

Microsoft 365 Apps licensing guidance

Summary

Microsoft 365 Apps is a comprehensive suite of up-to-date desktop applications, which includes Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, OneNote, Publisher, and Access. You can license Microsoft 365 Apps on a per-user subscription basis with standalone subscriptions or through various Microsoft 365 and Office 365 subscriptions. This document provides guidance on how you can purchase, deploy, and use Microsoft 365 Apps.

Applicable products

This document applies to the following products, including when licensed as standalone subscriptions or as components of other subscriptions:

- Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise
- Microsoft 365 Apps for business

Licensing model: User-based subscription

Note: This section describes the licensing model and standard provisions for the applicable products, including the core licensing requirements and benefits associated with that model. Review the subsequent sections for provisions that are unique to the applicable products.

User Subscription Licenses

You can license the applicable products on a user subscription basis. Assign a separate User Subscription License to each user account that accesses or benefits from the product. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

If the product license includes access to any cloud-based applications, the user may access the applications from any device using the login credentials for their licensed account.

Any device-based provisions included with the User Subscription License—such as protecting, managing, or installing desktop client apps on the user's devices—may be applied to the licensed user's personal devices or devices provided by your organization. Such provisions are typically limited to five devices. Refer to the [Product-specific provisions](#) for any applicable exceptions or clarifications.

Licensing requirements and technical enforcement

You must appropriately license the use of a product regardless of technical enforcement. Some products check for a license before granting access or allow you to restrict access to licensed users via your admin portal. Other products may not enforce this yet but could in the future. Ensure you are properly licensed regardless of what technical enforcement is currently available. For products that are enabled for all users by default and lack the ability to restrict access, license every user you intend to benefit from the product.

Multiplexing

You must properly license any user or device that directly or indirectly accesses, uses, or otherwise benefits from a product. Using hardware or software to pool connections, reroute or indirectly access information, and/or reduce the number of devices or users that directly access or use a product reduce the number of users or devices accessing or being managed by the product (often referred to as “multiplexing”) does not reduce the number of licenses you need. For additional information, refer to the [Microsoft Multiplexing Overview](#). [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Reassigning licenses

You can reassign a User Subscription License, but not within 90 days of its last assignment unless the user is absent (for example has left your organization or is on leave). Likewise, you can reassign a Device Subscription License, but not within 90 days of its last assignment unless the device is unavailable (for example, it’s been taken out of service or is under repair). If you reassign a Subscription License within 90 days of the last assignment for any other reason, that reassignment must be for the remaining duration of the subscription term. When reassigning, block access and remove related software from the previous device or user's device(s). [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Outsourcing software management

All licenses permit you to run the software on servers dedicated to your organization’s use and provide access to your licensed users or from your licensed devices. This includes dedicated servers in your own datacenter or hosted by an Authorized Outsourcer. (An Authorized Outsourcer is any outsourcer that is not a [Listed Provider](#) or using a Listed Provider as a datacenter provider.) With the Flexible Virtualization Benefit provided by subscription licenses and licenses with active Software Assurance, you can also run and access the software hosted on an Authorized Outsourcer’s shared servers. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

You’ll find more information in the [Outsourcing Software Management licensing guidance](#) and [Flexible Virtualization Benefit licensing guidance](#).

Product-specific provisions

All the typical provisions described in the Licensing model section above apply to [Product(s)]. The additional provisions below also apply.

Using desktop apps on the licensed user’s devices

Your licensed users can install, activate, and use the desktop applications on up to five physical or virtual operating system environments (OSEs) at a time. This can be on different devices or virtual machines, including locally on their personal devices or devices provided by your organization, or virtual desktops they access remotely.

[\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Using desktop apps on shared devices and virtual desktops

When you deploy Microsoft 365 Apps using shared computer activation, your licensed users can sign-in to any number of shared devices and virtual desktops with the credentials for their licensed account and enjoy the complete, personalized Microsoft 365 Apps experience.

All your users licensed for Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise can access the software with shared computer activation. Only users licensed for Microsoft 365 Business Premium can access Microsoft 365 for business with shared computer activation. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

You can deploy Microsoft 365 Apps with shared computer activation as described in the Licensing model section above, including with Authorized Outsourcers. You can also deploy to Microsoft Azure (including Azure Virtual Desktop).

Device Subscription Licenses

Some purchasing channels offer Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise on a per-device subscription basis, in which case assign a Device Subscription License to every device used to access the product locally or remotely.

[\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Device Subscription Licenses permit any user to access the applications running locally on one physical or virtual OSE on the licensed device or use the device to remotely access the application(s) running on one OSE on a server. Device Subscription Licenses do not support shared computer activation.

