

Blogger Tutor

The Complete Blogging Guide for Beginners

2027 Edition · Printable checklist

Everything you need to start a blog, set it up properly, write posts that rank in the age of AI answers, and earn from it, condensed into checklists you can tick off.

By Rahul Singh, bloggertutor.com

Prices and requirements checked September 2026

Full guide with sources: bloggertutor.com/complete-blogging-guide-with-free-pdf/

How to use this PDF

Work through it in order. Each page is one step, with a checklist at the bottom. The full online guide explains the reasoning behind every item and links to every source.

The 11 steps at a glance

1. **Choose a niche** you can write about from experience
2. **Pick a platform**, self hosted WordPress for most people
3. **Buy a domain and hosting**, and read the renewal price
4. **Install WordPress** and change six settings
5. **Add a fast theme** and five plugins, no more
6. **Connect Search Console** and Bing Webmaster Tools
7. **Research topics** the free way
8. **Write posts** that show real experience
9. **Do the on page SEO** basics
10. **Promote** beyond Google, starting with email
11. **Monetise** in the right order

The short answer. Pick a topic you know from real experience, register a domain, put WordPress on inexpensive hosting, publish 15 to 20 genuinely useful posts around two or three connected subjects, connect Google Search Console, then add affiliate links and ads once people arrive. Budget about a year before the blog earns anything meaningful.

Step 1. Choose a niche

A good niche sits where three things overlap: something you know from doing it, something people search for, and something people spend money on.

Run these four checks

- ☐ **30 titles test.** I can write 30 post titles from my own experience without research.
- ☐ **Demand check.** Google autocomplete, People Also Ask and related searches show many specific questions.
- ☐ **Money check.** Searching the topic plus "best" or "review" returns product comparisons.
- ☐ **Reddit check.** There are active threads with unanswered questions.

Avoid

- Pure news, and "make money online" unless you have actually done it
- Medical or financial advice without credentials
- A niche chosen only because a tool showed a high CPC

My niche

Step 2. Pick a platform

Platform	Cost to start	Own domain	Best for	Main limit
WordPress.org (self hosted)	Free software, you pay for hosting and a domain	Yes	Blogs you want to earn from	You handle updates and backups
WordPress.com	Free plan \$0, Personal \$4 a month billed yearly	Paid plans	Writers who want zero maintenance	Free plan shows WordPress.com ads and cannot install plugins
Blogger	Free	Yes, via DNS	Finding out if you enjoy writing	Dated themes, basic SEO controls
Substack	Free, then 10% of paid subscriptions plus Stripe fees	Yes	Newsletter first writers	Little SEO or design control
Ghost(Pro)	Starter \$15 a month billed yearly	Yes	Membership publications	Paid subscriptions need the \$29 Publisher plan
Medium	Free to write	No	Reaching Medium's own readers	Partner Program needs a paid membership; you never own the audience

Prices from each platform's own pricing page, checked 26 September 2026. One change worth knowing if you read older guides: WordPress.com's pricing page now lists plugin installs on its \$4 Personal plan, not only on Business. It is a genuinely reasonable option now, but you are still renting, and moving away later is harder than never moving at all.

☐ I have chosen my platform: _____

Step 3. Domain and hosting

In India, Hostinger's Premium plan works out to about Rs 8,450 including GST for four years of hosting, with the domain free for the first year, and WordPress itself costs nothing. That is the realistic entry price for a blog you own.

