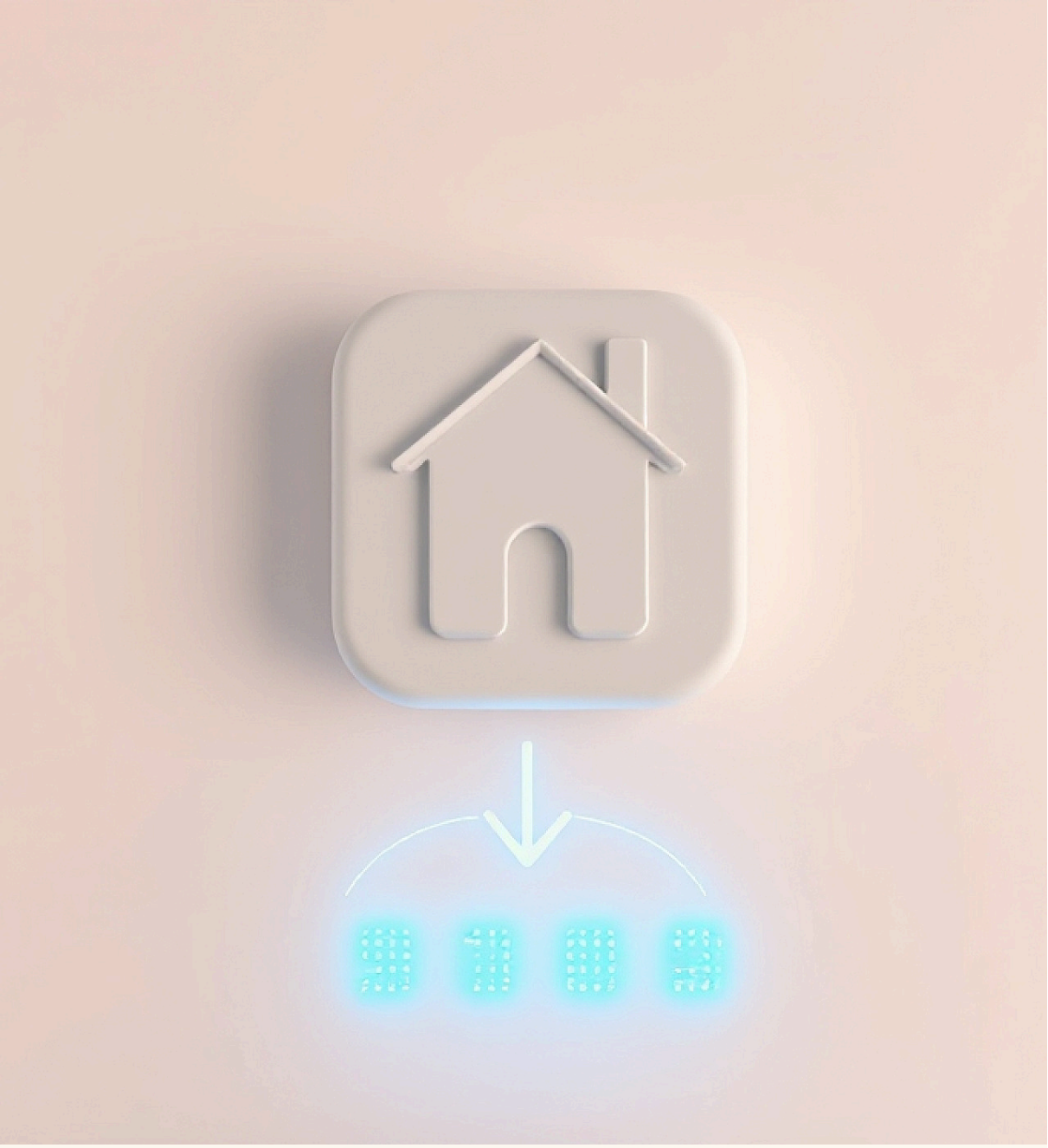
What is a domain name?

