

Waiting for WordPress 3

Hold onto your socks – WordPress is about to release version 3.0. What does this mean? Linda explains all in this article...

Get Ready to Rethink Blogging...

If you are using WordPress (WP), then you should be using [version 2.9.2](#), the most up-to-date version of this blogging platform. If you are using version 2.9.2, then a transition to WP 3.0 – which is slated for delivery in the next month – should not be a problem. That said, sometimes upgrades to new WP versions can cause some issues for a variety of reasons.

First, if you've chosen a theme for your blog that is outdated, it may not be powerful enough to keep up with WP changes. Secondly, if you've messed around with your WP code, you may encounter problems with an upgraded version of this blogging format. Finally, if you haven't upgraded WP in a long while, then you not only are messing with your blog's security, you may encounter some layout or database issues when you do finally upgrade.

Unfortunately, even if you have stayed up-to-date with WP upgrades, you may find that something, somewhere, will go haywire with your upgrade to WP 3. I face the same trepidation when applying WP upgrades to my blogs; but, since I do stay on top of the upgrades, and since I do not mess with WP code, the only issue I may worry about is whether or not my theme will collapse or cooperate with new upgrades.

All that said, it sounds as though WP 3 is something worth watching for, as the changes in that blogging format's functionality could be just what you're looking for, especially if you want to use (or, are using) WP for a CMS (Content Management System). For this article, I [downloaded the beta](#) from Mashable to fill you in on what WP is about to offer to its users.

What to Expect in WordPress 3.0

There are at least five major changes that you'll discover in WP 3, and these changes are listed below along with a few other minor, but significant, details. Throughout this article, I'll supply you with some links so you can learn more about each upgrade detail from other writers or from WordPress.

New step in the installer

This step not only makes it easier to remember your login information, it also lets you know if your password is too weak and helps you to get rid of the default "admin" username (hallelujah!). This change makes it more difficult to guess the first user's login, helping to enhance security for your blog.

NOTE: If you do not choose to play with the beta (and I wouldn't, if I had a blog that I had been maintaining for months or years), when you upgrade to the newly available and thoroughly tested WP 3, you may still have that "admin" issue. But, you can change the "admin" name to another name for blogging purposes. The only way to eliminate the "admin" issue altogether is to begin with a fresh WP install, as you'll then be creating a fresh database.

New default theme

WordPress 3.0 intends to upgrade not only its functionality, but it will be the first time, ever, that the default template will take on a new look. Gone is [Kubrick](#), the blue-faced header and its easy-to-use format. Instead, Twenty Ten is the new look for the default WP blog. The Twenty Ten theme serves as a good example theme that includes new theme-based features, and looks nice on a public site. The Twenty Ten theme will be housed in the `wp-content/themes/twentyten` folder and is the only theme in the WordPress distribution, and includes custom background and header options.

Writing Frenzies

Just another WordPress weblog



About

Hello world!

Posted on [May 16, 2010](#) by [admin](#)

Welcome to WordPress. This is your first post. Edit or delete it, then start blogging!

Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [1 Comment](#) | [Edit](#)

Search

Archives

- [May 2010](#)

Meta

- [Site Admin](#)
- [Log out](#)

Writing Frenzies

Proudly powered by  WordPress.

The following image shows how you can alter the new default theme from your WP 3 admin panel (dashboard):

Writing Frenzies Search Engines Blocked New Post Howdy, admin | Log Out Help

[Dashboard](#) **Custom Background**

This is your current background.



