

WORDPRESS BLOG

An instructional guide for creating posts on a WordPress platform

WHY SHOULD YOU BLOG?

Where do we start? Simply put blogging can increase your sales. Done correctly you can:

RANK HIGHER IN SEARCH ENGINES

For many online businesses search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing are the main source of site visits. To find out where your customers are coming from we recommend looking into Google Analytics if you don't already have it.

To gain customers from search engines you need to rank highly on them, i.e. your website really needs to appear on the first 2 pages. As you can see from the table below the lion's share of traffic only go to the first 2 pages, and if you are as far down as the 11th page then only 1 out of 100 people will see your website.

Blogging can help get your website ranking higher when you post about relevant topics that people search for. For example, if you sell baby clothing you could post about 'How to buy *baby clothing* that last' and mention '*baby clothing*' a few times in the post, then you will appear more relevant to search engines for that term than a website that just mentions it once on their homepage.

Just make sure you are still writing for your audience and not for search engines!

Google Page Rank	Average Traffic Share
1	32.5%
2	17.6%
3	11.4%
4	8.1%
5	6.1%
6	4.4%
7	3.5%
8	3.1%
9	2.6%
10	2.4%
11	1.0%
12	0.8%
13	0.7%
14	0.6%
15	0.4%

Source: chitika.com

INCREASE THE AMOUNT SEARCH ENGINES LOOK AT YOUR WEBSITE

By updating your site regularly with blog posts, search engines will know that your website is still active and being regularly updated with quality content, it is important to ensure that you avoid 'thin content' which means writing a few lines of copy because this is not best practice. so will rank you higher than sites that aren't. It also means the spiders will come back more often to see if you have made any more updates so all your changes will get indexed.

PROVIDE SOLUTIONS WITH YOUR PRODUCTS

If we continue with our baby theme. If a mother has found your blog and is looking at a post like 'How to get your baby to sleep' for example, she's just looking for advice, but if at the end of your article you very softly mention a baby grow that is 100% cotton and is so soft no baby can stay awake in it, you may have yourself a sale by providing a solution to a problem; which in this case they may desperately need!

CREATE SOCIAL CONTENT

Websites like Facebook and Twitter have a staggeringly high visit rate and have great conversion numbers too. Creating regular blog content also provides you with original content that you can post which will hopefully get casual Facebook fans visiting your website more often.

GIVE YOUR COMPANY A VOICE

These days customers want to know who they're buying from and regular updates about what the business is doing, new products, advice and more can create that all important rapport with your customers, increasing brand loyalty and

advice.

HEAR YOUR CUSTOMERS

With commenting sections you can see what your customers think, who they are and what they're interested in, a great source of knowledge for any business.

ENHANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

You will find that looking for subjects to post about can actually increase your knowledge of your specific industry, the latest trends and what your competitors are up to.

IT'S FREE PROMOTION

Once you've published a blog post and you've had your first initial visits and maybe a few conversions from it you may think it's job is done. Wrong. Your blog will stay searchable, it's rank will change over time maybe for better, maybe for worse but it will stay as another constant link to your site for anyone to find. Hubspot, a marketing software company, published a stat stating that **70% of their traffic each month comes from posts that weren't published that month** by posting marketing advice which is found through search engines by marketers, the exact people who would purchase the software.

INCREASE EXTERNAL LINKS TO YOUR WEBSITE

Shareable content, like blog posts, are great to get other people talking about you whether it's a local news website, your followers on social media or simply people or companies with similar interests. Google loves it when reputable websites post links to yours.

"Within about 24 hours of writing that article, it was No. 1 for every fiberglass-pool, cost-related phrase you could possibly type in. And because I have analytics, so far to this day, I've been able to track a minimum of \$1.7 million in sales to that one article." - **Marcus Sheridan of River Pools and Spas on his post www.riverpoolsandspas.com/cost/**

FINDING YOUR KEYWORDS

Keywords are what search engines will look for on your website when a user searches includes that keyword or longtail keyword (a keyword longer than 3 words). It's a good idea to know what some good keywords are for your business and to keep them in mind when writing your blog although your chosen keywords should run naturally through your website.

