

Licensing Windows and Microsoft Office for use on the Macintosh

This brief applies to all Volume Licensing programs.

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Summary

This licensing brief addresses the commonly asked questions about licensing the Windows operating system and Microsoft Office to run on the Macintosh.

What's new in this brief

This replaces a previous version published in August 2015. It has been updated to reflect Windows 10 and Office 2019 for Mac.

Details

Licensing of the Windows operating system for the Mac

Microsoft distinguishes between a *full* operating system that's complete and bootable and an *upgrade* operating system that's installed over a previously installed full operating system.

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Full Windows operating system licenses aren't available through Microsoft Volume Licensing programs. You can obtain full Windows operating system licenses by having Windows preinstalled on your PCs by the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM). For existing PCs with a licensed and installed [Qualifying Operating System](#), you can purchase the Windows 10 Pro Upgrade license or Windows 10 Enterprise Upgrade license through Volume Licensing.

The Apple Macintosh operating system is considered a Qualifying Operating System, meaning you can purchase the Windows 10 Pro Upgrade license or Windows 10 Enterprise Upgrade license for Macs that have a licensed and installed Mac operating system.

Scenarios

Your options for licensing Windows to run on a Mac depend on the specific scenario. The following explains the most common scenarios.

Note: If you require full installation media for deploying your Windows upgrade acquired through Volume Licensing, you may download the files from the [Microsoft Volume Licensing Service Center \(VLSC\)](#) or order physical media through your Microsoft reseller.

Scenario 1: Installing and running Windows as a second full operating system under Apple Boot Camp on a Mac

You can install Windows as a second full operating system on a Mac using Apple Boot Camp in addition to the already installed Mac operating system. To acquire the necessary Windows software license to accommodate this scenario—which allows you to keep the Mac operating system on the computer—purchase Windows Enterprise Upgrade with Software Assurance through Volume Licensing. Software Assurance for Windows allows you to run Windows Enterprise on a computer even if the Qualifying Operating System is still installed and running on that computer.

Alternatively, if the user is licensed with Windows Software Assurance per User or Windows Virtual Desktop Access (VDA) per User, Windows Enterprise can be installed locally if the Mac is licensed for Windows 7/8/8.1/10 Pro.

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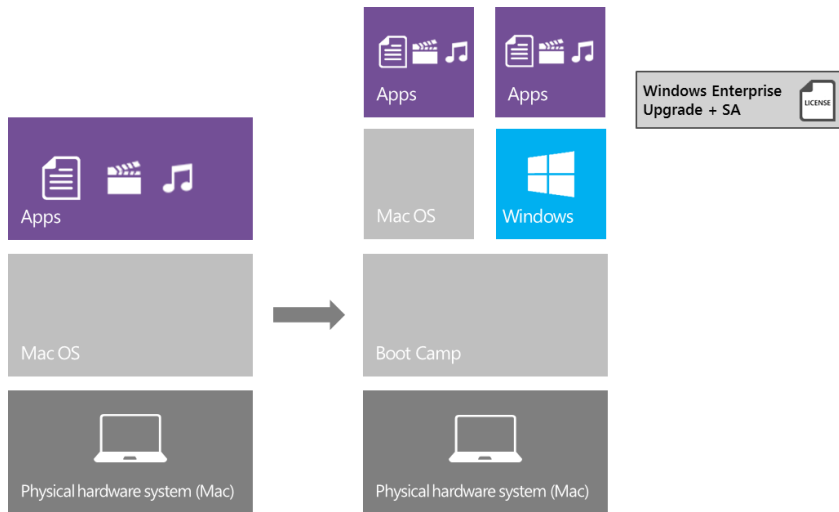


Figure 1: Installing and running Windows as a second full operating system under Apple Boot Camp on a Mac

Scenario 2: Installing Windows to run with third-party virtualization software

Another option for running Windows on a Mac is to install Windows as a second full operating system to run as a guest operating system in a virtual machine. In this scenario, the full Windows operating system must be licensed and installed. Like with Scenario 1, you can acquire the necessary license for this scenario by purchasing Windows 10 Enterprise Upgrade with Software Assurance through Volume Licensing.

Alternatively, if the user is licensed with Windows Software Assurance per User or Windows Virtual Desktop Access (VDA) per User, Windows Enterprise can be installed in a virtual machine if the Mac is also licensed for Windows 7/8/8.1/10 Pro.

