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Comparisons and alternatives

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SSD or NVMe storage: does the difference matter for a website

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NVMe is a faster kind of SSD, and for an ordinary website it is almost never what makes the site fast or slow. It matters when there is a heavily used database, a lot of small files, or big backups and imports. On a brochure site, what weighs is the images, the plugins and the lack of cache. Paying more for a disk does not fix a badly tuned site.

The terms, without the confusion

Term	What it is	In a few words
HDD	A disk with parts that spin.	The slowest and the oldest. Every request waits for the disk to turn.
SSD	A flash-memory drive with no moving parts.	Much faster than an HDD. It usually connects to the computer through SATA, an interface designed for older disks.
NVMe	Also an SSD, but it connects over PCIe and speaks a protocol of its own.	Answers faster and handles many requests at once. That is why it helps busy servers.

So “SSD or NVMe” really means “SATA SSD or NVMe SSD”. NVMe is not a separate kind of memory: it is an SSD that communicates in another way.

When you notice it

1. **Busy databases.** A shop with many orders, or a WordPress site with heavy queries, reads and writes the database all the time. The faster the disk answers, the less the pages wait.

2. **Lots of small files.** Cache folders, thumbnails and plugins with thousands of files depend on quick access.

3 **Large backups, imports and exports.** Importing a database of several gigabytes or compressing a whole site takes less time on a faster drive.

4 **When you do not.** On a small site with a cache, the server serves nearly everything from memory and the disk is barely asked. The limit is somewhere else.

What is usually the real cause of slowness

Before blaming the disk, look at the rest: huge images, too many plugins, no page cache and an old PHP version. See **what actually makes a difference when a site is slow** and **how to measure your site speed**. On shared hosting the disk belongs to the platform and is shared with other accounts; what you control is what your site asks of it. See **the limits nobody advertises**.

How to find out what you have

What each plan uses is described on the plan's page: see the **hosting plans** and the **VPS server**. If you have a VPS and want to look yourself, the command line shows whether the disk is rotational:

```
lsblk -d -o NAME,ROTA,SIZE
```

A **ROTA** of 0 means a non-rotational disk (SSD or NVMe). On a virtual server the system sees a virtual disk, and its name (for example `vda`) does not always reveal the technology behind it. These commands are yours: support does not run or repair them. See **how far our support goes**.

Beware of "up to X times faster".
Those figures measure the disk on its own, in a lab. Your site is not made of disk alone: it goes through PHP, the database and the network. The real gain on a site ranges from "none" to "noticeable", depending on what it does.

Choose the plan for what the site needs, not for the acronym.
For most sites, an SSD of either kind is far above what is required. If you have a large shop or a heavy database, ask about the plan and measure before deciding.

NEED A HAND?

Not sure whether your site needs a faster disk? Send us the address and what makes it slow.

Open a support ticket →

In our plans

Our shared hosting plans use NVMe SSD storage, from 10 GB on Pro up to 200 GB on Business Ultra. Our VPS plans use NVMe too, from 40 GB on VPS1 to 1,280 GB on VPS6. Cloud plans list their disk on the plan page (from 25 GB on Cloud1 to 400 GB on Cloud6), and that page is where you confirm the type. As the article says, for most sites the disk is not what limits you. If the site feels slow or stops at busy hours, **Resource Usage** in cPanel shows whether the account is hitting its CPU, memory or I/O limits.

SEE ALSO

- **The site is slow: what actually makes a difference**
- **Measuring your site speed: which tools, and what the numbers mean**
- **The limits nobody advertises: inodes, processes and memory**
- **Hosting plans and what each includes**

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