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Widgets and sidebars in WordPress: what they are, and what changed with block themes

WordPress & CMS

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Widgets and sidebars in WordPress: what they are, and what changed with block themes

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The short answer: a **widget** is a block of content you put in a fixed area of the site, such as the sidebar or footer (search, recent posts, categories, a text). In a classic theme you manage them under **Appearance > Widgets**. **Block themes** do not have those areas: the same is done in the Editor, with “templates” and “patterns”.

The most used widgets

Widget	What it is for
Search	A box for the visitor to search the site. Useful on a blog or a shop.
Recent posts / categories	Show what is new and help navigation. On small sites they are often too much.
Custom text or HTML	An address, opening hours, an image, a WhatsApp button. Be careful with outside code.
Subscription form	Usually comes from a plugin. Ask for consent: **Building an e-mail list legally**.

How to add a widget

1. **See whether your theme is classic or block:** if there is no “Widgets” in the Appearance menu, it is a block theme.
2. **In a classic theme,** open Appearance > Widgets, choose the area (sidebar, footer) and press + to add the block you want.
3. **Order and save.** Open the site to see how it looks, on a computer and a phone.

4 **In a block theme,** open the Editor, choose the template or template part (footer, sidebar) and add the blocks there: **Block theme or classic theme**.

Every widget weighs.
Those that load outside things (social networks, statistics, videos) make the site slower. Choose only those that help the visitor: **Tag Manager and pixels**. Never paste into a “Custom HTML” widget code you do not understand.

If the site is small, an almost empty sidebar is better than a full one.

NEED A HAND?

Cannot find the widgets in your theme? Open a ticket with the address and the theme’s name.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Block theme or classic theme in WordPress: what is the difference and which to pick** →
- **Installing a WordPress theme** →
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TAX ID (NUIT)	401 191 607
LEGAL ENTITY NO. (NUEL)	105 045 974
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY CODE (CAE)	62022
REGISTERED OFFICE	Bairro 7 de Setembro Vilankulo 1304 · CEP 0411-02, Inhambane, Mozambique
CONTACT	info@interweb.co.mz · +258 84 635 1111 · +258 86 635 1111 · www.interweb.co.mz
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