

The Ultimate WordPress **TOOLKIT**



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Table of Contents

The Story Behind this Toolkit	2
Why Having a Toolkit is Important?	3
Web Hosting	4
Security & Performance	6
SEO & Marketing	7
Themes & Styling	9
Publishing	11
Comments	12
Monetization	13
Ecommerce	14
Membership	15
Translation	16
Additional Resources	17
Copyright and Disclosure	18

The Story Behind this Toolkit

When I first started using WordPress in 2006, I wanted to know what were the exact plugins and tools that “experts” are using on their website.

At the time, no such resource existed. I struggled my way through and learnt from every single mistake that I made.

In 2009, I decided enough was enough and created [WPBeginner](#) which became the largest free WordPress resource site for beginners.

Today, I want to share with you my toolkit - a collection of WordPress related products and resources that I use on our websites and projects.

I hope you will find it useful in building / improving your WordPress site.

Yours Truly,

Syed Balkhi

Founder of WPBeginner

Why Having a Toolkit is Important?

When growing a business, **time is money**.

Leveraging the right set of tools will help you save time and get ahead.

On the other hand, using the wrong set of tools can cost you a lot of money and hassle in the long run.

That's why I always recommend choosing the best tool for the job.

Note: Not all plugins / services that I use are free.

I pay for them because they make me more efficient. Instead of looking at them as costs, I look at them as investments.

A toolbox stuffed with necessary tools is crucial for the success of your website.

Web Hosting

Often overlooked, web hosting is one of the key components of every successful website. Web hosting is where your website lives on the internet. Similar to a house, each website has different needs.

Knowing what you need will help you make the right decision and save time / money.

Where I host WPBeginner:



[HostGator](#) - WPBeginner website is hosted on a HostGator dedicated server. I have been using HostGator since 2007. They host over 8 million websites.

HostGator provides the perfect combination of quality and value. They have plans that grow with your business.

Alternatives:



[Bluehost](#) - One of the oldest web hosts started in 1996. Great for small businesses. I use them for my smaller websites. Officially recommended by WordPress.org.



[SiteGround](#) - Great international web hosting provider. I use them for my popular entertainment site, List25.com. Good all-around hosting provider with great support.

Enterprise WordPress Hosting



[Pagely](#) - The absolute best of everything (performance, security, & uptime). I use them for all of my eCommerce websites. My websites hosted on Pagely serve several billion impressions a month.

Read more about [when do you need Managed WordPress Hosting](#).

Security & Performance

Making sure that your website is secure and loads fast is detrimental to your success. Below are my favorite security & performance tools:



[Sucuri](#) - AntiVirus and Firewall for your website. They help protect you against hack attacks and DDoS attacks on your website. They will also clean up your website if you ever get hacked (for free).



[VaultPress](#) - Real-time WordPress backups for your website. This is like a time-capsule for your website. If something goes wrong, you can go back in time. Backups are the best security you can have.

Alternative: [BackupBuddy](#) (premium) / [UpdraftPlus](#) (free)



[WP Super Cache](#) - Best free caching plugin for WordPress. Caching is a must have for every website because it reduce server load and significantly speed up your website.

Reading: [How to Speed up WordPress](#)

SEO & Marketing

Want to get more traffic and subscribers on your website? Here are the best WordPress SEO and marketing plugins to help you boost your website traffic.



[Yoast SEO](#) - the best free WordPress SEO plugin. Helps you create meta titles, descriptions, keywords, sitemaps, and everything else that you need. For more details, see our [WordPress SEO guide](#).



[OptinMonster](#) - Converts abandoning website visitors into email subscribers. I created this plugin for WPBeginner and now it's being used by some of the largest websites on the internet.



[WPForms](#) - Drag & drop WordPress form builder. Easily create contact forms, subscription forms, payment forms, or any other type of forms without hiring a developer.

Free version available for beginners - [WPForms Lite](#)



[MailChimp](#) - Easily send email newsletters. One of the most popular email marketing solutions. I use them on WPBeginner.

Alternatives: [Constant Contact](#) and [AWeber](#).



[MonsterInsights](#) - Most popular Google Analytics plugin for WordPress. See how visitors find and use your website, so you can keep them coming back. Simply put get the stats that matter.

Suggested Readings:

- [Why Building Your Email List is so Important Today!](#)
- [Why You should never use WordPress send newsletter emails](#) - This is quite tempting but don't do it.
- [19 actionable tips to drive more traffic to your new website](#)

Themes & Styling

The look and feel of your website is crucial for delivering a great user experience. Here are my favorite theme shops and design plugins.

I highly recommend that you read this guide on [selecting a WordPress theme](#) before you make any decision.



[StudioPress](#) - The company behind the popular Genesis framework. WPBeginner theme is a custom theme built on top of Genesis. They have a great collection of premium WordPress themes.



[Themify](#) - Beautiful responsive premium WordPress themes that are fast and easy to use. Use the coupon: wpbeginner to get 20% off.



[CSS Hero](#) - Makes it easy for you to customize every aspect of your website design without touching a single line of CSS. Works with most popular themes and plugins.



