



Lesson #7

Developing header.php

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A Quick Reminder + CSS Fix

Are you experiencing problems with the lessons? In web development, one small misstep can trip us up big time. To make it worse, it's easy to make those mistakes. I've been doing this for a long time. Even though things go pretty smoothly most of the time, I too get tripped up over small things. Sometimes it is just being too tired, sometimes it's a matter of forgetting a few key areas. I completely understand the frustration when things don't quite go as they do in the lessons.

Back in Lesson 16, I introduced the Blog Theme Bootcamp [knowledge base](#) and would like to remind you that you can always check there for a solution or tip someone may have found. If you don't find anything like what you're experiencing, do submit the problem. You may not get immediate response, but I'll check in often. When submitting a question/solution/tip, if you opt to get notified when the question is answered, you'll also receive an email when the solution is posted.

CSS Fix

I've noticed a small CSS problem with the original theme. If you downloaded the HTML template. The top navigaton links will appear as individual blocks for each link on Firefox but one big block in IE 7.



To fix that, find #topnav li in style.css, add this line. margin: 0 5px 0 0;

```
77 #topnav li {  
78     list-style-type: none;  
79     display: inline;  
80     padding: 5px;  
81     margin: 0 5px 0 0;  
82     background-color: #FFE8CF;  
83 }
```

I've already fixed this in the download. So if you open style.css and see that the margin setting is already there, you need not take further action.

Recap

Time to get back to the lesson. Let's quickly recap what we've done so far to the theme only.

1. Downloaded the Blog Theme Bootcamp practice theme.
2. Broken up the theme into 4 php files, index.php, header.php, footer.php and sidebar.php.
3. Re-assembled the theme and fixed the style sheet reference inside index.php.
4. Added coding to style.css so WordPress can recognize it.
5. Familiarized ourselves with what tags are.

We are ready to build up our theme with WordPress tags so the data can be pulled up and displayed to the visitor.

header.php

If you haven't already, fire up your server and PsPad. If you are developing on your web host, fire up PsPad and connect to to your web host via FTP. Not sure how to do that? [Check the knowledge base](#).

Open header.php from PsPad. In this file, our objective is to:

1. Fill the title tag with the blog name.

2. Add the wp head 'hook' tag.
3. Add tags to make the search box live.
4. Use Page tags to create navigation links on the top.

Quick note: *When you are converting an HTML theme for your client, the steps may be different. It all depends on the theme design. Don't focus so much on the steps sequentially but rather how and where we make each of those work.*

Title Tags

Title tags are very important for your client. They can help add weight to a page for search engine optimization purposes. While it is not necessary from a theme developer stand – the theme is not going to break if you don't do it, but if you want to be a valued designer, I suggest you do make it a point to add little things like these to help your client.

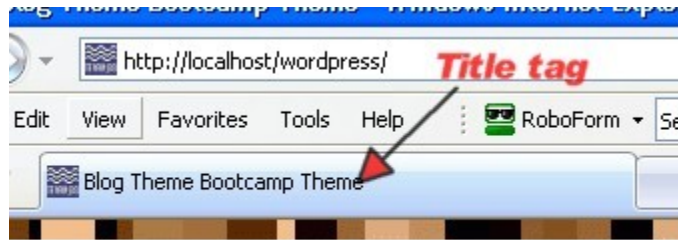
They may not always know it, but the next developer who comes along after you (hopefully none) or the clients' friends and mentors who are savvy in Internet Marketing will tell them. Make it a point to develop code in the cleanest possible manner for your clients. Don't leave a million comments in your theme that the search engine robots will pick up and hurt your client's rankings. If it is not necessary for a piece of code to be there and it won't affect the design take it out. Make sure your tags are opened and closed properly. Most of all, don't use Javascript on content based stuff especially navigation links when you can help it.

Besides, if you plan to distribute a theme for free online – the standard expectation is to have title tags dynamically generated. That's it for a quick good practices lesson. Let's move on.

