

FREE WEBSITE LAUNCH CHECKLIST

Website Launch Checklist for WordPress, SEO and Performance

Use this before you make a WordPress site live. It covers setup, mobile, on-page SEO, page speed, security and backups in plain language. Tick a box only after you have opened that setting and checked it yourself.

Who this is for

Beginners launching a first WordPress site, or rebuilding a messy one, without an agency.

What you get

42 checks, WordPress menu paths, and a short reason for each item so you know what to do.

INSIDE THIS PDF

01 WordPress setup and plugins

Site name, permalinks, homepage, unused demo content, menus, forms and plugins.

02 Mobile responsiveness and page speed

Real phone check, image weight, fonts, layout jump and cache — only if you use one.

03 On-page SEO and search visibility

Titles, one H1, heading order, alt text, internal links, sitemap and indexing.

04 Security, backups and go-live

HTTPS, updates, off-site backup, then a final click-through before you publish.

STEP 1

Finish homepage, one real article and a contact method first. Do not launch an empty shell.

STEP 2

Work 01 to 04. Tick only what you verified. Empty boxes are unfinished work, not failure.

STEP 3

Fix the empty boxes, publish, then write the next article. Do not wait for a perfect score.

PART ONE · WORDPRESS SETUP

Get the foundation right before SEO

If the site name, homepage, plugins and forms are messy, speed plugins and SEO tools will not save the launch. Open each path. Tick only what you have seen.

01 WordPress setup and plugin checks

This is the base of a WordPress website: identity, URLs, homepage, clean plugins, and a form that actually emails you.

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| ☐ Set the site title and tagline
The title is your brand. The tagline is one line about what you teach. Settings → General. | ☐ Set timezone and site language
Wrong timezone makes “new” articles look dated. Match the language your readers use. |
| ☐ Use an admin email you check
Form alerts, user notices and recovery mail go here. A fake inbox means you miss problems. | ☐ Turn on Post name permalinks
Settings → Permalinks → Post name. Clean URLs help people and search engines read the page. |
| ☐ Assign a real homepage
Settings → Reading. Your blog homepage should be the page you designed, not a random post list. | ☐ Remove Hello World and Sample Page
Demo content looks unfinished and can get indexed. Delete it or keep it as draft. |
| ☐ Keep one active theme
Appearance → Themes. Extra unused themes are clutter and a security surface. Delete what you do not use. | ☐ Activate only plugins you need
Two SEO plugins, two cache plugins, or leftover builders fight each other. One job, one plugin. |
| ☐ Send a real test from your form
Fill the contact form yourself. If the email does not arrive, visitors cannot reach you after launch. | ☐ Upload a site icon / favicon
Appearance → Customize. The small icon in the browser tab makes the site look finished. |
| ☐ Click every menu item
Appearance → Menus. Empty, duplicate or “#” links are a common beginner miss on launch day. | ☐ Fix the footer site name
It should say WebLearnCraft (or your brand), not “Just another WordPress site”. |

Plugin rule: Install a plugin only when a real page needs it. A lighter site is easier to keep fast, secure and understandable.

PART TWO · MOBILE AND SPEED

If it is slow or broken on a phone, it is not ready

Most visitors will not resize a desktop window. They will open your site on a phone. Check that first. Then reduce image weight before you add another speed plugin.

02 Mobile responsiveness and page speed

Responsive means the layout, type and buttons work on a real phone. Speed means the page is light enough to open without a long wait.

