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Featured image and excerpt in WordPress: what they do and where they show

WordPress & CMS

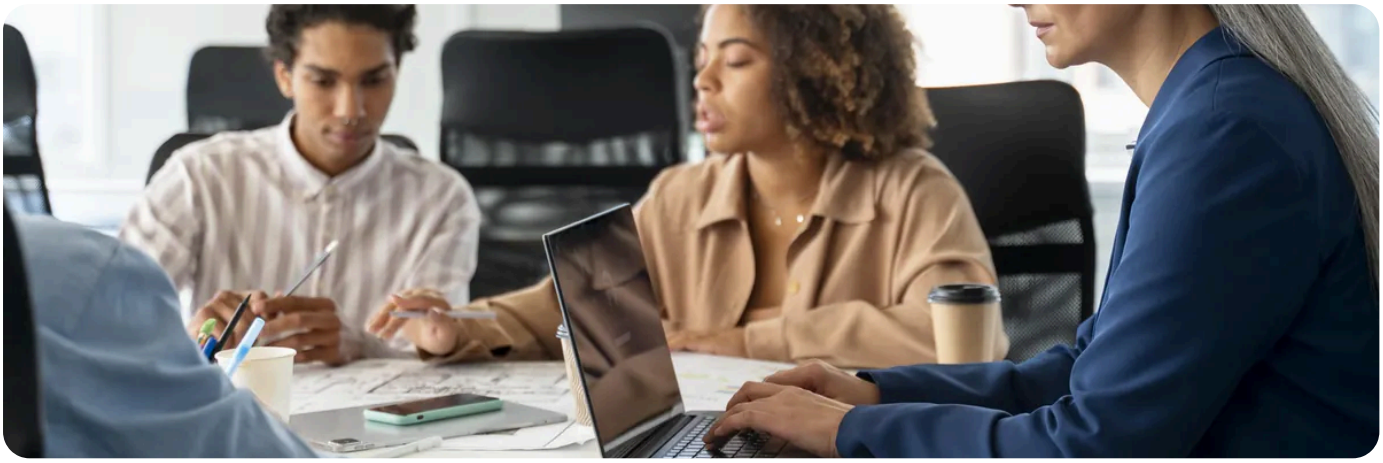
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Featured image and excerpt in WordPress: what they do and where they show

WordPress & CMS Created on **October 15, 2026** 2 min read



The short answer: the **featured image** is the main photo of a page or a post; the **excerpt** is the short text that goes with it. They appear in the site's lists, in internal search results and, often, when you share the link on a social network. You set them once per post.

What each one does

Item	Where you see it
Featured image	In the post list, at the top of the post (depending on the theme) and in the preview when the link is shared.
Excerpt	In the post list and in the site's search. If you leave it empty, WordPress uses the first words of the text.
Alt text	Read by people who cannot see the image and used by Google: **Alt text**.
Size	The theme crops the image to the measures it uses. A photo of a very different shape ends up badly framed.
Pages	They have a featured image, but the excerpt only shows on posts, unless the theme turns it on.

How to set them, step by step

1. **Open the post** (or page) to edit.

2. **In the side panel,** look for "Featured image", press "Set featured image" and pick a photo from the library or upload a new one: **The media library**.

3 **Write the image's alt text,** in a few words.

4 **In the same panel,** look for "Excerpt" and write two sentences that make people read on. (If you do not see the field, turn it on under screen options.)

5 **Update and look at the site's** post list: the image and the excerpt should appear. Share the link as a test to see the preview.

! **Choose light images.**
A photo of several megabytes as the featured image makes the post list slow: shrink it before you upload. **Image optimisation and WebP**.

For the preview when sharing, the theme or an SEO plugin may use another image; check after sharing. Pick one with the subject in plain view, which can be understood even when small.

NEED A HAND?

The theme does not show the featured image and you do not know why? Open a ticket with the address and the theme's name.

Open a support ticket →

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