

Get Started Blogging with TypePad!

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By the time you've finished reading this document, you'll know everything you need to know about signing up, configuring, and posting articles on a TypePad weblog, including how to use the popular Flickr image hosting service to store your photographs and other graphic images.

I. Signing Up

Your very first step is to sign up for a TypePad account. This can be done by going to the URL <http://www.typepad.com/> and clicking on the bright orange "Start Free 30 Day Trial" button. Then here's how to proceed:

Sign Up: Create an Account

Member Name

Your member name can not be longer than 25 characters and should not contain any spaces.

Create Password

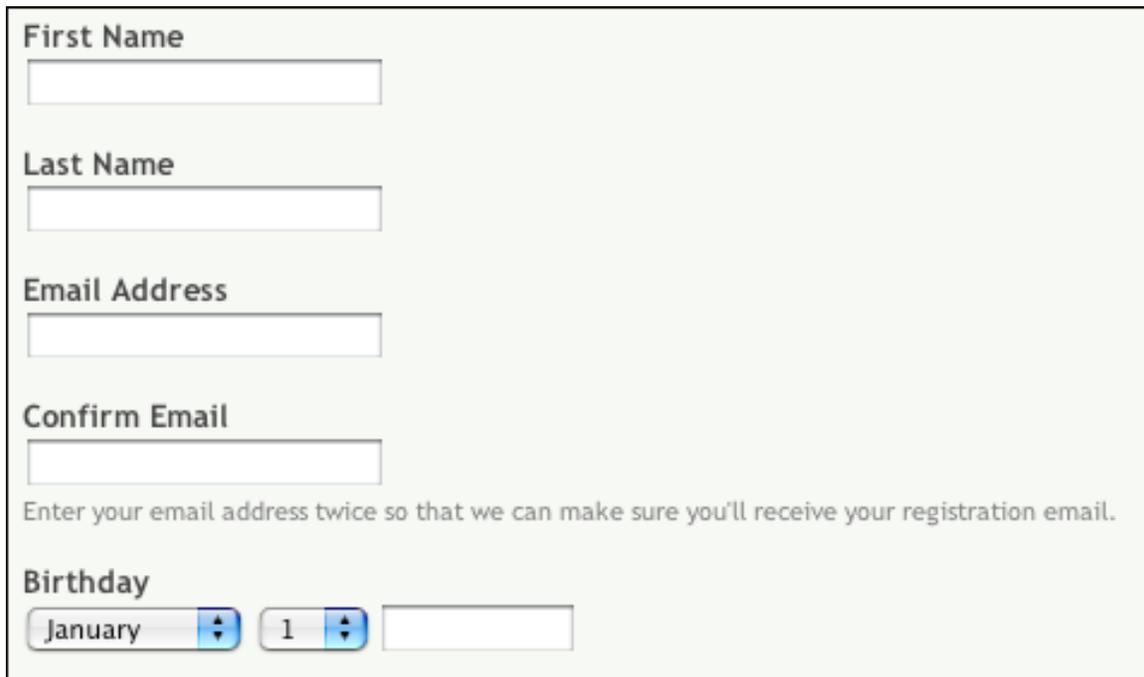
Your password should be between 6 and 15 characters and should not contain spaces.

Confirm Password

Pay attention to your member name and password. It should be no surprise to you that you'll want to reference this with some frequency! On the other hand, your name isn't a good password either, so try to use something reasonably secure. I suggest including a

digit and some punctuation too. An easy one might be something like **myBLOG2!** or similarly memorable but relatively nonsensical.

