

HANDS-ON WORKSHOP: From Coding to CMS: Build Your Website in 7 Easy Steps with WordPress

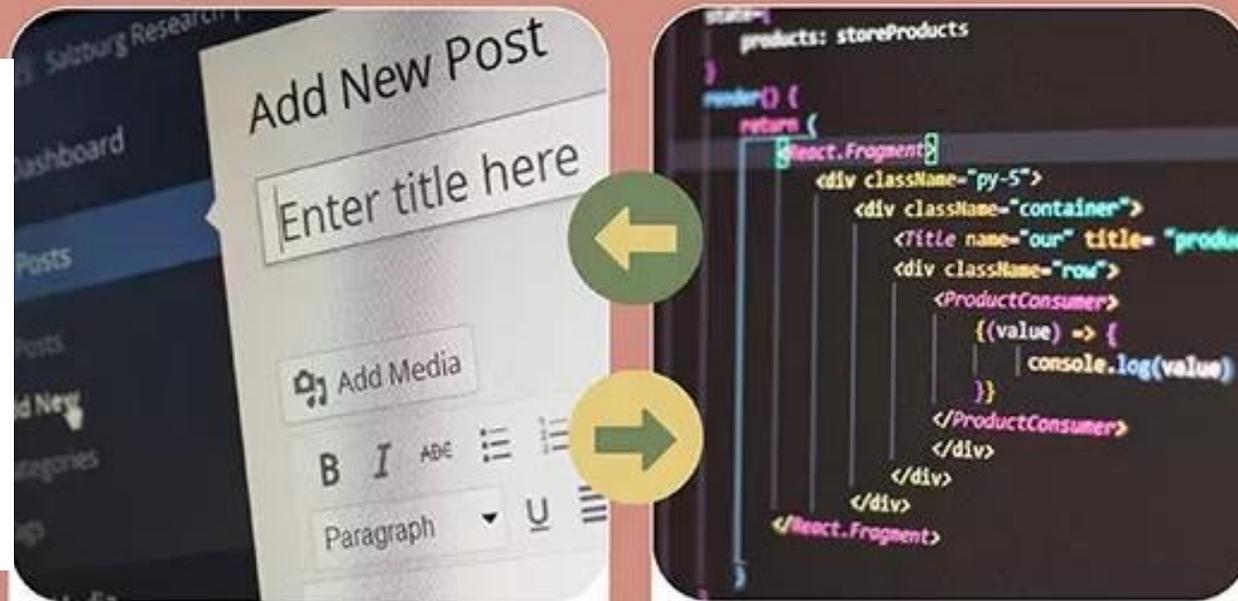
Mukalele Rogers



What is a Content Management System?

- A Content Management System (CMS) is a software application that allows users to create, manage, update, and publish digital content on a website without needing to write code for every change.

CMS → You **design, manage and update** the website layout and content through an interface / dashboard.



CMS

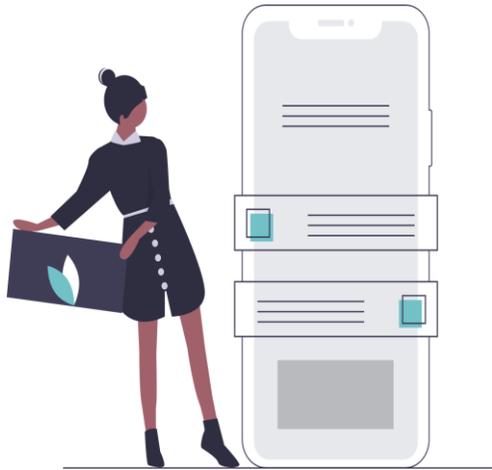
HARDCODING

← HARDCODING: You **develop** the website structure, content and styles by manually editing files directly using HTML, CSS etc.

CMS vs Coding – Use Case Comparison

Parameter / Scenario	Coding	CMS
Small static website (few pages, rarely updated)	✓	
Website requiring frequent content updates by non-technical users		✓
Full control over design and performance	✓	
Rapid development with limited time		✓
Learning core web development concepts	✓	
Easy integration of features (forms, SEO, galleries, etc)		✓

A competent web developer must understand **both coding and CMS usage** because:

