

# Transitioning from the classic editor

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## Learning objectives

In this lesson, you will learn:

- how to test the block editor on your site with a staging site;
  - what to pay attention to when testing;
  - how to convert old content into blocks.
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## 1. Transitioning from the classic editor

In this course, we explored the benefits of using the block editor. You learned that the block editor makes it easy to:

- publish user-friendly, high-quality content;
- give your content a great structure, look and feel;
- add structured data to your posts and pages

In Module 2, we showed you how easy it is to use the block editor. Hopefully, by now, you are convinced to jump on board and start using it to create your posts and pages.

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When **switching from the classic editor**, there still might be a question hanging in the air. You may be asking yourself: will the existing posts and pages I've made in the classic editor be affected when I switch to the block editor? The short answer to this question is: no, they won't. The long answer? That's what we explore in this lesson.

When you decide to use the block editor, transitioning to it should go smoothly. However, to be safe rather than sorry, it is best to **test the block editor on your site**.

## Testing the block editor

Testing is always useful, especially when making significant changes. Luckily, in WordPress, you can easily check if your site and the block editor are a good match. The best way to do it is to use a so-called **staging site**. A staging site is a copy of your live website. Using one allows you to implement and test changes without affecting your real site.

There are two ways to get a staging site. The first thing you can do is ask your **hosting company** to create one for you. Most hosts should be able to do it. If for some reason, your hosting company isn't able to create a staging site for you, you can use a **WordPress plugin** and create it yourself.

## Using a WordPress plugin to create a staging site

If you want to use a plugin to create a staging site, the first thing you need to do is find one. A quick search for 'staging' in the WordPress plugin directory results in 229 items (Image 1).

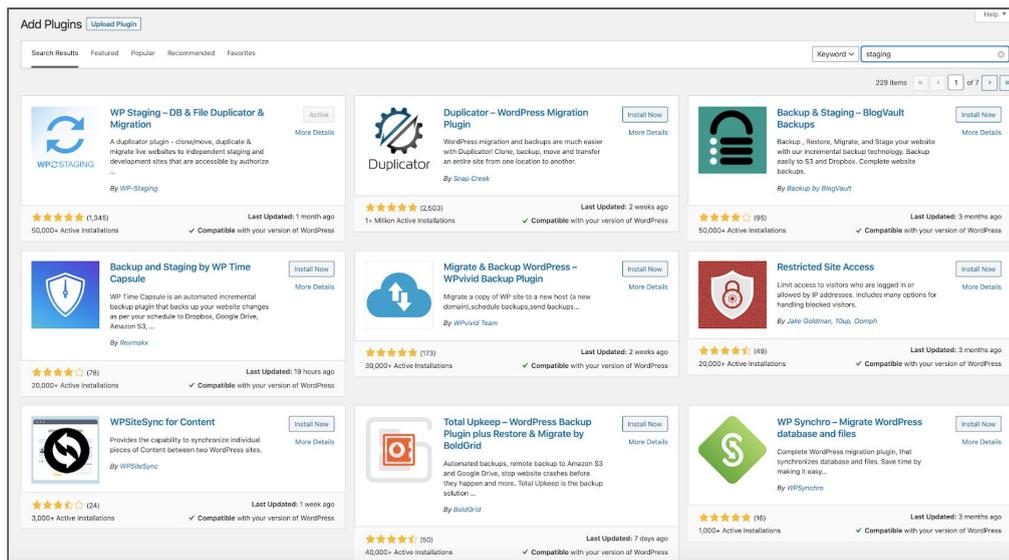


Image 1: Staging plugins in WordPress

Remember what we discussed in Lesson 2.3? When choosing a plugin, make sure it is **trustworthy**, by checking the:

- reviews;
- active installations;
- the last time it was updated;
- its compatibility with your version of WordPress.

It is also worthwhile to research more about the quality, performance, and the support the plugin offers.

## Example: Using the WP Staging plugin to clone your website

As an example, we chose the WP Staging plugin. Let's explore how it works. After you install and activate the plugin, you can find the plugin in your Admin Menu (Image 2). Click on the menu item to open the plugin screen (Image 2).

