Understanding the Azure Portal

What is the Azure Portal?

The **Azure Portal** is a **web-based, unified console** for managing your Azure services. You can build, manage, and monitor everything from simple web apps to complex cloud solutions.

URL: https://portal.azure.com

Home Page Layout Overview

Once you sign in, you'll see the **Azure Portal dashboard**. Here's what you'll typically find:

1. Navigation Pane (Left Sidebar)

- **Home**: Takes you back to the main dashboard
- **Dashboard**: Customizable tiles for quick access to services
- **All Services**: Complete list of all Azure services available
- **Resource groups**: Organize resources like VMs, databases, etc., into logical containers
- **Subscriptions**: Shows your Azure subscriptions and usage

2. Top Bar

- **Search Bar**: Quickly search for any Azure service or resource
- **Notifications**: Alerts for deployments, errors, and updates
- **Account settings**: Switch directory, manage permissions, billing
- **Cloud Shell**: Command-line access (Bash/PowerShell)

3. Main Dashboard Area

- Displays **pinned resources**, services, or dashboards
- You can create custom dashboards to monitor what matters to you

Basic Operations in Azure Portal

1. Create a Resource

- Click on **"Create a resource"** (top left or dashboard)
- Choose the type (e.g., Virtual Machine, Storage Account, SQL Database)
- Fill in details like:
  - **Resource Group**
  - **Region**
  - **Size/Performance level**
  - **Authentication details**
- Click **Review + Create** → Then **Create**

2. Managing Resources

- Go to **"All Resources"** or use **Search Bar**
- Click a resource to view its overview, settings, metrics, etc.
- You can **Start**, **Stop**, **Delete**, or **Resize** resources

3. Resource Groups

- A **Resource Group** is a container for resources that share the same lifecycle
- Navigate to **"Resource Groups"** to view and manage them
- Helps organize, deploy, and delete multiple resources together

4. Cost & Billing

- Go to **"Cost Management + Billing"**
- View usage, set **budgets**, analyze **spending trends**

Azure Cloud Shell

- Access it via the top navigation bar (looks like >_)
- Lets you use **Azure CLI** or **PowerShell** right in the browser
- Great for automation and scripting tasks

Customization Tips

- **Pin resources to dashboard** for quick access
- **Create multiple dashboards** for different projects or teams
- Use **Tags** to group and manage resources based on environment, cost center, etc.

Security Best Practices

- Use **Azure Active Directory (Azure AD)** to manage access
- Implement **Role-Based Access Control (RBAC)**
- Monitor with **Azure Security Center**