

CAL Suite Bridges

Licensing guidance

Summary

Client Access License (CAL) Suite Bridges support customers transitioning from on-premises to the cloud by enabling existing CAL Suite customers to keep access rights to on-premises workloads, meet organization-wide commitments for CAL Suites, and receive platform discounts when they license their users for certain Online Service subscriptions. The CAL Suite Bridges include the Server CALs that are not available in the Online Service subscriptions, thereby “bridging” the gap between the CAL Suite and the Online Service subscription.

This guidance is intended to provide clarity for licensing CAL Suite Bridges. It is not designed to introduce new or supplement existing terms but rather provide insight into this topic and the intent of existing guidance.

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Overview of CAL Suite Bridges

To understand CAL Suite Bridges, you need to understand CAL Suites and the CAL and Management License (ML) equivalencies included with Online Services subscriptions. Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suites grant access rights to various server products for the licensed user or from the licensed device, as well as the rights for devices to be managed by the applicable management server products. Certain Online Services subscriptions also include rights that are equivalent to CALs and MLs.

When you transition a user from a CAL Suite to an Online Service subscription, there may be gaps. For example, Core CAL Suite includes the Base CAL for Exchange Server and Office 365 E3 includes the equivalent Base CAL rights. Core CAL Suite also includes Windows Server CAL, however Office 365 E3 does not include equivalent rights. CAL Suite Bridges fill the gaps by including only the CALs and MLS that are in the CAL Suite but not the Online Service subscription. There are different CAL Suite Bridges for transitioning from Core CAL Suite and Enterprise CAL Suite (per user and per device) to Office 365 Enterprise plans, Enterprise Mobility + Security (EMS), and Microsoft Intune. [\[View related Product Terms\]](#)

In addition to ensuring your users continue to have the rights to access your remaining on-premises server workloads, the CAL Suite Bridges also serve to maintain any organization-wide commitments for the CAL Suites, retain your Software Assurance coverage, and continue to receive any platform discounts.

For additional details and explanations of the Microsoft Core CAL and Enterprise CAL Suite, please see the [licensing guidance for Core CAL and Enterprise CAL Suites](#).

Qualifying for CAL Suite Bridges

CAL Suite Bridges are Enterprise Products, and you may only use them to satisfy an organization-wide requirement for CAL Suites for applicable licensing agreements (for example, the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement). You can only purchase CAL Suite Bridge User Subscription Licenses for users who are assigned a User Subscription License for a Qualifying Online Service. When a CAL Suite Bridge is required, you should purchase the same number of CAL Suite Bridge User Subscription Licenses as the Qualifying Online Service User Subscription Licenses. Refer to the *Prerequisites licenses and minimum/maximum quantities* section below for a list of Qualifying Online Services for each CAL Suite Bridge.

If you are a new customer, you can pair CAL Suite Bridges with Qualifying Enterprise Online Services to meet the enterprise-wide licensing commitment for your licensing agreement.

If you are an existing customer with active Software Assurance for your CAL Suites customers, you can transition to a CAL Suite Bridge along with a corresponding Qualifying Online service mid-enrollment term at your anniversary or at renewal. When transitioning mid-enrollment term, the CAL Suite Bridge is required. However, if renewing, you may choose to change your enterprise-wide commitments (for example, CAL Suite, Office, Windows), and you only need the CAL Suite Bridge if you commit to a CAL Suite enterprise-wide.

Example scenarios

Scenario 1: A new customer scenario

Situation: A current Core CAL Suite customer deployed Microsoft Exchange Server and Microsoft SharePoint Server on premises and wants to use the services included with Enterprise Mobility + Security to manage all the company's users and their PCs. The customer wants to keep Exchange Server and SharePoint Server on-premises for now.

Solution: The customer buys an Enterprise Mobility + Security E3 (EMS) subscription for each user account along with Core CAL Suite Bridge for EMS to license the user's access to Exchange Server, SharePoint Server, and Windows Server.

Scenario 2: CAL Suite Bridges for Microsoft Office 365

Situation: A current Enterprise CAL Suite customer wants to migrate users to Office 365 for email, communications, and collaboration. The customer has deployed Microsoft Exchange Server and SharePoint Server on-premises and wants to continue using on-premises Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager infrastructure to manage their company PCs. The customer also wants to continue using Windows Active Directory Rights Management Services to safeguard sensitive email, and, therefore, retain the current Active Directory structure as part of the Office 365 migration.

