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# Introduction to WordPress



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## Introduction to WordPress

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You must have already created a positive idea about WordPress in your mind. If you are here to learn how to create a functional website using WordPress, you have chosen the right place. This tutorial will give you an introduction to the basic aspects of WordPress.

### What is WordPress?

WordPress is a software tool that started as a blogging system, which evolved to become a complete content management system. You can create anything, from a simple blog to multi-layered sites, using WordPress, and it provides immense flexibility to work freely on your imagination. There are a large number of plugins, themes and widgets to help you enhance the fundamental WordPress framework to suit your requirements. As WordPress is based on an open source model, you can find help from a vibrant community on almost anything.

### WordPress.org vs. WordPress.com

When you first get into the world of WordPress, you might get confused about these two options. Which one should you choose when you are starting out? Let's find out.

**WordPress.org** is a free, open source, self-hosted tool that helps you create beautiful websites. It is free to install, but you need to find a service to host your website, and register a domain name for your site. Even though you have to pay for the hosting service and domain name, it is really a cost effective and flexible solution.

One of the obvious advantages of creating a site on WordPress.org is that you will be the sole owner of your website. You will be in complete control of all your data, and there is no dependency on any other external companies or agencies. That means you will be able to display ads on your site if you wish to do that, and you do not have to share the resulting revenue with anyone. You are absolutely free to keep the site as a hobby blog or transform it into a money making endeavor, according to your choice.

Moreover, you can make use of all the available plugins, themes and widgets in the WordPress community to enhance your site's features. Within no time, you can change your site into an eCommerce store or a membership site. Fundamentally, you are free to do whatever you want to do with your site, of course within the legal regulations.

**WordPress.com**, on the other hand, is a hosted blogging platform that has free and paid plans. You can register with WordPress.com and start a blog for free, but your site will be a subdomain of wordpress.com. That means, the domain name will have WordPress.com appended to it - for example, *http://yoursite.wordpress.com*. On the free plan, your readers will see ads placed by WordPress.com, which you have no control or ownership. The revenue generated from the ads go directly to WordPress.com. Similarly, there are restrictions for using plugins and themes, which will be lifted when you opt for one of their paid plans.

Even though both options have its own merits and demerits, as a beginner, it is recommended to opt for the WordPress.org plan, as it gives you great flexibility and a great range of options. In this tutorial, we will be walking you through the basic steps of getting started with a WordPress site.

## Installing WordPress on your computer

As you already know, you need a hosting service and domain name to install WordPress and set up a website. However, before going live, you may have to test your site to see how it is working. For this, there is an option to install WordPress on your computer with a localhost.

### Why install WordPress locally?

Installing WordPress locally on your computer means it will be visible only to you. Public would not be able to see that site unless you upload it to a hosting server. Then, why do you have to install it on your computer? Because it is actually a great way to test the appearance and functionalities of your site. A lot of developers and site owners make use of this option to test new features and behaviors before going live. So, as a beginner, installing WordPress on your computer will provide you with a great chance to familiarize with WordPress and its many facets.

So, we will look into the basic steps of manually installing WordPress on a localhost first. Since our readers most probably are spread between Windows and Mac, we are demonstrating the steps for both

### XAMPP (for Windows)

XAMPP is a simple tool that will help you set up a local web server for testing purposes. It is actually quite easy to work with, and it is available across platforms such as Windows, Mac or Linux. And more importantly, as XAMPP uses similar components that are used by popular web hosting servers, it is relatively easy to move your test site to live servers. Furthermore, it is free and open source, so you can easily download and install it. In this demonstration, we are using XAMPP for Windows.



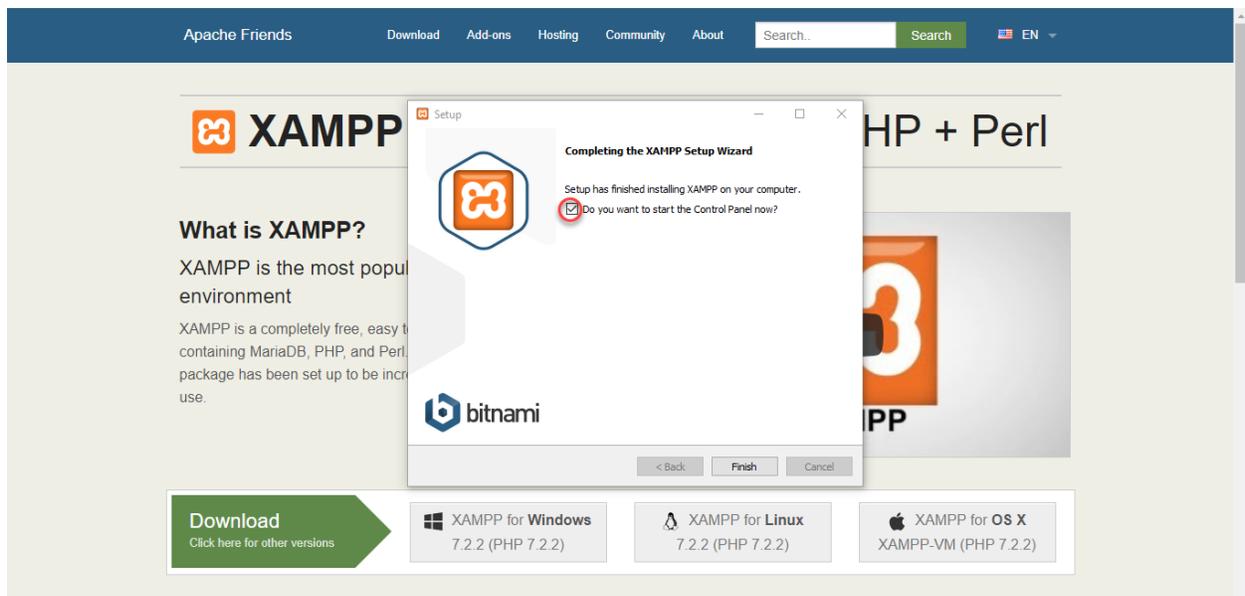
Let us get started...

## 1. Installing XAMPP

You need to visit the XAMPP website (<https://www.apachefriends.org/>), and click the download button specific to your operating system. We are using Windows, so will choose the first button.



Once the download is complete, you can start the installation wizard. On the last stage of installation, you can tick the checkbox to launch the XAMPP control panel right after installation.



Start Apache and MySQL

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