

WordPress®

Second Edition

Covers
Version **3.0**

IN DEPTH

que®

Bud Smith and Michael McCallister

You'll Learn How To

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WordPress® IN DEPTH

Second Edition

*Bud E. Smith
Michael McCallister*

que®

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Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

WORDPRESS® IN DEPTH, SECOND EDITION

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bud Smith wrote his first book for Que about buying computers fifteen years ago—and had to do his online research for it using dial-up Internet. Since then, he's lived and worked in Silicon Valley; London, England; Auckland and Christchurch, New Zealand; San Francisco and Oakland, California, and written a dozen more books. And he does most of his online work at broadband speeds—except when he's using the Web on his cell phone, which is as slow as his old dial-up modem. Bud runs a WordPress-based blog at RunawayDaily.com.

Michael McCallister is devoted to the idea that technology need not be feared and can be mastered by anyone. He has been writing about technology in general, and open source software in particular, for the whole of the twenty-first century, and part of the previous century, too. He tries to help build the open source community, from which derives WordPress and so much else that is good, true, and pure in life (the parts of life that run on computers, anyway). While Bud has moved hither and yon, Michael has lived the relatively boring, stable life in the central United States (Milwaukee, Madison, and Boulder). Michael has been running “Notes from the Metaverse” on WordPress since 2006 at metaverse.wordpress.com. Find out more at www.michaelmccallister.com.

DEDICATION

Bud dedicates his portion of the book to the open source community, godparents of WordPress, and pioneers in what we hope becomes the “new normal”: doing what you like, because you like to do it, to help other people, not because someone told you to. Linux Journal says that 86% of all blogs use WordPress, a powerful testament to the power of open source.

Michael echoes Bud's thoughts, and further dedicates his portion of the book to Jeanette, who puts up with so much.

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As the reader of this book, *you* are our most important critic and commentator. We value your opinion and want to know what we're doing right, what we could do better, what areas you'd like to see us publish in, and any other words of wisdom you're willing to pass our way.

As an editor-in-chief for Que Publishing, I welcome your comments. You can email or write me directly to let me know what you did or didn't like about this book—as well as what we can do to make our books better.

Please note that I cannot help you with technical problems related to the topic of this book. We do have a User Services group, however, where I will forward specific technical questions related to the book.

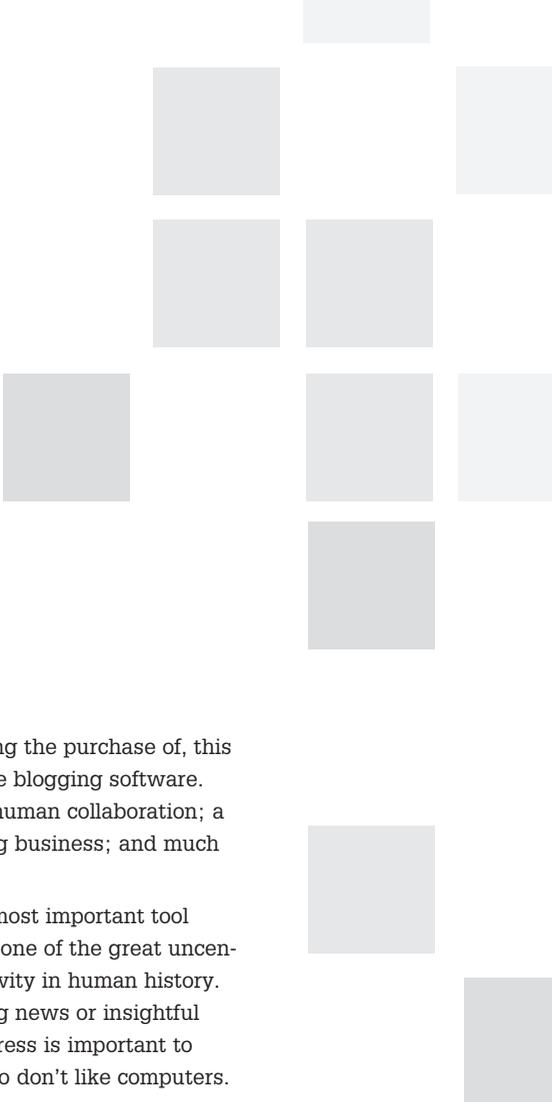
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome

We're glad that you've purchased, or are considering the purchase of, this book. WordPress, in its various forms, is remarkable blogging software. It's also an amazing project; a shining example of human collaboration; a great example of open source at work; a fascinating business; and much more.

In less than a decade, WordPress has become the most important tool around for blogging, which itself is the channel for one of the great uncensored, unedited, unrestrained outpourings of creativity in human history. WordPress blogs often serve as a home for breaking news or insightful comments that affect other media. As such, WordPress is important to people who don't like blogs and even to people who don't like computers. WordPress is a serious and tremendously flexible tool—and also a framework for creating more tools. WordPress blogs include some of the biggest websites around, as well as spur-of-the-moment creations that attract a few posts, perhaps a few comments, and then go the way of the dodo.

Along with the blogs themselves, one of the amazing things is the power of blogs as a network, referring to each other, with blog entries and comments forming a mesh—well, a web, actually—of comment, criticism, and encouragement. (Even a criticism can serve as a form of encouragement, inspiring a blogger to answer a complaint or to post a better entry next time.)

Another powerful feature of blogs in general, and WordPress blogs in particular, is the strong community that's formed around them. That's partly because of the popularity of WordPress blogs and partly because of the open source nature of WordPress software. The WordPress community seamlessly intermixes reaction to blog postings with advice and help on

technical aspects of running a blog. It's often hard to tell where one ends and the other begins, but that's part of the fun.

Why This Book?

This book is, of course, *WordPress In Depth*, and the *In Depth* part means something.

There are a few things that any book about WordPress should seek to do. It should seek to explain the different forms of WordPress—primarily the two versions called WordPress.com, a kind of sandbox for easy blogging, and WordPress.org, in which you more or less assemble your own sandbox and then blog in it.

A book about WordPress should show you how to use either version to get up and running with your blog as quickly as possible. And, for WordPress.org users, it should show you how to install your blog software quickly and easily.

An *In Depth* book, though, does even more. So, we show you how to create your own themes and plug-ins in WordPress.org—and how to use upgrades in WordPress.com to get some of the power of WordPress.org for only a small amount of money per month.

WordPress is a framework as well as a tool. It allows you to take advantage of graphics, video, audio, HTML, CSS, PHP, and more. (Don't worry if you don't know what all of this means; we explain it as we go along.) We cover a great deal of this in the book you hold in your hands.

We explain your choices at each step of the way thoroughly, giving you perspective lacking from the voluminous but disorganized online resources that exist for various versions of WordPress.

Our hope is that we've provided a complete, coherent, useful resource. The WordPress universe is so vast that no one can cover all of it in one place. But our aim has been to cover the core of the two main WordPress versions and their many customization options so you can spread your wings and fly. Then, you can take advantage of other WordPress resources, such as the WordPress community, to help you catch an occasional updraft and soar even higher.

In writing this book, we sought to be concise, accurate, interesting, elegant, and (occasionally) funny. A few words on each of these goals might be appropriate here.

By concise, we have worked to keep our explanations as brief as possible—but no briefer. That is, we don't assume you know much coming in. The book tries to provide all the “salmon ladders” needed so you can swim upriver with confidence, quickly arriving at your goal.

Accurate should speak for itself, but much of the explanatory material we found about WordPress in our research for this book is sadly inaccurate. Part of the reason is that WordPress has so many versions. As it's upgraded, old information hangs around, and even updated versions don't always fully reflect current reality. And some of it is just lack of care. We tried to be careful and up-to-date to make this book accurate.

A special note about versions: This book is being written using Version 3.0.1. (Our timing is good because a lot of changes that directly affect the look and feel of WordPress have been completed in the last couple of revisions of WordPress.) The book is going to press just as Version 3.1 is being completed. We've used a very late beta version of 3.1 for some screenshots. Please excuse any minor differences that result from changes in the final version of 3.1 or additional updates after this book is published.

We also sought to make this book interesting. You, as the designer of your blog, and all the words, images, and everything else that you put into it are the main source of interest for this book, of course. However, we have tried to help by using examples and references that are up-to-date, not trivially simple, and relevant to the topic at hand.

To write elegantly is even harder than writing interestingly. Each of us, though, brings years of past experience, as well as ongoing current work, in conveying detailed and sometimes hard-to-understand information in a useful way. We hope that we've managed a turn of phrase here, a trick of organization there, that make you feel that you're in the hands of people you can trust as you seek to get the most of WordPress.

Which brings us to funny. This isn't open mic night at the improve, but we do aim to keep it light. We hope it adds a little something as you digest all the informative content herein.

In all of this, we try to reach relative beginners, intermediate users, and experts. The way in which each such audience uses the book might differ, but the goal of making this book a useful reference to each and every one of you remains. We believe we've achieved it.

How Our Book Is Organized

We've divided the book into four parts (plus a set of appendixes). Each builds on the previous ones. The first three parts can be used by both WordPress.com and WordPress.org users. Only in Part IV, "Building Your Own WordPress Installation," do we address WordPress.org users exclusively. This arrangement is intended to help users of both kinds of WordPress. WordPress.org users sometimes use WordPress.com for specific projects and often end up serving as unpaid, informal support for WordPress.com users as well.

The approach here is different from the practice in many other WordPress books and online resources, which mash WordPress.com and WordPress.org together. We believe that this just confuses people and increases the burden of informal support on the more knowledgeable users.

Don't worry if you feel like an unpaid tech support person for WordPress.com users; at some point, your students might mature and "graduate" to WordPress.org. Then you get to serve as unpaid, informal support for them in their new role as a WordPress.org users instead! This book exists, in part, to help you with just that situation.

With all that in mind, here's a brief description of each major part of the book:

Part I, "Getting Started with Your Blog," handles the naming of parts of different WordPress versions and introduces the WordPress community. We also compare WordPress with a popular alternative, Blogger, and introduce WordPress hosting options. We then describe starting your blog and introduce the rich topic of domain name options for your blog. Finally, we describe the theme, header, and widget options available to WordPress.com users. (And, in much richer form, to WordPress.org users.)

