

Azure Hybrid Benefit FAQ

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– What is the Azure Hybrid Benefit?

The Azure Hybrid Benefit helps you get more value from your Windows Server licenses and save up to 40 percent* on virtual machines. You can use the benefit with Windows Server Datacenter and Standard edition licenses covered with Software Assurance or Windows Server Subscriptions. Depending on the edition, you can convert or re-use your licenses to run Windows Server virtual machines in Azure and pay a lower base compute rate (Linux virtual machine rates).

* Actual savings may vary based on region, instance type, or usage.

– What is the base compute rate?

The base compute rate that is used to calculate the Azure Hybrid Benefit is equal to the Linux rate (</en-us/pricing/details/virtual-machines/linux/>) for virtual machines.

– What products are eligible for the Azure Hybrid Benefit?

The Azure Hybrid Benefit is applicable to Windows Server Standard and Datacenter Editions.

– What does this benefit offer?

Each 2-processor license or each set of 16-core licenses are entitled to two instances of up to 8 cores, or one instance of up to 16 cores. The Azure Hybrid Benefit for Standard Edition licenses can only be used once either on-premises or in Azure. Datacenter Edition benefits allow for simultaneous usage both on-premises and in Azure.

– Who is eligible for this offer?

The Azure Hybrid Benefit is available if you own Windows Server Standard or Datacenter edition licenses with active Software Assurance or Windows Server Subscriptions. It is not restricted to any specific licensing program.

– Can I use my Windows Server licenses both on-premises and in the cloud?

Datacenter Edition customers can use licenses both on-premises and in Azure. Standard Edition customers can convert the license; once you assign the Azure Hybrid Benefit to Azure, however, you cannot use the Standard Edition license on-premises.

– How do I activate the Azure Hybrid Benefit?

If you are an Azure user, then you can activate your Hybrid Benefit using the following options

- You can deploy Windows Server virtual machines pre-configured with the Azure Hybrid Benefit straight from the Azure Portal for Windows Server 2016 Datacenter, Windows Server 2012 Datacenter, Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter and Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1. You can also go to the Azure Marketplace (<https://azuremarketplace.microsoft.com/en-us/marketplace/apps/Microsoft.WindowsServer?tab=Overview>) and select **Get it now**
- You can upload a custom virtual machine (<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/virtual-machines/windows/hybrid-use-benefit-licensing>).
- You can migrate existing workloads with Azure Site Recovery (</en-us/blog/hybrid-use-benefit-migration-with-asr/>) (free for first 31 days).

– Do I need to use Azure Marketplace gallery images or Azure Portal images for virtual machines that match my Standard and Datacenter licenses?

We offer four images that you can use with either Datacenter or Standard licenses—no need to match the image with your edition. If you own Standard Edition, for example, you can use the Datacenter Edition images. Here is a list of the images:

- Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1
- Windows Server 2012 Datacenter
- Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter
- Windows Server 2016 Datacenter

– When will the Azure Hybrid Benefit be available?

The Azure Hybrid Benefit has been available for new Azure workloads as of February 2016.

– Can I apply this benefit to Azure virtual machines retroactively?

Yes, you can. The "retroactive tagging" feature enables you to tag your existing VMs to enjoy this benefit. Find out more about how to use Azure Hybrid Benefit (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaHz5QOCWi4&t=138s>).

– Is the Azure Hybrid Benefit available in my region?

The Azure Hybrid Benefit is available in all Azure cloud regions.

– Can I apply the Azure Hybrid Benefit to products other than Windows Server?

No, the Azure Hybrid Benefit is applicable only to Windows Server Standard and Datacenter editions. Separately, you can use License Mobility (</en-us/pricing/license-mobility/>) to deploy existing SQL Server licenses in the cloud without additional fees.

– Does the 90-day license reassignment rule in the Product Terms apply to the Azure Hybrid Benefit?

Yes, there is a 90-day assignment rule for Windows Server, which requires licenses to stay assigned to the same hardware for a minimum of 90 days. This rule also applies to Azure virtual machines.

– How many Azure virtual machines do I receive for my on-premises licenses?

For every 2-processor Windows Server license or Windows Server license with 16-cores covered with Software Assurance, you will receive either of the following:

- Up to two virtual machines with up to 8 cores or
- One virtual machine with up to 16 cores.

Note: For VMs where some of the cores are suppressed only count the cores available in the resulting VM, not the core count of the original VM size.

– Can I run virtual machines with more than 16 cores?

Yes, you may run virtual machines with more than 16 cores by stacking licenses. For example, for two 2-processor licenses or 32 cores licenses, you may run a virtual machine with up to 32 cores.

– Is Windows Server licensed through the Core Infrastructure Suite program eligible for the Azure Hybrid Benefit?

If you licensed Windows Server through Core Infrastructure Suite (CIS), you can use the Azure Hybrid Benefit. The System Center component in CIS, however, is not covered.

– If I purchased Azure via a Microsoft partner (such as a Cloud Solution Provider), am I eligible for the Azure Hybrid Benefit?

Yes, you are eligible for the Azure Hybrid Benefit for purchases through partners that resell Azure Infrastructure, provided you have active Software Assurance coverage. For example, if you purchase Azure via a Cloud Solution Provider, you are eligible for the Azure Hybrid Benefit.

– Does this benefit apply to nested virtualization?

Yes, we support the nested virtualization on Azure Hybrid Benefit, without requiring the customer to allocate additional Windows Server licenses for the nested VMs.