

How to Quickly Fix DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN Error

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Quick answer

If you've ever come across the error message "This site can't be reached" or "DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN", you're not alone. This common issue occurs when your browser cannot resolve a domain name into an IP address, meaning it can't find the website you're trying to visit.

If you've ever come across the error message "This site can't be reached" or "DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN", you're not alone. This common issue occurs when your browser cannot resolve a domain name into an IP address, meaning it can't find the website you're trying to visit.

In this article, we'll break down what this error means, the common reasons behind it, and provide step-by-step solutions to help you get back online. All tips here are beginner-friendly and tailored to both desktop and mobile users.

What Is the DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN Error?

The error relates to the Domain Name System (DNS) - the technology that translates website names (like 'example.com') into IP addresses your device uses to connect to servers. When this system fails to find a matching address, your browser displays the DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN error, which essentially means "domain not found".

Common Causes of the Error

Several factors can trigger this issue:

- Misspelled URL
- Inactive or expired domain
- DNS misconfiguration
- Corrupted DNS cache
- VPN, firewall, or antivirus interference
- Browser cache issues
- Internet connectivity problems
- Incorrect entries in the local hosts file

How to Fix DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN: Step-by-Step

1. Check URL and Domain Status

- Double-check the URL for any typos.
- Use ICANN Lookup to see if the domain is active or expired.

2. Restart Your Devices

- Reboot your computer and mobile device.
- Unplug your modem/router, wait 30 seconds, then plug it back in.

3. Try a Different Browser or Device

- Open the site in a different browser (e.g., Firefox, Edge).
- Test on another device using the same network to isolate the problem.

4. Clear Browser Cache and Cookies

For Chrome:

- Go to 'Settings > Privacy and Security > Clear Browsing Data'
- Select "Cookies and other site data" and "Cached images and files"

5. Flush DNS Cache

Windows:

- Open Command Prompt (Run as Administrator)
- Run: 'ipconfig /flushdns'

Mac:

- Open Terminal and enter: 'sudo dscacheutil -flushcache; sudo killall -HUP mDNSResponder'

Chrome-specific DNS Cache:

- Type 'chrome://net-internals/#dns' in Chrome's address bar
- Click on "Clear host cache"

6. Release and Renew IP Address

Windows: 'ipconfig /release ipconfig /renew' Mac:

- Go to 'System Preferences > Network > Advanced > TCP/IP'
- Click on "Renew DHCP Lease"

7. Restart DNS Client Service (Windows)

- Open "Run" (Windows + R), type 'services.msc'
- Find "DNS Client", right-click > Restart

8. Change DNS Server

Recommended Public DNS Providers:

Provider: Google | Primary DNS: 8.8.8.8 | Secondary DNS: 8.8.4.4

Provider: Cloudflare | Primary DNS: 1.1.1.1 | Secondary DNS: 1.0.0.1

How to Change DNS:

- Go to Network Settings
- Modify IPv4 settings to use custom DNS servers

9. Disable VPN, Firewall, and Antivirus Temporarily

- Turn off VPN if active
- Disable antivirus/firewall temporarily to test site access

Quote: Note: Re-enable protection tools once testing is complete

10. Check and Edit Hosts File

Windows:

- Go to: 'C:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc\hosts'
- Open with Notepad (Admin Mode)
- Remove any suspicious entries redirecting your site

Mac:

- Open Terminal, run: 'sudo nano /private/etc/hosts'
- Remove any blocking entries

11. Reset Chrome Flags (if using Chrome)

- Visit: 'chrome://flags'
- Click "Reset all to default"
- Restart Chrome

Advanced Checks for WordPress or Website Owners

If you're running a WordPress site, here are a few extra checks:

- Reset permalinks: 'WordPress > Settings > Permalinks > Save Changes'
- Check .htaccess file: Rename or reset to default if misconfigured
- Disable plugins/themes: Use Safe Mode or deactivate items to identify conflicts
- Clear caching plugins and server-side cache

Mobile-Specific Troubleshooting

- Toggle Airplane Mode on/off
- Clear Mobile Browser Cache
- Forget and Reconnect to WiFi
- Switch from WiFi to Mobile Data or vice versa

How to Prevent DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN in Future

- Use reliable DNS servers (Google, Cloudflare)
- Keep antivirus/firewall software updated
- Avoid shady websites or untrusted downloads
- Monitor and maintain domain registration and DNS records
- Use trusted hosting and CDN providers

Conclusion

The DNS_PROBE_FINISHED_NXDOMAIN error may seem intimidating, but with a methodical approach, it's easy to resolve. Whether it's a misconfiguration, browser cache, or DNS issue, following the steps above will help you quickly get back on track. If none of the solutions work, it's a good idea to contact your ISP or hosting provider for assistance.