

A Short **Top-Level Domain** Definition

TLD stands for '**top-level domain**' and refers to the rightmost part of every domain name.

In *www.churchfieldracing.com*, 'churchfieldracing' is the domain name, and '**.com**' is the TLD. If you're looking for a custom TLD, contact us and let us help. There is no charge for this service.

If you are brimming with questions like 'What is the purpose of a custom TLD?', our handy guide is here to provide the answers...read on from here!

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It's now time to get started and define the top-level domain extension. Still unsure of what are top-level domains in a URL? Let's use an example. Consider *churchfieldracing.com* again. When you type it into your URL search bar, our website is being located by your computer, using the domain name "churchfieldracing" and an IP address.

Every website on the Internet can be identified by an IP address, which is a unique series of numbers. These numbers are a set of instructions that allows a computer to access stored website data.

Think of an IP address as a mobile phone number. While you may have 'Dad' listed in your phonebook, it's the number that you ultimately use to connect with him.

The letters at the end of a website address are known as its top-level domain (TLD). They typically tell a story about the domain name associated with it, such as the geographical area it was created in, its purpose, or the organization that owns it.

So, what is an example of a top-level domain? There's **.us** for United States, **.biz** for businesses, and **.com** for commercial websites. Interestingly 'top-level domain' is also known as the 'URL extension'. Although the most popular TLD is **.com**, there are many others available, including **.info**,  **racing**, and even **.pizza**. Example: [www.churchfield.racing](http://www.churchfield.racing)

## The Origins of TLDs

The original top-level domains were developed in the 1980s and were divided into three groups, Categories, Multi Organizations, and Countries.

*Note: Every original TLD had a unique purpose:*

- .NAME = private entity
- .COM = Commercial Business or Entity
- .ORG = Organization or Non-Profit
- .GOV = Government Agencies
- .INT = Intergovernmental
- .EDU = Academia and Education Agencies
- .MIL = Military Agencies

These days this restrictive practice has been largely lost, the meaning of domain extensions changed, and top-level domains are used in a variety of different ways. Domain registration is mostly open for all, apart from gTLDs assigned for the government, such as **.gov**, **.edu** and **.mil**.

So, what are a gTLD and ccTLD anyway, and what's the difference between the two?



### Generic TLDS

Generic top-level domains, (gTLDs) account for the majority of domain extensions. The most common gTLDs are **.com**, **.org**, **.net**. and **.biz**.



### Country Code TLDs

Country code top-level domains (ccTLDs) are location-specific and are generally reserved for countries and some territories. Examples include **.us**, **.co.uk**, and **.de**.

Since 2014, ICANN has released over 2,000 new extensions covering all areas from clubs and hobbies to industry, science and technology, and geographic locations. The addition of new generic top-level domains has taken some of the stress off the original gTLDs.

Interestingly, the mighty **.com** remains one of the world's most popular and most recognized gTLD, perhaps because it was one of the original top-level domains. Buyers place huge monetary value on **.com** domain name pricing over the new extensions, simply because of its universal recognition. What is interesting...unique TLD extensions like **.MUSIC** can be more useful than **.COM** and the price to own is very cost effective.

Example: [www.Joes.PIZZA](http://www.Joes.PIZZA) cost \$19.95 while [www.JoesPizza.COM](http://www.JoesPizza.COM) will cost close to \$10,000 to buy.

You can learn more about domain prices by contacting Churchfield Services. We are a consulting reseller for NameCheap Hosting Service.

## How do TLDs work?

Hold onto your hats and let's delve into the nitty-gritty of top-level domains. To successfully load a website, computers need to work through each section of a domain name to locate the data needed, starting with the top-level domain.

There are 13 root name servers that contain all the information for all of the gTLDs within that domain. For example, the name server for **.com** will contain information about *amazon.com*, but won't contain any information regarding *amazon.co.uk*.

