

Hands-on tutorials

Launch a Windows Virtual Machine in Amazon Lightsail



Launch a Windows Virtual Machine in Amazon Lightsail: Hands-on tutorials

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Launch a Windows Virtual Machine in Amazon Lightsail

AWS experience	Beginner
Time to complete	10 minutes
Cost to complete	Free Tier eligible
Requires	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AWS account <div data-bbox="862 632 1507 947"><p>Note</p><p>Accounts created within the past 24 hours might not yet have access to the services required for this tutorial.</p></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommended browser: The latest version of Chrome or Firefox
Last updated	August 23, 2022

Overview

[Amazon Lightsail](#) is one of the easiest ways to get started on AWS. It offers virtual servers, storage, databases, and networking, plus a cost-effective, monthly plan.

In this tutorial, you create a Windows Server 2019 instance in Amazon Lightsail in seconds. After the instance is up and running, you connect to it via RDP within the Lightsail console using the browser-based RDP client.

[Get started with Amazon Lightsail for free.](#)

This three-minute video provides an introduction to the tutorial: [Amazon Lightsail: Launch a Windows Instance](#)

Implementation

Step 1: Create a Windows Server 2019 instance in Amazon Lightsail

1. Create an Amazon Lightsail account

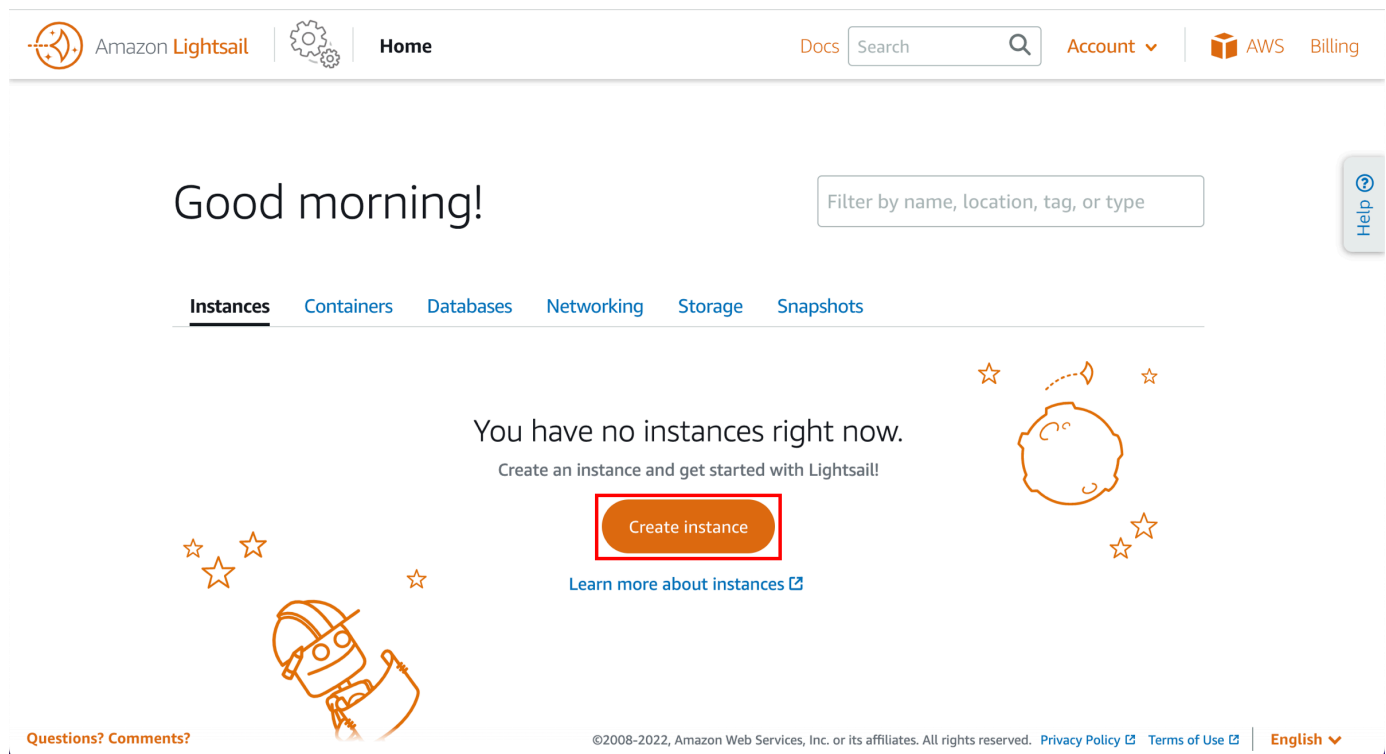
[Sign up for AWS](#)

Already have an account? [Sign-in](#)

This tutorial is free tier eligible.

2. Create a Windows Server 2019 instance in Amazon Lightsail

Choose the **Create instance** button on the **Instances** tab of the Lightsail home page.



The screenshot shows the Amazon Lightsail home page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Amazon Lightsail logo, a search bar, and links for Docs, Account, AWS, and Billing. Below the navigation bar, the main content area features a "Good morning!" greeting and a filter box. A navigation menu includes "Instances" (which is underlined), "Containers", "Databases", "Networking", "Storage", and "Snapshots". The central message states "You have no instances right now. Create an instance and get started with Lightsail!" with a prominent orange "Create instance" button highlighted by a red box. Below this button is a link to "Learn more about instances". The page is decorated with orange line-art illustrations of a robot and a planet. At the bottom, there is a footer with copyright information and links for Privacy Policy, Terms of Use, and a language selector set to English.