Solution: The customer purchases an Office 365 E3 subscription for each of the user accounts requiring cloud-enabled email communications and collaboration. The Enterprise CAL Suite capabilities of Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager, Active Directory Rights Management,

and Windows Server Active Directory aren't part of the Office 365 E3 subscription. Therefore, the customer purchases Enterprise CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365 for every Office 365 E3 user.

Scenario 3: CAL Suite Bridges for Microsoft Office 365 and Enterprise Mobility + Security

Situation: A customer currently uses all the capabilities in Core CAL Suite, such as Windows Server, Exchange Server, SharePoint Server, and Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager. The customer wants to migrate workloads to both Office 365 and Enterprise Mobility + Security Online Services, while maintaining the current Active Directory implementation to work with Enterprise Mobility + Security and Office 365.

Solution: The customer purchases the appropriate number of Office 365 user licensing subscriptions to gain cloud-enabled email and collaboration. The customer also purchases the appropriate number of Enterprise Mobility + Security licensing subscriptions for the number of devices they want to manage through the cloud. Lastly, the customer licenses the Core CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365 and Enterprise Mobility + Security to continue using Windows Server Active Directory capabilities.

Comparison of product editions

The following table provides an overview of what's included with each CAL Suite and CAL Suite Bridge. You'll find this information—as well as the CAL and ML equivalent rights included in Online Service subscriptions—in the [CAL and ML Equivalency section of the Product Terms](#).

CAL/ML	Core CAL Suite	Core CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365 (O365)	Core CAL Suite Bridge for Intune	Core CAL Suite Bridge for O365 + Intune	Core CAL Suite Bridge for EMS	Enterprise CAL (ECAL) Suite	ECAL Suite Bridge for O365	ECAL Suite Bridge for Intune	ECAL Suite Bridge for O365 + Intune	ECAL Suite Bridge for EMS
Exchange Server 2019 Standard/Enterprise Base CAL	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Exchange Server 2019 Standard Additive CAL						✓		✓		✓
SharePoint Server Subscription Edition Base CAL	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
SharePoint Server Subscription Edition Additive CAL						✓		✓		✓
Skype for Business Server 2019 Base CAL	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Skype for Business Server 2019 Additive CAL						✓		✓		✓
Windows Server 2025 Standard/Datacenter Base CAL	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Windows Server 2025 Standard/Datacenter Additive CAL (RMS)						✓	✓	✓	✓	
Windows MultiPoint Server 2016 Premium Base CAL (Academic only)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Windows MultiPoint Server 2016 Premium Additive CAL (RMS) (Academic only)						✓	✓	✓	✓	
Advanced Threat Analytics 2016 ML	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	
Microsoft Endpoint Configuration ML	✓	✓				✓	✓			
System Center Endpoint Protection 1606 ML						✓	✓			

Prerequisite licenses

This table includes the Qualifying Online Services for each CAL Suite Bridge:

CAL Suite Bridge	Parent CAL Suite	Qualifying Online Services
Core CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365	Core CAL Suite	Office 365 E1, Office 365 E3, or Office 365 E5
Core CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365 and Microsoft Intune	Core CAL Suite	Office 365 E1 and Microsoft Intune, Office 365 E3 and Microsoft Intune, or Office 365 E5 and Microsoft Intune
Core CAL Suite Bridge for Microsoft Intune	Core CAL Suite	Microsoft Intune
Core CAL Suite Bridge for Enterprise Mobility + Security	Core CAL Suite	Enterprise Mobility + Security E3 or Enterprise Mobility + Security E5
Enterprise CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365	Enterprise CAL Suite	Office 365 E3 or Office 365 E5
Enterprise CAL Suite Bridge for Office 365 and Microsoft Intune	Enterprise CAL Suite	Office 365 E3 and Microsoft Intune or Office 365 E5 and Microsoft Intune
Enterprise CAL Suite Bridge for Microsoft Intune	Enterprise CAL Suite	Microsoft Intune
Enterprise CAL Suite Bridge for Enterprise Mobility + Security	Enterprise CAL Suite	Enterprise Mobility + Security E3 or Enterprise Mobility + Security E5

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