

BLOGS BY Heather

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[Diana Designs](#)
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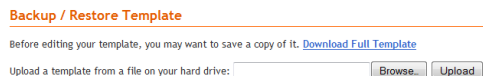
It's Heather from Blogs By Heather, www.BlogsByHeather.com. Happy New Year! In celebrating this month's theme of Love & Romance, I thought I'd share with you how to change the color theme of your blog! In this article, we'll review how to modify your blog's appearance by changing the background, template or theme. It's quick, fun and easy to do. You can give your blog visitors something new and fresh to look at as the seasons change, or simply whenever you'd like!

We'll begin changing the background and color scheme using Blogger's Template Designer. It's a wonderful new feature of Blogger, released in the summer of 2010. We'll then follow that using Typepad and its template gallery. Typepad is loaded with many templates, from professional to personal to simply and those that are customizable. We'll choose one to match our Love & Romance theme. Last but not least, we'll finish up with WordPress. WordPress, like TypePad, has many themes to choose from. We'll experiment with one of their themes called Sweet Blossoms! Let's get started!

Blogger Template Designer

Before modifying your templates design, in Blogger you can download (backup) your current template! Let's begin by logging into Blogger:

- Go to Design,
- Click the Edit HTML tab.



At the top of your screen you'll see the Backup/Restore Template section.

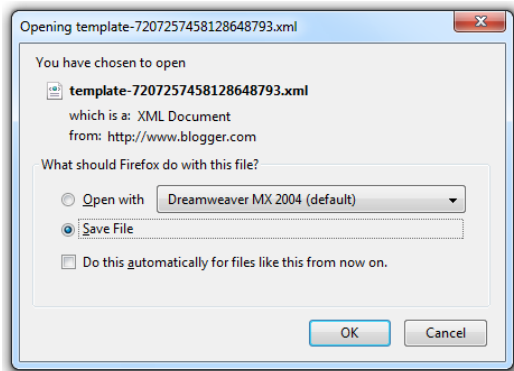
- Click on Download Full Template (hyperlink) and save the XML file to your computer.

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Your template will have a different name and you may not see the “Open with Dreamweaver MX 2004” as you may not have that program installed on your computer. Whether you are using Windows 7, like me, Windows XP, a Mac, or other operating system, you want to save the XML file to your computer as a backup.

Next, we’re ready to alter your blog’s design and give it a little Love & Romance make-over!

From within Blogger:

- Go to Design
- Click on Template Designer.

Depending on the template you are currently using, you may be to start right away by clicking on Backgrounds. If you see a message that you cannot currently change the background due to the current template, then you need to first click on Templates, and choose another template such as Simple, to get started.

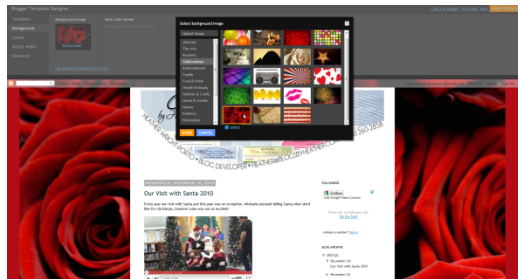
- Click on Background.
- Click on the dropdown arrow under the Background Image (which may be blank (white), or show the current background image you are using).
- When you click the arrow, the Select Background Image pops appears (as shown in the image below where the Roses are chosen under the Celebrations collection).

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What is more romantic than beautiful, red roses! I love flowers, especially roses (as you may tell when viewing my crafting blog, www.HandStampedByHeather.com). So, every Valentine's Day since we've been married (9-1/2 years), he buys me roses – all different colors and arrangements. Okay, so back to blogging...

- After reviewing all the different, available backgrounds and choosing one for your blog, click on Done.
- You are back at the Template Designer, Background area.
- Click on Advanced. In this area you may change the color and font of other elements of your blog - the Post Title or Link Colors – to coordinate with the new background chosen.
- When you are finished experimenting with your new blog color scheme, click Apply To Blog (in the upper right corner). When clicking that button, the changes are applied to your current blog's layout. If you do not click that button, the template/theme you have remains unchanged.

So, have fun experimenting and looking around inside Blogger's Template Designer!

TypePad Template Gallery

In the following exercise, we'll review the steps needed to quickly and easily change the look of your TypePad blog. We'll be changing the theme to a red/white template to compliment this month's Love & Romance theme.

- Login to TypePad.
- Click on Design.
- Then click on Choose Theme (if you are using the free version of TypePad, then you only have 3-4 templates to choose from. I do not recommend that version and do recommend the Typepad Plus, Unlimited or higher levels).