Step 2: Configure the instance

1. Specify a Region and Availability Zone

An AWS Region and Availability Zone is selected for you. Choose **Change Region and Availability Zone** to create your instance in another location.



+ Create an instance

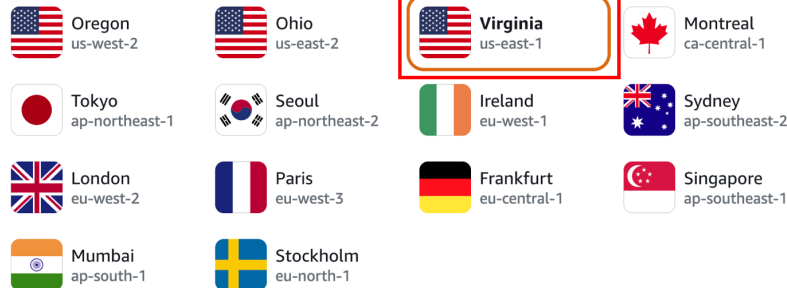
Help

Select your instance location

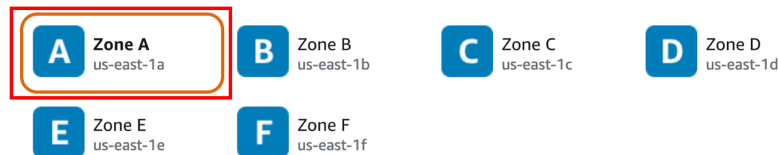
Select a Region

The closer your instance is to your users, the less latency they will experience.

[Learn more about Regions](#)



Select an Availability Zone



Help

2. Choose a platform and image

Choose the **Microsoft Windows** platform option, and choose **OS only** to view the operating system-only instance images available in Lightsail. Select the **Windows Server 2019** image.

To learn more about Lightsail instance images, see [Choose an Amazon Lightsail instance image](#).

Pick your instance image [?](#)

Select a platform

- Linux/Unix
28 blueprints
- Microsoft Windows**
4 blueprints

Windows-based instance prices reflect additional licensing fees.

Select a blueprint

Apps + OS OS Only

- Windows Server 2019**
2022.07.13
- Windows Server 2016
2022.07.13
- Windows Server 2012 R2
2022.07.13

Windows Server 2019 2022.07.13

Amazon Lightsail helps you build, deploy, scale, and manage Microsoft applications quickly, easily, and cost effectively with Windows Server 2019. For business IT applications, Lightsail runs Windows-based solutions in a secure, easily managed, and performant cloud environment. Common Windows use cases include Enterprise Windows-based application

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3. (Optional) Add a launch script

Choose **Add launch script** to add a PowerShell script that will run on your instance when it launches.

Optional

You can add a shell script that will run on your instance the first time it launches.

+ Add launch script

Launch script [?](#)

You can enter user data to configure the instance type you've chosen.

Enter your setup code here.

4. Select an instance plan

Choose your instance plan.

You can try the \$8 USD Lightsail plan free for three months (up to 750 hours). We'll credit three free months to your account.

[Learn more on the Lightsail pricing page.](#)

Lightsail will use the **default** SSH key pair for this Region to retrieve the administrator password for your Windows instance.

Choose your instance plan [?]

New! Check out our new 16 GB and 32 GB RAM bundles!

Sort by: **Price per month** | Memory | Processing | Storage | Transfer

Plan	Price per month	Memory	Processing	Storage	Transfer
\$8 USD (First 3 months free!)	\$8 USD	512 MB	1 vCPU	30 GB SSD	1 TB
\$12 USD (First 3 months free!)	\$12 USD	1 GB	1 vCPU	40 GB SSD	2 TB
\$20 USD (First 3 months free!)	\$20 USD	2 GB	1 vCPU	60 GB SSD	3 TB
\$40 USD	\$40 USD	4 GB	2 vCPUs	80 GB SSD	4 TB
\$70 USD	\$70 USD	8 GB	2 vCPUs	160 GB SSD	5 TB

For a limited time, new Lightsail customers can try the selected plan for free for three months. [Learn more about the free trial in Lightsail.](#)

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5. Enter an instance name

Enter a name for your instance.

For a limited time, new Lightsail customers can try the selected plan for free for three months. [Learn more about the free trial in Lightsail.](#)

Identify your instance

Your Lightsail resources must have unique names.

Windows_Server_2019-1 × 1

TAGGING OPTIONS

Use tags to filter and organize your resources in the Lightsail console. Key-value tags can also be used to organize your billing, and to control access to your resources. [Learn more about tagging.](#)

Key-only tags [?]

+ Add key-only tags

Key-value tags [?]

+ Add key-value tag

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6. (Optional) Add tags

Choose one of the following options to add tags to your instance:

- **Add key-only tags** — Enter your new tag into the tag key text box, and press Enter. Choose Save when you're done entering your tags to add them, or choose Cancel to not add them.
- **Create a key-value tag** — Enter a key into the Key text box, and a value into the Value text box. Choose Save when you're done entering your tags, or choose Cancel to not add them.

Key-value tags can only be added one at a time before saving. To add more than one key-value tag, repeat the previous steps.

