

Blogging 2 Learn Week 2 – Introducing the Dashboard

(Your main control panel)

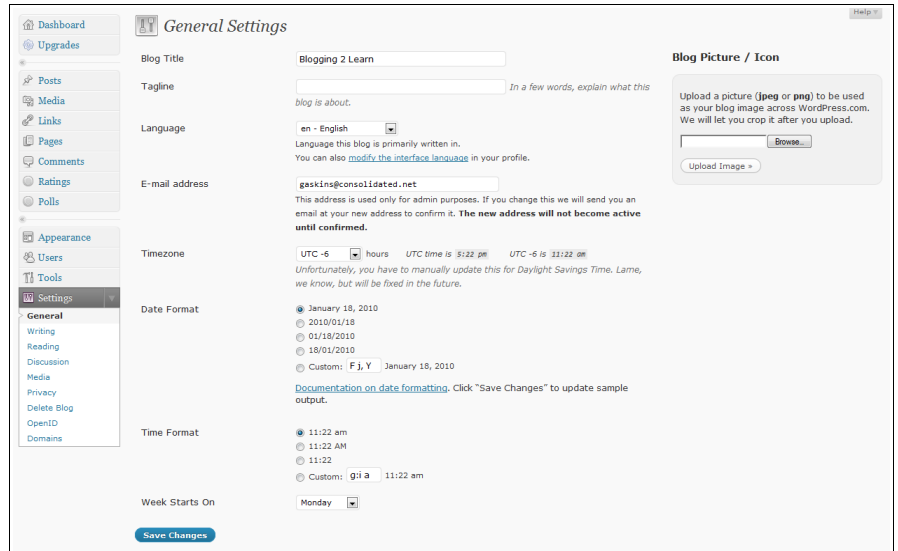
Things to notice:

- The *Gray Stripe* at top is always visible when you are logged in. This gives you an easy way to get back to your Dashboard from anywhere on WordPress.com.
- Click your blog's name to go to your blog. Notice the *Header* (where your blog name is shown), the *Sidebar* (we will work on this in later classes), the *Hello world* post (your homework), and the *About* page (more homework). Click *My Dashboard* to get back to your control panel.
- Skim the *Sidebar*, which will let you click to all sorts of different places to find information about your blog.
- *QuickPress* is an easy way to enter a short blog post and either *Save Draft* (if you plan to work on it more later) or *Publish* it right away.
- *Recent Drafts* shows the posts you have started but have not yet published.
- *Stats* will show you how many people have visited your blog recently. It does not count your own visits (when you are logged in).

The screenshot shows the WordPress.com dashboard for the blog 'Blogging 2 Learn'. The top navigation bar includes 'My Account', 'My Dashboard', 'New Post', and 'Blog Info'. A search bar is on the right. The main dashboard area is titled 'Dashboard' and features a yellow announcement banner for 'WordPress.com: Now on HootSuite'. Below this, the 'Right Now' section provides a quick overview: 44 Posts, 9 Comments, 2 Pages, 9 Approved, 7 Categories, 0 Pending, and 0 Tags. It also indicates the theme is 'Garland' with 10 widgets and a message from Akismet about spam protection. The 'QuickPress' section allows for creating a new post with fields for Title, Content, and Tags, and buttons for 'Save Draft', 'Reset', and 'Publish'. The 'Recent Drafts' section lists several draft posts, including 'Spam Comments', 'books widget', and 'Week 9: Finding and Keeping Readers (Lesson Draft)'. The 'Recent Comments' section shows a list of comments from users like 'TeacherMom' and 'Carol Topp, CPA'. The 'Stats' section at the bottom right features a line graph titled 'Views per day' showing a peak of 10 views on a specific day.

Settings > General

- Change your *Blog Title* to the way you want it shown on your blog itself.
- Set your *Timezone*.
Central Time is UTC -6.
- Set your preferred *Time Format* and *Week Starts On*.
- Be sure to click *Save Changes*!



