



HOW TO MAKE A SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITE

Free, Step-by-Step guide from [WebsiteSetup.org](https://www.WebsiteSetup.org)

Creating a website doesn't need to be difficult.

And does it need to be expensive.

It's a common myth that you can't create a professional-looking website without spending \$3,000+ on web design or learning HTML, CSS and PHP.

In 2018, that's not true...

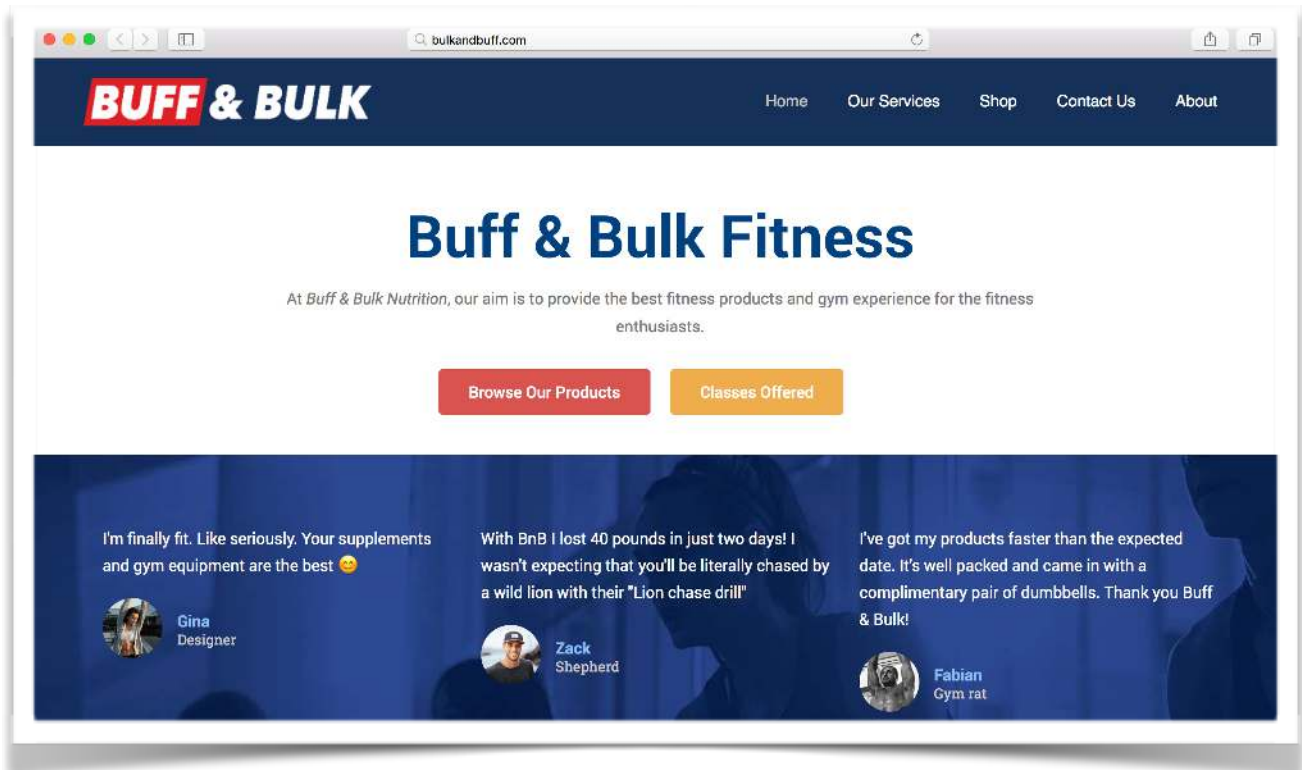
In fact, you can create a good-looking, functional website within an hour or two. And if you already have web hosting and a domain name, the rest of the process is completely FREE.

THIS STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE WORKS BEST FOR

- Small Business websites**
- Personal, Informative or Educative websites
- Online Stores/E-Commerce websites
- Blog websites
- Freelancer websites/Online Portfolios

In this example, I'll build a small business website for a company called "Buff & Bulk" (www.BulkBuff.com).

I'll use the free content management system called WordPress, and it'll take me about 1-2 hours.



To show you how easy (and simple) everything is, I'll also show you how to create these important pages:

- **Contact Us**
- **About**
- **Services**
- **Online Store**
- **Blog**

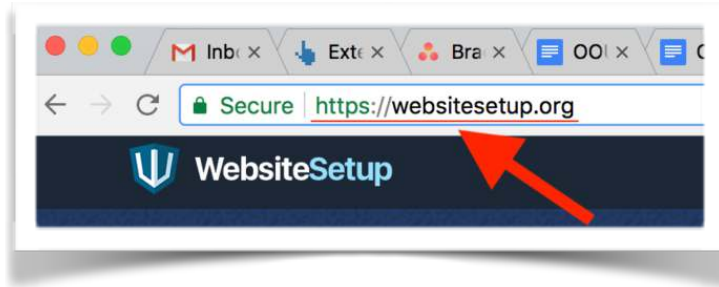
I personally don't know a better or easier way to build a website, and I promise you'll be satisfied with the end results. If not, [get in touch](#) with me and tell me what went wrong... I'm always curious to help or see the sites you've made.

[Ready to create your website today? Start from Step #1](#)

STEP 1: Get a Domain Name and Web Hosting

Here are the two main things that you need in order to make a website:

- **Domain name** – your website’s address on the internet. This website’s domain name, for example, is websitesetup.org.



DOMAIN NAME is your website’s home and address. If you don’t have a domain name, you can’t have a website.

- **Web hosting** – Servers where your website content is stored and from where it’s being served to whoever wants to read it.

WEB HOSTING is basically a cost for making sure your website is online for others to read and browse. Without a web hosting, you can’t have a website.

As I mentioned above, creating a website is completely free. No strings attached. However, the two other components – domain name and hosting – come with a price tag.

A domain name and hosting will cost you around \$3 – \$5 a month (together). That’s less than a coffee, so it won’t break the bank. Owning your own domain name looks far more professional than having your site on someone else’s domain (like yourbusiness.my-free-website.com), and it’s super affordable, too.

Having your own hosting will ensure your content loads quickly and your site won’t go down for hours at a time (pretty important for everyone who visits your pages.)

Where do I get a FREE domain name and hosting?

I've mostly used www.Bluehost.com as a web hosting and domain registrar.

