

How to Format Your Blog Posts in Blogger and WordPress

DRAFT VERSION FOR BLOG ON COURSE

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Introduction

Formatting posts can be a pain, as most bloggers quickly find out!

This guide is split into two parts:

- The first part goes through some of the most common formatting tasks
- The second part covers how to use *all* the formatting features in Blogger and WordPress

You'll find that the second part repeats a few things from the first, for the sake of completeness.

I'll do my best to explain everything in plain English rather than computer-ese, but if anything's at all unclear, feel free to drop me an email (ali@aliventures.com)

Quick note before we begin: I advise drafting your posts offline (e.g. in Word) in case anything goes wrong; that way, you can easily go back to your original version.

Let's get started...

Blogger: Basic Formatting

The most common formatting tasks are creating:

- Bold text
- Italic text
- Bullet-pointed lists
- Subheaders (in a larger font)

Here's how to do those in Blogger:

1. Log in to Blogger as normal and click on "New Post"

NEW POST

2. You should see a page that looks like this:

The screenshot shows the Blogger 'Compose' interface. At the top is a navigation bar with tabs: Posting, Comments, Settings, Design, Monetize, Stats, and View Blog. Below this is a sub-bar with 'New Post', 'Edit Posts', and 'Edit Pages'. The main area has a 'Title:' label followed by a text input field. To the right of the title field are 'Edit HTML' and 'Compose' buttons. Below the title field is a rich text editor toolbar with icons for font color, text color, bold, italic, text background color, bulleted list, numbered list, decrease indent, increase indent, link, unlink, undo, redo, insert image, and insert video. To the right of the toolbar is a 'Preview' button. The main body of the window is a large text area for writing the post. At the bottom, there is a 'Post Options' section with a 'Labels for this post:' label, a text input field with the example text 'e.g. scooters, vacation, fall', and a 'Show all' button. Below the labels section are 'PUBLISH POST' and 'SAVE NOW' buttons, and a 'Return to list of posts' link. At the very bottom, a small text line reads: 'Shortcuts: press Ctrl with: B = Bold, I = Italic, P = Publish, S = Save, D = Draft more'.

If you've published a post before, you'll have used this window. You can either type your post into it or (preferably) copy your post in from Word or another word-processing program.

When copying your post in, to avoid any formatting weirdness, it's best to click on the "Edit Html" tab first: that way, it'll go in as plain text, like this:

New Post [Edit Posts](#) [Edit Pages](#)

Title:

[Edit HTML](#) [Compose](#) [Preview](#)

b *i*

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam dignissim turpis facilisis nibh cursus vel accumsan lacus tempus. Aenean pulvinar mi vitae felis venenatis vel sagittis magna tincidunt.

Integer elit erat, interdum vel congue vel, egestas sed diam. Nulla porttitor nibh et neque aliquam vitae feugiat leo sodales. In porta malesuada nisi, et molestie nunc porttitor eget.

Cras at dictum lacus. Phasellus rhoncus convallis diam vel ultricies. Curabitur mi dolor, aliquet quis semper ac, viverra id mauris. Praesent sit amet dolor nisi, eget ultrices purus. Quisque velit dui, pretium eu auctor eu, lobortis sit amet est. Mauris auctor orci vel metus adipiscing mattis.

Fusce fermentum velit pharetra metus laoreet laoreet. Nulla ornare venenatis odio, laoreet mollis magna convallis sit amet. Suspendisse quis nisi faucibus leo luctus ornare sed non dolor. Integer nec interdum elit.

[Post Options](#) Labels for this post: [Show all](#)
e.g. scooters, vacation, fall

Shortcuts: press Ctrl with: B = Bold, I = Italic, P = Publish, S = Save, D = Draft [more](#)

[PUBLISH POST](#) [SAVE NOW](#)

[Return to list of posts](#)

3. Once your post is in, click back to the Compose tab.

Your post probably looks a little bland. (Though it's hopefully not in Latin like my dummy text here ... if you want some Lorem Ipsum text to play around with, you can generate it at <http://www.lipsum.com>.)

4. Add some bold text

I decided that "Cras at dictum lacus" was important enough to put in bold. (I have no idea what it actually means, but it sounds shoutable...)

To create bold text, highlight the text in question then click on the "b" button (circled):

Font **b** *i* [Preview](#)

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam dignissim turpis facilisis nibh cursus vel accumsan lacus tempus. Aenean pulvinar mi vitae felis venenatis vel sagittis magna tincidunt.

Integer elit erat, interdum vel congue vel, egestas sed diam. Nulla porttitor nibh et neque aliquam vitae feugiat leo sodales. In porta malesuada nisi, et molestie nunc porttitor eget.

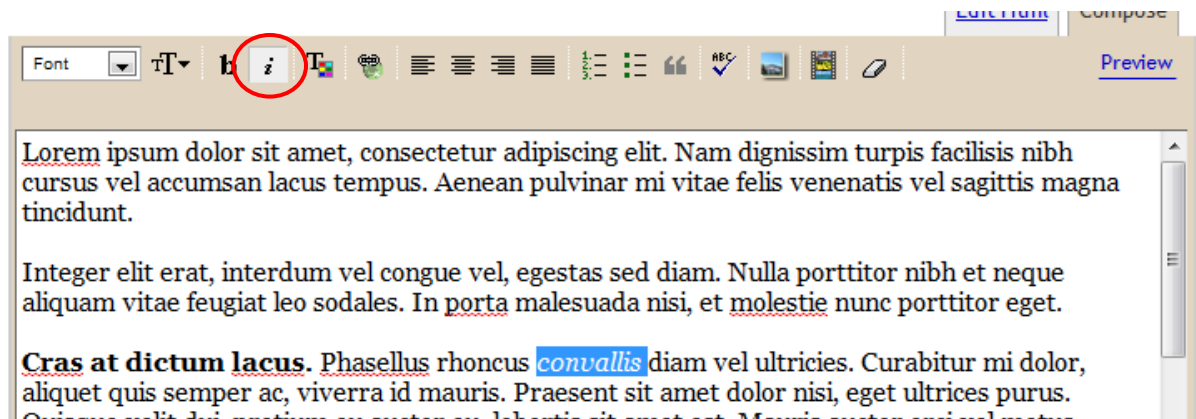
Cras at dictum lacus. Phasellus rhoncus convallis diam vel ultricies. Curabitur mi dolor, aliquet quis semper ac, viverra id mauris. Praesent sit amet dolor nisi, eget ultrices purus.

I find that bold text works well when used to highlight key sentences or phrases. A whole paragraph in bold is usually overdoing it – and single words picked out in bold can look a bit weird.

You can also create bold text by highlighting the words and pressing **Ctrl + B** on your keyboard. This works for most programs, not just Blogger.

5. Add some italic text

The “*i*” button next to the **b** is for italic text:

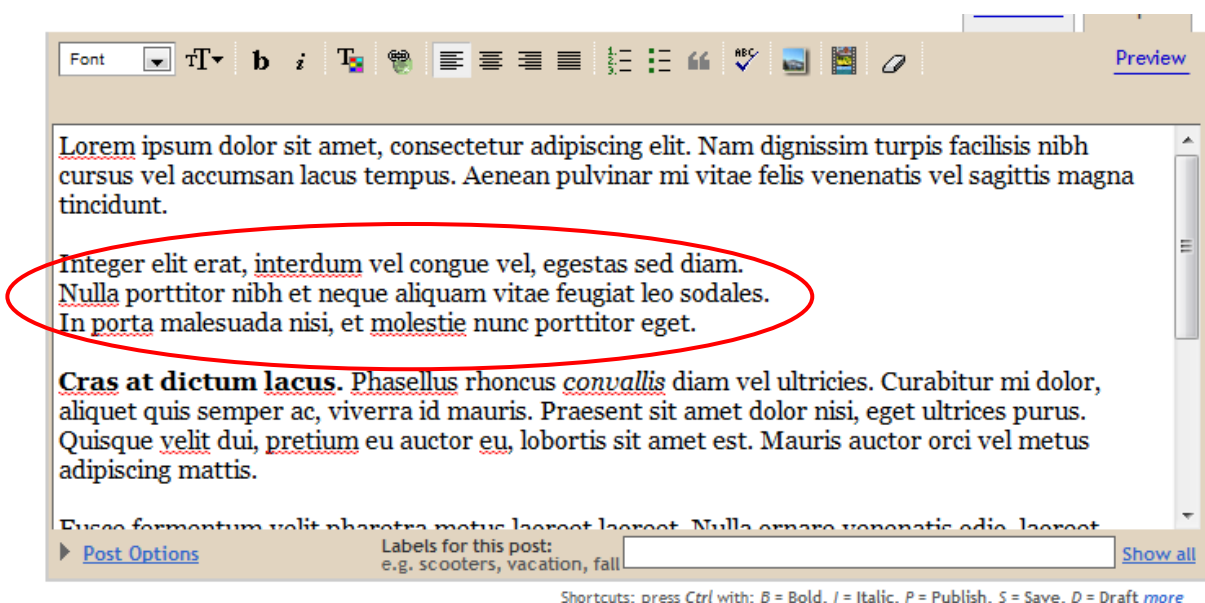


I like to use italics for individual words. It can work for whole sentences too – especially if you’re putting a note at the start or end of the post.

You can also create italic text by highlighting the words and pressing **Ctrl + I** on your keyboard. This works for most programs, not just Blogger.

6. Create a bullet-pointed list

This is a teeny bit more involved than creating bold or italic text – but it’s not much harder. You’ll need to make sure that all your list items are on separate lines, like this:

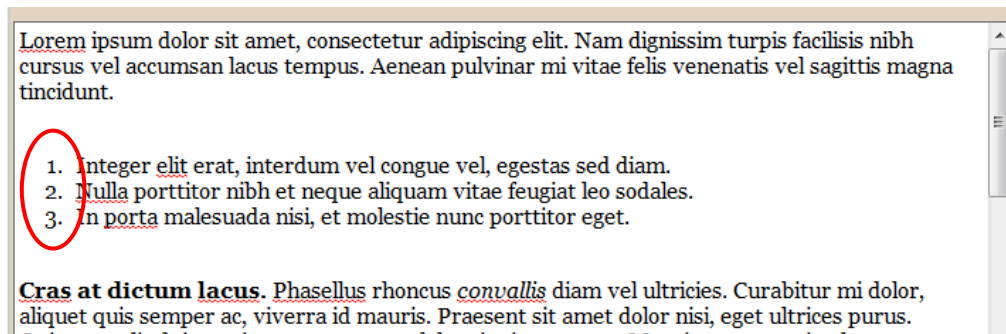


Then, click on either of the list icons. The one on the left is for a numbered list; the one on the right is for an un-numbered list.

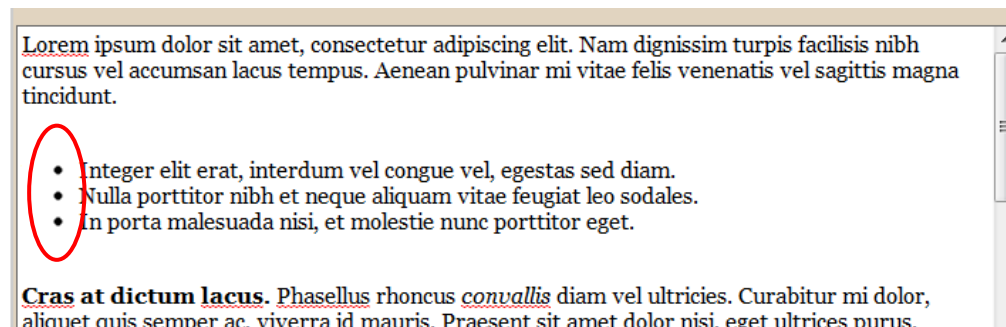


Here's what the lists will look like...

Numbered list:



Un-numbered list:



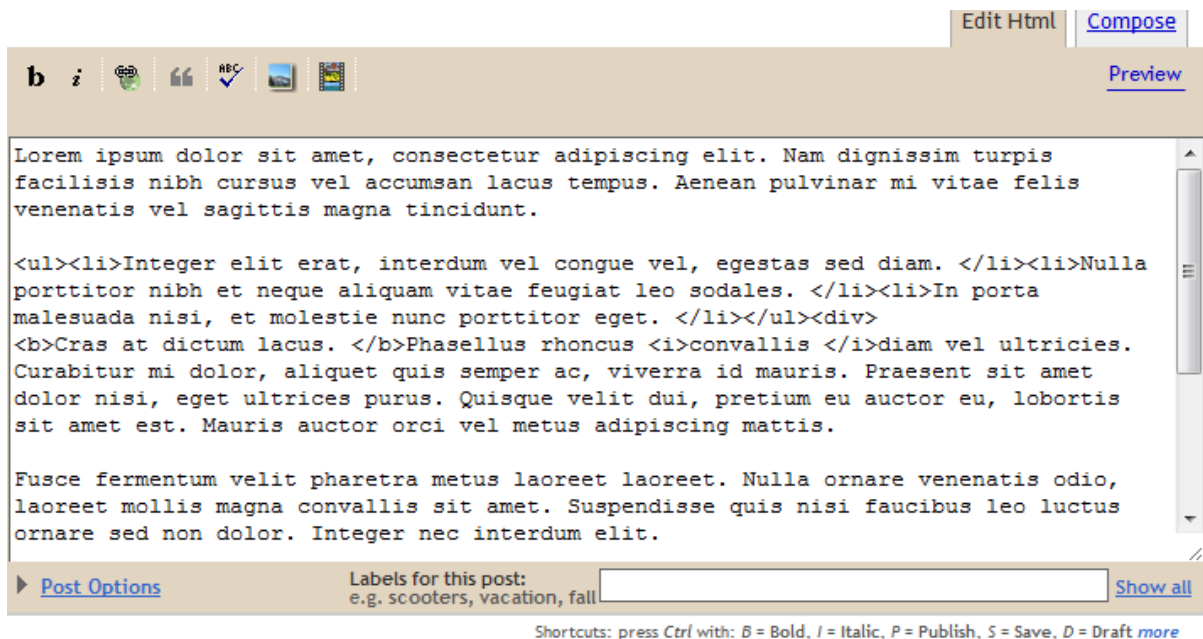
If you change your mind about which type of list you want, just highlight the list and click on the other button.

7. Add a Subheading

This is one of the trickier things to do in Blogger, despite being a very common part of blog-post formatting. There is a drop-down menu to change the font size, but as we'll see later, it doesn't always work well.

The best way to create a header, then, is by using the HTML view. Don't be intimidated by this: it's really not too tough.

As you can see here, the list, bold and italic text have all added bits of HTML code to the text. Don't worry about what those mean for now.



