interweb

Generated on 16/10/2026 15:36

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

# Orange cloud or grey cloud at Cloudflare: which records to proxy and which to leave DNS only

Speed, Cache & CDN

| CODE | VERSION | COUNTRY · LANGUAGE |
| --- | --- | --- |
| RLX-AO-KB-2102 | v2026.10.16 | Angola · English |

**Interweb Angola**
RLX Angola, Lda. · Group RLX Holdings
Tax ID (NIF) 500 260 5724 · Commercial registration no. 26464-25/250724

https://www.meu.interweb.ao/knowledgebase/2102

**The short answer:** every record in Cloudflare's DNS has a cloud beside it. **Orange** (Proxied) means visitors talk to Cloudflare and Cloudflare fetches what it needs from the server. **Grey** (DNS only) means Cloudflare just answers the DNS question and the traffic goes straight to the server. The website goes orange; anything that is not a web page (mail, FTP, SSH) and the admin logins stay grey. Getting this wrong in a hurry is the most common reason mail stops after the move. Cloudflare is a third-party service: the account is yours, opened on their site, and we do not sell it.

## Record by record

| Record | Cloud | Why |
|---|---|---|
| **The domain (@) and www** | Orange | This is the website: it gains caching, filtering and the certificate at the door. |
| **MX** | None | An MX is never proxied: it points at a name, and that name is what matters. Cloudflare does not even show the switch. |
| **The name the MX points to (usually mail)** | Grey | Mail uses ports and protocols the proxy does not carry. Orange, mail stops arriving and mail apps stop connecting. |
| **cpanel, webmail, ftp and the e-mail setup names (autodiscover, autoconfig)** | Grey | Admin and setup access: they should reach the server as they are, with no caching or challenges in the way. |
| **TXT (SPF, DKIM, DMARC, verifications), CAA, SRV** | None | They are information, not traffic. Copy them exactly: **moving the whole zone without losing records**. |
| **A subdomain for a service on other ports (a streaming server, an app on a VPS)** | Grey | The proxy only carries web traffic: ports 80 and 443 plus a short list of others Cloudflare publishes. Nothing else gets through. |
| **A subdomain that is another site, or a web API** | Orange, if you like | It behaves like the main site. Test first, especially if it receives automated calls from other systems. |

## Reviewing the clouds without breaking anything

1. **Open the list:** in the Cloudflare dashboard, pick the domain and the **DNS** section. The proxy status column says Proxied or DNS only on each line.

2. **Start with mail:** see which name the MX points to (almost always mail) and make sure that name is grey. If it is orange, change it now: it is mistake number one.

| | |
|---|---|
| **3** | **Turn the admin names grey:** cpanel, webmail, ftp and the e-mail setup names, if they exist. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **4** | **Leave orange** only the domain, www and the subdomains that are websites. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **5** | **Check from outside** with the commands below (on Windows, `nslookup` does the same). A grey name returns the server's address, the same one you see in cPanel (**your hosting IP address**). An orange name returns Cloudflare addresses. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **6** | **Test after every change:** send and receive an e-mail, log in to cPanel and open the site in a private window. |

```
dig +short www.yourdomain
dig +short mail.yourdomain
```

**A grey cloud shows the server's address, and for mail there is no way round that.** Anyone who looks up mail.yourdomain sees it. Turning mail orange to "hide the IP" hides nothing: it just takes mail offline. Cloudflare's protection is for the website, not for the whole server.

**Changed a cloud and nothing seems to happen?** Orange records get Cloudflare's automatic TTL; grey ones use whatever you choose. Anyone who already stored the old answer keeps it until the TTL runs out: **TTL and the four places to check**.

Mail stopped after putting the domain on Cloudflare? Tell us the domain and send a screenshot of the DNS record list there.

**Open a support ticket**

**SEE ALSO**

**Cloudflare: when it helps, how to switch it on, and the cache that fools you**

**Taking the whole DNS zone to Cloudflare without losing records**

**Putting a domain on Cloudflare**

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

**What your hosting IP address is and where to find it**

**Creating a subdomain on Cloudflare**

interweb

Online version of this document

Interweb is a leading internet services company, with a mission to help businesses to be born and prosper through technology.

| 2020 | 37,000+ | 130+ |
|---|---|---|
| FOUNDED | CLIENTS | SIGN-UPS A DAY |

# Interweb Angola

**RLX Angola, Lda. · Group RLX Holdings**

| | |
|---|---|
| TAX ID (NIF) | 500 260 5724 |
| COMMERCIAL REGISTRATION NO. | 26464-25/250724 |
| REGISTERED OFFICE | Rua Direita do Patriota, Bairro Dangereux<br>Belas, Luanda, Angola |
| CONTACT | info@interweb.ao · +244 942 011 191 · www.interweb.ao |
| OPENING HOURS | Monday to Friday - 08 AM to 04 PM<br>Saturday & Sunday - Closed |

RLX-AO-KB-2102 · v2026.10.16 · Generated on 16/10/2026 15:36