

What You Need to Construct a Website

To construct a website, you need to have some basic hardware and software – and you need to know how to use them. This is usually the “Achilles heel” of website construction. For every piece of hardware that you use – you also need to know HOW to use its software. It’s a steep learning curve to put up your own website. To construct a website, you will need the following:

1) A computer with an Internet connection. The computer must be powerful enough to utilize the software.

2) You will need a website host provider. A host is a computer where your Internet site is stored and is the computer where other people go to access your website. It is NOT your personal computer. I use [GoDaddy](#) but there are many other companies from which to choose. Prices, terms, and size of the website that you can post vary by provider. Check carefully before you sign up. Some Internet providers have pricing plans which limit customers in the website size and access speed. Don’t pay for more access than you anticipate needing. If you exceed the space that you initially sign up for you will be notified and can always increase your access plan.

3) You should get your own domain name, which you essentially "rent" from a host provider. I rent the WebguyDavis.com address through GoDaddy. The cost for a domain name varies a lot and can vary greatly by provider.

4) You will also need an SSL License (Secure Sockets Layer). An SSL is a standard security technology for establishing an encrypted link between a server and a client—typically a web server (website) and a browser, or a mail server and a mail client. Websites that have an SSL have a small, locked padlock symbol next to their name in the address bar.

5) I have found it is better to get the domain name, web hosting, and SSL all from the same vendor. Having everything with the same vendor is typically cheaper (they sometimes offer discounts) and makes it easy when you have to make changes or updates to your site.

6) There are two basic ways to build your own website.

A) You can start from scratch by using a website construction program. This program allows you to put words, pictures and files on web pages and see what it looks like

before you post your pages on your host provider. These are typically “drag and drop” programs. One of the best programs is named [Adobe Dreamweaver](#). While Dreamweaver is a very powerful program, learning how to use the program requires a steep learning curve.

B) The second way to construct a website is to use internet companies that have set up pre-made template websites. These sites allow you, for a fee, to use already constructed “boilerplate” templates of a website. You fill in the information, navigation system, photographs, etc. into a pre-made form. While template websites are much easier to use, there is still a lot of learning prior to making your own site. I use [GoDaddy's "Website Builder"](#) program for all my template websites, but there are many other companies that provide a similar service. Costs will vary, as will the hosting companies' requirements. Some are very inexpensive but in return require you to have advertisements on your site. Check the fine print carefully before selecting a template hosting company. This website is a template site hosted by GoDaddy.

5) In working with clients, I have found that they typically underestimate all the time and work that goes into constructing and updating a website. To begin, you need to decide on a color scheme, a logo, what the overall look of the site will be and what will be included in the navigation system. Once the overall look has been determined you will need content, photos and/or videos. As I eventually end up telling my clients, “The devil is in the details.” As a Webmaster you are starting out with a blank computer screen - when you're done you have a website. In-between there are a million decisions that must be made and a lot of writing to be done.