Windows 365 Enterprise – The ultimate step-by-step deployment guide – By Robin Hobo

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Windows 365 is a cloud-based service that provides Cloud PCs to end users. It's is not just a virtual machine running in Azure. Beside an own personalized desktop in the cloud, which can be accessed from anywhere on any device, and which is optimized for Microsoft 365 including Microsoft Teams AV redirection, it comes with some nice and unique features that can be offered to end users. For example, an option to restore the Cloud PC from a snapshot without the need for an IT administrator.

For the IT administrator, Windows 365 is optimized for simplicity. It can be deployed in a few clicks (I will show that step-by-step in this post). It is fully integrated in the Microsoft Intune admin center where you can apply the same policies and publish the same applications as you do on your current Intune managed devices. So, no need for additional VDI knowledge, no need to create a complete other policy set and no need to manage separate IT environments. It also comes with a fixed price per-user per-month, no matter you many hours you use the Cloud PC in a month.

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In this post I will cover the following steps:

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- 6. Create a Provisioning Policy
- 7. Connect to the Windows 365 Cloud PC

1 - Windows 365 Enterprise requirements

The following requisites needs to be in place before you can start with the Windows 365 Enterprise Cloud PC deployment.

- An Azure subscription (if you want to make use of an own hosted vNet)
- Windows 365 Enterprise license

- Microsoft Intune + Windows 10/11 Enterprise + Azure AD P1 (or Microsoft 365 F3/E3/E5/A3/A5 licenses or Microsoft 365 Business Premium or Microsoft 365 Education Student Use Benefit subscriptions)
- Azure AD environment up and running
- Microsoft Intune environment up and running
- Optional: Azure Network configuration (vNet) up and running (including correct DNS configuration).
- Optional: "on-premises" Active directory up and running
- Optional: Site-to-Site VPN / Express route to have access to the domain controllers within the Azure Network (as an alternative the domain controllers can also run in Azure itself)
- Optional: Azure AD Connect up and running with Hybrid Azure AD configuration (computer objects for Cloud PC needs to sync to Azure)

2 - Assign Windows 365 licenses to the users

There are several ways to assign licenses to users, for example in the Microsoft Entra portal, in the Azure AD portal and in the Microsoft 365 admin center. In the Microsoft 365 admin center, there is also an option to request a free trail license, so I will cover this way.

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Open the <u>Microsoft 365 admin center</u> and navigate to **Billing > Purchase service**. Click **Windows 365**.



Under Windows 365 Enterprise, click Details



If you don't have Windows 365 licenses yet and to want to try it, you can activate a free trial license. In the **Select a plan** pull down menu you have the option to **Try for free** so you can start with Windows 365 directly.

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To assign a license to a user, navigate to **Users > Active users** and click on the user to want to assign a Windows 365 license.

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Select the Licenses and apps page and assign the Windows 365 Enterprise license.

As an alternative you can also assign licenses based on group membership in Azure AD.

3 - Configure User settings

With user settings you can determine if a user needs to get local admin rights or not. You can also configure if you want to offer the user a point-in-time restore service where snapshots of the Cloud PC are created in the frequency you configure. User settings policies are published to Azure AD groups and you can create different User settings policies for different groups of users.

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In the <u>Microsoft Intune admin center</u>, navigate to **Devices > Windows 365** and click **User settings**

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Give the policy a name and configure whether you want that users get local admin rights or not. For the point-in-time restore service a maximum of 10 snapshots will be created. So, the frequency of the restore-point determines how far you can go back with a restore.

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Select an Azure AD user group and click Next

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Click Create

4 - Create an Azure network connection (optional)

An Azure network connection can be created. This is required if you need a direct connection to your back-end environment without the need of a VPN solution. The

network needs to be already configured in Azure as a vNet. If this is not a requirement you can use the Microsoft hosted network.

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To make an Azure network connection, open the **Azure network connection** tab and click **+ Add** and choose one of the following options.

Azure AD Join: If Azure AD Join only is sufficient.

