

Hands-on tutorials

Control Your AWS Costs



Control Your AWS Costs: Hands-on tutorials

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Control Your AWS Costs

AWS experience	Beginner
Time to complete	10 minutes
Cost to complete	Free Tier
Last updated	October 8, 2025

Overview

[AWS Free Tier](#) allows you to explore AWS services at no cost within specified usage limits, which makes it easier to get started with AWS. [AWS Budgets](#) automatically monitors your Free Tier usage and helps you track your AWS spending.

In this tutorial, you will learn to track your AWS Free Tier usage, manage credits, and set up cost alerts using AWS Budgets.

AWS Free Tier includes:

- \$100 USD in credits
- Up to \$100 USD additional credits (\$20 each) for exploring key services:
 - [Amazon EC2](#) - You'll learn how to launch an EC2 instance and terminate it.
 - [Amazon RDS](#) - You'll learn the basic configuration options for launching an RDS database.
 - [AWS Lambda](#) - You'll learn to build a straightforward web application consisting of a Lambda function with a function URL.
 - [Amazon Bedrock](#) - You'll learn how to submit a prompt to generate a response in the Amazon Bedrock text playground.
 - [AWS Budgets](#) - You'll learn how to set a budget that alerts you when you exceed your budgeted cost amount.

Exploration period

- 6 months to use your credits

What you will accomplish

In this tutorial, you will learn how to:

- Navigate the new Free Tier credit system
- Earn additional credits through service exploration
- Monitor your Free Tier usage
- Set up cost control alerts

Prerequisites

Before starting this tutorial, you will need:

- A supported web browser (latest version of Chrome or Firefox)
- An AWS account created after July 15, 2025: If you don't already have one, follow the [Setting Up Your AWS Environment](#) tutorial for a quick overview.

Note

New accounts may need 24 hours before accessing all services in this tutorial.

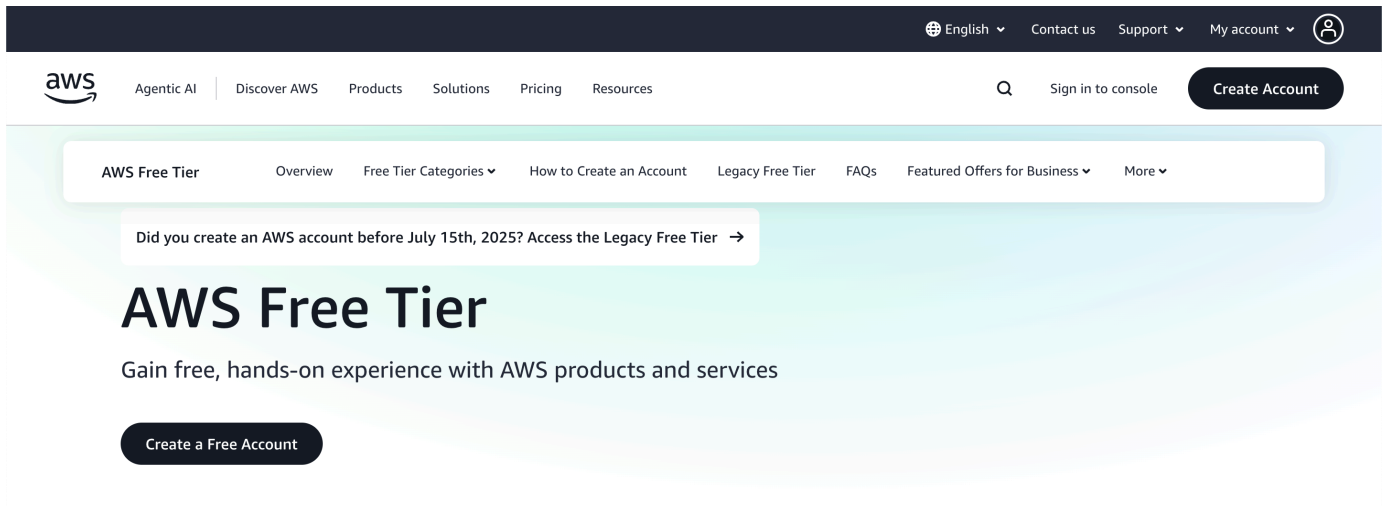
Note

Accounts created before July 15, 2025 will remain on the [Legacy AWS Free Tier](#) program.

