AWS Cost Audit Checklist

The exact checklist used to reduce AWS costs by ~80%

1. EC2 Instances

- [ ] Check CPU utilization (avg < 20% = oversized)
- [ ] Check memory utilization (install CloudWatch Agent first)
- [ ] Identify instances running 24/7 that only need business hours
- [ ] Look for stopped instances still paying for EBS volumes
- [ ] Review instance families: use t3 for burstable workloads
- [ ] Check for unattached Elastic IPs ($3.65/month each)
- [ ] Review On-Demand vs Reserved/Savings Plan coverage

2. EBS Storage

- [ ] Migrate all gp2 volumes to gp3 (20% cheaper)
- [ ] Delete unattached EBS volumes
- [ ] Delete old EBS snapshots (age > 90 days)
- [ ] Right-size over-provisioned volumes

3. RDS Databases

- [ ] Check CPU/memory utilization (right-size if under 30%)
- [ ] Migrate gp2 to gp3 storage in RDS
- [ ] Enable Reserved Instances for production databases
- [ ] Delete unused test/dev databases
- [ ] Review Multi-AZ: needed for dev/staging? Probably not

4. S3 Storage

- [ ] Enable S3 Intelligent-Tiering for unknown access patterns
- [ ] Set lifecycle rules: move to Glacier after 90 days
- [ ] Delete incomplete multipart uploads
- [ ] Review bucket sizes for unexpected growth

5. Networking

- [ ] Review NAT Gateway costs ($0.045/GB + $0.045/hr)
- [ ] Check data transfer between regions/AZs
- [ ]

Use VPC endpoints for S3/DynamoDB (free)

- [ ] Review unused load balancers ($16+/month each)
- [ ] Offload static assets to CloudFront CDN

6. Other Services

- [ ] Right-size Lambda memory allocation
- [ ] Set CloudWatch Logs retention to 30 days
- [ ] Review unused ECR repositories
- [ ] Check for idle ECS/EKS clusters

7. Commitment Discounts

- [ ] Right-size FIRST, then buy commitments
- [ ] Calculate steady-state from Cost Explorer (3 months)
- [ ] Compute Savings Plans for flexible workloads
- [ ] EC2 Instance Savings Plans for known families
- [ ] Start with 1-year No Upfront (lower risk)