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Windows Virtual Desktop User Guide

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People expect the same desktop experience every time they sign in, regardless of whether they're at home on a laptop, on the go with a phone or tablet, or at school on a shared computer. As a user, you want a consistent Windows experience anywhere—on any device. Windows Virtual Desktop does that for you, and this guide describes how to get started.

1 Discover the benefits

Windows Virtual Desktop gives you the same Windows experience regardless of the device you're on. The service offers many benefits:

- **Productive.** Windows Virtual Desktop provides the same experience from all your Windows, macOS, iOS, iPadOS, and Android devices so that you can be more productive on whatever device you use. It's like sitting at work or school but from anywhere on any device.
- **Continuous.** If your device is lost, stolen, or broken, simply get another one and pick up right where you left off. Because your Windows Virtual Desktop runs on a virtual machine (VM) in the cloud, you won't lose data, apps, or settings from the old device.
- **Secure.** Data is secure in Windows Virtual Desktop because the service stores your data in the cloud instead of on your local device. So, you can worry less about your personal or sensitive data falling into the wrong hands.
- **Fast.** With Windows Virtual Desktop, you'll experience better and more consistent performance than you might from your own device—especially on older laptops. The service provides the desired performance for all types of users, including those who typically need more powerful machines, such as engineers, animators, and graphic designers. With Windows Virtual Desktop, larger and more powerful machines can be available in minutes, and you don't need to set up expensive devices.
- **Simple.** You can quickly access work resources without worrying about signing in to a virtual private network (VPN). An internet connection is all you need to use Windows Virtual Desktop.

2 Understand Windows Virtual Desktop

Today, many companies use virtual desktop infrastructure to manage a collection of Windows VMs running in their data centers, and then allow users to access those VMs from their own devices. Windows Virtual Desktop is a cloud-based service that uses this virtualization technology; because it runs with unlimited cloud resources, it makes it easier for IT

organizations to deploy, manage, and scale the number of Windows VMs available to their users.

So, imagine if you could have a laptop that performed like it did when it was brand new, and it was impossible for you to lose it. Windows Virtual Desktop does that for you by providing a Windows VM and apps in the cloud that you can access from any device. From your Windows, macOS, iOS/iPadOS, or Android device, complete the following steps to access these virtual desktops through an easy-to-use app:

1. Download and install the Microsoft Remote Desktop app on your device.
2. Subscribe to a workspace that your IT department has made available to you.
3. Use the virtual Windows desktop and any applications available in your workspace.

A *workspace* is a group of resources that your IT department makes available to you. A workspace can include individual applications as well as one or more virtual desktops. These virtual desktops and apps look and feel like they're running on your local device. Because they live in the cloud, however, the technology is more like streaming a real-time interactive video feed to your device—not a “laggy” experience, where you have noticeable delays between selections and results but rather one in which you can make phone and video calls, watch videos, and use graphics-intensive applications. You get the same experience on every device at every location (provided you have a good internet connection).

3 Get started with Windows Virtual Desktop

You can use Windows Virtual Desktop on most modern devices that have an internet connection. You can access Windows Virtual Desktop in two ways: (1) Install the Remote Desktop app on your device or (2) access the service from a supported browser. In this section, you learn how to install and configure the Remote Desktop app for your operating system:

- [Windows devices](#)
- [macOS devices](#)
- [iOS/iPadOS devices](#)
- [Android devices](#)

To learn about the browser experience, see [Connect to Windows Virtual Desktop with the web client](#).

