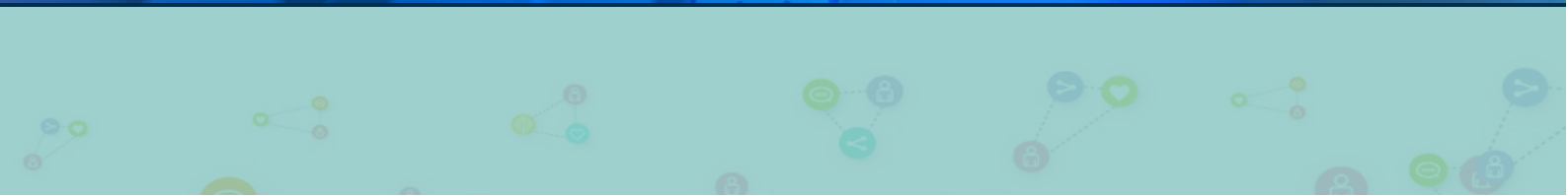# MAXFoundry

Best Practices for Social Share & Icons

Step by Step on How to Create Social Share & Icons

Introduction

You've made the smart choice to start integrating social media into your WordPress website. But...*now what?*

You know you want to add some type of "social buttons" to your site...but you might not be sure what buttons you should add, where you should put them and, oh yeah, *how to actually add buttons in the first place.*

We wrote this guide to help!

First, you'll learn the difference between social *share* buttons and social *follow* buttons. Then, we'll show you how to create your very own WordPress social share buttons and, *most importantly*, how to use those buttons effectively.

Social Share Buttons vs Follow Buttons

What's The Difference?

There are two types of social buttons you can use on your WordPress site:

Social share buttons - when a user clicks the button, they share your content *on their own profile*. Usually, this content is the specific post or page a visitor is reading. For example, sharing a post on their Facebook wall or writing a Tweet on their profile.

Follow buttons - when a user clicks the button, they *follow your social media account*. For example, liking your Facebook page or following you on Twitter.

Both types of buttons are valuable and have a place on your site. Share buttons directly help you drive more traffic from social media by getting you access to new audiences, while follow buttons help you build your own social following.

In this guide, though, we're specifically going to focus on helping you create awesome, click-attracting **share buttons**.

How To Create Gorgeous WordPress Share Buttons With MaxButtons

WordPress Social Share Buttons is a free extension for the similarly free MaxButtons plugin. To use it, you'll need **both** free plugins installed at your WordPress site.

Once you have both plugins installed, you can follow the guide below to learn how to create social share buttons with WordPress Social Share Buttons. But this isn't *just* a how-to guide - we'll also sprinkle in some data-backed tips to help you configure your buttons in the most effective way possible.
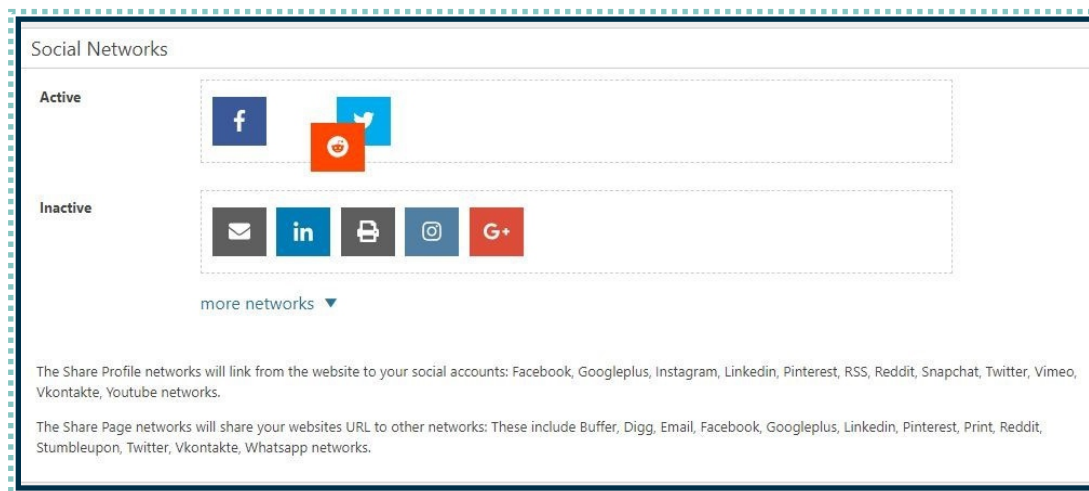
Step 1

