

NAS vs Cloud

Buy hardware once, or rent capacity forever?

NAS

- Capex - paid once
- Yours, on your premises
- LAN speed
- Needs an offsite copy

Cloud

- Opex - paid forever
- Someone else's building
- Internet speed
- Offsite by design

The honest answer is more interesting than either camp admits.

The Short Answer

For most homes and businesses with real volume, the right answer is BOTH: a NAS as the fast primary copy, with an encrypted cloud target as the automatic offsite leg.

Key Points:

- Cloud is rent. NAS is ownership.
- Rent is right for small volumes and short stays
- Ownership wins once the volume is real
- Neither alone is a backup strategy
- The hybrid is not a compromise - it is the design

Anyone selling one as the universal answer is selling,
not advising.

A Simple Analogy

Think of it like housing

Cloud = a hotel

- Zero maintenance
- Someone changes the towels
- Perfect for short stays
- Live there for years and the bills hurt

NAS = your home

- An upfront cost
- Occasional upkeep
- Every dirham builds equity
- Still keep valuables in a bank vault

Homeowners still use a vault. That is not a contradiction - it is the design.



The Cost Shape

Why the lines cross

NAS - year 1		hardware, once
NAS - year 3		power and drives
Cloud - year 1		rent
Cloud - year 3		rent, and it rises

A NAS is a large first cost then almost nothing. Cloud is a small first cost that never stops and tends to increase.

A NAS typically pays for itself in 18 to 30 months.

Side by side

Feature	NAS	Cloud
Cost shape	Capex, once	Opex, forever
Speed	LAN, 1-10 GbE	Your internet line
Big files	Excellent	Painful
Small files, many people	Fine	Excellent
Offsite by default	No	Yes
Where data sits	Your premises	Provider's
If internet drops	Keeps working	Stops
Maintenance	Someone's job	Theirs

Neither column sweeps the board. That is the point.

Cloud wins when...

Convenience and geography matter most

Genuinely the right choice for:

- Small volumes - 200 GB does not need a 4-bay array
- No hardware to rack, patch or ever replace
- Offsite by nature - a fire at your premises cannot touch it
- People in several countries on the same documents
- Short projects needing capacity this quarter, not next

For a freelancer with a laptop, cloud is simply correct.

A NAS wins when...

Volume, speed and ownership matter most

Genuinely the right choice for:

- Terabytes - media libraries, CCTV, design archives
- 4K video, RAW photos and CAD worked on directly
- Capex once, instead of renewal letters that only rise
- Records that must stay on your hardware, in the UAE
- CCTV retention sized once, with no per-camera rent

Editing 4K over the internet is not editing. It is waiting.

The 3-2-1 Rule

The only backup rule worth memorising

1. THREE copies of anything you cannot lose
2. TWO different kinds of storage
3. ONE of them kept somewhere else entirely

In practice:

- The working copy on your computers
- The fast copy on the NAS
- The encrypted copy in the cloud, automatically

A NAS alone is not a backup. Nor is cloud alone.

RAID is not backup

The most expensive misunderstanding in storage

RAID keeps a NAS running when a drive dies. It does nothing about the things that actually destroy data.

RAID does NOT protect you from:

- Deleting a folder by accident
- Ransomware encrypting everything at once
- Fire, flood or theft at the premises
- The array itself failing
- A file quietly corrupting months ago

RAID is uptime. Backup is survival. They are different jobs.



Mistakes We See

1. Treating RAID as a backup - it is not, and never was
2. A NAS with no offsite copy, sitting in the building it protects
3. Cloud-only for terabytes, then discovering the restore takes days
4. Buying a NAS with no plan for drive replacement in year four
5. Consumer drives in a NAS that runs twenty-four hours a day

Ask how a restore works BEFORE you need one.

Before you buy

Five questions:

- How many terabytes, and how fast is that growing?
- How much of it changes every day?
- How long could you survive without it?
- Does anything have to stay inside the UAE?
- Who replaces a failed drive at 2am - you, or us?

Size for three to five years, not for today.

Quick Revision

Cloud is rent. NAS is ownership.

Cloud is right for small volumes and short stays

NAS is right once volume and speed matter

A NAS typically pays back in 18 to 30 months

NAS runs at LAN speed - cloud runs at line speed

A NAS keeps working when the internet drops

RAID is NOT a backup

3-2-1: three copies, two media, one offsite

The hybrid is the design, not a compromise

Size the array for three to five years

Use NAS-rated drives, not desktop ones

Test a restore before you need one



NAS for speed and volume. Cloud for the copy that leaves the building.



Need a storage assessment?

We size, supply, install and manage NAS and hybrid storage across Dubai and the UAE - including CCTV retention, offsite replication and the restore testing most people skip.

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