

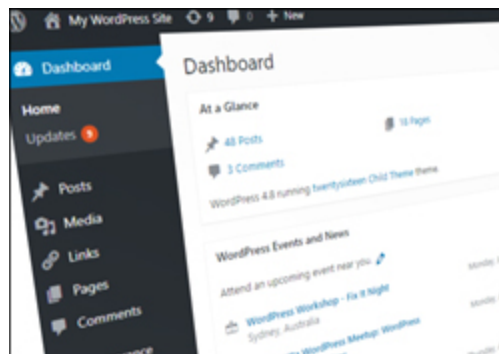
The WordPress Dashboard

wptrainingmanual.com/wordpress-tutorials/wordpress-dashboard

June 10, 2020

The WordPress Dashboard

WordPress Training



In this tutorial, you will learn about:

- The WordPress dashboard.
- How to use the dashboard to manage the different areas of your website or blog.
- How to navigate the different sections of the dashboard to access your site's main features.

You will also learn some useful “hidden” features of the WordPress dashboard that will help you to manage and use your WordPress site more effectively.



Note: For this tutorial, we will assume that you already have a WordPress website set up and that you know how to log into your site's admin area.

If you need help logging into WordPress, see this tutorial: [How To Log Into WordPress](#)

WordPress Admin vs WordPress Dashboard

The following terms are often used interchangeably in WordPress, but they refer to different things:

- **WordPress Admin** – The WordPress admin includes *all* the pages that allow you to perform administrative tasks on your site. These pages typically include `/wp-admin/` in their URL.
- **WordPress Dashboard** – The *dashboard* is just one screen inside your WordPress admin area. It's normally the first screen you will see after logging into your site's administration area or clicking on the **Dashboard** item in the admin (i.e., main) menu.

The WordPress Dashboard.

When you log into your site’s admin area, every screen that you access in the backend of your site is part of the **WordPress Admin**. This includes the **WordPress Dashboard**, which is also part of your admin area.

All your website’s management and administration tasks are performed inside the admin area and can be accessed via your Dashboard and the Admin menu.

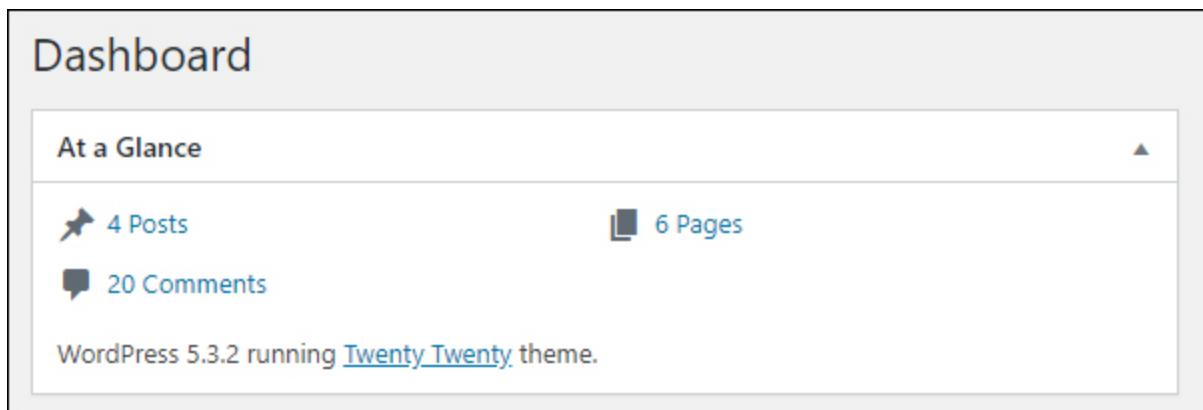
Now that you understand the difference, let’s take a look at your WordPress Dashboard.

Your WordPress Dashboard Explained – Useful Information

- As you will see shortly, the WordPress Dashboard is divided into various sections.
- Every user on your site has access to their own dashboard.
- The dashboard can be customized to suit your needs and/or preferences and will display different information, different settings, different features, and different tools depending on the role and the access privileges you have been assigned (e.g. administrator, editor, contributor, etc.)

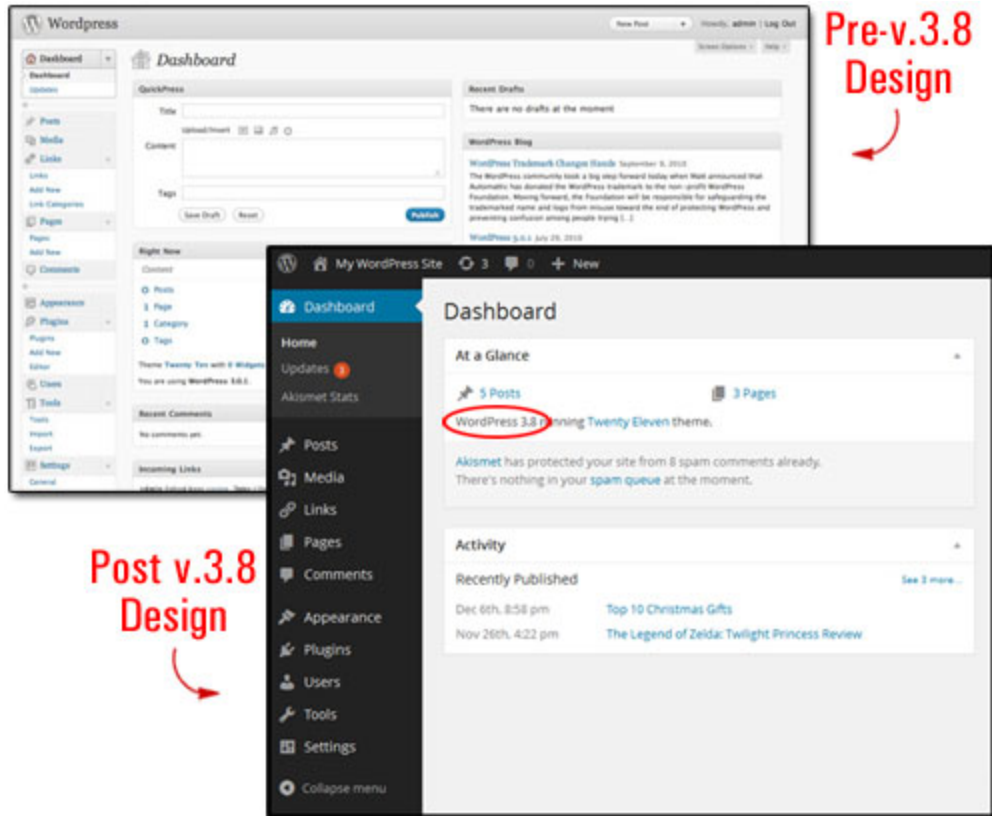
The WordPress Dashboard provides users with access to:

- Control and management of all your site’s settings and options.
- Features that enable you to add, edit, and delete your content, modify, and enhance your site’s design and functionality, upgrade, or remove plugins and themes, etc.
- System updates and notifications.
- Useful data, information, and “at-a-glance” metrics and reports about the activities taking place on your site.
- News and announcements from the WordPress community, including WordPress-related resources and announcements from plugin/theme vendors and developers (these announcements will only display if you have certain plugins or themes installed on your site).



WordPress Dashboard ‘At a Glance’ section.

In version 3.8, WordPress introduced a completely redesigned administration area.



WordPress Dashboard design changes.

This redesign was done mostly for aesthetic purposes. It aimed to give WordPress site administrators and web developers improvements like:

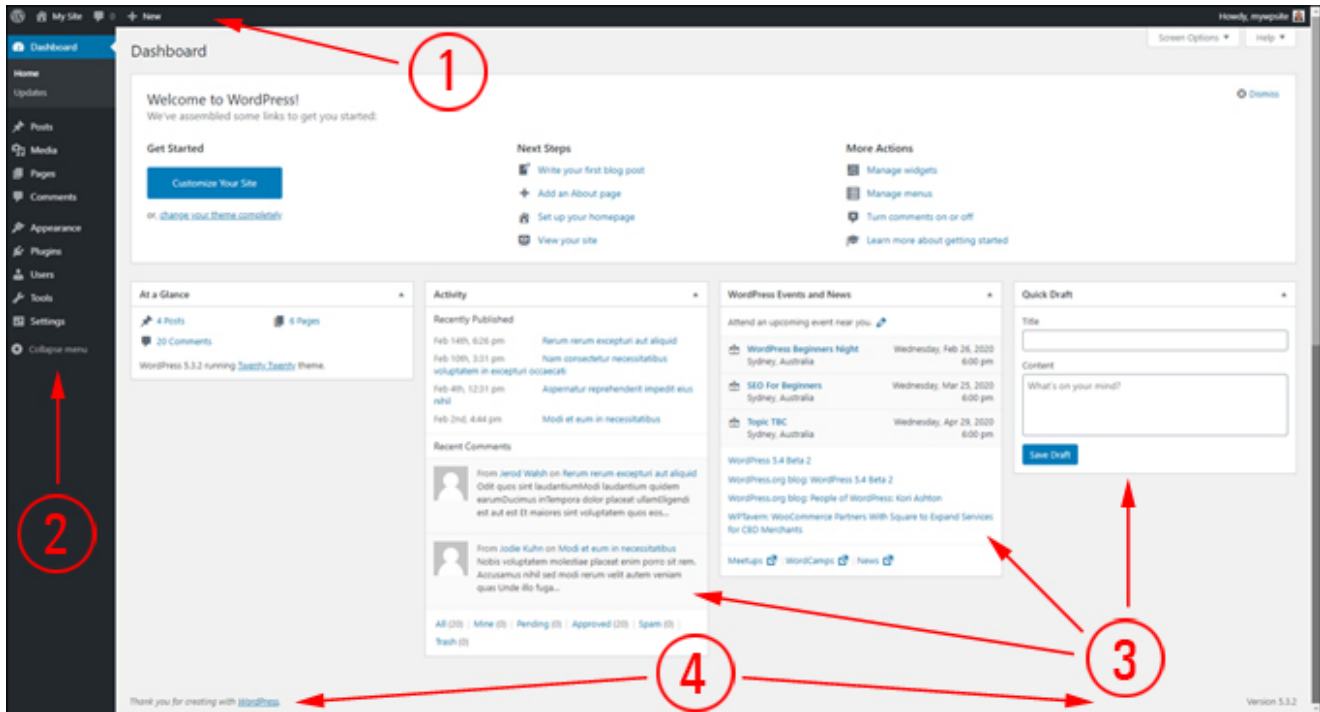
- Cleaner typography for an optimized mobile and desktop viewing experience.
- Easier to read sections and screens.
- More options and ways to customize the look and feel of the site's administration area.

WordPress is continually evolving and improving, so expect to see changes in design or functionality when you log into your dashboard as new features are added or new versions are released.

Note: This can affect WordPress documentation (e.g. tutorial screenshots and videos, etc.)

WordPress Dashboard – Sections

The Dashboard gives users with administrator privileges access to all the features, settings, options, and controls required to manage your site effectively.



WordPress Dashboard sections.