To create subheaders, you use heading styles. In HTML code these are:

<h1> ("heading 1" – largest)

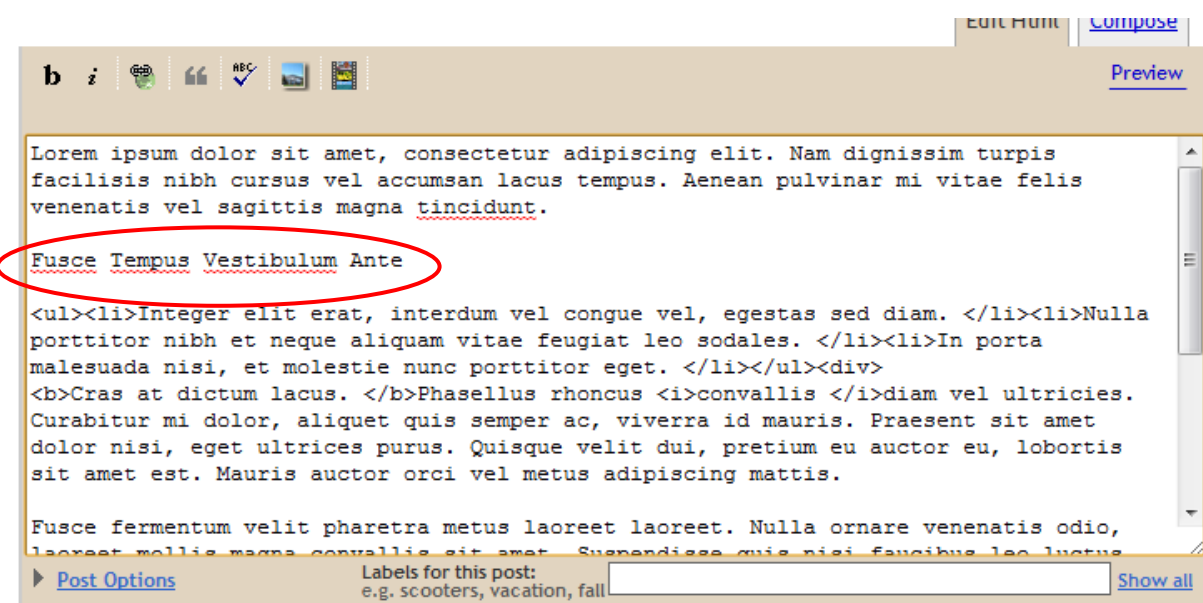
to

<h7> ("heading 7" – smallest)

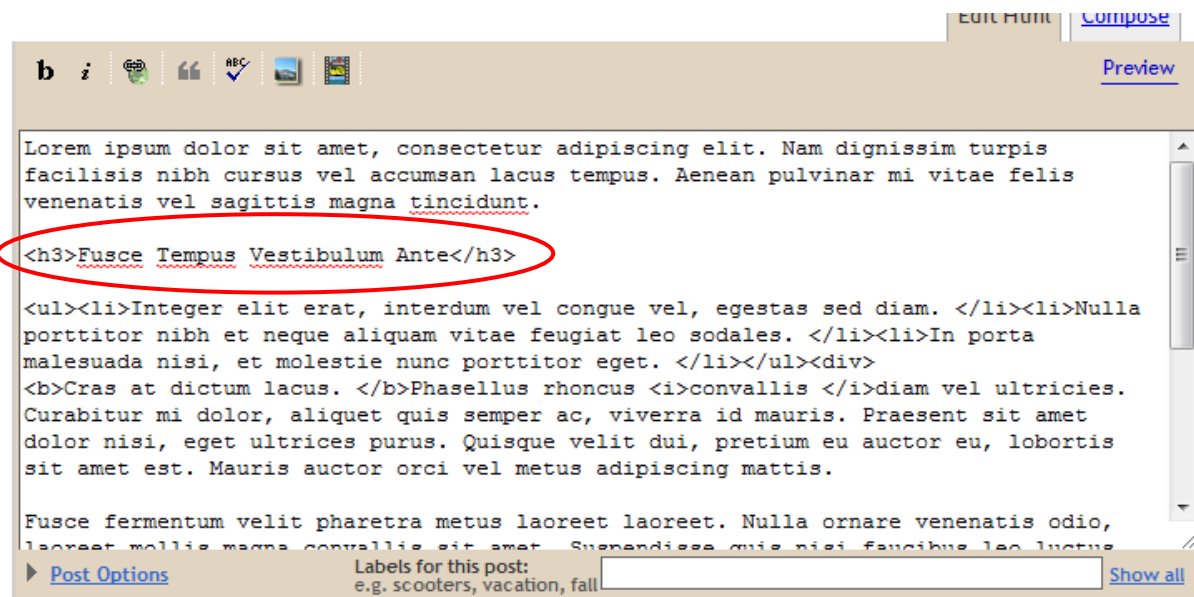
In practice, you'll probably want to use **<h3>** for your subheadings as **<h1>** is usually used for your blog's title and **<h2>** is often used for your post titles.

Here's how to add a subheader – I'm using "Fusce Tempus Vestibulum Ante" for mine.

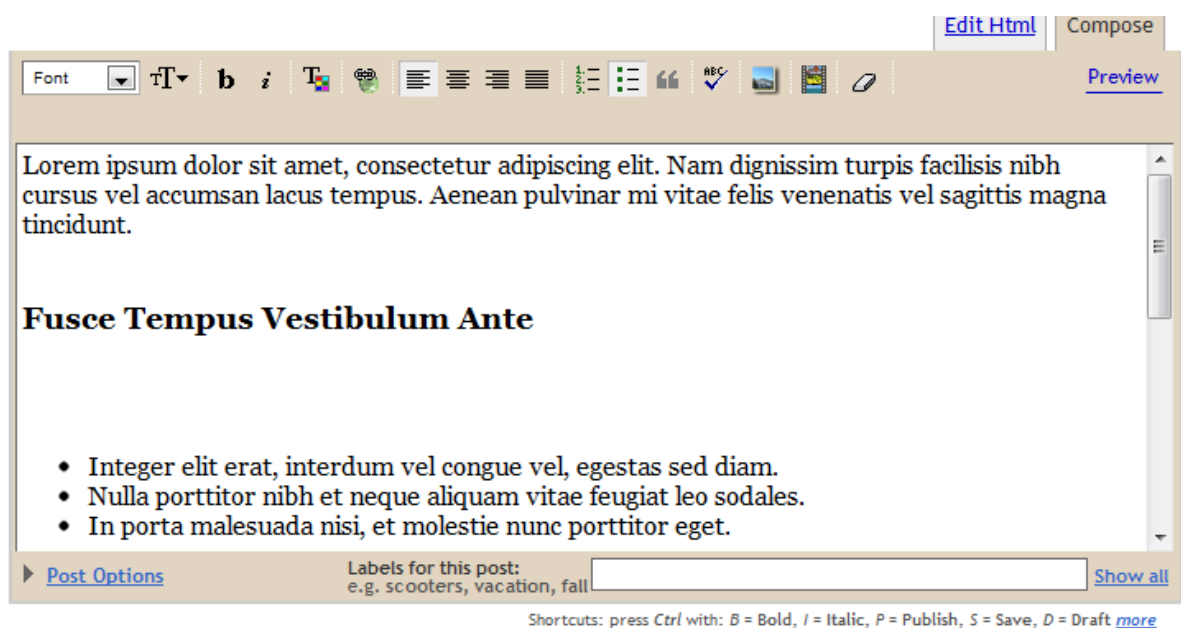
- Enter the text for your subheader, if it's not already in your post



b) Put `<h3>` and `</h3>` around the subheader text, like this:



c) Now click back to the “Compose” view and you should see your subheading in larger, bold text:



If you’ve ended up with some extra blank space after the heading, just put your cursor there and hit “backspace” or “delete” to remove it.

Congratulations – you can write HTML code! 😊

WordPress: Basic Formatting

The most common formatting tasks are creating:

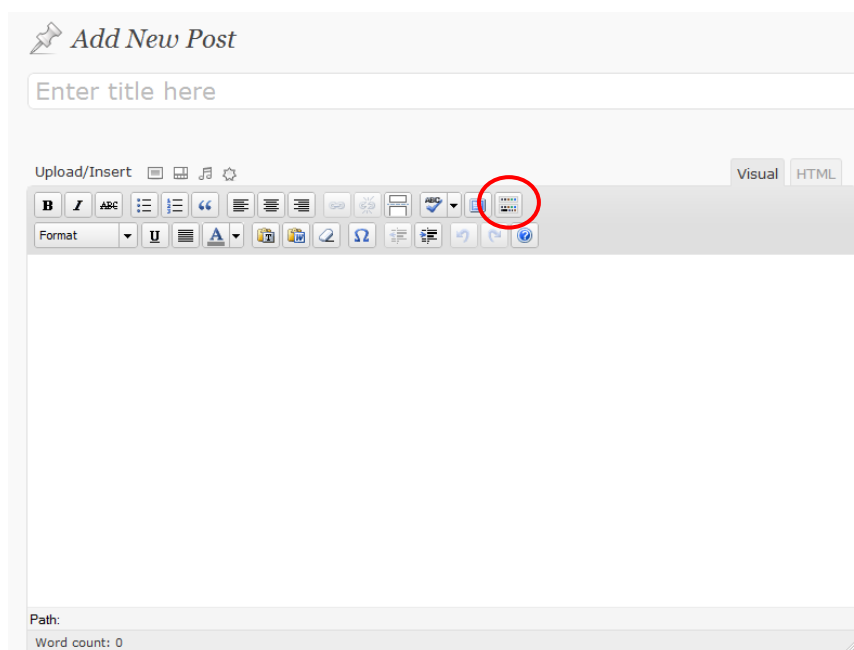
- Bold text
- Italic text
- Bullet-pointed lists
- Subheaders (in a larger font)

Here's how to do those in WordPress:

(Note that the screenshots in this section are taken from self-hosted WordPress – if you're using wordpress.com your screen will look slightly different.)

1. Log into WordPress and open up a new post

Click on Posts->Add New in the sidebar. You'll see a box that looks like this:



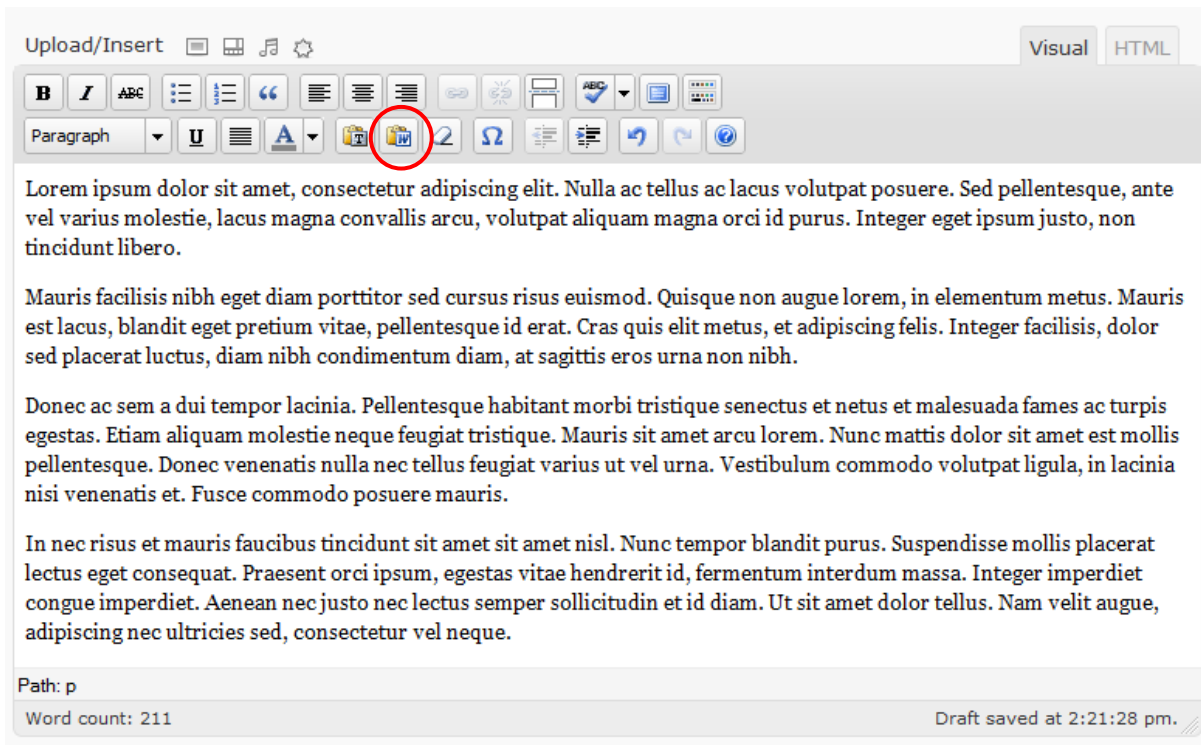
NB: Your posting box will probably look smaller than this – there are instructions to make it larger at the start of the “WordPress: All the Formatting Options” section.

If you only see one row of icons along the top of the posting box, click on the right-most button (circled above) to reveal the second row.

2. Copy your post into the box

If you used Word to write your post, and you've already put in some formatting, use the "Paste from Word" button (circled below) to paste your text into the posting box. Your formatting should be preserved.

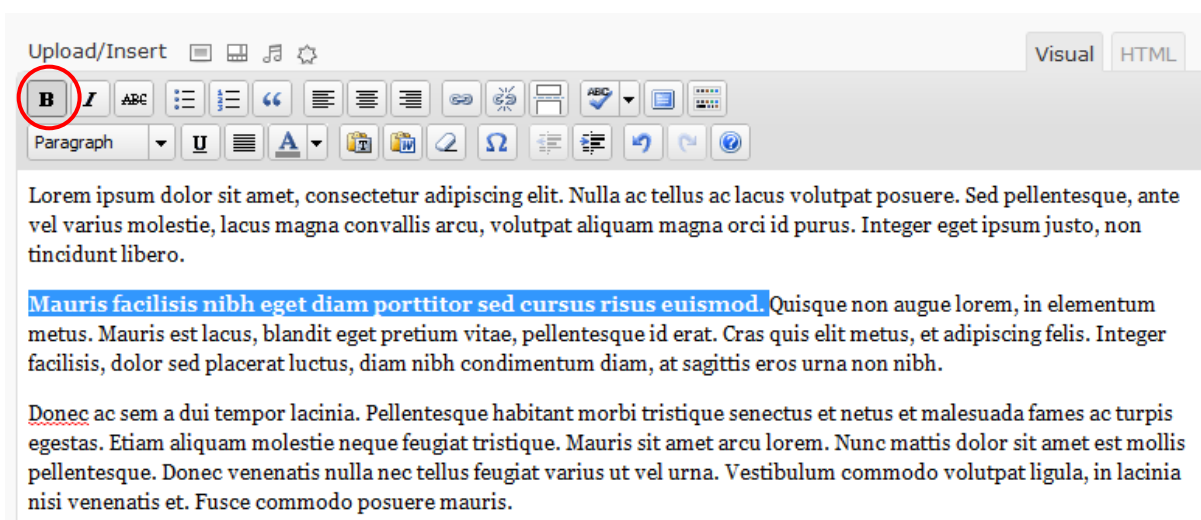
Otherwise, just paste the text into the main box.



