

**Jump Start Guide
to
Success Online-Part 1**

**How to Register
Your Web Site Name**

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Introduction

Even if you plan to hire someone else to design and/or develop your web site, you should still register your domain name yourself. That will ensure that you have the necessary access and control to what belongs to you and minimize the chances that you'll be shut out from your web site if you and your designer/developer decide to go your separate ways.

Using this guide, (be sure to read it all), you'll learn how to choose a domain name for your business or organization and how to register it.

You can do this, even if you've never considered yourself to be a very technical person. All you have to do is read the instructions and follow them. There are lots of pictures to show you what you'll be seeing on your computer screen.

The **Action Guide** at the end of this document is a checklist for you to use when you register your domain name. Print it out and use it as you go along to make sure you follow and understand each step in order.

In this guide you'll see words, phrases, and web site names that are underlined in blue. This means that you can click on the link to automatically open a page or tab in your web browser and be instantly transported to the place I'm talking about in the text. If you roll your mouse over the underlined words (this is called the anchor text) a box will pop up showing you the web page that you'll be taken to when you click the link.

In case you missed the disclosure information on my web site where you downloaded this Guide, you can read it below.

Disclosure:

Some of the links in documents from my web sites and articles on my blog are affiliate links. An affiliate link is a link to a web page that contains tracking information which tells which web page sent (referred) the visitor. The owner of the destination web page uses this information to pay the referrer for the lead.

In the Internet marketing world, this payment is usually called an affiliate commission. The vendor is willing to pay commissions to bloggers, reviewers, consultants, etc. because they help the ultimate consumers learn about the product or service, find it, and buy it. These individuals often reach many people that the product manufacturer or service provider doesn't.

There is nothing new about commissioned sales. It's been a part of the retail industry for many decades.

I use affiliate links for products and services that I have used personally or in my business and that I have been very satisfied with or that have been highly recommended by others I trust who have used them. My recommendations would be the same whether I received a sales commission or not.

I am not compensated to provide my opinions on products, services, web sites and various other topics. I earn commissions only when you make a purchase through one of my affiliate links. You are always able to go directly to the web pages I write about and make your purchases independently of my affiliate link.

If you do decide to purchase the products and services I recommend, I'd appreciate it if you'd use the affiliate link because the commissions provide income to my company that allows me to continue to produce guides like this and make them available to you at no cost. **As a customer, you pay exactly the same price for the end product or service when you purchase through an affiliate link as when you go directly to the supplier's site.**

Any product claim, statistic, quote or other representation about a product or service should be verified with the manufacturer or provider.

I explain this in detail because I believe in honesty of relationship, opinion and identity.

[Screenshots were current at the time this guide was published, but companies frequently update their web sites, so I can't guarantee that everything here will be a perfect match by the time you're reading this. Even if the graphics change, the procedure for signing up will be basically the same.]

[Important Note: There are lots of illustrations on the following pages. If you want to make them larger, there's a button marked + (plus) at the top of your Adobe Reader page. Just keep clicking on this until the image is big enough for you to read easily.]

Be sure to print out the Action guide and use it to keep track of your progress as you go along.

A. What's a Domain Name?

Quite simply, your domain name is the name by which you'll be known on the Internet. It's not the same as the name of your business, club, group, or organization, though it could be similar. It's the name that people type into their browsers in order to see your web site. For example, the domain name for Google is Google.com.

B. How to Choose Your Domain Name

What's the best way to choose your domain name? Well, that depends on several things, primarily the age and reputation of your business or organization and the reasons you have for creating a web site.

If you have an established name or brand or your name is well known (say, like CNN), you'll probably want your domain name to be similar (cnn.com). Many people will be able to find your web site easily because they're already familiar with your name. If they don't know for sure what your domain name is they'll be able to make a good guess.

[My domain name is SherylSchuff.com, not because I'm famous, but because I've used my name on Twitter, Facebook, and eZineArticles, so people are familiar with my name and more likely to search for me than any words that describe what I do]

If the only reason you have a web site is to provide contact information and physical location or other information for current customers or members, then you probably want to choose a domain name that's as close as possible to your company or organization name to make it easy for your site to be found.

