

Critical Factors to Consider

Now, we'll discuss some of the features that make a particular web hosting service suitable for us.

WE'LL COVER THE FOLLOWING ^

- The Nature of Our Website
 - Conventional Hosts
 - Cloud Hosting
- Reliability and Uptime Rates
- Bandwidth
- Security and Maintenance
- Necessary Utilities
- Control Panel
- Good Reviews
- Domain Emails
- Domain Name Purchasing
- Pricing
- Free Hosts vs. Paid Hosts
- SSL Certificates
- Test Your Knowledge!

In the previous lesson, we defined the different types of web hosting services available today. But how do we decide which approach best fits our website?

Furthermore, even if we've decided the type of hosting we need, we have to find a reliable service among hundreds that swarm the web hosting industry?

With that in mind, here are some of the major factors we need to keep in mind when choosing a web hosting service.

The Nature of Our Website

The Nature of Our Website

In order to decide a web hosting plan, we need to understand the behavior and the size of our website. Let's discuss this for all the hosting options we have.

Conventional Hosts

For a **small website** that does not currently generate a lot of traffic or revenue, a **shared hosting service** would prove beneficial. It would be cheap and we wouldn't need to worry about server failures in case of excessive traffic. The only downside is that the server may restrict you from running all the softwares you want.

A **large business** should always opt for **dedicated hosting** as it is the most efficient. It will also provide us with the highest storage space. **Managed hosting** would be better because it will ensure better security than any other web hosting plan.

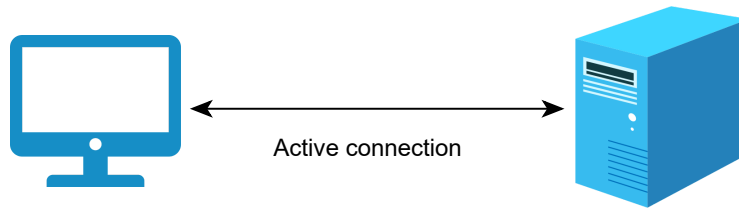
A **virtual private server** falls in the middle of the spectrum between shared and dedicated hosting. The higher degree of freedom and the moderate cost makes it ideal for **medium sized and rapidly growing websites**.

Cloud Hosting

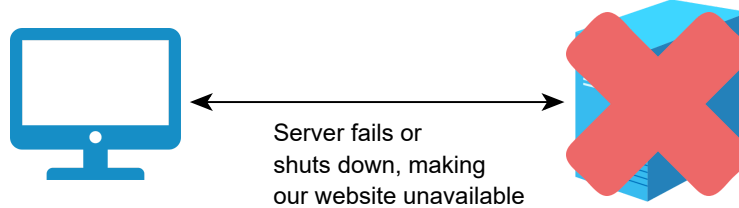
Moving to the cloud can be very beneficial for larger or growing businesses. It is much easier to scale our resources on the cloud. Educative itself uses the **Google Cloud Platform**. We highly recommend opting for a cloud host if one can afford it.

Reliability and Uptime Rates

A good web host is one which is always running, making your site available to anyone at any time. We should steer clear of a server that shuts down frequently and has an unsatisfactory uptime rate. The more popular services like [Bluehost](#) or [InMotion](#) have uptime rates higher than **99.9%**, which makes them extremely reliable.



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With the introduction of cloud hosting, the risk of downtime is minimized since there is a whole cloud of servers which can replace each other in case one fails.