The screenshot shows a rich text editor interface. At the top, there's a toolbar with various icons for text formatting and insertion. The 'Visual' tab is selected. In the toolbar, the 'Paste from Word' button (represented by a document icon with a blue 'W') is circled in red. Below the toolbar, there's a text area containing several paragraphs of placeholder text (Lorem ipsum). At the bottom, there's a status bar showing 'Path: p', 'Word count: 211', and 'Draft saved at 2:21:28 pm.'

3. Add some bold text

Highlight a sentence and click on the "B" button to make it bold:



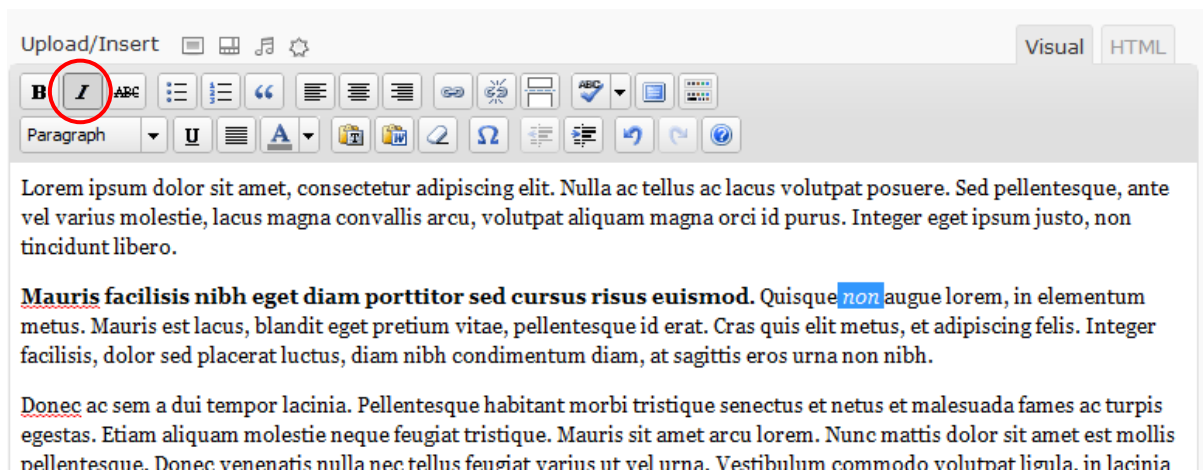
The screenshot shows the same rich text editor interface as before. In the toolbar, the 'B' button (representing bold) is circled in red. In the text area, a sentence is highlighted in blue: 'Mauris facilisis nibh eget diam porttitor sed cursus risus euismod.' The rest of the text in the editor is in its default color and font.

I find that bold text works well when used to highlight key sentences or phrases. A whole paragraph in bold is usually overdoing it – and single words picked out in bold can look a bit weird.

You can also create bold text by highlighting the words and pressing **Ctrl+B** on your keyboard. This works for most programs, not just WordPress.

4. Add some italic text

Highlight a word or two, and click on the “*I*” button for italics:

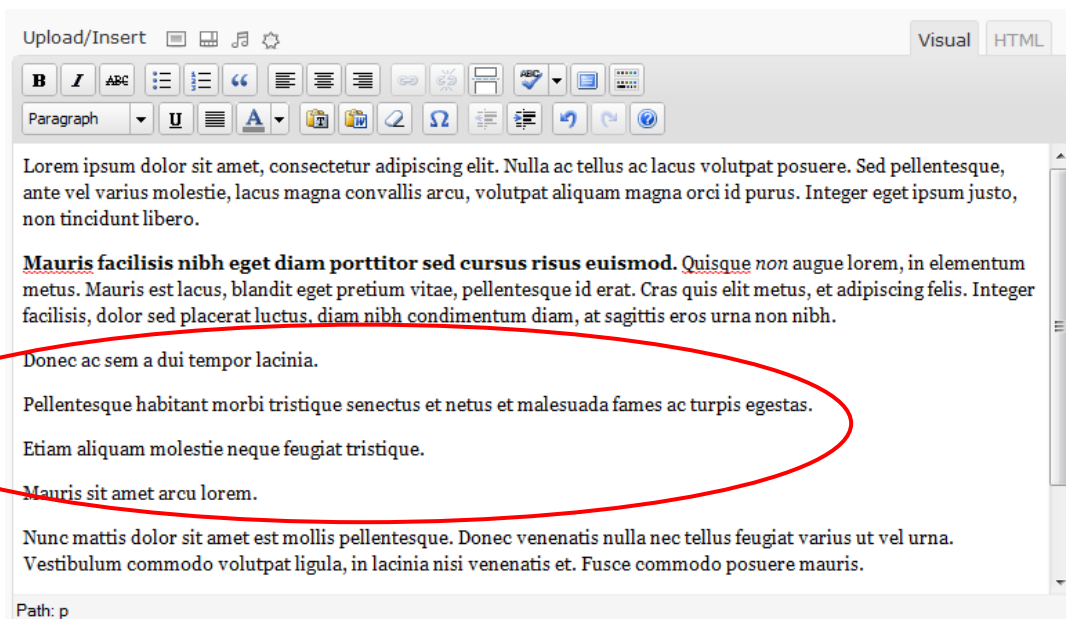


I like to use italics for individual words. It can work for whole sentences too – especially if you’re putting a note at the start or end of the post.

You can also create italic text by highlighting the words and pressing **Ctrl + I** on your keyboard. This works for most programs, not just WordPress.

5. Create a bullet-pointed list

This is a teeny bit more involved than creating bold or italic text – but it’s not much harder. You’ll need to make sure that all your list items are on separate lines, like this:

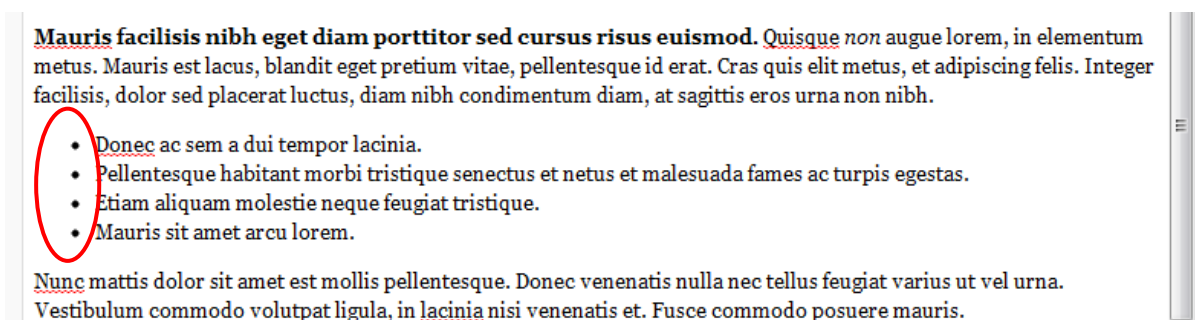


Then, click on one of the list icons. The one on the left is for an un-numbered list; the one on the right is for a numbered list:



Here's what the lists will look like...

Un-numbered list:



Numbered list:

Mauris facilisis nibh eget diam porttitor sed cursus risus euismod. Quisque non augue lorem, in elementum metus. Mauris est lacus, blandit eget pretium vitae, pellentesque id erat. Cras quis elit metus, et adipiscing felis. Integer facilisis, dolor sed placerat luctus, diam nibh condimentum diam, at sagittis eros urna non nibh.

1. Donec ac sem a dui tempor lacinia.
2. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas.
3. Etiam aliquam molestie neque feugiat tristique.
4. Mauris sit amet arcu lorem.

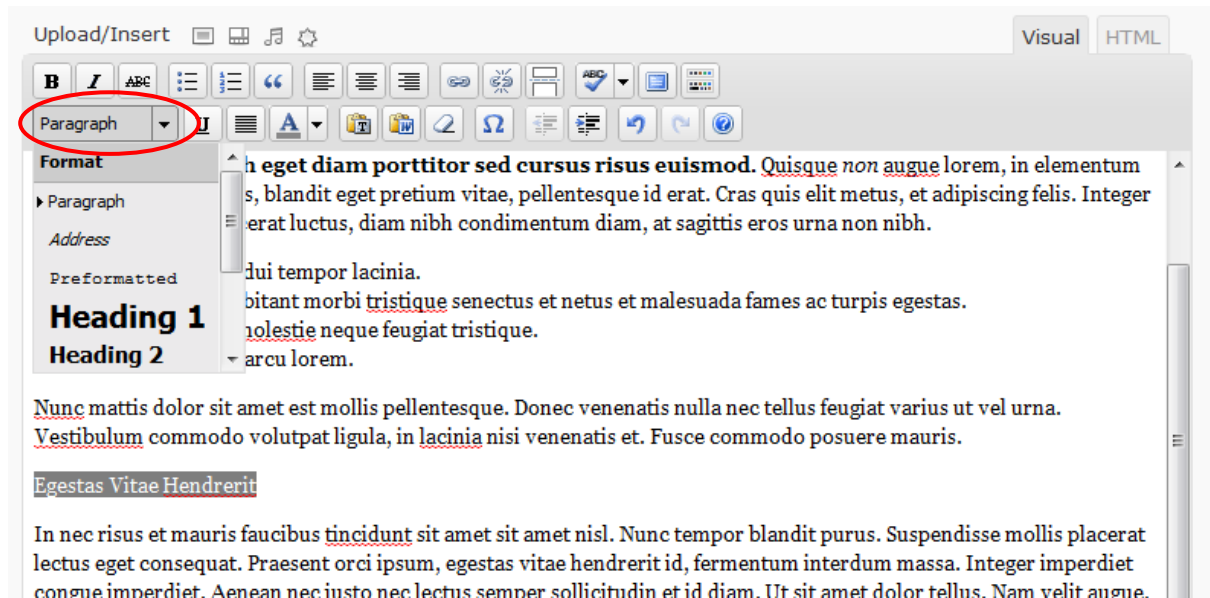
Nunc mattis dolor sit amet est mollis pellentesque. Donec venenatis nulla nec tellus feugiat varius ut vel urna. Vestibulum commodo volutpat ligula, in lacinia nisi venenatis et. Fusce commodo posuere mauris.

If you change your mind about which type of list you want, just highlight the list and click on the other button.

6. Add a Subheading

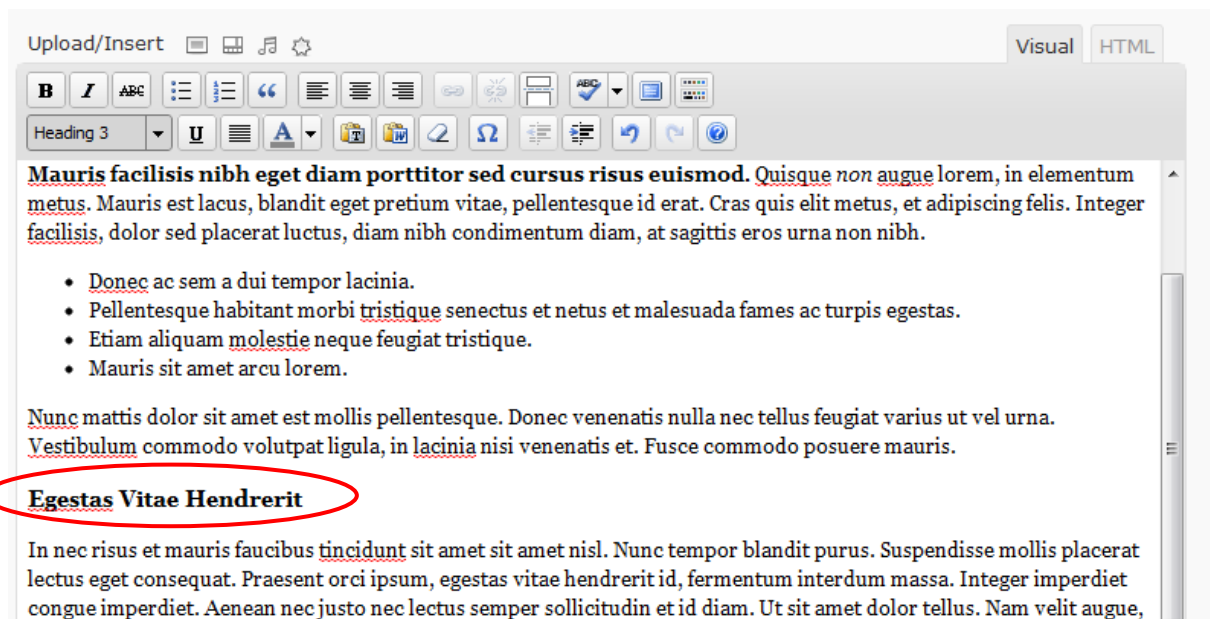
Type in your subheading, if it's not already in your text.

Highlight it, and click on the dropdown menu that currently reads "Paragraph":



Scroll down and select "Heading 3".

(Heading 1 is probably being used for your blog's title, and Heading 2 is often used for post titles.)



The text might not look much different in the posting window – but when your blog template’s stylings is applied, you’ll see that it shows up as a subheader. Here’s what my “Heading 3” style looks like on the blog itself:

Nunc mattis dolor sit amet est mollis pellentesque. Donec venenatis nulla nec tellus feugiat varius ut vel urna. Vestibulum commodo volutpat ligula, in lacinia nisi venenatis et. Fusce commodo posuere mauris.

Egestas Vitae Hendrerit

In nec risus et mauris faucibus tincidunt sit amet sit amet nisl. Nunc tempor blandit purus. Suspendisse mollis placerat lectus eget consequat. Praesent orci ipsum, egetas vitae hendrerit id, fermentum interdum massa. Integer imperdiet congue imperdiet. Aenean nec justo nec lectus semper sollicitudin et id diam. Ut sit amet dolor tellus. Nam velit augue, adipiscing nec ultricies sed, consectetur vel neque.

