

Windows 11 Education FAQ

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Most asked questions

I am buying a new PC now; will it be eligible for the free upgrade?

Most devices available for purchase now will be upgradeable to Windows 11. Look for devices that indicate that they are eligible for the upgrade. You can also ask your retail sales professional or the PC manufacturer (OEM) to confirm. Please note, after Windows 11 is released, Windows Update will confirm when the free upgrade is available for your PC. ISP fees may apply for any upgrade occurring in locations with metered internet.

What are the benefits of Windows 11 over Windows 10?

Windows 11 offers new productivity and inclusivity features as well as functionality designed to meet the challenges of the hybrid world, with a completely refreshed look and feel that helps students learn more, with less stress. Learn more about what's new on the Devices Overview webpage that can be found here - <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/devices/overview>.

When will the upgrade be available for my current Windows 10 PC?

The upgrade is expected to be available in early 2022. Not all eligible Windows 10 PCs will be offered the upgrade at the same time. Once the upgrade rollout has started, you can check the status of your device by navigating to Windows Update in settings.

Will my current Windows 10 applications, software or programs work with Windows 11?

Yes, most apps and devices that worked with Windows 10 will be compatible with Windows 11. You can also check with the software manufacturer of the specific application or device to confirm compatibility.

What are the basics of the free upgrade offer for Windows 11?

The upgrade to Windows 11 is available for devices running Windows 10, version 20H1 or newer, on eligible hardware. For more details on the minimum hardware requirements and specifications, visit <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-11-specifications>.

Can I stay on Windows 10 if I want to?

Yes. You do not have to upgrade to Windows 11. Microsoft will continue to support Windows 10 until October 14, 2025.

What are the major differences between Windows 11 and Windows 10? Why should I upgrade?

Windows 10 launched six years ago. Since then, there has been a lot of hardware innovation. With Windows 11, every detail has been considered. It has the speed and security you need in a redesigned and refreshed look. Plus, it comes with new tools, sounds, apps, and accessibility features. To learn more about Windows 11, please visit <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-11-specifications>.

Why did Windows choose to introduce a new Windows? I thought Windows 10 was going to be the last version.

The goal with Windows is still the same, regardless of number. Our commitment to drive innovation, bring people together and build the best version of Windows remains. We said we would always update Windows, so our commitment remains to give people the best version of Windows.

How can Windows 11 help my school?

Learn more about Windows 11 for Education here - <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/devices/overview>.

Why are you temporarily removing the PC Health Check app?

We are temporarily removing the app so that our teams can address the feedback. We will get it back online in preparation for general availability this fall. In the meantime, you can visit our minimum system requirements page <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-11-specifications> to learn more.

Purchase questions

When can I buy a PC with Windows 11?

PCs with Windows 11 pre-installed will be available later this year.

How much will a Windows 11 PC cost?

The upgrade from Windows 10 to Windows 11 will be available for free on devices that meet the minimum technical specifications (see below for more information).¹ New devices that come with Windows 11 preinstalled will be available at a variety of price points to fit your budget, as they are today with Windows 10. For devices that meet the minimum specifications but don't have Windows 10 installed, standalone versions of the Windows 11 retail and education packages will be available for purchase in 2022, with pricing shared at that time.

¹Internet access required and ISP fees may apply.

Where can I buy a PC with Windows 11?

PCs with Windows 11 will be available from a broad selection of retailers and our partners later this year. More details will be coming soon.

Is there a deadline for the free offer? Will I have to pay to upgrade?

The free upgrade offer does not have a specific end date for eligible systems. While Microsoft reserves the right to eventually end support for the free offer, it wouldn't be until at least one year after General Availability (the date when Windows 11 first becomes available to the public).

Will there be any discounts on Windows 10 devices after you announce Windows 11?

Discounts and offers are up to each OEM, Retailer, and local team to determine.

How much will it cost to upgrade to Windows 11? Can I upgrade for free?