In Part II, "Running Your Blog," we go through actually running your blog—the heart of using WordPress. This is the place where you learn how to create a post with links and formatting and publish it. Then we step you through putting posts in categories and using tags. (WordPress sometimes uses the same words a bit differently than anyone else, and categories, in particular, are an

example of this.) We finish by showing you how to extend your blog with static pages and polls and how to use statistics.

Some blogging tools start running out of gas at this point, but WordPress is just getting going. Part III, “Taking Your Blog Further,” shows how you can add graphics, which requires paying some attention to issues such as copyright as well as the mechanics of actually getting the graphic into your blog post. We then go on to describe how to add audio or video to your blog whether you’re a WordPress.com user, in which case each requires the purchase of an upgrade, or a WordPress.org user, in which case you should know whether your host charges extra for the bandwidth needed to serve a popular audio, or especially, video file.

In Part IV, “Building Your Own WordPress Installation,” we take you into the WordPress features exclusive to WordPress.org. This part begins with a description of installing and upgrading the WordPress software. We then take you through choosing from existing themes and plug-ins for your blog and, finally, show you how to use CSS to build your own theme or PHP to create your own plug-ins. You don’t have to learn the languages from scratch; in fact, many excellent WordPress blogs have been built through tweaks to existing code, which you can learn through a bit of reading (ahem) and trial and error. (No, that’s not part of the “funny” we said we tried to add to the book.)

Part V, “Appendixes,” begins by taking you through using WordPress.com versus WordPress.org in so much depth that you can probably even explain it to your boss after reading these appendixes. We then describe the WordPress online documentation in some detail, as it’s a fantastic resource, but sometimes causes as much wasted time as joy.

Conventions Used in This Book

Special conventions are used throughout this book to help you get the most from the book and from WordPress.

Text Conventions

Various typefaces in this book identify terms and other special objects. These special typefaces include the following:

Type	Meaning
<i>Italic</i>	New terms or phrases when initially defined
Monospace	Information that appears in code or onscreen
Bold monospace	Information you type

All book publishers struggle with how to represent command sequences when menus and dialog boxes are involved. In this book, we separate commands using a comma. So, for example, the instruction “Choose Edit, Cut” means that you should open the Edit menu and choose Cut.

Key combinations are represented with a plus sign. For example, if the text calls for you to press Ctrl+Alt+Delete, you would press the Ctrl, Alt, and Delete keys at the same time.

Special Elements

Throughout this book, you'll find Notes, Tips, Cautions, Sidebars, and Troubleshooting Notes. Often, these special elements will help you find just the tidbit you need to get through a rough day at the office or the one whiz-bang trick that will make you the office hero. You'll also find little nuggets of wisdom, humor, and lingo that you can use to amaze your friends and family, not to mention to make you cocktail-party literate.



note

Notes point out items that you should be aware of, but you can skip them if you're in a hurry. Generally, we've added notes as a way to give you some extra information on a topic without weighing you down.



tip

We specially designed these tips to showcase the best of the best. Just because you get your work done doesn't mean you're doing it in the fastest, easiest way possible. We show you how to maximize your WordPress experience. Don't miss these tips!



caution

Pay attention to cautions! They could save you precious hours in lost or wasted work.

We Had More to Say

We use sidebars to dig a little deeper into more esoteric features, settings, or peculiarities of WordPress. Some sidebars are used to explain something in more detail when doing so in the main body text would've been intrusive or distracting. Sometimes, we just needed to get something off our chests and rant a bit. Don't skip the sidebars because you'll find nuggets of pure gold in them (if we do say so ourselves).



Something Isn't Working

Throughout the book, we describe some common symptoms of trouble and tell you how to diagnose and fix problems with WordPress. These troubleshooting notes are sure to make your life with WordPress a bit easier.

INSTALLING AND UPGRADING WORDPRESS SOFTWARE

Getting It Done for You: Hosted WordPress

You've made the decision to get WordPress running on your own website. You want access to the full power of the software and its attendant community to help you communicate with the world, or at least your little corner of it.

Previous chapters covered functionality that's common between WordPress.com and WordPress software. Starting with this chapter, we're going to help you make the most of WordPress entirely outside the cozy environment of WordPress.com. This chapter covers the two ways of setting up WordPress on your own:

- Through an external provider, such as your Internet service provider (ISP) or a web hosting company (the choice for most people)
- On your own computer

Chances are pretty good that you don't want, or need, to have the headache of operating your own web server, connected to the Internet and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You just want some space on the Web to blog when the spirit moves you. Despite the shorthand term "self-hosted WordPress," the vast majority



tip

Although this book is not about being your own web host, the upcoming section titled "Hosting WordPress Yourself" is about running WordPress on your own computer. With a 24/7 broadband connection to the Internet and appropriate security, you could be your own host.

of WordPress.org software users run their blogs on someone else's server. If you want to be brave, though, and do it yourself, WordPress is there for you.

In this section, we want to help you find a good host for your site and get WordPress up and running.

Finding a Blog-Friendly Host

When looking at possible hosts for your blog, you'll need to make several decisions ahead of time. Some of these options are covered in Chapter 2, "Starting Your Blog Right":

- Do you want to have your own domain name, and how do you plan to register that name?
- How much time are you willing to commit to installing, updating, and administering your blog?
- Are you planning to include a lot of images, or stream audio or video from your blog?
- What are you willing to pay for blog hosting?

As with most things WordPress, you've got options when considering where to host your blog:

- ISPs offer free or low-cost websites to their users.
- WordPress.org recommends a few select WordPress-friendly hosts at <http://wordpress.org/hosting>. (These hosts pay Automattic a small fee for the listing.) These hosts offer one-click WordPress installations, access to multiple databases (good for running several blogs simultaneously), and financial support to WordPress to keep the WordPress websites and support forums up and functional. Some of these hosts come pretty cheap, too.
- Some hosting companies offer a range of support options for your WordPress blog. Look for the support you need.

Shopping for a web host generally involves obtaining enough disk space, bandwidth, and support for third-party software like MySQL databases and WordPress.

The amount of disk space available at a web host is similar to the amount of disk space available on your own computer. If a web host offers 10GB of space on its hard drives with your account, when you bump up against that limit, you can't save any more there.

Fortunately, simple text-based blogs have files measured in kilobytes (KB), and you could have many hundreds of posts before you even come close to hitting a 1GB space limit. Add a small image to each post, or the occasional video clip, and an allocation of 3GB or more should last you through your first hosting contract.

note

Choose your domain name before shopping for a web host. See "Playing the Domain Name Game" in Chapter 2 and "Getting a Good Domain Name" in Chapter 10, "Adding Upgrades, Audio, and Video," for tips on finding and registering your domain.

tip

Before you sign a hosting contract, make sure you understand what your host does when you begin to get close to your space limit. You should hear from the host when you hit 80% of your allotted space, or thereabouts. The good news is that, should you underestimate your space needs, your host should be able to upgrade your space for an additional, but reasonable and proportional, fee. Be sure to shop around because some hosts are better known for honoring their promises than others.

Bandwidth is the size of the pipe that brings data to and from your site. Your bandwidth use depends on two things: the size of your files and the popularity of your site. If you use your blog to keep 10 invited guests current on your daily life via text-mostly postings, bandwidth limitations are essentially meaningless to you. If you are a pop music star hosting a daily hour-long video blog designed to keep your millions of fans current on your daily life, you should get the biggest pipe available.

Web hosting companies generally give you a monthly bandwidth limit in the 25GB–75GB range. This is plenty for a standard website with a WordPress blog. Some hosts offer unlimited bandwidth, but you should ask them how they handle major traffic spikes and search the Web for customer complaints. (You don't want the best day for your blog traffic to be the worst day for your bank account!)

While shopping, make sure the host supports the minimum requirements to install WordPress (more about why you need this in the next section):

- PHP version 4.3 (or later)
- MySQL version 4.0 (or later)

You'd be hard pressed to find a host that doesn't support these minimums. Run away quickly if it doesn't! This means that host probably doesn't keep other software tools updated either.

Some hosts make it one-click easy to install and run WordPress on their systems, and others let you get as hands-on and customized with your installation as you want. At the very least, the hosts should have a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page and basic information on how to install WordPress on your site. Better hosts allow you to use more than one MySQL database for multiple blogs, provide help installing plug-ins, and provide help with WordPress software updates (or handle updates themselves).

Ask as many questions of would-be hosts as you need to make a good decision. Answers should be on their site or a prompt email response away. If you send an email to a potential web host and don't hear back within 24 hours, you shouldn't do business with that host.

When you have selected your web host and reserved your space on the Web, you can install WordPress on your site.

Why PHP and MySQL?

In this chapter, you will see quite a few references to PHP and MySQL, and you may wonder what the references are here for. MySQL is a free relational database management system that stores and manages all the content of your blog. It is an essential prerequisite for installing WordPress. PHP is a programming language for the Web. After you've installed WordPress, a look into the installation directory will uncover a lot of files with the `.php` extension because this is the language in which WordPress is written.



To the rejoicing of many, WordPress will change its minimum requirement for Personal Home Page (PHP) with WordPress v3.2, planned for release at the end of June 2011. Starting with the 3.2 version, your host must support PHP v5.2.4 or higher and MySQL 5.0.15 or higher. See Chapter 16, “PHP Basics: Themes and Plug-Ins,” for details.

PHP is the result of another lazy programmer's effort to simplify his life. Back in 1994, Rasmus Lerdorf wanted to eliminate some of the drudgery associated with updating his personal web page. Lerdorf wrote some Perl scripts to generate HTML tags based on some C code. In June 1995, he announced the existence of the PHP tools, version 1.0, in a Usenet CGI newsgroup. Those tools have since evolved into a full-fledged scripting language (now officially called PHP: Hypertext Processor). PHP has a powerful engine, called Zend, and a large community of developers hacking the code. You can read more about the history of PHP at <http://php.net/history>.

The PHP home page at www.php.net defines PHP as “a widely used general-purpose scripting language that is especially suited for Web development and can be embedded into HTML. Much of its syntax is borrowed from C, Java, and Perl with a couple of unique PHP-specific features thrown in.” It is open source, so anyone can contribute to its development, and it works from the web server to deliver pages. As you'll see later in the chapter, PHP often pulls data out of relational database management systems such as MySQL and PostgreSQL to display web pages that look no different from pages coded in standard HTML.

