

San Fernando Valley WordPress Meetup - Nov 1 - 2016

Topic: WordPress Basics - How to get the most from your website

Thanks everyone for coming tonight!

Here is an outline of what we're going to talk about.

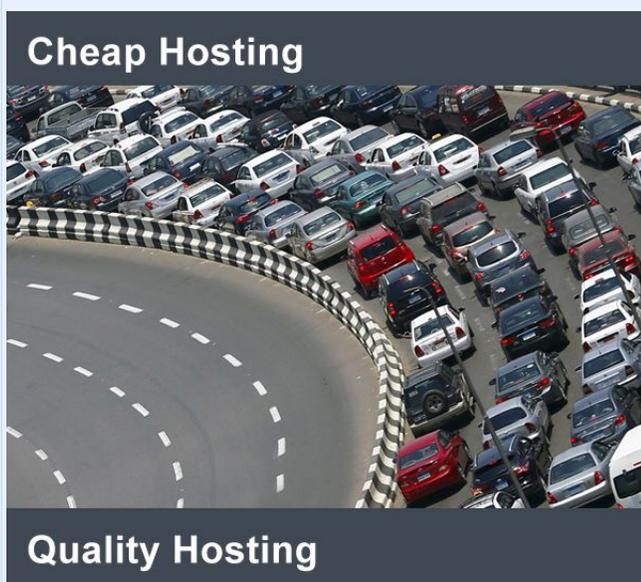
1. Hosting: Why a cheap host can tank your website.
2. How to choose a good plugin.
3. How to choose a good theme.
4. How to add an advanced contact form with Contact Form 7.
5. How to create a menu based on keywords.
6. How to use CSS Live Editor.
7. How to use the Customizer.

Feel free to ask questions - on topic or off!



1. Hosting: Why a cheap host can tank your website.

Choosing the right hosting service is the first most important decision you make when you start to set up your website.



Why spend more money on hosting.

1. Your host service is where your website lives.
2. Most hosting is shared hosting which means you have hundreds and probably thousands of “roommates”.
3. All your “roommates” are using the same door to get in and out. This can slow your website way down as you stand in line to “leave”.
4. Inexpensive shared hosting also might have older servers with software that isn’t running the most recent version (big problem with PHP).
5. Older servers and software, along with your many “roommates”, will slow down your load speed. Slow load speed is a major reason Google will reduce your rankings against your competitors (think phones).
6. You can look here to see how many “roommates” (IP neighbors) you have with your current site:
tcpiputils.com/domain-neighbors
7. You can check your website load speed here:
tools.pingdom.com/
developers.google.com/speed/



2. How to choose a good plugin.

I recommend getting plugins from only WordPress.org/plugins unless you have a lot of experience vetting plugins.

Here is an example of an excellent plugin - [Contact Form 7](#).



Requires: 4.4 or higher

1. Compatible up to: 4.6.1
2. Last Updated: 4 weeks ago
3. Active Installs: 1+ million

4. Ratings



4.5 out of 5 stars

| | | |
|---------|--|-----|
| 5 stars | | 815 |
| 4 stars | | 88 |
| 3 stars | | 27 |
| 2 stars | | 21 |
| 1 star | | 79 |

5. Author



Takayuki Miyoshi
10 plugins

1. Compatibility: 4.6.1

Needs to be compatible up to at least 4.0 or higher.

2. Last Updated: 4 weeks ago

Should be updated in the last month, no more than 3 months.

3. Active Installs: 1+ million

More than 30,000 is good, less than 10,000 and you should give the plugin a pass.

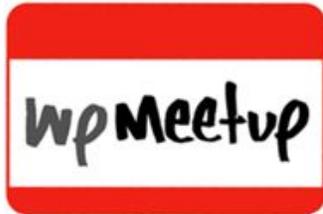
4. Ratings: 4.5 out of 5 stars

Above 4.5 is good. Less than 4 and you should give the plugin a pass.

5. Author: 10 plugins

The author has several plugins with excellent ratings (important but not essential).