There is no cost to upgrade for eligible devices to Windows 11.² Only Windows 10 PCs that are running the most current version of Windows 10 and meet the minimum hardware specifications will be eligible to upgrade. You can check to see if you have the latest updates by navigating to Windows Update in settings.

²Internet access required and ISP fees may apply.

Are Microsoft solutions more expensive than Google's?

When you calculate \$249 for devices, \$40 for licensing, and consider savings from simplified deployment, Microsoft's total cost of ownership is no more than Google's.

Requirement questions

Which new Windows 10 PCs meet the minimum requirements? (How do I see if a new PC meets the minimum requirements?)

Most Windows 10 PCs that meet the minimum requirements for Windows 11 should be clearly marked with "Free Upgrade to Windows 11 (when available)."³ Certain features of Windows 11 require specific hardware beyond the "minimum" system requirements. To confirm these hardware requirements, visit <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-11-specifications>. You can also ask your retail sales professional or PC manufacturer (OEM) to confirm compatibility.

³Some features require specific hardware requirements beyond the minimum hardware requirements required to upgrade to Windows 11. Consult the list of full feature requirements for details: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-11-specifications>.

What are the minimum hardware requirements for Windows 11?

Please note that certain features require certain requirements. The minimum requirements for Windows 11 are as below:

- **Processor:** 1 GHz or faster with 2 or more cores on a compatible 64-bit processor (<http://aka.ms/CPUlist>) or System on a Chip (SoC); link to the silicon list can be found here <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-11-specifications>.
- **RAM:** 4 GB
- **Storage:** 64GB or larger storage device
- **System Firmware:** UEFI, Secure Boot capable
- **TPM:** Trusted Platform Module (TPM) version 2.0 (for further details, please visit <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/security/information-protection/tpm/trusted-platform-module-overview>)
- **Graphics card:** Compatible with DirectX 12 or later with WDDM 2.0 driver
- **Display:** High definition (720p) display that is greater than 9" diagonally, 8 bits per color channel
- **Internet Connection and Microsoft Accounts:** Windows 11 Home edition requires internet connectivity and a Microsoft Account to complete device setup on first use. For more details, visit <https://account.microsoft.com/account>.

Switching a device out of Windows 11 Home in S mode also requires internet connectivity. Learn more about Windows 10 in S mode at <https://support.microsoft.com/help/4020089/windows-10-in-s-mode-faq>.

For all Windows 11 editions, internet access is required to perform updates and to download and take advantage of some features.

[Why is there a hardware floor for Windows 11 and how do I manage the future if my PC refresh cycle is 5 years?](#)

Windows 11 is best experienced on new, modern hardware. If your devices do not meet the eligibility requirements, Windows 10 will continue to be supported through October 14, 2025.

[With such a robust hardware floor requirement, what options do I have with regards to the frontline workers that only need a cost effective, internet-based device with simplified management capabilities?](#)

Windows 11 will be a great experience across all supported hardware. We're working hard with our partners to provide great, modern devices at a range of price points.

[Will my existing programs, hardware and drivers work on Windows 11?](#)

Most software and accessories that worked with Windows 10 are expected to work with Windows 11. Check with your software publisher or accessory manufacturer for specific details on your products.

[The hardware floor to run Windows 11 is published. What about the minimum disk requirements to host Windows 11 and to support subsequent feature and quality updates?](#)

The minimum storage drive requirement is 64GB for Windows 11. Ongoing requirements for feature and quality updates will vary, but are generally expected to be similar to what we see today for Windows 10.

What specific features/experiences in Windows 11 are reliant on the new minimum system requirements?

Windows 11 is the next generation of Windows designed and built as a complete set of experiences, unlocking the full power of the PC people have come to rely on, in areas like video conferencing, multitasking, security, playing, creating, building, learning and more. We believe Windows 11 delivers on what people need today and in the future.

Can you share why the min specs have changed?

As people move forward, so must technology. The Windows PC has become an essential device that people are relying on more than ever to connect, work, learn, create, and play. With this increased reliance, comes a need to adapt software and hardware to keep pace with people's needs and harness the true value and power of the PC to deliver the best experiences, now and in the future.