The core WordPress software is written in PHP. Themes consist of PHP templates and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) styles. Plugins can be written in PHP exclusively, or can include code from other languages (such as JavaScript), but need to be able to hook into WordPress to provide the necessary functionality. That is done using PHP as well.

Every bit of content in your blog—posts, sidebars, stylesheets, comments, graphics, Dashboard, and all the rest—is stored in the MySQL database you set up during your installation. (In a hosted blog, WordPress.com sets up the database for you when you launched your hosted blog—and never gives you direct access to that selfsame database). What happens when your site has a visitor? In a matter of seconds, all this goes on, as shown in Figure 11.1:

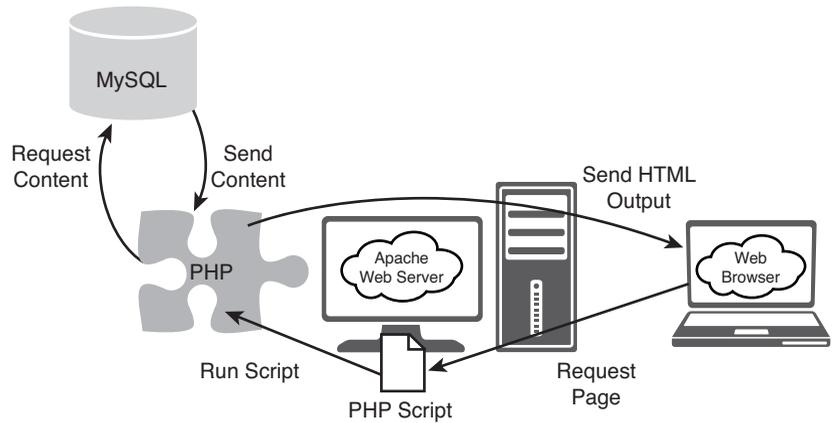
1. A visitor's web browser calls on a page from your site.
2. The web server sees a PHP script on the requested page and fires up its PHP interpreter (`mod_php5` in Apache) to execute the code.
3. Some of those PHP commands allow the script to connect to the MySQL database as the WordPress user and ask the database for the content that belongs on the page.
4. The MySQL database retrieves the requested content and sends it back to the PHP script (more precisely, to the page it's on).
5. The script, in turn, pours all of this content into a few variables.
6. The script then echoes the content from the variables for display on the page.
7. The script combines the database content with any plain HTML included on the requested page and hands it back to the web server.
8. The web server sends the HTML page back to the browser.
9. The visitor (ideally) becomes enlightened, entertained, enthralled, or some combination thereof. He tells you so on the comments page, beginning the process over again.



There is no shortage of books to help you learn PHP and MySQL together. *Sams Teach Yourself PHP, MySQL and Apache All in One* by Julie C. Meloni will get you off to a great start.

Figure 11.1

How PHP and MySQL work together to make a web page.



Why store your content in a database when it's just text? Isn't it just easier to have this material surrounded with some variant of HTML or XML tags? When you think about a blog as a moving target, a combination of static and dynamic elements, the answer becomes apparent rather quickly. Maintaining a blog full of static posts quickly becomes a logistical nightmare.

Coming up with enough blog content to keep people visiting can be hard enough without having to continually think about how many posts should be on the front page, making individual permalinks for each of your posts, and all the comments people make on them. This is a job ripe for automation, and the best way to automate content delivery is by keeping your data in one easily accessed place. That's what WordPress does for you.

Using FTP to Upload Files

The last piece of the preinstallation puzzle is a means to upload files from your computer to your host. Do this with a program that uses the Internet standard File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Some of the best FTP clients are available free of charge:

- **FileZilla**—Runs on Windows, Linux, and Macintosh; <http://filezilla-project.org>
- **CyberDuck**—Macintosh-only; <http://cyberduck.ch>
- **CoreFTP**—Windows-only; www.coreftp.com

For the purposes of this section, we focus on FileZilla, which is a simple FTP client application that connects to your web host and uploads your WordPress files with just a few setup steps. When you signed up with your host, most likely you received information about uploading files to the host's FTP server. Given its cross-platform character and its lack of cost, you might even find that your host has step-by-step instructions for setting up FTP with FileZilla—the host of one of the authors' (McCallister) did!

note

You can even run a basic FTP client from your Windows or Linux command line.

After downloading and installing FileZilla, follow these steps to set up file transfer between your computer and your web host:

1. Launch FileZilla.
2. Go to File, Site Manager (or click the first icon on the left in the toolbar). A dialog box appears.
3. Click New Site to enter your information, as in Figure 11.2.

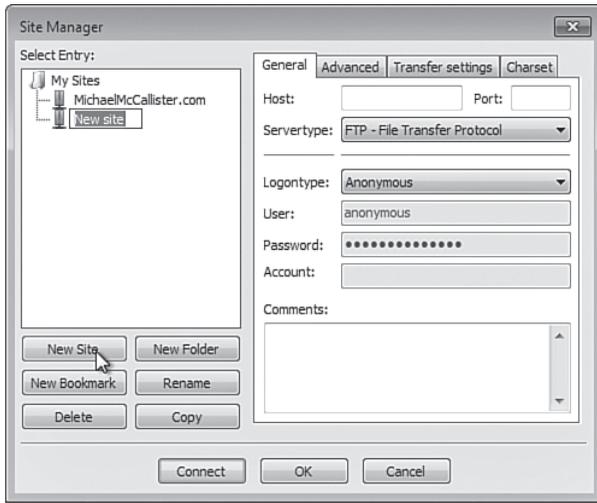


Figure 11.2

Use the General tab on the Site Manager dialog to set up an FTP connection to a web host.

4. Insert the connection information you received from your host. This includes the following:
 - **Host**—This is usually the same as your domain name, with ftp in front, for example, ftp.myWPblog.com.
 - **Server Type**—This should always be FTP.
 - **Logon Type**—For your website, this should usually be set to Normal. You use anonymous FTP when you visit a software download site, where the keepers don't really care who you are. The Normal setting requires a password to get to.
 - **User**—Your host should give you a username to access your files. Type this here.
 - **Password**—This is the place where you supply your password. It is usually identical to your site password.

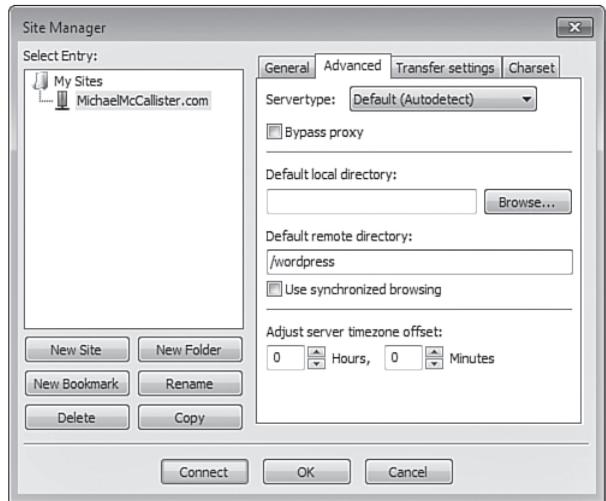
Your host might have you fill in the Account line, and you can add information in the Comments section.

5. Click the Transfer Settings tab. Then select the Passive button. In Passive mode, the client sets up all the data flow. This is more secure, especially if your firewall stops any data trying to pass through it from outside the network.

6. Click the Advanced tab (see Figure 11.3). Your host might want you to set a Default Remote Directory. This is the directory at the host server that appears when you log in. If you don't set this option, you will likely enter a directory with your username at login time. You could set up a WordPress directory as the default, too. Similarly, you might want to set your local WordPress directory as the default local directory.

Figure 11.3

The Advanced tab in the FileZilla Site Manager dialog lets you define default directories for both your local computer and your blog's host.



7. Click Connect at the bottom of the screen. If your settings are entered correctly, you should now be connected to your host server, and you can upload files by dragging them on the screen from the source folder to the destination folder. (When you're ready to disconnect from the server, press Ctrl+D.)

When you have downloaded the latest WordPress files (see the next section), all you need to do is point the Local Site section of FileZilla to the location of the WordPress files on your own computer. Connect to your host (Remote Site) on the right side and navigate to the directory where you want to store WordPress. Figure 11.4 shows how FileZilla looks with both sides set up. If you're ready to transfer all the WordPress files, press Ctrl+A to select them; then drag them over to the right side to begin the transfer.

Preparing for the Five-Minute Hosted WordPress Installation

You are standing at the precipice of installing WordPress. You have your domain name registered, a host selected and paid for, and a way to download and upload files.

In this section, we'll cover the steps you need to set up your MySQL database and prepare your site for WordPress. While some hosts offer "one-click WordPress installation" features, you lose some control and flexibility with that ease of use. If you want to fully manage your site, we'll show you how.

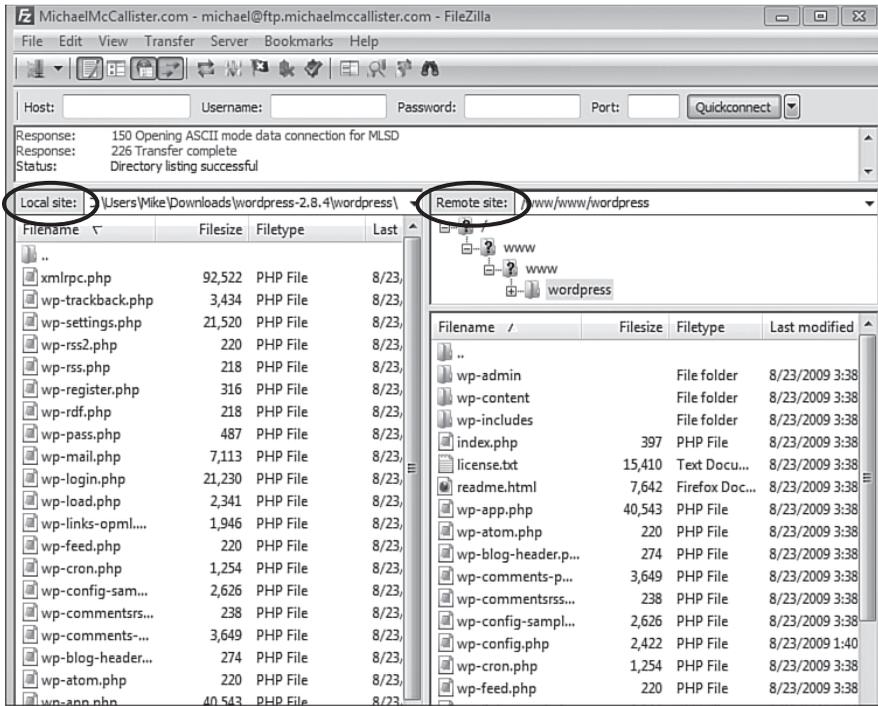


Figure 11.4
FileZilla makes transferring files to your web host a matter of drag and drop.

