

About domain names

Domain names make your web address easy to remember. For RescueGroups.org Website Service, you are not required to register a domain name as your organization can choose a free *hostname*, which acts as a domain name. We do strongly recommend it though, and suggest you read our article about the many reasons why [your rescue needs a domain name!](#)

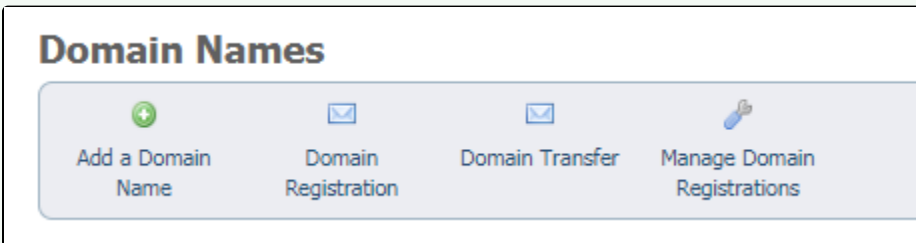
You will get a website URL like this: `adoptablepets.rescuegroups.org`. The hostname is the first part of your website address (`adoptablepets`), and the second part is our name (`rescuegroups.org`) because we host your site.

You can also register your own domain name, such as `adoptablepets.org`, at any time and configure it to use with either our Website or Hosting services.



Where do I find it?

You can find the information about domain names by going to **Services** and selecting any of the links under **Domain**.



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Why register a domain name?

A domain name makes it easy for guests to find your website. For instance, the name `adoptablepets.org` is shorter and easier to remember than `adoptablepets.rescuegroups.org`. If you want a domain name like `adoptablepets.org`, see the chapter [Registering a domain name](#).

Do I have to register a domain name?

You never have to register a domain name. Some groups don't sign up for a domain name because of the expense. And that's okay. You can use your hostname from RescueGroups.org as your domain name.

My organization already has a domain name registered, can we use it?

Yes. To do that, you can add the domain to your RescueGroups.org account, and "point" your existing domain name to our default name servers. This will allow your visitors to use your existing domain name to access your RescueGroups.org **Website**.

See the instructions for [Adding an existing domain to your account](#).

My organization would like to register a domain name

There are two ways of registering a domain name to use with your **Website Service** :

- You can register a domain name through our service and we will point it for you. See the section [Registering a Domain Name](#).
- You can register a domain name elsewhere and point it to your website. See the instructions for [Adding an existing domain to your account](#).

Domain renewal and your Website Service

If you have registered your domain name through RescueGroups.org and you have the Website Service, you will receive a domain renewal invoice in addition to your Website Service invoice when it is time to renew your domain name. Domain names are renewed annually, and that renewal allows your organization to keep the custom domain name you registered. Remember, your *hostname* is part of your **Website Service**, but the domain name is not.

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Have a question about this topic?