For more information about key-only and key-value tags, see [Tags in Amazon Lightsail](#).

Amazon Lightsail | Home | Docs | Search | Account | AWS | Billing

Identify your instance

Your Lightsail resources must have unique names.

Windows_Server_2019-1 × 1

TAGGING OPTIONS

Use tags to filter and organize your resources in the Lightsail console. Key-value tags can also be used to organize your billing, and to control access to your resources. [Learn more about tagging.](#)

Key-only tags ?

Enter a tag key

Add a tag key and press **Enter**.

Key-value tags ?

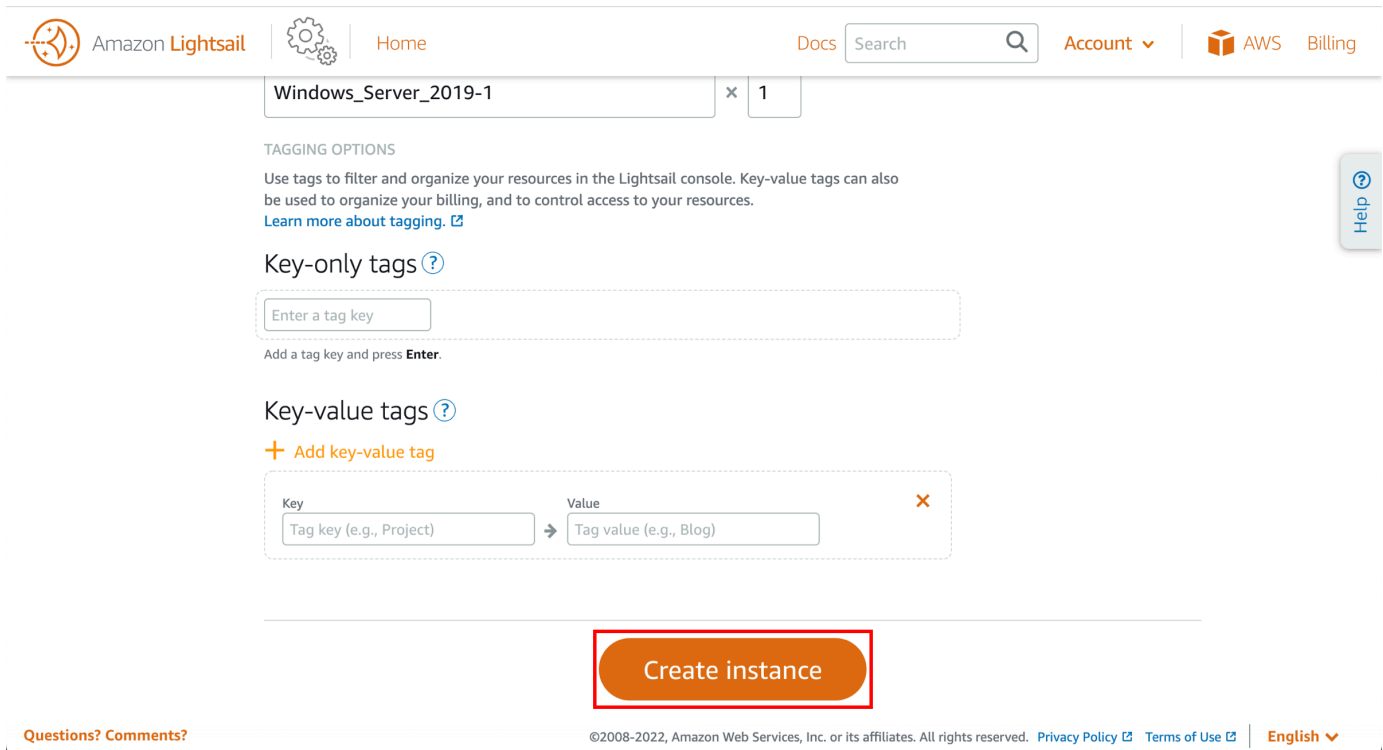
+ Add key-value tag

Key: Tag key (e.g., Project) → Value: Tag value (e.g., Blog)

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7. Create instance

Choose **Create instance**.

