



WordPress Website Development

Complete study notes — from domains and hosting to themes, plugins, pages, SEO, WooCommerce, security and speed — everything you need to build and run a professional website.

10

Modules

50+

Diagrams & checklists

200+

Questions & MCQs



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How to use these notes

The best way to learn WordPress is to build while you read. Set up a practice site (a free local install or a low-cost hosting plan — Module 2) and follow each module's steps on it. Menu names follow current WordPress; small differences between versions are normal.

Blue box — Key idea. The one thing to remember from that part.

Yellow box — Settings & rules. Values and conventions to follow.

Green box — Try it. Hands-on steps on your practice site.

Orange box — Caution. Mistakes that break or endanger a site.

Worked example. Real-world scenarios step by step.

Practice.
Questions and tasks at the end of every module.

MODULE 01

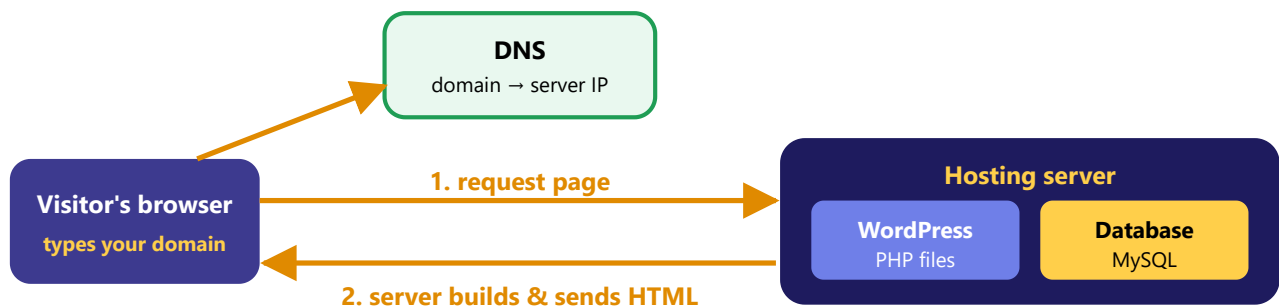
Introduction to WordPress and Website Basics

How a website is actually put together, what WordPress is and why it powers so much of the web, WordPress.com versus self-hosted WordPress.org, and planning your first site.

1.1 How a website works

Every website you visit involves a few basic pieces working together:

- **Domain name** — the address people type, e.g. `www.aitutorspark.co.in`. It is rented yearly from a **domain registrar**.
- **Web hosting** — a computer (**server**) that is always connected to the internet, where the website's files and database live. You rent space on it from a **hosting company**.
- **Website files** — the code, images and content that make up the pages.
- **Browser** — the visitor's program (Chrome, Edge, Safari) that requests and displays pages.
- **DNS** — the system that connects the domain name to the server's IP address.



WordPress reads content from the database, fills it into the theme's templates, and sends a finished HTML page.

Figure 1.1 — What happens when someone visits a WordPress website.

Static versus dynamic websites

	Static website	Dynamic website (e.g. WordPress)
How pages are made	Each page is a fixed HTML file written by hand	Pages are built on the fly from a database and templates
Updating content	Edit code for every change	Log in and edit in a friendly editor — no coding

Features	Limited	Blogs, forms, shops, memberships, search, comments
Best for	Very small, rarely changing sites	Almost every business, school, blog or shop

The languages behind the web

- **HTML** — the structure (headings, paragraphs, images, links).
- **CSS** — the appearance (colours, fonts, layout).
- **JavaScript** — interactivity in the browser (menus, sliders, pop-ups).
- **PHP** — the server-side language WordPress is written in.
- **MySQL / MariaDB** — the database that stores posts, pages, users and settings.

With WordPress, you can build complete professional sites without writing any of these yourself — but understanding what they do helps you troubleshoot and grow.

1.2 What is WordPress?

WordPress is a free, open-source **content management system (CMS)** — software that lets you create, edit and organise website content through a web-based dashboard, without coding. It was first released in **2003** by Matt Mullenweg and Mike Little as a blogging tool and has grown into a platform for every kind of website. It powers **over 40% of all websites** on the internet — far more than any other CMS.

Why WordPress is so popular

- **Free and open-source** (GPL licence) — no licence fees; you own your site.
- **Easy to use** — the block editor works like a word processor.
- **Themes** — thousands of designs, free and paid.
- **Plugins** — over 50,000 free plugins add features: forms, SEO, shops, bookings, galleries, security.
- **Flexible** — blogs, business sites, portfolios, schools, news sites, online stores, membership and course sites.
- **SEO-friendly** structure and clean URLs.
- **Huge community** — tutorials, forums, developers and meetups everywhere, including many Indian WordCamps.
- **Mobile-friendly** — modern themes are responsive.

Limitations to be aware of

- You are responsible for **updates, security and backups** on self-hosted sites (Module 9).

- Too many or poor-quality plugins slow a site down or cause conflicts.
- Very customised designs may need a developer.

1.3 WordPress.com versus WordPress.org

This confuses almost every beginner. Both use the same software, but they are very different services.

Feature	WordPress.com (hosted)	WordPress.org (self-hosted)
What it is	A commercial service by Automattic that hosts WordPress sites for you	The free software itself, which you install on your own hosting
Cost	Free plan with limits; paid plans for more features	Software free; you pay for domain + hosting
Domain	Free subdomain (yoursite.wordpress.com) or paid custom domain	Your own domain (yoursite.in)
Plugins & themes	Limited on lower plans	Any plugin or theme
Control	Less — platform rules apply	Full control of files, database, code
Maintenance	Handled for you	You (or your host) handle updates, backups, security
Monetisation	Restricted on lower plans	Unrestricted — ads, shop, memberships
Best for	Personal blogs, quick starts	Businesses, professionals, anyone who wants flexibility

Key idea

When people (and employers) say "build a WordPress website", they almost always mean **self-hosted WordPress.org**. This course focuses on it.

1.4 Types of websites you can build

Website type	Typical features	Example
Business / brochure site	Home, About, Services, Contact, testimonials, map	A clinic, coaching centre or CA firm

Blog / news / magazine	Posts, categories, comments, newsletter	Education blog, local news
Portfolio	Gallery of work, case studies	Photographer, designer, architect
E-commerce store	Products, cart, checkout, payments (WooCommerce)	Handloom store, bakery
Educational / LMS	Courses, lessons, quizzes, certificates	Online coaching
Non-profit	Mission, events, donations, volunteers	NGO
Landing page	One page focused on one action (sign up, call, buy)	Product launch, admission campaign
Directory / listings / booking	Searchable entries, appointments	Doctor appointments, property listings

1.5 Key WordPress terms

Term	Meaning
Dashboard (wp-admin)	The admin area where you manage the site (Module 3)
Theme	Controls the design and layout (Module 4)
Plugin	Adds features and functionality (Module 5)
Page	Static, timeless content: Home, About, Contact
Post	Dated content in a blog/news feed, with categories and tags
Block	A content element in the editor: paragraph, heading, image, button...
Widget	Small content area in sidebars/footers (classic themes)
Permalink	The permanent URL of a page or post
Media Library	All uploaded images, videos and files
Slug	The URL-friendly part of an address, e.g. /about-us/
Front end / back end	What visitors see / the admin area

1.6 Planning your website before building

The most common reason websites fail is building without a plan. Spend an hour answering these questions first:

1. **Purpose:** What should the site achieve? (Get enquiries, sell products, share knowledge, take admissions.)
2. **Audience:** Who will visit? Students, parents, local customers, businesses? On which devices — mostly mobile?
3. **Main action:** What one thing should visitors do? Call, WhatsApp, fill a form, buy?
4. **Content:** Which pages are needed? Who will write the text and supply photos?
5. **Features:** Contact form, gallery, blog, booking, payments, multilingual?
6. **Branding:** Logo, colours, fonts, tone of voice.
7. **Budget and timeline.**

The sitemap

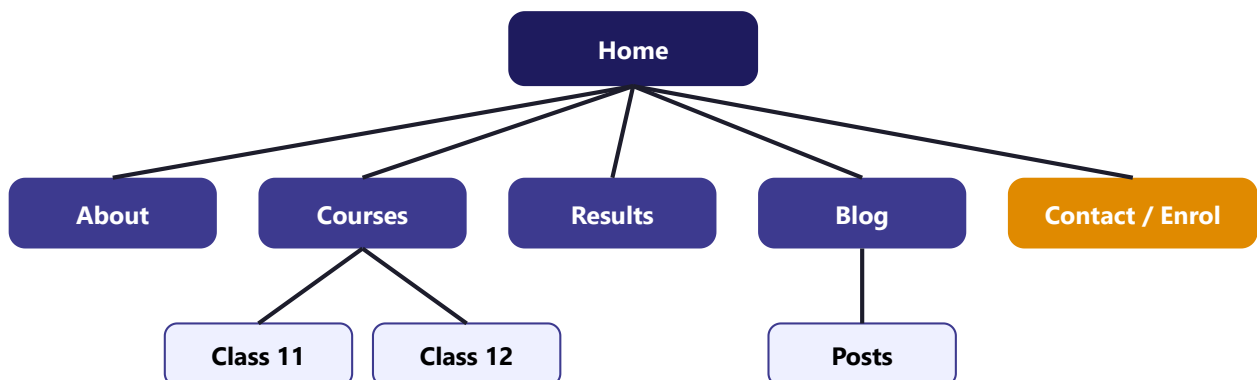


Figure 1.2 — A simple sitemap for a coaching centre website.

Worked example 1.1 — planning brief for "Sunrise Tuition Centre"

Purpose: get admission enquiries. **Audience:** parents and students in the town, mostly on phones. **Main action:** tap to call or WhatsApp; fill the enquiry form. **Pages:** Home, About (teachers), Courses (Class 11, 12, entrance), Results, Blog (study tips), Contact. **Features:** WhatsApp button, enquiry form, Google Map, testimonials, photo gallery. **Branding:** blue and orange, friendly tone, English and Odia. **Budget:** domain + hosting ≈ ₹3,000–5,000 per year; free theme and plugins.

1.7 What makes a good website?

- **Clear purpose** visible within 5 seconds: who you are, what you offer, what to do next.
- **Mobile-friendly** (responsive) — most Indian visitors use phones.
- **Fast** — pages that load in under about 3 seconds keep visitors.
- **Easy navigation** — simple menu, clear buttons.
- **Readable** — good contrast, enough font size, short paragraphs.
- **Trustworthy** — real photos, contact details, testimonials, HTTPS padlock.
- **Accessible** — usable by people with disabilities (alt text, contrast, keyboard navigation).
- **Findable** — basic SEO so people can find it on Google (Module 7).
- **Secure and backed up** (Module 9).

Module 1 — Summary

- A website needs a domain, hosting, files (and a database for dynamic sites); DNS links domain to server.
- WordPress is a free, open-source CMS powering 40%+ of websites, written in PHP with a MySQL database.
- WordPress.org (self-hosted) gives full control; WordPress.com is a hosted service with limits.
- Key terms: dashboard, theme, plugin, page vs post, block, permalink, slug.
- Plan first: purpose, audience, main action, content, features, branding, budget; draw a sitemap.

Practice questions — Module 1

1. Explain the roles of a domain name, web hosting and DNS.
2. Differentiate static and dynamic websites.
3. What is a CMS? Why is WordPress so widely used?
4. Compare WordPress.com and WordPress.org in a table (any six points).
5. Differentiate a page and a post with examples.
6. Write a one-paragraph planning brief for a website for a local bakery.
7. Draw a sitemap for a school website.
8. List eight qualities of a good website.

Setting Up Hosting, Domains, and Installation

Choosing and registering a domain, choosing the right hosting, connecting them, installing WordPress (one-click, manual and local), SSL, and the first settings to change.

2.1 Choosing a domain name

Your domain is your address and your brand online. Choose carefully — changing it later is painful.

- **Short, easy to say and spell:** `sunrisetuition.in` beats `sunrise-best-tuition-centre-cuttack.com`.
- **Match your brand** name where possible.
- **Avoid hyphens and numbers** — people forget them.
- **Choose the right extension (TLD):** `.in` or `.co.in` signal India and are good for local businesses; `.com` is global; `.org` suits non-profits; `.edu.in` / `.ac.in` are reserved for recognised institutions.
- **Check trademarks** — don't use other companies' brand names.
- Consider buying common variations to protect your brand.

Registering a domain

1. Search availability at a registrar (e.g. GoDaddy, Namecheap, BigRock, Hostinger, or your host).
2. Register for 1–5 years; enable **auto-renew** (an expired domain can be lost to someone else).
3. Turn on **privacy/WHOIS protection** where available, so your phone and address are not public.
4. Keep the registrar login secure with 2FA — whoever controls the domain controls the website and email.

Caution — who owns the domain?

When building for a client, register the domain in the **client's** name and account (or transfer it to them). Many businesses lose their website because an agency registered the domain in its own name and disappeared.

2.2 Choosing web hosting

Type	How it works	Good for	Approx. cost
Shared hosting	Many sites share one server's resources	New, small sites; students; local businesses	Low (a few hundred rupees a month or less)
Managed WordPress hosting	Host handles updates, caching, backups, security for WordPress	Businesses wanting less maintenance	Medium
VPS (Virtual Private Server)	Your own guaranteed slice of a server	Growing sites, agencies with many sites	Medium
Cloud hosting	Resources scale on demand across many servers	High-traffic or fluctuating traffic	Pay as you use
Dedicated server	A whole physical server for you	Very large sites	High

What to check in a hosting plan

- **Server location** near your audience (India/Singapore data centres for Indian visitors) → faster.
- **SSD/NVMe storage** and adequate space (10+ GB is plenty for most small sites).
- **Free SSL certificate** (Let's Encrypt) — essential for HTTPS.
- **One-click WordPress installer** and a control panel (cPanel, hPanel, Plesk).
- **Automatic daily backups** and easy restore.
- **Current PHP version** support (WordPress recommends a recent PHP 8.x) and MySQL/MariaDB.
- **Email accounts** (info@yourdomain) if needed.
- **Support quality** — 24×7 chat, good reviews.
- Check the **renewal price**, not only the first-term discount.

Try it — free practice site

You can practise without paying anything using a **local** install on your own computer: tools such as **LocalWP** (Local) or XAMPP create a working WordPress site that only you can see. Everything in Modules 3–9 can be practised locally.

2.3 Connecting the domain to the hosting

If the domain and hosting are from the same company, they are usually connected automatically. If not, point the domain to the host in one of two ways:

- **Change nameservers** at the registrar to the host's nameservers (e.g. `ns1.host.com`, `ns2.host.com`). The host then manages all DNS records. Simplest.
- **Edit DNS records** at the registrar: an **A record** pointing the domain to the server's IP address, and a **CNAME** for `www`.

DNS record	Purpose	Example
A	Domain → IPv4 address	@ → 203.0.113.25
AAAA	Domain → IPv6 address	@ → 2001:db8::25
CNAME	Alias to another name	www → yourdomain.in
MX	Where email is delivered	Google Workspace / Zoho / host mail servers
TXT	Verification and email security (SPF, DKIM, DMARC)	Google site verification

DNS changes take time to spread across the internet (**propagation**) — usually minutes to a few hours, occasionally up to 48 hours.

2.4 Installing WordPress

Method 1 — One-click installer (recommended)

1. Log in to your hosting control panel (cPanel: **Softaculous** → **WordPress**; other hosts have a "WordPress" or "Auto installer" button).
2. Choose the domain and protocol **https://**; leave the directory blank to install at the root (yourdomain.in, not yourdomain.in/wp).
3. Enter the **site title** and tagline (you can change them later).
4. Create the **admin username** (never "admin"), a **strong password** and a real admin email.
5. Choose language; skip bundled extra plugins/themes you don't need.
6. Click Install. In a minute, you'll get the site URL and the admin URL: `yourdomain.in/wp-admin`.

Method 2 — Manual installation (good to understand)

1. Download the latest WordPress from **wordpress.org/download**.

2. Create a **database**, a database **user** and a strong password in the control panel (MySQL Databases); give the user all privileges on the database.
3. Upload and extract the WordPress files to the web root (`public_html`) using the File Manager or **FTP/SFTP** (FileZilla).
4. Visit your domain. The famous **five-minute install** starts: choose language, enter database name, user, password, host (usually `localhost`) and table prefix (change `wp_` to something unique for a little extra security).
5. WordPress writes `wp-config.php` ; then enter site title, admin user, password and email. Done.

<code>public_html/</code> (web root)	
<code>wp-admin/</code>	dashboard code — never edit
<code>wp-includes/</code>	core WordPress code — never edit
<code>wp-content/</code>	YOUR stuff — back this up
<code>themes/</code>	installed themes
<code>plugins/</code>	installed plugins
<code>uploads/</code>	Media Library files by year/month
<code>wp-config.php</code>	database details & security keys — keep private
<code>.htaccess, index.php ...</code>	server rules (permalinks), entry file

Figure 2.1 — WordPress folder structure. Your content lives in the database plus `wp-content`.

Key idea — where your website lives

A WordPress site = **files** (especially `wp-content`: themes, plugins, uploads) + the **database** (all text, settings, users). A complete backup must include **both**.

2.5 SSL and HTTPS

An **SSL/TLS certificate** enables HTTPS, which encrypts data between visitors and your site and shows the padlock. Browsers mark non-HTTPS sites as "Not secure", and Google prefers HTTPS sites.

1. Activate the free **Let's Encrypt** SSL in your hosting panel (often automatic).
2. In WordPress, go to **Settings** → **General** and make sure both "WordPress Address" and "Site Address" start with `https://`.
3. Check the site loads with the padlock. If some images show "mixed content" warnings, a plugin such as *Really Simple SSL* or a search-and-replace of old `http://` links fixes it.

