

Activate Microsoft Windows / Windows Server

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Activate Windows

A Windows obtained from the MS Downloads portal (formerly Campus Sachsen) activates automatically by default. If activation does not occur automatically, you can perform it manually.

After installation, you have 30 days to activate. Systems that have not been activated via Key Management Service (KMS) switch to Reduced Function Mode (RFM). After 180 days at the latest, a previously activated Windows must be reactivated. This reactivation takes place automatically. If changes are made to the computer's hardware, reactivation may be necessary.

Requirements

- You have a computer with Windows 10 (Education/LTSC) or Windows 11 (Education), which you obtained via the portal [1]MS-Downloads (formerly Campus Sachsen).
- Your computer is connected to the TU Dresden network. If necessary, establish a VPN connection using [2]JeduVPN with the profile selection "TUD VPN full".

Note: A connection via Eduroam is not part of the TU Dresden network.
- You have administrative access on your computer: you are logged in with administrative privileges or can run a Windows Command Prompt "Run as administrator" prompt.

Test connection

Test the connection to the activation server using PowerShell. To do this, start a PowerShell session by pressing the Windows key and entering the PowerShell search command, then selecting the program and running the following command:

```
test-netconnection kms.zih.tu-dresden.de -port 1688
```

The response "TcpTestSucceeded : True" indicates an intact connection. If you get "False" here, the VPN connection should not work either.

Test of the connection in the PowerShell
Activation via script

Under Attachments you will find the script "activate_windows.cmd" for activation. Start it by double-clicking and answer Yes to "Do you want to allow this app to make changes to your device?". The activation is then carried out.

Perform activation manually Start Command Prompt

Start the Windows Command Prompt with administrative rights: Press the Windows key and type cmd. Then select the Run as administrator option. Answer Yes to "Do you want to allow this app to make changes to your device?".

Open Windows Command Prompt

You will now see a Command Prompt window with the heading "Administrator: Command Prompt". Execute the following commands in it. The first one sets the KMS server, the second one registers your system with the KMS.

```
slmgr.vbs -skms kms.zih.tu-dresden.de:1688  
slmgr.vbs -ato
```

If the activation is successful, the message "Windows 10 is being activated...The product has been successfully activated." appears. This means that your system has been successfully registered with the KMS server. Windows

will now periodically contact the KMS server to confirm its existence or to automatically reactivate itself.

Activation via command prompt

Possible error messages

Error message Solution

Error: 0xC004F025 It was reported by the Software Licensing Service that the operation requires administrator permissions. The slmgr commands were given in a Windows shell that was NOT run AS ADMINISTRATOR. Right-click on created shell icon and select "Run as administrator".

Error: 0xC004F035 The Software Licensing Service reported that the computer could not be activated with the Volume License Product Key. This error indicates that the computer does not have a Windows marker in the BIOS, which is present on OEM systems and indicates computers that ship with qualifying versions of Windows, which is a prerequisite for KMS client activation (occurs more often on Lenovo Thinkpads).

Error: 0xC004F038 The computer could not be activated, the number returned by the key management service was insufficient. At least 25 Windows systems have not reported to the KMS server so far. This error should no longer occur because the minimum number of client systems has been reached.

Error: 0xC004F074

The KMS server is not available.

- Wrong KMS server deposited?
- Test the accessibility of the license server via tcp-port 1688

Error: 0x800706BA

The RPC server is not available. The installation media used is not from a volume licensing program.

Background Key Management Service (KMS)

The KMS runs on central activation servers, which provide and manage license information for Microsoft products from connected clients. Microsoft Windows and Office products installed by users obtain their licenses from these servers and are thus not activated vis-à-vis Microsoft, but vis-à-vis the KMS server at TU Dresden. This type of volume licensing is intended to prevent the unlawful duplication of license keys.

Reduced Functionality Mode (RFM)

A system that

- has not been activated via KMS within 30 days after initial installation
- cannot perform reactivation after 180 days following KMS activation

falls into Reduced Functionality Mode.

In this mode, the system can be started normally, but only provides users with Internet Explorer after logging in. Then, one has a few hours to perform the activation before the system shuts down without warning. If activation has not yet been performed, the time until RFM occurs is 30 days. If a KMS-enabled system can no longer reach its KMS server, it falls into RFM after 180 days plus a 30-day grace period.

[1] <https://ms-downloads.zih.tu-dresden.de/>

[2] <https://faq.tickets.tu-dresden.de/v/ItemID=1284>