Here is an example of a plugin you should NOT install - [WP Meetup](#).

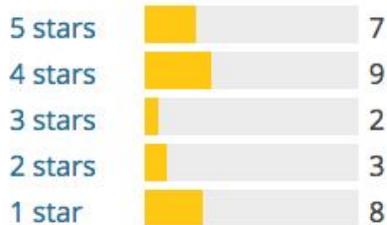


Requires: 3.7 or higher

1. Compatible up to: 4.1.0
2. Last Updated: 2 years ago
3. Active Installs: 1,000+
4. Ratings



3.1 out of 5 stars



5. Author

Nuanced Media
3 plugins

1. Compatibility: 4.1.0

WordPress is currently on version 4.6.1. Version 4.1.0 was released in December, 2014. The Plugin needs to be compatible up to at least 4.2 or higher.

2. Last Updated: 2 years ago

Plugins should be updated in the 30 days, no more than 3 months.

3. Active Installs: 1,000+

More than 30,000 is good, less than 10,000 and you should give the plugin a pass.

4. Ratings: 3.1 out of 5

Above 4.5 is good. Less than 4 and you should give the plugin a pass.

5. Author: 3 plugins

The author has 3 plugins. This is minimum for a good plugin author.

Here are 3 ways to find and install plugins (*and themes*).

1. Search and add from dashboard
2. Search from WordPress.org and add from the dashboard
3. Upload
 - a. *I don't recommend installing 3rd party plugins without a lot of research*



3. How to choose a good theme.

Here is an example of an excellent theme - [Customizr](#).



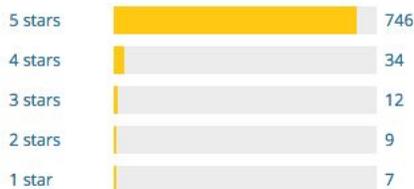
1. Last updated: October 17, 2016

2. Active Installs: 100,000+

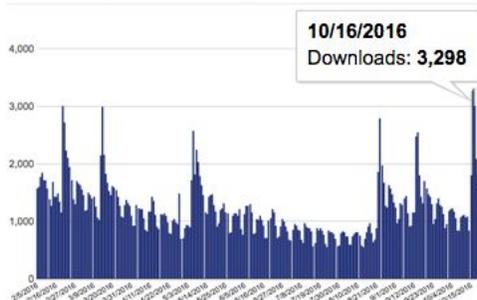
[Theme Homepage](#) →

3. Ratings

★★★★★ 5 out of 5 stars.



4. Downloads Per Day



1. Last Updated: Within 30 days

The theme should be updated at least every 90 days.

2. Active Installs: 100,000

This tracks how many people are actively using the theme, and not just the downloads, which is generally much higher.

3. Ratings: 5 out of 5 stars

Above 4.5 is good. Less than 4 and you should give the theme a pass.

4. Downloads Per Day: 1,000+ per day

As you can see, this theme is consistently downloaded. The demand is steady and not diminishing.

Free vs Premium Themes

Free themes you find on the internet *can* have malware and viruses. Try to choose a free theme from WordPress.org/themes.

If you want to pay for a theme, I recommend Themeforest.net.

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Here is an example of a theme you should NOT install - [Beautiful](#)

Beautiful By AmirMasoud



1. Last updated: August 9, 2015

2. Active Installs: 400+

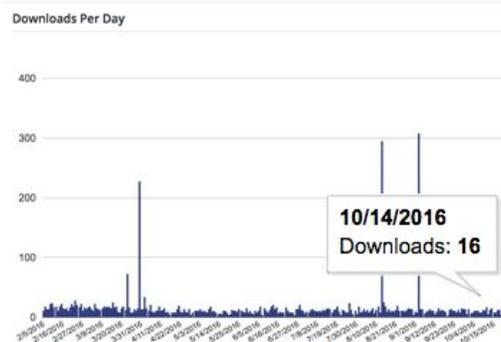
[Theme Homepage](#) →

3. Ratings

★★★★★ 5 out of 5 stars.



