

# What are IDN Domains?

**IDN** stands for **Internationalized Domain Name**. IDN domains allow for domain names to be registered using **non-Latin characters**.

Before the introduction of IDN domains, domain names were limited to the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet, along with the numbers 0-9 and the hyphen (-) character. This made it difficult for people who use non-Latin scripts to register domain names that accurately reflected their online identity or the content of their website.

With IDN domains, users can register **domain names** using a wider range of characters from different scripts, making it easier for people to use domain names **in their native language** or script.

For example:

- a **German user** can now register a domain name using characters with **umlauts (such as ä, ö, ü)** or the eszett (ß) character, which was previously not allowed in domain names
- a **Finnish user** can now register a domain name using characters with **diacritical marks (such as ä and ö)** that are specific to the Finnish language
- and **many more international users** can use language-specific characters in their domain names

With IDN domains, they can now **register domain names** using their native language characters, making it easier for them to represent their **online identity** and connect with their **target audience in their own language**.

Enabling IDN domains requires a technical process that involves converting non-Latin characters into ASCII characters, which is a standardized encoding system used by the existing internet infrastructure. This conversion is known as PUNYCODE, and it allows IDN domains to be processed and managed by existing systems that are designed to work with ASCII characters.

To simplify the registration process for IDN domains, we provide a PUNYCODE presentation of the domain name during the registration procedure. This allows users to easily see how their domain name will be encoded in ASCII characters and how it will be displayed in different contexts.

Web sites where you can verify PUNYCODES are (IDN-specific knowledge is required):

- [Wikipedia](#)
- <http://josefsson.org/idn.php>