Q: Why is Microsoft changing the servicing policy for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition compared to previous versions of SharePoint Server?

In previous versions of SharePoint Server, the support end date for each PU was tied to the anniversary of the products RTM date. This correlation effectively created a single month each year where customers had to update their SharePoint Server farms to remain in support. SharePoint Server Subscription Edition introduces our new continuous update model, also known as evergreen. This update model is more flexible and allows Microsoft to introduce new feature experiences regularly. Giving each PU its own one-year window of support ensures that customers are up to date with the latest functionality, performance, and stability improvements while also giving customers flexibility to update their farms in a timeframe that works best for them.

Q: Can we run Exchange, SharePoint or Skype for Business Server on a Listed Provider's dedicated hosted cloud services and is Software Assurance required?

For licenses acquired on or after October 1, 2019, use on Listed Providers' dedicated hosted cloud services isn't permitted unless you have Software Assurance or equivalent subscription rights, and you use your License Mobility through Software Assurance rights. Alternatively, you can use software hosted by Listed Providers who participate in the Services Provider License Agreement program. For licenses acquired prior to October 1, 2019, use on Listed Providers' dedicated hosted cloud services is generally consistent with licensing use on your own on-premises hardware or traditional outsourcers' hardware dedicated to your organization alone.

Q: Will Microsoft release service packs for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition?

No, Microsoft has no plans to release service packs for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition. Functionality, performance, and stability improvements for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition are delivered by way of our monthly PUs. New feature experiences are delivered in our Feature Updates.

Q: How are Feature Updates different from PUs in SharePoint Server Subscription?

Functionality, performance, and stability improvements for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition may appear in any of our monthly PUs. New feature experiences are bundled together in Feature Updates, which will be released twice a year (once in the spring and once in the autumn). Feature Updates are delivered to customers inside PUs.

Q: Where can I find the Product Updates (PUs) for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition?

The current list of Product Updates (PUs) for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition can be found in the SharePoint Updates article https://learn.microsoft.com/officeupdates/sharepoint-updates.

Q: Do the monthly Product Updates (PUs) contain all of the fixes included in the previous PUs?

Yes, the monthly Product Updates (PUs) are cumulative. Each PU contains all of the fixes provided in the previous PUs.

Q: Do I need to install an earlier product updates (PUs) before I can install the latest PU?

No, you do not need to install an earlier product update before you install the latest PU. You can install any PU directly on an RTM installation, or on top of any previous PU.

Q: Should I install the monthly product updates (PUs) for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition immediately or should I install them only if they contain a fix for a specific issue I'm having?

Microsoft recommends that all customers install PUs for SharePoint Server Subscription Edition as soon as they become available. Microsoft performs rigorous validation of each PU, both internally and with a select set of partners and customers, before it is released to ensure it has the highest quality.

Q: Do I get rights to the Outlook client when I buy Exchange Server 2019 licenses?

No, the Outlook client license was no longer included with any Exchange CAL after Exchange Server 2003 and must be purchased separately for Exchange Server 2019. The Exchange Server 2019 Standard CAL provides the rights to access email, calendar, contacts, and tasks through either Outlook on the web, or through a mobile device via Exchange ActiveSync.

Q: What are the licensing implications if I choose to run Exchange Server 2019 on a virtual machine rather than directly on a physical server?

One server license is required for each running instance of Exchange Server 2019 whether it is installed natively on a physical machine or a virtual machine. Learn more about virtualization support https://learn.microsoft.com/exchange/plan-and-deploy/virtualization?view=exchserver-2019&redirectedfrom=MSDN.

Q: Is there an External Connector license for Exchange Server 2019 for companies that want to offer email to non-employees such as corporate alumni or retirees (that is, "external users")?

No. External users do not require CALs to access Exchange Server 2019, access rights to standard Exchange functionality by external users is included with the Exchange Server 2019 license itself.

Q: Can a customer purchase certain features like the In-Place Archive separately from the Enterprise CAL?

Customers can get the In-Place Archive and In-Place Hold features through Exchange Online Archiving for Exchange Server, and they can get advanced security through Exchange Online Protection. All other premium features are only available in the Enterprise CAL or E-CAL Suite.

Q: Does the Enterprise CAL require the Enterprise Server or vice versa?

No. Both the Standard and Enterprise CALs can be used with either server edition. For more information, refer to the licensing guidance for Base and Additive CALs.