New hardware requirements enable us to deliver a higher quality, more secure, and more reliable Windows experience for our customers. By leveraging the latest hardware technologies, we're able to deliver the most advanced software experience, meeting the needs of an ever-growing and diverse ecosystem.

Please reference the document in this blog to learn more about min specs:

<https://blogs.windows.com/windows-insider/2021/06/28/update-on-windows-11-minimum-system-requirements/>

Upgrade questions

Will my current Windows 10 applications, software, or programs work with Windows 11? Will the AppAssure program support Windows 11?

Yes, Microsoft is committed to ensuring your applications work on the latest versions of our software and Windows 11 has been built with compatibility in mind. Our promise states that apps that worked on Windows 7/ 8.1/10 will work on Windows 11. If you have App Assure, Microsoft will help you fix them at no cost.

App Assure is a service that helps customers resolve application issues that they may experience when deploying the latest version of our software. App Assure is available at no additional cost for eligible customers with 150+ seats. For more information on eligibility requirements, please visit <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/fasttrack/eligibility>.

Visit <https://fasttrack.microsoft.com/dl/daa> and sign in to submit your request for assistance for a dedicated App Assure Manager. If you experience any issues submitting a request for assistance, please contact ACHELP@microsoft.com and one of our team members will assist you.

How will I know when the upgrade is available for my Windows 10 PC?

We'll send you a notification once your eligible PC has been tested and validated for the free upgrade. Or you can go to Windows Update and see for yourself. Please note that a significant download is required to complete this upgrade. ISP fees may apply in areas where the internet is metered.

How long does it take to upgrade to Windows 11?

Timing will vary, particularly based on internet speed. Downloading and installing Windows 11 will most likely take longer than a typical Windows 10 feature update. You can use your PC while you're downloading it and then you have the option to schedule the install to happen at a specific time when you aren't planning on using your PC.

What edition of Windows 11 will I get when I upgrade?

The upgrade to Windows 11 is for the same edition as you have on your Windows 10 device. Devices with Windows 10 Education installed will be upgraded to Windows 11 Education. Devices running Windows 10 Pro Education will upgrade to Windows 11 Pro Education. Windows 11 Education will not offer Windows 11 Education in S mode, so you will need to switch out of Windows 10 in S mode to upgrade.

Will I get all the features once I upgrade?

Generally, yes, once you have upgraded you will get all features available for the specific edition of Windows 11 that is installed on your device. There are some exceptions to this, where additional requirements may apply. For example, if you do not have a touch monitor or display, touch will not be available on your device after upgrading. Please visit this page for full feature requirements page - <https://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-11-specifications>.

Can I move back to Windows 10 after I upgrade my Windows 10 PC if I don't like Windows 11?

Yes, once you have upgraded to Windows 11, you have 10 days to utilize the rollback function to move back to Windows 10 while keeping files and data that you brought along with you. After that 10-day period, you will need to back up your data and do a "clean install" to move back to Windows 10.

Can I upgrade if I am running in Windows in S mode?

Windows 11 Pro Education will not offer Windows 10 in S mode, so you will need to switch out of Windows 10 in S mode to upgrade.

What if my device is not upgradeable to Windows 11? Can I stay on Windows 10?

Yes! You can continue to use your PC with Windows 10. Windows 10 will continue to get monthly Quality Updates and Microsoft is planning to release a Feature Update in the second half of 2021 for Windows 10. Microsoft has committed to supporting Windows 10 through October 14, 2025.

What is an update vs. an upgrade?

An update is a change within a version of a Windows product. For example, moving from Windows 10, version 2004 (the Windows 10 May 2020 Update) to Windows 10, version 20H2 (the Windows 10 October 2020 Update). An upgrade is when you change OS versions, for example moving from Windows 10 to Windows 11, or when you upgrade to a higher edition within the same OS version (e.g., Windows 10 Home to Windows 10 Pro).

Generally, how new does my device need to be to upgrade to Windows 11?

