



Managing AWS costs

Tags: [ACG](#)

As you begin your AWS studies, it can be intimidating to understand the costs associated with all the different services in AWS. In this article, we'll provide an overview of AWS Free Tier and guidance on managing your resources in a way that keeps costs minimal.

In this article

[About AWS Free Tier](#)

[Free Tier limitations](#)

[Helpful tips](#)

About AWS Free Tier

When you start an Associate-level AWS course, you'll be advised to open an account with AWS and make use of the Free Tier offered for training purposes. The Free Tier offering is defined by AWS, and is applied as a rebate to your monthly AWS bill. Free Tier is not a special lab environment, and it imposes no restrictions on what you can do in AWS. Read AWS's documentation on [Free Tier \(external site, opens in new tab\)](#) for details.

Throughout the course, you'll be advised which services and sizes to use to minimize cost and stay within the rebate. If you follow this advice and are intentional about managing your resources, the costs will be negligible. AWS also protects you from mistakes by preventing an excessive number of resources from being used accidentally.

Ultimately, you are responsible for managing your resources and therefore your costs. However, there are ways to keep costs low or at zero.

[back to top](#)

Free Tier limitations

Read the AWS documentation on [Free Tier \(external site, opens in new tab\)](#) and be mindful of the limitations as you use Free Tier, including:

- **The age of your account.** Some aspects of Free Tier are only valid for 12 months. If your account is older, try requesting an extension from AWS Support.
- **The type of resource.** Only certain resource types qualify for Free Tier (e.g. t2.micro instances).
- **The amount of the resource used.** A fixed amount of each resource is rebated/refunded per month.

[back to top](#)

Helpful tips

Most resources you use will attract a cost. Be aware of what resources you turn on, be mindful of the cost while they're running, and make a plan for when you can decommission them.

To keep costs down:

- Only use instance sizes recommended in the labs, unless you make a conscious decision to experiment and accept the cost.
- Clean up after yourself. Not only is recreating resources good practice, but there is very little that you can't recreate as needed, including the [Default VPC \(external site, opens in new tab\)](#).
- Check your billing in the console, and set up one or more Billing alarms. See the [Billing Alarm lab \(opens in new tab\)](#) or the [AWS documentation \(external site, opens in new tab\)](#) to learn how.
- Use [Tag Editor \(external site, opens in new tab\)](#) to check what resources you have running in each region and track down orphaned resources to either tag or delete them.
- Try to limit your lab work to two or three Regions only. That way, you have very few regions to check each day to ensure there are no unnecessary resources left running.
- Pay attention to these common sources of unexpected cost:
 - ELBs
 - NAT gateways
 - Unattached ENIs/EIPs
 - EC2 instances not terminated
 - RDS instances not deleted
 - Unnecessary EBS/RDS snapshots

With a small amount of practice, you'll see that if you follow the guidance in your course and the tips listed here, your costs will be minimal and most will be covered by the rebate. This is excellent practice for working in a commercial environment where every decision has a cost implication to your company.

If you need help, please contact [Pluralsight Support](#).