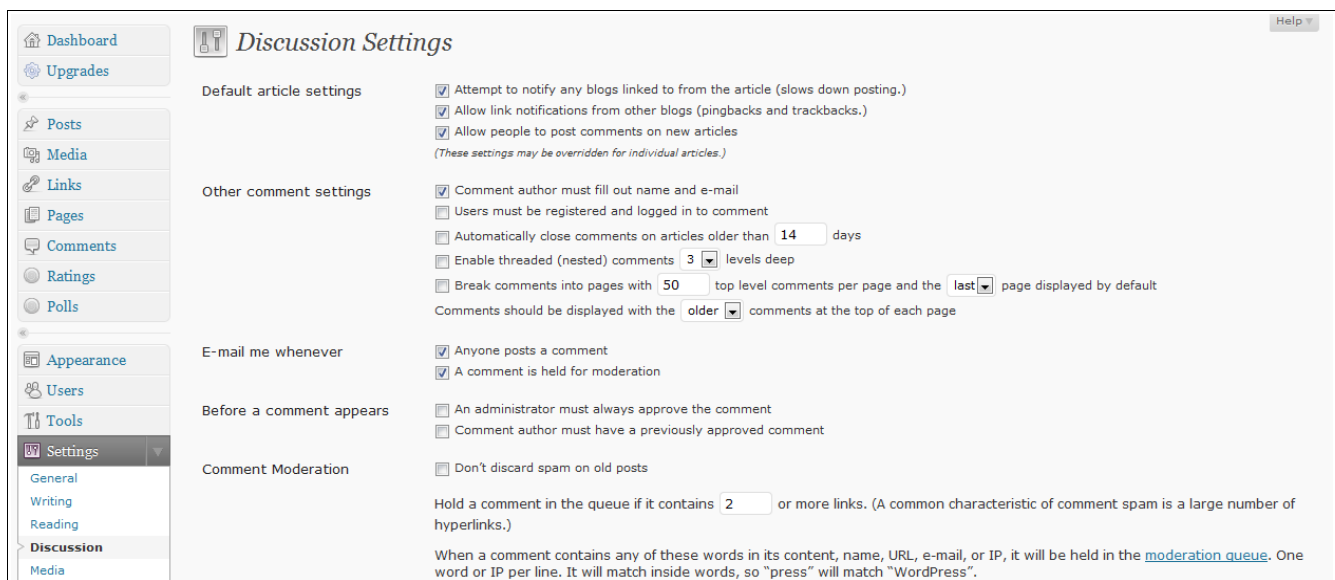
The screenshot shows the 'General Settings' page in WordPress. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Dashboard, Upgrades, Posts, Media, Links, Pages, Comments, Ratings, Polls, Appearance, Users, Tools, and Settings. The 'Settings' menu is expanded to show 'General', 'Writing', 'Reading', 'Discussion', 'Media', 'Privacy', 'Delete Blog', 'OpenID', and 'Domains'. The main content area is titled 'General Settings' and includes the following fields:

- Blog Title:** Blogging 2 Learn
- Tagline:** (empty)
- Language:** en - English
- E-mail address:** gaskins@consolidated.net
- Timezone:** UTC -6 hours
- Date Format:** January 18, 2010
- Time Format:** 11:22 am
- Week Starts On:** Monday

On the right, there is a 'Blog Picture / Icon' section with an 'Upload Image' button. A 'Save Changes' button is at the bottom.

Settings > Discussion

Click or un-click boxes to match the settings shown below. These settings make it easy for people to comment on your blog posts, and the email settings make sure you know about all comments. Remember to click *Save Changes*!



