



What is a Dedicated Server (And When Do You Need One?)

Much like many other new site owners, you probably opted for shared hosting when you first launched your website. After all, it's the cheapest option, and budget is important. However, as your website grows, it's important to know when to upgrade to something more substantial. There are plenty of options, and you may have pondered, *What is a dedicated server – and why do I need one?*

The answer lies in the reasons for wanting to upgrade in the first place. For example, you may be dealing with a rise in immediate traffic, or anticipating growth in the near future. Dedicated servers are ideal for this, along with their strong enhanced security features and potential positive impact on page loading times.

In this guide, we'll explain what dedicated servers are, then compare this [type of hosting](#) to other common types. Then we'll offer some advice on how to decide whether or not dedicated hosting is right for you. Let's get started!

What is dedicated hosting (and how does it compare to other types)?

Dedicated hosting essentially means that your website has its own server all to itself. It offers immense power and flexibility, but usually comes at a premium. As such, it's important to do your research before opting to purchase this type of plan.

For example, most websites start out with a shared hosting plan but soon grow to exceed that [cheap shared plan's](#) limits. Your options here could include an [upgrade to a virtual private server \(VPS\)](#) or a dedicated one. It's up to you to weigh up the different options.

As you may be aware, shared hosting stores your site on a server with potentially hundreds of others. For [personal blogs](#) or very small businesses, this option is sufficient. However, it's not the best option for performance, and you also lose out on flexibility because you can't configure things yourself (*since you have to share with others*).

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On the other hand, a VPS gives your site its own space, separate from other sites, while still sharing a server. Since your site is blocked off from other users, its performance will likely be more consistent. You also get a little more flexibility when it comes to how your server is configured.

These types of plans can offer you the speed you need at a lower cost than dedicated hosting, and represent a good middle ground for those looking to upgrade.

However, dedicated hosting is the plan of choice if you need the most power for your money. However, as you'd expect, the downside is cost, and some run up to three-figures per month. Fortunately, by the time your website needs one to handle its traffic, it may very well be worth it.

Why would you need a dedicated server (4 key reasons)?

As we mentioned, dedicated hosting is one of the most powerful server plans available, along with cloud hosting. However, you may be asking whether you need it. Let's review four reasons you should consider opening your wallet!

1. Your website is growing and needs to be able to handle an increase in traffic

If you anticipate that your website is going to grow quickly, it might be a good idea to opt for a dedicated server now. For example, if your site is still using shared hosting when your [traffic spikes](#), its performance could drop significantly. This can be a slippery slope of [higher bounce rates](#) and loss of revenue. It's important to give yourself time to migrate your site and 'settle' its performance before any potential problems arise.

According to FXBlog, your site should be prepared to handle spikes of up to [30 times](#) your normal daily traffic, to account for promotions and special events. If you're not prepared, your site could crash or otherwise lead to a negative [user experience \(UX\)](#).



2. Security is a concern for your website

Security is important for every website, but especially for those handling sensitive information. This could include confidential emails, [credit card numbers](#), or sensitive customer information. It's crucial to protect this information and your website from viruses, hacks, and other risks.

With a dedicated server, you're completely in charge of [your site's security](#). This means you can optimize the features you need for the specific requirements of your website and stored files. Of course, you're also responsible for how these features are implemented, but this is one of the benefits of flexibility.

However, some hosts offer fully-managed and semi-managed maintenance plans. In a nutshell, you can often specify what both you and your host will be responsible for, which means you can trust an expert with mission-critical functionality, while handling all other concerns directly.

3. You'd like your page loading times to be optimal

Your page loading times can have a significant impact on practically all aspects of your website. Slow pages can lead to low [engagement metrics](#) and high [bounce rates](#). A dedicated server can help you to optimize this aspect of your website as much as possible.

On a shared server, you won't have any insight into when the server's resources are being used elsewhere, which could make your site run slowly. Opting for a dedicated server will guarantee you have the bandwidth you need to enhance your page loading times.

4. Having control over your server is important to you

The final reason you may want to choose a dedicated server over other options is a simple one: control. We've alluded to this in previous sections, but dedicated hosting gives you complete responsibility over how you choose to use your server.

For example, you're even free to choose the server software you prefer. If you favor the resource control of NGINX over Apache, you have the power to do so. Plus, you can adjust hardware specifications and install your own operating system (OS). Because of this, dedicated



hosting may be an enticing option for advanced web developers, and those with unique and specific requirements.

Where can you get dedicated hosting?

You'll find that many of the popular hosting companies offer plans on the whole spectrum of complexity and price. This means that you'll often find a cheap shared hosting setups and powerful dedicated servers from the same company.

Some of our favorites are:

- [Bluehost](#) from \$79.99/mo
- [A2 Hosting](#) from \$99.59/mo
- [SiteGround](#) from \$269.00/mo

When should you opt for a dedicated server?

Now we've gone over some of the benefits of dedicated hosting, let's talk briefly about how to know if it's right for you. After all, a VPS provides many of the same features, but at a cheaper price.

First, consider whether your site is receiving more traffic. If the numbers are much higher than previously, it may be time to upgrade from your current plan. Your choice will either be VPS, cloud hosting, or dedicated hosting.

All three offer the potential for large bandwidths and fast page loading times. However, dedicated hosting has an edge over a VPS when it comes to security, if only because you have absolute control over how the server runs and operates.

Ultimately, as with many other WordPress considerations, your decision will depend on the specific needs of your website. Certainly, if budget is no concern, you can't go wrong with a dedicated server. However, much like choosing your very first hosting plan, cost will become a primary concern when making your decision.



Conclusion on what is a dedicated server

If your website is struggling to keep up with an increase in traffic, it may be time to migrate your website to a dedicated server. This is essentially a server that only hosts your site, and not only can it improve your site's performance, but also enhance your page loading times and help you optimize security.