A Beginner's Guide to DNS Records

Introduction

DNS records are a key part of how DNS works to direct domain names to the correct locations and services. This beginner's guide will explain the basics of DNS records.

What are DNS Records?

DNS records are entries that live on DNS servers which match domain names to:

- IP addresses of hosting providers.
- Other domains (redirects).
- Email servers for routing mail and more.

There are many types of records that serve different purposes.

Common DNS Record Types

Here are some common DNS record types:

- A records - Match a domain to an IPv4 IP address.
- AAAA - Match a domain to an IPv6 IP address.
- CNAME - Redirect/alias a domain to another domain.
- MX - Define mail servers for a domain's email.
- NS - Delegate DNS servers for a domain.

Managing DNS Records

DNS records are hosted by your domain's nameservers. Records can be created, edited or deleted to control a domain's behavior:

- Use your domain registrar or DNS provider to manage records.
- Modify TTLs to control caching duration of records.
- Add new records like A records to direct sites to hosts.

DNS record management is a key part of controlling how your domains and infrastructure are connected. Understanding the basics empowers you to link domains and services correctly.

Conclusion

DNS records are an integral behind-the-scenes part of the web. Learning how to manage them unlocks greater flexibility and control with your online presence.