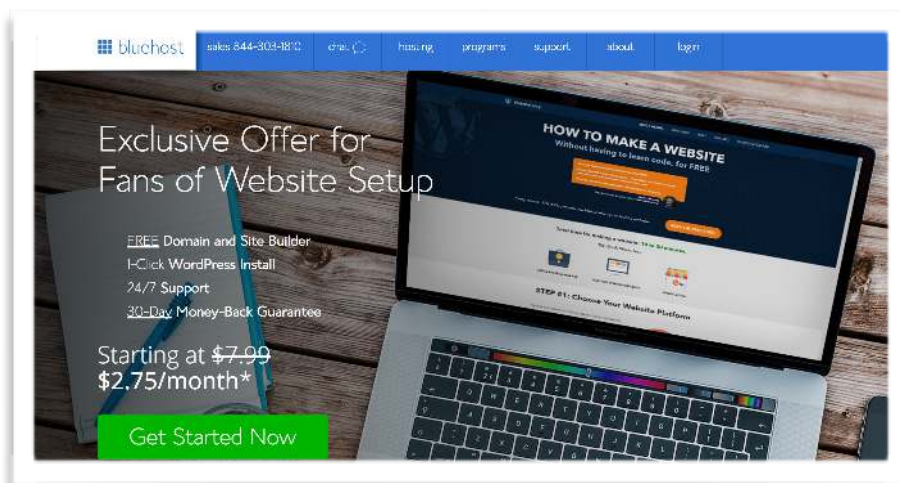
You can always do your own research, but it's worth checking these out. I've been using them for a while as they're affordable, have good customer service, and are currently throwing in a domain name for free.

When you get a domain name, you'll also get a personal email account(s):
you@yoursite.com – which is way more professional than a generic Gmail or Yahoo address.

Already have a domain name and hosting? Go ahead and skip to [step 2](#), where I'll explain how you can set up your website.

STEP 1: Go Bluehost.com

Remember: Since I'm using Bluehost myself, I've negotiated a special discount for WebsiteSetup.org visitors (67% OFF).



STEP 2: Choose Website Hosting Plan

Once you click “Get Started Now,” you’ll be taken to a page to select the hosting plan of your choice.

I went ahead and selected their “basic” option, which is a great choice for new websites. What’s more, at the moment they’re running a special discount of \$2.75/mo (as opposed to the usual rate of \$7.99/mo).

The “plus” and “prime” plans are great, but unless there are millions of people flooding your site each day, you probably won’t need all the extra bells and whistles they offer. Save your hard-earned cash and opt for the cheapest package to start out with.

	basic	plus	prime recommended
	normally \$7.99 \$2.75* per month	normally \$10.99 \$5.45* per month	normally \$14.99 \$5.45* per month
	select	select	select
websites	1	unlimited	unlimited
website space	50 GB	unmetered	unmetered
bandwidth	unmetered	unmetered	unmetered
performance	Standard	Standard	Standard
Included domains	1	1	1
parked domains	5	unlimited	unlimited

STEP 3: Pick a Domain Name

As an easy starting point:

- If you’re making a website for your business, your domain name should match your company name. For example: YourCompanyName.com
- If you’re planning to set up a website for yourself, then **YourName.com** can be a great option.

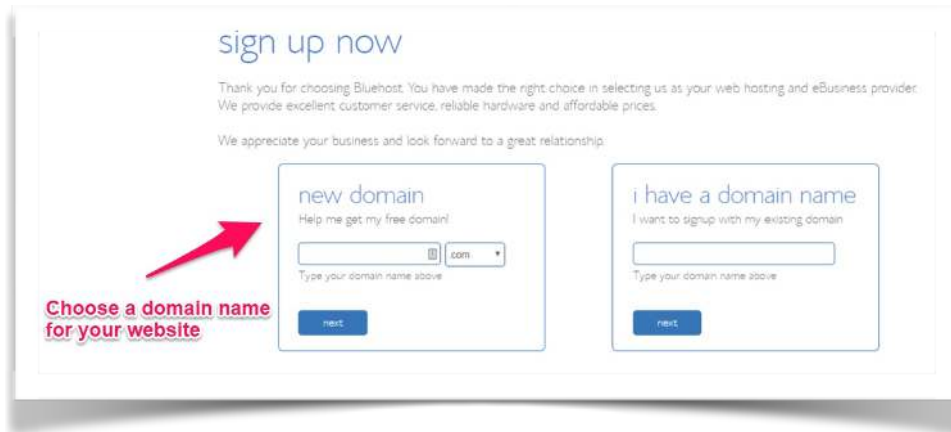
For this site (WebsiteSetup), I chose WebsiteSetup.org

Domain names usually end with .com, .org or .net, but in recent months, a huge amount of domain extensions (the end part of the web address, like .com) have come out, ranging from .agency to .pizza.

My best advice? Unless the extension perfectly describes what you have to offer, avoid weird extensions and go with .com, .net or .org – even then, see if you can find a more common name.

If you've already got a domain name, just enter it in and click "Next" on the "I have a domain name" form.

If you aren't ready to [choose a domain](#), you can do it at a later point in your website setup.



The screenshot shows a "sign up now" page with the following content:

- Header: "sign up now"
- Text: "Thank you for choosing Bluehost. You have made the right choice in selecting us as your web hosting and eBusiness provider. We provide excellent customer service, reliable hardware and affordable prices."
- Text: "We appreciate your business and look forward to a great relationship."
- Two main options for domain selection:
 - new domain**: "Help me get my free domain!". Includes a text input field, a dropdown menu set to ".com", and a "next" button. A red arrow points to this option with the text "Choose a domain name for your website".
 - i have a domain name**: "I want to sign up with my existing domain". Includes a text input field and a "next" button.

STEP 4: Fill In Your Details

To create your account, just enter your personal information on the "create your account" page.

You'll need to add in your first name, last name, country, street address, city, zip code, phone number, and email address. Your receipt will be sent to the email address you enter here.

It's optional to add your business name to this form, as well.

account information

All fields are required unless otherwise noted.

First Name

Last Name

(optional) Business Name

Country

Street Address

City

State

ZIP Code

Phone Number Ext.

*Email Address

Use an international number

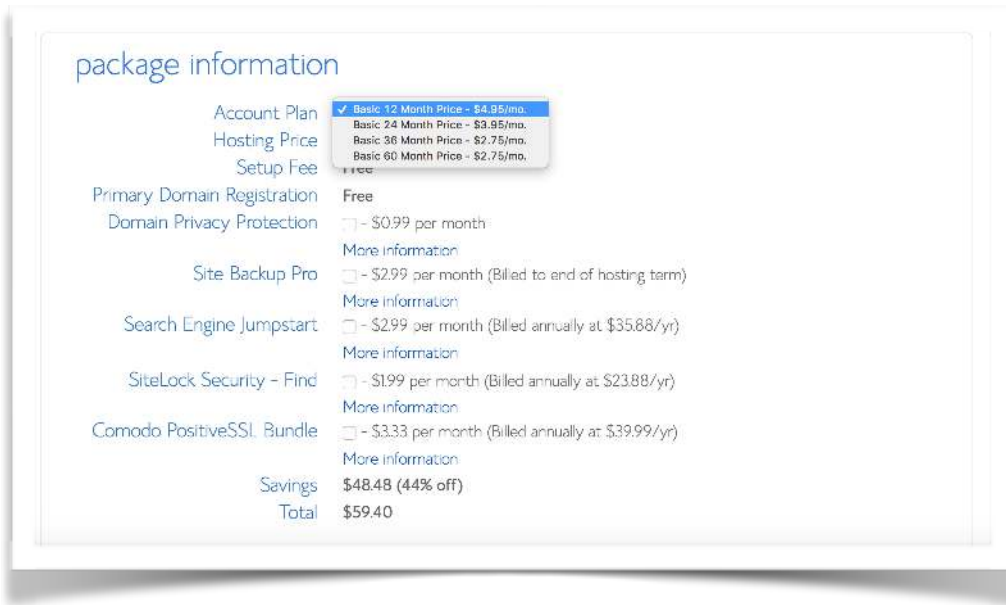
*Your receipt will be sent to this address.