Change Display Options

Position <input checked="" type="radio"/> Left <input type="radio"/> Center <input type="radio"/> Right	Repeat Tile	Attachment <input type="radio"/> Scroll <input checked="" type="radio"/> Fixed	Color # <input type="text"/> Select a Color
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[Save Changes](#)

Upload New Background Image

Choose an image from your computer:

[Browse...](#)

[Upload](#)

Appearance
Themes
Widgets
Menus
Background
Header
Editor
Plugins
Users
Tools
Settings

The screenshot shows the WordPress dashboard for 'Writing Frenzies'. The top navigation bar includes 'New Post', 'Howdy, admin | Log Out', and a 'Help' link. The left sidebar contains menu items: Dashboard, Posts, Media, Links, Pages, Comments, Appearance (expanded to show Themes, Widgets, Menus, Background, Header, Editor, Plugins, Users, Tools, Settings), and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Your Header Image' and features a grid of seven image thumbnails. Below the grid is a 'Save Changes' button. Underneath, there is a section for 'Upload New Header Image' with instructions and a 'Browse...' button to select an image from the computer, followed by an 'Upload' button.

New child theme support

As you may already know, I'm a huge fan of child themes. Child themes allow users to modify layouts without messing with code within WP or within an original theme. WP 3 offers improved [child theme](#) support, but I am not trying this feature out until the tested WP 3 becomes available.

Create custom post types

By default, WordPress lets you publish two types of content in either a "Post" or a "Page." According to [Masahable](#), in version 3.0, you can define additional content types with their own attributes. "For example, if you're running a WordPress site for a design agency, you might create a custom post type to display portfolio items, another for employee pages, and another for client testimonials. From there, you can customize your theme to better suit each individual post type."

With this custom magic, you can turn your site into something similar to [Tumblr](#) by creating custom post types for Test, Photo, Quote, Link, Chat, Audio and Video. If you're more accomplished with code, you could set a [number of arguments](#) to this new function that makes WordPress much more flexible. For those who want an easier option, visit [kovshenin.com](#) to learn more about custom post types.

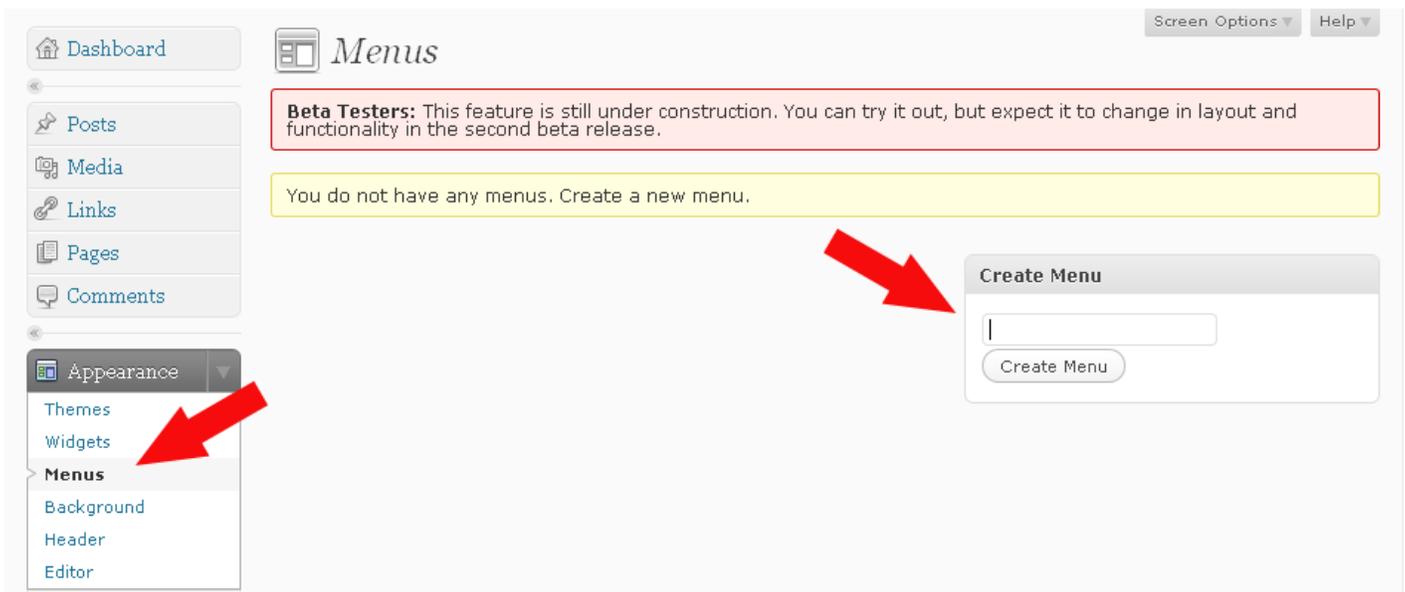
Beware, however, that if you set these arguments to beta, the tested and refined WP 3 make make those functions inoperable.

