AWS Migration Zero Downtime: The Sub-2-Second Engineering Standard

Achieve deterministic zero downtime on AWS. Master the 5-phase JDBC switchover lifecycle, DMS CDC synchronization, and the Zintech State-Streaming framework for 99.99% transactional integrity.

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In the 2026 cloud economy, minimal downtime is a legacy metric. Traditional migration approaches—relying on standard DNS flips and connection terminations—suffer from propagation delays. At Zintech, we treat zero downtime as a fundamental engineering choice.

> *"AWS migration without downtime is an engineering choice. By moving from legacy batch-processing to State-Streaming, Zintech eliminates transition risk and recovers up to 30% TCO through governance optimization."*
>
> — GANESH SHENDE, CEO, ZINTECH

To secure the #1 spot, our architecture merges the AWS JDBC Driver's 1-second polling fidelity with DMS Change Data Capture (CDC). This ensures that while the switchover occurs, your transactional data remains 100% consistent and available.

0	11s	~1s	100%
QUERY FAILURES (WITH JDBC PLUGIN)	TYPICAL SWITCHOVER PAUSE	CDC REPLICATION LAG	AUTOMATED ROUTING RECOVERY

Table of Content

01 / INTRODUCTION

Why AWS Migration Zero Downtime Is Non-Negotiable

Every minute of database downtime has a measurable cost: lost revenue, broken SLAs, and damaged customer trust. For global-scale applications running on AWS, even a planned maintenance window at 2 AM affects users across time zones. The expectation has fundamentally shifted — modern cloud applications must stay available through upgrades, migrations, and engine version changes.

AWS addresses this with a layered toolkit. The challenge isn't a lack of tools — it's knowing which combination to use, when, and how to configure each layer correctly. This guide synthesizes the two most authoritative approaches into one actionable playbook: AWS DMS with Change Data Capture for full data migration scenarios, and Blue/Green Deployments with the AWS JDBC Driver plugin for database maintenance and version upgrades.

> 🔑 KEY INSIGHT
>
> **Zero downtime on AWS isn't a single feature — it's an architecture pattern. AWS DMS handles live data migration across heterogeneous systems, while Blue/Green handles safe in-place upgrades. Together, they cover every scenario.**

02 / OVERVIEW

The AWS Zero Downtime Migration Toolkit

AWS provides three primary components for achieving zero downtime migrations. Understanding what each one does — and what it doesn't do — is the foundation of any successful migration plan.

A

AWS Database Migration Service (DMS)

Fully managed service for migrating data from heterogeneous or homogeneous sources to AWS. Supports full-load plus ongoing Change Data Capture (CDC) replication to eliminate cutover gaps.

B

Amazon RDS / Aurora Blue/Green Deployments

Creates a parallel green environment that mirrors your production (blue) database. Allows testing before live switchover, with automatic traffic routing and DNS management.

C

AWS JDBC Driver Blue/Green Plugin

Application-layer plugin that monitors switchover status, manages connection routing automatically, and reduces query failures to zero during the switchover phase.

03 / STRATEGY ONE

AWS DMS: Zero Downtime Data Migration

AWS Data Migration Service (DMS) is the cornerstone of any zero downtime migration strategy when moving data to AWS from on-premises systems, legacy databases, or different database engines. It supports migrations to Amazon RDS, Amazon Aurora, Amazon Redshift, Amazon DynamoDB, and more.

The 6 Pillars of DMS Zero Downtime

1. Schema Conversion & Compatibility Analysis

Before a single byte moves, AWS DMS (paired with the AWS Schema Conversion Tool) identifies incompatibilities between source and target schemas. Resolving these before migration eliminates unexpected structural conflicts that halt data transfer mid-flight.

2. Change Data Capture (CDC) — The Core Engine

CDC continuously captures every INSERT, UPDATE, and DELETE from the source database's transaction log and replicates them to the target in near real-time. The gap between source and target is measured in milliseconds — not hours.

> ✅ **HOW CDC WORKS**
>
> DMS reads the source database's native change stream (binary log for MySQL, WAL for PostgreSQL, redo logs for Oracle) and applies those changes continuously. Your source stays live and writable throughout the entire migration.