# Choose Which Social Networks To Include

The first decision you can make is **which social networks to display as part of your share buttons.**

To add new networks or remove existing networks, you just drag and drop the icons. You can also use drag and drop to choose the order for how your buttons are arranged:


So which social networks should you feature on your site?

As you'd probably expect, data from TrackMaven shows that Facebook and Twitter tend to significantly outperform other networks on *most* sites:
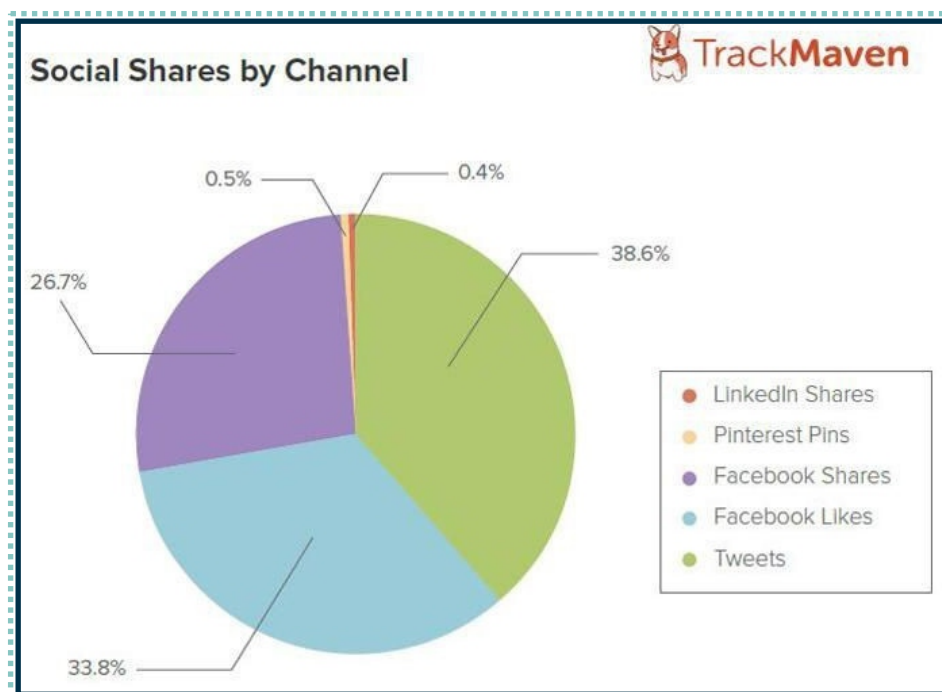
So it follows that putting Facebook and Twitter as numbers one and two on your list is usually a good option.