2.6 First settings after installation

Where	What to set
Settings → General	Site title and tagline; admin email; timezone (e.g. Kolkata); date format; site language
Settings → Permalinks	Choose Post name (/%postname%/) for clean URLs like /about-us/. Do this first — changing it later breaks old links
Settings → Reading	Choose a static page as the homepage (and a Posts page for the blog) for business sites. While building, keep "Discourage search engines" ticked; untick it at launch!
Settings → Discussion	Decide on comments; for business sites, often turn them off or require approval
Users → Profile	Set a display name (nickname) so your login username isn't shown publicly
Posts / Pages / Plugins	Delete the sample post, sample page and unused default plugins/themes (keep one default theme as a fallback)

Caution — the #1 launch mistake

"Discourage search engines from indexing this site" (Settings → Reading) is often ticked during development and forgotten. The site then never appears on Google. Add "untick search-engine visibility" to your launch checklist.

2.7 Logging in and user roles

Log in at `yourdomain.in/wp-admin` (or `/wp-login.php`). WordPress has built-in roles so you can give people only the access they need:

Role	Can do	Give to
Administrator	Everything: themes, plugins, users, settings	Owner and trusted developer only
Editor	Publish and manage all posts and pages, including others'	Content manager
Author	Write and publish own posts, upload media	Regular writers
Contributor	Write own posts but not publish	Guest writers, students
Subscriber	Manage own profile only	Members, customers

WooCommerce adds roles such as **Shop manager** and **Customer**.

2.8 Staging and moving sites

- A **staging site** is a private copy where you test changes (new theme, big plugin updates) before applying them to the live site. Many hosts offer one-click staging.
- To **migrate** a site (local → live, or host to host), use a migration plugin (e.g. All-in-One WP Migration, Duplicator, UpdraftPlus) or your host's free migration service.
- Build locally or on staging → migrate to live → set permalinks → untick search discouragement → test everything.

2.9 Professional email

An address like `info@sunrisetuition.in` looks far more professional than a free webmail address. Options: host-provided email, Zoho Mail, Google Workspace or Microsoft 365. Set up the MX records the provider gives you, plus SPF/DKIM/DMARC TXT records so your emails don't land in spam.

Module 2 — Summary

- Domains: short, brandable, right TLD; auto-renew, privacy, register in the owner's name.
- Hosting: shared for beginners; managed/VPS/cloud as you grow; check location, SSL, backups, PHP, support, renewal price.
- Connect via nameservers or A/CNAME records; allow for propagation.
- Install via one-click installer or manually (database + files + wp-config.php).
- Enable HTTPS; set timezone, **Post name permalinks**, homepage; untick search discouragement at launch.
- User roles: Administrator, Editor, Author, Contributor, Subscriber.

Practice questions — Module 2

1. List six guidelines for choosing a domain name.
2. Compare shared, managed WordPress and VPS hosting.
3. What is the difference between changing nameservers and adding an A record?
4. Describe the steps of a one-click WordPress installation.
5. What is stored in the database, and what is stored in wp-content?
6. Why should permalinks be set to "Post name" before publishing content?
7. Which role would you give (a) a guest writer, (b) the business owner, (c) a content manager?
8. **Task:** install WordPress locally (LocalWP) or on hosting, and complete the first-settings table.

MODULE 03

Understanding the WordPress Dashboard

A guided tour of every menu in the admin area, the block editor, the toolbar and screen options — so nothing feels unfamiliar afterwards.

3.1 The dashboard layout

After logging in at `/wp-admin`, you land on the **Dashboard**. Every screen shares the same layout:

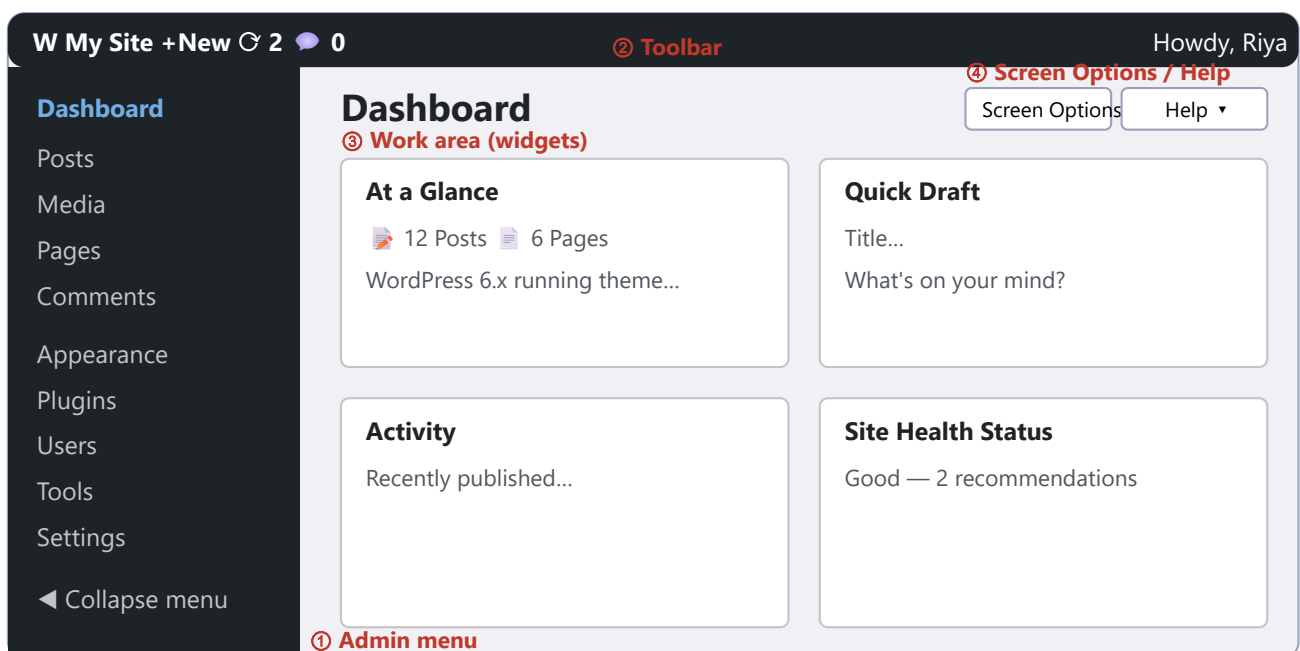


Figure 3.1 — The WordPress admin layout: ① admin menu, ② toolbar, ③ work area, ④ screen options.

- ① **Admin menu** (left): all sections of the dashboard. Hover to see sub-menus. Plugins often add their own menu items here.
- ② **Toolbar** (top): site name (click to visit the site), **+ New** shortcut, updates and comments counters, and your profile/log-out on the right. It also appears on the front end when you are logged in.
- ③ **Work area**: the content of the current screen.
- ④ **Screen Options**: show or hide boxes and columns on the current screen. **Help**: context help for that screen.

3.2 Dashboard home

Widget	What it shows
At a Glance	Number of posts, pages, comments; WordPress version and theme
Activity	Recently published posts and recent comments
Quick Draft	Jot down a post idea and save it as a draft
Site Health Status	Critical issues and recommendations (PHP version, HTTPS, inactive plugins)
WordPress Events and News	Nearby meetups and WordCamps, WordPress news

Dashboard → **Updates** lists available updates for WordPress core, plugins, themes and translations (Module 9).

3.3 Posts

- **All Posts:** list of every post with author, categories, tags, comments count, date and status (Published, Draft, Scheduled, Pending, Private). Hover a post for quick links: Edit, Quick Edit, Trash, View.
- **Add New Post:** opens the block editor.
- **Categories:** broad groups (e.g. Physics, Exam Tips). Hierarchical — can have sub-categories.
- **Tags:** specific keywords (e.g. Ohm's law, Class 12). Not hierarchical.

Try it — bulk actions and Quick Edit

Tick several posts → Bulk actions → Edit → change category or status for all at once. Use **Quick Edit** to change a title, slug, date or category without opening the editor.

3.4 Media

The **Media Library** stores every image, video, audio file and document you upload. View as a grid or list; click an item to edit its **alt text**, title, caption and description, copy its URL, or crop/rotate/scale it. Uploads are stored in `wp-content/uploads/year/month/`. More in Module 7.

3.5 Pages

Like Posts, but for static pages (Home, About, Contact). Pages have no categories or tags but can have a **parent page** (e.g. "Class 11" under "Courses") and a **template** (full width, no

sidebar) depending on the theme.

3.6 Comments

Approve, reply to, mark as spam or trash comments. Spam comments are common; an anti-spam plugin (e.g. Akismet, Antispam Bee) or turning comments off for business sites keeps this under control.

3.7 Appearance

Sub-menu	Purpose
Themes	Install, preview, activate and delete themes (Module 4)
Editor (block themes)	The Site Editor : edit templates, header, footer, navigation, styles (colours, fonts) across the whole site
Customize (classic themes)	The Customizer : live-preview settings for logo, colours, menus, widgets, homepage
Menus / Widgets (classic themes)	Build navigation menus; place widgets in sidebars and footers
Theme File Editor	Edit theme code directly — avoid ; a mistake can break the site

3.8 Plugins

Installed Plugins lists plugins with Activate/Deactivate/Delete links and auto-update toggles. **Add New Plugin** searches the free WordPress.org directory or uploads a ZIP file (for premium plugins). Covered fully in Module 5.

3.9 Users

Add users, assign roles (Module 2.7), edit profiles, and reset passwords. In **Profile**, set your display name, colour scheme, and create **Application Passwords** if an external app needs access. Log out everywhere else from the Sessions section if you suspect a problem.

3.10 Tools

- **Import / Export**: move posts, pages and media between WordPress sites in XML format (content only, not settings or design).
- **Site Health**: status tests and detailed "Info" about the server, PHP, database — useful for support.

- **Export / Erase Personal Data:** handle privacy requests from users.
- Theme and plugin file editors (avoid), and tools added by plugins.

3.11 Settings

Screen	Main options
General	Site title, tagline, site address, admin email, membership, default role, language, timezone, date/time formats
Writing	Default post category and format
Reading	Homepage displays (latest posts or a static page), posts per page, search-engine visibility
Discussion	Comment rules, moderation, avatars
Media	Default image sizes (thumbnail, medium, large)
Permalinks	URL structure (Post name recommended)
Privacy	Choose the Privacy Policy page

3.12 The block editor (Gutenberg)

Since WordPress 5.0, content is created with the **block editor**. Every piece of content is a **block**: a paragraph, heading, image, button, list, columns, video, table, and many more.

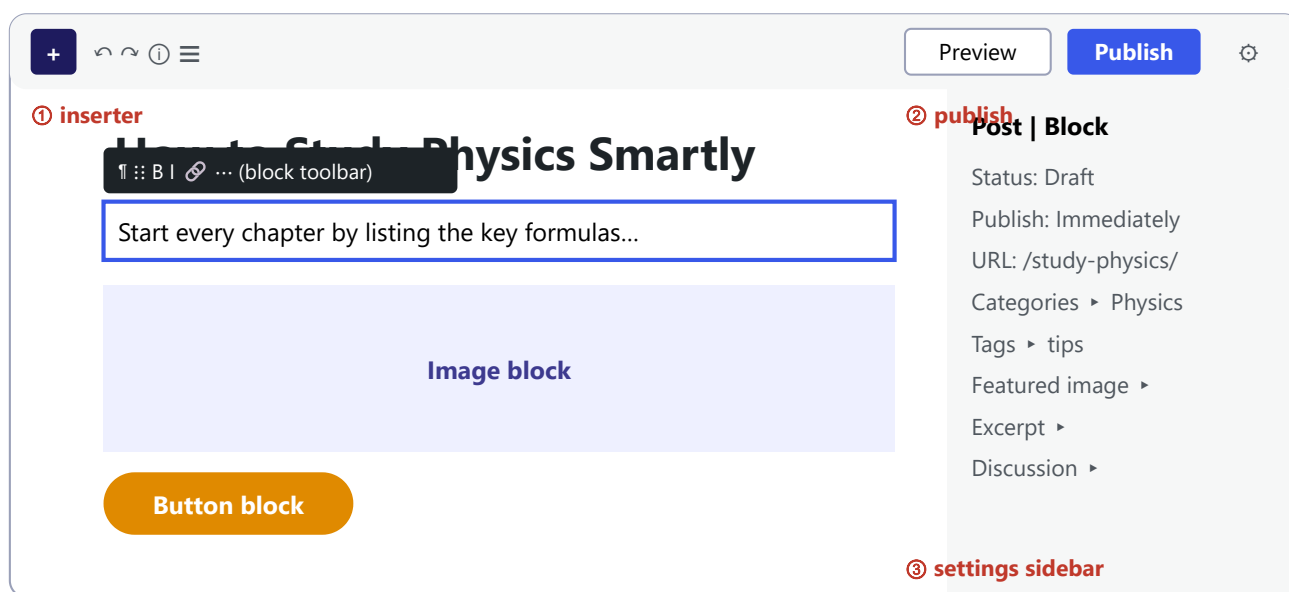


Figure 3.2 — The block editor: ① block inserter, ② Preview/Publish, ③ settings sidebar with Post and Block tabs.

Working with blocks

- Click + (or type / in an empty line, e.g. `/image` , `/heading`) to add a block.
- Each selected block shows a **block toolbar** (alignment, bold, link, move up/down, more options) and **block settings** in the right sidebar (colours, typography, spacing).
- Drag blocks using the handle (::) or use the up/down arrows to rearrange.
- **Group**, **Columns**, **Row** and **Stack** blocks build layouts.
- **Patterns** are ready-made groups of blocks (hero sections, testimonials, pricing tables) — insert and edit the text.
- **Synced patterns** (formerly reusable blocks) — edit once, update everywhere (e.g. a "call us" banner).
- **List View** (≡) shows the document outline; handy for selecting nested blocks.
- Undo with Ctrl + Z; **Revisions** in the sidebar let you restore earlier versions.

Publishing options

Option	Meaning
Save draft	Saved but not public
Preview	See it as visitors will (desktop, tablet, mobile)
Publish	Make it live now
Schedule	Set a future date/time to publish automatically
Visibility	Public, Private (only admins/editors), Password protected
Pending review	For contributors — an editor must approve

Try it — your first post

1. Posts → Add New. Type a title.
2. Add a paragraph, a Heading (H2), a list, an image and a button linking to your Contact page.
3. In the sidebar, choose a category, add two tags, set a featured image and check the URL slug.
4. Preview on mobile, then Publish. View it on the front end.

3.13 Keyboard shortcuts in the editor

Shortcut	Action	Shortcut	Action
/	Quick block search	Ctrl + S	Save draft
Ctrl + B / I / K	Bold / italic / link	Ctrl + Z	Undo
Ctrl + Shift + D	Duplicate block	Shift + Alt + Z	Delete block
Ctrl + Shift + Alt + M	Switch visual/code editor	Shift + Alt + H	Show all shortcuts

Module 3 — Summary

- Admin layout: menu, toolbar, work area, Screen Options/Help.
- Menus: Dashboard, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, Appearance, Plugins, Users, Tools, Settings.
- Categories are broad and hierarchical; tags are specific keywords.
- Appearance → Editor (block themes) or Customize (classic themes) controls site design.
- The block editor builds content from blocks; patterns speed up layouts; revisions allow undo.
- Publishing: draft, preview, publish, schedule, visibility.

Practice questions — Module 3

1. Name the four main areas of the admin layout.
2. What is the difference between categories and tags?
3. Which settings screen controls what the homepage shows?
4. What is Site Health, and why is it useful?
5. Explain blocks, patterns and synced patterns.
6. How do you schedule a post to publish next Monday at 9 am?
7. Why should you avoid the Theme File Editor?
8. **Task:** create three posts in two categories with tags and featured images; schedule one for tomorrow.

MODULE 04

Themes: Installing, Customizing, and Page Builders

What themes do, block versus classic themes, choosing a good theme, the Site Editor and Customizer, branding with colours and fonts, page builders, and child themes.

4.1 What is a theme?

A **theme** controls how your website **looks**: layout, colours, fonts, header and footer, and how posts and pages are displayed. Switching themes changes the design while your content (posts, pages, media) stays in the database. Only one theme is active at a time.

Key idea — separation of content and design

Content lives in the database; design lives in the theme. That's why you can redesign a WordPress site without retyping anything — but theme-specific features (like a theme's built-in sliders or shortcodes) may not carry over.

4.2 Block themes and classic themes

	Block themes (Full Site Editing)	Classic themes
How you design	Everything — header, footer, templates — is built from blocks in Appearance → Editor	Settings in Appearance → Customize ; menus and widgets screens
Global styles	Styles panel sets colours, fonts and spacing site-wide	Theme-specific Customizer options
Examples	Twenty Twenty-Four, Twenty Twenty-Five, Ollie, Frost	Astra, GeneratePress, OceanWP, Kadence, Neve (many support both approaches)
Best for	Modern, no-code full control	Very mature ecosystems; many tutorials; page-builder friendly

4.3 Choosing a good theme

- **Source**: the official WordPress.org theme directory (free, reviewed) or reputable premium marketplaces/developers. Never use "nulled" (pirated) premium themes — they often contain malware.
- **Responsive** — check the demo on your phone.

- **Lightweight and fast** — test the demo with PageSpeed Insights.
- **Recently updated** and compatible with the current WordPress version.
- **Ratings, active installs and support forum** responses.
- **Accessibility-ready** and translation-ready (for Indian languages).
- **Works with the plugins you need** (WooCommerce, your page builder).
- **Starter templates** — many themes offer one-click demo sites for schools, clinics, restaurants, shops.

Caution — "all-in-one" bloated themes

Themes that bundle sliders, dozens of shortcodes and page-builder plugins look impressive but are often slow and lock your content into that theme. A lightweight theme plus a few chosen plugins is usually better.

4.4 Installing and activating a theme

1. **Appearance** → **Themes** → **Add New Theme**.
2. Search or use the Feature Filter (e.g. "full site editing", "e-commerce", "education").
3. Click **Preview**, then **Install**, then **Activate**.
4. For premium themes: **Upload Theme** → choose the ZIP file → **Install** → **Activate**.
5. Import a **starter template** if the theme offers one (usually via a companion plugin).
6. Delete themes you don't use, but keep one default theme (e.g. Twenty Twenty-Five) as a fallback.