Then, enter your payment information to continue.

STEP 5: Check Your “Package Information” and Finish Registration

The next step in registering for a Bluehost account is to select your plan and package.

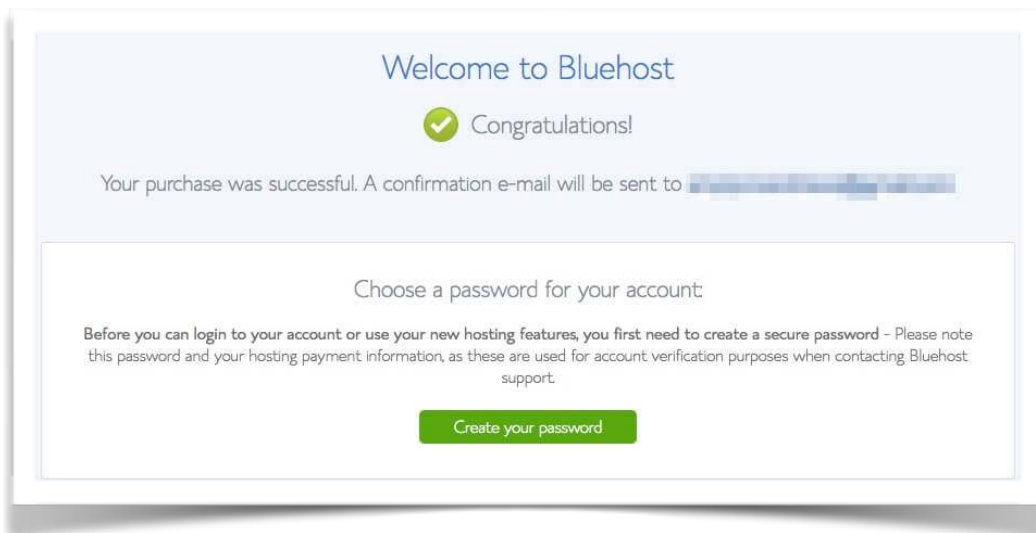
These are the last steps you’ll go through before your account creation is complete, so pay close attention to the extra options available, like Domain Privacy Protection.



- Domain Privacy Protection is only 99 cents more per month and keeps your personal information, such as your name and address, under wraps.
- If you want to keep your website and domain information anonymous, go ahead and spend the extra \$0.99 per month. If you don't, be sure to uncheck this box.

STEP 6: Create Your Password

Once you've paid and registered, you'll be able to create your password:



THINGS TO DO BEFORE THE NEXT STEP:

- ☑ Do some brainstorming to come up with a unique domain name that reflects your future website, business or blog.
- ☑ Secure your domain name and web hosting. For this I recommend [Bluehost.com](https://www.bluehost.com), but you can pick any other web host as long it's reliable and simple.

2. Install WordPress (FREE)

Have a web hosting and domain name? Awesome, you're halfway there.

Next, we'll install WordPress through your web hosting to your domain name.

WordPress is the most popular website-building platform for beginners. This tool allows users to create many different websites, from small business websites to online stores to one-page portfolio websites.



Creating a website on WordPress is really simple, and it's mobile-friendly, too.

Alternatively, you can start [learning HTML](#) and [CSS](#), but this takes months (if not years) to fully master. [Drupal](#) and [Joomla](#) are some [other popular CMS platforms](#), but they come with a bigger learning curve and are (perhaps) a little too robust...

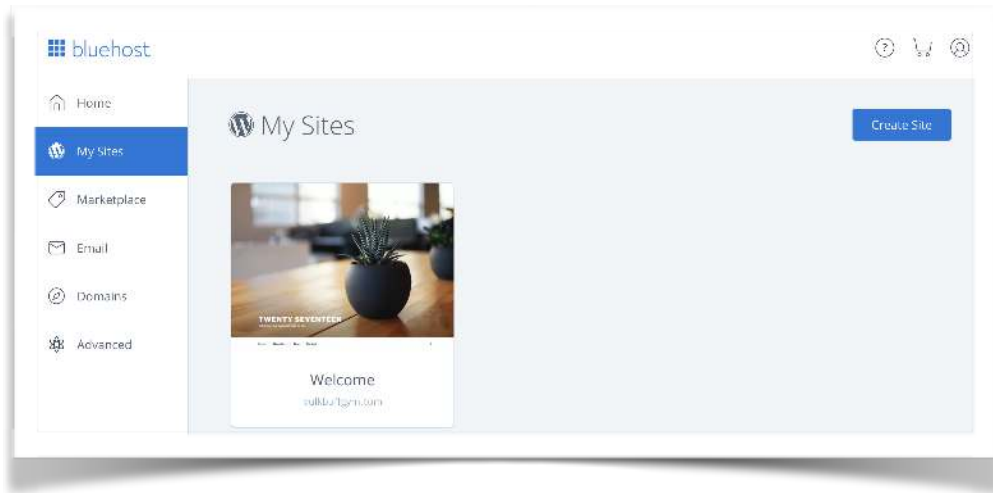
Hence the reason I recommend you stick with WordPress.

Most reliable and well-established hosting companies have integrated a one-click-installation for WordPress, which makes starting off a snap. If you signed up with [Bluehost](#) or any other similar hosting company, you should already be able to log into your WordPress site from your Bluehost dashboard (my.bluehost.com).

Just click on “Launch website” and choose “No help” on the theme for now.

Here are the steps you should follow (these should be similar/same on all the major web hosting companies):

1. Log in to your hosting account.
2. Go to your control panel.
3. Look for the “WordPress” or “My Sites” icon.
4. Choose the domain where you want to install your website.
5. Click the “Install Now” button and you will get access to your new WordPress website.



