

# *How to Start a Blog*

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## INTRODUCTION

This Ebook is very basic instruction on how to start your own blog. You can easily create a blog with just a few dollars. The key to starting a blog and making money is staying consistent, creating valuable content and sharing with your readers. Stay organized and create editorial calendars to meet goals and deadlines.

Be unique with your blog and create your own style. Readers love originality and finding something unique. Maybe creating video or broadcast live on Periscope is something you can do. Or, creating gorgeous imagery on Instagram. The sky is the limit online and you can create any kind of blog you desire.

## DOMAIN, HOSTING, AND SOFTWARE

You can start blogging without spending a dime and learn the basics of blogging by using [wordpress.com](https://wordpress.com) or [blogger.com](https://blogger.com). I highly recommend purchasing your own domain and hosting. These can be purchased for just a few dollars per month. You can install [Wordpress](https://wordpress.org) to your own server and the best part is that you will be your own boss.

If you do not run your blog on your own domain, such as blogger, you can risk losing it or being unable to earn as much income as you could if you were self-hosted. You gain a large amount of credibility when you host your own blog. You can also set up your own email associated with that domain. For instance, if you own yourdomain.com your email can be [yourname@yourdomain.com](mailto:yourname@yourdomain.com). Companies are much more likely to respond to you if you have your own email address associated with your blog.

When purchasing your hosting, you can start with a plan that has a small amount of disk space like the economy plan as shown below. Make sure you choose the option Linux operating system instead of Windows. I use GoDaddy.com for all of my domains and hosting but you can use any service you like. If you have more than one domain, it is much easier to maintain if you have them through one place. Often times your hosting provider will provide you with an easy option to install Wordpress to your server. Please don't confuse Wordpress.com with the Wordpress software available at Wordpress.org.

## LINUX PLANS

[See Windows Plans](#)

**MORE POWER AND SECURITY**

### ECONOMY

Best price for a basic site.

As low as  
**\$3.99/month**  
ON SALE - **SAVE 42%**  
\$6.99/month when you renew<sup>4</sup>

**ADD TO CART**

1 Website  
100 GB Storage  
Unlimited Bandwidth  
100 Email Addresses  
Free domain with annual plan  
Site Backup & Restore (Paid Option)

### DELUXE

A great home for your multiple sites.

As low as  
**\$4.49/month**  
ON SALE - **SAVE 50%**  
\$8.99/month when you renew<sup>4</sup>

**ADD TO CART**

Unlimited Websites  
Unlimited Storage  
Unlimited Bandwidth  
500 Email Addresses  
Free domain with annual plan  
Site Backup & Restore (Paid Option)

### ULTIMATE

Handles the most complex sites and heaviest traffic.

As low as  
**\$7.99/month**  
ON SALE - **SAVE 46%**  
\$14.99/month when you renew<sup>4</sup>

**ADD TO CART**

Unlimited Websites  
Unlimited Storage  
Unlimited Bandwidth  
1,000 Email Addresses  
Free domain with annual plan  
Site Backup & Restore (Paid Option)  
2X Processing Power & Memory (Linux w/ cPanel only)  
Premium DNS  
1-year SSL certificate to secure customer data and increase search rankings. (Restrictions Apply)

If you need to download Wordpress, go to [Wordpress.org](https://www.wordpress.org) to download the latest version and install it to your server. Read the documentation provided to install it correctly to your server. Wordpress is an open source software program, which means it was built by volunteers. They also offer a how to guide and a lot of community support. To download Wordpress you need to click on the download link. You can read toward the bottom of the page "It's Easy As..." section and find the documentation.

If you are purchasing your domain and hosting through GoDaddy, don't add on any of their suggestions. You do not need to add anything that will only add to the cost of your yearly fees. Much of the add-ons can be done yourself.

