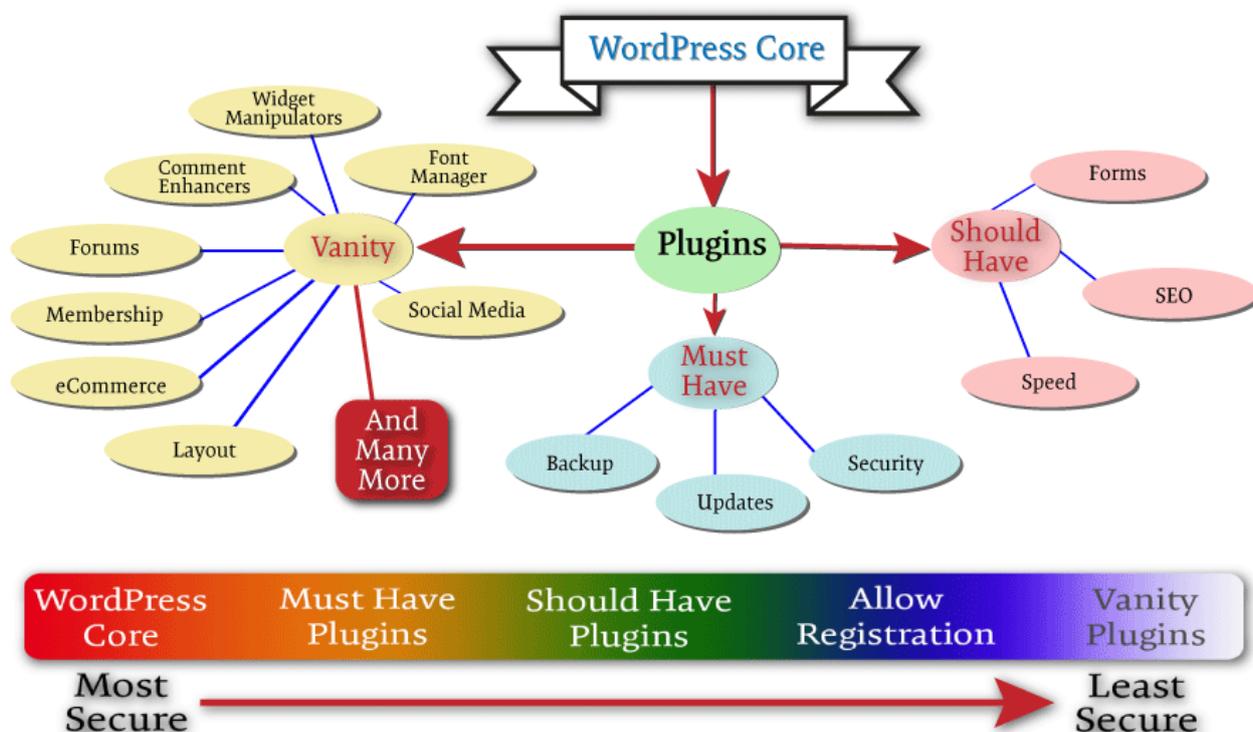# Types of WordPress Plugins I Should Use



WordPress plugins tree

**As you can see from the above chart,** it is more like the family tree of plugins off the main WordPress core. The explanation and the presentation of it is my interpretation of the WordPress plugin hierarchy. I know some of you may not agree, some of you will, and even more of you will think it is over simplified, but that's the kind of thing I meant to convey.

**The WordPress core itself is extremely secure**, and by that I mean as secure as any content management system, CMS out there can be. Since it is written and updated by developers, and has a whole community behind it helping its validity, it is one of the most secure CMS's out there today. It has checks and balances because if it.

**The WordPress core, (red,) is the most secure version** of your site. As it moves to the right and you keep adding more and more things, such as plugins, it gets less secure, (white.) Coming off of the green into the blue area denotes a

website that is more vulnerable to breaking and/ or getting hacked. My best advice is to make sure security is in place, and research your vanity plugins thoroughly before installing them.

**Must have plug-ins:** These are the plugins in my book that I feel no WordPress website should be without. This will definitely vary from person to person, and from developer to developer. These are the plugins that I recommend, and I am totally open to this changing as I learn more or hear better arguments. That can happen a lot in this business, and one of the coolest thing about WordPress. In this area I have the following categories: **Backups, Updating, Security, and Anti-spam.**

**Should have WordPress plugins:** These are the plugins that you will install after you have finished installing and testing the plugins on the "Must have" list. This section, plus the previous section will give you a fully functioning interactive site, with the bare minimum of headache when you are trying to keep your site secure. I have included the following categories in this area: **SEO, Caching, Responsiveness, and Forms.** Personally I don't think you can do without any of the plug-ins from either of the above areas. This, to me, is a full site if you are looking to have a functional, interactive site, that also has the chance to be discovered in the web.

**Vanity WordPress plugins:** Believe it or not, this is a favourite section of mine. I do like my Vanity plugins, because some of them are really cool, add value, and most are very well supported. I am not one of those developer that will poo-poo you because you want to add vanity plugins to your website. If I am designing your website you just have to abide by my rules when it comes to any plugins in this category. You just have to be careful how you choose a Vanity plugin, and what purpose it is supposed to serve on your site.