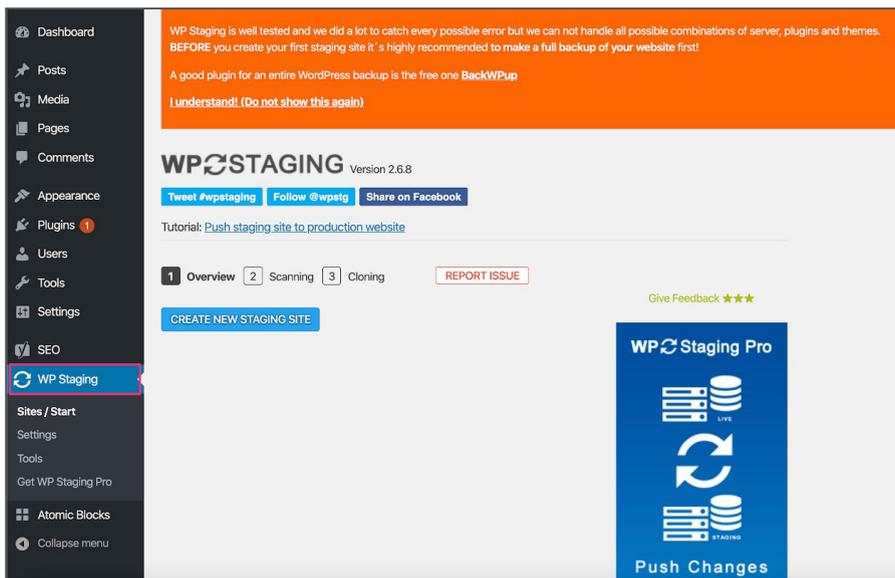


Image 2: The WP Staging plugin menu item (left) and its screen (right)  
WP Staging

The first thing you'll notice on the screen is the big box at the top, reminding you to make a backup of your site. We highly recommend it too. Regularly backing up your website is crucial, and it is especially necessary whenever you make big changes. To learn more about backups, go to the [WordPress for beginners course](#).

Creating the staging site with the WP staging plugin is easy. All you need to do is click on the Create New Staging Site button (Image 2). After you do that, you will get the option to give your staging site a name, and choose the files you want to clone (Image 3). Then, click the Start Cloning button, and the cloning will commence.

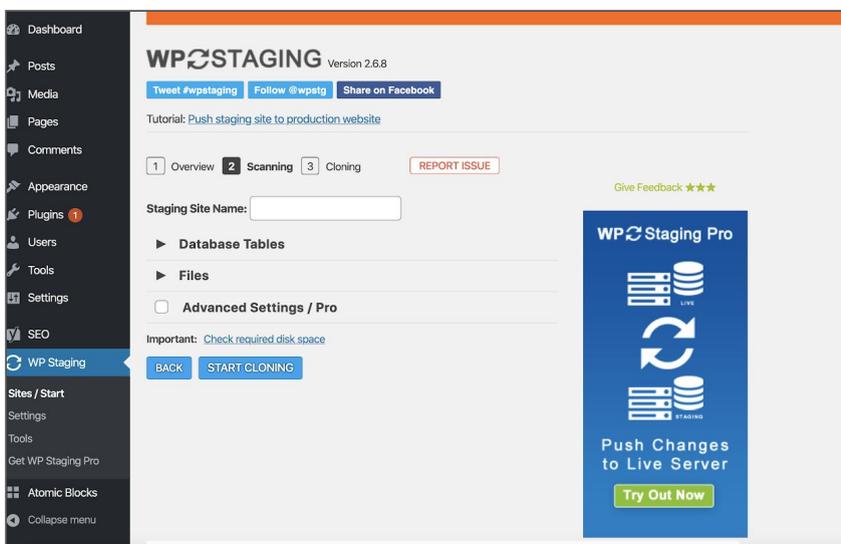


Image 3: Cloning a site with WP staging

The duration of the cloning depends on the size of your site. You will get the notification that the cloning was successful, along with some other information, on the same screen (Image 4).

