

# Licensing Microsoft Windows 10

## Editions and availability

Main options for business users

Volume Licensing		Windows 10 Pro	Windows 10 Enterprise
OEM (preinstalled on a PC)	Windows 10 Home	Windows 10 Pro	

## Buying Windows 10 through OEM

- Preinstalled on a new computer
- Full version, non-transferrable license
- The software “lives and dies” on that machine
- New license required if motherboard is changed



## Buying Windows 10 through a Volume Licensing agreement

- Licenses for Windows 10 Pro, Windows 10 Enterprise, and Windows 10 Enterprise LTSC 2019 are device licenses. They are also upgrade licenses and require a qualifying operating system on the device to which the Windows 10 license will be assigned
- Example eligible qualifying operating systems:
  - [Windows 10 Enterprise or Pro](#)
  - [Windows 8/8.1 Enterprise or Pro](#)
  - [Windows 7 Enterprise, Professional or Ultimate](#)



## Windows 10 Pro/Enterprise downgrade rights

Can downgrade to:	OEM	Volume Licensing	
	Pro	Pro	Enterprise
Windows 8/8.1 Enterprise	-	-	✓
Windows 8/8.1 Pro	✓	✓	✓
Windows 7 Enterprise	-	-	✓
Windows 7 Professional	✓	✓	✓
Windows Vista Enterprise	-	-	✓
Windows Vista Business	-	✓	✓
Windows XP Professional	-	✓	✓
Windows 2000 Professional	-	✓	✓
Windows 95 / 98 / NT	-	✓	✓

## Feature comparison

Windows 10 edition	Enterprise	Pro	Home
Device encryption	✓	✓	✓
Windows Hello, Continuum	✓	✓	✓
Domain Join and Group Policy	✓	✓	
BitLocker	✓	✓	
DirectAccess	✓		
BranchCache	✓		
AppLocker	✓		
App-V and UE-V	✓		

## Frequency of feature updates

Servicing Channels allow customers to designate how frequently their individual devices are updated for new features.

### Semi-Annual Channel

- New functionality is provided with twice-per-year feature update releases
- Organizations may defer feature updates, but each feature update release is only supported for 18 months from the time of its release
- Applies to Windows 10 Home, Pro, and Enterprise editions



### Long-Term Servicing Channel

- New functionality is provided via new feature releases every two to three years
- Specialized systems—such as PCs that control medical equipment, point-of-sale systems, and ATMs—often require a longer servicing option because of their purpose. These devices typically perform a single important task and don’t need feature updates as frequently as other devices in the organization. It’s more important that these devices be kept as stable and secure as possible than up to date with user interface changes. The LTSC servicing model prevents Windows 10 Enterprise LTSC devices from receiving the usual feature updates and provides only quality updates to ensure that device security stays up to date
- A Windows 10 Enterprise LTSC 2019 edition is available through Volume Licensing agreements
- Windows 10 Enterprise customers may choose to deploy this edition

## Windows 10 availability in Volume Licensing agreements

Offering	Open License	Open Value and Subscription	Select Plus and MPSA	Enterprise Agreement and Subscription
Windows 10 Pro	✓		✓	
Windows 10 Enterprise LTSC 2019	✓		✓	
Windows 10 Enterprise	✓	✓	✓	✓
Windows 10 VDA		✓	✓	✓

### Windows VDA license

A Windows VDA license may be assigned to any device, with no requirements for a qualifying operating system. Users of the licensed device may then access Windows 10 Enterprise running in a virtual desktop from that device.



### Product activation

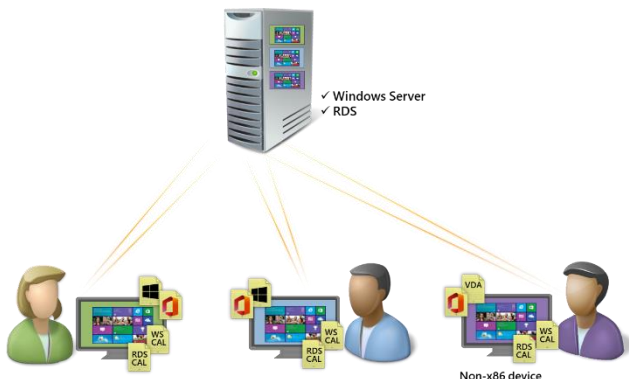
Every copy of Windows 10 must be activated with a valid product key. Licenses bought through OEM can be activated via the Internet or telephone.

There are three ways which organizations with Volume Licensing agreements can activate Windows 10:

- A **Multiple Activation Key (MAK)** is a volume license key that is used for one-time activation with activation services that are hosted by Microsoft. This method is useful for smaller organizations, and for computers which are infrequently connected to the organization's network.
- **Key Management Service (KMS)** activation is done against a service hosted within an organization, enabling organizations to activate systems within their network, eliminating the need for individual computers to connect to Microsoft.
- **Active Directory-based Activation** is a role service that allows organizations to use Active Directory Domain Services (ADDS) to simplify the task of maintaining volume activation services for a network.

### Virtual desktops

- Organizations with Windows 10 Enterprise or Windows VDA licenses may use virtual desktops in an on-premises Virtual Desktop Infrastructure, accessed by any users from licensed devices
- If users use Office in the virtual desktops, an Office Standard/Professional Plus 2019 device license must also be assigned to the device
- If the VDI host uses Windows Server and RDS, all devices must also be licensed with Windows Server and RDS CALs



### Software Assurance

Windows 10 Pro and Windows 10 Enterprise LTSC licenses do not include Software Assurance

Windows 10 Enterprise includes Software Assurance which gives the following rights:

- **Virtual Desktop Access:** rights to access virtual machines hosted in a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
- **Windows To Go:** rights to run a Windows desktop from a USB stick
- **MDOP:** Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack tools
- **Ongoing access to new Long-Term Servicing Channel builds**