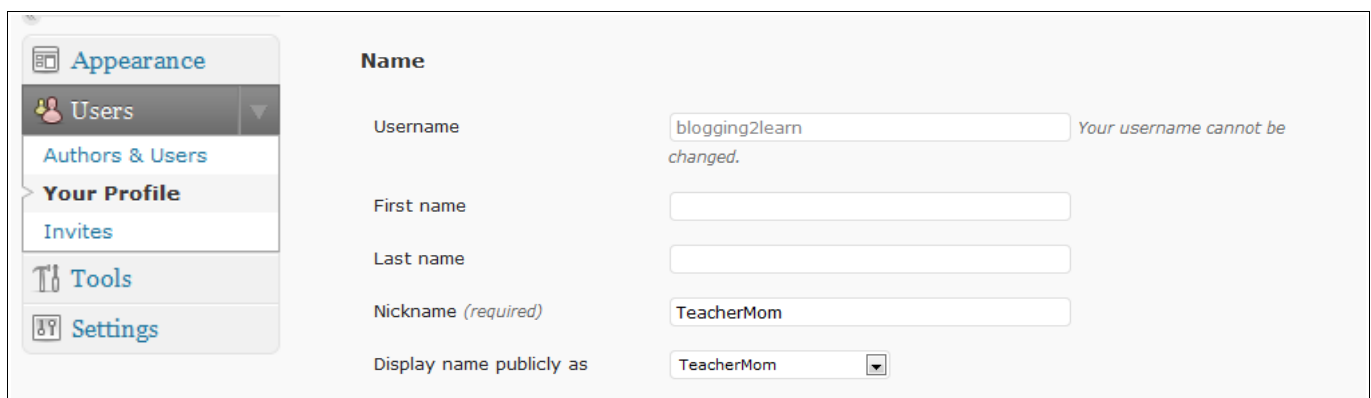
The screenshot shows the 'Discussion Settings' page in WordPress. The left sidebar is the same as in the previous screenshot, with 'Settings' expanded to 'Discussion'. The main content area is titled 'Discussion Settings' and includes the following sections:

- Default article settings:** All checkboxes are checked: 'Attempt to notify any blogs linked to from the article (slows down posting.)', 'Allow link notifications from other blogs (pingbacks and trackbacks.)', and 'Allow people to post comments on new articles'. A note below says '(These settings may be overridden for individual articles.)'
- Other comment settings:** 'Comment author must fill out name and e-mail' is checked. 'Users must be registered and logged in to comment' is unchecked. 'Automatically close comments on articles older than 14 days' is unchecked. 'Enable threaded (nested) comments 3 levels deep' is checked. 'Break comments into pages with 50 top level comments per page and the last page displayed by default' is checked. 'Comments should be displayed with the older comments at the top of each page' is checked.
- E-mail me whenever:** Both checkboxes are checked: 'Anyone posts a comment' and 'A comment is held for moderation'.
- Before a comment appears:** Both checkboxes are unchecked: 'An administrator must always approve the comment' and 'Comment author must have a previously approved comment'.
- Comment Moderation:** 'Don't discard spam on old posts' is unchecked. Below this, there is a text field with '2' and a note: 'Hold a comment in the queue if it contains 2 or more links. (A common characteristic of comment spam is a large number of hyperlinks.)' Below that, another text field contains 'press' and a note: 'When a comment contains any of these words in its content, name, URL, e-mail, or IP, it will be held in the moderation queue. One word or IP per line. It will match inside words, so "press" will match "WordPress".'

A 'Save Changes' button is at the bottom.

Users > Your Profile

Scroll down to find the place you can enter your *Nickname*. Change it to whatever you want. Make sure *Display name publicly as* shows what you want. Save changes.



The screenshot shows the 'Users > Your Profile' page in WordPress. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Appearance, Users, Authors & Users, Your Profile, Invites, Tools, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Name' and includes the following fields:

- Username:** blogging2learn (Note: 'Your username cannot be changed.') (disabled)
- First name:** (empty)
- Last name:** (empty)
- Nickname (required):** TeacherMom
- Display name publicly as:** TeacherMom