The Dashboard is divided into the following sections:

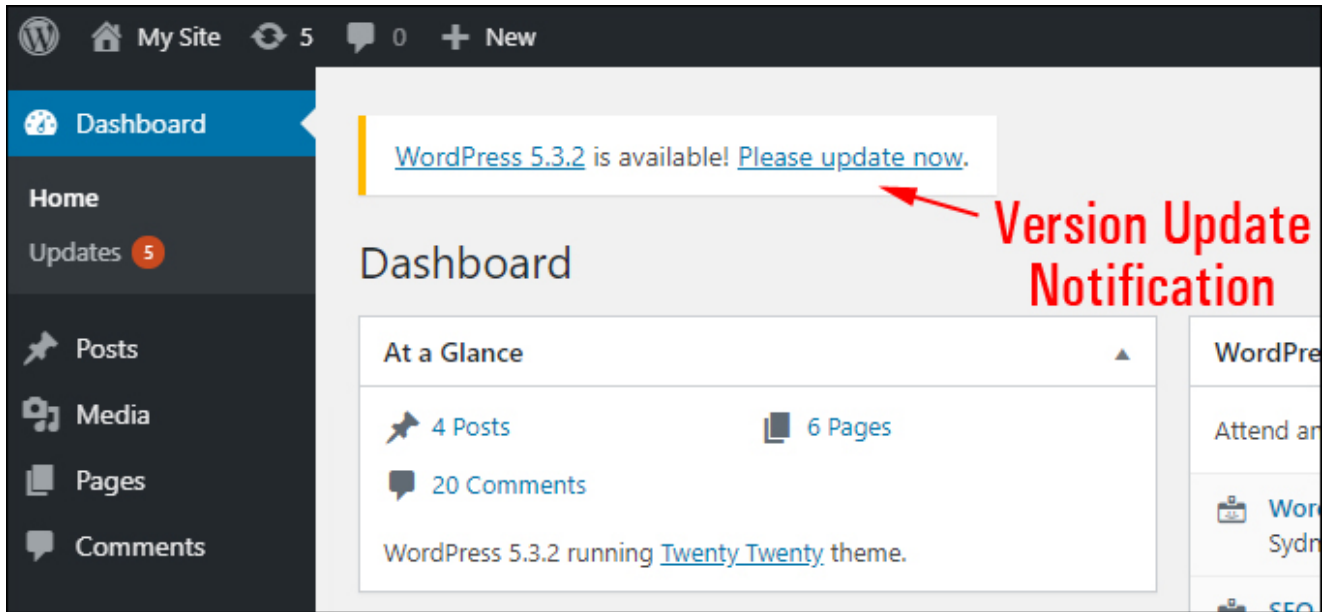
1. Header And Toolbar Section
2. Main Navigation Menu
3. Work Area
4. Footer Section

WordPress Dashboard: Header & Toolbar Section

Header

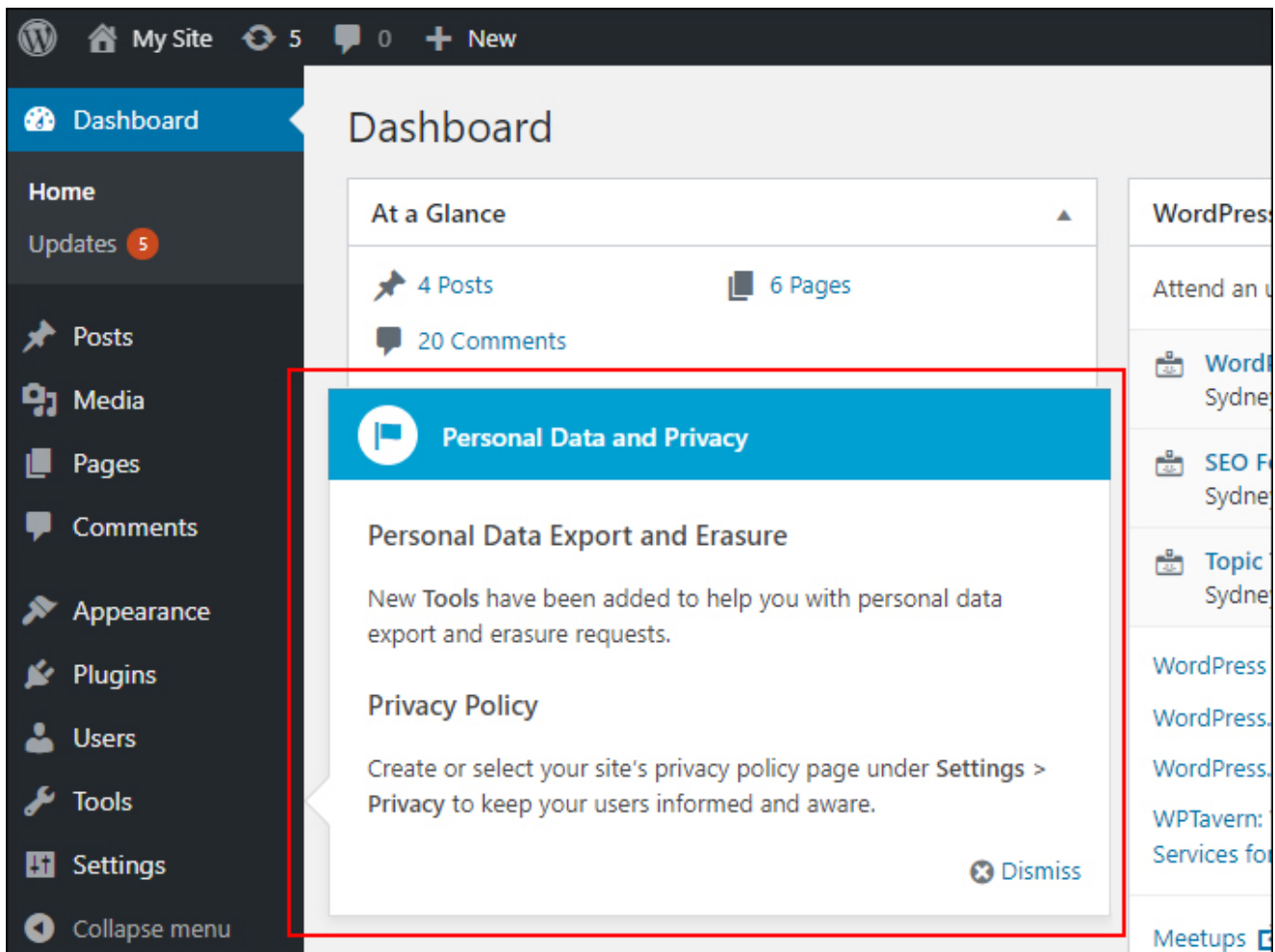
The header section displays system updates, warnings, and notifications.

For example, you may see system updates and notifications when a new version of WordPress is released.



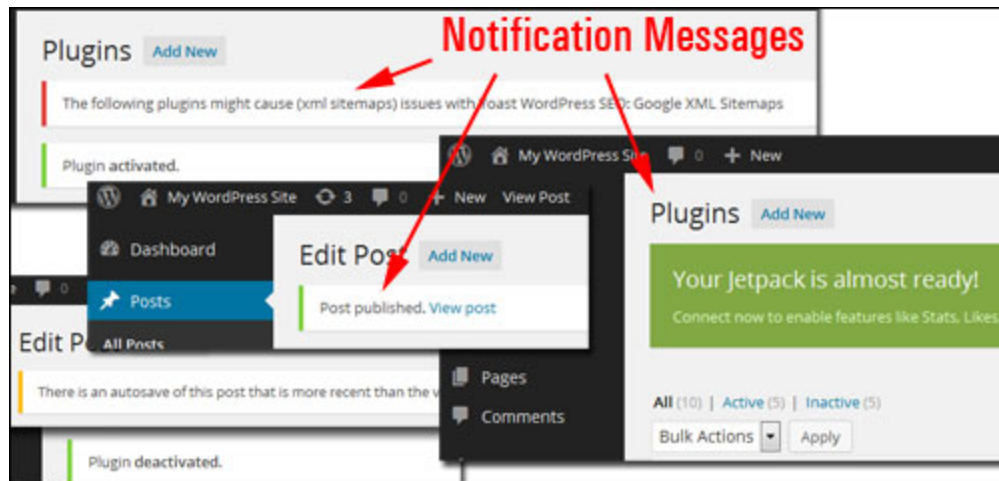
WordPress Dashboard – Version update notification.

You will also get notifications when new features or functionality are added to your site and/or your dashboard menu.



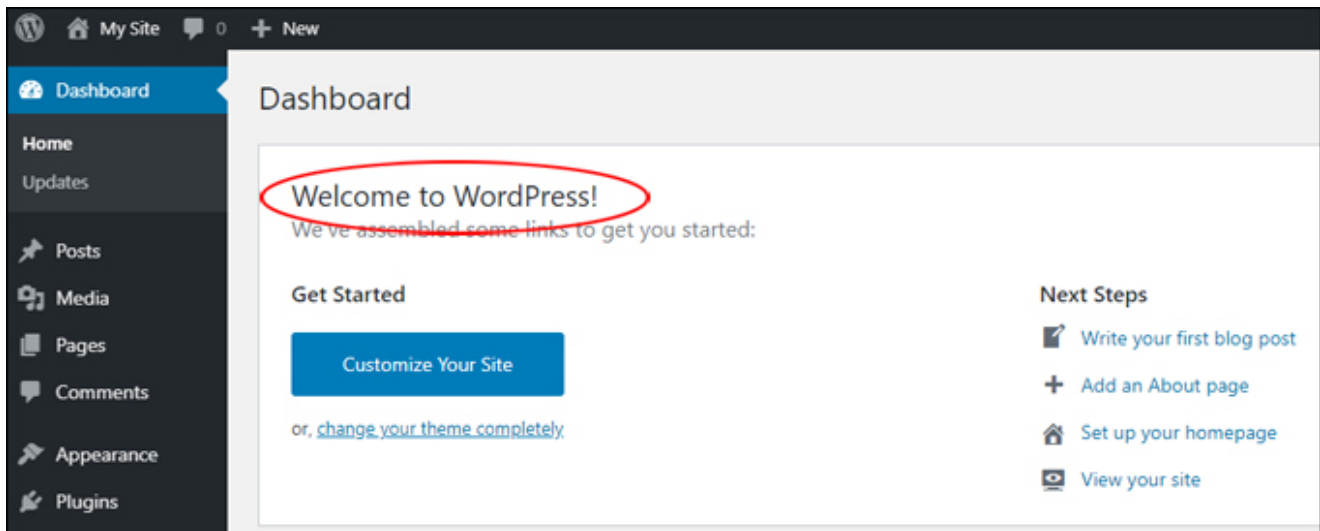
Menu notifications.

Various system updates, messages, banners, announcements, warnings, and notifications will display in your dashboard depending on the section you are working on, the tasks you are performing, and any plugins or themes you have installed.



Dashboard notifications.

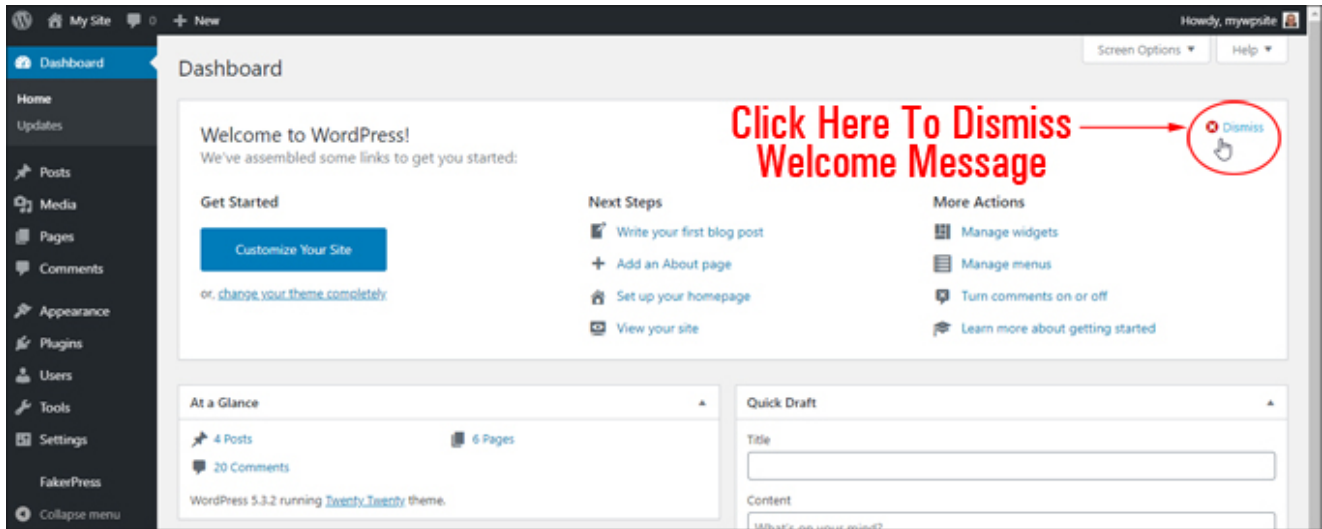
Note: The first time you log into your site, you may see a “Welcome to WordPress” message displayed at the top of your Dashboard, unless your site has been configured otherwise.



