

9 Best WordPress Themes for Bloggers

You have found a hosting provider you trust. You were able to get WordPress installed with limited troubles. But wait, the default WordPress theme is pretty boring. The good news is there are thousands of themes to spruce things up.

Below, I break down the best WordPress themes for bloggers and help you decide which one will fit your skill level and personality.

Astra - Best for Beginners (Free & Premium Options)

Astra is one of the most popular WordPress themes around, running on over 1.5 million websites. As you will soon find out it isn't difficult to see why.

Out of the gate Astra loads in less than 1 second, ensuring a speedy load time for your users.

Astra also has more than 90 ready to import websites (180+ on the pro version), so you can hit the ground running in minutes.

Astra also has built-in support for several page builders including: Gutenberg, Beaver Builder, Brizy, and my favorite, Elementor. Allowing you to build and edit pages with drag and drop ease.

The developers took careful consideration to follow best coding practices and ensure that pre-built themes are optimized for SEO.

Astra comes in two flavors, Astra, which is free for anyone to use, and Astra Pro, a premium option.

Astra (Free)

Astra is the basic Astra template and is available to download directly from the [WordPress theme library](#). If simple and inexpensive is your thing then this is the way to go.

The free version comes with all the basic functionality without the cost.

Astra Pro (\$59/year)

Astra Pro adds several enhancements over the free version all geared towards making your life easier and your site more customizable.

The pro version adds numerous site layout and header options. These include the fan-favorite sticky header, where the header stays at the top as your users scroll.

You will also gain access to Mega Menu, allowing you to easily add a beautiful menu without any coding skills.

Lastly, the Pro version adds more design options, including background styling, and enhanced color styling.

If you are truly looking for ease of use and maximum functionality, I recommend upgrading to the pro version.

BeTheme - Best Pre-Built Templates (Premium)

BeTheme is another popular WordPress template, running on over 230,000 websites.

The theme has been around for over 7 years and is updated at least once a month, so you know you are getting a well established theme.

Boasting a 96 on Google PageSpeed Insights, BeTheme is certainly going to keep your users and Google happy.

BeTheme includes their own proprietary page builder, Muffin Builder. The theme is also compatible with Elementor and WP Bakery, allowing you to skip the coding learning curve altogether.

Beyond the drag and drop, BeTheme includes a simple user interface to allow you to modify just about every website asset.

The best part in my opinion is that BeTheme comes packed with over 600 easy to import pre-built websites. BeTheme wasn't just going for a high stat either, their designs are beautiful and well thought out. Everything from landing pages to blogs are a simple mouse click away.

BeTheme is available for a one-time fee of \$59, which includes lifetime updates.

Authority Pro - Best for Simplicity (Premium)

Authority Pro is built on the ever popular Genesis Pro framework. If you aren't familiar with Genesis Pro it is one of the best WordPress theme frameworks.

The Genesis Pro page builder is built on top of Gutenberg and adds numerous new block widgets. By doing this, Genesis Pro offers you a familiar and easy to use builder. Genesis Pro prides itself on its lack of unnecessary plugins and code. By doing this you won't get some of the flashier features of some other popular WordPress themes, but will have a simple and easy to use design.

Authority Pro is perfect if you don't want any extras and simple is your best friend.

One note, Genesis Pro recently changed their pricing model and you cannot buy the theme individually. Now you will get all of the Genesis Pro pre-built themes for \$360/year.

GeneratePress - Best for Speed (Free & Premium Options)

GeneratePress prides themselves on being built on speed and stability, and with over 3.5 million downloads, they must be doing something right.

A real-time Google PageSpeed Insights score of 100 on both mobile and desktop shows that this theme knows how to be blazing fast.

To achieve these incredible scores GeneratePress leaves behind a lot of the bloat of some of the other best WordPress themes. This includes pre-packaged premium plugins and advanced features you may never notice are gone.

GeneratePress comes in two options, a free version and a premium version which is \$59 per year. Unlike some of the other themes in this list where the free and premium versions are somewhat similar, the premium version here is much more advanced than the free one.

Free

Out of the box the theme doesn't have much oomph and may even remind you of the theme pre-installed on WordPress. However, GeneratePress does add some additional functionality such as customizations of the header, footer, navigation bar, and sidebars. Additionally, you will have some color modifications available to you.

