

# Beginners Guide to Website Creation



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This guide is intended for beginners, and is not intended to be a complete dissection of all the intricacies of the technical process. The goal is to enable the beginner to start using the Internet today without knowing all the technicalities involved, but will be able to harness the power and excitement of the Internet. Simplified explanations of what is happening are usually not exactly what is going on, but they allow the concepts behind the technology to be learned easily.

## How Does the Internet Work?

The Internet is a huge network of computers. Computers communicate using different protocols to send and receive information between one another. When you open up a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox, your computer sends out a request for a specific web page, and a computer somewhere else receives the request and sends back the requested information.

### Creating Web Pages

Websites are composed of files that are formatted in a language called HTML(Hyper-Text Markup Language). Although HTML is difficult to learn quickly, there are programs that are designed to help you create web pages. Web pages are created much like a word processing document is created, and in fact most word processors can save documents in HTML format. Programs such as Microsoft Frontpage and more advanced programs such as Macromedia Dreamweaver are great places to start with a web page. If you don't have these programs, you can use your word processor to create a web page, just use 'Save As...' and select HTML in the format field to save it as a web page.

If you feel uncomfortable about website design, we can help you out. We have a team of designers and programmers that will be able to produce the web site you'll need, at a minimal cost. [Click Here](#)

### Domain Names

By now you have probably realized that different websites have different "domain" names. Each computer on the Internet actually is identified and only reachable by a number called it's IP number, which looks like 149.29.292.12. To make it easier for us to remember computer names, there is a huge directory of names that match a text string to an IP number. For example, when you type <http://www.google.com> into your browser, it is requesting the web page from the computer whose name is www.google.com,

so it will look up it's IP in this directory, and then it can communicate directly with the computer using this IP address.

### **Servers**

Typically, computers that transfer requested information are called servers. Internet servers are usually computers that are specifically tailored to provide Internet services. Different Internet services include web servers(for websites), e-mail servers, file transfer services(moving files between computers through the Internet), and many other services.

If you have information that you want to be available on the Internet, the best option would be to use a server designed for such an application. A server has many advantages over a normal personal computer with a normal Internet connection.

### **Web Hosting**

This is where web hosting comes in. At Pacific Blue Web Solutions, we provide our users with servers to utilize to post their websites to, send and receive e-mail, transfer files, and manage advanced features that normal computers are unable to do. Your web site will be very fast, and reliable because this is our specialty, our business is to make sure we provide fast, reliable web hosting services.

Our servers are carefully maintained, and are very powerful, our servers have 4 CPUs, as opposed to the normal 1 CPU in today's regular use computers. In addition to having much more processing power and speed, our servers have multiple fiber-optic connections to the Internet, which means our servers are connected to the backbone of the Internet, which results in blazing speeds. Our connection to the Internet is 10x faster than the ordinary cable or DSL connection.

Another advantage to our services is your website is basically immune from disaster. If the power fails in your home, your computer will not work, however, our servers are in a facility that has backup batteries and generators

in case of power outages, so if the power does go out, your website will still be up and running.

## Setup Your Web Space

So how do you get started? We will walk you through the key steps necessary to getting your website up and running.

### Purchasing and Using a Domain Name

In order for us to setup your account, we will need to know what domain name you would like your account to point to initially. This will require the registration of a domain name.

Domain names are managed centrally by a few entities. In order to obtain one, you must purchase one from a domain name registrar. A couple of domain name registrars that you can use are Godaddy.com and enom.com. There are literally hundreds of registrars, and any of them will work, but some are easier to setup than others.

All that is required in setting up a domain name, is after(or sometimes during) the ordering process, the registrar will ask you to specify nameservers that your domain name record will point to.

Nameservers are domain name servers that we have installed, which tell everyone on the internet exactly where it can find your website. So it's really an indirect process when someone attempts to access your website, their computer asks their DNS server for the IP of your website, and their DNS server will find the nameserver that is specified in the registrar and will ask that computer what IP it can use to communicate and will return that IP to the requestor.

You will want to point your domain to our nameservers, ns1.pacificblueweb.com and ns2.pacificblueweb.com . Most registrars make this process easy for it's users. You may have to enter their control panel for your domain, and look for a place to change your nameservers.

