

Media Servers

- [Robert - Plex Server](#)

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OS

Unraid

Pros	Cons
Relatively easy to use/maintain	Cost (base \$49 to \$250 for lifetime updates)
Flexible storage options (Array/Pool options that are separate)	Finicky OS
Can have Media Server app setup within a few clicks	Not personally stable
Incredible community app support (uses Docker and Docker Hub for templates)	Slow storage if using array (uses a proprietary RAID system that does not favor performance)
Native community plugin support	Has issues sometimes with updates
Incredible community documentation (SpaceInvader One and lbracorp)	Network config can be frustrating/unstable
Requires USB Flash drive for installation and license management	Slow development cycles (bugs don't get fixed often or at all)
Can virtualize VMs	Official documentation lacking
Can utilize self network shares	Backups not easy to setup
	Network shares buggy/unstable
	Permissions with shares are difficult to navigate
	Relatively easy to lose data when rearranging drives in array
	Requires at least one drive setup in the array even if using only pools (can setup a USB drive to be used here)
	Troubleshooting difficult with base setup since logs are deleted upon reboot

The image shows three license options for TrueNAS Scale:

- Starter License:** \$49 Per License. For everyday storage and self-hosting needs. Features include: Attach up to 6 storage devices, Own a perpetual license, Free OS Updates for one year, All Features of Unraid OS, Access to Community Apps, VM and Docker Management, Built-in VPN Support, Network-Attached Storage, Dual Parity Protected Array, ZFS, iSCSI, NFS Proofs.
- Unleashed License:** \$109 Per License. For the ultimate user with advanced storage needs. Features include: Attach unlimited storage devices, Own a perpetual license, Free OS Updates for one year, All Features of Unraid OS, Access to Community Apps, VM and Docker Management, Built-in VPN Support, Network-Attached Storage, Dual Parity Protected Array, ZFS, iSCSI, NFS Proofs.
- Lifetime License:** \$249 Per License. For the die-hard Unraid user. Features include: Attach unlimited storage devices, Own a perpetual license, Free OS Updates for life, All Features of Unraid OS, Access to Community Apps, VM and Docker Management, Built-in VPN Support, Network-Attached Storage, Dual Parity Protected Array, ZFS, iSCSI, NFS Proofs.

<https://www.youtube.com/@SpaceinvaderOne>

<https://www.youtube.com/@IBRACORP>

TrueNAS Scale

Pros	Cons
Depending on what you want, can range from very easy to setup, to extremely complicated	App support has recently changed to Docker and may/may not be 100% stable
Cost (free) - Open Source	App setup on the more complicated end
The fastest OS in these options	Eats RAM (uses all available RAM as a cache for storage)
Allows for mirroring OS storage to ensure if a drive fails you can replace it before needing to recover from backup	Can be complicated to maintain especially if something goes wrong (not everything has GUI support). YOU WILL LEARN ZFS COMMANDS
Uses one of the fastest storage filesystems available	Storage filesystem is not flexible in terms of expansion
Focused on being a storage solution first and has an incredible amount of options for that including network shares	ONLY has the ability to use ZFS as a filesystem
Most stable file system	
Troubleshooting easy with most logs persisting after reboot	
Can virtualize VMs	
Backups easy to setup	
Incredible community documentation	
Incredible official documentation	
VERY stable OS	

<https://www.youtube.com/@LAWRENCESYSTEMS>

CasaOS

Pros	Cons
Cost (free) - Open Source	Setup from an existing Ubuntu/Debian OS
App setup seems very easy but full featured	Not a large amount of options for storage
Simple interface	May require Debian based Linux knowledge for support

Media Applications

Plex

Pros	Cons
Simplest network management (they have their own servers to broker external connections through to the hosted media server)	Cost (\$5/mo for Plex Pass or \$120 for lifetime)
Most management of libraries is set it and forget it (with proper media names)	Hardware acceleration for transcoding requires Plex Pass
IMO the most user friendly interface	Requires port forwarding on router to access externally (CGNAT becomes a major issue if ISP is using it)
Usable on a wider variety of players and media devices	Database management is a PITA, requires SQL knowledge to manage
Netflix like "Skip Intro" and "Skip Credits"	Database requires fast/stable storage (recommend to use some filesystem that protects against bit rot like BTRFS/ZFS and to utilize mirrored drives for redundancy/backups)
	Mobile apps cost \$5/ea per app store, per account (Google vs Apple)

THANKS
FOR BEING
A FAN.



FAN FRIDAY SALE

THIS WEEK ONLY

Get a Lifetime Plex Pass
for ~~\$119.99~~ \$89.99 USD

Use Code: FANSFIRST25

Redeem Now

Now through 7:59 AM UTC on Tuesday, December 3, 2024. Lifetime subscriptions only.
Example price in USD. Exact pricing in other currencies may vary.

Jellyfin

Pros	Cons
Cost (free) - Open Source	Complex networking setup for external access
Management of libraries is relatively easy like Plex but not necessarily as set and forget	Requires specific domain/external IP address shared to users to access externally
Alright interface	Requires port forwarding on router to access externally (CGNAT becomes a major issue if ISP is using it)
Hardware acceleration for transcoding does not require paid service	
Offline media free to download	

Emby

Pros	Cons
Management of libraries is relatively easy like Plex but not necessarily as set and forget	Cost (\$5/mo for Emby Premiere or \$120 for lifetime)
Alright interface	Complex networking setup for external access
Offline media requires Emby Premiere to download	Requires specific domain/external IP address shared to users to access externally
Netflix like "Skip Intro" and "Skip Credits"	Requires port forwarding on router to access externally (CGNAT becomes a major issue if ISP is using it)

Pros	Cons
	Hardware acceleration for transcoding requires Emby Premiere