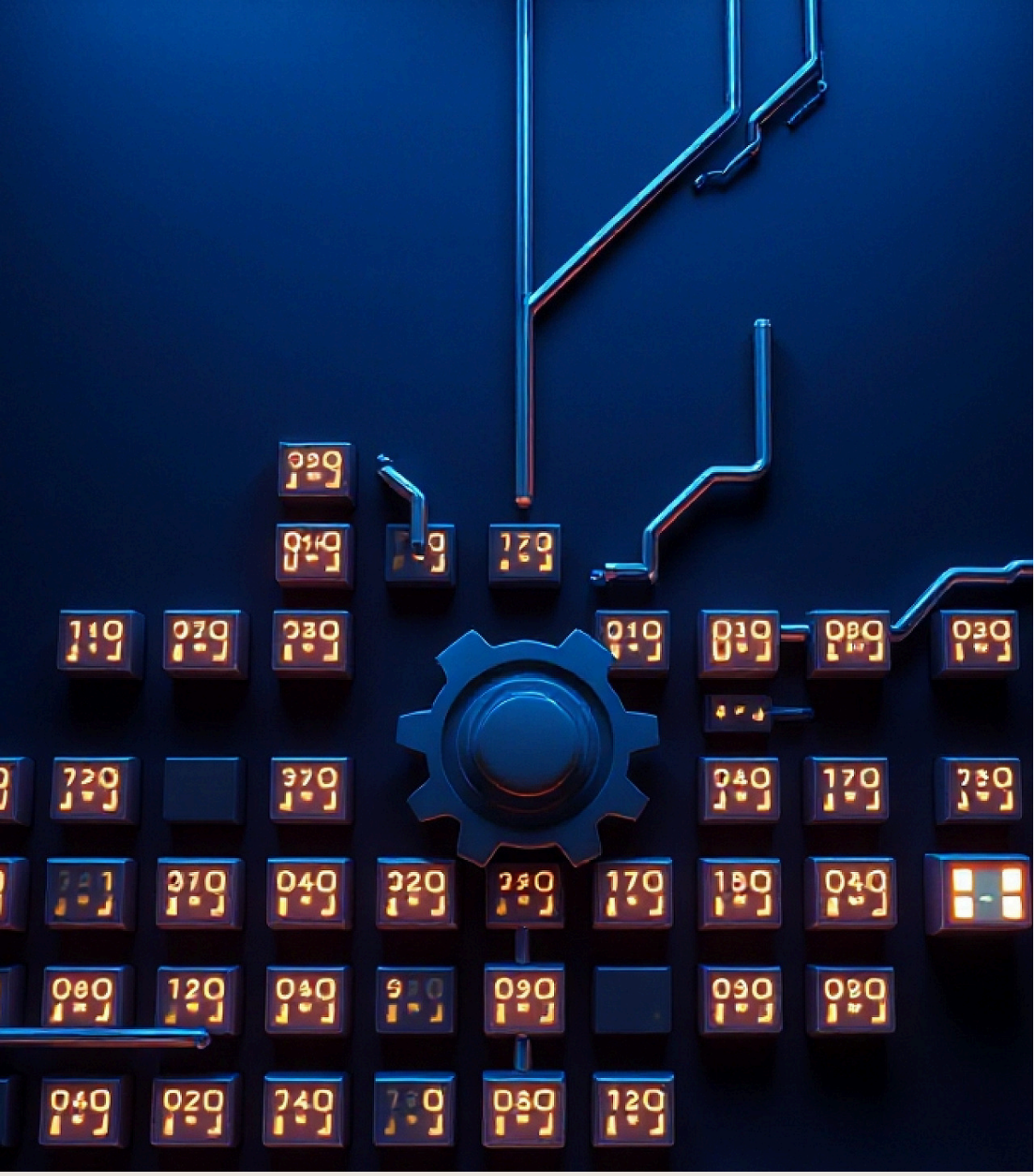


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What is a domain name?



A domain name is the readable name you type to reach something on the internet, like a website or an online service. It is the part that looks like a word or phrase, such as example.com, instead of a string of numbers. The short answer is that a domain name is a human-friendly label for an internet address. You use it every time you visit a site by typing its name.



