

THE **BLOGGER'S** JUMP START



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO LAUNCH
YOUR BLOG LIKE A PRO

BRUCESCHINKEL.COM

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Blogging JumpStart Guide

If you've always wanted to know how to start a travel blog, you're in the right place!

Starting a travel blog, or any blog for that matter, is surprisingly simple. If you follow my step-by-step guide below, you can have your amazing blog online faster than you thought possible.

Some of these steps require spending a small amount of money, but there are a few free options available like WordPress, Wix or Blogger. Just know that as you get more serious about your blog you'll want more control over it, meaning that you're bound to reach a point where your free account will no longer cut it. Besides, as a professional blogger you don't want ".wordpress.com" or ".wix.com" or ".blogger.com" affixed to the end of your URL as that can significantly reduce your credibility and take away from your brand.

Step 1: Choose a Name

One of the most important steps to accomplish when you're ready to start a travel blog can be surprisingly difficult: choosing a domain name. What do you want to be called? How do you want the world to know you? Does it fit your brand and core values? Will it stand the test of time?

You'll want to avoid domain names that can be restrictive (SixMonthsInChili.com), too common (TheTraveler.com), or too difficult to spell or remember (ImTraveling-YouCanToo365.com).

Restrictive names can seem like great ideas at first, but what happens after that 6 months are up? You need to think long-term. Similarly names that are too common will cause you to get lost among the hundreds (thousands?) of sites optimized for those same search words. Lastly, if you find yourself having to explain spelling, grammar, punctuation, or other characters, then the name is too complex.

A good rule of thumb is that people need to be able to remember your site name without having to write it down.

Short & Memorable

The domain name for your blog should be relatively short, easy to type, easy to spell, and easy to remember. I highly recommend having a brainstorming session (even better if you can brainstorm with others) where you simply write down a bunch of words you want your blog to represent. Adventure? Food? Culture? South America?



Keep in mind the following:

- What do you want to write about?
- Who are you?
- What is your passion?

Write everything down and start playing with different combinations of words. A [thesaurus](#) can come in very handy during this exercise.

No Hyphens, Underscores & Numbers

This can be difficult to do, and may mean that your first choice (or even your second or third) for a domain name is unavailable. Hyphens, underscores and numbers are difficult for someone to remember without writing it down (breaking our rule). Besides, would you really want to be TravelGuru_45.com? If you were a travel blog follower, wouldn't you wonder who the other 44 travel gurus were, and why we need another one?

Avoid Overused Words

Trademarked names and phrases need to be avoided, as do words that may be overused in the industry. These names may be simple to remember, but they won't stand out because those ideas have already been taken by others who are much more established. Here are some examples of words that won't help you stand out in the travel niche:

- wandering
- adventurer
- explorer
- nomadic

Step 2: Reserve Your Domain Name

Now that you've put all that hard work into picking out your perfect name you need to make sure you can actually use it.

You need to go to a domain name registrar to check your name's availability against all those other websites already in use by someone else. Don't worry, this can easily be done online in a few minutes.