Domain

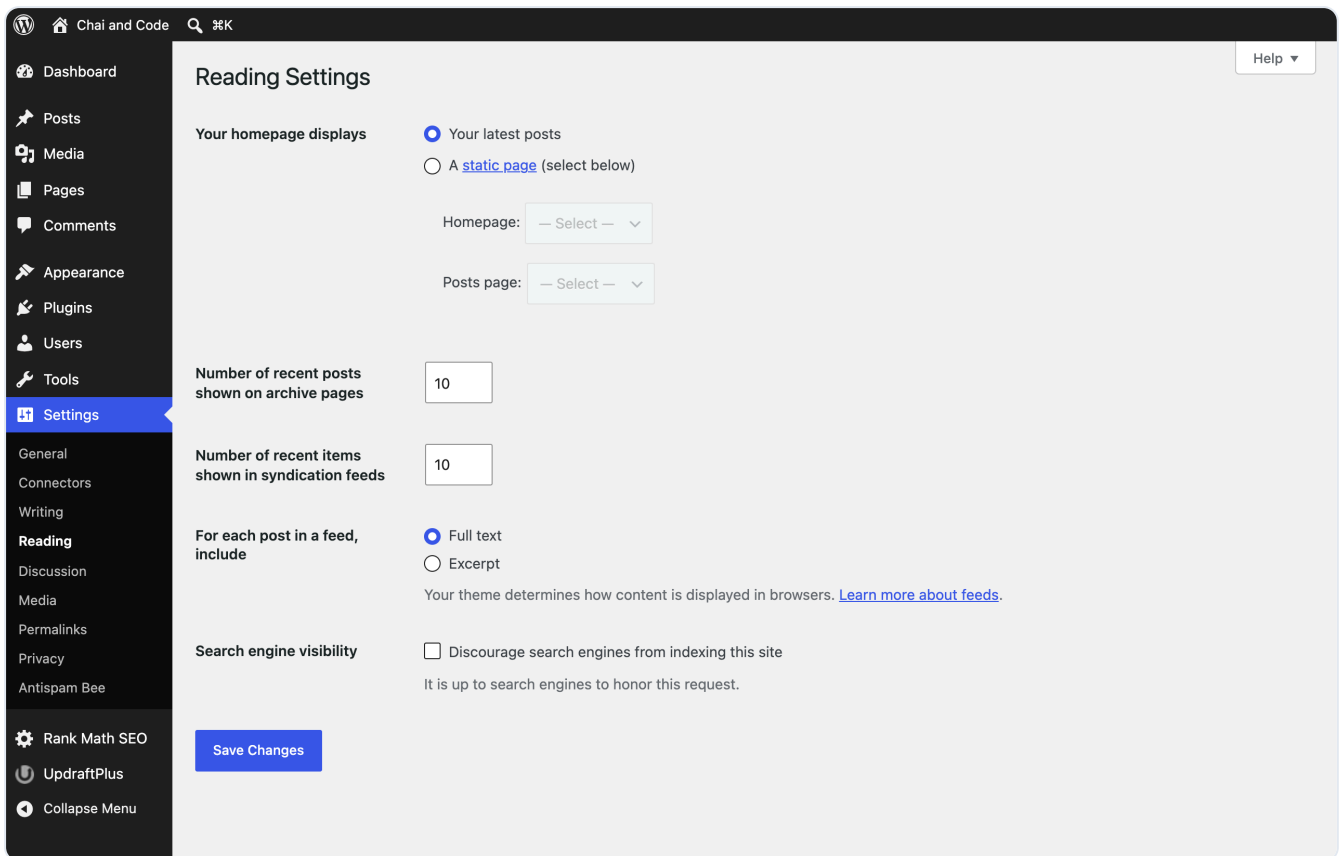
Registrar	.com first year	.com renewal	Notes
Porkbun	\$11.08	\$11.08	No renewal jump; .in is \$7.83
Cloudflare Registrar	At cost	At cost	No markup at all; does not sell .in
Namecheap	Rs 1,080.82 on sale	Rs 1,770.70	Cheap first year, renewal is where the money is

Entry hosting

Host	Intro price	Renews at	Free domain	Note
Hostinger Premium (India)	Rs 149 a month	Rs 449 a month	Yes, 1 year	48 month term, Rs 7,152 up front before GST
Hostinger Premium (US)	\$2.99 a month	\$10.99 a month	Yes, 1 year	48 month term, paid up front
HostArmada Start Dock	\$1.99 a month	\$9.95 a month	Yes	36 month term
DreamHost Launch	\$2.89 a month	\$10.99 a month	Yes, 1 year	Only a 1 year commitment
Bluehost Starter	\$3.99 a month	\$9.99 a month	Yes, 1 year	36 month term
SiteGround StartUp	\$3.99 a month	\$17.99 a month	Yes, 1 year	12 month term, highest renewal here

- ☐ Domain is short, easy to say, no hyphens or numbers
- ☐ Name is also free on Instagram and YouTube
- ☐ I compared the **renewal** price, not only the intro price
- ☐ My payment method (UPI, RuPay, card) is accepted

Step 4. Install WordPress, then change six settings



- ☐ Settings, General: real site title, tagline and timezone
- ☐ Settings, Permalinks: **Post name**
- ☐ Settings, Reading: **Discourage search engines** is UNTICKED
- ☐ Settings, Discussion: first time comments need approval
- ☐ Users, Profile: real name, photo and short bio
- ☐ Deleted "Hello world" post and "Sample Page"
- ☐ Admin username is not "admin", password is strong