Q: What is Exchange Server Subscription Edition (Exchange SE)?

Exchange Server Subscription Edition (Exchange SE) is the subscription-based, continuously updated version of Exchange Server that replaces the traditional perpetual licensing model. Exchange SE requires an active subscription via eligible Microsoft 365 licenses and is designed to ensure customers stay current with security, compliance, and feature updates.

Q: Do Microsoft 365 E3/E5 licenses purchased via CSP allow customers to run Exchange SE on-premises?

No. CSP versions of Microsoft 365 E3/E5 do not include Exchange Server Extended Use Rights. Customers who need on-premises server access must obtain qualifying licenses through Enterprise Agreement (EA) or MPSA where applicable.

Q: What are Exchange Server Extended Use Rights?

Extended Use Rights allow qualifying Microsoft 365 Enterprise licenses to:

- Use Exchange SE server software
- Access Exchange SE on premises servers without separate Exchange Server CALs
- Deploy hybrid environments with on premises mailbox or transport roles

These rights are documented in the Microsoft Product Terms under the Microsoft 365 Enterprise suite.

Q: Can cloud-only licenses (e.g., Exchange Online Plan 1 or Plan 2) be used to access Exchange SE?

Yes — Exchange Online Plan 1 (EXO P1) and Exchange Online Plan 2 (EXO P2) include CAL equivalency rights. This means they count as:

- Exchange Standard CAL (EXO P1)
- Exchange Enterprise CAL + Standard CAL (EXO P2)

These licenses allow users to access an Exchange SE server without needing separate CALs.

Q: What does "CAL equivalency" mean for Exchange SE?

CAL equivalency allows Exchange Online cloud licenses to satisfy the CAL requirement for on-premises server access. Specifically:

EXO Plan 1 – Provides Exchange mailbox access with standard email features, equivalent to an Exchange Server Standard CAL.

EXO Plan 2 – Delivers advanced Exchange capabilities, equivalent to Standard + Enterprise CALs, including DLP and advanced compliance.

Microsoft 365 E3 (EA) – Grants Exchange Standard CAL equivalency plus server use rights, covering both on-premises and cloud deployments.

Microsoft 365 E5 (EA) – Offers full Exchange CAL equivalency with advanced security and compliance features for on-premises and cloud use.

Q: If a customer uses Exchange SE only for Hybrid recipient management, do they still need these licenses?

For Hybrid management servers with no hosted mailboxes, customers may use the Hybrid Configuration Wizard (HCW) key. However, any server performing transport, mailbox, SMTP relay, or hybrid mail flow functions requires proper Exchange SE licensing and CAL/Extended Use Rights.

Q: Can customers mix Exchange SE and Exchange Server 2019?

Yes. Customers may run both versions in the same organization during transition or coexistence periods. Licensing requirements still apply per user based on access rights.

Q: If a customer moves from traditional CALs to Exchange SE, do they need to relicense?

Yes — Exchange SE requires qualifying Microsoft 365 licenses or EXO P1/P2 licenses for CAL equivalency. Traditional perpetual CALs alone do not satisfy Exchange SE licensing requirements.

Q: Are server keys still required for Exchange SE installation?

No. Exchange SE uses subscription activation through Microsoft 365 credentials rather than perpetual activation keys.

Q: If several users share the same desktop, do they each need an Exchange Enterprise CAL?

Customers may still license Exchange Server 2019 with either per-user or per-device CALs. If several users share a desktop and do not individually access the Exchange server from other locations, such as their home PCs, then they can be licensed with one device CAL.

Q: Are there any licensing prerequisites for Exchange Server 2019 or CALs?

Yes. For more information, see Exchange Server 2019 prerequisites.

Q: Are services still included with the Enterprise CAL? —

Yes. Customers are charged annually for subscriptions to Exchange Online Protection to protect their users from viruses and spam, and Data Loss Prevention (DLP) in Exchange Online (collectively "Services"). Customers may also choose to purchase the Exchange Enterprise CAL without Services if they do not need DLP or anti-virus and anti-spam protection.

Q: Can I purchase the Enterprise CAL without services? —

If purchased in Open, the Exchange Enterprise CAL is available either with or without Services. If purchased in Select, customers have two options. They can buy the License (L-only) and get the CAL without Software Assurance or Services. Or if they want Software Assurance (L&SA), they must also buy the Services.