Welcome to WordPress panel.

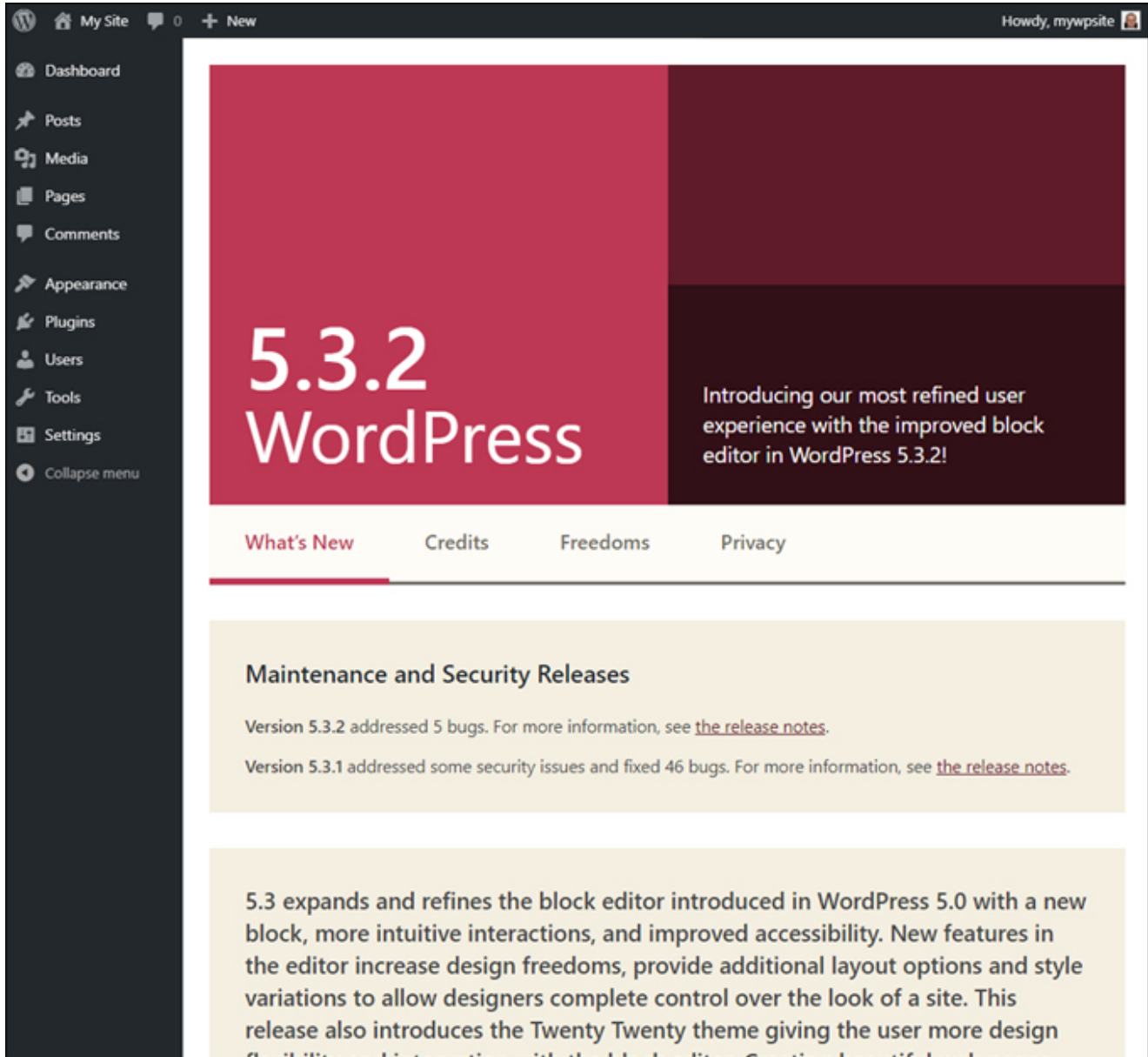
Click on the links in the “Get Started” or “Next Step” sections if you want to learn more about using WordPress or view official WordPress documentation.

To dismiss (hide) the “Welcome” message and prevent it from displaying again the next time you log in, click on the **Dismiss** link near the top right-hand corner of the message panel.



Click to dismiss the Welcome Message.

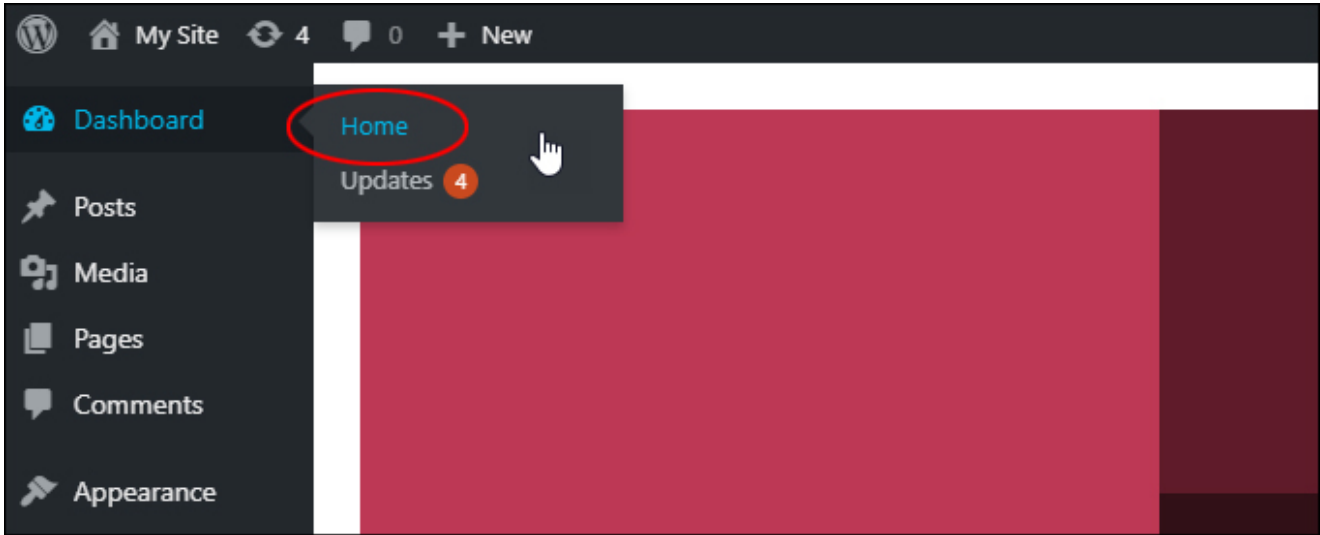
Note: You will also receive notifications in your dashboard whenever WordPress updates to a new version.



WordPress version update information.

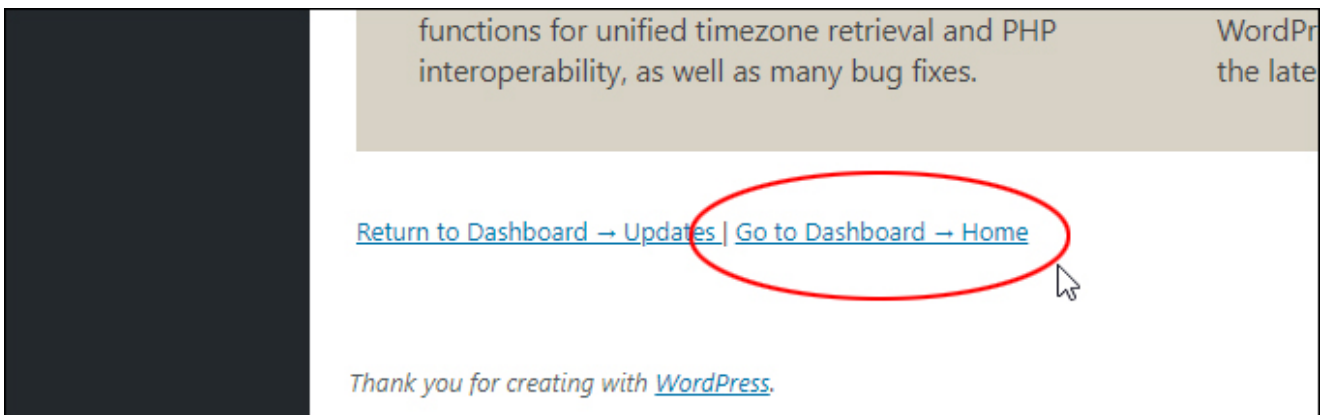
You can explore the information and links in this panel to learn more about new features and updates.

To return to the dashboard, select 'Dashboard' (or click on **Dashboard > Home**) in your admin menu section.



Dashboard – Home

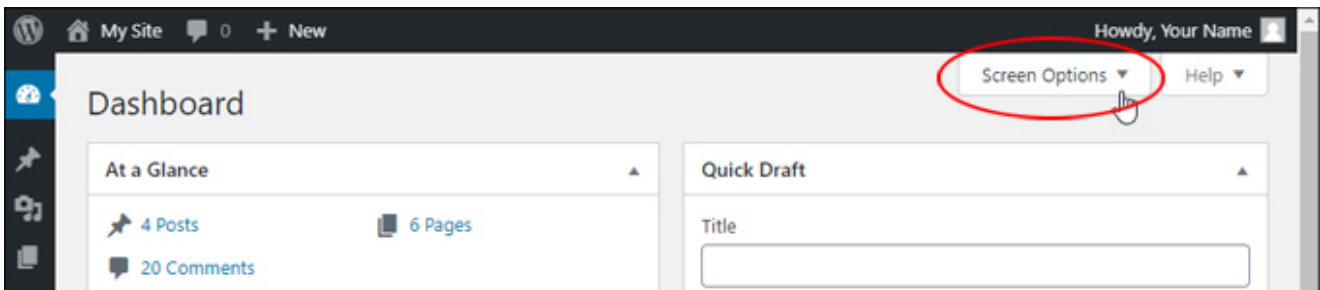
You can also dismiss the message and return to your main Dashboard by scrolling to the bottom of your screen and clicking on the **Go to Dashboard -> Home** link.



Go to Dashboard -> Home

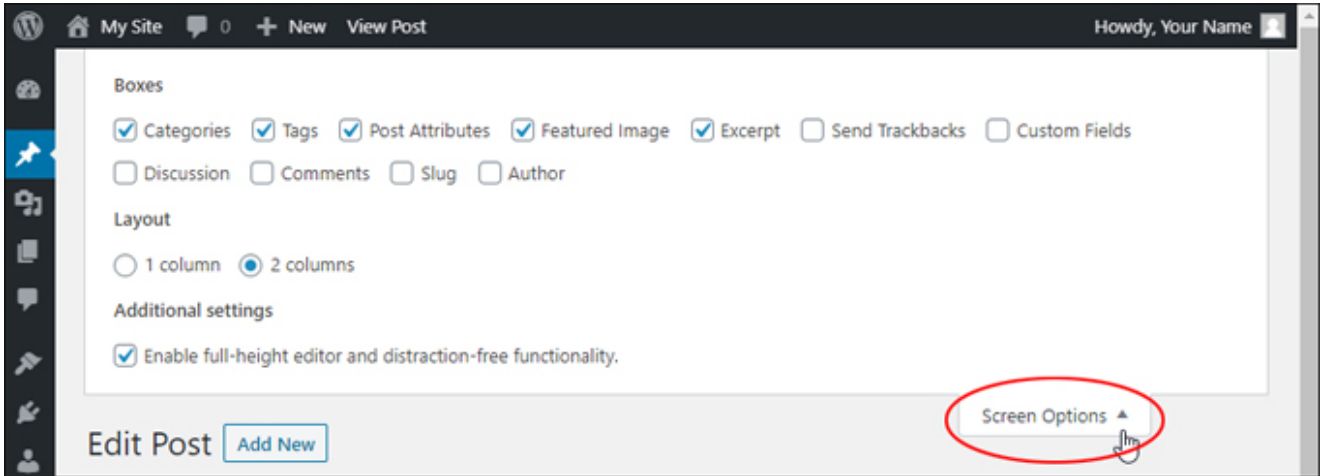
Screen Options Tab

The **Screen Options** tab is in the top-right corner of the dashboard screen's header section.