Appearance > Extras

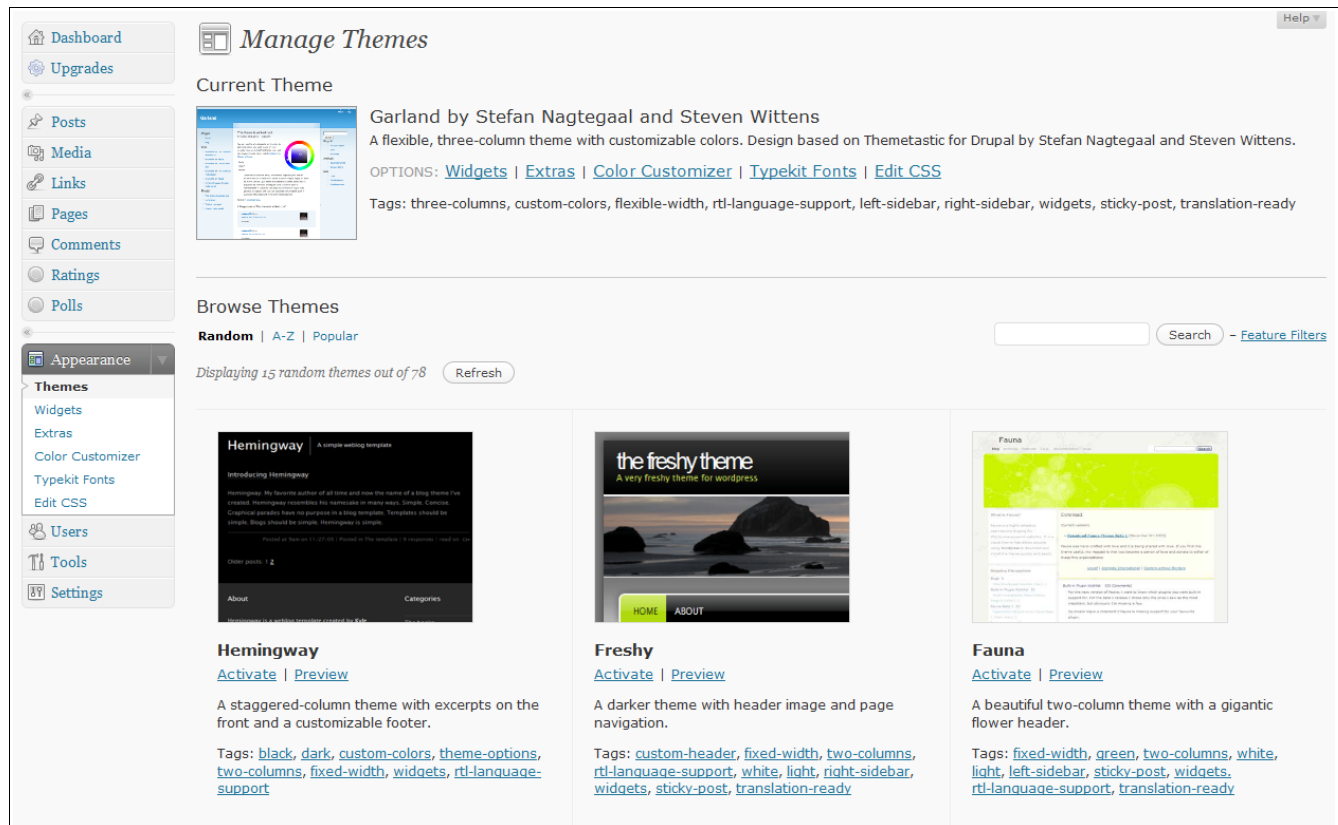
Click and unclick to match what is shown here. Don't forget to click *Update*.



Appearance > Themes

Finally, time to play!