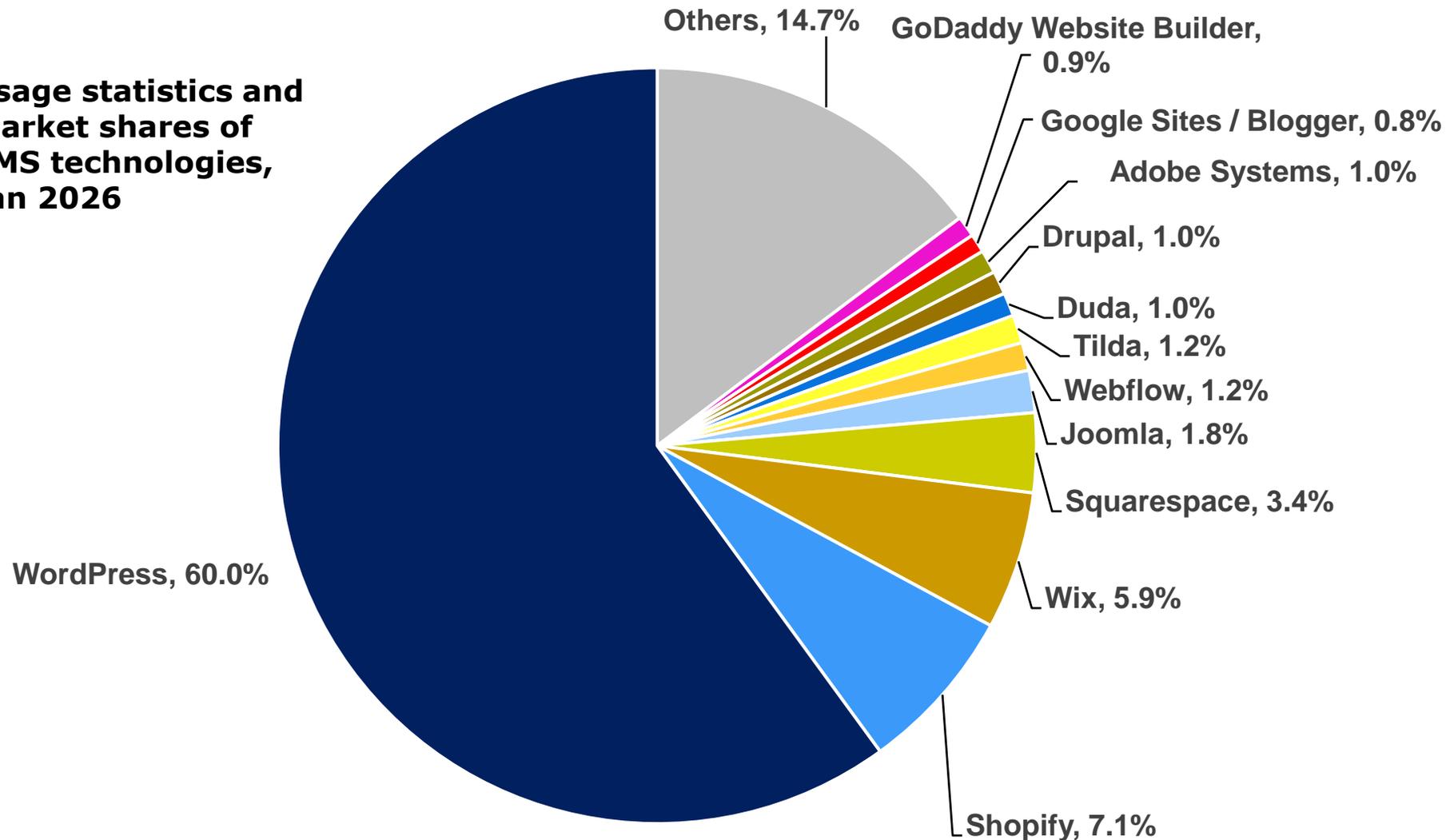


- CMS platforms excel in scalability, content management, collaboration, and extensibility.
- CMS platforms reflect popular real-world industry practice.
- CMS separates content from code, providing a dashboard for managing content
- Coding knowledge enables advanced **customization and troubleshooting** in CMS projects.
- Hard-coding develops deep technical understanding of how the web works.
- Hard-coding excels in simplicity, speed, performance, and foundational learning.



Examples of Popular Content Management Systems

Usage statistics and market shares of CMS technologies, Jan 2026



WordPress is the Most Popular CMS software, with 60% market share in Jan 2026, according to W3Techs

Source:

<https://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content-management> 19/01/2026

Introduction to WordPress

- WordPress is a free, open-source Content Management System (CMS) used to create and manage websites through a user-friendly dashboard.
- Originally built for blogging, WordPress now supports business websites, school sites, news portals, portfolios, and e-commerce stores.
- Its popularity comes from a large collection of themes (for design) and plugins (for added functionality such as forms, SEO, and security).
- WordPress has a large global community, regular updates, and strong hosting support, making it reliable and widely adopted.
- Because it is easy to learn yet highly flexible, WordPress is suitable for both beginners and professional developers.



Getting Started With WordPress

- In this session we practically do the following steps:

1. Install WordPress Locally or Online
2. Login to the dashboard
3. Create Pages
4. Select and customize a theme,
5. Setup a navigation menu
6. Create Posts
7. Add and integrate plugins as may be needed

Resources: Well organized beginner level standard lessons on WordPress are available at learn.wordpress.org, with many other tutorials on YouTube