3.1 Windows devices

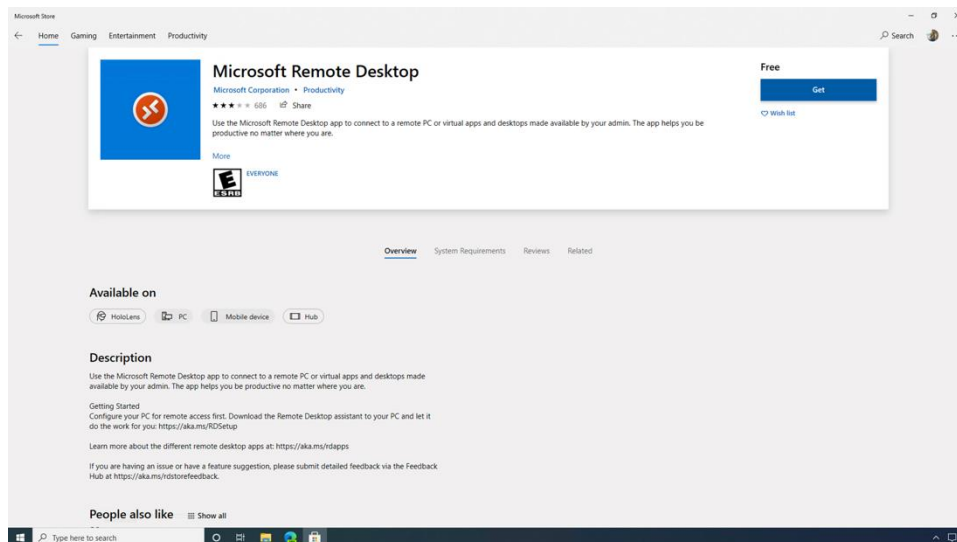
This section lists the steps to download, install, and configure the Remote Desktop Microsoft Store app on a Windows device. Then, it describes how to sign in to your virtual desktop.

To download and install the Remote Desktop app

1. Open the Microsoft Store on your Windows device.
2. In **Search**, type **Microsoft Remote Desktop**.
3. Select **Microsoft Remote Desktop** from the list.

NOTE: If you see multiple results, select the one that does not contain *Preview* or *Classic* in the name.

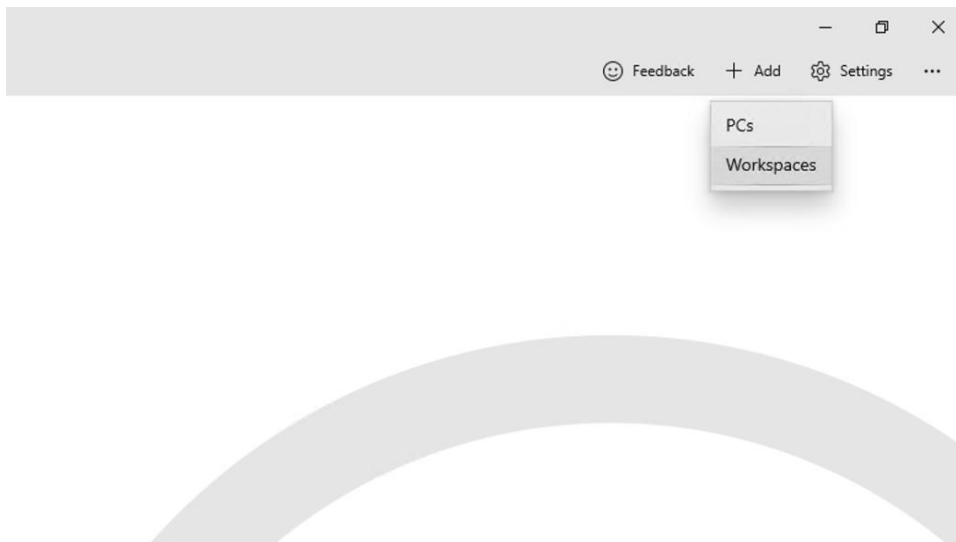
4. Select **Get** to download and install the app.



