



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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This set of FAQs reflects questions ICANN has received from various different sources, including [questions@icann.org](mailto:questions@icann.org). This page will be periodically updated.

Old FAQs and answers can be found on the [FAQ Archive page](#).

### Domain Name Registration Questions:

A very helpful FAQ on domain name registrations has been posted on the InterNIC site: [InterNIC Frequently Asked Questions](#). For reference, we reproduce a few of the most commonly asked questions and answers:

#### **What is a domain name?**

Domain names are the familiar, easy to remember names for computers on the Internet (such as [internic.net](#)). They correspond to a series of numbers (called Internet Protocol numbers) that serve as routing addresses on the Internet. Domain names are used generally as a convenient way of locating information and reaching others on the Internet.

#### **What does it mean to "register" a domain name?**

The Internet domain name system (DNS) consists of a directory, organized hierarchically, of all the domain names and their corresponding computers registered to particular companies and persons using the Internet. When you register a domain name, it will be associated with the computer on the Internet you designate during the period the registration is in effect.

#### **How can I get a domain name in .com, .net or .org?**

Domain names ending with .com, .net or .org can be registered through many different companies (known as "registrars") that compete with one another. An alphabetical listing of these companies appears in the [InterNIC Registrar Directory](#) on the InterNIC site.

#### **Can I choose the registrar I want to register a domain name for my web site?**

Yes. You may choose any of the listed registrars.

#### **What is involved in registering a domain name in .com, .net or .org?**

To register a domain name, you will be asked to provide the registrar you select with the various contact and technical information that makes up the registration. The registrar will then keep records of the contact information and submit the technical information to a central directory known as the "registry." This registry provides other computers on the Internet the information necessary to send you e-mail or to find your web site. You will also be required to enter a registration contract with the registrar, which sets forth the terms under which your registration is accepted and will be maintained.

#### **What is the process for submitting the required registration information?**

Different registrars offer different means of submitting the information. Most registrars

offer web-based registration services. Some offer registrations by telephone or mail. Many will work with your ISP to obtain the required information. You should go to the individual registrar's web site or otherwise contact it to determine the process it follows.

**Will my name and contact information be publicly available?**

Yes. Information about who is responsible for domain names is publicly available to allow rapid resolution of technical problems and to permit enforcement of consumer protection, trademark, and other laws. The registrar will make this information available to the public on a "Whois" site.

**How long does a registration last? Can it be renewed?**

Each registrar has the flexibility to offer initial and renewal registrations in one-year increments, with a total registration period limit of ten years.

**How much does a domain-name registration name cost?**

Each registrar sets the price it charges for registering names, and prices vary significantly among different registrars. In addition, some registrars offer discounted or free registration services in connection with other offerings, such as web hosting. To see what offering best meets your needs, you should go to the web sites of several of the registrars listed in the [InterNIC Registrar Directory](#) on the InterNIC site.

**When do I have to pay for my domain name?**

Before your domain name becomes active, you must provide a credit card number or other reasonable assurance of payment. This requirement enhances the availability of domain names by preventing them from being tied up by persons not intending to pay for registration.

**Can I change registrars after registering a domain name?**

Yes, you may change the registrar sponsoring your domain name at any time more than sixty days after initial registration. For details on the transfer process, contact the registrar you would like to assume sponsorship of the registration.

**I have seen advertisements for domain-name registration by companies not in the accredited registrar directory. Are these legitimate?**

Only registrars accredited by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) are authorized to register .com, .net and .org names in the registry. Some of these accredited registrars offer their services through resellers, which may provide assistance in completing the registration process. Your registration contract, however, will be with the accredited registrar and that registrar will maintain your contact information.

**Someone else has registered my company's name as a .com domain name. What is the process for resolving my complaint?**

All ICANN-accredited registrars follow a uniform dispute resolution policy. Under that policy, disputes over entitlement to a domain-name registration are ordinarily resolved by court litigation between the parties claiming rights to the registration. Once the court rules who is entitled to the registration, the registrar will implement that ruling. In disputes arising from registrations allegedly made abusively (such as "cybersquatting" and "cyberpiracy"), the uniform policy provides an expedited administrative procedure to allow the dispute to be resolved without the cost and delays often encountered in court litigation. In these cases, you can invoke the administrative procedure by filing a complaint with one of the dispute-resolution service providers listed at <http://www.icann.org/udrp/approved-providers.htm>. For more details on the uniform dispute resolution policy, see <http://www.icann.org/udrp/udrp.htm>.

**If I have customer service questions or problems related to my domain name registration, who should I contact?**

You should contact the particular registrar that registered your domain name.

**What are the rules for registration of .net and .org names?**

They are the same as for .com. Traditionally, however, names in .net have been used by organizations involved in Internet infrastructure activities and .org is frequently used by not-for-profit organizations.

**Are .com, .net, and .org domain names available for registration on a global basis?**

Yes. The .com, .net, and .org domains are available for registration by Internet users across the globe. ICANN-accredited domain name registrars are also located in various countries around the world. To view the InterNIC list of domain name registrars by country, [click here](#).

**I've seen domain names ending with two-letter combinations, like .uk. What are the rules for registering in these domains?**

Two letter domains, such as .uk, .de and .jp (for example), are called country code top level domains (ccTLDs) and correspond to a country, territory, or other geographic location. The rules and policies for registering domain names in the ccTLDs vary significantly and some are reserved for use by citizens of the corresponding country. You should check with the registrar offering ccTLD registration services regarding the specific terms and conditions for registration.

Some ICANN-accredited registrars provide registration services in the ccTLDs in addition to registering names in .com, .net and .org, however, ICANN does not specifically accredit registrars to provide ccTLD registration services.

**Is the "InterNIC" synonymous with Network Solutions, Inc.?**

No. The InterNIC is a concept for an integrated network information center that was originally developed by several companies, including Network Solutions, in cooperation with the U.S. Government.

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