Try it — use Live Preview

Hover over an installed theme → **Live Preview** to see your own content in that design before activating. On a live site, test new themes on a **staging** copy first.

4.5 Customising a block theme — the Site Editor

Appearance → **Editor** opens the Site Editor with these sections:

Section	What you can do
Navigation	Build and edit menus
Styles	Choose a style variation; set global typography (fonts, sizes), colours (palette, background, text, links, buttons) and layout (content width, spacing)

Pages	Open and edit pages in context
Templates	Edit layouts for types of content: Home, Single Post, Page, Archive, Search, 404
Patterns / Template parts	Edit the Header and Footer (appear on every page) and reusable patterns

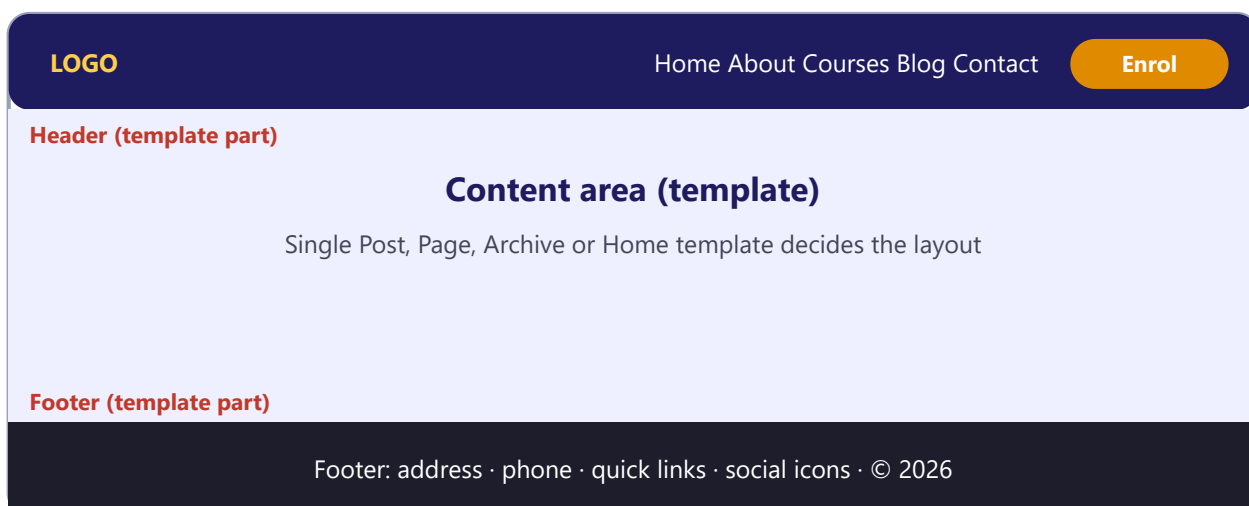


Figure 4.1 — A page is built from a header template part, a content template and a footer template part.

4.6 Customising a classic theme — the Customizer

Appearance → **Customize** opens a live preview with panels such as:

- **Site Identity:** logo, site title, tagline, **site icon (favicon)** — the small icon in browser tabs (upload a square image, at least 512 × 512 px).
- **Colours and Typography** (options vary by theme).
- **Header / Footer builder** (in themes like Astra, Kadence, Neve).
- **Menus and Widgets.**
- **Homepage Settings.**
- **Additional CSS** — small style tweaks without editing theme files.

Changes are previewed live and only go public when you click **Publish**. You can also schedule changes or save a draft.

4.7 Branding: colours, fonts and logo

Colour

- Pick a small palette: **1 primary** brand colour, **1 accent** for buttons/calls to action, **neutrals** (dark text, light backgrounds).

- Use the **60-30-10 rule**: about 60% neutral background, 30% secondary, 10% accent.
- Ensure **contrast** — text must be easy to read (WCAG recommends a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 for normal text).



Figure 4.2 — A simple five-colour brand palette.

Typography

- Use at most **two fonts**: one for headings, one for body text (or one font in different weights).
- Body text 16–18 px, line height about 1.5–1.7; headings clearly larger.
- Choose fonts that support the languages you need (e.g. Noto Sans for Indian scripts).
- Host fonts locally or use system fonts for speed and privacy.

Logo

Use a horizontal logo for the header (PNG or SVG, transparent background, about 250–400 px wide), plus a square version for the favicon and social media.

4.8 Page builders

A **page builder** is a plugin that provides visual drag-and-drop design with ready-made widgets and templates.

Builder	Notes
Block editor (Gutenberg)	Built into WordPress; lightweight; improving fast; add block libraries (e.g. Spectra, Kadence Blocks, GenerateBlocks) for more designs
Elementor	Very popular; visual front-end editing; huge template library; free and Pro versions
Beaver Builder, Divi, Bricks, Oxygen	Other established builders with different strengths and pricing

Pros of page builders

- Visual design without code
- Advanced layouts, animations, pop-ups
- Templates and design kits
- Fast for client projects

Cons

- Extra code can slow pages
- Content may be "locked in" to the builder
- Learning curve and Pro costs
- More things to update

Recommendation for beginners

Start with a lightweight theme and the **block editor + patterns**. Add a page builder only when you need designs the block editor can't handle easily. Don't mix several builders on one site.

4.9 Designing a homepage that works

A typical effective homepage, from top to bottom:

1. **Header** — logo, simple menu, a highlighted button (Call / Enrol / Shop).
2. **Hero section** — a clear headline saying what you offer and for whom, one supporting line, a primary button, and a relevant image.
3. **Trust bar** — years of experience, number of students/customers, ratings, logos.
4. **Services/products** — 3–6 cards with icons, short text and links.
5. **Why choose us** — benefits, not just features.
6. **Testimonials** — real names and photos (with permission).
7. **Call to action** — repeat the main action.
8. **Footer** — address, phone, email, map link, social icons, key links, privacy policy.

Worked example 4.1 — hero section text

Weak: "Welcome to our website."

Strong: "Class 11–12 Physics & Maths coaching in Cuttack — small batches, weekly tests, 92% students scored above 80% last year." **[Book a free demo class]**

4.10 Responsive design

Most visitors in India browse on phones, so every page must work on small screens. Responsive themes rearrange layouts automatically (columns stack vertically on phones). Always check:

- Use the editor's **device preview** (desktop/tablet/mobile) and your real phone.
- Text size readable without zooming; buttons large enough to tap (about 44 px).
- No sideways scrolling; images scale down.
- Menus collapse into a "hamburger" (≡) icon.
- Hide or simplify heavy sections on mobile if needed.

4.11 Child themes

If you edit a theme's files directly, your changes are **lost when the theme updates**. A **child theme** inherits everything from its parent theme but keeps your custom code separately, safe from updates. You need a child theme only if you change theme PHP/CSS files; for colours, fonts and layouts use the Site Editor/Customizer, and for small CSS use Additional CSS or the Styles panel. Many popular themes provide a ready-made child theme to download.

Module 4 — Summary

- Themes control design; content stays in the database.
- Block themes use the Site Editor (templates, template parts, global styles); classic themes use the Customizer.
- Choose lightweight, responsive, updated, well-rated themes from trusted sources; never nulled themes.
- Brand consistently: small colour palette, two fonts, good contrast, logo and favicon.
- Page builders add visual power at some cost to speed; start with blocks and patterns.
- Design homepages around a clear hero message and call to action; always test on mobile.
- Use a child theme only for code customisations.

Practice questions — Module 4

1. What does a theme control? What happens to content when you switch themes?
2. Differentiate block themes and classic themes.
3. List seven checks before choosing a theme.
4. What are templates and template parts in the Site Editor?
5. Explain the 60-30-10 colour rule.
6. Give two advantages and two disadvantages of page builders.
7. Why do we use child themes?
8. **Task:** install a lightweight theme, set a logo, favicon, colour palette and fonts, and design a homepage with hero, services, testimonials and a call to action.

MODULE 05

Plugins: Must-Haves and How to Choose Them

What plugins are, installing and managing them, the handful of plugin categories every site needs, how to evaluate a plugin before installing it, and fixing plugin conflicts.

5.1 What is a plugin?

A **plugin** is an add-on that extends what WordPress can do — like apps on a phone. WordPress core stays small and fast; plugins add features only where needed: contact forms, SEO tools, online shops, backups, security, galleries, bookings, multilingual support, and thousands more. The official directory at wordpress.org/plugins has over 50,000 free plugins; many also have paid "Pro" versions.

Theme versus plugin — the golden rule

Theme = how it looks. Plugin = what it does. Keep functionality (forms, SEO, custom post types) in plugins, so that if you change the theme your features don't disappear.

5.2 Installing and managing plugins

1. **Plugins** → **Add New Plugin**. Search by name or feature.
2. Check the details (see 5.4), click **Install Now**, then **Activate**.
3. Premium plugins: **Upload Plugin** → choose ZIP → Install → Activate → enter licence key for updates.
4. Find its settings (a new menu item or under Settings/Tools).
5. Manage in **Installed Plugins**: Deactivate, Delete, enable **auto-updates**.

Caution — deactivate is not delete

A deactivated plugin still sits on the server. If it has a security hole, it can still be attacked. **Delete** plugins you don't use.

5.3 The essential plugin categories

Category	Why you need it	Popular options (examples)
SEO	Titles, meta descriptions, XML sitemaps, social previews, schema	Yoast SEO, Rank Math, All in One SEO

Contact forms	Enquiry forms that email you and store entries	WPForms, Contact Form 7, Fluent Forms, Formidable
Anti-spam	Blocks spam comments and form submissions	Akismet, Antispam Bee, CleanTalk; reCAPTCHA/Turnstile in forms
Backup	Scheduled backups to cloud storage; easy restore	UpdraftPlus, BlogVault, host backups
Security	Firewall, login protection, 2FA, malware scanning	Wordfence, Solid Security, Sucuri
Performance / caching	Faster pages through caching, minification, lazy loading	LiteSpeed Cache (on LiteSpeed hosts), WP Rocket, W3 Total Cache, WP Super Cache
Image optimisation	Compress and convert images (WebP/AVIF)	Smush, ShortPixel, EWWW, Imagify
Analytics	Visitor statistics	Site Kit by Google, independent privacy-friendly tools
E-commerce	Online store	WooCommerce (Module 8)
Page building	Visual design	Elementor, Spectra, Kadence Blocks
Multilingual	English + regional language versions	Polylang, WPML, TranslatePress
Email delivery (SMTP)	Makes sure form emails reach the inbox	WP Mail SMTP, FluentSMTP
Chat / WhatsApp button	Floating click-to-chat button	Several "click to chat" plugins
Cookie consent / privacy	Consent banners where required	Complianz, CookieYes
Redirects & broken links	301 redirects for changed URLs; fix 404s	Redirection

The brand names above are well-known examples, not endorsements — features and pricing change, so compare current versions before choosing.

5.4 How to evaluate a plugin before installing

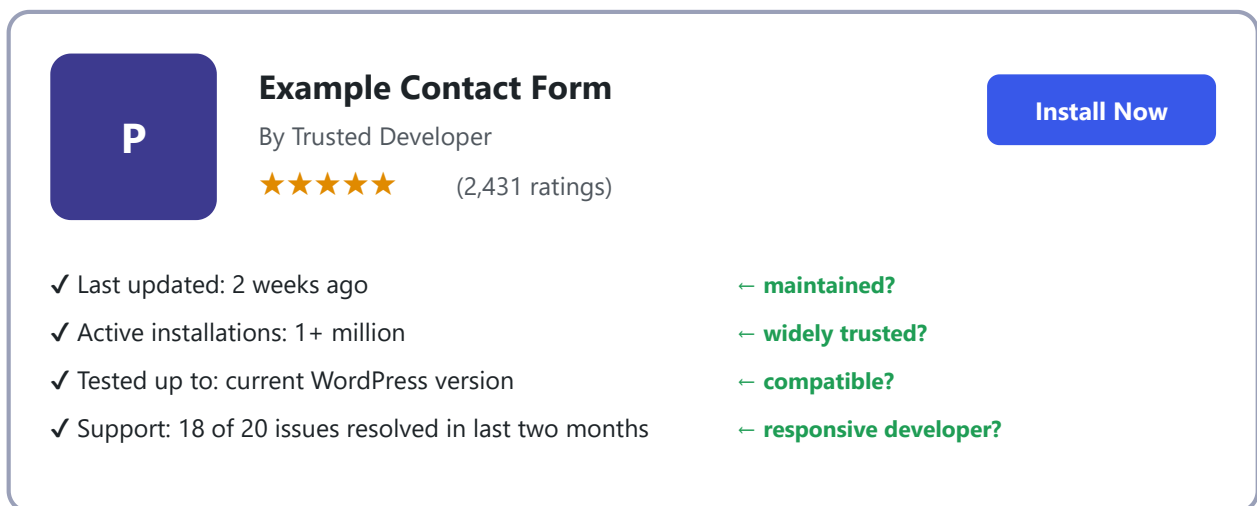


Figure 5.1 — What to read on a plugin's page before installing it.

- **Last updated:** within the last few months. Avoid plugins abandoned for a year or more.
- **Active installations** and **ratings:** more users and good reviews → more trust (but read recent 1-star reviews too).
- **Compatibility:** "Tested up to" your WordPress version; required PHP version.
- **Support forum:** are questions answered? Are issues resolved?
- **Developer reputation** and documentation.
- **Does it do one job well?** Avoid plugins that do dozens of unrelated things.
- **Performance:** does it load heavy scripts on every page?
- **Do you really need it?** Can the theme, a block, or two lines of settings do it?
- **Source:** official directory or the developer's own site — **never nulled/pirated** plugins.

5.5 How many plugins is too many?

There's no magic number — one badly coded plugin can slow a site more than twenty good ones. But every plugin adds code to update, possible security issues and possible conflicts. Aim for a **lean set** of well-maintained plugins, typically 10–20 for a business site. Review your plugin list every few months and remove anything unused.

5.6 Setting up a contact form (step by step)

Worked example 5.1 — enquiry form for a tuition centre

1. Install and activate a form plugin (e.g. WPForms Lite or Contact Form 7).
2. Create a new form with fields: **Name** (required), **Phone** (required, 10 digits), **Email**, **Class** (drop-down: 11, 12, Entrance), **Message**.
3. Add spam protection: honeypot + reCAPTCHA/Turnstile or an anti-spam integration.
4. Notifications: send to `info@sunrisetuition.in`; subject "New enquiry – {Name}"; also send the visitor a thank-you email.
5. Confirmation: show "Thank you! We'll call you within 24 hours." or redirect to a thank-you page (useful for tracking conversions).
6. Insert the form on the Contact page using its block or shortcode.
7. Install an **SMTP** plugin and connect it to your email provider so notifications don't land in spam.
8. **Test**: submit a real entry and confirm you receive the email.
9. Add a consent checkbox and link to your Privacy Policy, and collect only data you need.

5.7 SEO plugin quick setup

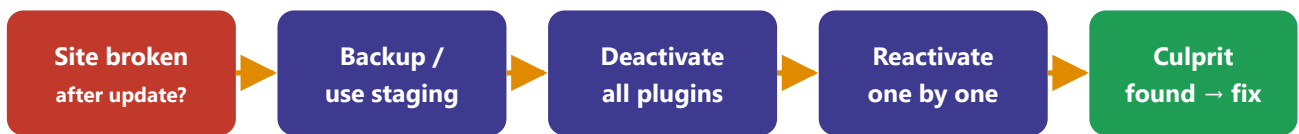
1. Run the setup wizard: site type (business/blog), organisation or person, logo, social profiles.
2. Confirm the **XML sitemap** is enabled (e.g. `/sitemap_index.xml`) and submit it in Google Search Console (Module 7).
3. Set **title templates** (e.g. *Post title – Site name*).
4. Choose which content types should appear in search (usually posts and pages; not tag archives on small sites).
5. For each important page, write a focus keyword, SEO title and meta description in the editor's SEO box.

5.8 Plugin conflicts and troubleshooting

Sometimes two plugins (or a plugin and the theme) don't work together — a layout breaks, a button stops working, or the dreaded message appears: *"There has been a critical error on this website."*

Systematic troubleshooting

1. **Think:** what changed just before the problem (new plugin, update)?
2. **Check the admin email:** WordPress's **recovery mode** emails a special login link identifying the faulty plugin/theme.
3. **Deactivate plugins one by one** (or all, then reactivate one by one) until the problem disappears. The last one you reactivated is the culprit. Do this on a staging site if possible, or use a troubleshooting plugin (e.g. Health Check & Troubleshooting) that disables plugins only for you.
4. **Switch to a default theme** temporarily to test for theme conflicts.
5. **Clear caches** (plugin, host, CDN, browser) after changes.
6. If you can't reach wp-admin: via File Manager/FTP, rename `wp-content/plugins/plugin-name` (e.g. add `-off`) to disable it.
7. Check the error log (hosting panel) or enable `WP_DEBUG_LOG` in wp-config.php temporarily.
8. Report the conflict to the plugin's support forum with details from **Tools** → **Site Health** → **Info**.



Also test with a default theme, and clear all caches between steps.

Figure 5.2 — Finding a conflicting plugin.

5.9 Updates and auto-updates

- Updates fix bugs and **security holes** — outdated plugins are the most common way WordPress sites get hacked.
- Take a **backup** before major updates; read the changelog for big version jumps.
- Enable **auto-updates** for trusted, simple plugins; update complex ones (WooCommerce, page builders) manually after testing on staging.
- Remove plugins that are no longer maintained and find replacements.

5.10 Must-use code snippets without extra plugins

Small tweaks (e.g. adding a Google verification tag, changing an excerpt length) are often done by pasting code snippets. Never paste them into the theme's functions.php of a parent theme (lost on update). Use a **code snippets** plugin or a child theme, and only use snippets from trustworthy sources that you understand.