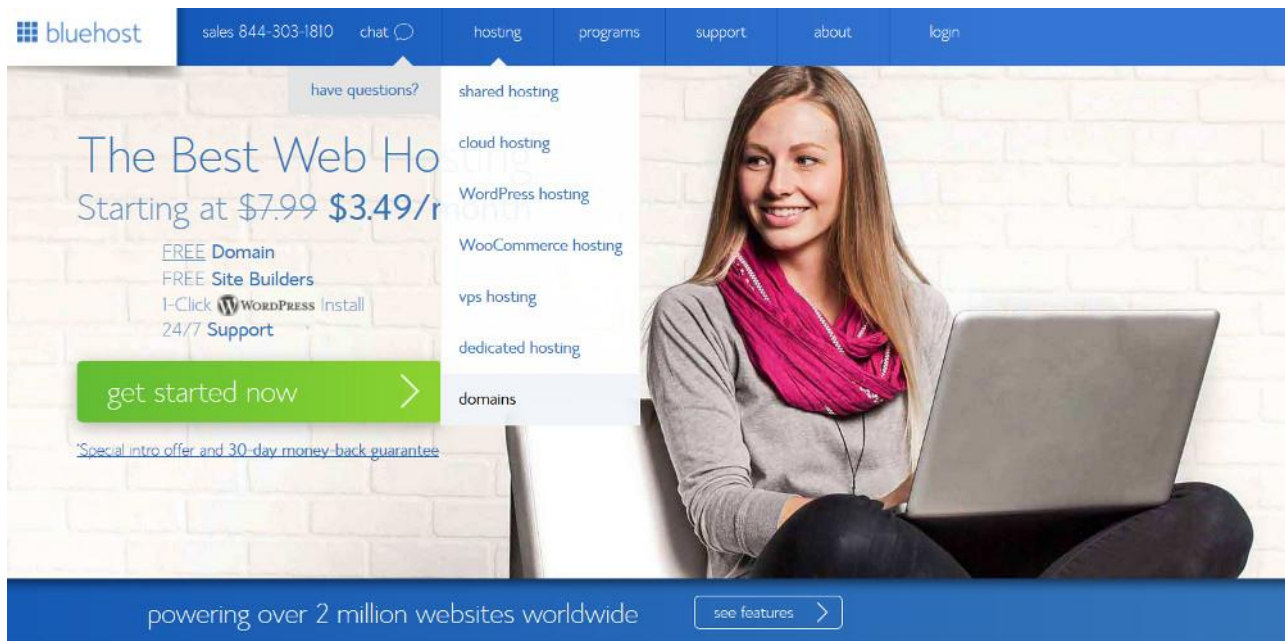
I'd recommend having your top 3-5 names ready just in case someone else had the same stroke of genius you did and already reserved your favourite name to start a travel blog of their own.

There are a lot of options out there for checking availability and reserving domain names. I recommend using either of BlueHost, HostGator, and GoDaddy. I've used all 3 in the past without issue.



The steps are fairly simple:

1. Go to the registrar's website (for the images in this example I'll be using [BlueHost](#))
2. Look for a menu item called "Hosting" or "Domains" and click it



3. You'll be presented with an option to enter your desired domain name, enter your #1 choice and submit it. Make note of the suffix you want on your URL (having ".com" is the most common, but there are a lot of options available to you).



4. You'll be told whether or not the name is available and presented with your options.
5. If the name you entered is available, you can proceed to the checkout.
6. If your name is not available, you'll often be presented with "similar" names to choose from. If none of these are to your liking, simply return to the previous screen and enter your next choice.
7. Continue steps 4-6, above, until you successfully find and register your new domain name.

Now that you've got your domain name and you're ready to complete your order, you'll be presented with a couple of options to "add-on" to your account. Of all those available, I'd recommend getting the "Domain Privacy Protection". Essentially this keeps the domain registration private, and keeps your info from getting into someone else's hands.

Now complete the checkout process on the registrar's website and your domain name is all yours!

Congratulations, you've got a blog name!!

But now what do you do with it??

Step 3: Host Your Domain

Yes, we are getting technical already, but it doesn't have to be scary! Now that you've got your domain name you need to build on your piece of Internet real estate with a place to store all your data, files, and photos. This is essentially what hosting does for you.

Just like with domain name registration, hosting doesn't need to be a big expense. You'll also run into most of the same players ([BlueHost](#), GoDaddy, HostGator, etc.). They all offer good quality for a low price and decent customer service. It's important to note that you can, but don't have to use the same domain registrar and host company. Using different companies simply requires an extra step of mapping your domain name servers (DNS) from your registrar to your host. It's much easier than it sounds.

The host is also important as they will provide you with the email address(es) you need to run your blog. Check the plan details to make sure you pick the offer that best suits your needs. You don't want to find out later that you're exceeding your limits on the number of email accounts or size of storage.



Step 3a: Brilliant Done-For-You PRO Blog Option

Wouldn't it be great if you could know your hosting was in the best hands possible?

