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How to deal with the WordPress visual editor stripping out line breaks. How to add a line break to your post.

One of the most annoying parts of dealing with WordPress can be the issues that the Visual Editor cause. One of these issues is that it often strips out line breaks. If you hit enter a couple extra times, that won't help once you publish the post. Even if you take it a step further and actually add **
**'s via the HTML editor, they will still get stripped out.

If you do a Google search on this issue, many people will recommend turning off the visual editor and just using the HTML version of the WordPress editor. Well that is great if you are comfortable with HTML, but what about those of us who aren't? Turning off the visual editor for myself isn't an option. It is an even worse solution if you are developing WordPress sites for other people. Luckily there is an easy solution using some inline css. If you want to add some extra white space then instead of using
 use the following code:

Just use this code wherever you want to add a white line of space. Make sure there is nothing between the sets of brackets and that you add it in the HTML editor.

-	
enter"> <td>></td>	>
enter, > <td>-</td>	-
	enter;">

This problem can be theme specific.

Sometimes the above solution won't even work, and sometimes it simply takes a hard enter to accomplish this.

If this doesn't work for you, consider a theme switch.

How to Center a YouTube video (and other embedded content).

When I am browsing blogs, aesthetics matter. If a site is eye catching, neat and orderly then I am more likely to stick around. One issue that drives me crazy is when a post has left justified videos. It looks better to have the video centered.





It just looks more organized. One reason so many people don't center their videos is because it can be a pain in the neck. In fact, when centering any flash object it can be a pain. With a picture, you add it and then you just hit "center" in the visual editor and are good to go. Same with titles and text. Embeddable objects like YouTube videos and Divshare players are a bit different and that won't work. Even wrapping it in center tags doesn't always do the trick. Luckily once again some inline CSS in the html editor does the trick! Just add your youtube code between the two sets of brackets:

<div style="text-align: center;"></div>



Centering your YouTube videos simply looks more professional.

There is something that doesn't seem aesthetically pleasing when a video is left justified in a blog post. How to do basic customizations to your WordPress theme AND How to use the Firefox browser and Firebug add-on

Appearance	
Themes	
Widgets	
Menus	
Editor	

One of the most intimidating steps to take when getting in depth with WordPress is tackling the Theme Editor. The Theme editor is found underneath the Appearance heading in the WordPress dashboard menu.

From this area you can edit the actual files that create your theme. You can also completely break your site so you have to be very careful.



The above picture is what you will see when you enter the editor. The red area is where you can actually edit the code. To the right of that area are the different templates that control the different aspects of your WordPress site (i.e. header, footer etc..) Below the red area is an Update File button, this button will make your changes official.

Firefox is not the fastest browser out there (Chrome may be), but it has many add-ons that can make the life of blogger and/or internet marketer much easier. This is a very sensitive area, especially if you don't know any PHP or HTML code. You can certainly break your website messing around in this area. Every time I edit a file in the Editor I first copy everything in the red window from above, and paste it into a text file (don't use Word, use a plain text editor). This way, if I do break my blog, I can simply paste the code from the text file and then hit Update File to fix it.

The most common use for this area will be to add code to your header or footer (analytics, webmaster tools etc...). You simply choose the header or footer file from the list on the right of that page, and then insert the code where you are told.

The second most common use will be changing style aspects of your site like font size, font color, heading size, bullet margins etc... In almost cases this will be controlled by a CSS file. On that right hand list, usually near the bottom you will find a file named something like stylesheet.css. Regardless of what it is called it will end in .css. If you check out this file you will see all of the page elements listed with different variables. The problem is how do you know which element to change?

If you look at your webpage and see some text you want to change, how do you know what text that is? Is it body, heading, link, list? You might be able to tell just by looking, but there is a plugin for the Firefox web browser (firebug) that makes this simple:

Firefox: <u>http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/</u> Firebug Addon: <u>https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/</u> <u>addon/firebug/</u> The first link above is for the Firefox browser, it is free and a significant upgrade from Internet Explorer, especially for the website owner or blogger. It might not be the fastest web browser out there but it has a ton of add-ons that give it a real edge.

The second link is for the Firebug add-on for Firefox. This is a web development tool with many uses, but later on we will focus on just one very useful tool it provides.

Once you have downloaded and installed Firefox, use it to navigate to the addon link. Follow the on screen instructions to install the add-on. Once installed the firebug icon will appear at the bottom of your browser, in the status bar:



As you can see, a small bug like icon is added, and you can click on this to turn Firebug off and on. For our purposes we won't need to click this on or off. In fact for now, just keep it off. It will be grayed out when off.