But if you want to drill-down and see which networks do best *for your specific site*, you can use [the free version of BuzzSumo](#) to analyze where users share your content the most. Just enter your site's URL in the search box and click **Search:**
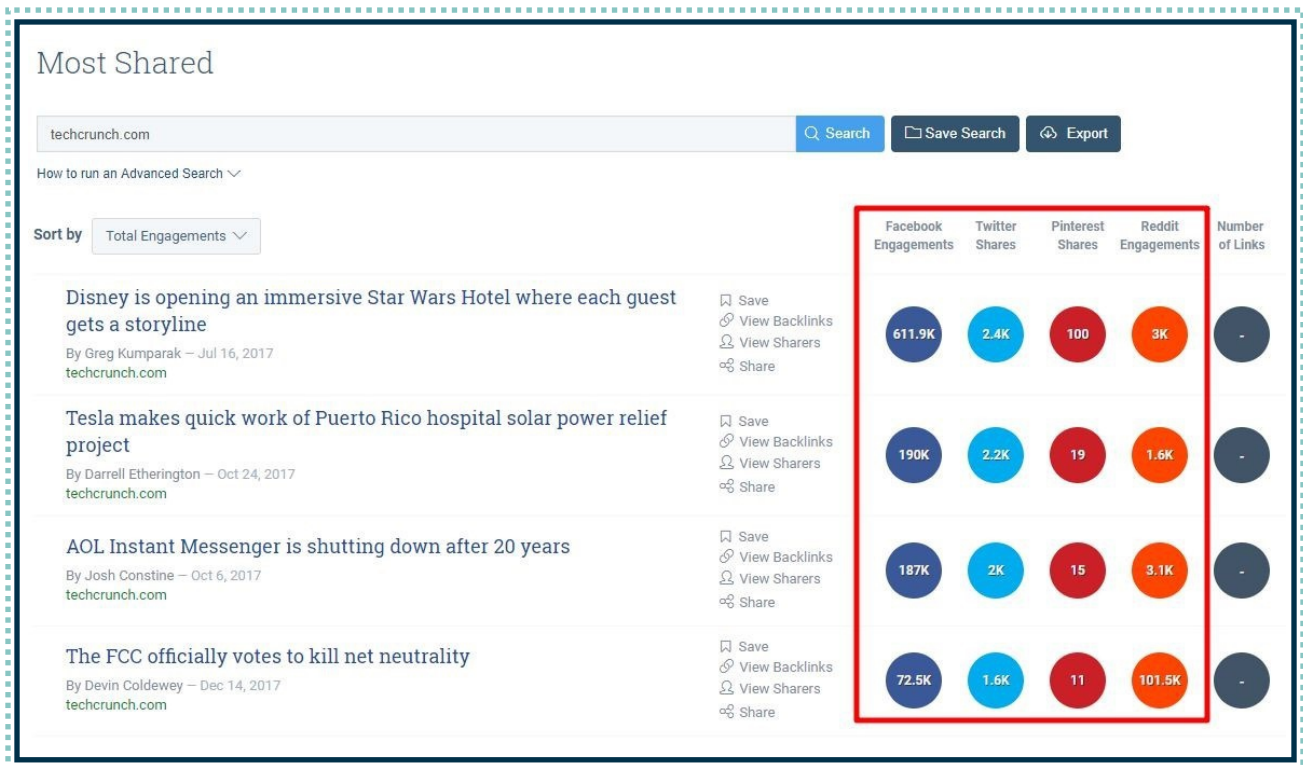
If you see that your content does especially well on, say, Reddit, that would be a good reason to make sure you have a Reddit share button in a prominent position on your site.

Step 2

Choose Your Share Buttons' Position

Once you've chosen which networks you want to use, the next step is to choose the position of your share buttons.

WordPress Social Share Buttons lets you choose different positions depending on the type of content. You can configure separate options for your:

- Homepage

- Pages

- Posts

- Archives and Categories

For each location, you can choose between two core positions:

- **Content** - lets you display your share buttons at the top or bottom of your post (or both).

- **Float** - lets you "float" your icons beside your content. Typically, you'll see people use this position to make share buttons float alongside the content.

You can also just disable share buttons for certain types of content by using the **Off** option. For example, you might not want share buttons on your homepage:

There's no hard rule about the best position for your buttons, and you'll find plenty of successful sites placing them in all kinds of different positions.

In *general*, though, you want to make your buttons as visible as possible, which usually means having at least one set at the top or in a floating bar.

It might seem odd to show share buttons before your visitor has a chance to read the entire article, but there is a significant percentage of [people who will share articles without completely reading them](), so making your share buttons visible for those people is a great idea to get more shares.

