Adobe CC buying guide: Black Friday deals, pricing, new features & free trials

If you're considering a shift to the cloud as well, but aren't totally sure where (or how) to start, or if it's worth it, here's what you need to know about the app – and grab Black Friday discounts while you're at it.

Whether you're a student, freelancer, or full-time creative professional, the first thing worth considering before getting a membership is assessing your usage type and needs. There are roughly four areas Adobe's creative programs cater to, though these fields can overlap: photography, graphic design, UX/UI design and audio/video editing.

Depending on your specialisation, you may find certain programs (or apps, as Adobe calls them on the Cloud) are more relevant to you than others. This might help you determine whether you want the whole suite or just one or two programs.

Note that you can now get 39% off the entire Creative Cloud suite, setting you back £30.34 per month instead of £49.94/mo.

That's 39% off the full price and lasts for one year before rising as it did last year, so if you took advantage of last year's deal this is well timed to coincide with when otherwise you'd start paying full price.

Students and teachers can get 19% off, meaning £13.15 per month for one year. Companies using Creative Cloud Teams meanwhile get 29% off, which £42.14 per user per month for the next year.

Is Adobe CC worth it?

Adobe released Creative Cloud (CC) in October 2011, in a move towards becoming more of a software-as-a-service provider (though you can use CC products offline as well).

If like many of us you've made do with CS5 until now, you may be wondering: is a CC membership worth it? A fair question. CC packs in lots of new features and upgrades that could improve your workflow.

First, and more of a general upgrade from its desktop predecessors is Sensei, Adobe’s AI software that uses machine and deep learning to understand your behaviour as a user. It’s active in over 30 Adobe programs. In Photoshop CC, you can see Sensei in action in the Face-aware Liquify Tool, where it lets you change facial expressions sans funny distortions. In Premiere Pro CC, Sensei uses face tracking and “optical flow interpolation” to ease transitions between jump cuts in the Morph Cut tool.

On a program-by-program basis, Adobe has rolled out tonnes of new features that should make your life easier and expand your creative possibilities. Here are just a few of those upgrades on Adobe’s popular programs. You can click on each title to read more about all the new features offered.

A full CC membership also bundles other apps that could be useful in your creative toolkit, especially for prototyping – whether for real world products or for mobile and web.

UX/UI designers can benefit from and Adobe XD for mobile, which are Adobe's response to the Mac-only prototyping tool Sketch. And graphic designers can up their packaging game using Dimension CC, which lets you easily create stunning photo-realistic 3D artwork.

Designers in general will also like having the 6000+ fonts bundled together in CC as part of Adobe Fonts, the replacement for Typekit which was released with CC 2019.

Adobe CC Prices

The big question. The short answer is: it depends. Adobe offers different pricing plans depending on how you intend to use its software. The company identifies four types of users: individuals, businesses, students and teachers, and educational institutions.

Adobe CC Photography Plan Price

Photographers, consider yourselves haloed – to Adobe at least. This is the only group that gets its own CC plan that bundles software most essential to the craft. Photographers can choose from 3 options:

- £9.89/US$9.99 per month gets you the Lightroom CC plan, which you can use across desktop, mobile and web with 1TB of cloud storage. This is useful if you already have (or do not need) Photoshop. Find out and sign up to
- If you want Photoshop, the standard Photography Plan, also £9.89, gets you Lightroom CC, Photoshop CC and Lightroom Classic (for desktop) with 20GB cloud storage. You can also add up to 10TB after purchase. Find out and
- If you want more storage with the Photography Plan, £19.97/US$19.99 gets you Lightroom CC, Photoshop CC and Lightroom Classic CC with 1TB storage. Find out and sign up to

Adobe CC Single App Plan Price

Designers and freelance creatives often to need to juggle between multiple Adobe programs to deliver their projects, but if you only ever use or need Photoshop or Illustrator, for example, this could work for you.

You do get more than just the program itself with a single app subscription though. £19.97/US$19.99 gets you 100GB of cloud

storage, your own portfolio website through , Adobe Fonts, and access to , which lets you create social media graphics.

You can sign up to

You still save money with up to 2 apps, otherwise a full suite subscription may be best.

Adobe CC All Apps Plan Price

All the apps cost £49.94/US$49.99 a month on the annual plan, £596.33/US$599.88 for an annual prepaid plan, or £75.85/US$74.99 on a month-by-month basis. Find out more

If you want Adobe Stock access on top of all the apps, it will cost you £73.93/US$79.98 per month on an annual plan. Find out

more

Is there an Adobe CC student discount ?