How much better would you sleep at night knowing that you had air-tight, bulletproof security included?

What if there was an option that required 1 small settings change and 3 clicks to have your blog setup?

How would you feel knowing that you could follow simple step-by-step instructional videos to launch your perfect blog FAST?

You're in luck! I'm NOW able to offer you exactly what I've outlined here, and so much more!

Click the button below to find out the details, then skip the rest of this post and head on over to Step 5 to start designing your blog!

Fast-Track My Blog NOW! >

Step 4: Install WordPress

You definitely want to use WordPress for your new travel blog; not Blogspot, Blogger, or anything else. WordPress is the platform the professionals use, and installing it with your hosting account is super easy.

To start a blog you'll want a **self-hosted** WordPress account rather than a free account; here's why:

- Your website is "MyTravelBlog.com" rather than "MyTravelBlog.WordPress.com"
- You own your data and have full control
- You can sell advertising on your site
- You can install plugins & custom themes
- You can use Google Analytics tracking

Login to your hosting account and select the WordPress button under "Website Builders" (for this example I'll be using [BlueHost](#)).



The screenshot shows a web hosting control panel dashboard. At the top is a navigation bar with links: hosting, WordPress tools, domains, addons, account, cart, help, and logout. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links: home, cpanel, performance, email, website, ftp, databases, manage ips, and install scripts. A large blue banner at the top left says "Your Cloud is Ready!" with subtext "Upgrade your account in minutes and make your websites faster, stronger, and safer." It includes a "Limited-time 30-day Trial" and buttons for "Move My Account" and "Learn More". To the right of the banner is a photo of a smiling woman in an apron. Below the banner are two promotional tiles: "Gmail for your business" with a "Learn More" button, and "The Cloud Is Here Stronger. Safer. Faster." with an "Upgrade Now" button. On the right side, there's a "helpful resources" section with icons for Getting Started, Help Center, Change Passwords, Update Billing Info, Renew Account, and Change Settings. Below this is a row of category buttons: marketing, email, website, files, domains, security, database, and services. The "website" category is selected and expanded, showing a list of website-related services: Website Manager, Install WordPress (circled in red), WordPress Themes, Use Weebly, One-click Install, My Installs, Page Speed Grader, and AppMachine.

Follow the simple installation process. When asked where you'd like to install WordPress, choose your new domain (e.g. <http://MyBlogName.com>). Make special note of the administration information provided to you after the install is complete. You'll need it to login to your blog afterward!

You now have the foundation of a blog!

The username and password provided to you will log you into the WordPress dashboard and you're ready to start customizing. Access your dashboard at <http://myblogname.com/wp-admin> (replacing *myblogname* with your blog domain name).

Congratulations, your blog is now online!!

But how do we make it look great??



Step 5: Use a Professional Theme

Your new blog comes with standard WordPress themes for you to design your site. These themes are okay for the beginner blogger, but I highly recommend purchasing a professional theme if you want to take blogging seriously (and be taken seriously).

Professional theme designs may cost a bit of money, but they come with many advantages. The biggest advantage is that they are continually being updated to combat security threats and improve usability. Plus, they just look better!

I highly recommend using one of the [Divi themes from Elegant Themes](#). Divi is pure awesomeness! It's highly customizable and makes sure your website looks its best on any device. There is a reason it is one of the most popular themes on the market.

Special Note: The special Fast-Track blog system I mentioned in Step 2 of this guide actually includes many of the best themes on the market, without the extra fees associated with them!

Test them out. Compare them to each other. Choose the one that best fits YOU. All in 1 place!

Check out the details of that system here:

Fast-Track My Blog NOW! >

Step 6: Useful Plugins

Plugins are like third-party apps for your website. They give your blog additional features like social media integrations and travel maps. Many of these plugins are free, but some will have a cost attached depending on the functionality you're looking for. You can download and install new plugins in the "plugin" section of your WordPress Dashboard.

