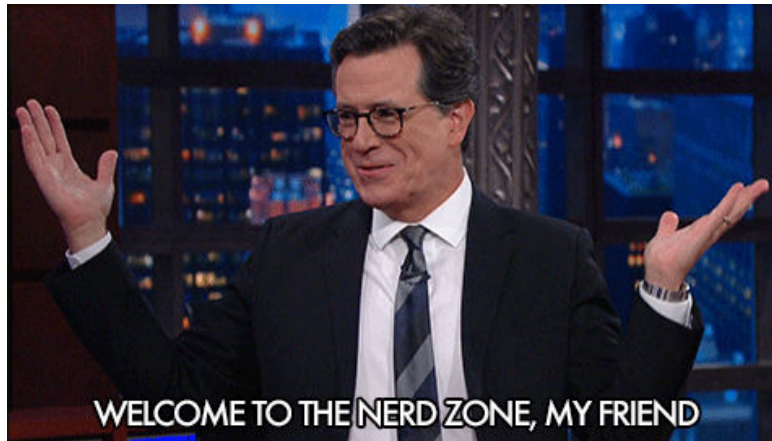


## Initial WordPress setup

Last Updated / Reviewed: Jan 10th, 2023

Execution Time: 5-10 minutes



**Goal:** To perform an initial setup of your new self-hosted WordPress site, after downloading it from [WordPress.org](https://WordPress.org), making sure that your new website is SEO-friendly.

**Ideal Outcome:** Your website will be optimized for better indexing and Yoast plugin is correctly installed and working on the website.

**Prerequisites or Requirements:** This exact process only applies to self-hosted WordPress sites.

**Why this is important:** Having an SEO-friendly website set up from the beginning will ensure that pages are correctly indexed, understood, and displayed on search engines.

**Where this is done:** In your WordPress admin panel.

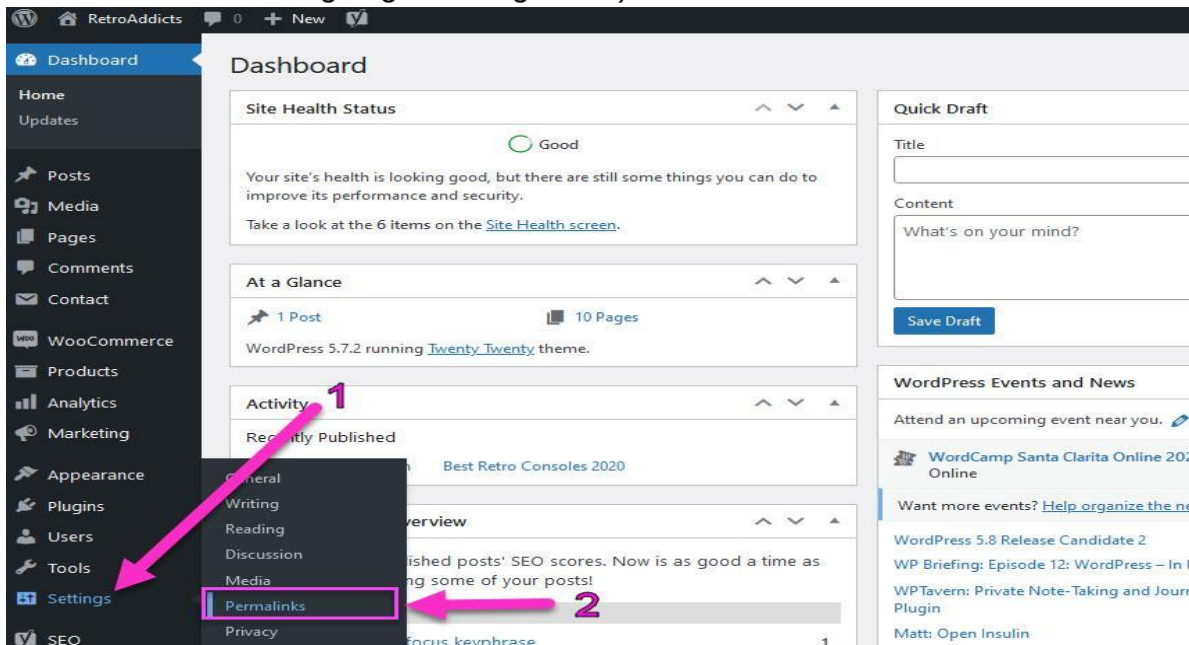
**When this is done:** When setting up a WordPress website for the first time.

