

Introduction to the Weebly Toolkit for Building Websites

Maureen Pratchett

April 2013

Objective

The purpose of this workshop is not to teach you how to design or even build a website, but rather to introduce you to a toolkit which non-technical people can use to build one.

At the end of the workshop you should be able to:

- Sign up for a Weebly account.
- Find your way around Weebly.
- Use Weebly for your own project.
- Know where to go find the available help.
- Publish your website.

Introduction

These days you don't have to be a tech guru to build your own website. There are a number of tool kits available of which Weebly is one. They each have advantages and disadvantages.

Weebly's advantages are:

- It is easy to use
- It offers many sophisticated features
- It is easy to maintain and change
- **It is free. But there is a "Weebly pro" version which costs a small amount a month and offers extra features (see the Extras section later in this workshop).**

To use Weebly, you sign up for a Weebly account, create your website and then publish it.

Getting Started

Step 1: Develop an initial website plan

Weebly websites are arranged hierarchically – there is a set of pages at the top menu level and all other pages are underneath one of these.

Think about what pages you want for the top level. You can start with just the main 2 or 3 to begin with because it is really easy to change and re-organise later.

For each page, note the type of content you want on the page and think if you want to just put that content directly on the page or organise it into a series of sub-pages.

Step 2: Sign up for a Weebly account and choose your website name

Go to the Weebly website – www.weebly.com

You will be presented with the Sign-up Entry Screen.

Enter your name in the first box.



Enter your email address (or Facebook address) in the second box.

Enter a password in the third box. This can be anything – it does not have to be the same as your email password.

Click Sign-up.

Note that once you have your Weebly account, you will not use this box again. You will login using the login command in the top right of the screen (see the red circle).



After you click sign-up, you will be asked to enter one of those funny series of letters. If you can't decipher the letters, ask for another set using the button to the left of the arrow.

Click the orange button

In the next screen, you will be asked to enter a title and choose the type of site from the drop-down list.



In the next box, you will choose your Website address.

Choose something that is representative of the nature of your website, and is not too complicated to remember.

Here I am using a subdomain of Weebly, and my website address will be:

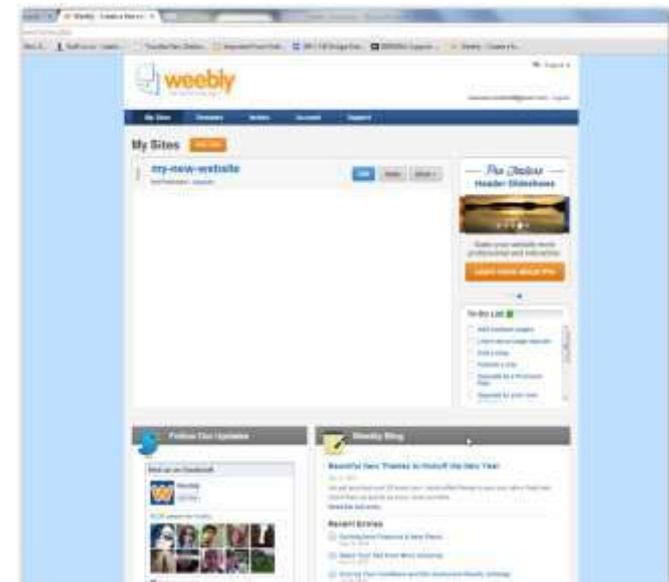
www.maureensproject.weebly.com

If you have purchased a domain name you can use this instead, or you can start with the Weebly subdomain and change to yours later.

Click Continue.

The next screen is the same screen that you will see when you login, and you are now ready to start building your website. Click the blue Edit button by your website name.

Note that this screen also contains buttons in the blue menu bar. Support is where you can access help from this screen and the help articles explain all the other buttons too.

