

How to build your own website in Wordpress

You may have heard about Wordpress before. If so, you may think it's only for building a blog. The truth is, you can actually build your entire website in Wordpress. Wordpress is known as a CMS (content management system). What this means, if you don't speak "computer programmer language", is that it allows you to edit any page on your website as easy as editing a Microsoft Word document. It's almost as easy as that...seriously.

Have a look around PracticePanther.com...looks like a pretty fancy site, eh? This entire site was actually built in Wordpress!

In this tutorial, we will teach you how to build a website step by step from scratch for free in Wordpress and create one of the nicest sites you've ever seen for under \$300 (and it will look like you spent over \$3,000).



Step 1 – Find a Wordpress theme you like:

1. For the best themes, go to [ThemeForest.net](https://www.themeforest.net) and click Wordpress. Sort by sales on the left or [click here](#).
2. Look for the theme that has the same look and feel as what you are going for (don't worry so much about the colors).
3. When looking at each theme, try to envision how your website can look on that site. Look for a responsive theme. Most premium themes are responsive, which means the website will re-size according to the device used to view your site (iPhone, iPad, Android, laptop, desktop, smartphone, tablet, etc...). See the image at the bottom of the post to see how PracticePanther's website re-sizes.
4. Select a theme you love or send the top 3 options to your family and friends and ask for their advice until you pick a winner.



Step 2 – Create a word document with the text and images:

1. Create a list of pages on the site you want to build.
2. Create a word document that will outline EXACTLY what you want written on every page of the site.
3. Create a folder for all of your images and talk about where you want those images placed.
4. This is the most important step that separates the amateurs from the experts, and is what can ultimately make or break your business. I strongly advise you visit every website you love (even your competitors), and write down what you love about them and what you want on your website that should be similar. Not an exact copy, obviously, but you don't always have to completely reinvent the wheel. You can find great royalty-free stock photos by searching Google [here](#). Google Image search also has a filter that lets you search for images that you can reuse ([try it](#)).



Step 3 – How to find a WordPress developer on oDesk.com:

1. You can try building the site yourself, but it's really not worth it. We would recommend going to <http://odesk.com> and have an expert do it for you.
2. To use the advanced search (which is the only search you should ever use), you need to [create a free account](#).
3. Once signed up, search for a web developer with the word "WordPress" and the skill "WordPress" in the subcategory of web design, in any country, with a feedback score of at least 4.5 stars and above, with an hourly rate of less than \$15, at least 1,000 hours billed, last activity within the last 2 months, and scored in the top 10% in WordPress. This will ensure that you are working with a great developer who doesn't cost too much money. You can also just [click here](#), but it won't work properly unless you're signed in.
4. My search yielded 23 freelancers who are the ultimate experts we want. Go through each one and look at their portfolio. Narrow it down to the top 10 most impressive freelancers.



Step 4 – Create a job posting on oDesk:

1. [Click here](#) to create a job posting.
2. Post a job in the category “Web Development” and the subcategory “Web Design”. The job title can be “WordPress theme & content installation”.
3. The description can say:

Hi! We are excited to find a talented developer who can help build a WordPress site and help maintain it for months to come. This is what we need:

1. WordPress installation on our website
2. WordPress theme installation
3. All content (text and images) to be placed on website
4. Minor color changes and theme customization
5. Pre-selected WordPress plugins installation
6. Google Analytics installation
7. Verify website with Google Webmaster tools
8. Install robots.txt file to allow search engines to find our site.

Please do not apply to this job if you cannot meet our budget constraints of \$250 total. Please submit your most recent portfolio.

Step 5 – Job Posting (Continued):

1. The skills you are looking for should be: WordPress, Adobe Photoshop, CSS, HTML5, web-design, and SEO.
2. You would like to pay a fixed price with a budget of \$250. The estimated end date should be 3 weeks from your start date. Attach your document with your content so they can see what needs to get done. For preferred qualifications, the freelancer type should be no preference, minimum feedback score should be at least 4.5, hours billed should be at least 1,000 (see image below).
3. You should not have to pay more than \$250 for a high quality WordPress website using a template (I know, shocking, isn't it?!) Once again, I repeat, DO NOT pay more than \$250 or you are getting ripped off.



 **Preferred Qualifications**

Freelancer Type	<input type="text" value="No preference"/>
Minimum Feedback Score	<input type="text" value="At least 4.5"/>
Hours Billed on oDesk	<input type="text" value="At least 1,000 hours"/>
Location	<input type="text" value="Any location"/>
English Level (self-assigned)	<input type="text" value="Any level"/>

Step 5 – What you will need to provide to your developer:

1. Username and password of where you purchased your website domain name from (usually GoDaddy).
2. FTP username and password (this is normally the same site you bought your domain name from) – if you don't know this, they can probably figure it out if you give them the password from #1.
3. Now go back to the theme you liked on ThemeForest.net and purchase it.
4. Send the theme files to the developer (or give him access to your ThemeForest account to download it).
5. Send the final content and images you selected for your site.