Besides the icon in the status bar, you also get an addition in your "right click" menu. Now when you right click on a webpage you get an "inspect element" addition to the menu.

Back Forward Reload Stop Print... ► Bookmark This Page Save Page As... Send Link... View Background Image Select All View Page Source View Page Info Properties Inspect Element GridFox

Web Developer

When you right click anything on a web page the circled option will appear.

The menu on the left is from a Mac based computer, but a Windows right click menu will also have this new option.

This option will inspect elements of your website. So if you find a an element you want to change, say for example a subtitle on your webpage, then just highlight it with you mouse and right click on the highlighted area:

Why You Have To Hear Him Y we give "drug kingpin" rappers like	View Page Source View Page Info Properties	eems very genuine. In an era where p, it is nice to see someone who's life
isn't created by a label. I think he The complete package. I don't th	🗣 Inspect Element	ice, really solid flow and lyrics for days. vorry about that a bit, but all signs point
to Freddie having star potential.	GridFox	▶ r big time exposure. He might end up
being your rappers favorite rappe Gibbs" and "midwestgangstabox	Web Developer	 o mixtapes "Miseducation of Freddie tracking down online and checking out.

Once you have the right click menu up, just click on Inspect Element and a new window will open up taking up the bottom third of your web browser.



This window is where you can figure out what element you are dealing with.

In the above picture, I highlighted a heading, right clicked on it and then chose inspect element (area highlighted is shown by horizontal arrow at top of screen).

All the information about that heading is found in the bottom left of the webpage, where firebug opened. There is an arrow pointing to this area as well. The arrow is pointing right at the name of the element. I now know this is "h2". Below that is all of the style rules for that element. You an actually change these values to test what it will look like. Only you will see the changes not your web visitors.

Now that you know what the name of the element is, you can head back to your WordPress theme editor, choose the CSS file (most likely) and search for "h2". Here you can change things like the font etc...

Make sure you back up before you make any changes, and click update file to make your changes live.

How to use plugins to optimize your WordPress site for Google (SEO)

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization, and it means to make your site as friendly to the search engines as possible. Your goal is to get your site to rank higher in the search results. This is one of the best ways to get traffic to your blog.

For the purposes of this tip, we will look at the plugins that can be simply added to make your site more powerful or relevant in the eyes of Google. All WordPress blogs will benefit from the following plugins:

<u>All In One SEO Pack</u> - This is a very popular plugin for WordPress and most savvy users have it installed. It will help you handle your META and TITLE tags, automatically, as well as let you specify these tags for each page or post. It is simple to use and can run as is, once you install it. You will have to go to the settings, to enable this plugin though.

<u>Google XML Sitemaps</u> - This plugin will create a sitemap for your website. A sitemap is something that Google values, and with a blog it is especially important. This plugin will also notify the search engines when your sitemap changes. For example, when you add a new post.

Yet Another Related Posts Plugin - This plugin will automatically link to other related posts at the bottom of your posts. This will hopefully keep people on your site. From an SEO outlook, it helps by funneling search engines through all of your content. Makes your posts easier to find for sites like Google.

These SEO plugns will help in all search engines at least somewhat although currently Google has such an overwhelming market share that it is far and away our target <u>SEO Friendly Images</u> - When it comes to SEO, the ALT and TITLE tags of your pictures matter. The ALT tag describes your image to search engines and the TITLE tag produces the tooltip when a user hovers over the picture. This plugin will automatically fix the alt and title tags of your pictures according to the options you set.

ShareThis - This plugin will add a ShareThis button to you posts. This will allow people to share your posts in a number of ways. Tthe SEO benefits might not be apparent right away, but if people are sharing your post it may be generating backlinks. Add that to the fact that Google is moving towards a more real time based search. If your blogpost is being virally posted to Twitter and Facebook, it could mean it popping up at the top of searches.

FD Feedburner Plugin - Feedburner is a great blogging tool. It basically controls your RSS feed. Many people find a Feedburner RSS feed more professional, so it helps for first impressions. It also lets you track the people that subscribe to your RSS feed, To top it off Google now owns Feedburner, and using it could potentially boost your site's relevance in Google. Considering all of the other benefits, it is basically a no brainer to add Feedburner to your site. This plugin will help with the process.