Learn WordPress Grow your WordPress skills w

Search for resources 

Get Started

Learning Pathways help you build your skills progressively so you can go fro

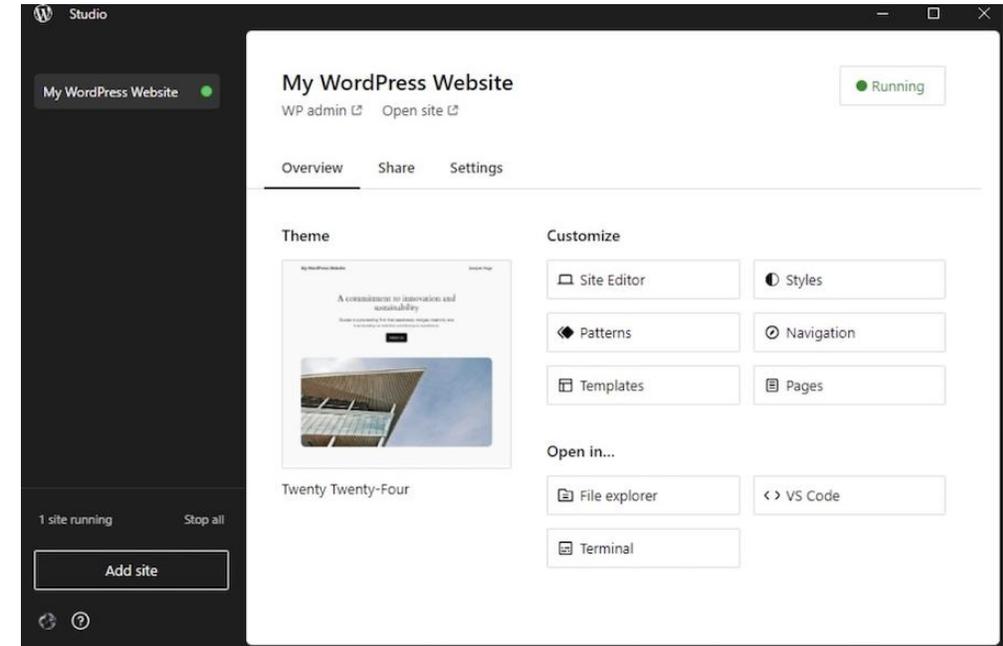
Start using WordPress

Learn the basics to create and manage your own website.



Step 1. Install WordPress (Local or Online)

- WordPress can freely be downloaded from wordpress.org and installed locally (for practice) or online (for live websites).
- Local server tools that can run WordPress include: XAMPP, WAMP and the new WordPress Studio.
- Online installation requires:
 - web hosting
 - a Domain name
 - Most hosting providers offer one-click WordPress installation via a Control Panel. E.g pantheon.io and webservices.sharebility.net offer a free plan for beginners practice