**Who does this:** The person responsible for website management or SEO.

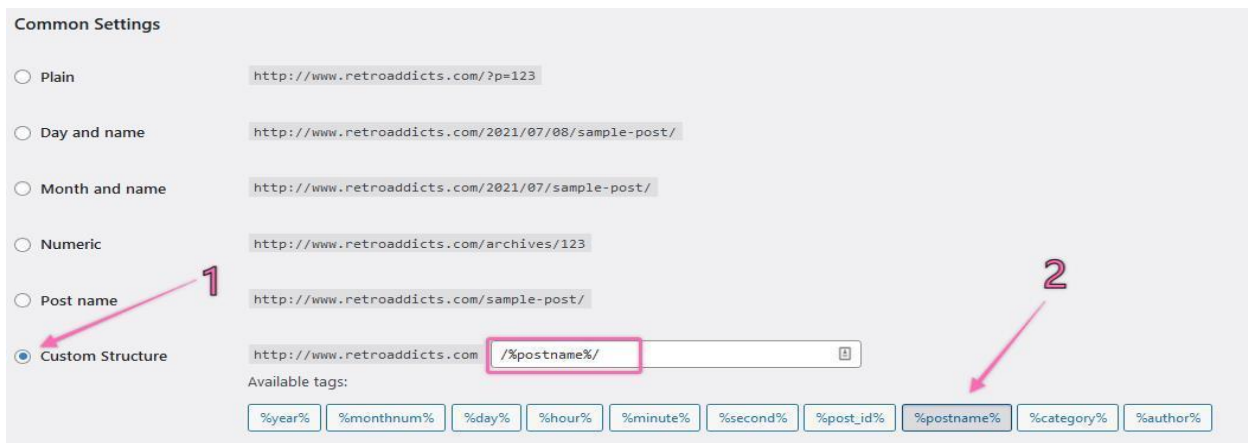
---

## □ Set up permalinks

1. Log into your WordPress Admin Panel (usually located in: your-website.com/wp-admin/).
2. Head over to 'Settings' → 'Permalinks' (The default setting should be 'Day and Name'. We are going to change that.)



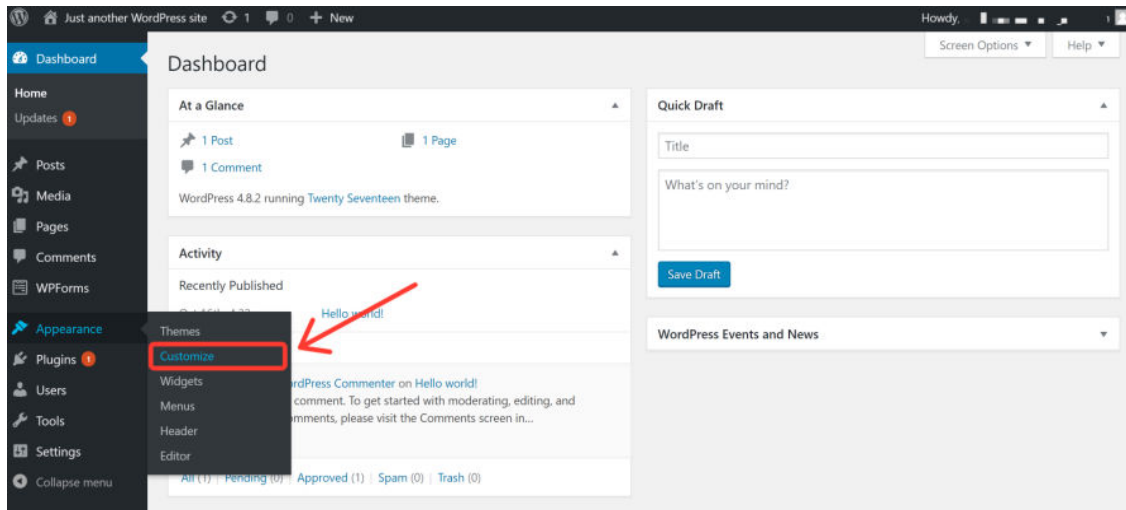
3. Select the "Post Name" option.



