



## inspiring, creative and personalized websites

### Tips for Selecting a Domain Name

So, you're ready to start your own website. Picking a domain name can be exciting, but it can also be pretty difficult when so many of the best .com domains have already been taken. How do you come up with one that's creative and engaging? We've rounded up five key things to remember when searching for a domain to help you create, and *find*, something memorable.

#### 1. Be creative

There are over 1 billion registered websites out there, so your chances of nabbing your dream .com URL are pretty slim. That's all the more reason to think outside the box when picking your name. While most sites tend to use generic domain extensions — .ca (in Canada) .com, .org, .net — there are actually *hundreds* of brand new domain names out there, featuring everything from .pizza to .pet to .blackfriday. Early adopters have been quick to snatch these up, knowing that these unconventional domains will become increasingly popular.

The International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers ([ICANN](#)) has on their website a handy [WHOIS](#) lookup engine that you can use to see if the domain you want to use is available. You can also find some interesting domain options that might be helpful using this [search engine](#) which is organized by interest area.

#### 2. ...but not too creative.

It may be tempting to try to copy the success of trendy domains like Tumblr and Flickr when looking for the perfect domain name, but using deliberate misspellings and slang can actually become an obstacle for those trying to find your website. A good rule of thumb is this: If you can tell someone the name of your website without having to spell it out to them, you've got a winner. If you're still on the fence, don't be afraid to double-check with friends or clients to see if they have trouble figuring out how to type your site into a web browser.

#### 3. Have a sense of humour...

Once you get used to the sheer amount of variety at your fingertips when picking a URL for your site, you can start to have a lot of fun with it. [Domains in the Wild](#) is a great source of inspiration for clever and catchy domain names for everything from podcasts to musicals to golf communities. Some good examples of clever domain names include [ma.tt](#), the personal blog of WordPress creator Matt Mullenweg, and [whathappensin.vegas](#), Las Vegas's official tourism site.

#### 4. ...but think it through.

For every clever domain name out there, there's an equally unfortunate one that will make your clients cringe and turn your company into the unintentional laughingstock of the Internet. When you're picking your URL, make sure to triple-check it for any unintentional double entendres or potentially inappropriate interpretations. Some particularly cringe-worthy examples include [penisland.net](#) — that's supposed to be Pen Island — and [oldmanshaven.com](#), otherwise known as Old Man's Haven, a site for cabin rentals.

#### 5. Keep it short, simple, and sweet.

At the end of the day, you want people to come to your site for your content and not just for your fancy domain name. That's why it's important to choose a domain that's as short, simple, and sweet as possible. Even though your domain name can actually include up to 253 characters, the most popular sites tend to be around eight characters

total — think Facebook, Google, and Twitter. Shorter site names are more memorable and easier to type, meaning that your site is more likely to receive more traffic and will be easier to spread through word-of-mouth. For reference, The Next Web [compiled a list of the most expensive domain names of all time](#) — notice a pattern?

A simple and straightforward URL will do you plenty of favours in the long run, and could make the difference between a good domain name and a great one.

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*- source unknown... from somewhere on the Internet*