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MySQL or MariaDB: which one runs here, and does it matter

Engines & Performance

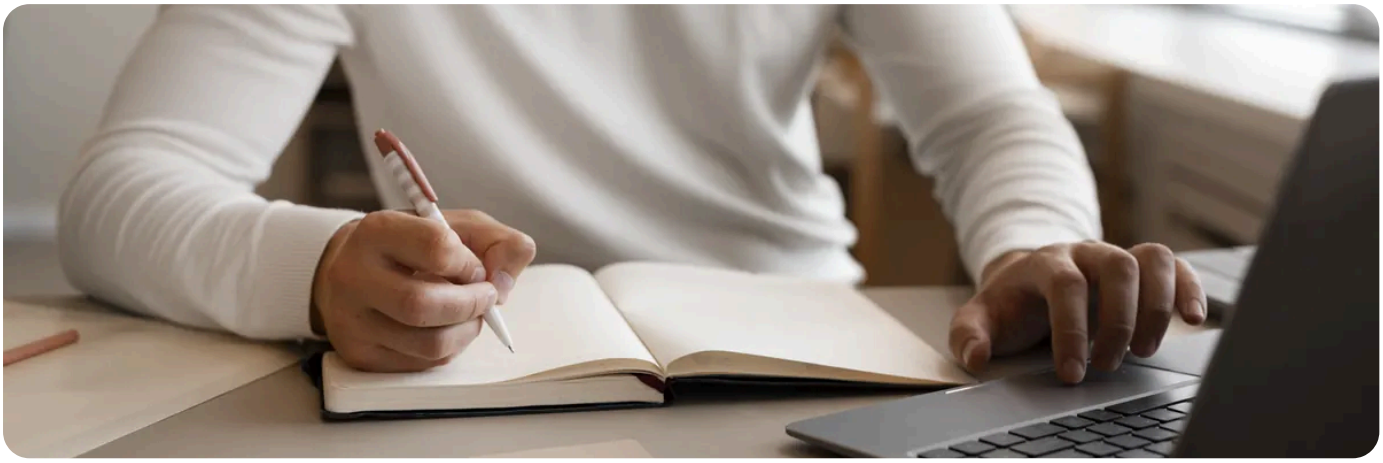
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MySQL or MariaDB: which one runs here, and does it matter

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Shared hosting here runs **MariaDB**, not Oracle's MySQL Server. At the time of writing the version is **10.11.16**. For almost every site that makes **no difference**: MariaDB started as a drop-in successor to MySQL, speaks the same SQL and connects the same way.

The command-line client is still called `mysql` for compatibility, and the phpMyAdmin in cPanel works like the one anywhere else. What is worth knowing is where the two families part ways, because that is where an imported file fails.

How to confirm what your account runs

1. Open **phpMyAdmin** in cPanel. The start page shows the **database server** and its version.
2. On the **SQL** tab type `SELECT VERSION();` and run it. The result contains the word **MariaDB**.
3. If you have SSH access, `mysql --version` says the same. See **the cPanel Terminal**.

What changes and what does not

Topic	In practice
WordPress, Joomla and most installer applications	Work without changes. They were written to run on MySQL and on MariaDB alike.
Connecting from PHP, Python or Node	The same. The usual libraries (`mysqli` , PDO, `mysql2` , PyMySQL) talk to MariaDB. See **the PHP example**.
`.sql` copies from an older MySQL	Import normally in the vast majority of cases.

Topic	In practice
`.sql` copies from MySQL 8	May carry a collation MariaDB does not know, such as `utf8mb4_0900_ai_ci`. The error reads *Unknown collation*.
Functions only MySQL 8 has	If your code relies on one, it will not run here. Rare in ordinary sites.
Users and passwords	Created in cPanel and already in the right format. You do not choose the authentication method.

The classic failure:
You import a copy made on MySQL 8 and phpMyAdmin stops with *#1273 Unknown collation*. The fix is to open the `.sql` file in an editor and replace `utf8mb4_0900_ai_ci` with `utf8mb4_unicode_ci` (and do the same for the charset if needed). See **character sets and collations**.

And the version, who picks it?

On shared hosting the engine version is the server's, not a setting on your account: you cannot choose or change it. MariaDB and MySQL version numbers **cannot be compared**: MariaDB 10.11 is not "older" than MySQL 8, they are different lines. When an application asks for "MySQL 5.7 or higher", check whether its documentation mentions MariaDB in the requirements (most do) or ask the author. An application that says "MySQL 8" does not always truly need it: many were simply tested on that version. If you really must have it, the route is a VPS.

Do you really need MySQL 8?
On a VPS you pick the engine and the version, because you have root. Installing and maintaining it is then your job, as with any unmanaged VPS. See **managed or unmanaged VPS**.

NEED A HAND?

Not sure your application works with MariaDB? Tell us its name and version and we will look at it with you.

Open a support ticket →

Where to see it in your account

- **How many databases:** databases are unlimited on every plan, so create one per application. The Statistics sidebar in cPanel shows how many you have, and MySQL Databases lists them.
- **How big:** we do not set a size per database. The limit is the plan's space, which the database shares with the site files and the mail: 10 GB on Pro, 20 GB on Plus, 30 GB on Ultra, and 50, 100 or 200 GB on the Business plans.

Where to see the size: phpMyAdmin lists each database with its size, and the Statistics sidebar shows the total space used by the account.

If a database keeps growing and the space runs short, you can clean it up, move up a plan without losing the site, or talk to us.

SEE ALSO

- **Creating databases and using phpMyAdmin**
- **PostgreSQL or MySQL: which one for your project**
- **Hosting plans and what each one includes**

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