

A Search Engine Optimization Guide for Wordpress by Jai Nischal Verma ([www.blogohblog.com](http://www.blogohblog.com))

According to recent statistics, Wordpress accounts for 0.8% of the web which makes Wordpress the best choice for any enthusiast blogger. Hundreds and thousands of blogs are created every day which use Wordpress as the blogging CMS (Content Management System), but not all of them are optimized for good search engine rankings. In this guide, I will instruct you how to quickly set up your Wordpress installation for the best SEO results and make your website more search engine friendly. You might know some of these techniques already, but the following steps will play the role of a checklist for you.

Follow the steps carefully and try not to miss out on any of them in order to acquire the best results for your blog.

### ❖ **Step I – Blog Title & Taglines**

I am assuming that you know how to install Wordpress for yourself. If not, please refer to [http://codex.wordpress.org/Installing\\_WordPress](http://codex.wordpress.org/Installing_WordPress). After the installation is completed, go to the wp-admin and under the *Options* -> *General* tab, fill out your Blog title and the tagline. Make sure that your Blog title is meaningful and your tagline is search engine friendly. The tagline should basically summarize what you do on your blog and ensure that you target the right keywords for your website. Fill in the rest of the information and we are done with this step.

### ❖ **Step II – Update Services**

Under the *Options*, go to the next tab called *Writing* and scroll down to the Update Services text box. Here you can input a list of update services separating them with line breaks (pressing the enter key). These are basically websites which maintain a list of all the current weblog updates in different areas. When you make a post, Wordpress will ping these websites to inform them that you have updated your blog.

Doing this will make your blog more social and also get you additional traffic through these update services. People who browse websites like Technorati and Sphere can easily find the posts that you made recently. Given below is a list of such ping services which I got from the official Wordpress website. Just copy and paste them in the update services box.



<http://blogsearch.google.com/ping/RPC2>  
<http://1470.net/api/ping>  
<http://api.feedster.com/ping>  
<http://api.feedster.com/ping.php>  
<http://api.moreover.com/ping>  
<http://api.moreover.com/RPC2>  
<http://api.my.yahoo.com/RPC2>  
<http://api.my.yahoo.com/rss/ping>  
<http://bblog.com/ping.php>  
<http://bitacoras.net/ping>  
<http://blogdb.jp/xmlrpc>  
<http://blog.goo.ne.jp/XMLRPC>  
<http://blogsearch.google.com/ping/RPC2>  
<http://blogmatcher.com/u.php>  
<http://bulkfeeds.net/rpc>  
<http://coreblog.org/ping/>  
[http://mod-pubsub.org/kn\\_apps/blogchatt](http://mod-pubsub.org/kn_apps/blogchatt)  
<https://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZFinance.woa/wa/pingPodcast>  
<http://ping.amagle.com/>  
<http://ping.bitacoras.com>  
<http://ping.bloggers.jp/rpc/>  
<http://ping.blogmura.jp/rpc/>  
<http://ping.blo.gs/>  
<http://ping.cocolog-nifty.com/xmlrpc>  
<http://pinger.blogflux.com/rpc/>  
<http://ping.exblog.jp/xmlrpc>  
<http://ping.feedburner.com>  
<http://ping.myblog.jp>  
<http://pingqueue.com/rpc/>  
<http://ping.blogg.de/>  
<http://ping.rootblog.com/rpc.php>  
<http://ping.syndic8.com/xmlrpc.php>  
<http://ping.weblogalot.com/rpc.php>  
<http://ping.weblogs.se/>  
<http://rcs.datashed.net/RPC2/>  
<http://rpc.blogbuzzmachine.com/RPC2>  
<http://rpc.blogrolling.com/pinger/>  
<http://rpc.britblog.com/>  
<http://rpc.icerocket.com:10080/>  
<http://rpc.newsgator.com/>  
<http://rpc.pingomatic.com/>  
<http://rpc.tailrank.com/feedburner/RPC2>  
<http://rpc.technorati.com/rpc/ping>  
<http://rpc.weblogs.com/RPC2>  
<http://rpc.wpkeys.com/>  
<http://services.newsgator.com/ngws/xmlrpcping.aspx>  
<http://signup.alerts.msn.com/alerts-PREP/submitPingExtended.do>  
<http://topicexchange.com/RPC2>  
<http://trackback.bakeinu.jp/bakeping.php>  
<http://www.a2b.cc/setloc/bp.a2b>  
<http://www.bitacoles.net/ping.php>  
<http://www.blogdigger.com/RPC2>  
<http://www.bloggoole.com/ping/>  
<http://www.blogoon.net/ping/>  
<http://www.blogpeople.net/servlet/weblogUpdates>  
[http://www.blogroots.com/tb\\_populi.blog?id=1](http://www.blogroots.com/tb_populi.blog?id=1)  
<http://www.blogshares.com/rpc.php>  
<http://www.blogsnow.com/ping>  
<http://www.blogstreet.com/xrbin/xmlrpc.cgi>  
<http://www.holycowdude.com/rpc/ping/>  
<http://www.lasermemory.com/lsrc/>  
<http://www.imblogs.net/ping/>  
[http://www.mod-pubsub.org/kn\\_apps/blogchatter/ping.php](http://www.mod-pubsub.org/kn_apps/blogchatter/ping.php)  
<http://www.newsifree.com/RPC2Cloud>  
<http://www.newsifree.com/xmlrpcctest.php>  
<http://www.popdex.com/addsite.php>  
<http://www.snipsnap.org/RPC2>  
<http://www.weblogues.com/RPC/>  
<http://xmlrpc.blogg.de>

There is a factor here which has to be taken into consideration. Whenever you make a new post now, Wordpress will try to ping all these websites one by one and that process will waste a lot



of time before you can make another post or do anything in Wordpress. In order to avoid this, you should use a plugin for Wordpress called [No Ping Wait](#). This plugin actually puts the process of pinging in the backlog and allows you to continue working seamlessly by removing any kind of delays. Download this plugin, install and activate it on your Wordpress blog.