So who is responsible for managing top-level domains? If you contact us, we can explain who and why owning your own DOMAIN (TLD) can be a very wise investment. This is the DIGITAL BUSINESS CARD and most IT consultants forget how important this can be.

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) delegates the responsibility for the global coordination of domain names.

A non-profit corporation, the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), is a department of ICANN. IANA assigns TLDs with IP addresses, which are vital for a domain to be discovered online.

## What Types of Top-Level Domains Are There?

If you've been paying close attention, you'll know that there are different types of internet domains, and you already know the answers to the following questions:

- (A) What does gTLD stand for?
- (B) What does ccTLD stand for?

Just in case you missed it the first time, gTLDs are generic top-level domains, and ccTLDs are country code top-level domains — geographical domains that are associated with a particular area in the world.

For example, the TLD **.de** is associated with Germany, **.io** with the British Indian Ocean Territory, and **.us** for the United States.

Generic top-level domains are the largest group of TLDs and account for most of the newly available domains. There are older, well-known gTLDs like **.com**, **.net**, and **.org**, and newer options, like **.club**, **.accountant**, and **.pizza**.

Ideal for companies and individuals, gTLDs can help you depict what your website actually does.

## What Are The 5 Most Common Domain Extensions?

In 2019, the 5 most common domain extensions according to [Verisign](#) were **.com**, **.tk**, **.cn**, **.de**, and **.net**. The **.com** remains the [king of domain names](#), as one of the original and most popular top-level domains, it's instantly recognizable.

If you haven't registered one of the most common top-level domains however, it doesn't mean that you're automatically at a disadvantage. The beauty in having the opportunity to choose from a large array of domain names means that it's very easy to find one that fits your purpose, whether you're choosing from common TLDs or the more obscure.

Already got a domain extension you like the sound of? Check out our article on [the cost of a domain name](#) and [how to register a domain name](#) to find out more.

## How Do You Create a TLD?

If you fancy trying your hand at creating a brand new top-level domain for people to use, the first step is to apply to [ICANN](#). If your registration is successful, you'll become a registrar and have the ability to decide who can use their domain on your TLD.

Some TLD applications can be quite contentious. For example, Amazon has applied for .amazon and have waited years for a decision over their registrar status. ICANN has been dragging their feet due to concerns from countries with Amazonian regions, fearing specific .amazon domain names could cause confusion or touch on national sensitivities.

## How to Reserve a Unique URL

When a name is reserved, it can only be registered by the parties who hold the reservation. Reserved names aren't operational URLs until registered. Domains can be reserved before they go live, others are available for immediate registration and some aren't open for public registration.

The phases of registration include

**The Sunrise stage.** This stage is served for trademark holders to register domains containing their mark.

**The Landrush stage.** This stage (also known as the Early Access Period), often comes at a higher cost. However, it's a great chance to swoop in and beat competitors before registration opens up to the public.

**General availability stage.** Registration is now open to all. Fill your boots!

Find out more about these stages in our handy articles about [Early Access](#) and [How to get the most out of buying New TLDs](#).

Excited to get started? Register your domain name through NameCheap by contacting Churchfield Services through the [www.churchfieldracing.com](http://www.churchfieldracing.com) website. Click on "services".

So, before registering your DOMAIN NAME, try entering it into your web browser. Do not search for the site name in the browser, simply enter [www.\(your choice\)](#) without an extension, into the URL address bar. *Example: Enter [www.joespizza](#) (CR)*

## Pre-registering a gTLD

Pre-ordering a domain is merely an expression of interest and doesn't always guarantee you'll get it. The benefit of pre-registering a domain name is that you are more likely to get it. There may be an auction if more than one person has pre-registered the same domain name.

## New Domain Extensions

From 2012, ICANN began to accept a huge number of applications that led to the dramatic expansion of domains. As of August 2017, thousands of new TLDs were available, making it easy for small business owners and individuals to discover their dream domain names.

