

Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite overview

This brief applies to all Microsoft Licensing programs.

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Summary

This brief provides an explanation of Microsoft CAL Suite licenses and the Microsoft products and services a CAL Suite provides use rights to.

Microsoft offers two Client Access License (CAL) Suites, the Microsoft Core CAL Suite and the Microsoft Enterprise CAL Suite, which provide access rights to a number of server products and online services. The Enterprise CAL Suite includes all of the components of the Core CAL Suite. This means customers interested in the components unique to the Enterprise CAL Suite don't need to license both the Core CAL Suite and the Enterprise CAL Suite. Customers can acquire the Enterprise CAL Suite upfront or as a step-up from the Core CAL Suite.

Details

What is a CAL Suite?

A CAL Suite is a single license that provides access rights to multiple Microsoft software and services included. CAL Suite licenses do not provide multiple individual licenses, for the included Microsoft software and services that a customer can separate and assign to multiple devices or users. Like other CALs, CAL Suites can be licensed on either a per-user or per-device basis. CAL Suites simplify licensing and tracking by reducing the number of licenses necessary to access Microsoft software and services. CAL Suites may also provide pricing that's more attractive than licensing the equivalent components individually.

CAL Suite use rights for software and services

CAL Suites are version-less and convey access rights for products that are released independently. However, CAL Suites do not include rights to deploy for the respective server software itself. Server software licenses must be acquired separately. CAL Suites are only offered with Software Assurance coverage, and accordingly give customers the right to use the most recent version of every software product in the suite. If Software Assurance coverage lapses and the customer is vested with perpetual rights, use rights are determined by the latest version of the products in effect before the lapse in coverage. For example, if a customer's Software Assurance coverage for the Core CAL Suite expired on September 1, 2020, the customer has perpetual access rights equivalent to the most recent version of the Core CAL Suite's components as of that date. This customer wouldn't have rights to versions of components released on or after September 1, 2020 or to products added to the CAL Suite after that date. Note that access rights to Microsoft services components of the suites also expire if Software Assurance is allowed to lapse.

CAL Suites sometimes provide use rights equivalent to licenses that aren't CALs, such as Client Management Licenses or Microsoft online services User Subscription Licenses. In all cases, under a CAL Suite, the customer's use rights with respect to a particular product or online service are the same as if that component was licensed separately. The only exception is that both per-user and per-device options are available in CAL Suites even when both options aren't available outside the suite. For instance, Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager has per-device use rights as part of Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite, even though it's offered under per user and per-operating system environment individually.

Client Management License use rights

The Core CAL Suite provides rights equivalent to the Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager Client Management License. CAL Suites licensed on a per device basis extend these rights to multiple operating system environments deployed on the same device, consistent with Server/CAL per-device licensing.

Microsoft online services use rights

As of the last publication of this brief, a license for the Enterprise CAL Suite with active Software Assurance coverage includes the rights to Exchange Online Archiving for Exchange Server, Data Loss Prevention, and Exchange Online Protection. To begin using these services, contact your Microsoft Partner, who can begin the provisioning process required to activate each service.

Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite components

Many Core CAL and Enterprise CAL Suite components are “base CALs” while certain components of Enterprise CAL Suite are “additive CALs”. Customers may choose to license the Enterprise CAL Suite upfront or as a step-up from Core CAL Suite licenses. Having the Enterprise CAL Suite is like having both the Core CAL Suite and the components that are unique to the Enterprise CAL Suite, since the Enterprise CAL Suite includes the Core CAL Suite.. For more information about base and additive CALs, refer to the Microsoft Commercial Licensing brief [Microsoft server Base and Additive Client Access Licenses \(CALs\) overview](#).

