

Core Web Vitals Best Practices for WordPress (Child Theme + Plugins)

1. General Best Practices

- Use a reliable hosting provider with good server response time (TTFB).
- Enable HTTPS everywhere.
- Keep WordPress, themes, and plugins updated.

2. Theme & Child Theme Optimization

- Avoid bloated templates—write optimized custom code in your child theme.
- Load only the required CSS/JS for each template using conditional loading.
- Inline critical CSS and defer non-critical CSS/JS.

3. Plugin Optimization

- Use fewer, well-coded plugins (audit regularly).
- Disable features from plugins that you don't use.
- Lazy load plugin assets and defer heavy scripts.

4. Image & Media Optimization

- Use next-gen formats (WebP/AVIF).
- Set proper width/height attributes.
- Implement lazy loading for images, videos, and iframes.

5. Caching & CDN

- Use page caching plugins like WP Super Cache or W3 Total Cache.
- Use object caching with Redis or Memcached if possible.
- Leverage a CDN (Cloudflare, BunnyCDN, etc.) for static assets.

6. JavaScript & CSS Optimization

- Minify and combine CSS/JS where possible.
- Defer non-essential JS (`defer`/`async`).
- Eliminate render-blocking resources.

7. Fonts & Icons

- Host Google Fonts locally or preload them.
- Use `font-display: swap` for better CLS.
- Prefer SVG icons over icon fonts.

8. Database & Backend

- Optimize the database with WP-Optimize or similar tools.
- Remove post revisions, spam comments, and transients.
- Use efficient queries in custom templates/plugins.

9. Core Web Vitals Specific

- LCP (Largest Contentful Paint): Optimize hero images and above-the-fold content.
- FID (First Input Delay): Defer long JS tasks and reduce third-party scripts.
- CLS (Cumulative Layout Shift): Reserve space for ads, images, and embeds.

10. Testing & Monitoring

- Use Google PageSpeed Insights, Lighthouse, and GTmetrix.
- Monitor in Google Search Console (Core Web Vitals Report).
- Continuously optimize after theme/plugin updates.