Every device and resource on the internet has a numerical address called an IP address. IP stands for Internet Protocol, and the address is a series of numbers that computers use to find each other. For example, an IP address might look like 192.0.2.1. Computers rely on these numbers to send and receive data across the network.



Long strings of numbers are difficult for people to remember. Typing an IP address like 192.0.2.1 by hand is slow and easy to get wrong, especially if you need to visit many sites. Imagine having to recall a different number for every website you use. This is why the internet needs a simpler way for people to reach resources.



A domain name is a readable label that stands in for the numerical IP address. Instead of typing 192.0.2.1, you can type a name like example.com. People remember names much more easily than numbers because names are made of words and are meaningful. The domain name makes the internet address human-friendly.



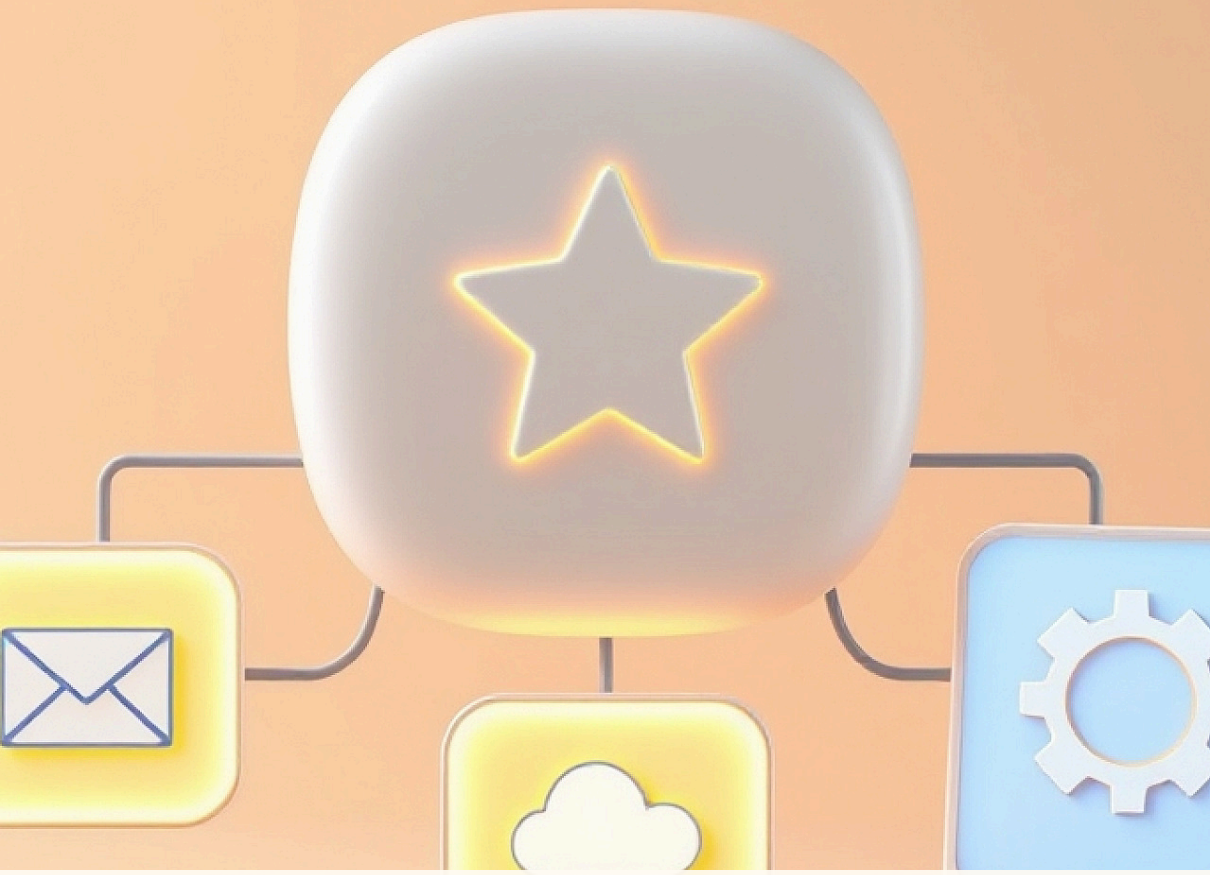
When you want to visit a website, you type its domain name into the browser's address bar. This is the everyday action that starts a visit to a site. For example, you might type www.example.com and then press Enter. The browser takes that name and begins the process of finding the right place.



