

## Importance of Your Carrier's Availability SLA

**Uptime** is probably the most important single metric you can use to measure the performance of your Internet connection. It shows the time or percentage the service is up and operational. The counterpart of that is **downtime**. It shows the time or percentage the service was unavailable.

**Availability** is basically the same as uptime. It's often measured by "Nines". Let's see how they translate to downtime over the course of a year:

Nines	Downtime
99%	Two Nines equals 87 hours and 36 minutes of downtime per year
99.9%	Three Nines equals 8 hours and 45 minutes of downtime per year
99.99%	Four Nines equals 52 minutes and 33 seconds of downtime per year
99.999%	Five Nines equals 5 minutes and 26 seconds of downtime per year
99.9999%	Six Nines equals 31.68 seconds of downtime per year

## A Trade-Off Between Uptime and Costs

Usually the higher the uptime guarantee the higher is the cost. Ideally you should find the middle ground where the level of uptime gives you peace of mind and the costs don't go through the roof.

Be wary when a budget carrier offers 100% uptime. They may really believe they can deliver but in reality it rarely happens. No carrier will have 100% uptime in the long run.

They may be up for a couple months with no issues, but sooner or later something always happens. There are simply too many moving parts in a carrier's network for something not to go wrong at some point.