

# Blogging 101



## What's a Blog?

A blog (short for “web log”) is an online journal where people can post diary-like entries about their personal experiences, hobbies, news or any topic. Blog entries are usually organized in reverse-chronological order and posted on a regular basis. Blogs often contain hyperlinks, photos, or other forms of media.

## What's a Hyperlink?

A **hyperlink** is a link from one website to another, usually indicated by a change in font (color and/or underlining), though a hyperlink can also be in a picture or video. Your mouse becomes a hand when hovering over a hyperlink.

## How do I find blogs to read?

- Visit [google.com](http://google.com) and type in terms related to your interests (e.g. football, gardening, birding, etc.) along with the term **blog**. The results will range from blogs to news articles (many of which can be read and tracked just like blogs).
- [stumbleupon.com](http://stumbleupon.com) is a site that generates random internet content based on your interests that you can then track and share (try it; it's *fun!*).
- Many blogs have links to other interesting related blog and sites (often called a **blogroll**). Once you find a few blogs you like these blogs will likely lead you to many other cool blogs.

The Tumblr logo, consisting of the word "tumblr." in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background.

[www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)

Easy to use interface

Limited customization

Built for short posts and ideal for photo blogs

The Blogger logo, featuring an orange square with a white lowercase "b" inside, followed by the word "Blogger" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue background.

[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)

More customizable than Tumblr, less customizable than Wordpress

Can change some design markup (HTML/CSS)

Connected with Google

The WordPress logo, featuring a white "W" inside a blue circle, followed by the text "WORDPRESS.COM" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue background.

[www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

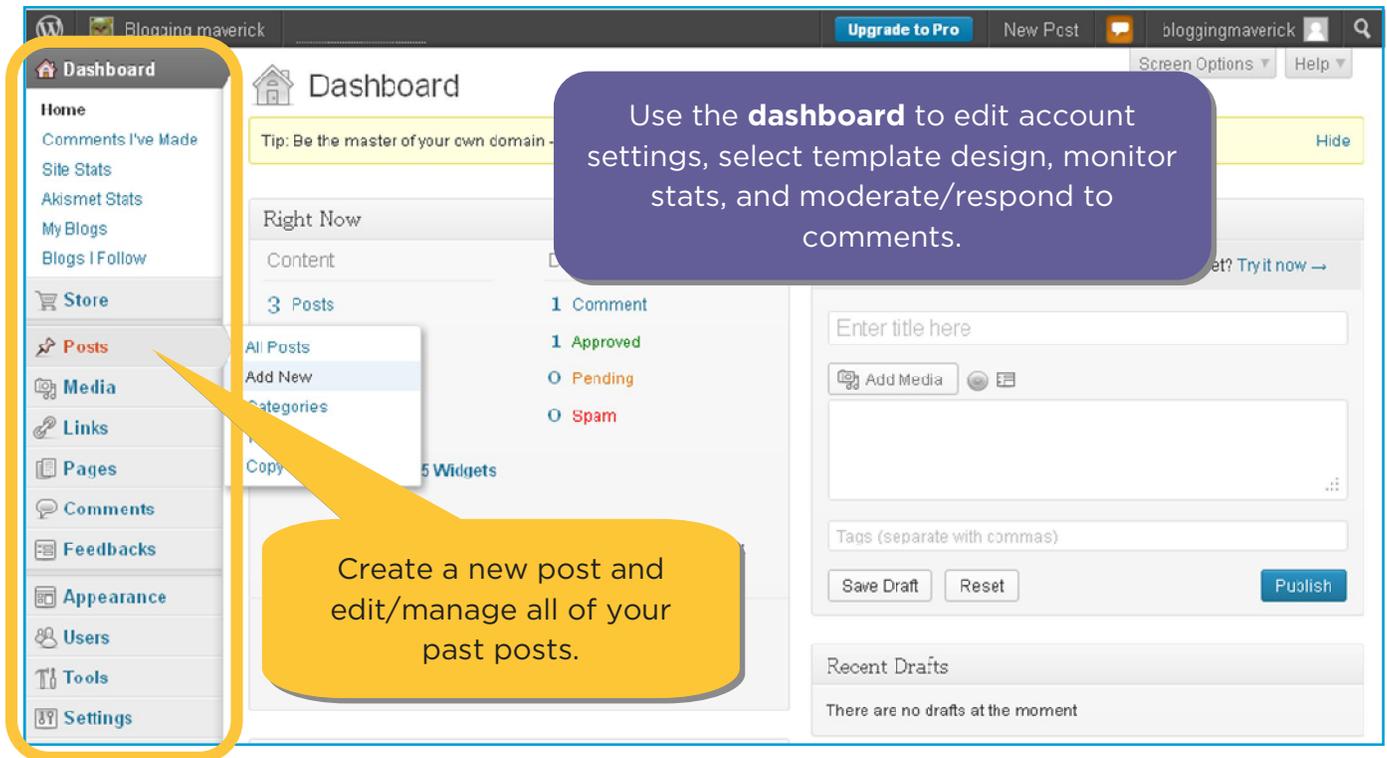
Most customizable, though most complex

Many themes to choose from, but cannot edit HTML and CSS without paying for upgrade.

Can be used to build a full website

CTC offers Wordpress classes

## The Dashboard: The Control Center for Your Blog



The image shows a screenshot of a WordPress dashboard. A yellow callout box on the left side of the dashboard menu lists various options: Home, Comments I've Made, Site Stats, Akismet Stats, My Blogs, Blogs I Follow, Store, Posts, Media, Links, Pages, Comments, Feedbacks, Appearance, Users, Tools, and Settings. A purple callout box in the center of the dashboard says: "Use the **dashboard** to edit account settings, select template design, monitor stats, and moderate/respond to comments." A yellow callout box at the bottom of the dashboard says: "Create a new post and edit/manage all of your past posts." The dashboard itself shows a "Right Now" section with 3 Posts, 1 Comment, 1 Approved, 0 Pending, and 0 Spam. There is also a "Recent Drafts" section at the bottom that says "There are no drafts at the moment".

## Tips for Successful Blogging

- **Write about something that interests you:** other people will find it interesting, too!
- **Learn from others:** read other blogs. See what you like and don't like, and incorporate these findings into your blog.
- **Plan ahead:** try to map out your first 10 posts before you ever put something online. It will help you to find your voice and refine what your blog is about.
- **Create conversation and community:** comment on other peoples' blogs (especially those that you like and/or are writing about the same things you are) and they'll likely return the favor.
- **Be consistent:** the world won't end if you don't post something every day, but posting on a regular basis helps build up readers and subscribers. Set your own deadlines to put up content and stick to your schedule!
- **Expect writers' block:** Pace yourself! It's common to hit roadblocks or not feel inspired. Don't get discouraged, and plan ahead. Many blogging platforms let you write posts in advance and schedule when they're posted. So, work ahead when you're inspired—that way you will still have content to post when you need to take some time to get inspired again.

### WHERE TO GET MORE HELP:

**The CTC:** come to the desk and ask for help, schedule a 1-on-1 tutoring lesson, come to more classes, or attend one of our open labs to answer your questions.

**HTML & CSS and Wordpress** classes are offered quarterly in the CTC.

**Online:** all platforms, especially Wordpress, have great support websites. There are also many free tutorials on YouTube and elsewhere.