How To Configure Your Buttons' Position(s)

To set your buttons' placement, click on the icon for the location where you want to place your buttons. Then, you can click on the **Options** button to further configure that placement:
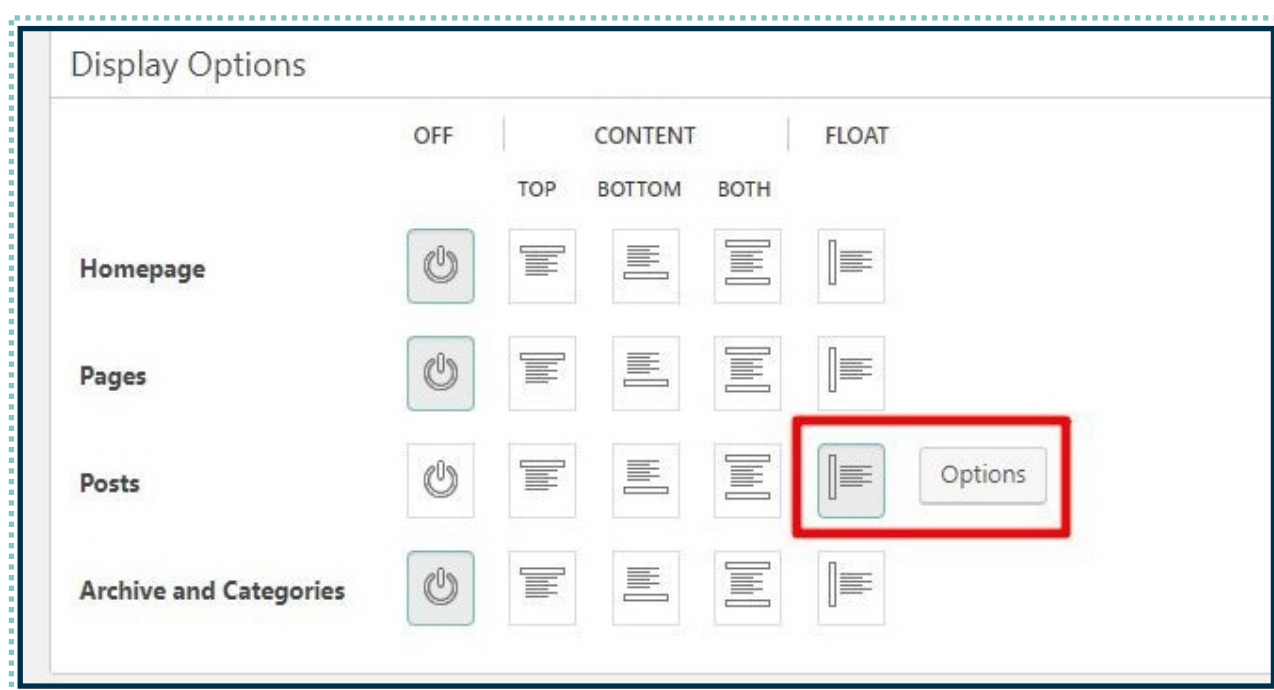
When you click on **Options,** it will let you choose your share buttons'...

- **Orientation** - you can choose between vertical and horizontal.

- **Position** - *only applies to Float* - lets you choose what part of the screen to "float" your buttons. Usually, you'll want to choose the middle option on either the right or left side.

- **Position fixed** - *only applies to Float* - when turned on, your buttons will "stick" to that part of the screen even if a visitor scrolls.

- **Share URL setting** - lets you control which URL is shared when a visitor clicks on that button.

Options

Orientation of the buttons

Position

Position fixed

Share URL setting   Auto ▼

Settings below only apply when Share URL is set to Custom URL
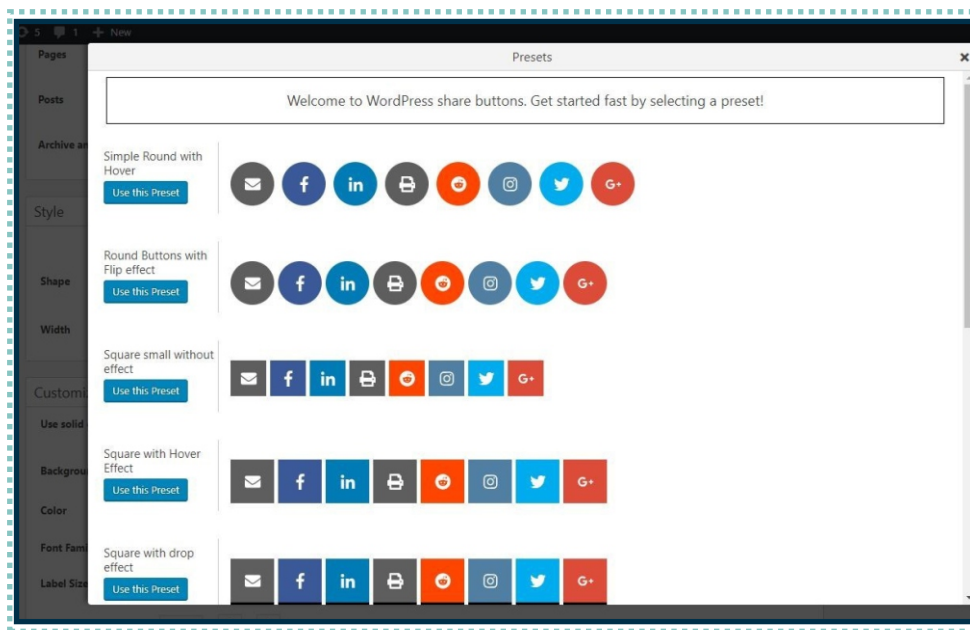
Custom URL

