FREE GUIDE

The WordPress Hosting Comparison Guide

Shared, VPS, managed or cloud — what each type of hosting is, who it fits, when to upgrade, and the red flags to watch for.

Format: 4 sections with tick boxes: hosting types compared, when to upgrade, red flags, and questions to ask before you buy

Use it for: Choosing hosting for a new WordPress site, or deciding whether your current host still fits

How to use this guide

Read section 1 and tick the hosting type that matches your site today, not the site you hope to have in three years. Then use section 2 to check whether it is time to move up, section 3 to check your current or planned host, and section 4 before you pay.

1. The main hosting types, side by side

☐ **1. Shared hosting — many sites share one server**
Lowest cost and the easiest start. Fits new sites, blogs and small business sites with modest traffic. Trade-off: other sites on the server can affect your speed, and you have less control.

☐ **2. Managed WordPress hosting — the host looks after WordPress for you**
Usually includes automatic updates, backups, caching, staging sites and WordPress-trained support. Costs more than shared. Fits business sites and stores where downtime is costly and you would rather not manage the server.

☐ **3. VPS (virtual private server) — your own slice of a server**
Set resources (CPU, memory) that are not shared with others, and full control. Fits growing sites and developers. Trade-off: you or your developer handle setup, security and updates unless you pay for a managed VPS.

☐ **4. Cloud hosting — resources spread across many servers**
Can scale up and down with demand and often bills by usage. Fits sites with uneven traffic or larger stores. Trade-off: pricing and setup can be harder to predict.

☐ **5. Dedicated server — a whole server for one site or business**
Most power and control, highest cost. Usually only needed for very large or specialised sites.

2. Signs it may be time to upgrade from shared hosting

☐ **6. Pages are slow even after you have added caching and optimised images**
Test with a speed tool at different times of day. If speed drops at busy times, the server may be the limit.

☐ **7. Your host warns you about resource limits or temporarily suspends the site**

- ☐ **8. You now run a store, membership site or booking system with logged-in users**
  These pages often can't be cached, so they need more server power.
- ☐ **9. Traffic has grown steadily and you expect it to keep growing**
- ☐ **10. You need staging sites, server-level caching or other features your plan does not include**
- ☐ **11. Downtime now costs you sales or enquiries**

3. Red flags that your host may be holding you back

- ☐ **12. Frequent or unexplained downtime**
  Use a free uptime monitor for a month so you have real numbers, not a feeling.
- ☐ **13. Slow server response even on a simple page with no plugins**
- ☐ **14. No automatic backups, or backups you can't restore yourself**
- ☐ **15. No free SSL certificate, or SSL that's hard to install**
- ☐ **16. Old PHP versions only, with no easy way to upgrade**
- ☐ **17. Support that is hard to reach or can't answer WordPress questions**
- ☐ **18. Low first-year prices that renew at a much higher rate**
  Always check the renewal price, not just the introductory price.
- ☐ **19. Hard to move away from, e.g. charges to export your site or a domain locked to the host**

4. Questions to ask before you buy

- ☐ **20. What is the price after the first term ends?**
- ☐ **21. How often are backups taken, how long are they kept, and can I restore one myself?**
- ☐ **22. Is there a staging site included?**
- ☐ **23. What uptime does the host commit to in writing, and what happens if it isn't met?**
- ☐ **24. Where are the data centres, and can I choose one close to my visitors?**
- ☐ **25. Is site migration included, and is it free?**
- ☐ **26. What are the refund and cancellation terms?**

> **Note:** This guide is general and independent — no host paid to be included and no host is named or ranked. Plans, features and prices change; confirm current details with any host before you buy.

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