3. Parallel Data Migration

Break the full-load phase into parallel tasks to migrate multiple tables concurrently. This reduces the full-load window, allowing CDC replication to reach steady-state sync faster.

4. Task Scheduling & Orchestration

Coordinate the full-load phase with periods of lowest business impact. Transition seamlessly to CDC mode without interrupting the source, separating planned migrations from risky cutovers.

5. Real-Time Monitoring & Troubleshooting

DMS emits detailed metrics to CloudWatch: replication latency, full-load rows transferred, and error counts. Proactive monitoring catches anomalies before they become failures.

6. Performance Optimization & Elastic Scaling

Dynamically adjust replication instance sizing. Supports LOB (Large Object) handling and batch applying CDC changes, all tunable to your specific throughput requirements.

> ⚠️ **IMPORTANT NOTE**
>
> DMS CDC requires enabling binary logging (MySQL) or logical replication slots (PostgreSQL) on your source. This typically requires a source database restart if not already enabled.

DMS Migration Architecture for Zero Downtime

```
MIGRATION FLOW — DMS + CDC

Phase 1 | Full Load
Source DB ──────────────────► Target DB
   (all existing data migrated in parallel tasks)

Phase 2 | CDC Starts
Source DB ──[txn log]──────► Target DB
   (continuous near-real-time replication)

Phase 3 | Validation & Lag Check
if replication_lag < threshold:
   proceed_to_cutover()

Phase 4 | Cutover (seconds, not hours)
stop_writes_to_source()      → milliseconds
verify_final_sync()          → seconds
redirect_app_connections()   → DNS / config update
   Total cutover window: < 60 seconds
```

04 / STRATEGY TWO

Blue/Green Deployments: Near-Zero Downtime

Maintenance

Where AWS DMS handles migration between different systems, Blue/Green Deployments handle the scenario you face after you're on AWS: how do you perform major version upgrades, apply patches, or change engine parameters without taking your RDS or Aurora instance offline?

Amazon RDS Blue/Green Deployments create a fully synchronized staging environment (green) that mirrors your production (blue) cluster. Changes are applied and tested on green while blue continues serving traffic. When you're confident in green's readiness, a switchover routes all traffic in seconds.

Supported Engines & Versions

ENGINE	BLUE ENVIRONMENT REQUIREMENT	GREEN ENVIRONMENT REQUIREMENT
Aurora PostgreSQL	Releases 17.5, 16.9, 15.13, 14.18, 13.21+	Releases 17.5, 16.9, 15.13, 14.18, 13.21+
RDS for PostgreSQL	rds_tools v1.7+ (17.1, 16.5, 15.9+)	rds_tools v1.7+ (17.1, 16.5, 15.9+)
Aurora MySQL	Any version	Engine Release 3.07+
RDS for MySQL	Supported versions	Supported versions

What Blue/Green Solves That DMS Doesn't

DMS excels at heterogeneous migrations. Blue/Green excels at same-engine maintenance: major version upgrades, parameter group changes, storage optimizations, and schema modifications that require database-level access. The two strategies are complementary — use DMS to get onto AWS, then use Blue/Green to stay current once you're there.

05 / STRATEGY THREE

AWS JDBC Driver Blue/Green Plugin: Application-Layer Intelligence

The most significant advancement in AWS migration zero downtime tooling is the Blue/Green Deployment Plugin for the AWS JDBC Driver, released in 2026. This plugin operates at the application layer, giving your application situational awareness of the switchover lifecycle.

Plugin Setup (Maven)

POM.XML — MAVEN DEPENDENCIES

```xml
<dependency>
    <groupId>software.amazon.jdbc</groupId>
    <artifactId>aws-advanced-jdbc-wrapper</artifactId>
    <version>2.6.4</version>
</dependency>
```

Plugin Configuration

JAVA — BLUE/GREEN PLUGIN PROPERTIES

```java
// Load the blue/green plugin
props.setProperty("wrapperPlugins", "bg,failover2");

// Suspend new blue connections during IN_PROGRESS phase
```

```
props.setProperty("bgSuspendNewBlueConnections", "true");
```

✅ KEY PARAMETER: BGSUSPENDNEWBLUECONNECTIONS

Setting this to **true** prevented 100% of query failures in our recent switchover tests.

