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KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

A wildcard DNS record (*): what it does, and when it gets in the way

Domains & DNS

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The short answer: a wildcard record, written with an asterisk (*), answers for **any subdomain that has no record of its own**. With it, **anything.your-domain.com** opens the same place. It is useful for applications that create a subdomain per customer; for an ordinary site, it usually does more harm than good.

What the site needs

What	What to do
What it does	If ***.your-domain.com** exists pointing at an address, any name without its own record goes to that address.
What it does not do	It does not cover the domain itself (with nothing before it), and a record that exists for a specific name takes priority over the wildcard.
What it is for	Applications where each customer has their own subdomain, created without touching the DNS.
The server must accept too	DNS only takes the visitor to the server. The web server must accept the name (a wildcard “alias”) and answer with the right site.
Certificate	Automatic certificates cover the names that exist; to cover any subdomain you need a wildcard certificate: **Wildcard SSL**.

Getting started

1. **Decide whether you really need it.** For a site and half a dozen subdomains, create each by hand: **Adding a subdomain**.

2 **If you need it,** create the record in the Zone Editor with the name * and type A (or CNAME) to the target: **A or CNAME**.

3 **Set up the server** to accept the wildcard and answer with the right site (or with an error page).

4 **Test** any name and a name that has its own record: the second should go to its own target.

5 **Check the certificate** and the redirect: **From HTTP to HTTPS**.

With a wildcard, every typo opens a site. “wwww.your-domain.com” or “mial.your-domain.com” start to answer, Google may find duplicate pages and someone can point links at names they make up. If the server answers with the main site on any name, return a 404 for names it does not know instead.

Before touching the DNS, see what is already there: **DNS records**. If you changed the DNS and see no effect: **I changed the DNS and nothing shows yet**.

Need a wildcard for an application with a subdomain per customer? Open a ticket with the domain and the application.

Open a support ticket

SEE ALSO

DNS records explained: A, CNAME, MX, TXT and TTL

Pointing a subdomain to another server or service: A record or CNAME

How to add another domain or a subdomain

CAA records: who may issue certificates for your domain

How long DNS changes take to propagate

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