

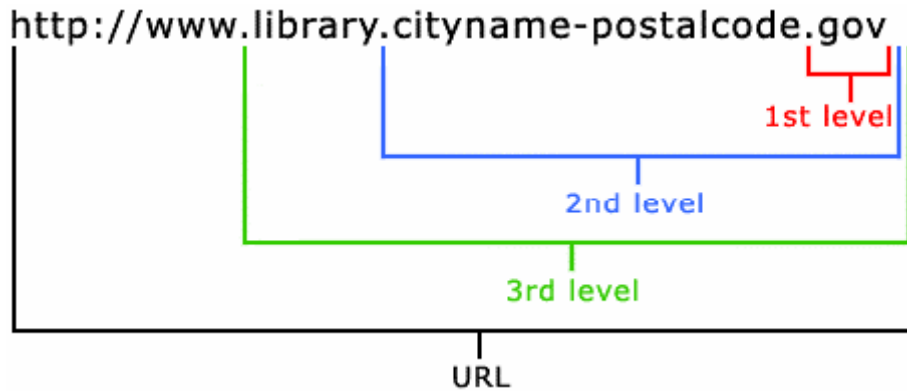
Third-Level Domain Names Explained

Domain Names

Domain names (e.g., gsa.gov) are used to locate computers on the Internet and to enable people to reach websites.

A host name identifies a specific computer on the Internet. For example, the host name in Figure-1 is www.library.cityname-postalcode.gov.

Figure-1



Domain names are made up of a hierarchy known as levels. The hierarchical levels within a domain name are built from right to left and are separated by periods (".") within the domain name. The highest level of a domain name is the top-level domain (TLD). This level is also known as the first-level domain. For example, the TLD in Figure-1 is ".gov." In Figure-1, the second-level domain is "cityname-postalcode.gov" and "cityname-postalcode" is the entity associated with the domain name. Second-level.GOV domain names are obtained via the Government Domain Registration site. In Figure-1, the third-level domain is "library.cityname-postalcode.gov." The third-level domain of "library.cityname-postalcode.gov" would be obtained through the owner of the cityname-postalcode.gov domain. Further specialization within a domain is possible by adding additional domain levels.