

The future of the block editor project

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Learning objectives

In this lesson, you will learn:

- what to expect from the Gutenberg project in the future;
 - what you can do during the transition period.
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1. The Gutenberg project

The **Gutenberg project** is massive. Its vision is to transform and modernize WordPress. The ultimate goal is to make WordPress easier, faster, and safer to use. We are not talking only about creating posts. A high priority on the Gutenberg project agenda is to change the way people create websites, edit them, and fill them with content. Ultimately, these changes will democratize publishing and make it possible for anyone to share their content online.

The block editor, which we explored in this course, marked the start of the Gutenberg project. And so a new WordPress era began. That is why the

block editor is also referred to as phase one of the Gutenberg project. Before the block editor, unlocking the full potential of WordPress was available only to those who knew how to use HTML and CSS. Yes, you could still make great posts and pages for free, but you had to use all sorts of custom code. The block editor changed that. With the introduction of blocks, creating posts and pages became super easy. Now, instead of worrying about code, you can explore your creativity using blocks.

So, if the block editor is phase one, what comes after it? A lot of exciting developments are in store. The Gutenberg project is set to have **at least four phases**. Blocks will continue to be the main actors in the project since the ultimate goal is to provide a site-wide block editing experience. In addition, during all the project phases, developers are working on the safety, speed, accessibility, and user-friendliness of WordPress. You must be excited about the future, and you may be wondering what to expect. In this lesson, we will reveal the current plans and developments of the Gutenberg project.



Image 1: Gutenberg for everyone

Phase 1: The block editor

In phase one, the spotlight was on the development of a new WordPress editor, namely the block editor. The main tools in the editor are the blocks. They allow you to create media-rich, engaging content in the blink of an eye. The reason the block editor was introduced was **to make online publishing more accessible**. In addition, with the introduction of blocks, publishing also became more intuitive. No technical knowledge is required. Instead of using shortcodes or custom HTML, all you need in the block editor is - blocks. On top of that, all blocks have the same interface. So, learn how to use one

block, and you'll be able to use them all. Luckily, you already did that in this course. There's no stopping you now.

Phase 2: Site-wide block editing experience

Phase 2 is already moving full speed ahead, with [nine priority projects](#) currently under development. The main focus in this phase is a **site-wide editing experience with blocks**. For now, blocks are contained to the post and pages editing screen. But what about editing other parts of your site? That is what phase 2 is about. Soon, you will start seeing blocks everywhere, and they will become the default editing and customizing tool.

When blocks spill over to site-wide editing, block areas will be available outside the post/pages editing screen. For example, the Customizer will get block areas. Why is that important? Well, think about it. What do you do now when you need to add widgets to your site? Or, when you want to change the colors or edit the menus? You need to use various settings that you find on different setting screens, right? Blocks will change that. You will no longer need to learn a new setting every time you want to edit or customize some aspects of your site. How can that be? Well, everything will be a block. And all blocks follow the same logic. Easy, right?

Speaking of widgets, a lot of widgets are already available as blocks. For example, you can already add archives, categories, latest comments, latest posts, a tag cloud, and more to your posts and pages through blocks. Brand-new widget-like blocks like social icons are also available.

Another exciting novelty currently in development is the [Navigation Block](#). With this block, you can add a menu with links to your pages, making your site easy to navigate. The ultimate goal with this block is to replace the Menu options that are currently part of the Customizer.

Soon, your WordPress Dashboard should be enriched with the [WordPress blocks directory](#). It will be the place to manage, discover, and install new blocks with ease. You can already see a prototype of the directory [here](#).

All these developments may sound abstract to you, so let's use an example to bring some life to them.

Example: What site-wide editing could look like

For this example, we use [this post by Matías Ventura](#) that demonstrates what a site-wide block experience could look like.

In his prototype, when working in WordPress, you can switch from 'Writing' to 'Full Site Editing' mode (Image 2).

