



How Does WordPress Work?

WordPress is a powerful and free web publishing application that anyone can download and use to easily create, manage and maintain a website.

Gone are the days when you needed to hand-code every individual page of a website using HTML, and where the pages sat on a web server waiting for someone to visit your site. WordPress is written in PHP and dynamically builds each web page of your site at the instant it is viewed online.

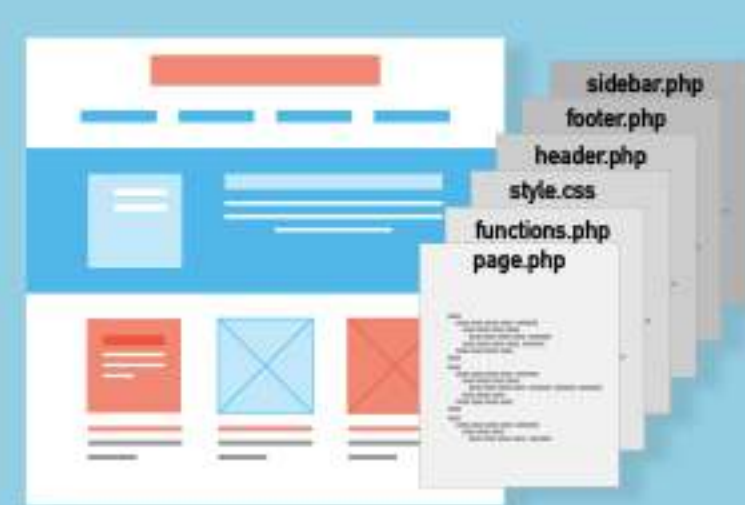
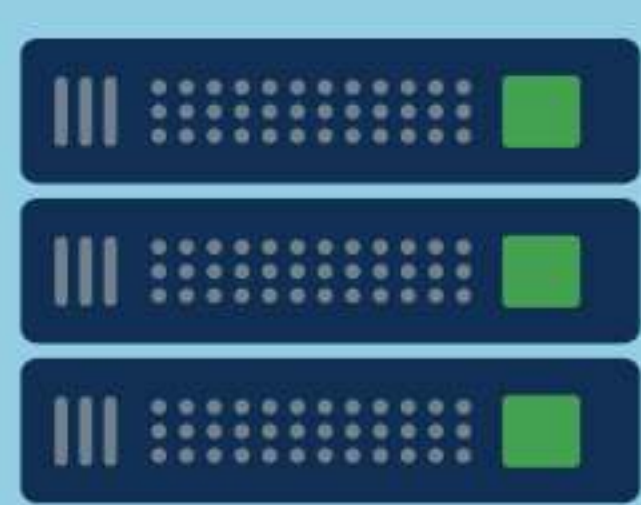
A WordPress website is BUILT, POPULATED with content and VIEWED through a WEB BROWSER



What Are the Elements Required to Build a WordPress Website?