... OR MANUAL INSTALL (if needed)

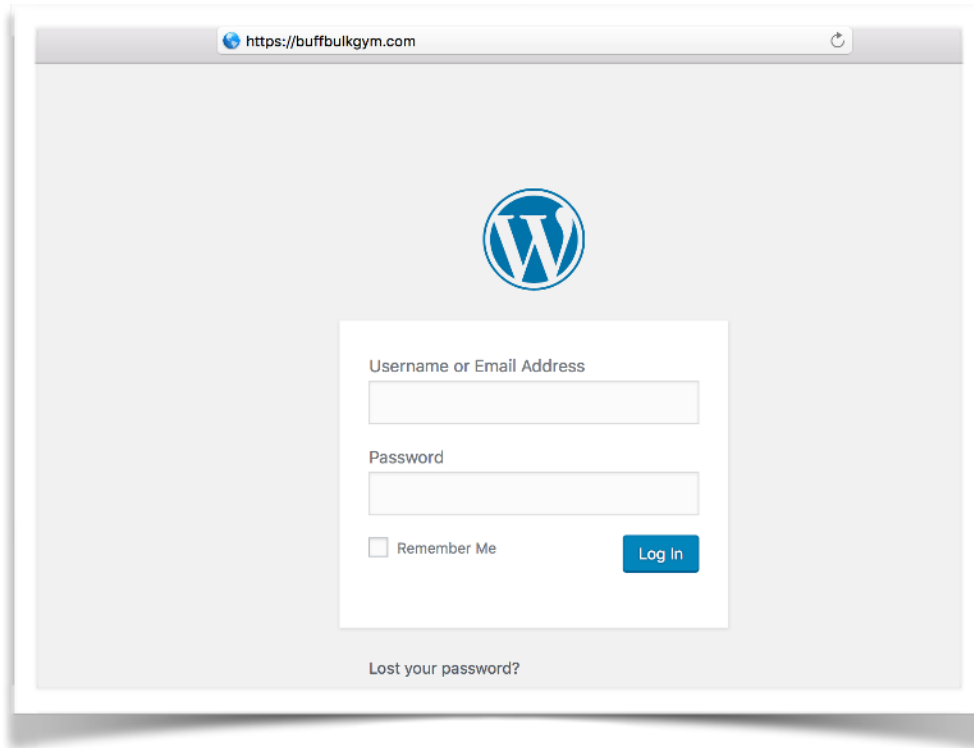
If you don't have the option to install WordPress automatically, look at the **manual guide** below:

[Installing WordPress manually](#)

Pssst – if they don't have one-click-installation for WordPress, you might be dealing with a non-user-friendly host.

Log into WordPress

To see if your website is alive and online, type in **YourDomainName.com/wp-admin/**and log in with the credentials you created in step 2.



3. Turn WordPress into Your Ideal Website

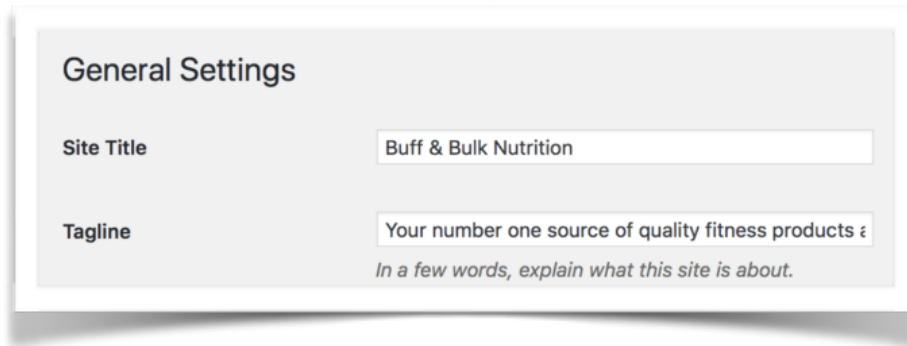
When you first open your website, it might look a little “empty,” but don’t worry. Design is the last part we need to deal with. First, let’s tweak your website name and settings.

1. Edit Name and Settings

As we start building our website, let’s pretend that I am an owner of a small business that sells fitness products and supplements online.

First, let’s change our website’s name and settings to get things started.

- ☑ Go to your WordPress dashboard, in the left panel, and click Settings -> General Settings.
- ☑ In General Settings, choose a name and a tagline that best fits your website.



Site Title: Your company name or the product you're trying to sell.

Tagline: In a few words, explain what this site is about.

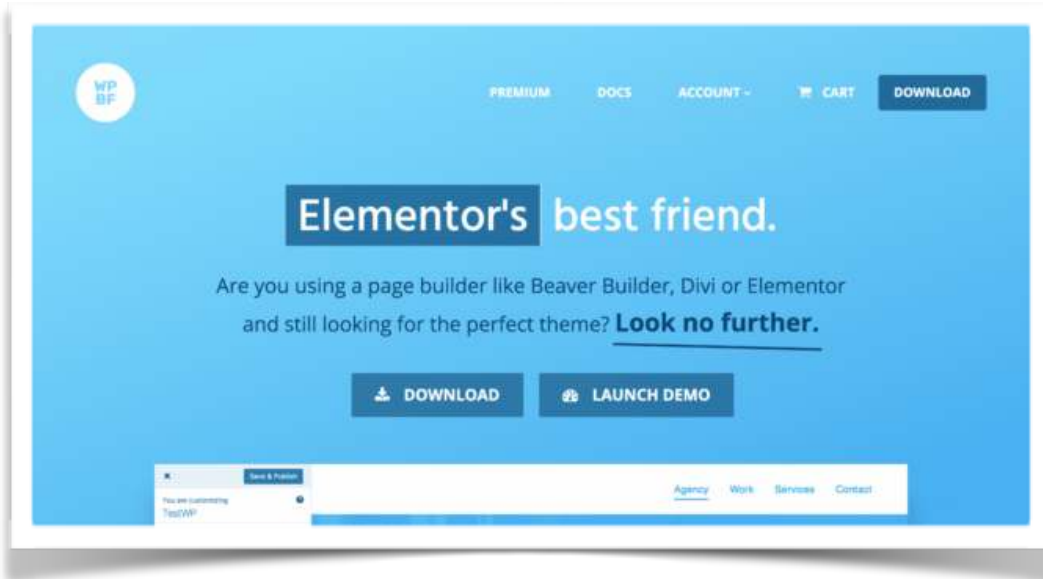
Then save when you're done.

2. Pick a FREE WordPress Theme

You can't actually call your website your own if you don't customize it design-wise.

WordPress has thousands of free themes to choose from, which is one of the reasons I recommended it from the get-go. There are 1500+ pre-designed themes (that are fully customizable) as well as themes designed for personal customizations. I prefer the latter.

In this example, I'll use "Elementor." ([Get it here for free](#))



For this guide, I'll be using "Page Builder Framework." The name says it all: it's built to work in conjunction with page builder plugins, which we'll be using later.