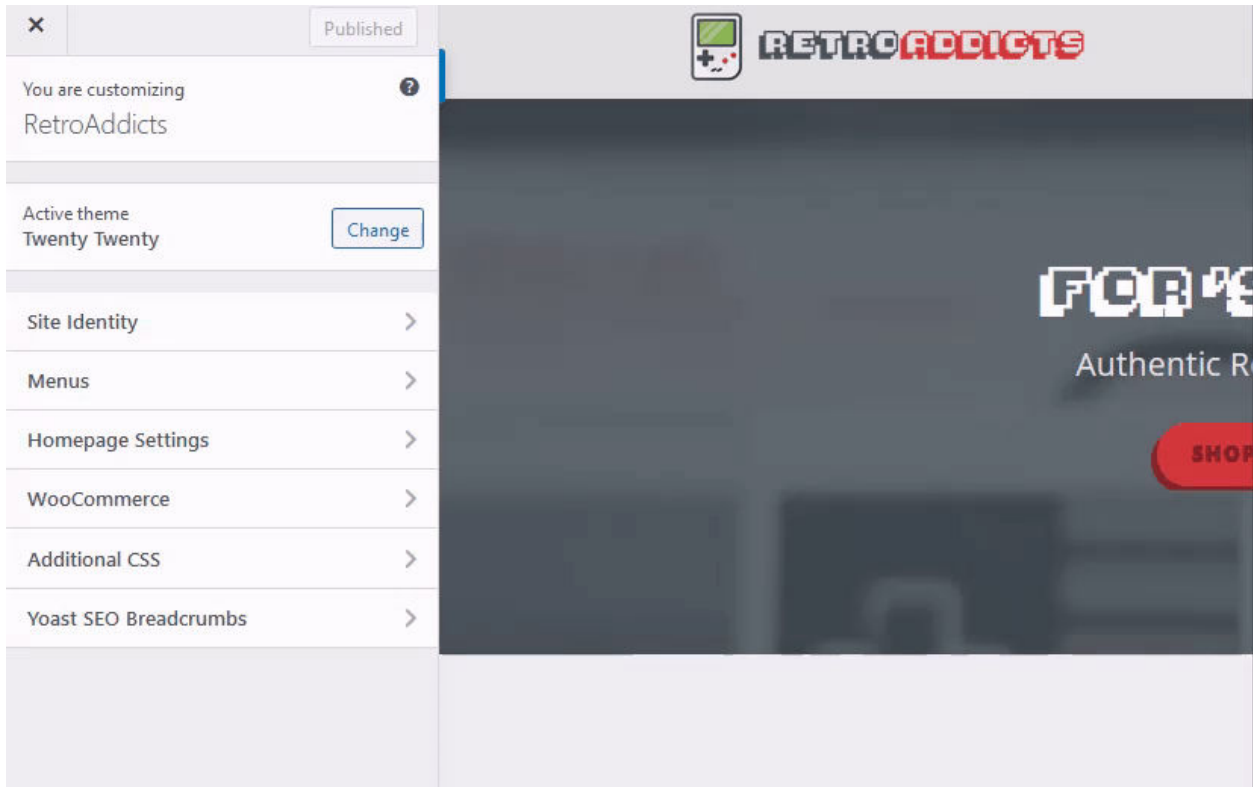
4. Scroll to the bottom part and click on 'Save Changes.'

## Set up a static homepage

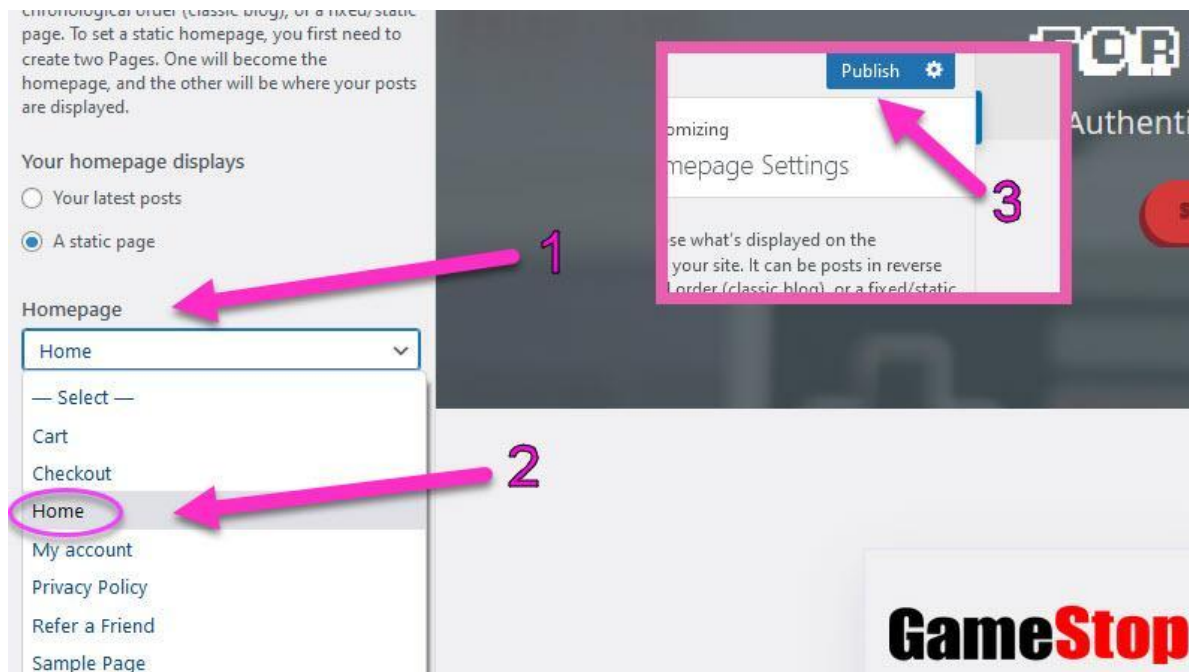
1. Inside the WordPress Admin Panel head over to “Appearance” → “Customize”



