

NEW BLOG OWNER'S MANUAL



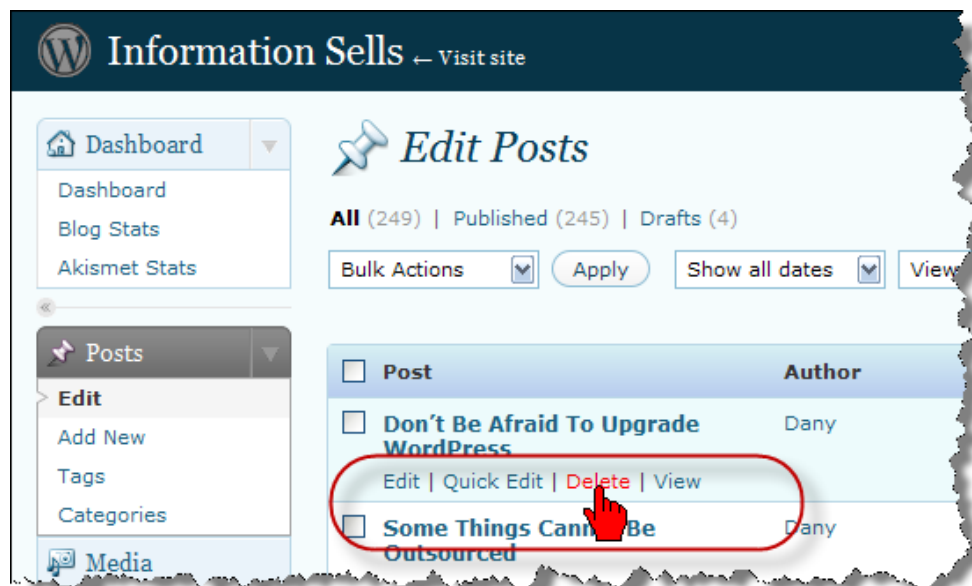
KICKING THE TIRES

Before you begin blogging, walk around your new blog, look under the hood, kick the tires. Get a feel for where things are and what they do.

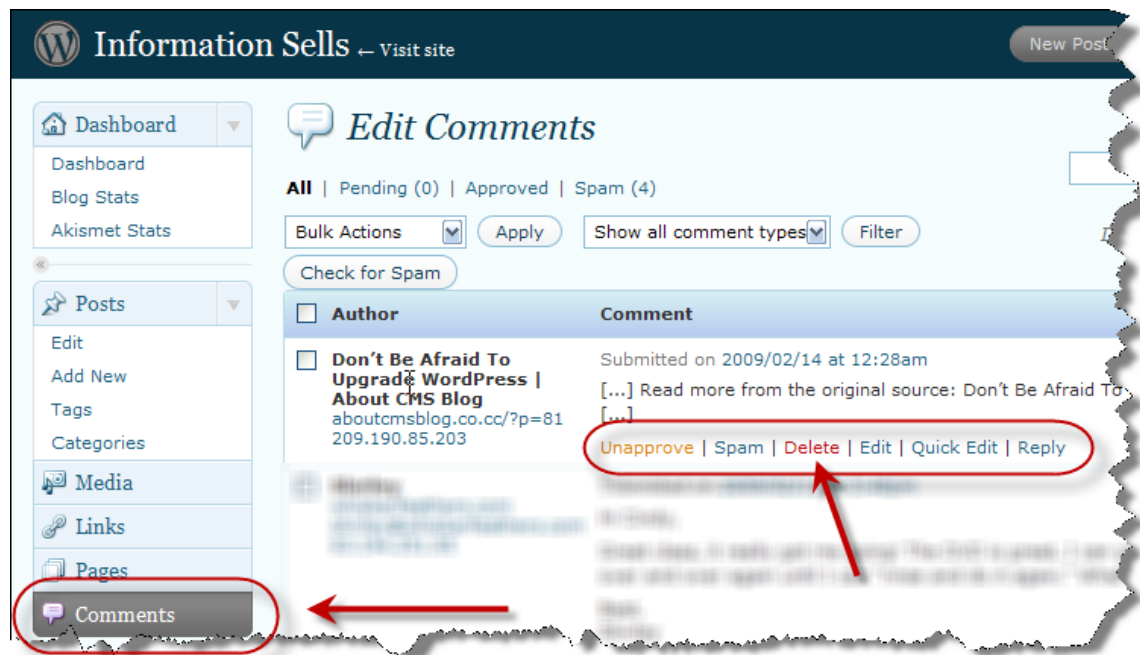
You don't need to know everything; you don't even need to completely understand what you are seeing. You just want to take a quick tour so that later, when you are looking for a missing piece of the puzzle, you will say, "Oh yeah, I saw something like that in **Settings** once."