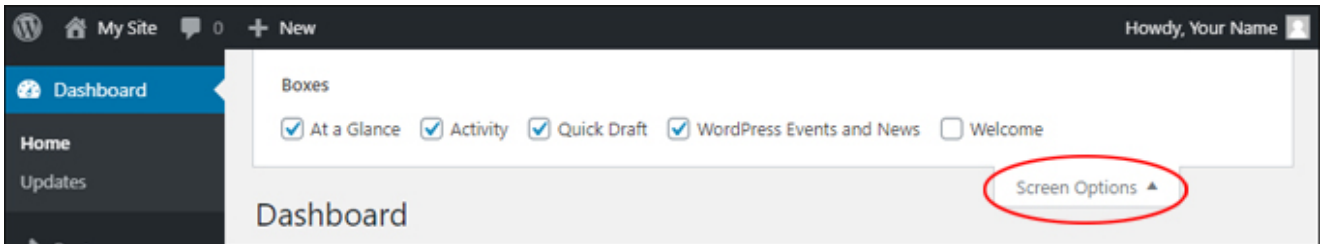
Screen Options Tab

Clicking on this tab will display different options and features depending on the screen you are currently working on.



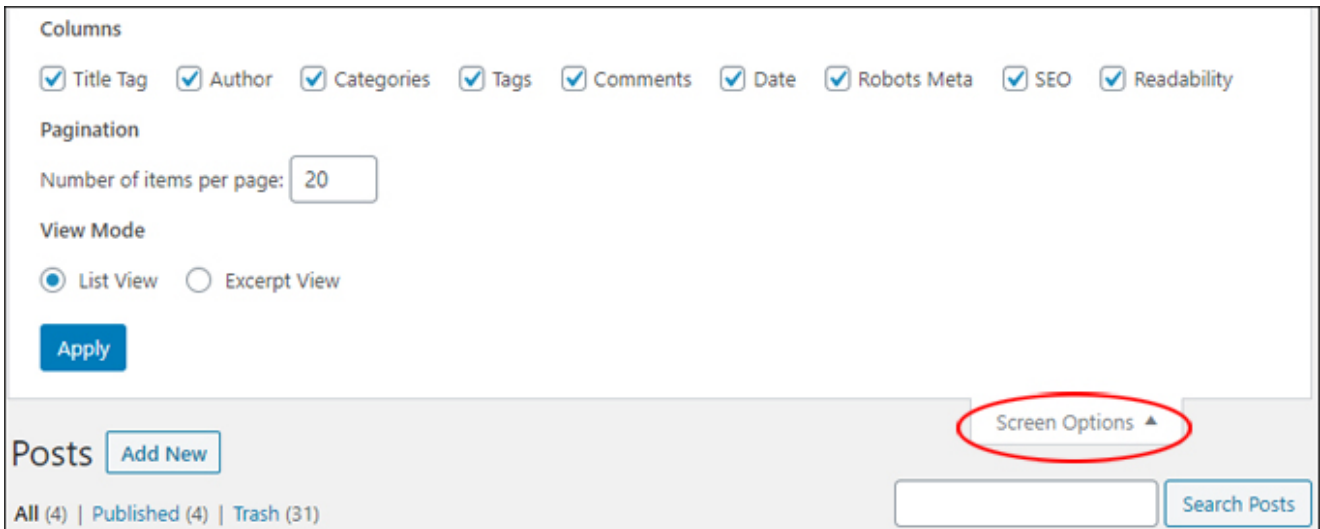
Screen Options – Edit Post

For example, if you are in the **Dashboard**, clicking on the Screen Options tab lets you configure options like hiding or displaying different dashboard information panels.



Dashboard Screen Options section expanded.

If you are in the **Posts** section, clicking on the Screen Options tab allows you to configure different options, like displaying or hiding information in the Posts Table screen (e.g. tags, comments, etc.), or specify the number of posts to display per page and other configurable settings depending on the plugins you have installed on your site.



Post Screen Options section.

Your site may have certain elements hidden from view. This is usually done for one or more of the following reasons:

- You probably don't need access to these features.
- To give your site a less "cluttered" look.
- To prevent accidental errors from happening.

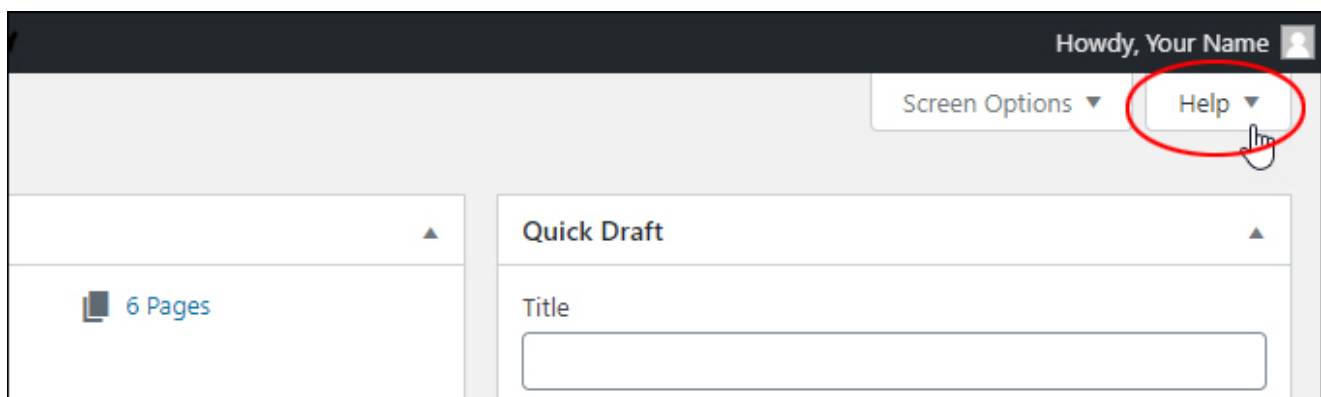


If you are searching for a particular feature or element in your admin section and can't seem to find it or don't know where to look for it, try clicking on the Screen Options tab...what you're looking for may be hidden or disabled.

To learn more, go here: [The WordPress Screen Options Tab](#)

Online Help Section

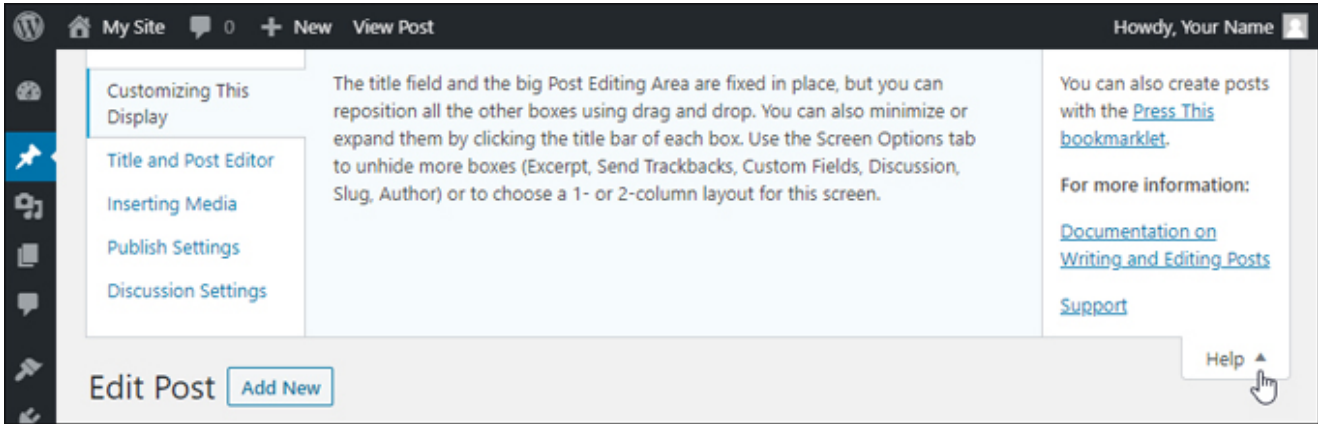
You can access official WordPress documentation and user community support or help forums by clicking on the **Help** tab at the top of your screen, next to the 'Screen Options' tab.



Click on the 'Help' tab to access WordPress documentation online.

Like the *Screen Options* tab, the **Help** tab also displays context-specific information depending on which section of the admin area you are in.

For example, if you are editing content in the **Edit Post** screen, clicking on the **Help** tab will bring up helpful information related to editing posts.

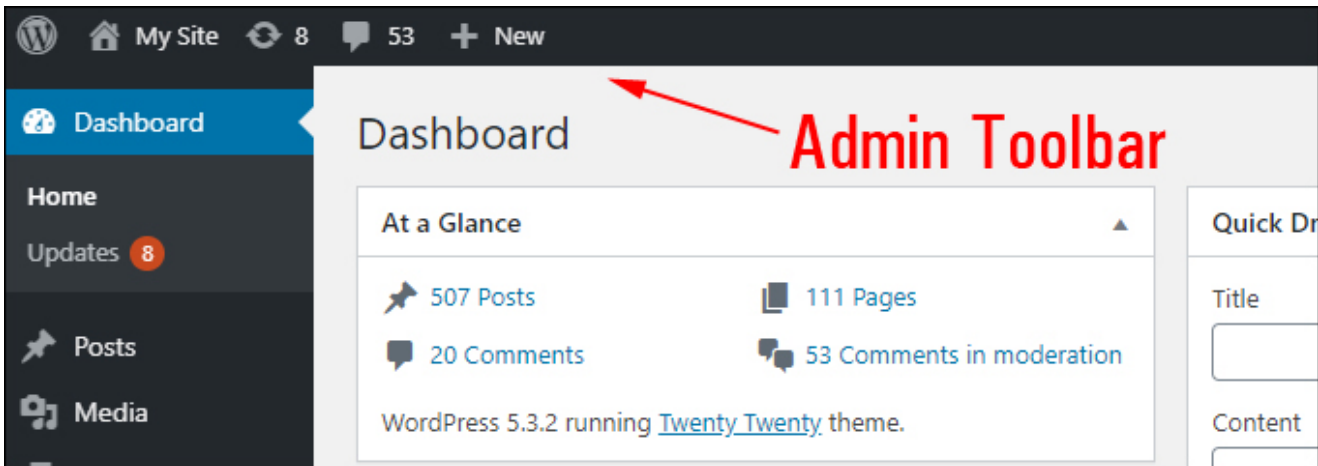


Help section – Edit Post.

To learn more about a feature or function of WordPress, just click on the **Help** tab.

