

# “I want to write a blog-buster!”

Desperate to start your own blog but don't know how? Who better to ask than **Tommy Collison**, 17, author of the award-winning blog [www.TrustTommy.com](http://www.TrustTommy.com).



**There's been a meteoric rise** in online blogs in recent times. Every single day a whopping 340,774 blogs are updated on WordPress. People are sharing arty photos, discussing the latest Wii game or simply rambling on about how they'd improve secondary schools if they had the chance. Here's all you need to know to get yourself started.

## “WHAT ARE BLOGS?”

Blogs are a type of website. Anyone with an e-mail address and an internet connection can create one and they don't cost a cent. On your blog you write 'posts'. These posts can contain words, pictures, videos, songs or a mixture of all four. Any subject matter goes. No, really... anything! A quick search brings up blogs featuring old Irish photos, ghost stories, music reviews or videos of how to do impressive skateboard tricks.

*“Pick something you're really passionate about”*

## “WHY SHOULD I BLOG?”

It's hard to keep a blog going if it doesn't have a particular focus to it. Pick something you're really passionate about and base your blog around that. It's common knowledge that you write best on the subjects you're interested in. Other reasons to blog are:

- To keep memories – My

blog is full of pictures and descriptions of my experiences and the places I've visited. I love the fact that in five years time I'll look back on my blog and see what I was up to and what I was thinking.

- To practice – If it's your dream to become a journalist (it's mine), practicing writing is key. Want to become a video games reviewer? Then review as many games as possible. It's very impressive to show someone months and months of blogposts. It proves dedication and a passion for what you do. I've been lucky enough to write for The Sunday Times, The Sunday Business Post and Face Up thanks to the work I put into my own blog.
- To share – Blogs are a great way of keeping in touch. I have an aunt living in England, as well as two brothers in America. They all check my blog to catch up on family news.
- To make a name for yourself – Before he was famous Justin Bieber was busy posting home-made footage of himself singing cover songs. He made his

big break when Scooter Braun, a former marketing executive of So So Def, clicked on his YouTube videos. The rest is pop history.

- Closer to home, several bloggers have received book deals, including a blogging Granddad known as 'Head Rambles' and the fashion gurus at Beaut.ie whose book, Guide to Gorgeous, is out now.

## “How Should I Get Blogging?”

The most powerful and practical blogging platform is <http://WordPress.com>. Once you've set the blog up, you can link it to your Facebook or Twitter accounts. Invite family and friends to read it and leave comments, then watch it grow. A blog works best when writing it doesn't feel like a chore, so above all, enjoy yourself!

## “Will Anyone Read Me?”

They will if you give them what they want. I created my own blog to keep my brother updated with news of the family after he moved to America to

go to college. As time passed, I mixed in TV reviews, videos of me practicing the drums and my views on school, travel and so on. I noticed that blog readers (who'd discovered my blog via my Facebook and Twitter profiles) liked some posts more than others, so I used their responses to gauge what sort of things I should write. I've now managed to grow my blog readership into the thousands.

## “How Do I Stay Safe?”

Privacy is a big concern for new bloggers. My suggestion is not to use your name – my first blog was called 'The Irish Blog of News'. It's ok to mention the town you live in but don't reveal your address or phone number. Basically, don't write anything that could personally identify you to bad people. Talking about a great day you had with your cousin Darragh in Lahinch is fine, but it becomes risky to say that you hung out on Golf Street, Lahinch around 2pm, like you do every Saturday.



Common sense will save you from 99.99% of potential problems.

Tommy has been writing his blog for three years now. Visit it at [www.TrustTommy.com](http://www.TrustTommy.com).

## Trust Tommy



### Flying

August 1st, 2011  
I get no kick in a plane, flying too high with some guy in the sky is my idea of nothing to do.  
↳ Get a Kick Out of You', Cole Porter  
It's not my idea, though! In fact, I think it sounds rather fun!  
Last week, when I was in Palo Alto, Patrick (who has a private pilot's license) took me flying around San Francisco. It's certainly worth away from flying commercial.

Some pictures:



Readying the Diamond DA-40 we'd be taking up.



Flying between Palo Alto and San Francisco. The Golden Gate Bridge was shrouded in fog but we got some great views of the city.

## TOMMY'S TOP 5 BLOGS



<http://bygonebureau.com/>



<http://www.boingboing.net/>



<http://dervalanet.net/>



<http://www.marco.org/>



<http://icedcoffee.ie/>