Device age is not the only factor, but most devices sold in the last three years will upgrade to Windows 11. There are older devices that will also be able to upgrade. The best method to use in determining if your device can upgrade is to confirm that your device has the hardware required to run this new operating system.

What happens if I buy a new device and it does not meet the minimum specs and is not eligible for upgrade to Windows 11?

Devices that do not meet the minimum specifications will continue on Windows 10, which will continue to be supported with security updates until October 2025. Please refer to the Windows 10 Lifecycle documentation that can be found at <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/lifecycle/products/windows-10-home-and-pro>.

How will I know what devices to purchase so I can get the upgrade?

All devices that meet the minimum specification will be eligible for the upgrade to Windows 11. Most eligible Windows 10 PCs will be clearly marked with a tag.

Can Windows 7 devices upgrade to Windows 11?

Any device that meets the minimum specification can run Windows 11. However, Windows 7 devices will likely not meet the minimum specification because of age and generation of the processor that was included with that device. If a customer with a Windows 7 PC that meets the minimum specification wants to upgrade, they would need to purchase a Windows 10 license and proceed with the upgrade to Windows 11. In 2022, they will also have the option to purchase Windows 11 at retail and install it on the compatible Windows 7 device.

Will I have to upgrade my device?

Your device must meet the minimum hardware requirements for Windows 11. To confirm these hardware requirements, visit <https://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-11-specifications>.

What will the customer experience be during upgrade?

The upgrade experience will be similar to a feature update in Windows 10. You will download the software while being able to continue to use your device.⁴ Once the update is downloaded and ready to install, you will be guided through the installation process through a series of screens and prompts. There will be at least one restart.

⁴Internet access required and ISP fees may apply.

If I decline the upgrade, can I change my mind and upgrade later?

Yes. You can upgrade via the Windows Update section in Settings if you originally declined the offer.

What will happen to the files during upgrade?

By default, all your files and data will transfer. However, Microsoft recommends backing up your files before installation.

Can I transfer older programs and apps to a new Windows 11 computer, or will I need to reinstall?

If you are upgrading an existing Windows 10 PC to Windows 11, your apps will remain on the PC and should continue to work. However, if you purchase a new Windows 11 computer, you will need to reinstall your apps on the new PC.

How can I transfer my old computer to a new Windows 11 computer?

There are a couple of ways to get your files and photos onto a new PC. With OneDrive, you can quickly transfer files from PC to PC or Mac to PC, so your files are organized like they were on your old computer and you can get right back to work. Or you can use an external storage device such as a USB drive, SD card, or external hard drive to help make the move.

Will Windows 11 take more storage space than Windows 10?

The new release takes up approximately the same amount of disk space as Windows 10.

Are customers able to download the upgrade “on demand”? Will there be ways that customers can find the upgrade prior to Intelligent rollout?

Yes, we plan to have options similar to those available today for updates to Windows 10: Upgrade Assistant (similar to Update Assistant) and the Media Creation Tool. We recommend, customers wait until they are notified through Windows Update that the upgrade is ready for their device. Note that there will be temporary blocks in some instances that will prevent the upgrade from completing installation.

Is Windows 11 a Windows 10 replacement?

Windows 11 is the next version of Windows 10. Microsoft will continue to support Windows 10 until October 14, 2025.

Is Windows 11 standard on all new PCs?

Eventually all new devices will be built and shipped with Windows 11. Educational organizations should work with their device partners to understand what options are available for new PCs.

What devices and programs are compatible?

Most software and accessories that worked with Windows 10 are expected to work with Windows 11. Check with your software publisher or accessory manufacturer for specific details on your products.

Will Windows 11 work better on new devices?

Windows 11 has been optimized to run on devices built with the latest hardware being sold today. It will also be compatible with Windows 10 devices that meet the minimum hardware specifications.

What is the upgrade process like?

Customers will be offered the option to upgrade through Windows Update, similar to how Windows 10 feature updates are offered today. Please note that a significant download is required to complete the upgrade.⁵ For IT-managed devices, users should check with their IT organization for details on their rollout plan.