5. When installation is complete, select **Launch** to open the app.

To subscribe and sign in to your virtual desktop

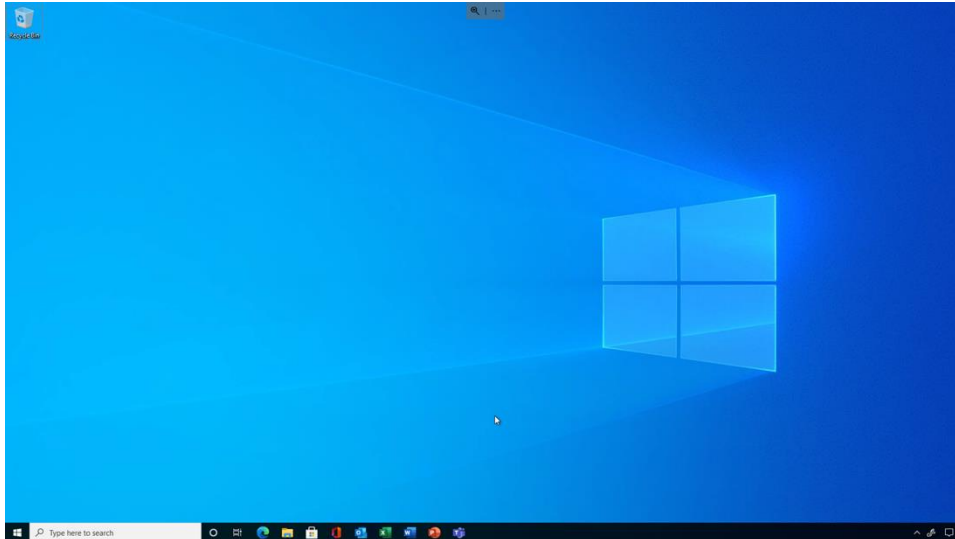
1. In the Remote Desktop app, in the top right corner, select **Add**, and then select **Workspaces**.



2. In **Email or Workspace URL**, type your work email address.
3. Select **Subscribe** to subscribe to the workspace.
4. Sign in using your work or school credentials.
5. Select the computer icon to launch your Windows Virtual Desktop.



6. Sign in to your virtual desktop as you would sign in to any other Windows device.

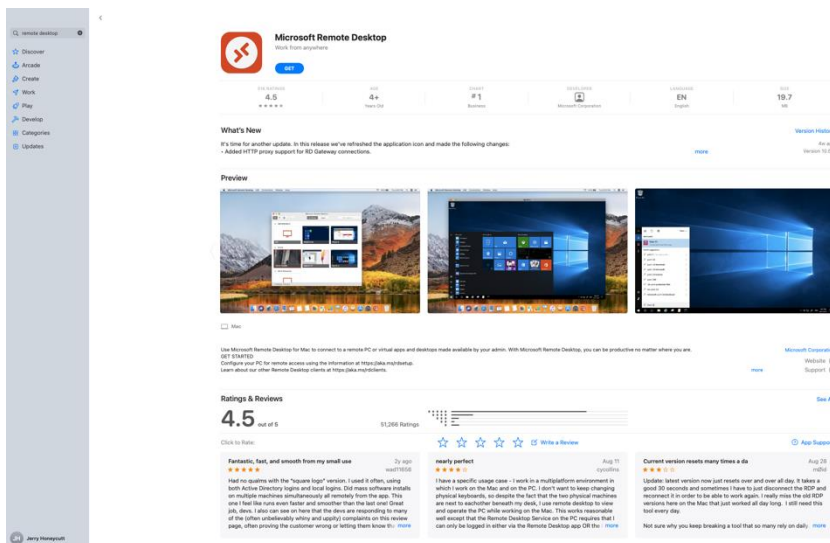


3.2 macOS devices

This section lists the steps to download, install, and configure the Remote Desktop app on a macOS device. Then, it describes how to sign in to your virtual desktop.