4. Downloads Per Day



1. Last Updated: Over 365 days ago

This theme is not being updated by its developer. A theme should be updated at least every 90 days.

2. Active Installs: 400+

This tracks how many people are actively using the theme, and not just the downloads which is generally much higher.

3. Ratings: 5 out of 5 stars

Although this theme has 5 Stars, it only has 3 ratings. You need at least 20 ratings to get an idea of any problems the theme is having.

4. Downloads Per Day: 16+ per day

A good theme should be downloaded over 50+ times per day.

Free vs Premium Themes

Free themes you find on the internet *can* have malware and viruses. Try to choose a free theme from WordPress.org/themes.

If you want to pay for a theme, I recommend Themeforest.net.



4. How to add an advanced contact form with Contact Form 7.

From the dashboard go to **Contact > Add New**

1. This is the default Contact Form - "Add New"
2. Text used as "Placeholder"
3. Can add Required Fields
4. Add "Label" manually

```
<label> Your Name (required)
  [text* your-name] </label>

<label> Your Email (required)
  [email* your-email] </label>

<label> Subject
  [text your-subject] </label>

<label> Your Message
  [textarea your-message] </label>

[submit "Send"]
```

You can add the following:

1. Text box
2. Email box
3. Add a URL
4. Add a Telephone
5. Date
6. Text area
7. Drop-down menu
8. Checkboxes
9. Radio Buttons
10. Acceptance
11. Quiz
12. reCAPTCHA
13. File
14. Submit

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How the form looks as code, and how the form looks on the website.

The image displays the WordPress Form Builder interface. On the left, the 'Form' tab is active, showing a list of form fields: text, email, URL, tel, number, date, text area, drop-down menu, checkboxes, radio buttons, acceptance, quiz, reCAPTCHA, file, and submit. Below this list is a code editor showing the HTML code for a form. On the right, the rendered form is shown, which is a visual representation of the code. Red arrows point from the code editor to the rendered form, with labels: 'The coded form.' and 'How the form looks on the website.'

The coded form.

```
<label>Your Name (required)
  [text* your-name]</label>

<label>Your Email (required)
  [email* your-email]</label>

<label>Subject
  [text your-subject]</label>

<label>Your Message
  [textarea your-message]</label>

<label>Text Box
  [text text-216 placeholder "I am
a placeholder."]</label>

<label>Single-line URL
  [url url-565]</label>

<label>Telephone
  [tel tel-342]</label>

<label>Number
  [number number-755]</label>

<label>Dropdown Menu
[select menu-958 "One" "Two"
"Three"]</label>

<label>Checkbox
[checkbox checkbox-360 "One" "Two "
"Three"]</label>

<label> Acceptance
[acceptance acceptance-529] </label>

<label> File
[file file-787] </label>

[submit "Send"]
```

How the form looks on the website.

Your Name (required)

Your Email (required)

Subject

Your Message

Text Box

Single-line URL

Telephone

Number

Dropdown Menu

Checkbox
 One Two Three

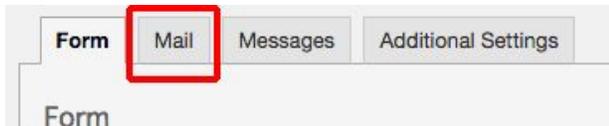
Acceptance

File
 No file chosen

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How to set up the form to send the information to your email.

