

Top 10 Must Have WordPress Plugins

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Where does one begin when it comes to WordPress plugins? Over the years, I've come up with a set of standard plugins I install on most WordPress websites. This group of essential plugins cover the basic and the often-requested features for a WordPress website.

Anti-Spam Plugin

I use [Akismet](#). It comes with WordPress, but has a fee attached to it for commercial use. Other anti-spam filters to consider are [Spam Free](#) and [GASP](#) (GrowMap Anti Spam Plugin).

Back Up Plugin

I recommend [BackWPup](#). This plugin lets you backup your WordPress database and all website files. It has a myriad of options for storing your backup online, or to a specific folder, or sent via email, etc. Some backup plugins backup just the database or just the website files. If so, be sure to install multiple plugins to get a complete backup of your site.

Contact Form 7

I recommend this particular plugin, [Contact Form 7](#), for adding forms to your website. It is straightforward to use and has great step-by-step instructions. It is called Contact Form, but lets you create any type of form for your website.

Digg Digg

If you're looking for a social media plugin, [Digg Digg](#) has a couple dozen of the most popular social media buttons to choose from. You can configure the buttons to display either above your content or below it. Or it can do a floating bar beside your content.

Gallery/Slideshow

I use the [Slideshow](#) plugin to add slideshows to pages or posts. This plugin lets you easily add images, videos, and/or text to slideshows. Another plugin that lets you add galleries and slideshows is the ever-popular [NextGEN Gallery](#) plugin.

Google Analytics for WordPress

[Google Analytics for WordPress](#) tracks your WordPress site easily and with lots of metadata: views per category, automatic tracking of outbound clicks and pageviews. The extra data this plugin captures adds to your tracking stats.

Google XML Sitemaps

The [Google XML Sitemaps](#) plugin will generate a special XML sitemap which will help search engines like Google, Yahoo, Bing and Ask.com to better index your blog.

TinyMCE Advanced

[TinyMCE Advanced](#) gives you more options in the visual editor of WordPress. It lets you easily add tables, special characters, and other options. It also includes a search and replace function.

W3 Total Cache

Website speed is important in having a successful website. [W3 Total Cache](#) helps your site load faster and reduces the overall site load.

WordPress SEO

This plugin improves your SEO by letting you add focused keywords, descriptions, titles and other pertinent information to each of your posts and pages. [WordPress SEO](#) provides an easy-to-use interface and a variety of settings to improve the SEO of your WordPress site.