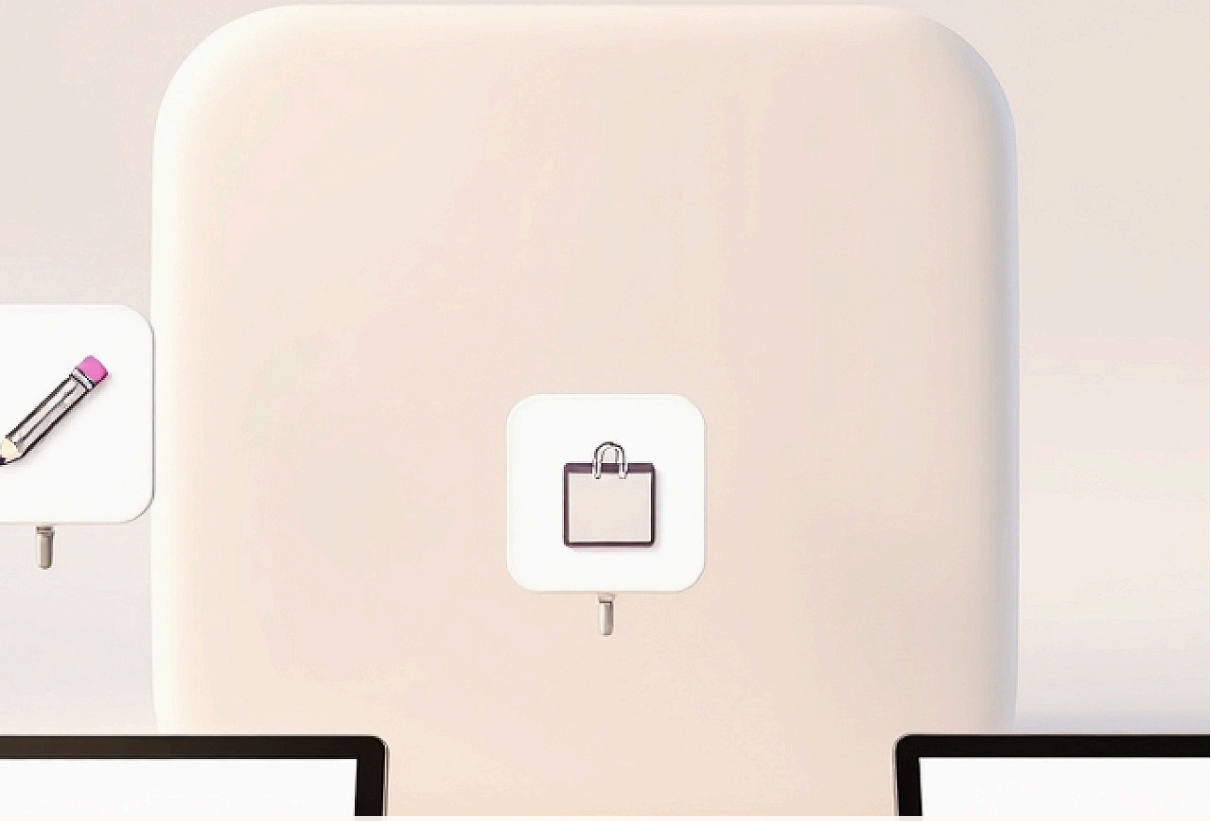
After you type a domain name, the browser looks up the matching IP address. This lookup happens automatically through a system called DNS, which stands for Domain Name System. DNS works like a phone book that maps names to numbers. The browser then uses the found IP address to reach the correct server and load the site.



A domain name and a website's files are not the same thing. The domain name is like an address that points to a location; the files are the actual content stored on a server at that location. For example, example.com is the name, but the text, images, and code that make up the site are separate files. The name helps you find the files, but it does not contain them.