Hybrid Azure AD Join: If an (local) AD domain join is also required. Be aware that additional Intune and Azure AD Connect configuration is required for Hybrid Azure AD Join.

In this case I will choose for Azure AD Join only.

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Give the Azure Network connection a **name**. Select your **subscription**, the **resource group** and **virtual network** including the **subnet**.

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This will start the creation of the Azure network connection within the Microsoft Intune admin center.

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After a few minutes the Azure network connection is created and a "checks successful" status will be displayed (if everything is configured correctly). You can click on the status to get more info.

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If there is a warning or error you can find more information here.

5 - Create a Custom image (optional)

It is possible to create custom images for deploying the Cloud PCs. However, it is optional and personally I would try to avoid this because image management takes a lot of time and effort. With modern management it is recommended to start with a "clean as possible" installation of Windows 11 were all policies will be applied and all applications will be installed from Microsoft Intune. This gives you the most flexibility, just like with Windows Autopilot.

However, if there is an use case where custom images are useful you have the option to use it. To create a custom image, first a new Virtual Machine needs to be created in Azure. For the next steps go to the <u>Microsoft Azure Portal</u>.

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Give the virtual machine a **name**. And select the other required fields like **subscription** and **resource group**. Click **See all images**.



Search for **Windows 365** and click **Select** under **Windows 365 Cloud PC image template**.

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Monitoring & Diagnostics (2)	Windows 10 Enterprise Cloud PC, version 20H2 +	AD using Azure	sync your on-premises Active Directory with Azure AD	Office 365
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Configure the rest of the settings of the virtual machine. I'm skipping these steps for now and let everything default. Click **Review + create**

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When the virtual machine is deployed. Connect to it and make all required settings and install all required applications.

When ready, run c:\Windows\System32\Sysprep\sysprep.exe

Select Enter System Out-of-Box-Experience (OOBE) as System Cleanup Action. Make sure Generalize is selected. As Shutdown Options, select Shutdown and click OK.

Once the virtual machine has the **Stopped** status in Azure, deallocate the virtual machine.



Within the Microsoft Azure portal open the **Overview** page of the Virtual Machine and click **Capture**.

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Select the Resource group for the VM capture. You can share this image to a gallery. However, this is not a requirement for Windows 365 Enterprise Cloud PC. For now, I will skip the gallery steps and just store the image in the Azure Resource Group. Select **Automatically delete this virtual machine after creating the image** (you can't use the VM anyway since you run Sysprep). Give the image a **Name** and click **Review + Create**.

≡ Microsoft Azure 🔎 Searc	h resources, services, and docs (G+/)	Þ	Ģ	Ω	٢	0	8	MODERNWORK IT (MODERNWO
Home > Virtual machines > CloudPCN Create an image	Aaster >							×
✓ Validation passed								
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Basics								
Subscription	modernwork-it							
Resource group	CloudPC							
Region	West Europe							
Share image to Azure compute gallery	No							
Automatically delete this virtual machine after creating the image	Yes							
Name	CloudPCMaster-image-100							
Zone resiliency	Off							
Create < Pre-	vious Next > Download a template for automation							

Click Create

Microsoft Endpoint Manager	admin center			r	\$ 0 R	MODERNWORKIT (MODERNWO
≪ ♠ Home ■ Dashboard	Home > Devices Devices Windows 365 …					×
 Dashboard All services Devices Apps Endpoint security Reports Users Groups Tenant administration Troubleshooting + support 		All Cloud PCs Provision Prefresh ⊻ Export ry image or import a custom ima e name ↑↓ Image versi	ing policies Custom image □ Delete age for your Cloud PCs. Your cust • Add filter ion ↑↓ Status ↑↓	Azure network connect	on User settings an more about Cloud OS support status	PC images ↑↓ Date modified ↑↓
	Update policies for iOS/iPadOS					

Go back to the Microsoft Intune admin center, click **Custom images** and click **+ Add**.



