

Windows Server 2012 Licensing Data Sheet

Product overview

With the release of Windows Server 2012, Microsoft brings its experience in building and operating public clouds to the server platform for private clouds. It offers customers scalable, dynamic and multitenant-aware cloud infrastructure that helps users connect across-premises. As a result, IT can respond to business needs with greater agility and efficiency, and the mobile workforce is able to access personalized work environments from virtually anywhere.

Edition overview

The Windows Server 2012 product line-up has been streamlined and simplified, making it easier for customers to choose the edition that is right for their needs.

- **Datacenter edition** for highly-virtualized private cloud environments.
- **Standard edition** for non-virtualized or lightly virtualized environments.
- **Essentials edition** for small businesses with up to 25 users running on servers with up to two processors.
- **Foundation edition** for small businesses with up to 15 users running on single processor servers.

To learn more about feature differences by product edition, click [here](#).

Edition	Feature comparison	Licensing model	Pricing*
Datacenter	Unlimited virtual instances All features	Processor + CAL**	\$4,809
Standard	Two virtual instances All features	Processor + CAL**	\$882
Essentials	2 processor Limited features	Server 25 user limit	\$425
Foundation	1 processor Limited features	Server 15 user limit	OEM Only

*Open No Level (NL) ERP. (For specific pricing, contact your Microsoft reseller. Microsoft does not determine pricing or payment terms for licenses acquired through resellers.)

**Client Access Licenses (CALs) are required for every user or device accessing a server. See the [Product Use Rights](#) for details.

Licensing overview

The packaging and licensing structure for Windows Server 2012 Datacenter edition and Windows Server 2012 Standard edition has been updated to simplify purchasing and reduce management requirements.

- **Two editions** differentiated only by virtualization rights – two virtual instances for Standard edition and unlimited virtual instances for Datacenter edition.

- **A consistent processor-based licensing** model that covers up to two physical processors on a server.

Windows Server 2012 Essentials edition and Windows Server 2012 Foundation edition remain unchanged.

- **Server-based licensing model** – Foundation is for single processor servers and Essentials is for either one or two processor servers.
- **CALs not required for access** – Foundation comes with 15 user accounts and Essentials comes with 25 user accounts.

Client Access License (CAL)

Windows Server Standard and Datacenter editions will continue to require Windows Server CALs for every user or device accessing a server. (See the [Product Use Rights](#) for exceptions and the [Multiplexing — Client Access License \(CAL\) Requirements](#) white paper for indirect-access licensing information.)

Some additional or advanced functionality will continue to require the purchase of an additive CAL. These are CALs that you need in addition to the Windows Server CAL to access functionality, such as Remote Desktop Services or Active Directory Rights Management Services. (To learn more about these CALs, see the [Base and Additive Client Access License](#) white paper.)

Note: You must have a Windows Server 2012 CAL to access an instance of Windows Server 2012.

Determining the number of licenses for Datacenter and Standard editions

Each license covers up to two physical processors on a single server. The minimum number of licenses required for each server is determined by the number of physical processors. For Standard edition you can add more virtual instances by assigning additional licenses to the server (two incremental virtual instances are added per license).

Licensing examples	Datacenter licenses required	Standard licenses required
One 1-processor, non-virtualized server	1	1
One 4-processor, non-virtualized server	2	2
One 2-processor server with three virtual OSEs	1	2
One 2-processor server with 12 virtual OSEs	1	6

Transitioning to the new licensing model

If you have Software Assurance coverage on your current Windows Server licenses at the time of the Windows Server 2012 General Availability, you will receive the following transitional license grants to Windows Server 2012.

Current license	Conversion ratio	New license(s)
Datacenter	2:1 ¹	Datacenter
Enterprise	1:2	Standard
Standard	1:1	Standard
SBS Essentials	1:1	Essentials
Web Server	2:1 ^{2,4}	Standard
Windows HPC Server Suite	1:1 ^{2,3}	Standard

¹Windows Server 2012 Datacenter covers up to two processors per license, whereas Windows Server 2008 R2 Datacenter only covers one processor per license.

²The grant provides you with an additional Windows Server 2012 Standard edition that you can use while maintaining rights to run your current Windows Server HPC edition, Microsoft HPC Pack Enterprise or Web Server licenses.

³Windows Server HPC edition and Microsoft HPC Pack Enterprise will receive a 2:1⁴ ratio of Windows Server 2012 Standard.

⁴For these grants you will round up to the nearest whole number to determine the appropriate entitlement.

Moving to processor-based licensing

In order to maintain full license coverage during the transition to Windows Server 2012, if you have server based licenses with Software Assurance you may be eligible for incremental license grants through the following process.