Normally you should focus on a topic/themes for your website so search engines get a good idea about what you do but as we're looking for a variety of blog post topics we'll keep it broad today.

It is important to write to your visitors and not force these keywords in too much as

search engines know this trick and can punish you for it by dropping you down their rankings.

- 1 The first step is to write down a list of keywords as to what you think your customer would be searching for in order to find the products you sell. Try to get as many as possible and not just single keywords but longtail keywords too so you have a variety to go at.

For example this is what our baby clothing store may use:

Baby clothing	Baby Sleepsuits	Baby giftsets
Baby booties	Baby Onesies	Socks for babies
Baby hats	Mum to be gifts	Shoes for babies
Baby Socks	Baby keepsakes	What to buy a mum to be
Swaddles	Baby books	Baby birthday cards
Bibs	What to buy a baby boy	Present for babies
Baby hampers	What to buy a baby girl	Baby shower gift ideas
First birthday gifts	Baby girl gift ideas	Newborn clothing
Second birthday gift ideas	Baby boy gift ideas	

- 2 The next step is to do some research. First type one of your chosen keywords into Google and scroll to the bottom of your page. Here you will find related searches that are similar to your keyword.

In our example we have searched for our main keyword 'baby clothing'. As you can see are results have provided searches like 'funky baby clothing', 'cheap baby clothing', 'baby clothing boutique' and 'baby clothing sale' that could all be added to our list.

Searches related to baby clothing

funky baby clothing	baby clothing boutique
sainsburys baby clothing	john lewis baby clothing
designer baby clothing	tesco baby clothing
cheap baby clothing	baby clothing sale



- 3 Next use ubersuggest.org to get really in-depth. Simply add your chosen keyword and Ubersuggest generates actual user searches that have used that term in alphabetical order.

We have found a few extra for our baby clothing shop:

baby clothing at night	baby clothing clearance
baby clothing cake	baby clothing company
baby xmas clothing	baby clothing free shipping
baby clothing for twins	baby clothing flower bouquet
baby clothing discount	baby clothing guide
baby clothing hot weather	baby clothing needs

- 4 Now we need to see how these keywords compare and how much competition there is to rank well with them.

Visit adwords.google.com/ko/KeywordPlanner if you don't already have an account it's quick and free to set one up for your business.

Choose the option 'Search for new keywords and ad group ideas'

On the following form enter your main keyword and hit 'get ideas'.

On the next page click the 'keyword ideas' tab in the middle of the page and browse. You will now also see how high the competition is on these keywords meaning if you want to target a keyword marked as 'high' then a lot of other people are trying to rank for that also so it maybe work ranking higher for a different keyword with less competition. Again some more ideas we've got from here. With high competition there is 'premature baby clothes', 'neutral baby clothes', 'winter baby clothes' and medium competition is 'baby shop', 'baby gear'.

↑ baby clothing + f

- ➕ baby clothing free delivery
- ➕ baby clothing franchise
- ➕ baby clothing from china
- ➕ baby clothing for sale
- ➕ baby clothing for twins
- ➕ baby clothing for temperature
- ➕ baby clothing flower bouquet
- ➕ baby clothing factory shops in cape town
- ➕ baby clothing for cheap
- ➕ baby clothing free shipping

↑ baby clothing + t

- ➕ baby clothing tesco
- ➕ baby clothing temperature chart
- ➕ baby clothing templates
- ➕ baby clothing temperature guide
- ➕ baby clothing trade shows uk
- ➕ baby clothing trade shows
- ➕ baby clothing tog guide
- ➕ baby clothing trends 2014
- ➕ baby clothing target
- ➕ baby clothing trends

From this research we now know keywords that people are searching for that could be potential leads for our business. Steps 2 to 4 were all based on the initial keyword 'baby clothing' but these steps can easily be taken with all of your initial keywords as well as new ones you discover. Try not to go too broad with your results and double check your list to ensure that if a user searches your keywords that they wouldn't be annoyed or confused to be sent to your website.