Easy Policy Privacy - If you use Google Adsense you need a privacy policy, but here is something people might not know, a privacy policy can help your Google rankings. I know this because it came straight from a meeting at the Toronto Google offices and that is the one tidbit they were willing to share. This plugin has some templates that make it really simple.

There are a lot of plugins available for WordPress but if you are using all of these listed ones, you will have a leg up over other bloggers.

Install them today, and learn all you can about how to use them. You will thank me when your site is ranking higher than ever on Google! How to increase interaction with your blog's readers using WordPress plugins.

One of the best ways to increase the time people stay on your site, and to keep them coming back, is to increase the interactivity of your blog. This gives people a stake in your site, they will feel more connected. It can help you retain readers, increase comments and reduce your bounce rate.

The following plugins will increase user interaction on your blog:

<u>CommentLuv</u> - This plugin is designed to increase your comments. It is a very simple plugin and will add a button to your comments that will let your readers add a link to their latest blog post. This is a great and simple way to encourage people to comment on your website.

<u>WP-PostRatings</u> - This plugin adds a rating system to your blog posts. This is useful in two ways. First, it shows you exactly what type of content your readers enjoy. Secondly, it gives people a chance to give their input to your site, in turn making them feel more invested. It is a win-win.

<u>Comment Rating</u> - Much like the above plugin, this will allow readers to rate a certain aspect of your site. In this case it allows them to rate comments. Highly rated comments will be bumped, while lower rated ones will be hidden. The benefits are the same as the above plugin for the most part.

Taking steps to boost the interaction between your blog and your web visitors will mean a lower bounce rate, and more time on site. DISQUS - This is a plugin that will replace your comment system entirely. it will install seamlessly though, and add a lot of interactivity to your comments. First off people will be able to log in in a lot more ways (including Facebook login). They will also be able to "like" your post. The comments will be threaded, there will be some great subscription options as well as spam filtering. Lastly the DISQUS discussion community is large, and this allows your blog to tap into that community.

<u>WP Greet Box</u> - This plugin will greet your web visitors with a welcome message that is tailored to how they visited your site. If they got there via Digg, it will prompt them to Digg your post. If they found it through a Twitter link they will be prompted to retweet and follow you on Twitter. This is a great way to get people to interact with your blog.

Top Commentators Widget - This plugin will add a widget that you can use to display the top commenters on your blog. This is one way you can acknowledge your most loyal followers. It also promotes a bit of competition, and that is never a bad thing. This is a great way to increase your comments.

<u>Contact Form 7</u> - There are a lot of contact form plugins out there, and this is one of the easier ones to use. I think adding a contact form to your blog's contact page can add a lot of interaction. It gives people a simple way to contact you with questions and comments. It also saves you from adding your email address directly to the contact page, and risking it being scraped and added to spamming lists.

How to take advantage of Feedburner on your WordPress blog.

We mentioned Feedburner in a previous lesson, since we only glossed over it there we wanted to add a full lesson. Feedburner integration should be one of the first things you do when setting up your blog. The advantages of using it include:

- Track your RSS feed subscriptions
- Easily offer email subscription for your feed
- Looks more professional The URL will be cleaner
- Abstraction If you have to change the source URL of your feed, you will still be able to keep the same Feedburner URL, so you won't lose subscribers.
- Adsense Integration Make money from your feeds.
- Google likes it. Google owns it. You want your blog to rank on Google, so you want to use it.
- Monitor multiple feeds from one single Feedburner account.

The first step you should take is to sign up for Feedburner. To do that, your first step is to visit the Feedburner site:

http://www.feedburner.com/

Feedburner is a great tool to use for any blog. besides all of the stats you can see, it is also owned by Google and using it may contribute to your Google rankings. You can either log in with a current Google account or create a new one. Once logged in, the first thing you will have to do is claim your feed

	Claim your feeds no	W >>
	– OR –	
Burn a feed right	this instant. Type your blog	or feed address here:

You enter your feed into the form above, and click "next". Most likely your feed address will be something like the format in the above image. If you have the firefox browser, you can click the little blue RSS symbol in your address bar when on your site to get the exact Feed URL.

Feed Title	Keep Title Simple - Use Blog Title
	Enter a title to help identify your new feed in your account.
	http://feeds.feedburner.com/
Feed Address	Something Easy To Remember
	The address above is where people can find your new feed.

