

HOW IT FITS TOGETHER

A business website and email rely on a few separate services, which are often confused. It helps to think of them like a shop:

Your domain name

Your address, such as **smithjoinery.co.uk**. You rent it by the year from a company called a **registrar**, and it's used for both your website and your email.

Your web hosting

The premises where your website lives. A **web host** stores your website and shows it to anyone who visits your address.

Your email service

Your post room, which handles your email. It's usually best provided by a separate specialist company. Our [**Guide to Business Email**](#) explains how to choose one.

ALWAYS OWN YOUR DOMAIN

Your domain is the one thing your website and email can't do without, so it should always be registered in your own name, in an account that you control. Never leave it in the name of a web designer, an IT company (including us) or a member of staff. You can give them access to help you, but ownership should stay with you. Then, whatever happens, your website address and email stay yours.

YOUR DOMAIN NAME

CHOOSING A NAME

- Keep it short, easy to spell and easy to say over the phone. Avoid hyphens and numbers if you can.
- For a UK business, **.co.uk** is the most familiar ending. If the matching **.com** is also available, it's worth registering both, so that no one else can use it.
- Check that the name isn't already used by another business, especially one in the same line of work.

CHOOSING A REGISTRAR

Reliability and straightforward pricing matter far more than saving a few pounds. Look for a registrar that:

- Charges the same, or close to it, when the domain renews. Many advertise a domain for 99p, then charge £12 to £15 a year after that.
- Includes privacy protection free of charge, so that your personal details aren't published.
- Doesn't push add-ons at checkout, such as website builders, trial email or 'premium' settings.
- Offers two-step verification to protect your account.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

We use and recommend **Squarespace Domains**, which is reliable, has simple pricing and includes privacy protection.

CHOOSING A WEB HOST

Web hosting is one of the most heavily discounted products online. A plan advertised at £2 a month can easily renew at £11 or more, and those headline prices often require you to pay for several years upfront. A good host is one you won't need to leave.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- **Good support** from real people who reply quickly, ideally by phone as well as chat or email.
- **Stable pricing**, with only modest increases at renewal.
- **Daily backups**, so that your website can be restored if something goes wrong.
- **A free security certificate**, which shows the padlock in your visitors' browsers.
- **UK data centres**, which keep your website fast for UK visitors.

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WORDPRESS
WEBSITES

Krystal

A UK company with UK-based support by phone, chat and ticket, and UK data centres. Its plans, from £7 a month, don't rely on introductory discounts, so there's no shock at renewal.

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BUILD IT
YOURSELF

Squarespace

If you'd like to create and update your own website without technical knowledge, Squarespace provides the design tools, hosting and your domain in one place, for a higher monthly fee.

KEEPING IT ALL SAFE

Losing access to your domain or hosting can take your website and email offline, and getting it back can be slow and difficult. A few simple habits avoid most problems.

1. Turn on two-step verification for your registrar and web host accounts.
2. Set your domain to renew automatically, and keep your payment card details up to date. If a domain lapses, someone else can buy it, and receive emails sent to your business.
3. Make sure renewal reminders go to an email address that someone checks regularly.
4. Keep your logins in a password manager. Our [Guide to Passwords](#) explains how.
5. If someone else built your website, make sure you have your own administrator login, not just theirs.
6. Keep a simple note of who provides your domain, hosting and email, and when each one renews.

WE CAN HELP

We can help you register your domain in your own name, set up your hosting and email, move an existing website to a new host and make sure everything is properly secured.