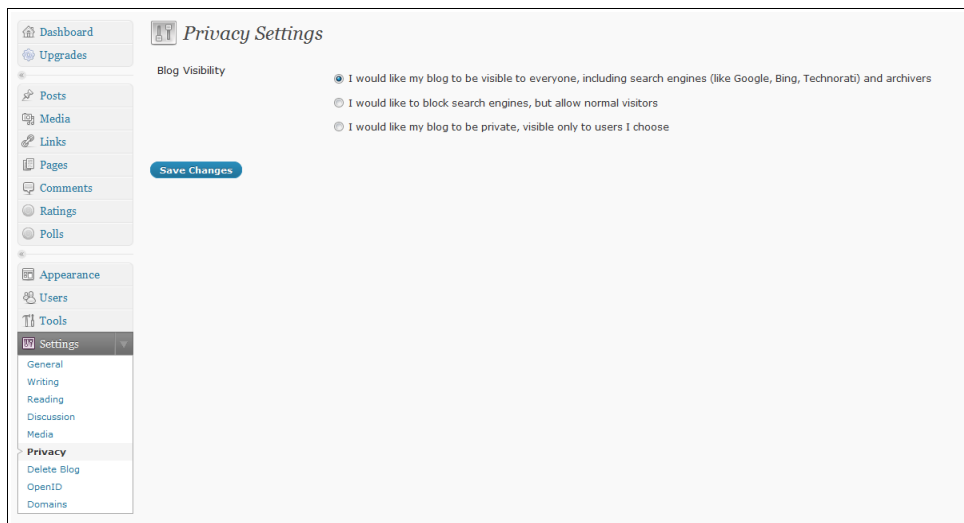
- WordPress.com offers more than 70 blog themes to choose from, so you should be able to find at least one that matches your personality.
- If a theme says *custom-header*, that means you can add your own picture in place of the one that is shown. If it says *custom-colors*, that means you can change the colors to whatever you want.
- Click *Preview* to see what the theme looks like. Click *Activate* if you want to keep it.



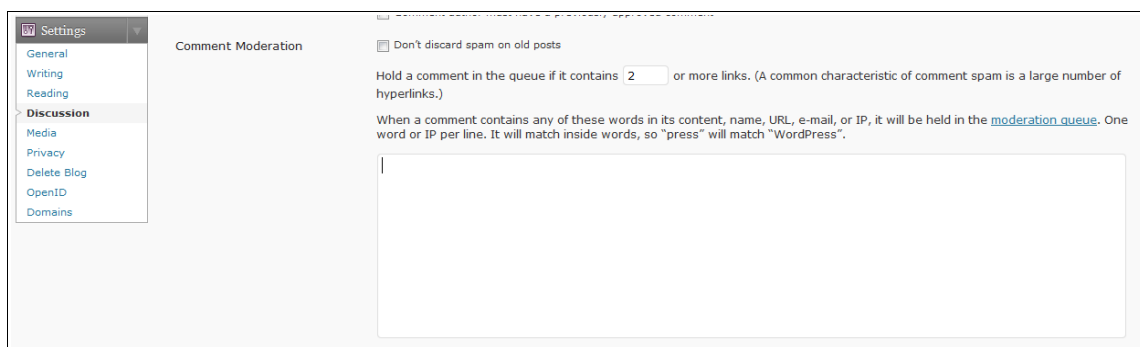
Week 2 Blogging Homework

1. **Edit the *Hello world* post to tell about yourself.** Remember to follow Internet safety! No full names or other specific details, but share with us a little about your hobbies, favorite books to read, favorite subjects in school, pets, or other interesting things. Be sure to click *Update* to save your changes!
2. **Delete the *Sample Comment*.**
3. **Edit the *About* page to tell about you.** Feel free to copy part of what you wrote in your *Hello world* post. Remember to click *Update*.

4. **Talk with your parents about privacy settings.** Go to **Settings > Privacy** to see what your options are. I recommend the first or second option, but your parents may prefer the third option. Set it to whatever they say, and then click *Save Changes*.



5. **Talk with your parents about *Comment Moderation*.** Go to **Settings > Discussion** and find the *Comment Moderation* section. Notice the *moderation queue* box.



- Type into this box all the hateful or nasty words that you and your parents can think of, words that you would not want people to use on your blog. (Examples: *hate, kill, dumb, stupid*, or assorted curse words.) Put one word per line: type a word, hit *Enter*, type the next word, etc.
- Whenever a person tries to write a comment with one of these words, it will not be published. You will get an email saying that the comment has been held for moderation. If the comment is just some jerk being rude, you can delete it. But sometimes you will find that the comment is OK – for example, if your moderation list included *ass*, then a comment talking about “how important it is not to make *assumptions* about other people” would go into moderation. Then you would have to click *Approve* so the comment can show up on your blog.
- DO NOT type anything in the *Comment Blacklist* box.