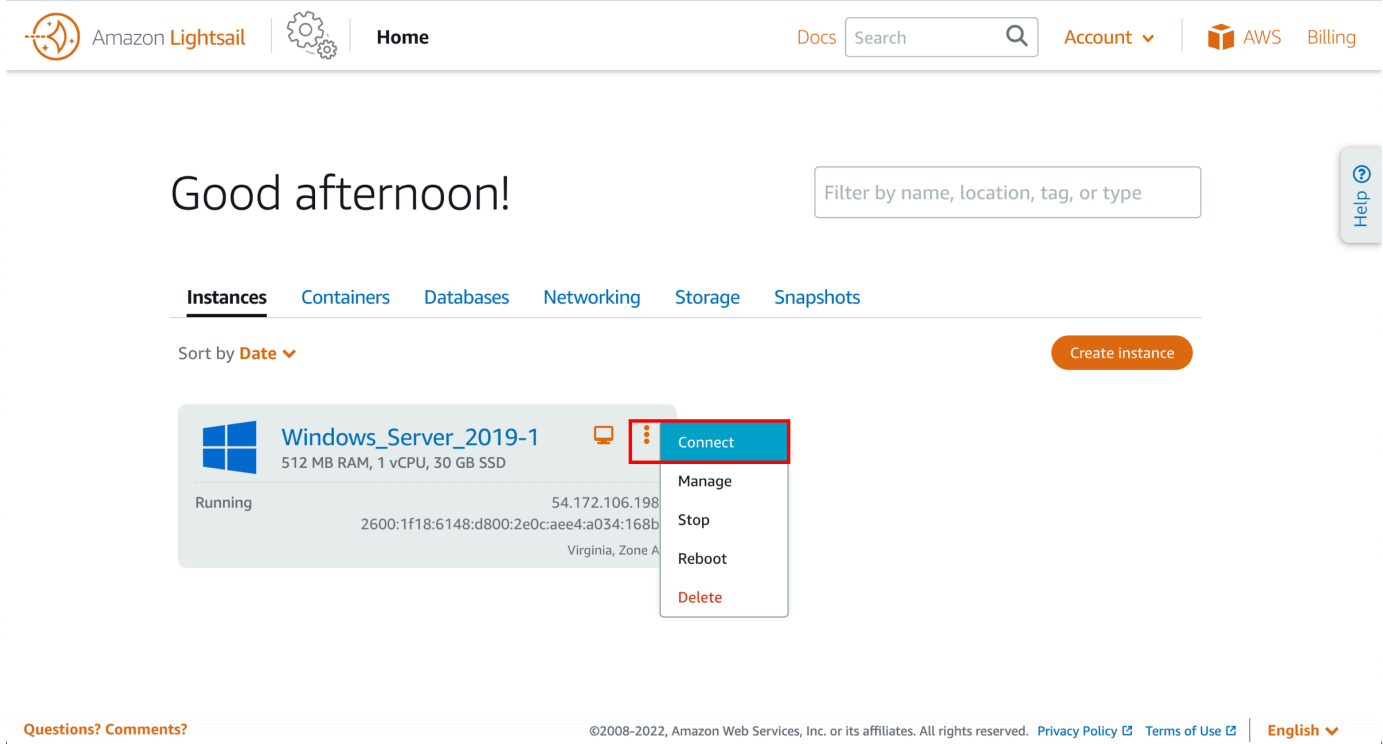


The screenshot shows the Amazon Lightsail console interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Amazon Lightsail logo, a 'Home' link, a search bar, and links for 'Account', 'AWS', and 'Billing'. Below the navigation bar, the instance name 'Windows_Server_2019-1' is displayed with a quantity of '1'. The main content area is titled 'TAGGING OPTIONS' and provides instructions on using tags. It includes sections for 'Key-only tags' with an input field 'Enter a tag key' and a note 'Add a tag key and press Enter.', and 'Key-value tags' with a '+ Add key-value tag' button and a form with 'Key' and 'Value' fields. A red box highlights the 'Create instance' button at the bottom of the page. The footer contains a 'Questions? Comments?' link, copyright information, and a language selector set to 'English'.

Step 3: Connect to your instance using the browser-based RDP client in Lightsail

1. Connect using RDP

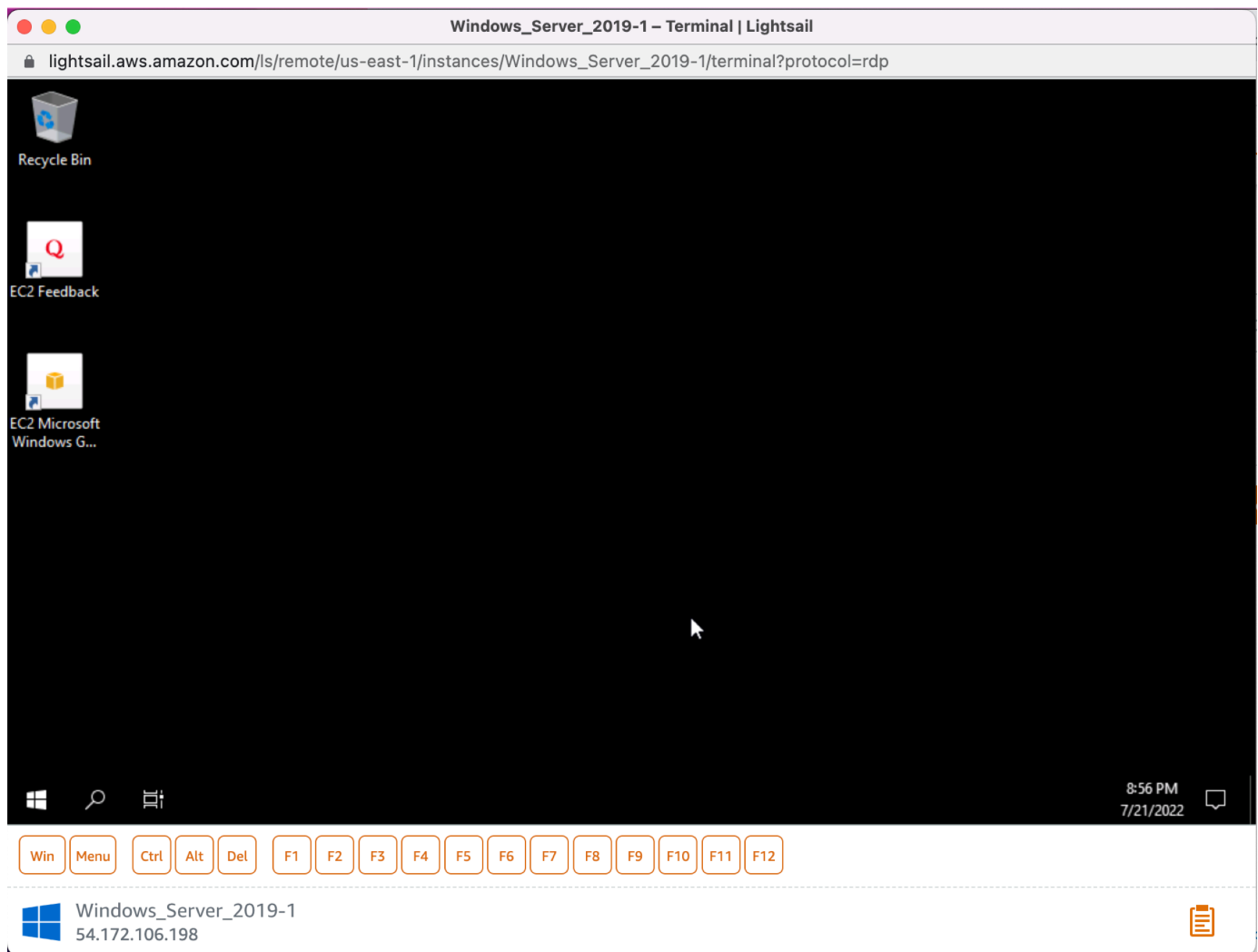
On the Instances tab of the [Lightsail home page](#), choose the RDP icon, or the ellipsis (:) icon next to the Windows Server 2019 instance you just created and choose **Connect**.