To access the staging site, click the Open staging site button. You can log in with the same credentials you use for your regular website.

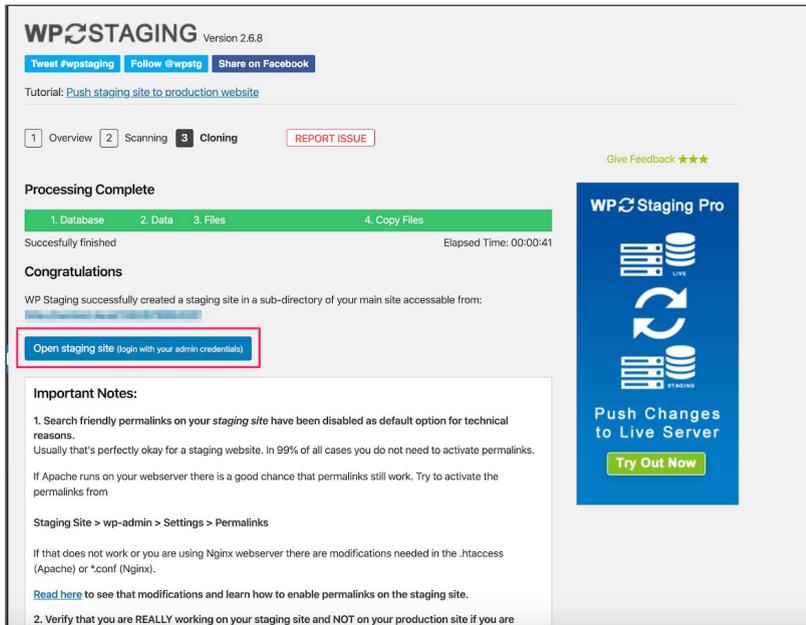


Image 4: The screen after the site is successfully cloned

The environment of the staging site looks the same as your regular site (Image 5). So, getting around should not be a problem.

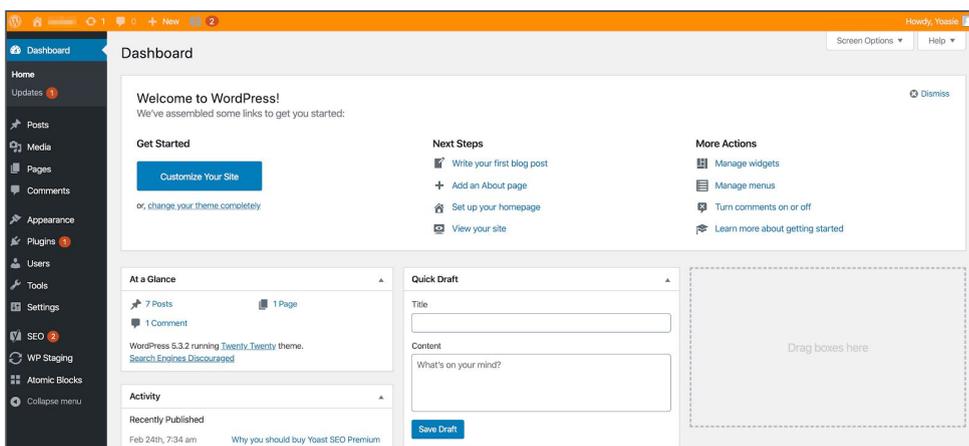


Image 5: The staging site environment

## What to test in the staging environment

Once you sort the staging environment, you can update to the latest version of WordPress, which automatically comes with the block editor. Alternatively, disable the classic editor plugin, and see the effect it has on your site. When testing, you need to pay special attention to **shortcodes and plugins**.

### Plugins

It is essential to check whether your plugins work with the block editor. If you haven't already done it, make sure to **update all your plugins** in the staging environment. Most plugins have already adapted to the block editor. That is why, using the latest version of all your plugins is a way to make sure your site works properly.

What if some plugins conflict with the block editor? Then, you can look for an alternative. Blocks can even replace some plugins, so check the available blocks and see if you can find what you need. It is handy to make a list of the plugins that conflict with the block editor. In that way, you can remove them from your real site before you make the transition.