⁵Internet access required and ISP fees may apply.

Will I have to sign back into all my applications if I upgrade?

No, generally, you will not have to sign back into your applications after upgrading.

Who is the target audience for Windows 11?

Windows 11 has been designed for every type of user across a variety of devices at a wide range of price points.

What does this announcement mean for the roadmap for Windows 10?

Windows 10 remains supported through October 14, 2025, as originally announced at its launch. Customers using long term service releases (LTSC and LTSB) will continue to be supported through those published end of support dates.

What is the upgrade path from Windows 10 to Windows 11? My company still has some Windows 7 devices. If they meet the hardware floor, can these be upgraded directly to Windows 11?

Most devices available for purchase now will be upgradeable to Windows 11. You will have the option to upgrade, clean install, or reimage Windows 10 devices to move to Windows 11. For Windows 7 devices that meet hardware requirements, you will need to clean install or reimage to go directly to Windows 11.

My company still has some Windows 7 devices. If they meet the hardware floor, can these be upgraded directly to Windows 11?

For Windows 7 devices that meet hardware requirements, you will need to clean install or reimage to go directly to Windows 11.

What are the benefits and value proposition of Windows 11 for the Education?

Windows 11 offers an enhanced user experience, with greater accessibility, hybrid learning, and security features built using the same trusted, easy-to-use management tools that educators may already be comfortable with.

If a remote end user purchases a Windows 11 device, can I move them back to my Windows 10 standard and how?

Downgrade rights are available with Windows 11 Pro OEM-licensed devices. You can downgrade to any version of Windows Pro/Professional that has not reached its end of support date. You will need to reimage or clean install a Windows 11 device to downgrade it to Windows 10. Downgrade rights are also available through Microsoft Volume Licensing (check your agreement for more details).

Are there specific Windows 11 preview programs where I can get early access?

Shortly after announcement, Windows 11 preview will be available in the regular Windows Insider channel. In August we will have a commercial preview, where we will make Windows 11 bits available via Windows Update to Release Preview, to WSUS in the Windows Insider Pre-release category, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) available on the Windows Insider ISO Download page, and images available on Azure Marketplace to be used with Azure Virtual Desktop. In addition to making these available, we will be providing CSS support for these builds so if you run into an issue, we can provide free assistance. Issues can also be reported via Feedback Hub.

Are there any geographical restrictions for Windows 11 deployments?

There are no new geographical restrictions for Windows 11, compared to those for Windows 10. The guidelines related to exporting Microsoft Products can be found at <http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/exporting>.

Will all my third-party Windows 11 security solutions continue to work across Windows 10 and Windows 11? To support Windows 11, will I have to upgrade those solutions to the latest and greatest before they are supported on Windows 11 and Windows 10?

Most software and accessories that worked with Windows 10 are expected to work with Windows 11. Check with your software publisher or accessory manufacturer for specific details on your products.

Do any specific rollback or upgrade recover mechanisms exist?

The Windows 11 upgrade has a 10-day rollback period, similar to what is offered today for Windows 10 updates.

Will features on demand (FODs) and language packs (LPs) be installed and updated like Windows 10?

Yes, however, language packs and features on demand will ship as a different International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Will Known Issue Rollback (KIR) function on Windows 11?

Yes, the Known Issue Rollback will function on Windows 11.

What's going to happen with kiosk mode?

Windows 11 is committed to supporting all of the user-specific scenarios that we supported in Windows 10, including kiosk mode. In this initial Windows 11, we are supporting single app kiosk mode. In the future, we plan to support multi-app kiosk mode.

If I'm upgrading from Windows 10 to Windows 11, can I change editions at that time (e.g., from Home or Education to Pro)?

If you have Windows 10 Education and your PC meets minimum specifications, you can upgrade to Windows 11 Education. You can then step up to Windows 11 Pro Education.

Will I get Windows 11 as part of my Microsoft 365 license?