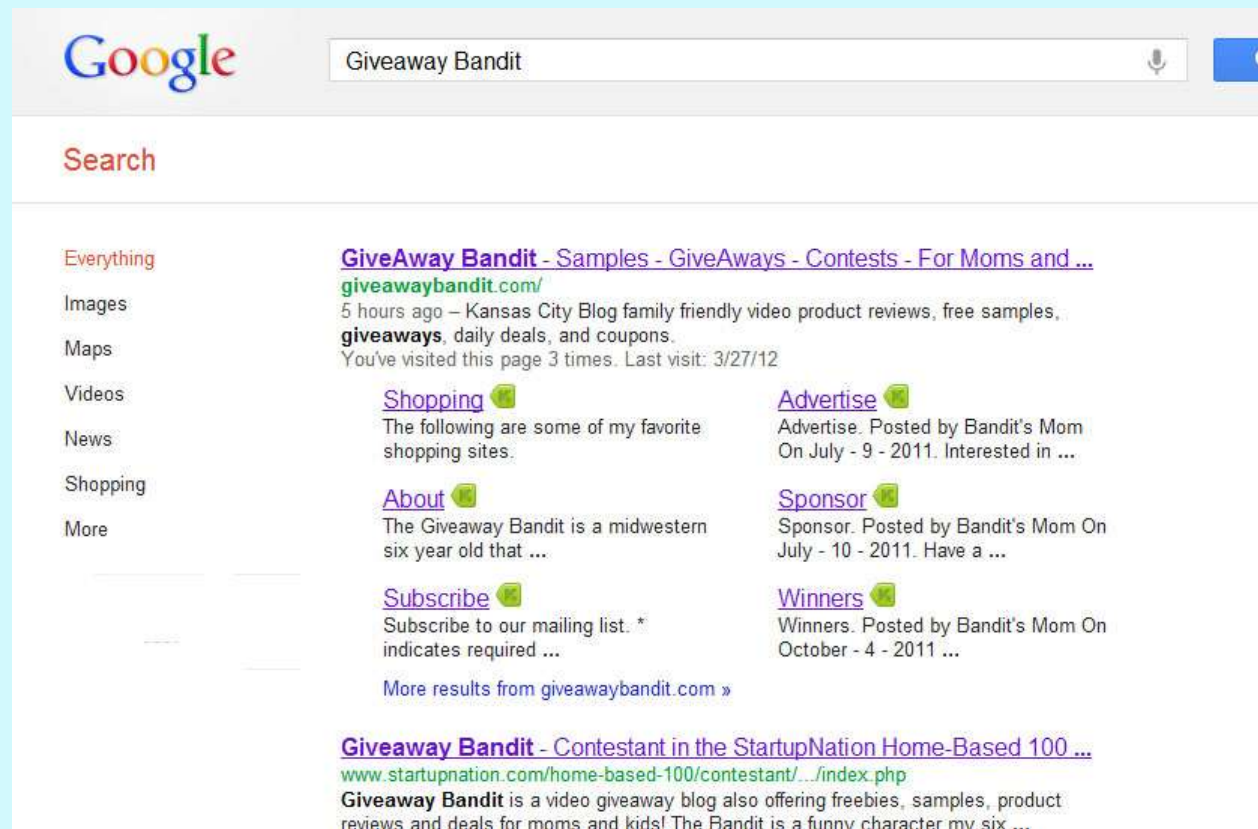
## CONTENT AND SEO

Content is king when it comes to blogging. You absolutely must continue to focus on content that is related to your site or niche. For instance, if you are a family friendly blog you would not blog about adult products.

It is good for SEO to include relevant keywords. I use Google to find popular keywords.

When creating your content you also must think about your title. The title tag is the main part of the text that describes your blog post. This is the single most important on-page

part of your SEO. It is often in three key places including the top of your browser, search results pages, and external websites. Below is an example of how the Giveaway Bandit is seen when searched on Google.



For example, don't just use "Monster High Doll Review" as a title when you are reviewing a specific item. If you are reviewing and giving away a specific product like the Monster High Hydration Station, a good title would be "Monster High Hydration Station Review and Giveaway". Below you can see that we are ranked in the top of Google search for this product giveaway.



monster high hydration station giveaway



## Search

Everything

Images

Maps

Videos

News

Shopping

More

### [Win a Free Monster High Doll Hydration Station Contest - YouTube](#)



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ud1-BTISw84](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ud1-BTISw84)

Jul 19, 2011 - 1 min - Uploaded by giveawaybandit

Enter to win a **Monster High Doll Hydration Station** ...

You +1'd this

### [Monster High Doll Hydration Station Giveaway Winner Announced ...](#)



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1h7iqZ3Ehc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1h7iqZ3Ehc)

Jul 30, 2011 - 2 min - Uploaded by giveawaybandit

Announcing the winner of the **Monster High Doll Hydration Station Giveaway!** Winners are chosen via random ...

### [Monster High Hydration Station from Mattel - YouTube](#)



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwgZZsFjlkQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwgZZsFjlkQ)

Aug 8, 2011 - 2 min - Uploaded by TimeToPlayMag

**Monster High Hydration Station** from Mattel. TimeToPlayMag ... can you pretty make a **giveaway** for the ...

More videos for [monster high hydration station giveaway](#) »

### [Monster High Dead Tired Lagoon Blue Doll And Hydration Station ...](#)

[thrifyninja.net/.../monster-high-dead-tired-lagoon-blue-doll-and-hy...](http://thrifyninja.net/.../monster-high-dead-tired-lagoon-blue-doll-and-hy...)