2. Click on Homepage Settings then select 'A static page' under 'Your homepage displays.'

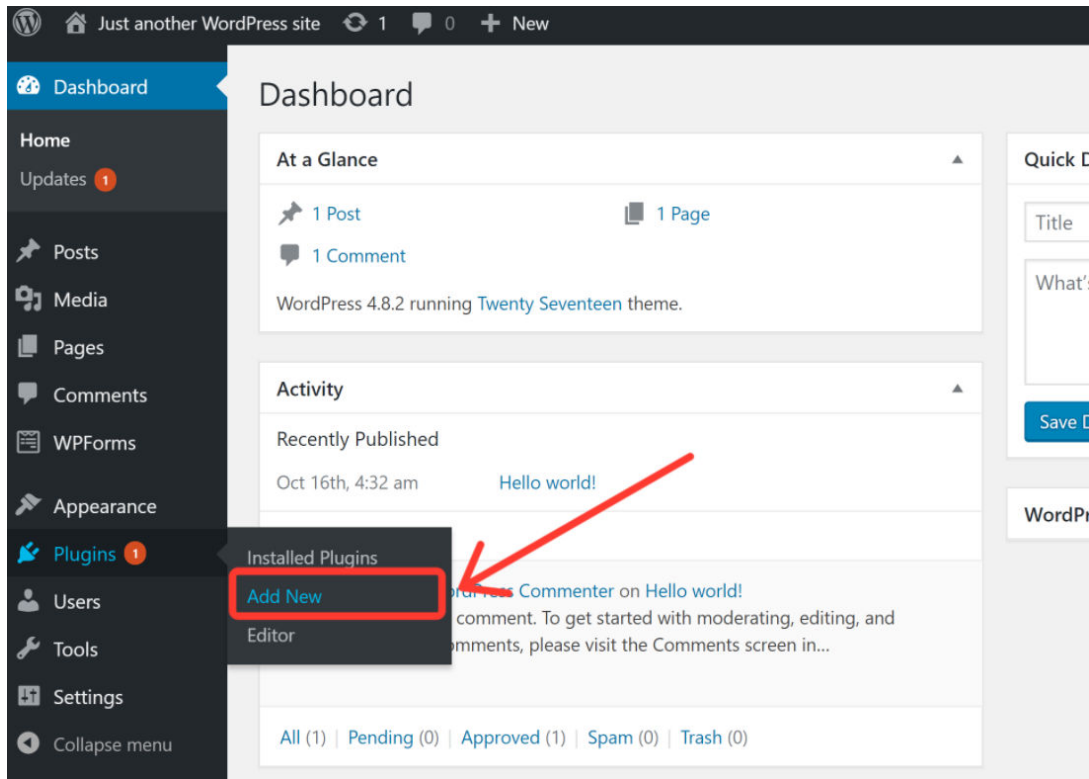


3. If you already have set up a 'Page' as your homepage, you can select it in the Front Page field. Then, scroll up and click 'Publish.'

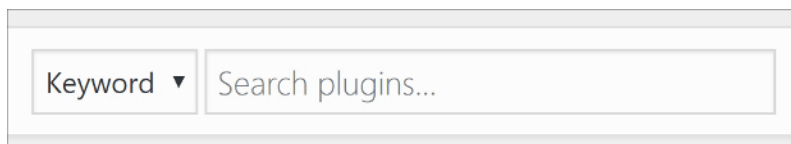


## ❑ Install Yoast SEO Plugin

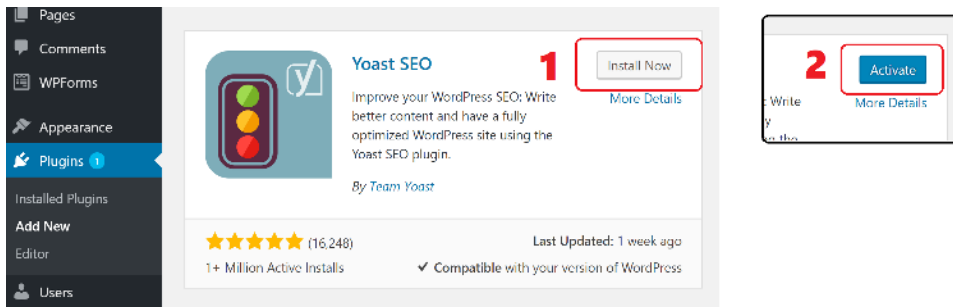
1. Inside the WordPress Admin Panel, head over to “Plugins” → “Add New”