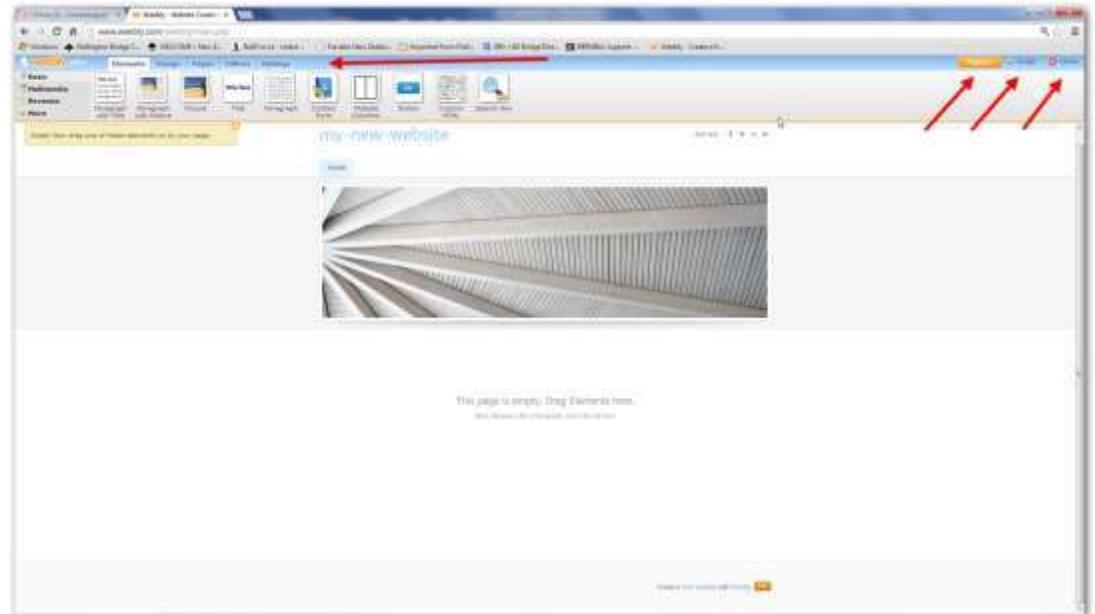


Weebly Overview

After you have clicked Edit for the first time, this is what you will see.

Don't worry about the picture – each page comes with a default picture which you can take away completely or replace by one of your own later (clicking on the picture give you options to replace it with one from your PC, or to search for one online).

You are taken to your Home page, which is the only page that exists when you start. Of course the page is empty at this point **because you haven't** added anything to it yet.



To build your website, the **Weebly toolkit** comes with 5 main menu choices which I'll explain in a minute:

- Elements (this is the menu choice which this screen shot is showing)
- Design
- Pages
- Editors
- Settings

Also on this page are the Publish button, the Help button and the Close button.