One domain name can lead to many different services. For example, under example.com you might find a website, an email service, and a file-sharing service. The domain name is a shared starting point, not a single page. Different services can be set up to respond when someone uses the same domain name.



Subdomains are smaller names placed in front of the main domain name. They let one domain lead to several separate areas. For example, blog.example.com might be a blog, while shop.example.com might be an online store. The main domain is example.com, and the subdomain is the part before the dot, like blog or shop.



A domain name is made of parts separated by dots. Reading it from left to right shows how the name is built. For example, in www.example.com, the parts are www, example, and com. The rightmost part, like com, is called the top-level domain, and the part before it is the main name. Each part helps identify the specific location.



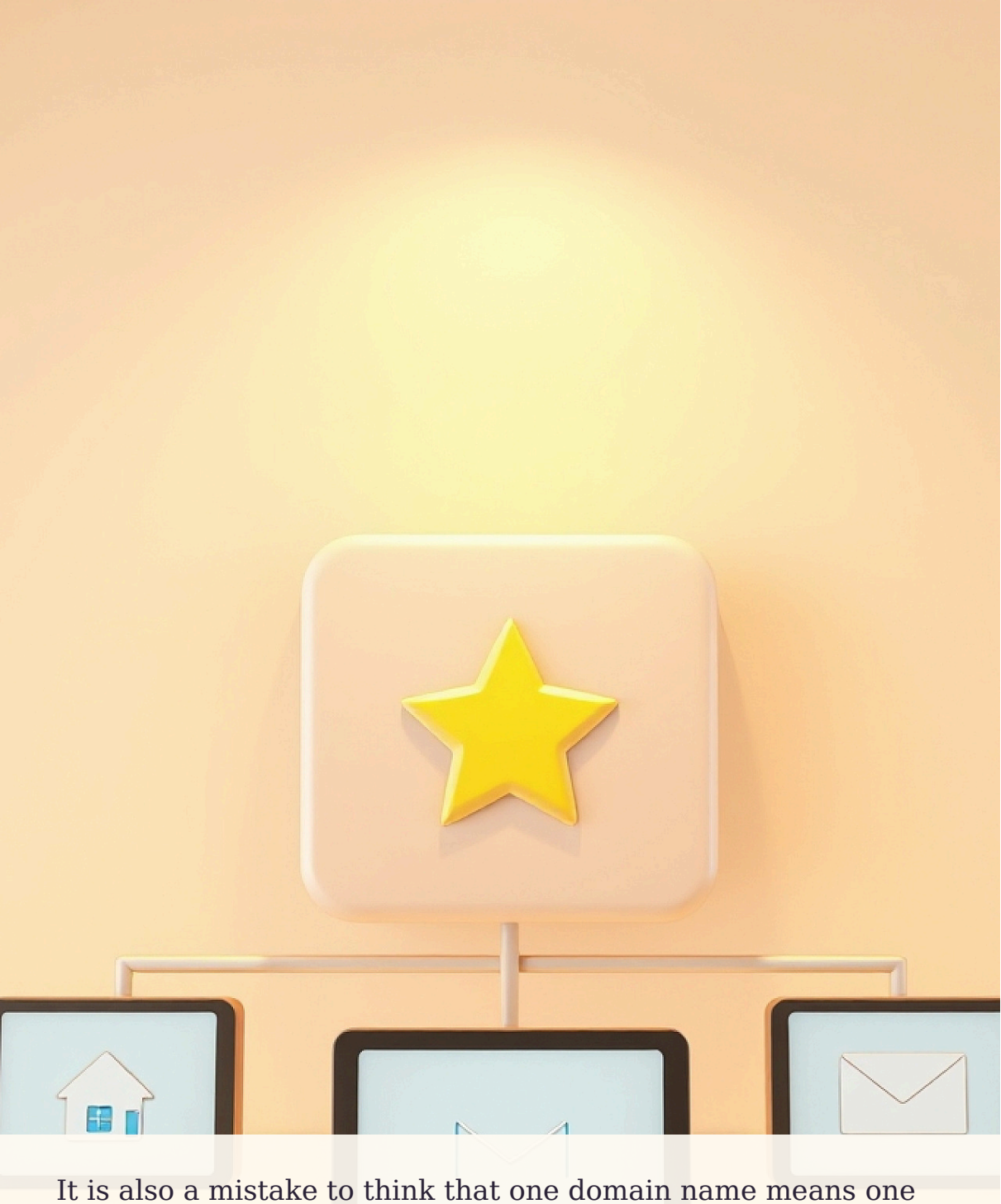
A domain name is simply a readable label, not a physical object. It exists to make internet addresses human-friendly. You cannot touch or hold a domain name; it is a piece of information stored in the DNS system. Its only purpose is to help people and computers find resources easily.