HOW SHOULD I BLOG ABOUT THESE KEYWORDS?

Now we've tackled the why to blog and what to blog about, we need to think of how. Below are a few title suggestions that have been proven to increase readership or why not try [Hubspots blog title generator](#).

How To ___ in 4 easy steps	How To Find ___
How To Get More ___	How To Tell If ___
A Complete Guide To ___	What to Look for ___
A Complete Guide To ___	Beginners Guide to ___
5 Things your ___ Doesn't Tell You	7 ___ Every ___ Should Own
20 Habits Of ___	10 Tips For ___
8 Creative Ways ___	Essential Steps To ___

Not only do you want to be found using the keywords we have just discovered but we also want to keep our readers coming back with interesting topics. Here are a few ideas that could work either with your keywords or without.

CUSTOMER QUESTIONS

Do you get asked the same things over and over again by your customers? Then blog the answers. If a number of people are asking you directly then you can be confident in that fact that more people are searching for it.

Example: *'Is polyester safe for babies?'*

HOW TOS

How to guides are a blogging staple. For example, 'How to get a baby to sleep' will rank well because most people search a question like 'how to...' or 'what is...'

Example: *'How to prepare a baby bottle', 'What is the best way to bath a baby?'*

LISTS

Lists are also popular with blog readers. Think of things you can list, whether it's your top products of the month or something relating to your products.

Example: *'10 gifts for daddys', '5 mistakes every mum makes and how to avoid them', '20 celeb mums who are doing it right'*

OCCASIONS

When local, national or global occasions arrive you can be sure people are discussing, reading and sharing it. So whether it's the summer equinox, the Olympics, a monument going up in town it's worth getting your business talking about it if not to be relevant but to be an active member of society.

Example: *'It's officially summer: Make sure your baby is sun safe', '10 Olympic exercises for you and your baby'*

VIDEO

Video blogs are used more which is why YouTube is the second highest channel after Google for search. Examples could be showing how your products are made, a how to guide or an interview even.

THE COMPANY

Your customers want to know who they're buying from so tell them. Have you had a business anniversary? Celebrate with them. Have you had a photoshoot? Show them behind the scenes snaps.

Example: *'Behind the scenes: We go backstage at our latest photoshoot'*

COMPETITIONS AND OFFERS

Your blog is a great place to promote competitions and offers you're currently running. With social integration is easy to share throughout your social media.

Example: *'Win a family holiday for 4', '50% off baby booties'*

SOMETHING POSITIVE

It sounds a bit cheesy but as a human race we love to hear that our dreams can come true, that possibilities are out there, and that we're doing a good job. If you can write about something positive it will simply be associated to your brand.

Example: *'How being a parent is the best job in the world', 'Why your life isn't over now you have a child; It's just beginning.'*



BLOGGING STATS

Tuesday and Wednesday are the most popular days for publishing blog posts.

Titles containing 60 characters received the most social shares.

Titles that included a single question mark have 46.30% social shares, nearly double that for titles without question marks.

61% of US consumers have made a purchase based on a blog post

Companies that blog have 55% more website visitors

THE PROCESS



RESEARCH

As we have just done, research what potential customers are interested in, what they're talking about and what they're searching for.



WRITE

Based on that information write your post continuously thinking about your target market and the keywords you want to be found for.



REVIEW

Reread your post or even better get someone to proof read it for you. The last thing you want are typos being associated to your business.



PUBLISH

Publish your blog when you know your target market will be online. You can find this out [here](#). Don't forget to set up your SEO data too. (More on that later)



PROMOTE

What is a blog without readers! Share it on social media, push it in your email marketing add a feed on your homepage, mention it to other bloggers who have a similar interest.



LINK

Once your post is done don't forget about it. If you write about something similar link back to it to enhance your current readers experience.