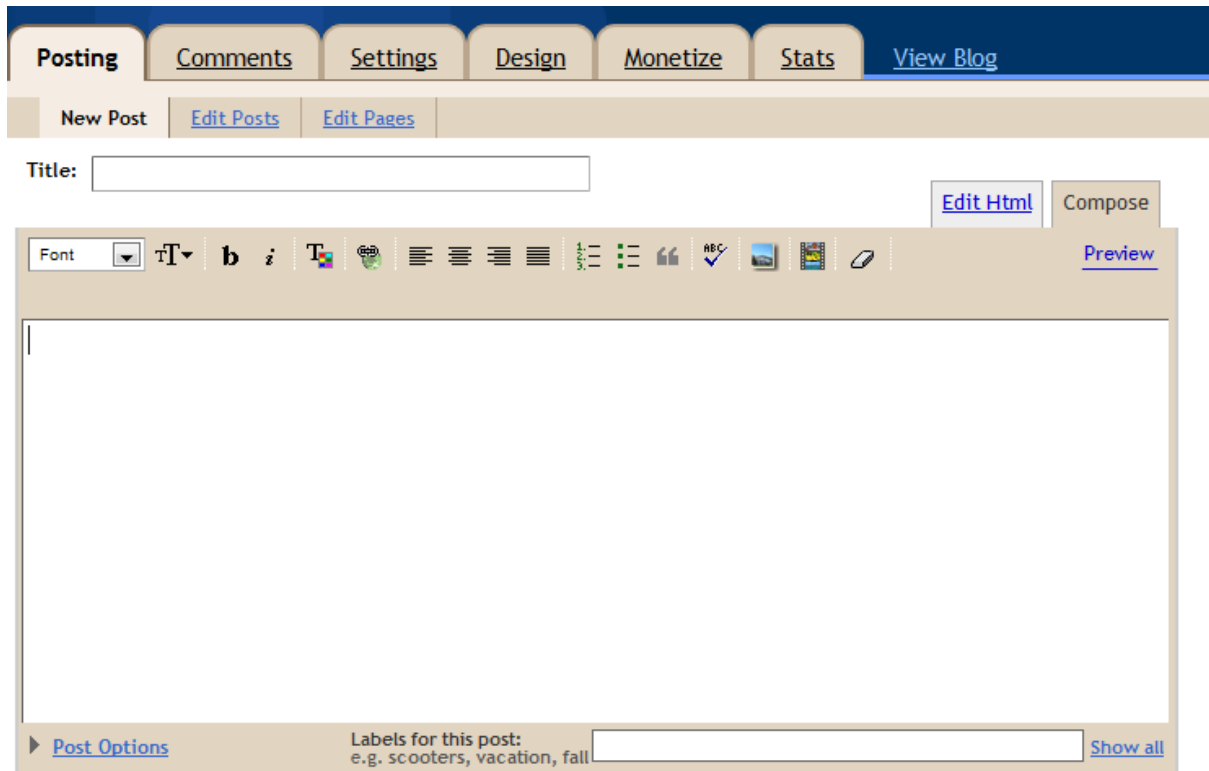
Simple, eh? ☺

If you want to learn what all the other buttons do, read “WordPress: All the Formatting Options” later in this guide.

Blogger: All the Formatting Options

The buttons along the top of your posting box all let you apply different types of formatting.

They might look a bit cryptic at a glance – so in this section of the guide, I'll be explaining what they all do, from right to left:



#1: The Font Dropdown Menu



This dropdown menu lets you change the font you're using. I wouldn't recommend using too many different fonts (your blog can end up looking cluttered).

#2: The Size Dropdown Menu



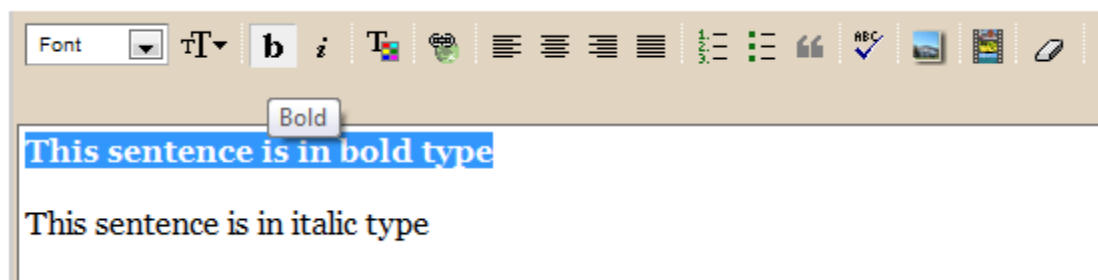
When you click on this dropdown, you can change the size of your text. Unfortunately, not all blog themes and browsers will show this text: it might look fine when you're composing the post, but it won't necessarily come through on the site.

So, I recommend doing headings as explained in the earlier section of this guide, using `<h3>` and `</h3>` (or `<h2>` and `</h2>` if you prefer) in the HTML.

#3 and #4: The Bold and Italic Buttons



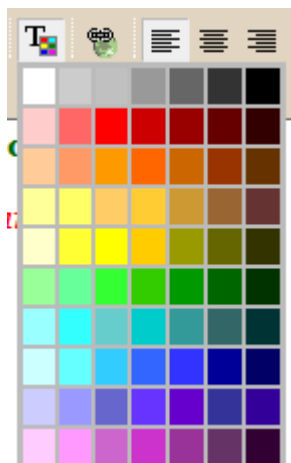
You've probably used these buttons before to create bold or italic text. They're simple to use: just highlight the text that you want to change and click the appropriate button:



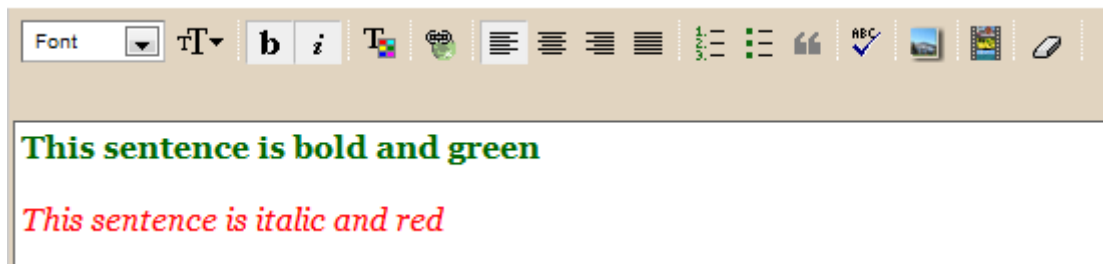
#5: The Colour Button



You can use this button to change the colour of your text. When you click on it, you'll see a colour palette that looks like this:



Simply highlight the text that you want to colour, and click on the little square of the colour that you want:



You might choose to use colour for subheadings, or even to emphasise a particular section. Too much colour is likely to look a bit garish, so tread lightly...

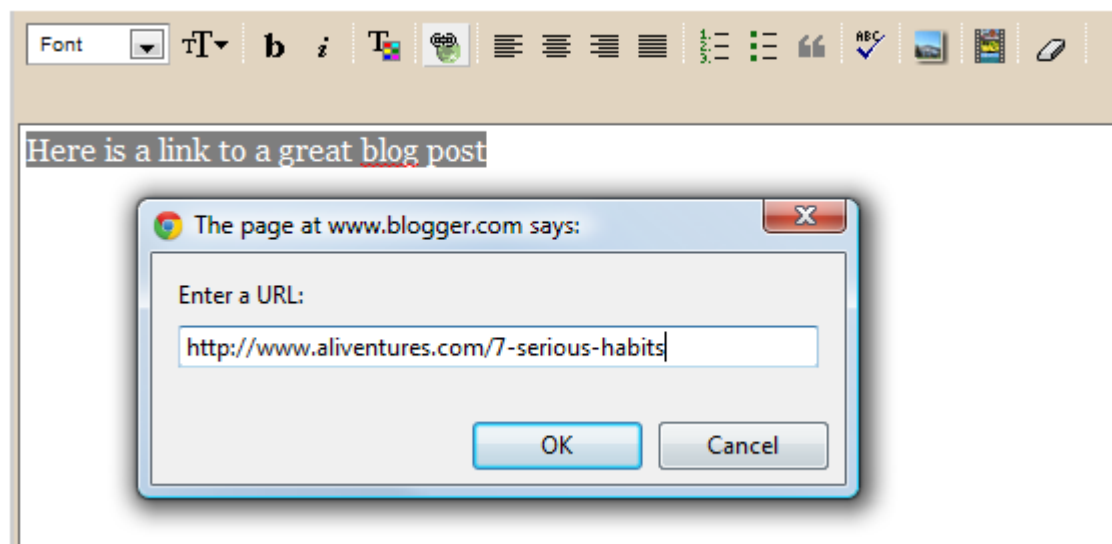
#6: The Link Button



As a blogger, you're going to want to link to other posts, sites and resources. The link button lets you put a live hyperlink into your post (instead of a link that has to be copied and pasted).

Again, all you need to do is highlight the text that's going to become the link, and then click the button. The technical name for this text is "anchor text" because it "anchors" the link.

Once you've clicked the button, you'll see a little pop-up like this:



Just type or copy your link into the pop-up window. Blogger will automatically put in the *http://* at the start ... be careful not to delete this, or your link won't work.

#7 - #10: The Text Alignment Buttons



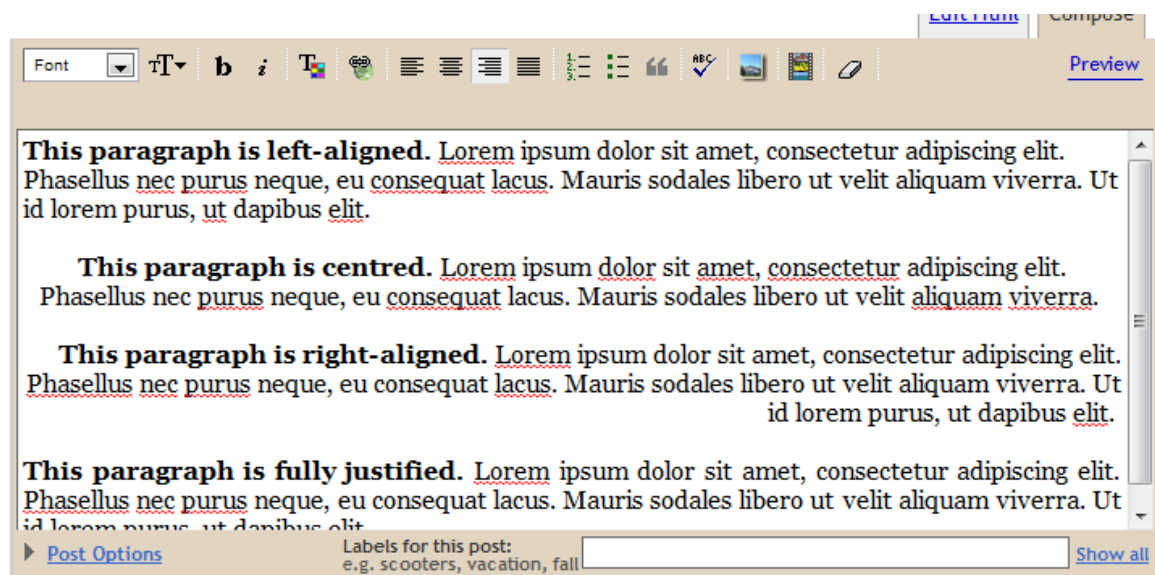
You'll have probably seen these buttons in Microsoft Word or another word-processing program. They allow you to align your text.

You won't want to use them very much, but sometimes you may want to centre text (e.g. a quotation or a subheading).

Again, just highlight the paragraph(s) that you want to change and click on one of the buttons. From left, they are:

- Left-align text
- Centre text
- Right-align text
- Fully justify text (*so that it "stretches" to reach the margins on both sides*)

Here's how they work:



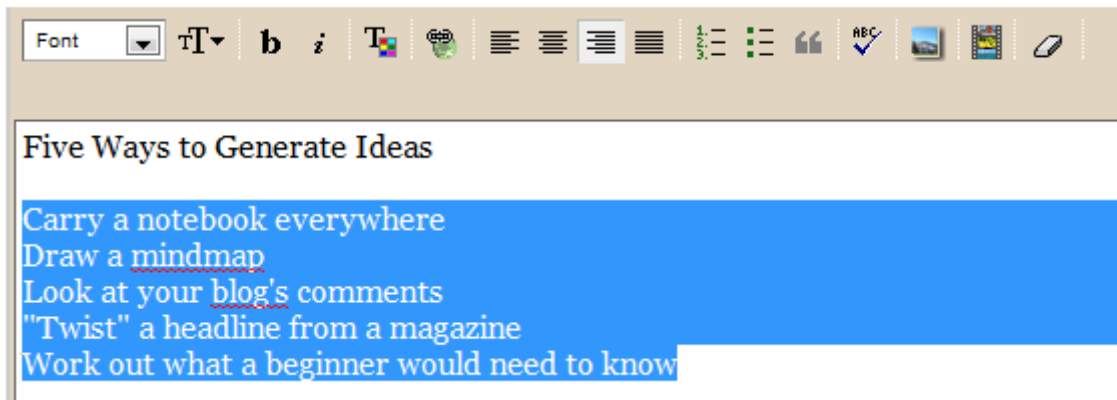
#11 and #12: The Bullet-Pointed List Buttons



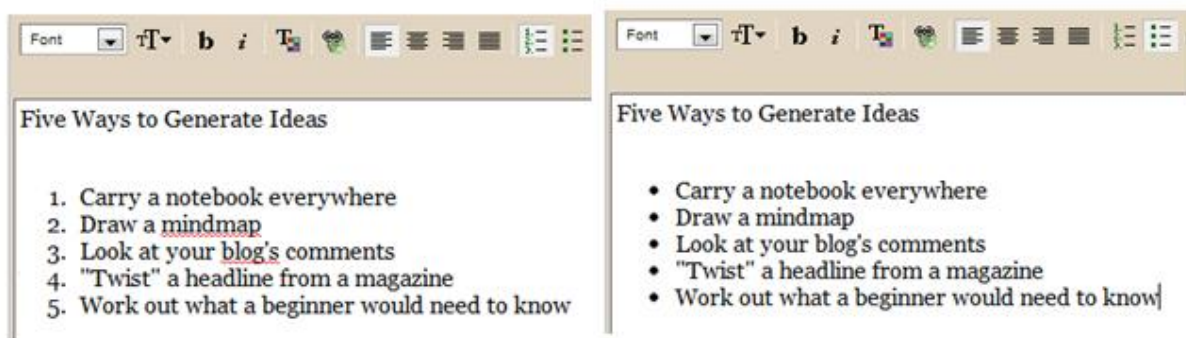
You'll almost certainly want to use these buttons at some point: many blog posts involve lists. The buttons are for an "ordered list" (numbered points) and an "unordered list" (round dots).