* Refers to a self-hosted WordPress website

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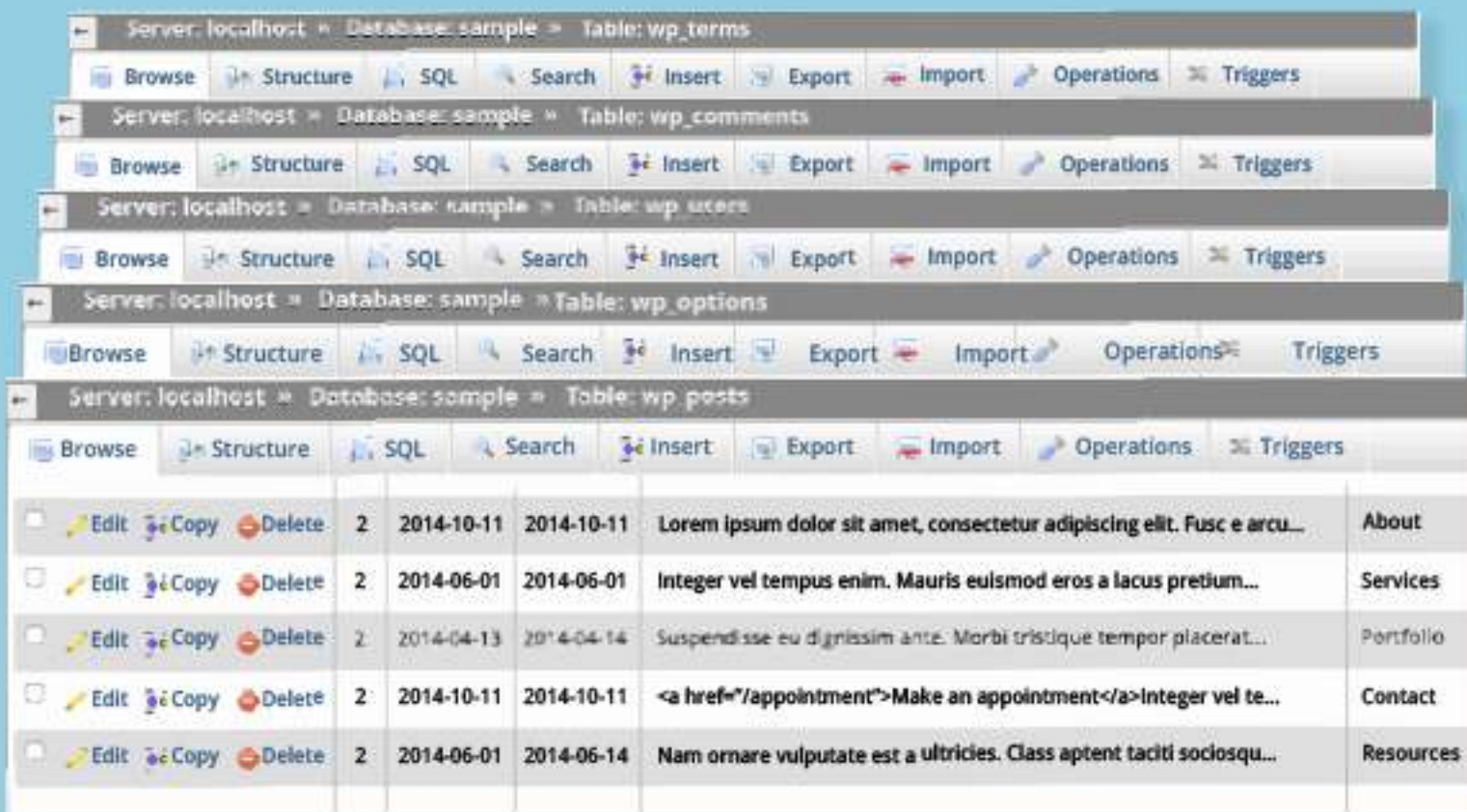
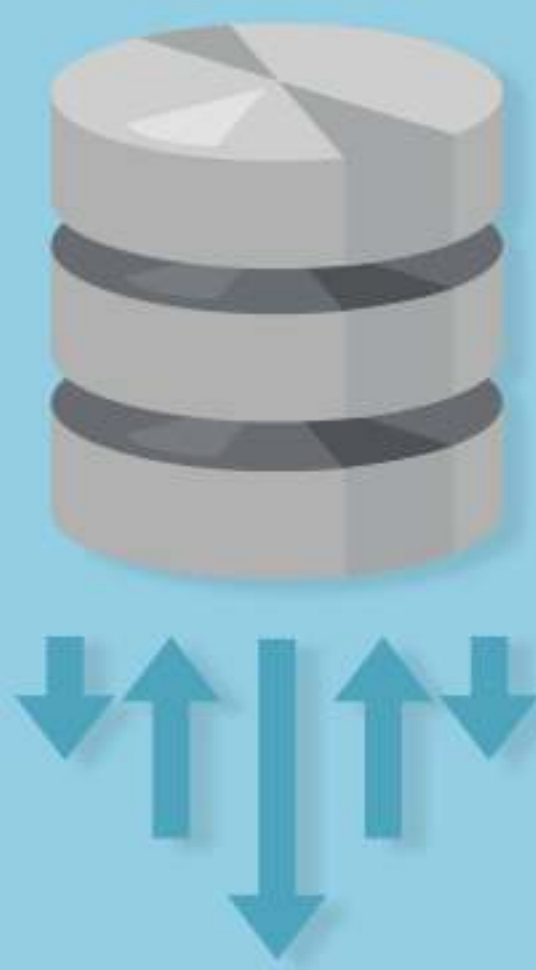
Domain Name + Web Hosting + WordPress Application + Theme

What is Installed With the WordPress Application?

WordPress is a content management system that uses page templates to build the pages of a website. These files are stored in a separate location from the content and settings of the site. Page templates provide a single file that is applied to multiple web pages, making it possible to change the design and layout of many pages with a single template file. Content is stored separately from the files that generate the site. Doing so makes it much easier to change the site's design without having to touch the content.