1. Download the theme on [their website](#) and save the ZIP file anywhere you prefer.
2. Log in to your WordPress dashboard.
3. Go to Appearance, then Themes, then click Add New.
4. On the top of the screen, click the Upload Theme button.
5. Next, upload the ZIP file and "Activate" the theme after installing it.

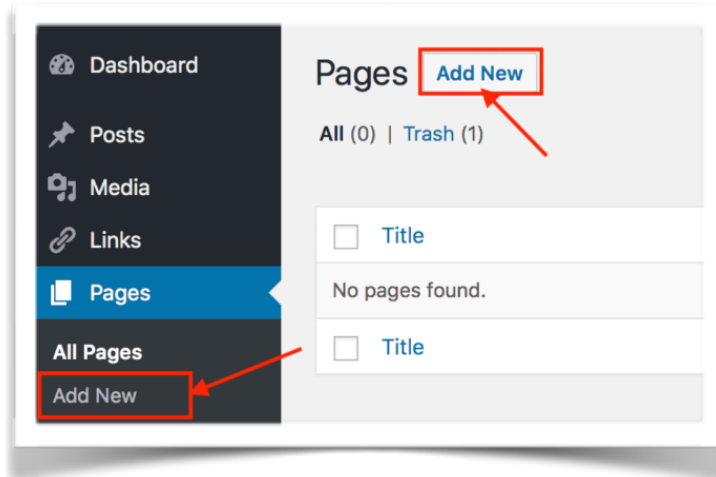
At first, the theme probably won't look too appealing. Which is good, seeing as we'll be customizing it later.

If you don't want to choose a free theme, you can also check out paid (premium) WordPress themes on [Envato](#).

3. Add "About" and "Services" pages

Let's make our website known to our visitors by adding About and Services pages.

To add a new page, go to your dashboard and click Pages. Next, choose "Add New."

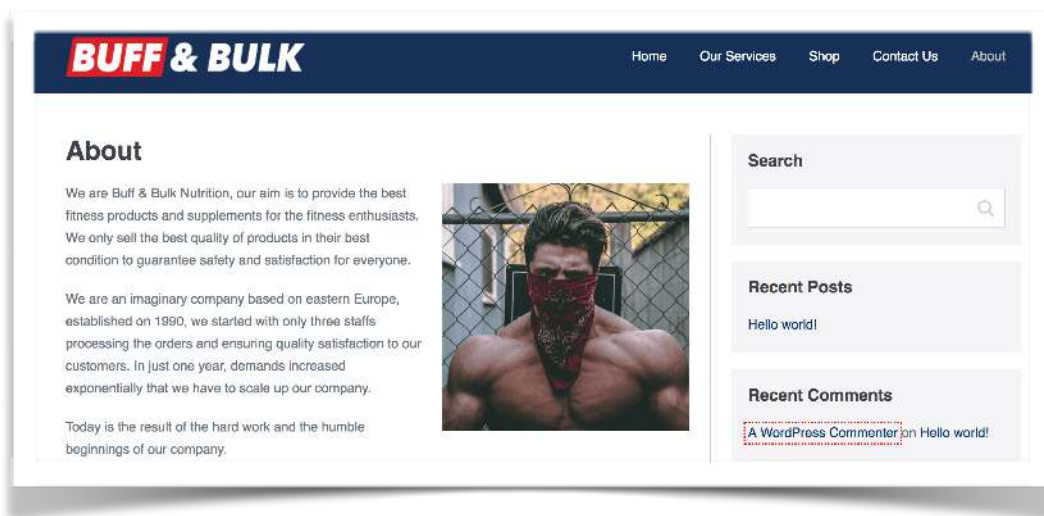


You'll be sent to the WordPress content editor, where you can add the page's title and content.

Name your page "About" and add a short description to explain your business.

You can add images to your page by clicking the "Add Media" button, or by dragging an image to the content editor directly.

Next, click the "Preview" button to see how your page would look before you actually publish it. Hit publish when you're done.



Next, create the Services page. Just like we did previously, go ahead and add a new page. Name it "Our Services" and add the content that describes the services your business offers.

4. Add Contact Page

One way to interact with your visitors is through a Contact page.

The easiest way to do so is to display your contact information on your Contact page, but I wouldn't recommend that because it will expose your information to the spam bots, and we don't want that to happen.

The more common and less-risky approach to let your readers contact you is to create a contact form.

Here's a [step-by-step guide for adding a contact form to WordPress \(including video\)](#).

To do this, you need to install a third-party plugin (free) that does the job. Plugins are a great way to extend or "plug in" a feature to your WordPress website without modifying your website's code. A popular plugin to use for this is "Contact Form 7."

- In your dashboard, go to Plugins, then click "Add New."
- Search for "Contact Form 7" in the search bar. It should automatically show up in the search results.
- Find and install Contact Form 7, and wait for it to install.
- Click the "Activate" button to activate the plugin's functions.
- Once you have successfully activated Contact Form 7, you'll be able to see a "Contact" menu in the left panel (if not, reload your dashboard).
- Hover or click on the menu and click "Contact Forms" to see all of the available contact forms. You'll be able to see one contact form on the list. This is a pre-made generic contact form by the plugin. For this example, I'll use that as our Contact page's contact form. Go ahead and edit the contact form.

Here, you only need to change some values inside the "Mail" tab to make the contact form work and to ensure you are getting emails from your readers:

Form **Mail** Messages Additional Settings

Mail

In the following fields, you can use these mail-tags:
[your-name] [your-email] [your-subject] [your-message]

To yourname@yourdomain.com

From [your-name] <wordpress@demo.websitesetup.org>

Subject Buff and Bulk Nutrition "[your-subject]"

Additional Headers Reply-To: [your-email]

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

Go ahead and go to the “Mail” settings by clicking on the “Mail” tab. Change the “To” value to where you want the emails sent to like, say, your personal email address. You can leave those other settings alone, except for the “Subject” value, if you want to change it.

