

Domains and Hosting

Domain name — Buy (rent) the Domain Name.

- Examples of domain names are westerntc.edu, craigkunce.com, apple.com, and eddiehale.com
- Domain Names, or web addresses, are typically rented by the year.
- Search engines put more weight in multi-year registrations (pay for several years in advance).
- If you think up a unique domain name and keep up the rent payments, it can be yours for the rest of your life.
- Typically the longer the rental time, the cheaper per/year price.
- If you can, find a .com
- Try to avoid hyphens-in-the-address. People tend to forget to type them in.
- Keep it branded, and shorter is better if possible.
- If you are building a site to build a brand for yourself (showcase your skills and resume) consider looking for your actual name.
- If you are looking for freelance and contract work you could think up a catchy “business” name.

Hosting — Rent server space.

- To make your site available to any person anywhere, you need to rent space (a folder) on a dedicated web server, often referred to as a host.
- You then point your domain to that host folder.
- If you rent your domain and your hosting from the same company, they will automate this process.
- You sometimes have a choice to make – Windows or Linux server. The difference is in the types of databases (Access or SQL) each supports. I don’t use databases much, but places I’ve worked lean towards SQL (Linux). This is primarily because of the support for Content Management Systems (CMS) like Wordpress.
- Some hosts may try to up-sell you during the checkout process. To get started you need only a domain and hosting. You can get the rest later if desired.
- Most of the time you can host multiple sites on your server, just give each site it’s own root folder (and index page) then point your domains to the correct folder. Some hosts have a data limit, which might impact how many sites you have on each server rental.
- Sometimes hosting services will throw in a free domain for a year with hosting subscriptions.

Extras

- Almost all modern hosting packages use something called cPanel to manage your sites. No matter what host you choose, chances are we’ll be able to troubleshoot together.
- It’s easier to manage domains and hosting from the same company (account).
- Get an SSL certificate if you are transferring sensitive data to/from your site (like credit cards).
- If you do not want the world to know a lot about you, consider using private registration. Otherwise all of your registration details are public knowledge (including name, address, and phone number).

Mobile First Design

Mobile first design is a new(ish) Responsive Web Design (RWD) strategy that incorporates designing for mobile devices, well, first.

- Instead of trying to build a big website, and shrinking the content to fit a smaller screen, you build for a smaller screen first and adjust the page layout as the screen gets larger.
- I like to think of this strategy as mobile concurrent – Meaning you are taking into consideration the content layout on multiple sized screens while you concept the visual pieces (in Photoshop). How is the content going to flow as the experience changes?
- Mobile First also means you first write the CSS to describe how the site looks on mobile devices. Then you use media queries to change the layout for wider screens.
- This technique ensures that older mobile devices, which do not understand media queries, will still display the mobile site.
- We'll be learning how to make these changes through the use of **media queries, fluid grids, and relative units**.

Design for Logical Breakpoints

- A key component of a mobile first strategy is focusing on the content, and not to a specific device size.
- For instance, don't design a layout for the iPad Air 2, and a different design for the iPhone 6S. Instead, code your site and if you find a screen width that "breaks" your design, add a media query to fix the layout at that point.

Why?

- Recent statistics show that web views on mobile devices exceed desktop web views (<http://money.cnn.com/2014/02/28/technology/mobile/mobile-apps-internet/>).
- They also show that only approximately 18% of the top 10,000 websites embrace Responsive Web Design. Stand out from the crowd!

Content Stacking

Creative Bloq has a nice write-up on mobile first design worth looking into if you want. One extremely helpful piece I pulled from the article was Content Stacking. Look at the content and parallel the flow of your design. It removes all visual elements and just organizes the content.

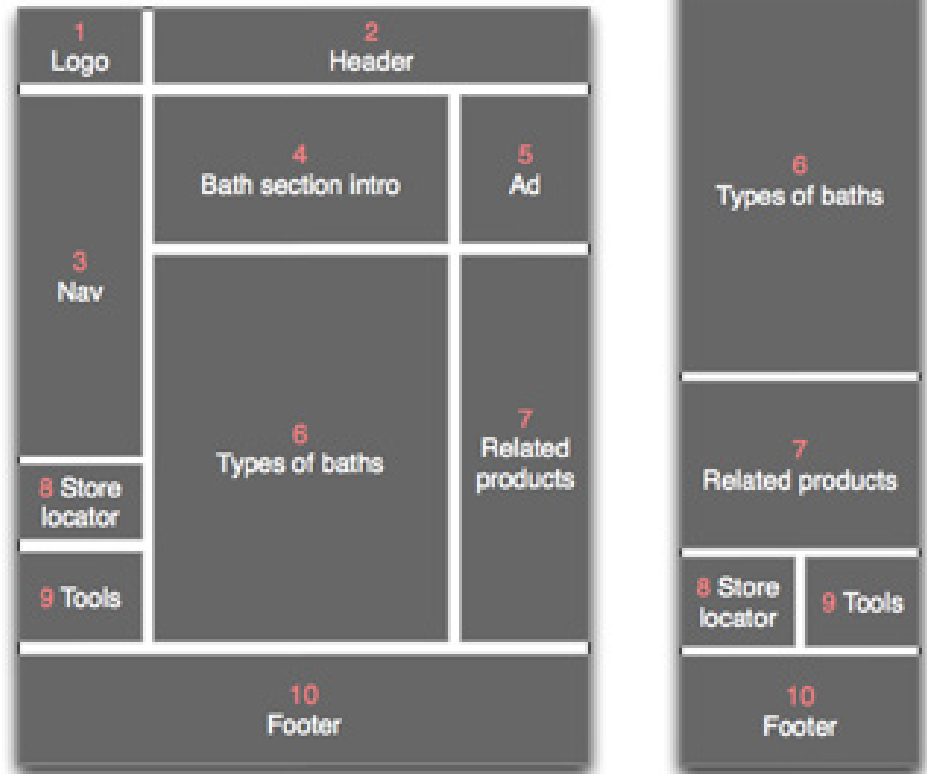


Image from Creative Bloq. Link to the full article:

<http://www.creativebloq.com/mobile/mobile-design-912823>