is a chance you might one day want your blog to be bigger, do more, or take a larger role in your life than it does on Day 1, think about spending the <\$70 bucks a year to pay for hosting. It'll save you money in the long run.

So let's review what you need to get going:

- **A host.** As mentioned above, I believe self-hosting on your own URL is the way to go. Most well-respected bloggers recommend [BlueHost](http://BlueHost.com). It's known for great customer service, ease of set-up, and cost (for less than \$4 a month you can create an unlimited number of websites).

- **A domain name.** Got a name for your blog? Great. Now turn that into a domain name. (Domain names look like [www.ClaireDiazOrtiz.com](http://www.ClaireDiazOrtiz.com), [www.MeatIsYummy.org](http://www.MeatIsYummy.org), or [www.MuffinsRock.net](http://www.MuffinsRock.net)). [BlueHost](#) will ask you what yours is when you're setting up the blog.
- **A credit card (or Paypal).** This is where you get to throw your cash money on the table. Note that there are free ways to blog, but for most people I don't generally recommend them, as I explained above. [Here's an explanation](#) of why you (usually) shouldn't be using free blogging services.

*So go ahead, get going. Watch [the video](#) (also below) or read the directions and sign up for [BlueHost](#) and then get your first post up!*

Here's the [video below](#) (linked here) walking you through exactly how to set up your new blog.

## How to Set Up a Self-Hosted WordPress Blog (Video)



[Link not showing up? Go here.](#)

Prefer written instructions with screenshots?

Me too.

(Sometimes.)

## Written Directions w/ Screenshots

Go to [BlueHost](#). Click on Sign Up Now.



It will ask you for a domain name. For now, let's assume you do not already have a domain name and need to buy one now. What do you want to call your site?

Muffins4eva.com?

DuckDynastyRecipes.com? Think of something good. A few more tips?

- Don't use dashes. Go for [peoplelovelongcats.com](#), not [people-love-long-cats.com](#).
- Don't use weird punctuation. Avoid [iloveu2much.com](#). Go for

iloveyoutoomuch.com.

- Get a .com if you can. If you can't, don't worry about it.

Enter it in the box "I Need a Domain Name" and see if it's available.

The screenshot shows a web interface for domain registration. At the top, there is a button labeled "Sign Up Now". Below it, a message reads: "Thank you for choosing Bluehost. You have made the right choice in selecting us as your web hosting and eBusiness provider. We provide excellent customer service, reliable hardware and affordable prices. We appreciate your business and look forward to a great relationship." Below this message are two main options: "I Need a Domain Name" and "I Have a Domain Name". Each option has a text input field labeled "Enter Domain Name:" with a ".com" dropdown menu and a "Next" button. The "I Have a Domain Name" option also includes a red note: "Now: Bluehost will provide you the information you'll need for transferring your domain."

If it's available, it'll tell you "Congratulations!" Now it's time to fill out your basic personal information and credit card information (or Paypal). Fill that in.



The domain you have requested, [duckdynastyats.com](http://duckdynastyats.com), is available.

### Account Information

All fields are required unless otherwise noted.

First Name

Last Name

(optional) Business Name

Country

Street Address

City

State

Zip-Code

Phone Number  Est.

\*E-mail Address

\*Your receipt will be sent to this address.

You're once again a winner. "Congratulations!" You set it up. Now it needs you to set up a password. Do that.



**Welcome**

 **Congratulations!**  
Your purchase was successful. A confirmation e-mail will be sent to [clairediazortiz@gmail.com](mailto:clairediazortiz@gmail.com).

**Choose a password for your account:**  
Before you can login to your account or use your new hosting features, you first need to create a secure password - Please note this password and your hosting payment information, as these are used for account verification purposes when contacting Bluehost support.

[Create your password](#)

Once you set up the password it wants you to log into the account. Do that.



**Account Login**

Login

  
  
[Forgotten Password?](#) 

No login? [Sign up for an account today!](#)

Now you're in your account. Click on "Websites", the blue icon in the middle of the screen.