First, we'll walk through a manual setup with the ICDSOft Control Panel, a homegrown host manager. We'll also show you how using some of the more popular site management tools, CPanel and Plesk, can simplify the task. Although there are a variety of applications that manage user accounts for hosting companies, the basic tasks are the same.

One More Decision: Will WordPress Manage Your Whole Site or Just the Blog?

There's one more decision to be made before you set up your host for running WordPress: whether to have WordPress manage your entire website, just the blogging part, or a specific subset of pages on your site. Your decision affects where WordPress should be installed.

WordPress can act as a complete web content management system (CMS), handling all elements of your website, but setting that up is outside the scope of this book. See Appendix C, "Examples of WordPress Blogs," for some sites that take WordPress beyond simply managing blogs.

note

If you just plan to use your domain for your blog, WordPress can obviously do that, and you should install WordPress into the root directory of your hosting space. If you're planning to have a blog and some more static, standard pages, WordPress can manage that too, with the use of the Pages feature. In this case, install WordPress in the root directory as well. If you want WordPress to manage the blog pages only on your website, you should install WordPress into a subdirectory.

Setting Up MySQL with a Generic Hosting Tool

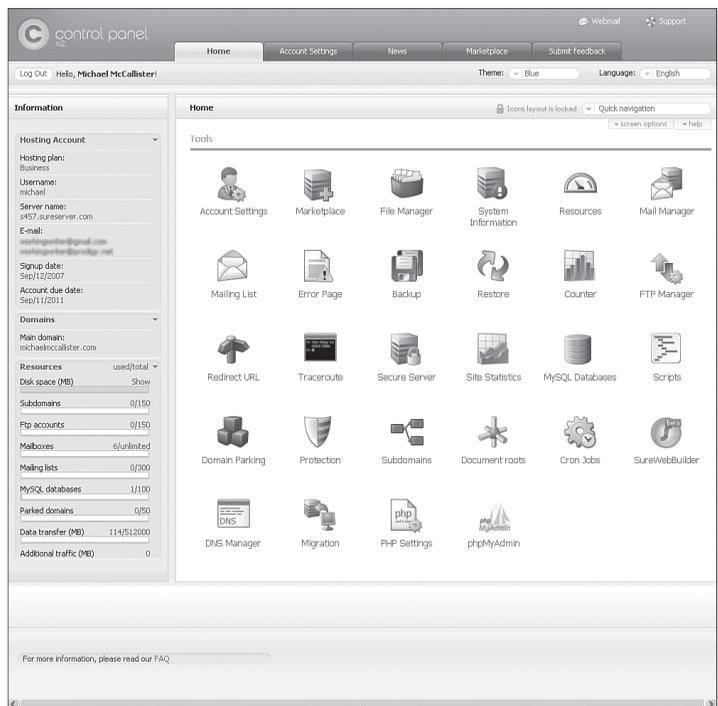
Hosting companies can use a variety of interfaces to allow you to manage your site's files, monitor traffic to your website, and access other features of your hosting account. MichaelMcCallister.com runs at ICDSOFT, a host with their own Control Panel tool (Figure 11.5). Your host will have a page that might look a bit different, but should have a way to connect to and configure a MySQL database using commands similar to the ones listed here. That process might even allow you to skip some of these steps. Consult with your web host if you have trouble setting this up. We describe this process in excruciating detail, so you don't miss a thing.

Follow these steps:

1. Get the latest copy of WordPress at <http://wordpress.org/download>.
2. Open a browser and log in to your account. When you set up your account, you should receive a username and password to access this page. Your Control Panel appears as shown in Figure 11.5.

Figure 11.5

The ICDSOFT Control Panel shows the tools you need to manage your website.



The number of icons may be overwhelming at first (again, depending on the options your host offers), but chances are good you will be working with just a few to manage your WordPress site: MySQL Databases (for the installation), File Manager, phpMyAdmin, and PHP Settings.

3. Locate MySQL Databases tool. You will see some information about your database connection settings (see Figure 11.6). You will create the database here because it's likely your account limits the number of databases you can have.
4. Scroll to Create New Database.
5. Name your database in the Database Name field. Technically, you can give this database any name you want, and your host may have some rules on prefixes for your databases. See the next Tip near Step 7 for some advice on database naming. Click Create to confirm the name of the database.

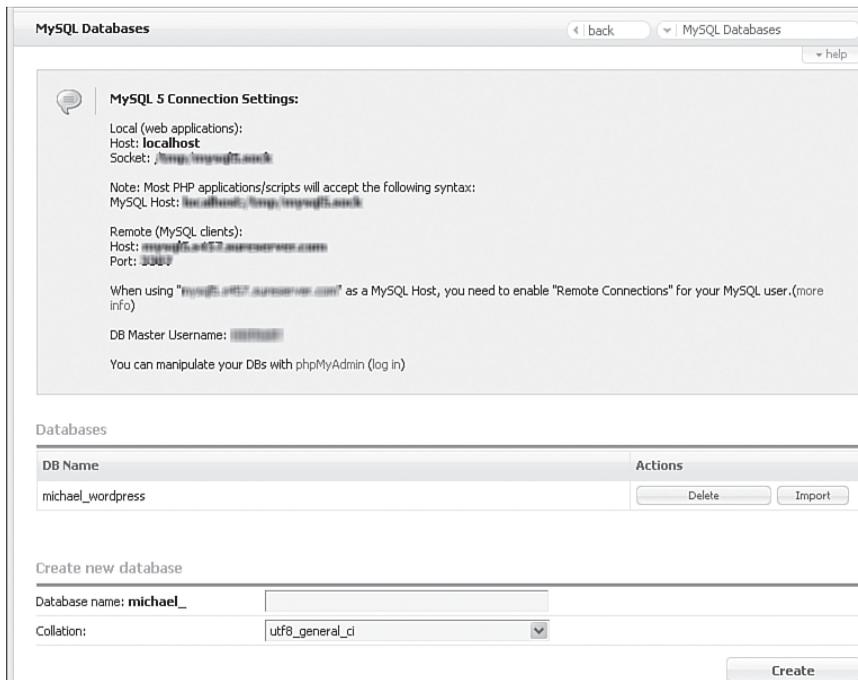


Figure 11.6
Create your database
in your web hosting
account.

6. WordPress needs a way to access this database, and this is done by creating a user. Scroll down to the MySQL Users section and add a user for this database. Give the user a name and password. The Privileges area should have everything selected. Click Add to confirm. This page should look something like Figure 11.7. Write down this essential information. You'll need it for the installation:

- Database name
- Database username (MySQL User in Figure 11.7)
- The database user's password
- The database host

Figure 11.7
Add a user to your database that will manage WordPress database items.

DB Name	MySQL User	Privileges	Remote Connections	Actions
michael_wordpress	michael	Master user	Enable remote	
michael_wordpress	mikemc	Create, Alter SP, Execute SP, Update, Delete, Show View, Lock, Create View, Drop, Create SP, Select, Alter, Insert	Enable remote	Delete

Create new MySQL user

User michael has 2 of 500 maximum allowed MySQL users

Database name: michael_wordpress

MySQL User:

Password:

Confirm Password:

Privileges:

Select All

Deselect All

Select

Insert

Update

Delete

Create

Alter

Lock

Drop

Create View

Show View

Alter SP

Create SP

Execute SP

Trigger

Add

7. Check the navigation in your host's administrative area and return to your main control panel (sometimes called Home). Locate the File Manager. Finalize your decision on how much of your website you want WordPress to manage. If you plan to have WordPress manage your entire website (or your website just consists of your blog), go to the root directory of your remote site, locate and rename your existing `index.html` file to `index.old` or `index.backup` so you don't lose either your existing home page or the default (in case you someday decide to return to a more static presentation).
8. If you want WordPress to manage your entire website, upload WordPress into the default folder, also called the root directory. If you prefer that WordPress just manage the blog portion of your site, create a subdirectory called `/blog` or `/WordPress` or some other name. Then you can direct your blog readers to visit the subdirectory `http://<yourdomainname>/blog` (or whatever). For the purposes of this example, we'll use the `/blog` directory.
9. Open your FTP client and upload the WordPress files. You can either upload the Zip archive and extract it into your preferred folder or extract the archive into a folder on your hard drive and upload the entire structure. What works best depends on your host.

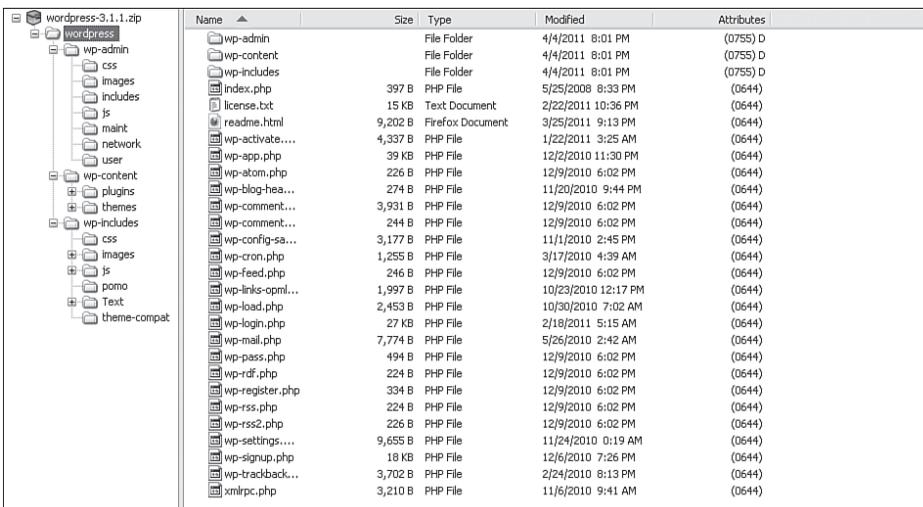


tip

There are two ways to approach database and user naming. The most secure method is to give your databases names, usernames, and passwords that won't simplify some evil hacker's task of vandalizing your blog. The downside of that is that maybe you can't remember which database is which on those rare occasions when you want to change a configuration setting in the database. In any case, be sure to select a secure password for your database user. Meanwhile, if you're looking to vandalize the blog shown here as an example, don't bother. The user has been changed.