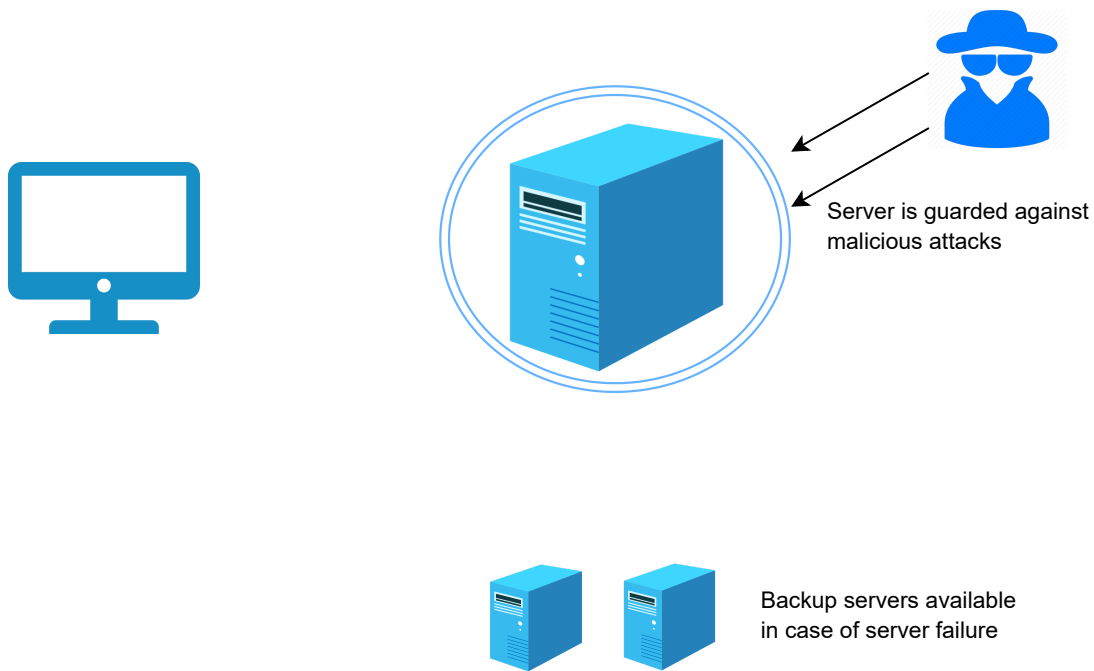
Bandwidth

Data transfer speed is one of the most important aspects of running a smooth website. In a situation where a lot of traffic is trying to access our website, the hosting service needs to provide us with a high bandwidth so that the users' experience is not hampered.

Dedicated servers and VPSs solve this problem better than shared servers. Cloud services provide very high bandwidth, with the option of acquiring more if needed.

Security and Maintenance

A web hosting service needs to have security measures in place to fight against cyber attacks. In case a server is physically damaged, our site needs to be stored on backup servers.



The company also needs to provide good tech support to its customers in case of any emergencies.

Necessary Utilities

The host we choose must make the following tools accessible to us:

- PHP, Perl, JavaScript (web development languages)
- File Transfer Protocol (file accessibility)
- .htaccess (Apache server configuration)
- Server Side Includes
- MySQL or MongoDB (database management)
- SSH (remote server communication)
- Cron (job scheduler)

Control Panel

Every decent web host provides us with a control panel from which we can

manage our account. Here, we can change our account settings and view

information about our website. Popular panels like **cPanel** or the **AWS management console** offer many more features.

Good Reviews

In this age, the web hosting industry has become extremely saturated. As a result, it can be hard to guess the reliability of a company. Customer reviews can tell us about the quality of the service.

Domain Emails

We should be able to create email addresses for our domains and define their purposes (auto-response, admin accounts, etc.).

Domain Name Purchasing

Even though we've learned how to buy a domain independently, good web hosting services also offer the option of buying domains and sub-domains.

Pricing

We should always compare the prices of different hosts. Signup prices are very cheap but don't be fooled. In almost every case, subscription renewal prices are significantly higher than the initial cost.

Free Hosts vs. Paid Hosts

We can find both types on the market. Paid hosting services are much more reliable. Free hosting could be our last resort but it is a risky step to take in terms of safety and reliability. Furthermore, a free host will put up its own ads on our website to generate revenue.

SSL Certificates

It is an added bonus if the web hosting company allows us to order an SSL certificate. Simply put, SSL encrypts client-server communication on our web site, making transactions and file transfers much safer. We'll learn more about it in the [SSL Certificate](#) lesson.

By considering all the factors listed above, we can have a fairly accurate idea

By considering all the factors listed above, we can have a fairly accurate idea about the hosting service we want to opt for. [HostingAdvice](#) has a very comprehensive list of companies ranked by user reviews.

Test Your Knowledge!

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Which of these has the highest uptime rate?

COMPLETED 0%

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In the next section, we will learn how to deploy our website on a cloud hosting service.