MR.PLANB FIELD GUIDE · MONITORING

Free Uptime Monitoring: 5-Service Comparison Sheet

Monitor counts, intervals, retention and the catch for each free plan, checked August 8, 2026.

Updated **2026-10-29** · Full guide: www.mrplanb.com/datacenter/free-uptime-monitoring

UptimeRobot gives the most free monitors (50) but checks only every 5 minutes, Better Stack checks every 3 minutes with 10 monitors, and Uptime Kuma is unlimited if you host it somewhere other than what it watches. Healthchecks.io covers a different failure: silent cron and backup jobs. Most people are best served by one uptime monitor plus one push-based job monitor.

50
monitors on UptimeRobot's free plan, the most of any hosted tier here

3 min
Better Stack's free interval, the fastest listed

299 s
worst-case detection gap on a 5-minute interval

5
services compared

Free plans compared

Service	Monitors	Interval	Retention	Catch
UptimeRobot	50	5 min	3 months	Hobby and non-profit positioning, interval fixed
Better Stack	10	3 min	Limited	Good incident features are paid
StatusCake	10	5 min	Limited	One page-speed, domain and SSL monitor each
Healthchecks.io	20 checks	Push (cron)	Varies	Does not poll, jobs must call it
Uptime Kuma	Unlimited	Your choice	Your disk	You host, patch and back it up

How to choose

1. Start from the cost of a missed minute. It decides whether 5 minutes is generous or negligent.
2. Run the monitor somewhere the outage cannot reach.
3. Cover silent failures separately with a push-based check.
4. Outgrow the free tier deliberately when you need dependency maps, trending and real alert logic.

Setup checklist

- [ ] Check the provider's current pricing page, since free tiers shrink without warning.
- [ ] If it is for work, read UptimeRobot's terms before building a process on it.
- [ ] Self-hosting Uptime Kuma? Run it on a free cloud instance, not on the box it watches.
- [ ] Add a push-based check for backup jobs, ZFS snapshot scripts and cron tasks.
- [ ] Budget separately if you need SMS or voice alerts. Email and webhooks are standard on free tiers.
- [ ] Behind NAT with no public IP? Use a tunnel or invert to a push check.

Best for

UptimeRobot
Watching many endpoints cheaply when a 5-minute gap is acceptable.

Better Stack
A few services where you want faster detection than 5 minutes.

StatusCake
One public site where certificate and domain expiry matter as much as uptime.

Healthchecks.io
Backup jobs, cron tasks and anything whose failure is silent.

Uptime Kuma
Homelabbers who run containers and want no limits.

FAQ in short

- How fast must it be? A 5-minute interval is fine for a blog, homelab dashboard or internal tool. For checkout flows or SLAs you want 1 minute, which every provider here charges for.
- Hosted or self-hosted? Hosted is zero maintenance. Uptime Kuma gives unlimited monitors and no terms risk, but only helps if it lives elsewhere.
- Is one monitor enough? Pair one uptime monitor with one push-based job monitor, since they cover opposite failure modes.

Sources and notes: Provider pricing pages, figures checked August 8, 2026 · Uptime Kuma on GitHub · Mr.PlanB free VPS and backup testing guides