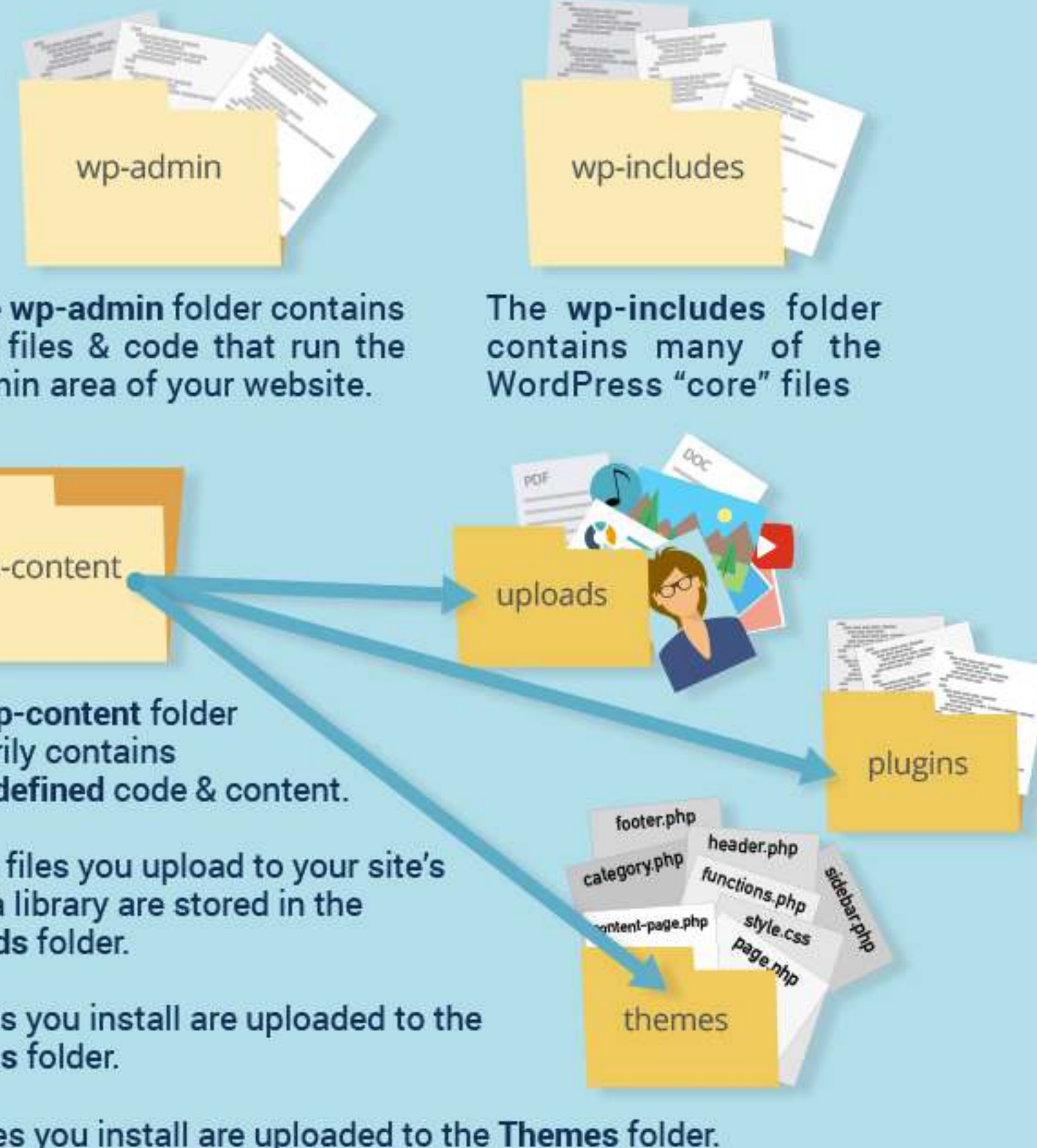
MySQL Database

Content and settings for your website are stored in a MySQL database. The database creates different tables for different types of content and settings. For example, pages, posts, comments and categories, as well as user information, passwords and site options are stored in various tables of the MySQL database.



WordPress Files & Code

When you install the WordPress application on your web server, three main folders are installed (wp-admin, wp-includes & wp-content) as well as several files in your root folder.



The wp-admin folder contains the files & code that run the admin area of your website.

The wp-includes folder contains many of the WordPress "core" files

The wp-content folder primarily contains user-defined code & content.

