

General

Q: What are the use terms for desktop applications in a Remote Desktop Services environment (where the application runs on the server and not on the client desktop)?

Device-based licensing means a license must be obtained for each desktop on or from which the product is used or accessed. You may not share a license for the product with another desktop or assign it to different desktops. Therefore, in a Remote Desktop Services environment, you must acquire a license for all desktops that access the product running on a server dedicated to the customer's use, subject to the Outsourcing Software Management terms.

Q: The Commercial Licensing Product Terms says I can use desktop application software on a network device. What does this mean?

Under the network use provision, you may run the software on a server dedicated to the customer's use, subject to the Outsourcing Software Management terms, for access and use from your licensed desktops using Remote Desktop Services (or similar functionality).

Q: If a desktop is licensed for a Microsoft desktop application, can I use that application both locally on the desktop and remotely using Remote Desktop Services?

Yes, if that license was acquired in Commercial Licensing. Commercial Licensing desktop application licenses give the customer the right to locally install the software and to use the same software remotely from a network server using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services (or similar technology). Local installation isn't a prerequisite for network use. In some cases, local installation may not be technically possible or desired.

Q: If I already have a desktop license for a desktop application, what additional licenses do I need for a desktop to use the software from that desktop remotely in a Remote Desktop Services environment?

In addition to the license for the desktop application, you need Windows Server and Remote Desktop Services Client Access Licenses for that desktop for remote access using Remote Desktop Services.

Q: I have installed Microsoft Office LTSC on a network server for access and use using Windows Server Remote Desktop Services. I have acquired Remote Desktop Services

User Client Access Licenses for each of my employees. I want my employees to be able to access Microsoft Office from any company managed desktop. What licenses are needed to properly license Microsoft Office within this environment?

Since Microsoft Office LTSC is licensed through a device-based licensing model only, each desktop that's used to access Microsoft Office using Remote Desktop Services must have a separate Microsoft Office LTSC license dedicated to it. Licenses for Microsoft Office LTSC cannot be shared across desktops to support concurrent use. In addition, you may not reassign a license within 90 days of the last assignment.

Q: I have just purchased several new desktops from an OEM with preinstalled licenses for Microsoft Office Professional 2019. Can I install the software on a network server and use these desktops to remotely access it and what if the copy running on the server is licensed under my Commercial Licensing agreement—does that change the answer?

The answer is no in both cases. First, the OEM license doesn't permit access and use from a network server. Even if you're licensed under your Commercial Licensing agreement to use the software on a network server from licensed desktops, your OEM Office licenses don't permit you to access the Commercial Licensing software on the server. The OEM versions and Commercial Licensing editions of Microsoft Office aren't the same.

However, within 90 days of purchase, you can acquire Software Assurance coverage for your OEM licenses under your Commercial Licensing agreement. Doing so gives you rights to a Commercial Licensing Office Standard edition (please refer to the Commercial Licensing Product Terms for a more complete description of the rules related to purchasing Software Assurance for OEM software). You may use the software locally on those licensed desktops enrolled in Software Assurance or remotely from a network server (for example, by using Remote Desktop Services).

Q: I have Office Professional Plus 2019 installed on a network server. Can I access this copy of Microsoft Office using Remote Desktop Services from a desktop that has Office Professional Plus 2016 installed and is covered by Software Assurance?

Yes. To use Office Professional Plus 2019 in this scenario, you'd need to be licensed for Office Professional Plus 2019. A desktop that's licensed for and has Office Professional Plus 2016 installed and is covered by active Software Assurance may upgrade their license to Office Professional Plus 2019.

Office LTSC

Q: Our company has a mixed deployment with both Office LTSC Professional Plus in German language and English language. What Microsoft Office licenses do I need?

Office LTSC licenses include multiple language packs and proofing tools. The ability to change languages or use multiple languages is included with all Office suites and applications' software

(such as Excel).

Q: I have a personal laptop device I like using at work for meetings. May I access Office LTSC deployed on a company server from my laptop using Remote Desktop Services?

The company would need to assign an Office LTSC device license to your personal laptop that is the same version and edition of Office being remotely accessed on the company's dedicated server. Since you are using your personal device on premises, Office Roaming Rights would not apply. Only third-party qualified desktops used outside of company premises may exercise Office Roaming Rights. Some examples include home and airport kiosk devices.

Q: What licenses are required for external users collaborating with licensed employees?

It is possible to collaborate with external using Office for the web without the need to license those users. Specifically, as stated in the Product Terms "External Users invited to site collections via Share-by-Mail functionality do not need User SLs with Office for the web."

As of the publication of this document, "External Users" are defined in the Product Terms as "users that are not employees, onsite contractors or onsite agents of Customer or its Affiliates."

To better reflect modern hybrid and remote work environments, the following revised definition is effective on October 1, 2024, to "users that are not (a) employees of Customer or its Affiliates, (b) contractors or agents that typically work for Customer or its Affiliates for more than 30 hours on average per week, or (c) contractors or agents that typically work onsite for Customer or its Affiliates on each working day."

Q: Our company has deployed Office LTSC Professional Plus in a virtual machine hosted on a company dedicated network server for remote access by one or multiple end users. Can a single device license be assigned to the virtual machine and be accessed by any user, since the virtual machine is where the software is installed?

No. Each device an end user uses to access Office software on a server is required to be licensed.

Q: I have an employee from our marketing organization that needs to use only Microsoft PowerPoint?

Office LTSC Standard and Office LTSC Professional Plus are product suites which consist of more than one software product offered under a single license. Users may not separate the software for use on more than one computer or by multiple users. If you have employees that need to use only a single Office LTSC application, individual application licenses are available for purchase on a stand-alone basis through the Open Value, Open Value Subscription, MPSA, and Select Plus programs.

Q: What products may I downgrade to if I have Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2024?

Downgrade rights in Commercial Licensing programs give you the right to downgrade to any prior version of the same product. Therefore, you may downgrade Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2019 to any prior versions of Office Professional Plus. You may not, however, downgrade to a prior version of Microsoft Office Standard Edition because it is a different product and not considered a prior version of Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2019.

In addition, Office Professional Plus 2024 users may not use earlier versions of any application included in a prior version license that is not included in the license the user owns.

Q: May I downgrade my Office LTSC Professional Plus 2024 license to Office Standard 2024 or Office Standard 2019 through my Commercial Licensing agreement?

No. Downgrade rights grant the user the right to use prior versions of Microsoft software, not other editions of the software released simultaneously unless explicitly stated in the Product Terms (for example, Windows Server 2025 Datacenter to Standard, Microsoft SQL Server 2022 Enterprise to Standard software are permitted).

Q: Can I use Office or Desktop Applications as part of my Unified Solution if I license it through the Self-Hosted Applications use right?

No. The Product Terms do not designate Office or Desktop Applications as eligible for self-hosting, so you cannot include them in your Unified Solution. If you want to include Office as part of your solution, you must license your entire solution through the SPLA program.
