

## Choosing website software: What you need to know

### Domain name

- A domain name is your website address on the internet
- For example: [gippsland.au](http://gippsland.au)
- Also used for email, for example: [glenn@gippsland.au](mailto:glenn@gippsland.au)
- You can register your domain with your *host* or separately with a *Domain Registrar*

### Website host

- The place where your website lives online
- Includes your email and other applications
- A network of computers, software, and skilled support staff. (see picture)
- Hosting software is provided but you manage your applications such as WordPress
- Lowest-cost method to get a website online
- Watch out for increased costs after first year

#### Australian hosting providers

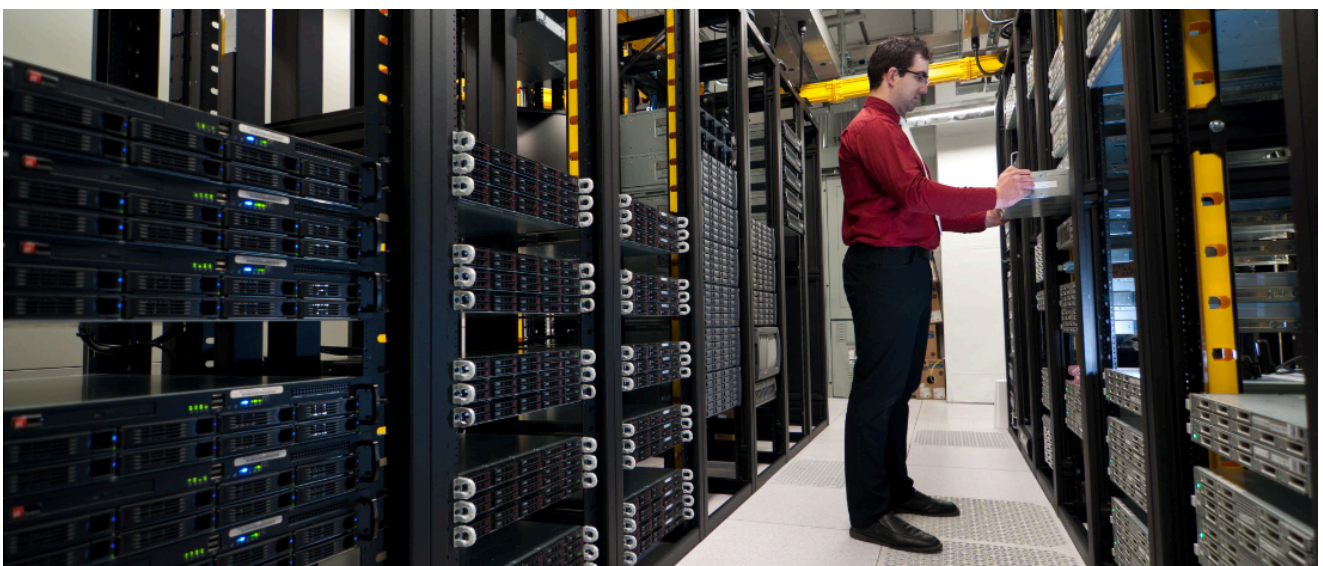
- [ventraip.com.au/web-hosting/business-hosting](http://ventraip.com.au/web-hosting/business-hosting)
- [serversaurus.com.au/green-australian-hosting/business-web-and-email-hosting](http://serversaurus.com.au/green-australian-hosting/business-web-and-email-hosting)

#### Budget US hosting providers

- [bluehost.com/hosting/shared](http://bluehost.com/hosting/shared)
- [dreamhost.com/hosting/shared/#shared-plans](http://dreamhost.com/hosting/shared/#shared-plans)

### More information on domains and hosting

- Guide: [actionskills.au/resources/webtech](http://actionskills.au/resources/webtech)
- Webinar: [actionskills.au/webinars/basics-website-tech](http://actionskills.au/webinars/basics-website-tech)



## Managed website builder

All the technical stuff is managed for you including hosting and all software.

### Pros

- Easiest way to get started
- Includes pre-designed templates
- Great for simple sites
- No management required

### Cons

- No email service
- Can be very expensive
  - Monthly subscription
  - + fees for extra features
  - + transaction fees
- Limited functionality
- Locked into the platform – transferring your site is hard or not possible

### Leading applications

- [canva.com/website-builder/](https://canva.com/website-builder/) - part of the powerful canva system
- [squarespace.com/pricing](https://squarespace.com/pricing) - strong design and user experience
- [weebly.com/pricing](https://weebly.com/pricing)
- [framer.com/pricing](https://framer.com/pricing)
- <https://carrd.co/pro> - cheapest
- [webflow.com](https://webflow.com) - more complex with more features
- [wix.com](https://wix.com) - currently under boycott due to their association with Israel

Some platforms include a website builder as part of a broader software package

- Membership platform - [memberjungle.com/pricing](https://memberjungle.com/pricing)
- Ecommerce - [shopify.com/au/pricing](https://shopify.com/au/pricing)
- Accommodation management platform - [littlehotelier.com/pricing](https://littlehotelier.com/pricing)
- Fundraising platform - [raisely.com/pricing](https://raisely.com/pricing)

## Managed website builder supplied by a host

- All the services of a host with their own website builder
- Low cost method to get a website online

### Providers

- [hostinger.com/website-builder](https://hostinger.com/website-builder)
- [godaddy.com/en-au/websites/website-builder](https://godaddy.com/en-au/websites/website-builder) - very restrictive builder

## WordPress

- WordPress powers 43.6% of all the websites on the Internet  
[wordpress.com/blog/2025/04/17/wordpress-market-share](https://wordpress.com/blog/2025/04/17/wordpress-market-share)
- Involves configuration and a learning curve for non-technical users
- Free and opensource
- Completely customisable
- Over 65,000 plugins available
- Very strong community support
- Vast amount of commercial support services

### Wordpress comes in a few versions

## Managed WordPress website builder

The technical side of WordPress hosting is fully managed for you

- Great for large and/or high performance websites

Leading applications

- [wordpress.com/pricing](https://wordpress.com/pricing)
- [wpengine.com/au/plans](https://wpengine.com/au/plans)

## Self hosted WordPress

- Requires your own hosting
- Low cost method to get a website online
- Independent control of your website
- Most hosts provide tools to easily install and manage your WordPress
- Software is free with many free plugins
- Some plugins cost extra

## Serviced WordPress

- A third party manages your WordPress website on your hosting or theirs
- Highest level of support
- Customised service and support beyond technical management
- Usually provided by your website design company

Our serviced WordPress for example

- [actionskills.au/careplan](https://actionskills.au/careplan)

## Other self hosted website software

- There are many applications to build websites
- The second most popular application is [drupal.org](https://drupal.org)
- Drupal is more complex and commonly used by government and university websites