

Microsoft 365

Microsoft 365 is Microsoft's office suite, email server, and cloud storage rolled into one.

Anyone can access Microsoft 365, which provides an email account, OneDrive cloud storage, and an online version of the Office suite. A subscription gives you access to all of these, a license for Microsoft Office that can be installed on up to five devices, greater cloud storage space, and a few other tools and services.

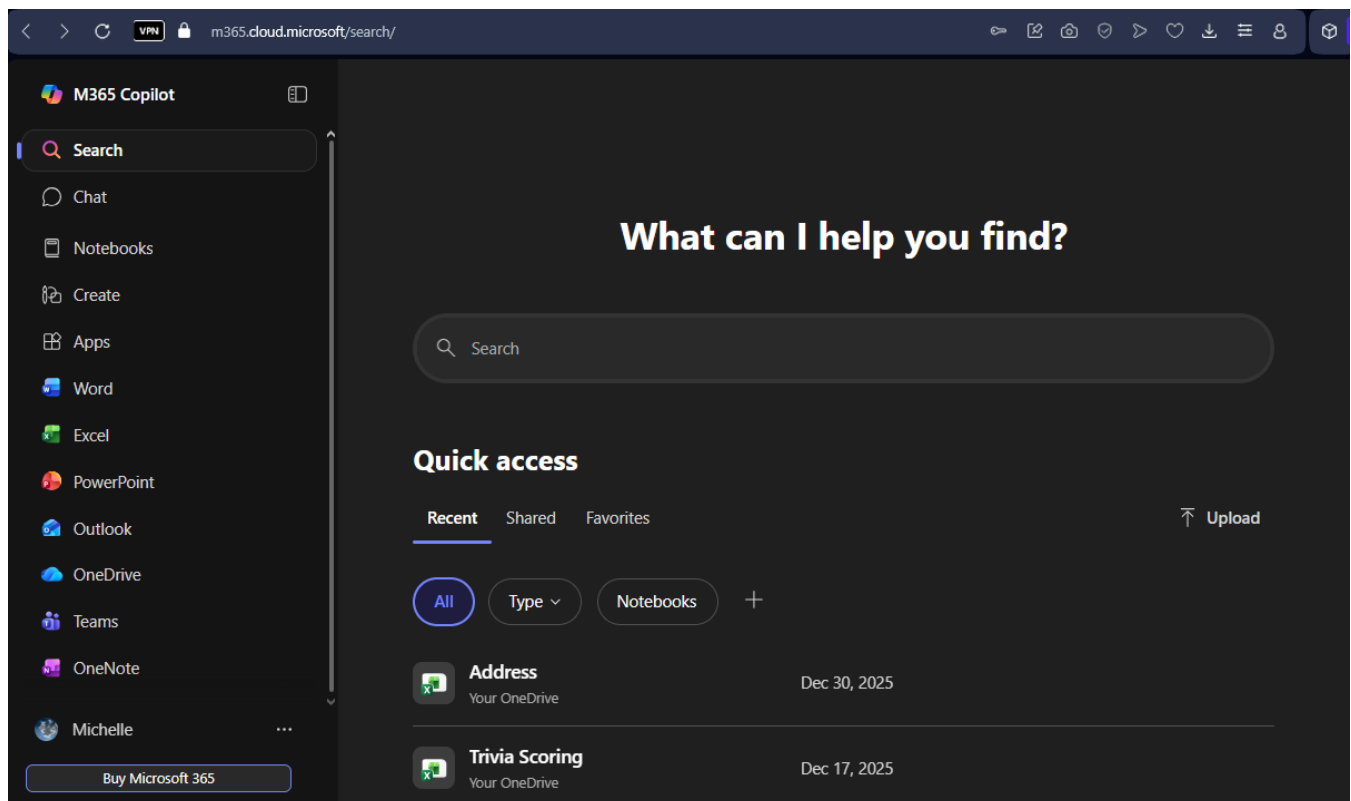
You can log in and sign up on the Microsoft 365 website:

<https://www.microsoft.com/en/microsoft-365>

What Is Microsoft 365?