In this next section, you will be asked to enter a Feed Title and your Feed Address. I would keep this part simple. The Feed Title is for your own uses, and I would keep it the same as your blog title. That way, if you have multiple feeds it will be easy to figure out what feed belongs to what blog. Your Feed address is the link that people will use for your feed. Keep it very simple and easy to remember. The simpler and easier the better. A nice looking feed URL is one of the main benefits of Feedburner, so don't mess that up by making it hard to remember. Click next when you are done...



to feed management", and we can begin to take your Feedburner feed to the next level. When you click that you will see a navigation menu:



The two areas of the menu we will focus on in this lesson is Optimize and Publicize.

↓ VIEW

Your Feed

XML Source

1 SERVICES

 BrowserFriendly Make subscribing simpler

SmartCast Podcasting and iTunes settings

 SmartFeed Ensure maximum compatibility

FeedFlare Build interactivity into each post On the optimize page, you will see this menu. You can activate anything you want, but I strongly suggest you activate the two settings that are check marked in the picture at the very least.

BrowserFriendly makes sure your feed looks good and is easy to subscribe to on any browser.

SmartFeed ensures your feed looks as good as possible on all RSS readers.

BuzzBoost Republish your feed as HTML	
✓ Email Subscriptions Offer feed updates via email	Subscription Management
Subscription Management	Subscription Form Code
Communication Preferences	Select which language you want to use in the window that appears when a
Email Branding	potential email subscriber signs up. The selection you make immediately
Delivery Options	modifies the code to copy and paste below.
PingShot Notify services when you post	Language: English
FeedCount Show off your feed circulation	Copy and paste the following code into any web page. Your subscription
Socialize Publish to the social web	readers can subscribe to receive daily email with your newest content.
Chicklet Chooser	onsubmit="window.open('http://feedburner.google.com
Awareness API	/fb/a/mailverify?uri=SocialD', 'popupwindow', 'scrollhars-ves width=550 height=520'):return true">=>>>Enter your
Creative Commons	email address:
Deserved Brotester	name="email"/> <input name="uri" type="hidden" value="SocialD"/>

You can check out any of the options you want, here but for this lesson we will focus on one: Email Subscriptions. If you click this you can activate email subscription...which you should! Once you have activated it you will see the above screen. Here you can get code to add to your blog. I find that the Typepad code (you can select from a view different types) works best on WordPress. You simply copy and paste this code into a text widget and add it to your sidebar. If you feel confidant with your coding skills, you can even add it to your header with the WordPress Theme Editor.

The last thing to remember, is to check out the Analyze tab. This will let you view a number of different statistics about your feed and subscribers.

Congrats on taking a big leap forward, by integrating your blog with Feedburner. Check out these WordPress plugins that are related to Feedburner, for even more functionality:

Feedburner Plugins

How to exclude pages from your WordPress blog's search.

The WordPress search is not the greatest of all searches out there. One thing that many people find annoying is that the search brings up pages instead of just posts. In general your readers will want to search for your posts a.k.a. your content. The pages aren't needed in search because they are right in the navigation. If you have a hidden page that is not in nav, you almost certainly don't want that coming up

With this very simple step you can avoid that common annoyance and you can do it without adding a bulky plugin.



It is a good thing we already talked about the WordPress Theme Editor because you will have to access it for this step. When you are in WordPress look for Editor under Appearance and NOT Plugins.

Once you have opened the editor, then check the right hand menu for a functions.php file. Now it is as simple, as pasting the following code into that functions.php file:

```
function SearchFilter($query) {
  if ($query->is_search) {
    $query->set('post_type', 'post');
  }
  return $query;
  }
  add_filter('pre_get_posts','SearchFilter');
```

Once you add the code, click Update File and pages will be hidden from search.

Sometimes you want one of your pages to be hidden for some purpose. Even if you hide it form navigation it might come up in searches on your site. This technique will address that issue.

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A primer on how to use the custom menus in WordPress

In WordPress 3.0 they introduced Custom Menus. This allows you to create your own navigation menus with way more flexibility. Now it is very simple to exclude pages from navigation, add categories or redirect a nav button to an outside page.



Once you have clicked on "menus", you will see the above pane on the right of the page. The first step is to name your menu, and click "create menu". Don't worry, this won't change your nav yet. You just have to create a menu in order to edit it.

Add a name for the menu in the field, and click "create menu".