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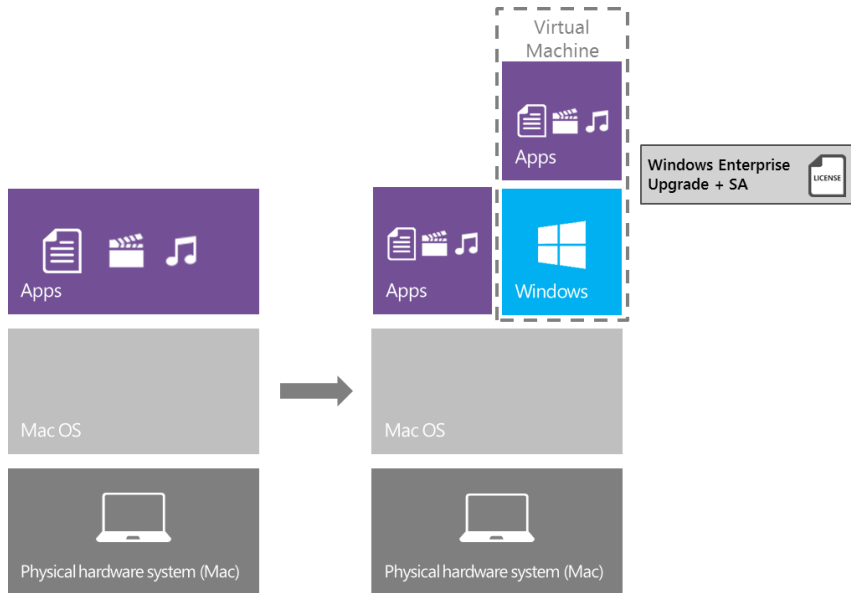
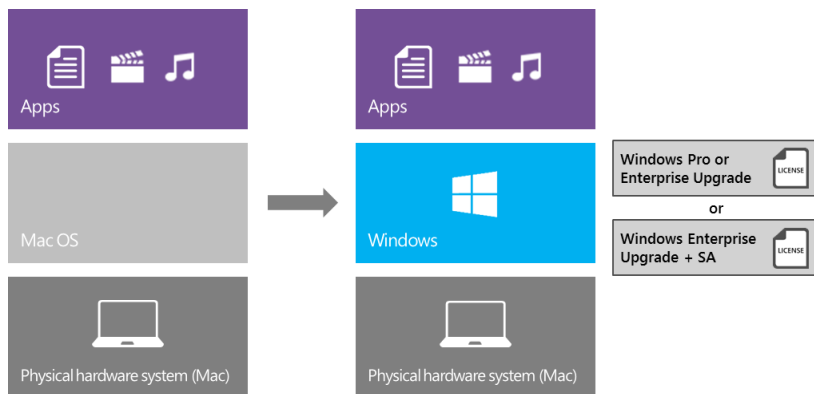


Figure 2: Licensing Windows to run with third-party virtualization software

Scenario 3: Replacing the Mac operating system with (upgrading to) Windows

Note: This isn't a common scenario due to technical difficulty, but it is allowed under the terms of Microsoft Volume Licensing.

If you've purchased a Windows Pro Upgrade license or Windows 10 Enterprise Upgrade license (without Software Assurance) for your Mac, the terms of the upgrade license require that you first remove the Qualifying Operating System (for example, Mac operating system) before you can deploy the Windows Pro or Windows Enterprise Upgrade. Because the Windows upgrade software isn't designed to install over a non-Windows operating system, Volume Licensing customers can request media (software) for the full Windows operating system from Microsoft to perform this upgrade.



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Figure 3: Replacing Mac OS with Windows

Scenario 4: Accessing a Windows virtual machine (VM) remotely from a Mac

By licensing the Mac or the user with the Windows Virtual Desktop Access (VDA) subscription license, you receive rights to remotely access a Windows virtual machine running on server in the data center through Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI).

Note: Assigning Windows Enterprise Upgrade with Software Assurance to the device would also cover VDI access.

