



Windows 11 SE EDU FAQ

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Most asked questions

What is Windows 11 SE?

A new, cloud-first operating system, Windows 11 SE offers the power and reliability of Windows 11 with a simplified design and modern management tools that are optimized for low-cost devices in educational settings, especially grades K-8.

Where can I learn more about Windows 11?

Learn more about Windows 11 for education at aka.ms/Windows11EDUFAQ.

What does SE stand for in Windows 11 SE? Student Edition?

The SE in Windows 11 SE is not intended to be short for anything, it is intended to clearly differentiate it from other editions like Home and Pro.

Who is the target audience for Windows 11 SE?

Although we are not limiting who can buy Windows 11 SE devices, their simplified fundamentals and experiences are really targeted at grades K-8.

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Purchase

Where will Windows 11 SE be sold at launch?

Windows 11 SE will be available worldwide, except in the People's Republic of China. PRC has specific government requirements around cloud storage and management that do not allow Windows 11 SE to be sold. We are evaluating options for selling the next version of Windows 11 SE in PRC.

Can I buy Windows 11 SE at a retail store?

While we will not restrict sales of Windows 11 SE devices, they are not likely to be available at retail. Windows 11 SE is intended for educational organizations that use cloud-based identity management and security for their students and devices. Most customers buying personal devices would not want the app and management restrictions that these devices come with, so stores are not likely to sell them.

When will Windows 11 SE devices be available to purchase?

Windows 11 SE will be available on new Windows 11 SE devices starting November 9th, 2021. However, we expect most devices to hit the market during Education Buying Season, which kicks off after the BETT Conference in London in January 2022.

Will Windows 11 SE be more expensive than Chromebook's solution?

The short answer is no. The cost for a Windows 11 SE device is not higher than Chromebook's solution. However, when you consider other benefits, like management, productivity, and accessibility features, Windows 11 SE is actually more affordable. Windows 11 SE includes more built-in accessibility features. At no additional cost, which reduces the need to evaluate and purchase third-party solutions. In addition, schools using Chromebook's devices need to pay for management subscriptions and services. Microsoft's per-device price includes management capabilities (Intune) as well as full versions of Microsoft Office and Minecraft: Education Edition for the same price as Chromebook's management-only price. Microsoft also offers subscription options that can make management and productivity even more affordable. Please visit support.microsoft.com if you need assistance.

I purchased this Windows 11 SE device for school use, but I now want to use it for personal use. How do I install Windows Home / Pro on it?

Windows 11 SE is intended for educational organizations that use cloud-based identity management and security for their students and devices. We built it with a streamlined interface and restricted, education-first app choices, based on feedback from educators. Windows 11 SE is not intended for personal use. We expect that most customers would find Windows SE too restrictive on a personal device. However, if you'd like to use a Windows 11 SE device for personal use, you may purchase a license for the version of Windows you'd like, completely erase all the data, files, settings, favorites, and the Windows 11 SE operating system on your device, and install your licensed version of Windows. After that, there would be no way to get back to Windows 11 SE.

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Application

What applications will work on Windows 11 SE? Why is there no application store on Windows 11 SE?

Windows 11 SE can run apps that run in a browser, either in Edge or Chrome, which is very common for education apps. Web apps do not require installation on the device. Windows 11 SE limits the applications that can be installed on the device, sometimes called native applications

or Win32 applications. Teachers want a simple, distraction-free environment for their students, and IT Administrators want devices to be easy to manage and perform well all year, so application installation, advanced features, and setting changes are controlled by IT administrators rather than end users. For scenarios that require more installed applications or access to more apps in the store, Windows 11 Pro Education is the best choice.

Will Windows 11 SE support Chrome browser?

Yes. Windows 11 SE supports essential third-party apps that promote better learning outcomes.

Will Windows 11 SE support Zoom?

Yes. Zoom can be provisioned using Intune for Education.

Can a student install their own applications like YouTube, Spotify, or iTunes?

Students will not be able to install any third-party native apps (Win32 apps or those from the Microsoft Store). However, students will be able to use any browser-based web apps in Edge or other enabled browsers such as Chrome.

Why can't I change settings? Why can't I install in app? A feature is missing on this device. Is it broken?