Custom Title

Done

Step 3

Style And Customize Your Buttons

Next, you can choose from the preset styles and then further configure your buttons.

There's no right or wrong here - it's just whatever style best fits your site. To access the presets, click the **SELECT PRESET** button in the **Style** section:

Once you've selected a preset, you can use the **Style** and **Customization** sections to further customize your share buttons:
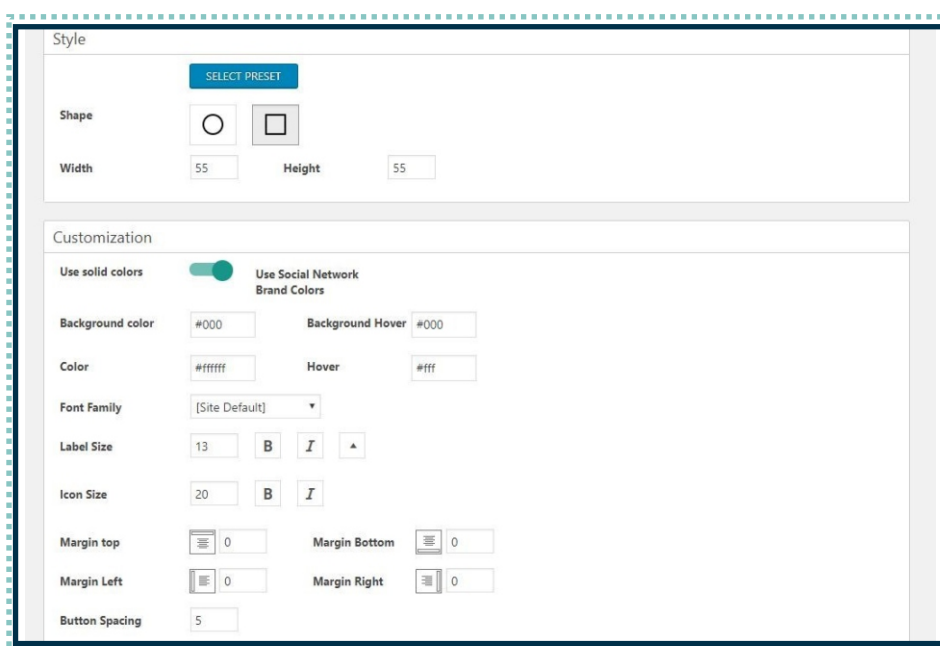
Step 4

Consider Displaying Social Share Counts

A "share count" is the number of times your content has been shared on a **specific** network or the aggregate number of shares across **all the networks** you have share buttons for.