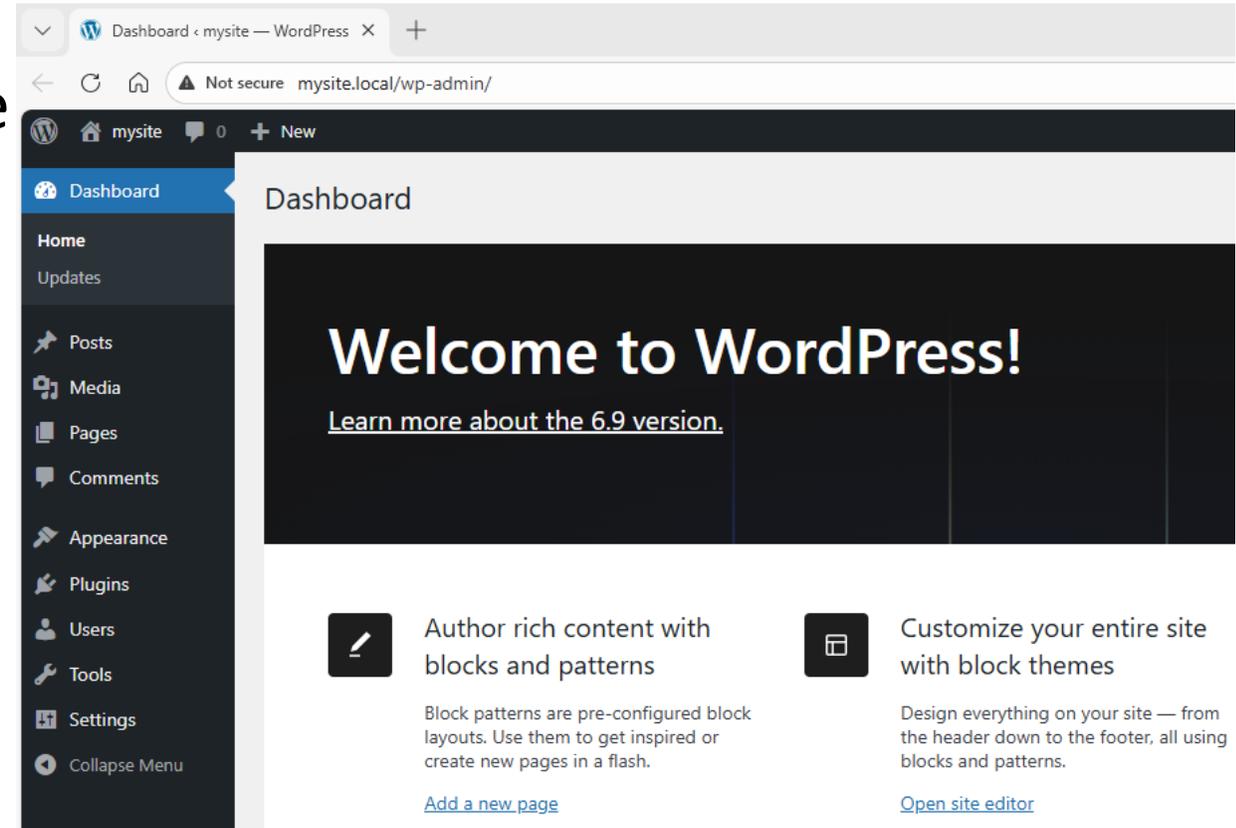


Hands-On Activity:

- Visit developer.wordpress.com/studio
Download and install WordPress Studio on your computer.
- Click "Add Site," name your site, and continue to set it up with default options
- Note the local URL (e.g., <http://mysite.local>)

Step 2: Log in to the WordPress Dashboard

- The dashboard is the admin interface where you manage your site's content, settings, and features.
- You need a username and password set during WordPress installation. (check Studio's site settings for details).



Hands-On Activity:

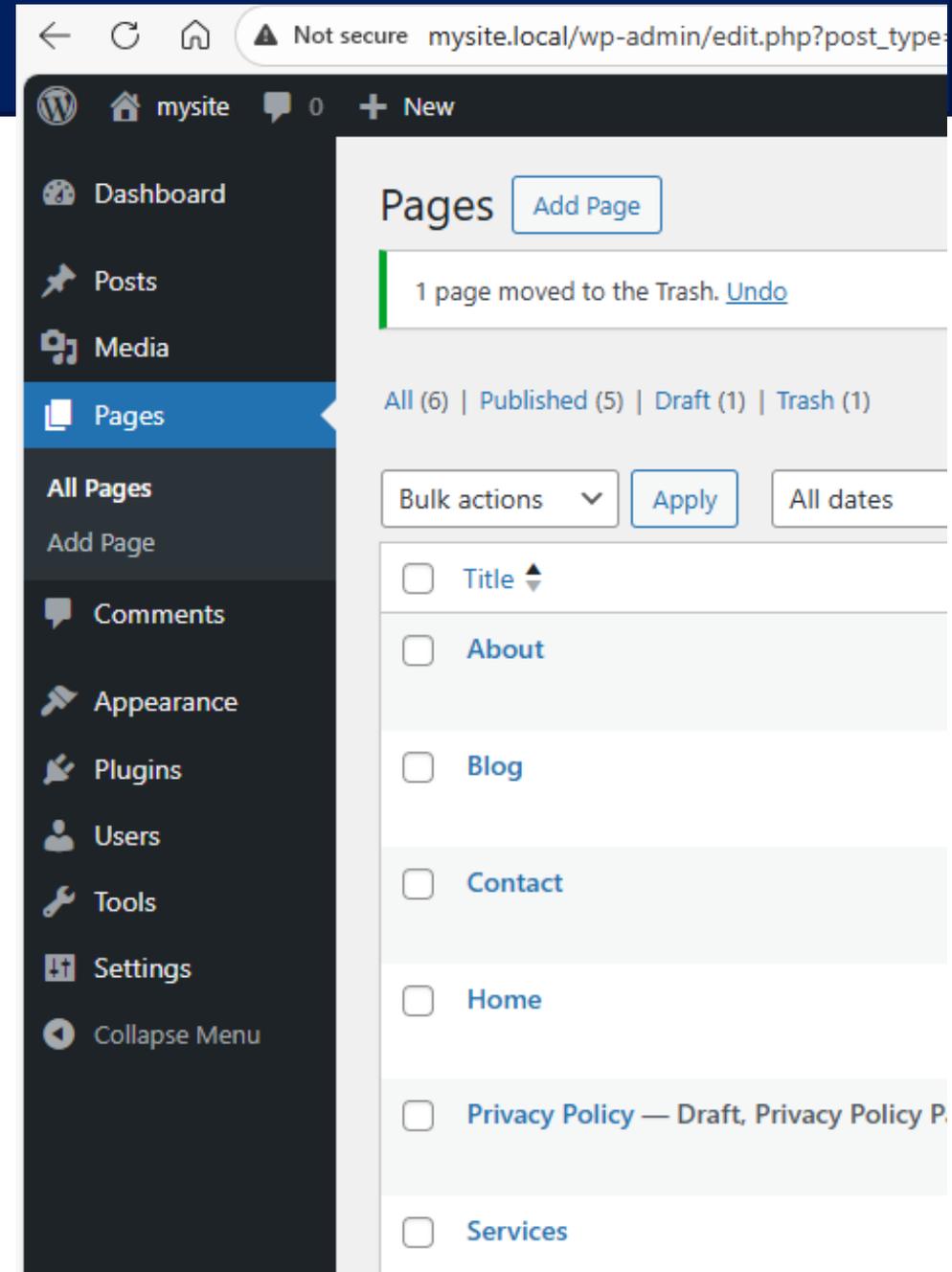
- a) Open your local site in Studio and navigate to /wp-admin (e.g., <http://mysite.local/wp-admin>). Enter your username and password.
- b) Explore the left-hand menu for quick access to posts, pages, and settings.