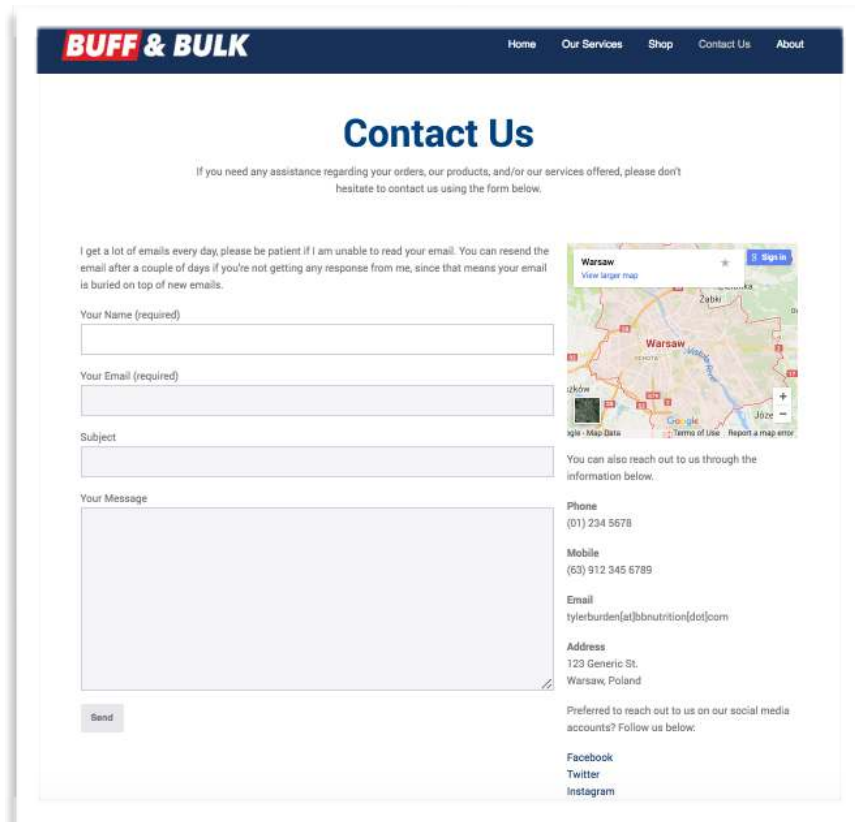
Hit save once you’re happy with your contact form. This will generate a “shortcode,” which you can add to your page wherever you want the contact form displayed. I added it inside my Contact page.

Contact form 1

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

`[contact-form-7 id="8" title="Contact form 1"]`

Here’s the end result (along with a map I added through page builder):



Take note that contact forms don't work on local environments (if your WordPress is hosted locally).

5. Add a Blog Page (optional)

The blog page is where your posts appear. The difference between posts and pages is that posts can have categories and tags, while pages can't. Meanwhile, pages are hierarchal – they can have parents and children – while posts are not hierarchal.

Setting the technicalities aside, posts are mainly used for blog posts, news articles, and other similar objects.

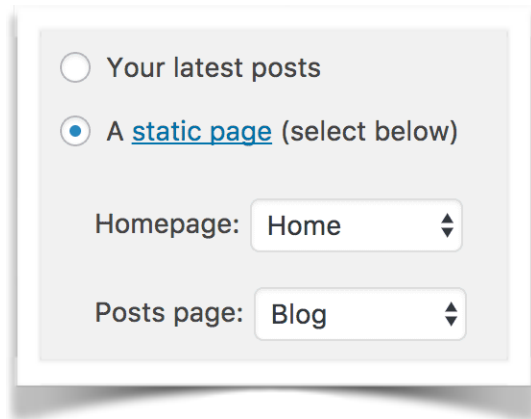
By default, your homepage contains all of your posts. You can change this inside the Reading settings if you want to use another page for your homepage.

Before we get to that, let's create two pages: "Home" and "Blog." You can add whatever content you want to display on the homepage of your website to "Home." Leave "Blog" blank, as pages set as a "Posts page" will hide any content added to them.

○ In your dashboard, go to Settings, then click on Reading Settings.

○ Under “Your homepage displays” group, click the “A static page” radio button.

○ Choose which pages will be your Homepage and Posts page by setting the value for “Homepage” and “Posts page.”



○ I used the pages Home and Blog (respectively) that I created earlier. Save your settings and visit your website’s homepage. You’ll see that your homepage now shows whatever content you added to the “Home” page.

○ To view your “Blog” page, go back to your dashboard.

○ Then go to Pages.

○ Then choose “All Pages,” find your “Blog” page, hover on it and click the “View” link.

You’ll now be able to see the list of posts in it.

6. Add an Online Store (optional)

WordPress is a website platform, but with plugins that extend WordPress’ functionalities, you can create whatever you want – for example, [your own online store](#).

Let’s do that by adding a new plugin to our website called WooCommerce (free).

○ Like we did previously, go to Plugins, then click “Add New.”

○ Search for “WooCommerce,” then install and activate it.

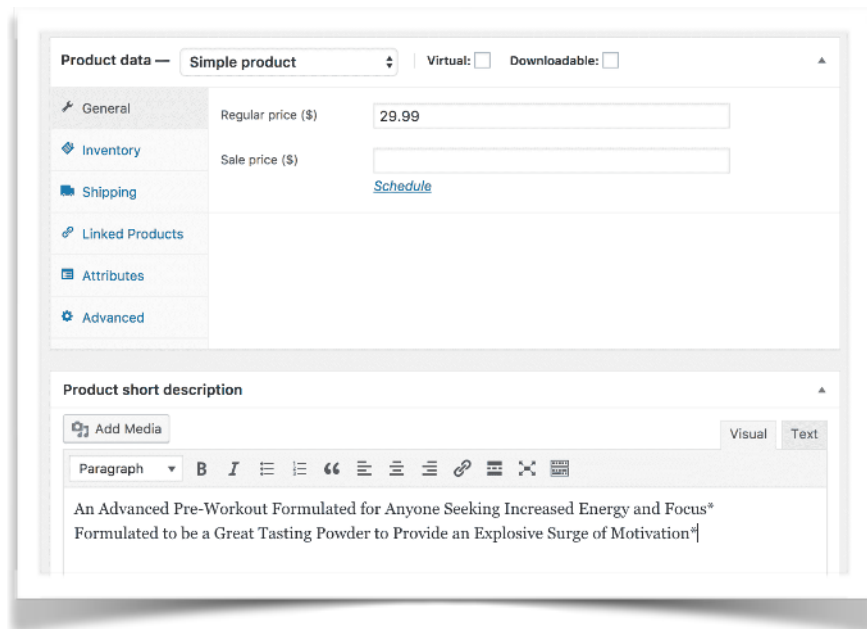
Since this will be your first time installing the plugin, you’ll be directed to their setup wizard. Take note that if the theme you are currently using doesn’t support WooCommerce, they’ll suggest you install a theme that supports it. You can also skip that step and install the theme later.

Just follow the on-screen instructions and fill out the forms. Take your time setting up the plugin and come back when you’re done.

Once everything is set up, you can start adding products for sale.

To do that, go to your dashboard, then go to “Products.” Click “Add New” on the left panel.

As you may have noticed, this process is pretty similar to creating a new page. However, if you scroll down and look around, you’ll see new panels that contain the settings specific to each of your products. Fill the content and the product custom values. Just like with pages, you can preview your changes before publishing it.