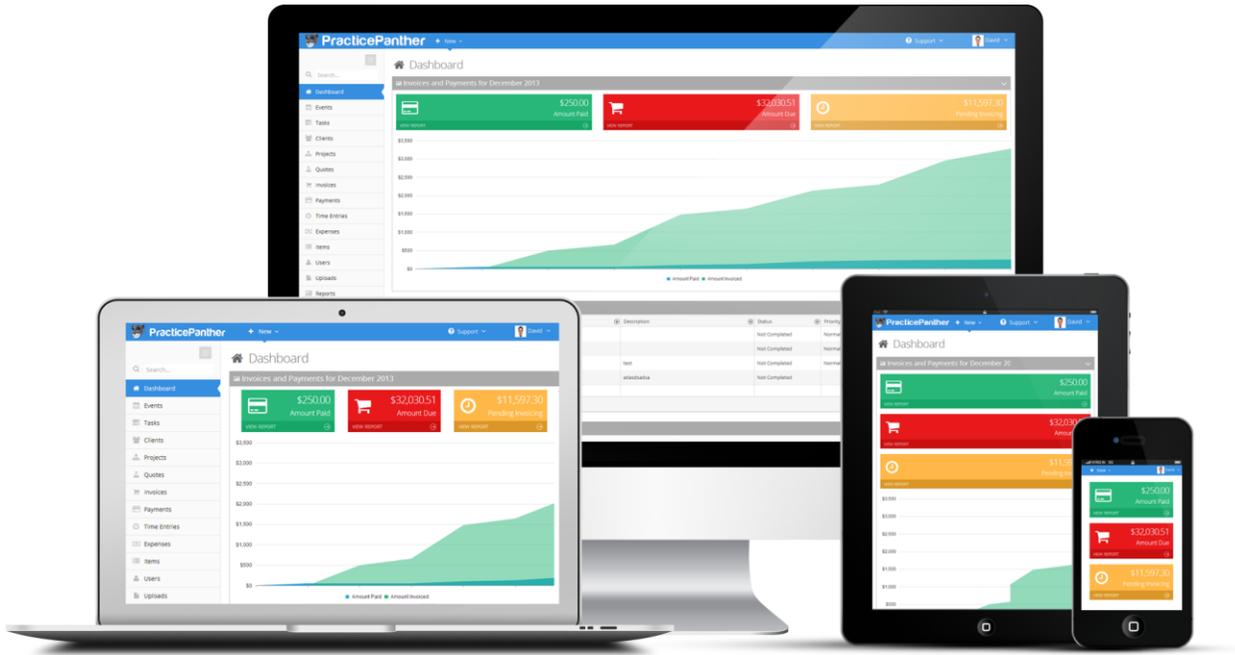
Step 6 - Follow up:

1. Follow up with your developer every 3-5 days to put some pressure. They usually like to do ALL the work in 1 day right before the deadline.
2. Give them as many revisions as possible until you are 100% happy with the website. Keep in mind that if you tell them to create 20 new pages you never discussed before, it will cost more.
3. They will work very fast, even faster than you. You need to be on your game for these 3 weeks and finish the website as fast as possible.



Step 7 – Plugins and SEO:

1. Make sure they install [Google Analytics](#) on your personal Gmail account so you can keep track of how every visitor found your site. For a helpful guide of how to use Google Analytics, [click here](#).
2. Make sure they did everything else we mentioned in Step 4.
3. SEO stands for search engine optimization and it basically means you want to optimize your site so the search engines (aka Google) can find you.
4. The first step in SEO is to come up with one long keyword phrase you want your developer to help get you ranked in Google for. The easiest way to think of a phrase is to ask yourself “what would you search for in Google to find your website?” Then, when you start typing into Google, it will give you suggestions automatically. Pay VERY close attention to those results as that is what many other people search for. If you are a local family law attorney in Miami Florida, your long keyword phrase should be “Family law attorney in Miami Florida”.
5. This is where your keyword phrase should go: The title of your website, the description of your site, the title of your homepage, displayed in LARGE BOLD font on the top of your homepage, the footer (bottom) of every page on your site, and consistently throughout the entire site. This basically tells Google “Hey! This is what we are all about. Send people to us searching for those words!” Tell your developer to focus on those keywords and if there isn’t much competition, you should hopefully start seeing results within 3-6 months naturally.



(example of PracticePanther's responsive website and software that re-sizes to any device)

Step 8 – Usability testing & maintenance:

1. Before you pay your developer, show your site to at least 3 people and just watch them as they browse around. Tell them you need their honest constructive feedback to tell the developer what to fix and you want them to think out-loud on their immediate thoughts and reactions on each page. You MUST take detailed notes and do NOT help them or tell them what to do next. Just watch and see how they interact with the site. What do they click on? Where do they go next? Do they get lost? Do they understand what you do? Do they have any questions? Do they get bored? If they have any issues or questions, it means that your real customers will likely have the same experience, and you must address any concerns in the final round before paying your developer.
2. Your website is never finished. Always continue to improve it now that you can edit it yourself. Add blog posts (using your long keyword phrase), add more pictures, videos, or frequently asked questions about what you do. If you ever get stuck or need help, contact your developer for a quick \$10 fix.

Good luck on your journey and let us know if there is anything we missed out!