What is the difference between pointers, add-ons, and subdomains?

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Subdomains:

Subdomains are a way of creating separate accounts within your main account. The subdomain can be accessed through a separate URL in the form of 'http://subdomain.domainname.com'.

This represents a subfolder within the public_html level of your account and you can create e-mail accounts with the subdomain extension.

Subdomains are often used to make access to subdirectories easier by simply typing in a shorter domain name, rather than the full domain name and the directory name.

Domain pointers, parked domains, domain alias or domain forwarders:

This allows you to point multiple domain names to the same website.

For example: yourdomain.com, yourdomain.net and somethingelse.com can all point to the same location. However, it CANNOT point to a folder on the main domain and it does not have any FTP features.

Add-on domains:

An add-on domain is a secondary domain name that points to a folder (subdirectory) within the main hosting account. It can be added from your cPanel. Example:

www.seconddomain.com will show the files actually in www.maindomain.com/afolder/

An addon domain will act like a full account; you can create sub-domains, email accounts, and FTP accounts for your addon domains directly from your cPanel.