

## How to Get a Free Windows 10 Upgrade

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As of July 30, 2016, the upgrade notifications for free upgrades to Windows 10 stopped and the upgrade app began disappearing. In theory, that means the only way to get a Windows 10 upgrade is to pay for it.

However, according to a recent [ZDNet article](#), you can still upgrade and have a valid, licensed version of Windows 10. The activation screens for a Windows 10 upgrade specifically confirm the existence of a “digital license.”

ZDNet says that «The digital license is associated with that specific device, which means you can reformat the disk and perform a clean installation of the same edition of Windows 10 anytime. You won’t need a product key, and activation is automatic.»

### Download Windows 10 Disc Image (ISO File)

Start by going to the [Download Windows 10](#) webpage where you can download a disc image (ISO file) that can be used to install or reinstall Windows 10. The image can also be used to create installation media using a USB flash drive or DVD.

- <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10ISO>

### Before You Begin

Make sure you have:

- A PC running a «genuine» copy of Windows 7/8/8.1 (properly licensed and activated).
- An internet connection.
- Sufficient data storage available on a computer, USB or external drive for the 5 GB download.
- A blank USB flash drive with at least 5 GB of space or blank dual-layer DVD (and DVD burner) if you want to create media.

Check these things on the PC where you want to install Windows 10:

- **64-bit or 32-bit processor (CPU).** You’ll create either the 64-bit or 32-bit version of Windows 10 that’s appropriate for your CPU. To check this on your PC, go to PC info in PC settings or System in Control Panel, and look for System type.
- **System requirements.** See the [system requirements](#) before installing Windows 10. We also recommend that you visit your PC manufacturer’s website for info about updated drivers and hardware compatibility.

- **Language in Windows.** You'll need to choose the same language when you install Windows 10. To see what language you're currently using, go to Time and language in PC settings or Region in Control Panel.
- **Microsoft Office products.** If you just purchased a new device that includes Office 365, we recommend redeeming (installing) Office before upgrading to Windows 10. To redeem your copy of Office, please see [Download and install Office 365](#).

## Download the Software

1. Select Edition. You have a choice of:
  - Windows 10 May 2019 Update (1903) – recommended
  - Windows 10 October 2018 Update (1809)
  - Click Confirm
2. Select the product language:
  - Select English
  - Click Confirm
3. Click the download button:
  - 32-bit Download, or
  - 64-bit Download
4. Save the file in your downloads folder.

After the download is complete, double-click the ISO file to mount it and open a File Explorer window; or, if you chose the option to create a bootable drive, open the USB flash drive in File Explorer and run Setup from there.

Then follow the prompts to complete the upgrade. You will not be asked for a product key, and when the upgrade is complete and you've connected to the Internet, you'll have a digital license to Windows 10, which you can confirm by going to Settings > Update & Security > Activation.