You also want to click the buttons and twirl the knobs when you aren't worried about losing your posts or looking foolish. No one knows your blog is online yet. Take advantage of your last, precious moments of privacy to experiment. Do you want to know what "this" does? Click it and find out. (It's a good idea to locate the **Undo** button first.)

Before you write your first post, take a peek at the test post, "Hello World," and the comment attached to it. They are installed on all new blogs.



Click the **Edit** button under **Posts** on the sidebar, then click on "Hello World." Now that you've seen it, you can delete it. To delete this – or any - post, hover your cursor over the post title. A row of menu buttons will appear below the title. Click **Delete**.



The Comment attached to the post will automatically be deleted when the post is deleted. However, if you want some practice dealing with comments, first go to **Comments**, on the left-hand side bar (before you delete the “Hello, World” post), and look at all the ways you can edit, approve, or delete comments. Again, just hover your cursor over the title to get the options to appear.

Be sure both “Hello, World” and its comment are deleted before your blog goes public.

Finally, if you didn’t create a tag line when setting up your blog, go to **Settings** (on the left hand sidebar) and click on **General**. Delete “Just Another WordPress Blog” from the tagline field. If you don’t have a tag line, leave it blank until you can think of one.

UNLOCKING THE DOORS

Your blog is now officially road-ready. Let’s open the door, adjust the seats and mirrors and get ready for a test drive

You log in to your blog’s Dashboard and do all your work through your web browser.

If you are having problems with the display – if, for instance, some screens won’t scroll or you can’t see the bottom part of a light box picture – try switching to a different browser. In general, Firefox works better with WordPress than Internet Explorer. If you have problems even though you are already using Firefox, upgrading to the latest version might help.

Open your browser and type **http://www.yourblogname.com/wp-admin** in the address bar.

Naturally, you'll replace "yourblogname.com" with the actual URL for your blog. It's the
/wp-admin

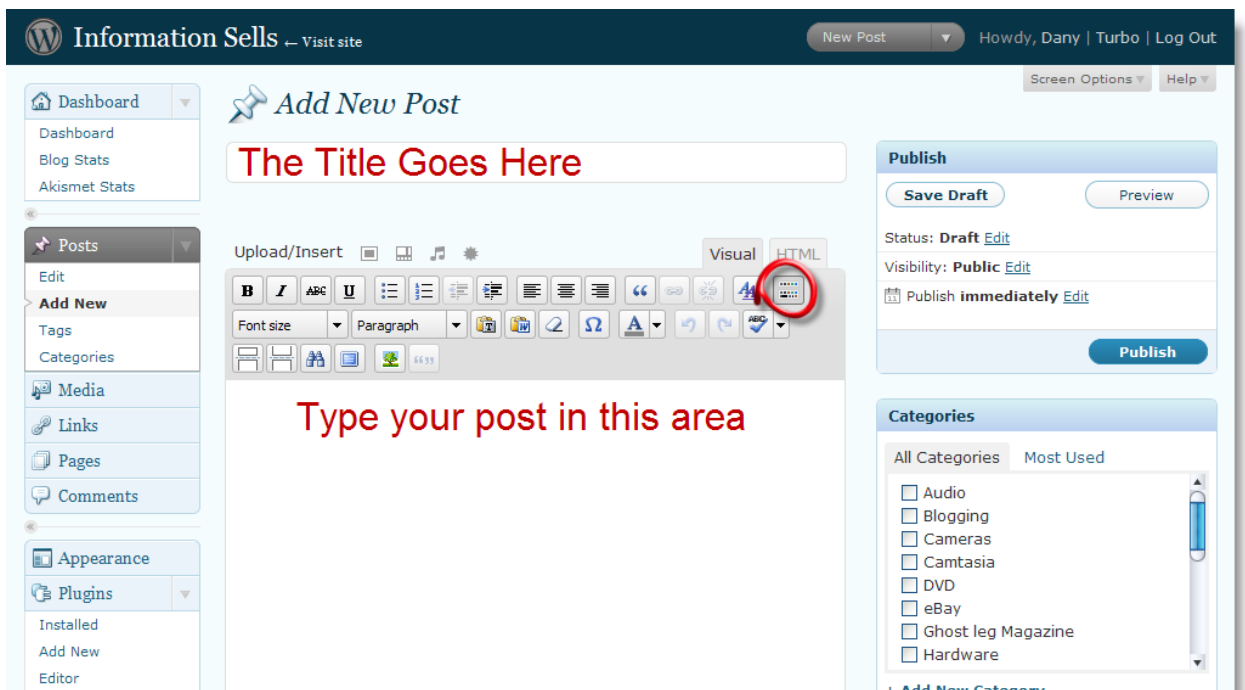
that's important. That's the door that lets you hop inside. You'll probably be greeted with a window asking for you user name and password. Type them in and tic the "Remember me" option if you are comfortable with storing your passwords on your computer. (**Never** do this on a shared or public computer!)