The screenshot shows the Amazon Lightsail console interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Amazon Lightsail logo, a search bar, and links for Docs, Account, AWS, and Billing. Below the navigation bar, a large heading says "Good afternoon!" followed by a filter input field. A horizontal menu contains tabs for Instances, Containers, Databases, Networking, Storage, and Snapshots. Under the Instances tab, there is a "Sort by Date" dropdown and a "Create instance" button. A table lists instances, with one instance highlighted: "Windows_Server_2019-1" (512 MB RAM, 1 vCPU, 30 GB SSD). A context menu is open over this instance, showing options: Connect, Manage, Stop, Reboot, and Delete. The footer contains a "Questions? Comments?" link, copyright information, and language settings.

2. Use RDP to manage instance

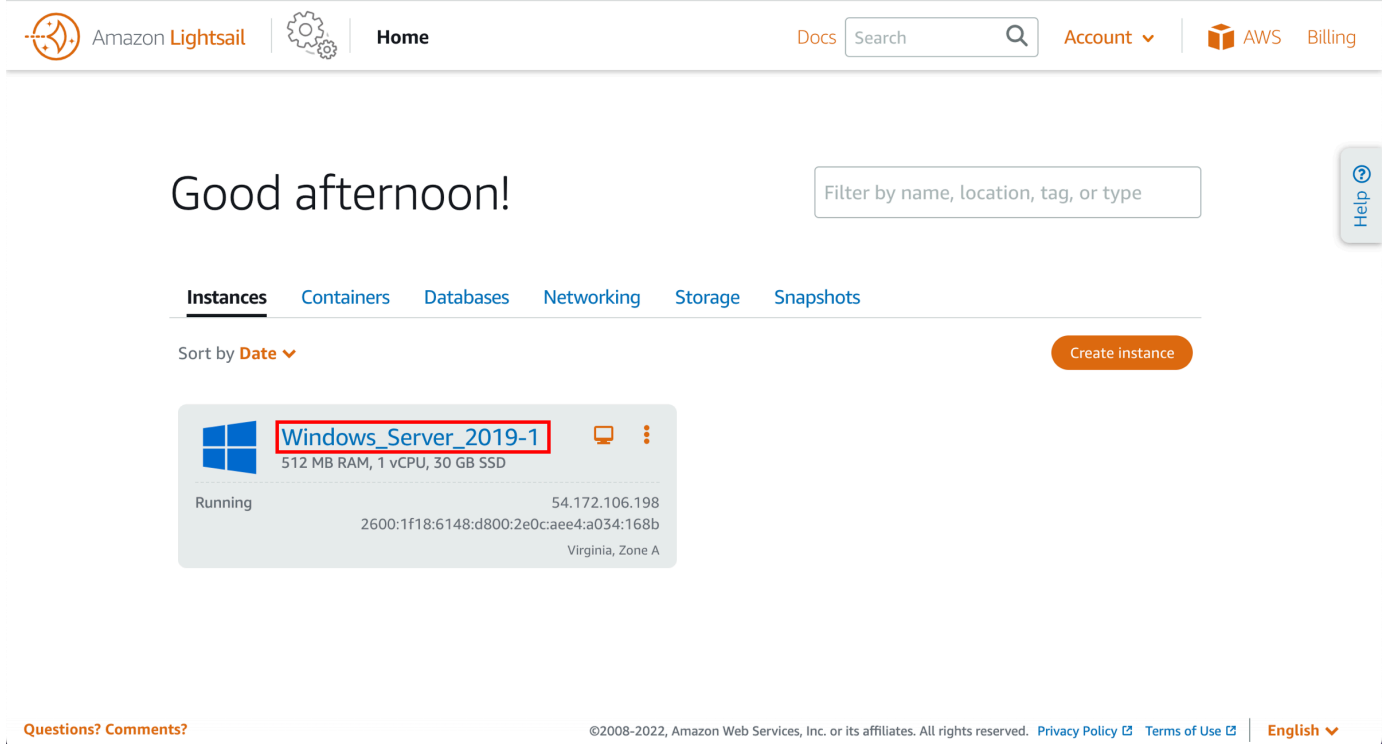
The browser-based RDP client window appears. You can use and manage your instance without configuring a third-party RDP client.



