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# Basic SEO for WordPress



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# Basic SEO for WordPress

## [Basic SEO for WordPress](#)

### [SEO](#)

#### [What is SEO](#)

[Site performance](#)

[URL structure](#)

[Page Title](#)

[Meta description](#)

[XML Sitemaps](#)

#### [Popular WordPress SEO Tools](#)

[Integrating Google Analytics](#)

[Adding your site to Google Webmaster tools \(Search Console\)](#)

#### [WordPress SEO Best Practices](#)

[Create unique, high quality content](#)

[Create a content structure with categories and tags](#)

[Leverage social media](#)

[Internal Links](#)

[External links](#)

[Image optimization](#)

[Comments optimization](#)

## SEO

You have set up a great WordPress site, and learned to incorporate functionalities like eCommerce capability into it. In order to make your website successful, you still have to understand a few more essential aspects. Search Engine Optimization or SEO is one of these. In simple terms, with SEO, you are making your site more accessible to search engines. So when a user types a relevant keyword on the search engine, your site shows up in the search results. By following the industry standards of search engine optimization, and regularly updating high quality content, you can surely get good ranking and traffic in due time.

Now, WordPress is considered as one of the most SEO-friendly content management systems at the moment. You can take advantage of this to create an optimized site that scores high in



search engine rankings if you follow the expert advice on SEO. This tutorial will guide you on the basic concept of SEO, and introduce some of the popular tools and best practices.

## What is SEO

SEO is a set of site optimization strategies that would make your site more accessible to search engines. The strategy involves optimizing the code, content and formatting of the site to make it more search engine friendly. And, it is also about maintaining user friendly content that helps users find what they are looking for easily. Some of the important aspects on your site that makes a difference in terms of SEO are good quality content, site performance, url structure, titles, descriptions, sitemaps and images. Let's look into some of these terms in more detail to understand them better.

### Site performance

How fast your site loads is an important aspect of SEO. If users click a button on your site, and it takes a bit longer to load, there are chances that they will leave your site immediately. This is especially relevant to eCommerce sites, as the customer wouldn't have the patience to wait. According to statistics, a one second delay can impact your conversions by 7%, and customer satisfaction by 16%. Site performance is an important criteria that search engines consider for your page ranking as well. So it is important to look for any issues with site performance, and immediately fix those.

You can use tools like [Pingdom](#) or [GTmetrix](#) to understand the performance of your site. Some of the determinants of page load speed are your hosting service, the number of plugins, external code on the site, page size, etc. You need to consistently test these aspects to optimize the performance of your site.

### URL structure

The blog posts on your site are accessed by users through their permalinks, which is automatically set by WordPress when you create a post. You may have noticed this while creating a blog post. The below screenshot shows a permalink:

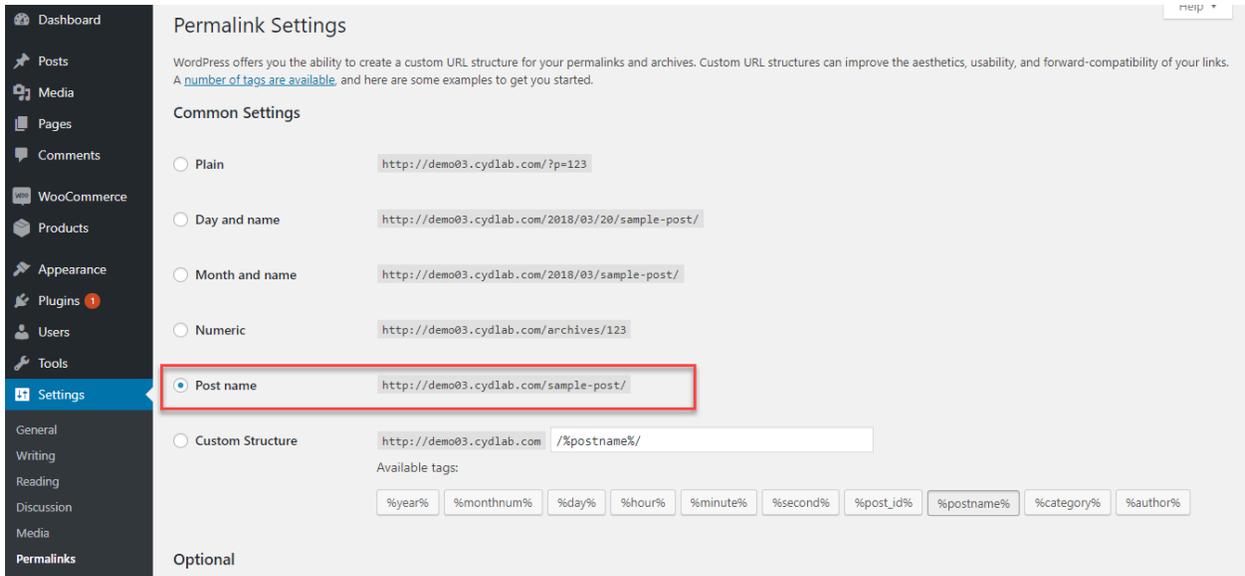
The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Add New Post' interface. The title is 'A New Trial Post'. The permalink is highlighted in a red box and reads 'http://demo03.cyclab.com/2018/03/20/a-new-trial-post/'. The right sidebar shows the 'Publish' section with 'Save Draft', 'Preview', 'Status: Draft', 'Visibility: Public', and 'Publish immediately' options. The 'Categories' section shows 'All Categories' and 'Most Used' tabs, with 'Uncategorized', 'WooCommerce', and 'WordPress' listed.