HOW TO ADD A BLOG POST

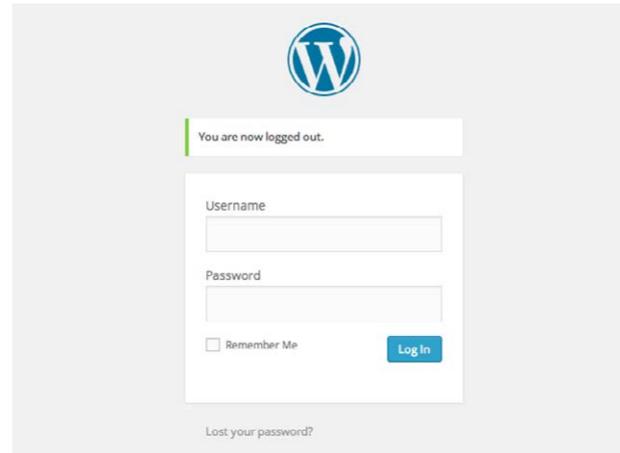
Now we know what we are posting we need to know how to. Our chosen blogging platform here at Exact Abacus is Wordpress. Used by over 60 million people to host their blog or even their whole websites. It has great flexibility with a huge range of plug-ins (additional features you can add on) to make your blogging experience a breeze.

So first things first...

1 FINDING YOUR BLOG BACKEND

To find 'the backend of your blog, so to speak, simply type in your website URL and add on [/wp-admin](#). For example [www.exactabacus.com/wp-admin](#).

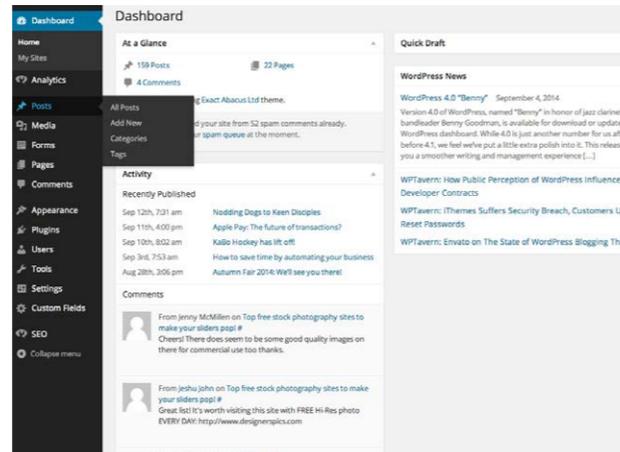
You should then see the screen on the right where you can enter your username and password. If you are unsure what they are feel free to [get in touch](#) and we will provide them for you.



2 THE BLOG DASHBOARD

This is the centre of your blog and where you can manage every aspect of it. If you have been added as a subscriber you may have limited access but that can sometimes make things easier.

To write a blog we only need to look at the 'Posts' section on the right-hand side menu. You will see 4 options, [All posts](#), [Add New](#), [Categories](#) and [Tags](#). They're all pretty self explanatory but for now we just want to focus on 'Add New' so go ahead and click this link.