Windows 11 SE is limited in the apps that can be installed and the settings an end user can manage. This is by design, based on feedback from teachers, who want a simple, distraction-free environment for their students, and IT Administrators, who want devices to be easy to manage and perform well all year. App installation, advanced features, and setting changes are controlled by IT administrators rather than end users for this specialized version of Windows 11.

Can I use a Windows 11 SE device for personal home use? Will I be able to install all my personal apps that I choose?

Windows 11 SE is intended for educational organizations that use cloud-based identity management and security for their students and devices. We built it with a streamlined interface and restricted, education-first app choices, based on feedback from educators. Most customers who are purchasing a personal computer would not want the app and management restrictions that these devices come with. While you might be able to buy a Windows 11 SE device as an individual, you would not be able to install your own apps, and there is no way to switch to a different version of Windows.

Why can't I install (MY APPLICATION) on Windows 11 SE?

Microsoft supports six categories of native application on Windows 11 SE (in Win32 and Universal Windows Platform (UWP) formats). These are curated to include the most important apps for education. The supported categories are:

1. Content-filtering apps
2. Test-taking solutions
3. Accessibility apps
4. Effective classroom communication apps
5. Essential diagnostics, management, connectivity, and supportability apps
6. Browsers

Apps that fall outside these parameters cannot be installed on Windows 11 SE.

If an app cannot be installed on Windows 11 SE, does that mean the app is not reliable or a risk?

Microsoft supports six categories of native application on Windows 11 SE, in Win32 and Universal Windows Platform (UWP) formats. These are curated to include the most important apps for education. The supported categories are:

1. Content-filtering apps
2. Test-taking solutions
3. Accessibility apps
4. Apps that facilitate classroom communication
5. Essential diagnostics, management, connectivity, and supportability apps
6. Browsers

Apps that fall outside these parameters cannot be installed on Windows 11 SE.

How does Microsoft determine which apps are acceptable for Windows 11 SE? How can I get my app on the list of acceptable apps for Windows 11 SE?

At launch, Windows 11 SE supports a curated set of apps that we chose based on feedback from educators and IT administrators. We are open to supporting new apps, by request. Please engage with your account manager to begin the evaluation process. To be considered, any new app must fit into at least one of the following six categories:

1. Content-filtering apps
2. Test-taking solutions
3. Accessibility apps
4. Apps that facilitate classroom communication
5. Essential diagnostics, management, connectivity, and supportability apps
6. Browsers

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Management

Am I able to switch my Windows 11 SE device to Windows 11? Windows 10?

No. It is not possible to switch from Windows 11 SE to other versions of Windows.

Why is Intune management required for Windows 11 SE? How do I benefit from Intune for Education?

Windows 11 SE was designed, from the beginning, to answer the needs of Education customers. While many administrators are comfortable with legacy management tools, most expect cloud based, simplified management solutions. Windows 11 SE requires Intune for Education to ensure it is easy to manage and deploy. Intune for Education offers a simple, convenient platform for managing all student devices, including Windows and Apple machines. It is included with Microsoft 365.

With Windows 10, Microsoft forced me to make significant changes to my IT processes, management approach, and tooling. What will Windows 11 SE require me to change?

To respond to IT needs for a solution that is easy to deploy and manage, Windows 11 SE requires Intune for Education for management. For Windows 10 or Windows 11 customers already using Intune for education, there are no changes or managing Windows 11 SE. For customers who prefer 3rd party or on-premise management tools, Windows 11 Pro Education is the right choice.

How does Windows 11 SE impact my current deployment of Windows 10? Windows 11?

Windows 11 SE, Windows 11, and Windows 10 can be deployed, managed, and serviced in the same way using Microsoft Intune of Education.

How will Windows 11 SE affect the ability of my remote students to continue learning? Any changes in VPN connectivity, remote management, update compliance, or security tools?

You will not need to change anything for your remote learning students. Windows 11 SE offers the same trusted, easy-to-use management tools that your IT teams are already comfortable with—including hands-free set-up and management options.

What is the activation and provisioning process for my remote students? Is it the same as Windows 10? Windows 11?