You are behind the wheel and ready to roll.

Click the **New Post** button at the top of the Dashboard or the **Add New** link under Posts on the left hand side.



The **Add New Post** window opens up, and you are ready to start your engine.



Look at that little scribbly icon at the end of the first row of icons on the toolbar. That's known as the Kitchen Sink. When you click on it, the toolbar will expand to two rows, giving you a few more formatting options. (I have added a plugin that gives me even more bells and whistles. If you want a big, old pair of fuzzy dice hanging from *your* rear view mirror, take a look at the TinyMCE Advanced plugin)

Type the title of your post in the title bar. Type the body of your post below, in the text box.

At any point, you can click **Save Draft** to save your work without publishing it. You can also click **Preview** (after you click Save Draft) to see what the post will look like when published. This view is not publically visible – only you can see the post until you click Publish. Preview is great for proof-reading.

When your post is ready, click **Publish**.

Hooray! You are now a published author and blogger!

BUFFING OFF THE FINGERPRINTS

Sometimes, you'll need to make changes to published posts. On the left hand sidebar, under **Posts**, click on **Edit**. You'll see a list of all your posts – both published posts and those saved as drafts. Click on the title and the post will open in the **Edit Post** window, which looks and acts just like the Add New Post window. Make your changes and click **Update Post**.

BRAGGING TO THE NEIGHBORS

You'll want to show your shiny, new blog off to the world, so you need to register with a few other sites.

The first thing you need to do is go to <http://www.wordpress.com> and register for an account. Yes, you did just go to great lengths and expense – registering a domain, signing up with a hosting company, installing software from WordPress.org – to avoid using WordPress.com. And you did the right thing.

You are going to open a WordPress.com account, but you are **not** going to start a WordPress.com blog.

To use **Akismet**, the WordPress anti-SPAM filter, you need something called a **WordPress API Key**, and you can only get that by registering with WordPress.com. Once you've registered, go to the **Users** section (on WordPress.com – not on your blog) and copy the API key, which is near the top. Then come back to your blog, click on the link that appears everywhere after you activate Akismet without an API key, and paste in the API key.

OK, this is ridiculously convoluted. But Akismet is such a good SPAM catcher that it is more than worth the trouble. So jump through WordPress's hoops and get the API key. Think of it as insurance.

Now tell that nosy gossip Google all about your nifty new blog and let Google start spreading the word that you have a fabulous new blog.

If you don't already have a Google account, go to [Google](#) and create one.

Next, decide which Google products your blog needs. At a minimum, sign up for Google Analytics and Google Web Master Tools. With a good Analytics plugin (there are several to choose from), you'll know how readers are finding your blog and what they are doing once they get there.

Google Web Master Tools will help you see your blog as Google's spiders see it. You can find broken links, bad URLs, sitemap errors, etc.

If you plan on adding AdSense ads, sign up for that program as well.

Finally, you'll want to sign up for a Feedburner account. Feedburner is now owned by Google, so you'll be able to use your Google ID to sign up with Feedburner.

Go to <http://feedburner.google.com/> and create an account then burn a feed. Use the [Feedsmith Feedburner plugin](#) to monitor your RSS subscribers.

CRUISING

That's it. You're cruising down the highway with your new blog.

All you need to do now is fill 'er up with new posts at least once week.

Congratulations and good luck!

Would you like more in depth information about blogging? Take a look at my ebook, [Blogging With WordPress](#) available here: <http://www.ghostleg.com/blog-book.htm>

Photo by [omniNate](#)