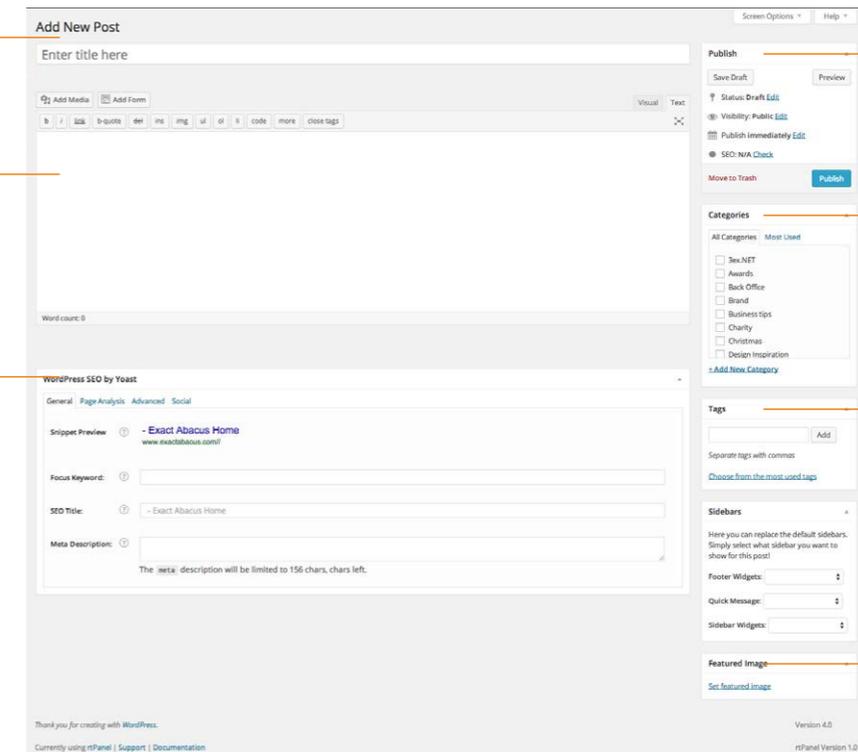
3 THE ADD POST PAGE

You should find yourself on a screen like this one. There are a few steps to ensuring your blog is formatted correctly and that it has the best possible chance of ranking highly in Google but if you post regularly (and you should!) it will all become second nature. We will go through these step by step on the following pages but here is a quick overview.

4 | Add your title

5 | Add your blog content

6 | Check your SEO data



10 | Schedule, Preview, Publish

9 | Add your post to a category

8 | Associate tags to your post

7 | Assign your featured image

4 ADD NEW POST

This is where you add your title. It may seem like a simple step but remember your title is the main reason people will read your article so make sure it's engaging and intriguing using some of the techniques we spoke about earlier.

Add New Post

Enter title here

5 WRITE YOUR BLOG POST

The second box is where you add your content. Don't forget to add imagery and break up your text with paragraphs (online people prefer to read short sharp text segments) use lists and blockquotes to enhance and break up your text. Below is a diagram of the main styling options you have to use. Note: To add a large image at the top of your blog (usually called the feature image) we will use a feature later on so there is no need to add one here.

The image shows a rich text editor toolbar with various icons and labels. The 'Add Media' button is highlighted with a blue line. The toolbar includes icons for Bold, Italic, Canceled, Bulleted and numbered lists, Horizontal rule, Blockquote, Text Alignment, Add and remove links, and Visual/Text editors. Annotations include: 'Bulleted and numbered lists', 'Horizontal rule', 'Opens up an extra bar to edit your text', 'Visual editor gives you an idea of how it will look', and 'Text editor is using the html code (turn over to the next page to learn more)'. A text area below the toolbar contains the letter 'p' and a 'Word count: 0' indicator.

The image shows the 'Insert Media' interface. On the left, there are options for 'Create Gallery', 'Set Featured Image', and 'Insert from URL'. The main area is titled 'Insert Media' and has 'Upload Files' and 'Media Library' tabs. Below these are several image thumbnails. A central area says 'Drop files anywhere to upload or Select Files' with a 'Maximum upload file size: 8 MB.' note. On the right, there is an 'ATTACHMENT DETAILS' panel for a selected image, showing its URL, title, caption, alt text, and description. Below that is an 'ATTACHMENT DISPLAY SETTINGS' panel with options for alignment, link to, and size.

ADD MEDIA

Adding additional elements like imagery, videos and downloadable pdfs really make your posts engaging.

You can also add galleries to your post by choosing the option on the left and selecting multiple images.

It is illegal to use other peoples imagery (eg from a google search) without their permission or crediting them.

There are great websites out there that specialise in images that are free for commercial use, you can find a few [here](#). Otherwise you can use your own photography or paid stock photography sites like [istock.com](#).

1. Click upload files (or you can select an image that has already been uploaded)

2. Drag and drop your chosen files to upload.

3. On the right hand side you will see a summary of your image. Add a title, alt text and description to help your SEO ranking and aid users with disabilities.

If you choose to add a caption this text will appear under your image as a description.

5. Ensure you choose the correct size you want it displayed. For full width images ensure the width measurement is larger than your blog posts width and it will be resized.