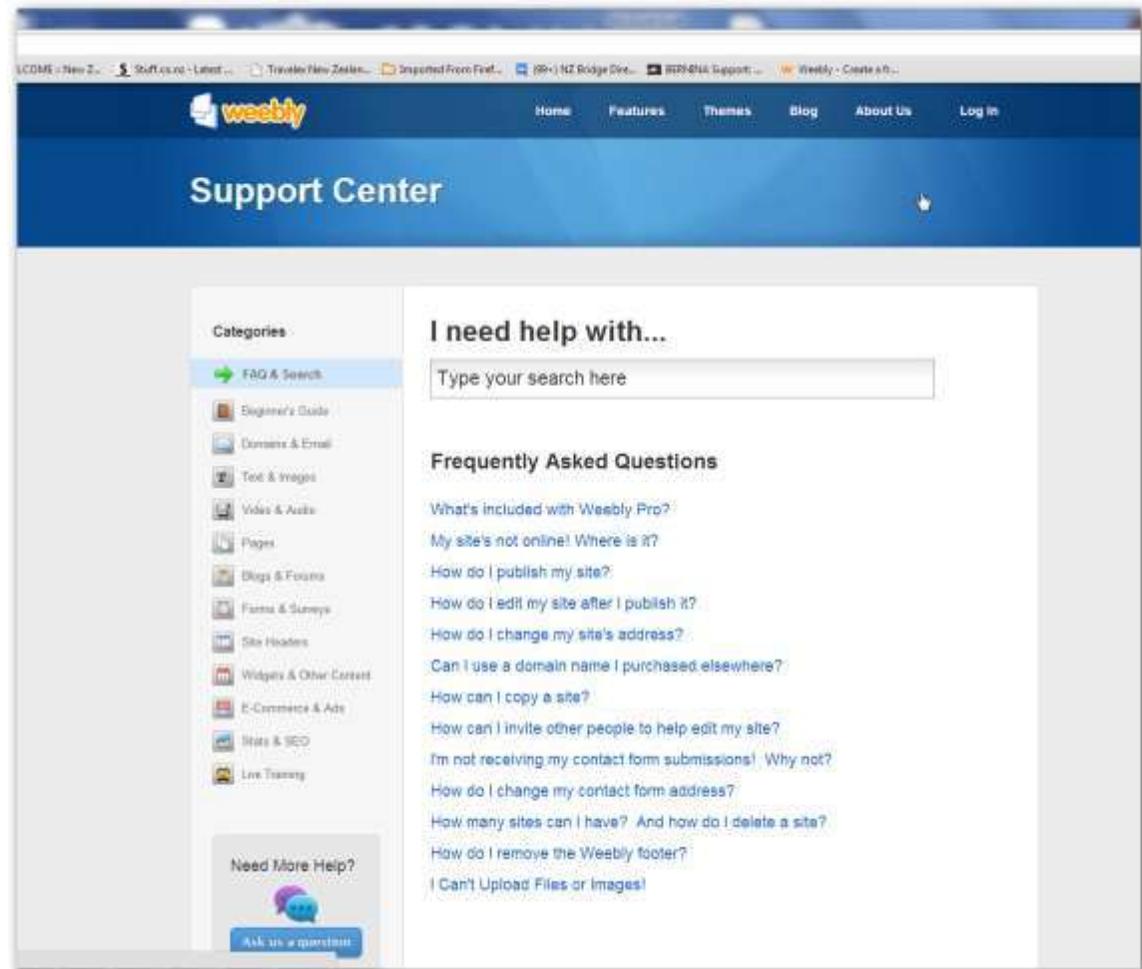
The Help button will be your most useful tool to begin with, so I will cover this first.

Weebly Help

The Weebly help articles are extensive, but each is fairly short and concise.

You can search for a specific topic, or scroll through the long list of categories to see what help is available.

Or you can email the Weebly Support team a question (see the “Ask Us a Question” button). But be warned – if you are not a “Pro” customer, you will not get much online help from them.