If this process seems a little overwhelming, when you sign-up for our web hosting, you can specify that you'd like us to register your domain name for you. We will setup your domain name for you and will transfer it over to you. Normally, we do charge a nominal \$10 fee for domain name registrations(includes the domain name).

Domain names take a little while to propagate through the Internet. In other words, when you register a domain and point it to our nameservers, it may take up to 24 hours for your website to be visible. If you have an existing domain name, the domain name will continue to point at your old 'parked page' or other web server until the DNS information propagates.

### **Setting up your Pacific Blue Web Account**

Simply find an 'Order Now' link on our website to get started. Our registration program will direct you to enter the domain name you would like to use on our servers. Enter the domain name, and if it isn't registered to anyone, you will be asked if you want us to register it for you. You can do it yourself as well.

Then you will be asked to choose which plan you would like along with payment options. Also you will need to specify a password which will be used for the account, please record this in a safe place.

Upon completion, you will be e-mailed confirmation, and your account will be instantly created. At this point, your account is ready for you to begin using! However, if your domain name is not available, you will not be able to go to your website immediately, yet you can access your server by it's IP address, as is detailed in your welcome e-mail. Just use the IP wherever you would normally use your domain name.

Now that your account is setup, we will go over how to send files to your server and begin to see the results.

## Design Your Web Page

Usually, you will want to design your website first on your own computer using any of the software tools that have been mentioned earlier. Once you create a web page, even if it is simple to start with, we can put it on your website.

Website design is past the scope of this document, however there are many resources that are available on the Internet to help you get started in this area.

## Upload to the Server

Now it's time to get the files that you have created onto the server. We will discuss what is required to do so.

### File Transfer Protocol

In order to transfer files between computers, we generally use a protocol called FTP (File Transfer Protocol). FTP is a protocol just as the more common HTTP (Hyper-Text Transfer Protocol). It is simply a standard way that computers can send data.

In order to use FTP, you will need a program that is capable of transferring using this protocol. Luckily, most of today's operating systems come with this capability automatically. For example, on Microsoft Windows, simply click on 'My Computer' and begin to type an FTP address into the location bar. Instead of <http://yourdomain.com>, you will want to type <ftp://yourdomain.com> . Remember to replace yourdomain.com with your IP address if your domain hasn't propagated yet.

FTP requires you to authenticate (prove you are authorized to access the server) with the username and password that was created when you signed up. Once you are authenticated, you can transfer files to and from the server. In our Windows example, you can simply drag and drop files into the server.

## Public Folder

When you open up an FTP connection, you will see a few different folders. The most important one for you will be the public\_html folder. Not all files on your account are visible to the Internet, this is intentional, as there are other files in your account such as your e-mail and other settings that need to be kept safe. The public\_html folder is the folder that is visible when you type <http://yourdomain.com> in a web browser. This is the folder you will want to put your files in to ensure they are visible to the public.

## Default Pages – index.html, index.htm, index.php

In order to access any uploaded file on your website, you type <http://yourdomain.com/filename.html> . Now that can be a lengthy address, so in order to simplify things, you can specify a default web page-- a page that will load automatically when you don't specify a filename in the URL. In order to have a page become the default file, you must name it either index.html, index.htm, or index.php(if it is a PHP script).

So, if we renamed our filename.html file to index.html, we could now access it using simply <http://yourdomain.com> and our index.html file will be the default page. If no default page is set, your site will list the directory's contents(unless you change this in your control panel), so it is always a good idea to specify a default file.

Remember, if your domain name has not yet propagated, you must use the IP, please refer to your confirmation e-mail for information on how to do this.

## **Congratulations!**

If everything went well, you should have been able to upload files to your web server and see them in a web browser. This is only the most basic information about how to use your hosting account at Pacific Blue Web Solutions.

## **Keep Going**

The best way to learn more about the Internet and how to create websites is to experiment on your own. Search the Internet for guides to creating web pages, and try things on your own. Get familiar with your web hosting control panel that is provided for you. If you can understand what is provided in your account at a basic level, you will have a good grasp of the basic technologies that you'll need to know to continue to manage a successful web site.

Good luck on your journey, and let us know if there's anything we can do to help. Even if it's some design help here and there. Seriously.