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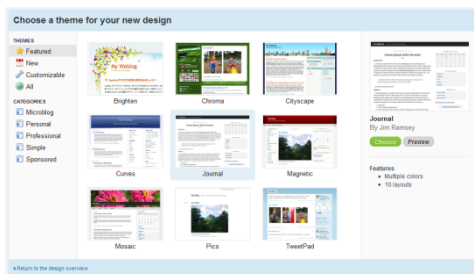
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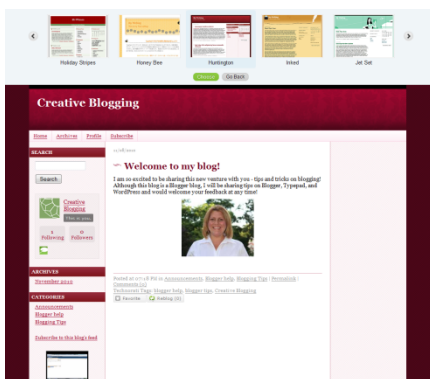
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- Upon clicking, you'll have many options to choose from on the left. The default is Featured (shown below).



- Click on All so you may see all the templates.
- Scroll through them looking for one you may like. In searching for a Valentine-like look, I chose Huntington, and clicked on Preview (shown below).



- Click on Choose to choose the theme. Or while in Preview mode you may continue previewing all the different themes using the left and right arrows.

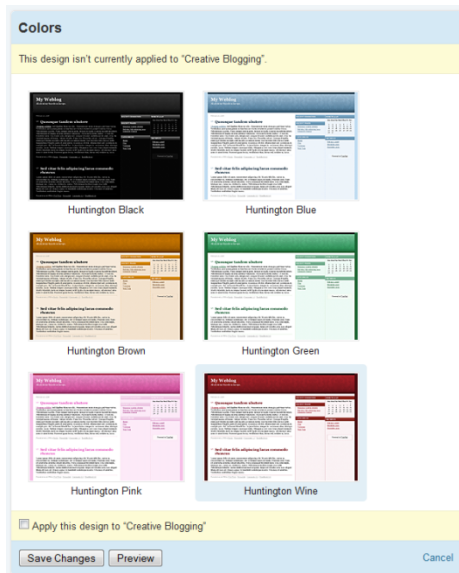
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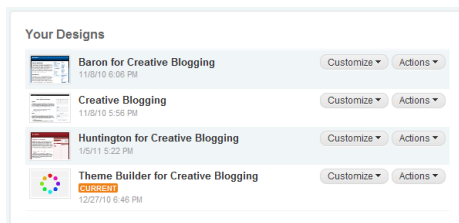
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- When choosing this theme, this particular them has different Color options. Notice there is a pink too!



- When you have selected the color, such as the Huntington Wine I have selected, you need to check off the “Apply this design to ‘<your blog name>” and then Save changes to apply this new design to your blog.
- If you’ve experimented with more than one design before, or want to go back to one of your previously chosen designs, click on Design and notice the different templates in the Your Designs area at the bottom.



- In this example, I could easily click on Theme Builder for Creative Blogging, click Actions and then Apply to reapply that design.

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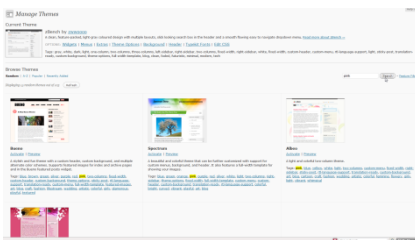
You're done! Now you may View Blog and continue creating posts, etc. Have fun exploring TypePad's gallery!

WordPress Themes

There are many different WordPress blogging platforms, such as that hosted by GoDaddy, or maybe you have a WordPress blog hosted by Amy Celona (www.WebsByAmy.com), or have a free blog at www.WordPress.org or www.WordPress.com. In the following example, I am using a free blog by www.WordPress.com.

WordPress.com, like TypePad Templates, has many different themes you may choose from. In following our theme this month, we are going to experiment with the Sweet Blossoms theme!

- Login to WordPress.com.
- Click on the My Blog menu at the top and click Dashboard.
- From the left side, click Appearance.
- From this screen, on the right, I entered "pink" in the search box to find themes that fit this month's Love & Romance theme.



- On the bottom, left there is Sweet Blossoms.

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- Click on Preview to preview it with your blog.



- Yea! My type of theme...hearts and flowers! It's a very "thin" template though but fits this project.
- If you'd like to apply the template, in the upper, right corner click "Activate Sweet Blossom."

Yes it is that simple! When using TypePad and WordPress themes, the color scheme also gets updated to coordinate with the theme chosen. In Blogger it does this as well, however, when we modified the background specifically and chose a new image, then the color scheme needs to be updated manually using the Advanced tab (in Template Designer).

Alternatively, you may have chosen another Template from Template Designer and that would again have all the colors and blog elements coordinating. You would not have had to change any colors for Post Title, Links, etc. Again, it is when you customize the background element, for example, it requires you to then modify the rest of the color scheme yourself.

I hope you enjoyed this month's article and have fun experimenting with the available templates and themes whether you use Blogger, Typepad or WordPress.

You may download this tutorial at www.BlogsByHeather.com. Happy blogging!

Feel free to contact me if you get stuck, heather@blogsbyheather.com or blogsbyheather@att.net.

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