

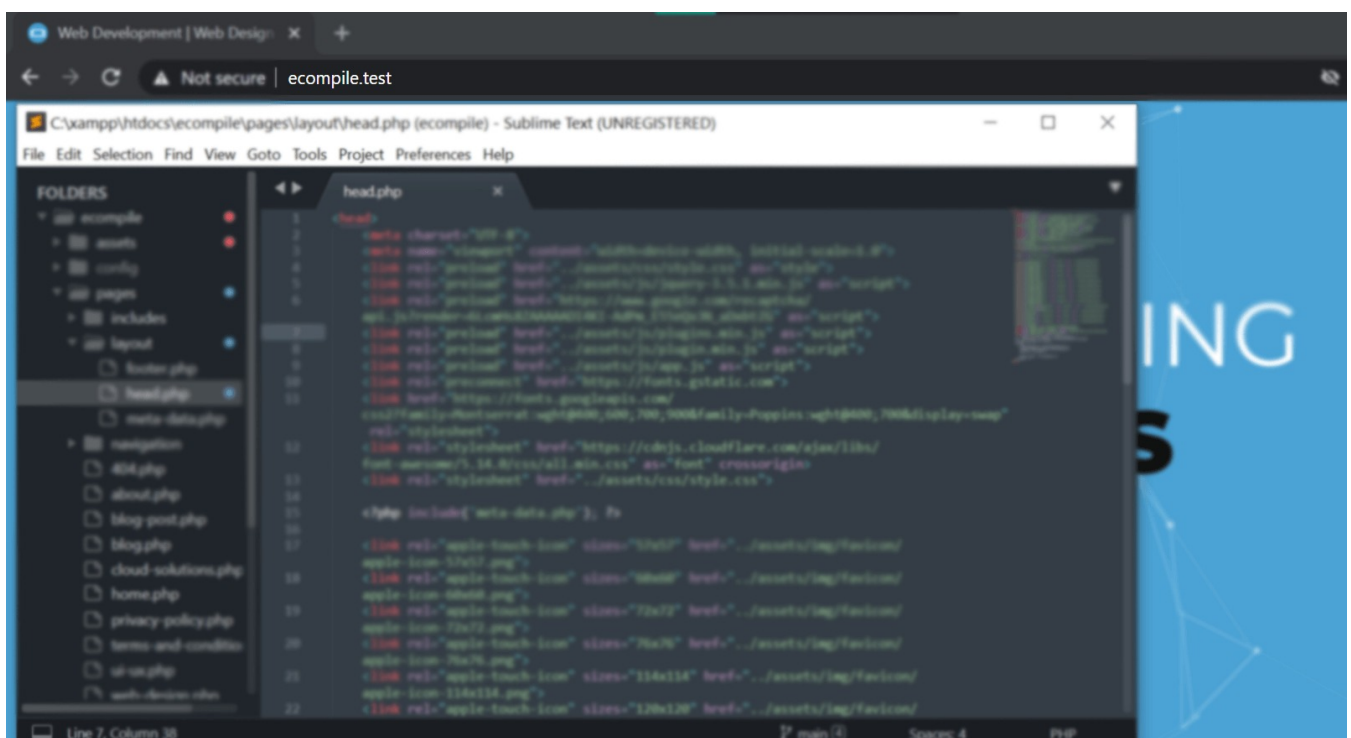


# How to set a custom domain name on a localhost (Windows 10)

Views: 102,648

Published: 25 Nov 2020

9 minute read



**Want to access your website on a localhost via a domain name, say something like mywebsite.test? There are few benefits in doing so.**

*Updated: 21/01/2022*

- You can create shortened URLs to be able to access your local website easily

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### Step 1.

Open the directory below in file explorer:

C:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc

### Step 2.

There you will find a file called *"hosts"*. Double click on the file to open it. If it asks you to choose a program to open it, choose "Notepad" or your preferred text editor.

