

Microsoft 365 Business Basic Explained

As the name suggests, Microsoft 365 Business Basic is the firm's entry-level productivity suite. And while that does mean you get fewer features, it also brings the cost down: in the UK it's £4.90. All the prices here are based on an annual subscription purchase, and all the prices we've mentioned here don't include sales taxes.

For that money you get access to a host of popular apps. You can use web, Android and iOS versions of [Word](#), [Excel](#), [PowerPoint](#), [OneNote](#) and [Outlook](#), and you also get access to Exchange so you can use your domain name for emails.

Collaborative working is possible in documents and spreadsheets, and files are saved and synced across all of your devices with OneDrive and SharePoint.

If you want these apps as desktop versions, you can pay £8.60 for Microsoft 365 Apps for Business, which gives you downloadable office apps instead of web versions but without Teams.

Beyond that, the Basic tier includes 1TB of [cloud storage](#) for each user, business-class email with 50GB of space per mailbox, custom domain names and full calendar capabilities. You can use Teams to plan schedules, track information with Lists, interact with customers through Bookings and get feedback with Forms.

Security comes from Exchange Online Protection, and Microsoft's software adheres to critical international and industry-standard security and privacy protocols. Admins can deploy custom permissions and groups to restrict access to sensitive data. The Basic product supports 300 users.

That's a solid start that'll sate many small and medium-sized businesses, but the Basic tier lacks many advanced features.

Microsoft 365 Business Standard explored

You'll get more versatility if you upgrade to Microsoft 365 Standard, which costs £10.30 per user per month.

Microsoft 365 Business Standard gets off to a good start by including the same range of features as the Basic tier, including web apps, support for 300 users and 1TB of cloud storage per user.

The key addition is the ability to download and install desktop versions of Outlook, Excel, Word, PowerPoint and OneNote on your PC or Mac hardware – so you don't have to rely on online versions. PC users also get Access and Publisher, and each user can install these tools on five devices. Beyond that, Microsoft 365 Business Standard allows users to host webinars. There's one more key difference. With Business Standard, firms can choose how much control Microsoft has over your data. There's a more in-depth option that's ideal for any company that already has its own domain, but you'll need more tech know-how to get going.

If that's not suitable for your business, you can access Microsoft 365 Business Standard with email accounts from different providers instead, but you won't get as many advanced customization options. That's a process that Microsoft calls Simplified Sign-Up

Microsoft 365 Business Premium – the best option?

With Microsoft 365 Business Premium you get every other feature we've already mentioned here – including the full suite of desktop apps – alongside loads of extra security and management tools from Azure and Intune.

Business Premium users get enterprise-grade security that protects all your devices from malware and ransomware, and you can deploy Microsoft's best email protection tools to prevent your employees from falling foul of phishing messages.

You're able to restrict data sharing, prevent unauthorized users from accessing company information, and give trusted employees elevated levels of access no matter where they work, which means you get maximum versatility for hybrid staff.

Business Premium also includes wizards to help admins apply security and access changes to wide swathes of mobile and desktop devices, and apps can be automatically deployed across your organization. Updates can be applied automatically, and you can remotely wipe data from company devices in case of breaches or theft.

That's a great slate of features for any business needing better security and more control over its devices, but remember that Microsoft 365 Business Premium still only supports 300 users. And be prepared to pay more for this product, too: it costs £18.10 per user per month.