

Microsoft launches Teams Essentials for small businesses

Microsoft has announced the general availability of Teams Essentials, the first-ever standalone Microsoft Teams offering, designed specifically for small businesses. "We know how difficult the past 20 months have been for small businesses. They've had to demonstrate extreme flexibility to adapt, often with limited access to tools and technology," said Jared Spataro, corporate vice president of Modern Work at Microsoft. "Teams Essentials is built specifically to meet the unique needs of small businesses, enabling them to thrive in this new era of work."





Teams Essentials provides the following features:

- Unlimited group meetings for up to 30 hours
- Meetings with up to 300 people
- 10 GB of cloud storage per user

Teams Essentials also includes existing and new capabilities available in the free version of Teams to meet the needs of small businesses:

- Simple, easy invitations require only an email address. Users are not required to sign up, sign in or install Teams to participate in a meeting.
- In addition to Outlook Calendar integration, new Google Calendar integration makes it easy to schedule meetings in Microsoft Teams.
- Professional meeting tools and capabilities like meeting lobby, virtual backgrounds, Together mode, live closed captions and live reactions.
- Never lose context or continuity with always-available chats in Microsoft Teams.
- Quickly start a group project and host meetings with anyone, assign tasks to teammates, and create polls to receive feedback quickly all in one hub with the new small-business group chat template. *Coming soon to desktop and web

Microsoft Teams (free)	New Microsoft Teams Essentials	Most popular Microsoft 365 Business Basic	Microsoft 365 Business Standard
Free <small>(No commitment) Price does not include VAT.</small>	R61,70 <small>user/month</small> <small>(Annual subscription—automatically renewed) Price does not include VAT.</small>	R77,10 <small>user/month</small> <small>(Annual subscription—automatically renewed) Price does not include VAT.</small>	R192,80 <small>user/month</small> <small>(Annual subscription—automatically renewed) Price does not include VAT.</small>
Sign up for free	Buy now	Try free for one month	Try free for one month
Learn more >		Buy now >	Buy now >
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unlimited group meetings for up to 60 minutes ✓ Up to 100 participants per meeting ✓ 5 GB of cloud storage per user ✓ Unlimited chat with coworkers and customers ✓ File sharing, tasks, and polling ✓ Data encryption for meetings, chats, calls, and files 	<p>Everything in the free version, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unlimited group meetings for up to 30 hours ✓ Up to 300 participants per meeting ✓ 10 GB of cloud storage per user ✓ Anytime phone and web support 	<p>Everything listed in Microsoft Teams Essentials, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Team meetings recordings with transcripts ✓ Web and mobile versions of Office apps ¹ ✓ Expanded cloud storage of 1 TB per user ✓ Business-class email ✓ Standard security <p>Office apps and services</p> 	<p>Everything listed in Microsoft 365 Business Basic, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Desktop versions of Office apps with premium features ✓ Webinar hosting ✓ Attendee registration and reporting tools ✓ Manage customer appointments <p>Office apps and services</p> 

According to LinkedIn data, SMB open job postings are up 81.9% year over year compared to 1 November 2020. More than ever, small businesses need the flexibility to hire from anywhere and technology opens the door to new employee workstyles, such as synchronous and asynchronous collaboration.

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