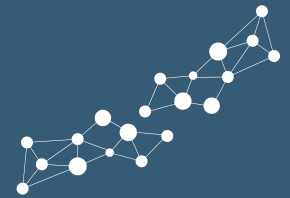


The 2 First Steps

When Getting a WordPress Website Designed for You



While a web designer will do a lot of the work for you, there are some things you need to do yourself. The first two of these actions are:

1. Registering a domain name
2. Purchasing suitable website hosting


You can often do this with a single transaction with just one company, but I will explain that more at the end of this help sheet.

Registering a Domain Name

If your website was a house, your domain name is like a street address because it allows people to find your website easily. Examples of popular domain names include:

- wikipedia.org
- news.com.au
- amazon.com.au

It includes the name itself and an extension at the end.


 The extension describes the nature of the site (e.g., .com = commercial business, .org = informational or charitable). Further, it often includes a country code (e.g., .au for Australia). When a domain has no country code it either has an international audience or an audience within the US.

Registering a domain name is like renting it for a period. They are not expensive (less than \$25/yr.), and I recommend registering them for at least 2 years.

Which Domain Name Registrar to Go With

There are over 30 [accredited Australian domain registrars](#), and even more worldwide.

In terms of quality, it doesn't overly matter who you choose. But, in terms of convenience, I would register your domain with the same company who hosts your website. So, read-on before registering your domain.

Choosing a Good Domain Name

Your domain name is the face of your website. It's the first thing people see when they come across your site, and it's the name they'll use to remember it and share it with others. That's why it's crucial to choose a domain name carefully. So what should you consider when choosing a domain name?

1. It Must be Available

Two websites cannot use the same domain name. So, if someone else is using it for their website, you cannot use it for yours.

So, once you have an idea name in mind, you need to check whether it is available. You can do this using a [domain name search tool like this one](#).

2. Keep It Short & Sweet

Shorter domain names are easier to remember and share with others. Ideally, your domain name should be no more than 15 characters long. Avoid using long, complicated phrases that are difficult to remember.

3. Make It Memorable & Easy to Spell

In addition to tip 2, your domain name should be easy to remember and easy to spell. Avoid using numbers, hyphens, and uncommon words that are difficult to spell. Keep it simple and straightforward, so people can easily type it into their web browser.

4. Reflect Your Brand & Business

Most importantly, your domain should reflect the nature of your business. So, if I was a physiotherapist, I should include a word like *physio* or *physiotherapist* in the domain name.

It should also reflect your brand and niche. For example, while I am a website designer, my focus is on small business websites. So I include both the words *web* and *small* in my domain name.

5. Use the Best Extension

For most Australian small businesses, **the best extension is .com.au**

But it is different for other organisations for example the Flying Doctors uses *.org.au* and schools use *.edu.au*.

You may have noticed that my domain name uses the extension *.net* – I would rather have *.com.au* but unfortunately it was taken.

This highlights the fact that while you should try to follow these tips, sometimes you won't be able to. Just follow as many as you can.

What About SEO?

A while ago, including words that people are likely to search for in your domain name helped you rank on Google. For instance, an example would be *website design mackay*. But there is a growing belief (that I agree with) that is no longer very helpful. Your homepage, which is the page that shows when people visit your domain, should focus on ranking well for your business name.

Purchasing Suitable Hosting

If your website was a house, hosting is like the land you build it on. A hosting server is a special computer that your website physically lives on.

Nearly all small businesses rent space on a hosting server from a hosting company. Why? Because buying and maintaining your own hosting server is expensive, complicated, and time-consuming.

Types of Hosting Plans

There are many forms of hosting available. Here are 3 of them (Tip – go with the second one).

Shared Hosting

This is where your website shares space on a hosting server with other people's websites.

Shared WordPress Hosting

This is the same as shared hosting but with a few tweaks that help look after WordPress websites. In my experience, **this is your best choice**. This type of hosting handles most small business websites well and is more affordable than other options. You should be able to get *shared WordPress hosting for less than \$25/mth*.

VPS

A VPS (Virtual Private Server) is a type of web hosting service that allows you to have your own virtual server space. This is good for larger businesses with a lot of traffic and more complex websites.

But it can be 4-10x more expensive than shared WordPress hosting.

Which Hosts to Avoid & Choose?

A good host can help your website grow your business. A bad host can hurt your chances and be painful to deal with.

In my experience, hosting companies to avoid include GoDaddy, Bluehost, Dreamhost, Hostinger, Host Gator, Panthur, A Small Orange, Just Host ...

It may be quicker to share my recommended host (who I am not affiliated with in any way), which is [VentralIP](#). Start with their standard plan, which is enough for most small businesses. You can boost your plan if needed.

Action to Take Now

Register your domain and purchase your hosting, which you can do in one step through [VentralIP](#).