



Scheduling an Orchestration: The Six Cadences and What Each One Costs

Features · <https://docs.functionize.com/hc/en-us/articles/43800801701271-Scheduling-an-Orchestration-The-Six-Cadences-and-What-Each-One-Costs>

An orchestration's schedule is the single setting that decides what it costs and whether anyone still trusts it in six months. Everything else about a suite — which tests, what order, who gets the email — matters less than how often it runs.

There are six options. This page covers all of them, including the one that is not there.



THE SIX OPTIONS, IN FULL

On Demand

The default. **Runs only when triggered manually.** Costs nothing until somebody presses Run.

Hourly

Twenty-four runs a day, every day. Reserve this for a handful of tests you genuinely want to know about within the hour.

Every 4 Hours

Six a day. A reasonable ceiling for a smoke suite that gates deploys.

Every 12 Hours

Twice a day - morning and evening, roughly.

Daily

Once a day at a time you choose, on the days you choose. This is the one most suites should be on.

Monthly

Once a month. Useful for a long compliance or accessibility pass that nobody reads weekly anyway.

There is no Weekly. To run something once a week, choose **Daily** and tick one day - the day picker only appears after you pick Daily, which is why the option is easy to miss.

WHAT DAILY REVEALS

SCHEDULE

Daily at 06:00 on **Monday** Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Choosing Daily adds a time field and a day-of-week picker. Tick one day for a weekly job; tick five for weekdays only.

The schedule is the cost decision, not the orchestration. A ten-test suite costs the same ten tests whether you run it by hand or on a timer. Hourly runs it 720 times a month; Daily runs it 30.



Where the setting lives

The **Schedule** field is the fourth field in the **New Orchestration** panel, and it is on an existing orchestration under **Actions** → **Edit**. Changing it does not disturb anything else about the suite.

Whatever you pick, Studio prints a one-line description next to the field. For the default that line reads "*Runs only when triggered manually.*" — worth reading, because it is the only confirmation you get that you have not accidentally armed a timer.

The six options

On Demand	The default, and the right answer for a brand new suite. Nothing happens until somebody presses Run , so the orchestration costs nothing while you are still working out whether it is any good.
Hourly	Twenty-four runs a day. Almost nobody needs this, and the people who do have a three-test smoke suite rather than a thirty-test regression pack. Before you pick it, work out what you would do differently on being told about a failure at 3am versus at 9am.
Every 4 Hours	Six a day. A sensible ceiling for a suite that gates deploys in a team shipping several times a day.
Every 12 Hours	Twice a day. In practice this is "before the working day and after it", which suits a team spread across two time zones.
Daily	Once a day, at a time you pick, on the days you pick. This is where most suites should end up, and it is the option with the most hidden flexibility — see below.
Monthly	Once a month. Right for a long accessibility, localization or compliance pass that nobody was ever going to read weekly.

There is no Weekly, and that is fine

This catches people out, because weekly is a perfectly reasonable cadence for a full regression pack. The way to get it is **Daily**.

Choosing Daily adds two controls that are invisible until you do:

- **at** — a time field, defaulting to `12:00 AM`.
- **on** — a day picker holding Monday through Sunday, and it takes as many as you like.

So a weekly job is Daily, at 02:00, on Sunday. A weekdays-only job is Daily, at 06:00, on Monday through Friday. A twice-weekly job is Daily on Tuesday and Thursday. The naming is a little odd, but the control is more capable than a Weekly option would have been.

Leave the day picker empty and Daily means every day

If you never open the day list, the job runs seven days a week. That is usually what you want from a smoke suite and almost never what you want from a two-hour regression pack.

What each cadence actually costs

An orchestration consumes credits for the tests it runs, exactly as if you had run them one at a time. Grouping them is organizational; it is neither a discount nor a surcharge. What the schedule changes is the multiplier.

On Demand	However many times somebody presses the button.
Hourly	About 720 runs a month.
Every 4 Hours	About 180 runs a month.

Every 12 Hours	About 60 runs a month.
Daily (every day)	About 30 runs a month; five weekdays only is about 22 ; one day a week is about 4 .
Monthly	1 run a month.

Multiply by the number of tests in the suite and you have the monthly cost of that orchestration. A twelve-test suite on Hourly is doing 8,640 test runs a month; the same suite on weekdays at 6am is doing 264. Both are defensible. Only one of them is defensible by accident. See [How Credits Work](#).

Choosing a cadence you will still want in six months

The honest test is not "how often would we like to know?" — everyone answers that with "constantly". It is this:

- **Who reads the result, and how soon?** If the answer is "we look on Monday", an hourly schedule is generating 167 results a week that nobody opens.
- **What does a failure block?** A suite that gates a deploy earns a frequent schedule. A suite that informs a trend does not.
- **Is it stable?** A flaky suite on a frequent schedule trains the team to ignore red, and that habit is much harder to undo than a schedule is to change. Put it on On Demand until the flake is fixed — see [Keeping a Suite Green: Flake, Tiers and Who Owns Red](#).

A practical default for a team getting started: smoke on Every 4 Hours, core on Daily at whatever hour is quiet for your application, full on Daily with one day ticked.

Turning a schedule off again

Set it back to **On Demand**. The orchestration, its tests and its whole run history stay exactly as they are; it simply stops firing on its own. This is the right move when a suite goes flaky, when the application is mid-migration, or when somebody leaves and nobody has picked up their alerts.

The **Schedule** filter on the orchestrations list — which offers *On-demand* and *Scheduled* — is the fastest way to audit what is firing without you. Doing that once a quarter is a habit worth forming. See [Managing Orchestrations: Filters, Bulk Actions and Run History](#).

Where to go next

- [Orchestrations: Running a Suite as One Job](#) — what an orchestration is and how to build one.
- [Run Order, Re-runs and Alerts](#) — the settings folded away under Advanced, including who gets told when the schedule fires.
- [How Credits Work](#) — what a run costs before you multiply it by a cadence.
- [Keeping a Suite Green: Flake, Tiers and Who Owns Red](#) — how to keep a scheduled suite worth reading.