1. Click on "Mail"
2. Add the custom fields
3. Email results ==>



Add Custom Fields

```
From: [your-name] <[your-email]>
Subject: [your-subject]

Your Name
[text* your-name]

Your Email
[email* your-email]

Subject
[text your-subject]

Your Message
[textarea your-message]

Text Box
[text text-216 placeholder "I am a placeholder."]

Single-line URL
[url url-565]

<label>Telephone
[tel tel-342]

Number
[number number-755]

Dropdown Menu
[select menu-958 "One" "Two" "Three"]

Checkbox
[checkbox checkbox-360 "One" "Two" "Three"]

Acceptance
[acceptance acceptance-529]

File
[file file-787]

--
This e-mail was sent from the Contact Us form.
```

SFV WordPress Demo "SVF Demo Contact Form 7"

John Bolyard <wordpress@arianedavid.com>
to me ▾

From: John Bolyard <john@johnbolyard.com>
Subject: SVF Demo Contact Form 7

Your Name
John Bolyard

Your Email
john@johnbolyard.com

Subject
SVF Demo Contact Form 7

Your Message
SVF Demo Contact Form 7

Text Box
SVF Demo Contact Form 7

Single-line URL
<http://JohnBolyard.com>

Telephone
[2063356162](tel:2063356162)

Number
12

Dropdown Menu
One

Checkbox
One

Acceptance
1

File

This e-mail was sent from the Contact Us form.

How to add your form to a page or post.

Edit Contact Form [Add New](#)

SVF Demo Contact Form 7

Copy this shortcode and paste it into your post, page, or text widget content:

```
[contact-form-7 id="1181" title="SVF Demo Contact Form 7"]
```

1. Copy the [shortcode] and paste it into a post, page, or text widget content.
2. [contact-form-7 id="1181" title="SVF Demo Contact Form 7"]

Edit Post [Add New](#)

SVF Demo Contact Form 7 DRAFT ONLY!!

Permalink: <http://arianedavid.com/svf-demo-contact-form-7-draft-only/> [Edit](#)

[Get Shortlink](#)

[Add Media](#)

Visual Text

B *I* ABC

Paragraph [U](#)

```
[contact-form-7 id="1181" title="SVF Demo Contact Form 7"]
```

3. How the Form displays. ==>

SVF Demo Contact Form 7

Your Name (required)

Your Email (required)

Subject

Your Message

Text Box

Single-line URL

Telephone

Number

Dropdown Menu

Checkbox

One Two Three

Acceptance

File

No file chosen



5. How to Create Your Menu Based on Keywords

How to Create a Keyword Outline of Your Website

Menu Structure

- 1 The History of Photography Page ▾
- 1 150 Years of Photographers Page ▾
 - 2 Imogen Cunningham 1883 *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 Man Ray 1890 *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 Gordon Parks 1912 *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 Diane Arbus 1923 *sub item* Page ▾
 - 3 Carrie Mae Weems 1953 *sub item* Page ▾
- 1 Vintage Cameras Page ▾
 - 2 1900 The Brownie Camera *sub item* Page ▾
 - 3 1905 Folding Pocket Kodak *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 1931 Gold-Plated Leica *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 1971 Polaroid Supercolor 1000 *sub item* Page ▾
- 1 The Future of Photography Page ▾
 - 2 Virtual Reality *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 Smart Cameras *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 Image Recognition *sub item* Page ▾
 - 2 Light Field Camera *sub item* Page ▾
- 1 Contact Us Page ▾

The menu is a keyword outline of your website.

1. Start with the more general keywords on the top of the navigation menu. [1]
2. Then create more specific keywords page for dropdowns. [2]
3. It's recommended to stay within 2 levels for most of your menu.
4. You can add a third level if it's relevant. [3]

Why is This Important

1. Google knows what your website is about by your navigation framework.
2. Each page should have only one main topic.
3. Sub-pages (dropdowns) needs to be specifically related to the top page.
4. Pages should have keyword title and not generic phrases like "Our Services"



