

# FAQ

## Answers to Common Questions of UW Blogs Network Blog Owners

- [When should I choose a WordPress Network blog vs. setting up my own?](#)
- [Are there limitations on how I use my blog?](#)
- [Will my blog be backed up and can it be restored if data is lost?](#)
- [Do UW data ownership and retention policies affect my blog?](#)
- [Can I have a custom URL for my WordPress Network blog?](#)
- [What are the controls and limits for comments to my blog?](#)
- [Can I be alerted if there is spam posted to my blog and what can I do about it?](#)
- [Can I get a custom theme or plugin for my blog?](#)
- [I noticed that the flash-based media uploader isn't activated. Why not?](#)
- [Who can read my blog; can I limit access?](#)

[When should I choose a WordPress Network blog vs. setting up my own?](#)

Setting up a WordPress blog on the UW Web Publishing site can be a difficult and time-consuming task. It involves downloading, installing and configuring both database and WordPress software applications. If you need full control and customization, then you probably want to install things yourself.

Many people are happy with a basic WordPress blog and just want to get started with out a lot of technical work. That is the need the UW WordPress Network blog service meets. You can have a blog ready to use in just minutes and don't have to worry about maintaining or upgrading your blog. You have some options for themes and plugins and administrator control of posting and comments. UW WordPress Network blogs do not allow blog owners to install additional plugins or themes, but you can request to have these installed.

[Are there limitations on how I use my blog?](#)

Yes, the UW Web Publishing service and UW WordPress Network blogs are provided for use in support of academic, research and administrative activities. Your blog should be set up and operated in accordance with state laws and [UW policy](#).

[Will my blog be backed up and can it be restored if data is lost?](#)

- Because your UW WordPress Network blog is using UW IT servers, it is protected against server failures. The application and data are regularly backed up and the service, with your blog data, will be restored by UW IT staff if the server fails. Backups are made daily so blog activities within the last 24 hours prior to loss are likely to be lost.
- If a blog is deactivated, the content will remain present on the server, but in an inactive state. After two weeks of deactivation, the content may be deleted.
- Blog owners can choose to export their content to a local device if they so choose.

[Do UW data ownership and retention policies affect my blog?](#)

Yes.

[Can I have a custom URL for my WordPress Network blog?](#)

All UW WordPress Network blogs will be accessed via links like:

`blogs.uw.edu/netid`

However, to achieve a custom address, the URL Forwarding service can be used with WordPress Network blogs. That would allow use of a custom domain address which would forward to your blog. Only forwarding is available, not URL masking.

More information and a request form are available in the IT Connect [URL Forwarding and Masking](#) page.

[What are the controls and limits for comments to my blog?](#)

Blogs are created with a default set of controls on comments. The blog owner can change the settings, including restricting access to NetID-holders only, forcing all comments through moderation, or disabling comments entirely. Akismet provides a layer of spam protection for comments.

Blog owners can view and change settings via the blog's Dashboard. Choose the Settings control, then "Discussion"

By default:

- Comments may be posted on new articles (blog posts)
- To comment the author must enter a name and email address
- Only the first comment by an author will be held for moderation
- Blog owners will be emailed whenever there is any comment posted, and when there is a comment held for moderation

More restrictive policies can be established by the blog owner.

### Can I be alerted if there is spam posted to my blog and what can I do about it?

By default, you will receive an email for any comment that has passed the spam checks and is either awaiting final approval or has been posted directly. While a vast majority of spam comments are caught and no further action is required from you, there may be cases where a spam comment is passed as valid. You will be able to mark it as spam and the comment will be removed.

### Can I get a custom theme or plugin for my blog?

The UW Blogs Network come with a set of standard themes and plugins. Blog owners can see those and implement the choices via the blog Dashboard under the "Appearance" and "Plugins" controls. No custom themes or plugins can be installed for UW WordPress Network blogs by individual site owners. If you are not seeing what you are looking for, make sure to check [JetPack](#), which is a 'best-of' plugin that is provided. However, if you have one you'd like to have considered to be made available, please let us know by sending an email request to "help@uw.edu"

### I noticed that the flash-based media uploader isn't activated. Why not?

Adobe Flash only supports certain types of authenticated uploading behavior. There is an issue with most browsers that renders the UW's NetID authentication incompatible with the flash-based uploading tool. Rather than open up the install to security issues, we have instead chosen to only allow the more traditional browser-based uploading mechanism.

### Who can read my blog; can I limit access?

Blogs are readable by anyone who has the address. We're currently looking into possible solutions to enable blog owners to restrict their blog to certain NetIDs or NetID groups. However, this is currently not a feature that is available for use.