In header.php, look for this line:

```
<title>Blog Theme Bootcamp Theme</title>
```

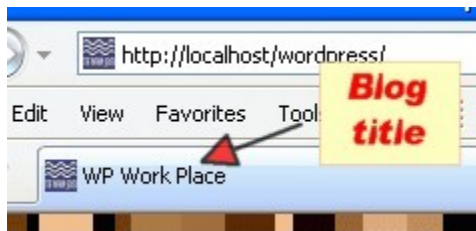
Anything between those lines will be output to your browser like this.



Remove “Blog Theme Bootcamp Theme” and replace it with this code:

```
<?php bloginfo('name'); ?>
```

Check your work by visiting your Sandbox blog in your browser. Example: <http://localhost/wordpress/> or <http://yourdomain.com/wordpress> . The title of the blog should now be whatever you named your Sandbox. I named my Sandbox blog “WP Work Place” and so this is what I see.



This information is taken from your blog's general settings (WordPress admin >> Settings >> General - screen shot below). This is also where you would change the text if you wish.

General Settings

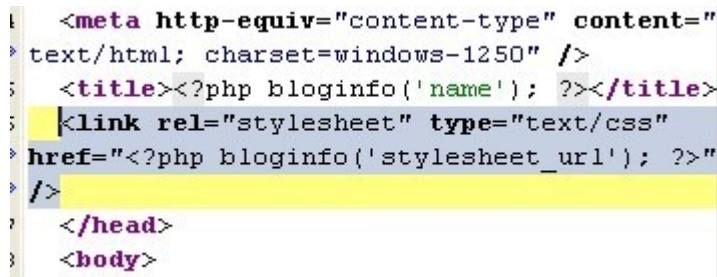
Blog Title	WP Work Place
------------	---------------

If you notice, the blog title is now displayed as the title on all pages, archives and posts. You can make the title change when viewing a Page, a post or archives. We'll cover that in later lessons but right now, let's just get the basics down. Keep your browser, and PsPad open. We'll be going back and forth frequently.

Stylesheet Reference

Hopefully, you already fixed the style sheet reference in the last lesson. This is a quick check to make sure the style sheet reference is still there and done correctly. Right after your title tag you should see a line of code like this.

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
href="<?php bloginfo('stylesheet_url'); ?
>" />
```



```
<meta http-equiv="content-type" content="
text/html; charset=windows-1250" />
<title><?php bloginfo('name'); ?></title>
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
href="<?php bloginfo('stylesheet_url'); ?>"
/>
</head>
<body>
```

Adding wp_head Tag

Some plugins need to insert javascript or special style into the theme in order to work properly. The wp_head tags allow plugin developers to 'hook' into the theme and add their code. Examples of some plugins that need this are ShareThis and Viper's Video Quicktags.

For a theme developer, you need not worry about how this works. The most important thing for us is to make sure the tag is present. Otherwise, you may have clients beating down your door demanding why a plugin they installed is not working and the plugin people said its your theme's fault.

Right before the closing </head> tag, add this line of code.

```
<?php wp_head(); ?>
```

The result,

```
5 <title><?php bloginfo(
6 <link rel="stylesheet"
7 bloginfo('stylesheet_url
8 <?php wp_head(); ?>
9 </head>
10 <body>
```

Save.

Nothing will output on your browser by adding this code so there is no need to refresh the browser to see the effect because nothing happens.

Make The Search Box Live

In the given HTML template, the search box does not work. This is pretty normal especially when you purchase an HTML template. It is expected that you, as the developer will complete that information to make it live.