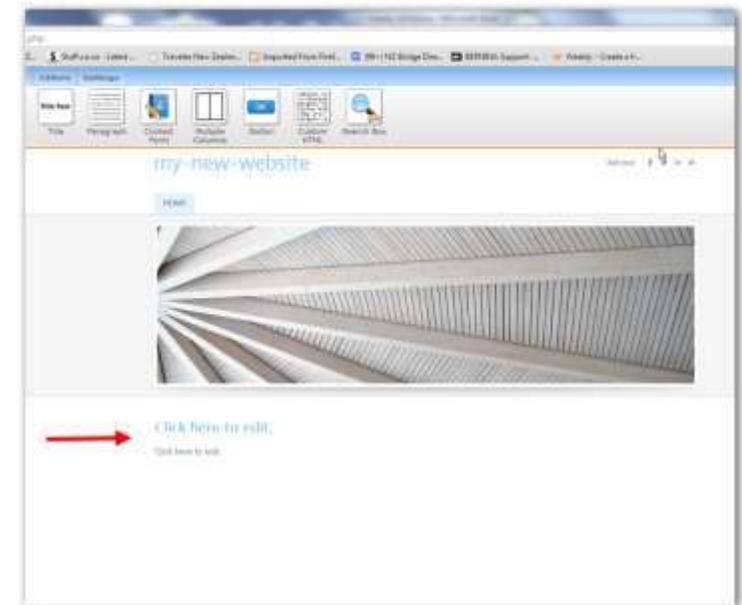
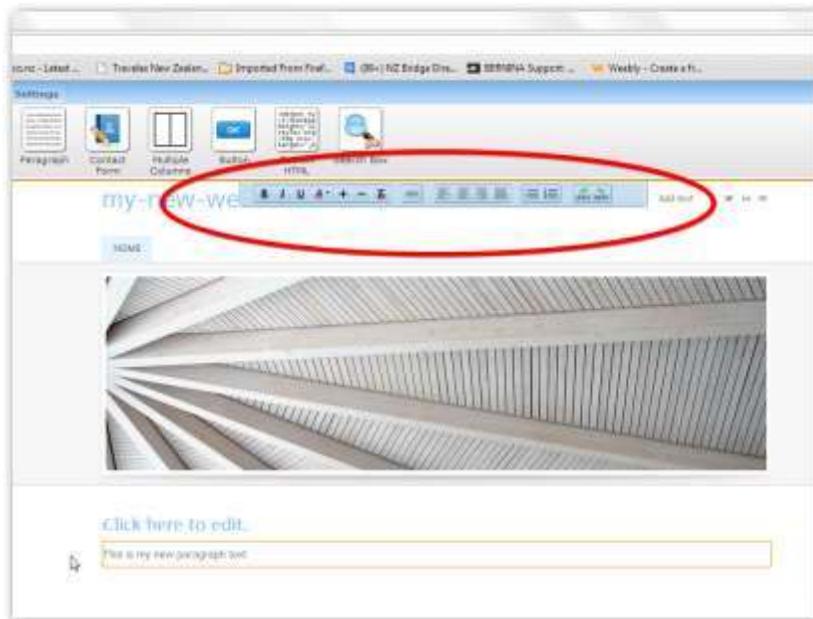


Weebly Elements

A Weebly website is built using elements, and this is where you can access them. The Elements are categorised into 4 ribbons – Basic, Multimedia, Revenue and More. To use an element, you click on the icon, hold down your left mouse button and drag the element onto your page.

So if you want to put text onto your page, you can select either the Paragraph or the Paragraph with Title element and drag it to the page.

Now you can click where it indicates to start typing your text, or you can copy and paste text from another website or from a document on your PC.



When you click on a text element, you will find a formatting bar which will allow you to make some choices about the look of your text.

If you put an element onto your page and change your mind about it, there is a delete button at the top of the element after you click on it.

I am not going to explain each element in detail because the Weebly Help does a much better job than I can. The fastest way you can learn is by experimenting with each of the elements.