What's in the WordPress Archive? WordPress stores all its required files in a Zip archive, a structured set of files compressed for easy download. These files include mainly PHP script files, but also have plain HTML pages, CSS, JavaScripts, images, and even text files.

When you extract the files with a Zip utility like PKZIP, it matters where you put them. Figure 11.8 shows you the folder structure of a WordPress installation. When you extract to the root directory, you create a /wordpress folder that contains the index.php template file that generates your front page. You'll learn more about template files in Chapter 16. If the /wordpress/index.php file exists in a subfolder, you can create a different front page for your site, with WordPress managing just one area of your site. The decision is yours.



Name	Size	Type	Modified	Attributes
wp-admin		File Folder	4/4/2011 8:01 PM	(0755) D
wp-content		File Folder	4/4/2011 8:01 PM	(0755) D
wp-includes		File Folder	4/4/2011 8:01 PM	(0755) D
index.php		PHP File	5/25/2008 8:33 PM	(0644)
license.txt	397 B	Text Document	2/22/2011 10:36 PM	(0644)
readme.html	15 KB	Firefox Document	3/25/2011 9:13 PM	(0644)
wp-activate.php	4,337 B	PHP File	1/22/2011 3:25 AM	(0644)
wp-app.php	39 KB	PHP File	12/2/2010 11:30 PM	(0644)
wp-atom.php	226 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-blog-head.php	274 B	PHP File	11/20/2010 9:44 PM	(0644)
wp-comment.php	3,931 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-comments.php	244 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-config-sample.php	3,177 B	PHP File	11/17/2010 2:45 PM	(0644)
wp-cron.php	1,255 B	PHP File	3/17/2010 4:39 AM	(0644)
wp-feed.php	246 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-links-opml.php	1,997 B	PHP File	10/23/2010 12:17 PM	(0644)
wp-load.php	2,453 B	PHP File	10/30/2010 7:02 AM	(0644)
wp-login.php	27 KB	PHP File	2/18/2011 5:15 AM	(0644)
wp-mail.php	7,774 B	PHP File	5/26/2010 2:42 AM	(0644)
wp-pass.php	494 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-rdf.php	224 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-register.php	334 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-rss.php	224 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-rss2.php	226 B	PHP File	12/9/2010 6:02 PM	(0644)
wp-settings.php	9,655 B	PHP File	11/24/2010 0:19 AM	(0644)
wp-signup.php	18 KB	PHP File	12/6/2010 7:26 PM	(0644)
wp-trackback.php	3,702 B	PHP File	2/24/2010 8:13 PM	(0644)
xmlrpc.php	3,210 B	PHP File	11/6/2010 9:41 AM	(0644)

Figure 11.8 Files in the WordPress installation archive are structured in folders.

Wherever you extract the WordPress archive, the guts of your installation are the three main subfolders that create and maintain your WordPress website:

- wp-admin creates the WordPress administration page, also called the Dashboard.
- wp-content holds everything you create and use for your site: themes, plug-ins, and posts. Back this folder up regularly!
- wp-includes has all the PHP and JavaScript code that automates all the stuff you'd otherwise have to do by hand.

As a regular user of WordPress, you won't have a lot of direct contact with individual files in the WordPress installation, but it's good to know a little bit about how WordPress is organized, in case something goes wrong and a file goes missing.

Get Permission First!

Many, if not most, host companies employ Linux or UNIX as the operating system for their servers. As a measure of security, these systems employ a set of permissions allowing groups of users to access files. Each file has an owner and is assigned a group when it is created. Read, Write, and eXecute permissions are set for three types of users: Owner, Group, and Others (that is, the rest of the world).

Your FTP client should display the permissions on the remote system either as a string of permissions like this: `rw-rw-rw-` or as octal (base 8) numbers like this: `776`. In the case of this example, the Owner and Users have full Read, Write, and eXecute permissions to a file (shown as 7 for the Owner and 7 for the users). Others can read and write, but cannot execute (shown as 6).

Be sure that your FTP client got the permissions correct when it uploaded your files. These permissions tell WordPress who gets access to its files. Generally speaking, your content and theme files should be listed as `rw-rwr--` (or `664`), your plug-ins folder should be listed as `rw-rw-r--` (`764`), and the admin and includes folders should be set as `rw-r--r--` (`744`).

Your FTP client should allow you to change permissions for any file or group of files. To change them, select the file(s), right-click in the highlighted area, select Properties, and then make the changes.

Setting Up MySQL with cPanel

One of the most popular web administration applications is called cPanel. It offers a wizard to create your MySQL database. In the Database section, click the MySQL Database Wizard button and follow these steps:

1. In the Create a Database page, type the name of your database (see Step 5 in the previous section for tips). Click Next Step.
2. In the Create Database Users page, add the username as in Step 6 in the previous section. The wizard limits passwords to seven characters, and offers a strength indicator for the password you enter. Make sure you use a very strong password. In this case, don't use the automatic password generator. You need to know what the password is, so WordPress can connect to the database. Because the Password field displays only dots, this can be a problem. Click Create User.
3. In the Add User to the Database page, check the All Privileges box.
4. The Complete the Task page appears, noting that your user was added to your database. Click Return to Home.

Setting Up MySQL with Plesk

This setup is very similar to setting up MySQL with cPanel, with slightly different icons.

1. On the main administration page, look for the Domains section. Click your Domain Name.
2. Click the Databases icon.

3. Under Tools, click Add New Database.
4. Type the name of your database (see step 5 in the previous section, “Setting Up MySQL with a Generic Hosting Tool”). Use the Type scrolling box to identify MySQL. Click OK.
5. In the Users for Database section, click Add New Database User.
6. Add the username as in step 6 in the previous section “Setting Up MySQL with a Generic Hosting Tool.” Click OK. Plesk gives this user All Privileges by default.

Your website’s host is now prepared to receive data from WordPress. You have a database to hold your blog’s content, along with all the design elements of your blog pages. It’s time to begin the Famous Five-Minute Install.

The Five-Minute Hosted WordPress Installation

Now you’re almost there. You have uploaded the files to the correct directory, and you have set up your database. Let’s do the famous five-minute WordPress installation!

1. Go to <http://<yourdomainname>/blog>. If you did everything correctly in the previous set of steps, you should see a mostly empty screen with a Create a Configuration File button (see Figure 11.9). Click it.
2. Some more introductory language appears, with a Let’s Go! button. Click that button.

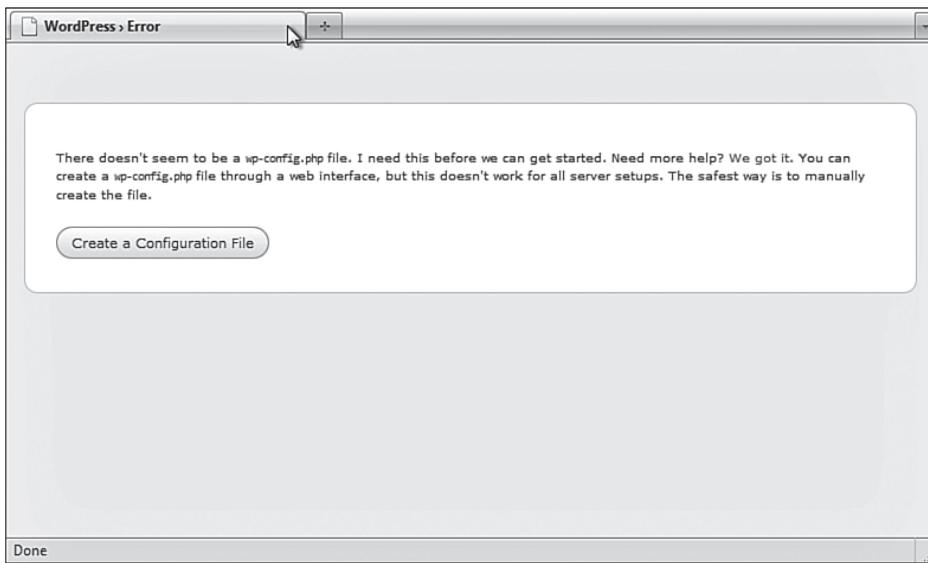


Figure 11.9
Begin the Five-Minute Install here.

3. Enter the information we advised you to write down in step 6 of the previous section (see Figure 11.10):

- Database name
- Database username
- The database user's password
- The database host (Usually, you don't have to change this from localhost, but your hosting company might ask you to change this.)
- Table Prefix (Your hosting company might ask you to change the Table Prefix from the default wp_. Some security experts also recommend changing this to prevent evildoers from accessing the database.)

**tip**

When you are filling out this form on the Web, you are actually editing the WordPress configuration file, `wp-config.php`. If you prefer to do this directly, or just want more information about setting up WordPress, see “Editing the WordPress Configuration File,” later in this chapter.

Figure 11.10
Enter your database connection information on this screen.

WordPress Setup Configuration File

WORDPRESS

Below you should enter your database connection details. If you're not sure about these, contact your host.

Database Name	<input type="text" value="wordpress"/>	The name of the database you want to run WP in.
User Name	<input type="text" value="username"/>	Your MySQL username
Password	<input type="text" value="password"/>	...and MySQL password.
Database Host	<input type="text" value="localhost"/>	99% chance you won't need to change this value.
Table Prefix	<input type="text" value="wp_"/>	If you want to run multiple WordPress installations in a single database, change this.