As you proceed to sign up for TypePad you'll find that you need to share various personal information, though as they say on the page, it's not going to result in you getting spam or any other junk, either from them or any of their partners. This is what they ask for:

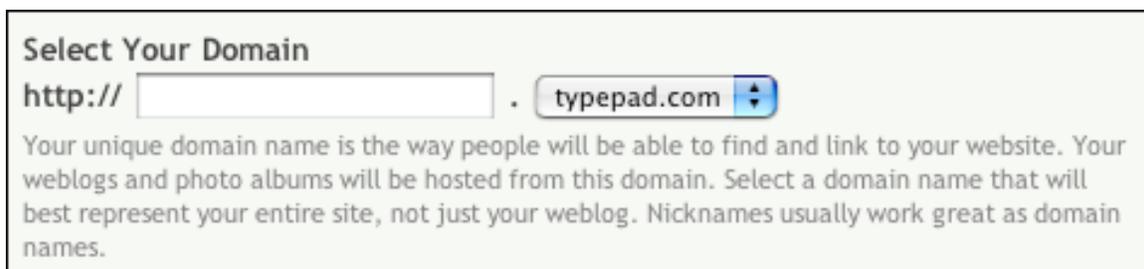


The image shows a registration form for TypePad. It contains the following fields and elements:

- First Name**: A text input field.
- Last Name**: A text input field.
- Email Address**: A text input field.
- Confirm Email**: A text input field.
- Enter your email address twice so that we can make sure you'll receive your registration email.**: A line of instructional text.
- Birthday**: A section containing three dropdown menus: the first is set to "January", the second to "1", and the third is empty.

They're asking for your birthday here, by the way, because they want to know how old you are: if you're 13 or younger, there are some privacy laws that apply and the system will work differently.

Next, the most important question of this entire process: what are you going to call your new Typepad blog?



The image shows a form titled "Select Your Domain". It includes:

- The text "http://" followed by a text input field, a period, and a dropdown menu currently showing "typepad.com".
- Below this, a paragraph of text: "Your unique domain name is the way people will be able to find and link to your website. Your weblogs and photo albums will be hosted from this domain. Select a domain name that will best represent your entire site, not just your weblog. Nicknames usually work great as domain names."

Take a few minutes to think about something easily spelled, pronounceable, and not prone to mistyping or confusion. A descriptive word like "cabinets", "teahouse", "recharge" or "photos" is ideal.

Also, be aware that you can't change your domain name once you've set it. If you decide you don't like it, you'll need to cancel your account and create a new one, so that's yet another reason why you should take your time and pick a real winner!

The next step is to configure the more permanent aspects of your new TypePad blog account, starting with choosing what kind of membership you seek:

Membership Level

TypePad Basic: \$4.95/month or \$49.50/year
Get your full-featured weblog up and running quickly with our simple yet powerful publishing tools. Perfect for beginners.

TypePad Plus: \$8.95/month or \$89.50/year
Build photo albums, maintain up to three weblogs, customize your design, and use other advanced features.

TypePad Pro: \$14.95/month or \$149.50/year
Expert control over HTML, archive types, guest authors, and unlimited weblogs. Perfect for advanced users.

Notice that you don't want to select TypePad Basic if you want to do a domain name redirect so that your weblog isn't known as *yourname.typepad.com* but rather something more akin to *blog.yourdomain.com* or *www.yourblogdomain.com*.

On this same page you'll need to enter some credit card information to proceed, but don't panic: you can always cancel the account before they move you into the billing cycle. If you are going to stick with it, choose the annual payment option - it will instantly save you almost 20%.

