Best Practices for Choosing a Domain Name

Getting Started · https://umw.domains/guides/best-practices-for-choosing-a-domain-name/

There can be a lot of pressure around choosing "the right" domain name. While we generally think some variation on your name is a good place to start here are some tips for selecting a domain name:

- **Pick something you can live with during your time at UMW.**
  - We only purchase one domain on your behalf while your at UMW so while we appreciate a good pun consider how the graduating senior version of you might feel about it.
- **Avoid including words related to the class you are taking.**
  - If your first introduction to Domain of One's Own is via a class assignment we encourage you not to include words related to that class as part of your domain (i.e. go with something like *yourname.com* instead of *yournameDGST101.com*). You might encounter more classes where you'll need to use this platform (remember we only purchase one domain for you) so don't be too specific. There are ways to create subdomains off your main domain that are a great place to include that class information (e.g. you can make build a website at *dgst101.yourname.com* after you've chosen *yourname.com*)
- **Keep your domain name short.**
  - The average domain name length is about 12 characters. Try keeping your domain name between 6-14 characters. This not only makes the domain name easier to read, but it's easier to recognize too.
- **Avoid hyphens and numbers.**
  - These can be confusing in domain names and sometimes make the site difficult to search.
- **Keep it easy to type/pronounce.**
  - This makes the site easier to remember. If the user can read the domain name like a phrase, they're more likely to remember it. This also helps avoid confusion when searching for the site.

Some Good Examples

- **janedoe.net** (good if that’s your name, not so great otherwise)
- **janesays.org** (good for all Janes everywhere)
- **jdoe.com** (same as above)

Some Bad Examples

- **janedoefsem100.com** (not useful once the class is done)
- **google.com** (already taken, sorry)
- **zoodleracer.net** (…?)

Reviewed by Abby Firestone 06/22/26