Submit

Done

4. Click the Submit button. If all has gone well, you'll see a screen that looks like Figure 11.11.



Figure 11.11
All right, Sparky!
You configured the
database properly!



Troubleshooting Database Connection Errors

If all has not gone well, you will get an error message. Most often it will complain about an “Error establishing a database connection.” If this happens, make sure that you entered the right information about your database. Remember these details about your database:

- The database name should be spelled exactly the same in the WordPress Installation Wizard as it is in phpMyAdmin (or another database administration tool you might be using). Spelling counts everywhere else, too!
- The database username should be different from the username you use to log in to your hosting account.
- The database password is case sensitive.
- Make sure that the database host information is correct and follows the rules of your web host.

Get all of these items right, and you’ll be all right.

5. Click the Run the Install button.
6. Fill in the items on this screen (see Figure 11.12). We covered the relevant points related to this in Chapter 2:
 - Name your site.
 - Choose a username for your administrative user. This user differs from the WordPress database user you created in the previous section in that you will be logging in to this account on a regular basis to administer your WordPress settings. In the past, WordPress created a user called Admin and automatically generated a password. You would then be asked to change that password after your first login. Because that made one-half of the site-hacking break-in job much easier (that is, you have the Admin username; all you need now is the password to

8. Click the Login button. The standard WordPress login screen appears (see Figure 11.13).



Figure 11.13
Log in for the first time as the administrative user.

9. Type in **admin** for the username and the generated password from step 7. Leave the Remember Me box unchecked. The admin account should be used only when you have specific administrative changes to make to your blog. You'll create a separate user account for your everyday blogging needs in a few minutes. Click the Log In button.
10. Your administrative Dashboard appears (see Figure 11.14). You can learn more about the Dashboard (also known as the administrative page) in Chapter 12, "Taking Control of Your WordPress Site."

The installation is complete. Congratulations!

Adding a User to Your Site

You now have everything in place to start using your WordPress site. For an added measure of security, you should create an ordinary, non-administrative user who will handle the blogging/content creation tasks. Because WordPress identifies the author of every post right on the page, you want the "public face" of the site to be a user who lacks administrative privileges. You don't want the bad guys to know who the admin is.

We covered the various user roles in Chapter 7, "Adding Features to Your Blog." The process for adding and working with users is very similar in WordPress.org and WordPress.com.

1. From the Administration page, go to Users, Add New.
2. Fill out the form (Figure 11.15) with a different username from your administrative user, password, and email address. Include a first and last name if you want.

note

For a lengthier explanation of why you shouldn't post with your administrative user account, and some tips in fixing posts that already exist, see <http://esdev.net/wordpress-security-tip-dont-post-from-your-admin-account/>.

Figure 11.14

When your installation is complete, your Dashboard appears.

The screenshot shows the WordPress Dashboard for a user named 'Howard, mkeinc_A'. The dashboard is divided into several sections:

- Right Now:** A summary of site statistics: 1 Post, 1 Comment, 1 Page, 1 Approved, 1 Category, 1 Pending, 0 Tags, 0 Spam.
- QuickPress:** A form for quickly adding a new post with fields for Title, Content, and Tags.
- Recent Comments:** A list of recent comments, with one from 'Mr WordPress' on 'Hello world #1'.
- Incoming Links:** A widget for Google Blog Search showing no incoming links.
- Plugins:** A section for installed plugins, including 'outSTATS Widget', 'WP Mailcat', and 'WP-Market'.
- Recently Updated:** A section for recently updated plugins, including 'PCChat Widget'.
- WordPress Blog:** A section for news and updates, including 'WordPress 3.0.3' and 'WordPress 3.0.2'.
- Other WordPress News:** A section for various news items, including 'WordPress Theme Releases for 12/12' and 'WordPress Plugin Releases for 12/10'.

Figure 11.15

Add a new user with Editor privileges to write posts.

The screenshot shows the 'Add New User' form in the WordPress Dashboard. The form is titled 'Add New User' and includes the following fields:

- Username (required):** text
- E-mail (required):** tust@michaelmccalister.com
- First Name:** (empty)
- Last Name:** (empty)
- Website:** (empty)
- Password (new, required):** (masked with asterisks)
- Send Password?** (checkbox, unchecked)
- Role:** Editor (selected)

At the bottom of the form, there is a note: "Note: The password should be at least seven characters long. To make it stronger, use upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols like ! * ? % ^ & #." There is also a checkbox for "Send this password to the new user by email." and an "Add User" button.

3. We recommend clearing the Send Password check box. Instead, write down the password you selected or store it in an encrypted file or in a password management application.
4. Select Editor from the Role pull-down menu.
5. Click the Add User button.
6. The user's name and other information are added to the Users area.

While you're thinking about users and security, this might be a good time to visit the General Settings page. This is the place where you set the Default User Role. By default, this role is set to Subscriber, which is a very good thing for a public-facing blog that accepts comments. Although you can (and should) require visitors to register on your site before they comment, be aware that spammers and their bots are capable of registering and they will. If the default is set to anything other than Subscriber, you may well be seeing posts advertising various "body part enhancing" products appearing on your site (or in your editing inbox). Make sure this default doesn't change.

Upgrading WordPress

Prior to version 2.7, keeping your WordPress software up-to-date and as secure as possible involved deleting some program files, downloading the new version, uploading the entire new version to your host, and running the installation program again. Now, with the Updates page at the top of the left sidebar of the Administration page, it's a bit easier.

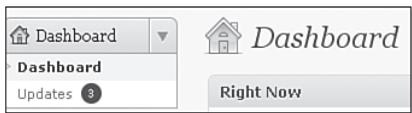


Figure 11.16
Always look for Updates when you log in to WordPress.

Before clicking that Update button, though, it's still a good idea to follow all these steps:

1. Back up your database. This is often done in your host control panel or in your database manager. Instructions for this procedure should be provided by your hosting company. The WordPress Database Backup plug-in simplifies this process greatly, however. You'll learn more about this plug-in in Chapter 14, "The WordPress Toolkit: Plug-Ins."
2. Back up your WordPress files. To do this, download a copy of the wp-content folder back to your computer. This folder contains all the most important material of your blog: posts, comments, themes, and plug-ins. You can also use the Export tool to make this backup. See the next section, "Transferring Your WordPress.com Blog," to learn about this tool.
3. Turn off any installed plug-ins. Sometimes plug-ins stop working after an update. Sometimes active plug-ins can break the update itself. Before starting the update, go to the Plug-Ins page of your Dashboard and check for Active Plug-Ins. Under Bulk Actions, choose Deactivate. Click Apply.



Be sure to back up your wp-content folder on a regular and consistent basis. How often you should do this depends mostly on how often you post and how paranoid you are about losing material. Weekly postings should be backed up monthly. Back up daily postings at least once a week. If you are posting your lifestream, and dozens of posts appear daily, then you may want to consider a daily backup.

See Chapter 13, “The WordPress Toolkit: Themes and Security,” for more information on backing up your WordPress data.

Now you can click the Update WordPress link and select Upgrade Automatically. In next to no time, WordPress will update itself and tell you when the upgrade is complete.

After logging in again, you can reactivate any plug-ins you want. Go back to the Plug-Ins page and click Recently Active Plug-Ins to see the list of plug-ins you just turned off to complete the upgrade. Click the box at the top of the Plug-In column to select all the recently active plug-ins; then, click the Bulk Actions pull-down menu and select Activate.

Transferring Your WordPress.com Blog

If you're a longtime WordPress.com user making the move to WordPress software on a hosted domain, you may be wondering what will become of those hundreds of blog posts sitting at WordPress.com. The short answer is that those posts can follow you to your new home. This process is startlingly easy, even knowing how simple WordPress makes blogging.

We've just covered the process of updating and upgrading the WordPress software on your host. The process for migrating a WordPress.com blog (or, for that matter, a WordPress blog from one hosting company to another) is similar.

1. Start at WordPress.com. Log in to your blog so that the Dashboard appears.
2. Under the Tools menu, near the very bottom of the left side Settings options, select Export. The Export page shown in Figure 11.17 appears.

WordPress explains a little bit about what it will do when you click the Download Export File button. Essentially, this export file turns your existing HTML content (posts, pages, comments, custom fields, categories, and tags) into a single XML file, which the WordPress.org software uses to transform everything back into perfectly good WordPress content at the other end.

3. You have many options to choose from when exporting your site.
 - **Start and End Dates**—With a longstanding blog, perhaps you do not want all 10,000 posts dating back to the dawn of time (or at least the dawn of WordPress.com). Or perhaps you only want to preserve the first year of posts to remind you (and your readers) of how much your writing has improved. The pull-down menus include every month you have posted.
 - **Restrict Author**—If you have multiple authors for your blog now and are going solo (or some of your coauthors are not migrating with you to the new digs), use the Restrict Author drop-down menu to identify who to exclude from the export.

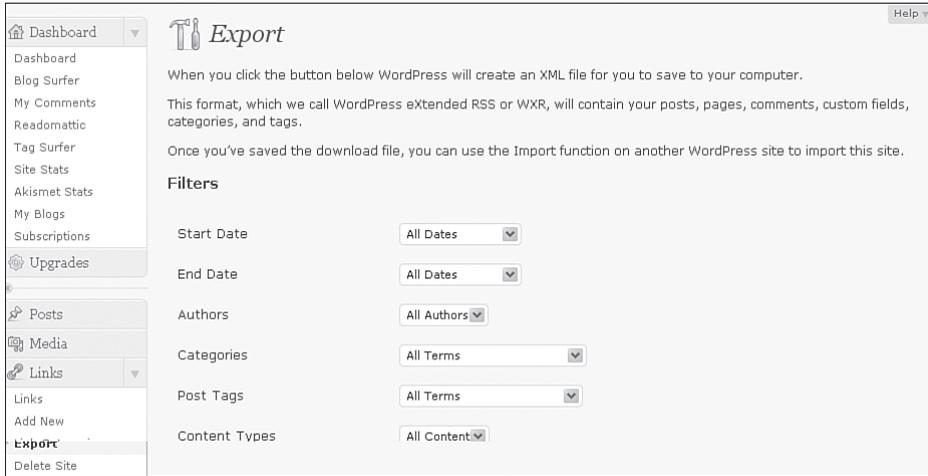


Figure 11.17 WordPress explains what's included in the export file.