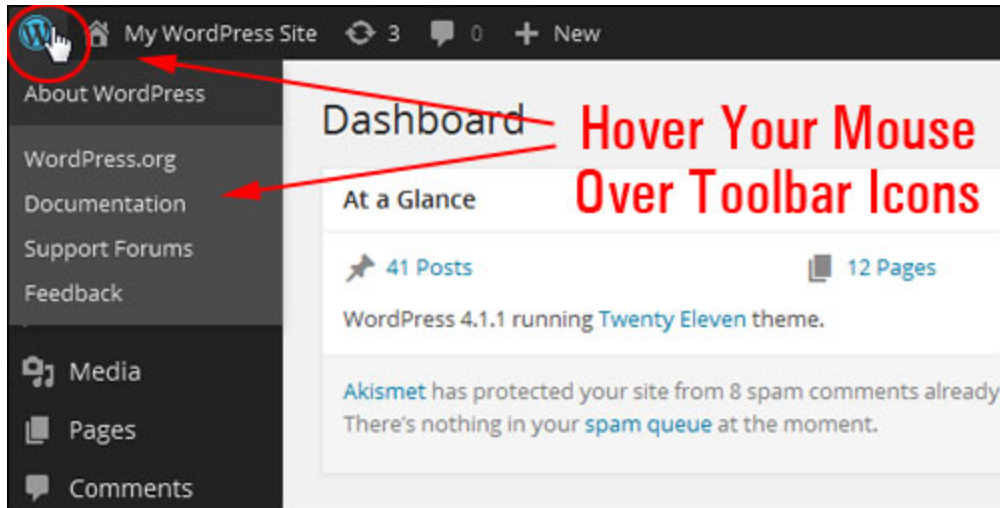
WordPress Admin Area: Toolbar

The **WordPress Admin Toolbar** is located at the very top of your Dashboard screen and provides you and your logged-in users with access to a range of useful administrative functions, features, information, and “quick links” to other areas of your site.



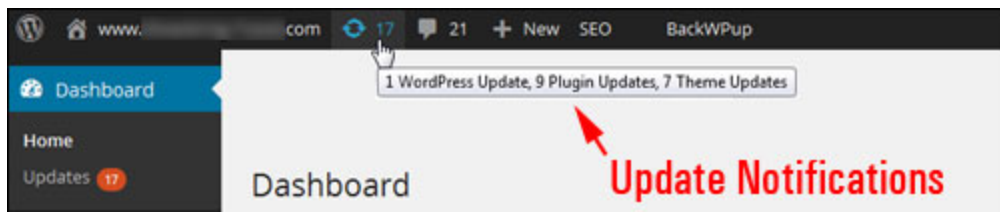
WordPress Dashboard Admin Toolbar.

Most **Toolbar** items can expand to display additional information simply by hovering your mouse over the toolbar icons.



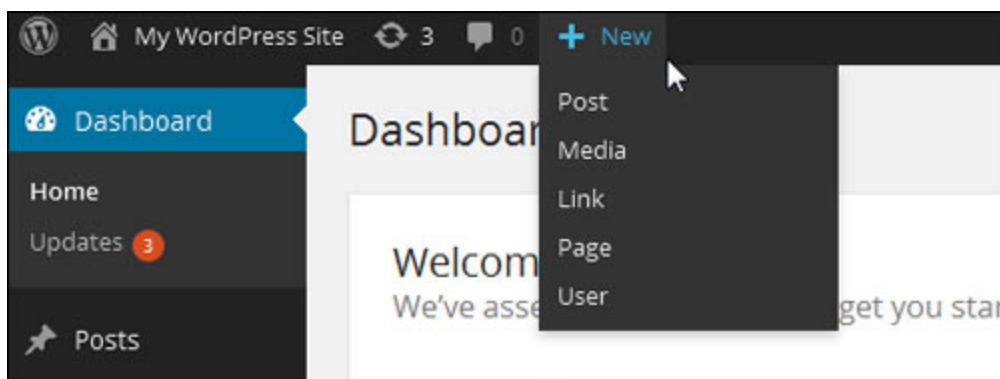
Hover your mouse over Toolbar icons to display additional information.

For example, hovering over the “updates” icon on the toolbar lets you see what features of your site like plugins or themes need updating.



Admin Toolbar – Update notifications

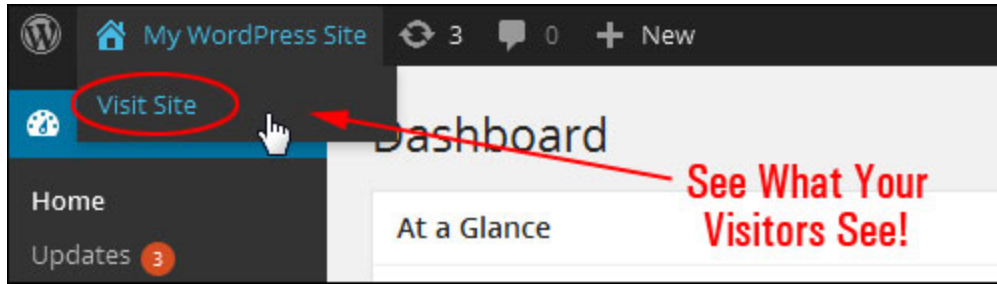
You can also view things like how many comments in your posts are currently awaiting moderation, or perform tasks using shortcuts in the toolbar to create new posts or pages or add new media, links, or users to your site, plus a whole lot more.



Toolbar shortcuts menu.

The toolbar also lets you quickly see how any changes you make to your posts, pages, or settings will affect how visitors see these on your site. Just hover your mouse over the title of your website and click **Visit Site**.

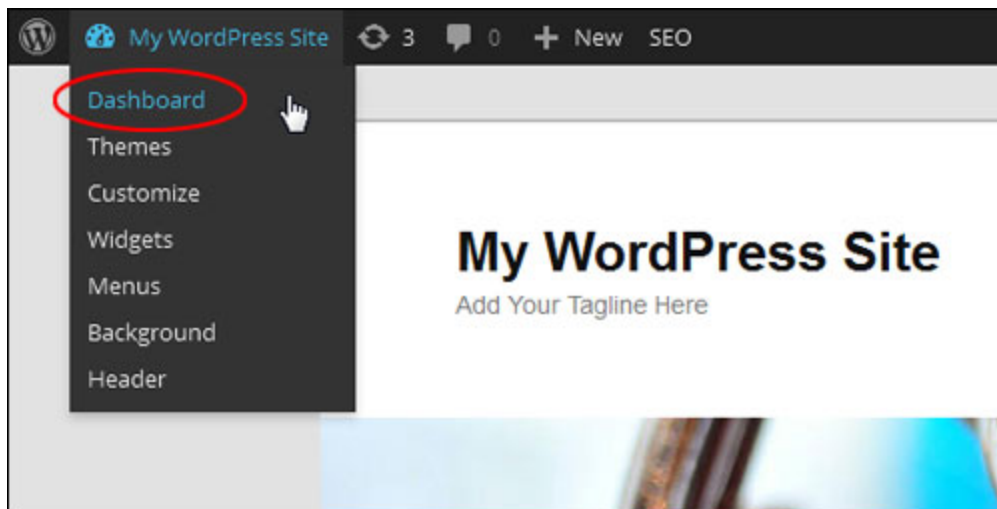
Tip: To continue working on your site and view your home page as your visitors will see it, right-click on the **Visit Site** link and choose either “Open Link In New Tab”, or “Open Link In New Window” to view the frontend of your site in a separate window in your web browser.



Click to visit your site.

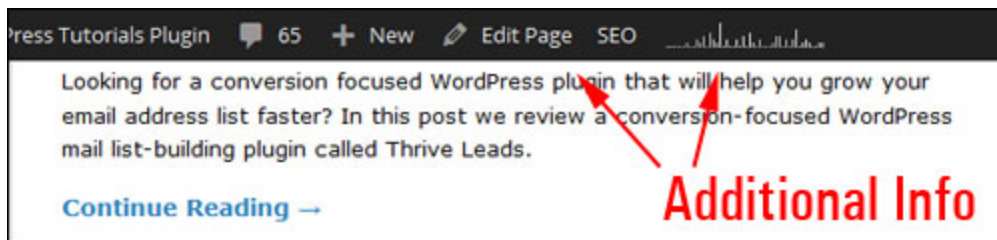
If you remain logged into your admin area, the WordPress toolbar will display on your web browser when you view the “front end” section of your site.

This allows you to easily return to your admin area and continue working on your site without having to log back in.



Click to return to your dashboard.

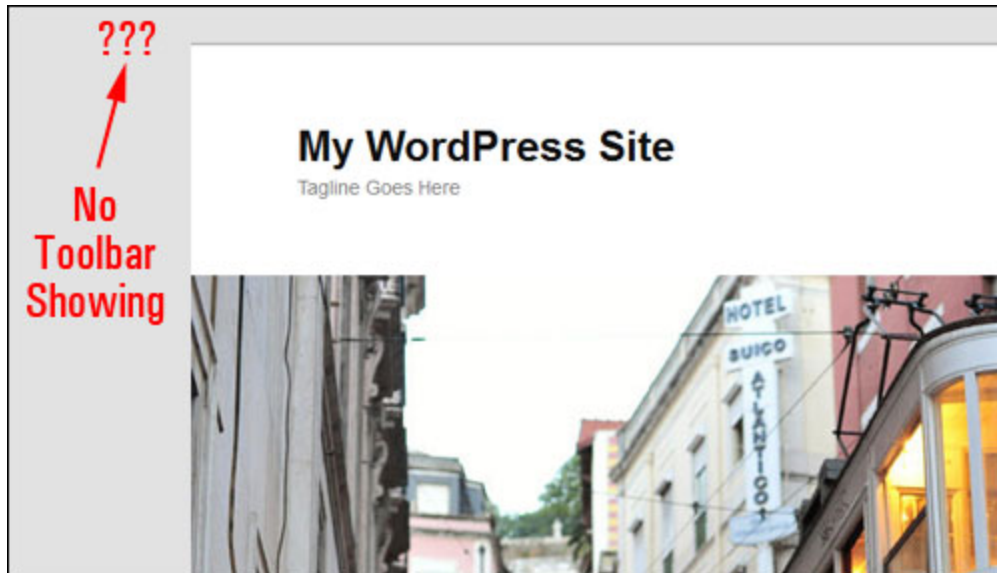
Depending on where you are inside the admin area and what plugins or services you have installed on your site, you may also see additional information displayed on the toolbar.



WordPress Dashboard Admin Toolbar displaying additional info.



If you are logged in and cannot see the admin toolbar in your dashboard, make sure that you have enabled it in your “Profile” settings (how to enable/disable the admin toolbar is explained further below).

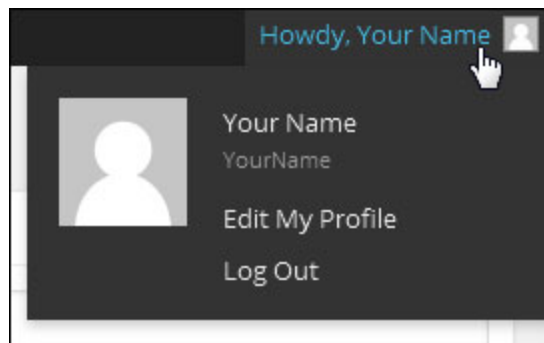


No Admin Toolbar showing.

The “Howdy, User” Section

At the far right-hand side of the Admin Toolbar is the “Howdy, User” section with your **Gravatar** image.

Hover your mouse over this section and it will expand to display your name and username and links that allow you to edit your profile and log out of your site.

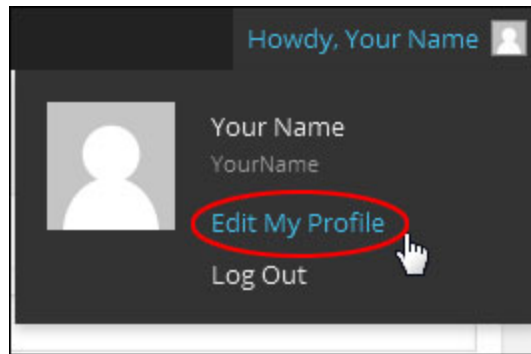


The ‘Howdy, User’ section contains links to your profile.