It is important to note that you don't want to install a bunch of plugins just to see how many you can collect. Too many plugins can cause problems for your blog, such as memory leaks and non-compatibility with each other. Plugin developers do extensive testing for the most common blog configurations, but they can't test everything. It's highly unlikely they have tested your exact configuration.

If you find that you have plugins that conflict with each other you have a couple of options. In some cases, it's not a big deal and you can work around the issues. Other times you'll have to decide which plugin wins out and replace the offender with another that doesn't conflict.



Special Note: If you took advantage of that awesome blog system we discussed earlier, this testing is all done for you! Never worry about plugin conflicts or security issues! It's all handled behind the scenes.

Our experts have also scoured the plugin world to come up with the optimal plugins for your blog. Easier integrations. Better security. Blog optimization. All branded to YOU!

If you haven't already done so, click the button below to Fast-Track your Blog, and skip the rest of this step ... it's time Launch Your Blog in Step 7, below!

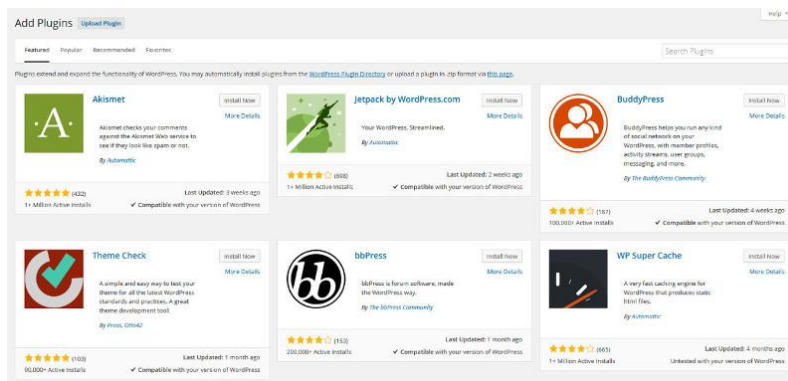
[Fast-Track My Blog NOW! >](#)

I recommend this list of plugins to get you started:

- **Easy Facebook Likebox** – Add your Facebook feed directly on your blog
- **WP-Edit** – Ultimate WordPress editing
- **WP-Blackcheck** – Protects your blog from spammers
- **Pretty Link Lite** – Shrink, track and share any URL on the internet from your website
- **Yoast** – The industry standard for SEO for your website
- **Google Analyticator** – Seamlessly integrate your blog with Google Analytics
- **Coming Soon Page & Maintenance Mode by SeedProd** – The best coming soon page while waiting to publish your new website

For travel blogs specifically, I recommend these additional plugins:

- **Bloom** – create beautifully integrated email opt-ins
- **AccessPress Instagram Feed** – Galleries and carousels displaying your feed with shortcode or widget
- **Google Maps Veebiekspert** – Create multiple Google maps directly on your blog
- **Monarch Plugin** – Allow visitors to share you post on social media



Congratulations, your blog is really coming together!!

But when can you launch??



Step 7: Social Media

To build a successful travel blog, you will need to integrate with social media. It's the fastest and easiest way to get the word out that you exist and build a loyal following. Do everything you can to keep your social media handles (your name) consistent across all channels to avoid confusing your audience.

Becoming a master of social media is huge discussion unto itself. [Here are some great social media tips](#) from online marketing and branding coach, [Julia Baxter](#), which will go a long way to help you get started.

Some of the social media channels you'll want to at least reserve your handle on are:



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Pinterest](#)



[Twitter](#)



YouTube



[SnapChat](#)



You don't need to master all of these channels immediately. In fact, I'd recommend focusing on just 1 or 2 until you get a solid fan-base. Which channel you choose will depend on the content you want to share and your interests, but it's a good idea to reserve all the names just in case you want to expand your focus in the future.

If you're new to social media or to some of these platforms, my advice is just start using each of them and see which ones you find yourself drawn to naturally.

To give you my honest opinion, everyone should at least have a Facebook fan page (different from your profile page). It's the biggest social network and one of the top search engines in the world. As a travel blogger you should consider Instagram, Pinterest, and SnapChat. They are 3 of the biggest, fastest growing social media channels at the moment, and perfect for sharing your travel experiences.

