A **virtual machine (VM)** is a software-based, virtualized computer that runs on a physical host machine or a cloud provider’s server. [VMs allow you to create isolated computing environments with dedicated resources, making them useful for tasks like testing new operating systems, building and deploying apps to the cloud, and more1](https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/resources/cloud-computing-dictionary/what-is-a-virtual-machine/). Here are **five free reference links** where you can learn more about virtual machines:

1. [**Microsoft Azure: What Is a Virtual Machine?**](https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/resources/cloud-computing-dictionary/what-is-a-virtual-machine/): This article provides an introduction to VMs, their benefits, and how they work.
2. [**Wikipedia: Virtual Machine**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_machine): A comprehensive overview of virtual machines, including their history, architecture, and implementations.
3. [**Google Cloud: What Is a Virtual Machine?**](https://cloud.google.com/learn/what-is-a-virtual-machine): Learn about VMs and their various use cases, including supporting DevOps and creating development environments.
4. [**YouTube: Introduction to Virtualization - 90 Minute Crash Course**](https://www.udemy.com/course/virtualization-one-hour-crash-course/): A beginner-friendly video course covering key virtualization concepts applicable to various platforms.
5. [**How-To Geek: Beginner Geek - How to Create and Use Virtual Machines**](https://www.howtogeek.com/196060/beginner-geek-how-to-create-and-use-virtual-machines/): A practical guide on creating and using VMs using tools like VMware Player and VirtualBox.

Feel free to explore these resources to deepen your understanding of virtual machines! 🚀