Give the image a **Name** and an **Image version**. This must be in the "x.x.x" format, so for example, 1.0.0.

Select the subscription. The just created image will be selectable in the pull down menu. Click **Add.**

Microsoft Endpoint Manager	admin center			r 🦨	ା ଜି ଦି 🖉 м	
×	Home > Devices					
A Home	Devices Windows 3	65				×
E All services						
Devices	Android	Overview All Cloud PCs Provisioni	ng policies Custom images	Azure network connecti	on User settings	
Apps	Chrome OS (preview)	🕂 Add 🖒 Refresh 🞍 Export 🛛 [ii] Delete			
Endpoint security	🔉 Linux	Use a gallery image or import a custom image	ne for your Cloud PCs. Your custom i	images are listed below. Les	arn more about Cloud PC	images
Reports	Device enrollment	Q Search	Add filter	,		
Lusers	Enroll devices					
Sroups Groups	Provisioning	Image name ↑↓ Image versio	on ↑↓ Status ↑↓	Operating system ↑↓	OS support status $\uparrow\downarrow$	Date modified ↑↓
Tenant administration	Mindour 265	Win11-AdminImage 1.0.0	Upload pending	Not detected	Not detected	2/5/2023, 10:41:57 AM
X Troubleshooting + support	Windows 505					
	Policy					
	Compliance policies					
	Conditional access					
	Configuration profiles					
	5 Scripts					
	Group Policy analytics (preview)					
	Update rings for Windows 10 and later					
	Feature updates for Windows 10 and later					
	Quality updates for Windows 10 and later					
	Update policies for iOS/iPadOS 🛛 🖉					

The upload will now start, this may take a moment.



After the upload is complete, the status will be changed to "Upload successful".

6 - Create a Provisioning Policy

A Provisioning Policy needs to be created to provision the Cloud PC with an image of choice. You can create multiple Provisioning policies and assign them to different Azure AD security groups.

Microsoft Endpoint Manager	admin center	R 🖓 🍥 🖉 _{Modenwo} i	RK.IT (MODERNWO
«	Home > Devices		
A Home	Devices Windows	365	\times
21 Dashboard			
E All services	₽ Search «		
Devices	Android	Overview All Cloud PCs Provisioning policies Custom images Azure network connection User settings	
Apps	Chrome OS (preview)	🖒 Refresh 🞍 Export 💷 Columns	
🛼 Endpoint security	🔉 Linux	You can provision configure protect and monitor your Cloud PCs Learn more about Cloud PC setup	
Reports	Device enrollment	Failed provisioning In grace period Provisioned Provisioned with warning Provisioning Not provisioned	
Lusers	Enroll devices	0 10 10 10 15	
Sroups	Provisioning		
Tenant administration	Windows 365	Showing 1 to 5 of 5 records	of 1 Next >
X Troubleshooting + support	Windows 505		
	Policy	Device name ↑↓ Provisioning policy ↑↓ Image ↑↓ Azure network co ↑↓ PC type ↑↓ Status ↑↓	, User
	Compliance policies	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v () Not pr	rovisioned ange
	Conditional access	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v () Not pr	ovisioned elliot
	Configuration profiles	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v 1 Not pr	ovisioned darle
	Scripts	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v () Not pr	ovisioned smitl
	Group Policy analytics (preview)	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v 1 Not pr	ovisioned robin
	Update rings for Windows 10 and later		
	Feature updates for Windows 10 and later		
	Quality updates for Windows 10	•	

As you can see in the screenshot above, no provisioning policies have been created and assigned. The Cloud PCs all have the status "Not provisioned".

