Sometimes it feels like the operating system doesn’t matter. Sure, the fans will always be there ready and willing for a debate, but for most of us, there’s little difference between using Windows or macOS. Most of our day-to-day computing is happening in a web browser—and those are pretty universal at this point. The really popular apps we might use, like Spotify, Slack, or Photoshop, are cross-platform too. But it really does matter which OS you use, and not just because there might be a learning curve if you make a switch. Here are some of the key reasons why your choice still counts.

### ****Bundled software****

There’s no doubt macOS has the edge when it comes to the software you get with your operating system. Mail, Safari, Apple Maps, Messages, FaceTime, iTunes and the rest. Admittedly Pages, Numbers, and KeyNote can’t match Microsoft Office in terms of features and power, but they’re more than enough for most people—and completely free.

Then you’ve got iMovie for movie making and GarageBand for music making for free as well, neither of which have Windows equivalents, and you can see why macOS is the operating system to pick if you want most software out of the box. You might well never need to install another application.

Over on the Windows side of the fence, you do get basic email, calendar, and contacts clients as part of Windows 10, but that’s about it. Skype and Microsoft Edge are included too, and you get simple tools for photo, music, and movie management, but some of our favorite apps, like Windows Movie Maker, are no more, and Windows Media Player is woefully neglected.

There’s a wealth of third-party Windows software out there—much of it free—but in terms of what you get with the operating system, it’s dragging behind what Apple offers with macOS. Microsoft can console itself with the knowledge that it makes the better office suite (for both Windows and macOS), but then again you will have to pay for it.

### ****Security and privacy****

When it comes to security and privacy it’s no contest. Apple wins. It has an aggressive approach to user privacy and benefits from the fact that most of the world’s malware takes aim at Windows—which might be because of Windows’ much larger market share more than anything else. You’re statistically safer on macOS, though not completely invulnerable.

The gap isn’t a huge one though. The days of Windows being a virus riddled mess if you used it without anti-virus software are thankfully behind us. Provided you’re running the very latest version of Windows 10 (complete with its built-in Windows Defender anti-malware tool) then you’re pretty well patched against major threats. The biggest security disasters usually affect older versions of Windows or are nothing to do with the OS at all.

In terms of what apps can do on your system, both Windows and macOS let you control which programs can access your microphone, camera, current location, and so on. It’s fair to say that Windows users probably need to be a little more security savvy than macOS users, and Windows certainly gives users (and app developers) more freedom when it comes to the risks they can take.

As for privacy, we’re giving the nod (just barely!) to Apple, because it makes a lot of noise about wanting to protect users. Check out the privacy policies for [Apple](https://www.apple.com/privacy/) and [Microsoft](https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-US/) though, and again there isn’t a massive difference in how data is used, even if Apple relies more on local storage than the cloud—users are far more likely to be worried about the likes of Google and Facebook instead.

**Why it matters:** Apple’s hard line on privacy means you’re less likely to find your photos and data out in the wild. Windows has dramatically improved over the years, but you’ll still want to be well versed in privacy and security to use it as safely as you can a Mac.

Coming from someone who spends a lot of time in both Windows and macOS, both of them offer a polished, secure, fast and intuitive experience—it’s difficult to say one is particularly better than the other for every person in every situation, but that doesn’t mean there aren’t big differences to consider.

Why it matters: Windows has a wider variety of hardware at a wider variety of price points. It’s simply cheaper, and for a lot of people cost trumps all—including Apple’s well-design hardware.

https://gizmodo.com/why-choosing-between-windows-and-macos-still-matters-1832023864