Implementation

Step 1: Explore the AWS Free Tier

- Open the AWS Free Tier page, under the AWS Free Tier header, choose **Create a Free Account**.

The image shows the AWS Free Tier landing page. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the AWS logo on the left and links for 'English', 'Contact us', 'Support', and 'My account' on the right. Below this is a white navigation bar with the AWS logo and links for 'Agentic AI', 'Discover AWS', 'Products', 'Solutions', 'Pricing', and 'Resources'. A search bar and 'Sign in to console' link are also present. A prominent 'Create Account' button is on the right. The main content area has a light blue background. It features a breadcrumb trail: 'AWS Free Tier > Overview > Free Tier Categories > How to Create an Account > Legacy Free Tier > FAQs > Featured Offers for Business > More'. A callout box asks, 'Did you create an AWS account before July 15th, 2025? Access the Legacy Free Tier →'. The main heading is 'AWS Free Tier' in large, bold, black text. Below it, the text reads 'Gain free, hands-on experience with AWS products and services'. A large, dark 'Create a Free Account' button is centered at the bottom of the main content area.



When signing up for Free Tier you can choose between two plans:

- Free Plan: Explore AWS for up to 6 months without cost or commitment. You won't be charged unless you switch to the Paid Plan.
- Paid Plan: Develop production-ready workloads with access to all AWS services and features.



Sign up for AWS

Choose your account plan

	
Free (6 months) Learn, experiment, and build prototypes	Paid Develop production-ready workloads
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Receive up to \$200 in credits✓ Includes free usage of select services✗ Workloads scale beyond credit thresholds✗ Access to all AWS services and features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Receive up to \$200 in credits✓ Includes free usage of select services✓ Workloads scale beyond credit thresholds✓ Access to all AWS services and features
<p>ⓘ After the 6 month free period or when all credits are used, you can choose to upgrade to a paid plan. Otherwise, your account closes automatically.</p>	<p>ⓘ After all of your credits are used, you are charged using <u>pay-as-you-go</u> pricing.</p>
<input type="button" value="Choose free plan"/>	<input type="button" value="Choose paid plan"/>

[ⓘ View additional details](#)

Step 2: Earning AWS credits

You can see the credit details in the **Explore AWS** widget in the [AWS Management Console](#).

These activities are designed to expose you to important building blocks of AWS, including cost and usage that show up in the AWS Billing and Cost Management Console. These charges are deducted from your Free Tier credits and help teach you about selecting the appropriate instance sizes to minimize your costs.

1. Choose **Set up a cost budget using AWS Budgets** to earn your first \$20 credits. It redirects to the [AWS Billing and Cost Management console](#).

The screenshot shows the AWS Console Home page. The 'Explore AWS' widget displays a list of activities to earn AWS credits. The activity 'Set up a cost budget using AWS Budgets' is highlighted with a red box. The 'Cost and usage' widget shows the current month's cost as \$0.00 and the forecasted month end cost as \$0.00. The credits remaining are \$100.00 USD, and there are 180 days remaining until the credits are depleted or the free period ends.

Activity	Reward	Status
Launch an instance using EC2	\$20	Not started
Use a foundation model in the Amazon Bedrock playground	\$20	Not started
Set up a cost budget using AWS Budgets	\$20	Not started
Create a web app using AWS Lambda	\$20	Not started
Create an Amazon RDS Database	\$20	Not started

2. On the **Choose budget type page**, choose Use a template (simplified) and Monthly cost budget.
3. Enter a **name** for your monthly cost budget, set the budgeted amount to **100.00** (credited amount from account creation), and enter your **email address** to receive spend updates.