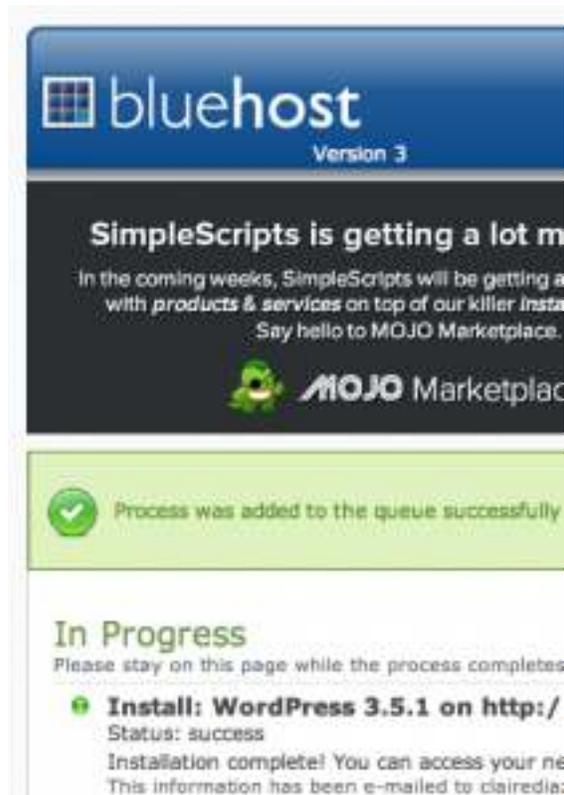


Once you click there, you'll see a screen that will say "WordPress" on the left hand side with a big logo. Click on "WordPress" — that's what we're going to use to blog on.



Click WordPress, and it'll ask you to install WordPress. Deselect a few extra plugins it will select for you. If you get an error message that says "Oops! That directory exists!" don't worry.

This is just meant for people who are installing WordPress on a site that is already live. Just click the box saying you know this would override any existing files. You may need to deselect those plugins again.



The screenshot shows the Bluehost control panel interface. At the top, the Bluehost logo and 'Version 3' are visible. Below this, a dark banner contains the text: 'SimpleScripts is getting a lot m', 'In the coming weeks, SimpleScripts will be getting a', 'with products & services on top of our killer Insta', and 'Say hello to MOJO Marketplace.' The MOJO Marketplace logo is also present. A green notification box with a checkmark icon states: 'Process was added to the queue successfully'. Below this, the 'In Progress' section is titled, followed by the instruction: 'Please stay on this page while the process completes'. A green plus icon indicates a successful installation: 'Install: WordPress 3.5.1 on http:/', 'Status: success', 'Installation complete! You can access your ne', and 'This information has been e-mailed to clairedia:'.

And then, success!

Click on the link it gives you for your new blog and put in your password.



Now look at the left hand side of the screen and click “Add New” under “Posts”.



Write your first post, and hit “Publish!”

Yay!

Your first post is up!

Now what?!

### **What to Do After the First Post**

To make your blog a bit nicer, here are a few key things you'll want to think about doing in the first few days or weeks of blogging that can help get off on the right foot:

- Choose a Theme. Under “Appearance” in your WordPress you can click “Themes” to see some free themes available. One good free one that many folks use is called [Platform](#). Here are a bunch more [free WordPress themes](#). I use a great paid theme called [Genesis](#) which I highly recommend.
- Download some good plugins. Some of my favorites include [Askimet](#) (to prevent Spam), [Google Analytics](#) (to see stats about your blog), and [Contact Form 7](#) (to have an easy way for folks to contact you).
- For more general information on WordPress and getting your site looking awesome, try [WP101.com](#), a great site with tons of good videos.

So remember, it all starts with getting things set up. I recommend [BlueHost](#).



Got any questions? Shoot me a note.

I'm at [Claire@clairediazortiz.com](mailto:Claire@clairediazortiz.com).