Premium (\$59/year)

The pro version of GeneratePress is where the fun happens. Once you upgrade you get access to the GeneratePress builder, which is built directly into Gutenberg, and the pre-built site library.

You will also get additional customization options including more color, typography, and background controls. If that isn't enough you will also get access to a mobile friendly header, advanced layout system, sticky navigation, and more.

Due to GeneratePress' focus on speed the theme doesn't offer some of the "wow" features of the other best WordPress themes in this list, but you will launch knowing speed may never be a factor for you.

Avada - Best for Flexibility (Premium)

Avada claims to be the "#1 selling theme of all time" and has gained quite the committed following. Having launched in 2012, the theme is updated several times a year and has received numerous upgrades since its original launch.

Avada comes with its own proprietary page builder that lets you add, edit, and remove elements in real-time with ease.

Avada also comes with a built-in form builder allowing you to ditch popular form builders like GravityForms and WPForms.

One of my favorite features of Avada is it's new "Performance Wizard" which offers you the ability to optimize images, videos, and the code. The "Performance Wizard" will also let you disable unused features, allowing you to save precious load time and help your Google PageSpeed Insights score.

Avada comes with more than 80 pre-built websites, offering you the ability to hit the ground running.

If you aren't sure which direction you will go or what features you may need, Avada might be your best bet. With Avada you will have a toolchest of features and functionality to choose from all in a nice package.

Avada costs a one-time fee of \$60 and you will receive lifetime updates.

Zakra - Best for SEO (Free & Premium Options)

Zakra is built for speed and SEO and is one of the best WordPress themes for both. With a Google PageSpeed Insights score of 100 and compatibility with all major SEO plugins all you will have to worry about is the colors and styles.

Zakra is compatible with all major page builders with pre-built sites for Elementor, Brizy, and Gutenberg. Also, when you purchase the Premium Plus version you will receive 15+ custom built Elementor widgets.

Much like GeneratePress, the free version is pretty basic compared to its more premium siblings.

Free

The free version of Zakra will score you 25+ free pre-built sites and give you most basic customization options including the header, page layout, fonts and basic color options.

Personal (\$59/year)

The Personal version of Zakra boosts the customization options. You now have the ability to create advanced headers and footers along with additional blog layouts.

Also, with this upgrade you are given access to over 100 sitewide customizations that will allow you to tweak everything from fonts, spacing, and a whole lot more.

Personal Plus (\$67/year)

When you upgrade to the Personal Plus version you will get everything from both the free and Personal version along with access to 30+ additional pre-built sites to get you going quickly and in style.

Also, as mentioned earlier you will also gain access to Zakra's proprietary 15+ Elementor widgets. These widgets will offer you easy access to add a countdown timer, gallery or many more to your website.

The Personal Plus version also gives you access to install the theme on 3 different websites. Therefore, if you, your buddy, and your buddy's buddy all want to use Zakra, then you can save some money and each throw in a third.

However, if you don't know two others that will use the theme, won't be using Elementor, and aren't a big fan of any of the 30+ additional pre-built sites, then maybe skip this option and save that money for something else.

The7 - Best for Tweakers (Premium)

I've covered the best WordPress themes for templates and the best for beginners, but what if you are the type of person who wants to customize (almost) everything? For that we have The7.

The7 claims to be the "most customizable theme on the market" and they are certainly the most customizable I have ever seen.

The7 has dozens of pages of settings that are very easy to tweak even if you have never typed a line of code in your life. Whether it is the share buttons, the mobile logo, or the footer almost every element of the theme can be tweaked.

Before you even start tweaking, The7 gives you the ability to start with one of 60+ pre-built websites. These pre-built websites are built on top of either Gutenberg, Elementor, or WP Bakery.

Due to The7 trying to squeeze over 1,000 options into an options panel, some customizations can be difficult to find or easy to misinterpret. That said, you don't have to be a developer to tweak things.

Beyond The7's long list of customization options it is also built with speed in mind. Boasting a real-time Google PageSpeed Insights score of 94 this theme will hum.

The7 has also been certified by Google for its SEO-readiness and mobile friendliness.

If all of that wasn't enough to make this one of the best WordPress themes, The7 also comes with WP Bakery, Slider Revolution, The7 Elements, and Ultimate Addons for free. Between all of those you save more than \$100 or more than you will even pay for this incredible theme.

The7 will set you back \$39, but you will certainly see the value and will receive lifetime updates.