Module 5 — Summary

- Plugins add features; themes add looks. Keep functionality in plugins.
- Essentials: SEO, forms + anti-spam, backup, security, caching, image optimisation, SMTP.
- Evaluate: last updated, installs, ratings, compatibility, support, single purpose, trusted source.
- Keep a lean set; delete (not just deactivate) unused plugins.
- Fix conflicts by deactivating and reactivating one by one; recovery mode and renaming plugin folders help.
- Back up, then update regularly.

Practice questions — Module 5

1. What is the difference between a theme and a plugin? Why should features live in plugins?
2. List six essential plugin categories for a business website and the purpose of each.
3. List seven factors to check before installing a plugin.
4. Why is it better to delete unused plugins rather than just deactivate them?
5. Why do contact forms often need an SMTP plugin?
6. Describe the steps to find a plugin conflict.
7. How can you disable a plugin if you cannot log in to wp-admin?
8. **Task:** install and configure an SEO plugin, a contact form with spam protection, and a backup plugin; test the form.

MODULE 06

Creating Pages, Posts, and Menus

Building your site's structure: pages versus posts, the essential pages, writing for the web, categories and tags, the homepage and blog page, and navigation menus.

6.1 Pages versus posts — in depth

Feature	Pages	Posts
Purpose	Timeless, static information	Timely articles, news, updates
Examples	Home, About, Services, Contact, Privacy Policy	"Exam tips for board exams", "Results 2026", "New batch starts"
Date shown	Usually not	Yes
Organised by	Parent–child hierarchy	Categories and tags
Appears in	Menus	Blog page, archives, RSS feeds, category pages
Comments	Usually off	Often on
Author box	Usually not	Yes

Some plugins add more **custom post types** — e.g. WooCommerce adds *Products*; course plugins add *Courses* and *Lessons*; portfolio plugins add *Projects*.

6.2 The essential pages of a business website

Page	Include
Home	Clear headline, services, trust signals, testimonials, call to action (Module 4.9)
About	Your story, mission, team with photos and qualifications, achievements
Services / Products / Courses	What you offer, who it's for, benefits, price or "ask for price", FAQs, a button
Contact	Phone (tap-to-call), WhatsApp, email, form, address, embedded Google Map, working hours
Blog	Posts that answer customers' questions (helps SEO)

Testimonials / Results / Gallery	Proof and photos
Privacy Policy	What personal data you collect (forms, cookies, analytics) and how it's used — required if you collect data
Terms & Conditions / Refund Policy	Required for online payments and by payment gateways
404 page	A friendly "page not found" with search and links (template in the theme)

Try it — create the core pages

Pages → Add New Page. Create Home, About, Courses, Contact, Blog (leave empty) and Privacy Policy (**Settings** → **Privacy** offers a starter template). Use patterns for layouts. Set short, clean slugs: `/about/`, `/courses/`, `/contact/`.

6.3 Setting the homepage and blog page

1. Go to **Settings** → **Reading**.
2. Your homepage displays: choose **A static page**.
3. Homepage: select **Home**. Posts page: select **Blog**.
4. Save. Your blog posts now appear automatically on the Blog page, and your designed Home page is the front page.

(With block themes, you can also design the front page directly in **Appearance** → **Editor** → **Templates** → **Front Page/Home**.)

6.4 Page hierarchy and templates

In the page sidebar, set a **Parent** page to create a hierarchy: "Class 11" and "Class 12" under "Courses" give URLs like `/courses/class-11/`. Choose a **Template** (Default, Full width, No title, Blank/Canvas) depending on your theme — e.g. a full-width template for landing pages.

6.5 Writing content for the web

People **scan** web pages rather than read every word. Write so that the key points jump out:

- **Lead with the answer** or main benefit in the first two lines.
- Use **headings** (H2, H3) every few paragraphs. Use only one H1 per page (usually the title).
- Keep paragraphs short (2–4 sentences). Use **bullet lists** and bold key phrases.
- Write for your reader: simple words, "you" language, local context; avoid jargon.

- Add a clear **call to action** (button) at the end of every page.
- Use real photos and helpful images with **alt text** (Module 7).
- Link to related pages (internal links) — helps visitors and SEO.
- Proofread; check spellings of names and numbers.
- Respect copyright — don't copy text or images from other websites.

Worked example 6.1 — a service page outline

H1: Class 12 Physics Coaching in Cuttack

Intro: Small batches of 15, weekly tests, doubt sessions — prepare for CHSE boards and JEE/NEET basics.

H2: Who this course is for · **H2:** What you'll learn (bullet list of units) · **H2:** Batch timings and fees (table) · **H2:** Results (3 testimonials) · **H2:** FAQs (accordion/details blocks) ·

Button: Book a free demo class.

6.6 Categories and tags — organising posts

- **Categories** are your blog's main sections — broad topics. Every post must have at least one. Keep 5–10 categories; you can nest sub-categories. Rename the default "Uncategorized" to something useful.
- **Tags** are optional, specific keywords that link related posts across categories. Use a few relevant tags per post; don't create a new tag for every post.

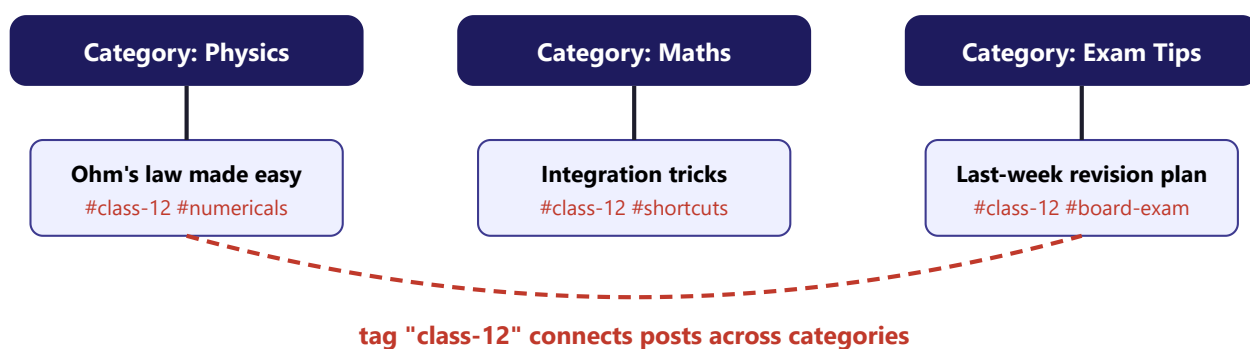


Figure 6.1 — Categories group posts by main topic; tags connect related posts across categories.

6.7 Anatomy of a good blog post

1. **Title** — clear and specific, ideally including the main keyword: "How to Solve Ohm's Law Numericals: 5 Steps".
2. **Slug** — short: /ohms-law-numericals/.

3. **Introduction** — the problem and what the reader will gain.
4. **Body** — H2/H3 sections, lists, images, examples.
5. **Conclusion + call to action** — "Join our demo class", "Download notes".
6. **Featured image** — shown on the blog page and when shared on social media.
7. **Excerpt** — a 1–2 sentence summary for the blog page.
8. **Category, tags, author, internal links**, and an **SEO title and meta description** (Module 7).

6.8 Navigation menus

The main menu is how visitors find their way. Keep it **simple**: about 5–7 top-level items, in a logical order, with the most important action (Contact / Enrol / Shop) highlighted as a button at the end.

Block themes — Navigation block

1. **Appearance** → **Editor** → **Navigation** (or edit the Header template part and select the Navigation block).
2. Add items: pages, posts, categories, custom links (e.g. a WhatsApp link <https://wa.me/91XXXXXXXXXX>).
3. Drag to reorder; indent an item under another to create a **sub-menu** (dropdown).
4. Style the last item as a button; choose how the mobile menu opens (overlay).
5. Save.

Classic themes — Menus screen

1. **Appearance** → **Menus** → create a menu, e.g. "Main Menu".
2. Tick pages on the left → **Add to Menu**; add Custom Links as needed.
3. Drag items to reorder; drag slightly right to make sub-items.
4. Under **Menu Settings / Display location**, tick "Primary Menu" (and create a separate Footer Menu for Privacy Policy, Terms etc.).
5. Save Menu.



Figure 6.2 — A clear main menu with a dropdown and a highlighted call-to-action item.

6.9 Other navigation aids

- **Footer menu** — Privacy Policy, Terms, Refund Policy, Sitemap, Careers.
- **Breadcrumbs** — "Home > Courses > Class 12" — provided by SEO plugins or themes; help users and search engines.
- **Search** — add a Search block for content-heavy sites.
- **Buttons and internal links** within content.
- **Sticky header** or a floating WhatsApp/call button on mobile.

6.10 Editing, revisions and housekeeping

- **Revisions:** every save stores a version; compare and restore from the editor sidebar.
- **Changing a published URL** breaks links — add a **301 redirect** from the old URL to the new one (Redirection plugin or SEO plugin).
- **Trash** keeps deleted items for 30 days.
- Keep content fresh: update prices, dates, staff and results; archive old announcements.

Module 6 — Summary

- Pages = timeless, hierarchical; posts = dated, categorised, in the blog.
- Essential pages: Home, About, Services, Contact, Blog, Privacy Policy (+ Terms/Refund for payments).
- Settings → Reading sets a static homepage and a posts page.
- Write for scanning: headings, short paragraphs, lists, a call to action.
- Categories are broad (required); tags are specific (optional).
- Menus: 5–7 items, logical order, sub-menus, highlighted CTA; separate footer menu.
- Use revisions, and 301 redirects when URLs change.

Practice questions — Module 6

1. Give three differences between pages and posts, with examples.
2. List the essential pages for a clinic website and what each should contain.
3. How do you set a static homepage and a separate blog page?
4. Give six guidelines for writing web content.
5. Explain categories and tags with an example.
6. Describe how to create a main menu with a dropdown in a block theme.
7. What is a 301 redirect, and when is it needed?
8. **Task:** build the full page structure and menus for your practice site; write one complete blog post.

MODULE 07

Working with Media, Forms, and SEO Basics

Preparing and optimising images, video and documents, alt text and accessibility, forms that convert, and the on-page SEO settings that matter most — plus Google Search Console and local SEO.

7.1 Images: the right format and size

Images make pages attractive, but oversized images are the **number-one cause of slow WordPress sites**. A photo straight from a phone camera can be 4,000 px wide and 4–8 MB — far bigger than any screen needs.

Format	Best for	Notes
JPEG / JPG	Photographs	Lossy; adjust quality (70–85% is usually fine)
PNG	Logos, screenshots, images needing transparency	Lossless; can be large for photos
WebP	Photos and graphics on the web	Much smaller than JPEG/PNG at similar quality; supported by modern browsers and WordPress
AVIF	Photos	Even smaller; newer
SVG	Logos and icons	Vector — sharp at any size; needs a plugin to upload safely
GIF	Simple animations	Large; prefer short MP4 videos

Image preparation rules

- **Resize before uploading:** full-width images about 1600–2000 px wide; content images about 1200 px; thumbnails 300–600 px.
- **Compress:** aim for under ~200 KB for most images (hero images may be a little larger).
- **Name files descriptively:** `physics-class-12-batch-cuttack.jpg`, not `IMG_20260912.jpg`.
- Use an image-optimisation plugin to compress automatically and serve WebP/AVIF.

Worked example 7.1 — the cost of one big image

A 6 MB photo on a mobile connection of 10 Mbps takes about $6 \times 8 \div 10 \approx 4.8$ seconds to download. Resized to 1,200 px and compressed to 150 KB (0.15 MB), it takes about $0.15 \times 8 \div 10 \approx 0.12$ s — around 40 times faster, and it looks the same on screen.

7.2 The Media Library and image settings

- Upload via **Media** → **Add New Media File** or directly in an Image block.
- WordPress automatically creates several sizes (thumbnail, medium, large) and serves the right size to each device (**responsive images**).
- Edit an image: crop, rotate, flip, scale — useful for quick fixes.
- WordPress adds **lazy loading** automatically, so images below the fold load only when the visitor scrolls to them.
- In the Image block: set alignment, size, link, caption, and aspect-ratio/cropping.

7.3 Alt text and accessibility

Alternative (alt) text is a short description of an image. Screen readers read it aloud to blind and low-vision users; it appears if the image fails to load; and search engines use it to understand images.

Image	Poor alt text	Good alt text
Teacher explaining a circuit to students	"image1", "photo"	"Teacher explaining a series circuit to Class 12 students on a whiteboard"
Company logo linking home	"logo.png"	"Sunrise Tuition Centre – home"
Decorative divider line	"line"	Leave empty (decorative images need no alt text)

Other accessibility basics: sufficient colour contrast, headings in order (H2 → H3), descriptive link text ("Download the syllabus" instead of "click here"), captions for videos, and forms with visible labels.

7.4 Video, audio and documents

- **Videos:** upload to YouTube (or Vimeo) and **embed** — paste the link into the editor and WordPress embeds it automatically. Self-hosting large videos slows your server and uses bandwidth. Use short, compressed MP4s only for small background clips.

- **Audio:** the Audio block plays MP3s; podcasts are usually hosted on podcast platforms.
- **PDFs:** the File block adds a download button (and optional preview). Compress PDFs; give them clear names. For paid or private files, use membership or e-commerce features rather than public links.
- **Galleries:** the Gallery block creates responsive image grids with lightbox options.

7.5 Forms that convert

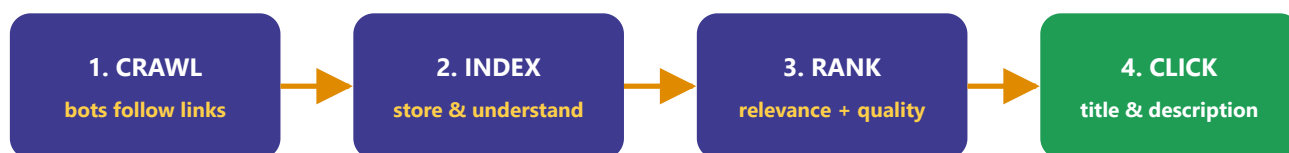
A contact form's job is to turn visitors into enquiries. Small changes can double submissions:

- **Ask only what you need** — every extra field reduces submissions. Name + phone + one question is often enough.
- **Clear labels** above fields and helpful placeholders.
- **One clear button** with an action word: "Book my free demo" beats "Submit".
- **Mobile-friendly:** large fields; correct input types (phone keypad for numbers).
- **Trust:** "We'll call you within 24 hours. We never share your number."
- **Spam protection** without annoying users (honeypot, invisible CAPTCHA/Turnstile).
- **Confirmation** message or thank-you page, and an auto-reply email.
- **Reliable email delivery** with SMTP; store entries in the database as a backup.
- **Privacy:** consent checkbox and link to the Privacy Policy where appropriate.

Common form types: contact/enquiry, admission/registration, appointment booking, quote request, feedback/survey, newsletter sign-up, file upload (e.g. resumes — restrict file types and sizes).

7.6 What is SEO?

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) means making your website easy for search engines to find, understand and rank, so that people searching for what you offer find you. Search engines use automated programs (**crawlers**) to visit pages, **index** them, and **rank** results by relevance and quality.



Technical SEO helps steps 1–2; content and links help step 3; good titles and descriptions win step 4.

Figure 7.1 — How search engines work.

7.7 Keyword research basics

A **keyword** is the phrase people type into Google. Target the words your customers actually use:

- Brainstorm customer questions: "physics tuition near me", "class 12 physics coaching Cuttack", "how to solve ohm's law numericals".
- Look at Google's autocomplete suggestions and "People also ask" boxes.
- Prefer specific **long-tail** keywords (3–6 words) — less competition, clearer intent.
- Include **location** for local businesses.
- Assign **one main keyword per page**; don't make several pages compete for the same keyword.

7.8 On-page SEO checklist

Element	Best practice	Example
SEO title (title tag)	Main keyword near the start; about 50–60 characters; brand at the end	Class 12 Physics Coaching in Cuttack Sunrise Tuition
Meta description	Persuasive summary, about 140–160 characters, with keyword and call to action	Small batches, weekly tests and doubt sessions for CHSE Class 12 Physics. Book a free demo class today.
URL slug	Short, lowercase, hyphens, keyword	/class-12-physics-coaching/
H1	One per page, includes the keyword	Class 12 Physics Coaching in Cuttack
Subheadings	H2/H3 structure with related terms	"Batch timings", "Fees", "Results"
Content	Genuinely helpful, original, complete; answers the searcher's question	Syllabus, method, FAQs

Images	Descriptive file names and alt text; compressed	class-12-physics-lab.webp
Internal links	Link to related pages with descriptive anchor text	"See our Class 11 course"
External links	Link to authoritative sources where useful	Board syllabus PDF
Mobile & speed	Responsive, fast (Module 9)	—
Schema	Structured data (organisation, local business, FAQ, article) via SEO plugin	Shows rich results

sunrisetuition.in › courses › class-12-physics Class 12 Physics Coaching in Cuttack Sunrise Tuition Small batches, weekly tests and doubt sessions for CHSE Class 12 Physics. Book a free demo class today.	← URL (slug) ← SEO title ← meta description
---	---

Figure 7.2 — How your SEO title, URL and meta description appear in Google results (illustrative).

7.9 Technical SEO basics in WordPress

- **Search-engine visibility on** (Settings → Reading — untick "discourage").
- **Post-name permalinks.**
- **HTTPS** everywhere.
- **XML sitemap** enabled (SEO plugin) and submitted to Google.
- **robots.txt** not blocking important content.
- **No broken links**; 301 redirects for changed URLs.
- **Fast loading** and good **Core Web Vitals** (loading speed, responsiveness, visual stability).
- Avoid **duplicate content**; noindex thin tag/archive pages on small sites.

7.10 Google Search Console and Analytics

1. **Google Search Console** (free): verify your site (DNS TXT record or via Site Kit/SEO plugin) → submit your sitemap → see which searches show your site, clicks, indexing problems and mobile issues.
2. **Google Analytics** (or a privacy-friendly alternative): visitor numbers, sources (Google, social, direct), popular pages, conversions (form submissions).