Step 3: Create Pages

Pages are static content like "About Us" or "Contact," unlike posts which are time-based.

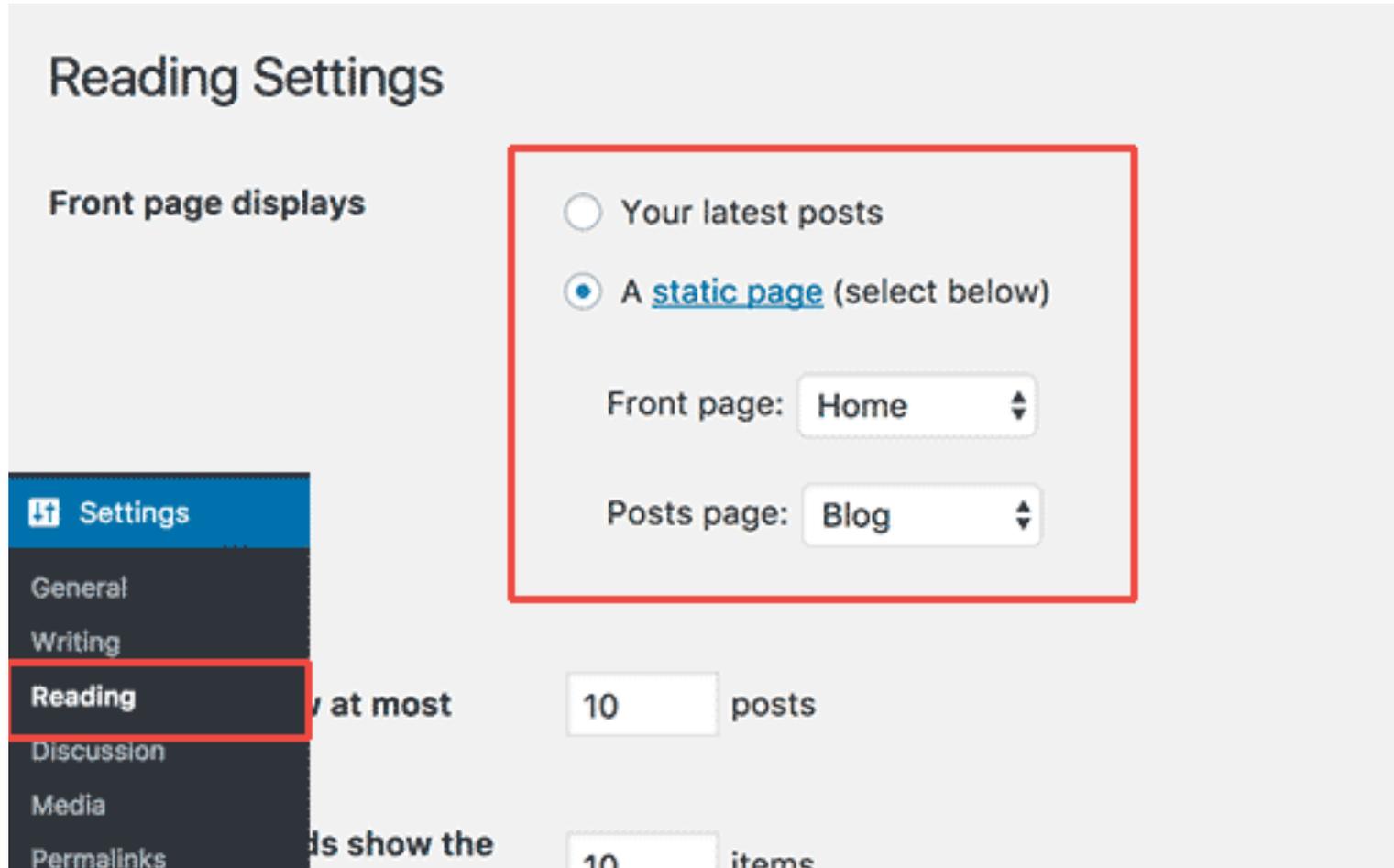
Hands-on Activity: From the dashboard,

- a) Go to Pages > Add New
- b) Enter a title and add blocks (e.g., Paragraph, Image - Using the Block Editor (Gutenberg) for drag-and-drop content creation.).
- c) Use the settings sidebar for featured images, excerpts, or templates.
- d) Publish or save as draft, then preview.
- e) Create at least 5 pages for your business site i.e Home | About | Services | Blog | Contact
- f) Delete / Trash any unwanted pages e.g the default Sample Page



Step 3: Create Pages

- g) Visit the Settings » Reading page in your WordPress admin dashboard. Under the 'Front page displays' option, click on "A static page" and then select your 'Home' page which you created earlier, and ' Blog' as your posts pages.
- h) Click on the 'Save Changes' button at the bottom of the page to store your changes.