**I have created a table for you to look at** with specific examples of plugins I use that fall into each of the areas. Also when adding a new plugin directly from the list below, I have outlined the procedure below, and this procedure should work most of the time, but otherwise it is very easy to figure out:

1. Click the link to the plugin
2. Download the plugin to your hard-drive
3. Go back into your "Admin" section of your site

4. Select "Plugins"
5. Select "Add New"
6. Select "Upload Plugin" at the top of the page
7. Cling the "Choose file" button
8. Find the plugin on your heard-drive – highlight file and select Open, (usually in your downloads folder.)
9. Click the "Install Now"
10. Activate plugin
11. Re-read documentation on the plugin to know how it sets itself up on your computer
12. Check that plugin is there and configure it

**Video coming soon on how to download and install a plugin**

| Area | Category | Specific plugin (* = Best in my book) |
|---|---|---|
| **Must Have** | **Backup** | Backup Buddy * No free version<br>BackWPUp * – Free |
| | **Updating** | iThemes Sync * Free – on-line service<br>JetPack Monitor Free – on-line service<br>ManageWP * Monthly subscription – on-line service |
| | **Security** | iThemes Security * Free and paid version<br>Sucuri * No free version – on-line<br>CloudFlare * Free and paid version – on-line service<br>Really Simple CAPTCHA – Free |
| | **Anti-Spam** | Akismet – * Free and comes with WordPress |
| **Should Have** | **SEO** | WordPress SEO by Yoast * Free and paid version |
| | **Caching** | W3 Total Cache * – Free and paid version<br>P3 (Plugin Performance Profiler) – Free |
| | **Responsiveness** | WP Touch * – Paid version<br>JetPack Mobile theme – Free |
| | **Forms** | Gravity Forms * – No free version<br>Contact Forms 7 * Free |
| **Vanity** | **Editor** | WPEdit * Free |
| | **Social buttons** | Floating Social Bar * Free<br>SumoMe – Free and paid version – On-line service with plugin |

| Area | Category | Specific plugin (* = Best in my book) |
|---|---|---|
| | Widgets | Display Widgets – Free |
| | Media Library | Enhanced Media Library – Free |
| | Typogrphy | Google Font Manager – Free<br>Hide Title – Free<br>No Page Comment – Free<br>Yet Another Related Posts Plugin – Free |

**There are definitely tons more plugins than this**, but this will give you a basic idea of the areas that you will most likely need to fill first. Whatever you are looking for can be found by following the steps above the table for finding a plugin or a type of plugin. Let's say you have an idea and you want to see if there is a plugin exists that might help, then type it in.

**Remember that a bad plugin has the potential** of crashing your site. So when you install a plugin, always check that your site is working after **EACH** install. Don't install 5 or 6 plugins, and then check your site. If it isn't working, then there is no way to tell which plugin was responsible. So take your time and test, test, test as much as you can. Try and limit the number of plugins you install, and delete the plugins that you are not using. Also delete any themes that you aren't using as well. This can help the possible chances that a hacker can get to your website, but all of this is discussed in another article with this site, when I talk about how to tighten up, or lock down your site.

# Limit Logins

**Limit Login Attempts –** By Johan Eenfeldt

**This plugin will limit the number of login attempts** possible both through normal login as well as using auth cookies. By default WordPress allows unlimited login attempts either through the login page or by sending special cookies. This allows passwords (or hashes) to be brute-force cracked with relative ease. Limit Login Attempts blocks an Internet address from making further attempts after a specified limit on retries is reached, making a brute-force attack difficult or

impossible.

**This is why it is important to research and test. Test Test Test!** I used to like this plugin, but it has gotten the better of me a few times and my clients – it is too tough and I was still getting comment spam with it. Locked myself out quite a few times with this.Two mistypes, and hitting the enter key on a blank password locked me out. I know you can set it however you like, but not user friendly enough for me.

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# iThemes Sync

This is an awesome unobtrusive plugin to help you keep track of all of your theme and plugin updates. Easy to install and configure which is a plus for me. **In their own words:**

> *It's important to keep your WordPress sites updated, both for the security of your site and to take advantage of the latest features and improvements of your themes and plugins.*

> *Updates to WordPress core and any plugins or themes installed on your sites can happen pretty frequently. And if you're managing multiple WordPress sites, keeping them all updated can take up a lot of your valuable time.*

> *iThemes Sync is an easy way to manage updates for all your WordPress sites from one place. Instead of logging in to each site individually, you have one place to view and install available updates.*

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# iThemes Security

**Maybe it is because I know the developer**, maybe it's because it's a great plugin or a combination of both, but I love this plugin. It covers a lot of bases when it comes to WordPress website security, and gives me peace of mind for my website. It isn't the only thing I have installed but it is a must and a first security install for me on a clients site. **In their own words:**

**"iThemes Security shows you a list** of things to do to make your site more secure with a simple way to turn options on or off. We've simplified these steps and provided descriptions of each action so you know exactly what's happening on your site. You shouldn't have to be a security pro to use a security plugin. And isn't that the point?"

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# WP product review

**Spent ages looking for the right plugin**. One that looked nice and integrated with WordPress easily. This is the plugin I settled with. I am still in the process of finding out if it works for me, but so far I love it. I would like to see it as a plugin that created its on review section with searchable reviews, but I don't think the free version has that ability.

**I just have to come up with a way** to show the posts and make them searchable, which is why all reviews have their own category, but share tag taxonomis. Looking forward to updating this review soon, but I highly recommend it.

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# WordPress SEO

**WordPress SEO** – By [Team Yoast](#) – *a must install*

Love this plugin and it is a must have, but there is a learning curve with this, and this is where my yerly subscription to lynda.com comes in handy. I can learn from the best in there.

The first true all-in-one SEO solution for WordPress, including on-page content analysis, XML sitemaps and much more.