CODING YOUR POST IN HTML

If you fancy getting your hands dirty in a little HTML you can switch your view to 'text' and code your post. The styles that these tags below create will be defined by the CSS that your web designer will have added to your website.

It is easy to forget to 'close the tag' by adding the end `</?>`, as seen below, if it isn't working make sure you have added them although note that the horizontal rule and image close in themselves.

Top level heading

```
<h1>Babies</h1>
```

2nd level heading

```
<h2>Baby clothing</h2>
```

3rd level heading

```
<h3>Baby onesies</h3>
```

Paragraphs

```
<p>A paragraph about babies</p>
```

Link

```
<p>A paragraph with <a href="http://www.exactabacus.com/" title="Exact Abacus Website" target="_blank">a link</a> in it</p>
```

Bold

```
<p>A paragraph with <strong>bold text</strong> in it</p>
```

Italic

```
<p>A paragraph with <em>italic text</em> in it</p>
```

Quote in a sentence

```
<p>A paragraph with a quote in it <q>Life is like a box of chocolates</q> - Forest Gump</p>
```

Blockquote

```
<blockquote>A block quote for longer text. An infant (from the Latin word infans, meaning "unable to speak" or "speechless") is the very young offspring of a human or animal. When applied to humans, the term is usually considered synonymous with baby or bairn (Scotland), but the latter is commonly applied to the young of any animal. When a human child learns to walk, the term toddler may be used instead.
```

```
</blockquote>
```

Horizontal rule

```
<hr/>
```

Unordered List (Bulleted)

```
<ul>
<li>Nappies</li>
<li>Bottle</li>
<li>Car seat</li>
<li>Toys</li>
</ul>
```

Ordered List (Numbered)

```
<ol>
<li>Fill the kettle with fresh tap water</li>
<li>Bring the water to boil & allow it to cool for no more than 30 mins</li>
<li>Read the packet to check the amount of water needed </li>
<li>Pour the required amount of water into the bottle</li>
</ol>
```

Image

```

```

EXAMPLE

Below is an example of how you would code a post in text view and to the right is how that code would look on our blog.

```
<p>It's always useful to know how to code basic HTML, <em>it's fast becoming a life skill</em>, so we're here to show you how you can use HTML to enhance your blog and say goodbye to pre-set styles.</p>
```

```
<blockquote>I would have put a deep and meaningful quote about coding HTML in here but when you Google it just shows you how to add blockquotes like this one</blockquote>
```

```
<p>To become a master of coding you need to know how they work. Simply put, by wrapping what you are writing in what we call <strong>'tags'</strong> you tell your website to take on any stylings that <strong>tag</strong> has been assigned.</p>
```

```
<hr/>
```

```
<h2>There are a few reasons for this</h2>
```

```
<ol>
```

```
<li>It helps search engines decipher your website by knowing what is most important and things that should be over looked like quotes. By the way <q>this is how you tag a small quote that would fit in your sentence</q>. You can see it automatically adds your quote marks for you. Isn't that nice</li>
```

```
<li>It makes your code easier to navigate </li>
```

```
<li>The style breaks up your text making it easier and more enjoyable to read</li>
```

```
</ol>
```

```
<hr/>
```

```

```

```
<p>I have edited this image in a few ways from how Wordpress provides it...</p>
```

```
<ul>
```

```
<li>I have removed the 'a' tag'. This is a link meaning if you clicked the image it would open in a new window just displaying the image. I didn't want it to be clickable</li>
```

```
<li>I removed the classes as I don't want those styles assigned to it</li>
```

```
<li>I changed the width to 100% so it always fills the whole width of the blog post and removed the height so it stays proportional automatically.</li>
```

```
</ul>
```

```
<p>Last but by no means least is how to add a link in your blog for example if you wanted to link to our home page you would code it <a href="http://www.exactabacus.com/" title="Exact Abacus Website" target="_blank">like this</a>.</p>
```

How to use styling in html

[\[edit \]](#) Posted by [Jenny McMillen](#) on September 25, 2014

It's always useful to know how to code basic HTML, *it's fast becoming a life skill*, so we're here to show you how you can use HTML to enhance your blog and say goodbye to preset styles.

```
I would have put a deep and meaningful quote about coding HTML in here but when you Google it just shows you how to add blockquotes like this one
```

To become a master of coding you need to know how they work. Simply put, by wrapping what you are writing in what we call 'tags' you tell your website to take on any stylings that tag has been assigned.