Step 8: Tell People About You

The "About Me" page is one of the first pages people will click on when they land on your site, so make it count. This is also a page that search engines look for before ranking you, but more on that another day. So how do you make a killer about page? Here are a few tips I got from my friend [Chris Ducker](#):

- Start with a benefit-driven headline to tell visitors what they will get by visiting your site
- Follow-up with 1-2 paragraphs to elaborate on this headline
- Provide some social proof. If you're just starting out get some family or friends to give you some testimonials!
- Provide a short, but sweet bio telling visitors why you are in a position to talk to them
- Invite them to connect via social media (max 2 platforms)
- Give people a call-to-action; visitors will want to know what to do next

To see this in action I invite you to check out my [About Me](#) page.

Step 9: Write Your First Post!

Now it's time to create some content for your blog. When you're getting started, I'd recommend writing 2-3 new articles per week. Be sure to take your time and craft compelling blog posts with impact.

What should you write about? What you're interested in. What problems you can solve for others. What your audience needs to know. What you've learned that can help someone else.

Are you currently travelling? Share your favorite things to do there, fun travel stories, video tours, food recommendations, etc. Keep writing about a wide variety of topics until you find your personal blogging



style & voice, and to see what resonates with your visitors. Make sure you position every post so it solves a problem or inspires your audience. Leave them wanting more, not saying “so what”!

If you are not currently travelling, write about a recent trip or provide some tips for exploring your hometown. Share some tips about saving money for travel, provide your bucket list suggestions, or write about your favourite travel books, websites and movies.

Most importantly, share what is important to you. Making it personal and helpful will keep visitors coming back.

When you first start a travel blog your only fans will likely be family and friends. That’s ok!

It takes time to build an audience. To help you get your name out there and gain some valuable recognition, start reading other travel blogs. Leave comments on articles that you find helpful and link to other blog posts from your site where appropriate.

As your recognition grows, so will your following. It won’t happen overnight, but if you put in the work you can build the travel blogger dream life!

Congratulations, You’re Online!

Congratulations, you’re blog is now online!!

That wasn’t so hard, was it? You’re now well on your way to creating the lifestyle you’ve been dreaming about.

Where do you go from here? That comes down to 4 blogging pillars:

Content

Keep the content of your blog “on brand”. Don’t go chasing fads, or trying to be everything to everyone. You have your niche market, and it’s important to play to those strengths.

Promotion

You’ll need to learn how to “toot your own horn” if you want people to notice you. You need to speak-up and get noticed, or risk being lost in the crowd.



Consistency

You want to make your fans feel comfortable so they'll keep coming back for more. To do this, you need to set expectations. The number of times per week/month you'll be creating a post, which day of the week/month, and how they'll hear about new posts are all important details.

Authority

Nobody is expecting you to be the expert on everything related to your niche, but they do need to have a reason to believe and trust you. Using a combination of your experiences and citing other resources serves to help build you up as someone of value.

Each of these blogging pillars requires more time than I have in this JumpStart Guide. In fact, each of them requires a "jumpstart" guide of their own!

In the meantime, I'd love to help you move forward with your blog. There are a number of ways I can help, and I'd love to discuss your needs. Click the button below and let's get you started on the right path to your greatness.

[Apply Here to Learn More >](#)

I can't wait to start following you and seeing all the greatness you have to share!

Be sure to [email me](#) your blog URL so I can find and support your journey.



Thank You

I hope you've enjoyed this Blogging JumpStart Guide!

My passion is to serve to inspire you to follow your dreams. If you're looking for help with building your home business, reach out to me today.

I want to say a HUGE thank you for reading my blog and connecting with me via email and social media! I'm truly grateful for your continued support.

You are welcome to contact me with any questions, suggestions, or comments. I look forward to hearing from you!

- Bruce Schinkel

Keep in touch!

bruce@bruceschinkel.com

www.bruceschinkel.com