3. Check monthly: top queries, pages losing traffic, pages with high impressions but low clicks (improve their titles/descriptions).

7.11 Local SEO — essential for local businesses

- Create and verify a **Google Business Profile**: correct name, address, phone (NAP), category, hours, photos, website link.
- Keep NAP **identical** on your website, Google profile and directories (JustDial, IndiaMART, Sulekha, etc.).
- Ask happy customers for **Google reviews**; reply to every review politely.
- Add your town/area to titles and content ("... in Cuttack"); embed a Google Map on the Contact page.
- Add LocalBusiness schema via your SEO plugin.

7.12 Content that ranks: E-E-A-T

Google rewards content that shows **Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness and Trustworthiness**. Show real authors with credentials, cite sources, share first-hand experience and results, keep information accurate and updated, and make contact details and policies easy to find. Write for people first, not for search engines — keyword stuffing and copied or low-effort AI-generated content can hurt rankings.

Module 7 — Summary

- Resize and compress images (WebP, ~200 KB); descriptive file names; lazy loading and responsive sizes are built in.
- Always write meaningful alt text; follow basic accessibility rules.
- Embed videos from YouTube; use File blocks for PDFs.
- Forms: few fields, clear labels and button, spam protection, confirmation, SMTP, privacy.
- SEO: keywords → title (50–60 chars), meta description (140–160), slug, H1/H2, content, images, internal links, schema.
- Technical: visibility on, sitemap, HTTPS, speed, redirects. Use Search Console, Analytics and Google Business Profile.

Practice questions — Module 7

1. Why do large images slow a website? How would you prepare a phone photo for upload?
2. Compare JPEG, PNG, WebP and SVG.
3. Write good alt text for: (a) a photo of your shop front, (b) a chart of exam results.
4. List seven ways to improve a contact form's conversion rate.
5. Explain crawling, indexing and ranking.
6. Write an SEO title and meta description for a bakery's "Birthday Cakes" page in Pune.
7. What is a sitemap, and how do you submit it to Google?
8. List five local SEO actions for a small clinic.

E-commerce with WooCommerce (Intro)

Setting up a basic online store: products, variations, shipping, taxes and GST, payment gateways, checkout, orders, and the legal pages every Indian store needs.

8.1 What is WooCommerce?

WooCommerce is a free, open-source plugin that turns a WordPress site into a full online store. It is the most widely used e-commerce platform for WordPress, powering millions of shops — from a home baker selling cakes to large brands. Because it runs on your own WordPress site, you own your store and customer data, and pay no platform commission (payment-gateway fees still apply).

Feature	What it provides
Products	Physical, digital (downloads), variable (sizes/colours), grouped, external/affiliate
Cart & checkout	Cart, checkout, customer accounts, guest checkout
Payments	UPI, cards, net banking, wallets via gateways; cash on delivery; bank transfer
Shipping	Zones, flat rate, free shipping, local pickup; courier integrations via plugins
Taxes	Tax classes and rates (e.g. GST), tax-inclusive pricing
Orders & customers	Order management, statuses, emails, refunds, reports and analytics
Coupons	Percentage or fixed discounts, free shipping, usage limits
Extensions	Subscriptions, bookings, memberships, invoices, WhatsApp notifications, marketplaces

8.2 Before you start — planning a store

- **Business basics:** what you sell, to whom, pricing, margins, delivery area.
- **Legal and tax:** business registration as applicable; **GST registration** where required (e-commerce sellers often need it — check current rules with a tax professional); a business bank account.
- **Payment gateway account** — most require KYC documents (PAN, bank details, business proof) and your website's policy pages to be live.

- **Product content:** good photos (white or clean background, multiple angles), accurate descriptions, sizes, weights, prices.
- **Logistics:** packaging, courier partner or local delivery, returns process.
- **Hosting:** a reliable plan with enough resources — stores need more than simple brochure sites.

8.3 Installing and setting up WooCommerce

1. **Plugins** → **Add New** → **WooCommerce** → Install → Activate.
2. Follow the **setup wizard**: store address (sets default country and currency ₹ INR), industry, product types, business details.
3. WooCommerce creates the key pages automatically: **Shop, Cart, Checkout, My Account**.
4. Choose a WooCommerce-compatible theme (most modern themes are).
5. Review **WooCommerce** → **Settings** tab by tab (below).

Settings tab	Key options
General	Store address, selling/shipping locations, currency (INR), decimals, enable taxes
Products	Shop page, weight/dimension units (kg, cm), reviews, inventory (stock management, low-stock alerts), downloadable product settings
Tax	Prices entered with or without tax; tax classes and rates
Shipping	Zones, methods and costs
Payments	Enable payment methods
Accounts & Privacy	Guest checkout, account creation, privacy policy, data retention
Emails	Order emails to admin and customers — sender name, logo, colours

8.4 Adding products

Handloom Sambalpuri Cotton Saree

Long description: weave, fabric, care, size...

Product data — Simple product ▾
General: Regular price ₹2,499 · Sale price ₹2,199
Inventory: SKU SAM-COT-021 · Stock 12
Shipping: Weight 0.6 kg · 35 × 25 × 5 cm
Linked products: upsells / cross-sells
Attributes · Advanced

Publish
Visibility: Shop & search

Categories: Sarees

Product image
+ Product gallery
Short description

Figure 8.1 — The product editing screen (simplified).

1. **Products** → **Add New Product**.
2. **Name** and **long description** (features, material, sizes, care instructions, FAQs).
3. **Product data** panel: product type; regular and sale price; tax status and class; **SKU** (stock-keeping unit code) and stock quantity; weight and dimensions for shipping.
4. **Short description** — shown next to the image; key selling points in 2–4 lines.
5. **Product image** and **gallery** (square images, e.g. 1000 × 1000 px, compressed).
6. **Categories** and **tags** for browsing and filtering.
7. Publish and view the product page.

Product types

Type	Use for	Example
Simple	One item, one price	A book
Variable	Options with their own price/stock/image	T-shirt in S/M/L and 3 colours
Grouped	A set of related simple products shown together	Stationery kit items
External/Affiliate	Sold on another website	Affiliate product link
Virtual / Downloadable (checkboxes)	No shipping / digital file delivered after payment	Consultation / PDF notes, e-book

Worked example 8.1 — a variable product

T-shirt with **Size** (S, M, L, XL) and **Colour** (Blue, White).

1. Product type: **Variable product**.
2. Attributes tab: add "Size" with values S | M | L | XL and "Colour" with Blue | White; tick "Used for variations".
3. Variations tab: **Generate variations** → 8 combinations.
4. For each (or in bulk): price, SKU, stock, image. E.g. XL costs ₹50 more.
5. Customers now pick size and colour before "Add to cart".

8.5 Shipping

WooCommerce uses **shipping zones** (regions) with **methods** inside each:

Zone	Methods
Local (your city PIN codes)	Local pickup (free) · Local delivery ₹40
Rest of your state	Flat rate ₹70 · Free shipping for orders above ₹999
Rest of India	Flat rate ₹99 · Free shipping above ₹1,499

Flat rates can also depend on weight or quantity using shipping classes. Courier-aggregator plugins can calculate live rates, print labels and provide tracking. Cash on delivery (COD) can be limited to certain zones or order values.

8.6 Taxes and GST

- Enable taxes in **Settings** → **General**, then configure **Settings** → **Tax**.
- Decide whether prices are entered **inclusive** of GST (common in India; the displayed price is final) or exclusive.
- Create **tax classes** for different GST rates that apply to your products (e.g. 5%, 12%, 18%) and assign each product the right class.
- GST treatment depends on whether the buyer is in your state (CGST + SGST) or another state (IGST); plugins for Indian GST help show the correct split and produce GST invoices with your GSTIN and HSN/SAC codes.

Caution — get tax advice

GST rates, thresholds and e-commerce rules change and depend on your product and business. Confirm your registration and rates with a chartered accountant or tax practitioner before launching.

8.7 Payments

Method	Notes
Payment gateway (e.g. Razorpay, PayU, Cashfree, PhonePe PG, Stripe)	Accept UPI, cards, net banking and wallets. Install the gateway's WooCommerce plugin, enter API keys, test in test mode first, then switch to live. Fees are typically a small percentage per transaction
Cash on Delivery	Popular in India; increases orders but also returns — consider limits or a small COD fee (check gateway/courier rules)
Direct bank transfer / UPI QR	Manual verification of each payment; OK for very small shops

Gateways usually require these pages to be live on your site before approval: **About/Contact** with business details, **Privacy Policy**, **Terms and Conditions**, **Refund & Cancellation Policy** and **Shipping/Delivery Policy**, plus product prices shown in INR.

Try it — test an order end-to-end

With the gateway in test mode, place an order using the gateway's published test card/UPI details. Check: order appears in WooCommerce → Orders; customer and admin emails arrive; stock reduces; invoice generates. Then refund it to practise refunds.

8.8 The customer journey and checkout



Every extra step or field loses some buyers — keep checkout short.

Figure 8.2 — The shopping journey.

Checkout best practices

- Allow **guest checkout** (don't force account creation).

- Ask only necessary fields (name, phone, address, PIN code, email).
- Show all costs early — shipping and taxes — no surprises at the last step.
- Offer popular Indian payment methods: UPI first, then cards/net banking; COD if suitable.
- Show trust signals: HTTPS, secure-payment badges, return policy, contact number.
- Make it fast and mobile-friendly; test on a real phone.
- Recover abandoned carts with reminder emails/WhatsApp (with consent) via plugins.

8.9 Managing orders

Order status	Meaning
Pending payment	Order created, awaiting payment
Processing	Paid; ready to pack and ship (stock reduced)
On hold	Awaiting confirmation (e.g. bank transfer)
Completed	Delivered/fulfilled
Cancelled / Refunded / Failed	As named

Workflow: receive order email → verify payment → pack → ship and add tracking number (note to customer) → mark **Completed**. Use **WooCommerce** → **Analytics** for sales, top products, coupons and stock reports. Export orders for accounting.

8.10 Coupons and marketing

- **Marketing** → **Coupons**: create codes like `WELCOME10` (10% off first order), `FREESHIP`; set expiry dates, minimum spend, usage limits.
- Show related products, upsells and cross-sells.
- Collect reviews (with verified-buyer badges).
- Use Google Merchant Center / shopping listings, social media shops, WhatsApp catalogues and email newsletters (with consent).

8.11 Store security and performance

- Use strong admin passwords and 2FA; give staff the **Shop manager** role rather than Administrator.
- Keep WooCommerce and extensions updated — test major updates on staging.
- Daily backups (orders change constantly — Module 9).

- Don't store card details yourself — payment gateways handle them securely.
- Choose hosting suited for WooCommerce; exclude cart/checkout/my-account pages from page caching (most caching plugins do this automatically).

Module 8 — Summary

- WooCommerce is a free plugin that adds products, cart, checkout, payments, shipping, taxes and orders.
- Plan legal, tax (GST), payment-gateway KYC, content and logistics before building.
- Products: simple, variable (attributes → variations), grouped, external, virtual/downloadable.
- Shipping zones and methods; GST tax classes (take professional advice).
- Payments via gateways (test mode first), COD, bank transfer; publish policy pages.
- Short, trustworthy checkout; manage orders by status; coupons for marketing.

Practice questions — Module 8

1. List eight features WooCommerce adds to WordPress.
2. Which pages does WooCommerce create automatically?
3. Differentiate simple and variable products with examples.
4. Design shipping zones and rates for a Bhubaneswar bakery that delivers locally and ships cookies across Odisha.
5. What is the difference between tax-inclusive and tax-exclusive pricing?
6. Which policy pages do payment gateways usually require?
7. List six checkout best practices.
8. **Task:** set up a test store with one simple and one variable product, a shipping zone, a coupon and a test-mode payment; place and complete a test order.

MODULE 09

Website Security, Backups, and Performance

The unglamorous work that prevents disasters: how sites get hacked, hardening WordPress, backups and restores, speed and caching, Core Web Vitals, and a maintenance routine.

9.1 Why WordPress sites get hacked

Because WordPress is so popular, automated bots constantly scan the internet for weak WordPress sites. Most attacks are not personal — they target known weaknesses. The main causes:

Cause	What happens
Outdated plugins and themes	Known security holes are published; bots exploit sites that haven't updated. The single biggest cause.
Weak or reused passwords	"Brute-force" bots try thousands of password guesses on wp-login.php
Nulled (pirated) themes/plugins	Often contain hidden backdoors
Insecure hosting / old PHP	Server-level vulnerabilities
Too many admin users; shared logins	More ways in; no accountability
Abandoned plugins	No fixes for new vulnerabilities

Consequences: defaced pages, spam links injected, redirects to scam sites, stolen customer data, Google "This site may be hacked" warnings, blacklisting, email sending blocked, and lost trust.

9.2 Security hardening checklist

Area	Action
Updates	Keep WordPress core, themes and plugins updated; enable auto-updates for minor core releases and trusted plugins
Logins	Unique username (not "admin"); long unique passwords; two-factor authentication for all admins; limit login attempts

Users	Least privilege — give each person the lowest role they need; remove ex-staff; don't share accounts
Plugins/themes	Only from trusted sources; delete unused ones; never nulled
HTTPS	SSL everywhere
Security plugin / firewall	Web application firewall (plugin or service), malware scanning, login protection
Hosting	Reputable host; current PHP; server-level firewall; isolated accounts
File editing	Disable the dashboard file editor: add <code>define('DISALLOW_FILE_EDIT', true);</code> to <code>wp-config.php</code>
File permissions	Typically folders 755, files 644, <code>wp-config.php</code> 600/640 (host-dependent)
Database prefix	Use a non-default table prefix on new installs
XML-RPC	Disable if not needed (reduces brute-force surface)
Backups	Automated, off-site, tested (next section)
Monitoring	Uptime monitoring; security alerts; Google Search Console security issues

Key idea — the three most effective steps

1. **Update** everything regularly. 2. **Strong passwords + 2FA** for all admin accounts. 3. **Off-site backups** you have actually tested. These three prevent or undo the vast majority of problems.

9.3 Backups

A backup is a copy of your site you can restore after a hack, a bad update, a mistake or a server failure. A complete WordPress backup includes **both**:

- the **database** (all posts, pages, settings, users, orders), and
- the **files**, especially `wp-content` (themes, plugins, uploads) and `wp-config.php`.

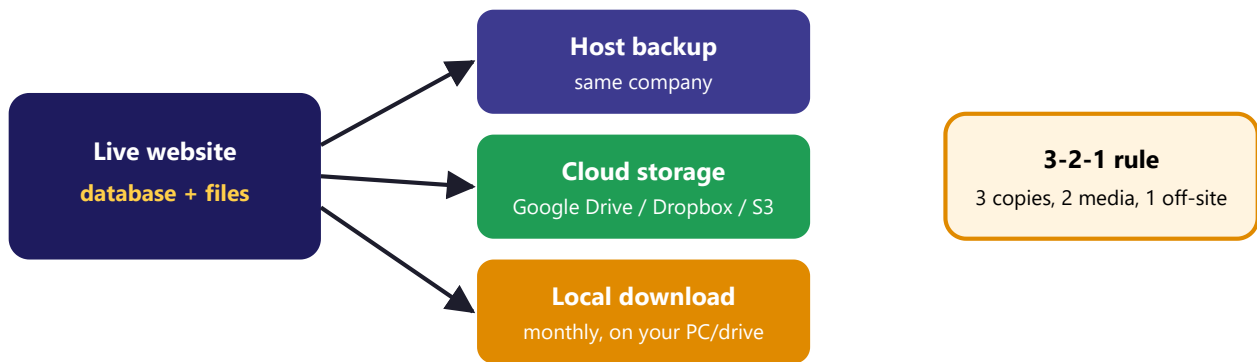


Figure 9.1 — Keep backups in more than one place, including off-site.

A good backup plan

- **Frequency** matches how often the site changes: brochure sites weekly; blogs daily; stores daily or real-time.
- **Off-site storage** — not only on the same server (if the server fails or is hacked, backups there may be lost too).
- **Retention** — keep several versions (e.g. last 14 daily + 3 monthly), because a hack may go unnoticed for days.
- **Before every major change** — take a manual backup before updates, theme changes or big edits.
- **Test restores** periodically on a staging site. An untested backup is only a hope.

Worked example 9.1 — UpdraftPlus-style setup

1. Install a backup plugin → Settings.
2. Files backup: weekly, retain 4. Database backup: daily, retain 14.
3. Remote storage: connect Google Drive (or Dropbox/S3).
4. Tick "email me a report".
5. Run a manual "Backup now"; confirm files appear in Drive.
6. On a staging site, practise **Restore**.

9.4 If your site is hacked — recovery steps

1. **Stay calm; don't delete everything.** Take a copy of the current (infected) site for evidence.
2. Put the site in **maintenance mode** or ask the host to isolate it.
3. **Change all passwords:** WordPress admins, hosting, FTP/SFTP, database, email; update the security keys (salts) in wp-config.php to log everyone out.

4. **Restore a clean backup** from before the hack (then immediately update everything), **or** clean the site: scan with a security plugin/host scanner, replace core files with fresh copies, reinstall plugins/themes from official sources, remove unknown admin users and suspicious files.
5. **Find and fix the cause** — usually an outdated plugin; update or remove it.
6. Request review in **Google Search Console** if flagged; inform customers if personal data may have been exposed (and follow legal obligations).
7. Consider a professional malware-removal service for complex infections.

9.5 Why speed matters

- Visitors leave slow sites — especially on mobile data. Many studies show bounce rates rise sharply once pages take more than about 3 seconds to load.
- Google uses page experience signals, including **Core Web Vitals**, in ranking.
- Faster stores sell more.

Core Web Vitals

Metric	Measures	Good target
LCP — Largest Contentful Paint	How quickly the main content (e.g. hero image/heading) appears	≤ 2.5 s
INP — Interaction to Next Paint	How quickly the page responds to taps and clicks	≤ 200 ms
CLS — Cumulative Layout Shift	How much the layout jumps around while loading	≤ 0.1

Measure with **PageSpeed Insights** (pagespeed.web.dev), Google Search Console's Core Web Vitals report, or GTmetrix. Always test the **mobile** score.