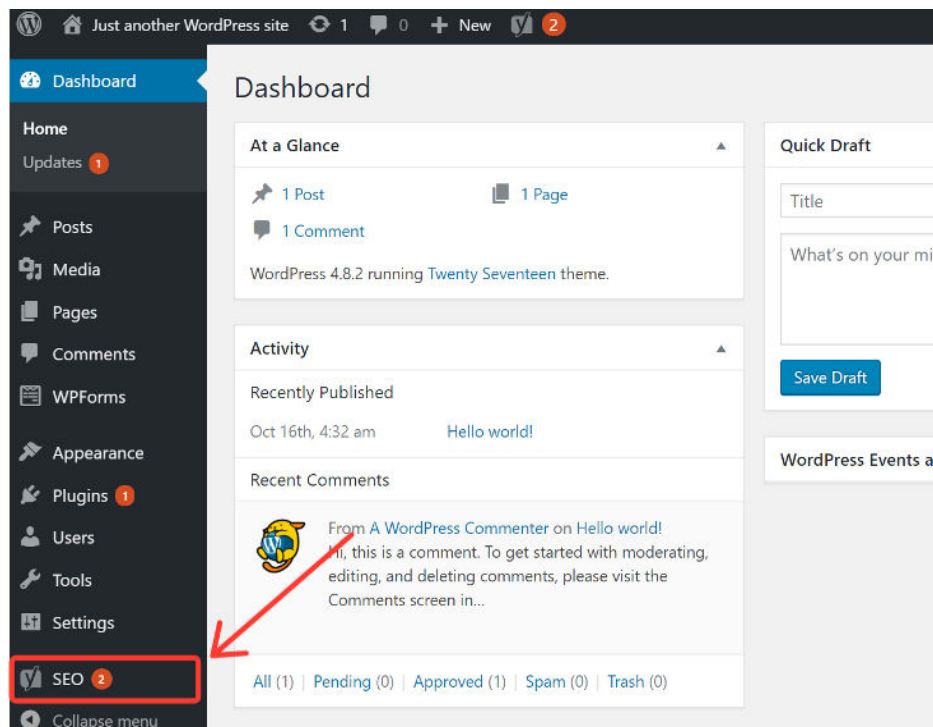
2. Search for “Yoast SEO”



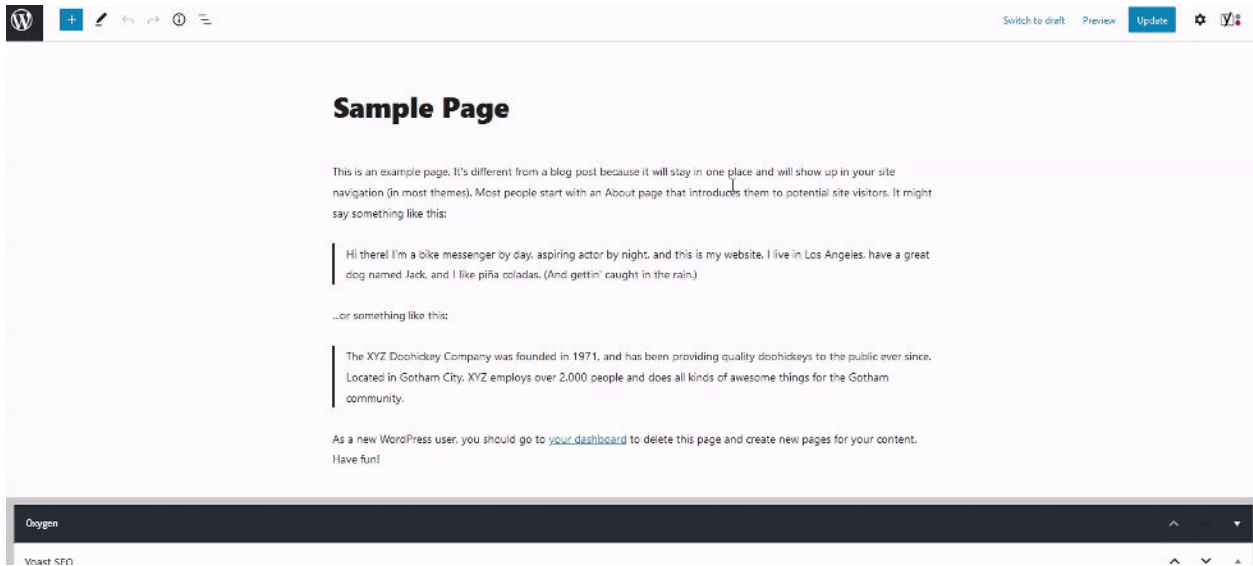
3. Click “Install” and then click “Activate”



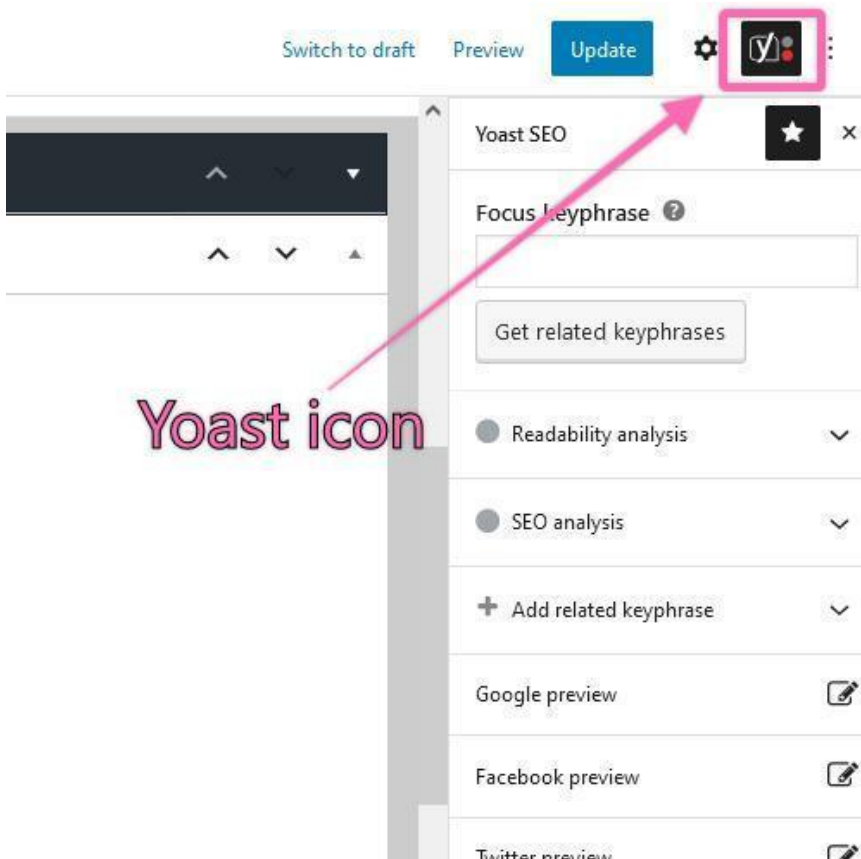
- a. A new “SEO” option should appear on the sidebar of your WordPress admin.



