

Creating a simple website to showcase a video or photography portfolio can be straightforward and affordable for college students. Here's a step-by-step summary on how to do it, along with recommendations for the best and cheapest platforms to host their work.

### 1. Choose a Website Builder

Website builders allow students to create professional-looking portfolios without coding skills. Here are some of the best free and affordable options:

- **Wix:** A very intuitive drag-and-drop builder with free plans available. However, the free plan includes Wix ads and a Wix-branded domain. Paid plans start around \$16/month to remove ads and use a custom domain.
- **WordPress.com:** Offers free and low-cost plans. WordPress is flexible, with many customizable templates ideal for video and photography portfolios. Paid plans start at \$4/month.
- **Squarespace:** More stylish templates and excellent for photographers and videographers. Prices start at \$16/month, with a 14-day free trial.
- **Weebly:** Easy-to-use and offers free plans, though like Wix, free versions come with ads. Paid plans start at \$6/month.
- **Google Sites:** Completely free but very basic. Great for simple portfolios, but less customization compared to the above options.

### 2. Pick a Domain Name

For a professional portfolio, using a custom domain is ideal (e.g., *yourname.com*). Some platforms (like Wix or WordPress) offer domain registration with their premium plans, but students can also purchase domains separately on sites like:

- **Google Domains:** Starts at \$12/year.
- **Namecheap:** Domains often start as low as \$9/year.

### 3. Select a Template/Theme

Choose a template that emphasizes visuals. Most website builders have templates specifically designed for photographers or videographers. Look for:

- Clean, minimalist designs that make images and videos stand out.
- Full-width galleries or video backgrounds.
- Easy navigation for viewers.

### 4. Upload Portfolio Content

- **Photography:** Upload high-quality images, keeping in mind file size to avoid slow loading times.
- **Video:** Platforms like Vimeo and YouTube allow you to embed videos directly onto your site, saving space and reducing loading times.

Make sure to categorize your work (e.g., nature photography, short films, etc.) for easy navigation.

## 5. Optimize for Mobile and SEO

Ensure that your site is mobile-friendly since many visitors will view your portfolio on phones. Website builders typically offer mobile previews.

To help your site appear in search results, add relevant keywords, captions, and descriptions to your work. For instance, include your name, the type of work, and location in image titles and video descriptions.

## 6. Publish and Share

Once your site is ready, publish it and share it across social media platforms, LinkedIn, or email to showcase your portfolio to potential clients or employers.

### Cheapest Hosting Options:

- **Free Options:** Wix, WordPress.com, and Weebly offer free hosting with subdomains (e.g., *yourname.wixsite.com*).
- **Low-cost Options:** Hosting on WordPress.com with a custom domain is one of the cheapest options, starting at \$4/month, or Wix starting at \$16/month with full branding control.

For students, starting with a free plan is often the most practical, and upgrading later to a custom domain and premium features when necessary.