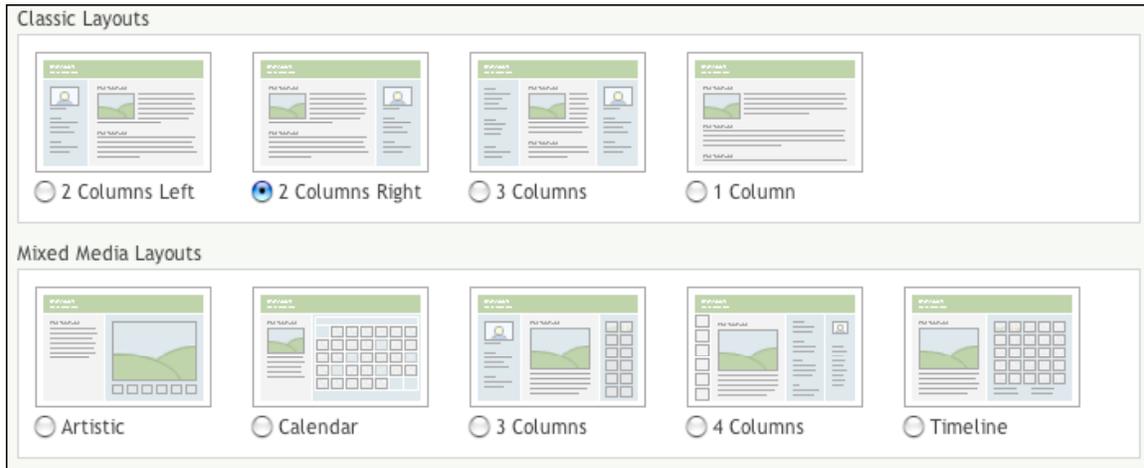
More fun stuff now! First, your Weblog's presentation name:

Weblog Name

This will be displayed at the top of each page.

Pick something that has a few keywords and is descriptive. You'll be looking at this *a lot* and all of your customers will see this in their bookmark list and on every single page (or RSS feed entry) you make available, so make sure it's something you really like. You can change it if you want, which is nice, so it's not critical that it be perfect right out the gate.

You'll also want to choose a layout structure that has the navigational columns *on the right* so that you'll get better search engine results. I suggest "2 Columns Right":



How does your layout affect your search engine placement? Search engines believe that text appearing earlier on the source of a Web page is more important than text appearing later on the page. With that as an overriding principle, it should make sense that having all of your navigational links appear consistently *before* your actual articles is going to adversely impact you in the long run. Instead, push all the navigational material to the right side by choosing 2 Columns Right out of these choices.

There are other styles and layouts that you can apply from third-party sites if you really get into the whole TypePad world, so, again, these choices can be changed either to another TypePad layout or something else. On the other hand, the real key is *your content* so the layout and colors should basically just ensure that your visitors won't hate your design!

Next in the signup process you get to choose a design style, which is really better described as a rudimentary color scheme. Any of these options will work well enough for now and I recommend anything but the default, just so you'll have at least a small chance of being unique in the blogosphere:

Choose a Design Style
 Preview a design style with the layout you selected by clicking on the thumbnail to open a preview in a new window.

April Showers

Bonjour Chatette

Classy

Earth

Green Grass

Minimalist

I rather like the April Showers color scheme, but you might gravitate towards something quite different.

Final step before you're ready to start populating your weblog: do you want your blog to be public or private? Probably public, right?

Weblog Privacy

Publicized
 Allow anyone to read my weblog, and include it in TypePad's Recently Updated list and directories.

Not Publicized
 Allow anyone to read my weblog, but do not publicize to the general public.

Password Protected
 Only allow someone who knows a shared username and password to read my weblog.

Hurray! You now have a TypePad blog!

Ready to get started? Well, we have a few more tasks before it's time to make your first weblog posting, but you've done the hard work now, so it shouldn't be too much longer...

More Information:

TypePad User Manual: <http://help.typepad.com/>

II. Customizing TypePad

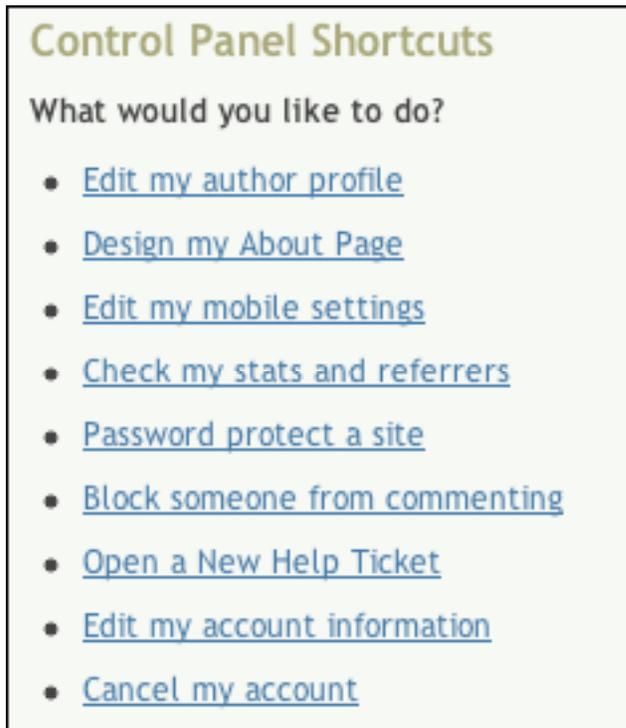
To customize your TypePad blog further, you'll want to go to the Control Panel, which can be accessed by clicking "Control Panel" from your TypePad home page, which is really quite logical! You'll find that there are a row of tabs along the top of the window offering basic configuration areas:



But first, look even higher up on the page and notice the four major tabs for the four major areas of TypePad:



You'll find that these offer an easy way to move around! Notice in the Overview section that there's a very helpful set of specific common tasks that you might want to do within TypePad:



If you're going to cancel your account before the 30 days are up and you start getting billed, notice here the last option **Cancel my account**. That's how you'll shut things down.

To get started, none of these are really important, though it's useful to go to the **Design my About Page** since it's going to be a link on your blog regardless, so you might as well make it something informative!

There are three areas in the profile area:



The “About Page” is where you’ll go if you click on “Design my About Page”, and there are a bunch of different data fields you can opt to include if you’re so inclined:

Select the items that you wish to include on your About Page.

Note: If you choose to display your email address, it will be automatically encoded for protection against spam harvesters.

<input type="checkbox"/> Name	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Web address (URL) Lists
<input type="checkbox"/> Nickname	<input type="checkbox"/> Location
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biography
<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Line Bio
<input type="checkbox"/> AIM Name	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interests
<input type="checkbox"/> ICQ Number	<input type="checkbox"/> Amazon Wishlist
<input type="checkbox"/> Yahoo! ID	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PGP Key
<input type="checkbox"/> MSN Messenger	

You’ll have to decide for yourself what you want to share with others, but Name, Photo, Email, Web address, and some sort of biography are fairly common.

The information for these specific fields can be found back at the “Author Profile” section of the Profile tab. Click on it and you’ll see:

* First name	<input type="text" value="Dave"/>
* Last name	<input type="text" value="Taylor"/>
Nickname	<input type="text"/>
* Email Address	<input type="text" value="taylor@intuitive.com"/>
Web Address (URL)	<input type="text" value="http://www.intuitive.com/"/>
* Country	<input type="text" value="United States"/>
Zip/Postal Code	<input type="text" value="80304"/>
* Language	<input type="text" value="US English"/>
* Time zone	<input type="text" value="America/Denver"/>

Here I've filled in specific and optional information. Scrolling down further, there are more important fields to fill out:

Your Interests What are your hobbies? Interests? Favorite authors, movies, sports? List them here and separate each item with a comma. Example: weblogs, baseball, kung-fu movies <input type="text"/>	Your Extended Biography Enter the full biography that you'd like to appear on your About page. <input type="text"/>
Your One-Line Biography Describe yourself in one sentence: Example: I'm a college professor with 2 kids. <input type="text"/>	

Enter a half-dozen lines in the extended bio, and a one or two line summary in the one-line bio field. Remember to use a few industry critical keywords too to increase your findability.

Enough configuration. Let's post!