[BeaverBuilder](#) - a complete drag & drop page builder for WordPress. Create any type of custom page layout or even custom themes with an easy to use drag & drop interface.



[Envira Gallery](#) - Easily create WordPress photo and video galleries, organize them in an album, sort them by tags, add social media integration, eCommerce, and more.



[SoliloquyWP](#) - the fastest WordPress slider plugin. Easily create image and video sliders in WordPress. Features include dynamic content sliders, carousels, lightbox, and more.



[Breadcrumb NavXT](#) - Easily add breadcrumbs to your website that shows visitors path to their current location. I use this on WPBeginner because it's extremely flexible and customizable.

Publishing

Creating a good editorial workflow will help you publish great content fast. Here are some of my favorite plugins for publishers.



[Edit Flow](#) - Easily create and manage your editorial workflow with custom statuses, editorial comments, calendar, and more. We use this on WPBeginner.



[TablePress](#) - Create beautiful and feature-rich tables into your posts and pages without writing any code. Features include sorting, pagination, filtering, and ability to import / export data.



[Publish Confirm](#) - A very light-weight plugin that helps you avoid accidental publishing of your blog posts with an extra confirmation dialogue.

Recommended Reading:

[14 Tips for mastering the WordPress Visual Editor](#)

Comments

Comments help you improve user engagement. In the past, I have tried several third-party plugins such as Livefyre, Disqus, Facebook comments, etc.

Each time, I have ended up returning back to default WordPress comments because these third-party solutions insert ads without your permission and reduce engagement.

Below are my favorite WordPress comment plugins that I use in combination with the default WordPress comments:



[Akismet](#) - helps block comment spam. This is one of the two default WordPress plugins that comes pre-installed. Make sure you activate it.



[Subscribe to Comments Reloaded](#) - Allows users to subscribe to comment notifications on specific posts. Users can also choose to only receive notifications to replies of their original comment.

Monetization

At the end of the goal, your goal is to make money with your website.

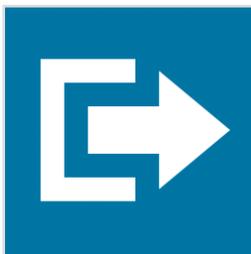
Below are the tools I recommend:



[ThirstyAffiliates](#) - Easy solution to manage your affiliate links. It also automatically replaces keywords on your website with affiliate links. I use it on WPBeginner and my other websites.



[AdSanity](#) - WordPress banner ads made easy. Easily rotate banner ads, set ad expiration dates, see stats, and more.



[Insert Post Ads](#) - Very simple plugin that allows you to insert ads after paragraphs of your post content. I created it for one of my websites and made it available for free.

Ecommerce

One of the best ways to monetize a website is through an online store. Below are the best WordPress eCommerce solutions.



[WooCommerce](#) - The most popular WordPress eCommerce plugin. Easily add an online store on your WordPress website. See our tutorial on [how to add an online store](#).



[Shopify](#) - Fast growing all-inclusive eCommerce platform that integrates with WordPress. Very easy to use for beginners. Very easy to setup and completely hassle-free.



[Easy Digital Downloads](#) - Makes it easy to sell digital products with WordPress. Great for selling eBooks or online software. We use it to sell our WordPress plugins.

Membership

Another way to monetize your website is by creating a membership website and offering premium content to paying subscribers. Below are the best WordPress membership plugins.



[MemberPress](#) - Easy to setup membership plugin that allows you to add content access control, content dripping, and integrates with most popular marketing and payment solutions.



[Restrict Content Pro](#) - Powerful membership plugin by the same team behind Easy Digital Downloads and AffiliateWP. Solid code, easy to use, and growing list of features.



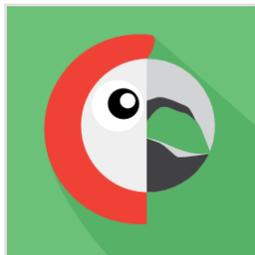
[LifterLMS](#) - Complete Learning Management system. Create courses with lessons, quizzes, surveys, and more. Easily manage students and add gasification with awards & certificates.

Translation

If your business have an international presence, then you may want to localize your content for certain geographical regions. Here are the best plugins to add and manage translations in WordPress.



[WPML](#) - Short for WordPress Multilingual, allows you to create content in different languages. It's powerful enough for corporate sites while simple enough for small blogs.



[Polylang](#) - Another popular solution that makes WordPress multilingual. They have the lite version for free, but you have to pay for premium features such as same slugs, duplication, etc.

Additional Info:

[9 Best Translation Plugins for WordPress Websites](#)

Additional Resources

Thank you for reading my toolkit, and I hope you found it to be helpful.

If you did, then please consider following WPBeginner on:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)

We share tons of awesome video tutorials on YouTube, so definitely check that out.

You may also like the following sections on WPBeginner:

- [WordPress Dictionary](#) - WordPress terms explained in plain English.
- [WPBeginner Deals](#) - Exclusive discounts on the best blogging tools and services for WPBeginner users.

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