Grafana Interface
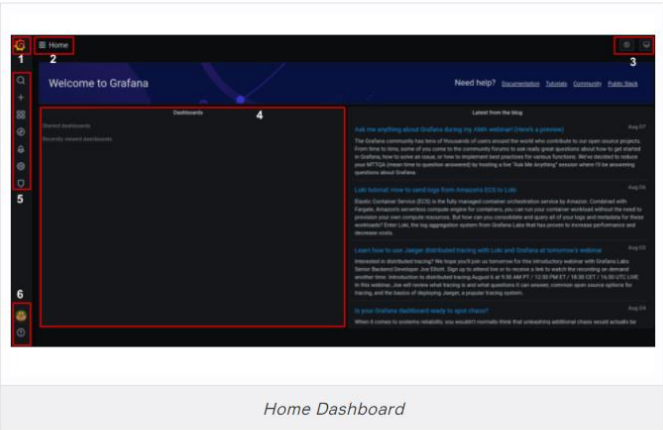
The Home Dashboard

After logging in to the Grafana application, you should end up on the Home dashboard, as shown.

Home Dashboard

Here are the UI elements visible on the default Home dashboard:

1. The Grafana logo button: Returns the user to the Home dashboard
2. The dashboards button: Displays the current dashboard
3. The dashboard settings and view mode
4. The dashboard panel: Shows the favorite and recently viewed dashboards
5. The side menu bar: Provides navigation to common tasks and pages
6. The user and help buttons

Grafana is structured around two main interactive UI components that together constitute its core functionality: **dashboards** and **panels**. The page in the preceding screenshot is composed of a side menu bar to the left and a dashboard to the right—specifically, the Home dashboard.

A **dashboard** is a kind of canvas upon which you can display one or more panels in a grid-style arrangement. It also serves as a web page, so you can bookmark or share it with a simple URL. The entire dashboard can even be imported and exported in JSON text file format, making it easy to share, save, or transfer to another version of Grafana.

The fundamental building blocks of the functionality of the dashboard are the **panels**. Panels fulfill a number of roles, from generating graphs, organizing data into tables, and displaying useful text to simply contain a menu list of dashboards —which happens to be the kind of panel you see on the Home dashboard in the preceding screenshot. Panels are implemented as a plugin to Grafana, so any capable developer can add to the variety of Grafana panels by creating new ones.

Panels

The panel is the basic visualization building block in Grafana. Each panel has a query editor specific to the data source selected in the panel. The **query editor** allows you to extract the perfect visualization to display on the panel.

With the exception of a few special use panels, a panel is a visual representation of one or more queries. The queries display data over time. This can range from temperature fluctuations to current server status to a list of logs or alerts.

In order to display data, you need to have at least one data source added to Grafana.

There are a wide variety of styling and formatting options for each panel. Panels can be dragged and dropped and rearranged on the dashboard. They can also be resized.
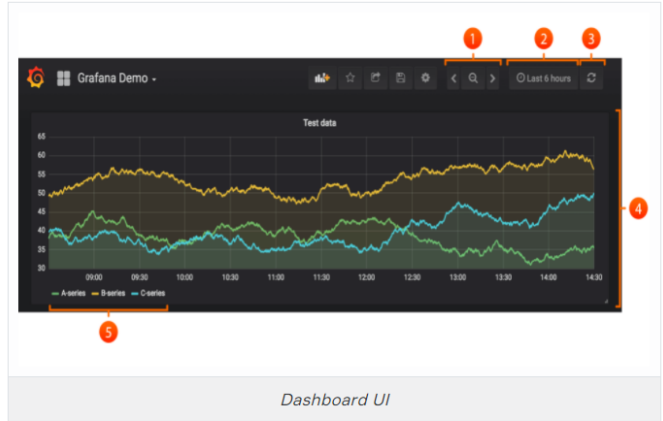

Panels

Move or resize panels:
You can drag and drop panels by clicking and holding the panel title, then dragging it to its new location. You can also easily resize panels by clicking the (-) and (+) icons.
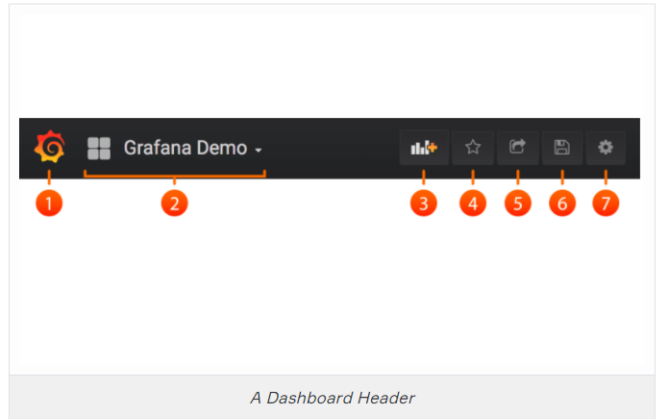
Tips and Shortcuts:

- Click the graph title and in the dropdown menu quickly duplicate the panel.
- Click the colored icon in the legend to change a series color or the y-axis.
- Click series name in the legend to hide series.
- Ctrl/Shift/Meta + click legend name to hide other series.
- Hover your cursor over a panel and press e to open the panel editor.
- Hover your cursor over a panel and press v to open the panel in fullscreen view.

Dashboards

A **dashboard** is a set of one or more panels organized and arranged into one or more rows. Grafana ships with a variety of Panels. Grafana makes it easy to construct the right queries, and customize the display properties so that you can create the perfect dashboard for your need. Each panel can interact with data from any configured Grafana Data Source (currently Graphite, Prometheus, Elasticsearch, InfluxDB, OpenTSDB, MySQL, PostgreSQL, Microsoft SQL Server, and AWS).

Dashboard UI

1. **Zoom out time range**
2. **Time picker dropdown.** Here you can access relative time range options, auto-refresh options, and set custom absolute time ranges.
3. **Manual refresh button.** Will cause all panels to refresh (fetch new data).
4. **Dashboard panel.** Click the panel title to edit panels.
5. **Graph legend.** You can change series colors, y-axis, and series visibility directly from the legend.

A Dashboard Header

1. **Side menubar toggle:** This toggles the side menu, allowing you to focus on the data presented in the dashboard. The side menu provides access to features unrelated to a Dashboard such as Users, Organizations, and Data Sources.
2. **Dashboard dropdown:** This dropdown shows you which Dashboard you are currently viewing, and allows you to easily switch to a new Dashboard. From here you can also create a new Dashboard or folder, import existing Dashboards, and manage Dashboard playlists.
3. **Add Panel:** Adds a new panel to the current Dashboard
4. **Star Dashboard:** Star (or unstar) the current Dashboard. Starred Dashboards will show up on your own Home Dashboard by default, and are a convenient way to mark Dashboards that you're interested in.
5. **Share Dashboard:** Share the current dashboard by creating a link or create a static Snapshot of it. Make sure the Dashboard is saved before sharing.
6. **Save dashboard:** The current Dashboard will be saved with the current Dashboard name.

Complementary Interactive Lesson about Creating Dashboards with Grafana