In 2011, Microsoft debuted Office 365, a subscription service initially tailored towards businesses, but quickly adapted for the general user.

Instead of buying a CD (or a pile of diskettes), you pay a yearly subscription for access to the Office suite which includes other apps and services. You then install Office on your device(s) after logging into the Office 365 website.



Even if you don't purchase a subscription, a Microsoft 365 account provides a free version of Office 365, which provides access to the stripped-down versions of the Microsoft office suite, web email, and cloud storage.

We'll look at both these options, starting with the free Microsoft 365 for the web.

Free Microsoft 365 on the Web

If you do not want to purchase a Microsoft 365 subscription, you can still use Office Online, which provides access to the online versions of Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. These “lite” versions likely provide all the tools that the casual user could need.

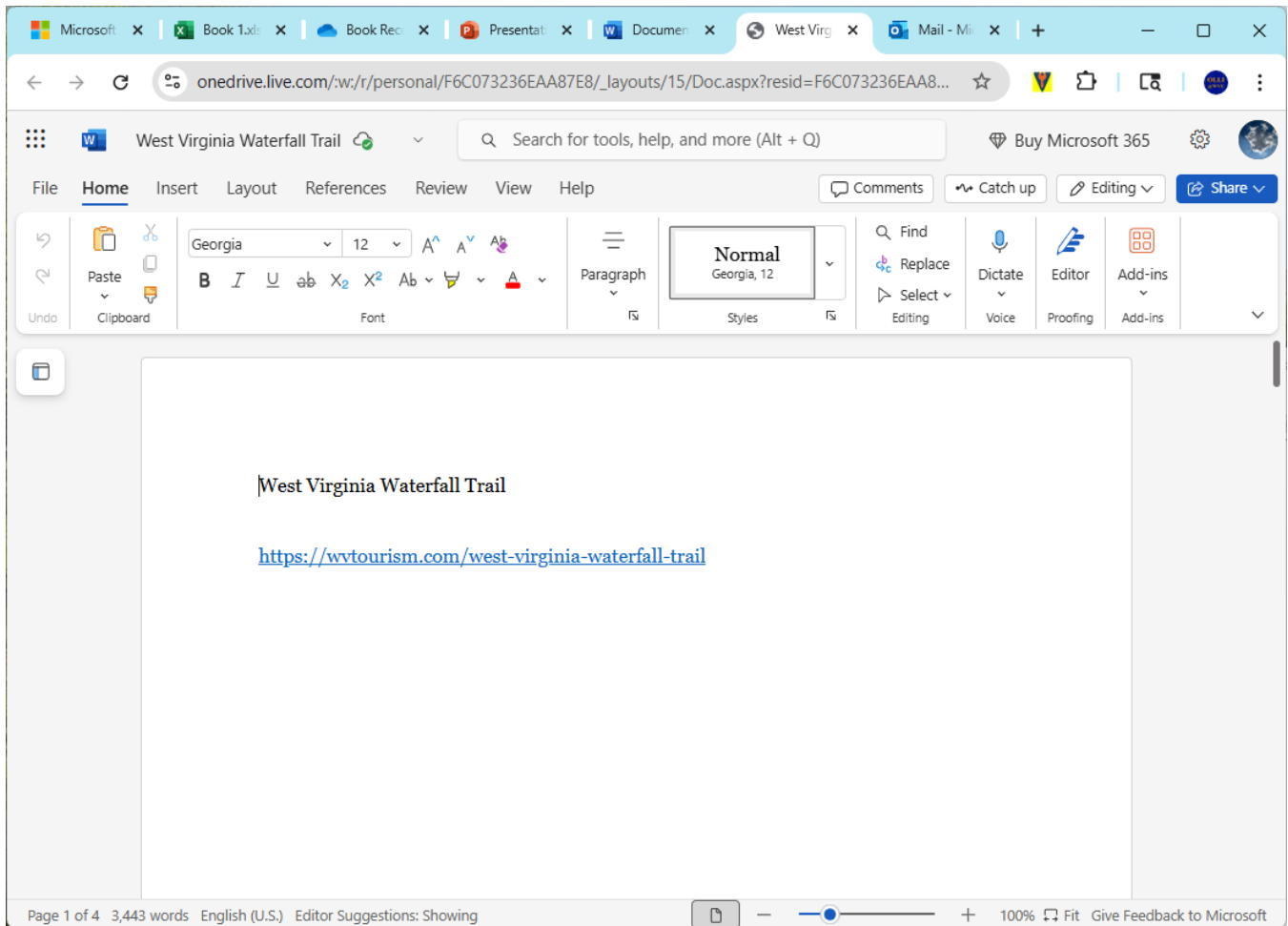
However, you will only have access to the free **web** versions of those programs, and you **must** be connected to the internet to use them.

