



Every RVer Needs a Blog!

Your life ought to be a book! Here's how to write it – Day by Day.

Keep a log of your travels complete with Pictures and Links. Your friends and family will love you now, and you'll love yourself later when you have an organized record of your travels. It's EASY. With one click, you publish your pictures and writings to the world ...or just to yourself or your family ... it's up to you.

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What is a Blog?

A Web Log, weblog, shortened to Blog. A type of website where log entries are made, displayed in a reverse chronological order. Blogs often provide commentary on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. Blogs can contain text, photographs, videos and audio. As years go by, they get more sophisticated and can now be used for full-featured business websites.

Blogging is done using an instant web publishing system like Blogger, or Moveable Type, or WordPress. Templates create the look of the Blog. All the writer has to do is ... write.

Examples

Geeks on Tour, Jim and Chris' weblog (Blogger) www.geeksontour.blogspot.com

LOTS of RVers blogs at ... www.hitchhitch.com,

Club blog example: Frustrated Maestros: <http://www.frustratedmaestros.blogspot.com/>

A business site built with Blogger: www.instanteleganceinc.com

What is the difference between a Blog and a website?

Every Blog is a website, not every website is a blog

Because a Blog is on the web ... it *IS* a website. It's special because this website is made up of a collection of 'Posts.' All you do is write each individual post. The blogging system (Blogger, Wordpress, Typepad etc.) takes care of publishing the posts and providing an automatic organization by date, complete with archives. Your reader can choose to view your most current set of posts, an individual post page, an archived month of posts, or a group of posts by category or label. You can also create 'Pages' that are outside the dated flow of Posts – they show up on a menu.

Create a Blog using Blogger (see video tutorial 'Creating your first Blog')

3-steps: 1)Sign Up, 2)Name a Blog, 3)Choose a Template

1. Sign Up: Create a Blogger/Google account

www.blogger.com Blogger is owned by Google. If you already have a Gmail account, you're all set. It is the same Google username (email) and password that you will use for Blogger. Although it is possible to create a Google account with an email other than @gmail.com – we highly recommend using a gmail address. It just makes more sense – and gmail is a very good *free* email – just go to www.gmail.com and 'Sign up for Gmail'. Make sure to WRITE IT DOWN! Your username is the email address (you@gmail.com) and the password is the password.

See video: 'Get a gmail account'

Once you sign in with your Gmail account, you can fill in the information to sign up for Blogger. Then click 'Continue'

2. Name your Blog

The Blog title may be changed at any time. It is what appears at the top of your Blog's page. The Blog address should not be changed, and it must be unique. This is the address that a reader would type into their browser to get to your blog. Many names have already been taken, it may take a few tries to get one you can have. Use the 'Check Availability' link.

Notice that whatever address you choose will be followed by .blogspot.com. That is because your blog is hosted on Blogger's free servers – called blogspot.com. You can also buy your own domain name (e.g. www.mysite.com) for \$10/year and Blogger will use that as your 'Custom Domain.' Realize that your content will still be hosted on Blogger's servers, but the address your readers will use to get there will be www.mysite.com.

3. Pick a starter template

There are several to choose from. You can always change it later. Click on one and Continue.

Your Blog is now created

Logging in

Once you have a blog set up, the only things you need to remember are to go to www.blogger.com, your username, and your password. PLEASE have these written down!

The Dashboard

Once you're logged in, you will see the 'Dashboard'. You can actually have more than one blog if you like. They will all show up here. For each blog, you can view it, create a 'New Post' or Manage existing posts or settings. Notice the help that is available.



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Writing Blog Entries or 'Posts' (see tutorial video, 'Posting')

Once logged in, click 'New Post' on the blog you want to work with


Now you can type a title and whatever you want to say in the main white box. When you're ready, click "Publish Post" and you now have a web page!



All you have to tell friends is the address to your Blog, in our case it's www.geeksontour.blogspot.com

Adding photos (see tutorial video, 'Pictures')

Steps

-  While creating a post
- Click on photo icon
- Browse for photo on your computer
- Click Upload Image

Options

When you click on a picture in your blog, you will see options for: Left, Center, Right; Small, Medium, Large, and Remove



Note: if your photo upload process doesn't work like this, it may be that you are on the old Post Editor. To upgrade, go into your Settings / Basic. At the bottom of the screen check the 'Select post editor' it should be on 'Updated editor'

Photos are added to the post at the position of your insertion point (cursor). You can then drag them to a new location – or cut them from the wrong place and paste into the right place.

Preparing your photos

Blogger allows you to upload large photos and it will create the small version for the blog automatically. What your readers will see is the small version, when they click on it, it will open the large version. Then they click their 'Back' button to return to your blog.

BUT ... uploading large photos takes a long time and a lot of space. It is best to prepare your photos with something like Picasa, and Export them to a smaller size. I choose 800 pixels.




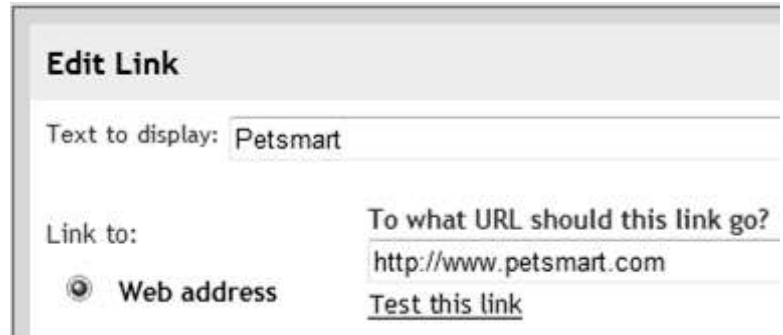
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Adding links (see video tutorial, 'Links')

Select the text that will be the clickable link

Click on the hyperlink button  in the toolbar. If you want to be sure you typed the link correctly, you can click 'Test this link' It will open in a new window and you can just close it to get back to Blogger.



Edit Link

Text to display:

Link to:

Web address

To what URL should this link go?

[Test this link](#)

Enter the web address (URL) to link to. Click OK

Changing the Date of a Post

Each post is automatically dated with the current date. If you want it to have a different date, click on 'Post Options' and you'll see where you can change the date.

Comments (see video tutorial, 'Settings for your Blog')


When readers leave a comment, it's nice to be notified. Go to Settings and click on Comments. At the bottom you'll see a setting for Email Notification for Comments. Put your email address in there. If you find you are getting unwanted comments, you can choose to be notified before the comment is posted and you can approve it first. Set 'Enable Comment Moderation' to Yes.

Private Blogs

Another setting is called Permissions. You can specify who can see your blog, and who can write to your blog. This is a great way to make a private group website. For example, a family could set up a blog where every member of the family is an 'Author' and only Authors can see the blog.

Learn More

This seminar briefly covers approximately 7 lessons. We have recorded tutorial videos on 27 lessons total. Each lesson is a 4-7 minute video. So, there are lots more to learn! You can buy the videos on our 'Show-Me-How' DVD, or they are also online as part of a Geeks on Tour membership. – see our Blogging Tutorials page <http://www.geeksontour.com/blogger.cfm>



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