How To Enable Your WordPress Admin Toolbar When Viewing Your Site

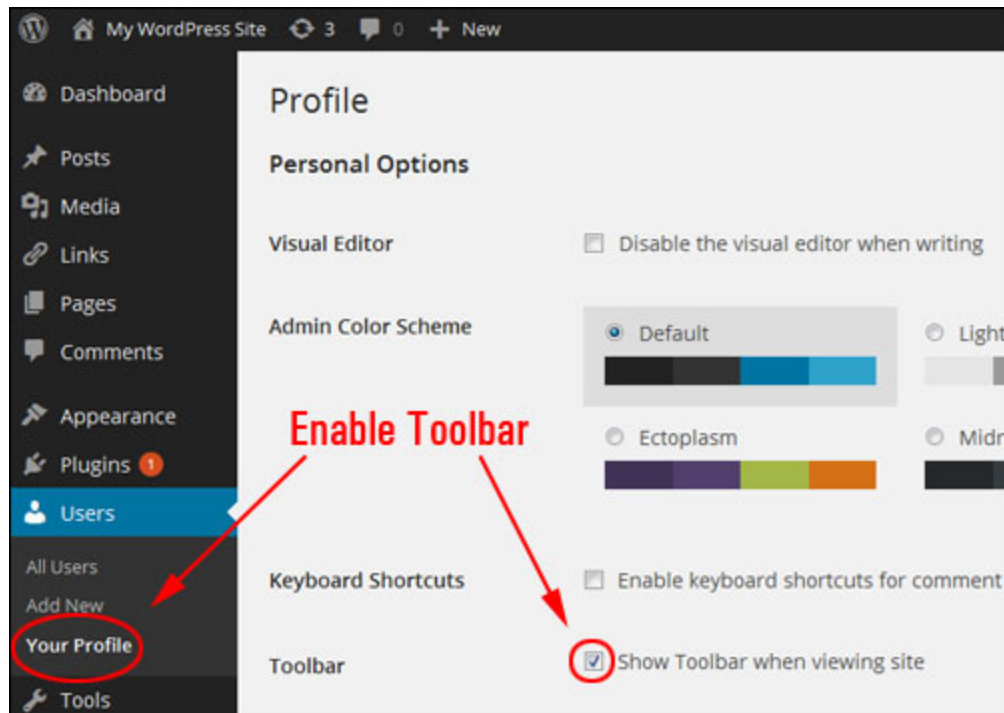
Here's how to enable/disable the admin toolbar:

Click on the “**Howdy, Your Name**” tab in the top right-hand corner of your dashboard and select **Edit My Profile...**



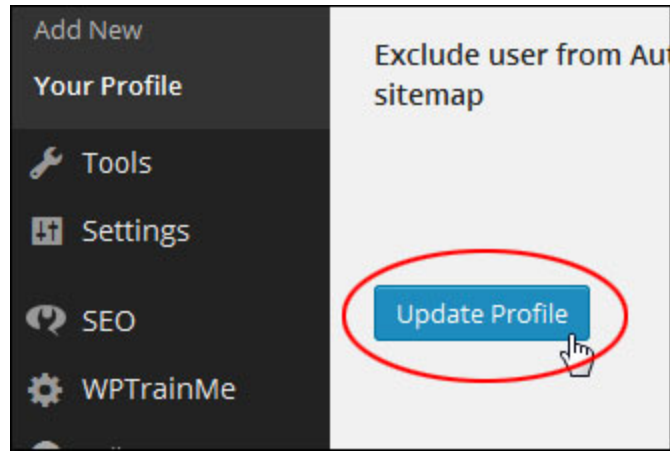
Howdy User > Edit My Profile

Check that **Show Toolbar when viewing site** is enabled (the box should be ticked) in your **Profile** screen.



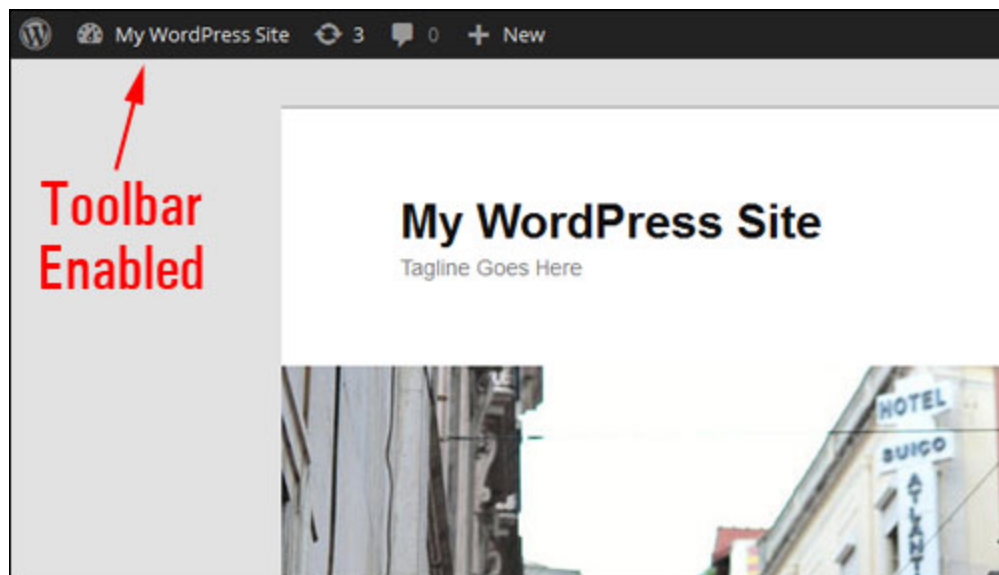
User Profile screen – Enable Toolbar checkbox

Click the **Update Profile** button at the bottom of your screen to save your changes.



Click to update your profile settings.

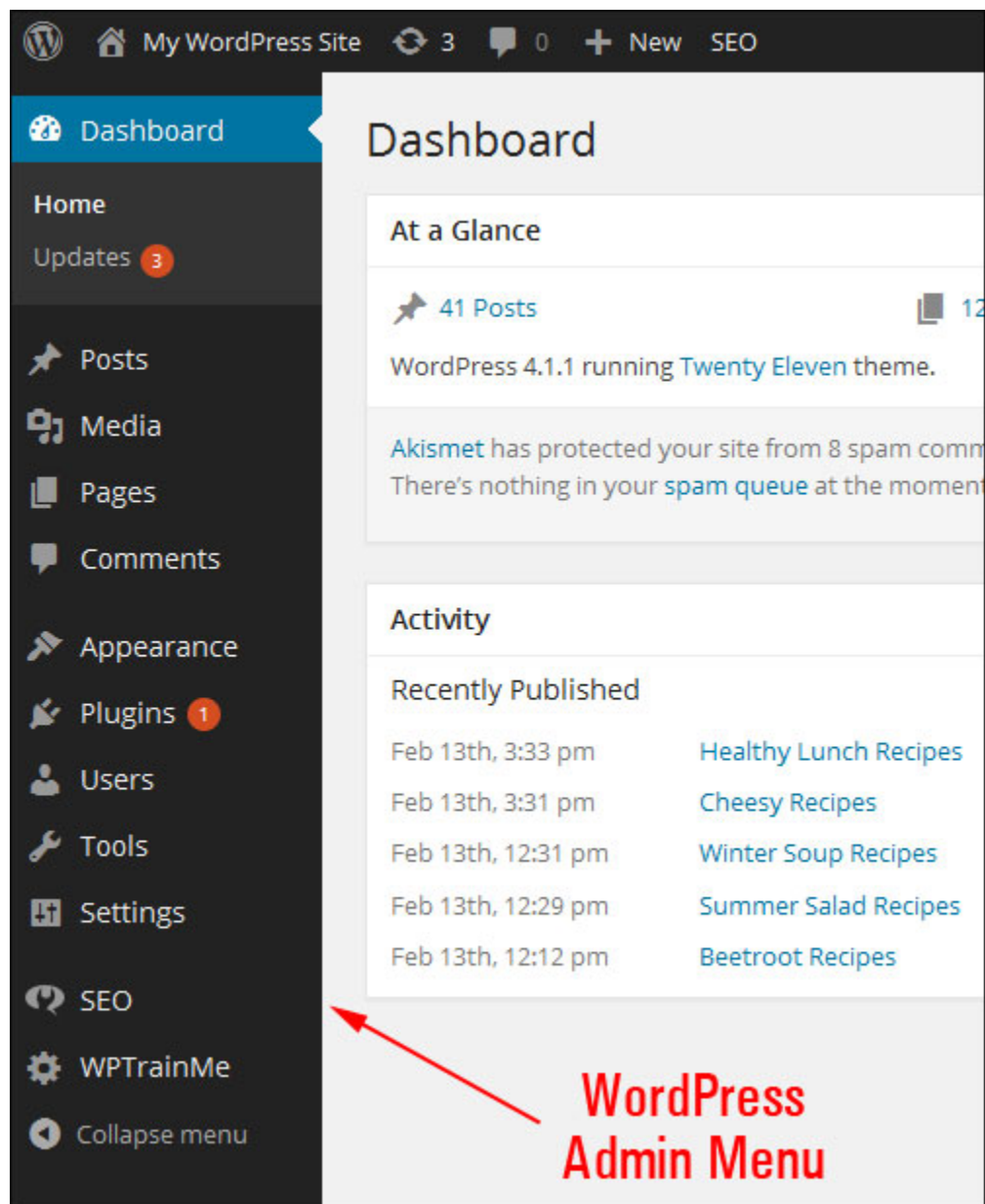
You should now be able to see the **WordPress Toolbar** displayed at the top of your screen whenever you log into your site.



WordPress Admin Toolbar visible.

WordPress Admin Section: Navigation Menu

On the left-hand side of your Dashboard is the main navigation menu. This menu contains links to all your site's features, settings, and administrative areas.

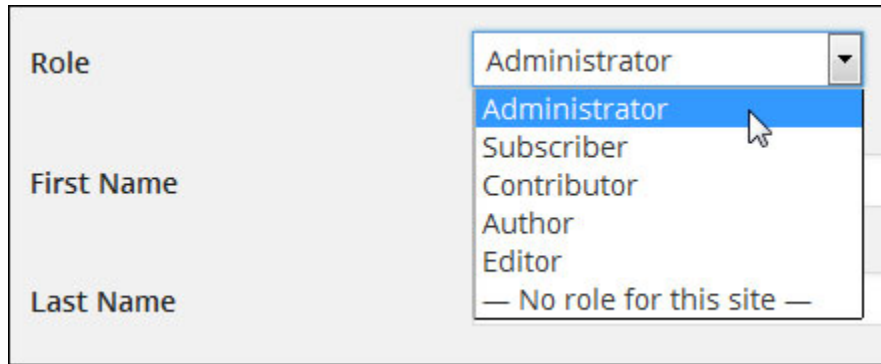


The main WordPress admin menu.



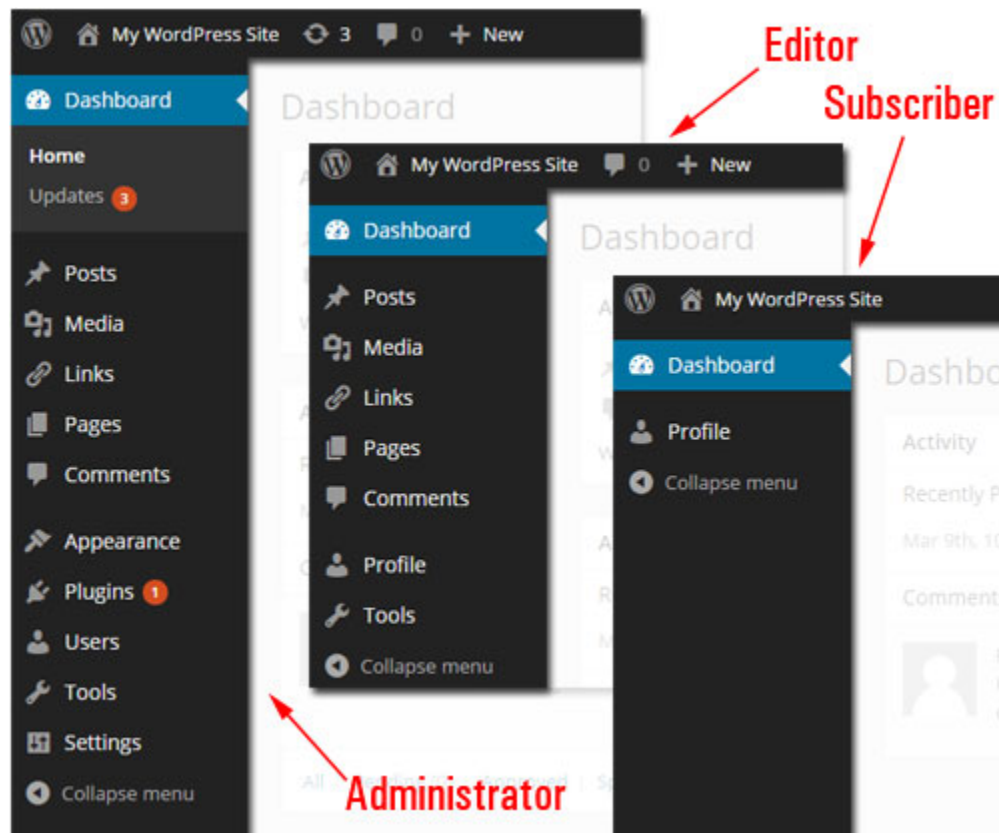
What users will see inside the Dashboard area when they are logged in will depend on what role and capabilities they have been assigned and how the site administrator has configured settings and options for different features.