Step 4: Get administrator password for your Windows Server 2019 instance

1. Choose the instance

Choose the name of the Windows Server 2019 instance on the Instances tab of the Lightsail homepage.



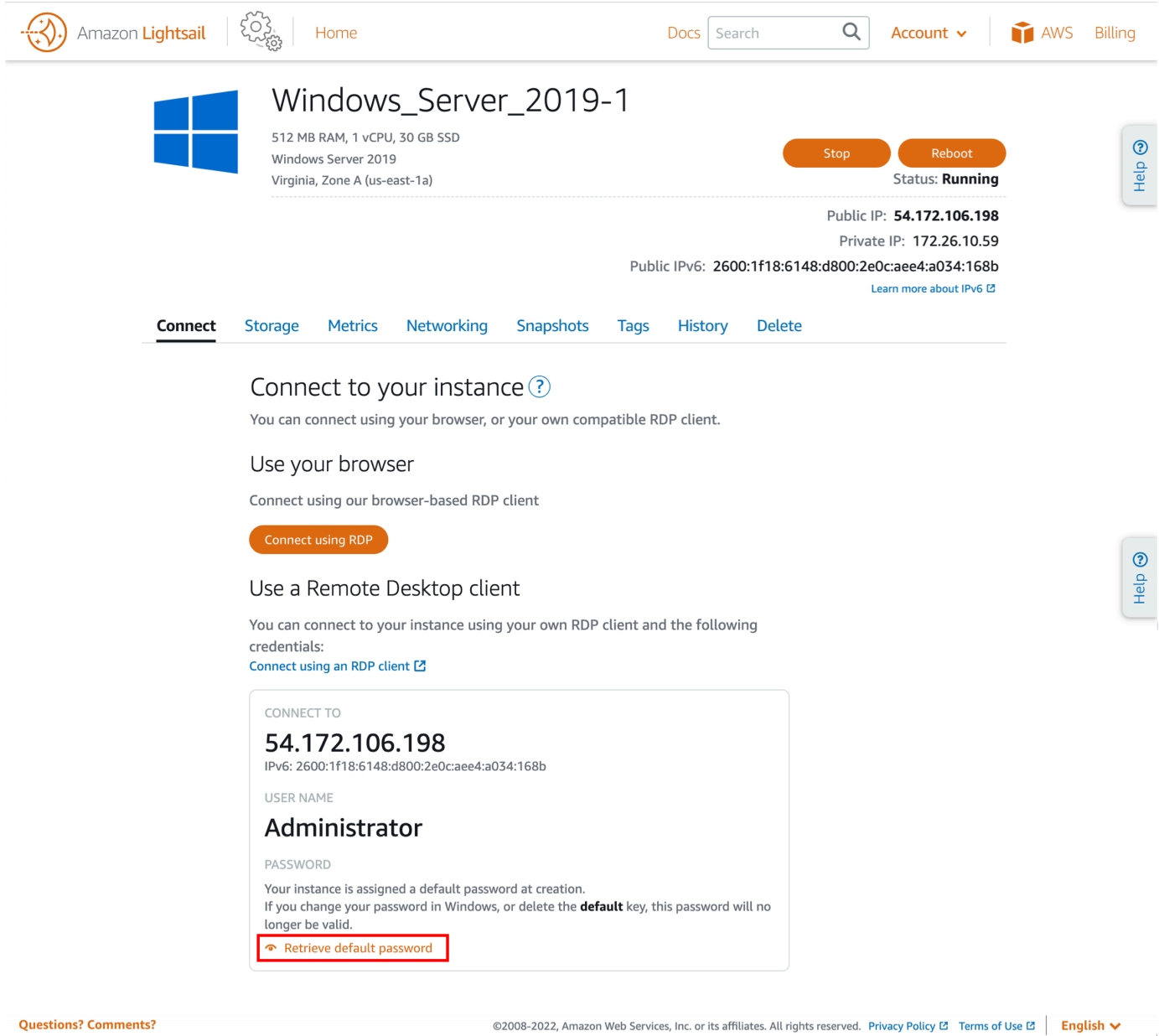
The screenshot shows the Amazon Lightsail console interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Amazon Lightsail logo, a search bar, and links for Docs, Account, AWS, and Billing. Below the navigation bar, a greeting "Good afternoon!" is displayed on the left, and a search filter "Filter by name, location, tag, or type" is on the right. A "Help" button is visible in the top right corner. The main content area features a navigation menu with tabs for Instances, Containers, Databases, Networking, Storage, and Snapshots. Below the menu, there is a "Sort by Date" dropdown and a "Create instance" button. A single instance card is shown, titled "Windows_Server_2019-1" (highlighted with a red box), with specifications "512 MB RAM, 1 vCPU, 30 GB SSD". The instance status is "Running", and it displays the IP address "54.172.106.198" and a unique identifier "2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b". The location is "Virginia, Zone A". At the bottom of the console, there are links for "Questions? Comments?", copyright information "©2008-2022, Amazon Web Services, Inc. or its affiliates. All rights reserved.", and links for "Privacy Policy", "Terms of Use", and "English".

