

The learning outcomes are setting your site title and tagline, updating your site's time zone, and choosing your homepage display.

Site title and tagline

First up, let's talk about your site's identity. In the Settings menu, you'll find "General". These elements are not just for show. They are vital in how your site appears in search engine results. So what can you do? Craft a compelling title and tagline that not only represents your site but also entices visitors to open it when they see it listed on search engines or when they visit it. The site title and tagline should tell visitors what your site is about and who you are trying to attract. They are often among the first things visitors will notice on your site. The title is usually the name of your site, while the tagline is a short phrase or sentence that aims to communicate the site's main focus.

Please note that you can choose not to display your tagline, but as mentioned, search engines pay attention to titles and taglines, which will also help you improve your site's SEO. So remember to add your tagline even though you might decide not to display it on the front end of your site. Here is an example from a search engine where you don't see the tagline on the site, but when you search for Mantis Research, you will see the site title, Mantis Research, and part of the tagline, helping marketers publish research that gets attention. You can change your site's title and tagline below General settings, as shown in the example. For example, you can also update your site title and tagline within the Site Editor when updating your header. If you update or change the Site Title block or the Site Tagline block, it will also update automatically below the General settings.

Time zone

Next, let's discuss the time zone settings below General. It is best if your site's time zone matches the time zone settings on your computer or local time. It ensures that your scheduled posts go live at the right time, and if you post content ahead of time, you'll know exactly when it will be published. You also have the option to select your own date and time format. And you can even decide when you want your week to start.

Homepage display

Now, let's focus on the structure of your website. In Reading, under Settings, you can decide what visitors see when they land on your site. Do you want a dynamic homepage showcasing your latest posts or a static page? The choice is yours. By default WordPress displays a list of posts on the homepage of your site. This list of posts is automatically updated as soon as new posts are published. Also, there is no need to create any page to have a homepage with your latest posts. You might ask, where do I edit this homepage displaying my latest posts? This homepage is displayed via your blog home template. So, if you selected your latest posts as your homepage display, you can go to Appearance and click on Editor. This will open up your Site Editor, and by default, your blog home template will appear on the right. To open it up, merely click on it, and you can now start editing the homepage template that displays your posts via the Query Loop block. You can edit and customize your homepage right here.

But if you prefer to have a static homepage, you can go ahead and make your way to pages and then create a homepage, as well as a page for posts, in this case, my blog page. Then, you can go ahead and create any other pages that you want on your site. You can head back to the dashboard, select Settings, Reading, and then activate Using a static page next to your homepage displays. Then, select one of the pages you created as your homepage or front page, and then below that, you can also select another page to display your dynamic posts or blog, for example. When you select a static page, your homepage will automatically be assigned to the default page template.

Let's make our way to pages to see this in action. When I open my static homepage and then open up my settings sidebar, I will notice that on the right, next to the template, it says that this page has been assigned to the page template or the default template. That means that your static homepage and other pages that have been assigned to this default template will share the same template, or in other words, the same header and footer. If you want to update the header, the footer, and the structure for this page, you do it in the template. But you, of course, head back to your homepage to start adding content and building your homepage from here using blocks. When you edit your posts page, you will notice that at the top, it says you are currently editing the page that shows your latest posts. Please note the posts page has been assigned to the blog home template. You will notice it says the posts page template cannot be changed. You will build your entire blog page within the blog home template and leave this page empty.

Conclusion

Configuring the basic WordPress settings correctly is essential for your site's functionality and appearance. And as mentioned, we will look at more settings further down the line.

Practical

Go to WordPress Playground and complete the following activities to test your knowledge.

1. Go to General Settings
 - Update your site title and tagline.
 - Change the time zone settings to your liking.
2. Create a Home page and blog page.
3. Go to Reading Settings and select a static homepage display and a static posts page. Assign the Home page and blog page you have created.