Yes. The Students and Teachers Plan lets you save up to 65% on the All Apps Plan. This slices the price from £49.94/US$49.99 per month to £16.24/US$19.99 per month. You can

Keep in mind, this discount applies only to the first year and you would need institutional affiliation. That is, you must be able to prove you are a student. You must be at least 13 years old as well, and homeschooled students also qualify.

You can also get the Photography Plan under this scheme for £9.98/US$9.99 per month or £119.21/US$119.88 prepaid, annually, with access to Adobe Portfolio and Spark

Adobe CC for schools and universities

Adobe’s Schools and Universities plan is available on a Per-Name license (aimed at small workgroups and departments) or Per-Device license (for classrooms and labs).

On a Per-Name license, you can get all the apps for £29.49/US$34.99 per month per user. Or, you can choose a single app subscription for £12.64/$US14.99 a month. These options also include 100GB of storage per license, 24/7 tech support and 1-on-1 access to product experts.

Again, you will need an institutional affiliation, and there

are some exceptions as to who can qualify. You can read more on , under the “institutional affiliation” link in the “Schools and Universities” tab.

On a per-Device License, you can get all the apps for £353.88/US$419.88 a year. The single app option will cost £151.68/US$179.88 a year per device.

Adobe CC for businesses

If you are looking for multiple licenses to a CC membership, Adobe does have business plans as well. You can choose the All Apps plan for £59/US$69.99 per month, per license. This also gets you a team website, premium fonts, 100GB of cloud storage and 24/7 technical support. Find out more on Adobe’s website .

You can also chose the single app option for your business at £25.28/US$29.99 per month per licence. Get the single app option .

Because CC is cloud-based, your team can also edit, share and collaborate online.

Can I use Adobe CC on desktop *and* mobile?

If you work on a desktop computer, but also across mobile, CC has a number of useful apps to support cross-platform creation. This can benefit web and UI designers – although creating responsive and web-optimized graphics seems to be a general standard nowadays. You can see the whole list of apps that support mobile creation .

One CC app that users might especially find useful is Fresco (below), Adobe’s iPad-only answer to the likes of Procreate and Affinity which was released recently. Find out more in our Adobe Fresco review; note that Windows CC users can use the app on select Wacom and Microsoft models.

Another gem is Capture, which lets you adapt photos into colours, patterns, type, brushes and shapes for use in Photoshop, Illustrator, Dimension, Adobe XD, and other applications.

You can read more about Capture . Adobe’s on Capture is also informative.

Note Photoshop has just come to the iPad, as unveiled this year at Adobe MAX 2019. If you have a Creative Cloud subscription that includes Photoshop, whether standalone or a Creative Cloud bundle, Photoshop for iPad (below) is included. There’s also

Finally, you may have heard of Illustrator coming to the iPad (below), but this is a beta not expected until fall 2020. Find out more here.

What’s included in the Adobe CC free trial?

Adobe does allow you to try CC for up to 30 days for free. The trial version gets you 2GB of cloud storage, video tutorials, and a CC desktop app that lets you manage apps, files, and fonts. You can download trial version for the desktop applications .

Adobe CC System Requirements

Mac users will need Mac OS X10.11 or higher. PC users need Windows 7, 8 or 10. You can see the program-by-program

requirements .

You should also know

- CC upgrades are free
- Adobe lets you use CC on up to 2 devices, Mac or PC, though you can’t use both at the same time. For example, you can have one set up on a computer at work, and another at home.
- CC access also gets you CS6 access. This might be especially useful for audio/video editors who use Encore, as this is discontinued on CC. With access to CS6 however, Adobe allows a for Encore users.
- You don’t need to be online to use CC. You do need to be connected at installation, but otherwise you can use your program(s) in the offline mode for up to 99 days on an annual subscription, and 30 days with the monthly subscription. After 30 days, you will be prompted to reconnect so Adobe can verify your license. You can read more about offline grace periods .
- If you cancel a monthly subscription, or annual membership (prepaid or monthly), within 14 days you can get a full refund. There are different refund policies based on your subscription type if you cancel after 14 days. You can read about those .

Read next: Hands on with Illustrator for iPad, the desktop classic in tablet form

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