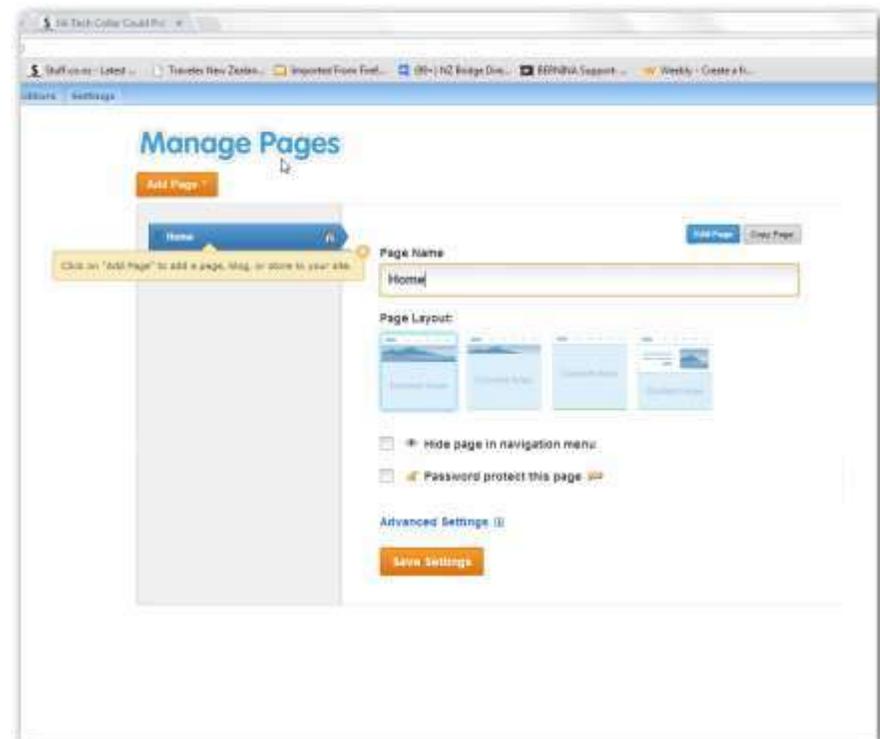
Weebly Pages

Use this function when you want to add or delete new pages.

Click Add Page to add a new page. If you have several pages, you can drag the new page to the position you want, including indenting it under an existing page.

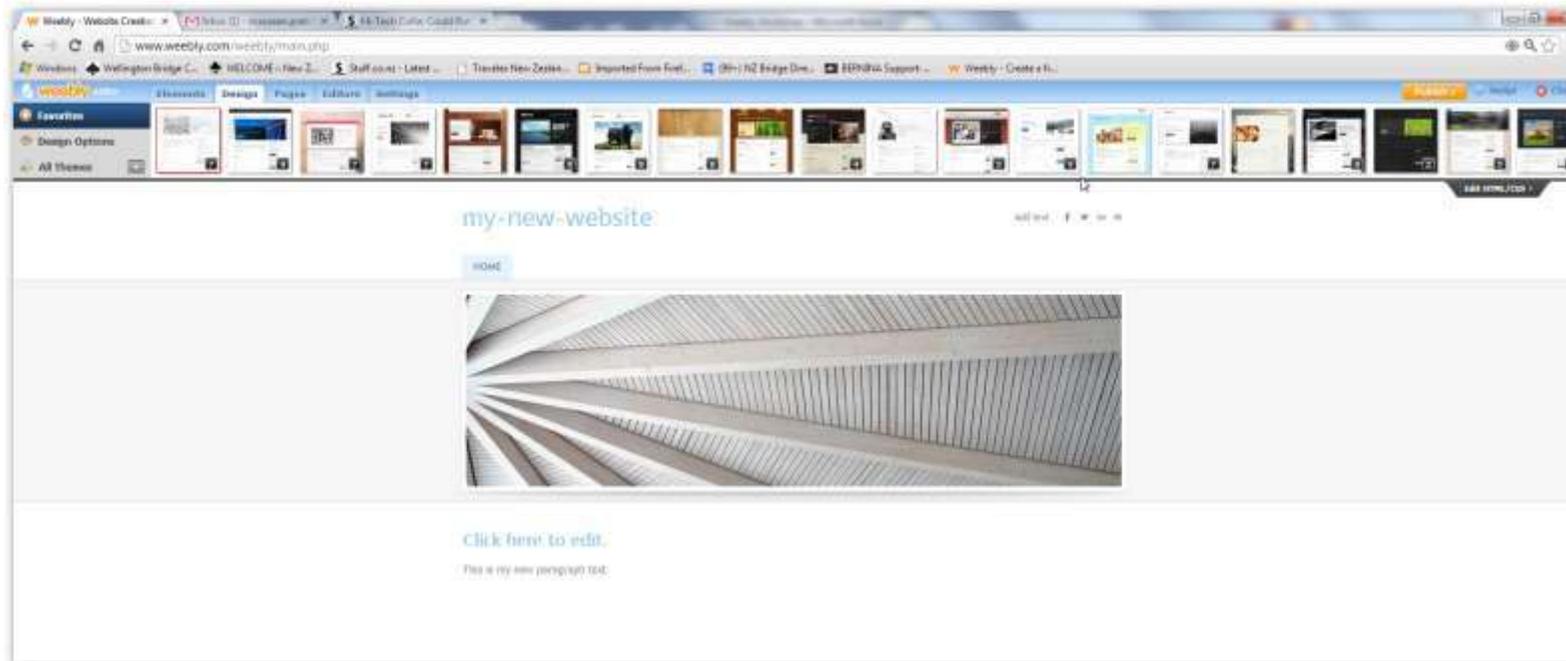
Weebly also gives you the choice of 4 page layout styles and this is where you can choose one of these.

