



INSPIRING ENTERPRISE

Building Better Opportunities

## Build your own website for business

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### Your options

**It's really easy to build your own website.** Even if you're not very technical or not very good with design. An ever-growing number of tools are available, making it really simple for business owners like you to do it themselves.

#### Reasons why someone else should build your website

If it's so easy, why doesn't everyone build their own? Some reasons are:

- They don't have the time.
- They want complex features on their site.
- They want it to rank highly in a very competitive market.

Website building tools have their limitations. If you want a simple site with a few pages of information and the option to blog, they're great. If you're looking to sell products or take appointments online, it can get trickier. These are possible, and the tools are improving all the time, but it can be harder to set up.

#### The essentials of a website solution

**Domain name** - your website address, such as myflowershop.co.uk. Most DIY systems make it easy to buy this.

**Hosting** - the computer where your website is stored. You'll want to pay a professional hosting company for this. Most DIY systems provide this as part of their fee.

**Email** - this is often part of the DIY package but could cost extra per email account.

**Plugins** - many systems have extra elements that allow you to add features such as email signup and ecommerce. Not all of these are free.

#### What you can expect to pay

You should budget £20-£30 per month for your website. It could be less, as a promotional deal.

#### Tips for choosing the best solutions for you

- Decide your budget.
- Talk to other people about their experience of website building tools.
- Research online, including using free trials to get a feel for how the systems work.

## Do-it-yourself website tools you should consider

You have many options to choose from, including some that may be specific to the industry you work in. Here are some you could look at first:

**Shopify** - designed specifically for ecommerce, it comes with a host of tools for managing sales.

Pros: Has many plugins available for different features.

Cons: Relatively expensive compared to other website builders.

**Squarespace** - has a reputation for high quality design templates.

Pros: Great for blogging and even allows hosting of podcasts.

Cons: Quite a limited set of plugins available.

## WordPress

There are two versions, WordPress.com and WordPress.org

### WordPress.com

Pros: A low-cost way to use the single most popular website builder in the world.

Cons: Has limited options compared to the WordPress.org option.

### WordPress.org

Pros: Probably gives the best balance between being user-friendly and very customisable.

Cons: It does require a higher level of technical confidence to get good results.

**Wix** - one of the leading DIY site systems.

Pros: Has a good variety of pricing options, including a free version.

Cons: It can be hard to change between design templates.

## Limitations of website building tools

Making websites easy to build, at a low cost to you, does come at a price. By taking this route you're giving up:

- Complete control over your site - you're reliant on the host's technology and security.
- Capability to change what you want - there are usually limitations to what you can customise.
- Ease of changing to another system - it's not easy to switch from one to another.

Many search engine optimisation (SEO) specialists say some of these tools aren't ideal if you want your site to rank really well in search results. However, this is probably only a concern if you sell in a very competitive market.

Further reading:

- [Your first website: a 6 step guide](#)
- [Google Digital Garage webinars](#)

