QUANTUM COMPANIES — GUIDE

How to buy quantum cloud time

Compare AWS Braket, Azure Quantum and IBM Quantum Platform pricing, access models and free tiers for gate-model QPUs, annealers and simulators.

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Public cloud platforms provide on-demand and reserved access to quantum processors and simulators. Compare pricing models before you commit.

Access models

| Platform | Free tier | On-demand | Reservation | Subscription | |---|---|---|---|---| | **IBM Quantum Platform** | 10 min/month on 100+ qubit QPUs (Open Plan) | Pay-As-You-Go: $96/min | Flex: 400 min/yr from $72/min; Premium: 5,200 min/yr from $48/min | Annual contracts only | | **AWS Braket** | 1 hour SV1/DM1 sim/month for 12 months | Per-task + per-shot (see table) | Braket Direct: hourly reservation (see table) | No monthly sub; pay for reservation hours | | **Azure Quantum** | Free simulator (up to 30 qubits) | Per-provider token/gate-shot model | Monthly plans for Quantinuum (Standard $125k, Premium $175k) | Monthly subs for Quantinuum; IonQ $25k/mo Aria-Forte |

AWS Braket on-demand pricing (fetched 2026-11-01)

| QPU | Provider | Per-task | Per-shot | Min shots (error mitigation) | |---|---|---|---|---| | SV1 / DM1 / TN1 simulators | AWS | — | $0.075/min (SV1/DM1), $0.30/min (TN1) | — | | Rigetti Cepheus | Rigetti | $0.30 | $0.000425 | — | | IQM Emerald | IQM | $0.30 | $0.00160 | — | | IQM Garnet | IQM | $0.30 | $0.00145 | — | | IonQ Forte | IonQ | $0.30 | $0.08000 | 2,500 | | AQT IBEX-Q1 | AQT | $0.30 | $0.02350 | — | | QuEra Aquila | QuEra | $0.30 | $0.01000 | — |

Reservation rates (Braket Direct, per hour): AQT IBEX-Q1 $4,800; IonQ Forte $7,000; IQM Emerald $4,000; IQM Garnet $3,000; QuEra Aquila $2,500; Rigetti Cepheus $4,100.

Source: AWS Braket pricing — fetched 2026-11-01.

Azure Quantum on-demand pricing (fetched 2026-11-01)

| Provider | Model | Pricing | |---|---|---| | **IonQ** (Aria 1, Forte 1, Forte Enterprise 1) | Pay-as-you-go: Azure Quantum Tokens (AQT) = m + 0.000220·N •q·C + 0.000975·N ,q·C | Aria 1: $0.000220/1q-gate-shot, $0.000975/2q-gate-shot, min $97.50 (error mitigation on) / $12.42 (off). Forte 1: $0.0001645/1q, $0.001121/2q, min $168.20 / $25.79. | | **IonQ** | Monthly Aria-Forte plan | $25,000/mo + Azure infra (includes Aria 1, Forte 1, Forte Enterprise 1) | | **Pasqal** (Fresnel, EMU-MPS, EMU-SV) | Pay-as-you-go | €3,000/QPU-hour + Azure infra; €15/emulator-hour + Azure infra | | **Quantinuum** (H2) | Pay-as-you-go (contact sales) | HQC = 5 + C(N •q + 10N ,q + 5N ˜)/5,000 Q | **Quantinuum** | Standard plan | $125,000/mo + Azure infra (10k HQC H2, 100k eHQC emulator) | | **Quantinuum** | Premium plan | $175,000/mo + Azure infra (17k HQC H2, 170k eHQC emulator) | | **Rigetti** (Cepheus-1-108Q) | Pay-as-you-go | $0.02 per 10 ms job execution time; QVM simulator free |

Source: Azure Quantum pricing — fetched 2026-11-01.

IBM Quantum Platform pricing (fetched 2026-11-01)

Plan	Price	Minimum	Features
Open	Free	—	10 min/month on 100+ qubit QPUs; Qiskit Runtime; basic support
Pay-As-You-Go	$96/min	1 second	Full fleet access; Qiskit Runtime; standard support
Flex	$72/min	400 min/yr	Prepaid; priority queue; advanced tools; early access
Premium	$48/min	5,200 min/yr	Annual; highest priority; dedicated support; accelerator program
On-Prem	Quote	—	Dedicated on-site system; IBM maintenance; full capacity

Source: IBM Quantum products & services — fetched 2026-11-01.

Decision checklist

- [ ] Identify target modality and qubit count for your workload
- [ ] Check which clouds offer that hardware
- [ ] Estimate shot count and circuit depth !’ calculate on-demand cost
- [ ] Compare to reservation/subscription break-even
- [ ] Factor in classical compute, storage and data transfer
- [ ] Confirm free tier eligibility (new accounts only)
- [ ] Test on simulator first (free on all platforms)
- [ ] Verify SDK compatibility (Qiskit, Braket SDK, Azure Quantum SDK, PennyLane, Cirq)

Sources

- AWS Braket pricing — fetched 2026-11-01.
- Azure Quantum pricing — fetched 2026-11-01.
- IBM Quantum products & services — fetched 2026-11-01.
- AWS Free Tier for Braket — fetched 2026-11-01.
- Azure Quantum providers — fetched 2026-11-01.

Frequently asked questions

Which cloud is cheapest for small experiments?

IBM Quantum Open Plan gives 10 free minutes/month on 100+ qubit systems. AWS Braket and Azure Quantum charge per-task plus per-shot; AWS Free Tier includes 1 hour of SV1/DM1 simulation/month for 12 months.

Do I need an account with each provider?

Yes. AWS Braket requires an AWS account. Azure Quantum requires an Azure subscription. IBM Quantum requires an IBMid. You can use multiple clouds simultaneously.

Can I run the same circuit on different QPUs?

Yes, with translation. Qiskit, Cirq and PennyLane compile to multiple backends. Amazon Braket SDK and Azure Quantum SDK provide unified interfaces. Verify qubit count, connectivity and gate set compatibility first.

What are the hidden costs?

Data transfer, storage (S3, Blob Storage), classical compute for hybrid jobs (ml.m5.xlarge, etc.), notebook instances (SageMaker, Azure ML), and reservation cancellation fees. Read the full pricing page before committing.