9.6 Making WordPress fast

Technique	How	Impact
Good hosting	Fast servers near your audience; LiteSpeed/NGINX, PHP 8.x, OPcache	Very high
Page caching	Caching plugin or host cache saves ready-made HTML pages so PHP and the database aren't used for every visit	Very high

Image optimisation	Resize, compress, WebP/AVIF, lazy loading, correct dimensions (prevents CLS)	Very high
Lightweight theme; fewer heavy plugins	Avoid bloated themes, sliders, multiple page builders	High
CDN (content delivery network)	Serves static files from servers worldwide (e.g. Cloudflare, host CDN)	Medium–high
Minify and combine CSS/JS; defer JavaScript	Caching plugin settings — test carefully, can break layouts	Medium
Fonts	Use system fonts or host 1–2 font files locally with <code>font-display: swap</code>	Medium
Database cleanup	Remove old revisions, spam comments, transients	Low–medium
Limit third-party scripts	Chat widgets, trackers, heavy embeds (use click-to-load for YouTube)	Medium

Typical page weight before and after optimisation (illustrative)

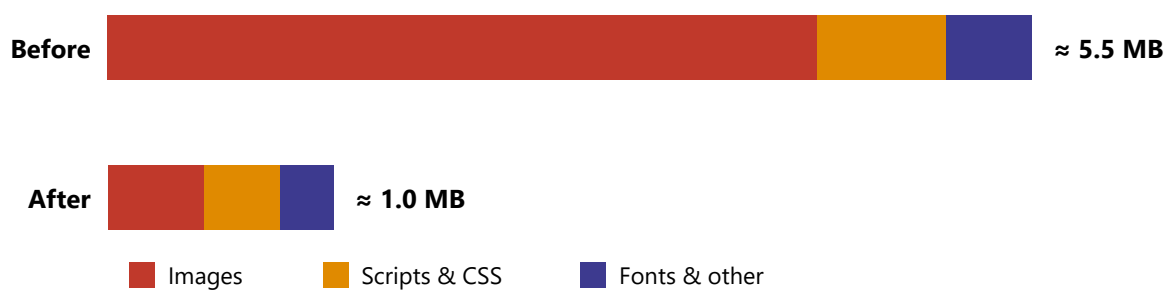


Figure 9.2 — Images are usually the biggest part of page weight; optimising them gives the largest gains.

Caution — caching and dynamic pages

Never cache cart, checkout, my-account or login pages, and clear the cache after design changes. If a change "doesn't show", clear the plugin cache, host cache, CDN cache and browser cache.

9.7 Uptime and monitoring

- Use a free **uptime monitor** to alert you (email/app) when the site goes down.
- Watch Site Health, Search Console (coverage, security, Core Web Vitals) and your security plugin's alerts.

- Keep an eye on domain and hosting **renewal dates** — expired domains take sites (and email) offline.

9.8 A maintenance routine

Frequency	Tasks
Weekly	Check backups ran; apply updates (after backup); review security alerts; test the contact form; moderate comments
Monthly	Speed test; check broken links; review Search Console and analytics; remove unused plugins/themes/users; database cleanup
Quarterly	Test a full restore on staging; review content (prices, staff, dates); check PHP version; audit user accounts and passwords
Yearly	Renew domain/hosting/licences; review design and SEO; update legal pages

Freelancers and agencies often sell this routine as a monthly **maintenance plan** — a reliable recurring income (Bonus section).

Module 9 — Summary

- Most hacks exploit outdated plugins, weak passwords or nulled software.
- Harden: update, strong passwords + 2FA, least-privilege users, firewall, HTTPS, disable file editing.
- Backups: database + files, off-site, retained, before changes, and tested.
- Hacked? Change passwords, restore clean backup or clean, fix the cause, request review.
- Speed: good hosting, caching, image optimisation, lightweight theme, CDN, fewer scripts; measure Core Web Vitals ($LCP \leq 2.5$ s, $INP \leq 200$ ms, $CLS \leq 0.1$).
- Follow a weekly/monthly/quarterly/yearly maintenance routine.

Practice questions — Module 9

1. List five common reasons WordPress sites get hacked.
2. Write a ten-point security hardening checklist.
3. What must a complete WordPress backup contain? Why keep backups off-site?
4. Describe the steps to recover a hacked site.
5. Explain LCP, INP and CLS with target values.
6. How does page caching speed up WordPress?
7. Why must cart and checkout pages not be cached?
8. **Task:** run PageSpeed Insights on your site (mobile), apply three improvements, and compare scores.

MODULE 10

Practical Project and Final Revision

Build a complete website from brief to launch — step by step — with a pre-launch checklist, a handover guide, and a one-page revision of the whole course.

10.1 The capstone project

You will build a complete, professional website for a real or realistic small business. The worked example below is for "**Sunrise Tuition Centre, Cuttack**"; you can follow the same steps for a bakery, clinic, boutique, NGO or your own portfolio.



The seven stages of a WordPress website project.

Figure 10.1 — Project roadmap.

10.2 Stage 1 — Brief and plan

Item	Sunrise Tuition Centre (example)
Goal	30 admission enquiries per month from the website
Audience	Parents and Class 10–12 students in Cuttack; 80% on mobile
Main action	Book a free demo class (form), call, or WhatsApp
Pages	Home, About, Courses (Class 11, Class 12, Entrance), Results, Blog, Contact, Privacy Policy
Features	Enquiry form, WhatsApp button, testimonials, gallery, Google Map, blog with study tips
Brand	Navy #1E1B5E + orange #E08A00; fonts: one clean sans-serif; logo supplied
Content responsibility	Client supplies teacher bios, photos, results; you write page copy drafts
Timeline	2 weeks

10.3 Stage 2 — Domain, hosting and install

1. Register `sunrisetuition.in` in the client's name; enable auto-renew and privacy.
2. Buy shared/managed WordPress hosting with an Indian or nearby data centre, free SSL and daily backups.
3. One-click install WordPress with a unique admin username and strong password; enable 2FA later.
4. Activate SSL; set Settings → General (timezone Kolkata), Permalinks (Post name), Reading (discourage search engines **on** during build).
5. Delete sample content and unused themes/plugins.

10.4 Stage 3 — Theme and branding

1. Install a lightweight block theme (or classic theme like Astra/Kadence with a starter template for education).
2. Set the **logo** and **site icon**.
3. Global styles: colour palette, fonts (headings 700 weight; body 17 px), button style (rounded, orange).
4. Design the **header** (logo, menu, orange "Book Demo" button) and **footer** (address, phone, email, quick links, social icons, © line).

10.5 Stage 4 — Plugins

Need	Plugin category
Enquiry form	Form plugin + anti-spam
Email delivery	SMTP plugin connected to the domain email
SEO	SEO plugin (titles, sitemap, schema, breadcrumbs)
Backups	Backup plugin to Google Drive (in addition to host backups)
Security	Security plugin with firewall, login limits, 2FA
Speed	Caching plugin (matching the host) + image optimisation
WhatsApp	Click-to-chat button plugin (or a simple custom link/button)
Analytics	Site Kit or privacy-friendly analytics

10.6 Stage 5 — Pages, posts and menus

Home page sections:

1. **Hero:** "Class 11–12 Physics, Chemistry & Maths coaching in Cuttack" + "Small batches · Weekly tests · Doubt sessions" + buttons *Book a free demo* and *WhatsApp us* + photo of a real class.
2. **Trust bar:** "12 years · 2,000+ students · 4.8★ Google rating".
3. **Courses:** three cards linking to course pages.
4. **Why Sunrise:** four benefit icons.
5. **Results:** toppers with photos (with consent).
6. **Testimonials:** three short quotes from parents/students.
7. **Latest blog posts** (Query Loop block).
8. **Final CTA** band with phone and button.

Course pages: audience, syllabus highlights, batch timings and fees table, FAQs (Details blocks), demo-class button.

Contact page: form, tap-to-call link (`tel:+91xxxxxxxxxx`), WhatsApp link, email, address, embedded map, hours.

Blog: three starter posts answering real questions ("How to prepare for CHSE Physics in 60 days").

Menus: Home · About · Courses ▾ · Results · Blog · Contact + "Book Demo" button; footer menu with Privacy Policy.

10.7 Stage 6 — SEO, speed and security

- SEO title and meta description for every page; one H1; descriptive slugs; alt text on all images.
- Google Business Profile updated with the website link; LocalBusiness schema.
- All images resized and converted to WebP; caching on; PageSpeed mobile score checked (aim for green/high 80s–90s where possible).
- Security plugin configured; 2FA on for admin; backups scheduled to Google Drive; test restore on staging.
- Client account created as **Editor** (or Administrator if they insist, with 2FA), your account as Administrator.

10.8 Stage 7 — Pre-launch checklist

✓	Check
☐	All pages proofread; no "Lorem ipsum" or sample text; phone numbers and email correct
☐	Every link and button works (no 404s); menu works on mobile
☐	Forms tested — emails received by client and auto-reply to user; entries stored
☐	Tested on phone, tablet and desktop; Chrome, Safari, Firefox
☐	Favicon, logo, social sharing image set
☐	HTTPS padlock on all pages; no mixed-content warnings
☐	SEO titles/descriptions; sitemap working; Privacy Policy published
☐	Speed test done; images optimised; caching on
☐	Backups running and a restore tested; security plugin active; 2FA on
☐	Settings → Reading: "Discourage search engines" UNTICKED
☐	Search Console verified and sitemap submitted; analytics working
☐	Uptime monitor set; domain/hosting renewal dates noted

10.9 Launch and handover

1. Final backup, then launch (remove maintenance/coming-soon mode; untick search discouragement).
2. Announce: WhatsApp broadcast, social media, Google Business Profile post.
3. **Hand over** to the client: a document with all logins (via a secure password manager share, not plain email), domain and hosting renewal dates, how to edit pages/add posts (a short screen-recorded video tutorial works very well), how to check form entries, who to call for support.
4. Offer a **maintenance plan** (updates, backups, monitoring, small edits) for ongoing care.
5. After 30 days: review analytics and Search Console with the client; improve pages with low engagement.

Your capstone deliverables

1. A live (or local) WordPress site with at least 6 pages, 3 posts, a working form, menus and a consistent design.
2. A one-page planning brief and sitemap.
3. Screenshots of PageSpeed (mobile) and your security/backup settings.
4. A completed pre-launch checklist.
5. A 2-minute screen recording explaining how the owner can edit the site.

10.10 Course revision — one page

Module	Key points
1 Basics	Domain + hosting + files/database; DNS; WordPress = free CMS, 40%+ of web; .org self-hosted vs .com hosted; plan purpose, audience, action, sitemap
2 Setup	Short brandable domain in owner's name; hosting checklist; nameservers/A records; one-click or manual install; wp-content + database; SSL; Post name permalinks; user roles
3 Dashboard	Admin menu, toolbar, Screen Options; posts vs pages; categories vs tags; Appearance/Plugins/Users/Tools/Settings; block editor, patterns, publishing options
4 Themes	Design only; block vs classic; choose lightweight, updated themes; Site Editor/Customizer; brand palette and fonts; page builders; homepage structure; child themes
5 Plugins	Functionality; essentials (SEO, forms, backup, security, cache, images, SMTP); evaluation checklist; delete unused; conflict troubleshooting
6 Content	Essential pages; static homepage + posts page; web writing; categories/tags; menus with CTA; 301 redirects
7 Media & SEO	Resize/compress/WebP; alt text; embeds; conversion-friendly forms; keywords, titles, meta descriptions, headings, internal links; sitemap, Search Console, local SEO
8 WooCommerce	Products (simple/variable), shipping zones, GST classes, gateways (test mode), policy pages, short checkout, order statuses, coupons
9 Security & speed	Update, strong passwords + 2FA, backups (off-site, tested); recovery steps; caching, images, CDN; Core Web Vitals; maintenance routine
10 Project	Brief → setup → design → plugins → content → SEO/speed/security → checklist → launch → handover

Module 10 — Summary

- Follow the seven-stage process for every website.
- Design around the audience and one clear call to action.
- Never launch without the pre-launch checklist — especially search-engine visibility, forms and backups.
- Hand over clearly and offer maintenance.

Practice questions — Module 10

1. List the seven stages of a website project.
2. Prepare a planning brief for a website for a local clinic.
3. Design the homepage sections for a bakery, in order.
4. Write a ten-point pre-launch checklist from memory.
5. What should a client handover include?
6. Why is a maintenance plan valuable to both the client and the developer?

BLUEPRINTS

Five Ready-to-Use Website Blueprints

Plans you can adapt for the most common client types — pages, homepage sections, features, plugins and content tips for each.

Blueprint 1 — Clinic or doctor's website

Part	Plan
Goal	Appointment requests and calls
Pages	Home · About the doctor · Treatments (child pages per treatment) · Appointments · Patient info (FAQs, insurance, what to bring) · Blog (health tips) · Contact · Privacy Policy
Homepage sections	Hero with doctor photo, speciality and "Book appointment" · Clinic timings · Treatments grid · Doctor's qualifications and experience · Reviews · Map and directions · Emergency number
Features	Appointment form or booking calendar; click-to-call; WhatsApp; Google Map; FAQ accordion
Plugins	Booking/appointment plugin or form plugin; SEO with LocalBusiness/MedicalClinic schema; security; backups; caching
Content tips	Plain-language treatment explanations; real clinic photos; qualifications and registration details; no exaggerated medical claims; strong privacy wording for patient data

Blueprint 2 — Restaurant, café or bakery

Part	Plan
Goal	Orders, table bookings and visits
Pages	Home · Menu · Order online (WooCommerce or links to delivery apps) · Catering/Events · Gallery · About · Contact
Homepage sections	Mouth-watering hero photo + "Order now" / "Reserve a table" · Today's specials · Menu highlights with prices · Reviews · Opening hours · Location map
Features	Menu with categories (veg/non-veg icons), online ordering with local delivery zones and pickup, table reservation form, Instagram feed

Plugins	WooCommerce (+ local delivery/pickup, time slots), reservation plugin, image optimisation (many photos!), caching
Content tips	Professional food photos; update menu prices promptly; list allergens; FSSAI details where required

Blueprint 3 — School, college or coaching institute

Part	Plan
Goal	Admissions enquiries; information for students and parents
Pages	Home · About (vision, management, affiliation) · Academics / Courses · Admissions (process, fees, form) · Faculty · Facilities · Results/Achievements · Notices & Events · Gallery · Careers · Contact · Mandatory disclosures (for schools, as required by the board)
Homepage sections	Admissions-open banner · Why choose us · Courses · Results · Notice board (latest posts in "Notices") · Events calendar · Testimonials · Contact strip
Features	Admission enquiry form; downloadable prospectus (File block); notices as a post category; events calendar; photo galleries; multilingual option
Plugins	Forms; events calendar; gallery; multilingual (if needed); SEO; security; backups
Content tips	Keep fee and date information current; get consent before publishing student photos; make notices easy to find

Blueprint 4 — NGO or community organisation

Part	Plan
Goal	Donations, volunteers and credibility
Pages	Home · About (mission, team, registration details) · Programmes · Impact/Reports · Get involved (volunteer, partner) · Donate · News/Stories · Contact
Homepage sections	Emotional hero story + "Donate" · Impact numbers · Programmes · Beneficiary stories · Partners · Volunteer call-to-action · Newsletter sign-up
Features	Donation form with payment gateway; receipts; volunteer form; annual reports (PDF); event listings
Plugins	Donation plugin or WooCommerce; forms; newsletter; SEO; security
Content tips	Transparency builds trust: registration numbers, tax-exemption status (only if valid), audited reports, clear use of funds

Blueprint 5 — Personal portfolio or freelancer

Part	Plan
Goal	Win clients or jobs
Pages	Home · Work/Portfolio (case studies) · Services · About · Testimonials · Blog · Contact / Hire me
Homepage sections	Clear statement ("I build fast WordPress websites for clinics and coaching centres") · Featured projects · Services and starting prices · Process (4 steps) · Testimonials · CTA
Features	Case-study template (problem → solution → results, screenshots); contact form with project-type drop-down; calendar booking link
Plugins	Forms; SEO; caching; portfolio/gallery if needed
Content tips	Show outcomes (speed scores, enquiries increased), not only designs; keep it fast — your site is your proof

Key idea

Every blueprint follows the same logic: **one main goal → pages that answer visitors' questions → a homepage that leads to one clear action → only the plugins needed for that goal.**

TROUBLESHOOTING

Common WordPress Errors A–Z and How to Fix Them

Keep this section handy. Always take a backup before trying fixes on a live site, and work on staging when possible.