OceanWP - Best Free Theme (Free and Premium Options)

OceanWP is a great theme with over 150 pre-built Elementor ready sites (10+ included for free) to get you going with ease.

This theme is a bit different from the other popular WordPress themes in this list. It starts as a stand alone theme within the [WordPress theme library](#) that has a wealth of customizations and

options built-in. OceanWP's basic functionality is then extended through various plugins called extensions, both free and paid.

The stand-alone theme can be used on its own without adding any additional extensions. You will still get a blazing fast, SEO optimized, mobile friendly theme that is easy to customize.

Free

By adding the free extensions you will gain the ability to easily add modal windows, custom sidebars, social sharing, and a little bit more.

Premium

With the premium extensions you will add features like a sticky header and footer, an additional 40+ Elementor Widgets, a fancy Instagram feed and more. You can either purchase each premium extension a la carte for \$29.99 or you can get them all plus access to the OceanWP's entire pre-built site collection for \$39/year.

Another great addition to the Premium version is that you can disable scripts and styles that you aren't using that would otherwise slow down your site.

OceanWP's premium extensions do offer some additional functionality that might be worth it if you have the money in your budget. However, if you skip the premium options you may not even notice you are missing something.

Soledad - Best for Me (Premium)

Soledad is the official theme of Hit Publish and I can attest, it is awesome. Besides my personal opinion, Soledad rocks in both speed and functionality.

In a real-time Google PageSpeed Insights test Soledad scored a 100. It also has full AMP support, meaning your mobile pages are built and optimized for speed.

Out of the box you can choose from one of 100s of pre-built homepages to get you up-and-running with limited experience and time.

Soledad is optimized to work with WP Bakery and Elementor and includes more than 30+ custom elements between the two, allowing you to drag and drop your vision to reality.

If you are looking for a theme that is fast, reliable, and maybe at least a little inspired by Hit Publish, then Soledad is the best WordPress theme for you.

Soledad is a one-time fee of \$59 and includes all future updates.

Choosing the Best WordPress Theme For Your Website

You may be thinking, “if a theme looks great, it will be great”, but that isn’t always the case.

Choosing a theme could have far more of an impact on your blog than simply looking good. Some WordPress themes are faster, some may have more features, and some are designed for ease-of-use.

Let’s dig into some things to take into consideration when choosing your blog’s theme and the ultimate impact it may have on you.

WordPress Theme Functionality

At first glance, you may assume that all a theme does is maximize what WordPress is capable of. However, many of the best WordPress themes have built in proprietary widgets and features that stack on top of WordPress’ built-in functionality.

That fancy slider at the top of almost all blogs these days, that isn’t built into WordPress. You either need to buy a plug-in to add that function, build it yourself, or choose a theme that includes it.

Different themes offer different headers, post layouts, and footers. Some have fancy icons, and some have beautiful navigation bars. Again, you will need to decide which concept best fits your needs before taking the plunge on a theme.

All themes at their core operate the same way. But the enhancements that they include can be the difference between ease-of-use for you and the “wow” factor for your audience and regretting your purchase.

Before you bite on any theme take a look at their website, pre-built sites, and make sure it includes the enhancements and functionality you are looking for. Even in this list of best WordPress themes some are pretty basic (Zakra, GeneratePress, and Authority Pro) and others offer more features than you may ever use (The7, BeTheme, Astra).

Mobile Friendly

It used to be that if you had a beautiful website that functioned completely on a desktop or laptop you were in the clear.

Today mobile is sometimes more important than desktop, depending on your audience. And back in 2019 [Google made a rare announcement](#) about their proprietary rankings, any new or “previously unknown to Google” website would have their index and rank based on the mobile version of their website.

This means if you want to rank in Google, your mobile website should be fast, SEO optimized, and user-friendly.

If I have you in a panic, take a deep breath. The good news is almost all new and continuously updated themes are mobile friendly. And all the themes in this list are both mobile and desktop optimized.

Browser Support

You may be viewing this post in Safari, Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge or any other browser. And it is important that no matter what browser your user is using that they get the supreme viewing experience they are expecting.

The great news is that [Chrome and Microsoft Edge](#) use the same behind the scenes code, called a render engine, to render a website. Firefox, Safari and Internet Explorer use their own independent render engines. That said, Firefox focuses on staying up-to-date with the latest coding standards and should give you minimal, if any, headache.