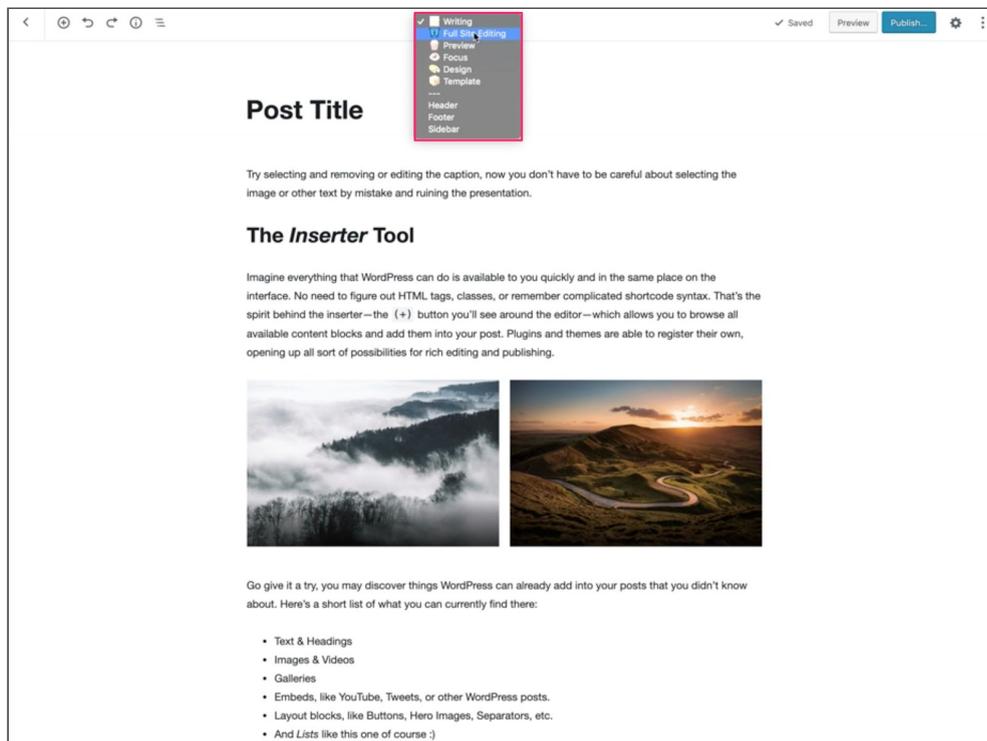


Image 2: Switching to Full Site Editing

When you make the switch, you will be able to edit every element of the page the same way you edit blocks. For example, instead of using the Customizer or the Settings to change the site title, you can do it with a block in the 'Full site editing' screen (Image 3).

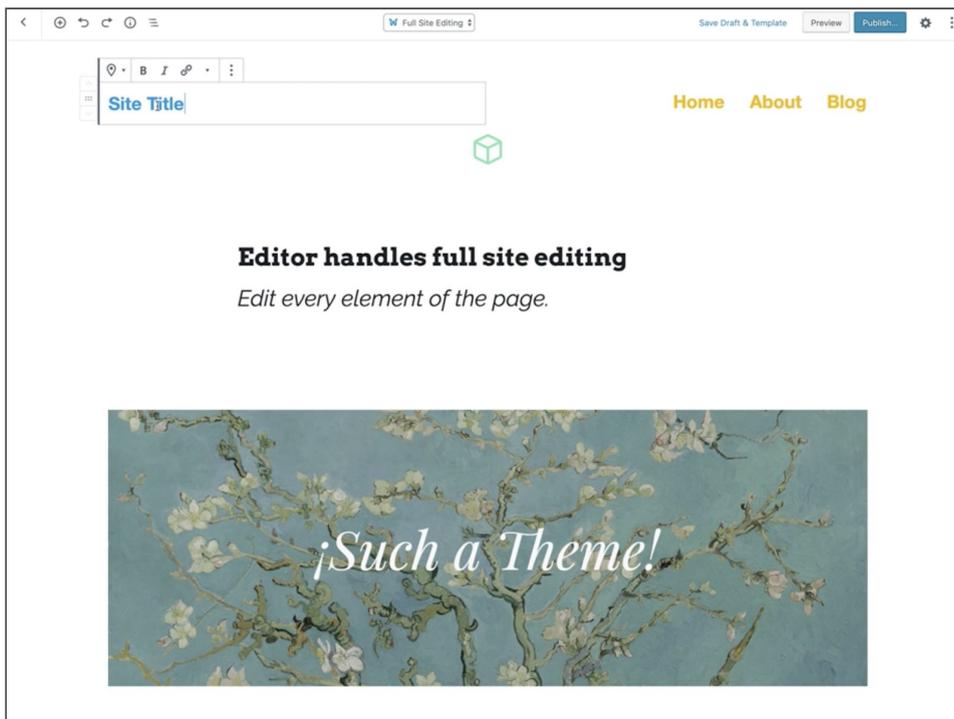


Image 3: Changing the site title with a block

The same goes for other parts of your site. For example, the sidebar area could also be a block (Image 4). And so could the navigation menu, the header, and the footer. All the editable areas of your site would be blocks, giving you a uniform editing experience.

