



FREE DOWNLOAD

The Blog Launch Checklist

44 checks that take a blog from "I bought a domain" to "my first post is live and indexable." Print it, pin it, tick every box before you announce anything.

01	How to use this checklist	2 min
02	Foundation — domain, hosting, WordPress	14 checks
03	Setup — theme, plugins, performance, security	16 checks
04	Launch — content, SEO, analytics, email	14 checks

START HERE

How to use this checklist

Work top to bottom. Each stage assumes the one before it is done. Don't skip ahead to content while your hosting is still undecided; that's how half-launched blogs are born.

THE THREE STAGES

1 Foundation

Domain, hosting, and a clean WordPress install. One afternoon.

2 Setup

Theme, essential plugins, performance, and security. One weekend.

3 Launch

First posts, SEO wiring, analytics, and an email list from day one.

» Then stop tweaking

Once every box is ticked, your job is publishing, not polishing.

GROUND RULES

- 1 **One pass, honestly.** A half-ticked box is an unticked box.
- 2 **Date your launch.** Write it in the box below and work backwards.
- 3 **Skip nothing in Foundation.** Everything downstream inherits those choices.

— MY LAUNCH DATE

Why 44 checks? Because every one of them is a mistake I've either made myself since 2008 or fixed for one of 850+ client sites. This list is the shortcut past all of them.

DOMAIN

- ☐ **Name passes the radio test** – hear it once, spell it right
- ☐ No trademarked terms (WordPress, Insta...) in the name
- ☐ No hyphens, no numbers, under 15 characters
- ☐ Registered at a reputable registrar, auto-renew on
- ☐ WHOIS privacy enabled

HOSTING

- ☐ **Server region matches your main audience**
- ☐ Daily automated backups enabled and tested once
- ☐ SSL certificate active – site loads on https:// only
- ☐ CDN connected if your audience is global
- ☐ PHP 8.2+ and current MySQL/MariaDB confirmed

WORDPRESS INSTALL

- ☐ Fresh install – sample posts, pages, and plugins deleted
- ☐ Permalinks set to Post name (/%postname%/)
- ☐ Admin username is not "admin"; password is from a manager
- ☐ Timezone, site title, and tagline set

— STAGE COMPLETE WHEN

Your bare domain loads over https in under 2 seconds, and you can log in from a second device.

THEME & DESIGN

- ☐ **Lightweight theme installed** (GeneratePress, Kadence, Astra)
- ☐ Child theme active before any customization
- ☐ Logo + favicon uploaded
- ☐ Mobile layout checked on a real phone

ESSENTIAL PLUGINS (10–15 MAX)

- ☐ SEO plugin configured, sitemap generated
- ☐ Caching/performance plugin active
- ☐ Image compression plugin converting to WebP/AVIF
- ☐ Security/firewall plugin active
- ☐ Form plugin on a working contact page
- ☐ Every inactive plugin and theme deleted

PERFORMANCE & SECURITY

- ☐ **Core Web Vitals pass** on PageSpeed Insights (mobile)
- ☐ Homepage weighs under 1 MB
- ☐ Two-factor authentication on the admin account
- ☐ Login attempts limited
- ☐ Auto-updates set for minor core releases
- ☐ Uptime monitor pinging the homepage

— STAGE COMPLETE WHEN

PageSpeed Insights shows all four Core Web Vitals green on mobile, and a wrong password locks you out.

CONTENT

- ☐ **3–5 posts ready** before you announce anything
- ☐ Privacy policy and disclosure pages published
- ☐ About page written – who you are, who this helps
- ☐ Every post has a featured image and alt text
- ☐ Contact page with a working form

SEO & ANALYTICS

- ☐ Google Search Console verified, sitemap submitted
- ☐ Analytics installed and receiving data
- ☐ Site is indexable – "Discourage search engines" unchecked
- ☐ Each post targets one clear search intent
- ☐ Posts interlinked – no orphan pages

EMAIL – FROM DAY ONE

- ☐ **Email platform connected** and signup form live
- ☐ Welcome email tested with your own address
- ☐ Lead magnet or welcome offer in place
- ☐ Signup form visible on every post

— LAUNCHED WHEN

A stranger can find a post, read it in under 3 seconds of load time, and join your list – without you touching anything.

After launch: publish weekly for 12 months before you judge the numbers. The full playbook lives at gauravtiwari.org/resources/blogging-resources/