The activation and provisioning process for remote students for Windows 11 SE is the same as it's been for Windows 10. Windows 11 and Windows 11 SE offer the same trusted, easy-to-use management tools that your IT teams and educators are already comfortable with—including hands-free set-up and management options.

I use Windows Autopilot to provision devices for end users. Will Windows Autopilot be available for Windows 11 SE?

Yes. You can still use Windows Autopilot for Education to provision devices with Windows 11 SE.

As an IT Pro, can I manage or remove certain applications or features in Windows 11 SE that I may not want in my install base or to expose to my users?

Yes. As an IT Pro, you have control over the applications if they are on Microsoft's curated applications list that are installed on Windows 11 SE devices.

Will existing identity solutions continue to work as they do with Windows 10? For example, AAD, Hybrid, MSA, etc.?

AAD and MSA identities are supported. For others, it depends on your infrastructure set up. Windows 11 SE will not have local on-premises support.

What is the device reset process for Windows 11 SE and is it as Chromebook's PowerWash? Can I, as an admin, do a remote device reset?

Yes. IT administrators can wipe and reconfigure Windows 11 SE devices remotely, through Intune for Education. The process is as simple as Chromebook's PowerWash.

Can I manage Windows 11 SE with Chrome's Management Console?

No. Windows 11 SE devices cannot be managed with Chrome's Management console.

Will Windows 11 SE devices require reimaging?

Windows 11 SE comes in a single edition. It is preinstalled with Microsoft Office and more of the apps and policies schools need than ever before, eliminating the need for reimaging. Simply enroll and go.

Are Windows 11 SE devices only manageable using Intune?

Yes. Windows 11 SE devices can only be managed using Intune and Intune for Education.

How can we selfhost Windows 11 SE on other devices? Can we get added to the selfhost/Insider build?

Windows 11 SE is only available pre-installed on new devices. There is no image for Windows 11 SE and no way to upgrade to Windows 11 SE. To try it out, talk to your Microsoft or OEM account manager about available trials.

Are Azure Active Directory (AAD) and Microsoft Account (MSA) the only authentication paths supported? What if a customer uses Ping Federate or Octa?

Yes, Azure Active Directory (AAD) and Microsoft Account (MSA) are the only identity authentication tools supported on Windows 11 SE devices. Windows 11 SE can only be managed by Intune and/or Intune for Education. In some cases, school districts might not directly purchase devices for their students but will instead provide a "preferred device" list for parents to make purchases through educational sellers (for example, CDW or Ingram Micro). In this scenario, parents would log in to their device using their MSA password, but they would only be able to use the preinstalled apps and web browser. To enable full device functionality, the student would need to bring the device to school to have it provisioned for management by the IT administrator (or teacher) via Intune/Intune for Education.

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Upgrade

What is the difference between Windows 10 and Windows 11 SE?

Windows 10 launched six years ago. Since then, there has been a lot of hardware innovation. Windows 11 SE is an edition of Windows 11, and has the same user experience, security, and learning anywhere updates that are new in Windows 11. In addition, Windows 11 SE is optimized to deliver great education experiences on low-cost devices, removing distractions to help students stay focused, and simplifying deployment and management for IT professionals.

What are the experience differences between windows 11 SE and Windows 10 in S mode? What are the technical / architectural differences between Windows 11 SE and Windows 10 in S mode? What is the difference between Windows 11 SE and Windows in S mode? Are Windows 11 SE and Windows 11 in S mode the same?

Windows 11 SE was created based on feedback from teachers, who wanted a simplified, distraction-free, limited-option experience for their students, and from IT admins who wanted a single, easy way to deploy and manage devices and ensure great performance all year. These are the key differences between Windows 11 SE and Windows 10 in S mode:

- Windows 11 SE has an even more simplified user interface, to minimize distraction and keep the focus on education
- There is no Microsoft Store for Windows 11 SE, so IT educators can control which apps and tools students download
- Windows 11 SE has built-in enhancements to optimize performance on low-cost hardware
- There is no way to upgrade or switch to Windows 11 from Windows 11 SE, whereas users could switch to the full version of Windows 10 from Windows 10 in S mode at any time.
- Windows 10 in S mode was built simply to limit apps; the other enhancements were not yet developed

Windows 11 SE is optimized for institutional use, whereas Windows 10 in S mode was also available to consumers.