2. Get the password

Select the **Connect** tab, scroll down to the **Default login credentials** section of the page, and choose **Retrieve default password**.

Important

If you changed the administrator password after signing in to your Windows Server 2019 instance, then the administrator password displayed in the Lightsail console is no longer valid.



The screenshot shows the Amazon Lightsail console interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Amazon Lightsail logo, a search bar, and links for Docs, Account, AWS, and Billing. The main content area displays details for a Windows Server 2019 instance named "Windows_Server_2019-1". The instance specifications are 512 MB RAM, 1 vCPU, and 30 GB SSD, located in Virginia, Zone A (us-east-1a). The status is "Running". There are "Stop" and "Reboot" buttons. The public IP address is 54.172.106.198, and the private IP is 172.26.10.59. The public IPv6 address is 2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b. Below the instance details, there is a "Connect" section with options for "Storage", "Metrics", "Networking", "Snapshots", "Tags", "History", and "Delete". The "Connect" section is expanded, showing instructions on how to connect to the instance. It offers two methods: "Use your browser" and "Use a Remote Desktop client". The "Use a Remote Desktop client" section provides the following credentials: Public IP: 54.172.106.198, IPv6: 2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b, and User Name: Administrator. A note states that the instance has a default password, and a link is provided to "Retrieve default password".

Amazon Lightsail Home Docs Search Account AWS Billing

Windows_Server_2019-1

512 MB RAM, 1 vCPU, 30 GB SSD
Windows Server 2019
Virginia, Zone A (us-east-1a)

Stop Reboot
Status: **Running**

Public IP: **54.172.106.198**
Private IP: 172.26.10.59
Public IPv6: 2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b
[Learn more about IPv6](#)

Connect Storage Metrics Networking Snapshots Tags History Delete

Connect to your instance ?

You can connect using your browser, or your own compatible RDP client.

Use your browser

Connect using our browser-based RDP client

[Connect using RDP](#)

Use a Remote Desktop client

You can connect to your instance using your own RDP client and the following credentials:

[Connect using an RDP client](#)

CONNECT TO

54.172.106.198
IPv6: 2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b

USER NAME

Administrator

PASSWORD

Your instance is assigned a default password at creation. If you change your password in Windows, or delete the **default** key, this password will no longer be valid.

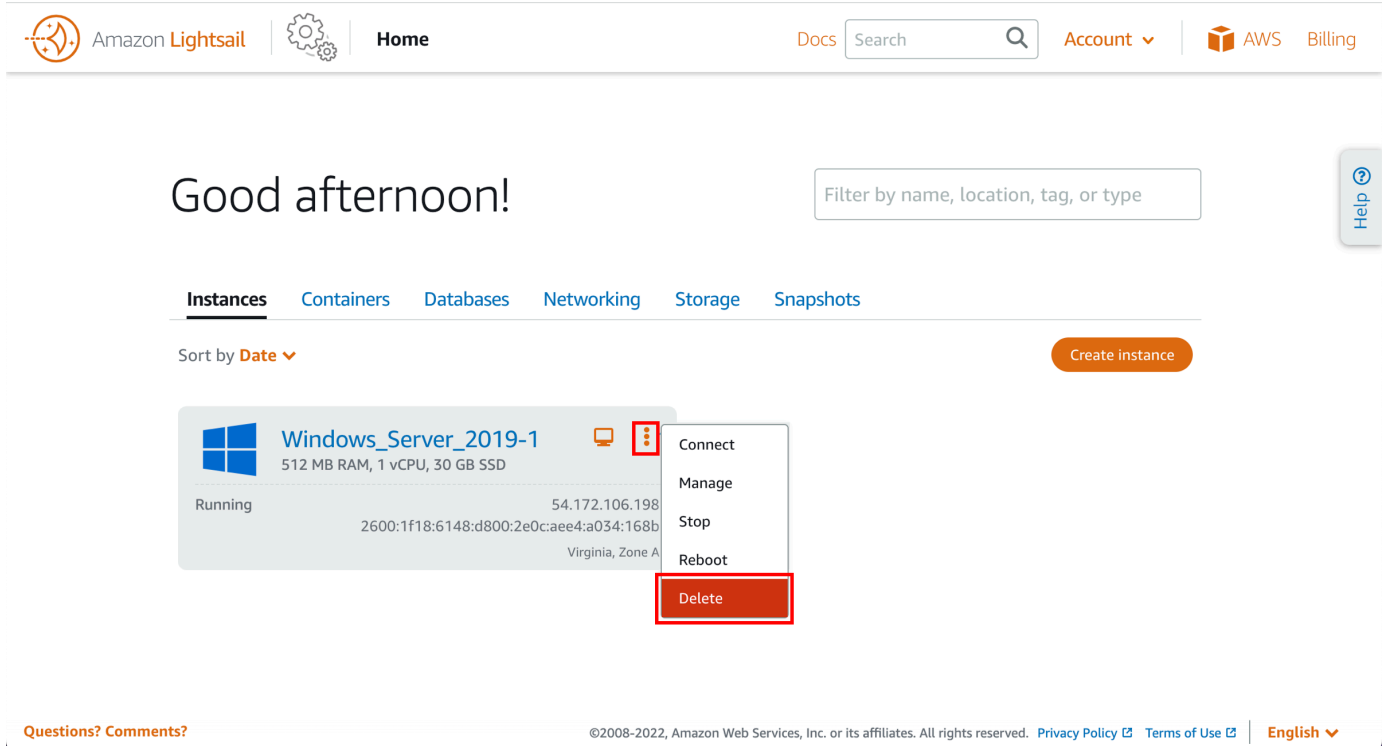
[Retrieve default password](#)

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Clean up resources

1. Delete the instance

On the **Instances** tab of the [Lightsail home page](#), choose the ellipsis (:) icon next to the Windows Server instance you just created and choose **Delete**.