### Shortcodes

Before the block editor came, people used shortcodes to add various features to a website. Shortcodes are like shortcuts to a [pre-created and pre-defined code on your website](#). If you've used shortcodes, make sure they display correctly with the block editor. This is especially important if you use plugins that insert shortcodes.

Once you've tested everything, you're ready to make the switch! Make a backup of your site and update it to the latest version of WordPress 5.0. Or, if you are using the classic editor plugin - disable it, to enjoy your new block editor experience!

## Converting the content of the old posts and pages

When you update to the WordPress version that contains the block editor, your old posts made in the Classic editor will be converted into a single Classic block. For the full block experience, you can convert the content of the single Classic block into separate blocks. To do that, follow these steps:

- 1. Select the Classic editor block in the post editing screen.**

The top toolbar appears.

**2. Click on the three vertical dots in the upper right corner.**

A menu appears (Image 6).

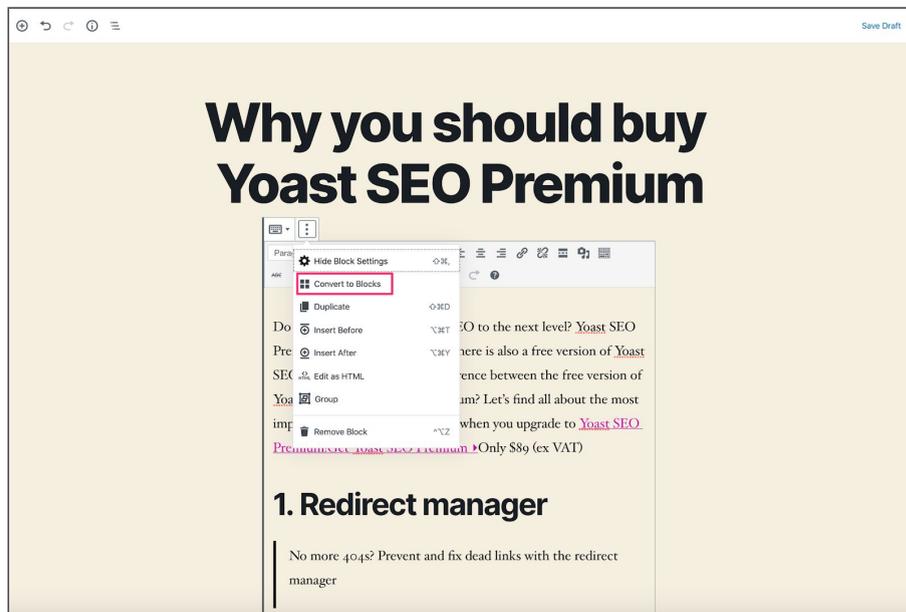


Image 6: The menu in the Classic block

**3. Click the Convert Block menu item (Image 6).**

WordPress scans your text for HTML tags in your content to place every piece of your content into a corresponding block.

When WordPress converts the content of your post to the blocks system, you should review each new block. When reviewing, use the Block Navigation menu to save time. It shows you all the different parts of your post or page, so you can quickly scan through them to see if everything is the way you want it to be.

