

AskWoody Plus – 22.25.2 – 2025-06-25 – A one-year extension to Windows 10 — almost free!

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A one-year extension to Windows 10 — almost free!

By Susan Bradley • [Comment about this alert](#)

You know I've been trying — for months — to find a vendor from which I could purchase Windows 10 Extended Security Updates (ESUs).

I certainly want to make such a purchase for my firm, and perhaps for use on my home PCs. You also know that I've been promising to tell you how to purchase ESUs, how to install them, and how to manage them. I can understand why you might think I haven't kept that promise.

Well, there's a catch. I have not been able to find a vendor willing to sell me ESUs. It's true that I'm not going to buy a huge number of these licenses because I'm not in a large enterprise, but it should be possible to buy a modest number, such as would be required by small businesses, or even to buy singletons. There are certainly very small businesses who need only one or two ESUs.

And, of course, we've been reporting Microsoft's promise that consumers would be able to purchase a one-year ESU, probably available closer to the October end of life for Windows 10.

Yesterday, Microsoft finally provided more details on how to purchase ESUs, both for consumers and small businesses. In a long and rambling [Windows blog post](#), Microsoft spent a lot of time explaining why Windows 11 is the way to go, then provided some relevant information about how to keep Windows 10 around.

On September 1, three-year ESUs will become available to businesses through Cloud Service Providers (CSPs), which tend to sell to smaller businesses. The price will be \$61 for the first year, *doubling* in each subsequent year.

If your business uses a managed service provider, reach out to your contacts there. You have my permission to send them a copy of this Plus Alert email. Ask them to get in touch with their software distributor. These “disties” will make it easier to obtain the licenses.

ESUs are, essentially, product keys. You will need to apply these keys to your Windows 10 PCs so that Microsoft will allow those machines to receive updates. As we get closer to October, I'll be

providing more details about this and any other nuances we discover along the way.

Important information for consumers

Microsoft is throwing a bone to Windows 10 consumer users. It comes with one tiny caveat — it's tied to a Microsoft account.

As Microsoft mentioned last year when it initially announced the ESU program, it will be possible for users to buy a one-year ESU for Windows 10 for \$30. So that's not news, just confirmation. And although not explicitly stated, it appears this consumer ESU will be good for one year only, with no extension available.

But in an interesting “gameification” offering, you can pay for that extra year with Microsoft Rewards points instead of cash. That's the “free” option I mentioned in the title of this alert. If you're not familiar with it, the [Microsoft Rewards program](#) issues points when you're signed in to your Microsoft account and engage in certain activities. For example, you can pick up points for searching with Bing or playing little games on the Web — such as taking daily quizzes.

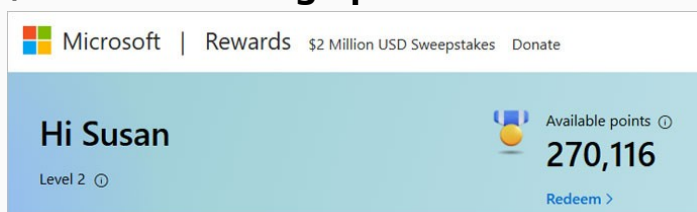
Microsoft is making updates to Windows 10 to provide an “enrollment wizard” within Windows, either via notifications or in Settings. That's a nice touch that should make the process nearly painless. The company says the wizard is available today to Windows Insiders and will start to roll out to the rest of us in July, with August targeted for “wide availability.” As you apply regular updates to Windows 10, check to see whether the enrollment wizard has appeared.

The wizard will offer the following enrollment options:

- ☐ Use Windows Backup to sync your settings to the cloud. (We're not clear about this one, so check my future columns. I'll let you know exactly what it means. It may just be an incentive to get you to use Windows Backup.)
- ☐ Redeem 1,000 Microsoft Rewards points. (You can log in to the [console](#) to see whether you have enough points.)
- ☐ Pay \$30 USD; local pricing may vary.

I'll be watching for the enrollment wizard and will write about it soon.

Wait, do I have enough points?



Why, yes. Yes, I do.

I'm glad, at least, that we've finally gotten some clarification from Microsoft about ESUs. Why the

vendors I've used for so long were unable to help me remains a mystery, but perhaps now I'll get some straight answers from them, too.

Contribute *your* thoughts
in this alert's forum!

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