- **Categories**—This pull-down menu does not let you choose multiple categories, so keep this at All Terms unless you are just covering one category in the new site. (One way around this would be to create a new category called NewSite and assign posts to it before doing your export.)
 - **Post Tags**—Same as the Categories pull-down menu.
 - **Content Types**—Use this menu if you simply want to export either your Posts, Pages, or Media (images, audio, and video).
 - **Statuses**—Perhaps you just want to export the unfinished posts. This pull-down menu lets you select from Published, Scheduled, Pending, Draft, and Private status. It's unfortunate that this option also forces you to select just one option. You can, however, create multiple export files to pick up each status. Fortunately, nothing is lost when you do the export.
4. Click Download Export File. Tell your browser where to save this file. It doesn't matter where you save the file, but you may want to put it in the same folder you upload to your other site, such as the Documents\Website\WordPress\wp-admin folder, for example.
 5. Go back to the new blog and log in to your WordPress.org Dashboard.
 6. Scroll down to the Tools menu again and click Import. The Import page shown in Figure 11.18 opens.
 7. When the plug-in is “successfully installed,” click the Activate Plug-In & Run Importer link.



tip

As you can see from this list, you can import content from several blogging platforms into WordPress. Find out more in Appendix F, “Importing Content from Other Systems.”

Figure 11.18

You can import posts and other files from many other platforms to your WordPress.org blog. Click the WordPress link at the bottom of this list. WordPress will first ask you to install a plug-in to handle the import (Figure 11.19). Click **Install Now**. WordPress will download the importer plug-in.

Blogger	Import posts, comments, and users from a Blogger blog.
Blogroll	Install the blogroll importer to import links in OPML format.
Categories and Tags Converter	Install the category/tag converter to convert existing categories to tags or tags to categories, selectively.
LiveJournal	Import posts from LiveJournal using their API.
Movable Type and TypePad	Import posts and comments from a Movable Type or TypePad blog.
Posterous	Import posts, comments, tags, and attachments from a Posterous.com blog.
RSS	Import posts from an RSS feed.
TextPattern	Import categories, users, posts, comments, and links from a TextPattern blog.
Vox	Import posts, comments, tags, and attachments from a Vox.com blog.
WordPress	Import posts, pages, comments, custom fields, categories, and tags from a WordPress export file.

If the importer you need is not listed, [search the plugins directory](#) to see if an importer is available.

Figure 11.19

Install the WordPress.com importer plug-in before bringing your posts and other files to your new site.

Install importer

Description Installation Changelog Faq Other Notes

Description

The WordPress Importer will import the following content from a WordPress export file:

- Posts, pages and other custom post types
- Comments
- Custom fields and post meta
- Categories, tags and terms from custom taxonomies
- Authors

For further information and instructions please see the [Codex page on Importing Content](#)

Install Now

FYI

Version: 0.4
Author: [wordpressdotorg](#)
Last Updated: 55 days ago
Requires WordPress Version: 3.0 or higher
Compatible up to: 3.1.1
Downloaded: 771,306 times
[WordPress.org Plugin Page >](#)
[Plugin Homepage >](#)

Average Rating
 ☆☆☆☆☆
 (based on 69 ratings)

8. The Import WordPress page will appear. Use the Browse button to locate the Export file (with a *.wxr extension) on your system. Click to select it.
9. Click the Upload File and Import button, and WordPress does the rest.

WordPress reloads the page and confirms that all your materials have been imported. You should now see that material in your Dashboard and in your blog.



Troubleshooting Uploading Problems

If you run into problems uploading your file to your host, the cause might be a problem with your host's PHP configuration. WXR files larger than 2MB can run afoul of a common upload limitation in a standard `php.ini` file. Try working with your hosting company to raise this limit.

You might also try uploading your own `php.ini` file to your account's root directory. This configuration file should contain the following line:

```
; Maximum allowed size for uploaded files.upload_max_filesize = 7M
```

Now try uploading again and see if that works.



tip

Be aware that when you export posts and comments from your WordPress.com blog, they don't go away, even when you import them somewhere else. You should still monitor traffic on old posts to your WordPress.com blog because they will appear in search results.

After you have transferred your blog's data, consider adding some boilerplate "This blog has moved..." language to the front page of your old blog and to at least some of the more popular posts.

Also, for a fee, WordPress.com will "forward" your old site to your new site. From your WordPress.com Administration page, go to Upgrades and choose Offsite Redirect. Name the URL of your new site, and after you complete the upgrade purchase, WordPress.com will send everyone who comes to one of your old posts directly to your new site.

Hosting WordPress Yourself

You can install the WordPress software on any computer with web server software installed, even if that computer has no permanent connection to the Internet. That means you could even use that old computer with the dial-up modem (or none at all) that has been gathering dust in your basement. Why would you want to have WordPress installed on your own computer? How would people read your blog if it wasn't connected to the Internet? We can think of at least four good reasons to install WordPress on your system—even if your "real" WordPress blog was hosted somewhere else, be it WordPress.com or at your own host:

- You are an angry person and view blog posts as a way of venting steam. You want a place to tell your boss what you really think of him without threatening your career. Plus, you like the WordPress visual editor and don't need a full-blown, feature-rich web design tool to write.

- You have been on WordPress.com for a while and want to see whether you can install the WordPress software yourself before committing to buying a domain name and a year's worth of hosting fees.
- You are considering changing themes and adding plug-ins, and you want to test things out before going live on the Web.
- You want to create new WordPress themes and plug-ins and don't want to upload your files to the Web each time you modify one character in the code.

In practical terms, you don't need a reason to give the install a try. With enough time, disk space, and bandwidth, you can do this. With an average high-speed Internet connection, you can complete all of these tasks—downloading and installing an Apache web server, a MySQL database, and WordPress—in about a half hour. We're here to help.

In this section, we'll install a web server on a Windows system and get you ready for the WordPress installation. We'll also show you how to edit the WordPress configuration file manually.

Installing a Test Web Server and MySQL Database

If you are running the Windows operating system (no matter the version), you need to download several applications to successfully run WordPress on your computer: That includes a web server application, the MySQL database, and the WordPress software. If you want to develop plug-ins, you also need the PHP scripting language.

The good news is that the cost of all this software is \$0. Yes, that's right; it's free. Another piece of good news is that software developers have packaged the server app and database in a single download for Windows, so there's only one thing to install. The bad news is that you have to invest some time and effort to get it all running.

There are several packages of what is called the WAMP (Windows Apache MySQL and PHP/Perl) Stack available for download. We have had the best experience with XAMPP from the Apache Friends. The X takes the place of the underlying operating system—Windows, Linux, and Macintosh OS X. In this section, we show you how to install and configure XAMPP in Windows to prepare for your WordPress installation. The process in other operating systems should be similar, if not exactly the same.

1. Download XAMPP from <http://apachefriends.org/en/xampp.html>.
2. Install XAMPP by double-clicking on the downloaded file. At the end of the installation, a command-line shell will appear, and the install program will ask you some questions. Unless you know to do differently, accept the defaults.
3. When the final menu comes up, select Start XAMPP Control Panel.
4. Start the Apache and MySQL services by clicking the Svc check box next to each module (see Figure 11.20). You'll be asked to confirm each service start.

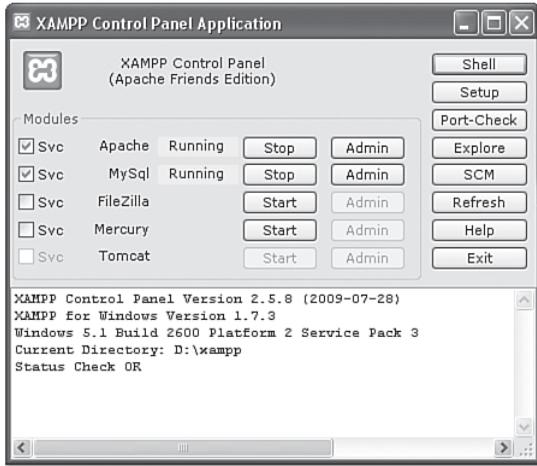


Figure 11.20

Start the Apache Web Server and MySQL database services in Windows through the XAMPP Control Panel.

5. Start the Apache server by clicking the Start button associated with it. Windows Vista and Windows 7 users might see a User Account Control dialog box asking whether you really want to install this application. Click Yes. When it starts, the Control Panel will say it's running, and the Admin button will be active.
6. Start MySQL the same way. The shell-like status window at the bottom of the Control Panel will also indicate that each service started.
7. Open a browser and type `http://localhost/xampp` in the address bar. If Apache is running, you'll first be asked to define your language, and then (if you select English) the screen will look like Figure 11.21.

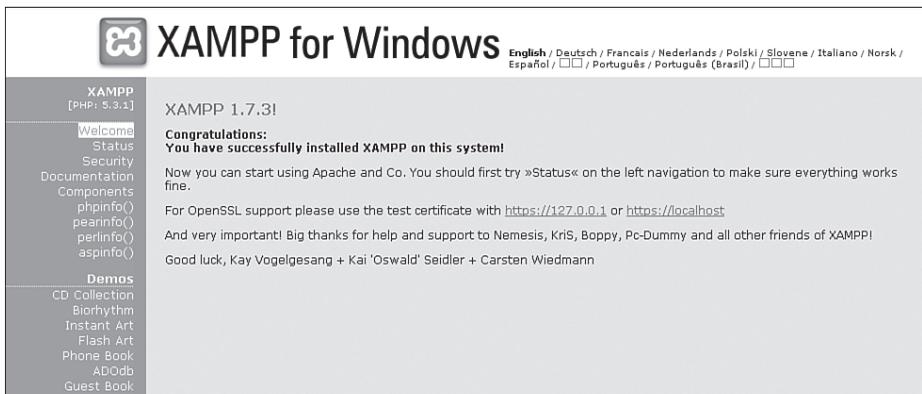


Figure 11.21

A successful configuration of Apache through XAMPP!

