

Licensing Microsoft Client OS, Windows 10 & 11 on VMware Cloud on AWS

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Use rights for licensing Microsoft Client OS on VMware Cloud on AWS

Microsoft Client Operating System (OS) licenses include both perpetual upgrade licenses from an OEM install, as well as a cloud subscription. Most customers utilize those licenses in a VDA or VDI environment where end users' sessions are virtualized and remotely accessed.

Customers looking to virtualize Windows Client OS have a variety of ways to deploy and license their virtual machines (VMs) depending on what Microsoft license entitlements they have. This brief describes how to license Windows Client OS for use on VMware Cloud on AWS.

Basics of Licensing Microsoft Client OS for Virtualization

Q. How does Microsoft license the Windows Client OS for virtual environments?

A. Virtual desktop access rights are a benefit of Windows Client Software Assurance (SA). Customers who intend to use PCs covered under Software Assurance have access to their Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) desktops at no additional charge. Customers who want to use devices that do not qualify for Windows Client SA, such as thin clients, will need to license those devices with Windows Virtual Desktop Access (VDA)

Q. What is Windows Virtual Desktop Access (VDA)?

A. Windows VDA is a device-based subscription designed to help organizations license devices that do not qualify for Windows

Q. Does a Windows Client SA / Windows VDA license provide me any licensing rights for applications like Office?

A. No, Windows Client SA / Windows VDA only provides licensing rights for the Windows client operating system (OS) itself.

Q. What is the difference between VDI and VDA?

A. Simply put, VDA is how a user's accesses a virtual desktop instance. VDI is the virtual infrastructure that a virtual desktop is deployed on.

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Q. Are there any licensing changes between Windows 10 and Windows 11?

A. From a licensing perspective the big change is that Windows 11 is considered the new version released after the October 1 2019 and subject to changes to the [Outsourcing Software Management](#) clause in the Microsoft Product Terms document. Per those rules, there is no compliant way to bring Windows 11 to a Listed Provider Cloud, which includes VMware Cloud on AWS.

Q. Does Windows 11 have the same remote virtualization rights as Windows 10?

A. Yes, there are no changes to the local or remote virtualization rights. Customers with active Software Assurance still get the right to run 4 virtual instances of the OS and access those remotely.

Q. Are dedicated outsourcing and Bring Your Own License (BYOL) related? if so, how?

A. Under the Microsoft Outsourcing Software management rules, customers can deploy their perpetual volume licenses on hardware that is dedicated to them. When a customer moves those licenses to that dedicated environment, they are bringing their own license to that environment.

Q. If I am licensed for Windows 10, can I still deploy on VMware Cloud on AWS?

A. If you still have Bring Your Own License (BYOL) rights for eligible Windows 10 licenses and you do not upgrade to Windows 11, your Volume License BYOL use rights remain in place and can be used on VMware Cloud on AWS.

Q. What if I currently license the Client OS through a suite like M365?

A. Any of the Product components included in the M365 Suites are governed by the ~~industrial~~ individual Product terms for those components. The Client OS included in M365 licenses are governed by the same license Terms as Client OS licenses bought individually. Those licenses are subject to the updated Outsourcing Software Management rules.

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Q, How can I license and use Windows Client OS in VMware Cloud on AWS SDDC

A. You can use a Windows VDA E3/E5 per user license and get virtualization entitlements and BYOL rights to VMware Cloud on AWS. Eligible licensed users or devices may access up to four virtual machines. Customers can also choose to emulate a Windows Client OS image through a Windows Server license to provide a desktop image for remote access and use. This still requires that the Windows Server and RDS licenses have BYOL use rights for VMware Cloud on AWS. ~~Alternatively~~Alternatively, customers can procure the Windows Server licenses through the VMware Cloud on AWS license included offering.

Q. Where can I go to get more information on Microsoft licensing for VMware Cloud on AWS?

A. For all Microsoft Licensing questions on AWS please email vmc-microsoft-licensing@vmware.com