If, on the other hand, you want to use your web site to attract new prospects to your business or organization, you'll usually get better traffic (that's web speak for visitors) if you use a domain name that includes keywords specific to your target market. For example, if you sell albums and supplies for people who want to make scrapbooks about their Disney vacations or using Disney characters, you might name your site DisneyScrapbookShop.com. If you help people on the East side of Indianapolis learn to read, you might choose a name like IndyReads.org or EastSideReaders.org.

It's always a good idea to think of several possible names in case your first choice is already taken.

What about the part of the domain name after the dot? That's known as the top level domain (TLD). Which TLD should you use?

There are lots of choices for the TLD including .com, .net, .org, .edu, .biz, and .us. Generally speaking, regular businesses use .com, not-for-profits use .org, and schools and universities use .edu. There's no law that says you have to follow this pattern, but most people associate a .com with a for profit business, so if that's what you are, it's best to use that in your domain name. If you're a not-for-profit or a simple, unofficial group of citizen leaders, it's probably best to use .org.

It just makes it easier for folks to find you. And that's the reason you have a web site, isn't it? To be found.

You might find a discount deal on a .biz or .info name, but I don't think it's worth saving a few bucks when the .com or .org names cost less than ten bucks to begin with. They give you a more professional image. Many people will think you're cheap (and therefore might choose not to associate with you) just because you didn't spend a couple dollars to get a .com or .org name.

Many Internet marketing consultants advise companies to register multiple domains using all the popular TLDs. The reason for this is that if you don't, the people who want to come to your site might accidentally wind up at a similarly spelled but completely different site belonging to someone else when they really want to be at yours. If you're TheBestWidgetCompany.com and your arch rival is TheBestWidgetCompany.net, folks who search for TheBestWidgetCompany can easily become confused.

The same thing can happen if you're TheBestNeighborhood.org and someone else has TheBestNeighborhood.net.

[If they type in your actual domain name, they'll always get to your site, but if they just Google the company name, they can easily click on a search result that will take them somewhere other than your site].

When you're first starting out, you really only need one domain name. If you decide for some reason that you really want to get the other TLDs, you can always buy additional domain names later.

[When I started my payroll service, I started with the domain name NoMorePayrollHeadaches.com. Later on I added NoMorePayrollHeadaches.biz, .info, and .us. and later on, I decided to keep just the .com name.]

C. Where to Register Your Domain Name

Once you've chosen your preferred domain name, you'll need to register it. With all the choices available, which domain registrar should you choose? There are literally hundreds of companies on-line who will be glad to take your money to register your domain name.

Prices range from \$1 to \$35 per year. You can usually find deals that offer free domain name registration when you also sign up for a web hosting package from the same vendor (Yahoo frequently runs specials like these).

I do NOT recommend that you use the same company to both register and host your domain. There are two main reasons to use different vendors for these services.

- Each company will have less control over you and it will be easier for you to change these services independently of each other
- Companies who excel at domain name registration services usually do not excel at providing web hosting. By choosing two different vendors you can get the best service in each area.

I've used about half a dozen (maybe more) registrars over the past ten years. I finally settled on [DotYou](#) because I think they offer the best combination of price, features, and service. Registration fees are \$ 9.75 for a full year.

The actual sign up process is quick and easy, which is something that's important to me and it will be to you, too. Once I'm ready to pay, I want to check out NOW. Many other registrars make you go through up to six additional pages of options (offering add-on services you don't need) before allowing you to finally purchase your domain name.

If you're not familiar with the technical details of all the services they try to add on to your domain name registration, it's easy to become confused and frustrated and wind up ordering services that you don't really want or need.

[DotYou](#) doesn't do this. They also don't bombard you with email promotions every other day like some of the big-name companies do.

I've had excellent service from their support team when I've run into minor glitches over the years. I can't say the same for ANY of the other vendors I've used (including THE most popular one). I know they'll take care of me and that's why I continue to do business with them. I highly recommend them.

D. How to Register Your Domain Name

It's actually pretty easy to register your domain name. There are usually only a few required steps. As you complete these steps, record your results on your *Action Guide* (You know, the one at the end of the document that I told you print out so you could use it.)

- Look up the name you've chosen to make sure no one else has already registered it (if they have, choose another and look it up)
- Decide on the name (s) you want to register
- Provide your payment information

Any other steps you see are optional and you probably don't need them, especially when you're first getting started. If you change your mind, you can always add additional services later. For now, I'm going to show you exactly what to do to get registered at [DotYou](#). Of course, you can choose a different registrar and the steps will be similar.