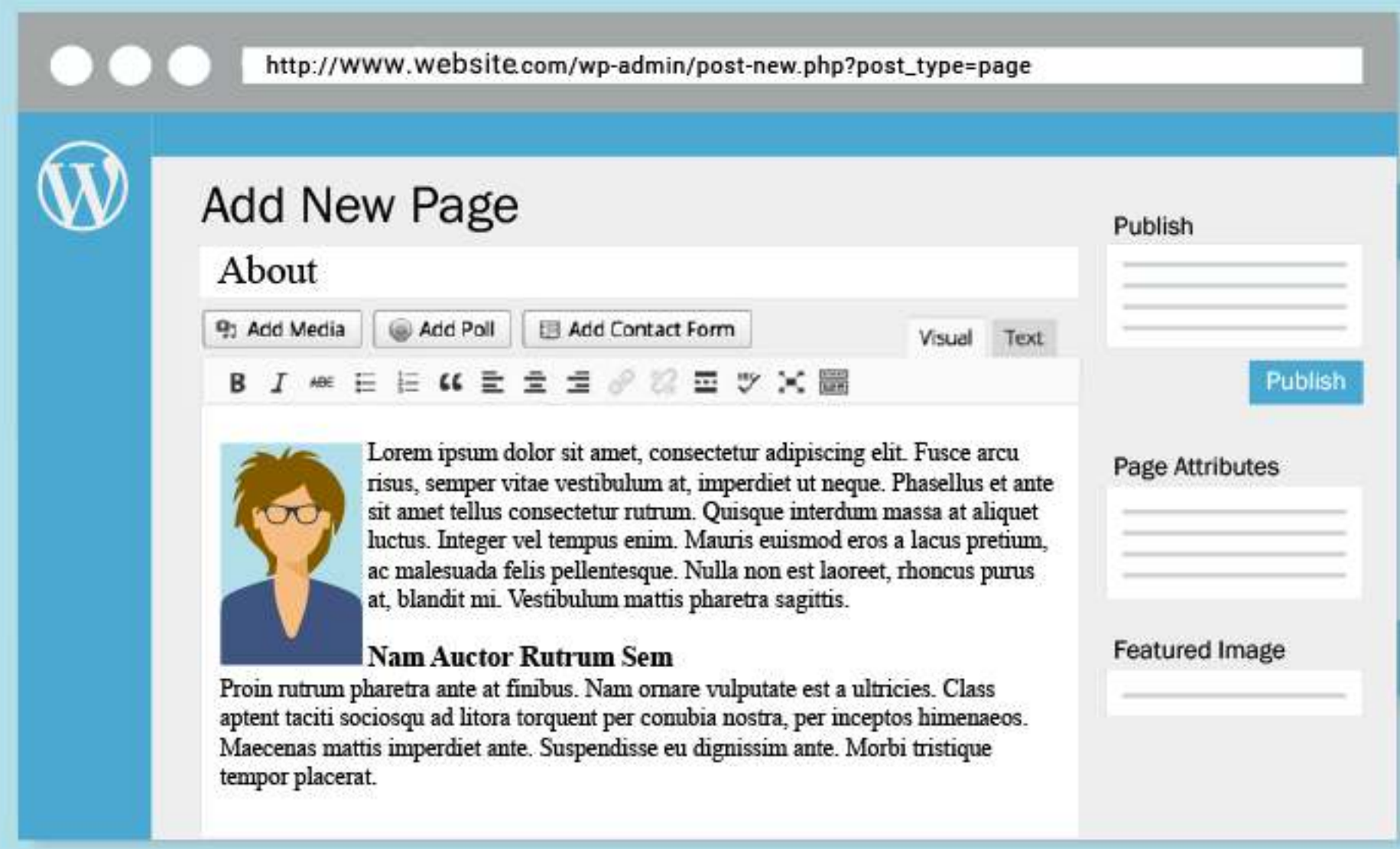
Media files you upload to your site's media library are stored in the Uploads folder.

Plugins you install are uploaded to the Plugins folder.

Themes you install are uploaded to the Themes folder.

A few files sit outside these three main folders. The most important is the wp-config file. It helps the WordPress application "talk" to the MySQL database.

What is the WordPress Process?



1 When you create a new page or post and then publish it, the content and its settings are saved to the database.

2 Media files you have uploaded to the page are stored in the uploads folder inside wp-content.

3 When someone visits a page on your website, their web browser makes a request to the WordPress Application to view that page.

4 The page doesn't actually exist. WordPress must build that page on the fly using the content and settings from the database and any media files you uploaded to the page.



5 After grabbing the content, settings and media files, it uses the code in the theme template files to build the requested webpage. HTML defines the structure of the page. CSS defines its design and look & feel.

6 The dynamically generated page is sent to the requesting web browser for display.



7 Additional code is sent to the generated page that executes in the browser and provides added functionality and interactivity (JavaScript / jQuery).

The goal of this infographic is to provide an accurate, yet greatly simplified overview of how WordPress works. It was created with absolute WordPress beginners in mind to provide a technical yet basic understanding of the inner workings of WordPress.

References:
The WordPress.org Codex: <https://codex.wordpress.org/>
Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WordPress>

