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Domain vs web hosting: what is the difference?

Domains & DNS

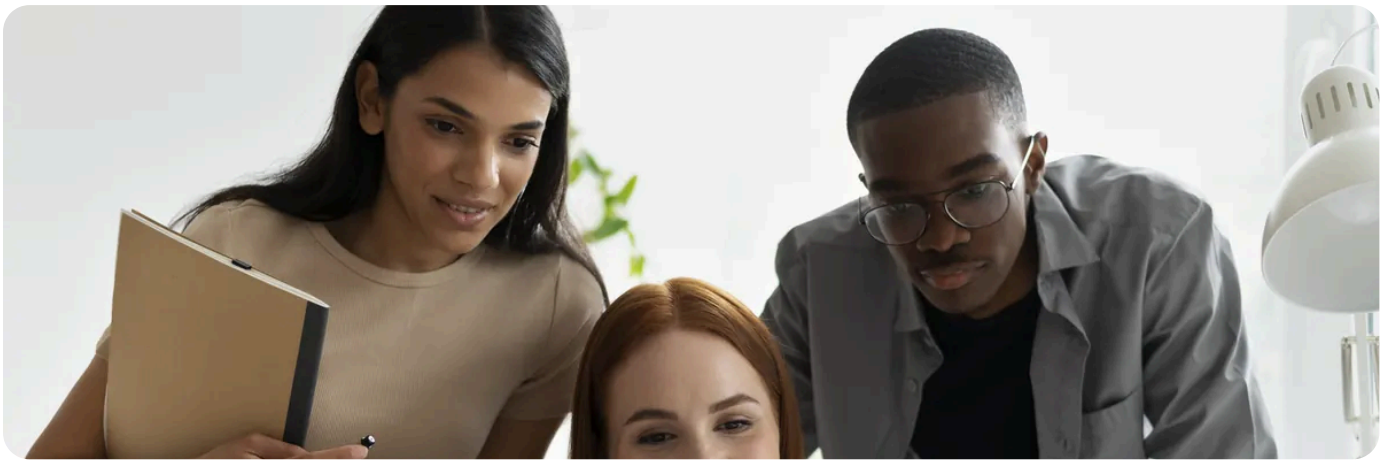
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Domain vs web hosting: what is the difference?

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These are two different things, bought separately, and mixing them up is one of the most common confusions when starting out.

	What it is
Domain	The **address**. It is the name people type into the browser. On its own it stores nothing - it is just a name reserved in your name.
Hosting	The **space**. It is where the site files, mailboxes and databases live, on a server connected to the internet 24 hours a day.

The most useful comparison is property: the domain is the **address**, the hosting is the **house**. You can own an address with no house, and a house with no address - but only with both can anyone visit you.

What happens if you only have one

1. **Domain only** - the name is reserved for you (nobody else can register it), but anyone who goes there finds no site, and cannot e-mail you at that domain.

2. **Hosting only** - you have the space and the site can exist, but it is only reachable through a technical address. No customer will memorise that.

What connects them

DNS is what points the domain at the hosting. That's why, if you buy the two in different places, you have to set that pointing up - see **how to configure a domain's DNS** . Buy both from us and it is already done.

What about professional e-mail?

It needs both as well: the domain gives you the *@yourcompany* part, and the hosting (or an **e-mail plan**) stores the messages.

They renew separately.

They are distinct services with their own invoices and dates. An expired domain takes the site down even with the hosting paid - and the other way round.

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