Jan 2, 2012 - When I was given the opportunity to review the **Monster High** Dead Tired Lagoon Blue Doll and **Hydration Station**, I couldn't help but squeal in ...



Thrifty Ninja shared this - Public

### [Monster High Doll Hydration Station \\* Winner ... - GiveAway Bandit](#)

[giveawaybandit.com/monster-high-doll-hydration-station-winner-an...](http://giveawaybandit.com/monster-high-doll-hydration-station-winner-an...)

Jul 30, 2011 - Be sure to tell everyone about the **GiveAway** Bandit! ... **Monster High Doll Hydration Station** Contest by **GiveAway** Bandit - Enter to Win Monster ...

## NEWSLETTER

I highly recommend offering a newsletter sign up as soon as you start your blog. I send out a newsletter every day that contains my new content and links to my social networks. Even if you only send out a newsletter once a week or even a month you will be glad you gathered those emails in the future.

I use [Mailchimp](#) for sending my newsletters but there are a number of email marketing solutions out there. They are convenient and cost effective. You can easily design your own newsletter with this programs and keep you email signups organized. You can use a number of plugins through Wordpress for integrating an email sign up form easily.

Newsletters are the perfect way to share new content.

## CONCLUSION

Start writing great content. Share it with your friend, co-workers, social media or anyone that may read it. Starting your own blog is a lot of hard work but also a lot of fun. Enjoy yourself and let your personality shine through!

Check out our resources below including:

- [Affiliate Programs for Bloggers](#)
- [List of Blogging Networks to Connect with Brands](#)

Need help with your blog? I offer [blog coaching services](#) to help you set up your blog and start making money!

Good luck in your blogging endeavors,

Melanie Kampman

[www.giveawaybandit.com](http://www.giveawaybandit.com)

# Resources

## Affiliate Programs for Bloggers

First of all, what is an affiliate program for bloggers? An affiliate program, or affiliate marketing, is when you sell someone else's products or services and get paid for doing it. You normally earn a commission or some type of payment off of each sale. Be sure to only become an affiliate of products you recommend or would use yourself. Don't have an affiliate link for every other word. Spread them out and make your content matter.

*Disclosure: This post contains some affiliate links, which means that if you click on one of the product links, I may receive compensation.*

### **How to become an affiliate:**

1. Start a website or blog. For example, this blog can use affiliate programs to earn money.
2. Think of a product or service you can recommend to your readers that can easily tie in to the niche of your blog. For example, I am affiliate for GoDaddy because I can easily recommend their hosting services. Each time someone clicks on that link and purchases a product I make a commission from the sale.
3. Write a post that can easily tie in the product or service so you can recommend it to your readers. If you look at the affiliate programs I have listed below, I am an affiliate for ShareASale and I earn a set dollar amount each time someone signs up under my affiliate ID.
4. The reader then clicks on the link and is taken to the website of the company. Affiliate programs provide you with a unique tracking url so they can easily keep track of your clicks and sales. Links can be in the form of text links or banner ads. You can even include these in your sidebar.
5. The affiliate company then pays you based on your clicks, sales, etc. Often times payment is in 15, 30 or 60 days.

6. Be sure you always use a disclosure at the top of your blog post to let your readers know you are making money from the affiliate links. This is required by law.

## **Find Affiliate Programs**

Not sure how to find affiliate programs? Besides our list below, here's some suggestions on finding the affiliate program for companies you want to recommend:

1. Go to the website of the product or service you want to recommend to your followers. Here's a great example: head over to [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com/affiliate), scroll to the bottom of the page and click on Affiliate program. This could also be called affiliates, referral program, partners, etc. You might have to take a little time to find it on some websites but most companies do offer some type of program. You can also do a google search if you are having trouble finding their program. For instance, try searching "shutterstock affiliates" and if they offer a program it should come up in your search results. In affiliate marketing the company with the product, in this case shutterfly, is called the advertiser or vendor. You will be known as the publisher or affiliate.
2. Another great idea is to check out other bloggers that are in your same niche. You can see what they are offering to get an idea for your own website. You can view their posts and sidebar to find what they are suggesting to their readers.
3. Join an affiliate network. We've included various affiliate networks for you to join below. Within one network you can find a variety of companies to promote on your blog or website. If you're a coupon blogger Escalate Network is an excellent one to join. Or, by joining ShareASale you can become an affiliate for companies such as [Craftsy.com](https://www.craftsy.com), [Wayfair](https://www.wayfair.com), [Tiny Prints](https://www.tinyprints.com), etc. I like affiliate networks because they make it easy to keep track of your sales with everything in one place. Often times they are very good at helping you understand the program and how you can make better sales because the more sales you make, the more money they make.
4. Be sure you shop around. Some companies are in several different affiliate networks or programs. Sometimes the company may pay a higher payout in one affiliate network over another. Do your homework before signing up for any program.



