INTRODUCTION TO WORDPRESS

What is WordPress
WordPress is a free open-source content management system that has been around since 2003. Created by Matt Mullenwag and Mike Little, it started as a project for developers to share information easily and effectively. It helped usher in what is now called Web 2.0. WordPress is one of the first blogging sites to allow themes, plug-ins, and add-ons to their sites to maximize the client experience through content and personalization.

As a user, you have the ability to create pages, manage users, operate a media and user database, manage analytics, and so much more. WordPress continues to be one of the most robust platforms for web management and blogging software.

Wordpress.com vs. Wordpress.org
With Wordpress.com, the servers and internal software is managed by the WordPress.com engineers and designers. With Wordpress.org, you have access to the full library of themes, plug-ins, and functions. You have the ability to install the raw open source files and manage them individually on your own server. For a full list of benefits of each, visit http://support.wordpress.com/com-vs-org/.

Signing Up/Logging In
Each person in class will have access and control of their own blog.

1. Go to Wordpress.com and start by entering the name of your blog. Once you have that part decided, click the “Create Website” button. Don't worry, you can change this later on, it's not a permanent name yet. You'll be asked to input your email address and create a Username and Password and one last chance to verify your WordPress site.

2. Provide an email address, Username, and password to get started

3. Choose Create Blog at the bottom of the page. Don't upgrade unless you want to pay.

4. Use your Username and password to login at Wordpress.com on subsequent visits.

5. Go through the setup process to get your blog started. Begin by saying a few things about your blog and checking a few settings. Everything here can be changed down the road, nothing is permanent yet.

6. Once you get to the end, find an confirmation email in your inbox. Confirm that your email is legit, you will be automatically sent to your website. Hit the dashboard button to gain access to your blog. It might look intimidating at first, but it's pretty easy once you get accustomed to using a Content Management System (CMS).

On the Dashboard page, you'll see some stats and your options. WordPress provides a lot of info that helps you control and manage your site. Feel free to browse around here and see what you can do. Anything you change can usually be undone. If you happen to find yourself looking at coded files for HTML, CSS, or PHP, you might not want to change those pages just yet.
Typically, I work with two tabs open, the first tab has my dashboard open and the second tab has my blog open. Whenever I make a change to my blog via the dashboard, I refresh my blog page and the changes are immediately visible. It’s a really useful way to work.

Making/Editing a Page
You can add pages to WordPress, giving it more the feel of a regular Web site than a blog. Consider what your sections should be and create several relevant pages. To create a new page, from the Dashboard, find the Pages button on the left and Choose Add New. Give it a title and some content. The new page will show up on as a navigation item on the site. Your pages will show up on your blog once you create and refresh your site.

It's very easy to add or edit a page to your blog After your initial introduction to your dashboard, look for the section on the left that says Pages and click All Pages to see your About page.

1. Hover over your About page and click the edit button to access the page. On display, you have access to a mini-dashboard for your pages. The mini-dashboard is actually common to all your pages, posts, and more, so it's easy to become familiar with it.

2. On the top of your page is your "kitchen sink", the tools that help you edit your page and create dynamic content. The main area of your page is where you can edit or create your content. Have at it.

3. Use the Add Media button to add images, and use the Link button to create web links to other content. Embed tags for video don't work. Click on the Add Media button, then the Insert YouTube button. Paste the URL code into the box and press Insert.

4. Once your good with your changes, hit Update or Publish on the right side to get going. That's it. It's that simple.

Page and Post Guidelines
Make sure you link to appropriate items using the Link icon. Use “Open Link in New Window” as the target, that way your blog is still open in the browser. Why would we want someone to navigate away from our page.

You can work in Visual or Text (HTML) to make your post. HTML allows you to add your own custom styles directly.

You can use the More tag, if you have a long post and only want an excerpt to show on the main blog page.

Use only basic format tags (like paragraph, heading1, etc., so the format will be driven by the theme's CSS). Don't do anything crazy with colors unless you really need emphasis.

Edit Posts
You can go to the Edit Posts page to Edit, Delete or View a previous post, check its stats. You can also go to the Media Library, Link List and Comments to manage those entries.

Adding a Theme
Themes are the first stop in adding customization to the site. Under Appearance, choose Themes. Pick a theme has just the basic layout that you want. You can sort the themes based on the different tags or filters depending on what you need. You can also customize the theme based on color, typeface, orientation of images, and other items. Feel free to play around with some of the features available to you.
Widgets
WordPress gives you lots of Widgets to add to the site. Under Appearance, click Widgets, and drag your desired widget to the sidebar. Go through and see which might be relevant. RSS feeds, Search form, Tag Cloud, Archives, Flick, etc. Edit. Fill out the information required by the box.

Backgrounds
Change color or upload a new image.

Customizable Menu
Using the pages section, you can add pages to your blog. They will appear in the header menu and sometimes, depending on the theme, your footer menu. Look through your blog to see if you can edit these features. *Posts do not show up on your menu, they appear on your main page or recent posts widget.

Mobile Options
You can also choose to have your blog optimized for mobile phone or iPad.

Settings
General – Change Blog Title and Tagline
Timezone, Date Format etc.
Writing – Size of Post Box, Default
Categories
Reading – Front Page Display, # Posts on Front Page
Syndication options Discussion – default settings, moderation, blacklist
Media – sizes
and much much more...