Due to the fact that **.com** has been around almost 30 years, many valuable domain names have already been taken and registered. Many are also for sale...this can be expensive.

Recent extensions allow you to be more adventurous since one-word domain names are available once again. These [new TLDs](#) are being used in unique and unexpected ways.

The new gTLDs include domain extensions in different languages including Chinese, Arabic and those based on the Cyrillic alphabet such as Russian.

The **.tech** gTLD is the all-rounder for tech companies and startups while **.shop** is a nice fit for anyone interested in owning an online store.

If you own a business, a **.biz** might be the ideal choice. This gTLD earned itself a bad reputation because it was introduced so early and became associated with spam sites. These days it's considered as a viable backup gTLD.

The **.club** extension was a surprise hit and one of the most successful gTLDs, with over 1 million registered domains. Consider the number of leagues, organizations, nightclubs, and hobbyists this is a natural fit for.

Manufacturers and printers have also jumped on the new appendages with the introduction of industry-specific gTLDs such as **.cards** and **.bike**. Even the niche tattoo industry has a complimentary extension with **.ink**.

Creative industries have plenty to choose from such as **.live**, **.photography**, and **.music**.

Brand TLDs are on the rise. Big names across many industries like Amazon, Axa, Barclays, BMW, Canon, Google, and many others have applied for a brand-specific extension.

With the introduction of industry-specific gTLDs, site owners called for a similar gTLD available for adult websites. As a response to the interest in this field, **.xxx**, **.sex**, and **.adult** were considered until **.xxx** went live in 2011.

Interested in finding out who owns a domain? It's easy to discover [site owners](#) when you use our useful Whois Lookup Tool.

## Changing Your TLD

If you want to change your name, why not consider registering the same domain name, but with different extensions? It's easy to do! For details and additional help contact Churchfield Services.

Imagine if you have a bustling coffee shop right by Central Park in New York, so you register for the domain name, *thecoffeeshop.nyc*.

The shop becomes so popular you open up more, and so decide to register *thecoffeeshop.us*. Further down the line, you end up selling your own branded blend in your own trendy cafes, so you register *thecoffeeshop.coffee* and *thecoffeeshop.cafe*. These are custom TLD's. We can do that!!

It's also possible to register a bunch of domain names and if a customer visits the URL, they can be redirected through to one website, keeping all your content in one central, easy-to-manage place.

If you've got a domain name with another registrar and want to switch, why not [transfer your domain name](#) to Namecheap today? Contact Churchfield Services if this is right for you.

## Which TLDs Are Restricted for Use?

There are some domain extensions you will be unable to register. Restricted TLDs exist because they are intended for limited use or needed for testing or documentation purposes.

### Reserved DNS Names

The TLDs **.invalid**, **.example**, **.localhost** and **.test**, were reserved by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). They can't be installed into the root zone of the DNS to reduce the chance of conflict or confusion. These names can then be used for either local testing scenarios for documentation purposes.

**Invalid** - used to demonstrate domains that are invalid such as those with apostrophes or spaces.

**Example** - used in documentation or as examples when presenting the concepts of the DNS system or the Internet in general.

**Localhost** - used when the domain refers back to a local computer.

**Test** - used for testing code related to DNS.

### Restricted Domains

Not all domain extensions are available to the public. There are many restricted top-level domains known as rTLDs.

To register a domain with an rTLDs, you need to belong to a particular community or represent a specific entity. For example, **.name** is reserved for individuals and **.edu** is restricted to educational entities.

To date, **.gov** and **.mil** are controlled by the government of the US, restricted to government and military purposes. The **.edu** extension is also restricted and only accredited institutes or US-based post-secondary institutions can use it.

Trademarked names aren't available to anyone except the trademark owner, for example **.versace** and **.nescafe** aren't open for general registration.

## Conclusion

Now you've been immersed in the fascinating world of top-level domains, you're probably excited to register your own. Why not see if your dream domain is available. Contact Churchfield Services.