You must be an administrator of the site to access all dashboard features, functions, settings, and capabilities.



User Roles give users different capabilities and can limit their access to site features.

Users assigned roles other than “Administrator” (e.g. Editor, Subscriber, Contributor, Author, etc.) have access to fewer menu options inside their dashboard.



Different user roles get assigned different capabilities, options, and access privileges inside their dashboard.

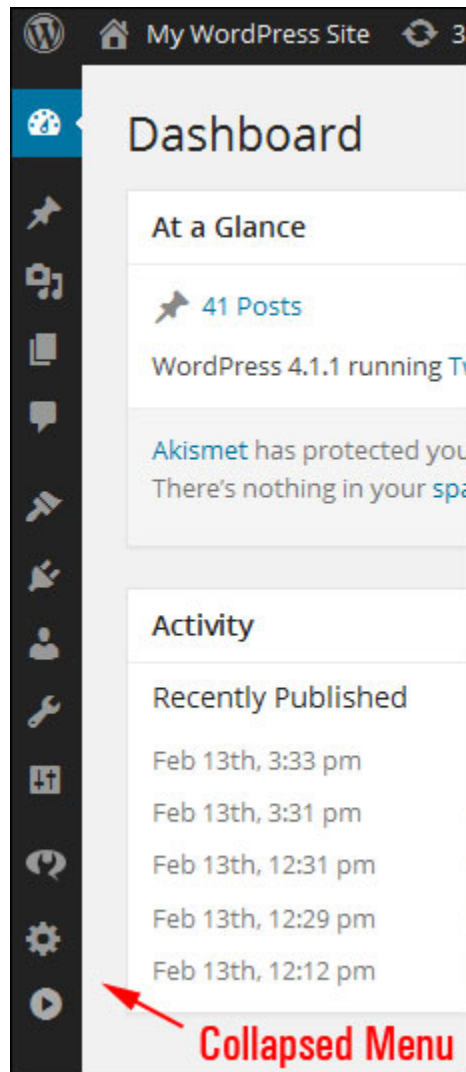
Regardless of the role assigned to a user, some features of the menu like “Collapse menu” remain accessible to all users.

Click the **Collapse menu** button at the bottom of the navigation menu.



Click to collapse menu.

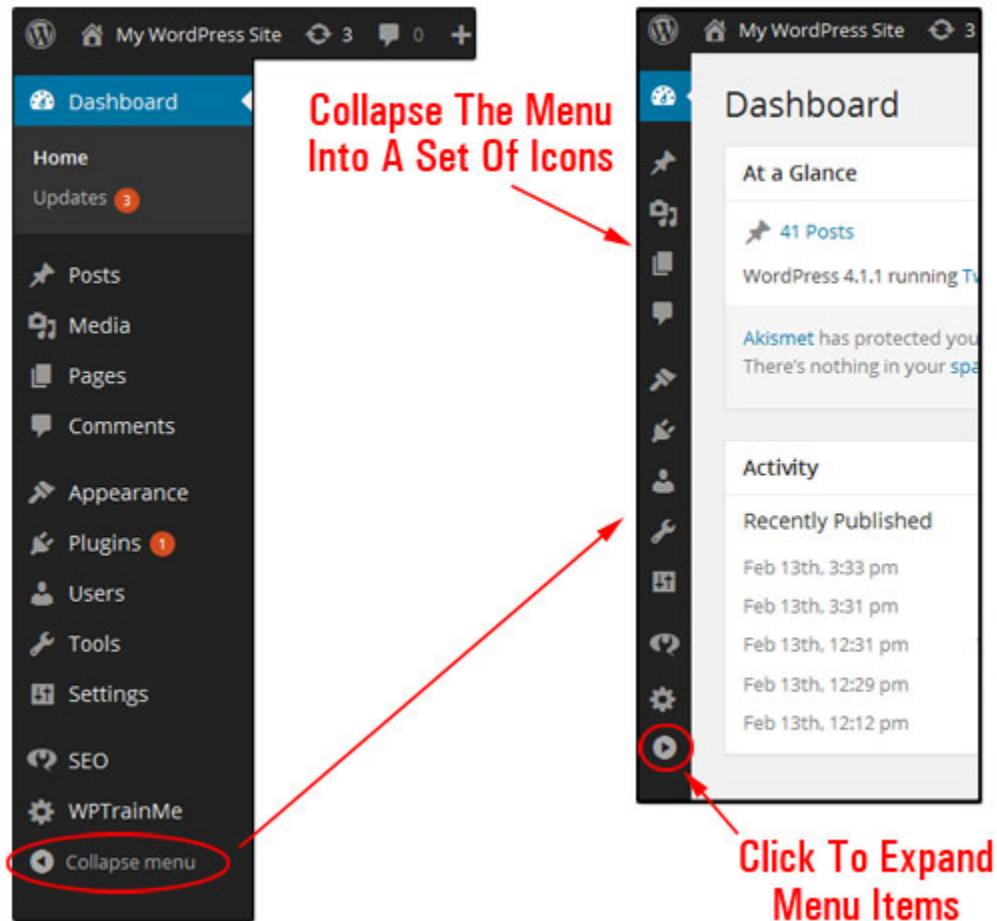
And the admin menu will shrink and collapse into a narrow strip with icons displaying for all items instead.



Dashboard with collapsed menu.

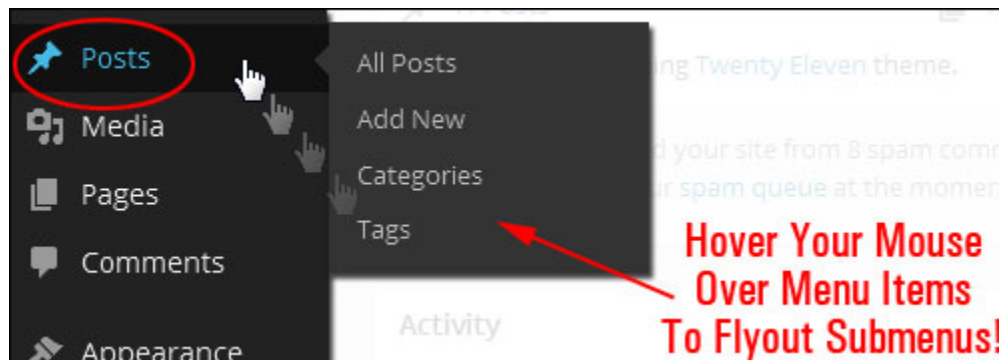
This menu feature is useful if you want more space to work in your admin area or if you are working within a smaller window frame.

If you are working with the collapsed menu and are not sure what the icons mean, just click on the bottom icon to expand all menu items or hover over the icon to display its submenus.



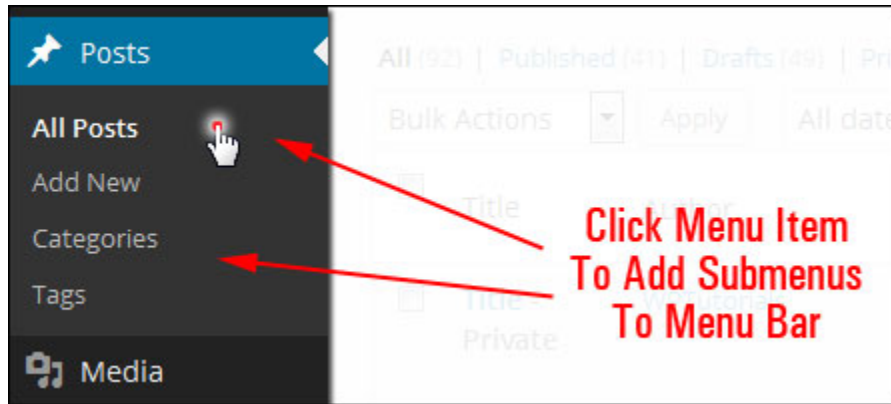
Collapse the menu to display menu icons or expand to view full menu items.

If you hover over a menu item, a submenu will fly out.



Menu items fly out if you hover over them with your mouse.

To “stick” submenus into your main menu bar while you are working, click on a menu item.



Click menu item to add submenus to menu bar.

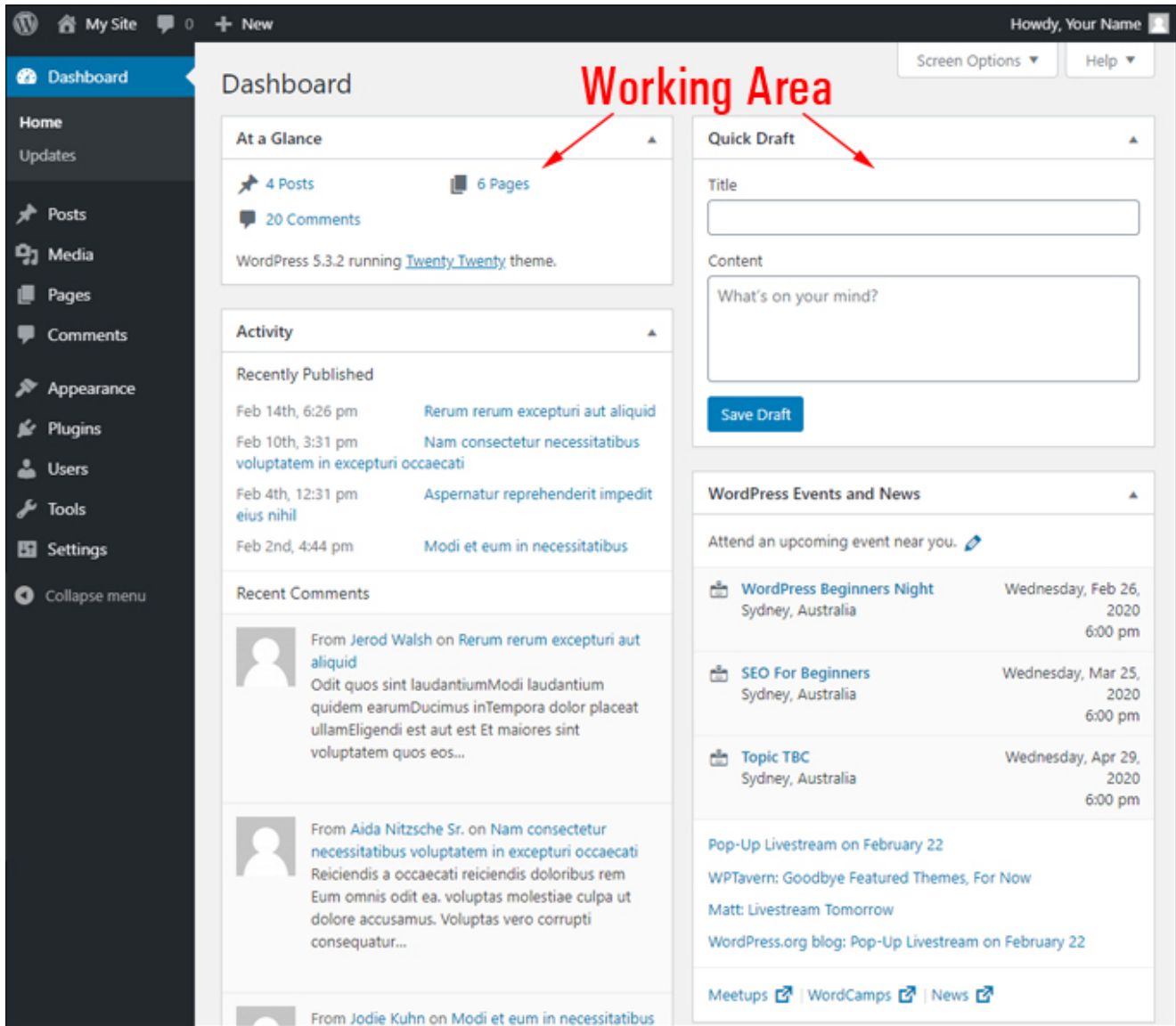
Each of the features of the main WordPress menu is covered in separate tutorials.