Check out Weebly help for more detailed information on these and other features.



Weebly Design

This menu function gives you choices over the external look and feel of your website.



Across the top are a series of design schemes – Weebly has over 200 of these available. Clicking any one will completely change the look of your website.

Some of the design schemes have a menu bar which is horizontal and in some this is vertical.

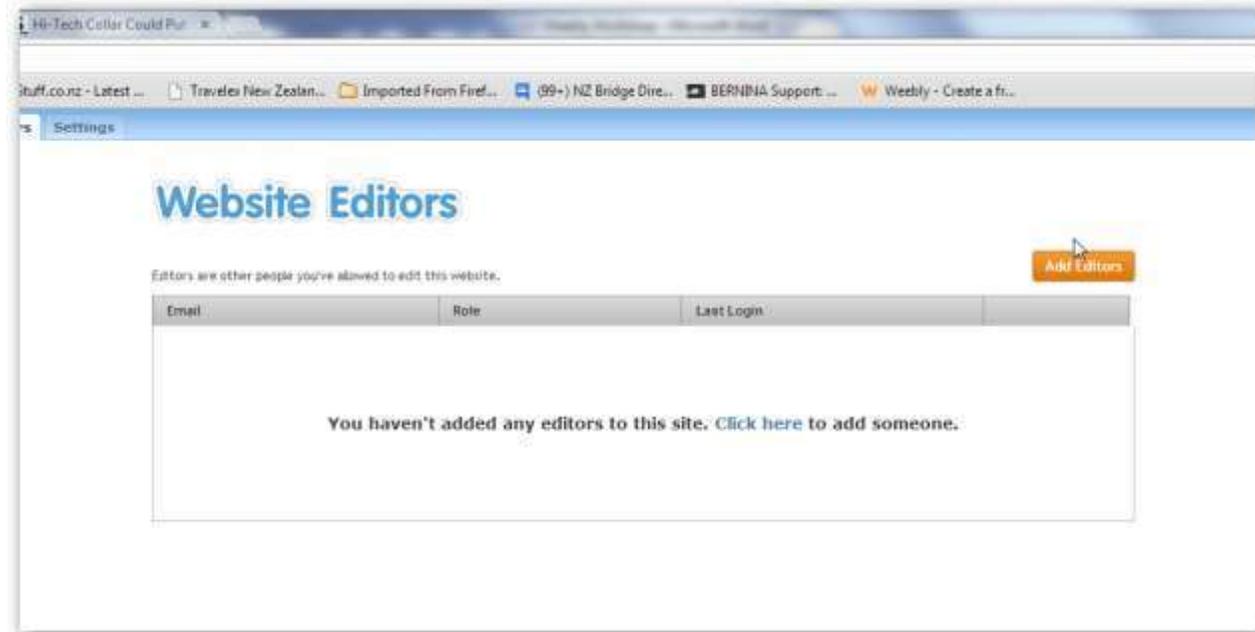
Many of the design schemes have options the user can change under Design Options.

There is no alternative to experimenting here to find the one that best suits your own needs and preferences.

Weebly Editors

Use this function to tell Weebly the email address of other people you will allow to edit your website.

They will get an email message letting them know they are now an editor.



