Cloud landing zones and IaC: Terraform, policy-as-code and guardrails

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A landing zone is the prepared foundation for an organisation's cloud accounts: structure, identity, networking, logging and security baselines set up before teams start deploying. Infrastructure as code keeps it repeatable.

TL;DR The short version

- A landing zone sets up account structure, identity, networking, logging and security baselines before teams deploy.
- Describing it in code, for example with Terraform, makes changes reviewable, repeatable and reversible.
- Policy as code acts as a guardrail, automatically blocking risky changes such as public storage, missing tags or unapproved regions.

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What a landing zone sets up

- Account or subscription structure, mapped to teams and environments.
- Central identity and least-privilege access.
- Network layout and connectivity.
- Logging, audit trails and monitoring from day one.
- Baseline security settings.

Why code

Describing the environment in code, for example with Terraform, makes changes reviewable, repeatable and reversible. It also removes the drift that builds up when people change things by hand.

Guardrails, not gates

Policy as code checks changes against rules automatically: no public storage by default, required tags, approved regions. Teams get fast feedback and a clear reason, instead of waiting for a manual review.

Starting out

1. Start with the smallest baseline that is safe.

2. Put it under version control and review changes.
3. Add policies as you find real risks.
4. Test changes in a non-production environment first.

> Related credential: Cloud Architecture Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. HashiCorp. Terraform documentation. developer.hashicorp.com/terraform.

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