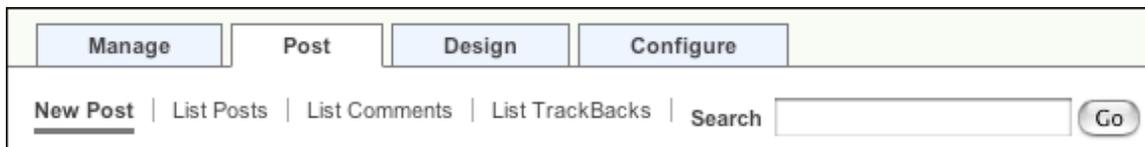
III. Working with TypePad

Go back to your home page in TypePad and you'll see:

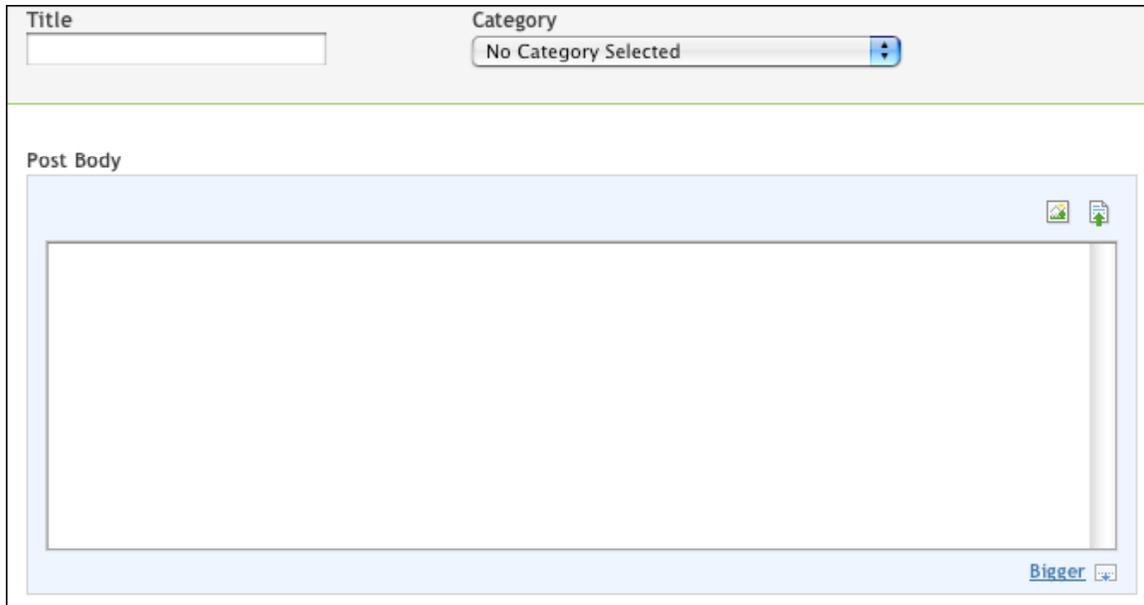


Click on "Create a Post" to get started with your first blog posting.

Notice here that you have a bunch more choices in the tab area:



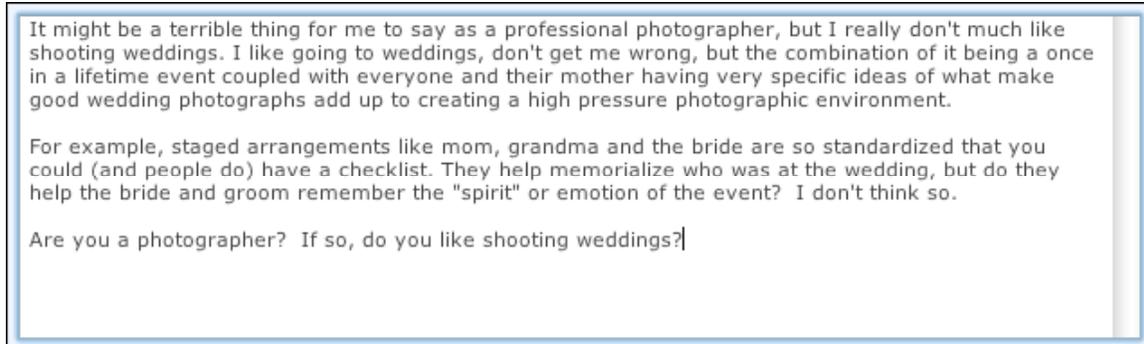
Let's focus on the new posting, though. The basic input is broken down into a posting **title**, posting **category**, and posting **body**:



The screenshot shows the TypePad post creation interface. At the top, there is a 'Title' text input field and a 'Category' dropdown menu currently set to 'No Category Selected'. Below this is a large 'Post Body' text area with a vertical scrollbar on the right. In the bottom right corner of the post body area, there is a 'Bigger' link with a small icon.