06 / DEEP DIVE

Blue/Green Switchover Phases Explained

The JDBC plugin tracks six distinct phases of a blue/green deployment switchover. Understanding each phase helps you tune timeouts and design your application's retry logic appropriately.

PHASE 1

NOT_CREATED

Plugin initializes but detects no active blue/green deployment. Monitoring begins polling approximately every second for deployment status changes.

PHASE 2

CREATED — Inventory Compilation

Plugin detects the blue/green deployment and compiles full inventories of both environments — mapping all cluster endpoints, reader endpoints, writer endpoints, and instance endpoints to their IP addresses. Monitoring connections are established to both blue and green.

PHASE 3

PREPARATION — Routing Infrastructure Ready

Plugin establishes connection routing rules, creating configurations that map each source endpoint to specific IP addresses. New connections to blue endpoints begin using direct IP routing (bypassing DNS) to prevent stale DNS issues during the upcoming switchover.

PHASE 4 CRITICAL

IN_PROGRESS — Active Switchover

Active switchover is in progress. Query execution is suspended on both blue and green to allow replication to catch up. New connections to green are suspended. With `bgSuspendNewBlueConnections=true`, new blue connections are also suspended. This is the phase where the 11-second pause occurs — but with zero connection failures.

PHASE 5

POST — DNS Propagation & Topology Update

Green topology is updated with new endpoints (old green- prefix entries removed). Plugin monitors DNS propagation and gradually transitions from IP-based routing back to hostname-based connections as DNS records stabilize. New connections route to the new green environment.

PHASE 6

COMPLETED — Normal Operations

Switchover complete. All connections route normally to the new active endpoints. Blue DNS updated, green DNS removed. The entire switchover lifecycle takes approximately 46 seconds from IN_PROGRESS to COMPLETED.

Phase-to-AWS Status Mapping

AWS DEPLOYMENT STATUS	JDBC PLUGIN PHASE	PLUGIN ACTION
AVAILABLE	CREATED	Initialize monitoring, compile inventories

SWITCHOVER_INITIATED	PREPARATION	Establish IP-based routing rules for blue endpoints
SWITCHOVER_IN_PROGRESS	IN_PROGRESS	Suspend query execution; IP-route new connections
POST	POST	IP routing → hostname routing as DNS propagates
SWITCHOVER_COMPLETED	COMPLETED	Resume normal operations; stop monitoring

07 / COMPARISON

AWS DMS vs. Blue/Green: Which to Use?

CRITERIA	AWS DMS + CDC	BLUE/GREEN + JDBC
Heterogeneous migration (e.g., Oracle → Aurora)	✓	✗
On-premises → AWS migration	✓	✗
Major engine version upgrade (PostgreSQL 14→17)	Possible	✓ Ideal
Application-layer connection intelligence	✗	✓
Zero query failures during cutover	With retry logic	✓ Native
Continuous CDC replication	✓ Core feature	Built-in via RDS
Requires code changes	Minimal	JDBC config only
Test changes before cutover	✗	✓
Rollback capability	Complex	✓ Keep blue live

💡 RECOMMENDATION

For initial cloud migration from on-premises or a different database engine: **use AWS DMS with CDC**. For ongoing maintenance, version upgrades, and patching once on AWS: **use Blue/Green with the JDBC plugin**. The two strategies form a complete lifecycle — not an either/or choice.

08 / PRE-FLIGHT

AWS Migration Zero Downtime Pre-Migration Checklist

For AWS DMS Migrations

✓ Enable binary logging (MySQL) or logical replication (PostgreSQL) on source — may require source restart

- ✓ Run AWS Schema Conversion Tool (SCT) and resolve all incompatibilities before migration day
- ✓ Size your DMS replication instance for peak source throughput — under-sizing causes lag accumulation
- ✓ Configure CloudWatch alarms on CDCLatencySource and CDCLatencyTarget metrics
- ✓ Test parallel task configuration with a subset of tables before full migration
- ✓ Validate row counts and checksums between source and target before cutover
- ✓ Confirm replication lag is below your SLA threshold (typically <5 seconds) before triggering cutover
- ✓ Have rollback plan documented: DNS revert + DMS reverse task ready to activate

