

K² Technologies Monthly Blast

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Office 2013 vs. Office 365

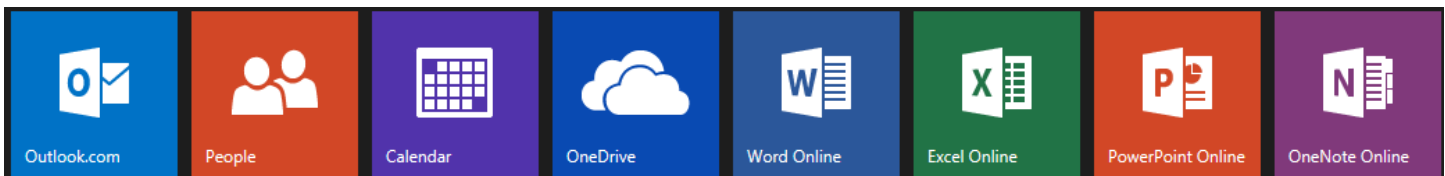
You're getting ready to upgrade your office suite and you need to know what package to buy? At first look, Microsoft has overly complicated that decision by offering different versions of Office 2013 (do I need the version with Access or not?), which is something they usually do, but now there is a whole new category that you have to consider—Office 365.

What is the main difference between Office 2013 and Office 365?

Office 2013 is the 'traditional' version—you get a disc in a box with a license key (or you can download from the internet). You pay once, install it on one computer and can keep it forever. Office 2013 comes in three flavors (or versions, if you prefer). Each version includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote. Office Home & Student 2013 includes only the 4 base programs and is the least expensive. Office Home & Business 2013 is more expensive, but includes the 4 base programs plus Outlook. The only other version is Office Professional 2013 and includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook, and adds Publisher and Access. It is the most expensive. No matter which version you buy, you can only install it on one computer.

Office 365 is the Office version that users can purchase and install on their desktops (just like Office 2013), but it offers additional features and a different payment system. As an Office 365 user, you get all of the programs in Office Professional (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook, Publisher, and Access). You also get online storage, Skype minutes, and Microsoft tech support. In addition, depending on the price you pay, you can install the whole suite on 5 computers and 5 tablets (or other devices). The big difference is that you don't pay once. You pay a subscription—either annual or monthly—and can only use the programs for as long as you stay subscribed.

Office 2013 is paid once for one machine and Office 365 is a subscription on up to 5 machines.



Which one is right for me?

Finding the right version for you and your business (or family) really depends on how you will be using the programs and how many of you will need them. Obviously, if you occasionally use Word or Excel on your home computer or laptop, you probably don't need (or want) an ongoing subscription and will save money by purchasing one of the Office 2013 versions. As of this writing, Office Home & Student 2013 was \$139.99. If you use the suite for at least two years, that comes out to \$5.83 per month.

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If you purchase a subscription to Office 365 Home, you pay \$9.99 per month or \$99 per year (and annual subscription saves you roughly \$20 over the year then). Up front, this may seem like a no-brainer and in order to save the money, you should buy the Office 2013 version. Here's where the catch is—you don't get Outlook, Publisher, or Access with Office Home & Student. You can only install the software on 1 computer. With the higher (slightly) price, you get the extra software, Skype minutes, online storage (20 GB), and can install on 5 computers. So, Office 365 Home & Business for 2 years on 5 computers costs \$9.99 a month (\$239.76 total) or \$99 per year (\$198 total). If you only need Office 365 on one computer, the price is even lower. You get all the same features (all the programs, skype, online storage, etc.) for \$6.99/month (or \$69.99/year) with Office 365 Personal. The caveat—you install on one computer and one device—tablet, phone, etc.

Comparing apples to apples here means that Office Home & Student 2013 for one computer is the \$139.99 (\$5.83/month for 2 years). Office 365 Personal for two years is \$167.76 if you pay monthly or \$139.98 total if you pay yearly. Surprise! That's nearly the same exact price for Office Home & Student 2013 and Office 365 Personal. The advantage here goes to Office 365 because you get more features and functions. And if Microsoft updates Word, Excel, etc. to Office 2014 or Office 2015 subscribers will be automatically updated. Office 2013 purchasers will have to buy it all over again.

Of course, if you want Publisher, Access, and Outlook you have to spend up to \$399.99 for Office Professional 2013. And what if you wanted all of those for 5 computers for your office? You'd have to buy 5 copies at \$399.99 each. That starts to add up very quickly.

Seriously, what should I do?

Bottom line is this: Microsoft is very heavily biased in favor of Office 365 and the subscription path. They loaded Office 365 with features and made it pretty attractive from a monetary standpoint. In fact, about the only time that it makes more sense to buy Office 2013 is if you buy Home & Student or Home & Office and use it for 2 years or more on only one computer. If you travel or have to do any work out of the office, it probably isn't feasible.

If you have to have Office on more than one computer and other devices, Office 365 is probably your best bet. Sure, a subscription seems expensive, but if you upgrade more than once every 4 years, would like some significant online storage, and need Office on multiple computers, you're probably saving hundreds, if not thousands of dollars over time.



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