

# Getting to Know Your WordPress Website



Congratulations on having an awesome website! It was designed and developed with great care. Plus, it utilizes the WordPress content management system (CMS) – the most popular web platform in the world. That means you have an unbelievable amount of powerful tools right at your fingertips – tools you can use to help you build your business.

You may have already known some or all of the above. But what you might not have realized is that **having a website also requires some ongoing responsibility on your part** – even after it has launched.

While that may sound a bit ominous – don't worry! It's actually not very difficult. And, this quick guide is here for reference any time you need it. Should you have further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Now, let's get started...

## Think of Your Website as a Car


Investing in a new website is similar to purchasing a car in that both require some ongoing maintenance in order to keep things running smoothly. This is especially true when it comes to websites that are powered by WordPress.

### You Should Know:

- 1. WordPress releases updates for its core software several times per year.** And, the developers of your website's theme and any plugins you're utilizing may also release frequent updates as well.
- 2. It's critical to keep WordPress core, themes and plugins updated.** These updated versions often include bug and security fixes, as well as new features.
- 3. Neglecting updates can put your website at risk.** While you don't necessarily have to rush to make every single update (depending on what plugins you're using, several may release updates weekly), you should make an effort to keep things updated. Otherwise, your website could be more vulnerable to being hacked.
- 4. If you host your WordPress website with me, you're taken care of!** If your site is hosted with me (i.e., you pay me for yearly hosting service) I regularly back up and apply updates for you. If you are hosted elsewhere and would like to arrange for regular software updates, please contact me.

The bottom line is that having a WordPress website is not a set-it-and-forget-it type of deal. Much like technology itself, things move fast. And, while the occasional update can cause unforeseen problems, it's still imperative that your website is regularly checked and updated.

I recommend checking in **at least every two weeks** to ensure that you are running the latest versions of WordPress, your theme and plugins.

 For a quick video tutorial on updating WordPress, visit:

<https://www.karks.com/wordpress-training-videos/users-settings-and-updating-wordpress/>

## Staying Secure

Website security is something we should all consider a top priority. It affects sites both large and small. In fact, many attacks on WordPress sites are automated and aren't related to the size or popularity of your site at all. These "bot" attacks simply look for sites running WordPress and try various methods to do damage.


### You Should Know:

**1. Your website should be running a security plugin.** By default, I install the free version of [Wordfence](#) security plugin on all WordPress websites that I have built. Although nothing is 100% bulletproof, it protects against many forms of attack. But I also recommend investing in the [premium version](#) as it offers even more security benefits.

**2. Don't give administrator access to your website to just anyone.** Administrator accounts have access to EVERYTHING – including the ability to reset any password within your website. If you need to create a new account for someone, consider using [lower-level](#) accounts like Editor or Author. These accounts offer less access to critical settings, while still enabling users to add or edit content.

 For a quick video tutorial on adding users, visit:

<https://www.karks.com/wordpress-training-videos/users-settings-and-updating-wordpress/>

**3. Utilize a SSL Certificate for even more security.** SSL (Secure Socket Layer) Certificates encrypt user information that users (or even you) enter into your website. For example, having SSL enabled means that the information a user types into your contact form is encrypted (scrambled) to prevent a hacker from intercepting that data in transit. You might recognize it by the little green "lock"  in your web browser's address bar.

**SSL can be quite inexpensive or in some cases free. If you host your site with me, free SSL certificates can be installed – just ask.**

If you host your site elsewhere, your web host would be the one to contact regarding purchase of a certificate. Just note that your WordPress site would need to be set up to take advantage of it (contact me for further details).

## Other Things Worth Knowing

To get the most out of your WordPress website, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with a few rules of thumb:

**1. Don't install new plugins or themes without consulting a professional.** There are literally tens-of-thousands of plugins and themes available – many for free. But not all are created equally. Some may have security holes or have even been abandoned by their authors. It's best to fully consider whether or not you really need something before installing it. Plus, it's a good idea to run it by a professional beforehand. It could save you some headaches!

**2. WordPress Page and Post Revisions can help erase mistakes.** We all make mistakes when editing content – sometimes we hit that “update” button a little too soon. Thankfully, most sites can take advantage of WordPress Revisions. They keep track of what has changed for a page or post and allow you to restore them to an earlier version.

■ For a quick video tutorial on using revisions, visit:

<https://www.karks.com/wordpress-training-videos/pages/>

**3. Content is easier to find when it's organized.** That's why WordPress has some great built-in features such as post categories and tags available. They can help you group similar types of content together.

■ For some quick video tutorials on organizing content, visit:

<https://www.karks.com/wordpress-training-videos/organizing-content/>

**4. If you need help, just ask!** Rome wasn't built in a day, and no one has learned all there is to know about WordPress, either. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me regarding any questions you might have.

Thanks for reading and enjoy your WordPress website!

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