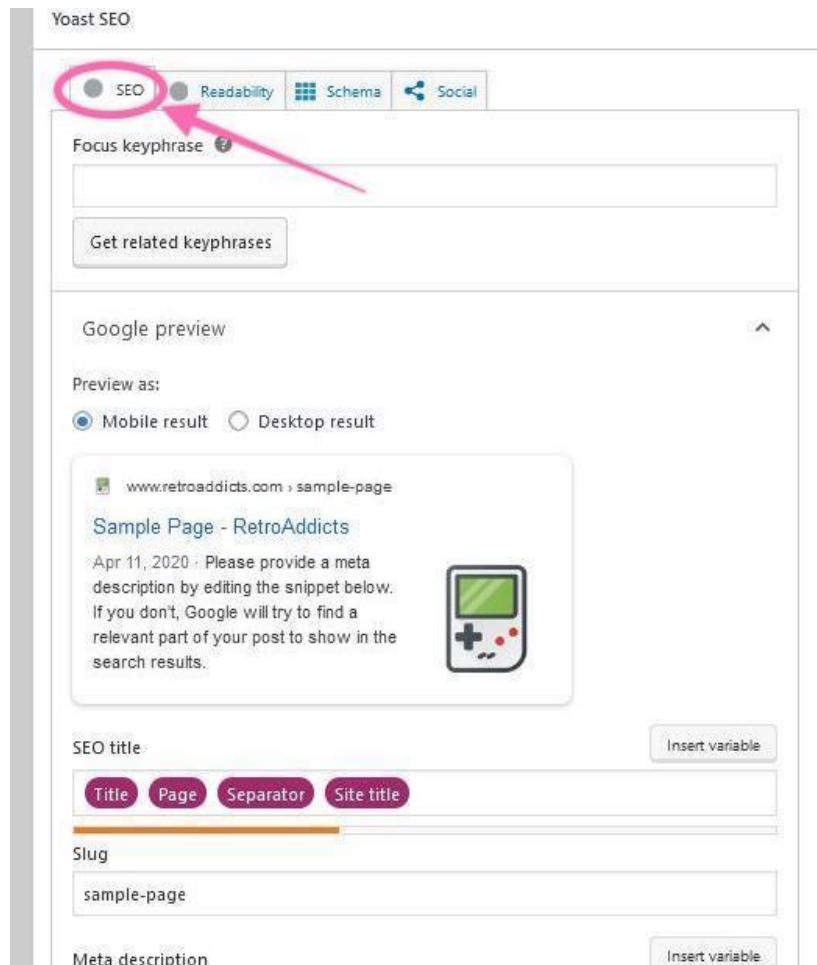
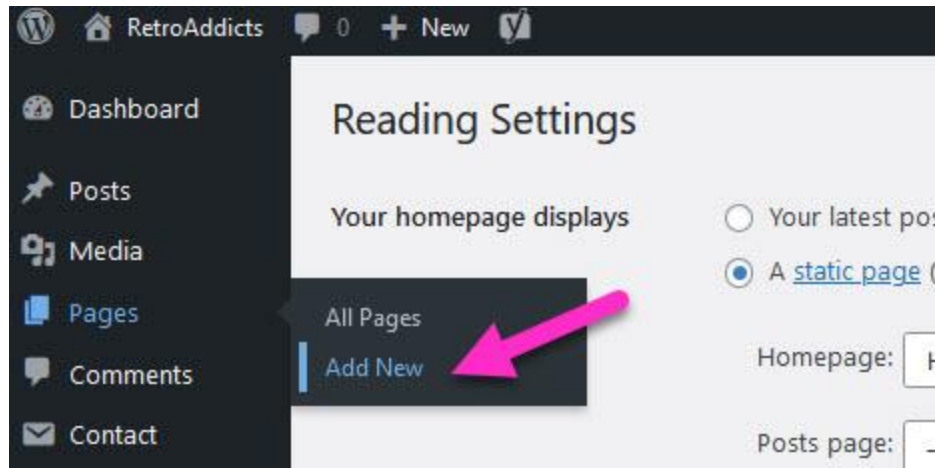
- b. You should now have a set of completely new features that are designed exclusively to optimize your pages and posts, when you scroll down in any page or post you make:



