

Website Basics — How To Obtain a Domain Name

Intro: What is a Domain Name

A domain name is an address on the world wide web. It commonly starts with 'www.' and typically ends with '.com', '.ca' etc. For example, the domain name for this website is *www.canadiancraftsfederation.ca*. It is a user friendly way for web users to find your website. The user types your domain name into the address or location line in their browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator). When they hit the 'return' key on their keyboard the browser (if connected to the internet) then locates the website with that unique domain name on the world wide web and displays it in the user's browser.

It is a unique name which a person / company / institution can lease (sometimes referred to as parking) for an agreed amount of time. You lease a domain name from a domain name registrar.

TIP: You can usually omit the 'www.' when typing in a domain name into the address/location line in your browser and you will still be able to access the address you want. For example, *canadiancraftsfederation.ca* will take you to the same page as *www.canadiancraftsfederation.ca*.

First Step: Locate a Domain Name Registrar

In a browser connected to the internet locate a domain name registrar. A good option here in Canada is a site called *www.easyhosting.com* which is owned by Look Communications. They register domain names inexpensively and allow you to manage your domain name easily.

Second Step: Choose a Name

Choose a name that represent you or your company or product. Domain names allow any mix of upper and lower case is allowed, as long as it's before the first single forward slash "/". All these are allowable:

<http://www.andrewgoss.com/>
<http://WWW.ANDREWGROSS.COM/>
<http://www.AndrewGoss.com/>

Spaces or symbols are not allowed. You can use a hyphen. The name can be any length you want. Keep in mind, you will have to live with the name and people have to type it into their browsers address/location line — simple is best. Dot com (whatever.com) names are the most common on the internet. Some browsers default to .com if nothing is typed in after a name. Other typical name endings are .ca, .net, .org. Many more are being developed for example .name but it is probably best to stick to the familiar endings at the present time.

Third Step: Check for Availability

Follow the instructions on the domain registrar's site to check whether the name you chose is available.

Fourth Step: Reserve and Pay for Your Domain Name

Follow the instructions on the domain registrar's site to reserve your name and pay for it.

TIP: Make a note of the password and user ID you choose or is given to you. It is very IMPORTANT when you decide to manage or modify the records associated with your domain name.

Conclusion: Next Steps

You now have a domain name. However, before anybody can come and visit you on the web you must build a website and upload it to a central computer (a server) connected to the internet. Please access other tutorials