WordPress Admin Section: Working Area

The large section in the middle of your admin screen is your main working area. Here, you can do things like:

- Access all of your site's information and do all of your admin work,
- View different screens and configure settings and options for different sections,
- Create, edit and delete posts, pages, and other types of content
- Upload media to your site, edit media, etc.
- View, install, update, and configure plugins and themes,
- etc.

When you log into your admin area, the Dashboard displays several panels containing information about various activities taking place on your site, including news, updates, and announcements from different WordPress-related resources.






WordPress Dashboard Working Area.

Occasionally, you may even find that new panels get added to your WordPress dashboard.

For example, in **version 4.8**, WordPress added a new dashboard panel that displays nearby WordCamps and local WordPress Meetups in your area.


WordPress Events and News

Attend an upcoming event near **Cambridge**.

 WordCamp Portland, Maine USA Portland, Maine USA	Friday, May 26, 2017
 Developers: TBD Portsmouth, NH, USA	Thursday, Jun 8, 2017 6:30 pm
 Topic TBD But It Will Be Awesome! Pawtucket, RI, USA	Tuesday, Jun 13, 2017 6:00 pm

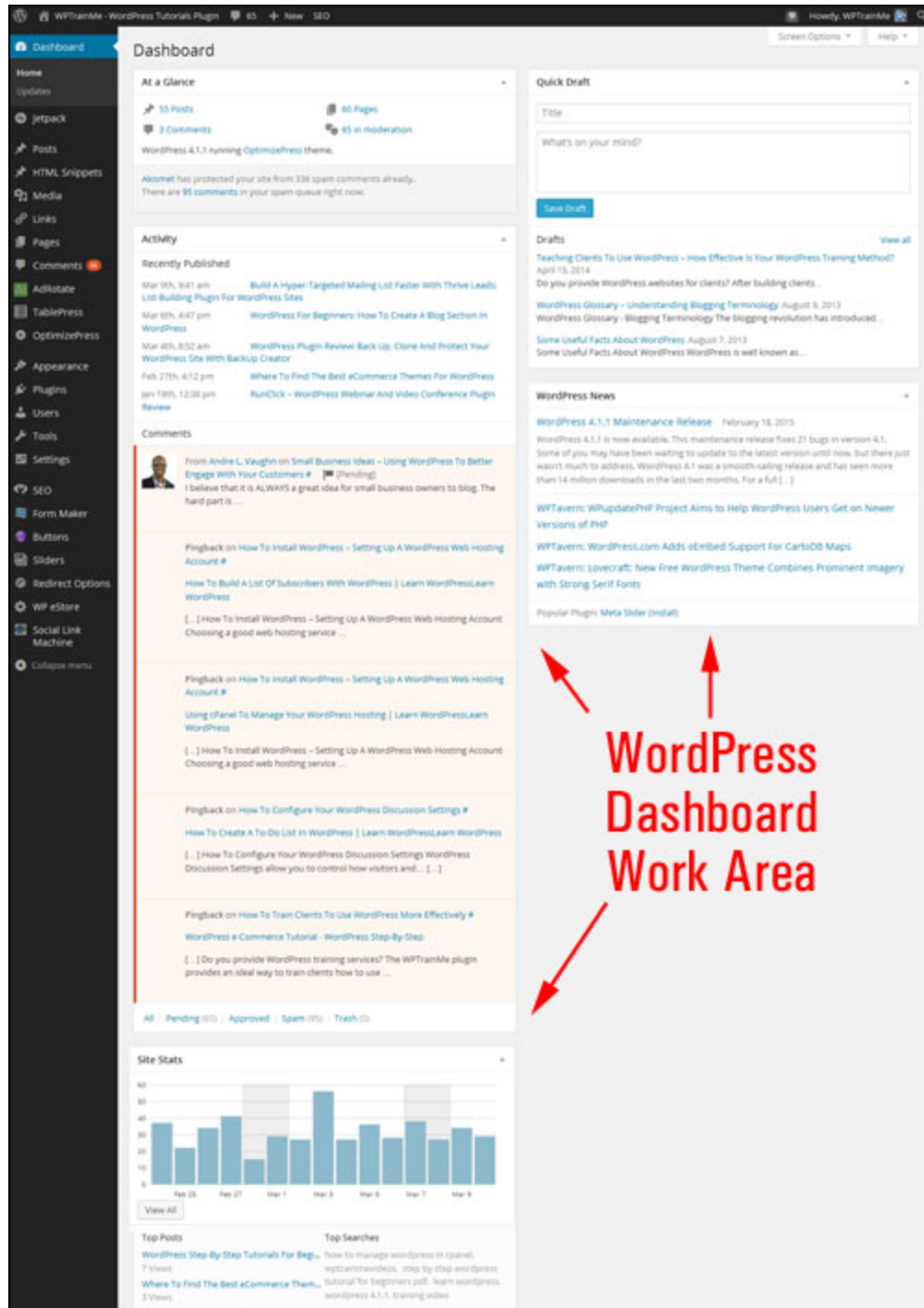
WordPress 4.8 Beta 2
Matt: Profile of Anker
HeroPress: My Life, Designed by WordPress!
WPTavern: WordPress 4.8 Improves Accessibility on Admin Screens

[Meetups](#) | [WordCamps](#) | [News](#)



WordPress Events and News

As your site grows with more content and functionality (e.g. adding e-commerce or a support helpdesk) and more visitors begin interacting with your site, you may find that your working area can start to look busy.



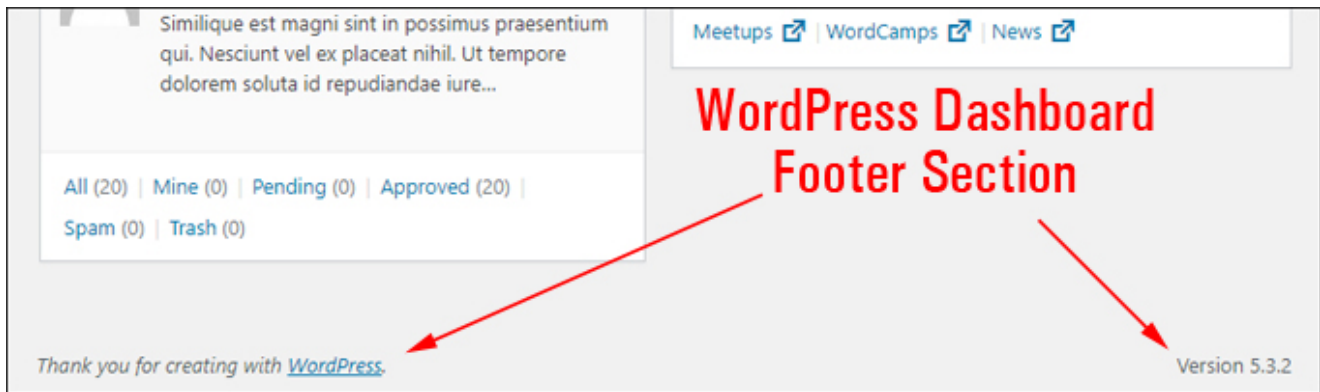
Your Working Area can display a lot of information and reports about your site.

Fortunately, you can “tidy up” and declutter your WordPress dashboard by hiding, minimizing, and reorganizing the layout of your information panels.

For a quick and easy tutorial on how to customize your WordPress Dashboard, go here: [How To Customize Your WordPress Dashboard](#)

WordPress Administration Section: Footer

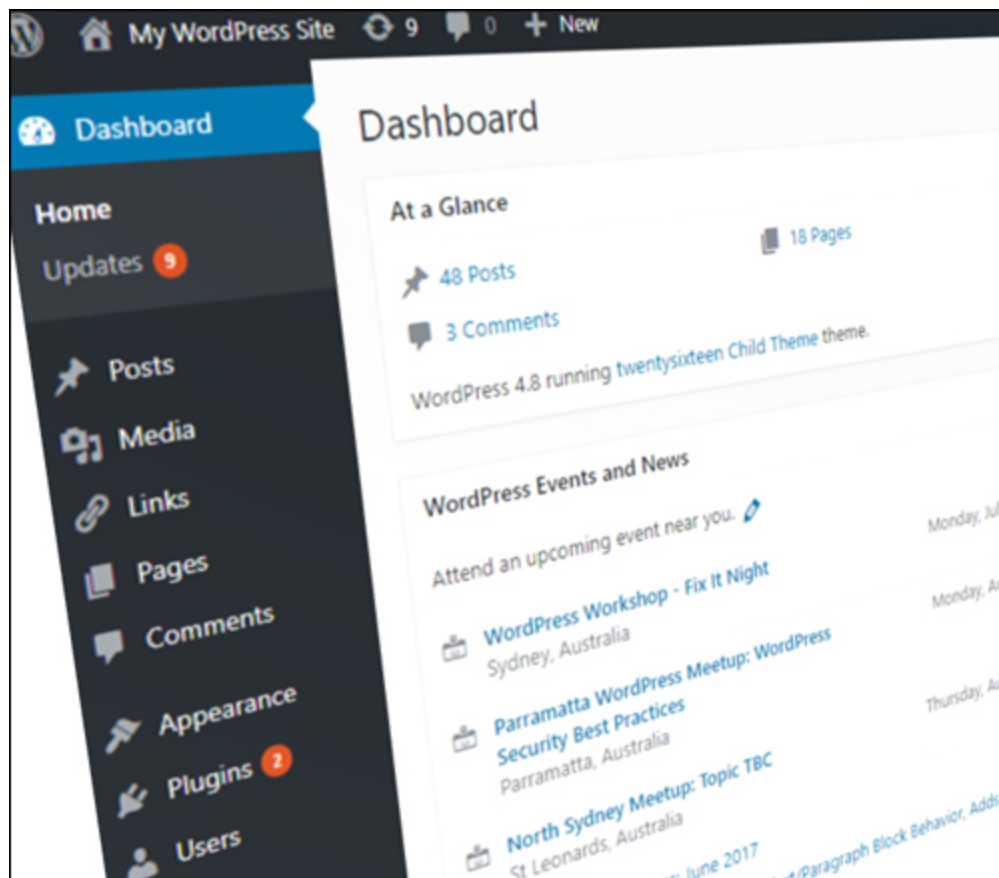
The footer section is located at the bottom of your admin screen and displays links to the WordPress website and your site's current version of the WordPress software.



WordPress Dashboard Footer section.

Note: You may not see this information if your dashboard has been customized.

Congratulations! Now you know how to navigate around your WordPress dashboard and all the important admin sections you need to know to use your site effectively.



The WordPress Dashboard