Amazon Lightsail Home Docs Search Account AWS Billing

Good afternoon!

Filter by name, location, tag, or type

Instances Containers Databases Networking Storage Snapshots

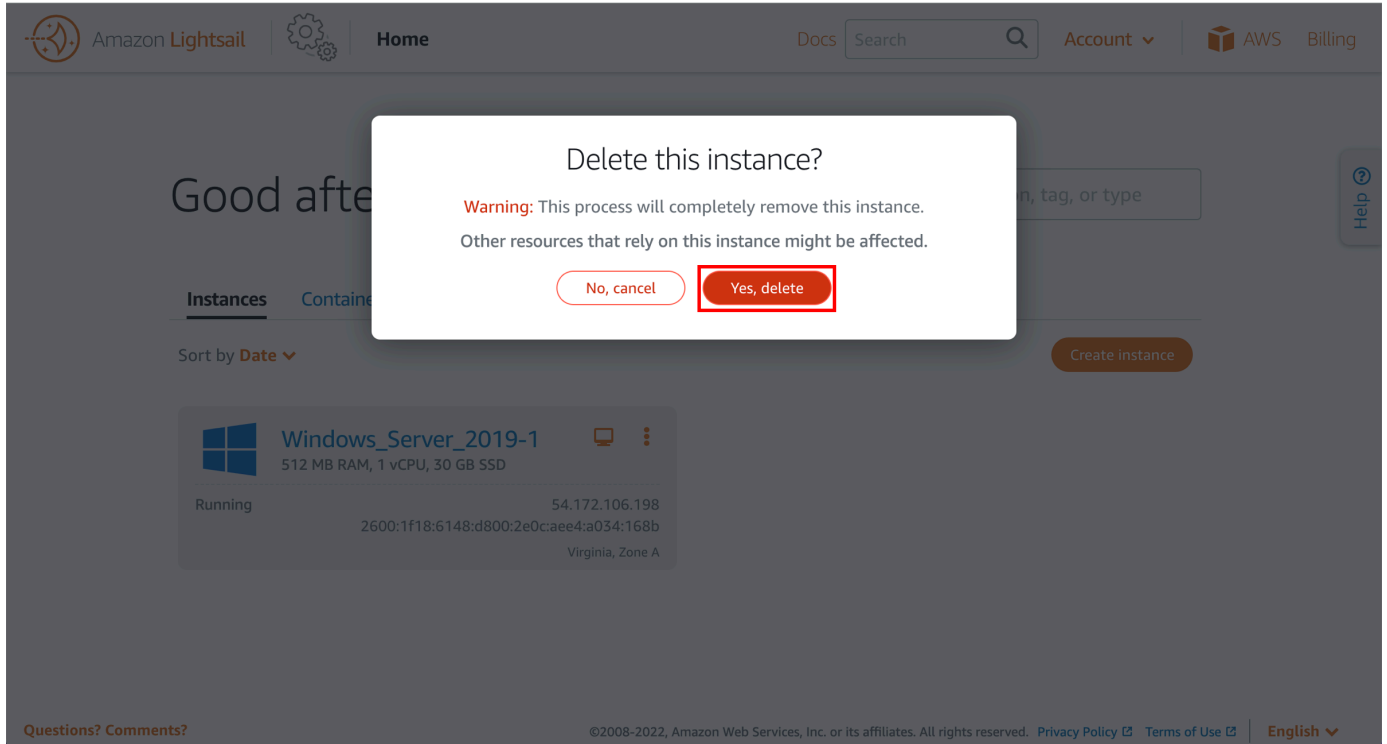
Sort by Date Create instance

	Windows_Server_2019-1 512 MB RAM, 1 vCPU, 30 GB SSD			Connect
Running		54.172.106.198		Manage
		2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b		Stop
		Virginia, Zone A		Reboot
				Delete

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2. Confirm deletion

Choose **Yes, delete** from the prompt.



Amazon Lightsail Home Docs Search Account AWS Billing

Good afternoon!

Filter by name, location, tag, or type




Instances Containers Databases Networking Storage Snapshots

Sort by Date Create instance

Delete this instance?

Warning: This process will completely remove this instance.
Other resources that rely on this instance might be affected.

No, cancel **Yes, delete**

	Windows_Server_2019-1 512 MB RAM, 1 vCPU, 30 GB SSD			
Running		54.172.106.198		
		2600:1f18:6148:d800:2e0c:ae4:a034:168b		
		Virginia, Zone A		

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Conclusion

Congratulations! You used Amazon Lightsail to spin up and configure a Windows instance.

Amazon Lightsail is great for developers, web pros, and anyone looking to get started on AWS in a quick and cheap way. You can launch instances, databases, and SSD-based storage; transfer data; monitor your resources; and so much more in a managed way.