Windows Product Key vs Digital License – Differences

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You can use a product key or digital license to activate Windows 10/11. Windows product key vs digital license, what's the difference between these two Windows activation methods? This post gives some explanations. If you have other computer problems, you may find solutions from MiniTool Software website.

On This Page :

You can use a product key or digital license to activate your Windows computer. Windows product key vs digital license, are they the same? This post introduces the difference between Windows product key and digital license.

Depending on how you get the copy of Windows 10/11, you will either get a 25-character product key or a digital license to activate your computer.

Windows Digital License vs Product Key – Definition

A Windows product key is a 25-character code that you can use to activate Windows. A Windows digital license is also called a digital entitlement. It is a new Windows activation method that doesn't need to enter a product key.

Windows Product Key vs Digital License – Different Activation Message

If you activate Windows with a digital license, on the Activation page, you will see a message "Windows is activated with a digital license" or "Windows is activated with a digital license linked to your Microsoft account". If you activate Windows with a product key, you may only see a message "Windows is activated".

10 Best Free Product Key Finder Software for Windows 10/11

This post introduces the top 10 free product key finder software. You can choose a preferred key finder to find your Windows 10/11 key or other products' keys.

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How to Find Windows Product Key or Digital License

You can find the 25-character product key by running the command **wmic path SoftwareLicensingService get OA3xOriginalProductKey** in Windows Command Prompt. However, you can't find anything if you activate Windows 10/11 with a digital license.

When You Will Get a Product Key or Digital License

If you purchase a copy of Windows 10/11 from the Microsoft Store app, then you will have a digital license for that device. You need to activate the device with a digital license. However, if you buy Windows 11/10 from Microsoft Store online in the browser, you will have a product key and you can find your product key in the order email.

If you previously installed and activated Windows 10/11 with a product key, then you will also need to enter a product key when you reinstall Windows 10/11 OS. If you activated Windows with a digital license before, then you will also need to activate your computer with the digital license.

If you buy a PC that came with Windows 11/10, then you will have a product key. Generally, you can find your product key either on the device packaging or on the Certificate of Authenticity (COA) attached to your device.

If you upgrade to Windows 11 from an eligible device running a genuine copy of Windows 10/8.1/7, you will get a digital license.

If you buy a digital copy of Windows 11/10 from an authorized retailer, you will have a product key and you can find your product key on the confirmation email after buying Windows 11/10.

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Fix Windows 11/10 Digital License Not Working

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Fix Windows 11/10 Digital License Not Working – 10 Tips

Microsoft allows users to activate Windows with a digital license. If Windows digital license is not working, you can check the 10 tips to fix this issue.

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Windows Product Key vs Digital License – Activation

As for the activation, Windows digital license is associated with your computer hardware and is normally linked to your Microsoft account. When your PC is connected to the internet and you log in to your Microsoft account, your PC will be activated.

If you intend to activate Windows 10/11 using a product key, you can enter a product key during the installation. After installation, you can click Start -> Settings -> System -> Activation -> Change product key, and enter your product key to activate Windows 11. For Windows 10, you need to click Start -> Settings -> Update & Security -> Activation -> Change product key to enter the product key.

Tip: If you make a big hardware change to your computer and your computer isn't activated, you can run the Activation Troubleshooter to reactivated Windows 10/11. You may also run this tool to fix Windows 11/10 activation key not working and other Windows activation errors.

Verdict

Windows digital license vs product key, these are the differences between them. You can choose a preferred method to activate your Windows 10/11 computer. Make sure your Windows 10/11 edition matches your license.

Windows 11 Supported Intel Processors/CPUs

This post lists the Windows 11 supported Intel processors. You can check if your computer's Intel processor supports Windows 11 upgrade.

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About The Author

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Alisa is a professional English editor with 4-year experience. She loves writing and focuses on sharing detailed solutions and thoughts for computer problems, data recovery & backup, digital gadgets, tech news, etc. Through her articles, users can always easily get related problems solved and find what they want. In spare time, she likes basketball, badminton, tennis, cycling, running, and singing. She is very funny and energetic in life, and always brings friends lots of laughs.