Interactive Online

Hosting & Domain Decision Guide

Compare website tools, email, recurring costs, and DNS requirements before buying hosting or moving a domain.

For new hosting customers and owners planning a website move.

Use this guide

Read the guide, record your answers, and keep a copy of your decisions. The HTML version includes browser worksheet fields; an editable Word worksheet is also available.

Do not record passwords, private customer information, or payment details in this document.

Choose the tools you need

Compare the complete offer

Record your domain and email before a change

Use Cloudflare with a clear destination

Plan the move and the rollback

Know what happens after launch

Choose the tools you need

Start with the work you want to do. A website builder, hosting account, and maintenance service each solve a different part of running a website.

• AI Website Builder: create and edit a new website in the builder; choose paid publishing when the draft is ready.

• Website hosting with cPanel: manage website files, domains, and email through a hosting account. An AI assistant is different from an included website-builder allowance.

• WordPress with AI: create a new WordPress draft on an eligible hosting account, then use the supported WordPress editing workflow after publishing.

• Managed WordPress and website care: confirm the specific maintenance, backups, update checks, and human work included in the service.

New website or existing website

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Website platform and number of sites

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Email mailboxes and current email provider

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Who will update the website

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Features or integrations that must continue working

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Compare the complete offer

Compare the same billing period and write down the actual renewal cost. An inexpensive headline does not explain the full service.

☐ Monthly or annual charge, setup charge, and renewal price.

☐ Website count and published-site limit.

☐ Storage, bandwidth, databases, and application limits.

☐ Mailbox allowance and whether mail is hosted here or elsewhere.

☐ AI assistant availability versus website-builder credits.

☐ Whether credits renew and whether unused credits carry over.

☐ Backup frequency, retention, restore scope, and restore fees.

☐ Migration scope and exclusions.

☐ Support channels and the human work included.

☐ Domain registration, renewal, taxes, and optional extras.

Offer A: price, limits, and exclusions

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Offer B: price, limits, and exclusions

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Questions still unresolved

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Chosen plan and reason

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Record your domain and email before a change

Your website and email may use different providers. Replacing nameservers can affect both. Save the current DNS records and account access before making changes; never include passwords in this worksheet.

- Check both the root domain and www.
- Keep evidence of record values, priorities, and TTLs.
- Record redirects, subdomains, email forwarders, and any application using the domain.

Domain registrar and renewal date

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DNS provider and current nameservers

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Current website destination

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Mail provider and mailbox owners

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A/AAAA and CNAME records

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MX records

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SPF, DKIM, and DMARC records

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Verification records and other connected services

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Use Cloudflare with a clear destination

If Cloudflare manages DNS, add the exact records supplied by the selected publishing or hosting service. Do not copy an IP address from an unrelated account or old guide.

☐ The destination matches the specific builder publishing instruction or welcome email.

☐ Root and www use the intended supported records.

☐ Existing MX, SPF, DKIM, DMARC, and verification records are preserved.

☐ Mail host records use DNS-only where appropriate; do not proxy mail traffic.

☐ Proxy mode and TLS settings follow the hosting or builder requirements.

☐ HTTPS, redirects, and any ownership verification succeed before launch.

New website destination from the official setup instruction

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Records to change

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Records to preserve

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Who can revert the change

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Read the current DNS and Cloudflare help

Plan the move and the rollback

Agree on the cutover and recovery steps before replacing an existing website. A backup file is useful only when its contents and restore procedure have been verified.

☐ Back up the correct website files and database and record their source.

☐ Save the domain, email, redirect, SSL, and scheduled-task context.

☐ Restore or otherwise verify the backup independently.

☐ Review the new website before changing DNS.

☐ Arrange a short content freeze if the old site changes frequently.

☐ Record the previous DNS values and how to restore them.

☐ Confirm form delivery and mailbox access after cutover.

☐ Keep the previous setup until the agreed acceptance checks pass.

Backup location and restore evidence

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Cutover owner and date

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Acceptance checks

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Rollback trigger and procedure

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Know what happens after launch

Write down who owns the domain, hosting subscription, website updates, and email. Keep recovery and billing details in an appropriate secure place.

- Review the first invoice and renewal date.
- Verify website HTTPS, pages, forms, email, and the mobile view.
- Confirm backups and support access.
- Schedule content and software reviews according to the platform and agreed service.
- Ask before changing packages on an existing account; opening a builder does not automatically upgrade a hosting subscription.

Domain owner

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Hosting and billing owner

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Content and maintenance owner

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Support contact and next review date

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Compare hosting

Review WordPress hosting

Get help choosing