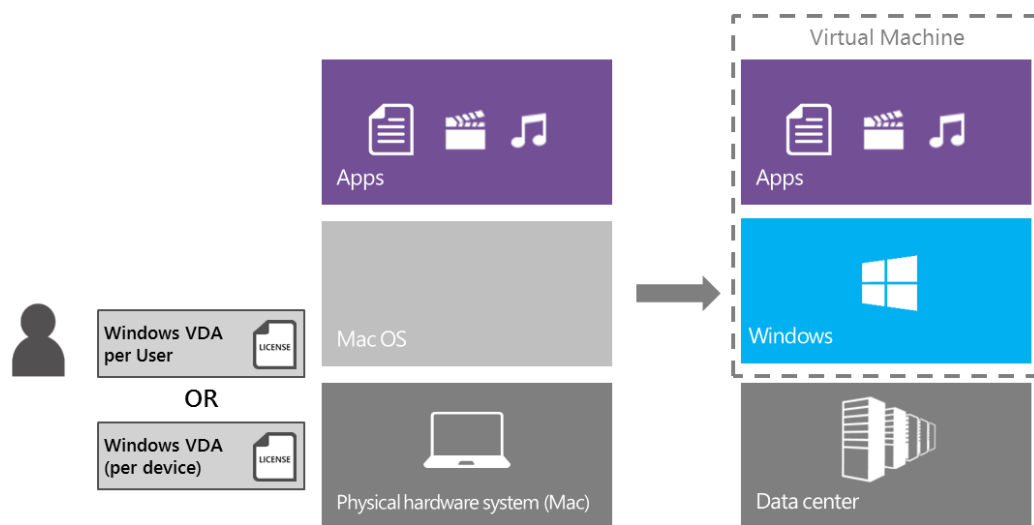


Figure 4: Accessing a Windows virtual machine running on server remotely from a Mac

Licensing of Microsoft Office for Windows and Microsoft Office for Mac

When licensing Microsoft Office for Windows and Microsoft Office for Mac on a “per device” basis, each Microsoft Office license must be assigned to a single physical hardware system (“Licensed Device”) before using the software. When licensing Microsoft Office on a “per user” basis (through Office 365*), each license must be assigned to a single user before using the software.

When acquired under a Volume Licensing agreement, licenses for the Microsoft Office products are considered Platform Independent Licenses. These include Microsoft Office Standard for Windows, Microsoft Office Professional Plus for Windows, Office for Mac, and the individual Microsoft Office programs: Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software, Microsoft PowerPoint presentation graphics program, and Microsoft Outlook messaging and collaboration client software for both Windows and Mac.

You can use software under a Platform Independent License on any computer platform (for example, PC or Mac) as long as the version used is the same or earlier than the originally licensed product version. For example, if you have a license for Office Standard 2016 for Windows, you can use Office Standard 2013 for Windows or Office for Mac 2011,

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but you cannot use Office for Mac 2019. The exception is if you had active Software Assurance coverage on Office Standard 2016 for Windows at the time Office for Mac 2019 was released.

Under Volume Licensing, you also have the right to install and use any number of copies of the software and of any prior version of the software on the Licensed Device in physical and/or virtual environments.

In the context of Platform Independent Licenses, you can run one or more copies of a different available platform version of the product instead of the version licensed. Again, the version must be the same or earlier than the originally licensed product version. It must also be run on the same Licensed Device.

The components of a product suite can vary by platform version. As a result, if you're exercising this cross-platform right, you can use only the components common to both platform versions. For example, if a customer licensed with Office 2016 for Mac Standard chooses to run Office Standard 2013, the customer may run only the components that are included with Office Standard 2013. For example, they don't have the right to run Lync, but they do have the right to run OneNote.

Licensed product	Equivalent edition under platform independence
Office 365 ProPlus	Office 365 ProPlus*
Office 365 Business	Office 365 Business*
Office Professional Plus 2013 for Windows	Office for Mac 2011
Office Standard 2013 for Windows	Office for Mac 2011
Office Professional Plus 2010 for Windows	Office for Mac 2008
Office Standard 2010 for Windows	Office for Mac 2008
Office Enterprise 2007 for Windows	Office 2004 for Mac Professional
Office Professional Plus 2007 for Windows	Office 2004 for Mac Professional
Office Standard 2007 for Windows	Office 2004 for Mac Standard Edition
Office 2016 for Mac Standard	Office Standard 2013 for Windows
Office for Mac 2011 Standard	Office Standard 2010 for Windows
Office 2008 for Mac	Office Standard 2007 for Windows

*Office 365 click-to-run automatically installs the Mac versions of the Office applications.