Core CAL Suite components (as of the last publication of this brief)

The Core CAL Suite is equivalent to the following licenses:

- Windows Server CAL
- Exchange Server Standard CAL
- SharePoint Server Standard CAL
- Skype for Business Standard CAL
- Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager Client Management License (formally System Center Configuration Manager)
- System Center Endpoint Protection Client Management License
- Skype for Business Server Standard CAL

Enterprise CAL Suite components (as of the last publication of this brief)

The Enterprise CAL Suite is equivalent to the following licenses:

- All of the components of the Core CAL Suite (listed above)
- Exchange Server Enterprise CAL with Services*
- Exchange Online Archiving for Exchange Server
- SharePoint Server Enterprise CAL
- Skype for Business Server Enterprise CAL
- Windows Server Active Directory Rights Management Services CAL
- Advanced Threat Analytics Client Management License
- Microsoft Audit and Control Management Server CAL

**Includes Data Loss Prevention and Exchange Online Protection*

Frequently asked questions

Q1: *Is there a difference between the Enterprise CAL Suite and an Enterprise CAL? Is it an important distinction?*

A: Yes. The Enterprise CAL Suite provides user rights equivalent to a variety of technologies. An Enterprise CAL is a distinct license that describes specific use rights to specific features for SharePoint, Exchange, and Skype for Business Server.

For more information, refer to the Microsoft Commercial Licensing brief [Microsoft server Base and Additive Client Access Licenses \(CALs\) overview](#).

Q2: *Can I apply an Enterprise CAL Suite Step-up to a Core CAL Suite with expired Software Assurance coverage?*

A: No. You must have active Software Assurance to benefit from the ability to migrate lower edition offerings to higher editions using step up licenses, like migrating from the Core CAL Suite to the Enterprise CAL Suite.

Q3: *Do the Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite provide downgrade rights for their equivalent components?*

A: Yes. Unlike use rights for most product suites, the use rights for the Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite permit customers to downgrade components individually. The downgrade rights for the components of the Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite are the same as those for the individual components. For instance, an Enterprise CAL Suite license may be used to access an Exchange Server 2016 server.

Q4: *Does the Enterprise CAL Suite provide the right to Microsoft Server licenses?*

A: The Enterprise CAL Suite provides use rights equivalent to the corresponding CALs and Client Management Licenses. Customers must still separately purchase required corresponding server licenses.

Q5: *Does the Enterprise CAL Suite provide the right to access all Microsoft Server Products?*

A: No. The Enterprise CAL Suite provides rights equivalent to CALs and Client Management Licenses for a broad selection of Microsoft server products to permit information workers access to a variety of functionality, including communication, collaboration, presence, synchronous communications (IM), enterprise content management, information rights management, client security, server and Web security, client and server real-time monitoring and updates, conferencing, Web-based forms solutions, and business data connectors. However, the Enterprise CAL Suite doesn't provide rights equivalent to other CALs, including Dynamics 365 On Premise Server and SQL Server.

Q6: *Can I license the Enterprise CAL Suite's components individually?*

A: Yes. All Enterprise CAL Suite components are available for individual purchase.

Q7: *What server editions do CAL suites provide access to? For instance, does the Enterprise CAL Suite provide access to Exchange Server Standard Edition or Exchange Server Enterprise Edition?*

A: Like other CALs, the Enterprise CAL Suite and Core CAL Suite licenses work with any accompanying edition of the server that requires a CAL. Therefore, Enterprise CAL Suite and Core CAL Suite license access to both Exchange Server Standard Edition and Exchange Server Enterprise Edition.

Q8: *Does the Enterprise CAL Suite include rights to access Microsoft SQL Server?*

A: No. SQL Server CALs must be obtained separately from the Enterprise CAL Suite or Core CAL Suite.

Q9: *Are there any price adjustments for customers who already own the Enterprise CAL Suite which contains Core CAL, System Center Endpoint Protection, and Skype for Business Server Standard CAL?*

A: Since Enterprise CAL Suite contains Core CAL, there's no change to the composition or pricing of Enterprise CAL Suite