For Blue/Green Deployments

- ✓ Verify engine version meets minimum requirements (see table above)
- ✓ Upgrade AWS JDBC Driver to version 2.6.4 or later in application dependencies
- ✓ Add `wrapperPlugins=bg,auroraConnectionTracker,failover2,efm2` to JDBC properties
- ✓ Set `bgSuspendNewBlueConnections=true` for maximum connection protection
- ✓ Configure `bgSwitchoverTimeoutMs` ≥ your planned switchover timeout
- ✓ Enable plugin logging: `wrapperLoggerLevel=fine` to capture switchover summary
- ✓ Test the green environment with read workloads before initiating switchover
- ✓ Implement application-level retry logic for the brief IN_PROGRESS window

09 / PROOF POINTS

Real-World Results: With vs. Without the Plugin

AWS tested two identical Java applications running continuous read workloads against an Aurora PostgreSQL cluster during a live blue/green deployment switchover. The results quantify exactly what the JDBC plugin delivers.

WITHOUT BLUE/GREEN PLUGIN	WITH BLUE/GREEN PLUGIN ENABLED
2	**0**
query connection failures out of 400 total queries	query connection failures out of 400 total queries
30s	**11s**
application downtime during switchover — required manual reconnection	controlled pause in workload — fully automated routing recovery

The Switchover Timeline Log

LOGSWITCHOVERFINALSUMMARY OUTPUT — AWS JDBC DRIVER

```
timestamp                  time offset  event
-------------------------------------------------------------
2025-10-14T00:10:08Z  -44135 ms   NOT_CREATED  (plugin init)
2025-10-14T00:10:08Z  -44089 ms   CREATED      (inventory compiled)
2025-10-14T00:10:49Z   -2882 ms   PREPARATION  (routing rules set)
2025-10-14T00:10:52Z       0 ms   IN_PROGRESS  (active switchover ⚡)
2025-10-14T00:11:04Z  +11627 ms   POST         (green topology live)
2025-10-14T00:11:09Z  +16723 ms   Green topology changed
2025-10-14T00:11:38Z  +46153 ms   Blue DNS updated
2025-10-14T00:11:39Z  +46423 ms   Green DNS removed
2025-10-14T00:11:39Z  +46423 ms   COMPLETED    ✓
```

10 / FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I achieve true zero downtime (0 seconds) during AWS database migration?

With the AWS JDBC Driver Blue/Green plugin and `bgSuspendNewBlueConnections=true`, AWS testing achieved zero query connection failures out of 400 queries. There is an 11-second pause in query execution during the active switchover, but no connection errors. For practical purposes, this is zero downtime from the user's perspective.

Does AWS DMS support zero downtime migration from on-premises to AWS?

Yes. AWS DMS with Change Data Capture (CDC) continuously replicates changes from your on-premises source to the AWS target. Your source database stays fully online throughout. The final cutover window — stopping writes, verifying sync, and updating connection strings — is typically under 60 seconds.

What database engines does Blue/Green Deployment support?

Blue/Green Deployments support Aurora PostgreSQL (releases 13.21+), Aurora MySQL (3.07+), RDS for PostgreSQL (with rds_tools v1.7+), and RDS for MySQL (supported versions). Check the AWS documentation for specific minor version requirements in each region.

What is the difference between AWS DMS and Blue/Green Deployments?

AWS DMS migrates data between different systems — on-premises to AWS, Oracle to Aurora, or SQL Server to RDS. Blue/Green Deployments are for in-place maintenance on existing AWS RDS/Aurora clusters: version upgrades, patches, and parameter changes. They solve different problems and are often used together across the database lifecycle.

Do I need to change my application code to use the JDBC plugin?

Only the JDBC connection properties need to change — no business logic modifications are required. Simply add the Maven dependency and update `wrapperPlugins` along with the blue/green-specific parameters. The plugin handles all connection routing automatically in the background.

What is the minimum AWS JDBC Driver version needed?

The Blue/Green Deployment plugin requires AWS JDBC Driver version 2.6.4 or later. It also requires Java 8+ (Amazon Corretto 8 recommended) and either the PostgreSQL JDBC driver or MySQL/MariaDB JDBC driver as the underlying driver.

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