8 Essential WordPress Settings

The Settings that You Must Configure Just Right After a Fresh Installation

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8 Essential WordPress Settings to Tweak After a Fresh Installation

After you've finished installing WordPress, you just can't immediately go ahead and keep posting your contents.

Yeah... you heard right and you need to tweak some certain essential settings in WordPress to make your site more secure and functional.

And in this tiny guide, I'll walk you through all the steps that you have to take after a fresh WordPress installation.

Do this before you proceed:

Keep your WordPress dashboard open and make changes as this guide walks you thru.

1. Delete the Sample Post, Comment, and Page: WordPress comes with a set of sample or default post (tilted "Hello World"), a comment and a page (titled "Sample Page") for demonstration purpose to give the fresh WordPress users an idea about how they would like on a live website.

These are of no use and you should delete these things right away.

Select "*Posts>All" Posts* from your dashboard's left menu.
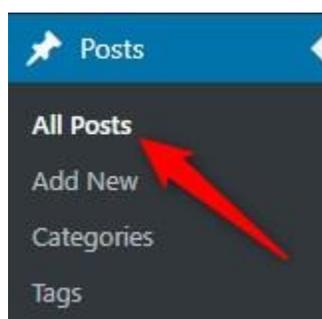
On the promoted page check the box beside *"Hello World"* and click *"Trash"*.

You've deleted the sample post, now it's time to delete the *"Sample Page"*.

Go to *"Pages>All Pages"*.
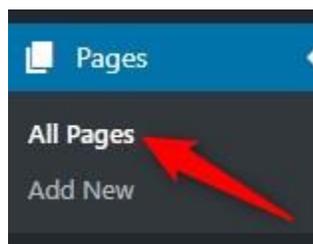
Select the checkbox beside *"Sample Post"* and click the *"Trash"* button.

After deletion of the sample page...

Go to *"Comments"* and check the box beside *"A WordPress Commenter"*.

Click *"Trash"* to delete the sample comment.
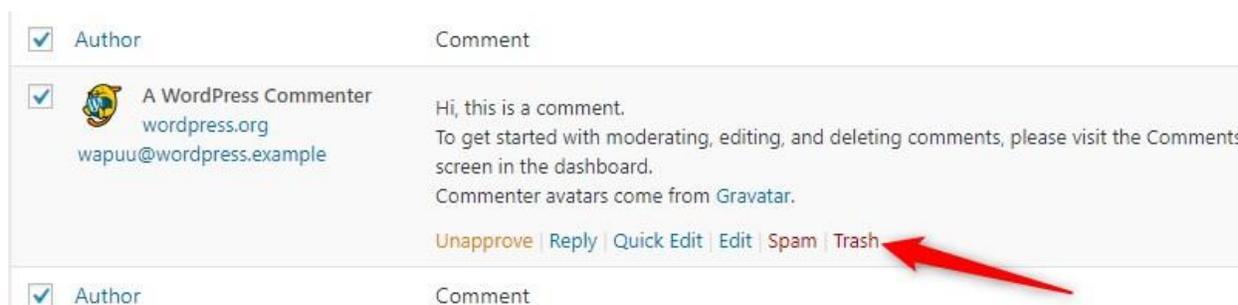
Yay! You deleted all the junk stuff and you won't look amateurish after you go online.

2. Set the URL Structure: The URL or Permalink is the set of words and numbers attached with a domain name. And by default, WordPress URLs are not search engine or SEO friendly.

They are long and also not easy to remember.

Go to *"Settings>Permalinks"* and there you'll find a bunch of permalink structures to choose from.
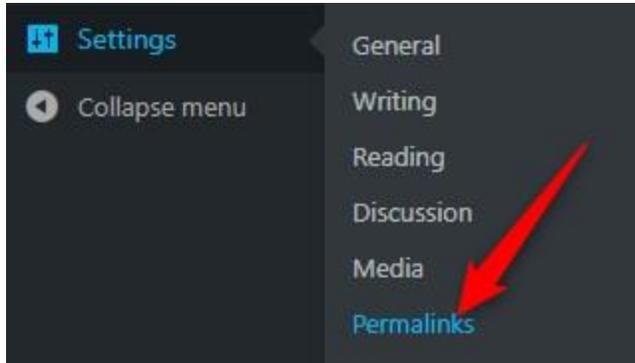
Select *"Post Name"* and click on the *"Save Changes"* button.

