

STILL USING WINDOWS 10?

Microsoft ended its support for Windows 10 on 14 October 2025. A computer running Windows 10 will carry on working much as before, but without regular security updates it becomes steadily more exposed to viruses and malware, and the risk grows the longer it goes without them.

To give home users more time, Microsoft offers **Extended Security Updates**, which provide essential security fixes until **12 October 2027**, a year later than originally planned. Your computer must be enrolled to benefit, however, and many people aren't sure whether theirs is.

YOUR OPTIONS

1
BEST

Upgrade to Windows 11

Benefits: The upgrade is free, keeps your files and programs in place, and will be supported for years to come.

Drawbacks: It's only available on computers that meet Microsoft's requirements, which rules out most made before 2018.

2
FOR NOW

Extended Security Updates

Benefits: Nothing changes, it's free for most people, and essential security fixes continue until 12 October 2027.

Drawbacks: It only postpones the decision, and provides security fixes alone, with no new features or technical support.

3
WHEN
NEEDED

Replace your computer

Benefits: A new computer will be faster, comes with Windows 11 and will be supported for many years.

Drawbacks: It's the most expensive option, and your files and settings will need to be moved across.

X
AVOID

Carrying on without updates: the computer will keep working, but it will become increasingly vulnerable, which is a particular worry if you use it for online banking, shopping or email.

CHECKING YOUR COMPUTER

IS IT ENROLLED?

It takes less than a minute to find out.

1. Click the **Start** button, then **Settings** (the cog icon).
2. Click **Update & Security**, then **Windows Update**.
3. If you see **Your PC is enrolled to get Extended Security Updates**, your computer is covered and there's nothing more to do.
4. If you see a link to enrol, such as **Enrol now**, your computer isn't yet protected. Click it and follow the instructions, or ask us to do it for you.

If neither message appears, your computer may need to install outstanding updates first.

WAYS TO ENROL

Enrolment needs a Microsoft account, of the kind used for Outlook.com, Hotmail or OneDrive, and the computer must be fully up to date. There are three ways to enrol:

- **Free**, by backing up your settings to your Microsoft account with the Windows Backup app. This is the option most people choose.
- **Free**, by redeeming 1,000 Microsoft Rewards points.
- By making a **one-off payment** of around £25.

A single enrolment covers up to ten computers signed in with the same Microsoft account. If you're already enrolled, your cover continues automatically until 12 October 2027.

CAN IT RUN WINDOWS 11?

If your computer is suitable, Windows Update will usually offer an upgrade to Windows 11 free of charge. To check for certain, click **Start**, type **PC Health Check**, open the app and click **Check now**. It'll tell you whether your computer meets the requirements and, if not, why not. If the app isn't on your computer, we can check this for you.

As a rough guide, most computers made before 2018 can't run Windows 11. If you upgrade and then change your mind, you've got 10 days to return to Windows 10 with your files intact.

WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

If your computer can run Windows 11

Upgrade. It costs nothing, keeps your files and programs, and removes the deadline altogether. We recommend this over relying on Extended Security Updates.

If it can't, but still works well

Enrol in Extended Security Updates and plan to replace the computer before October 2027, ideally at a time that suits you rather than in a last-minute rush.

If it's old, slow or unreliable

Replace it. Rather than extending the life of a computer that's already struggling, this is a sensible moment to invest in a new one. We can advise on what to buy and move your files across.

GOOD TO KNOW

- Microsoft Defender will continue to receive virus updates on Windows 10 until October 2028, but Microsoft is clear that antivirus alone isn't enough without Windows' own security updates.
- Microsoft Edge, and Microsoft 365 apps such as Word, Excel and Outlook, will continue to receive security updates on Windows 10 until October 2028.
- Before upgrading or replacing your computer, make sure your files are backed up. Our [**Guide to Backing Up**](#) explains how.
- Be wary of calls, emails or pop-ups claiming that your computer has 'expired' or needs urgent attention because of Windows 10. Microsoft will never contact you in this way. Our [**Guide to Spotting Scams**](#) explains more.

WE CAN HELP

We can check whether your computer can run Windows 11, enrol it in Extended Security Updates, carry out the upgrade, or help you choose and set up a replacement. We can also move your files across.