Or you can access the Yoast SEO icon on any post or page at the topmost right portion of any page or post:



- i. Head over to 'Pages' → 'Add New Page' you should be able to see these new options when you scroll down:





1. 'SEO' tab:

- a. **SEO Title:** The headline that you want displayed in the search results for this page.
- b. **Slug:** The personalize-able part of the URL that goes after your domain name.  
*e.g.: <https://yoururl.com/this-is-the-slug>*
- c. **Meta description:** A short paragraph of text that you want to be displayed under the headline in the search results for this page.

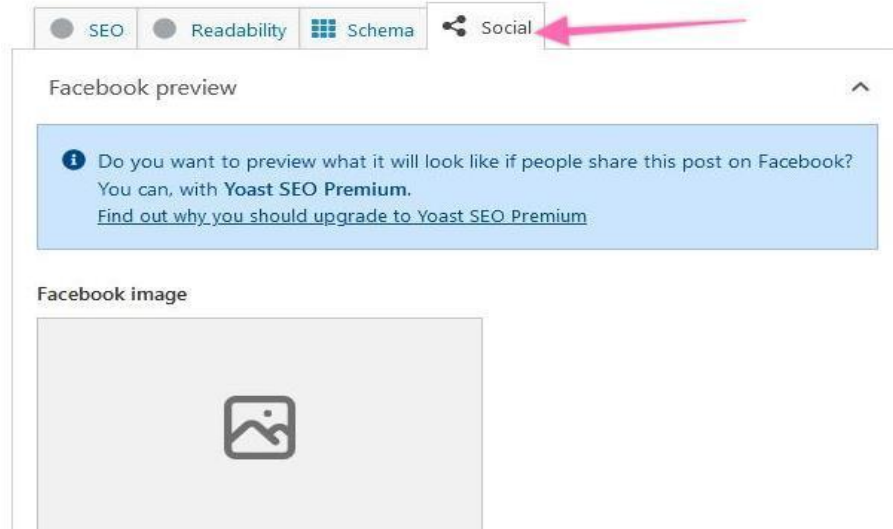
2. Focus keyphrase:

- a. This option will perform an analysis on the content of your page and let you know how optimized the content is for that specific keyword.
- b. **Important:** This is a very crude SEO check that should only be used as a reminder. You **do not** need to turn all the lights green to have a fully optimized site. Doing so might result in a really spammy post.

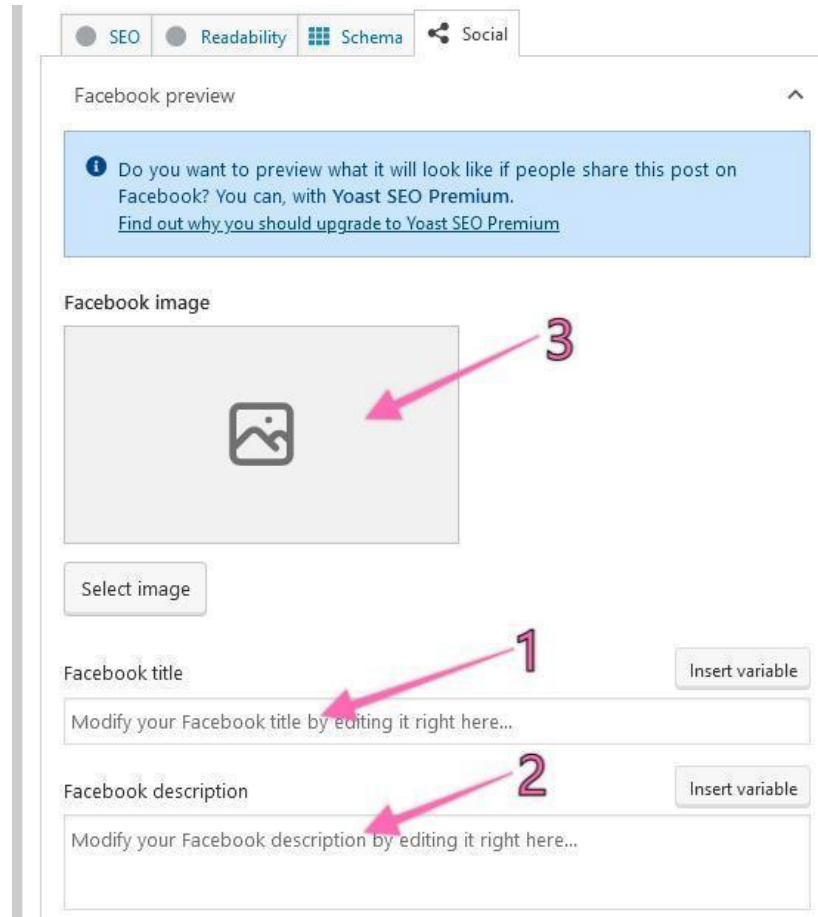
**Note:** If you want to undertake a full on-page optimization using Yoast SEO, you can follow [SOP 018](#).