WordPress Social Share Buttons lets you display both individual and total share counts. Or, you can also just choose one of the two.
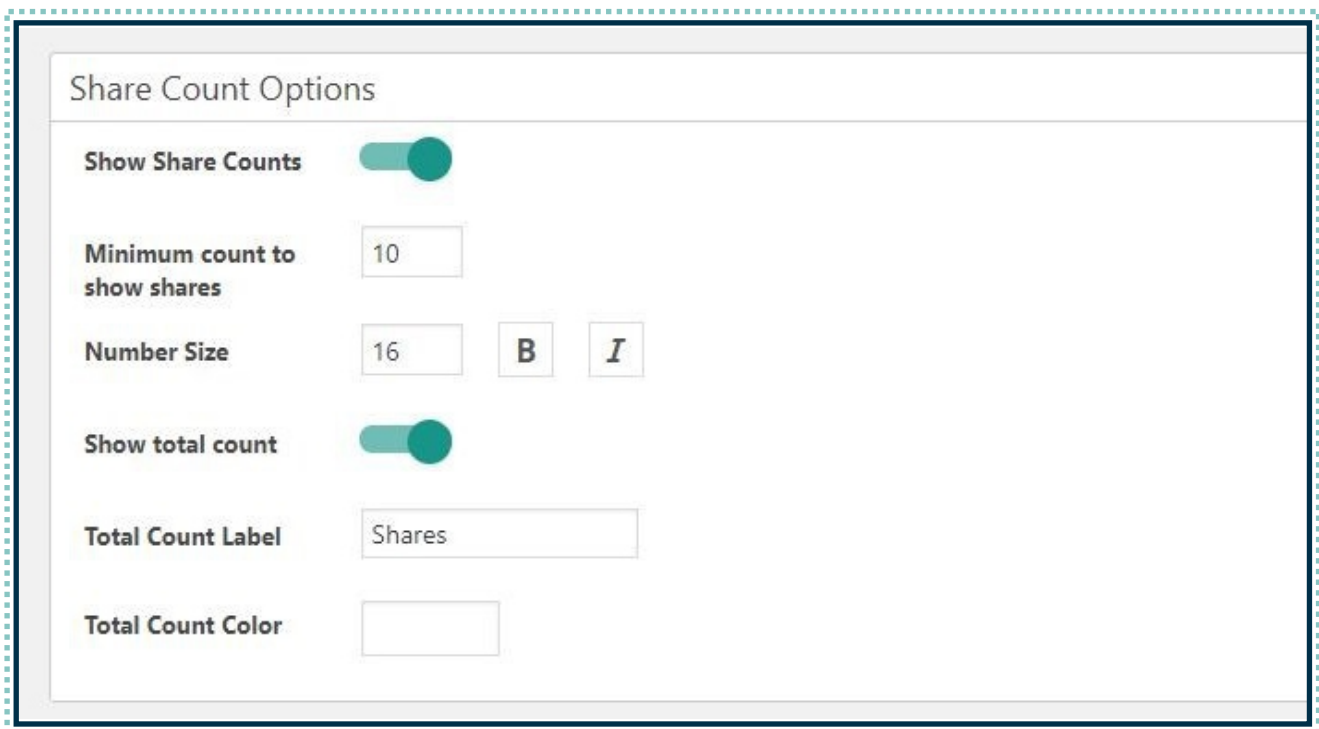
If your content regularly gets shared on social media, displaying share counts is a great way to show **positive social proof** for your content.

Think about it...if a new visitor sees that hundreds or thousands of people already found your content awesome enough to share, that gives that visitor a pretty good indicator that they should keep reading, right?

Of course, that only works if you have shares, which is why WordPress Social Share Buttons also lets you specify a **Minimum count to show shares.**

To avoid the awkward situation where you have zero shares (e.g. a brand new post), WordPress Social Share Buttons will wait until this number is reached to start displaying your share counts.

To configure how share counts function, you can use the **Share Count Options** section:

Use Share Buttons...But Also Build A Cohesive Social Media Strategy

At this point, you should have a set of great-looking, share-enticing buttons at your site.

But effectively using share buttons is only part of creating a complete social media strategy.

If you want to learn more about social media strategy, we recommend these three great posts to continue learning:

- [Growing a Social Following from Nothing: My Social Media Strategy](#)

- [25 Expert Social Media Growth Strategies](#)

- [How to Automate Social Media: Build a Content Cannon And Load It with Social Ammo](#)

And for even more flexibility with your share buttons - like more social networks and the ability to add share buttons to WordPress custom post types - consider [upgrading to MaxButtons Pro today.](#)