Usually, these will create neater, nicer-looking lists than if you just manually typed a number or a dash or similar. The numbered list will automatically reorder itself if you add a new point into the middle of it, too – often very handy!

As with all formatting, you just need to highlight your text and click the appropriate button. Make sure you've put each list item on a separate line:



Here's what the list looks like, using the two different buttons:

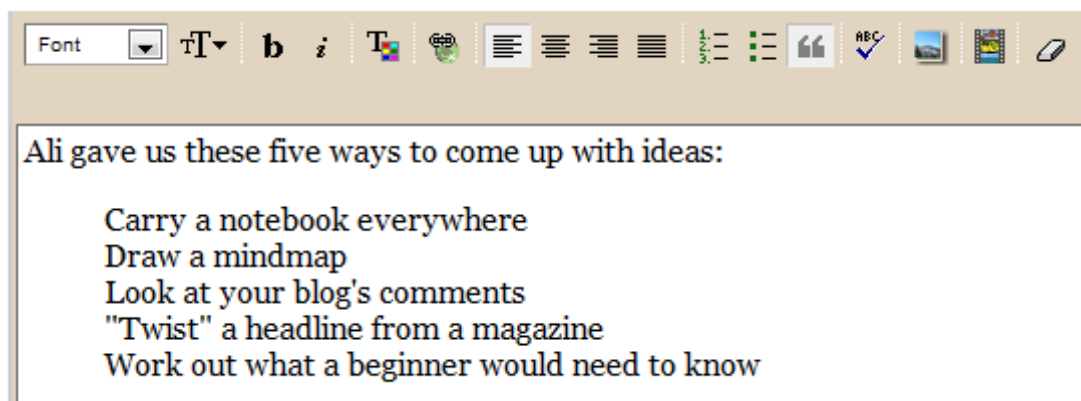


#13: The Blockquote Button



This button lets you format text as a "blockquote" – an indented piece of text that's normally used when you're quoting someone directly:

(I've removed the bullet point formatting to keep things simple, but you could create a blockquote that's formatted as a list, if you wanted.)



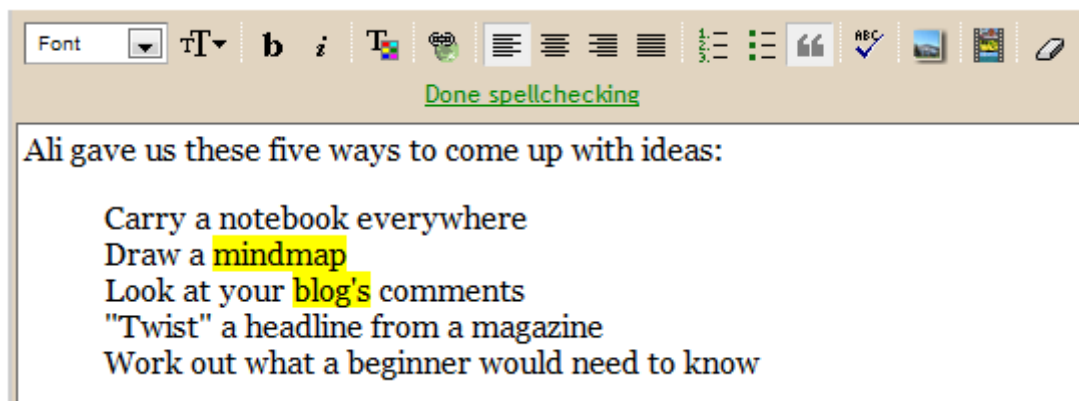
#14: The Spell-check Button



It's always worth running a spell-check after writing your post! You don't need to highlight your text this time – just click on the “ABC” button and it'll automatically spell-check the whole post.

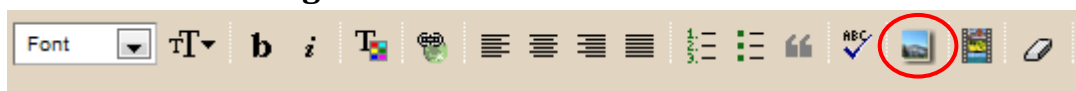
Once the spell-check is complete, any incorrect words will be highlighted in yellow.

(As you can see below, some newer words like “mindmap” and “blog’s” might get caught – so feel free to ignore the spell-check if you disagree with it!)



Once you've finished making any corrections, click on the green link “Done spellchecking” above your post, and the yellow highlighting will vanish.

#15: The “Add Image” Button



This button lets you insert an image into your post. Just click on the button, and either upload an image from your own computer, or link to one on the web. (I prefer to upload images, as web pages sometimes get taken down.)

Add an image from your computer

[Add another image](#)

No file chosen

We accept jpg, gif, bmp and png images, 8 MB maximum size

Or add an image from the web

[Add another image](#)

URL

[Learn more](#) about using web images

Choose a layout.

☐ None

☐ Left

☒ Center

☐ Right

Image size:

☐ Small
☒ Medium
☐ Large

☒ Use this layout every time?

You are currently using 4MB (0%) of your 1024MB

Make sure you have permission to use the image.

“Choose a layout” lets you position the image to the left, centre or right. “None” will normally make it appear on the left above your text. A centred image often looks good at the top of a blog post

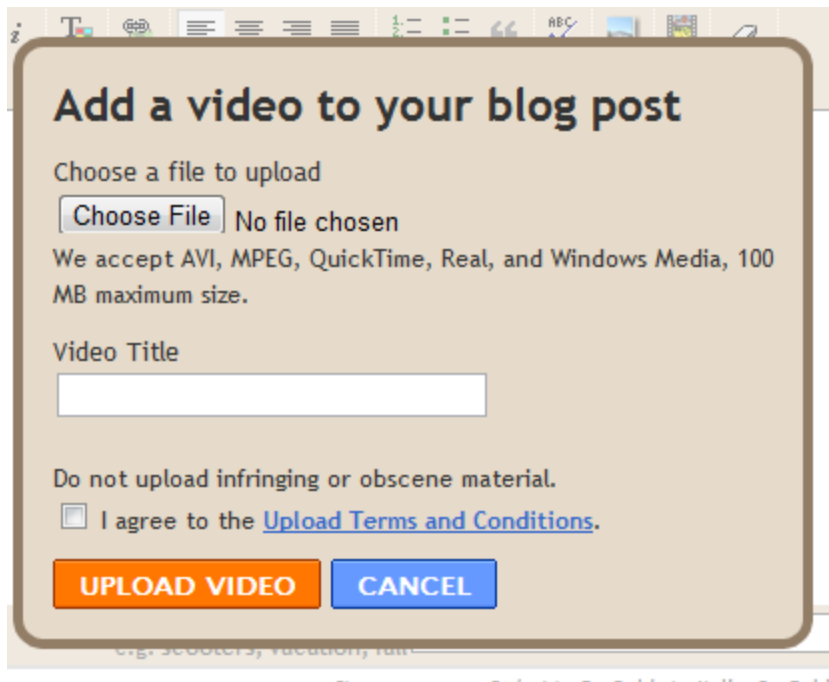
“Image size” lets you choose how to format your image “Large” will be full size, and medium and small will be correspondingly smaller.

You can position the image to the left, centre or right. “None” will normally make it appear on the left above your text. A centred image often looks good at the top of a blog post.

#16: The “Add Video” Button



If you have a video file on your computer, you can add it to your blog post using this button. You’ll see a window like this:



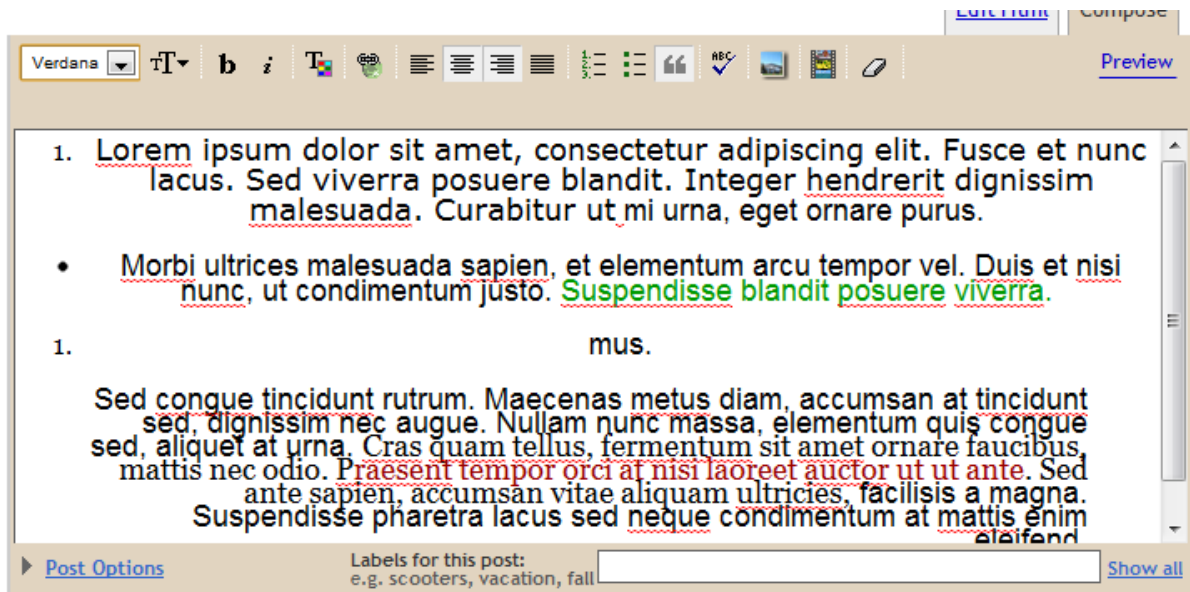
If you want to include a video from YouTube, you'll need to do that using HTML code (which we'll come to later in this ebook).

#17: The “Clear Formatting” Button



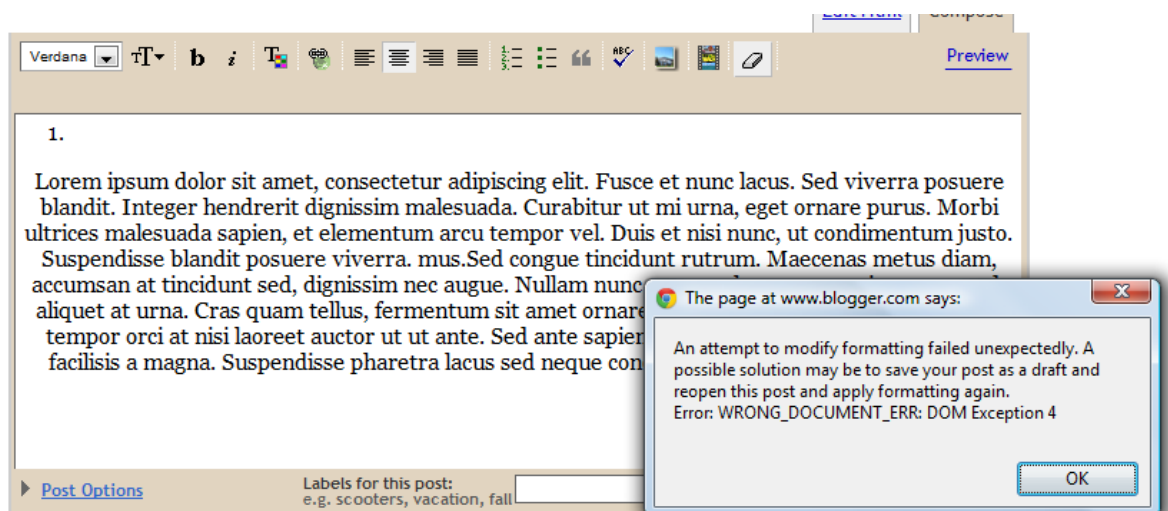
It's all too easy for formatting to go wrong: perhaps you copied in some paragraphs from a Word document, and they've ended up in a different font, or you tried to create a list and a blockquote and they somehow went wrong.

Here's some text that I've deliberately messed up! You can see that it starts off with a numbered point, then has an un-numbered one, then starts again at 1 ... plus there are different fonts and colours and alignments going on.



In theory, all I need to do is to highlight the text and click on the eraser button. Unfortunately, this won't work in every single case.

You can see that most of the formatting has been fixed, though, apart from the number at the top:



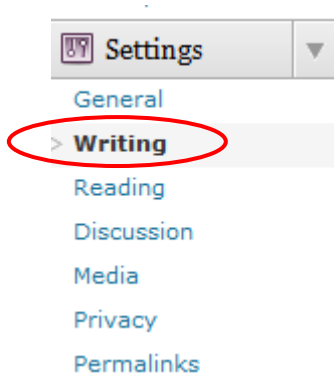
So ... what do you do if things go wrong?

You'll need to switch from the "Compose" view to the "Edit HTML" view, and take out any errant pieces of HTML code. Look at the part of the post that's gone wrong, and remove anything in pointy brackets like this: `< > </ >`

WordPress: All the Formatting Options

WordPress might seem a bit daunting and complex, but it has lots of powerful features for formatting posts. In fact, once you get used to it, you'll find it's actually easier to use than Blogger.

Before we get started on formatting, log in and go to: *Settings->Writing*



(If you don't see the list under "Settings", you'll need to click on the small downwards arrow to the right.)

Now, at the top of the page, change "Size of the post box" to at least 20 lines:



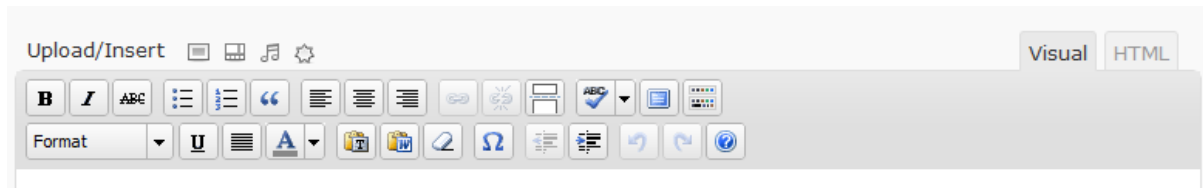
Hit the blue "Save changes" button at the bottom of the page:



This makes it *much* easier to see what you're doing when you're trying to format your post (or page).