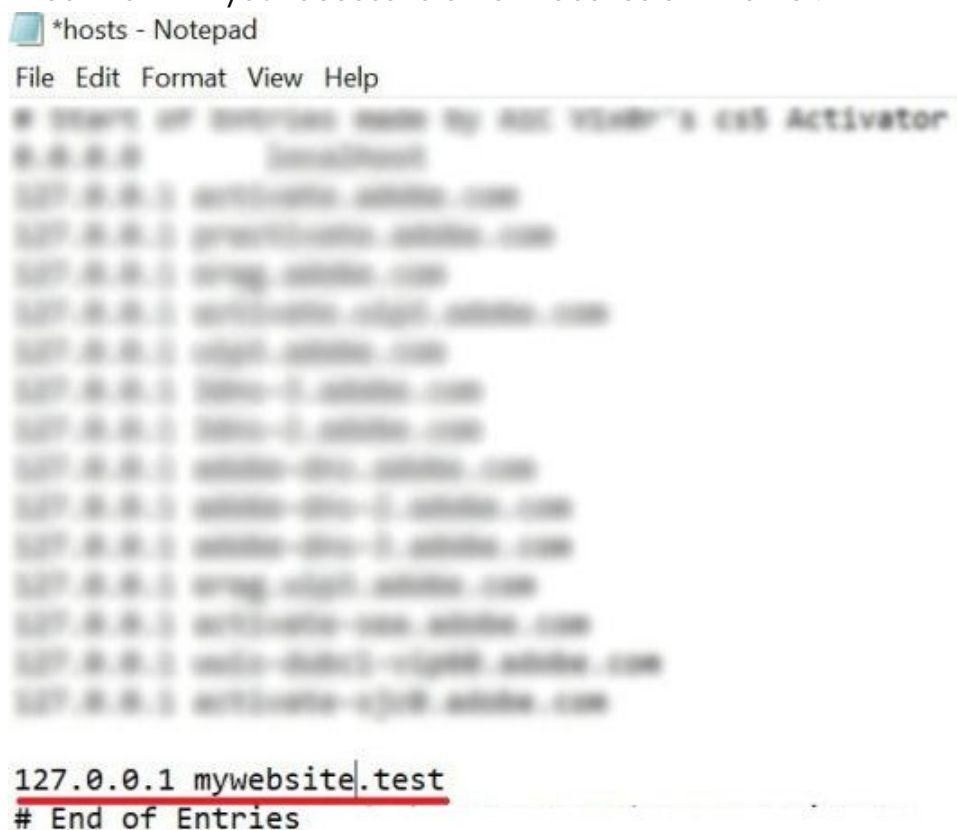
### Step 3.

Scroll to the end of the file and add the following line:

127.0.0.1 example.test

*Note:*

- Type in your local machine address(127.0.0.1) follow by the domain name. You can use any extension(.test .mywork .dev). Do not use common extensions (such as .com, .net, .io, etc), otherwise it will conflict with your access to other websites on internet.



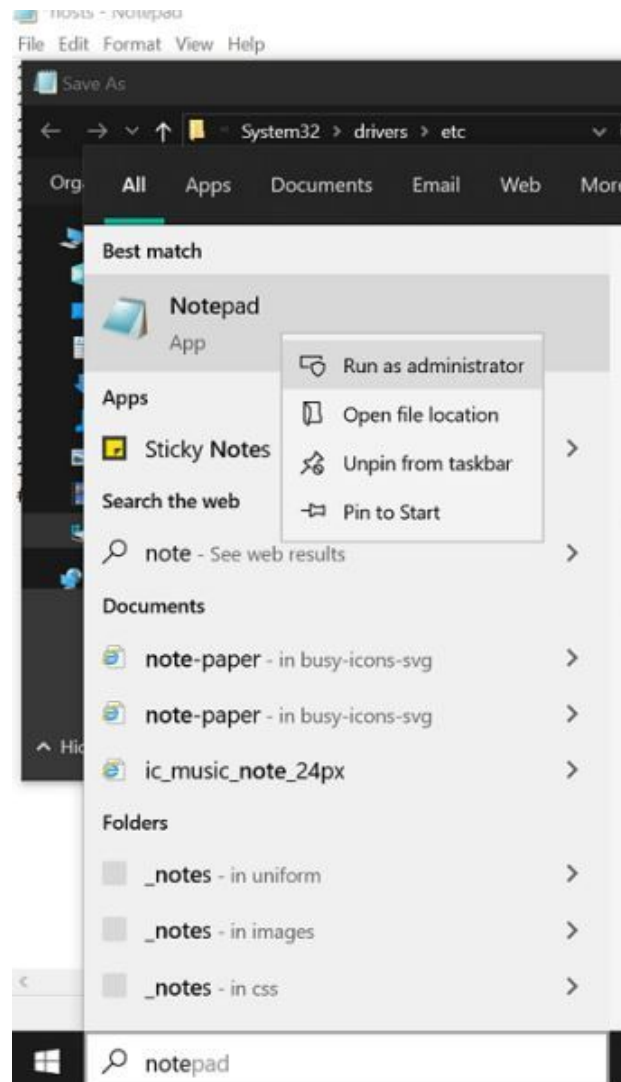
### Step 4.

