

Microsoft Open programs

Licensing guide

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Microsoft's Open agreements—Open Value and Open License—offer a convenient and simple way for small and medium sized organizations to acquire the latest Microsoft technology and cloud services. Choose from Open Value, including the Open Value Subscription option, or Open License to help track your licenses, reduce compliance risk, and have more time to focus on your organization.

Note: The Microsoft Open License program is being discontinued effective January 2022, when no new orders or agreements will be accepted through Open License. Learn more at www.microsoft.com/licensing/news/microsoft-open-license-program-changes.

Benefits of Open programs

The Open program agreements offer many benefits, including:

Licensing simplicity. Place an order and start using licensed products immediately. The flexible pay-as-you-go model helps eliminate the need for forecasting. After you place your order in Open License, you receive a single authorization identification number that you can reuse and share with qualified affiliates. Good for the entire two-year agreement, this identification number helps reduce procurement costs and simplifies the purchasing process.

Licensing flexibility. Open Value gives you a single platform option, which allows you to choose components from the Windows Desktop Operating System Upgrade, Microsoft Office, Office 365, and Client Access Licenses (CAL) under a single platform.

If your organization requires enterprise solutions, latest version of Microsoft Office Professional Plus, Office 365 E plans, Enterprise CAL, and Windows Enterprise are available.

Licensing manageability. Online tracking tools make managing licenses easy and convenient. With the Volume Licensing Service Center (VLSC), you can view licensing information, download Microsoft licensed software, and manage Software Assurance benefits and subscriptions from one convenient online location.

Licensing affordability. Stretch software procurement budgets further than retail purchase options. With a simple transaction, you can pay for what you need when you need it, giving you the flexibility to manage your software needs.

Purchase online services subscriptions. Customers purchasing through Open programs can purchase some Microsoft online services in the same agreement as on-premises software, so you can transition to the cloud at your own pace. Purchase online services subscriptions through Open Value or Open License, and you can seamlessly use services such as Microsoft 365 in or away from the workplace and across multiple devices. Geographic restrictions apply.

Note: For government, academic, and nonprofit organizations that license software in multiple quantities and manage software across multiple devices, Microsoft volume licensing agreements may provide the most cost-effective way to acquire licenses and online services. Talk with your services provider partner for more information.

Open programs options

Microsoft recognizes that small and medium size organizations have a variety of license acquisition needs. Open Value and Open License agreements share many of the same program features but give you different license purchasing options. These options ensure that you are getting an agreement that fits your specific needs.













Open Programs options

→ For organizations with 5-250 users

→ 5 licenses to qualify

→ Public sector options

→ Online services purchases available

Open License	Open Value	Open Value Subscription
 Perpetual software rights	 Perpetual software rights	 Subscription software
 Optional: Software Assurance	 Included: Software Assurance	 Included: Software Assurance
 Upfront payment	 Upfront or spread payments	 Spread payments
 Buy licenses as needed	 Organization-wide option	 Organization-wide required

The Open License program will be discontinued effective January 1, 2022.

Open Value

Open Value is recommended if you have a small to midsize organization with five or more users/devices and want to simplify license management, manage software costs, and get better control over your investment. Open Value includes Software Assurance, which helps you get the most out of your software spending through each phase of software management. In addition, access to valuable benefits such as training, deployment planning, software upgrades, and product support help you boost the productivity of your entire organization.

Open Value Organization-wide option

The Open Value organization-wide option offers commercial and government organizations an additional discount when they standardize all their users/devices on one or more Microsoft enterprise products. By choosing Open Value organization-wide, you get the rights to the latest Microsoft licensed products with a single platform option. The organization-wide option isn't available through Open Value for Academic agreements.

With the single platform option, you can customize your device as you choose components from the Windows operating system, Microsoft Office, and Office 365 / CAL product pools, plus additional products selected in your agreement that include the latest version of platform product options as outlined in the [Product Terms](#).

Open Value Subscription

Similar to the organization-wide option, with Open Value Subscription you pay a single price per desktop PC to deploy Microsoft technology as the standard across your organization. Open Value Subscription provides the lowest up-front costs of the Open Program options with the flexibility to reduce the total licensing costs in years

when the desktop PC count declines. This gives your organization the rights to run the software throughout your organization only during the term of the agreement with Microsoft. You also can add the single platform option to an Open Value Subscription agreement. Open Value Subscription is not available to nonprofit organizations and is offered to education institutions through the Open Value Subscription for Education Solutions agreement.

An "Up to Date Discount" is available through Open Value Subscription for ordering licenses for products during the first year of your agreement if you have a license for the corresponding qualifying product.