[\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Using mobile apps on smartphones and tablets

Licensed users may use Microsoft 365 Apps for mobile for commercial purposes and sign in to Microsoft 365 Apps with their work or school account on up to five smartphones and five tablets.

[\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Viewing and printing files

Anyone in your organization with a Microsoft 365 (or Office 365) license may use Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise in Reduced Functionality Mode to view and print files.

[\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Office Online Server

You may install any number of copies of Office Online Server on any Server to provide access to your licensed Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise users. (If you are outsourcing management or control of your servers, the [Outsourcing Software Management terms](#) apply.) A Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise license (or an Office LTSC license with Software Assurance) is required to edit files on Office Online Server. If you qualify for this entitlement, you can access the Office Online Server software via your [Microsoft 365 Admin Center](#). Please note that this provision does not apply when you license Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise under Microsoft licensing agreements that cover Online Services only. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Lab and library use for education customers

When you assign a Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise User Subscription Licenses to Institutions to all faculty and staff, [Education Qualified Users](#), or [Knowledge Workers](#), you have the following options for using the software on lab and library devices.

- Enrollment for Education Solutions (EES) customers may acquire Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise Device Subscription Licenses up to the number of Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise User SLs licensed by the Institution for use on any device within your organization, including any open access lab or library devices.
- Open Volume Subscription for Education Solutions (OVS-ES) customers may install Office Professional Plus software on any open access lab or library within your organization. Use of the software is otherwise subject to the [License terms for Office Professional Plus](#). [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Student Use Benefit

For every paid Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise faculty license purchased through EES, School, CSP, or OVS-ES programs, you are entitled to 15 Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise student licenses at no additional cost.

For every paid Microsoft 365 A3/A5 faculty license purchased through EES or CSP programs, you are entitled to 40 Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise student licenses at no additional cost.

For every paid Office 365 A3/A5 faculty license purchased through OVS-ES, EES or CSP programs, you are entitled to 40 Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise licenses at no additional cost.

[\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

Comparison of product editions

Here's an overview of what you get with Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise compared to Microsoft 365 Apps for business.

Feature, capabilities, and benefits	Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise	Microsoft 365 Apps for business
Install desktop apps on up to five OSEs	✓	✓

Feature, capabilities, and benefits	Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise	Microsoft 365 Apps for business
Use mobile apps for commercial purposes on up to five phones and five tablets	✓	✓
1 TB OneDrive cloud storage per user	✓	✓
Microsoft Copilot (AI assistant)	✓	✓
Eligible for Microsoft 365 Copilot (sold separately)	✓	✓
Self-service business intelligence tools in Excel	✓	
Advanced security features	✓	
FastTrack assistance	✓	
Available for more than 300 users	✓	

[Learn more about Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise](#)

[Learn more about Microsoft 365 Apps for business](#)

Subscription plan options

Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise

You can subscribe to Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise as a standalone subscription or packaged along with other products and services in certain Microsoft 365 (or Office 365) plans. The following subscriptions include Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise:

- Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise
- Microsoft 365 E3
- Microsoft 365 E5
- Microsoft 365 E7
- Microsoft 365 A3
- Microsoft 365 A5
- Microsoft 365 G3
- Microsoft 365 G5
- Office 365 E3
- Office 365 E5
- Office 365 A3
- Office 365 A5
- Office 365 G3
- Office 365 G5

Microsoft 365 Apps for business

For businesses with up to 300 users, you can subscribe to Microsoft 365 Apps for business as a standalone subscription or packaged along with other products and services in certain Microsoft 365 Business plans. The following User Subscription Licenses include Microsoft 365 Apps for business:

- Microsoft 365 Apps for business
- Microsoft 365 Business Standard
- Microsoft 365 Business Premium

Purchasing your subscriptions

Where to buy

You have multiple options for where you buy subscription licenses, including:

- From a [Microsoft partner](#)
- From [Microsoft Sales](#)
- Online from the [Microsoft 365 website](#) or your [Microsoft 365 Admin Center](#)

To learn more about these options, refer to the [How to Buy guide](#)

Prerequisite licenses and minimum/maximum quantities

License	Prerequisite licenses	Minimum quantity	Maximum quantity
Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise (User Subscription License)	None	None	None
Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise (Device Subscription License)	None	None	For Enrollment for Education Solutions (EES) only: May not exceed the number of Microsoft 365 Apps for enterprise User Subscription Licenses
Microsoft 365 Apps for business (User Subscription License)	None	None	300

Frequently asked questions

See [FAQ page](#).

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