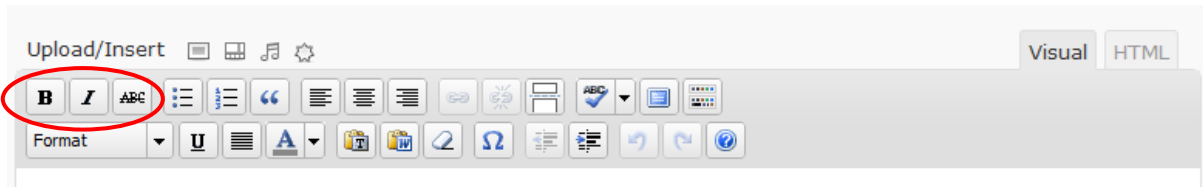
The Posting Box

When you create a post in WordPress, this is what you see above the writing box:



(If you don't see the bottom row of icons, click on the circled "Show/Hide Kitchen Sink" button to make them appear.)

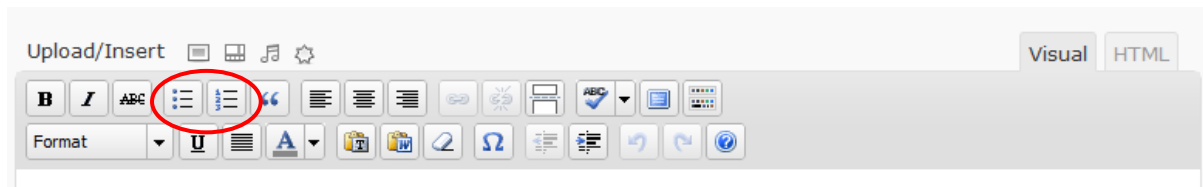
#1: - #3: The Bold, Italic and Strikethrough Buttons



You can select text and click "B" to make it **bold**, "I" to make it *italic* or "ABC" to put a line through the middle of it (called "strikethrough").

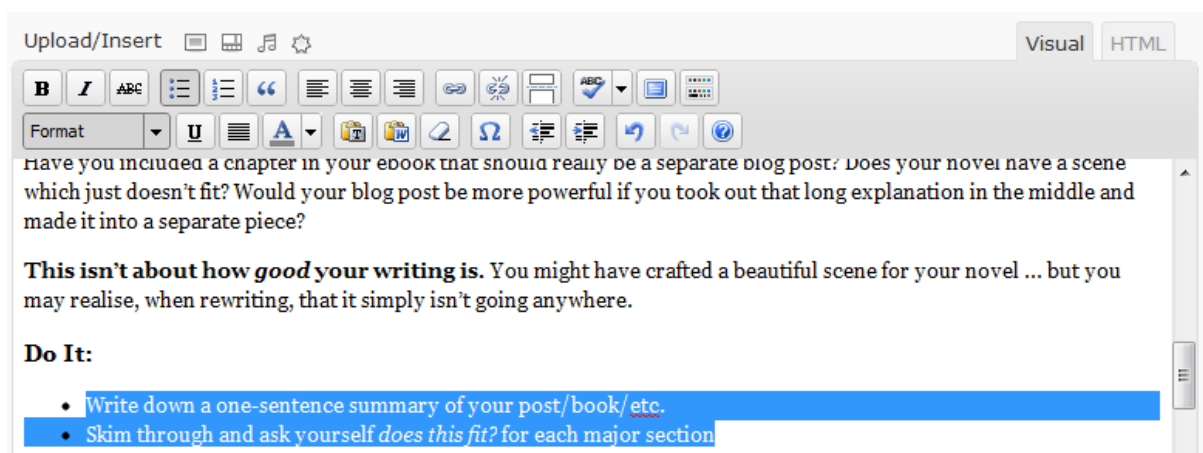
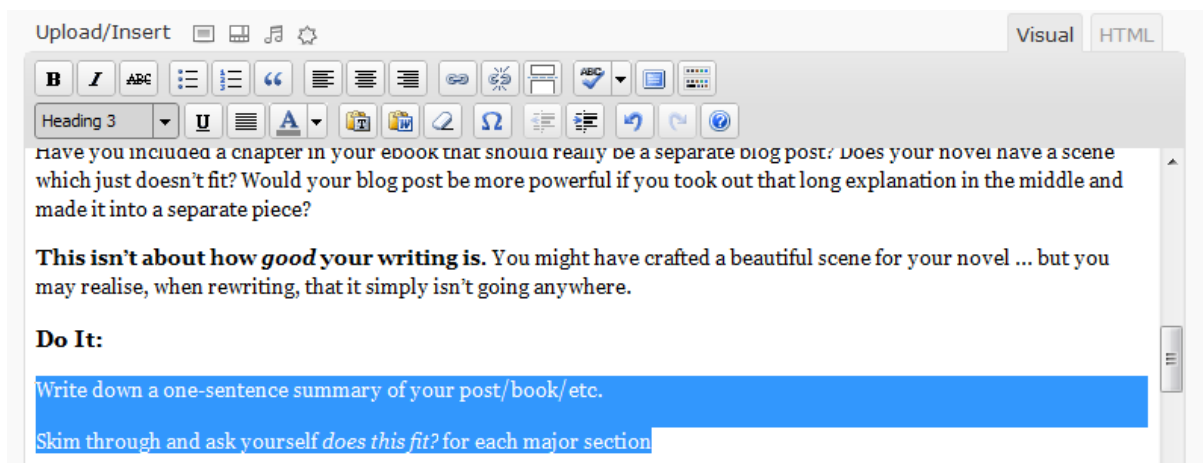
I find that the strikethrough formatting often vanishes, for no apparent reason, when I publish the post – so I wouldn't really recommend using it.

#4 and #5: The List Buttons



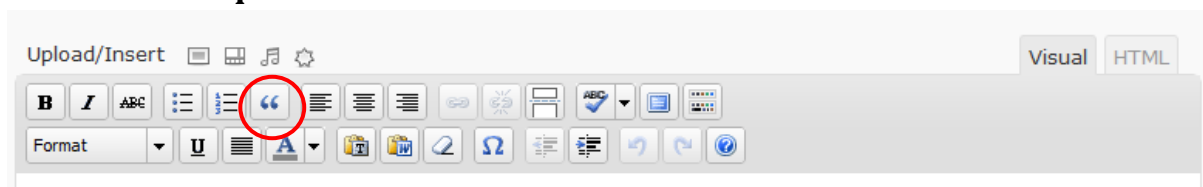
The first of these buttons creates an "unordered" list (usually has round black dots for bullet points, though this depends on your blog's theme). The second button creates an "ordered" list, starting with the number 1.

To create a list, highlight your text and click the button. Each item should be on a separate line:



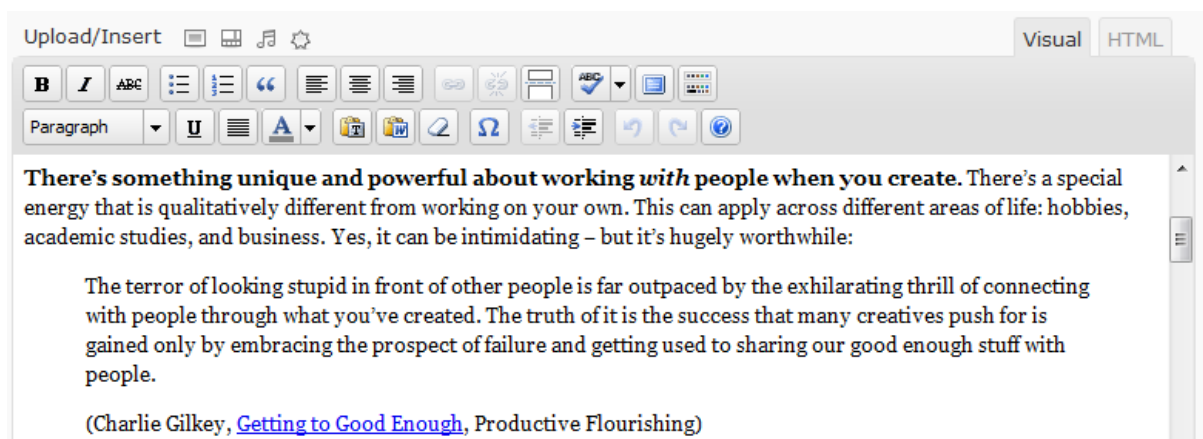
If you change your mind and want to remove the list, just put the cursor at the start of the line (before the first one but after the bullet point) and click “backspace”. You might have to put in a new line break.

#6: The Blockquote Button



This button lets you mark text as a quote. In most WordPress themes, blockquotes will be indented and they may have different formatting (e.g. lighter coloured text, or a line down the side).

In the post editor, your blockquote paragraph will just be indented, like this:



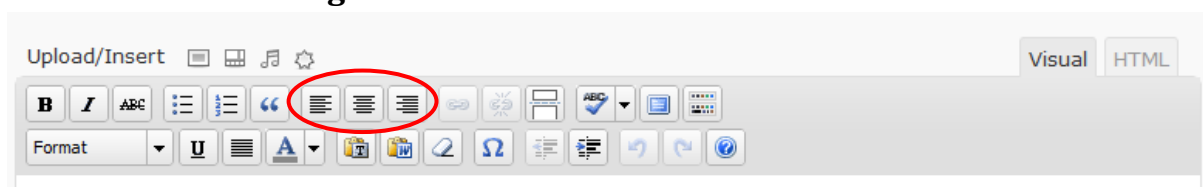
But in the post itself, whatever formatting your theme applies will be shown – in my case, that's a line down the side and a slightly lighter font:

There's something unique and powerful about working *with* people when you create. There's a special energy that is qualitatively different from working on your own. This can apply across different areas of life: hobbies, academic studies, and business. Yes, it can be intimidating – but it's hugely worthwhile:

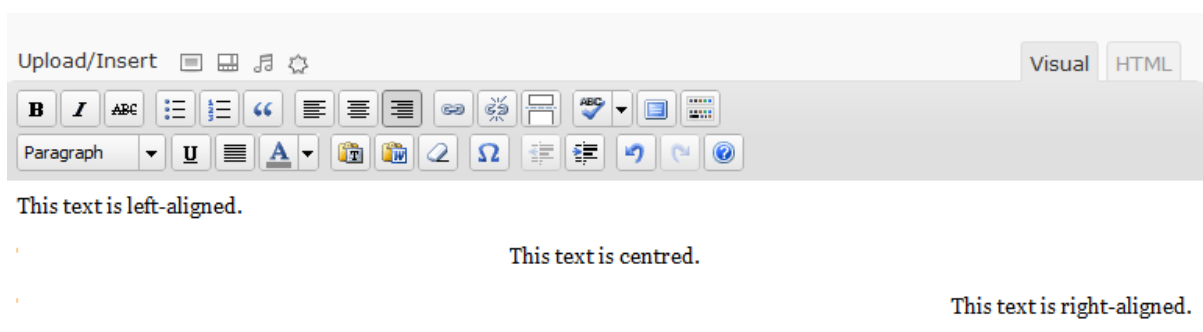
The terror of looking stupid in front of other people is far outpaced by the exhilarating thrill of connecting with people through what you've created. The truth of it is the success that many creatives push for is gained only by embracing the prospect of failure and getting used to sharing our good enough stuff with people.

(Charlie Gilkey, [Getting to Good Enough](#), Productive Flourishing)

#7 - #9: The Text Alignment Buttons

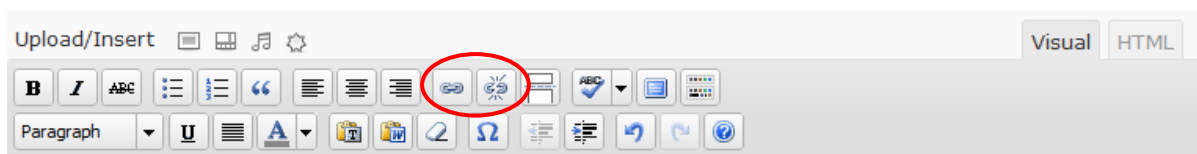


These buttons let you align the text, either to the left, centred or to the right:



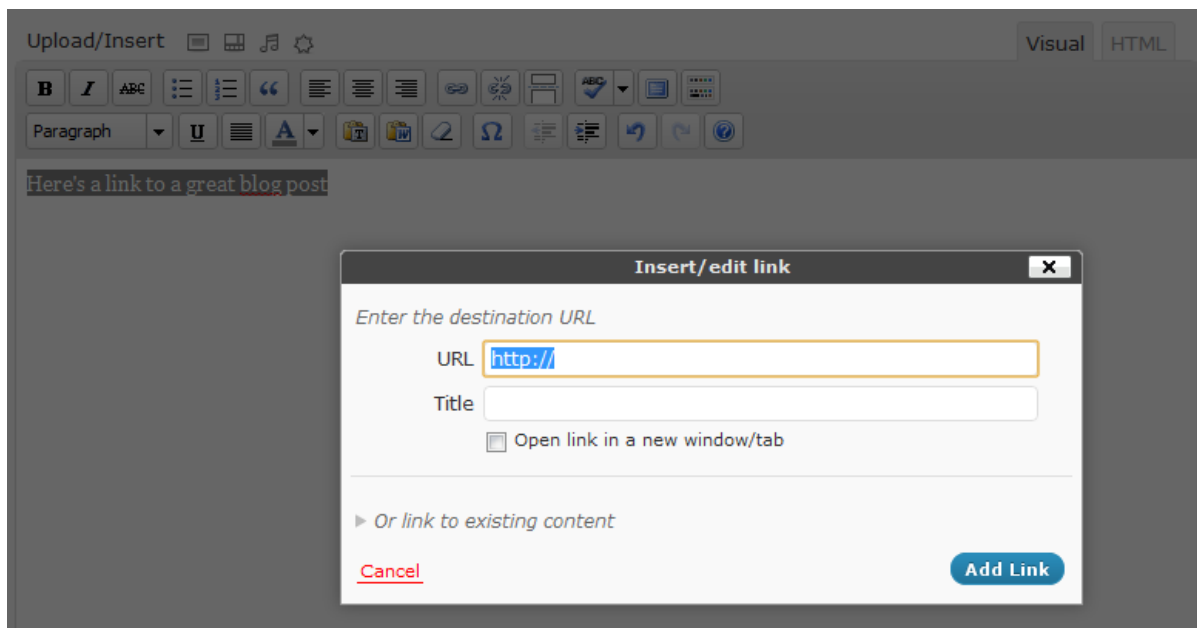
You might want to use centred text to provide a credit/caption for a centred image, or for your headers. Try experimenting with different alignments to see what looks good.

#10 and #11: The Link Buttons



(Note that the link buttons are greyed-out until you select some text for your link. All the other buttons can be used to apply formatting at the start of a paragraph.)

To create a link, highlight your text and click on the closed-chains button on the left:



Just type or paste in the link that you want. Make sure you leave the <http://> there.

If you want, you can add a “Title” – this is text that will show up when the reader moves their cursor over the link.