Is Windows 11 SE faster than Windows 10 Pro Edu and Windows 11 Pro Edu? If so, how much faster?

Windows 11 and Windows 11 SE were designed to deliver great experiences on low-cost devices. Specific speeds will vary depending on hardware, applications, and device configuration.

Unlike Windows 11, Windows 11 SE is a cloud-first operating system. It therefore requires less memory and uses a smaller footprint than traditional Windows Pro, so it can perform faster. It also offers an optimized experience for smaller devices, which are often used by students.

Is a user able to upgrade to Windows 11 SE from Windows 10? Windows 11?

No. Windows 11 SE is only available pre-installed on new Windows 11 SE-compatible devices. It isn't possible to upgrade to Windows 11 SE from other versions of Windows, including Windows 10 or Windows 11. However, an IT Administrator can re-image a Windows 11 SE device and install any Genuine Windows OS they have a license for via Intune for Education. However, once a device has been wiped and a new Windows OS has been installed, you can no longer re-install Windows 11 SE.

How is Windows 11 SE different than Windows 11 Pro Education?

There are 3 editions of Windows for Education—Windows 11 SE, Windows 11 Pro Education, and Windows 11 Education. Windows 11 SE is a cloud-first edition of Windows 11, and it was designed to meet the special needs of K-8 education. It is optimized to deliver great education experiences on low-cost devices, removing distractions, so students stay focused. Additionally, only IT administrators can install apps on Windows 11 SE computers, which gives enhanced control to IT managers, so devices perform well all year.

With Windows 11 Pro Education, students and other end users can install apps on their device. Windows 11 Pro Education is what comes pre-loaded on devices purchased through the Shape the Future Program.

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Product

How does Windows 11 SE differ from S Mode? What is the difference between Windows 11 SE and Windows in S mode? Are Windows 11 SE and Windows 10 in S mode the same? Are Windows 11 SE and Windows 11 in S mode for home licensing the same? What are the technical/ architectural differences between Windows 11 SE and Windows 10S?

Windows 11 SE was created based on feedback from teachers, who wanted a simplified, distraction-free, limited-option experience for their students, and from IT admins who wanted a single, easy way to deploy and manage devices and ensure great performance all year. These are the key differences:

- Windows 11 SE does not have an S mode (as Windows 10 did)
- Windows 11 SE has an even more simplified user interface, to minimize distraction and keep the focus on education
- There is no Microsoft Store for Windows 11 SE, so IT educators can control which apps and tools students download
- Windows 11 SE has built-in enhancements to optimize performance on low-cost hardware
- There is no way to upgrade or switch to Windows 11 from Windows 11 SE, whereas users could switch to the full version of Windows 10 from Windows 10 in S mode at any time.
- Windows 10 in S mode was built simply to limit apps; the other enhancements were not yet developed

Windows 11 SE is optimized for institutional use, whereas Windows 10 in S mode was also available to consumers.

What are the benefits and value proposition of Windows 11 SE?

Windows 11 SE has the same accessibility, security, privacy, and remote learning benefits as Windows 11, with the added advantage of being optimized to deliver great education experiences on low-cost devices, removing distractions to help students stay focused, and simplifying deployment and management for IT professionals.

What investments have you made to ensure Teams, Office, Minecraft work well on Windows 11 SE?

We've tested key education scenarios that are important for student learning on Windows 11 SE devices to ensure that the experience is smooth for students and that the devices perform according to our standards of excellence. These scenarios include joining a class, submitting an assignment, and taking notes during class.

What offline experiences will be available with Windows 11 SE?

The Microsoft Office Win32 applications—including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote—are available for students to use offline on Windows 11 SE devices. OneDrive will intelligently store files locally, on each device, for students to access when they are offline.

Why does Windows 11 SE require me to store my files in OneDrive? Does it support any other cloud storage options? What's the default file storage experience for Windows 11 SE?

Windows 11 SE is a cloud-first experience with user content served in the cloud in OneDrive. Our first version supports file storage in OneDrive only, but we will continue to evaluate whether to expand to other cloud storage solutions in subsequent versions.

