Shopify vs WooCommerce
Comparison Sheet

Which Platform Fits Better for Your Business?

Section 1: Start Here – Platform Fit, Costs and Direction

Purpose of This Comparison Sheet

Shopify and WooCommerce can both be used to build professional ecommerce stores, but they work very differently.

Shopify is a hosted ecommerce platform with a more structured and managed setup.

WooCommerce is ecommerce built on WordPress and usually gives you more technical control and flexibility.

This comparison sheet is designed to help you understand the main differences between the two platforms and identify which working style may fit your business better.

This is not a price calculator.

Detailed cost awareness and expense comparison will be covered separately in the next lessons.

How to Use This Sheet

Read each comparison area carefully.

For each section, review the Shopify and WooCommerce differences.

Then mark how important that area is to your business:

☐ High Priority ☐ Medium Priority ☐ Low Priority

You can also add your own notes.

At the end, record which platform currently appears to fit your priorities better.

1 Platform Type

SHOPIFY

- Hosted ecommerce platform
- Hosting is included within the platform
- Core ecommerce infrastructure is managed for you
- The platform controls much of the technical environment
- Designed specifically for ecommerce

WOOCOMMERCE

- Ecommerce system built on WordPress
- Requires your own hosting setup
- You manage more of the technical environment
- Greater flexibility over hosting, plugins and website configuration
- Built on a broader website/content platform

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

2 Ease of Setup and Daily Management

SHOPIFY

- Usually easier for beginners to start
- Admin, checkout and order flow are already structured
- Product and order management is more standardised
- Fewer technical decisions during basic setup

WOOCOMMERCE

- Setup depends more on hosting, theme and plugin choices
- WordPress users may find the system familiar
- More setup decisions are usually required
- Daily management may depend on how well the website has been configured

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

3 Hosting and Technical Responsibility

SHOPIFY

- Hosting is handled by Shopify
- Core platform security is managed by Shopify
- Platform updates are handled within the hosted environment
- Less responsibility for server-level maintenance

WOOCOMMERCE

- You choose and manage hosting
- Website security depends partly on your setup
- WordPress, plugins and themes require maintenance
- You have more responsibility for technical performance and updates

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

4 Control and Customisation

SHOPIFY

- Strong structured ecommerce system
- Themes and apps can extend functionality
- Some advanced customisation may require Liquid or specialist help
- Server and database access is limited compared with self-hosted platforms
- The platform has defined boundaries

WOOCOMMERCE

- Greater access to hosting, files, plugins and code
- More freedom to customise website behaviour
- Custom workflows can often be planned more openly
- Greater flexibility also means greater technical responsibility

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

5 Content and Blogging

SHOPIFY

- Supports pages and blogging
- Works well when ecommerce is the main focus
- Suitable for standard content needs around a store
- Content-heavy businesses may need more planning

WOOCOMMERCE

- Built on WordPress
- Strong flexibility for blogging and publishing
- Often more suitable when content is central to the business
- Easier to build large content structures around ecommerce

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

6 SEO Flexibility

SHOPIFY

- Includes essential ecommerce SEO features
- Product, collection and page SEO can be managed
- Suitable for standard ecommerce SEO requirements
- Some technical areas are controlled by the platform

WOOCOMMERCE

- Benefits from WordPress SEO flexibility
- Greater control over content structure and technical configuration
- Often preferred for content-heavy or SEO-heavy websites
- SEO results still depend on implementation quality

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

7 Apps, Plugins and Feature Expansion

SHOPIFY

- Uses apps to add extra features
- Many ecommerce-focused apps are available
- Apps may be free, paid or subscription-based
- Too many apps can increase cost and complexity

WOOCOMMERCE

- Uses WordPress plugins to extend features
- Large plugin ecosystem
- Plugins can provide significant flexibility
- Too many plugins can also create compatibility and maintenance issues

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

8 Maintenance Responsibility

SHOPIFY

- Less technical maintenance for the store owner
- Hosting and core platform systems are managed
- Good fit for learners who want to focus more on products and operations

WOOCOMMERCE

- More responsibility for updates, security, hosting and compatibility
- Maintenance quality depends on the website setup
- Better suited to users who are comfortable managing technical tasks or have support available

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

9 Standard Ecommerce Store Fit

SHOPIFY MAY FIT BETTER WHEN:

- Ecommerce is the main goal
- You want easier store management
- You prefer a managed platform
- You want less technical maintenance
- You are building a standard product store
- You prefer a more structured ecommerce system

WOOCOMMERCE MAY FIT BETTER WHEN:

- WordPress or content is central to the business
- You need deeper customisation
- You want more hosting-level control
- You are comfortable managing plugins and maintenance
- You have specialised requirements that benefit from more technical flexibility

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

10 Existing Website or Store

SHOPIFY

- Suitable for a fresh ecommerce build
- Existing stores may require migration planning
- Content, products, customer data and SEO structure may need to be reviewed before moving

WOOCOMMERCE

- May be a natural continuation if you already use WordPress
- Existing WooCommerce stores can remain within the same ecosystem
- Existing custom WordPress functionality may be easier to retain

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

11 Special or Custom Business Requirements

SHOPIFY

- Standard ecommerce requirements are usually straightforward
- Apps may handle many additional features
- Complex workflows may require custom development or expert support
- Some platform limitations can affect highly specialised requirements

WOOCOMMERCE

- Often provides more freedom for custom workflows
- Plugins and custom development can provide deeper flexibility
- Complex customisation can still require expert support
- More flexibility can also create more setup and maintenance responsibility

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

12 Long-Term Operating Style

SHOPIFY MAY SUIT YOU IF:

- You prefer a structured platform
- You want less technical responsibility
- You want to manage products, customers and orders without managing much of the infrastructure
- You are comfortable working within platform rules

WOOCOMMERCE MAY SUIT YOU IF:

- You prefer greater control
- You are comfortable managing a more technical setup
- You want deeper flexibility over your website
- You want greater ownership of hosting and technical configuration

MY PRIORITY

☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My notes:

Important Cost Note

Do not make your decision based only on the starting price of either platform.

Shopify and WooCommerce have different cost structures.

The next lessons will separately help you understand:

- Shopify cost categories
- Fixed, optional and variable costs
- App and plugin costs
- Hosting and platform costs
- Payment and shipping expenses
- Monthly and yearly expense comparison

Use this comparison sheet mainly for platform fit, working style, control and operational preference.

Final Comparison

Now review the sections you marked as HIGH PRIORITY.

For each important area, ask:

Which platform appears to match this requirement better?

MY TOP 3 PLATFORM PRIORITIES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

MY CURRENT LEANING

- ☐ Shopify
- ☐ WooCommerce
- ☐ Either platform could work
- ☐ I am still unsure

WHY AM I LEANING THIS WAY?

_____

_____

_____

THE 3 BIGGEST REASONS FOR MY CURRENT CHOICE

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ONE AREA I STILL NEED TO INVESTIGATE

_____

_____

Final Reminder

There is no single platform that is automatically better for every business.

Shopify generally provides a more managed and structured ecommerce environment.

WooCommerce generally provides greater technical control and flexibility through WordPress.

The better option is the one that fits your business model, operating style, technical comfort and long-term requirements.

Do not make your final decision based only on popularity or starting price.

Next Step

Continue to:

UNDERSTANDING SHOPIFY COSTS BEFORE YOU START

In the next lesson, you will move from platform fit and comparison into cost awareness.

You will learn the different types of costs that can be involved in running a Shopify store before using the detailed Shopify vs WooCommerce expense calculator later in Section 1.