Note: Government customers: A one-year Open Value Subscription option is available for eligible government customers. This option better aligns with government procurement requirements by giving you the flexibility to choose from a one-year or three-year term. The Up to Date Discount is not available for the one-year option, and you must have purchased Open Value Subscription for a continued period of three or more years at the time of buyout.

Open Value for Government is not available in all regions. Please contact your Microsoft reseller for availability in your country.

Open License

Open License is for corporate, academic, government, or nonprofit organizations that want to pay as you go. Because you pay for licenses as you need them, you get flexibility to grow with your organization's increasing and changing business needs. You must have a minimum initial purchase of five software licenses for an Open License agreement, but you can acquire additional licensed products through Open License in any quantity at any time during the two-year agreement term. Many Online Services such as Office 365 do not have a minimum initial purchase requirement. Software Assurance can be purchased at the time of the license purchase, and the benefits end with the expiration of the agreement Authorization Number. To maximize the benefit period of Software Assurance, Open License customers can order Software Assurance as a new order (not as an additional purchase under an existing Authorization Number).

Open License is available until January 2022. Software Assurance coverage that expires after January 2022 is still active until the original Software Assurance expiration date.

Microsoft online services

As your IT strategy evolves to include the many benefits of cloud computing, Microsoft can help you extend the capabilities and functionality of your existing technology investments with online services delivered as a subscription service hosted by Microsoft. With any Open agreement, you can choose software and services for different user types, optimize technology spend by purchasing subscriptions that map to IT and user needs, and streamline software compliance and asset management across all Microsoft software and services. After you place an order, both you and your reseller will receive email information of how to activate the online services. For more information, please refer to the [Online Services Terms](#).

Licenses for Online Services are User Subscription Licenses that give you the right to use the online service for as long as you subscribe. The subscription term is 12 months and the term start and end date is independent of your licensing agreement.

Client Access Licenses and Bridge CALs

If the workstations in your organization are networked, you likely depend on network server software to perform certain functions, such as file and print sharing. To access this server software, a Client Access License may be required. As well, a Client Access License Suite is a single license that provides use rights equivalent to multiple licenses for on-premises deployment. Client Access License Suites simplify licensing and tracking by reducing the number of licenses necessary to access Microsoft products on servers. They may also provide pricing that is more attractive than licensing the equivalent components separately.

Microsoft Client Access License Suite Bridges are used when you are transitioning from a Client Access License Suite (on-premises) to a comparable product and Online Service combination. Bridge Client Access Licenses are available through Open Value and Open Value Subscription and make it easier and most cost-effective to move from on-premises software to cloud services while maintaining your platform coverage. Bridge Client Access Licenses give you a way to license and retain access to those Client Access License Suite workloads not already licensed with the Online Service to which you will subscribe; for example, a Microsoft 365 plan.

Get more information about [CAL Suites and Bridge CALs](#).

Offerings for eligible education, government, and nonprofit organizations

Eligible public and private organizations may receive special pricing levels. These offers aren't available in all countries. Check with your reseller for availability.

Education

Microsoft is committed to providing licensing solutions for education customers. Learn more about licensing options for education customers, including Open Value for Academic and Open Value Subscription for Education Solutions at www.microsoft.com/licensing/licensing-programs/licensing-for-industries.

See eligibility requirements at www.microsoftvolumelicensing.com/DocumentSearch.aspx?Mode=3&DocumentTypeId=7.

Government

Qualified government organizations are eligible for Open Value for Government or Open License for Government (until Open License is discontinued in January 2022). Learn more about licensing options for government organizations at www.microsoft.com/licensing/licensing-programs/licensing-for-industries.

See eligibility requirements at www.microsoftvolumelicensing.com/DocumentSearch.aspx?Mode=3&DocumentTypeId=6.

Nonprofit

Eligible nonprofit organizations may qualify for Open Value for Nonprofits pricing. Learn more about licensing options for nonprofit organizations at www.microsoft.com/licensing/licensing-programs/licensing-for-industries.

Open Value for Nonprofits is available as of July 2021, and Open License for Nonprofit will not be available after December 31, 2021.

See eligibility requirements at

www.microsoftvolumelicensing.com/DocumentSearch.aspx?Mode=3&DocumentTypeId=19.

Software Assurance

Microsoft Software Assurance helps boost productivity across your organization by helping you to get the most out of your Microsoft software and online services with deployment and productivity benefits and the latest software releases and unique technologies all in one cost-effective program. Here are some ways that Software Assurance benefits can help your organization:

- Reduce software and services costs with rights to new software releases and cost-efficient upgrades.
- Gain access to unique deployment tools and use rights available only to Software Assurance customers.
- Allow users to work where they choose, and on a broad range of licensed devices to help enhance work styles with virtualization and Roaming Use Rights for Windows and Office.
- Improve operational efficiency and maintain an available and responsive IT infrastructure through access to unique technologies, licensing rights, and support resources.

