It doesn't matter what you're naming—your product, your business, or your Web site your choice is important.
Below, you'll find a flock of ideas, strategies, and tools to make your name discovery a little easier.

Generating a name is not cut and dry. The process of naming is anything but linear.

There is NO chronological set of events that promise to lead you to naming perfection.

There is NO set of naming principles you must adhere to.

Sure, there are certain guidelines and ideas that are good to keep in mind, but I promise you that there's an exception to every rule.

**Consider this: The basic stuff**

1. Be easy to pronounce and spell.
2. Make it memorable.
3. Don't pigeonhole yourself (being too specific in the naming of your company or product [example: Dave's 256k Flash Drives Inc. or Toowoomba Flooring] can hinder growth later).
4. Stay away from negative connotations (consider other cultures).
5. Make sure your name doesn't alienate any group (race, religion, etc.)
6. Search for existing trademarks on potential names (www.ipaustralia.gov.au).
7. Make sure that the domain is available or purchasable in the aftermarket.

**Consider this: Domain availability**

Domain availability is possibly the biggest hang-up to ever happen to naming. Sure, you can come up with great potential names, but can you come up with great potential domains that are available?

I won't spend much time on this because it's pretty simple. If you're creating a name for a product or business that will require a .com or .com.au, be patient, keep trying, and you'll start to get a feel for names that are more likely to be available than others.

**Consider this: Focused brainstorming**

Every book out there prescribes brainstorming. However, instead of just sitting back and trying to come up with ANY words that describe your business, focus your brainstorming to answering a set of questions.

Answer each by making as long of a list or words and phrases as you possibly can. Remember, the longer and more abstract your list, the better off you'll be. So go wild...

* What does your product do?
* What does your industry do, what's its purpose?
* What is your product's benefit to the consumer?
* What will happen for them?
* What will they get?
* What are the "ingredients" that go into your product or service?
* How are you different from the competition?
* What makes you unique?
* What's the lingo in your industry? What are the expressions that are unique to your offering and business?

Add your own to the list, as you see fit.

 **Consider this: Synonym search**

It's pretty simple, really. Take every one of the words you brainstormed above and plug them into a thesaurus, like Thesaurus.com ([thesaurus.reference.com](http://thesaurus.reference.com/)). Run through each entry, keeping the words you like, trashing the ones you don't. Put these into a new list, paying attention to name possibilities.

**Consider this: Word combining + a cool name-combining tool**

After you've done some focused brainstorming and/or a synonym search, try word combining. Pop ALL of your words into a word combiner like My Tool ([www.my-tool.com/word-domain/word-picker/](http://www.my-tool.com/word-domain/word-picker/)), tweak its settings to reflect what you want it to show, and combine.

Depending on how many words you put into the system, you may get a massive list returned to you.

**Consider this: Name and word lists to get your juices flowing**

Plenty of great product, company, and Web site names have their roots in other, irrelevant names. Look up "list of \_\_\_\_\_\_" in Google and you'll get more than you can handle:

Geologic periods Fruit or food names

Types of dinosaurs Kinds of rocks

Latin or Greek roots Place names

Historical figure names Zoological names

Botanical names Math or Engineering terms

Astronomical terms Animal, fish, or bug names

Think about this abstractly also. If your product is new and unique, what foods or plants have fresh connotations? And so on.

**Consider this: Groovy word tool**

Use this More Words tool ([www.morewords.com](http://www.morewords.com/)) and search for any words that contain \_\_\_\_ . You can search for anything—search for words that contain "top," or words that have a double "e." Virtually any sound or letter combo you want to find in a word, this site will do it for you.

**Consider this: Meaningful or not?**

(Example: Dave's Rocket Repair Inc. has meaning, Simble Inc. does not.)

Some say creating a name with built-in meaning is a must—new companies or products need to seem familiar and safe. Others say non-meaningful names are the best— the name is completely yours, free of meaning (which you can then define); plus, newly coined word names connote innovation.

The jury, as they say, is out. Some things to keep in mind though:
Newly coined words CAN convey meaning. The most championed of these may be Acura, which was formed from the morpheme "Acu" and finishing with suffix "ra." Acu as a root connotes accuracy or precision, which fits nicely for a luxury car line.

**Consider this: A truly killer naming tool**

Word Lab ([www.wordlab.com](http://www.wordlab.com/)) and specifically this page: Word Lab Tools ([www.wordlab.com/tools/t\_index.cfm](http://www.wordlab.com/tools/t_index.cfm)).

This Web site I consider to be one of the single most powerful naming tools out there. With an absolutely massive list of company names, a morpheme name creator, name builder, and so on, this site is the juggernaut of idea generators. Every time I'm naming something new, I use this site.

 **Consider this: Metaphorical naming (some powerful stuff)**

I call it metaphorical or lateral naming; but no matter what you call it, it's a branch from the focused brainstorm, and often the coolest names come from this method. It'll take a more creative, abstract frame of mind, so whatever you need to do to break out of your linear comfort zone, do it.

Here we're going to centre on the question "What does your product, business or industry do?" You're going to sequentially take each of the words and phrases you came up with, and come up with other things in life that do these things too. Make a list of everything you come up with. Here is an example:

Imagine a software company, and their newest product's function is to copy files. So they ask themselves, "What else in life copies things?"

A copier—too logical.
A cell—might work, but a little "out there."
A mime—A HA!
Why not call the new software product... Mime.

**Consider this: Industry lingo**

Each industry has its lingo, and you may have noticed that many taglines come from such lingo... or, more distinctly, from words and expressions that are used by your consumers.

For example, if you’ve just developed the perfect fish hook that never, and I mean never, lets a fish go. A common expression in fishing when you feel a fish take your bait is "Fish on." This great expression, combined with something else, might make a nice tagline for your fail-safe hook. How about "Fish on ... never off."

**Consider this: How is the competition named? What are the trends?**

Many people have made the mistake of not checking their competition first, before creating a name, only to find out the name they created is just like a competitor's. Time wasted.

Now, my general rule is to find out how your competitors are naming themselves and simply be different. Stepping out of the box is always a bit of a gamble, so make sure you're different in what will be seen as a positive way.

**Consider this: Name rhyming**

Rhymed names are memorable and can work, as long as they're not too cute or overboard. Rhyme Zone ([www.rhymezone.com](http://www.rhymezone.com/)) is fantastic for finding words that rhyme. More Words can also be good for this.

**Consider this: Don't put too much stock in your name**

They're certainly important, but naming can also be over-emphasized. There are plenty of highly successful businesses and products out there with bad names. So, take your naming, like your friends' opinions, with a grain of salt. And, as with everything, the more you stress about obtaining perfection, the less likely you'll come up with that killer name that seamlessly fits your offering.