

# How to Build and run a website for your boat

Keep friends and fellow yachtsmen up to date with your yachting activities – create your own boating website for free. Andy Beharrell shows how

The internet, interweb, world wide web: whatever we call it, it is now ubiquitous. And despite all of its occasional frustrations, it is very useful for us as sailors. We can access immediate weather forecasts, find out up-to-date pilotage information, discuss issues with other like-minded sailors and even find out racing results if we are so inclined.

It's a great tool, but most of us perhaps tend to be passive receivers of information from the internet rather than active participants. With the growth of new tools and social media, however, this is a situation that is changing rapidly.

In PBO July 2011, Jellyellie suggested using Facebook to communicate with

friends and family while cruising and keep them updated. However, you may like to go one step further and set up a website for your boat – and this article looks at easy (and free) ways of doing this. It is easier than you think and costs nothing to try, so why not have a go?

## Creating a blog

The tool I am going to suggest for setting up your own website is a blog. This may seem an odd choice, but if we consider that the term blog is an abbreviation of 'web log' then we can see that the internet geeks adopted the phrase from us, and it's time for sailors to claim it back!

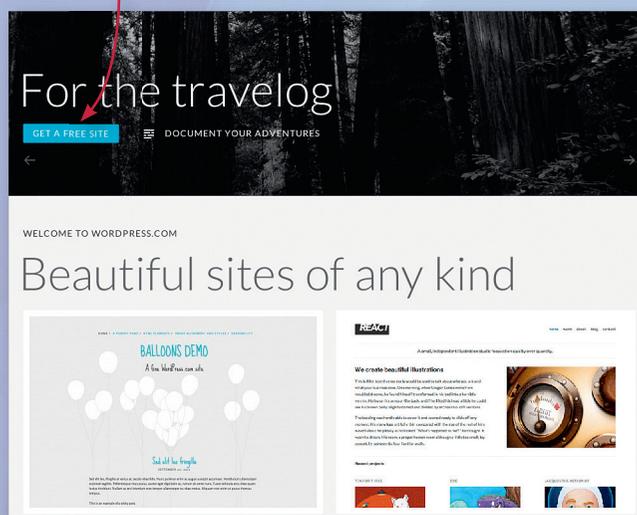
There are well over 150 million blogs in existence and as a result there are a wide

variety of tools online for creating your own. These tools are sufficiently straightforward to use that you can create a whole website as well. For example, Google owns the blogging site Blogger ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)). If you already have a Gmail account or Google account, you can start blogging straight away. If not, create an account and you can start a blog within minutes.

The blogging tool we will focus on for this article is one called Wordpress ([www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)). Wordpress is one of the most popular blogging tools and very straightforward to use. There are more than 73 million Wordpress sites in the world, so you are far from alone if you choose to set one up. This means that there is extensive help and support available online.

## Setting up your site couldn't be easier

To set up your site, you will need an account on Wordpress. This is easy – just go to [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com) and click the **GET A FREE SITE** button.



As part of this process, they will ask you to give a name for your blog. Wordpress themselves will be hosting your blog, so the web address will be whatever you choose followed by the suffix [.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com). In the screenshot, you can see that I chose my boat name (*Charmary*) as the first part of



the whole address then ends up as being [charmary.wordpress.com](http://charmary.wordpress.com). They do give you the option of having your own more readily-identifiable web address (called a domain name, usually ending in something like [.com](http://.com) or [.co.uk](http://.co.uk)) but this will cost a fee so you may prefer to stick with the free option to start with.

As part of the setup process you will also need to choose a username and password. Once you have done all this you will get an email asking you to confirm the account and will need to follow a link in the email.