Now, this permalink structure plays a big part in SEO. Let's know what all ways you can optimize this.

### **Simplify the permalink structure**

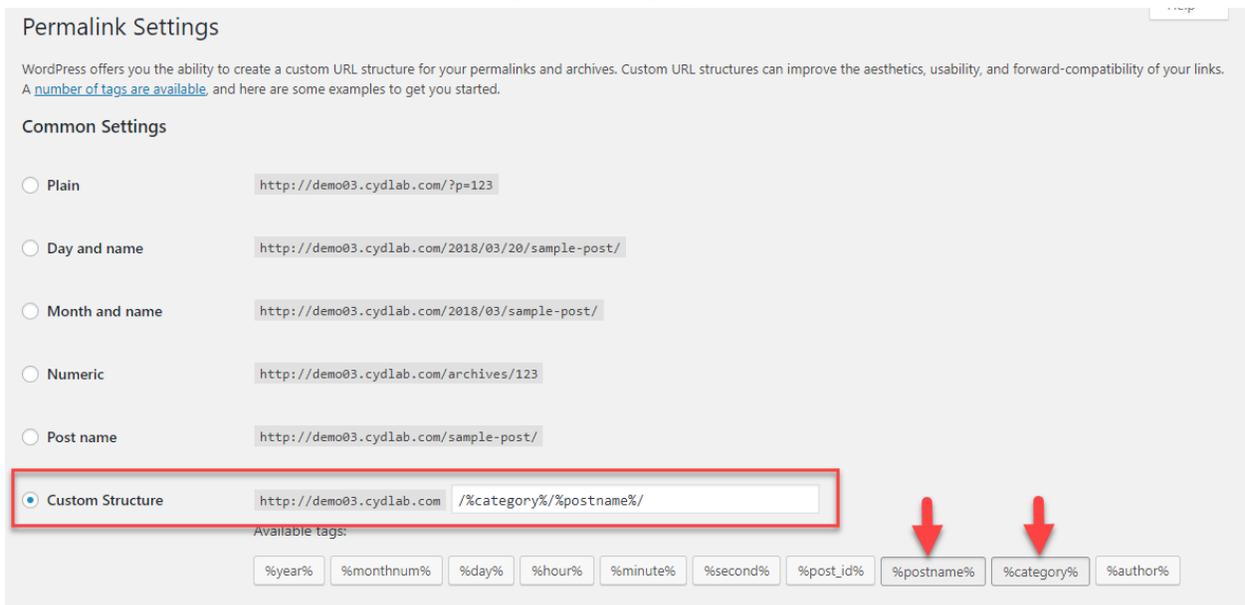
The structure of the permalink should not be very technical or complicated. It should have a user friendly format where users can get an idea on what the post is about. Keeping the permalink structure simple with the title of your article (post name) is a good practice. And if you have a category structure on your site, you can also set it up with the category name and post name. You can change the permalink structure from the navigation panel (**Settings > Permalinks**).

You can select a suitable permalink structure for your site. For example, you can choose post name as below:



The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Permalink Settings' page. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Dashboard, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, WooCommerce, Products, Appearance, Plugins (1), Users, Tools, Settings (highlighted), General, Writing, Reading, Discussion, Media, and Permalinks. The main content area is titled 'Permalink Settings' and includes a 'Help' link. Below the title is an introductory paragraph. The 'Common Settings' section has five radio button options: Plain, Day and name, Month and name, Numeric, and Post name. The 'Post name' option is selected and highlighted with a red box. Below it, the 'Custom Structure' option is also visible with a text input field containing '/%postname/'. Underneath, there are 'Available tags' buttons for %year%, %monthnum%, %day%, %hour%, %minute%, %second%, %post\_id%, %postname%, %category%, and %author%.

Or, choose a custom structure with category and post name. You can select the field 'Custom Structure' and then use the available tags for category and post name.



This screenshot shows the same 'Permalink Settings' page, but with the 'Custom Structure' radio button selected and highlighted with a red box. The text input field for 'Custom Structure' now contains '/%category%/%postname%/'. Two red arrows point to the '%postname%' and '%category%' tags in the 'Available tags' row.

## Decide on 'www'

You can also decide whether you want to keep 'www' in your url or not. That is, your site url will be either <http://yoursite.com/> or <http://www.yoursite.com/>. You can choose the preferred option by going to **Settings > General**.

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