A free Microsoft 365 account currently comes with 5GB OneDrive cloud storage.

If you already have a Microsoft email account (an email address ending in @hotmail, @live, or @outlook) you just use that to log into Office 365. (<https://account.microsoft.com/account>) If you do not have a Microsoft account, you can sign up for one.

Here are some glances at what Office 365 on the web looks like:

Word Online

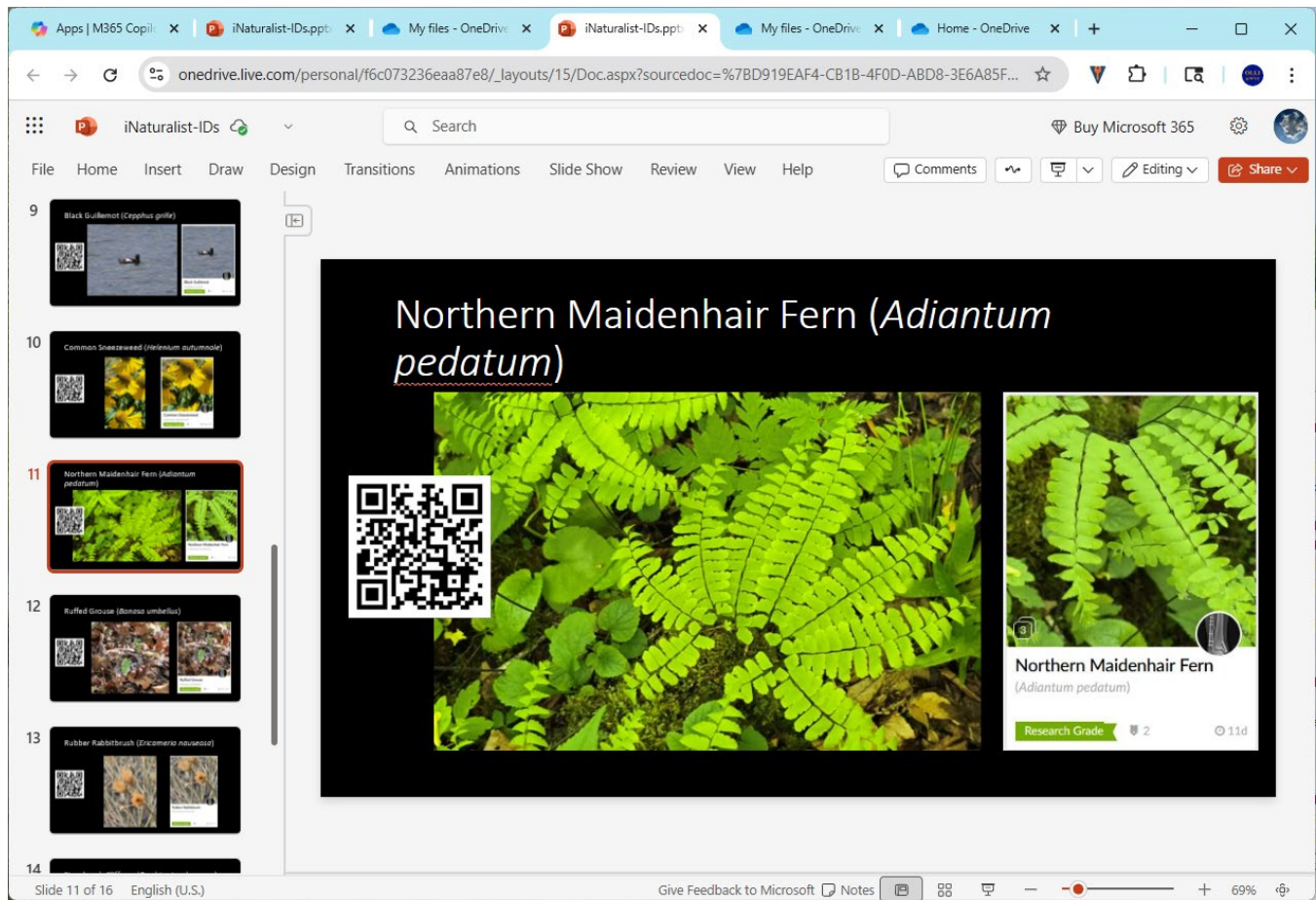


Limitations in Word Online:

Watermark/themes
Embedded objects (like charts)
Macros
Smart Art & Charts
Screen clipping
Section breaks

Signatures
Captions, Bibliography & Citations
Compare & Merge
Envelopes & Labels
Mail Merge

PowerPoint Online



Limitations in PowerPoint Online:

Audio embedding
Slide master
Smart graphics
Charts
Picture compression
Limited slide transitions

Limited slide animations
Animation triggers
Presenter view
Presentation recording
Custom slide shows

Excel Online

The screenshot displays the Microsoft Excel Online web application. The browser tabs at the top include 'Microsoft acc...', 'Book 1.xlsx', 'Book Recomm...', 'Presentation...', 'Document.doc', and 'Mail - Michell...'