**The lecture 5**

**The Azure portal**

An online management portal provides the easiest way to manage the resources you deploy into Azure. You can use this to create virtual networks, set up Web Apps, create VMs, define storage accounts, and so on, as listed in the previous section.

As noted earlier in this chapter, there are currently two versions of the portal. The production portal is the Azure portal at https://portal.azure.com. Most features have been moved to the Azure portal, with some exceptions such as Azure AD. The previous portal is called the classic Azure portal (https://manage.windowsazure.com), and it can still be used to manage Azure AD and to configure and scale classic resources such as Cloud Services. In most cases, you will be using the Azure portal, so that’s what we’re going to focus on in this book. All of the resources that use the Resource Manager deployment model can only be accessed in the Azure portal.

Let’s take a look at the Azure portal and how you navigate through it.

**Dashboard and hub**

The Azure portal is located at https://portal.azure.com. When you open this the first time, it will look similar to Figure 1-1.



This is called your Dashboard. The column on the left is called a hub; it shows you a core set of options such as Resource Groups, All Resources, and Recent. The other items on this hub are resources you have selected and/or used before. For example, I have recently created some App Services and VMs. You can click any of these, and it will show the resources you have for that type. For example, if you click SQL Databases, it will show a list of your SQL Databases.

You can customize the list of resources that show up in that left hub. If you click Browse, you will see a selection screen showing all of the options, and you can select which ones you want to appear, as displayed in Figure 1-2.



Figure 1-2 Configure default hub in the Azure portal.

The area on the right with the tiles is called your Dashboard. You can customize this by adding tiles, removing tiles, resizing tiles, and so on by selecting Edit Dashboard, as shown in Figure 1-3.



Figure 1-3 How to edit the Dashboard in the Azure portal.

As you create resources, you can choose to pin them to the Dashboard, and it will add them to this section.

There are a couple of default tiles on the Dashboard that are of interest.

* **All Resources** Clicking this will bring up a list of all of your resources.
* **Service Health** This shows the health of the regions around the world. If you click this, it will show a list of the regions, and you can select one to get more detailed information.
* **Marketplace** This will take you directly to the Marketplace blade where you can search for and add resources.
* **Subscriptions** This shows the subscriptions that can be managed by the account you are using. You can select a subscription and see the billing information for the current month. If you have a starting credit, this will show the amount of credit left. Accounts having starting credit include MSDN accounts and BizSpark accounts.
* **Help + Support** This takes you to the blade where you can submit a new support request and manage the requests you have already put in. It also provides links to the MSDN forums and StackOverflow where you can post questions.

Now, let’s look at the icons in the upper-right corner of the Azure portal, as shown in Figure 1-4.



Figure 1-4 Notifications, settings, etc. in the Azure portal.

From left to right, here’s what these icons mean:

* Clicking the bell shows notifications from this session. For example, if you create a new VM, when it’s finished, it will put a notification here.
* Clicking the pencil puts the Dashboard into edit mode, just like clicking Edit Dashboard above.
* Clicking the gear icon brings up the Settings screen for the portal, where you can do things like enable or disable toast notifications, set the default language, and so on.
* Clicking the smiley face will show a dialog you can use to send feedback to the portal team.
* Clicking the question mark will show a drop-down menu allowing you to create a new support request, view your current support requests, and so on.
* The last field shows the account you have used to log into the portal. If you administer more than one subscription, this will show the list of Azure ADs to which the user belongs. You can click this to sign out, change your password, or submit an idea.

**Creating and viewing resources**

As you make selections, the portal scrolls to the right. The separate sections that get opened are called blades. Click New in the main hub. You see a categorized list of the resources available, as shown in Figure 1-5. This is a new blade.

If you click See All, it will take you to the Azure Marketplace. The Marketplace contains all of the resources that you can use in Azure. This includes everything from VM images, which are certified before being made available, all of the SQL Server options, and Web Apps. It also includes applications such as Drupal and WordPress. To add any resource, you can search for it, then select it to add it to your Azure subscription.

You can also select a category on this blade. It will show the list of resources valid for that category, and you can then select which one you want to create. For example, to create a VM, you would click the Virtual Machines category; to create a storage account or a SQL Server, you would click Data + Storage. Once you have created some resources, there are several ways to view them. Let’s look back in the main hub (Figure 1-1), which has two helpful options—Resource Groups and All Resources.



Figure 1-5 Creating a new resource in the Azure portal.

**View by resource group**

Use this option to see all of your resources by resource group. Click Resource Groups, and you see a blade like Figure 1-6 showing all of your resource groups.



Figure 1-6 Screenshot showing all of your resource groups in the Azure portal.

Next, select one of the resource groups, and it shows all of the resources deployed to that group (Figure 1-7).



Figure 1-7 List of resources in the selected resource group.

You can click any of the resources here, and they will be displayed in a new blade.

Click All Settings to show the Settings blade (Figure 1-8). From there, you can look at the costs by resource, view the deployment history of the resources, set tags and locks, and manage what users have access to this resource group.