Note: If you want your URLs to include date, month or year, you can choose either *"Day and name"* or *"Month and name"* as per your need. But from the Search Engine and users' perspective *"Post Name"* is recommended and also my personal favorite.

3. Discussion Settings: Comments are often used as a tool to make spam and it's crucial to take care of them.

Well, by default WordPress Discussion settings are fairly well set by the developers but some more settings are left which can be taken into account to increase security.

Follow the instructions below:

On the section *"Before a comment appears"* check the box along with "Comments must be manually approved".

The second option will approve a comment automatically if comment author replies to a comment thread if he has already an approved comment in that thread (Uncheck this if you are a too strict comment moderator).
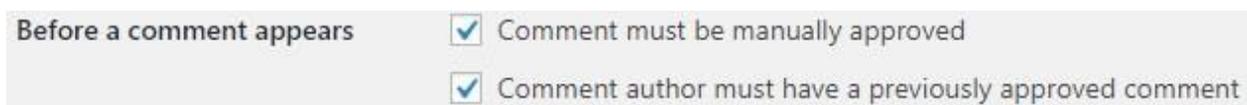
In the *"Other comments settings"* you can check the option *"Users must be registered and logged in to comment"* if you are irritated by spam comments on your blog. Otherwise just leave it unchecked.

One more thing you can do is to auto blacklist comments which are filled with slangs, offensive words, coming from annoying IP or email addresses or etc.

You just need to go to the section *"Comment Blacklist"* and enter the words, emails, IP addresses or whatever you don't want to be in your website comments.

Scroll down and click on *"Save Changes"*.

4. Set the Time Zone: One more important thing to do is to configure the correct time zone of your location, date & time format. It helps you to schedule a blog post also.

To set it up, go to *"Settings>General"*.

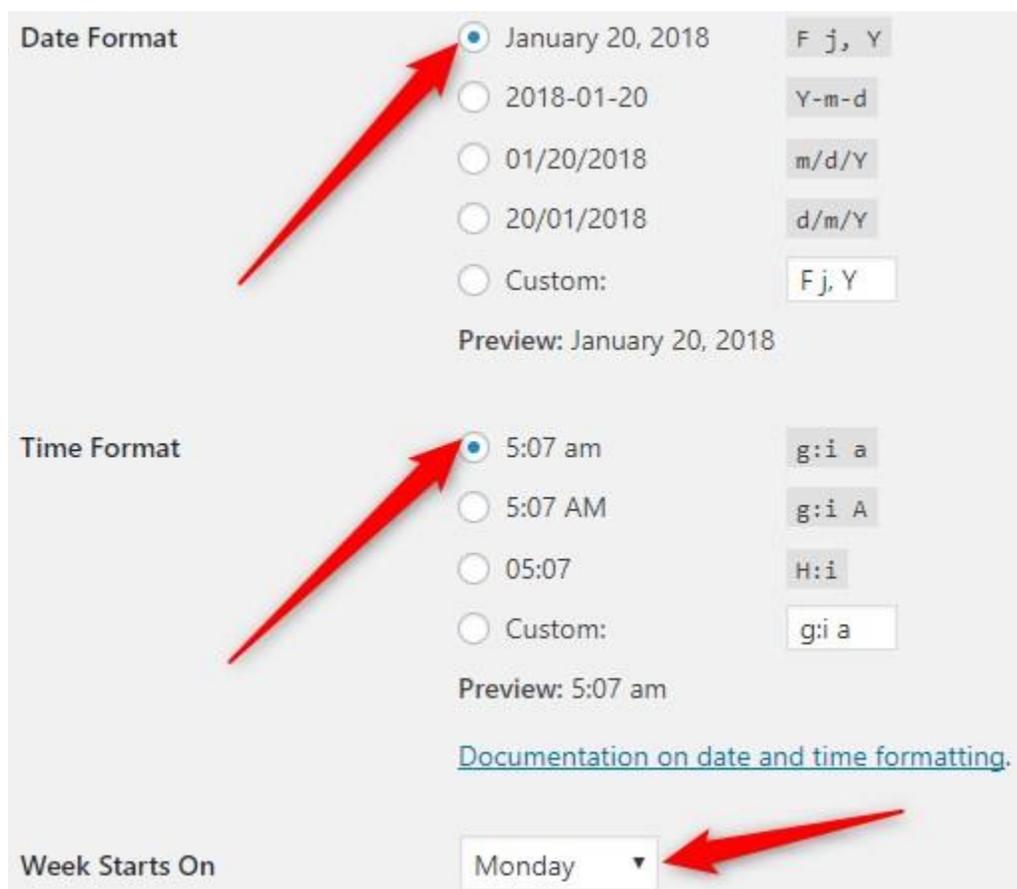There you have to select your time zone from the drop-down menu under the *"Timezone"* option.

