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Changing registrar without the site or e-mail blinking: DNS, lock and the checks after

Backups & Migration

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Changing registrar without the site or e-mail blinking: DNS, lock and the checks after

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Changing the **registrar** (whoever holds your domain's registration) **is not** changing the DNS or changing the hosting. They are three different things. A registrar transfer, on its own, does not touch the nameservers: the site and the e-mail stay where they were. The danger is in one particular case: when your domain's DNS is run **by the old registrar itself**, and stops being so after the transfer. That is the case this article covers. The transfer steps are in **transferring your domain to another provider** and **how to transfer a domain to us**.

The three things not to confuse

What	Who handles it	Does it change in a transfer?
Domain registration	The registrar: holder, renewals, lock, transfer code.	**Yes.** This is what gets transferred.
DNS (the nameservers and the zone)	The DNS provider, which may or may not be the registrar.	Not in principle. But confirm whose it is.
Hosting and e-mail	The hosting provider.	No.

If you want a clearer picture of who is who, see **registry, registrar and registrant**.

Before asking for the transfer

1. **Find out who runs your DNS.** Look at the current nameservers in WHOIS (**WHOIS: what it shows and how to check it**) or with `dig NS yourdomain.tld +short`. If they belong to Interweb, to Cloudflare or to some provider other than the registrar, the transfer does not affect them. If they are the old registrar's, read on.

2 **Save the zone.** If the DNS is the old registrar's, copy every record before you start and rebuild them where they will live: **moving your DNS zone to a new provider**. Only when the new zone is right do you change the nameservers (before, or right after the transfer).

3 **Confirm the starting conditions.** The domain must be unlocked, not expired, and with the holder's e-mail reachable; there is a period after registering or transferring during which it cannot be transferred again. It is all in **transferring your domain to another provider**.

4 **If you have DNSSEC,** many registrars require you to turn it off before transferring. Switch it off at the DNS provider and remove the DS record at the old registrar; turn it back on at the end, if you want it.

5 **Do the transfer with margin** before the renewal date. A domain that expires mid-transfer complicates everything (**domain renewal**).

Afterwards: the checks

Check	How
The registrar is the new one	WHOIS. It can be slow to update; confirm in the new registrar's panel.
The nameservers have not changed	The same as before the transfer, unless you changed them on purpose.
The site opens and e-mail works	Open the site, send and receive a test message.
The transfer lock is on	In the new panel. It protects the domain again.
Auto-renewal and the date	Confirm the new expiry date and the payment method.
The holder's contacts	The right e-mail, one you read. Important notices go there.
DNSSEC, if you used it	Turn it on again, with the new chain of keys.

The classic mistake: closing the old registrar account right afterwards.
If the DNS zone was still there, the site and the e-mail go down the moment the account closes. Close it only after confirming whose DNS it is and having the zone in the new place.

Changing registrar and hosting in the same month?
Do one thing at a time. If something breaks, you know straight away which it was. To change hosting, see **migrating without downtime**.

NEED A HAND?

About to transfer a domain and not sure who runs the DNS? Tell us the domain and we will look together.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- Transferring your domain to another provider →
- How to transfer a domain to us →
- Changing nameservers at a registrar that is not us: the map every panel follows →
- Registry, registrar and registrant: who owns the domain? →

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