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| ☐ Open the site on a real phone
Desktop preview is not enough. Use Chrome or Safari on your phone and scroll the homepage and one article. | ☐ Read the text without pinching
Body copy should be readable at arm's length. If you zoom to read, the type is too small. |
| ☐ Make buttons easy to tap
Menu, download and article cards need thumb-sized targets. Tiny links get missed on mobile. | ☐ Check overlap and cut-off
Look at the hero, article cards, sidebar and footer. Nothing important should sit on top of something else. |
| ☐ Compress homepage and article images
Export WebP or compressed JPG. A pretty image that is 3MB will make the whole page feel cheap and slow. | ☐ Check file size in Media Library
Open Media, sort by size if you can, and replace anything huge that appears on key pages. |
| ☐ Use at most two font families
Each extra font file slows the first load. One for headings and one for body is enough. | ☐ Delete unused plugins and demo kits
Imported demo pages, extra addons and unused widgets still load code even when you "do not use them". |
| ☐ Stop the page from jumping
Set image width and height (or Elementor image size) so content does not leap while pictures load. | ☐ Configure cache only if you installed it
A cache plugin that is only installed does nothing. If you do not have one yet, skip this box. |
| ☐ Time the homepage yourself
Open it in Chrome and on your phone. If you sit there waiting, visitors will leave. Cut weight first. | ☐ Limit embeds to where they earn their place
Maps, YouTube and extra scripts on the homepage are common speed killers. Keep them off the first screen unless needed. |

Speed rule: Compressed images on a simple layout beat a stack of speed plugins on a heavy page. Fix weight first, tools second.

PART THREE · SEO, SECURITY AND GO-LIVE

Make the page clear, then make it safe to publish

On-page SEO means a person and Google can tell what the page is about. Security means you can log in and restore the site if something breaks. Do both before you announce the launch.

03 On-page SEO and search visibility

Write the page for a beginner first. Then match the title, H1, headings and image alt text to that same topic. Do not stuff keywords.

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| ☐ Give each key page a unique title
About 50–60 characters. Include the topic, for example “WordPress” or “SEO”, without repeating the same title everywhere. | ☐ Write a plain meta description
One or two sentences that say what the page helps the reader do. Not leftover theme or plugin filler. |
| ☐ Use one H1 that matches the topic
The H1 is the page’s main heading. In Elementor, do not style a big paragraph to look like a title. | ☐ Use H2 then H3 in order
Headings are a map, not decoration. Do not skip from H2 to H5 or use font size instead of a heading. |
| ☐ Write image alt text that describes the image
Alt is for people who cannot see the image, and for Google. Not “image1”, “logo” or “photo”. | ☐ Keep URLs short and readable
Your permalink should look like a phrase, not a string of numbers and leftover words. |
| ☐ Add 2–3 internal links
From the homepage and each article, link to related articles. This helps readers and search engines move around the site. | ☐ Turn on an XML sitemap
WordPress core, Yoast or Rank Math can do this. The sitemap is a list of pages you want indexed. |
| ☐ Allow search engines to index the site
Settings → Reading. “Discourage search engines” must be off on the live site or Google will stay away. | ☐ Do not block launch for Search Console
Connect it after the site is live if you want. An empty perfect setup is worse than a clear published site. |

04 Website security, backups and go-live

You need a login only you control, HTTPS, updates, and one backup that does not live only on the same server.

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| ☐ Use a strong, unique admin password
Do not reuse the password from email or social. If you can, turn on two-factor later — do not delay launch for it. | ☐ Remove unused users
Users → All Users. Old demo accounts and leftover authors are an open door. |
| ☐ Confirm HTTPS and the padlock
The live URL should be https. Mixed http images can break the padlock and look unsafe. | ☐ Update WordPress, theme and plugins
Dashboard → Updates. Outdated plugins are the usual way beginner sites get hacked. |
| ☐ Take a files + database backup
A backup plugin or your host backup is fine. Theme files alone are not enough. | ☐ Keep one copy off the server
Download it to Drive, a disk, or email. If the host dies, a backup on the same host dies with it. |
| ☐ Click every main and footer link
No 404s on the paths you show in the menu. This is the last human test before publish. | ☐ Test forms, buttons and the download
Including this checklist button. Then test Chrome and one phone browser. Publish when those work. |

After you publish: Put one clear article live, then the next. Search traffic is slow at the start. A complete, honest site beats a hidden “perfect” one. More guides: WebLearnCraft articles.