Step 4: Select and Customize a Theme

A theme controls your site's design and layout. Block themes (e.g., Twenty Twenty-Five) support full-site editing; classic themes use customizers. Start with free themes from the repository.

- b) Now Go to Appearance > Themes > Add New>
- c) Upload / search and install a the selected theme.
- d) Activate it, then go to Appearance > Site Editor.
- e) Adjust colors, fonts, header, and layout in the Site Editor and add a site logo.
- f) Preview the changes on your home page and revert if needed.

Hands-on Activity:

- a) Go to WordPress.org/Themes and explore / preview several themes available. Choose one with good ratings and good usage from a trusted developer and download it

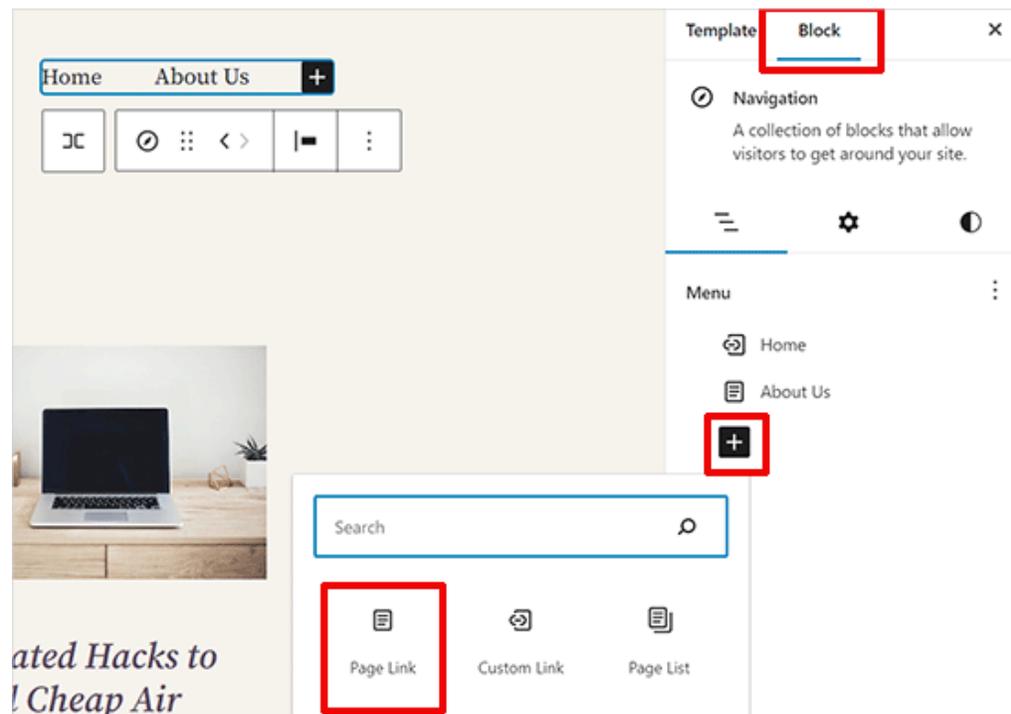
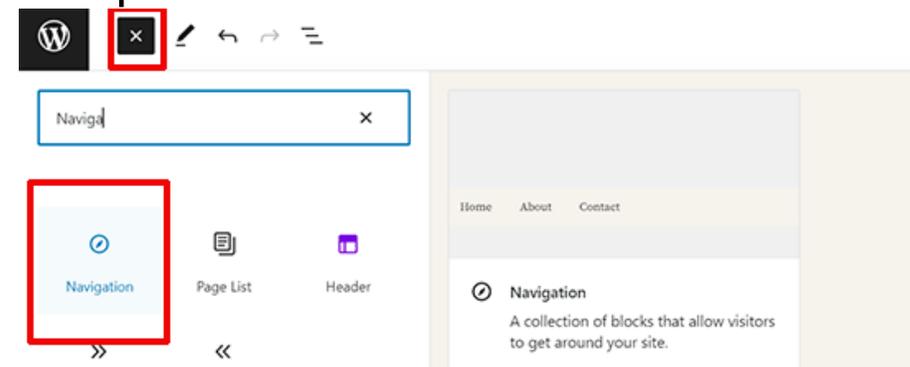
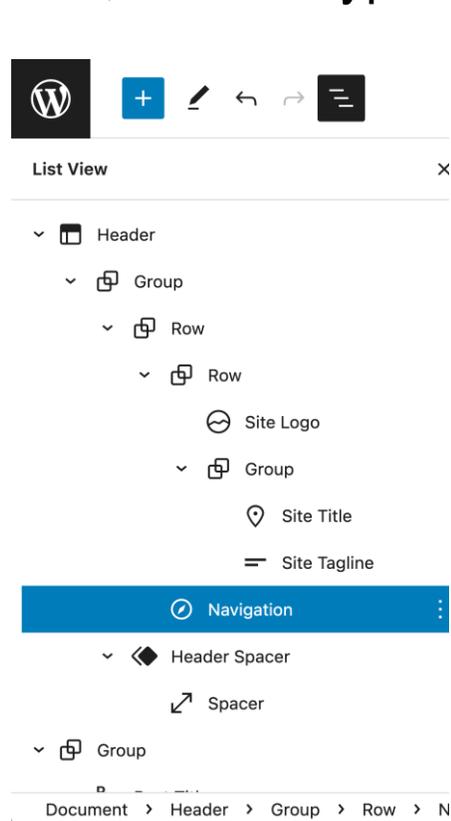
The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Add Themes' interface. The top navigation bar includes 'mysite', 'New', and 'Howdy, admin'. The main content area is titled 'Add Themes' and features an 'Upload Theme' button. Below this, there are filters for '400' results, 'Popular', 'Latest', 'Block Themes', and 'Favorites', along with a 'Feature Filter' icon. A search bar contains the text 'company'. The main display area shows three theme preview cards: 'CargoLink' (Reliable Cargo Solutions Delivered On Time), a theme with a truck and 'Fast, Reliable, and Secure Transport Every Time', and 'TECH' (Find Best For Big Ideas Tech Company With Us). The left sidebar is visible, with 'Appearance' highlighted and 'Themes' selected below it.