Step 5. Theme and the five starter plugins

Theme	Active installs	Rating
Kadence	500,000+	98 out of 100 from 455 ratings
Blocksy	300,000+	100 out of 100 from 872 ratings
Astra	1,000,000+	98 out of 100 from 6,531 ratings
GeneratePress	500,000+	98 out of 100 from 1,427 ratings

Job	Plugin	Active installs	Rating	Why
SEO	Rank Math SEO	4,000,000+	96 out of 100	Sitemaps, meta tags, schema and Search Console data in one plugin
Backups	UpdraftPlus	4,000,000+	96 out of 100	Free scheduled backups to Google Drive or Dropbox
Spam	Antispam Bee	700,000+	96 out of 100	Blocks comment spam with no account or API key
Caching	LiteSpeed Cache	7,000,000+	96 out of 100	Free full page caching on LiteSpeed hosting such as Hostinger
Login security	Limit Login Attempts Reloaded	1,000,000+	96 out of 100	Stops bots guessing your password

- ☐ One lightweight theme installed, unused themes deleted except one default
- ☐ SEO, backup, spam and caching plugins installed, nothing else yet
- ☐ Monthly: download the latest backup and check it contains the database and uploads

Step 6. Search Console and Bing

- ☐ Site verified in Google Search Console
- ☐ Sitemap submitted (yourdomain.com/sitemap_index.xml with Rank Math)
- ☐ Site added to Bing Webmaster Tools (import from Search Console)
- ☐ IndexNow switched on for Bing
- ☐ Checked the Generative AI performance report once there is data

Step 7. Free topic research

- ☐ Google autocomplete, including "topic a", "topic b" and so on
- ☐ People Also Ask questions saved as headings and FAQs
- ☐ Related searches at the bottom of the results
- ☐ Reddit and Quora threads sorted by new
- ☐ After 3 months: Search Console queries at positions 8 to 20

My first 20 post ideas

Step 8. Write posts that show real experience

Anatomy of a section that gets quoted

Answer first, proof second, detail third. The same shape works for readers, featured snippets and AI Overviews.

H2 PHRASED THE WAY PEOPLE SEARCH

How much does it cost to start a blog?

ONE SENTENCE ANSWER, 25 TO 45 WORDS

About Rs 8,450 including GST buys four years of entry hosting in India, the domain is free for year one, and WordPress itself costs nothing.

PROOF: YOUR NUMBER, SCREENSHOT OR SOURCE LINK

[cost table + link to the host's own pricing page]

DETAIL FOR THE READER WHO STAYS

Renewal prices, what to skip, when to upgrade...

Readers

get the answer before they decide whether to scroll.

Google

can lift the second block straight into a snippet.

AI answers

cite pages whose claims are specific and sourced.

You

keep the click, because the detail and the proof live on your page.

Pre publish quality checklist

- ☐ The first paragraph answers the question in the title
- ☐ At least one thing nobody else has: a photo, a test, a number, an opinion from use
- ☐ A reader will not need to search again after reading
- ☐ Every statistic links to its source
- ☐ Two or three internal links out, one older post links in
- ☐ Reads well on a phone
- ☐ AI used only for help; every sentence is one I would sign my name to

Step 9. On page SEO basics

Element	What to do
Title	Main phrase near the start, SEO title under 60 characters
URL slug	Short and descriptive, never changed after ranking
Meta description	Under 160 characters, a reason to click
Headings	One H1, H2s that match real questions
Internal links	Two or three to related posts, descriptive anchors
Images	Compressed, descriptive file names and alt text
Schema	Article by default; FAQ or review only when the page has it
Speed	LCP within 2.5 s, INP under 200 ms, CLS under 0.1

Step 10. Promotion

- ☐ Email signup form live, with a useful free download
- ☐ WhatsApp Channel or Telegram for Indian readers
- ☐ Each post turned into one Short or Reel
- ☐ Answering genuine questions on Reddit and forums
- ☐ Linking to and helping other bloggers in my niche

Step 11. Monetise in the right order

The blog monetisation ladder

Requirements from AdSense, Mediavine and Raptive's own pages, checked 26 September 2026. Own products and sponsorships can start at any rung.

Affiliate links

No traffic minimum. Link products you have used, and disclose it.

