

Microthemer Walk-through Transcript

In this video, we will be dissecting Microthemer in a bit more detail so that you can get a complete understanding of how the program works. We will cover the following topics

Part 1. Installing Microthemer

[wp dashboard] We'll start off right from the beginning, with a fresh WordPress install. Our first task is to install Microthemer [add new plugin screen]. Microthemer comes in the form of a zip package when downloaded from themeover.com. The simplest way to install Microthemer is to go to the 'upload' plugin screen [click upload link], locate the zip file on your computer - double click it to select it [find/click file] and then click the "Install Now" button.

Once installed all we need to do is activate it by clicking the activate link [click activate link]. And that's it! Microthemer has been installed.

We're almost ready to start editing our theme. But there's something we should do first - we should grab ourselves a free blank slate theme from Themeover's repository [go to Themeover repository].

Part 2. Installing a Blank Slate Theme

Our fresh WordPress install comes with the Twenty Eleven theme pre-activated. [scroll to twenty eleven] So let's get a blank slate theme for Twenty Eleven [Download blank theme]. As a side note, we will be adding new blank slate themes to this repository on an ongoing basis [hover mouse over signup option]. If you'd like to keep up with this, please sign up for our monthly newsletter

Blank micro themes are installed the same way as regular micro themes, from the "Manage Themes" Microthemer page [go to manage themes page].

We simply click the "Install Zipped Theme" button and then browse for the blank theme we downloaded [install blank theme]. We will activate it in a moment, but first, let's move on to the Microthemer UI, where all the magic happens.

Part 3. The Microthemer UI

[go to Microthemer UI] Before we activate the blank theme we just installed, let's have a look at what the Microthemer UI looks like by default. Microthemer suggests 15 sections for us to organise our styles into. These sections can be deleted [delete], renamed [rename to "My Header"], added to [add "My New Section"] and even reordered [reorder]. But no Selectors are currently present, and so we would have to create these manually.[create selector #site-title a "Site Title Link"]

This allows us to edit our site's title [click to load iframe and change to bold italic 40 goergia green]. And then we save our changes [do so]. But hang on. [open modify] Isn't Microthemer meant to be a substitute for writing CSS code? [highlight code] Absolutely. And that's exactly why we downloaded our Twenty Ten blank slate theme. Let's import our blank slate theme now.[close iframe]

We can import our blank theme by selecting the appropriate theme from the import menu [do so] and then clicking the blue "Import button" [click]. Microthemer warns us that this will override our current settings and we click 'OK' to import our selectors.[ok]

[highlight numbers with mouse] These numbers here indicate how many selectors a section contains. We can reveal a section's selectors by clicking on this "Edit Selectors" link [header edit selectors link]. Blank themes are important because they provide WordPress users with a way to redesign a WordPress theme without having to understand the CSS code [modify > highlight the #site-title a code] which targets elements on our web page [click to load iframe with highlighting].

We can scroll through our selectors [click prev > prev > select body button] and then apply new styles by loading our editing options. A dark gradient perhaps [turn off highlighting, load editing options, set body: Gradient A to black, Gradient C to mid grey].

So some of you might be wondering why Microthemer has two editing views. The visual editor view here.[close iframe] and the default view here. The short explanation is this. The visual editing view is for WordPress users and the default view is mainly for Theme authors.

[reload visual view (header)] The visual view is simpler, more intuitive and the ability to highlight selectors [toggle] can be very informative for beginners. However, [close iframe] the default view has more options that will be useful to Theme Authors . Such as, the ability to create selectors manually [#header My Header -gradA = white, gradC = mid-light grey], reorder selectors [reorder some selectors], and enter raw CSS code here [#site-description { font-weight: bold }]. There are currently a few exceptions to this rule however. This glossary of CSS terms, [click label] which is likely to be of most use to non-technical users can currently only be accessed from the default view. [close glossary, open background images] Also, background images can only be viewed from the default view.

It's worth noting that we can still view design changes with a single click from the default view. We do this by ensuring that this "Save first" checkbox is ticked and then click this "View Site" button [click button to load iframe].

Now on to another one of Microthemer's main features: versioning. We've made a few changes to the Twenty Eleven theme. But what if we'd like to take our design in a new direction without losing our current design? That's where the ability to export your settings comes in handy.

Let's close all our open sections and selectors for the sake of tidiness [\[close all\]](#). Then, all we need to do is check the "export" checkbox [\[do so\]](#), select "New" [\[do so\]](#) (because we don't want to overwrite any existing micro themes), and then enter a descriptive name for our theme e.g. "Dark Twenty Eleven" [\[do so\]](#). Finally, we click save to initiate the export [\[do so\]](#).