Licensing Windows and Microsoft Office for use on a Mac

Frequently asked questions

1. **As a Volume Licensing customer, what license do I need to run Microsoft Office for Windows on a Mac under Boot Camp or use a third-party virtualization program?**

Volume Licensing customers need to acquire a new license or use their existing license for Microsoft Office for Windows to install and run it on their Macs with Apple Boot Camp or using a third-party virtualization program. The Windows operating system also needs to be properly licensed with active Software Assurance (see above).

2. **If I have a license for Office 2016 for Mac Standard, am I licensed to run Microsoft Office 2013 for Windows on my Mac?**

Because Office 2016 for Mac is the most recently launched version of Microsoft Office (on either platform), if you're licensed for Microsoft Office 2016 for Mac through Microsoft Volume Licensing, you're permitted to install and use any prior version of Microsoft Office, including Microsoft Office 2013, on the Licensed Device, regardless of platform.

Because the components of a product suite can vary by platform version, when exercising this cross-platform right, you can use only the components common to both platform versions. For example, if a customer licensed with Office 2016 for Mac Standard chooses to run Office Standard 2013, the customer may only run the components that are included with Office Standard 2013. For example, they don't have the right to run Lync, but they do have the right to run OneNote.

3. **I have a license for Office for Mac 2011 with active Software Assurance. May I run Office 2013 for Windows on my Mac?**

If Office Standard 2013 for Windows was released during your term of active Software Assurance coverage for Office for Mac 2011, you're permitted to use Office Standard 2013 for Windows.

4. **I have a license for Office Standard 2013 for Windows with active Software Assurance. May I use Office 2016 for Mac?**

If Office 2016 for Mac was released during the term of your active Software Assurance coverage for Office Standard 2013 for Windows, you're permitted to use Office 2016 for Mac.

5. **I have a license for Office 2016 for Mac. Can I simultaneously use Office 2013 for Windows on my Mac under Apple Boot Camp or a virtual environment?**

If you acquired your Microsoft Office licenses through Microsoft Volume Licensing, you're permitted to install and use any prior version of Microsoft Office (regardless of platform) simultaneously on the Licensed Device in a physical or virtual environment. Again, you can run only the components of a product corresponding to the components of the equivalent platform version you're licensed for.

6. **I'm an Enrollment for Education Solutions (EES) customer with the Education Desktop Platform. Can I install and run Windows as a second full operating system under Apple Boot Camp on my Mac? And which versions of Microsoft Office can I use on my Mac?**

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Because EES includes Software Assurance, you can run up to four instances of the Windows operating system without uninstalling the Mac operating system. Under the Education Desktop Platform license, you can install and run either Microsoft Office 2013 for Windows, Office 2016 for Mac Standard, or both on your Mac.

7. **I'm a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA)/Open Value (OV) Company-wide/Organization-wide customer with the Professional Desktop Platform. Can I install and run Windows as a second full operating system under Apple Boot Camp on my Mac? What if I am a Select Plus* or Open License customer?**

EA/OV Company-wide/Organization-wide customers and Select Plus* and Open License customers with active Software Assurance can run up to four instances of the Windows operating system, without uninstalling the Mac operating system. The right to run both operating systems simultaneously expires with the EA/OV agreement or Software Assurance coverage.

*Effective July 1, 2016, in markets where the MPSA is available, Microsoft will stop accepting new orders and Software Assurance renewals through existing commercial Select Plus agreements at your next agreement anniversary date. This retirement doesn't apply to government and academic Select Plus agreements. More information is at <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/licensing/licensing-programs/select.aspx>.

8. **I'm an EA/OV Company-wide/Organization-wide customer with the Professional Desktop Platform. Am I licensed to run Office for Mac in addition to Office for Windows?**

Yes. Because the Professional Desktop Platform licenses are Platform Independent Licenses, you're licensed to run Office for Mac and Office for Windows.

9. **What if I need full version installation bits for deploying my Windows upgrade acquired through Volume Licensing?**

If you require full installation bits for deploying your Windows upgrade acquired through Volume Licensing, you can download the files from the [Volume Licensing Service Center](#) or order physical media through your Microsoft reseller.

10. **Can a user who's licensed with Windows Software Assurance per User or Windows VDA per User access Windows Enterprise on or from a Mac?**

Yes. The user can remotely access Windows Enterprise via virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) from the Mac. Also, if the Mac is licensed for Windows 7/8/8.1/10 Pro, then you can install Windows Enterprise locally.

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