

ARTIST GUIDE: CREATING A WEBSITE



WITH KIND PERMISSION OF



INTRODUCTION

Your website helps to raise your profile as an artist. It's an opportunity to showcase your work to a wide audience, and for people to find out more and to get in touch. A website is like an official stamp, demonstrating your professionalism. Promoting through your website will help you to reach audiences and sell your work.

Social media should only be part of your online presence, complementing your website rather than being a website substitute.

There are lots of website builders which offer free and paid-for options. In this guide, we use [Wordpress.com](https://www.wordpress.com) as an example. The principles are similar for other website builders such as [Wix](https://www.wix.com), [Squarespace](https://www.squarespace.com) and [Weebly](https://www.weebly.com). Wordpress.com has a free version. For a small fee, you can remove ads and benefit from online support. Note that WordPress.com is the website builder. [WordPress.org](https://www.wordpress.org) is different – this is software that you can use to create, host and maintain your website. It's usually used by people with more experience and knowledge of websites.

DOMAINS & WEB HOSTING

Domain name

The domain name is the address of your website, for example **somersetartworks.org.uk**. It tells the web browser where to look for your site. There are different extensions for domain names such as **.com**, **.co.uk** or **.net**. Wordpress sites come with a free domain name such as **somersetartists.wordpress.com**. You can also purchase your own domain name which will look more professional. You can do this through Wordpress which makes it easy to link your domain name with your website. Alternatively, you could purchase a domain name through a different provider, and you would then need to have it mapped to your website.

When you choose your domain name, you might want to use your own name, for example **sambrown.com**. If that isn't available, you could try one of the other extensions such as **sambrown.net** or **sambrown.info**. Alternatively, you could add something to your name such as **sambrownartist.com** or **sambrownpotter.com**. Try to use the same name across all platforms, and make sure you choose something that you're going to be happy with so that you don't have to change it later.

Web hosting

Web hosting is where your website content is stored. With Wordpress.com, web hosting is included in both free and paid-for plans.

CONTENT

You don't need lots of content to start your website. It's often a good idea to start simple and build from there, but it's also useful to have an idea of what you're aiming for to help you plan.

Logo

If you use a logo, have a good image of it to hand. Many artists simply use their name and don't have a logo.

Images

To showcase your work, you need good images. For more information, see our [Guide to Creating Images](#). Images on your website should be high enough resolution to look good, but if the files are too large it will take a long time for the web page to load, and it will also be possible for people to take copies. For this reason, you might want to include a discreet watermark.

Information about your work

Title, medium, dimensions, year of creation and if the work is for sale, the price.

Information about you

You can include a formal biography, a CV and an artist statement, which can be useful if you're targeting galleries. It's also good to have a short, easy-to-read description of who you are for more casual audiences – something that quickly grabs people's attention and makes them want to find out more. For more information about writing about you and your work, see our [Guide to Telling Your Story](#).

PLANNING YOUR WEBSITE

It can be helpful to draw a plan of your website, or to list the pages. Each page should have one clear purpose. This is not only helpful for visitors to the site, it also helps with search engine optimisation (SEO). Good SEO means that your website is more likely to show up when someone searches for you using Google or any other search engine.



It's a good idea to look at other websites to help you decide what you think will work for visitors to your site. You might want to ask friends and family to give some suggestions – it might be easier for them to see things from the point of view of your audience.

WEB PAGES

Home page

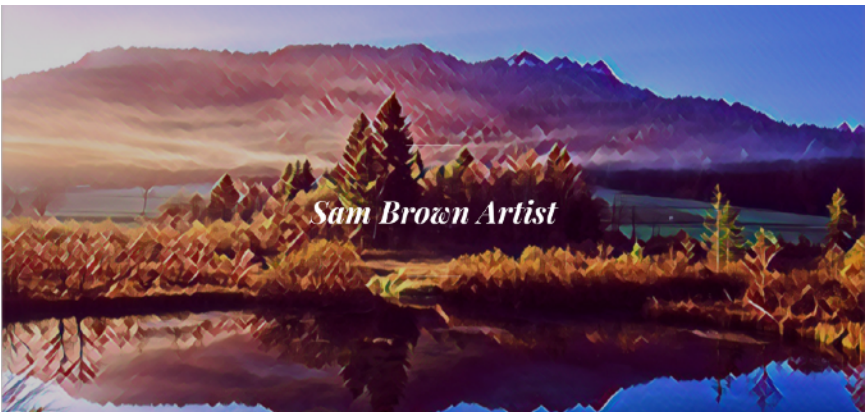
This is where most people will arrive when they visit your site. Elements are likely to include:

Title

The title of your website is different from your domain name which is the 'web address'. The title is likely to be your name eg Sam Brown.



You might want to say who you are eg Sam Brown Artist.



You might want to give a little more info eg Sam Brown, Contemporary landscape painter.



The title of your website is usually in the header, which might appear on all your web pages, depending on the website theme you choose. You might also have a logo to include in the header.

Image(s)

You could use one large image that profiles your work, or show several images with a [gallery](#) or [slideshow](#). They could be images of your work and/or photos of you creating the work. Don't be tempted to include too many images here; you just need enough to quickly give a flavour of you and your work.

Menu

The [menu](#) should be clearly visible on all your pages to help people navigate the website.

Introduction

A short introduction to you and your work. You don't need to say everything; visitors who want to find out more can look at your 'About' page. Two or three short paragraphs to give visitors a flavour of you and your work is all it takes. For

more information about writing about yourself, see our Guide to Telling Your Story.

About

This is where you can give more detail about you and your work. You can include a biography, CV and artist statement. You should include images here too, perhaps a headshot and/or a photo of you working.

Contact

This should include an email address or form for people to get in touch. For some visitors, a contact form feels rather anonymous, so providing an email address makes you more approachable. Some people prefer to provide only a contact form on their website because they don't want to make their email address public.

You might also choose to include a phone number. Links to social media platforms also provide other ways of getting in touch.

Shop

You should include some information about how to purchase your work. The easier you make this, the more likely you are to make sales. You could link to an external selling site where you already have an account, such as Etsy or Notonthehighstreet, or you could set up your own shop for your website. Wordpress have [paid options to create a shop](#) or you could use another provider such as [Bluehost](#) or [Shopify](#).

Other things you might want to add to your website are an e-newsletter sign up page (see our Guide to E-Newsletters for more information), a feed from your social media, as well as links to follow you on social media, videos (see our Guide to Creating a Short Films), and a 'latest news' page.

UPDATING

Keep your website updated. You don't have to make lots of big changes, but visitors need to know that the site is active. Keeping your site up to date also helps with SEO.

Wordpress has a good guide, [Build Your Website in Five Steps](#) which takes you through the things you need to do to get your website up and running. This is a great place to start.