- Prior to renewing your agreement, conduct a self-inventory documenting any 8-processor servers running Windows Server Enterprise edition (eligible to receive two additional Windows Server 2012 Standard edition licenses), and any 4-processor servers running either Windows Server Standard edition or Windows Server HPC edition (eligible to receive one additional Windows Server 2012 Standard edition license).
- This self-inventory should be conducted using the Microsoft Assessment and Planning (MAP) Toolkit or another inventory tool to accurately archive a time/date-stamped inventory of hardware tied to Windows Server installations.
- This documentation will serve as proof of license for any incremental license grants beyond the normal transition grant.
- If you forego the self-inventory, you will receive licenses for the entitled edition based on the normal Windows Server 2012 transition model.

Planning for Windows Server 2012

If you are planning to deploy Windows Server 2012, remember:

- Select the edition of Windows Server 2012 based on your virtualization needs and edition features:
 - Datacenter edition for highly-virtualized private clouds.
 - Standard edition for lightly or non-virtualized environments.
 - Essentials edition for small businesses with up to 25 users, running on servers with up to two processors.
 - Foundation edition for small businesses with up to 15 users buying single processor servers from OEMs.
- Renewing Software Assurance is the best way to protect investments while gaining access to new versions, technical assistance and Deployment Planning Services.
- The Microsoft Enrollment for Core Infrastructure (ECI) will continue to offer the best value for private cloud and datacenter management pricing.
- Core CAL and Enterprise CAL Suites will continue to be the most cost effective way to purchase Windows Server CALs to access Windows Server 2012 Standard and Datacenter editions.
- Find out how flexible payments can help you get the IT you need and stay on budget. Visit www.microsoft.com/financing for program details or to learn more contact your Microsoft Solution Partner directly or call 1-800-936-3500 in the United States and Canada.

Appendix

Edition comparison by running instances

Running instances can exist either in a physical operating system environment (POSE) or a virtual operating system environment (VOSE).

Edition	Running instances in POSE	Running instances in VOSE
Datacenter	1	Unlimited
Standard	1*	2
Essentials	1**	1**
Foundation	1	0

*When a customer is running all allowed virtual instances, the physical instance may only be used to manage and service the virtual instances. For information about licensing in virtual environments, see the [Microsoft Volume Licensing Brief: Licensing Microsoft Server Products in Virtual Environments](#) white paper.

**Essentials can be run in either a physical or virtual operating system environment "1 or 1."

Edition comparison by server roles

Here is a summary of key server roles by edition.

Server role	Datacenter Standard	Essentials	Foundation
AD Certificate Services	●	■ ¹	○ ¹
AD Domain Services	●	■	● ⁴
AD Federation Services	●	●	●
AD Lightweight Directory Services	●	●	●
AD RMS	●	●	●

Server role	Datacenter Standard	Essentials	Foundation
Application Server	●	○	●
DHCP Server	●	●	●
DNS Server	●	■	●
Fax Server	●	●	●
File Services	●	■	●
Hyper-V	●	○	○
Network Policy & Access Services	●	■ ²	○ ²
Print & Doc Services	●	●	●
Remote Desktop Services	●	■	○ ³
UDDI Services	●	●	●
Web Services	●	■	●
Windows Deploy Services	●	●	●
Windows Server Update Services (WSUS)	●	○	○

● Full ○ Partial/Limited

■ Automatically Installed/Configured ○ Not Available

AD = Active Directory RMS = Rights Management Service

DNS = Domain Name System

¹Limited to creating Certificate Authorities—there are no other Active Directory Certificate Services features (Network Device Enrollment Services, Online Responder Service). See AD CS role documentation on TechNet for more information.

²Limited to 50 RRAS connections, 10 IAS connections.

³Limited to 20 Remote Desktop Services connections.

⁴If ADDS role is installed, must be root of forest and domain.

Edition comparison by feature

Here is a summary of key server features.

Feature	Datacenter Standard	Essentials	Foundation
Active Directory Rights Management Services ¹	●	●	●
BranchCache Content Server	●	●	●
BranchCache Hosted Server	●	●	●
Direct Access	●	●	●
Hyper-V	●	○	○
Internet Information Services 7.5	●	●	●
Network Access Protection	●	●	●
Remote Desktop Services ²	●	●	●
Server Core	●	○	○
Server Manager	●	●	●
Windows Deployment Services	●	●	●
Windows PowerShell	●	●	●

¹Requires an incremental AD RMS CAL for access.

²Requires an incremental RDS CAL for access.

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Channels

The availability of each edition will vary by channel.

Edition	Volume Licensing	OEM	Retail	SPLA
Datacenter	●	●	○	●
Standard	●	●	●	●
Essentials	●	●	●	●
Foundation	○	●	○	○