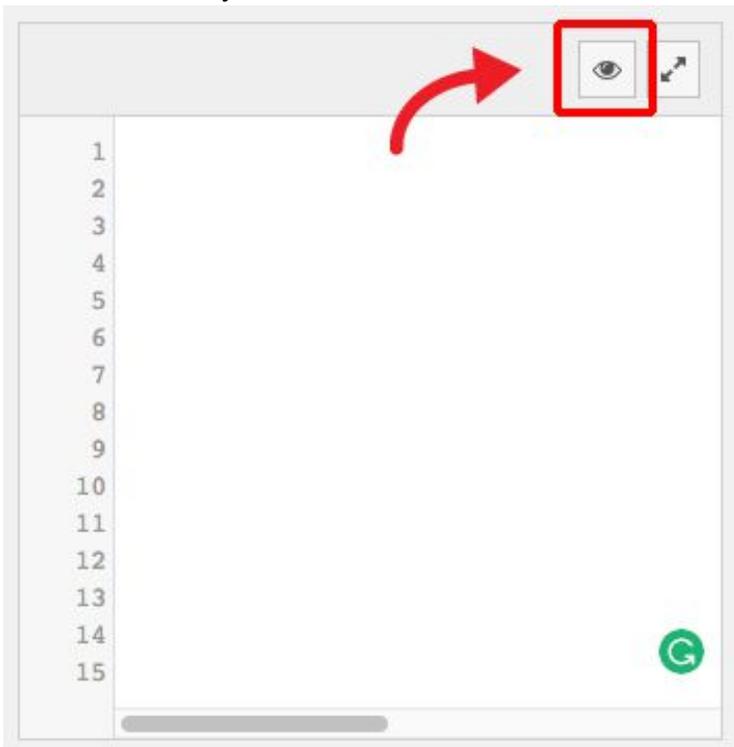
6. How to use a CSS Live Editor

1. Appearance > Custom CSS



This demo is using the [SiteOrigin CSS Editor](#).

2. Click on the "Eye"

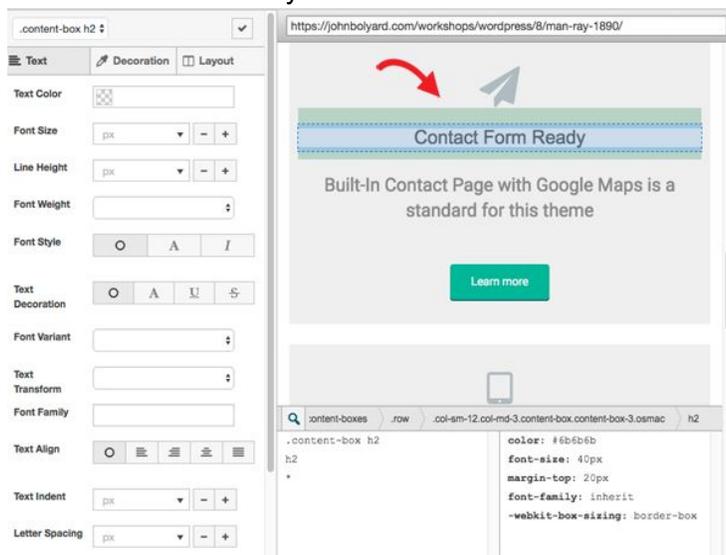


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3. Add the page URL you want to edit