Microsoft Endpoint Manager a	Imin center 💀 🖗 👁 🖉 _{MODERNWORKT (MODERNWORKT (MODERNWORKT)}	
**************************************	Home > Devices	
合 Home 🚳 Dashboard	Devices Windows 365 ···· ×	
E All services	Search «	
Devices	Android	
Apps	Chrome OS (preview) + Create policy C Refresh ± Export	
Endpoint security	2 Linux Provisioning policies determine the configuration for creating a Cloud PC. Learn more about provisioning policies	
Reports	Device enrollment ho Search $ m O$ Created by Equal $ imes rac{1}{2}$ Add filter	
Groups	The first f	
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	Update rings for Windows 10 and later	
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	📰 Quality updates for Windows 10 🔹	

Open the **Provisioning policies** tab and click + **Create policy**

Microsoft Endpoint Manager a	admin center		Ģ	¢ 🕴	0	ጽ	
«	Home > Devices Windows 365 >						
A Home	Create a provisioning	policy					×
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E All services	General 2 Image 3 Co	nfiguration ④ Assignments ⑤ Review + create					A
Devices	A Cloud PC is a managed virtual PC that	users can sign in to and get work done from anywhere on any machine. These					
Apps	steps help you configure the settings nee	eded to host Cloud PCs.					
Endpoint security	Name *	CloudPC-AADJ-MSNetwork					
Reports	Description						
🙎 Users							
Sroups							
Tenant administration	Join type details						
🔀 Troubleshooting + support	Select the join type for the Cloud PCs as	signed to this policy. Learn more about join types. \overline{arphi}					
	Join type * 🕕	Azure AD Join					
		O Hybrid Azure AD Join					
	Network *	Microsoft hosted network					
		Azure network connection					
	Geography *	European Union					
	Decise *	MastEurope					
	Region ~	west Europe					
	Use single sign-on (preview) ①						
							Ť
	Previous Next						

Give the policy a **Name** and select the **Join type**. Azure AD Join or Hybrid Azure AD Join. For **Network**, select the **Microsoft hosted network**, or an existing **Azure network**

connection (see previous steps). When you select the **Microsoft hosted network**, make a selection of the **Geography** and **Region**.

Microsoft Endpoint Manager	udmin center	R 🖉 🏾 🕅 R	MODERNWORK IT (MODERNWO
Home Dashboard	Home > Devices Windows 365 > Create a provisioning policy Windows 365	Select an image PC OS image gallery	×
All services	General (2) Image (3) Configuration (4) Assignments (3) Review + create	,⊘ Şearch Image	Version
 Apps Endpoint security 	Select the image that you want to use to create the session. Or, you can create a new custom image. Learn m	Windows 11 Enterprise + OS Optimizations	22H2
Reports	Windows 11 Enterprise + Microsoft 365 Apps 22H2	Windows 11 Enterprise + Microsoft 365 Apps	22H2
👗 Users	Change	Windows 11 Enterprise + OS Optimizations	21H2
 Tenant administration Troubleshooting + support 		Windows 11 Enterprise + Microsoft 365 Apps	21H2
		Windows 10 Enterprise + OS Optimizations	22H2
		Windows 10 Enterprise + Microsoft 365 Apps	22H2
		Windows 10 Enterprise + OS Optimizations	21H2
		Windows 10 Enterprise + Microsoft 365 Apps	21H2
		Windows 10 Enterprise + OS Optimizations	20H2
	Previous Next	Select	

Select Use single sign-on and click Next

Select an image from the Gallery image or a custom image. When you choose **Gallery image** you have the choice for Windows 10 or 11, with or without the Microsoft 365 apps and the version/build.

Select the image of choice and click **Next**



Select the **Language & Region** of your choice and the way you want to update the Cloud PC. This can be manually (via Windows update policies in Microsoft Intune) or via the <u>Autopatch service</u>.

Click Next

Microsoft Endpoint Manager	admin center	Ģ	Ļ2	0	ጽ	MODERNWORK IT (MODERNWO
×	Home > Devices Windows 365 >					
A Home	Create a provisioning policy					×
🖾 Dashboard	Windows 365					
E All services						
Devices	General Configuration Assignments S Review + create					
Apps	Select the groups containing users that you want to receive Cloud PCs. Cloud PCs will only be provisioned for users who have Windows 365 licenses. The Cloud PCs will be provisioned with the configurations specified in this policy. Learn					
Endpoint security	more about the Cloud PC lifecycle 🗟					
Reports	A Add groups					
🙎 Users	Groups					
🎎 Groups	MW-Windows365-Cloud					
Tenant administration						
X Troubleshooting + support						
	Previous Next					

Select an Azure AD security group and click Next.