Note: If you have downloaded the beta and are playing along, note that there is a way to set a featured image in your new posts at the bottom of the right column in the "Add New Post" page. Since I am using the default theme for this article, I'm not sure that this feature will show up if another theme is uploaded to WP 3.

Custom menu system

The custom menu system (Appearance > Menus) is not quite finished. According to WP, "In Beta 2, the layout will be different and a bunch of the functionality will be improved, but we didn't want to hold things up for this one screen. You can play with making custom menus, and report bugs if you find them, but this is not how the final screen will look/work, so don't get attached to it."

The custom menu option is another step towards the CMS for WordPress. This new functionality makes it very easy to create custom menus by adding and mixing categories, pages or custom urls. WP 3 provides an easy drag-and-drop interface where you can embed these custom menus as a widget wherever your theme allows.



WordPress merges with WordPress MU

For some users, this is the biggest news of all. I haven't covered WordPress MU in my previous articles, so you may want to read up on this content management system at [WordPress](#). Basically, WP MU (Multi-User) allows users to create a site that contains multiple blogs. This is the system that WordPress uses to support [WordPress.com](#) a site that serves tens of millions of hits on millions of blogs each day.

You can brush up on [network usage](#) at WordPress, too, so you can decide whether or not to open your blog to a network of blogs.

NOTE: While this multi-blog and multi-user system is enticing, make sure you have server support for that type of online activity.

Custom taxonomies

This feature brings WP 3 to that true CMS format. [Custom taxonomies](#) allow users to create additional pieces of meta information, similar to creating sub-menus. Default includes "Categories" and "Tags," but now you can add additional types with an option for hierarchy.

Other Improvements

According to [PluggedIn](#), the following list of items will become available with WP 3:

- Change to comments UI to show when a comment is replying to another, and link to the parent comment
- Enable custom taxonomy UI for pages as well as for posts
- Show login form upon email-sent for recover/reset passwords
- New `wp_login_form()` provides a simple login form for use anywhere
- Allow "No role for this blog" to be chosen in Administration > Users > Add New panel

Additionally, WP 3 users will have the ability to create unique author templates. If you're running a multi-author blog and you'd like to apply unique styles or layouts to individual author pages, you'll have your chance to accomplish this goal.

Conclusion

Although it appears that WordPress is behind in their testing and finalizing schedule for WP 3 (it was supposed to be delivered this month, but it appears that the testing has not made it to Beta 2.0 yet), you probably can expect WP 3 to roll out in June. And, it won't stop there, as per usual.

WordPress has scheduled updates to WP 3, noting in their [Roadmap](#) that version 3.1 is scheduled for delivery in August, and that 3.2 is scheduled for release in November this year.

These releases alone make it somewhat imperative that you don't mess around with WP code or the code in your theme unless you are extremely self-assured that upgrades won't cause an issue with your changes.

In the meantime, I suggest you get excited about these new features and begin to think about the possibilities that WP3 might provide for your current blog or for a new blog. No matter what you decide to do, be sure to stick to the blog writing guidelines of choosing a subject and sticking with it. These new WP 3 features also have nothing to do with how well you write a post. Keep brushing up on those issues and when the new and tested WP 3 arrives, I'll be sure to let you know about how some of the new features work out.