Microsoft 365 licenses that include Windows licenses will allow you to run Windows 11 on supported devices.

Will Windows 11 work with my accessories?

Most software and accessories that worked with Windows 10 are expected to work with Windows 11. Check with your software publisher or accessory manufacturer for specific details on your products.

For Windows licenses sold to OEMs, how will the RPL for Windows 11 license compare to a Windows 10 license?

We will continue to offer our OEMs competitive pricing for Windows licenses across consumer, education, and enterprise, which will enable them to create a broad range of Windows devices to meet customers' needs. There are no significant changes to license pricing we're highlighting.

How much more or less powerful and performant is Windows 11 compared to Windows 10?

Windows 11 is faster, more battery efficient, and improves the ability to multi-task with several things running side-by-side. The exact performance will depend on the specific hardware specifications of a customer's device. We'll have more to share on specific performance benchmarks as we get closer to launch.

Will Safeguard holds still function for Windows 11 and how will that work between the two different OS versions?

Yes. IT Administrators will have access to safeguard hold information using Update Compliance. More information can be found here <https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/windows-it-pro-blog/access-safeguard-hold-details-with-update-compliance/ba-p/1809652>.

Will there still be a combined LCU and SSU package capability?

Yes. Windows 11 will continue to support one cumulative package where we will deploy all LCUs and SSUs (if applicable) together as a single package to Windows Server Update Service (WSUS) and Catalog and have them orchestrated on the device. This capability is also the default for those updating from Windows Update.

Management questions

Who do I contact if I have issues in upgrading to Windows 11 or general support questions?

Please visit <https://support.microsoft.com> if you need assistance.

With Windows 10, Microsoft forced me to make significant changes to my IT processes, management approach and tooling, what will this new version require me to change?

Windows 11 is based on the same foundation as Windows 10, so it will support the same management tools that you use today with Windows 10.

How does Windows 11 impact my current deployment of Windows 10?

Windows 11 and Windows 10 can be deployed, managed, and serviced in the same way, as both versions of Windows use the same deployment, management, and servicing tools. In terms of deployment, you can consider Windows 11 and Windows 10 as two different releases of the same OS.

Can I run both Windows 11 and Windows 10 in parallel? If so, do I use the same process and tools to manage both?

Yes, Windows 11 is based on the same foundation as Windows 10, so they can coexist and will use the same processes and tools to manage them.

Given the new normal of the hybrid workforce and my strategy for my remote users, how will Windows 11 impact their ability to continue business as usual? Any changes in VPN connectivity, remote management, update compliance and security tools?

Windows 11 offers the same trusted, easy-to-use management tools that your IT teams are already comfortable with—including hands-free set-up and management options.

What is the activation & provisioning process for my remote users? Is it the same as Windows 10?

Windows 11 offers the same trusted, easy-to-use management tools that your IT teams are already comfortable with—including hands-free set-up and management options.

I use Windows Autopilot to provision devices for end users, will Windows Autopilot be available for Windows 11?

Yes, you can still use Windows Autopilot for Education to provision.

As an IT Pro, can I manage or remove certain new features in Windows 11 that I may not want in my install base or to expose to my users?

As with previous versions of Windows, IT will have control over certain policies that can effectively manage or remove specific features. Windows 11 was built on the same core as Windows 10, so you will continue with the same management experience you're accustomed to on Windows 10.

Will existing identity solutions continue to work as they do with Windows 10, example AAD, Hybrid, MSA, etc.?

Windows 11 has been built on the same core as Windows 10, therefore, you will continue with the same experience you're accustomed to on Windows 10.

Will Microsoft force upgrades to Windows 11 on eligible devices? What if someone isn't ready to move to Windows 11 or purchase a new PC?

Microsoft will not force anyone to upgrade. We are putting that choice in the hands of our customers so that they can decide for themselves. Customers have the option to remain on Windows 10 if they are not yet ready to purchase a new PC.

We will continue to support our customers on Windows 10 through October 14, 2025. You can learn more [here](#).