AdGuard vs PiHole - Find the Best Home DNS Server

TechRounder PDF Edition

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Bottom line

Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home are both DNS-based ad blockers that filter unwanted ads and tracking scripts across your entire home network, but they differ in key ways.

In this article, we take you through a technical comparison of Pi-Hole vs AdGuard Home. These two popular home DNS servers block unwanted ads and tracking scripts and are designed to improve your online browsing experience.

Both Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home are DNS-based ad blockers. They intercept requests to ad-serving domains, thus preventing them from being loaded. Both these servers aim to significantly reduce the number of ads and tracking scripts you see online. In addition, these efforts lead to faster page loading times and increased privacy.

While Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home serve the same purpose, they have much more to differentiate. For example, home DNS servers differ in grounds of installation and configuration, customization options, supported platforms, and more.

There's much to learn about Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home before we conclude which is better. So join us in this article as we dive deeper into the differences between Pi-Hole and AdGuard. In the end, the comparison and a detailed discussion will help you decide which one is the best fit for your needs. Whether you are tech-savvy or a casual user, this informative guide will give you the best possible information. Let's get started:

AdGuard vs PiHole

Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home are two popular home DNS servers. These servers allow users to block ads and prevent device tracking.

Pi-Hole is a free and open-source network-level ad and internet tracker blocking tool. It acts as a redundant DNS server, blocking ads and unwanted items across the network. Pi-Hole is particularly successful at eliminating intrusive ads on websites and apps. In addition to ad blocking, Pi-Hole offers detailed statistics, allowing customers to analyze their network traffic and see exactly what is being blocked.

Adguard Home is a network-wide ad blocker and a privacy protector. It works on your home network and offers a secure and configurable approach to blocking unwanted ads, dangerous and phishing websites, and other online threats. It also offers parental control and security against online tracking. Adguard Home works with any online browser and provides extra protection for all devices linked to your home network.

Both Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home are effective ad blockers. However, their installation, configuration, and features may differ, and that's how they suit certain users and situations.

Pi-Hole vs. AdGuard Home: List of Features

- DNS-based ad-blocking blocks ads and tracking at the DNS level, resulting in faster page loading times and increased privacy.
- Multiple device support can be installed on a Raspberry Pi, a Linux machine, or a Docker container. This feature also helps block ads for all devices on the specific network.
- Customizable blocklists: Users can create and manage custom blocklists and whitelist domains, depending on what they want to allow.
- Query logging: It logs DNS queries and provides a dashboard to view statistics. Users can monitor the number of blocked queries and domains.
- Lightweight: It is lightweight and thus does not require a lot of resources to run.

Here are the features of AdGuard Home:

- Web protection: AdGuard Home protects your online experience by blocking access to dangerous websites, phishing, and other online risks.
- Block Ads and Trackers: AdGuard Home removes advertising and trackers from websites, allowing them to load faster and saving you money on data bills.
- Devices that support AdGuard Home: It can be installed on Linux, Raspberry Pi, and in a Docker container.
- DNS-Level Filtering: AdGuard Home employs DNS-level filtering to prevent users from visiting dangerous or fraudulent websites.
- Parental controls: It offers parental control features. This feature allows users to block children from accessing irrelevant content.
- Secure Connection: AdGuard Home can protect customers from man-in-the-middle attacks by encrypting Internet traffic.

Pi-Hole vs. AdGuard: Hardware Requirement

The hardware requirements for Pi-Hole include the following:

- Raspberry Pi 3 or 4 for optimal performance. However, older models can also be used.
- Pi-Hole can be installed on various Linux distributions. However, it requires at least 512 MB of RAM.
- Pi-Hole can also be installed on a Docker container. However, it requires a host machine with Docker installed.

The hardware requirements for AdGuard Home:

- CPU: A single-core processor.
- RAM: At least 1 GB
- Storage: At least 512 MB of free storage.

Pi-Hole Vs. AdGuard Home: User Interface

Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home are popular ad-blocking solutions. Both servers have strengths and weaknesses regarding the user interface. Pi-Hole has a web-based user interface. It can be accessed through any device connecting with the Pi-Hole server. Its user interface is relatively simple. It consists of a dashboard that displays the number of blocked queries and other statistics.

In addition, it has a settings page that allows users to configure various aspects of the Pi-Hole. This page includes whitelisting/blacklisting domains and enabling additional blocklists. Pi-Hole doesn’t have a fancy interface but gets the job done easily.

Adguard Home offers an easy-to-use web interface to build and maintain filtering rules, monitor network activity, and check advanced statistics. The home dashboard features simple graphs, data, and a menu at the top. You can also easily determine the total number of DNS requests, blocked list, and most searched and blocked domains.

Pi-Hole Drawbacks and Disadvantages

Despite the ad-blocking solution Pi-Hole's popularity and effectiveness, it has potential drawbacks and disadvantages. Here are a few to highlight:

- Pi-Hole requires a Raspberry Pi or a device that can run Decker. Setting it up and maintaining it may require technical skills, which can prove daunting for many.
- Pi-Hole can potentially break certain websites or applications, especially those that rely on ads to function properly.
- Some ad networks can bypass DNS-based blocking since Pi-Hole may not block all ads.
- Pi-Hole may slow down the network if the Raspberry Pi device is underpowered. It may also cause other issues, especially when not configured correctly.
- Beyond blocking ads, Pi-Hole does not protect user privacy or security. Additional tools or services are important for added security.

AdGaurd Home Drawbacks and Disadvantages

Here are some of the highlighting drawbacks and disadvantages of AdGaurd:

- AdGuard Home does not support packet inspection. Also, it lacks critical web content filtering and application control features to mitigate cyber risks like malware, phishing, etc.
- The DNS-level blocker cannot effectively block any ad that shares a domain with the content.
- AdGuard Home may slow browsing speed or consume system resources. However, especially on lower-end devices, it shows some performance impact.
- It may block legitimate content, considering it triggers a filter.

Which one is better: Pi-Hole or AdGuard Home?

Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home are both DNS-based ad-blockers. They filter requests to ad-serving domains and thus prevent ads and tracking scripts from being loaded. Both Pi-Hole and AdGuard are servers that offer similar features and functionalities.

Some standard features between both are customizable blocklists, DNS-based ad-blocking, and multiple-device support. However, both services also include some differences like installation and configuration, hardware requirements customization options, supported platforms, etc.

Ultimately, the choice between Pi-Hole and AdGuard Home and deciding which is better depends on the specific needs and preferences of the users. Users who prefer open-source solutions and are comfortable configuring their system manually must go with Pi-Hole. At the same time, users who prefer a more user-friendly interface, advanced features, and support for multiple platforms should go with AdGaurd Home.

Wrapping Up

Both Pi-Hole and AdGuard are powerful home DNS servers. Both of them can effectively block ads and improve network security. AdGuard is easier to set up and manage, whereas Pi-Hole is more customizable and suitable for the advanced user. However, the choice between the two depends on individual needs and preferences.