Billing and Cost Management

Choose billing view [New](#)

Primary view

- Home
- Getting Started
- Billing and Payments**
 - Bills
 - Payments
 - Credits
 - Purchase Orders
- Cost and Usage Analysis**
 - Cost Explorer
 - Cost Explorer Saved Reports
 - Cost Anomaly Detection
 - Free Tier
 - Data Exports
 - Customer Carbon Footprint Tool
- Cost Organization**
 - Cost Categories
 - Cost Allocation Tags
 - Billing Conductor
- Budgets and Planning**
 - [Budgets](#)
 - Budgets Reports
 - Pricing Calculator
- Savings and Commitments**
 - Cost Optimization Hub
 - Savings Plans**
 - Overview
 - Inventory
 - Recommendations
 - Purchase Analyzer
 - Utilization Report
 - Coverage Report
 - Purchase Savings Plans

Choose budget type [Info](#)

Budget setup

- Use a template (simplified)**
Use the recommended configurations. You can change some configuration options after the budget is created.
- Customize (advanced)**
Customize a budget to set parameters specific to your use case. You can customize the time period, the start month, and specific accounts.

Templates - *new*

Choose a template that best matches your use case.

- Zero spend budget**
Create a budget that notifies you once your spending exceeds \$0.01.
- Monthly cost budget**
Create a monthly budget that notifies you if you exceed, or are forecasted to exceed, the budget amount.
- Daily Savings Plans coverage budget**
Create a coverage budget for your Savings Plans that notifies you when you fall below the defined target.
- Daily reservation utilization budget**
Create a utilization budget for your reservations that notifies you when you fall below the defined target.

Monthly cost budget - Template

Budget name

Provide a descriptive name for this budget.

My Monthly Cost Budget

Names must be between 1-100 characters.

Enter your budgeted amount (\$)

Last month's cost: \$0.00

100.00

Email recipients

Specify the email recipients you want to notify when the threshold has exceeded.

my@email-address.com

Maximum number of email recipients is 10.

Scope

All AWS services are in scope in this budget.

You will be notified when 1) your actual spend reaches 85% 2) your actual spend reaches 100% 3) if your forecasted spend is expected to reach 100%.

Template settings

This template has default configurations that can be changed later. To change any of these settings, see [Custom](#). You can also download this template in [JSON](#).

Cancel [Create budget](#)

4. Choose Create budget.

Your budget **My Monthly Budget** has been created successfully. [Submit feedback](#)

Budgets (1) [Info](#)

[Actions](#) [Download CSV](#) [Create budget](#)

Name	Thresholds	Budget	Amount used	Forecasted amount
<input type="checkbox"/> My Monthly Cost Budget	OK	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

← Create a monthly budget (simplified)

[Congratulatory!](#) You completed the tutorial

You now know how to create a budget.

[Submit feedback](#)

Note

We'll send an email alert when 50 percent, 25 percent, or 10 percent of your AWS credits remain. We'll also send notifications to the AWS console and your email inbox when you have 15 days, 7 days, and 2 days left in your 6-month free period. After your free period ends, we'll send you an email with instructions on how to upgrade to a paid plan. You'll have 90 days to reopen your account by upgrading to a paid plan.

Step 3: Confirm your credits

You can go to the Credits page in the left navigation pane in the [AWS Billing and Cost Management Console](#) to confirm your \$20 in credits.

Note

It can take up to 10 minutes for your credits to appear.

The screenshot shows the AWS Billing and Cost Management console interface. On the left is a navigation pane with categories like 'Billing and Cost Management', 'Billing and Payments', and 'Cost and Usage Analysis'. The main content area is titled 'Credits' and includes a 'Redeem credit' button. A summary card shows: Total amount remaining: \$20.00, Total amount used: \$0.00, and Active credits: 1. Below this is a table of credits with columns for Credit name, Expiration date, Amount used, Amount remaining, and Applicable tags.

Credit name	Expiration...	Amoun...	Amoun...	Applicable ...
Explore AWS: Set up a cost budget using AWS Budgets	1/1/2026	\$0.00	\$20.00	See list

You can receive an additional \$80 by completing the remaining four activities.

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have finished the Control your AWS Costs tutorial.

You have successfully analyzed your Free Tier usage, explored and managed your credits, and set up cost alerts using AWS Budgets. You can now confidentially explore the portfolio of services without incurring costs, making it even easier to get started with AWS.

For more information about AWS Free Tier, see the [AWS Free Tier User Guide](#), [AWS Free Tier Blog](#), or [AWS Free Tier FAQs](#).