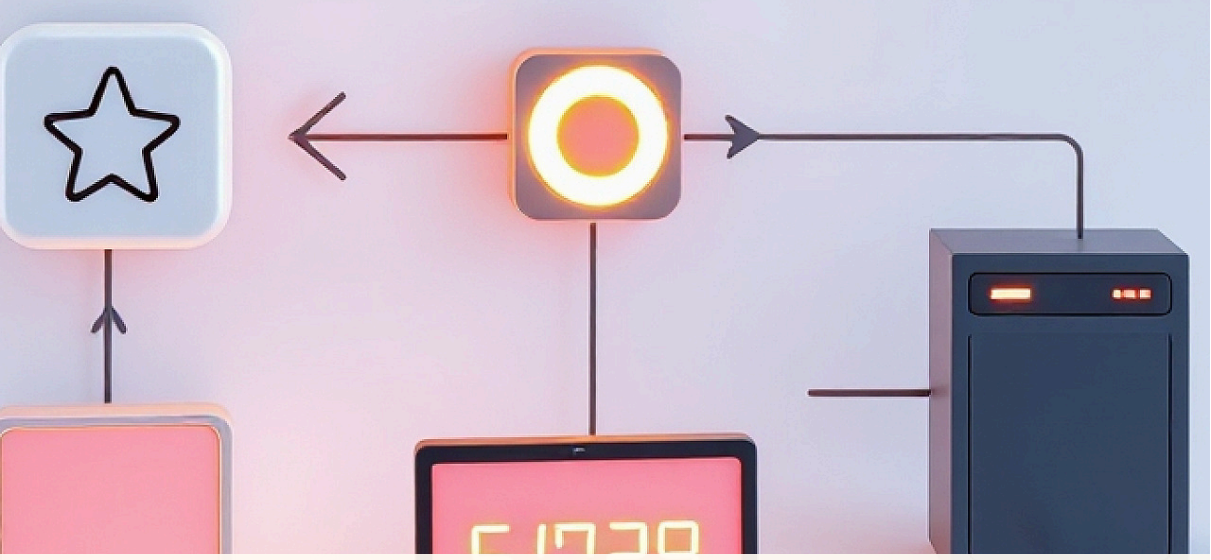
A common mistake is to think that a domain name is the website itself. In truth, the domain name is only the readable address that leads people to the website. The website consists of files and content stored on a server. The name is like a street address; the website is like the house at that address.



Another mistake is to believe that the domain name contains the website's files. The name does not hold any files; it only helps find the server where the files live. For example, when you type example.com, the browser uses the name to look up the server's IP address, then requests the files from that server. The files are stored separately.



It is also a mistake to think that one domain name means one single page. Many services and subdomains can sit under the same name. For instance, example.com might have a main page, a blog at blog.example.com, and an email service at mail.example.com. The domain name is a shared starting point for multiple resources.



Putting it all together: computers use numerical IP addresses to find each other, but people use readable domain names instead. When you type a domain name, the browser looks up the matching IP address and then reaches the right server. The domain name is separate from the website's files and can host many services and subdomains. This system makes the internet easy to use.



What to remember: a domain name is a readable internet address that replaces hard-to-remember numbers. It is not the website's files, and one name can hold many services and subdomains. You type it into a browser to start a visit, and the browser looks up the numerical address for you. This simple idea makes navigating the internet possible for everyone.