Choose the time zone according to your geolocation or if you are uncertain about your time zone select the city that matches with your time zone.

You can also choose the date & time format as well as the starting day of a week.

After the all things are set up, click on *"Save Changes"*.

5. Media Settings: When you upload a photo or image into WordPress, it saves the images in four different sizes (viz. Thumbnails, Small, Medium & Large). This function generally makes your WordPress site unnecessarily bloated and sometimes sluggish.

Better off you disable this option by going to *"Settings>Media"*.

And… there you have to put **zero** in all of the width & height boxes like the below image.

Image sizes

The sizes listed below determine the maximum dimensions in pixels to use when adding an image to the Media Library.

Thumbnail size	Width 0	Height 0
	☐ Crop thumbnail to exact dimensions (normally thumbnails are proportional)	
Medium size	Max Width 0	Max Height 0
Large size	Max Width 0	Max Height 0

6. Delete Unused Themes: You shouldn't keep a lot of themes installed in your WordPress directory. Sometimes you might leave your theme directory with lots of unused themes especially when you try out different kind of themes before selecting a new one. It could cause your WordPress site to run slow at times depending on your available resource. And hence you should only keep the theme you are currently using and one more theme as a backup in case your current theme got crashed.

Just head over to "*Appearance>Themes*" and delete those themes which are currently not in use.

7. Delete Unused Plugins: If you have plugins that are of little to no use (like Hello Dolly) or some other plugins which you have installed earlier but currently not in use then delete those plugins right away and free up your disk space.

To do this go to "*Plugins>Installed Plugins*" and delete the plugins according to your need.

8. Disable Directory Browsing: Directory browsing or listing is a functionality in apache powered servers which lets users browse all of the website contents via root or parent directory. In that case, anyone can easily steal your media files, themes, plugins or even sometimes your backup files.

This is enabled by default and you should immediately disable that feature if you haven't done it yet.

Log in to your CPanel and go to "*File Manager>public_html*"

Locate the **.htaccess** file and open it.

Note: Take a backup of the original .htaccess file to avoid some errors.

At the end of the page write *"Options -Indexes"* and save it.

```
# BEGIN WordPress
<IfModule mod_rewrite.c>
RewriteEngine On
RewriteBase /
RewriteRule ^index\.php$ - [L]
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_FILENAME} !-f
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_FILENAME} !-d
RewriteRule . /index.php [L]
</IfModule>

# END WordPress

Options All -Indexes
```
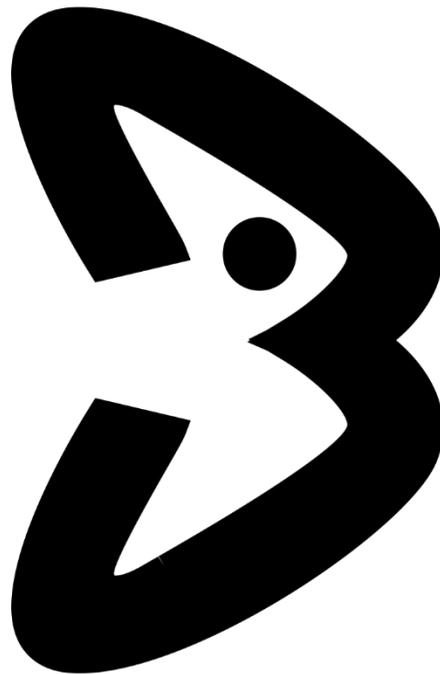
That's it!

You've done editing your .htaccess file and added an extra security layer on your website.

I hope this tiny guide on essential WordPress settings helped you as a newbie webmaster to get rid of some boo-boos.

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