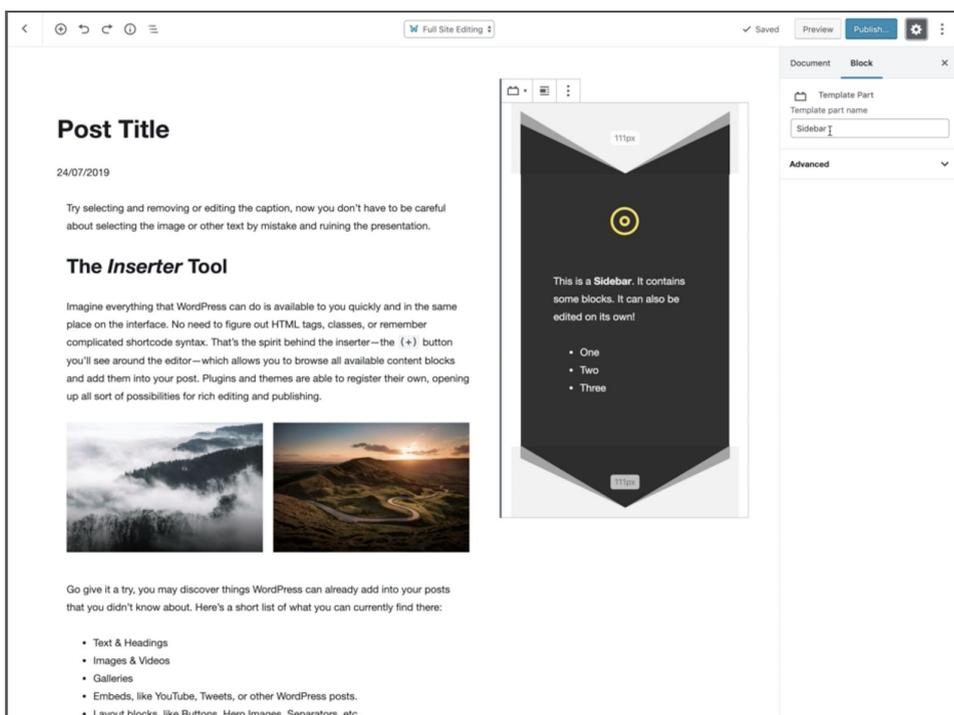


Image 4: Editing the sidebar as a block

Moving to a site-wide editing experience will affect **WordPress themes**. As we've seen, the idea for WordPress is to allow users to edit areas outside the post content via the block editor. In this new system, there will be block areas, in which you can edit all the elements of your site in the block editor.

Phase 3: Collaboration

When collaborating on a project, a lot of people use Google Docs. With it, you can conveniently have multiple authors working on the same document, add comments and revisions. In phase 3, the Gutenberg project will focus on **bringing such collaborating features to WordPress**. That will make it easier for teams to work on posts and pages.

Phase 4: Multilingual publishing

WordPress powers 35% of the internet. As you can imagine, a lot of people worldwide use this CMS. To provide an equally rewarding experience to all users, regardless of their language, phase 4 of the Gutenberg project will focus on **multilingual publishing**. Some approaches to multilingual publishing already exist in WordPress. But, what is missing is an overarching structure to those approaches, and phase 4 intends to fix that.

2. The transition period

So, you see, the Gutenberg project is where all the innovation in the WordPress space is happening. WordPress is continuously changing and growing. Of course, for some, it is not always easy to adapt to change.

Because of this, WordPress has allowed for a **transition period**. For those who are still finding it hard to switch to the block editor, there is the Classic Editor plugin. It provides a way to keep using the classic editor instead of the block editor, and it will be maintained during the transition period. However, this plugin won't be supported forever. The WordPress.org team has announced to officially stop supporting the Classic Editor plugin after December 31, 2021.

We encourage you not to wait much longer. Start with the block editor now, and you'll quickly find the joy in creating posts with blocks! And that will get you very well prepared for the future of WordPress.

3. Contributing to WordPress

Does this bright vision of the future of WordPress excite you? We have some good news. You can also be part of it! WordPress.org is [open-source software](#), so anyone is welcome to [contribute their knowledge and skills and make the block editor even better](#). That includes developers, but also designers, copywriters, translators, and more.

Contributing is not limited to the block editor. There are many more ways to [get involved with WordPress and its community](#). We encourage you not to hesitate. Explore your options, and use your skills to help countless people get a better experience with WordPress!

Key takeaways

- The Gutenberg project consists of **four phases**:
 - Phase 1 brought the **block editor**, which changed the way content is created.
 - Phase 2 focuses on using blocks for **site-wide editing**.
 - Phase 3 will make it easier for authors to **collaborate** in WordPress.
 - Phase 4 will focus on **multilingual publishing**.
- During the **transition period**, you can use the Classic Editor plugin. WordPress will stop supporting this plugin at the end of 2021.
- WordPress is **open-source software**. That means that you can also contribute to it.