Click Save (Shortcut for Windows is CTRL+S) to overwrite the changes to the file. *In the "Save Type As" dropdown select 'All Files'.* There should be a popup window asking you if you want to replace the file. Click "Yes".

You could get a message prompt saying that you don't have the right/administrator permissions to replace the file. If you do, **Go to step 4.1**, if not skip to Step 5.

#### Step 4.1

In your windows startup search bar, type *"notepad"*. Right click on notepad and run it as administrator.



Copy the full contents of **hosts** file that we previously opened in step 3. Paste the content into the notepad file that you opened as an administrator in step 4.1.

Click "Save As" on the new notepad. For "Save Type As" select 'All Files'. Change the directory on the Save Popup Window to the following folder:

```
C:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc
```

You will see a file on top called "hosts". Select the file and it will prompt *"file already exists, do you want to override the file?"*, to which you must select "Yes".

#### Step 5.

Open the follow directory

```
C:\xampp\apache\conf\extra
```

Double click to open a file called **"httpd-vhosts"**. If it asks you to choose a program to open it, choose Notepad.

### Step 6.

Scroll to the bottom end of the file and add the following code:

```
<VirtualHost *:80#62;
ServerAdmin example.test
DocumentRoot "C:/xampp/htdocs/foldername/"
ServerName example.test
</VirtualHost#62;
```

You should replace **"c:/xampp/htdocs/example/"** with location of your project. Example, if your project is in a subfolder then add the subfolder **" c:/xampp/htdocs/folder/subfolder/"**

ServerName (**example.test**) should also be replaced your chosen domain name. Note it must be the same domain name that you used in Step 3.

```
*httpd-vhosts - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
# match a ##ServerName or ##ServerAlias in any <VirtualHost> block.
#
##<VirtualHost *:80>
##    ##ServerAdmin webmaster@dummy-host.example.com
##    ##DocumentRoot "C:/xampp/htdocs/dummy-host.example.com"
##    ##ServerName dummy-host.example.com
##    ##ServerAlias www.dummy-host.example.com
##    ##ErrorLog "logs/dummy-host.example.com-error.log"
##    ##CustomLog "logs/dummy-host.example.com-access.log" common
##</VirtualHost>

##<VirtualHost *:80>
##    ##ServerAdmin webmaster@dummy-host2.example.com
##    ##DocumentRoot "C:/xampp/htdocs/dummy-host2.example.com"
##    ##ServerName dummy-host2.example.com
##    ##ErrorLog "logs/dummy-host2.example.com-error.log"
##    ##CustomLog "logs/dummy-host2.example.com-access.log" common
##</VirtualHost>

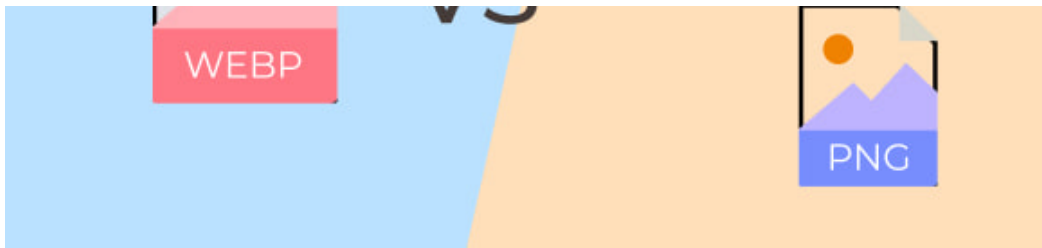
<VirtualHost *:80>
DocumentRoot "c:/xampp/htdocs/mywebsite/"
ServerName mywebsite.test
<Directory "c:/xampp/htdocs/mywebsite/">
</Directory>
</VirtualHost>
```

Next restart your xampp. (Stop & Start the apache service).

Type in your new domain name into the browser's search bar and you are good to go.

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## About the Author



**Shavkat**

Has been doing web design & development since early 2010s. Believes every website should serve a purpose. he is the founder and head of Development at Ecompile.

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