Problem / message	Likely cause	Fix
"There has been a critical error on this website"	PHP error from a plugin/theme (often after an update)	Check the admin email for the recovery-mode link; deactivate the culprit; or rename its folder via File Manager; check error logs
White screen of death (blank page)	PHP fatal error or memory limit	Same as above; increase PHP memory limit (host panel or <code>WP_MEMORY_LIMIT</code>); switch to a default theme
Error establishing a database connection	Wrong database details in <code>wp-config.php</code> , or database server down	Verify DB name/user/password/host; contact host; repair database if corrupted
404 errors on all posts/pages except home	Permalink rules (<code>.htaccess</code>) broken	Settings → Permalinks → click Save (regenerates rules); check <code>.htaccess</code>
500 Internal Server Error	Corrupt <code>.htaccess</code> , plugin conflict, PHP limits	Rename <code>.htaccess</code> and re-save permalinks; deactivate plugins; check error log
Changes don't show on the site	Caching	Clear plugin, host, CDN and browser caches; check you edited the right page/template
"Briefly unavailable for scheduled maintenance"	An update was interrupted	Delete the <code>.maintenance</code> file in the web root; re-run the update
Login loop / can't log in	Cookies, wrong site URL, security plugin lockout	Clear cookies; check Settings URLs (or define <code>WP_HOME</code> / <code>WP_SITEURL</code>); wait for lockout or disable security plugin folder
Forgot admin password, reset email not arriving	Email delivery issues	Set up SMTP; or reset via hosting panel/phpMyAdmin (user_pass with MD5) — carefully

Contact form emails not received	Server mail blocked/spam filtered	SMTP plugin with authenticated email; SPF/DKIM records; check spam folder; test
"Not secure" warning / mixed content	Some resources loaded over http://	Ensure SSL active; update site URLs to https; search-replace old http links; SSL helper plugin
Images not uploading ("HTTP error")	File too large, memory/timeouts, permissions	Resize image; increase upload_max_filesize/memory; check uploads folder permissions
"Maximum upload file size exceeded"	Server limit	Raise limits in hosting PHP settings; compress files
Site very slow	Heavy images, no caching, bloated plugins, weak hosting	Module 9 checklist; PageSpeed diagnostics; remove heavy plugins
Layout broken after update	Theme/page-builder conflict or cached CSS	Clear caches; regenerate builder CSS; roll back update on staging and report to developer
Menu missing	Menu not assigned to location (classic) or Navigation block lost its menu	Assign location in Appearance → Menus; reselect menu in the Navigation block
Site hacked / redirects to spam	Vulnerable plugin, weak password	Module 9.4 recovery steps
Google shows no pages	"Discourage search engines" ticked; new site; noindex settings	Untick; submit sitemap; check SEO plugin noindex settings; request indexing in Search Console
WooCommerce payments failing	Wrong API keys, test/live mismatch, webhook not set	Recheck keys and mode; configure webhooks; check gateway logs
Cart empties or checkout errors	Cart/checkout pages cached	Exclude them from caching; clear caches
"Sorry, you are not allowed to access this page"	Role/capability issue or security plugin	Check user role; deactivate security plugin temporarily; check database prefix changes
Update failed / "Another update is currently in progress"	Stuck update lock	Wait 15 minutes; or delete the <code>core_updater.lock</code> option in the database

Scheduled posts not publishing ("Missed schedule")	WP-Cron not running (low traffic)	Set a real server cron job via hosting; or use a plugin to handle missed schedules
Fonts or icons missing	Blocked external font files, CORS, cache	Host fonts locally; clear caches; check CDN settings
Mobile layout overflows sideways	Fixed-width element, wide table or image	Find the element with browser Inspect; set max-width: 100%; simplify tables for mobile

The universal troubleshooting order

1. Back up → 2. Clear all caches → 3. Deactivate plugins one by one → 4. Switch to a default theme → 5. Check error logs and Site Health → 6. Undo the last change (restore) → 7. Ask the plugin/theme/host support with details.

PRIMER

HTML and CSS Basics for WordPress Users

You can build WordPress sites without code — but knowing a little HTML and CSS helps you fix layouts, read what blocks produce, and make small style tweaks with confidence.

P.1 HTML — the structure of a page

HTML (HyperText Markup Language) describes content using **tags** in angle brackets. Most tags come in pairs: an opening tag `<p>` and a closing tag `</p>`. Tags can have **attributes** that add information, like `href` for a link's address.

```
<h1>Sunrise Tuition Centre</h1>
<p>Class 11-12 coaching in <strong>Cuttack</strong>.</p>
<a href="/contact/">Book a free demo</a>

<ul>
  <li>Small batches</li>
  <li>Weekly tests</li>
</ul>
```

Tag	Meaning	Block that produces it
<code><h1> ... <h6></code>	Headings (h1 most important)	Heading
<code><p></code>	Paragraph	Paragraph
<code></code>	Link	Link in any text; Button
<code></code>	Image (no closing tag)	Image
<code></code> , <code></code> , <code></code>	Bulleted list, numbered list, list item	List
<code></code> , <code></code>	Bold (important), italic (emphasis)	Bold/Italic buttons
<code><table></code> , <code><tr></code> , <code><td></code>	Table, row, cell	Table
<code><div></code> , <code><section></code>	Generic containers	Group, Columns
<code><header></code> , <code><nav></code> , <code><main></code> , <code><footer></code>	Page regions (semantic HTML)	Template parts

Try it — see the HTML of a block

Select any block → : (Options) → **Edit as HTML**. Or use the **Custom HTML** block to paste embed codes (e.g. a Google Map iframe). In a browser, right-click a page → **Inspect** to see the HTML and CSS behind any element.

P.2 CSS — the look of a page

CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) sets colours, fonts, sizes, spacing and layout. A CSS **rule** has a **selector** (what to style) and **declarations** (property: value).

```
h2 {  
  color: #1E1B5E;           /* navy headings */  
  font-size: 28px;  
}  
.book-btn {                  /* elements with class="book-btn" */  
  background: #E08A00;  
  color: #fff;  
  padding: 12px 24px;  
  border-radius: 24px;  
}  
@media (max-width: 600px) { /* phones only */  
  h2 { font-size: 22px; }  
}
```

Concept	Explanation
Selectors	p (all paragraphs), .classname (a class), #idname (one element)
Colours	Hex (#1E1B5E), rgb(30, 27, 94), names (white)
Units	px (pixels), %, rem / em (relative to font size), vw (viewport width)
Box model	Every element is a box: content → padding (inside space) → border → margin (outside space)
Layout	display: flex and grid arrange items in rows/columns (what Row/Columns blocks use)
Media queries	Different styles for different screen widths — the heart of responsive design

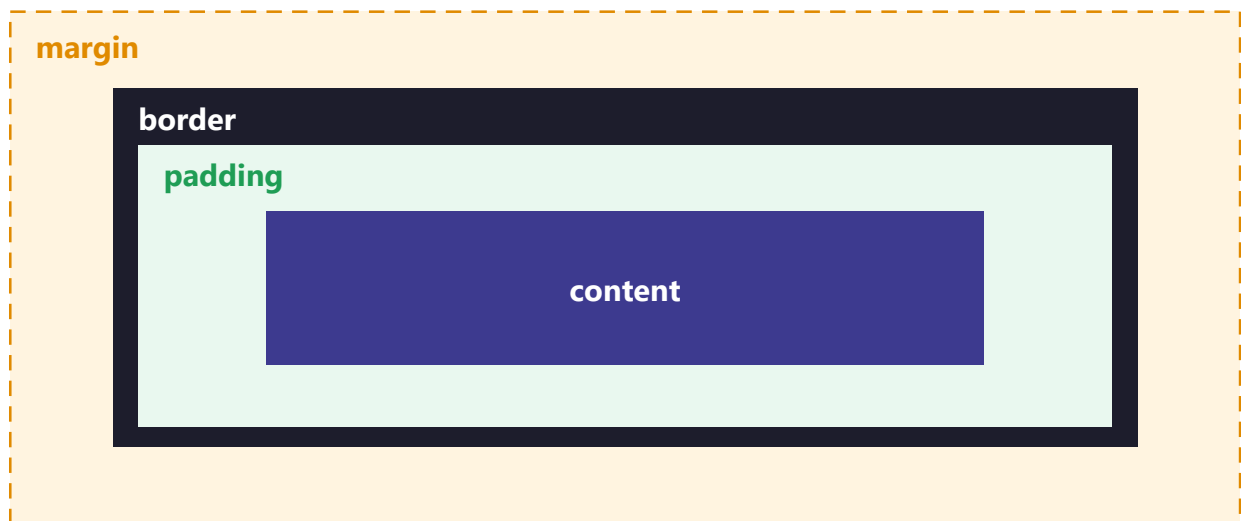


Figure P.1 — The CSS box model.

P.3 Where to put CSS in WordPress

- **Block settings / Styles panel** — colours, typography, spacing without code (preferred).
- **Additional CSS** — Appearance → Customize → Additional CSS (classic themes), or Styles → : → Additional CSS in the Site Editor (block themes).
- Add a custom class to a block: Block sidebar → **Advanced** → **Additional CSS class(es)** — e.g. `book-btn`, then style it in Additional CSS.
- For larger changes, a **child theme's** `style.css`.

Caution

Keep custom CSS small and commented. Test on mobile. Never edit the parent theme's files directly — updates will erase your changes.

REFERENCE

Block Editor Quick Reference

The most useful core blocks and what to use them for.

Block	Use it for	Tip
Paragraph	Body text	Keep to 2–4 sentences
Heading	Section titles (H2, H3...)	Keep the order logical; one H1 per page
List	Bullets or numbered steps	Great for scannable benefits
Image	Single image with caption/link	Always add alt text
Gallery	Grid of images	Enable lightbox/"expand on click"
Cover	Image or video background with text on top (hero sections)	Use an overlay for text contrast
Media & Text	Image beside text	Stacks on mobile automatically
Buttons	Calls to action	Action words: "Book a demo"
Columns / Row / Stack / Grid	Layouts	Check mobile stacking
Group	Wrap blocks to give a background or spacing	Use for coloured sections
Spacer / Separator	Vertical space / divider line	Prefer block spacing settings where possible
Table	Fees, timetables, comparisons	Keep columns few for mobile
Details	Expandable FAQ items (accordion)	Good for long FAQs
Quote / Pullquote	Testimonials, highlighted quotes	Add the person's name
Embed (YouTube, etc.)	Videos, social posts	Paste the URL on its own line
File	PDF downloads	Name files clearly
Query Loop / Latest Posts	Lists of posts (e.g. "Latest from our blog")	Set number of posts and layout

Navigation	Menus in headers/footers	Keep 5–7 items
Search	Site search box	Useful on content-heavy sites
Social Icons	Links to social profiles	Place in header/footer
Custom HTML / Shortcode	Embed codes; plugin shortcodes	Paste only trusted code

15 Hands-On Exercises

Do these on a local (LocalWP) or practice hosting site. Tick each when done.

Lab 1 — Install

Install WordPress locally with LocalWP (or on hosting). Log in; change the site title, tagline and timezone; set Post-name permalinks.

Lab 2 — Tour

Visit every admin menu. Use Screen Options to hide two dashboard widgets. Run Site Health and note its recommendations.

Lab 3 — Users

Create an Editor and a Contributor account. Log in as the Contributor, write a post and submit it for review; approve it as Administrator.

Lab 4 — Theme

Install two free themes; Live Preview both; activate one. Set logo, site icon, palette and fonts.

Lab 5 — Header and footer

Build a header with logo, menu and a button; a footer with address, phone link (`tel:`), email link (`mailto:`) and social icons.

Lab 6 — Homepage

Design a homepage with Cover (hero), three service columns, testimonials, latest posts (Query Loop) and a CTA band. Set it as the static homepage.

Lab 7 — Pages

Create About, Services (with two child pages), Contact and Privacy Policy. Check the parent/child URLs.

Lab 8 — Blog

Create three categories, then write three posts with featured images, tags, excerpts and internal links. Schedule one post.

Lab 9 — Menus

Create a main menu with a dropdown and a button-style last item; a footer menu with legal pages. Test the mobile menu.

Lab 10 — Forms

Install a form plugin; build an enquiry form with 4 fields and spam protection; set notifications and a thank-you message; test delivery.

Lab 11 — Images

Take a phone photo; resize to 1,200 px and convert to WebP before upload; compare file sizes; add alt text.

Lab 12 — SEO

Install an SEO plugin; complete setup; write titles and meta descriptions for four pages; open your sitemap URL.

Lab 13 — Store

Install WooCommerce; add one simple and one variable product; create a shipping zone and a coupon; place a test order (test mode or cash on delivery).

Lab 14 — Security & backup

Install security and backup plugins; enable 2FA for your admin; schedule backups to cloud storage; practise a restore on a copy of the site.

Lab 15 — Speed

Run PageSpeed Insights (mobile). Enable caching and image optimisation; retest and record the before/after scores and LCP.

Model Question Paper — WordPress Website Development

Time: 2 hours · Maximum marks: 70 · Attempt all sections.

Section A — Very short answers (10 × 1 = 10)

1. Expand CMS.
2. Which language is WordPress written in?
3. Name the folder that stores uploads.
4. What is the recommended permalink setting?
5. Which role can publish only their own posts?
6. What does a plugin add to WordPress?
7. Name a modern, efficient image format.
8. What is the HTTP code for a permanent redirect?
9. Name the WooCommerce page where customers pay.
10. Expand CDN.

Section B — Short answers (8 × 3 = 24)

11. Differentiate WordPress.com and WordPress.org.
12. Explain categories and tags with an example.
13. What is a child theme and why is it used?
14. List six checks before installing a plugin.
15. Write an SEO title and meta description for a clinic's "Dental Implants" page.
16. What are shipping zones in WooCommerce?
17. What should a complete backup include? Where should it be stored?
18. Explain LCP, INP and CLS.

Section C — Long answers (4 × 9 = 36)

19. Describe how to register a domain, buy hosting, connect them and install WordPress.
20. Plan and describe the page structure, homepage sections and menus for a coaching centre website.
21. Explain WordPress security hardening and the steps to recover a hacked site.

22. Describe how to set up a basic WooCommerce store in India, including products, GST, shipping and payments.

Section A answers: 1. Content Management System · 2. PHP · 3. wp-content/uploads · 4. Post name · 5. Author · 6. Features/functionality · 7. WebP (or AVIF) · 8. 301 · 9. Checkout · 10. Content Delivery Network.

BONUS

Freelancing, Client Work and Careers

How to turn WordPress skills into income: services you can offer, pricing, proposals, working with clients, legal basics, a portfolio, and career paths.

B.1 Services you can offer

Service	What it involves	Typical buyers
Business websites	5–10 page sites with forms, maps, SEO basics	Clinics, coaching centres, shops, CA firms, restaurants
E-commerce stores	WooCommerce setup, products, payments, shipping	Handloom, handicraft, bakeries, boutiques
Landing pages	One high-converting page for a campaign	Admissions, events, product launches
Blogs and portfolios	Content sites and personal brands	Writers, photographers, doctors, teachers
Redesigns and speed-ups	Modernise old sites; improve Core Web Vitals	Existing businesses
Maintenance plans	Updates, backups, monitoring, small edits monthly	Every client — recurring income
Security clean-ups	Malware removal, hardening	Hacked sites
SEO and content	On-page SEO, blog writing, Google Business Profile	Local businesses
Training	Teaching owners/staff to manage their site	Schools, NGOs, small teams

B.2 Pricing your work

- **Fixed project price** (most common for websites): estimate hours × your hourly rate + a buffer for revisions and unknowns; add third-party costs (premium plugins, stock photos) separately.
- **Packages** make choosing easy, e.g. *Basic* (5 pages), *Business* (8 pages + blog + SEO setup), *Store* (WooCommerce, up to 25 products).

- **Recurring plans** for maintenance, hosting management or content.
- Clearly state what's **included** (pages, revision rounds, training) and what's **extra** (content writing, logo design, product uploads beyond a number).
- Take an **advance** (commonly 30–50%) before starting, and the balance before launch or handover of admin credentials.

Worked example B.1 — estimating a project

Business site: planning 3 h + setup 2 h + design 8 h + 6 pages × 1.5 h + forms/SEO/speed/security 5 h + testing/launch 3 h + training 1 h = **31 hours**. Add 20% buffer ≈ 37 h. At your chosen hourly rate, that gives the quote; add annual domain/hosting costs as pass-through items. Offer a monthly maintenance plan separately.

B.3 Proposal and contract essentials

- **Scope:** pages, features, number of design revisions, content responsibilities, what's excluded.
- **Timeline** with milestones and dependencies (e.g. "starts when content and logo are received").
- **Price and payment terms** (advance, milestones, GST if registered).
- **Ownership:** client owns the domain, hosting account and final site after full payment; licences for premium themes/plugins in the client's name where possible.
- **Support period** after launch (e.g. 30 days bug fixes) and maintenance options.
- **Change requests:** how extra work is quoted.
- Confidentiality and data-protection responsibilities.

B.4 Working with clients smoothly

1. **Discovery call** — understand goals, audience, competitors, budget; ask for 2–3 websites they like.
2. **Content first** — collect logo, photos, text and details early; most delays come from missing content. Provide a simple content checklist or form.
3. **Staged reviews** — share the homepage design first, then inner pages. Use a staging/private link.
4. **Clear communication** — weekly updates; one feedback channel; consolidated feedback per round.

5. **Document decisions** — confirm in writing (email/WhatsApp summary).
6. **Launch and train** — handover document and video (Module 10.9).
7. **Follow up** — ask for a testimonial and a Google review; offer maintenance.

B.5 Legal and ethical basics

- Use only licensed images and fonts (your own photos, free-licence sources, or purchased stock). Don't copy content from other sites.
- WordPress and most plugins/themes are GPL-licensed, but premium support and updates require valid licences — never use nulled copies.
- Websites collecting personal data should publish a Privacy Policy and follow India's data-protection law (DPDP Act, 2023) and any sector rules.
- E-commerce sites need Terms, Refund/Cancellation and Shipping policies and accurate business contact details.
- If your turnover crosses the applicable limits, understand GST obligations for your services — consult a professional.

B.6 Building your portfolio

- Build 3–5 sample sites for different industries (e.g. a clinic, a bakery store, a coaching centre, a portfolio).
- Offer a discounted first project to a local business or NGO in exchange for a testimonial.
- For each project show: the problem, what you built, screenshots (desktop + mobile), PageSpeed score, and results (enquiries, sales).
- Create your own site (with your blog) — it is your best advertisement.
- Be visible: LinkedIn, freelance platforms, local business groups, WordPress meetups and WordCamps.