Click Create

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«	Home > Devices	
A Home	Devices Windows	165 ···· ×
🔠 Dashboard		
E All services	✓ Search «	
Devices	Android	Overview All Cloud PCs Provisioning policies Custom images Azure network connection User settings
Apps	Chrome OS (preview)	🜔 Refresh 🞍 Export 🗮 Columns
🕵 Endpoint security	🔉 Linux	You can provide configure protect and monitor your Cloud PCs Lang more shout Cloud PC return
Reports	Device enrollment	Tailed provisioning In grace period Provisioned Provi
Users	Enroll devices	
Tenant administration	Provisioning	
Troubleshooting + support	Windows 365	Showing 1 to 5 of 5 records <pre></pre>
	Policy	
	Compliance policies	Not provisioned Cloud PC-AADJ-MSNet Windows 11 Enterpris Cloud PC Enterprise 4v 🕹 Provisioning ange
	Conditional access	Not provisioned Cloud PC-AADJ-MSNet Windows 11 Enterpris Cloud PC Enterprise 4v 😌 Provisioning elliot
	Configuration profiles	Not provisioned Cloud PC-AADJ-MSNet Windows 11 Enterpris Cloud PC Enterprise 4v 🕹 Provisioning darle
	Scripts	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v () Not provisioned smith
	Group Policy analytics (preview)	Not provisioned Cloud PC Enterprise 4v () Not provisioned robin
	Update rings for Windows 10 and later	
	Feature updates for Windows 10 and later	
	Quality updates for Windows 10 and later	
	Update policies for iOS/iPadOS 👳	

After the provisioning policy is created, Cloud PCs of assigned users will be provisioned. After the provisioning is finished, the status will be changed to "Provisioned" and the Cloud PC is ready to use.

7 - Connect to the Windows 365 Cloud PC

Let's connect to the Windows 365 Cloud PC. You can use different clients for this, depending on the operating system you are using on the (local) client. First, lets use the web client. Navigate to <u>https://windows365.microsoft.com/</u>

iii Windows 365		<u>&</u>	ŝ	9
<u>↓</u>	Welcome, Robin Hobo Quick actions Take the tour × Skipped the tour? Take It to get familiar with Windows 365 and Its			
	Your Cloud PCs			
	CloudPC-AADJ-AzureNetw I Last connected 22 minutes ago			

After signing in, you will see your Cloud PC. There are options for the user to restart, restore the Cloud PC and some other options from this web interface.

::: Windows 365		ନ୍	ŝ	9
⋒	Download an app to use Windows 365 from your device			
	Windows 365 app			
	Use your Cloud PC like another desktop on your local PC. Manage your Cloud PC using the self-serve tools built into the app.			
	Windows 365 for Windows Microsoft Corporation Go to Microsoft Store			
	Microsoft Remote Desktop apps Connect to devices and services, including your Cloud PC. You won't be able to manage your Cloud PC from the app, and your Cloud PC won't be			
	integrated into your local device.			
	Microsoft Remote Desktop for Windows Microsoft Corporation Microsoft Corporation Microsoft Corporation			
	Get subscription URL Get subscription URL			
	Download 64 bit V			
	Microsoft Remote Desktop for iOS Microsoft Remote Desktop for Android Microsoft Corporation Microsoft Corporation			
	Get subscription URL Get subscription URL			
	ロ Go to App Store Go to Google Play Store			

When opening the **Remote Desktop Clients** page, you can find the download links and information to all other available clients.



For example the new Windows 365 for Windows app you can download straight from the Windows store.

Click Connect



In a few second you have access to your Windows 365 Cloud PC.