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Windows 10 Extended Security Updates (ESU)

What home users need to know about continuing security protection after Windows 10 end of support

AT A GLANCE

Microsoft ended standard support for Windows 10 on 14 October 2025. Eligible Windows 10 Home users can use Microsoft's Extended Security Updates (ESU) program to continue receiving important security updates for a limited period while planning a move to a supported operating system or replacement device.

Overview

Microsoft provides Extended Security Updates (ESU) for eligible Windows 10 users who need additional time before moving away from Windows 10. ESU supplies security updates after the operating system's official end-of-support date, helping reduce exposure to newly discovered Windows vulnerabilities. It is a temporary security measure rather than a replacement for moving to a fully supported operating system.

Who is affected?

This bulletin is primarily relevant to home users who still operate Windows 10 PCs or laptops, particularly systems that cannot be upgraded to Windows 11 because of hardware requirements or where replacement is not yet practical.

Enrollment options and requirements

Eligible home users can enroll through Windows Update. Depending on Microsoft's current offer and regional availability, consumer enrollment options may include a paid enrollment, redemption of Microsoft Rewards points, or an option linked to signing in with a Microsoft account and synchronising PC settings using Windows Backup.

- The device should be running Windows 10 version 22H2.
- Enrollment requires an eligible personal-use device and a Microsoft account.
- Devices managed by an organisation, domain-joined systems, or devices enrolled through certain work or school management arrangements may not qualify for the consumer ESU program.
- Check Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update for the ESU enrollment option on an eligible PC.

Why keeping your PC or laptop updated matters

Security updates correct vulnerabilities discovered in Windows and other software. Once a vulnerability becomes publicly known, attackers can attempt to exploit computers that have not received the relevant patch. Continuing to use an unsupported and unpatched operating system can therefore increase the risk of malware, ransomware, account compromise and unauthorised access.

Home computers often contain or provide access to valuable information including personal documents, photographs, email, saved passwords, online banking and cloud accounts. Keeping Windows, web browsers, security software and commonly used applications up to date reduces the number of known vulnerabilities available to an attacker.

Updates can also improve system reliability, compatibility and stability. Antivirus software remains important, but it does not replace operating-system security updates. A layered approach—supported software, current patches, security software and reliable backups—provides substantially better protection.

MISTER IT RECOMMENDATION

If your computer supports Windows 11, plan to move to a supported operating system. If the computer cannot be upgraded immediately, check whether it qualifies for Windows 10 ESU and enroll where appropriate. Do not rely on antivirus software alone to protect an operating system that is no longer receiving security patches.

Recommended action

- Run Windows Update and confirm that Windows 10 version 22H2 and all available updates are installed.
- Check whether the device is eligible for Microsoft's consumer ESU program and review the enrollment options currently offered.
- Keep web browsers, Microsoft Office and other frequently used applications fully updated.
- Maintain current antivirus or endpoint protection.
- Back up important files regularly, preferably using more than one backup location.
- Plan for migration to Windows 11, another supported operating system, or replacement hardware where the existing PC cannot meet current support requirements.

Important note about ESU dates and pricing

Microsoft's ESU terms, enrollment methods, pricing and support dates can change and may vary by region. Before publishing or relying on specific prices or final coverage dates, users should verify the current information shown by Microsoft and the enrollment information presented in Windows Update.

Additional information

Mister IT can assist with checking Windows 11 compatibility, reviewing the security status of an existing Windows 10 computer, configuring updates and backups, migrating personal files and applications, and advising whether upgrading or replacing an older computer is the more practical option.

Technical information disclaimer

This Technical Article is provided by Mister IT for general information and guidance. Technology, security threats, vendor policies, software versions and support arrangements can change over time. Information should be verified against current vendor documentation before making significant technical or business decisions. Recommendations may need to be adapted to the specific device, network or operating environment. Where appropriate, ensure important data is backed up before making system or configuration changes.

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