You can also choose to set the link to open in a new window/tab. If you’re linking to external sites you may want to do this – though bear in mind that many readers don’t like it.

The option “Or link to existing content” lets you put in a link to one of your own posts or pages:

Insert/edit link

Enter the destination URL

URL

http://

Title

☐ Open link in a new window/tab

▼ Or link to existing content

Search

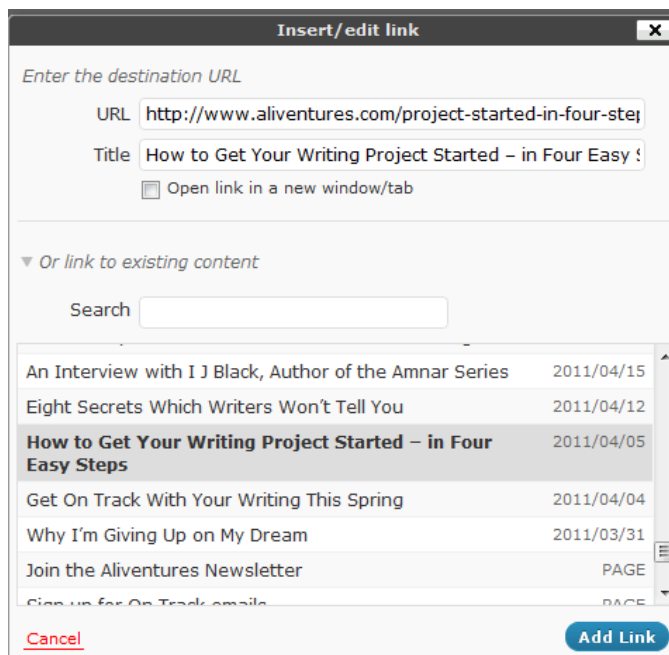
An Interview with I J Black, Author of the Amnar Series	2011/04/15
Eight Secrets Which Writers Won't Tell You	2011/04/12
How to Get Your Writing Project Started – in Four Easy Steps	2011/04/05
Get On Track With Your Writing This Spring	2011/04/04
Why I'm Giving Up on My Dream	2011/03/31
Join the Aliventures Newsletter	PAGE
Sign up for On Track emails	PAGE

Cancel

Add Link

It will show the posts and pages that you've most recently added/edited at the top of the list.

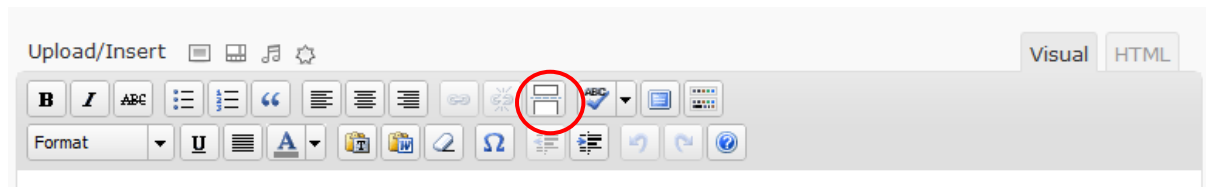
When you click on one, the URL and Title fields will be automatically populated:



To edit a link, click on it (you don't need to highlight the whole thing) and then click on the closed-chain link again.

To remove a link, click on it and then click the broken-link button.

#12: The “More” Button



This button isn't used in all blog themes, but it applies to many of them. To insert the “more” link, just position your cursor and click the button. You'll get a thin horizontal line like this:

How to Cut the Waffle From Your Writing – and Grab Readers’ Atten

Permalink: <http://www.aliventures.com/cut-the-waffle-writers/>

Edit

View Post

Get Shortlink

Upload/Insert

Visual

HTML



When you write – *especially* if you’re writing online – it’s important to avoid waffle. At best, a vague and waffly piece won’t have a strong impact on the reader. At worst, you’ll not only lose readers, they’ll mentally note you down as a writer to avoid.

So, how do you go about cutting the waffle from your writing?

More...

Step #1: Get Clear About the Topic

On the front page of your blog (and perhaps on other pages too, like categories and archives), you’ll see the first part of a post. There’ll be a link that the reader can click on to read more:

How to Cut the Waffle From Your Writing – and Grab Readers’ Attention

by ALI on JUNE 15, 2011



(Image from Flickr by [Unhindered by Talent](#))

Have you ever read a book that was way too wordy? (For me, Stephen Covey’s otherwise excellent *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* comes to mind...)

The content itself might have been good – but the substance ended up buried beneath a froth of unnecessary words. Perhaps you found it hard to stay focused, or you simply stopped reading.

When you write – *especially* if you’re writing online – it’s important to avoid waffle. At best, a vague and waffly piece won’t have a strong impact on the reader. At worst, you’ll not only lose readers, they’ll mentally note you down as a writer to avoid.

So, how do you go about cutting the waffle from your writing?

[\[click to continue...\]](#)

The content that appears on the front page is everything before the “More” marker in your post.

#13: The Spell-check Button

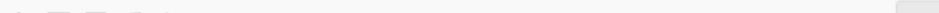
Upload/Insert

Visual

HTML



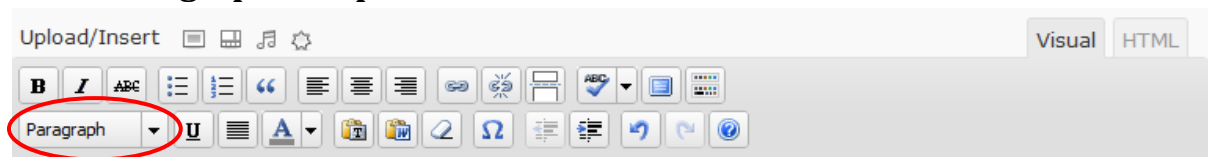
The dropdown list lets you set your language.



You can just click the full-screen button again to go back to the normal view.

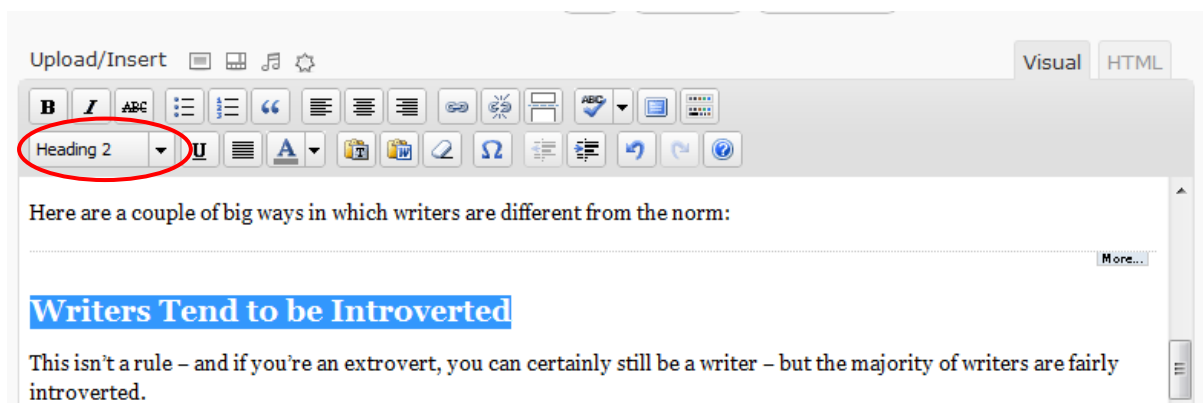
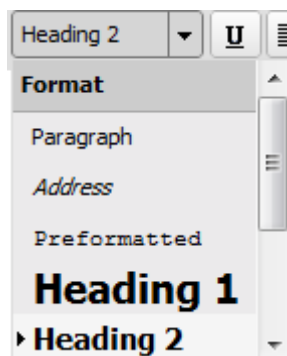
Simple, huh?

#16: “Paragraph” Dropdown



This dropdown menu lets you apply formatting to your text. The default setting is “paragraph” which will produce (unsurprisingly) normal paragraphs.

The main use of this is to create subheadings, though you may want to experiment with some of the other options too.



Depending on your blog’s theme, you’ll want to either use “Heading 2” or “Heading 3” for your first-level subheadings. Try out both and see which you prefer.

#17: The Underline Button

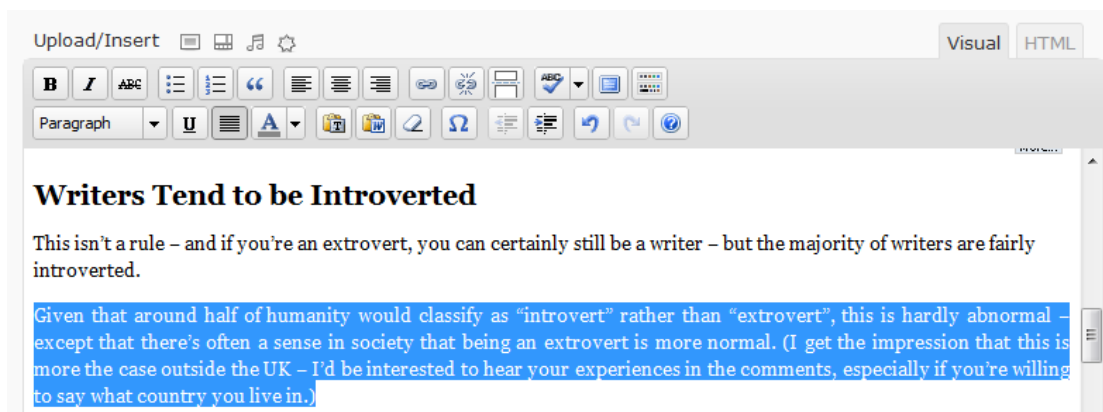


Use this to underline text. On second thoughts, *don't* use it unless you have a really good reason to – because web users will assume that underlined text is a link.

#18: The Justify-Text Button



This button lets you justify your text, so that paragraphs reach to the margins on both sides:



I can’t imagine that you’d normally want to use this. If you were *always* going to justify your paragraphs, it’d be easier simply to set this up site-wide in your CSS (stylesheet) file.

#19: The Colour Dropdown



This lets you change the colour of your text. It can be useful for applying emphasis or for separating different points. In this post, the green and blue headers are both created by applying “Heading 2” style and then adding a colour:

Module-by-Module



Module One: How to Write a How-To Post – Monday 6th June

The lessons for this module are available to all members:

1. [Developing an Idea](#)
2. [Writing the Introduction](#)
3. [Planning the Main Body](#)
4. [Writing the Main Body](#)
5. [Writing the Conclusion](#)
6. [Titling Your Post](#)
7. [Editing Your Post](#)
8. [Where Next? Extending the How-To Format](#)



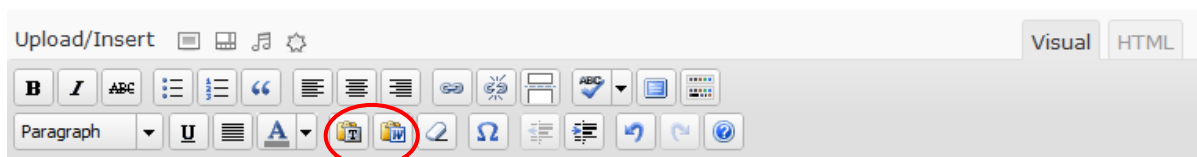
Assignment deadline: Sunday 12th June, 23:59 PST. [Turn your post in here.](#)



Gold Module One: Your Contact Page – Monday 13th June

The lessons for this module are available to Gold members only:

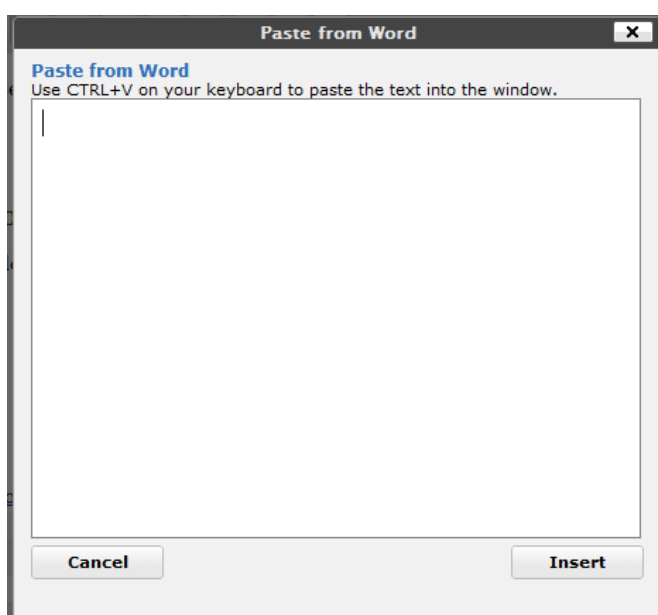
#20 and #21: The “Paste as Plain Text” and “Paste as Word” Buttons



If you’re copying something (e.g. a quote from a website) and you *don’t* want to keep the formatting, use the “T” (plain text) button. Make sure you’ve positioned your cursor where you want the text to go.

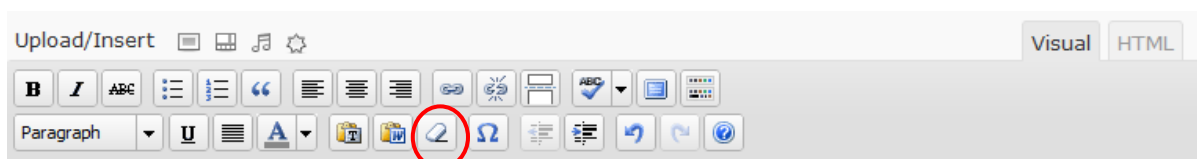
If you wrote your post in Word and you want to copy it with all the formatting intact (e.g. bold, italics, lists) then use the “W” (Word) button.

Either way, you’ll get a pop-up box to paste your text into:



Just hit “Insert” once you’ve put your text into the box, and it’ll appear in your post.