Not all themes are custom menus ready, check out the custom menu settings in your WordPress back office and it will tell you if your current theme takes advantage of this great new feature. Now that you have a menu created you can begin to customize it. On the left hand side of the page (beside the above image) you will see all the ways you can customize the menu:

Theme Locations

Your theme supports 1 menu. Select which menu you would like to use.
Main Nav
Save
Custom Links
URL http://
Label Menu Item
Add to Menu
Pages
Most Recent View All Search
About
Select All Add to Menu
Categories
Most Used View All Search
Motivational Videos

Motivational Quotes

Motivational Lists

Motivational Tools

Motivational Music

Motivational Articles

Add to Menu

Positivity

Goals

📃 Fear

Select All

The first area is where you can place the menu. The drop down menu will give tell you where your theme supports the custom menu. Choose the spot you want to use.

Custom links area allows you to link to anything in your navigation. Simply add the URL or web address of the link, and then a label. The label is what will show up in your nav.

The Pages pane lets you add the pages of your site. if you don't want a page to appear, don't choose it. Check the pages you want to add and click "Add to Menu"

Much like the Pages pane, the Categories pane will allow you to add categories into your navigation. Add them the same way as above. Once you are done adding what you want to your menu, the right hand of the page will look something like this:

TESTING +	
Menu Name TESTING	Automatically add new top-level pages
Delete Menu	Save Menu
About	PAGE V
Navigation Label	Title Attribute
About	
Original: <u>About</u>	
Remove Cancel	
Videos	CATEGORY
Quotes	CATEGORY V

All of the items you added to the menu, should appear in this pane. Each item will also have a drop down menu with a couple more ways to customize the menu. You can change the label here, and you can also add a title attribute. This title attribute is what will pop up when people hover the mouse over the menu item.

When you are done customization, click on save menu and your new menu will appear wherever you chose on the theme locations pane.

One last way to use the custom menus is the widget. WordPress now has a custom menus widget, so you can drag your newly formed menu into any widget enabled areas on your site.

How to customize and simplify your login page.

The WordPress login page is pretty clean and is easy to use. The only real problem is that it looks very plain. It is also essentially the same on all sites. If this doesn't bother you then fine you don't have to change a thing. However there are a couple reason you might want to customize it:

- You simply want the login page to match your website style. Personal preference.
- You are building a site for a client. The custom login can be a nice value add, that takes little effort.
- If you allow people to register with your blog. A custom login will look more impressive and professional

Changing the login page on your site is actually a pretty simple step and can be accomplished with the aid of a plugin:

Custom Login

When you add the plugin, there will be a new menu item under Settings. Click this new item, "Custom Login", to start the process to customize your login page. The login in page on WordPress is pretty plain.

If you allow multiple users to log into your site, you might want to think about simplifying the URL and adding your own branding to the page. Once you click that a page will appear with a bunch of different panes. We will break down each area of the page now...

About Cus	stom Login	On
Plugin:	Custom Login 0.8.4	see
Author:	Austin Passy - @TheFrosty	
		Th
Support C	ustom Login	info
Donate:	PayPal.	
Rate:	This plugin on WordPress.org.	aut
Share:	Your design on <u>Flickr</u> .	
Support:	WordPress support forums.	On
		wh
Preview y	our work, Master	cus
	Click here to see a live preview!	
Avtivatio	on — to infinity and beyond	
Activate	[7]	
Announ	cements	
_		

On the right hand side of the page you will see 3 panes of information.

These are basically just links to nformation about the plugin and plugin author. There is also a donate link.

On the bottom is the only really useful link, which will allow you to preview your custom login page before you go live.

I'm speaking at WorkCamp Portland. Come say hi if you're in the area.

On the top of the left side of the page, you will see the above panes. The top one includes a checkbox to take your changes live. The one underneath seems to just be announcements from the plugin designer. I actually close this pane (small arrow on top left of grey bar) and ignore it.

eneral Settings			
html border-top background:			Upload [?]
html background color:	#FFF2F2	[7]	
html background url:			Upload [?]
html background repeat:	repeat-x		[7]
login form background color:	#000000		Upload [?]
login form background url:	#000000	[1]	Upload [?]
login form border radius:	11 px [?]		
login form border thickness:	1 px [?]		
login form border color:	#FF0000	[?]	
login form box shadow:	5 px 5	px 18 px #464646 [?]	
label font color:	#ffffff	[7]	

This pane directly below the last two are where you can make the changes to your login page. Most of the fields are self explanatory. You can upload logos and background images, as well as choose colors for certain aspects.

The fields that prompt you for colors, will open a color palette that makes it easy to choose the colors.

You simply make the changes you want, and then you are basically done. There is a pane beneath this one for custom CSS and HTML, and under that another announcement window you can ignore.

Once you are done, simply check the activate box from earlier, and look at the bottom of the page for the Update Settings button and click that.