# Themes

A WordPress theme is a collection of files that determine **the look and feel** of a WordPress website. It includes templates for the website's pages, styling for various elements, and functionalities that are specific to the theme. Themes can be customized by users to change the layout, colors, and other design elements of their website. WordPress offers a wide variety of free and paid themes to choose from.

### Activity: Explore portfolios & design your site

Before choosing a theme, decide which characteristics of a site you like and don't like. One way to do this is to explore other people's portfolios and note what you like and don't like about them.

Once you know what you want, use a graphic tool (it could be PowerPoint) to roughly sketch out the design for your site. It is a good idea to choose a color scheme and key imagery before you choose your theme.

## Choosing a Theme

You can choose from 1000s of available free themes, or you can pay for a premium theme. I recommend starting out with a free theme and only pay for a theme if you are certain you will want it.

Although the theme affects many aspects of the way your site looks, they are also highly customizable. This can make choosing a theme challenging, as you may not know if the theme works the way you want until after you have made specific customizations. Further, with the introduction of full site editing, you can now build your own theme without the need for any coding. This gives you even more flexibility in how your site looks.

## Video: Choosing a theme

This video was recorded before full site editing was available. The method for installing the themes is the same; however, themes that support full site editing will likely not use the WordPress Customizer to control the sites look and feel, rather, they use the full site editor.



[Watch on YouTube](Watch on YouTube)

## Tip

When installing themes ensure that you have at least **three** pages and **three** posts on your site as well as a few images; otherwise, you will not get a good sense of how the site will look with the theme.

You can filter themes based upon a variety of different features. As WordPress changes, the things that you can filter on also changes. Claire Brotherton provides a great resource that describes what the different feature filters mean.

## Tip

Choose a theme that supports **block patterns**. At the time of writing, this is one of the newer features of WordPress. Choosing a theme that supports block pattern helps to ensure that you are getting a theme that is designed for a newer version of WordPress.

If you wish to use the full site editor, you must choose a theme that supports **site editing**.

> **Tip**
>
> If your site is being used as a portfolio for a position in education (e.g. K-12 or higher ed), it is highly recommended that you choose a theme that is **accessible**.