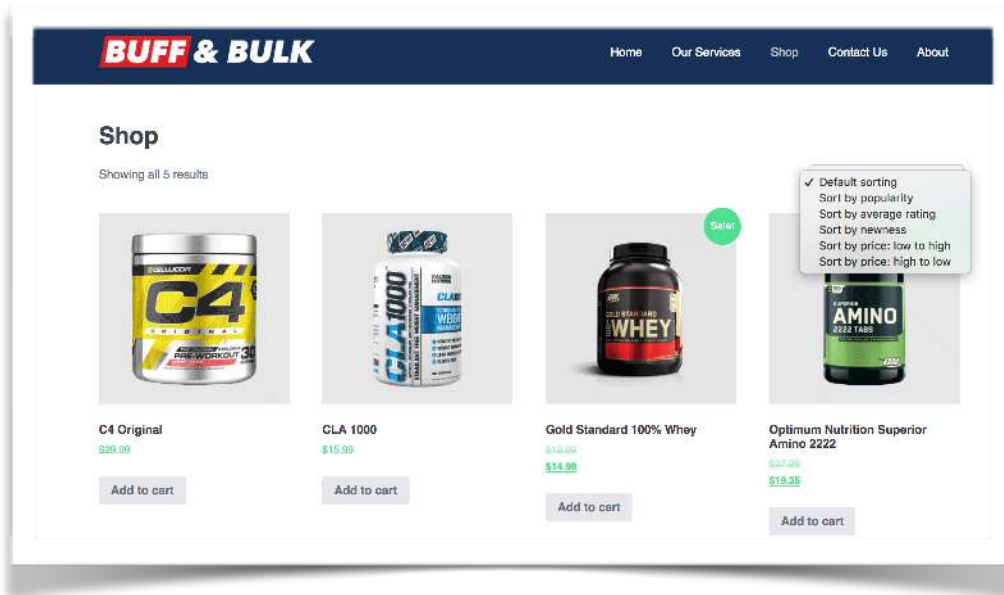


Once you’re done, check your store by going to “All Pages” inside the Pages menu on the left panel, then view the “Shop” page.

Where did the “Shop” page come from, you ask? The shop page and other pages were automatically generated by WooCommerce after installing the plugin. These pages are required in order for your shop to function properly.

If you’re able to see the products you made before, then you have successfully created your online store.

To learn more about WooCommerce, you can read their documentation [here](#), or read my step-by-step guide on [how to start an online store using WooCommerce](#).



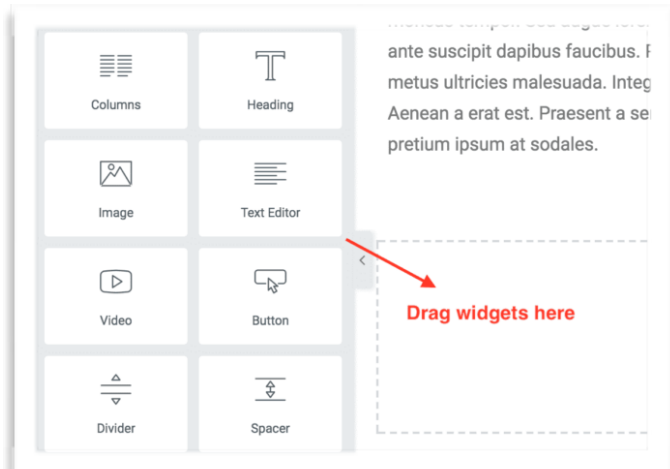
Page Builder (optional)

Let's extend our WordPress website much further. This time, instead of installing a plugin that benefits us and our visitors, let's add a new plugin that would benefit us, the content creators, to make our lives easier. We can do this through "Page Builder" plugins.

WordPress' content editor is flexible enough that it accepts HTML codes to help you format your content. You can also embed complex HTML codes to create complex layouts – but most of us don't know even the basics of HTML, let alone complex codes.

Sadly, WordPress only provides us basic text formatting like **emphasizing texts** like this and creating text headings. Without HTML knowledge, we're stuck in the abysmal wall-of-text layout. While this is good for reading, it's not appealing for showcasing our products and services.

With page builders, you can create complex layouts that help you achieve the custom website design you've been longing for (but don't have the budget to hire a web developer for) without writing any code!



One of the best page builder plugins right now is the “Elementor” page builder. The best part is, it’s free!

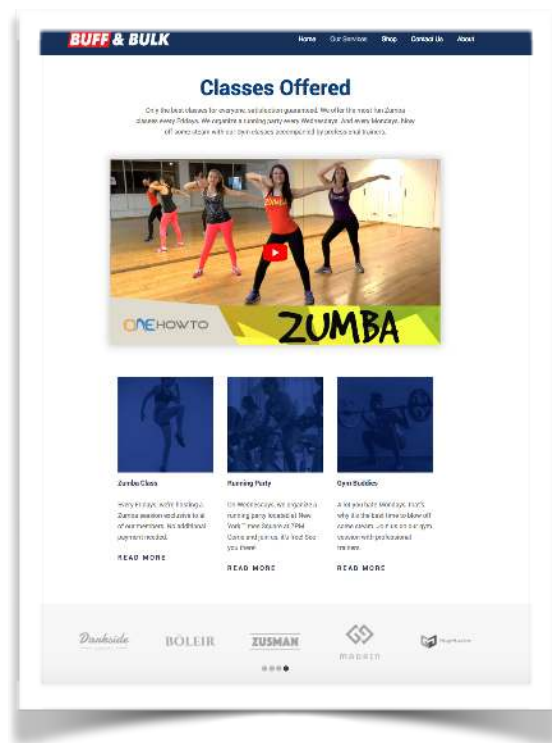
Go ahead and install it. Like we did previously, go to your dashboard, then go to Plugins. Next, click “Add New,” then search for “Elementor” and install the plugin.

Once this is installed, give it a run by editing your “Services” page. Inside WordPress’ content editor, click the “Edit with Elementor” button to switch to Elementor’s page editor.

Inside Elementor’s page editor you’ll see two sections: the panel on the left is where the tools and page settings can be found, and the panel on the right is the live-page editor.

In the live-page editor, you can click any element and edit the content in real time. While an element is active for editing, you’ll also see more settings you can adjust for that element in the left panel. And you can add new sections inside the live-page editor. When clicking the “Add Section” button, you’ll be able to choose what kind of layout the section will have. Widgets can then be added to a section by dragging a widget from the left panel to the section.

If you can’t see the widget selection, click the “grid” icon to make it visible. Play around with the available widgets and create your own complex page design. If you feel a bit lazy, you can use pre-designed templates by clicking on the “Add Template” button. You can then modify the template to suit what you want, like what I did here.



Last 10 minute fine-tuning (Menu, Logo, Footer and Header)

We've got the necessary pages published, we've got our blog section, we've got the necessary tools. Now we just need to make them work together and add a finishing touch to finalize our website.