We can now start our new design from fresh by re-importing the Twenty Eleven blank theme [\[do so\]](#). And as you can see, our changes have disappeared [\[load iframe\]](#). But if we want them back, we simply import our "Dark Twenty Eleven" theme [\[import theme\]](#) and hey presto [\[load iframe\]](#), our design is back and ready for us to edit [\[expand selector\]](#)!

Before we move back to the "Manage Themes" page, I'd like to show you a little time saving feature. With the padding, margin, and border properties [\[tick properties\]](#), including border radius properties [\[tick border radius\]](#), you can give all the properties in a row the same value by entering just one value and then double-clicking it [\[do so\]](#).

Part 4. Managing Micro Themes

We looked at how to install a Micro Theme using the "Install Zipped Theme" button at the start of this video [\[toggle button\]](#). We can also create a new empty shell Micro Theme [\[click button, enter "My Micro Theme" create new\]](#), which we can export settings to at a later date.

To switch between Themes we want to manage, we simply chose the theme from the dropdown menu and click "go" [\[do so - switch back to dark twenty eleven\]](#).

We can deactivate or active our Micro Theme [\[do so\]](#), we can delete it [\[hover mouse over\]](#). And the "Edit Theme Styles" link takes us back to the Microthemer UI [\[switch between\]](#)

Microthemer provides authors with a means to attach meta data to their Micro Theme without the need to create a separate text file. Microthemer also makes it easy for theme authors to provide end users with specific instructions for customising their Micro Theme.

Microthemer supports background images. We can use this feature to add a logo to our WordPress theme. Microthemer also lets us resize images when we upload them. In order to determine the right size, let's inspect our site with firebug [\[go to tab with frontend\]](#). Firebug comes pre-installed with Chrome and can be added to firefox by downloading the firebug addon [\[go to google tab, type 'firebug' and go to download page\]](#).

[\[go back to frontend tab\]](#) Firebug is a must have for all Microthemer users. To use firebug, we simply right click on an element and then click "Inspect Element" [\[do so\]](#). Firebug highlights elements on the page when we move our mouse over the HTML code [\[do so\]](#) in the same way that Microthemer highlights selectors. We're going to add our logo to the left of the site title so this is the element we're interested in [\[hover mouse over site title html\]](#).

We can use firebug to find out the height of our site title in pixels by clicking on the layout tab [\[do so\]](#). The first number is the width and the second number is the height. So we now know that the site title is 35 pixels high.

[\[go back to manage tab\]](#) Going back to our "Manage Themes" page, we can now upload and resize our logo so that it lines up with our site title nicely. We browse for the logo image on our computer [\[do so\]](#) and then set the height of the logo by expanding out the resize options and entering 35 in the height field [\[do so\]](#). By leaving the width field blank [\[hover mouse over width field\]](#) we ensure that the image gets resized proportionally without having to do the maths ourselves. We then click the upload file button.

Note that it tells us the new width of 43 as well. Let's write that down for later [\[create sticky note\]](#). To confirm that the image has uploaded successfully, you can view it by clicking the "view" link in the table [\[do so\]](#).

Now to add our logo as a background image for our site title. We go back to the Microthemer UI [\[go back\]](#), locate the site title selector and then bring up our visual editing view. Then, we hide the highlighting and load our editing options [\[do so\]](#). First of all, we specify our logo image, set the correct position, and ensure that it doesn't repeat [\[do so\]](#). Then, we create some room for it by giving the site title left padding that's equal to the width of the logo [\[bring up sticky - enter 43\]](#) plus a bit more to give it space to breath [\[change 43 to 53\]](#). We then save our changes [\[save\]](#).

Our description looks a bit off now so let's give it the same left padding of 53 so that it lines back up again [\[use dropdown to find site description and then give it 53 pixels\]](#). We then save our changes again [\[save\]](#).

Before we move on, I'd like to introduce colorzilla, another great addon for firefox [\[google search for colorzilla\]](#). With colorzilla installed, we right-click anywhere > choose colorzilla > eyedropper and then click the crosshair over the colour we want to sample [\[do so\]](#). This copies the colour to our clipboard. We can then paste [\[right click paste\]](#) the colour into the "Color" field of on our site title selector so that our site title matches the green colour in our logo. And

And there you have it. Hopefully this video has demonstrated how Microthemer can be used to achieve a high level of artistic control over a WordPress theme with very little technical knowledge.