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Do you need a VPS for n8n? What shared hosting cannot do

n8n Setup & Hosting

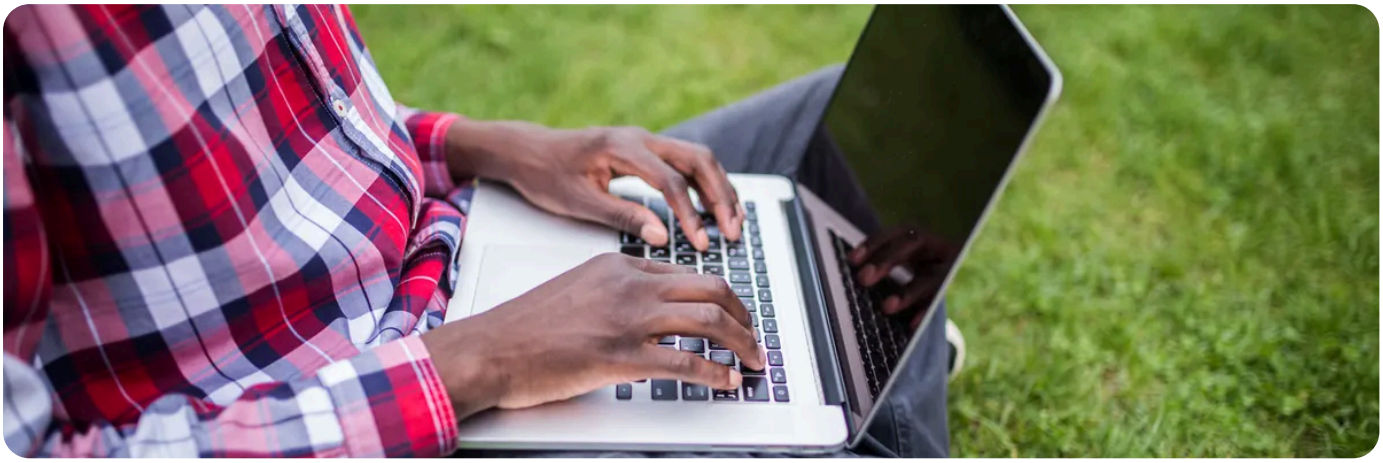
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Do you need a VPS for n8n? What shared hosting cannot do

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Yes: to run n8n on a server of your own you need a VPS (or a dedicated server) with root access. It cannot be done on a shared hosting plan, and it would not make sense anyway: n8n has to stay switched on, and a shared plan was not built for that.

What a shared plan lacks

What n8n asks for	Shared plan	VPS with root
Docker and Docker Compose, the route the project's documentation recommends	Not there, and cannot be installed.	Installed with root access.
A process that is always alive, for schedules and webhooks	Processes have limits and may be stopped when there are no requests.	The container keeps running and restarts by itself.
Choosing the system, opening ports, putting an HTTPS proxy in front	No access to any of that.	All yours: see **first steps with your VPS**.
Memory for workflows that move a lot of data	There are memory and process limits.	The memory of the plan is all yours.

You may point out that cPanel has Node.js, and n8n is written in Node.js. True, but "Setup Node.js App" is meant for websites and small applications that answer requests, managed by Passenger. n8n has to run permanently, with a database of its own, and be updated like a service. The limits of a shared plan are laid out in **the limits nobody advertises**.

Which machine to pick

1. **Start from a small plan.** According to third-party guides and the project's documentation, as a starting point 1 vCPU with 1 GB of RAM is enough to begin with, and 2 vCPU with 2 GB is more comfortable. Check the current n8n documentation, since it changes between versions.

2. **See what each plan has** on **VPS servers** and, for more headroom, **Cloud servers**. The figures are on those pages, not in this article.

3. **Pick Ubuntu** if you have no preference, because it is the system with the most documentation. See **which operating system to choose**.

4. **Grow when you need to.** Workflows that process a lot of data are what use the most. If memory runs short, read **the causes** before changing plan.

And if you do not want to run a server

There are two honest ways out. The first is the **hosted service of the n8n project itself**: nothing to install, but it is their service, on their terms, and not a Interweb product. The second is to ask whether you need n8n at all: for simple scheduled jobs a **cron job** in cPanel does the work, as in **cron jobs: what they are for and how to create one**.

An unmanaged VPS is yours.

Installing n8n, keeping it updated and securing it is your job. Our support does not install or repair n8n or any other third-party software. See the **Support Policy** and **how far our support goes**.

Already have a VPS for something else?

You can add n8n to it, as long as there is memory to spare. Keep each service in its own container, as in **an application with its database in Docker Compose**.

RECOMMENDED

Compare the plans and choose the server for your n8n.

See the VPS servers →

In our plans

For n8n, our VPS plans (KVM virtualisation, full access over SSH) start at VPS1 with 1 vCPU, 2 GB of RAM and 40 GB of NVMe, which already meets the minimum of 1 vCPU and 1 GB of RAM. The Cloud plans start at Cloud1 with 1 vCPU, 2 GB and 25 GB. For the more comfortable 2 vCPU and 2 GB, pick a step up and check the vCPU column on the plan page, where each step is listed. The ladder goes up to VPS6 (32 vCPU, 64 GB, 1,280 GB) and Cloud6 (32 vCPU, 64 GB, 400 GB). For disk, start with what the plan gives and look at the usage on the server now and then with `df -h`; when it nears the limit, it is time to move up.

SEE ALSO

- **VPS servers** →
- **Installing n8n with Docker Compose on a VPS** →
- **First steps with your VPS** →

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