Weebly Settings

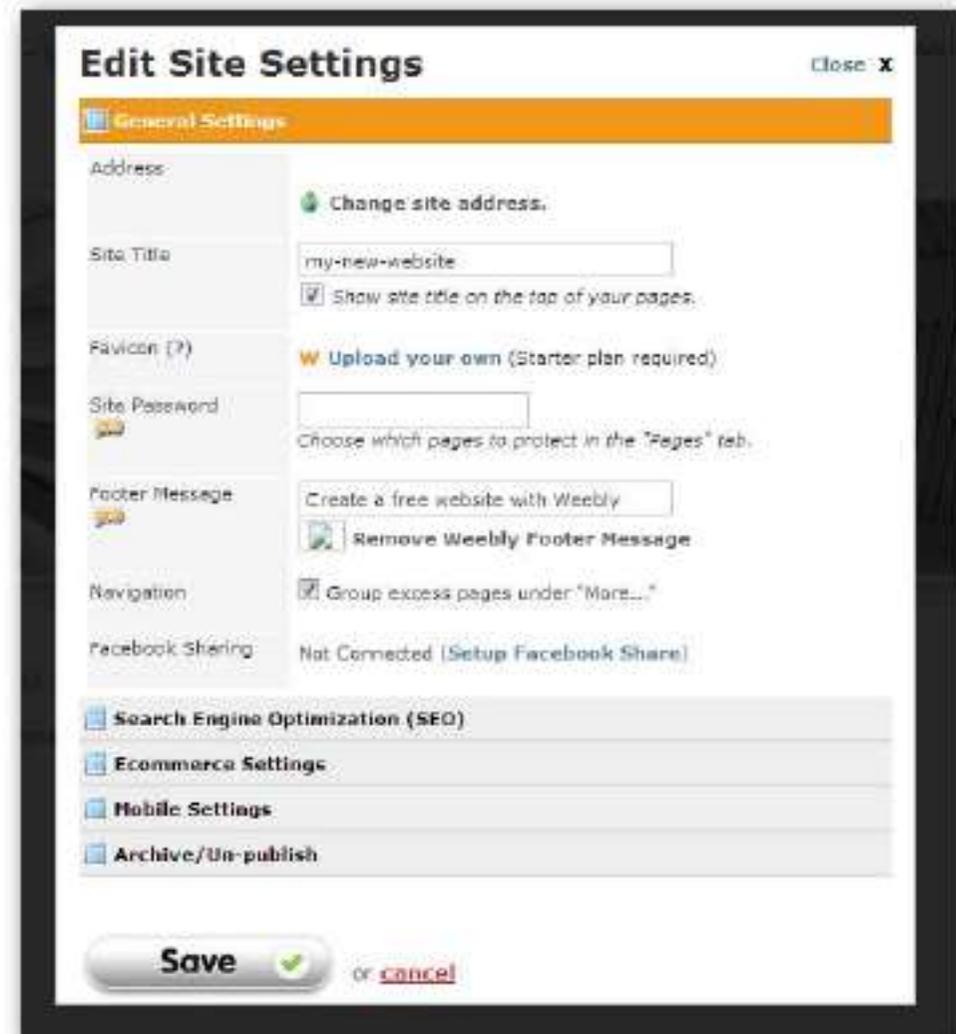
Use this function to set or change settings that apply to your whole website.

Some examples of the things you can do are:

- Change the name of you website
- Add/change a footer to every page
- Connect to Facebook
- Have Weebly construct from your website a layout more suitable to smartphones and other small screens

Don't forget to click the Save button when you are finished.

Again, Help has more information on these and other settings.



Making your website available to Others on the Internet

In Weebly terms, this is called Publishing and you do this by clicking the large orange Publish button.

When you publish, Weebly will display a window confirming it has been published. You can click on the link to your website (see the blue URL address) to check for yourself.

Any changes you make to your website will not be available to others until you publish.



The Extras – Weebly Pro

There are many reasons why you might want to sign-up for Weebly Pro. These include:

- **Weebly will be more inclined to answer any questions (by email) that you can't sort out through Help.**
- Some of the elements only work with a Pro account.
- When you nominate editors, with a Pro account you can limit them to nominated pages.
- Some of the elements have larger capacity limits (for example, you can upload larger pictures with a Pro account)
- If you are building forms on your website, you are restricted to 5 form fields in the free version.

Of course Weebly would very much like you to sign up for Pro, and you will receive several (all friendly) emails encouraging you to do this. In my experience, you should wait for a while to do this as you are likely to be offered a significant discount after a few weeks.