To download and install the Remote Desktop app

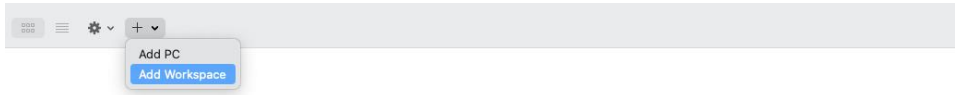
1. Open App Store on your macOS device.
2. In **Search**, type **Microsoft Remote Desktop**, and then press Return.
3. From the results list, select **Microsoft Remote Desktop**.
4. Select **Get**, and then select **Install** to download and install the app.



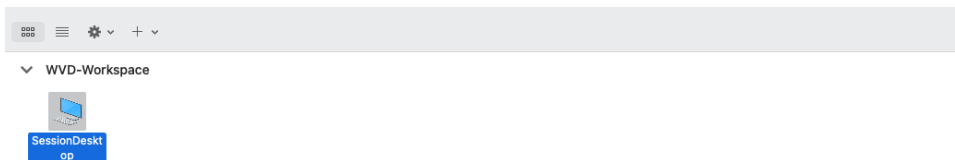
5. When installation is complete, select **Open** to open the app.

To subscribe and sign in to your virtual desktop

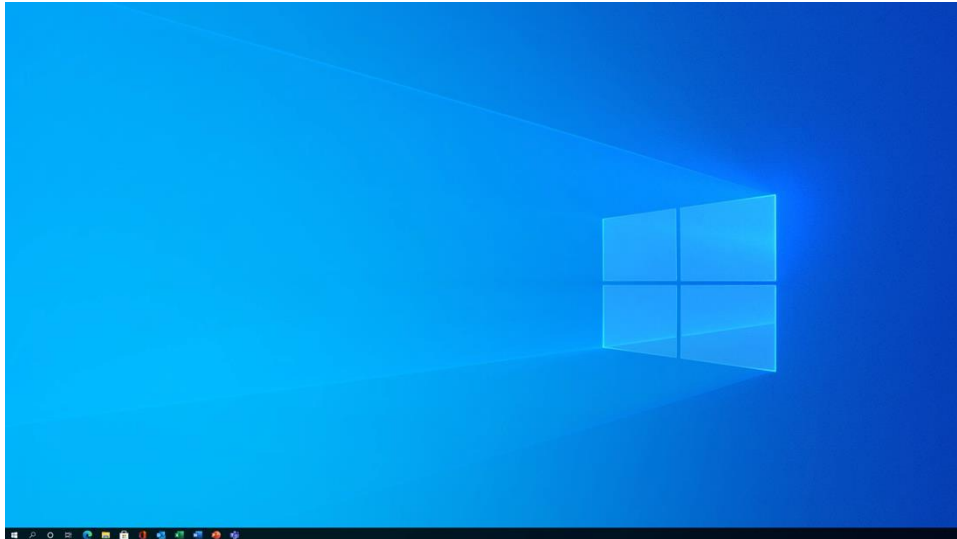
1. In the Remote Desktop app, select the Plus sign (+), and then select **Add Workspace** to get started.



2. In **Add Workspace**, type your work email address.
3. When a URL appears, select **Add**.
4. Sign in using your work or school credentials.
5. Select the computer icon to launch your Windows Virtual Desktop.



