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cPanel or CloudPanel on your VPS: the differences that matter

VPS & Servers

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cPanel or CloudPanel on your VPS: the differences that matter

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The short answer: choose **cPanel** if the server will hold several accounts, with e-mail and DNS in the same panel, or if you will resell hosting: it is paid and does it all. Choose **CloudPanel** if you want to run your own sites and apps (WordPress, PHP, Node.js, Python) on a lean, free server, with e-mail on another service, because CloudPanel does not include e-mail.

Side by side

What to compare	cPanel and WHM	CloudPanel
Licence	**Paid.** Solo Cloud (1 account), Admin Cloud (5), Pro Cloud (30) or Premier Cloud (100), when you order.	**Free.** There is no licence.
Systems you can order	**AlmaLinux 8 and 9** (9 recommended) and **CloudLinux 8**. Ubuntu only as 24.04, through a support ticket. Rocky Linux is no longer supported.	**Ubuntu 22.04 and Debian 12.** Ubuntu 24.04 and Debian 13 through a support ticket. No AlmaLinux, Rocky or CloudLinux.
Web server	Apache; NGINX can sit in front of Apache; LiteSpeed with a separate licence.	NGINX with PHP-FPM; Varnish and Redis available.
E-mail included	Yes: Exim and Dovecot, with webmail.	**No.** The documentation says to use a separate e-mail service.
DNS	Yes: its own nameserver (PowerDNS by default, or BIND; on Ubuntu, PowerDNS only).	**No DNS server:** the records stay wherever the domain is managed.

What to compare	cPanel and WHM	CloudPanel
Several accounts and reselling	Yes: WHM creates cPanel accounts and resellers. The Solo licence serves 1 account, with no reselling.	Users with three roles (Admin, Site Manager, User). No packages and no reselling.
WordPress	WP Toolkit.	A dedicated WordPress site type.
Node.js and Python apps	Application Manager: Node.js, Python and Ruby, through Phusion Passenger.	Built in: Node.js and Python site types, plus PHP, static and reverse proxy.
Backups	In WHM: daily, weekly or monthly, compressed or incremental; on the server, over FTP, SFTP or Rsync, or on S3 and Google Drive.	Off the server only: S3, Dropbox, Google Drive, SFTP and anything Rclone supports; manual restore.
Minimum memory and disk	2 GB (4 GB recommended; 3 GB with ClamAV). Disk: 20 GB (40 GB recommended).	2 GB. Disk: 10 GB.
Learning curve	Two interfaces: WHM for the server, cPanel for each account (the same as on our shared hosting).	Few menus: sites, users and backups, no e-mail and no DNS.
First login	WHM at https://IP:2087, cPanel at :2083, webmail at :2096.	https://IP:8443

Which to choose

Choose cPanel if

you will host sites for different clients, each with their own login, or you need mailboxes on the server itself. Also if you know cPanel from shared hosting and want the same environment. Mind the memory: 2 GB is the minimum, so a VPS1 is right at the limit.

Choose CloudPanel if

the sites are yours, you want Node.js or Python next to PHP, and your e-mail already is (or will be) on its own service. There is no licence to pay, but there is no vendor to ask for help either: questions go to the community.

The licence, and what stays with you

We sell cPanel as a server option (Solo Cloud for 1 account, Admin Cloud for 5, Pro Cloud for 30, Premier Cloud for 100): you pick it when you order, or ask for it through a support ticket if the server already exists. For a licence bought from us, first-line help is ours, through a support ticket, and we escalate to the vendor. CloudPanel needs no licence.

Either way the VPS is unmanaged: installing, updating and securing the panel is up to you. The steps are in **installing cPanel** and **installing CloudPanel**.

You cannot swap one for the other on the same system.

CPanel only installs on a freshly installed system and has no uninstaller; CloudPanel asks for an empty server. Changing panel means reinstalling a clean system (requested through a support ticket) or using a second server, after copying everything. From cPanel to CloudPanel, move the mailboxes and the DNS zone to another service first, because CloudPanel does not take them, then move the sites one by one (files and database).

NEED A HAND?

Questions about the cPanel licence or which system to pick for CloudPanel? Ask us.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- Installing cPanel and WHM on your VPS, step by step
- Installing CloudPanel on your VPS, step by step: a free panel for PHP, Node and Python apps
- Which control panel to install on your VPS: cPanel, Plesk, Webuzo, HestiaCP or CloudPanel
- Free or paid control panel on your VPS: what the licence buys you
- CyberPanel, aaPanel and CloudPanel on a VPS: free panels and the questions to ask first

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