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A .com or a country domain: which one should you register

Comparisons and alternatives

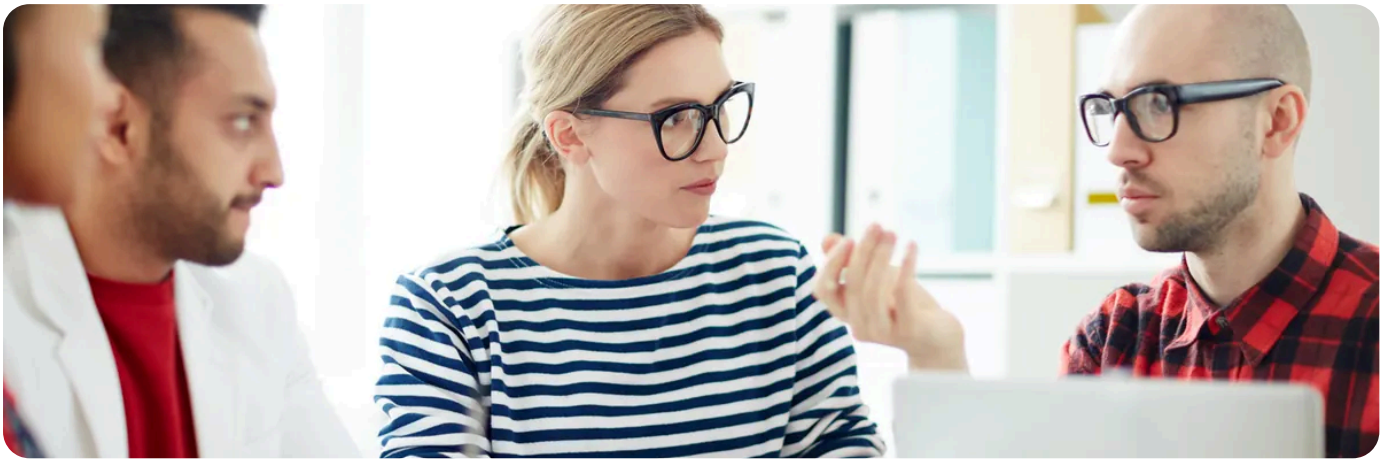
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A .com or a country domain: which one should you register

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If your customers are mostly in your own country, the country extension is the natural pick. If you sell abroad or want a name without borders, go for .com. If the name matters a lot to you, register both and use only one as the main address. No extension is better in the abstract: there is the one that fits the audience you want to reach.

What each one tells the person who sees it

Aspect	Country extension	.com
What it suggests	That the business is local and serves people in that country.	That the business is international, or does not want to be tied to one country.
Search engines	Treat the country extension as a hint of the audience the site is for, which helps in local searches.	Give no geographic hint at all. The country is read from the content, the language and other signals.
Availability of the name	There are usually more free names.	The most sought after: the name you want may already be taken.
Typing habit	People who know your local business type the right ending.	Many people add .com by reflex, even when the address is another one.
Registration rules	Some country extensions have their own rules about who may register. Check on the registration page.	Generally no residence restrictions.

How to choose, by case

1. **Shop or service for customers in your country:** the country extension. People searching “near me” read it as local.

2. **You sell in several countries, or want an international brand:** .com. If you also have customers at home, add the national extension as a second domain.

3. **Association or non-profit:** check whether your country has an extension meant for that, on the **domain registration** page.

4. **The name is your brand:** register both and point one at the other. That way nobody else ends up with the one you left, and people who mistype still reach your site.

Two domains, one site

When you register both, pick **one as the main** and make the other a permanent redirect to it. Do not publish the same site on both addresses: search engines see two copies and cannot tell which to show. See **301 redirects when you change a page or a domain**. E-mail addresses are also chosen on one domain, the main one. The price of each extension is on the **domain pricing page**.

Changing domain after the site has grown costs traffic and trust.
The old addresses, the links from other sites, the printed cards and the e-mail signatures all keep pointing to the old name. Think carefully before registering, because the decision stays with you for years. See **how to choose the right domain for your business**.

Register the domain in your own name.
Whether .com or national, the holder must be you or your company, not whoever built the site. See **who owns the domain**.

RECOMMENDED

Want to see whether your chosen name is free on both extensions? Search here.

Search for a domain →

Country extensions: what we sell and who can register

- **Angola:** we sell .ao, .co.ao, .edu.ao, .it.ao and .org.ao. A name shorter than three characters cannot be registered; a three-character name is not bought in the cart, it is registered on a quote.
- **Mozambique, open to all:** .co.mz is open to any person or organisation (.org.mz is for non-profits and individuals, .net.mz for communications providers), the holder does not have to be in Mozambique, and the National Registry (INTIC) approves each request, which can take up to 5 working days.

- **Mozambique, with rules:** .ac.mz requires the education and research licences; .edu.mz is for education without that paperwork; .adv.mz is for lawyers; .gov.mz and .mil.mz are only for state and military bodies, with an official letter.
- **Short .mz names:** a single character cannot be registered, and 2 or 3 characters have a special price.

Each of these rules has its own article in this knowledge base, under domains.

SEE ALSO

- **How to choose the right domain for your business** →
- **301 redirects when you change a page or a domain** →
- **Registry, registrar and registrant: who owns the domain?** →
- **Domain pricing** →

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