THERE ARE A FEW REASONS FOR THIS

1. It helps search engines decipher your website by knowing what is most important and things that should be over looked like quotes. By the way "this is how you tag a small quote that would fit in your sentence". You can see it automatically adds your quote marks for you. Isn't that nice
2. It makes your code easier to navigate
3. The style breaks up your text making it easier and more enjoyable to read



I have edited this image in a few ways from how WordPress provides it...

- I have removed the 'a' tag'. This is a link meaning if you clicked the image it would open in a new window just displaying the image. I didn't want it to be clickable
- I removed the classes as I don't want those styles assigned to it
- I changed the width to 100% so it always fills the whole width of the blog post and removed the height so it stays proportional automatically.

Last but by no means least is how to add a link in your blog for example if you wanted to link to our home page you would code it [like this](#).



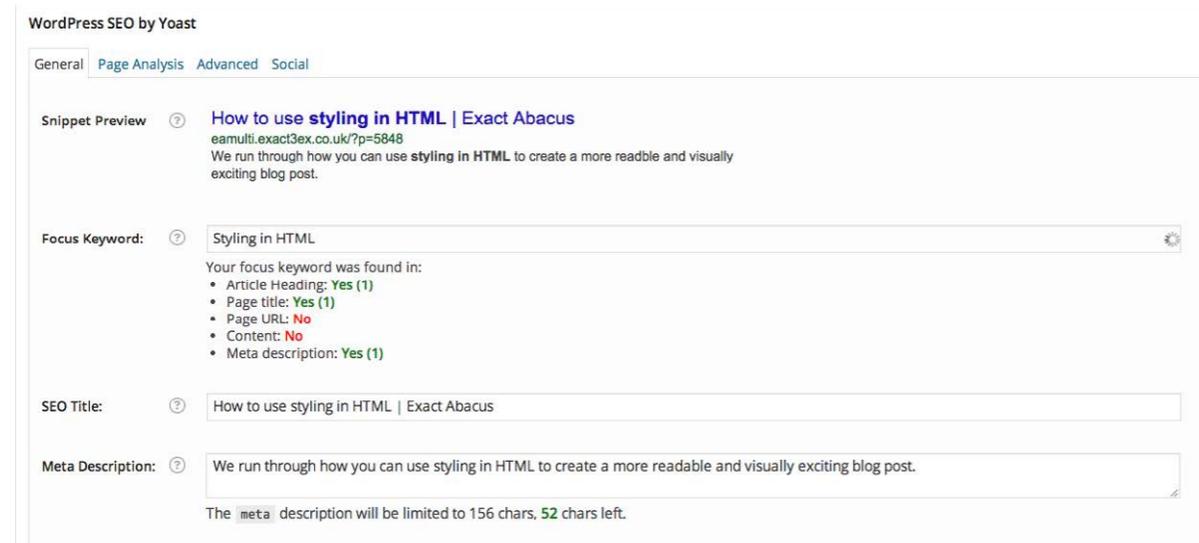
6 CHECK YOUR SEO

To make sure your blog has the best chance of ranking well in search engines we add a plug-in called SEO Yoast. This can be used to check to see when and how many times you are using the keyword you want your blog post to be found for.

By typing in the 'focus keyword' section for what you want to be found for it brings up a list showing where

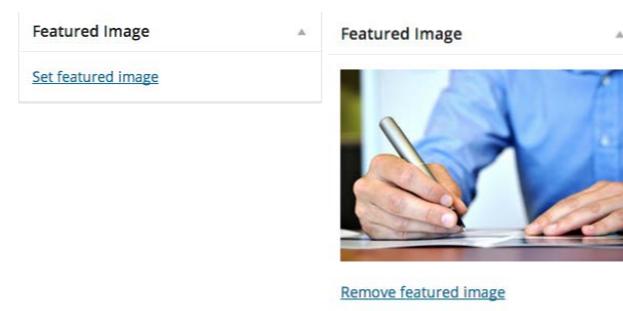
it is missing. You want this keyword to be mentioned in each section.