Day one

Google AdSense

Age 18+, policy compliant original content. Paid at \$100.

15 to 20 solid posts

Journey by Mediavine

Sessions from the US, Canada, UK and Australia only.

1,000 Tier 1 sessions / 30 days

Raptive

Domain 6+ months old, half the traffic from the US, UK, Canada, NZ or Australia.

25,000 pageviews / month

Mediavine

The full network, for established Tier 1 audiences.

\$5,000+ ad revenue / year

Method	When	Entry requirement
Affiliate links	From your first buying guide or review	Varies by program. Amazon India pays by category, from 1% on phones to 10% on apparel and beauty; Hostinger starts at 40%
Google AdSense	Once you have 15 to 20 solid posts and steady visitors	Age 18+, original content that meets policies; paid at \$100, by wire transfer in India
Journey by Mediavine	When US, UK, Canadian or Australian readers arrive	1,000 sessions from Tier 1 countries in 30 days
Mediavine	An established, mostly Tier 1 audience	\$5,000+ in annual ad revenue
Raptive	About 25,000 pageviews a month	25,000 monthly pageviews, domain 6+ months old, 50% traffic from the US, UK, Canada, NZ or Australia
Your own product	When readers keep asking you the same question	None. An ebook, template, course or consulting
Sponsored posts	When brands in your niche notice you	None, but always disclose

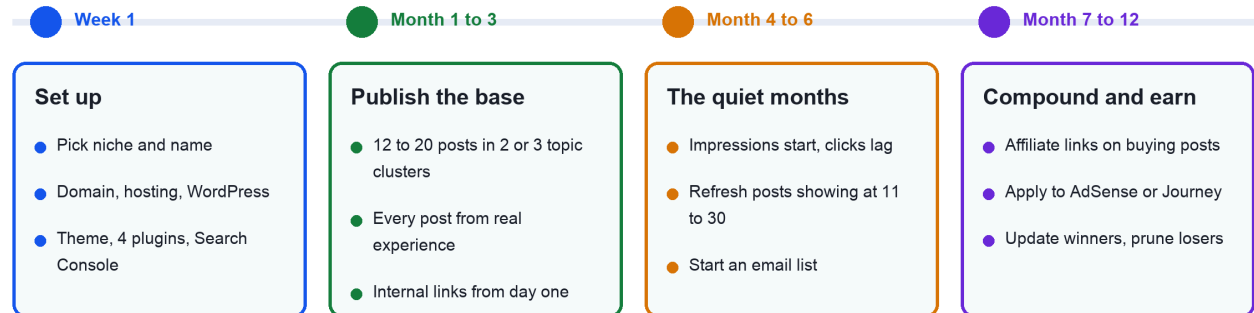
Indian audience note. Journey by Mediavine counts only Tier 1 sessions (US, Canada, UK, Australia) and Raptive wants half your traffic from the US, UK, Canada, New Zealand or Australia on smaller sites. Most Indian audience blogs start with affiliates and AdSense.

- ☐ Affiliate disclosure page published
- ☐ Every affiliate link marked nofollow sponsored
- ☐ Links matched to what the reader of that post wants
- ☐ Auto linking, if used, capped at one link per page

Your first 12 months

Your first 12 months as a blogger, realistically

The plan I give every beginner who asks. Most blogs are abandoned in the quiet months, not because they failed.



Only 1.74% of new pages reached Google's top 10 within a year in Ahrefs' 2025 study, and the average page ranking first was five years old. Months four to six feel like nothing is working. They are when you refresh posts sitting on page two and keep publishing.

Monthly routine

- ☐ Publish 4 to 8 posts
- ☐ Refresh 2 posts that rank at positions 8 to 20
- ☐ Add internal links from new posts to older ones
- ☐ Send at least one email to subscribers
- ☐ Test that a backup downloads and opens

Keep going

This checklist is the condensed version. The full guide, with the reasoning behind every step, screenshots, sources and answers to the most common questions, is at:

bloggertutor.com/complete-blogging-guide-with-free-pdf/

Related guides on Blogger Tutor:

- How to start a blog, the practical short version: bloggertutor.com/start-a-blog/
- Kadence vs Blocksy theme comparison: bloggertutor.com/kadence-vs-blocksy-theme/
- Rank Math vs Yoast: bloggertutor.com/yoast-vs-rankmath-seo-plugin/
- How to monetise your audience: bloggertutor.com/how-to-monetize-your-audience-properly/
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