Microsoft reveals how much businesses will have to pay to keep using Windows 10 securely



Microsoft is ending support for Windows 10 on October 14th, 2025, and you'll need to pay yearly if you want to continue using the operating system securely. Microsoft will offer Extended Security Updates (ESU) for Windows 10 users, with pricing starting at $61 for the first year.

The pricing for additional security updates will be offered to consumers for the first time ever with Windows 10. Businesses and consumers will need to purchase ESU licenses for each Windows 10 device they plan to keep using after the end of support cutoff date next year.

For businesses, the first year is priced at $61. It then doubles to $122 for the second year and then doubles again in year three to $244. If you enter into the ESU program in year two, you'll have to pay for year one as well since the ESUs

are cumulative.

On Wednesday, Microsoft updated its Windows IT Pro Blog post to note that the pricing listed applies to commercial organizations only and that details of consumer pricing "will be shared at a later date."

> *Editor's note 4.3.2024: The details and pricing structure outlined in this post apply to commercial organizations only. Details will be shared at a later date for consumers on our consumer end of support page. Educational organizations can find tailored information about Windows 10 end of support in the Microsoft Education Blog.*

Microsoft typically only offers subscriptions for Extended Security Updates to organizations that need to keep running older versions of Windows. This time around, it's different, as there are still a large number of people on Windows 10, nearly nine years since its release in 2015.

"Extended Security Updates are not intended to be a long-term solution but rather a temporary bridge," explains Microsoft in a blog post. "You can purchase ESU licenses for Windows 10 devices that you don't plan to upgrade to Windows 11 starting in October 2024, one year before the end of support date."

Microsoft is offering a 25 percent discount to businesses that use a Microsoft cloud-based update solution like Intune or Windows Autopatch. This drops the pricing to $45 per user (up to five devices) for the first year. If you're using Windows 10 laptops and PCs to connect up to Windows 11 Cloud PCs through Windows 365, then Microsoft is waiving the fees for security updates since licenses are included in the Windows 365 subscription cost.

Schools will get an even bigger discount, with Microsoft offering a $1 license for year one, which then doubles to $2 for year two and $4 for the third year. It doesn't look like

Microsoft is going to offer any special discount pricing for consumers, but we're still months away from these licenses going on sale, so the company *could* still offer something for consumers.

Naturally, Microsoft wants consumers to move to Windows 11 instead. Millions of PCs can't upgrade officially to Windows 11 due to more strict hardware requirements and Microsoft's security push with its latest OS. Windows 11 is only supported on CPUs released from 2018 onward and with devices that support TPM security chips.

As a result, Windows 11 has lagged behind the Windows 10 rollout, which was offered to Windows 7 and Windows 8 users as a free upgrade. Windows 11 was also a free upgrade, but only for Windows 10 machines that met the strict minimum hardware requirements.

StatCounter says Windows 10 is still used by 69 percent of all Windows users, compared to just 27 percent for Windows 11. That's a big gap that Microsoft is unlikely to close over the coming 18 months, leaving many Windows 10 users having to consider paying for security updates for the first time.

Correction April 3rd, 8:40PM ET: *After publication, Microsoft updated its post to note this pricing is for commercial organizations only. Pricing for consumers has not been announced yet.*

https://www.theverge.com/2024/4/3/24120093/microsoft-windows-10-extended-security-updates-price