You can do these changes inside WordPress' customizer. On the left panel of your dashboard, go to Appearance, then click "Customize." This will bring you to WordPress' theme customizer.

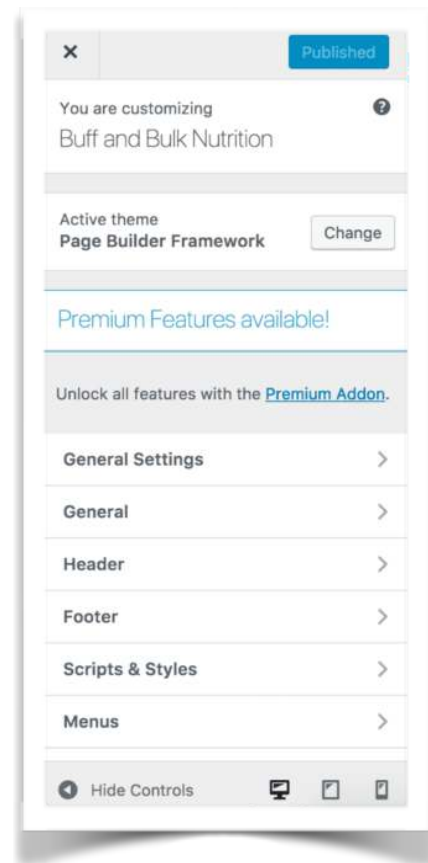
Within the customizer, you can edit your website's appearance, like the logo, background, and other elements of your website. The settings you can modify depend on the theme you are using, but luckily, Page Builder Framework gives you a lot of options to help customize your website further.

Starting off from the top, while inside customizer, click "Header" then click "Logo." This will bring up the settings for your website's logo. Upload your custom logo if you already have one. If you need one, there's a neat [website](#) that can create one for you with just a few steps, and it's free!

Next, try recoloring your navigation section (the section on the top where the logo and menu resides). To do that, go back one level by clicking on the arrow-left icon on the top (looks like this "<"). Here, you'll be able to see each section setting.

Go ahead and click "Navigation," while inside, and change the background color and other values to whatever you want. I changed my background color to dark blue and changed the font color to white to make the text readable.

You can change your footer's colors inside the Footer settings. To do that, go back until you get to the root settings, then click "Footer." Inside, you'll be able to change the footer



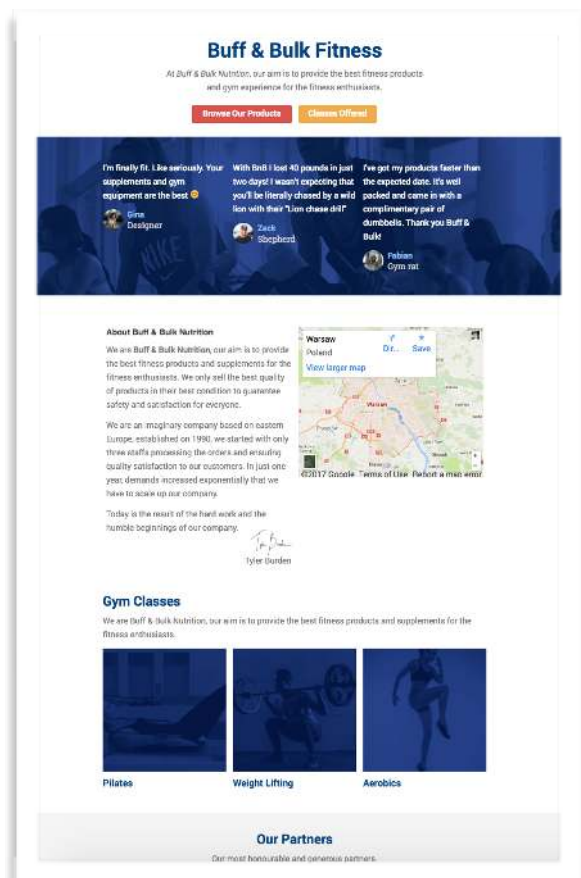
colors like we did with the header. Unfortunately, you can't customize the footer's content with the free version of the theme. It is possible to edit the content, but you need to edit the theme's code.

Next, we will add our website's menu inside the "Menus" settings. Again, go back to the root settings, then click on "Menus." Create a new menu by clicking on the "Create New Menu" button. Add a name to your menu, then in the "Menu Locations" settings, check the locations in which your menu will appear.

Click "Next" to proceed and click the "Add Items" button. A new panel will pop out on which you can add pages to the menu by clicking on the plus (+) button. Once you're happy with your menu, hit publish on the top.

There are some settings I haven't covered inside customizer since they are not necessary for my website. You can go ahead and check these settings out for yourself, though, inside the "General" settings. But if you're happy with your website's changes, go ahead and hit publish to save these changes.

Now that you're done customizing your website, I suggest that you update your pages' design using the Elementor page builder. Especially the homepage. I made some changes to mine and ended up with this:



1-2-3 Let's Launch Your Website

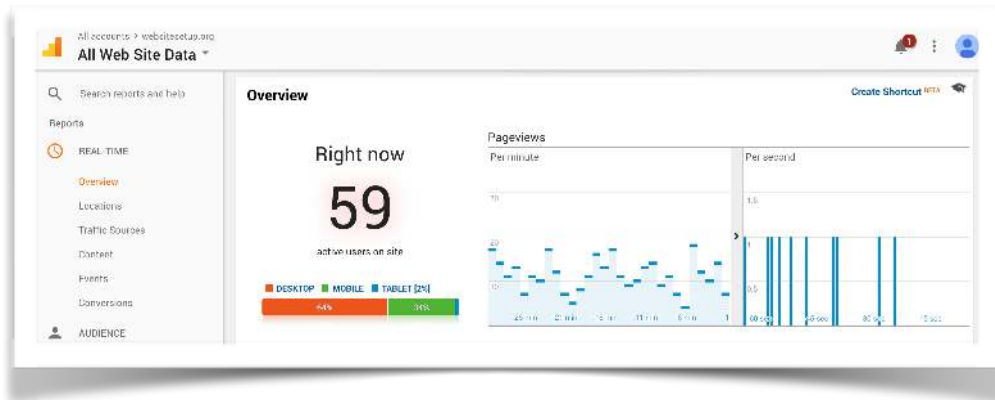
Ready to launch?

Well, I am! Here's my result, check it out: www.BulkBuffGym.com

I assume you've launched too, so congratulations!

BONUS: Getting traffic and monetizing your website.

When I launched WebsiteSetup.org, I only had a handful of visitors. Now, I've turned this into a 400k+ visitors business, and I'm using affiliate marketing to make this website earn passive income.



If you want to do the same, read the guides below:

- [How to Get FREE Traffic to Your Website](#)
- [How to Monetize Your Website](#)

If you liked the guide, feel free to [buy me a beer](#) :).