Safari and Internet Explorer are often called the “problem children” in the development world because they do their own thing. The great news is Internet Explorer will lose [Microsoft’s own support starting in mid-2022](#).

Apple unfortunately, has not announced any earth-shattering news about Safari or an improvement on following current and future standards.

If I lost you somewhere in the last few paragraphs, don’t worry, I got lost a little too. The good news is, you aren’t a developer and it won’t be your problem.

Choose a newer theme or one frequently updated, and you should be in the clear.

Speed/SEO

When it comes to choosing the best WordPress theme for your blog, speed and SEO optimization can be almost as important as the look and functionality.

If you have a slow website, obviously users will abandon your site for something faster. But, also Google will ding you knowing that it is a poor user experience.

Speed

Speed can be a complicated beast and even for some of the best developers can be a tricky balance between design, function, and speed.

Keep in mind as you choose a theme that a general rule of thumb is the more feature-rich the theme, the slower it will be. That wiz-bang video in your beautiful slider at the top of your homepage, your user has to wait for that to load and it may not be worth the speed/SEO hit.

If your theme comes with 150 unique button styles but you are just going to use 2 of them, then that is a hit to your speed/SEO for no reason.

Some of the best WordPress themes target speed (Zakra, GeneratePress, and Authority Pro) while others target feature richness (Avada, The7, BeTheme). You may have to decide if speed is your ultimate goal or if you want more feature options.

Another option is to play the middle ground. Some themes (Avada and OceanWP) let you disable any unused functionality to prevent it from slowing down your site.

Beyond speed, having clean and optimized code behind the scenes also impacts your SEO. If your website's images, styles, and scripts aren't being loaded properly you will experience an SEO hit.

If the code has errors built-in, Google will look unfavorably towards your site.

Therefore, make sure when selecting a theme you are choosing one that states it is SEO optimized and performs strongly on Google PageSpeed Insights.

Popularity/Update Frequency

You may be thinking, I don't want a popular Wordpress theme because my site will look like everyone else's. But the truth is you DO want a popular theme.

A widely used theme will have a strong community of support and YouTube tutorials for if you get stuck and need some assistance.

The most popular themes are more likely to have security issues discovered and repaired quickly, keeping both you, your blog, and your users safe.

By selecting a more common theme, you are more than likely going to receive more frequent updates to your theme. Updates generally come with enhanced features, fixes for potential or known issues, and code and/or speed improvements.

And to ensure your website is unique, all the best WordPress themes in our list let you make numerous customizations so that your site fits your personality and your audience.

WordPress Theme Pricing

WordPress themes are priced in numerous ways. You may be able to snag your favorite theme for free, some themes charge a one-time fee, while others charge annually.

Free vs. Premium

There are thousands of free themes both available for download over the internet or in [WordPress' theme library](#).

With a free theme you are saving money and that is always great. However, you may be losing out on features that will save you time such as a custom widget for connecting Instagram or a drag-and-drop editor.

A free theme may also not have as many updates throughout the year or any updates at all. This can become a security risk overtime and may lead to your blog being hacked or your users' data being stolen.

Paid themes meanwhile, generally promise updates during a set timeframe and will usually come with support for if you hit a snag.

In many cases paid themes also come packed with plugins you would otherwise pay for or their own internally built widgets and plugins. Lastly, premium themes generally offer more customization options, saving you the need to hire a developer.

Annual vs. Lifetime

Premium themes generally come with either an annual license or a lifetime license. Depending on the theme the lifetime license may be a no-brainer, insanely expensive, or not even an option.

It is important to maintain an active license as generally you are not allowed to use the theme anymore if you don't have an active license. You also will lose out on support and updates, leaving you open to security issues and code flaws if you don't maintain an active license.

I would encourage you to do the math to determine if an annual license or lifetime license will be best. I find that generally a website will receive a facelift every 3-5 years. So if the lifetime license is more than 5x the annual license it may not make sense.

However, keep in mind that theme licenses can change at a moment's notice. Authority Pro used to be a one-time fee of \$129.95 and included a year of support and lifetime updates. Today Authority Pro is only sold as a bundle deal for \$360 per year.

Picking the best WordPress theme for your blog can be long and complicated, which is why I wanted to give you a head start. If you choose one of the themes in this list, you should be able to rest easy knowing you are ready to go.