6. Sign in to your virtual desktop as you would to any Windows device.

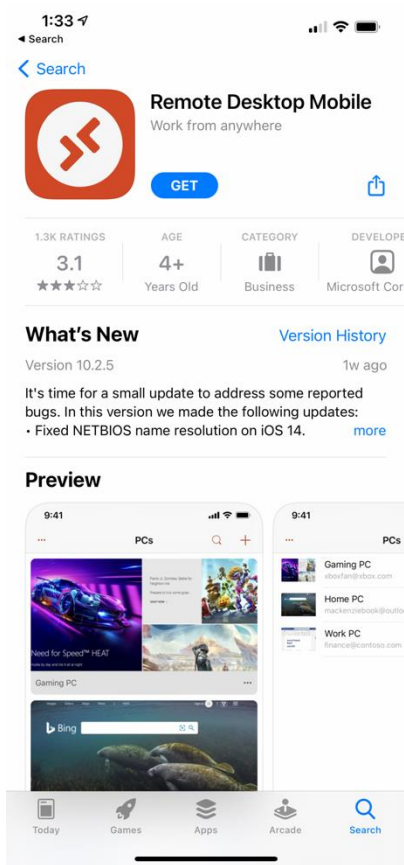


3.3 iOS/iPadOS devices

This section lists the steps to download, install, and configure the Remote Desktop app on an iOS or iPadOS device. Then, it describes how to sign in to your virtual desktop.

To download and install the Remote Desktop app

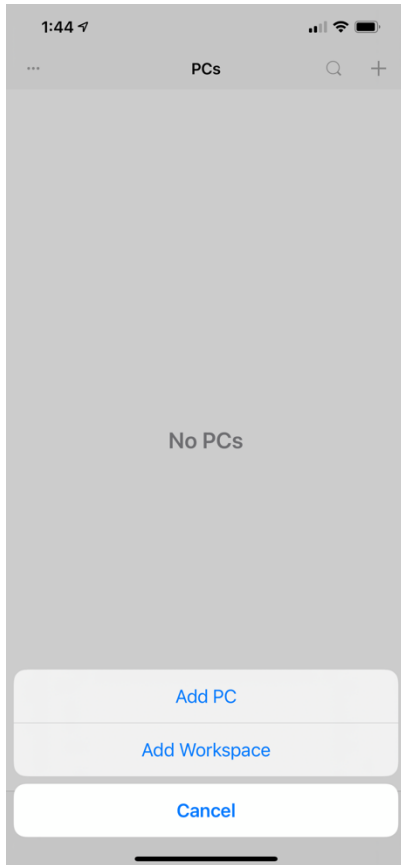
1. Open App Store on your iOS/iPadOS device.
2. In **Search**, type **Microsoft Remote Desktop**, and then select **Search**.
3. Select **Get**, and then select **Install** to download and install the app.



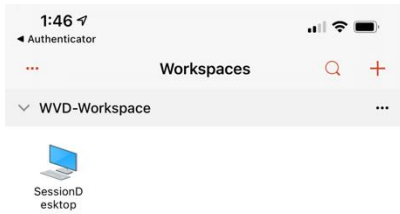
4. When installation is complete, select **Open** to open the app.

To subscribe and sign in to your virtual desktop

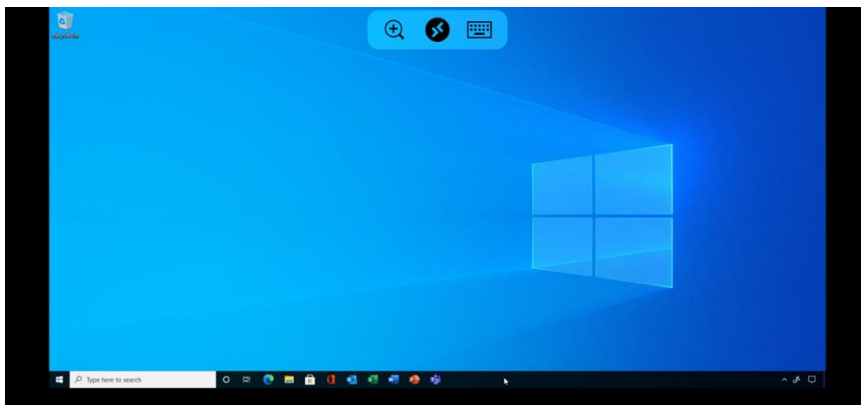
1. In the Remote Desktop app, select the Plus sign (+), and then select **Add Workspace** to get started.