Step 5: Setup a Navigation Menu

Navigation menus help users browse your site, and are typically setup in the header / footer.

Hands-on Activity: In the Site Editor (Appearance > Editor),

- Use the List view to select the Navigation Block in the header, or add a new one.
- Choose an existing menu or start empty.
- Add links to pages/posts by searching and selecting; create submenus by nesting items.
- Adjust alignment, colors, and mobile toggle in settings panel; save changes.
- Run the site & test your menu links.

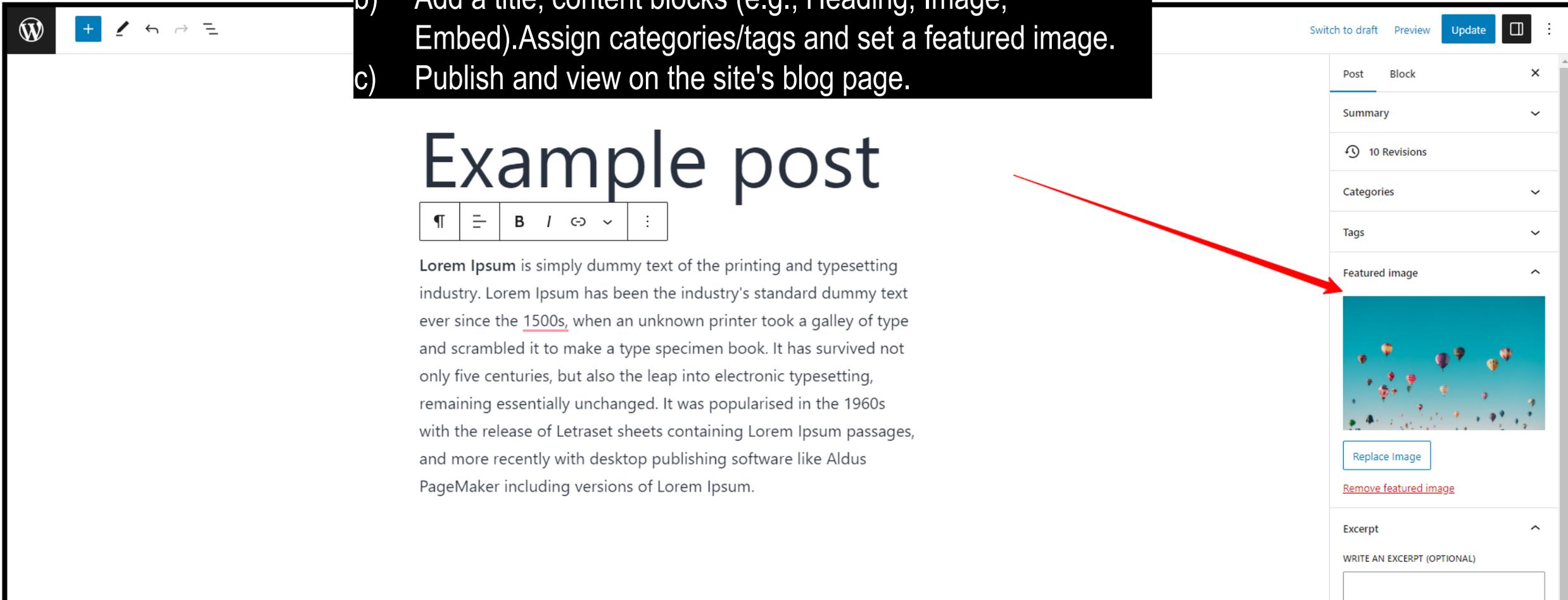


Step 6: Create Posts

Posts are dynamic, blog-style content organized by date and categories. They're great for news or articles, appearing in feeds.

