

Instruction Guide: Microsoft Azure Account Set-up

Create an Azure Account

1. Navigate to Azure's Website: Go to <https://azure.microsoft.com/>
2. Sign in/Sign up: Click on "Start free" if you're a new user. If you already have a Microsoft account, sign in, or you'll be prompted to create a new account.
3. Verification Process: You'll be asked to verify your identity through a phone number and provide credit card details. Note: Microsoft won't charge you anything at this point, but they use this to avoid fraud and multiple free tier exploitations.
4. Choose a Subscription: Select the "Free Trial" subscription if you're eligible. This gives you a \$200 credit to explore Azure services for 30 days.
5. Setup: Fill in your details, including your name, email, password, and other required fields.
6. Agree & Sign up: Review the agreement and privacy statement, click on the "Sign Up" button, and you should be good to go!

Monitoring Usage and Billing

1. Azure Portal: Once logged in, navigate to the Azure Portal at <https://portal.azure.com>.
2. Cost Management + Billing: On the left sidebar, there should be a section named "Cost Management + Billing". Click on it.
3. Cost Analysis: Under "Cost Management", choose "Cost Analysis". Here, you can monitor your spending patterns, check the projected costs, and analyze past usage.
4. Budgets: To ensure you don't exceed your limit, set up budgets. Under "Budgets" in "Cost Management", you can create a budget for your subscription, and get alerts when you're nearing your budget.
5. Usage and Spending: Under the "Subscriptions" section, select your subscription. This will show you your current balance, how much of the free credit you've used, and the services you've provisioned.

Utilizing Free Tier Services

Azure offers several services that are always free, if you stay under specified limits. Some popular free services include:

- Azure Cosmos DB: 5 GB storage and 400 reserved in throughput units with 10 million operations/month.
- Azure Functions: 1 million requests per month.
- Azure Active Directory: 500,000 objects.
- Azure DevTest Labs: Allows you to create test VMs without incurring additional charges.
- Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS): You only pay for the VMs, not the Kubernetes management infrastructure.

Make sure to regularly check Azure's official documentation and pricing pages, as offerings and limits can change. And always remember to turn off or deprovision resources that you're not using to avoid unexpected charges.