- Open phpMyAdmin to create and configure the database. Go back to the XAMPP Control Panel. Click Admin next to MySQL to launch phpMyAdmin, or click phpMyAdmin in the Tools section from the XAMPP admin page shown in Figure 11.21. This application serves as a graphical front end to the MySQL command-line administrative tool. It's written in the PHP scripting language, as is WordPress.

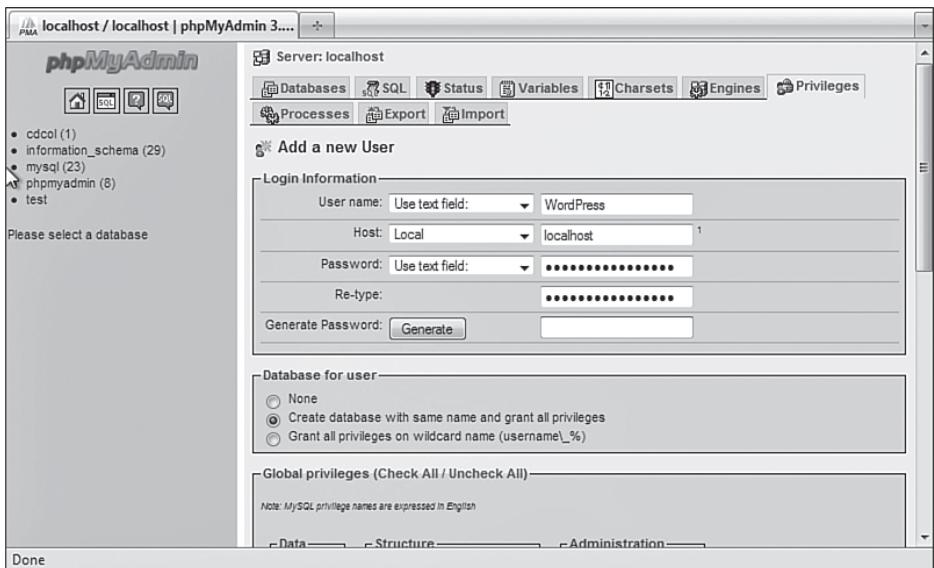
The remaining steps should mirror the database creation steps in the earlier section “Preparing for the Five-Minute Hosted WordPress Installation.”

- Go to the Privileges tab. Click Add a New User.
- In the User Name field, type **WordPress** (or some other name; see the earlier tip on database user naming). Under Host, use Local. Type a password or use Generate Password (for a more secure, if less memorable, password).
- Under Database for User, click Create Database with Same Name and Grant All Privileges, as shown in Figure 11.22. Scroll to the bottom and click the Go button. phpMyAdmin generates the appropriate MySQL commands and displays them under the phrase You Have Added a New User.

**note**

You can also open the screen in Figure 11.21 in your default browser by clicking Admin next to Apache from the XAMPP Control Panel.

Figure 11.22
Set up the
WordPress
database from
your browser
with phpMyAd-
min.



- Click the Databases tab, and you will see WordPress on the list of existing databases. Click the link to open the database.



You can name your database and user anything you want. If you're planning to do only one blog from this database, you could name the database *blogname_wp*, where *blogname* is your blog's name. For maximum flexibility, though, we recommend something more generic. WordPress doesn't constrain you when you change your mind about something. At the same time, choosing a name other than "WordPress" is more secure. Attackers will always look for a database or user with that name, so using some other name is another hurdle the bad guys have to jump over.

13. Click the Privileges tab to see the list of "Users Having Access to WordPress." Your WordPress user should have All Privileges, and Grant should say Yes, as shown in Figure 11.23. If this is not correct, click the Action box at the end of the row and make sure every database-related privilege box is checked. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click Go when you're finished.

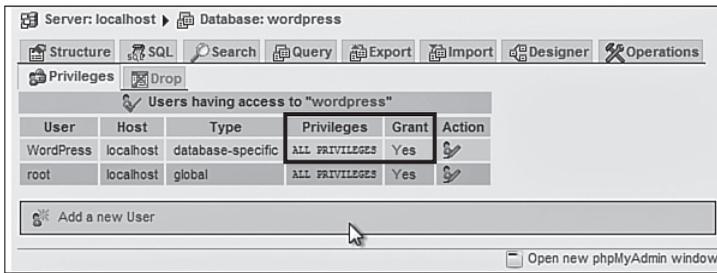


Figure 11.23

Make sure your WordPress user has all privileges, including Grant, to your database.

14. Close phpMyAdmin.

Now that you have the web server and database configured, all you need is a fresh copy of WordPress. Download the latest version of WordPress at <http://wordpress.org/download> and extract it to the XAMPP\htdocs folder.

Editing the WordPress Configuration File

Now the real fun begins. When we configured WordPress on a separate host, we used the WordPress online form. This time, we'll get our hands dirty editing the raw configuration file.

You'll need to open a text editor, such as Notepad, to edit the WordPress configuration file. Be sure you use a text editor, and not a word processor, like OpenOffice Writer or Microsoft Word. Word processors add formatting codes and assorted characters that will confuse your web server and WordPress when it tries to figure out what your configuration choices are. Web servers look for plain text, and you should deliver it to them.

But first, go to Windows Explorer and locate the sample. If you followed the instructions in this chapter, this file should be located at `C:\XAMPP\htdocs\WordPress\wp-config-sample.php`. Yes, this is a PHP code file, but don't panic. There's not much you need to do here because the comments included in the file are easy to understand. Besides, if you do get confused, we're here to help.

Before you do anything else, click File, Save As to remove the text “sample” from the filename. Save the file as `wp-config.php`. That way, in the unlikely event something goes wrong, you will always have the sample to return to.

The first section of this file allows WordPress to communicate with the database you’ve just created. The section should look like this:

```
/** The name of the database for WordPress */
define('DB_NAME', 'putyourdbnamehere');

/** MySQL database username */
define('DB_USER', 'usernamehere');

/** MySQL database password */
define('DB_PASSWORD', 'yourpasswordhere');

/** MySQL hostname */
define('DB_HOST', 'localhost');

/** Database Charset to use in creating database tables. */
define('DB_CHARSET', 'utf8');

/** The Database Collate type. Don't change this if in doubt. */
define('DB_COLLATE', '');
```

There are but a few lines to edit in this section:

- Where it says `putyourdbnamehere`, replace it with the name of your database (`wordpress`). Make sure the name is inside the quotation marks; otherwise, it won't work.
- Where it says `usernamehere`, replace it with the username you entered in step 10 from the preceding section (which should be the same as the name of the database).
- Where it says `yourpasswordhere`, replace it with the password you entered in step 10 from the preceding section.
- Confirm that the `DB_HOST` line points to `localhost`. If it does, don't change it.

The last two items can usually be ignored. `DB_CHARSET` and `DB_COLLATE` relate to the character set used by the database. Unless you are using Cyrillic or Asian-language characters, leave these lines at the default settings.

The Authentication Unique Keys section of the configuration file is optional but can help secure your installation. Setting these keys makes it much harder for anyone bent on cracking your blog to steal your login information, and you don't need to remember the contents. This section looks like this:

```
* Authentication Unique Keys.
*
* Change these to different unique phrases!
* You can generate these using the {@link https://api.wordpress.org/secret-key/1.1/
WordPress.org secret-key service}
```

* You can change these at any point in time to invalidate all existing cookies. This will force all users to have to log in again.

```
*
* @since 2.6.0
*/
define('AUTH_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
define('SECURE_AUTH_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
define('LOGGED_IN_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
define('NONCE_KEY', 'put your unique phrase here');
/**#@*/
```

At the top of the section, you'll see a link to the WordPress Secret Key service. Copy this address (<http://api.wordpress.org/secret-key/1.1/>) into your browser, and you'll see four highly secure keys generated for you and you alone. Copy all four lines and paste them back into this section of the `wp-config` file, replacing the default lines that ask you to put your unique phrase here.

The WordPress Database Table Prefix section exists for those who want to produce multiple blogs from this database. If that's you, WordPress needs to be able to differentiate this blog from your other blogs. It does this by creating separate database tables for each blog. We recommend using `wp_blogname` as the identifying table prefix. Your hosting company might also have a recommendation on how to handle the Table Prefix. The section looks like this:

```
* WordPress Database Table prefix.
*
* You can have multiple installations in one database if you give each a unique
* prefix. Only numbers, letters, and underscores please!
*/
$table_prefix = 'wp_';
```

The last section of the configuration file to worry about is the Localized Language section. This defaults to English; if you want to blog in another language, visit http://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_in_Your_Language for information on how to set up WordPress in many languages. (That's 64 languages, as of this writing.)

```
* WordPress Localized Language, defaults to English.
*
* Change this to localize WordPress. A corresponding MO file for the chosen
* language must be installed to wp-content/languages. For example, install
* de.mo to wp-content/languages and set WPLANG to 'de' to enable German
* language support.
*/
define ('WPLANG', '');
```

As the creators of `wp-config-sample` tell you, "That's all, stop editing! Happy blogging!" Save the file again. The hard work is done, and it's time to run the famous five-minute installation, as described earlier in this chapter in "The Five-Minute Hosted WordPress Installation" section.

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About the Authors

BUD SMITH wrote his first book for Que about buying computers 15 years ago—and had to do his online research for it using dial-up Internet. Since then, he’s lived and worked in Silicon Valley; London, England; Auckland and Christchurch, New Zealand; San Francisco and Oakland, California, and written a dozen more books. And he does most of his online work at broadband speeds—except when he’s using the Web on his cell phone, which is as slow as his old dial-up modem. Bud runs a WordPress-based blog at RunawayDaily.com.

MICHAEL MCCALLISTER is devoted to the idea that technology need not be feared and can be mastered by anyone. He has been writing about technology in general, and open source software in particular, for the whole of the twenty-first century, and part of the previous century, too. He tries to help build the open source community, from which derives WordPress and so much else that is good, true, and pure in life (the parts of life that run on computers, anyway). While Bud has moved hither and yon, Michael has lived the relatively boring, stable life in the central United States (Milwaukee, Madison, and Boulder). Michael has been running “Notes from the Metaverse” on WordPress since 2006 at metaverse.wordpress.com. Find out more at www.michaelmccallister.com.