While each customer experience is unique when it comes to deploying, managing, using and migrating software and services, all customers can benefit from the ability to optimize their business performance through Software Assurance. By offering a simple set of helpful benefits coordinated across on-premises software and online services, we can better support your needs as your organization grows and adapts.

For access to these benefits, purchasing through an Open Value agreement, which includes Software Assurance, is recommended. Software Assurance purchase is optional with Open License. Information on Software Assurance benefits available through Open agreements can be found at www.microsoft.com/softwareassurance.

Acquiring Software Assurance

Software Assurance coverage is included for the entire term of an Open Value or Open Value Subscription agreement. You can also buy Software Assurance with an Open License agreement for the remaining balance of the term of the Open License Authorization number. With Open License, Software Assurance must be paid for in two-year increments, regardless of when it was purchased.

Software Assurance may also be purchased on its own if system or server software products are purchased through retail full-packaged product or from an original equipment (hardware) manufacturer. There is a 90-day period after purchase during which time Software Assurance may be added.

License management

Managing software licenses is easy with our online tools.

Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center

The Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center is where you manage your Open agreements, download licensed products, and access product keys for your software licenses. The site features your customized Microsoft License Statement, an easy-to-use report that provides a real-time calculation of Volume Licensing entitlements across agreements. You can also use it to quickly identify, activate, and assign Software Assurance benefits. Access the Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center at www.microsoft.com/licensing/servicecenter/home.aspx.

Please note that a Microsoft work or school account is required to sign into the Volume Licensing Service Center.

Placing an order

If you are interested in volume pricing through a Microsoft Open program, locate a reseller near you. To find a Microsoft reseller, call (800) 426-9400 in the United States or (877) 568-2495 in Canada. Outside the United States or Canada, please visit partnerdirectory.microsoft.com/solution-providers/search to find a reseller.

Additional resources

Open programs:

www.microsoft.com/licensing/licensing-programs/open-license

Microsoft Volume Licensing:

www.microsoft.com/licensing/

Software Assurance:

www.microsoft.com/softwareassurance

Microsoft Product Terms:

www.microsoft.com/licensing/product-licensing/products

Volume Licensing for Government, Education, and Nonprofit organizations:

www.microsoft.com/licensing/licensing-programs/licensing-for-industries

Appendix

Determining the licenses you need

A software product license can be broken into five main elements: product pool, product, version, edition, and product type.

Product Pool

Microsoft software programs and Online Services fall under one of the following three product pools:

Applications: Examples of Microsoft applications include the Office suites, Microsoft Visio drawing and diagramming software, and Microsoft Project. Developer tools and utilities such as Microsoft Visual Studio development system are also part of the Microsoft applications pool.

Systems: An example of Microsoft desktop PC operating system software programs is Windows Professional Upgrade.

Servers: Examples of Microsoft server software programs are Microsoft Exchange Server, Microsoft SQL Server database software, Windows Server operating system and Office 365 Subscriptions.

Product

The product software is, for example, Microsoft Office, Visual Studio, Windows, or SQL Server.

Version

Versions differentiate various releases of the product (for example, Microsoft Office 2016 and Microsoft Office 2019).

Edition

The edition specifies the level of features and/or applications included in a product (e.g., Microsoft Office Standard 2013 includes Microsoft Word 2013, Microsoft Excel 2013 spreadsheet software, Microsoft Outlook 2013 messaging and collaboration client, and Microsoft PowerPoint 2013 presentation graphics program where Microsoft Office Professional 2013 includes Word 2013, Excel 2013, Outlook 2013 with Business Contact Manager, PowerPoint 2013, Microsoft Access 2013 database software, and Microsoft Publisher 2013.

Online Service

Microsoft products delivered as a subscription service hosted in the cloud by Microsoft. Examples of Microsoft Online Services are Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online.

Product Type

License: Provides the right to run a specific version of the product ordered (for example, Microsoft Office Professional 2013). The Open License and Open Value programs provide perpetual use rights. Customers with Software Assurance will have perpetual use rights to the latest product version available at the time the contract expires. Open Value Subscription provides use rights for the latest products version for the duration of the agreement's term.

Software Assurance

Software Assurance may be ordered for any underlying licensed product and provides the right to upgrade to and run the latest version of that product that Microsoft makes available during the covered period. Software Assurance is automatically included in the Open Value, Open Value Subscription. Purchase of Software Assurance is optional in the Open License program.

Note: Options and rules differ across products.

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