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Free VPS Tiers 2026: Comparison and Catches Sheet

Five free server tiers checked against provider documentation on August 8, 2026, with what each really costs you.

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

> Free allowances shrink far more often than they grow. Oracle's Arm tier lost half its cores and memory on June 15, 2026, without an announcement. Permanence separates these tiers more than size does: Oracle, Google and Render keep going, while Azure and AWS stop on a date fixed the day you sign up.

2 / 12 GB
Oracle Arm OCPUs and RAM now, down from 4 OCPUs and 24 GB

5
free tiers compared

750
free hours per month on Azure and Render

$100
AWS credit at signup, plus up to $100 more

Free tiers compared

Every figure was checked against the provider's own documentation on August 8, 2026. Verify before you rely on it.

Provider	What you get	Free forever?	Card?	The catch
Oracle Cloud Always Free	2 Arm OCPUs, 12 GB RAM, plus 2 AMD micro VMs	Yes	Yes	Halved in June 2026; idle instances can be reclaimed
Google Cloud	1 e2-micro, 30 GB disk	Yes	Yes	3 US regions only; 1 GB/month egress
Microsoft Azure	B1S, B2pts v2 or B2ats v2, 750 hours per month	No, 12 months	Yes	Credit expires after 30 days
Amazon Web Services	$100 credit, plus up to $100 more	No, 6 months	Yes	12-month tier gone for accounts after July 15, 2025
Render	750 instance-hours per workspace per month	Yes	No	Spins down after 15 minutes idle

How to choose and stay safe

- [ ] Decide whether you need permanence or capacity. Azure and AWS give more machine for a fixed window; Oracle and Google give less for an indefinite one.
- [ ] Assume the instance will vanish. Keep the build reproducible with a container image or script.
- [ ] Keep nothing on the box that only exists there.
- [ ] Set a billing alarm before you deploy anything.
- [ ] Add free alerting too: a free instance with no monitoring fails silently.

- [ ] Set a calendar reminder for month eleven if you use Azure.
- [ ] Check whether your AWS account is under the new or the legacy free tier regime.

Oracle Always Free in detail

Arm allowance
1,500 OCPU-hours and 9,000 GB-hours per month, one always-on instance with 2 Arm cores and 12 GB RAM.

Also included
Two AMD VMs (1/8 OCPU and 1 GB each), 200 GB block storage, 20 GB object storage.

The quiet cut
On June 15, 2026 the 4 OCPU, 24 GB tier was halved with no blog post or email.

Friction
Arm capacity is often exhausted in popular regions, and your home region is fixed at signup.

Recently shrunk or killed

- Fly.io removed its permanent free allowance in 2024. New accounts get a short trial.
- Heroku ended free dynos in November 2022, the cut that started the pattern.
- Oracle's 4 OCPU and 24 GB Arm tier was halved on June 15, 2026 and is still quoted as current almost everywhere.
- AWS restructured its free tier on July 15, 2025.

Best for

Provider	Best for
Oracle	Closest thing to a real always-free server, if you tolerate the friction
Google Cloud	A free, low-traffic endpoint you never think about
Azure	A year of useful capacity, with a reminder in month eleven
AWS	Learning AWS specifically; poor for a server that stays free
Render	Deploying a small app from a Git push with no server

Sources and notes: Provider documentation checked August 8, 2026 · Oracle Always Free resources, Google Cloud free tier, Azure free account, AWS Free Tier, Render free tier docs