

# Planning a Node

## Decisions

The two big things you *can't* change about your node once you've started it is your **domain name**, and your **software**. There are currently no known migration options for migrating from one federating software to another, and ActivityPub is **extremely** reliant on the domain name.

It's effectively impossible to change either without effectively starting over with your instance, and re-using the same domain can have complications (although, you could use a (different) subdomain without problems.) You will want to make sure you are comfortable moving forward with the two things you choose in this regard.

## Domain Name

As far as domain name goes, you'll need to purchase it from a domain registrar - there are several options available to you in this regard. Choose one that's trustworthy, and one that you feel would have your back in the event of a security issue (i.e. your account gets hijacked.) The author of this document uses [Porkbun](#), but there are other options out there; a few that have been mentioned are [Namecheap](#), [Glauca](#), and [Cloudflare](#).

Keep in mind that name registrars will often offer a deeply discounted price for their domain names, and a much steeper price for subsequent years. Assuming you will be running this node for at least over a year, be mindful of what the normal renewal price will be, so you don't get stuck with a \$40 renewal for what you thought was a \$2 domain!

Once you've picked out your registrar of choice, go looking for a domain name! Keep in mind this domain will be at the end of your (and your users, if this is a multi-user node) username, so pick something that's both available and that you'd like at the end of your username! (For example, if you chose the domain sickos.social and your username was critter, your full username would be @critter@sickos.social.) You don't have to necessarily be elegant with this, but it can be fun coming up with a good domain!

Once you've come up with (and purchased) a good domain name for your instance, it's time to think about the software you'll use.

## Fediverse Software

As far as software goes, you have a few options. The two known/adapted to work for the Website League as of writing this are [GoToSocial](#) and [Akkoma](#). This guide will focus on installing

**GoToSocial**, but you may want to compare and contrast both to see which one you would prefer to run.

GoToSocial is lighter and simpler to spin up, but doesn't come with its own UI/front-end for posting; you'd need to use (or install) an external client, such as [Phanpy](#) or [Tusky](#). Akkoma, on the other hand, is more complicated, but it also offers several front-ends which can then be re-skinned/re-coloured to your liking, among other bits of flexibility.

There are other federating software choices out there - such as Sharkey or the well-known Mastodon, but these are not included here as they either lack features or have flaws which disqualify them for use with the Website League. You may be able to patch the software to make it work, but this is out of the scope of this guide.


## Server

Now that you've picked what software you'd like to use, and the domain name you'd like, the last thing you need to choose is where to put your instance! There are, again, multiple options for this - [Vultr](#), [Hivelocity](#), [Linode](#), [DigitalOcean](#), and [OVH](#) are option ([Oracle](#) is *also* an option, and you *may* be able to get it for free, with the caveat that it's Oracle. However, Oracle and Hetzner, two major hosting options, disallow adult content on their servers, which mostly takes them out of the running for use on a social network that permits adult content.) For this guide, we will be using Vultr.

For this guide, we're going to get a **regular cloud compute shared CPU** VM with **1 vCPU, 1 GB RAM, and 25 GB SSD** for **\$5/mo**. If you start to run into resource constraints, you can always upgrade your VM. For the operating system, choose **Rocky Linux 9**.

## Choose Plan

AMD High Performance <sup>?</sup> Intel High Performance <sup>?</sup> High Frequency <sup>?</sup> Regular Cloud Compute <sup>?</sup>

Name	Cores	Memory	Storage	Bandwidth	Price
 <b>25 GB SSD</b>	1 vCPU	1 GB	25 GB SSD	1 TB	<b>\$5/month</b> \$0.007/hour

These size constraints make sense for the software we are running - GoToSocial is pretty lightweight. If you're running other software, you may want to consider something with more RAM.

Give your VM a hostname and hit Deploy Now. After a moment, it'll start up and give you an IP address. You're now the proud owner of a virtual machine! Click on your VM name, then take note of the **IP address** and **IPv6 address** it gives you as we move on to the next section - configuring your domain name!

IP Address: 10.13.12.25 

IPv6 Address: fd42:694:2069:acab:5400:05ff:fe1c:587b 

If you aren't using Vultr, note that some hosts may not have IPv6 addresses enabled by default. For example, Digital Ocean allows you to [automatically enable it during VM creation](#) or [manually afterwards](#).

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