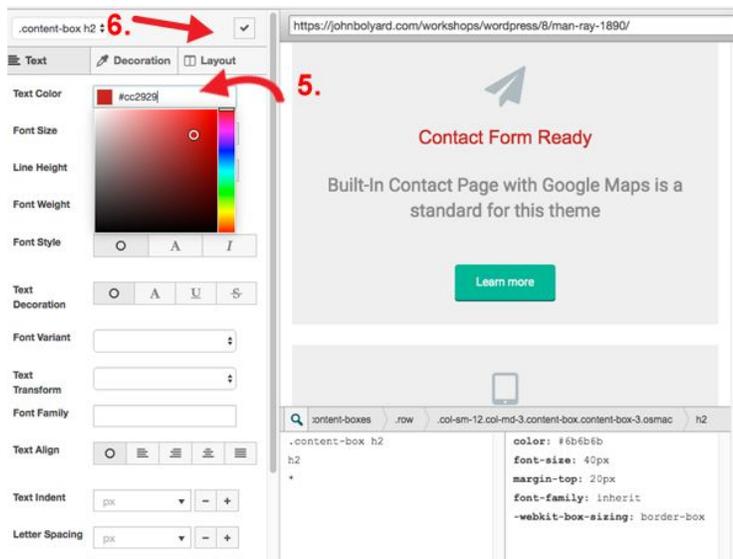


4. Select the element you want to edit.



5. Change the element properties-color, size etc.

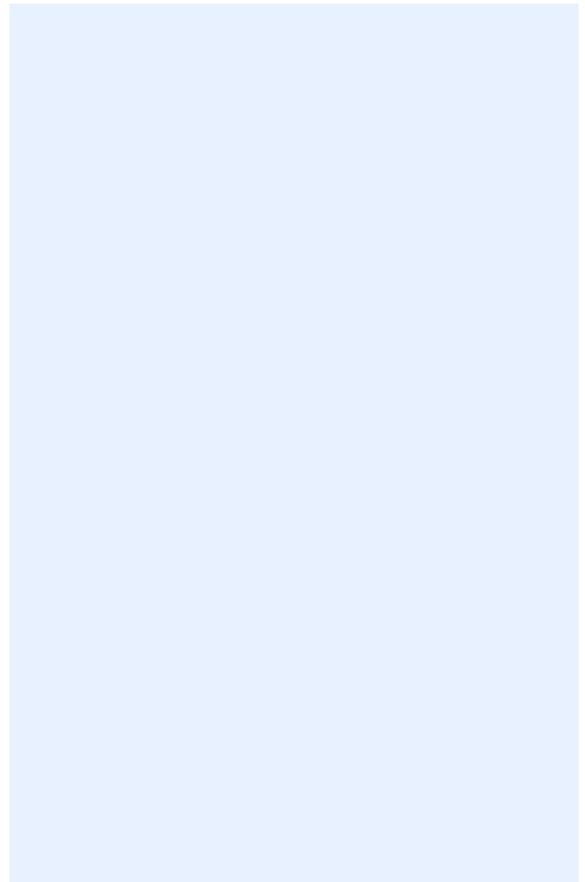
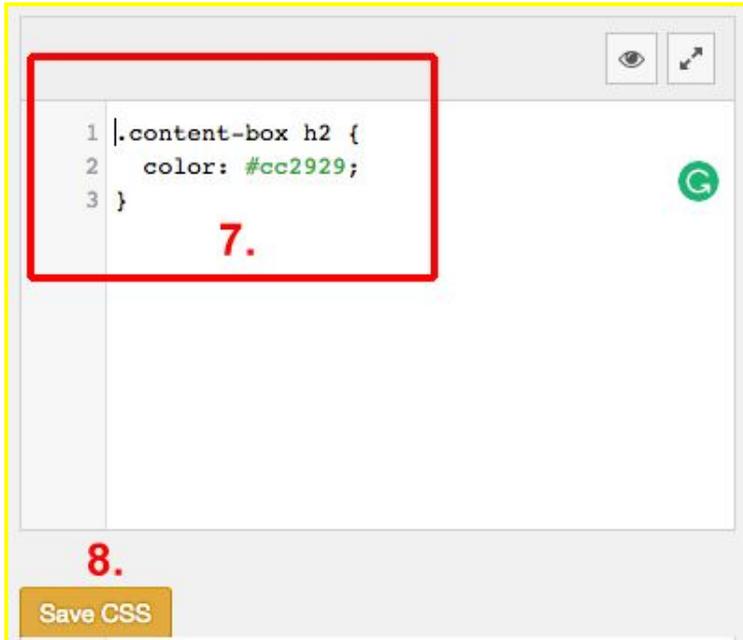
6. Click on the "Checkmark"



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7. The CSS Editor will insert the attribute (value) into the custom CSS stylesheet.

8. Click "Save CSS"



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7. How to use the WordPress Customizer

Let's look at 4 different themes and check out how their customizers work.

Active: Moesia [Customize](#)

Active: Vantage Premium [Customize](#)

Active: evolve [Customize](#)

Active: Twenty Sixteen [Customize](#)