Click on the [DotYou Link](#) to get started.

You should see something that looks like the picture on the next page.

The screenshot shows the DotYou.com website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for Domains, WebHosting, Email, SSL, SecureLogin, and Support. Below these are links for Home, Domain Control Panel Demo, Hosting Control Panel Demo, Whois Lookup, and Create a Free Account. A search bar is present with the text "Search for a domain name NOW".

On the left side, there is a "MY ACCOUNT" section with a green header. It contains a login form with fields for "Your User Name (email address)" and "Your Password", and a "LOGIN" button. Below the login form are links for "Forgot Your Password", "Create a FREE Account" (highlighted with a red circle), and "My Cart".

The main content area is titled "Domain Registration, Transfers and Renewals". It features several promotional boxes:

- A box for "\$975 DOMAIN INCLUDES FREE" with a list of features: Full DNS Control, Dynamic DNS interface, Domain Locking, Online Control Panel, Ownership Transfers, and Friendly Support. It includes "BUY" and "DETAILS" buttons.
- A box for "ID PROTECT" for only \$ 7.75 yr, listing benefits like SPAM, Identity Theft, Junk Mail, Telemarketers, Name Hijackers, and Data Mining. It includes a "DETAILS" button.
- A box for "FIND YOUR DOMAIN NAME" with a search bar and extension selection options (.com, .net, .org, .us, .biz, .info). It includes a "BUY" button.
- A box for "Cutting Edge Web Hosting" with a "BUY" button.

At the bottom, there are logos for DotStart and DotSmart, and a note that "All of our webhosting plans come with user-friendly".

Click where it says "Create a FREE Account" and you'll get a screen where you can enter your information.

DotYou.com
INTERNET SERVICES

Domains | WebHosting | Email | SSL | SecureLogin | Support

Home | Domain Control Panel Demo | Hosting Control Panel Demo | Whois Lookup | Create a Free Account

Search for a domain name NOW

domain SEARCH

SELECT YOUR DESIRED EXTENSION(S)

.com .net .org .info .us .biz

NEW HIDE DOMAIN OWNER ID PROTECT

SHOPPING CART VIEW CART

MY ACCOUNT

Your User Name (email address)

Your Password

LOGIN

Forgot Your Password

Create a FREE Account

My Cart

DOMAINS

Register Domain

Register .NAME

Transfer Domain

Renew Domain

Domains For Sale

Whois Lookup

Domain Pricing

Domain Bulk Packs

HOSTING

Website Hosting Plans

DNS only Hosting

Email Hosting \$19.75 yr

\$37 Secure Site

Create an Account

Have an account? [Click here to login](#)

Note: all required fields have a red star *

Login Information

*Username:
(min 6 max 12 chars. alphanumeric)

*Password:
(min 6 max 12 chars. alphanumeric)

*Re-type Password:
(min 6 max 12 chars. alphanumeric)

*Secret Question:

*Secret Answer:
(Used for account verification and password retrieval)

Account Options

Stay up to date with our mailing list subscription

Note: Dotyou.com reserves the right to contact members in urgent matters.

Contact Information

Please fill out the information accurately.

*First Name:

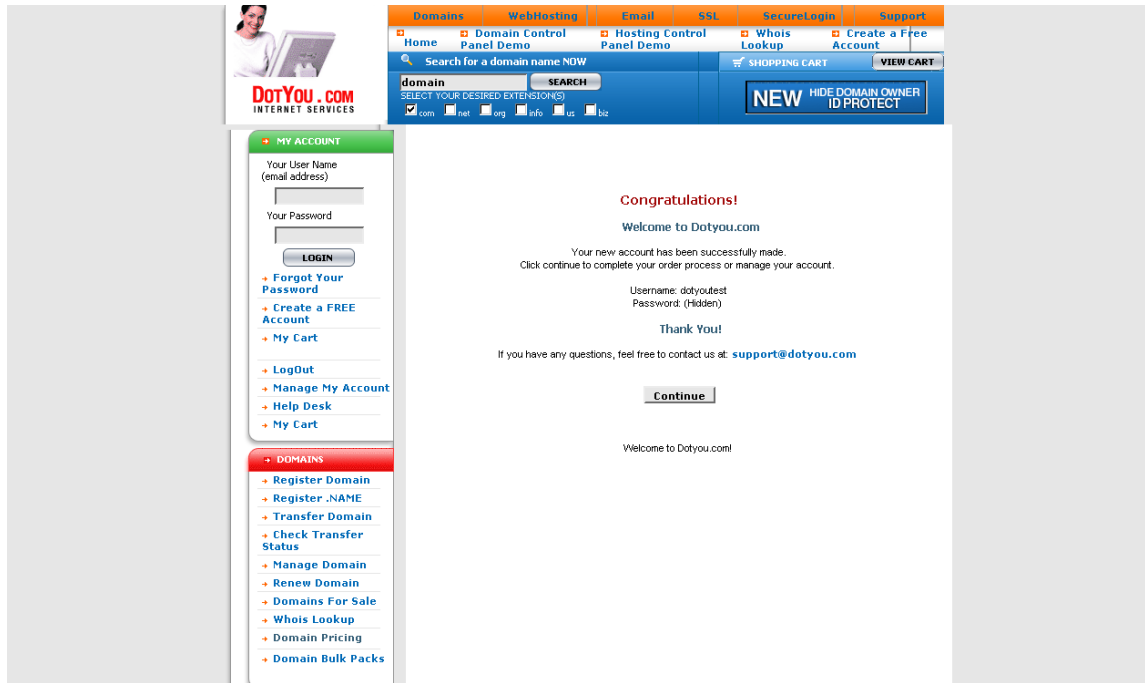
*Last Name:

*Organization Name:

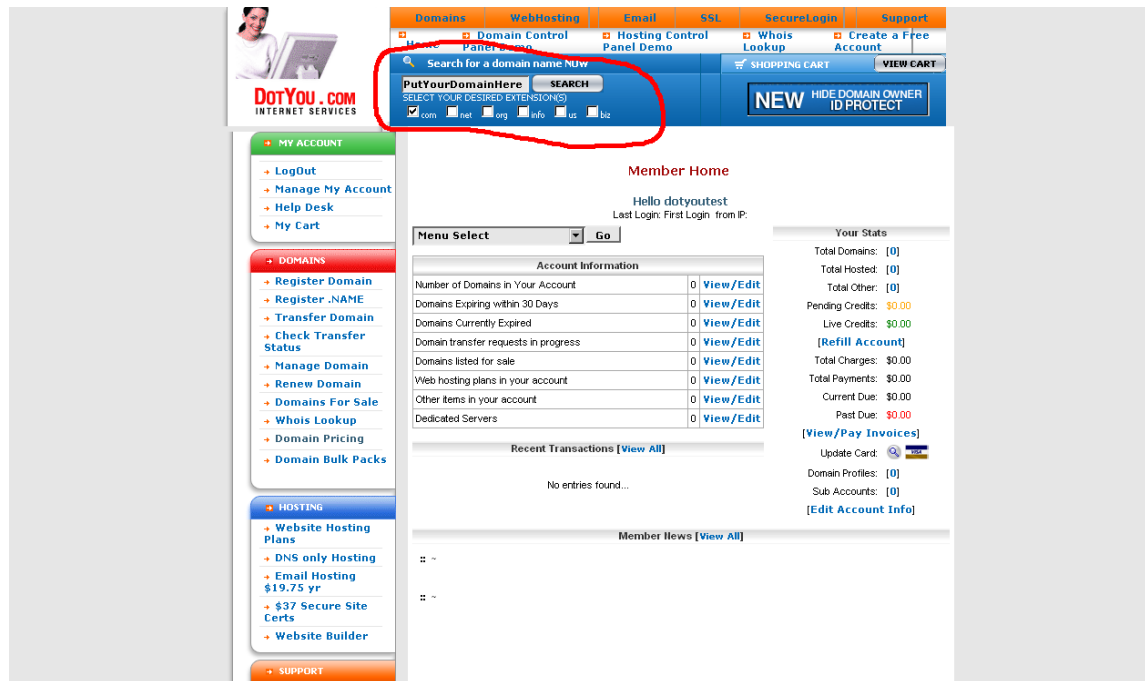
*Job Title:

Enter your information on this screen.

When you've done that, you'll see this page. Click "Continue."



Now you're ready to look up the domain name you've chosen to see if anyone already has it registered. Type the name in the box and click "Search."



