



Update Roundup



Windows 21H1 is due out soon

The next semi-annual update to Windows 10 will probably show up around May 20th. It will be labeled as “21H1” for “2021 First Half.” Most users won’t notice this one, if all goes well. It’s a small upgrade with a short reboot, if installing over the most-recent update, 20H2. As pre-announced, it has few new features; it’s basically what we used to call a “roll-up” of small patches issued in the past 6 months. There’s more here, at the Windows Blog:

<https://blogs.windows.com/windowsexperience/2021/02/17/introducing-the-next-feature-update-to-windows-10-version-21h1/>

The Semi-Annual updates for Windows 10 receive security patches for only 18 months.

- Version 20H1 Stops receiving updates May 2022.
- Version 2004 Stops receiving updates December 14th, 2021
- Version 1909 Stops receiving updates May 12, 2021.

- All older versions have already stopped receiving updates.

I maintain a longer list of software end-of-service dates here:

<https://pc410.com/calendar>

What's your Version?



To find out what version of Windows 10 you have, click Start (that white logo) and type 'winver', and click the program that shows up in the search results. Right now, the newest version is '20H2', for October 2020, and the new version will be "21H1". Anything older than 1909 is no longer in security compliance for any business that's required to follow security rules. That's mostly government contractors, doctors, stockbrokers, and a few other categories.

New Microsoft Office, Later This Year

Microsoft Office is due to be updated late this year, probably as "Office 2022." There will be announcements of new features as we get closer to the release date, but the usual suspects are improvements in connections between Microsoft Office and Microsoft cloud services, and new ways to manipulate data in Excel.

Office 2022 is the perpetual license for Office, good for one install on one computer, and it's usable for as long as you care to use it, although these products no longer receive bug fixes after 5 years and security fixes after 7 years.

Products like Office that connect to the Internet constantly are not safe to use after the end of security patching and should be replaced once they're no longer updated. Here are the end-of-life dates for recent versions of Office:

- Office 2019 and Office 2016 end Extended Support October 14th, 2025.
- Office 2013 ends Extended Support April 11th, 2023.

- Office 2010 ended Extended Support October 13th, 2020.

To avoid all of the expiration issues and to always keep everyone on the same version of Office, Microsoft encourages the purchase of Microsoft 365, which was known as Office 365 until very recently. That's the subscription version. As it includes up to 5 installs of Office for each user, it can be cheaper than the perpetual version for any user with multiple computers, and it includes team collaboration features and email hosting in the monthly price. Call me if you're considering making the switch.

Edge Legacy Goes Away April 13th.

Wait, what is that? And why would we care? 'Edge Legacy' is the browser created by Microsoft to be the default browser in Windows 10, replacing Internet Explorer. There are two versions of Edge. The second version is based on Chromium, which is the free, open-source code that Google uses to create the Google Chrome Browser. So the older Chrome edition is going away. Unlike most recent Microsoft products that have reached end-of-life, you won't have a choice on this one; Microsoft will uninstall legacy Edge during the April Patch Tuesday updates, on April 13th or soon after, and replace it with the Chromium version. If you already have the Chromium version, nothing will change; Microsoft has been offering it as a recommended change for months now.

Here are the logos, so you can keep score:



So that's the ancient Internet Explorer 11 on the left, which should no longer be used by anyone; it's not secure, and it can't display many web site layouts. Time to move on, but Microsoft isn't uninstalling it automatically yet, as some ancient proprietary systems still can't use a modern browser.

In the center is the logo for Edge Legacy, which will disappear soon, and be replaced with the third logo, and Edge built on Chromium. As the code used to create Edge is used first for Google Chrome, the menus and settings are similar.

Here's more on the transition, at Microsoft:

<https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/microsoft-365-blog/new-microsoft-edge-to-replace-microsoft-edge-legacy-with-april-s/ba-p/2114224>

Patch Automation

There are also the usual patches for Firefox, Chrome, Adobe, and many other programs. It's possible to have them install quietly in the background without interrupting your work; this prevents employees from clicking 'allow' on something they shouldn't. Call me to automate patching; it's \$20/computer/year, or included in all service plans.



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