

Windows 10 to 11 Readiness Plan

The dates. Windows 10 mainstream support ended **14 October 2025**. Commercial Extended Security Updates run a maximum of three years from there, to **October 2028**.

The pricing. On the commercial track it is roughly \$61 USD per device for year one and doubles each year after. It is also **cumulative**, so joining in year two means paying for year one as well. The separate consumer ESU option is a flat single year and does not double, so check which track you are actually on.

The prerequisite nobody mentions. A machine must be running **Windows 10 version 22H2** to be eligible for ESU at all. Check that first, because an older build is a blocker before price is even a question.

ESU is a bridge, not a destination, and it is priced to make sure nobody settles on it.

The useful first step is not an upgrade. It is finding out what you actually have.

Step one, inventory

Use the companion spreadsheet on the templates page to list every machine. For each one you need: who uses it, the Windows version, the age, and whether it meets Windows 11 requirements.

Most businesses are surprised in both directions. Machines they assumed were fine are not eligible, and machines they assumed were ancient are.

Step two, sort into three groups

Upgrade in place. Eligible for Windows 11 and healthy enough to be worth it. Usually the largest group and the cheapest outcome.

Replace. Not eligible, or old enough that replacement was due anyway. Budget for these and spread them across quarters rather than buying all at once.

Keep on ESU temporarily. Machines tied to software that will not run on Windows 11 yet. This should be a short list with a date attached to each one.

Step three, sequence it

- ☐ Do one machine first, belonging to someone patient, and see what breaks
- ☐ Confirm your line of business software is supported on Windows 11 before going further
- ☐ Check anything with a physical attachment: label printers, scanners, payment terminals, lab or shop floor equipment. Drivers are where upgrades actually fail
- ☐ Then batch the rest, a few at a time, rather than all at once

Step four, do not forget

- ☐ Confirm backups are running before you touch anything
- ☐ Note which machines hold local data that is not backed up to the cloud
- ☐ Securely wipe and dispose of replaced machines

The trap

Leaving it until the deadline. The upgrade itself is quick. Discovering that a critical piece of equipment has no Windows 11 driver is not, and that discovery is the part that needs lead time.

Version 1.0, August 2026. Figures in Canadian dollars unless stated. Checked at time of writing; verify anything time-sensitive before relying on it.

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