These are directly analogous to an email subject and email message: pick a pithy, interesting 5-10 word descriptive (and keyword rich) title, then write a few paragraphs of text, only using the Return or Enter key to double-space between paragraphs.

For an entry entitled “Why I don’t like shooting weddings”, I might write:



The screenshot shows the post body text area with the following text:

It might be a terrible thing for me to say as a professional photographer, but I really don't much like shooting weddings. I like going to weddings, don't get me wrong, but the combination of it being a once in a lifetime event coupled with everyone and their mother having very specific ideas of what make good wedding photographs add up to creating a high pressure photographic environment.

For example, staged arrangements like mom, grandma and the bride are so standardized that you could (and people do) have a checklist. They help memorialize who was at the wedding, but do they help the bride and groom remember the "spirit" or emotion of the event? I don't think so.

Are you a photographer? If so, do you like shooting weddings?]

Once you’ve written your first entry, created a good subject, and decided whether to use the categorization feature or not (I suggest you skip it for the first half-dozen postings, at least), you’re still not quite done.

You can publish your article immediately, or you can save it in “draft” form where you can further edit it later, as desired:



The screenshot shows the 'Posting Status' dropdown menu with 'Publish Now' selected.

The most interesting of these options is **Publish On...** which lets you schedule future weblog posting and means that you can easily queue up a few days or even more articles all at once, making it easy to spread out your entries across a time period, even if you aren't actively logged in at the time!

Here's what the scheduler looks like:

Set Date and Time

Time to publish: :

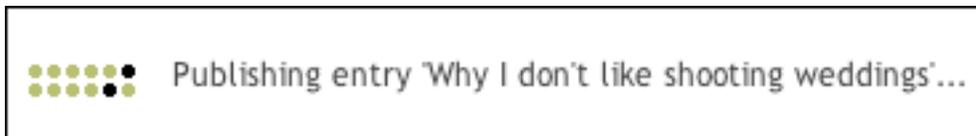
Date to publish: < June 2005 >

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

That should be easy enough to work with!

The other two options are whether you accept comments or trackback. I'd suggest yes and yes, until you have spam problems and then you might need to seriously think about whether to stop allowing either of these features.

Ready to publish your article? Click on "Save" and you'll see:



That's all there is to it! Now if you visit your Weblog's home page, you'll see your new article:

Why I don't like shooting weddings

It might be a terrible thing for me to say as a professional photographer, but I really don't much like shooting weddings. I like going to weddings, don't get me wrong, but the combination of it being a once in a lifetime event coupled with everyone and their mother having very specific ideas of what make good wedding photographs add up to creating a high pressure photographic environment.

For example, staged arrangements like mom, grandma and the bride are so standardized that you could (and people do) have a checklist. They help memorialize who was at the wedding, but do they help the bride and groom remember the "spirit" or emotion of the event? I don't think so.

Are you a photographer? If so, do you like shooting weddings?

June 01, 2005 | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

Cool, eh?

There are some rudimentary hypertext markup tags worth knowing for your entry body text too:

- make something **bold** by surrounding it with `` and ``
- make something *italic* by surrounding it with `<i>` and `</i>`
- Add a horizontal line between paragraphs by using `<hr>`

