Windows 10 and 11 - Activation

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Windows 10 and Windows 11 Enterprise Editions do not require a product key like commercial versions. Instead, after you install Windows Enterprise, the license needs to be activated with the KMS server on campus.

Depending on how your machine is configured for the MIT network, your activation experience will vary.

- If your machine is configured for DHCP, the activation should occur automatically within the first three days. Activation occurs automatically if you are connected to the MIT network, including wireless, because the DHCP lease contains the correct configuration information needed to activate.
- If your machine is at home or off campus, you need to connect with the MIT VPN client then activate manually as instructed below.
- If your machine is configured with a static MIT IP address, the activation will occur once the machine is set up correctly. Check the system Date and Time. If the timezone is incorrect or if the clock is set for AM instead of PM, activation will fail.

An activation is good for 180 days and the system will attempt to renew that activation automatically.

Note: Windows 10/11 Pro, Windows 10/11 Pro N and Windows 10/11 Enterprise N cannot be activated with the KMS server on campus.

Set up Windows with the Correct Domain Suffix:

1. Access the control panel:
   - **Windows 10**: Right click on the **Start** menu and select **Control Panel**.
2. Choose **Control Panel** from this menu and choose **System** in the Control Panel window.
3. In the "Computer name, domain, and work group settings" section, click **Change settings**.
4. Click **Change...**.
5. Click **More...**.
   The Primary DNS suffix setting of this computer should show MIT.EDU. If it doesn't, enter MIT.EDU and click **OK**.

Note: If another domain suffix, e.g., broad.mit.edu or psfc.mit.edu, is listed, do NOT change it to just mit.edu.

Manual Activation

To find out if Windows is already activated:

1. See this Microsoft page Activate Windows 10
2. See this Microsoft page Activate Windows 11
   - **If Windows is not activated** then the screen will show the number of days remaining in the grace period for activation.

To activate Windows:

1. Click the **Activate Windows now** link.
   Result: The **Activate Windows now** screen appears.
2. On the Windows activation screen click **Activate Windows online now**.
   Result: Windows will activate and the next screen confirms that the activation was successful.

You now have 180 days until the next activation.