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Lesson 8: WordPress Plugins

INTRODUCTION
This lesson covers the process of upgrading your new WordPress site using Plugins. This lesson assumes the competencies gained in the previous lessons.

LESSON OBJECTIVES
By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe Plugins.
- Describe how to find Plugins (commercial and free).
- Demonstrate how to install Plugins.

LEARNING SEQUENCE

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<td>- Plugin Directory</td>
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<td>- How to Install and Setup WordPress SEO Plugin by Yoast</td>
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<td>- 7 Must Have Social Media Plugins and Tools for Bloggers (optional)</td>
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<th>Video Resources</th>
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<td>- How To Make a WordPress Website - AMAZING! (1:03:28)</td>
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INSTRUCTION
In this Lesson you are going to walk through the process of installing Plugins into your new WordPress installation on your website.

Remember that a Plugin is software that adds functionality (“tools”) to your WordPress website. The analogy we used before is that it is like installing a new “app” on a smartphone or tablet. However, a Plugin is usually a larger, more powerful program than an app.

Another analogy is to think of buying a new car. You know that all cars come with basic standard features (tires, steering wheel, radio). But you are able to add features to a car to make it more like what you want. Let’s suppose you purchase your favorite truck - from the factory it is probably really great. But if you were to change the standard tires for high-performance off-road tires it would be better. It comes with a basic radio but you would like to add a custom sound system. It comes standard with cloth seats but you would prefer to have leather seats. You want to tow a trailer so you add a heavy-duty towing hitch. And you can probably think of many other ways to customize this or some other vehicle (budget permitting).

Plugins allow you to customize your WordPress website beyond just appearance. They add value and power to what your website can do. WordPress is part of a user community. Out of the millions of people who use WordPress for a blog or website there are thousands who have the knowledge and skill to create software that can make a WordPress website even better. These individuals become “software developers”.

In some cases the software developers make this software (Plugin) free to the community. In other cases it is part of their business and they sell the software (Plugin) for a nominal fee. Either way, there are valuable resources available to you to make your website even better.

Assignment 8a: Finding WordPress Plugins
A resource guide has been created to step you the process of selecting and changing a WordPress theme. Review the following guide to work through the steps needed to complete Assignment 8a: Finding WordPress Plugins.
Finding WordPress Plugins Tutorial
For this assignment:

- Research five (5) free Plugins and five (5) commercial Plugins that you might be interested in installing on your WordPress website.
- Explain why each of these Plugins might be useful to your website.

Turn in: Write a brief report listing each of these Plugins (include the name, source, and brief description for each) and why you would consider installing each of these Plugins in your WordPress website.

Assignment 8b: WordPress Plugins Videos
For this assignment you are going to watch some video tutorials to prepare you for our hands-on assignment. As you have done before, take detailed notes on the processes shown. Be sure to focus on “why” something is being done in addition to “how” something is done.

Watch How To Make a WordPress Website - AMAZING! (1:03:28). While this entire video might be of interest to you, for this lesson you can fast forward to the 44:00 minute mark and view the section on installing Plugins.

The second video, WordPress Tutorial For Beginners Part 7 - Installing and Managing Plugins (23:08), starts out with some material you will view again in Lesson 9. It will be useful for you to watch this material now but focus on and take notes on the portion of the video dedicated to installing and managing Plugins.

The third video, How to Setup and Configure the Yoast WordPress SEO Plugin (21:01), discusses how to setup and configure the Yoast WordPress SEO Plugin. Please note that this video is a little advanced but will give you an idea of what you can do with a Plugin once it is installed:

Turn in: A copy of your notes for each video.

Assignment 8c: Installing WordPress Plugins Tutorial
A resource guide has been created to step you the process of installing a WordPress plugin. Review the following guide to work through the steps needed to complete Assignment 8c: Installing WordPress Plugins Tutorial.

Installing WordPress Plugins Tutorial

Turn in: Using Print Screen, take a screen picture of your Plugins screen. Be sure that all of your Plugins are visible or use multiple screen pictures. Email your instructor the name of this assignment and the screen picture: Assignment 8c your website domain name.

Assignment 8d: Installing WordPress Plugins Project
It’s your turn!

For this assignment you will locate and install three new Plugins. Two of these Plugins are assigned, one of these Plugins you will select.

- WordPress Backup to Dropbox
- Better WP Security

Start by carefully reading this information:

WordPress Backup to Dropbox

Now it is time for some research!

Go to YouTube and search for at least one video that is helpful to you on how to install and setup WordPress Backup to Dropbox. You will include the name of this video(s) and link(s) with your assignment.

Next, before you begin the process of downloading and installing WordPress Backup to Dropbox, you need to create an account on Dropbox. Go to: Dropbox.com
Sign up for an account to use with WordPress Backup to Dropbox.

To install Better WP Security Plugin you will go back to the Plugin Directory and scroll down until you find Better WP Security.
This will take you to the **Better WP Security Plugin** screen. Download the software to your computer as you did before:

![Better WP Security Plugin download page](image)

**Figure 3** Screenshot of the *WordPress Better WP Security Plugin download page*.

For your third **Plugin**:

- Select an **external Plugin**
- Install this **Plugin**
- Be sure to **ACTIVATE** all three of your new **Plugins**

**Finally! Before you conclude your Lesson:**

- Activate the JetPack Plugin
- To do so, click on Settings for JetPack.
- Follow the instructions to Connect to WordPress.com
- Enter your WordPress.com account username and password
- Activate any Plugins that show an Activate button
- If your installation of JetPack shows that an Update is available, click on the Update button

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When you are done, you will have installed and activated:

- **WordPress Backup to Dropbox**
- **Better WP Security**
- **An external Plugin of your choice**

Turn in: Using **Print Screen**, take a screen picture of your **Plugins** screen. Be sure that all of your **Plugins** are visible or use multiple screen pictures. Email your instructor the name of this assignment and the screen picture: Assignment 8d your website domain name.

**Assignment 8e: Daily Post**
For now you will continue your Daily Posts on your NEW website.

- Sign into your WordPress website
- Create a new blog
- Post to your blog 5 days per week for the next two weeks. You are welcome to post every day.
- Be sure to announce to those following your blog the domain name of your NEW website so that they can follow your progress.

Turn in: Email your instructor the name of this assignment and the complete blog address for this blog: Assignment 8e website address.

**PRACTICE**

1. Explain what you consider to be the most important or most interesting Plugin and why.

2. Brainstorm ideas of features you would like to see in a Plugin, then search the internet to see if any Plugins are available with these features.

**SUMMARY**
So what should you take away from this lesson?

- Be able to describe Plugins
- Be able to describe the difference between free and commercial Plugins
- Be able to describe the criteria of functions, downloads, and reviews for selecting Plugins
- Be able to find Plugins
- Be able to locate review sources for Plugins
• Demonstrate how to install Plugins

ASSIGNMENTS
Note: Assignment details are located within the lesson.

1. Assignment 8a: Finding WordPress Plugins
2. Assignment 8b: Viewing Installing WordPress Plugins Videos
3. Assignment 8c: Installing WordPress Plugins Tutorial
4. Assignment 8d: Installing WordPress Plugins Project
5. Assignment 8e: Daily Post