PostgreSQL 19 is out: REPACK, plan advice and the defaults that change under you

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The PostgreSQL Global Development Group released PostgreSQL 19 on 19 November 2026. The announcement highlights a new REPACK command that can reclaim table bloat without blocking reads or writes, a pg_plan_advice extension for stabilising query plans, and several changes to defaults and authentication that administrators should check before upgrading.

TL;DR The short version

- PostgreSQL 19 was released on 19 November 2026.
- It adds REPACK, which can reclaim table bloat without blocking reads or writes, and pg_plan_advice for stabilising query plans.
- Before upgrading, check pg_hba.conf for RADIUS and md5, move to SCRAM, and replace io_workers in configuration and automation.

Read online, listen to it, or change the text size: https://blogs.iictp.org/postgresql-19-released-repack-plan-advice-upgrade

What was reported

- REPACK reclaims unused space and can reorder a table to match an index. With REPACK (CONCURRENTLY) it does so without blocking reads or writes. The project says REPACK replaces VACUUM FULL and CLUSTER, which remain available for compatibility.
- The pg_plan_advice extension lets users stabilise plan choices and experiment with plans, and the companion pg_stash_advice extension stores advice and applies it by query identifier, without application changes.
- Autovacuum can now vacuum indexes with parallel workers, controlled by autovacuum_max_parallel_workers. Creating the first logical replication slot now raises the effective WAL level to logical automatically, so a restart is no longer often needed.
- A new WAIT FOR LSN command lets a session on a standby wait until it has replayed the primary's WAL up to a given point, for "read-your-writes" consistency. INSERT ... ON CONFLICT DO SELECT returns existing rows that conflict.
- The project says improved foreign key checks made bulk inserts nearly 2x faster in its testing.
- Changes to check: JIT compilation is now off by default, RADIUS authentication support is removed, a successful md5 password login now produces a warning, the io_workers setting is replaced by io_min_workers and io_max_workers, and the default TOAST compression is lz4 when built with LZ4 support.

What a practitioner should do

- Before upgrading, search your configuration and pg_hba.conf for RADIUS and md5. Move password logins to SCRAM, as the project recommends, since md5 was deprecated in PostgreSQL 18 and will be removed.
- Replace io_workers with the new settings in configuration files and automation, so that a rendered config does not fail or silently lose your tuning.
- If you run large analytical queries, compare their timings on PostgreSQL 19 and decide whether to turn JIT back on. The project says its old cost estimates for JIT proved unreliable.
- Rehearse the major version upgrade on a copy of production, including extensions, replication and backups, and read the full release notes rather than only the announcement.
- Once upgraded, consider REPACK (CONCURRENTLY) for bloated tables that you previously could not take offline, testing it first on a non-critical table to learn its resource use.

The wider lesson

A major release brings features, but the changes most likely to cause an outage are the quiet ones: a removed authentication method, a renamed setting, a default turned off. Reading the release notes for what is removed or changed, not only what is new, is part of the operational discipline in the Architecture & Systems Design domain of the TPBOK.

> Facts in this post were read from the sources listed below on 20 November 2026; this is a developing story or product and details may have changed since.

Sources and further reading

1. PostgreSQL Global Development Group. PostgreSQL 19 Released! 19 November 2026. postgresql.org/about/news/postgresql-19-released-3449/
2. LWN.net. PostgreSQL 19 released. 19 November 2026. lwn.net/Articles/1108561/

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