### ❖ Step III – Modifying the Title Tags of your Wordpress Theme

The title tags in your pages matter a lot for SEO purpose but Wordpress themes are usually not optimized for them. To make your theme more search engine friendly, go to *Presentation* -> *Theme Editor* in the admin area of Wordpress. Now open the *header.php* file for editing and replace whatever is between <title> & </title> tag with the following code:-

```
<?php if (is_home () ) { bloginfo('name'); } elseif ( is_category() ) { single_cat_title(); echo " - "; bloginfo('name'); } elseif (is_single() || is_page() ) { single_post_title(); } elseif (is_search() ) { bloginfo('name'); echo " search results: "; echo wp_specialchars($s); } else { wp_title("",true); } ?>
```

### ❖ Step IV – Meta Tags

Wordpress does not insert any Meta tags in your blog on its own. Meta tags are very important if you want the search engines to fall in love with your blog. You can use the [All in one SEO Pack](#) plugin for all your Meta tags including the titles too. You will get all the help for installing this plugin on the [author's plugin homepage](#). There are other plugins as well which can be used to insert Meta tags into the blog. Just search for them on Google.

### ❖ Step V – Permalinks & Mod\_rewrite

Search engines will always index your pages faster if your URLs are text-based instead of being long strings of code. Having your keywords in the URL is beneficial as it tells the spiders about your page content. For example, the URL ***http://mysite.com/?var1=3434&var2=3434*** is not search engine friendly, but if the same URL was written like ***http://mysite.com/my-page.html***, it would be easier for the search engines to index the URL.

This kind of link conversion is done using a server-side feature called **Mod\_rewrite** which uses an *.htaccess* file that is placed in your website root folder. Wordpress already has this inbuilt functionality to generate pretty URLs, so all you have to do is enable the option. Go to *Options* -> *Permalinks* in the Wordpress admin, and you will see the following common options.



### Common options:

Default

» <http://localhost/wordpress/?p=123>

Date and name based

» <http://localhost/wordpress/index.php/2007/11/29/sample-post/>

Numeric

» <http://localhost/wordpress/index.php/archives/123>

Custom, specify below

Custom structure:

Click on the fourth option (Custom) to enable it, and type `%postname%.html` in the text box. This will make your URLs include the titles of your posts/pages and format them accordingly. If you have a post with the title “Hello World”, this will convert the URL to ***yourdomain.com/hello-world.html*** for that particular post.

Note: You should have Linux based hosting for the Mod\_rewrite function to work properly. If not, you can choose the second option which is date and name based.

### ❖ Step VI – Optimization of Keywords

When making new posts or pages in Wordpress, make sure that you are targeting your search keywords properly. Try to include those keywords in the titles for which you want to be searched and indexed. If your content is unique and you have chosen the right keywords, search engines will quickly pick up your articles and index them.

Overture’s [Keyword Suggestion Tool](#) is a good way to look for popular keywords related to your niche and then optimize accordingly. Use variations for your keywords and include them in different phrases.

Search engines rank your pages by keywords in the following order:-

- ✓ Prominence and accuracy of the keywords
- ✓ Frequency of the keywords
- ✓ Concentration of the keywords
- ✓ Closeness within the keywords
- ✓ Placement of the keywords in the content



So, be sure that you have a balanced article before publishing it to your audience and please do not spam your keywords because everyone hates it, including the search engines.

### ❖ **Step VII – Google Sitemap**

Google Sitemap is a file which contains URLs and some supplementary information for all the public pages or documents of your website. There is no proof that a Google Sitemap will directly affect your ranking in any way. However, it can help Google to crawl your blog better which may result in a more complete index of your page.

You may use a plugin which will automatically generate XML sitemaps for your blog. Download here -> [Google Sitemaps Generator for Wordpress](#)

Once you have installed the plugin, you can go to the options menu and generate a sitemap for your blog. You can also set the frequency of the updates so that the sitemap is generated accordingly.

### ❖ **Step VIII – Social Bookmarking Plugins**

You should download and install a social bookmarking plugin which will enable your visitors to bookmark and submit your posts to various bookmarking sites like Digg, Reddit, Stumbleupon, etc. The most popular plugin for social bookmarking nowadays is [AddThis](#). It has support for adding the bookmarking widget at the end of every post in your blog and I would definitely recommend that.

That concludes the “Wordpress SEO for Beginners”. I hope that people starting out with Wordpress will benefit from this guide.

- [Jai Nischal Verma](#)

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If you found this document useful, please make a donation to [jainischalverma@yahoo.com](mailto:jainischalverma@yahoo.com) through PayPal for the hard work that has gone into making this guide.

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Some more useful articles if you are a blogger:-

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- ✓ [Blogging Money!](#)