```
<form action="#" method="post">
<input type="text" name="search" value="Search Site" />
<input type="submit" name="submit" value="Go" id="
searchbutton" />
```

So we need to add an action URL, a 'get method' and an ID for the form. The action URL is the most important here because it tells the browser where to submit the form to. The rest (get method and ID) is there so we can use that for styling or further coding should we choose to later on. Change

```
<form action="#" method="post">
```

to

```
<form method="get" id="searchform"
action="<?php bloginfo('url'); ?>/">
```

This is what my code looks like in PsPad

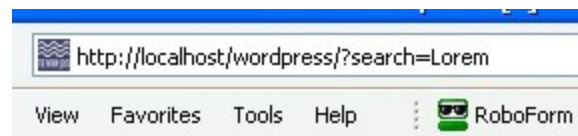

```
13     <div id="search">
14         <form method="get" id="searchform" action="<?php
15         bloginfo('url'); ?>/">
16         <input type="text" name="search" value="Search Site" />
17         <input type="submit" name="submit" value="Go" id="
18         searchbutton" />
19     </form>
```

Save your work. Now go back to your browser, refresh your Sandbox blog. Right click anywhere in the browser, then click View Source. It should look like this.

```
<div id="container">
<div id="topnav">
<div id="search">
<form method="get" id="searchform" action="http://localhost/wordpress/">
<input type="text" name="search" value="Search Site" />
<input type="submit" name="submit" value="Go" id="searchbutton" />
</form>
</div>
```

See how the action is now a proper URL? It should be the URL to your blog. Ok you are probably wanting to test it out now. You can but nothing is going to happen when you do – you are not going to get search results – you'll only see the same page re-loaded into the screen. This is because we have not completed the other parts of the theme yet. Most importantly, we have not completed the index.php file yet.

If you insist, the one way of knowing if the search form is live for now is to look at the URL. If the URL has changed to something like this:



Then you know the form is live. In the case above, I searched for the word "Lorem". That why you see search=Lorem

After we finish up index.php, you come back for a more thorough test of the search form.

Top Navigation Links

In the html coding, the navigation links on the top are “hard coded”. This means that anytime you add a Page, the links won't add automatically. You have to manually edit and link up the Pages in your theme. You can certainly leave it like that and simply add the URLs to point to the right pages.

But for the sake of making it easy for clients to add or edit Pages and navigation above, you should use the `wp_list_pages` tag. This way, the list of links is dynamically generated. When your client adds a page, a new link will automatically appear in their navigation. When they edit the title of that Page, the link text will also change.

Change these lines of code from this:

```
<ul>
<li><a href="#">Home</a></li>
<li><a href="#">Contact</a></li>
<li><a href="#">About</a></li>
</ul>
```

to this:

```
<ul>
<?php wp_list_pages('title_li='); ?>
</ul>
```

```
20 <ul>
21 | <?php wp_list_pages('title_li='); ?>
22 </ul>
23 </div>
```

Notice how the `` remains unchanged? That is because WordPress will format the `` for each Page link. There is no need for us to add the ``'s.

Save and refresh the blog in your browser. The links in the navigation bar should change to list the Pages you have. In a standard WordPress blog you should see the About page.

Different blogs will see different things, depending on what Pages you have created on the blog. If you want to see how more links will look like, simply create more Pages (WordPress admin >> Write >> Pages). This is what I see on mine.



A Word About Dummy Content

Dummy content is very important to help you see what you're doing, gauge whether the content is displayed properly and in the right spot. Before you continue developing this theme, I highly recommend you add categories, add Links, add Pages, posts, comments and even create a new author account or two.

To fill my Posts and Pages with content, I usually go to www.lipsum.com to generate me some dummy Lorem Ipsum text, then put them in Pages and Posts. What you name these categories, posts, Pages and links don't matter. You just want to generate some data.

Alright, that pretty wraps up header.php. We will return to this later on make the title tags more intuitive. I have included my finished theme files for this lesson [here](#). If you are stuck or find some errors, download my theme files and check them against your work. That's often a quick and easy way to find out where you went wrong.

Homework!

1. As usual, complete the exercises
2. Add some dummy content into your Sandbox blog

Coming Up Next ...

We shall continue developing and move on to footer.php

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