2. In **Add Workspace**, type your work or school email address.
3. When a URL appears, select **Next**.
4. Sign in using your work or school credentials.
5. Select the computer icon to launch your Windows Virtual Desktop.



6. Sign in to your virtual desktop as you would any Windows device.



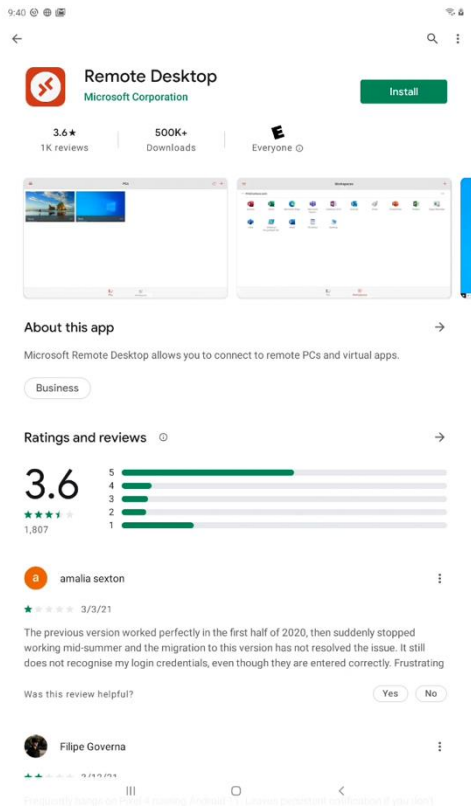
3.4 Android devices

This section lists the steps to download, install, and configure the Remote Desktop app on an Android device. Then, it describes how to sign in to your virtual desktop.

To download and install the Remote Desktop app

1. Open the Play Store on your Android device.

2. In **Search**, type **Microsoft Remote Desktop**, and then select **Search**.
3. Beside **Remote Desktop**, select **Install** to download and install the app.



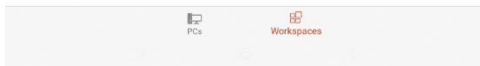
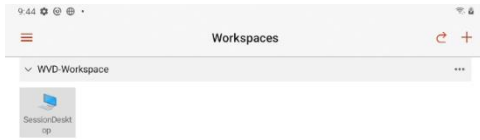
4. When installation is complete, select **Open** to open the app.

To subscribe and sign in to your virtual desktop

1. Review the user agreement, and then select **Accept**.
2. In the Remote Desktop app, in the top right corner, select the Plus sign (+), and then select **Remote Resource Feed**.



3. In **Add Workspace**, type your work or school email address, and then select **Next**.
4. When a discovered URL appears, select **Next**.
5. Sign in using your work or school credentials.
6. Select the computer icon to launch your Windows Virtual Desktop.



7. Sign in to your virtual desktop as you would any Windows device.



4 Explore more benefits

When you've signed in to Windows Virtual Desktop, here are three things to try:

- **Open and use your Microsoft apps.** With Windows Virtual Desktop, you should have access to the Microsoft apps you're familiar with, such as Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- **Call someone by using Microsoft Teams.** Making a Teams call is a good example of the high performance you'll experience in your new virtual desktop.
- **Notice that you can access company resources.** Because these VMs are located within your organization's network boundary, you should be able to access all your familiar shared content—without having to connect to a VPN.

To learn more about Windows Virtual Desktop, go to aka.ms/WVD-EndUser.

5 Glossary

As you're learning about Windows Virtual Desktop, you may encounter the following terms:

Virtual desktop. A Windows desktop running in a VM in the Microsoft cloud

Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI). A desktop virtualization platform that provides the foundation for Windows Virtual Desktop

Windows Virtual Desktop. A cloud-based service running in Microsoft Azure that virtualizes client or server operating systems for end users or IT pros to use from any compatible device

Workspace. A collection of apps and virtual desktops that your IT department publishes for use in Windows Virtual Desktop