If your first choice is available, just click on "Continue." If not, try one of the other names you thought of. Keep going until you find a name that's available. The system will make suggestions for you like it did in my example below.

Domain Search Results
Thank you for choosing Dotyou.com!

Below are listed the available domains based on your SLD choices. Select any TLD's you wish to purchase. If any yellow lights show up, there is a communications problem with that registrar. You are just a few clicks away from owning your domain!

Domain Availability			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	putyourdomainhere.com	Unavailable	[BackOrder Now!][Whois]
<input type="checkbox"/>	myputyourdomainhere.com	Available	\$9.75/yr
<input type="checkbox"/>	putyourdomainhereonline.com	Available	\$9.75/yr

[Update Selections/Continue](#)

[Click here to cancel](#)

[Search Again](#)

Legend
 X = Domain Not Available
 O = Whois Lookup Error

You may or may not like their suggestions. Don't feel like you're limited to their suggestions. Continue checking the other domain names you brainstormed earlier.

When you finally find an available name that you want, click "continue."

The next thing you'll see is the checkout page.

Current Cart Contents

Cart has been updated
 You may now select domain and/or hosting options. Final totals will be calculated and shown at checkout prior to payment. Click REMOVE to remove an item from your cart.

Domain/Other packages in Cart

1 R	putyourdomainhereonline.com	1 year(s)	\$9.75
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[Choose Domain Extras] [Remove](#)

Click to save your cart changes [Update Cart](#)
 Click to remove all items [Empty Cart](#)

Coupon Code
 If you have a coupon code, enter it here. Pricing will be adjusted for each package if applicable.
 Code [Submit Code](#)

Order Summary

Setup Fees	\$0.00
Extras	\$0.00
Discounts	-\$0.00
Sub Total	\$9.75


[Checkout](#)


Legend: H=hosting A=Addon R=registration T=transfer NB=name bundle S=setup fee N=dns only POP3
 P=POP3 Bundle O=other

There's no need to buy any extras right now, so just click on the "Checkout" button.

All that's left is to enter your payment information.


Payment Options

 Pay by Check/Invoice

 Pay via your PayPal account

 Pay with your VISA card

 Pay with your Mastercard

 Pay with your American Express Card

You'll see some confirmation messages and you're all set. Congratulations. You've just registered your new domain name.

To learn how to choose a web host and set up web hosting for your web site, download the [Jump Start Guide to Success Online-Part 2: How to Sign Up For Web Hosting](#)

Action Guide

The Action Guide is a checklist for you to use to keep track of your progress.

1. Think up possible domain names and go to [DotYou](#) to see if desired names are available

<u>Name</u>	<u>Available</u>
_____	Yes / No
_____	Yes / No
_____	Yes / No

2. Register your domain name

Domain Name: _____
Date Registered: _____
DotYou Login ID: _____
DotYou Password: _____

Your domain name will not be immediately available for you to use. It will take somewhere between 4 hours and 48 hours (In extremely rare instances, I've seen it take as long as 72 hours). The technical name for this process is propagation. Before the name is available for use, you'll get a "page not found" error when you type the name into your browser's address bar. When the process is complete, you'll no longer get an error when you try to browse to your domain name. Instead you'll see some sort of page that indicates that the web site is parked or under construction or something similar.

3. Wait for domain name to be available

Completion Date: _____

About the author

Sheryl Schuff, BS, MBA, CPA

Sheryl Schuff is a Certified Public Accountant, author, teacher, coach, and Founder of the Business Startup Success Club. She's been in solo practice as a CPA in Indianapolis for over 30 years and has helped develop the curricula for tax workshops for the [Business Ownership Initiative](#) of Indiana and its Central Indiana Women's Business Center.

Sheryl is the go-to person at [The Web Sellers Circle](#) for questions about accounting, bookkeeping, and using QuickBooks. She also serves as the tax and technology expert for the [International Association of Solopreneurs](#).

These days (and nights) she spends most of her time on-line, researching new technology and blogging for her [Business Startup Success Club](#). She also frequently guest posts for other small business blogs.

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Thank You!
Thank You!

Thanks again for using this training guide. If you have any ideas for how to improve the material or any suggestions for other topics you'd like to learn more about, please email me. I'd love to hear your feedback.

Contact info: Sheryl@BusinessStartupSuccessClub.com.

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