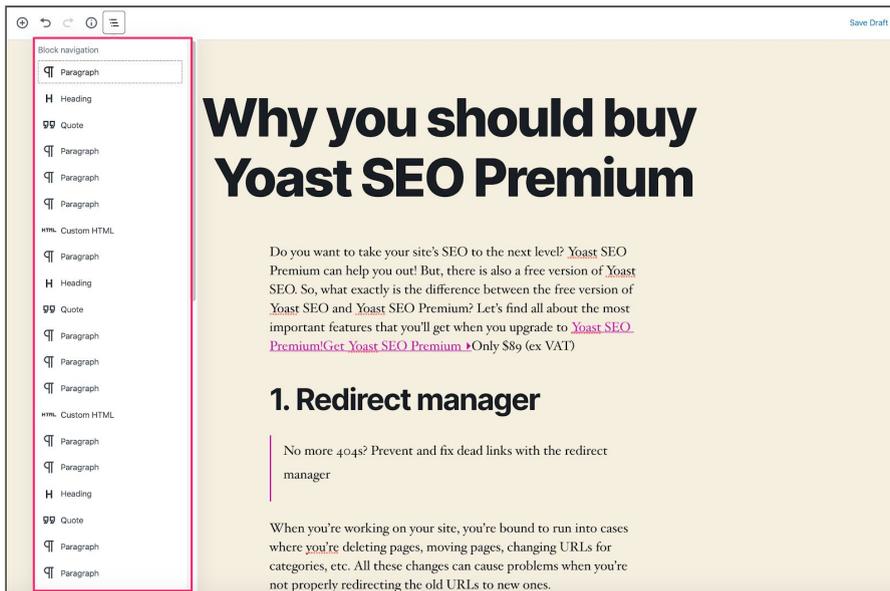


Image 7: The block navigation menu

When you do the conversion, you might spot errors in some blocks (Image 8). It's nothing to worry about. You can easily fix this by clicking the Resolve button (Image 8).

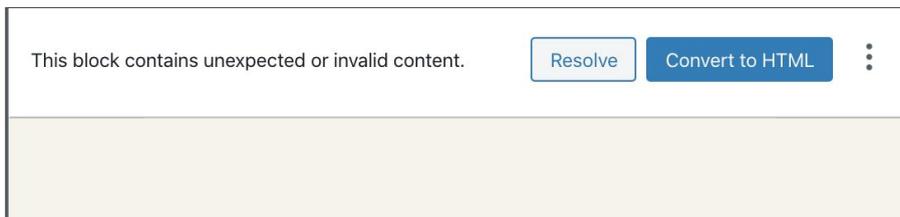


Image 8: An error notification

A new window pops up, and you can see the issues WordPress encountered. To resolve them, just click the Convert to Blocks button (Image 9).

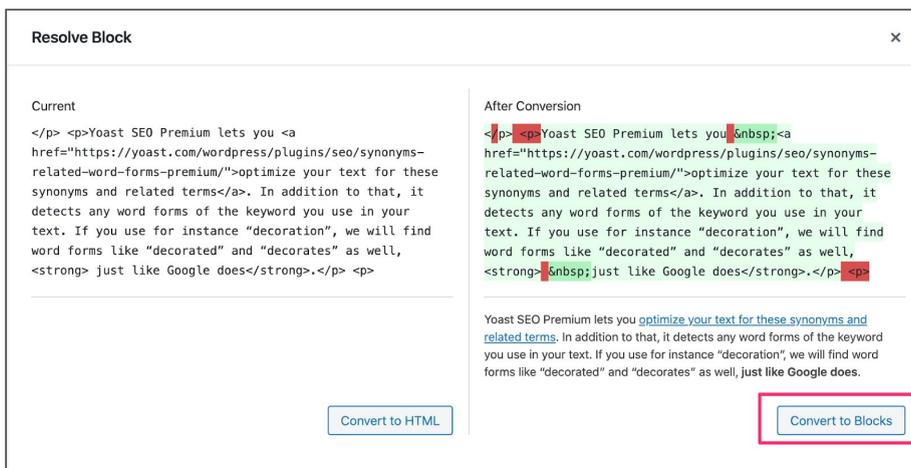


Image 9: The Resolve Block pop-up

Time to sum up! In this lesson, you saw that it is quite easy to make the switch to the block editor. We've explained that this won't affect any of your existing posts and pages. However, you should check for any conflicting plugins and make sure all of your shortcodes still work correctly. Good luck!

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## Key takeaways

- Before transitioning to the block editor, you can test it with a **staging site** by:
  - asking your **hosting provider** to create one for you;
  - using a **plugin**.
- When testing the block editor on the staging site, make sure to check if your **shortcodes and plugins** work correctly.
- When you install the latest version of WordPress, your old posts will go to the **single Classic editor block**.
- You can **convert** the content of the single Classic editor block to multiple blocks.