5. Once you have joined an affiliate network or program, you can search through the links or banner ads for the advertiser or vendor. The affiliate program will provide with a unique code to copy and paste on your blog.

### **Popular Affiliate Programs for Bloggers:**

1. [Commission Junction](#)
2. [ShareASale](#)
3. [Amazon Associates](#)
4. [Flex Offers](#)
5. [Impact Radius](#)
6. [Savings Blogger Network](#)
7. Rakuten LinkShare
8. [Escalate Network](#)

## **List of Blogging Networks to Connect with Brands**

If you've started blogging and connecting with other bloggers you may notice there's quite a few different blogging networks to join. The main concept of all of these blogging networks is to connect your blog with brands. Many of these blogging networks pay you for your work and time spent promoting these brands and products. I am a member of many different networks and they are definitely a good source to start making money from your blog.

*Disclosure: This post contains some affiliate links, which means that if you click on one of the product links, I may receive compensation.*

*Please note - I will remove any companies that I believe aren't legitimate. Having said that, use at your own risk.*

### **List of Blogging Networks to Join:**

- [Social Fabric](#)
- [Izea](#)
- [Massive Sway](#) (The SITS Girls) – one of my faves!
- [Sserve](#)
- [SocialMoms Network](#)

- [SheSpeaks](#) - product reviews only
- [MomSelect](#)
- [Mom Central](#)
- [Dad Central](#)
- [Millennial Central](#)
- [Clever Girls Collective](#) – one of my faves!
- [Lingia](#)
- [TapInfluence](#)
- [Moms Meet](#)
- [Double Duty Divas](#)
- [Tastemaker Mom](#)
- [MomDot](#)
- [US Family Guide](#)
- [Best Buy Blogging Network](#)
- [Talented Talkers](#)
- [Tomoson](#)
- [The Niche Parent Network](#)
- [Latina Mom Bloggers](#)
- [Latina Bloggers Connect](#)
- [Latina Lifestyle Bloggers](#)
- [Entertainment New Media Network](#)
- [Mom It Forward](#)
- [Ella Media](#) - for Latinas
- [Influenster](#) - product reviews only
- [Blogalicious](#)
- [BlogHer](#)
- [Pollinate](#)
- [LinkWorth](#)
- [BlogDash](#)
- [Link From Blog](#)
- [BookieBoo](#)
- [Weave Made Media](#)
- [Smiley 360](#) - product reviews only
- [Project Eve](#)
- [Collectively](#)

- [Media Talent Agency](#)
- [Platefull](#)
- [LinkVehicle](#)
- [Stiletto Media](#)
- [Uphandle](#)
- [Business2Blogger](#)
- [Blogsvertise](#)
- [GigCoin](#)
- [Global Influence](#)
- [Parent Tested, Parent Approved](#)
- [Blog Distributor](#)
- [One2One Network](#)
- [Mom Spark Media](#)
- [Mode Media](#)
- [BloggingPro](#)
- [Mommy Mindset Media](#)
- [The Brand Connection](#)
- [Mami Innovative Media](#)
- [Fit Fluential](#)
- [The Mission List](#)
- [Everywhere Society](#)
- [The Blogger Programme](#)
- [Blueprint Social](#)
- [Triberr](#)
- [ProBlogger](#)
- [Bloggers Required](#)
- [House Party](#)
- [Sponsored Reviews](#)
- [Mommerce](#)
- [Bloggin' Mamas](#)
- [The Motherhood](#)
- [Social Media Chicks](#)
- [Cooperatize](#)
- [Green Moms Network](#)
- [etailPR](#)

- [Made in Blog](#)
- [Ignite Social Media](#)
- [Mom Bloggers Club](#)
- [Blog Meets Brand](#)
- [Millennial Blogs](#)
- [Brandbacker](#)
- [SocialChorus](#)
- [BzzAgent](#) - product reviews only
- [PopSugar Select](#)
- [Girls Gone Sporty](#)
- [World Market Ambassadors](#)