What are the minimum specifications for a device to run Windows 11 SE?

Windows 11 SE has the exact same minimum requirements as Windows 11, given that they are built on the same core. You can learn more at <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/whats-new/windows-11-requirements>

Where can I learn more about Windows 11 SE devices?

You can learn more about Windows 11 SE devices at aka.ms/Windows11SEpage.

Do Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office work well on low-cost hardware?

Windows 11 SE is optimized for cloud-connected classroom experiences. It includes performance optimizations, so core education-first Microsoft Office apps run well on budget-friendly hardware.

How does Chromebook compare to Windows 11 SE?

Like Chromebooks, Windows 11 SE devices provide great web-first experiences. But unlike Chromebooks, they also offer comprehensive offline experiences, as well. This includes full use of Microsoft Office applications as well as a broad set of additional offline education experiences.

How does Microsoft 365 compare to Google Workspace for Education?

Feature for feature, Microsoft 365 provides the exact same collaboration functionality as Google. And it goes one step further by including the most comprehensive suite of built-in assistive technology, with tools for learning, vision, hearing, and mobility needs at no extra cost.

Additionally, Microsoft 365 lets students learn on the tools they will use later in life, as they progress from classroom to career.

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Licensing

Are there any device minimums, letters of eligibility, or not-to-exceed clauses required to purchase Windows 11 SE devices?

No. Windows 11 SE device licensing is different than Windows 11 Pro for Education or Windows Education. You do not need letters of eligibility, not-to-exceed pricing clauses, or device volume minimums.

Will my paid Microsoft 365 subscription work on Windows 11 SE?

Yes. Active Microsoft Office 365 A3 or A5 licenses or Microsoft 365 A3 or A5 licenses can be used on Windows 11 SE devices.

What changes have you made to Microsoft 365 A1 licensing?

We are refining our Microsoft 365 A1 license with new per-device pricing. The new offering is different from our prior licensing deals. It involves a one-time fee of \$38 per device, for up to 6 years of services. In addition to Windows 11 SE, this license comes with desktop Teams, Microsoft Office, OneNote, and Class Notebook as well as multiple education-centered apps that prepare students for their future careers. These include Minecraft: Education Edition, Flipgrid, and Reading Progress. This A1 offer also includes Intune for Education, our mobile-device management service, to support cloud-based management of student devices.

What is the cost of a Microsoft 365 A1 license?

The Microsoft 365 A1 license includes a \$38 'one-time pricing' offer for up to 6 years of services on a specific device.

How long is the Microsoft 365 A1 license support?

The Microsoft 365 A1 offer is supported for up to 6 years of services on a specific device.

What applications/services are part of the Microsoft 365 A1 license?

In addition to Windows 11 SE, the Microsoft 365 A1 license comes with desktop Teams, Microsoft Office, OneNote, and Class Notebook as well as multiple education-centered apps that prepare students for the future. These include Minecraft: Education Edition, Flipgrid, and Reading Progress. This offer also includes

Intune for Education, our mobile-device management service, to support cloud-based management of student devices.

Is the Microsoft 365 A1 license available only on Windows 11 SE?

The Microsoft 365 A1 license offer is available for all education devices.

When will this new Microsoft 365 A1 license offer be available to customers?

The new Microsoft 365 A1 offer will be announced on November 09, 2021 and available to purchase on November 09, 2021.

Where can I learn more about the new Microsoft 365 A1 offer?

You can learn more about the new Microsoft 365 A1 offer by visiting <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/buy-license/microsoft365>.

Is Windows 11 SE available on all device configurations?

Windows 11 SE is not available on all devices. It can run on machines with 4GB or 8GB of RAM and 64 or 128 gigabytes of memory.

Is Windows 11 SE available as part of the Shape the Future program offering?

No, Windows 11 SE is not part of the Shape the Future model. In contrast with Shape the Future, there are no minimum quantities or restrictions on how Windows 11 SE devices are sold.

Is Microsoft licensing complex and expensive with Windows 11 SE?

Our new, device-based licensing makes Microsoft Education easier and more cost-effective to buy. This new pricing structure is intended to simplify licensing options and help schools find cost-effective device options with high-end performance.

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