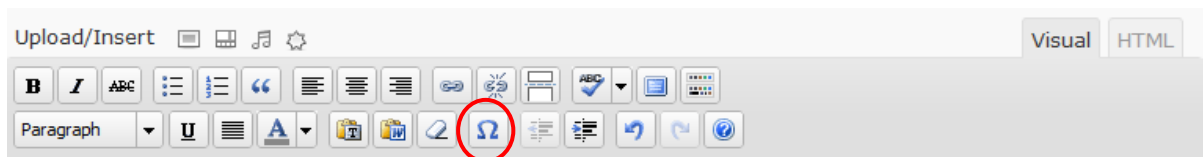
#22: The Eraser Button



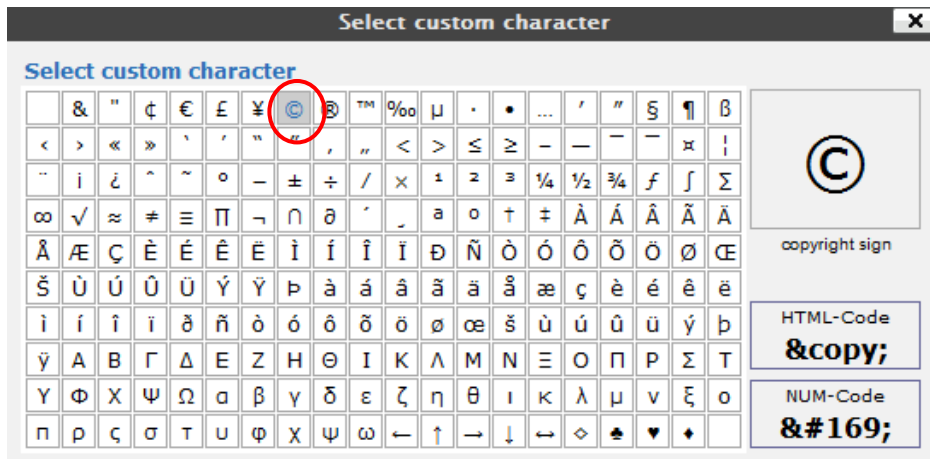
If you’ve changed your mind about some formatting, you can (maybe) use this button to remove it.

Just highlight the text that you want to change, and hit the button. It won’t remove heading styles, links or lists.

#23: The Insert Character Button

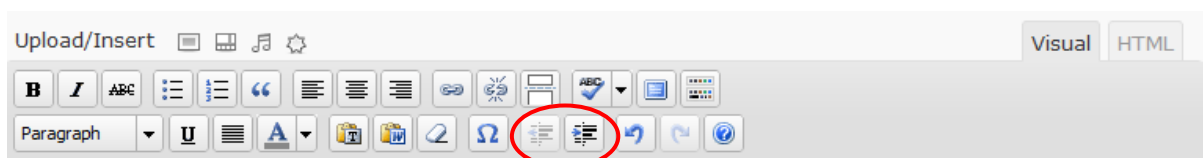


If you're writing a word like "café" or a mathematical formula, or you need a copyright symbol, etc, this is the button for you. It brings up a character map so you can select the character you want:

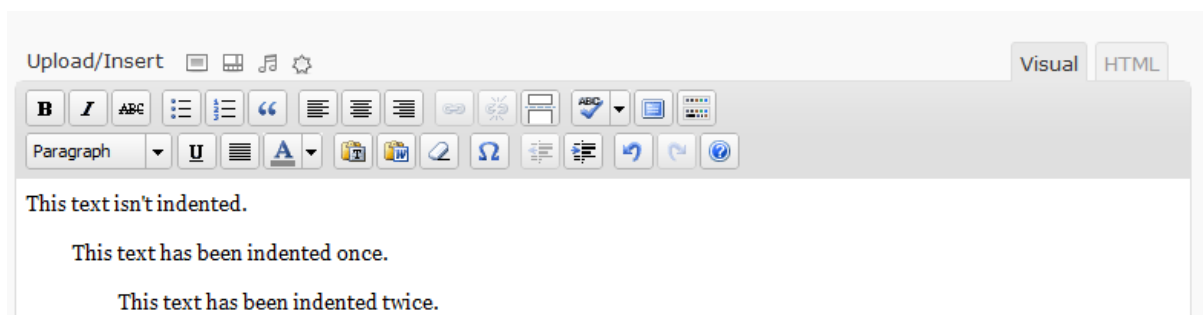


When you put your cursor over the character, it'll appear in the box on the right. When you click on it, WordPress will insert it into your post.

#24 and #25: The Outdent and Indent Buttons



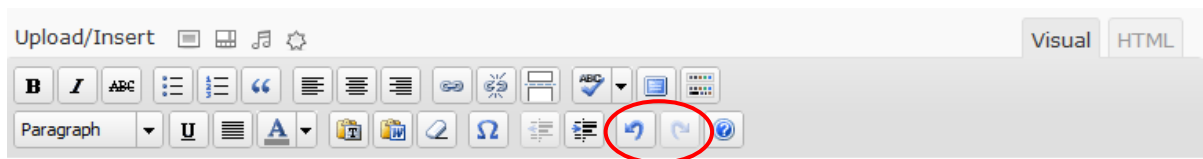
These buttons let you indent your text (or "outdent" it – which basically means removing the indent!) The outdent is greyed out on the left and the indent is on the right. You can click the indent button more than once to indent your text further:



Once you've indented a line, you can use the "outdent" to move it back again.

You might want to use this if you're writing poetry, or if you want to indent text that isn't a quote (e.g. if you're indenting subsections in your post).

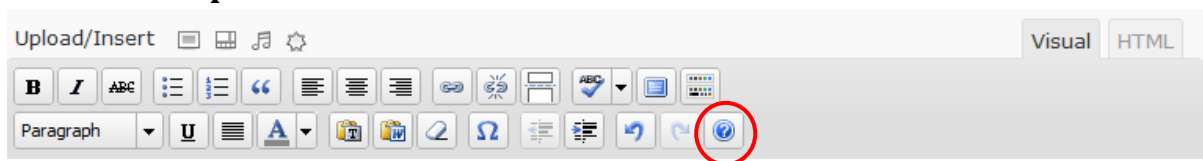
#26 and #27: The Undo and Redo Buttons



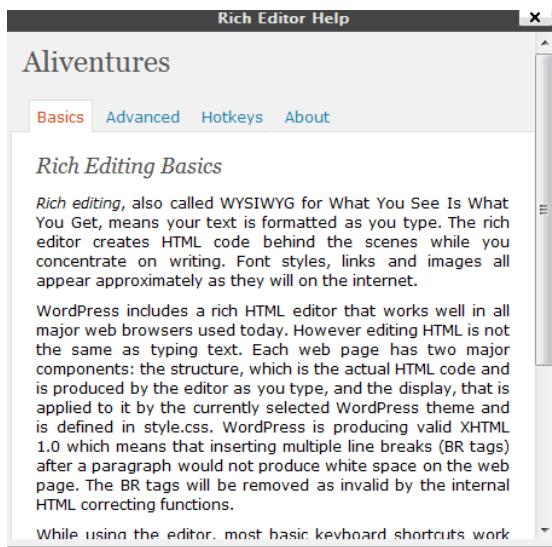
These are very handy if you accidentally click the wrong button and apply formatting that you don't want, or delete half your post...

Just click "Undo" to undo your most recent change. You can click it again and again to undo a string of changes. "Redo" lets you put the changes back, so to speak – it will be greyed out until you've clicked "Undo" at least once.

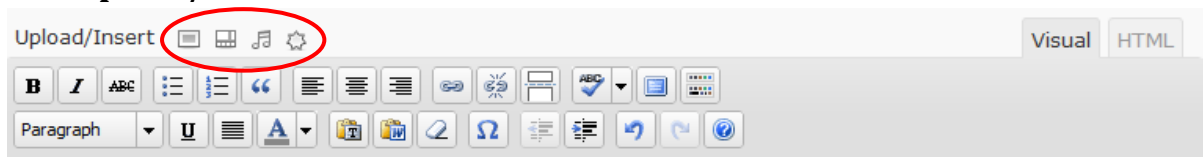
#28: The Help Button



This button brings up a window of help text, which explains (in somewhat techy terms) about the posting box. You may or may not find it helpful...



The Upload/Insert Row



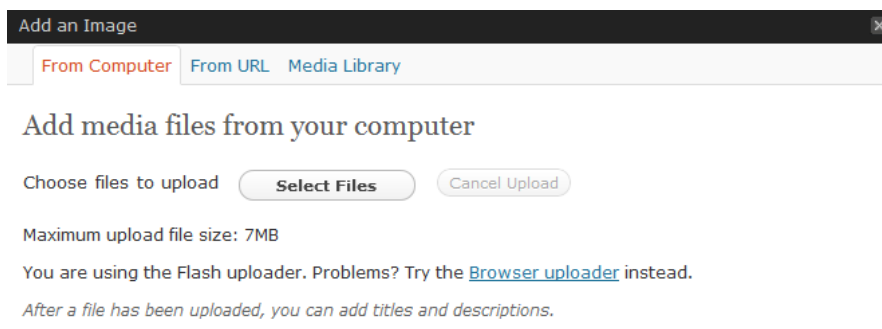
These four buttons let you add different types of multimedia to your posts. From left, they are:

- Add image
- Add video
- Add audio
- Add media (anything else, basically)

I'll cover images here, since they're the most common addition; the other buttons work in a pretty similar way.

Before adding an image, make sure you position your cursor at the *start* of a paragraph/line (or between paragraphs).

Click on the button, and you'll see this window:



The options at the top let you upload an image from your computer (pretty self-explanatory) or link to one on the web with “from URL”.

I'd normally recommend downloading images and re-uploading them rather than using a direct link, just in case they get removed in the future – you don't want the images on your blog to break.

Whichever of these two methods you choose, you'll need to select from some options:

Add an Image

From Computer
From URL
Media Library

Add media files from your computer


Choose files to upload

Select Files
Cancel Upload

Maximum upload file size: 7MB

You are using the Flash uploader. Problems? Try the [Browser uploader](#) instead.

After a file has been uploaded, you can add titles and descriptions.



File name: writing-in-notebook.jpg
File type: image/jpeg
Upload date: June 17, 2011
Dimensions: 500 x 333

Edit Image

Title

* writing-in-notebook

Alternate Text

Alt text for the image, e.g. "The Mona Lisa"

Caption

Description

Link URL

<http://www.aliventures.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/writing-in-no>
None
File URL
Post URL

Enter a link URL or click above for presets.

Alignment

☐ None
☒ Left
☐ Center
☐ Right

Size

☐ Thumbnail (150 x 150)
☐ Medium (300 x 199)
☐ Large
☒ Full Size (500 x 333)

Insert into Post
Delete

This appears when the user puts their cursor over the image

The caption is show below the image

Readers can click this to view the full image. You can change it, e.g. to link a sales banner to a page.

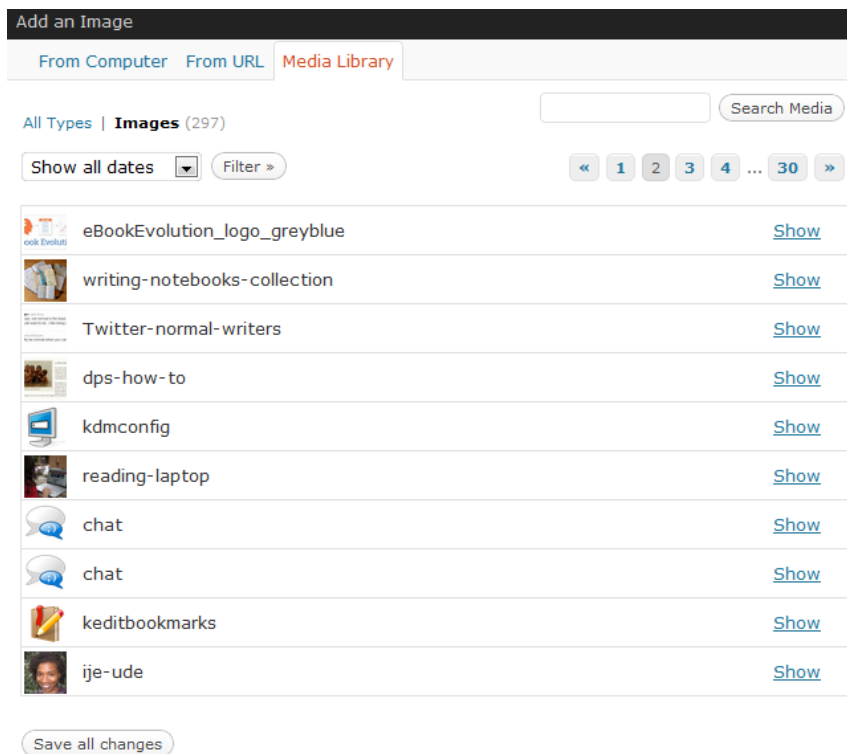
With “Alignment”:

- “None” appears on the left, above the paragraph
- “Left” appears on the left, with the paragraph text flowing around it
- “Center” appears in the centre, above the paragraph
- “Right” appears on the right, with the paragraph text flowing around it

It’s normally a good idea to resize images *before* uploading them – that way, you’ll avoid any risk of them getting compressed oddly. But if you do need to make your image smaller, you can use the “Size” feature.

Once you’re done, click “Insert into Post”.

The “Media Library” tab lets you re-use images that you’ve already uploaded in the past:



You'll need to click on "Show" for the image that you want, then decide on the alignment, size, etc.

This is very handy if you use the same image frequently, or if you're creating a page like this:



Using Microsoft Word to Format Your Posts

I personally prefer to write my posts in Word and then copy them into WordPress (using the “paste from Word” button).

Most formatting that you apply in Word will be kept when you copy your post over. That includes links, lists, bold, italics and headings.

Headings in Word

When using headings, don’t manually change the font size for each one: use Word’s styles. In Word 2007, the styles are shown under the “Home” tab:

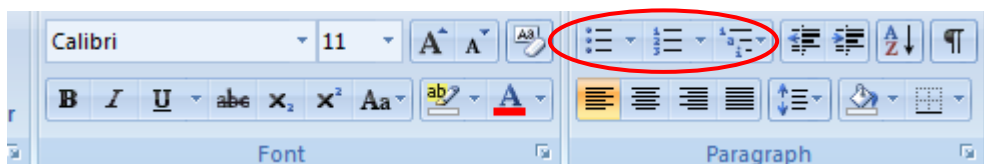


It doesn’t matter what colour, font, etc you’re using for these styles – when you copy your post into WordPress, “Heading 1” will become “Heading 1” in your blog’s own style, “Heading 2” will become a “Heading 2” and so on.

You’ll probably want to use either Heading 2 or Heading 3, depending on what looks good on your blog.

Lists in Word

To create a list, use the special buttons in Word – don’t type each bullet point manually. The list buttons in Word 2007 look like this:



(The third one is a “multi-level list” – you probably won’t want to use that.)

You’ll need to add the following formatting *after* copying your post into WordPress:

- Blockquotes (Word has a “quote” style but this doesn’t get copied over)
- Images, and any other multimedia
- Coloured text
- Paragraph alignment

Got questions? This is the first version of this guide, so I'll be making updates and changes based on feedback. If anything was unclear, or if you'd like more details on any aspect of formatting, just let me know!

You can contact me at ali@aliventures.com or via the Blog On contact form at <http://www.aliventures.com/blog-on-contact>

Ali x