B.7 Career paths

Path	Focus	Skills to add next
WordPress freelancer / agency owner	Client websites and maintenance	Sales, project management, design sense
WordPress developer	Custom themes, plugins, integrations	HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, the WordPress APIs, Git

Web designer / UI designer	Layouts, branding, user experience	Figma, typography, colour, accessibility
E-commerce specialist	WooCommerce stores, conversions, payments	Marketing, analytics, logistics
SEO / digital marketing	Search, content, ads, analytics	Keyword research, Search Console, GA4, content strategy
Website support / maintenance	Updates, security, performance	Hosting, server basics, security tools

B.8 Quick revision — one line per module

Module	Remember in one line
1	Domain + hosting + WordPress (CMS); .org gives full control; plan before building.
2	Domain in owner's name; good host; SSL; Post-name permalinks; roles.
3	Know every dashboard menu; blocks, patterns, publish options.
4	Theme = design; lightweight theme, consistent brand, mobile-first homepage.
5	Plugin = function; few, trusted, updated; fix conflicts one by one.
6	Pages vs posts; essential pages; scannable writing; simple menus with CTA.
7	Small WebP images with alt text; short forms; titles, descriptions, sitemap, local SEO.
8	WooCommerce: products, shipping, GST, gateways, policies, short checkout.
9	Update + 2FA + tested off-site backups; cache and optimise for speed.
10	Seven stages; pre-launch checklist; handover and maintenance.

REVISION

100 Multiple-Choice Questions

Test yourself on all ten modules. The answer key follows the questions.

- WordPress is best described as a:
(a) web browser (b) content management system (c) programming language (d) web host
- WordPress is written mainly in:
(a) Java (b) PHP (c) Python (d) C++
- WordPress stores content in a:
(a) text file (b) MySQL/MariaDB database (c) spreadsheet (d) PDF
- Approximately what share of websites use WordPress?
(a) under 5% (b) about 15% (c) over 40% (d) 100%
- The service that rents you space on an internet-connected server is:
(a) domain registrar (b) web hosting (c) DNS (d) browser
- DNS converts:
(a) PHP to HTML (b) domain names to IP addresses (c) images to WebP (d) posts to pages
- Full control, any plugin and your own hosting describes:
(a) WordPress.com free plan (b) self-hosted WordPress.org (c) a static site (d) a social network
- Which is a dynamic website feature?
(a) fixed HTML pages only (b) content built from a database (c) no editing possible (d) no forms
- A good domain name is:
(a) long with hyphens (b) short and brandable (c) full of numbers (d) a competitor's brand
- To show your site is based in India, a suitable extension is:
(a) .edu (b) .in (c) .gov (d) .mil
- A client's domain should be registered in:
(a) the developer's name (b) the client's name (c) a random account (d) nobody's name
- An A record points a domain to:
(a) an email server (b) an IP address (c) another domain name (d) a plugin
- Changing nameservers makes:
(a) the host manage the DNS (b) the site load faster (c) WordPress update (d) email stop
- The folder containing your themes, plugins and uploads is:
(a) wp-admin (b) wp-includes (c) wp-content (d) public

15. Database details are stored in:
(a) index.php (b) wp-config.php (c) style.css
(d) .htaccess
16. The recommended permalink setting is:
(a) Plain (?p=123) (b) Day and name (c)
Post name (d) Numeric
17. Before launch you must untick:
(a) Anyone can register (b) Discourage
search engines from indexing (c) Use
HTTPS (d) Show avatars
18. The role that can do everything is:
(a) Editor (b) Author (c) Administrator (d)
Contributor
19. A guest writer who should not publish
directly should be a:
(a) Administrator (b) Editor (c) Contributor
(d) Shop manager
20. HTTPS requires an:
(a) SSL/TLS certificate (b) FTP account (c)
premium theme (d) CDN
21. The WordPress admin area is usually
reached at:
(a) /admin.php (b) /wp-admin (c)
/login.html (d) /dashboard.php
22. Screen Options lets you:
(a) change themes (b) show or hide boxes
and columns (c) edit PHP (d) back up the
site
23. Categories are:
(a) optional and flat (b) broad and
hierarchical (c) only for pages (d) for
images
24. Tags are:
(a) required for pages (b) specific keywords
for posts (c) theme files (d) user roles
25. Dated blog articles are created as:
(a) pages (b) posts (c) menus (d) widgets
26. In the block editor, typing / in an empty
line:
(a) deletes the block (b) opens quick block
search (c) publishes (d) undoes
27. Ready-made groups of blocks are called:
(a) widgets (b) patterns (c) shortcodes (d)
templates only
28. To publish a post automatically later, use:
(a) Private (b) Schedule (c) Draft (d) Trash
29. Previous versions of a post can be restored
from:
(a) Revisions (b) Media (c) Users (d) Tools →
Export
30. A theme mainly controls:
(a) website design and layout (b) contact
forms (c) backups (d) payments
31. In a block theme, the header and footer are
edited in:
(a) Settings → General (b) Appearance →
Editor (template parts) (c) Plugins (d) Tools
32. Classic themes are customised mainly in:
(a) Appearance → Customize (b) Tools →
Import (c) Users → Profile (d) Settings →
Media
33. Pirated premium themes are called:
(a) child themes (b) nulled themes (c) block
themes (d) starter themes

34. The small icon shown in browser tabs is the:
(a) logo (b) site icon (favicon) (c) featured image (d) avatar
35. A child theme is used to:
(a) install plugins (b) keep custom code safe from theme updates (c) back up the database (d) speed up images
36. The 60-30-10 rule is about:
(a) page count (b) colour proportions (c) plugin numbers (d) image sizes
37. A plugin mainly adds:
(a) design (b) functionality (c) domain names (d) hosting
38. Before installing a plugin you should check:
(a) last updated date and ratings (b) its colour (c) the developer's age (d) nothing
39. A deactivated but unused plugin should be:
(a) kept forever (b) deleted (c) renamed (d) copied
40. To make form emails reach the inbox reliably, use an:
(a) SMTP plugin (b) image plugin (c) slider (d) page builder
41. If you can't access wp-admin due to a plugin error, you can:
(a) rename the plugin folder via FTP/File Manager (b) delete WordPress (c) buy a new domain (d) change the theme colour
42. To find a conflicting plugin:
(a) reactivate plugins one by one (b) install more plugins (c) change the domain (d) clear the Recycle Bin
43. An SEO plugin typically creates:
(a) an XML sitemap (b) a payment gateway (c) a new domain (d) a backup server
44. Timeless content like About and Contact should be:
(a) posts (b) pages (c) tags (d) comments
45. A static homepage is set in:
(a) Settings → Reading (b) Settings → Media (c) Tools → Export (d) Users
46. A permanent redirect from an old URL uses code:
(a) 200 (b) 301 (c) 404 (d) 500
47. A good main menu usually has:
(a) 25 items (b) about 5–7 items (c) no links (d) only external links
48. Each page should normally have how many H1 headings?
(a) none (b) one (c) five (d) as many as possible
49. Web readers usually:
(a) read every word (b) scan headings and lists (c) only read footers (d) print pages
50. The biggest cause of slow WordPress pages is often:
(a) large unoptimised images (b) short posts (c) too few categories (d) dark colours
51. A modern image format that is much smaller than JPEG is:
(a) BMP (b) WebP (c) TIFF (d) RAW
52. Alt text is used by:
(a) screen readers and search engines (b) payment gateways (c) DNS (d) FTP

53. Decorative images should have alt text that is:
(a) very long (b) empty (c) the file name (d) a keyword list
54. Large videos are best:
(a) uploaded to the Media Library (b) embedded from YouTube/Vimeo (c) emailed (d) zipped
55. A good SEO title is about:
(a) 10 characters (b) 50–60 characters (c) 300 characters (d) 1,000 characters
56. A meta description is about:
(a) 20 characters (b) 140–160 characters (c) 500 characters (d) one word
57. Search engine bots that visit pages are called:
(a) crawlers (b) plugins (c) widgets (d) caches
58. Google Search Console is used to:
(a) host websites (b) see search performance and indexing issues (c) design logos (d) take payments
59. For local businesses, an important free listing is:
(a) Google Business Profile (b) a CDN (c) an SSL certificate (d) a child theme
60. Keywords with 3–6 specific words are called:
(a) short-tail (b) long-tail (c) stop words (d) meta tags
61. Every extra form field usually:
(a) increases submissions (b) reduces submissions (c) has no effect (d) breaks the form
62. WooCommerce is a:
(a) theme (b) plugin for online stores (c) hosting company (d) browser
63. WooCommerce automatically creates which pages?
(a) Shop, Cart, Checkout, My Account (b) About, Blog (c) Privacy only (d) none
64. A T-shirt in sizes and colours is a:
(a) simple product (b) variable product (c) grouped product (d) external product
65. An e-book sold for download should be marked as:
(a) Downloadable (and Virtual) (b) Grouped (c) External (d) Draft
66. Delivery regions in WooCommerce are called:
(a) shipping zones (b) tax classes (c) categories (d) tags
67. Different GST rates are handled with:
(a) tax classes (b) coupons (c) menus (d) widgets
68. Payment gateways should first be tested in:
(a) live mode (b) test mode (c) private mode (d) draft mode
69. Payment gateways usually require a published:
(a) Refund & Cancellation Policy (b) child theme (c) page builder (d) CDN
70. An order that is paid and ready to ship has the status:
(a) Pending payment (b) Processing (c) Completed (d) Draft

71. A good checkout practice is:
(a) force account creation (b) allow guest checkout (c) hide shipping costs until the end (d) add many fields
72. Staff who manage orders should get the role:
(a) Administrator (b) Shop manager (c) Subscriber (d) Contributor
73. The most common cause of WordPress hacks is:
(a) outdated plugins and themes (b) using HTTPS (c) having a blog (d) using categories
74. Two-factor authentication protects:
(a) image quality (b) logins (c) page speed (d) menus
75. A complete WordPress backup includes:
(a) database only (b) files only (c) both database and files (d) only images
76. Backups should also be stored:
(a) only on the same server (b) off-site (e.g. cloud) (c) nowhere (d) in the Recycle Bin
77. An untested backup is:
(a) fully reliable (b) only a hope until a restore is tested (c) illegal (d) always corrupted
78. To disable the dashboard file editor, add to wp-config.php:
(a) DISALLOW_FILE_EDIT (b) WP_DEBUG_DISPLAY (c) WP_CACHE (d) AUTOSAVE_INTERVAL
79. After a hack, one of the first steps is to:
(a) change all passwords (b) add more plugins (c) buy a new logo (d) delete all posts
80. Page caching speeds up a site by:
(a) serving ready-made HTML pages (b) adding more images (c) disabling HTTPS (d) removing menus
81. Pages that must NOT be page-cached include:
(a) Cart and Checkout (b) About (c) Blog (d) Home
82. A CDN:
(a) serves files from servers around the world (b) is a theme (c) is a payment method (d) writes content
83. LCP measures:
(a) layout jumping (b) loading of the largest visible content (c) click response (d) database size
84. A good CLS score is at most:
(a) 0.1 (b) 1 (c) 10 (d) 100
85. A good INP is at most about:
(a) 20 s (b) 2 s (c) 200 ms (d) 2 ms
86. Google's free speed-testing tool is:
(a) PageSpeed Insights (b) Search Console Ads (c) Site Kit Pro (d) WP Rocket
87. Least privilege means users get:
(a) Administrator always (b) the lowest role they need (c) no password (d) shared accounts

38. A private copy of a site for testing changes is a:
(a) staging site (b) sitemap (c) child theme (d) CDN
39. Before major updates you should first:
(a) take a backup (b) delete the theme (c) change the domain (d) disable HTTPS
30. Hosting near your audience mainly improves:
(a) speed (b) logo design (c) SEO titles (d) colours
31. The first stage of any website project is:
(a) installing plugins (b) brief and planning (c) launching (d) SEO
32. A tap-to-call link starts with:
(a) mailto: (b) tel: (c) ftp: (d) wa:
33. Missing content from clients commonly causes:
(a) faster projects (b) delays (c) better SEO (d) free hosting
34. Premium plugin licences should ideally be in the:
(a) client's name (b) developer's personal name only (c) competitor's name (d) none
95. A monthly maintenance plan typically includes:
(a) updates, backups, monitoring (b) only a logo (c) only a domain (d) nothing
96. Before starting a client project, it's common to take:
(a) no payment (b) an advance payment (c) the client's bank password (d) the client's domain for yourself
97. The pre-launch checklist should include testing:
(a) forms and mobile layout (b) only the logo (c) only colours (d) nothing
98. Handing over logins should be done:
(a) securely (password manager share) (b) in a public post (c) on social media (d) on the footer
99. The file that controls server rules such as pretty permalinks on Apache is:
(a) .htaccess (b) robots.txt (c) style.css (d) readme.html
100. To make a menu item open a WhatsApp chat you add a:
(a) category (b) custom link (c) tag (d) widget area

ANSWERS**MCQ Answer Key**

If you got a question wrong, go back to the module it came from and re-read that section.

Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans
1	b	21	b	41	a	61	b	81	a
2	b	22	b	42	a	62	b	82	a
3	b	23	b	43	a	63	a	83	b
4	c	24	b	44	b	64	b	84	a
5	b	25	b	45	a	65	a	85	c
6	b	26	b	46	b	66	a	86	a
7	b	27	b	47	b	67	a	87	b
8	b	28	b	48	b	68	b	88	a
9	b	29	a	49	b	69	a	89	a
10	b	30	a	50	a	70	b	90	a
11	b	31	b	51	b	71	b	91	b
12	b	32	a	52	a	72	b	92	b
13	a	33	b	53	b	73	a	93	b
14	c	34	b	54	b	74	b	94	a
15	b	35	b	55	b	75	c	95	a
16	c	36	b	56	b	76	b	96	b
17	b	37	b	57	a	77	b	97	a
18	c	38	a	58	b	78	a	98	a
19	c	39	b	59	a	79	a	99	a
20	a	40	a	60	b	80	a	100	b

Short-answer questions (2–3 marks)

1. What is a CMS? Name two examples.
2. Differentiate WordPress.com and WordPress.org.
3. What is the purpose of wp-config.php?
4. Why should permalinks be set to "Post name"?
5. Name the five default WordPress user roles.
6. Differentiate pages and posts.
7. What is a block pattern?
8. What is a child theme?
9. Give three criteria for choosing a plugin.
10. What is alt text, and why is it important?
11. What is an XML sitemap?
12. What is a variable product in WooCommerce?
13. Name three Core Web Vitals.
14. What must a complete WordPress backup include?
15. What is a 301 redirect?

Long-answer questions (5–10 marks)

1. Explain how a website works, covering domain, DNS, hosting, WordPress and the database, with a diagram.
2. Describe the steps to register a domain, buy hosting, connect them and install WordPress.
3. Give a guided tour of the WordPress dashboard menus and their uses.
4. Explain how to choose and customise a theme, including branding and homepage design.
5. Describe the essential plugins for a business site and how to troubleshoot plugin conflicts.
6. Explain how to plan and build the page structure and navigation of a website.
7. Explain image optimisation and on-page SEO for WordPress with examples.
8. Describe how to set up a basic WooCommerce store in India, including products, shipping, GST and payments.
9. Explain WordPress security hardening, backups and hacked-site recovery.
10. Describe the complete process of building and launching a client website, with a pre-launch checklist.

Glossary of Terms

Key words used throughout these notes, in alphabetical order.

Administrator

User role with full control of the site.

Alt text

Text description of an image for accessibility and SEO.

Backup

Copy of the database and files for recovery.

Block

A content element in the editor (paragraph, image...).

Block theme

Theme fully editable with blocks in the Site Editor.

Breadcrumbs

Navigation trail such as Home › Courses › Class 12.

Cache

Stored ready-made copies of pages or files for speed.

Category

Broad, hierarchical grouping of posts.

CDN

Network of servers delivering files from near the visitor.

Child theme

Theme that inherits a parent and holds custom code.

CMS

Content management system.

Core Web Vitals

Google's LCP, INP and CLS user-experience metrics.

CSS

Language for styling web pages.

Customizer

Live-preview settings panel for classic themes.

Dashboard

WordPress admin area (wp-admin).

Database

Stores content, settings and users (MySQL/MariaDB).

DNS

System translating domains to IP addresses.

Domain name

Website address such as example.in.

Excerpt

Short summary of a post.

Favicon (site icon)

Small icon in browser tabs.

Featured image

Main image representing a post or page.

FTP/SFTP

Protocols for transferring files to the server.

Gateway

Service that processes online payments.

GPL

Open-source licence used by WordPress.

Hosting

Server space where a website lives.

HTML

Markup language for web page structure.

HTTPS / SSL

Encrypted connection and its certificate.

Lazy loading

Loading images only when they are about to be seen.

Media Library

Store of uploaded images, videos and files.

Menu

Navigation links in the header or footer.

Meta description

Summary shown under the title in search results.

Nameservers

Servers that hold a domain's DNS records.

Nullified

Pirated premium theme/plugin — unsafe.

Page

Static, timeless content.

Page builder

Visual drag-and-drop design plugin.

Pattern

Ready-made group of blocks.

Permalink

Permanent URL of a post or page.

PHP

Server-side language WordPress is written in.

Plugin

Add-on that extends functionality.

Post

Dated content in the blog feed.

Redirect (301)

Permanent forwarding from an old URL to a new one.

Responsive design

Layouts that adapt to screen size.

Revision

Saved earlier version of content.

Role

Set of permissions for a user.

Schema

Structured data that helps search engines understand content.

SEO

Search engine optimisation.

Shipping zone

Region with its own delivery methods and rates.

Site Editor

Tool for editing block-theme templates and styles.

Sitemap (XML)

File listing pages for search engines.

SKU

Stock-keeping unit code for a product.

Slug

URL-friendly part of a permalink.

SMTP

Protocol for reliable email sending.

Staging

Private copy of a site for testing.

Tag

Specific keyword linking related posts.

Template / template part

Layout for a content type / reusable header or footer.

Theme

Package controlling site design.

Two-factor authentication

Login needing a second proof such as an app code.

Variation

Specific option of a variable product (e.g. size M, blue).

WebP

Efficient modern image format.

Widget

Content block for sidebars/footers in classic themes.

WooCommerce

E-commerce plugin for WordPress.

wp-config.php

File with database settings and security keys.

wp-content

Folder holding themes, plugins and uploads.

Keep learning

Use the AI tutor on www.aitutorspark.co.in to ask any question from these notes — it explains step by step. Complete the course quiz to earn your certificate. All the best!