

SAMPLE



OPTIMIZATION WORKBOOK



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Getting Started

Working to improve your site speed is an important task that all website owners must be able to do. In this workbook, we will help you implement the speed optimization strategy that we use for our own WordPress websites.

Before we go any further, I want to make it very clear that this workbook is meant for WordPress websites. If you are using another website management system, you may not be able to perform all of these actions, nor use all of the recommended plugins. You can still use the workbook, but it won't be as useful. To fully optimize your site with this workbook, it should be a WordPress website.

It is highly recommended that you use this workbook in conjunction with the Speed the Easy Way book, rather than using it alone. This is because the book explains all of the concepts you must know to understand what you're doing. It gives valuable insight into why and what you're doing.

With the exception of chapters one and two, each chapter of the book corresponds to a section in this workbook. You should read the chapter, then come back to this workbook to do the necessary work, before moving on to the next chapter.

Not only will this improve your understanding of the strategy, it will help you keep your place so you don't forget what you have and haven't done yet.

Our Speed Strategy

In this optimization workbook, we will go through our full speed strategy. There are eight main issues that affect speed. This workbook recommends a plan of action to fully optimize your site for speed—step-by-step, in easy-to-understand terms.

The main speed-related concepts we will tackle are:

- Site hosting
- Theme
- Plugins
- Images
- Caching and CDNs
- Optimizing HTML, JavaScript, CSS
- Fine Tuning
- Ad Optimizing (for Mediavine users only)

Recommended Plugins

We have strategically chosen plugins that will be used to do the hard work of optimizing your site for speed. Using a plugin removes the difficult task of learning how to adjust code, and it helps cut down the chance that you will break your site in the process.

Below is a list of the recommended plugins. If you choose to use the plugins we recommend, we will give you full step-by-step instructions for implementing it.

If you are already using a plugin that does the required task, you can skip that section of this workbook, or you can deactivate the plugin you're currently using and install one of the recommended plugins, to see which one works best for your site. Not all plugins will work with every site. It's always wise to test out a few and decide for yourself.

*Choose only ONE plugin from each category. You should not be duplicating the efforts of any plugin.

Image Optimization

- Robin Image Optimizer (free for images under 5MB)
- WP Smush (free – must purchase Pro version for best compression)
- ShortPixel (very limited free use, must purchase credits for best compression – can use ShortPixel’s CDN with Autooptimize)

Caching

- WP Rocket (premium plugin)
- W3TC (free for basic use, no need to upgrade)

CDN

- CloudFlare (free for basic use, no need to upgrade)

Advanced Optimization

- WP Rocket
- WP Sweep
- W3TC

Fine Tuning

- Autooptimize (free – some advanced features require ShortPixel)

AD OPTIMIZATION

- Within the Mediavine Dashboard (for Mediavine users only)

Important Notes Before Getting Started

- This workbook is best viewed at 125%. Zoom in to the images to see details.
- Always make a backup of your site and learn how to use it before performing any optimizations.
- Test your site's functionality and run a speed test after completing each section of this workbook. If you do this section by section, you will know what caused an issue if one arises.
- Be sure to test your homepage, internal pages, and blog pages. They are all created differently and have different speed recommendations.
- If something goes wrong, you can disable the plugin that caused the problem. Not all plugins will work perfectly with every site. You can't know if it will work for you or not until you try. If it doesn't, try a different plugin.
- Sometimes you can fix an issue just by unclicking one specific functionality inside the plugin. This is especially true for Autooptimize. If a setting causes an issue, leave it unchecked.
- The optimization methods in this book will get you about 85% of the way there, which is considered more than good enough when it comes to ranking on Google. If you want a screaming fast website that hits every benchmark, you'll have to continue working with a speed professional to get the other 15%.

- If you are a Mediavine user, you may want to start with the last section, and optimize your Mediavine settings before completing the rest of the workbook. It will allow you to see the changes as you go along.