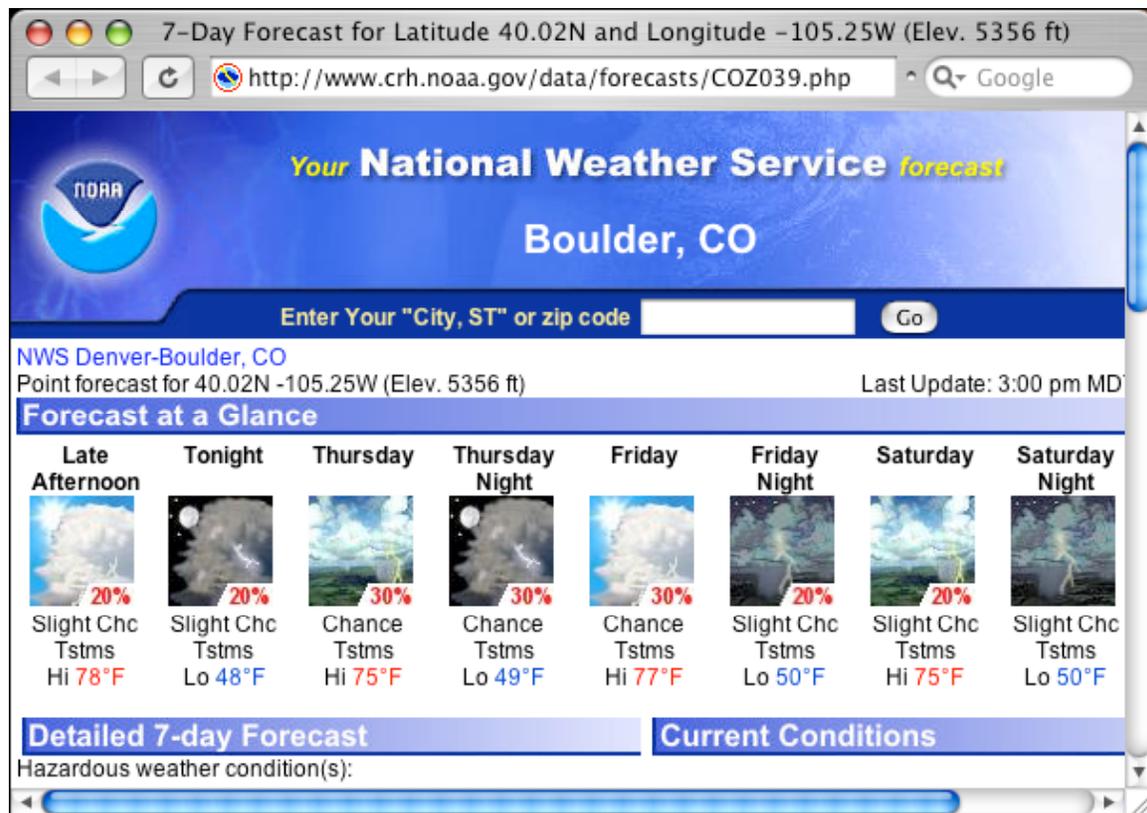
The most important additional capability is being able to create links to other Web pages. To accomplish this, first identify the address ("URL") of the page you want to point to. If you wanted to point to my blog, for example, that would be <http://www.intuitive.com/blog/>. Notice that you *must* include the **http://** prefix. Now decide what word or words you want to use on your page as the *link text*. Let's use the proper name "The Intuitive Life Business Blog" for this example.

Put them together thusly, paying close attention to the quote marks:

```
<a href="http://www.intuitive.com/blog/">The Intuitive Life  
Business Blog</a>
```

That'll produce a link with the text **The Intuitive Life Business Blog** in your entry, linking to the Web page you desire.

For more complex links, a good shortcut is to open up another Web browser window and navigate to the specific window of your choice. For example, I might navigate to the Boulder weather page on the NOAA site:



Now, just click in the address box itself, then choose Edit -> Select All then Edit -> Copy and you'll have the complex Web page address in your copy and paste buffer.

Go back to your TypePad page, type in the beginning of a link:

`<a href=""`

then choose Edit -> Paste to copy in the URL. Finally, finish up the rest of the link text (which I show here in **bold** just to make it easier to see):

`
Boulder Weather Forecast`

There's a lot more you can do with TypePad, but this should get you started blogging, with images and links. Remember, the best way to gain visibility is to write interesting, compelling content that's timely and relevant. Think of this as a "smart cocktail party" or network socializer rather than a venue for marketing or advertising.

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