- ii. Click on 'Social' tab:

Yoast SEO



iii. You should be able to see these new options:



1. **Facebook Title:** The headline you would like to see being used when a visitor shares this page on Facebook.
2. **Facebook Description:** The description you would like to use when a visitor shares this page on Facebook.
3. **Facebook Image:** The main image you would like to see being used when a visitor shares this page on Facebook.

iv. And this is how It will look like when a visitor shares the page:

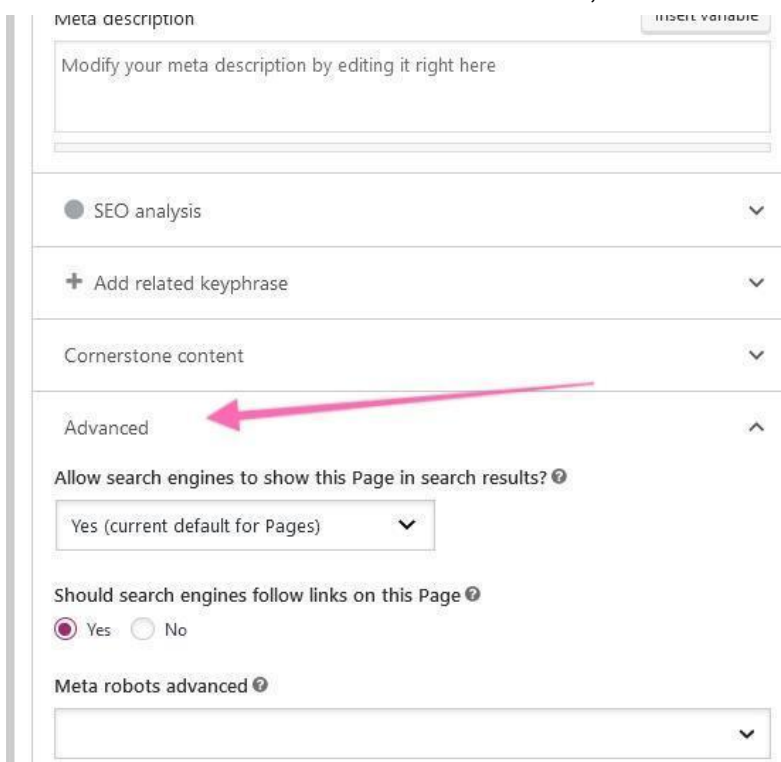


← **1. Image**

← **2. Title**

← **3. Description**

v. Back on the SEO tab, scroll down and click on 'Advanced':



Meta description UNICEL VOIRQUE  
Modify your meta description by editing it right here

● SEO analysis ▼

+ Add related keyphrase ▼

Cornerstone content ▼

Advanced ←

Allow search engines to show this Page in search results? ⓘ  
Yes (current default for Pages) ▼

Should search engines follow links on this Page ⓘ  
 Yes  No

Meta robots advanced ⓘ  
▼

vi. You should be able to see these options:

Advanced ⤴

Allow search engines to show this Page in search results? ?

Yes (current default for Pages) ⌵

Should search engines follow links on this Page? ?

Yes  No

Meta robots advanced ?

⌵

Breadcrumbs Title ?

Canonical URL ?

**Note:** You will usually leave the default options for these settings, but if you wish to change them, this is where you would do it.

**1. Allow search engines to show this Page in search results?**

- a. Yes: This is the default option and allows search engines to index the page.
- b. No: Selecting this option will **not allow** search engines to index the page.

**2. Should search engines follow this Page?**

- a. Yes: This is the default option. It will tell search engines that you trust that the content you are linking to is relevant and safe.
- b. No: This will tell search engines not to follow the links on this page. You might want to use this option if you don't fully trust the content you are linking to, or you don't want or need the pages to be indexed.

### 3. Meta robots advanced:

- a. No Image Index: This option prevents search engines from indexing the images on the page.
- b. No Archive: This option prevents the search engines from storing a cached version of the page.
- c. No Snippet: This option not only prevents search engines from storing a cached version of the page, but it will also prevent the description from appearing below the headline in the search results.

### 4. Breadcrumb title:

If you have enabled [Yoast SEO breadcrumbs](#), you can customize the length of the post or page title in the breadcrumb in this field.

*e.g., If you have a very long page or post title, it will not look good to see the top navigation going: Home  Category  A Very, Very Long Page Title. You can shorten 'A Very, Very Long Page Title' in this field to just 'Page Title,' without affecting the actual length of your main page title.*

5. **Canonical URL:** If the page is extremely similar to another existing one in your website (to the point that it might be considered duplicate content) the 'original' page URL should be inserted here.

**That's it!** You have set up your new self-hosted WordPress website with the basic SEO settings for it to be easily indexed by search engines.