Hands-on Activity: In the Dashboard

- Go to Posts > Add New.
- Add a title, content blocks (e.g., Heading, Image, Embed). Assign categories/tags and set a featured image.
- Publish and view on the site's blog page.



The image shows a screenshot of the WordPress dashboard. On the left, a portion of the post editor is visible, showing the title "Example post" and a rich text editor with a paragraph of Lorem Ipsum text. On the right, the sidebar contains several settings sections: "Post" (with "Block" selected), "Summary", "10 Revisions", "Categories", "Tags", "Featured image" (with a red arrow pointing to a hot air balloon image and a "Replace Image" button), and "Excerpt" (with a "WRITE AN EXCERPT (OPTIONAL)" field).

Example post

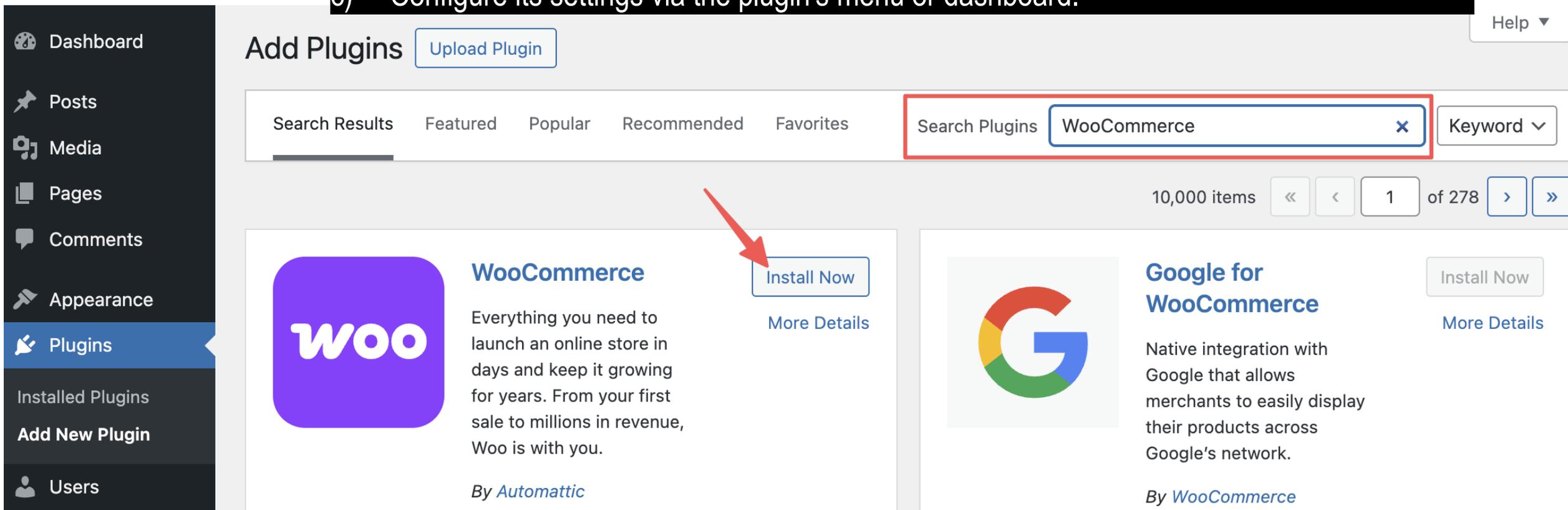
Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting, remaining essentially unchanged. It was popularised in the 1960s with the release of Letraset sheets containing Lorem Ipsum passages, and more recently with desktop publishing software like Aldus PageMaker including versions of Lorem Ipsum.

Step 7: Add & Integrate Plugins as May Be Needed

Plugins extend WordPress functionality, like adding forms, a shop, an LMS, a library or SEO tools. Always choose reputable ones from the official directory to avoid security risks.

Hands-on Activity: In the Dashboard

- Go to Plugins > Add New.
- Search for a plugin (e.g. "WooCommerce" or Downloads Manager). Install and activate it.
- Configure its settings via the plugin's menu or dashboard.



The screenshot displays the WordPress 'Add Plugins' interface. On the left is a dark sidebar with navigation options: Dashboard, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, Appearance, Plugins (highlighted), Installed Plugins, Add New Plugin, and Users. The main content area is titled 'Add Plugins' and includes an 'Upload Plugin' button. Below this is a search bar with 'WooCommerce' entered, highlighted by a red box. The search results show two plugins: 'WooCommerce' and 'Google for WooCommerce'. The 'WooCommerce' plugin card features a purple 'WOO' logo, a description, and an 'Install Now' button highlighted with a red arrow. The 'Google for WooCommerce' card features a colorful 'G' logo and an 'Install Now' button. The bottom of the page shows pagination for 10,000 items, currently on page 1 of 278.

HANDS-ON WORKSHOP ACTIVITY

1. Use a CMS to create a professional, mobile responsive website for your company or organization. Include at least 6 pages, including one with a functional module such as an online shop, online courses or library.
2. Research about available free / trial web hosting services you can use to upload / publish your dynamic website to the world wide web

THANK YOU