



Final steps to successfully launching your WordPress site

So... you've worked hard at building a new photography website. You have all the content in place, and you're ready to put it out into the world. That's awesome!

But don't rush it, take some time to go through this list of small tasks to make sure everything is ready to go live.

Final testing & polishing

- update the WP core, your WP theme, and all plugins
- double-check the content & design of every single page
 - remove any sample/dummy text
 - replace placeholder images
 - spell checking & proofreading (tip: use [Grammarly](#))
 - improve text formatting
 - no big blocks of text (break them down into paragraphs)
 - consistent capitalization
 - avoid repetitive phrases

- test image slideshows/lightboxes
- test videos & downloadable files
- test all links/buttons
- disable coming-soon/maintenance-mode plugins
- test redirects
 - from non-www to www (however you prefer)
 - from old page slugs to new ones (if you're redesigning on old site)
- test contact forms
- test social sharing buttons
- test blog RSS feed
- double-check all internal & external links (use [these broken link checked tools](#))
- performance testing (in a tool like [PageSpeed Insights](#))

Launching the site

tip: don't launch the site on a Friday, because that leads to you working during the weekend :-)

- back up your old site (and consider taking screenshots of your old site if you want to share before&after collages on social media)
- LAUNCH THE SITE (DNS changes, database, files, etc., this depends on your hosting service and specific set-up)
- manually test the site again
 - check for missing content (or images not loading well)
 - test slideshows
 - test redirects
- test the contact form again
- activate site backups (and confirm they're working)
- performance improvements (which can only be done after launching)
 - activate site caching (if you had it disabled during development)
 - activate the CDN feature of your hosting provider (if available)
- activate security measures

- disable the “Discourage search engines...” option in Settings > Reading
- clean-up old site, unneeded files, staging site, etc.
- Google Analytics
 - install the tracking code (or [use a plugin](#))
 - check that tracking is working (use the Real-Time report)
 - schedule to check back on GA reports after a couple of weeks
- Google Search Console
 - add your site to Google Search Console (both “www” and “non-www”)
 - Settings > Preferred domain: “Display URLs as...”
 - submit a sitemap to GSC
 - schedule to check back on GSC reports after a couple of weeks

Post-launch

- put your login details in a safe place
- archive the website-related files on your computer
- take note of any plugin or theme license renewal dates
- start thinking about [WordPress maintenance](#)
- promote the new site
 - contact old clients and fellow photographer-friends
 - share on your social media profiles (and newsletter if you have one)
 - think of more ways to [get backlinks](#)
- celebrate!

So there you have it, all the steps you need to take to have a smooth website launch.

The middle task in there, the actual launching of the site, is very technical in nature, so you should hire a web-designer to handle that for you (if you don't have one already).

If you've just launched a new photography website after following this checklist, congrats! Good luck on your new adventure.



WordPress care plan

I also offer a WordPress maintenance service, if you're not comfortable managing the site after you launch it. I call it the "WordPress care plan" and you can read about it on my site here: <https://www.foregroundweb.com/web-design/wordpress-care-plan/>

An ongoing care plan is what can give you peace of mind that all software is up to date, secure against any unwelcome attacks and that the site is actually online and operational for your users.

Besides me being there to quickly restore the site if anything goes wrong, my site lists all the tasks I can handle for you. I can become your dedicated webmaster basically, in case you want to leave the responsibility of WP maintenance in the hands of a WP expert.

I'm offering this service to you with 20% off, simply visit:

<https://www.foregroundweb.com/wp-discount/>

And once again, if anything goes down, it's my responsibility, I take on that risk and I fix it ASAP, for free, won't charge you anything extra. So you can sleep easier at night :-)

There's only a limited number of monthly maintenance projects I can support (to honestly have enough time and attention for each site individually), so [email me](#) to reserve a spot.

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