As you can see below we are missing our longtail keyword from our page URL (which you can edit at the top of the page under your blog title) and from our content. We can simply edit these until we have all green yesses. These aren't compulsory but mean we have the best chance of being found.



7 ASSIGN YOUR FEATURE IMAGE

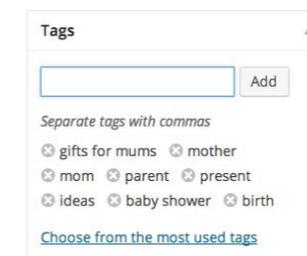
This image is important as it will display on your blog listing page (unless your blog listing page is all text), at the top of your blog to set a tone and when people share your post on social media. By clicking the link it takes you to the media upload page where you can simply choose an image or upload a new one.



8 ASSOCIATE TAGS TO YOUR POST

To keep things complicated there are also different types of tags other than the ones in our HTML. These tags are connected to your post so that people searching your website can find relevant content.

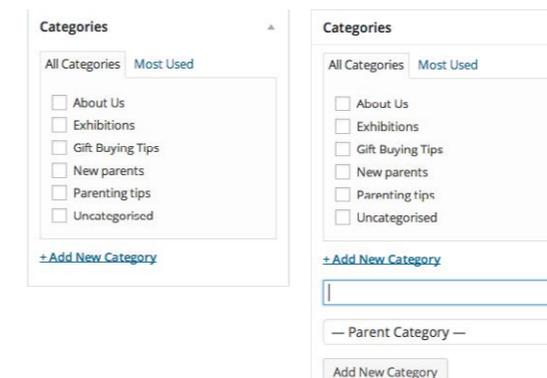
So back to our baby website example, if someone searches the blog for 'gifts for mums', then any post tagged 'gifts' or 'mums' etc will display.



9 CHOOSE YOUR CATEGORIES

Many blog browsers will use your categories list (usually found on the sidebar of your blog) to navigate to topics they're interested in. It is important to assign a category to your post to help it be found by these viewers.

If you're struggling to place your article you can create a new category using the link at the bottom or just assign it to a general category.

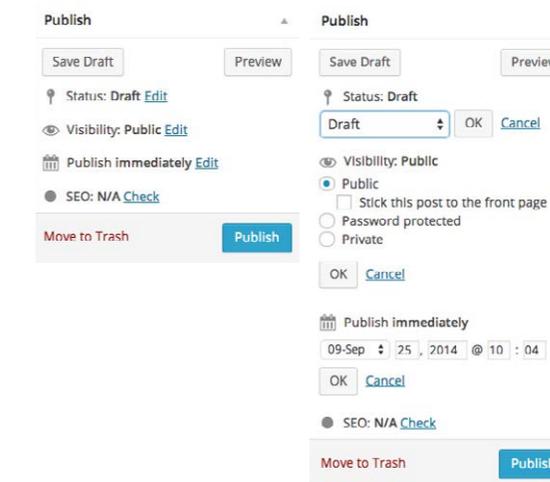


10 PUBLISH, SAVE OR SCHEDULE

Finally, your post is ready. To preview how it will look on your website you can click 'preview' and if you're still in the middle of editing then you can save your draft here too.

You also have the option to make it visible to everyone, where it's password protected or private meaning only admins can see it.

When you're ready to publish you are given the option to publish immediately (by just hitting the blue publish button) or to schedule it in on your chosen time or date meaning you can publish it when you know most of your viewers will be online without having to log on every time. This is particularly useful if your blog automatically share posts to social media when published.



So there we go how to use Wordpress to write and publish a blog post. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch with us and we'll be happy to advise.



WE HOPE YOU FOUND THIS GUIDE HELPFUL

If you have any more questions please feel free to get in touch.

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