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Plesk or HestiaCP on your VPS: the differences that matter

VPS & Servers

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Plesk or HestiaCP on your VPS: the differences that matter

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The short answer: both give you sites, e-mail and DNS on the same server. Choose **Plesk** if you will have customers or resellers, want WP Toolkit and the Node.js and Python extensions, and prefer a vendor behind it: it is paid. Choose **HestiaCP** if the sites are yours or a few users', you want e-mail without paying for a licence, and you do not mind the command line: it is free and open source.

Side by side

What to compare	Plesk	HestiaCP
Licence	**Paid.** Web Admin (up to 10 domains), Web Pro (up to 30) or Web Host (no limit), when you order.	**Free** (open source, GPLv3). There is no licence.
Systems you can order	**AlmaLinux 8 and 9, Rocky Linux 8, Debian 12, Ubuntu 22.04.** Not advised: Ubuntu 20.04, Debian 10 and 11, CentOS 7.	**Debian 12 and Ubuntu 22.04.** Ubuntu 24.04 and Debian 13 through a support ticket. LTS releases only; no AlmaLinux, Rocky or CloudLinux.
Web server	nginx and Apache 2.4, both shipped with Plesk.	Nginx with PHP-FPM, or Nginx in front of Apache; several PHP versions.
E-mail included	Yes: Postfix and Dovecot, with webmail.	Yes: Exim and Dovecot, Roundcube webmail; SpamAssassin and ClamAV optional.
DNS	Yes: BIND.	Yes: BIND, your own nameservers, DNS cluster and DNSSEC.

What to compare	Plesk	HestiaCP
Several accounts and reselling	Customer accounts on Web Pro and Web Host; resellers on Web Host only. Web Admin is for your own sites.	Users with limit packages. The documentation has no resellers.
WordPress	WP Toolkit: limited (SE) on Web Admin, full on Web Pro and Web Host.	Quick install of WordPress and other applications.
Node.js and Python apps	Through extensions: Node.js, and Python (WSGI apps, through Phusion Passenger).	No app manager in the documentation: a Node.js app sits behind an Nginx proxy template, set up by hand.
Backups	Backup Manager: full or incremental, scheduled, on the server or over FTP; scheduled backups to the cloud (S3, Google Drive, OneDrive) are a separate paid feature.	Automatic, on the server or to FTP, SFTP and Rclone; incremental with restic.
Minimum memory and disk	1 GB plus 1 GB of swap. Disk: 20 GB.	1 GB without SpamAssassin and ClamAV (4 GB recommended). Disk: 10 GB (40 GB recommended).
Learning curve	A single interface for the server and the sites, which grows with extensions.	A simple panel; what it does not show is done with the v- commands on the command line.
First login	https://IP:8443 (according to the Plesk documentation, the address without a port may also open the panel).	https://IP:8083

Which to choose

Choose Plesk if

you will hand panels to customers or resellers, if you work a lot with WordPress (full WP Toolkit on Web Pro and Web Host), if your apps are Node.js or Python, or if the system has to be AlmaLinux or Rocky Linux, which HestiaCP does not support.

Choose HestiaCP if

you want sites and mailboxes on your VPS without paying for a licence, on Ubuntu or Debian. If you will switch on antispam and antivirus, give it memory: the 1 GB minimum is without them, and the project recommends 4 GB.

The licence, and what stays with you

We sell Plesk as a server option (Web Admin, Web Pro and Web Host): 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. HestiaCP needs no licence. Either way the VPS is unmanaged: installing, updating and securing the panel is up to you. The steps are in **installing Plesk** and **installing HestiaCP**.

There is no importer between the two.

HestiaCP imports cPanel and DirectAdmin backups, and restores VestaCP backups and its own, but not Plesk ones; Plesk Migrator does not list HestiaCP among its sources either. Sites, databases and mailboxes move one by one. And HestiaCP has to go on a freshly installed system: changing panel means reinstalling a clean system (support ticket) or using a second server, after copying everything.

NEED A HAND?

Questions about the Plesk licence or which system to pick for HestiaCP? Ask us.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Installing Plesk on your VPS, step by step**
- **Installing HestiaCP on your VPS, step by step: a free panel with e-mail**
- **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**
- **HestiaCP and VestaCP on a VPS: what the panel gives you and what stays your job**

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