. The address bar shows a OneDrive URL. The Excel ribbon is set to 'Home', and the font is 'Arial Bold' size '12'. The spreadsheet contains a table with 21 rows of book data. The columns are: Title, Author, 2nd Author, Publisher, Pub Date, Genre, Rating, Artists, and Series. The data includes books by Ellery Adams, Jennifer Ashley, and Juneau Black, with publishers like Kensington and Vintage Crime.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Title	Author	2nd Author	Publisher	Pub Date	Genre	Rating	Artists	Series
2	<i>The Secret, Book, & Score</i>	Ellery Adams		Kensington	10/31/2017	Mystery	6.0		Secret, Book, & Score
3	<i>The Whispered Word</i>	Ellery Adams		Kensington	11/27/2018	Mystery	7.0		Secret, Book, & Score
4	<i>The Book of Candlelight</i>	Ellery Adams		Kensington	1/28/2020	Mystery	7.5		Secret, Book, & Score
5	<i>Ink and Shadows</i>	Ellery Adams		Kensington	1/26/2021	Mystery	7.5		Secret, Book, & Score
6	<i>The Vanishing Type</i>	Ellery Adams		Kensington	4/26/2022	Mystery			Secret, Book, & Score
7	<i>Paper Cuts</i>	Ellery Adams			1/1/2023	Mystery			Secret, Book, & Score
8	<i>The Little Lost Library</i>	Ellery Adams			1/1/2024	Mystery			Secret, Book, & Score
9	<i>The Price of Lemon Cake</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai JA / AG Pu		10/3/2023	Mystery	7.5		Below Stairs Mystery J
10	<i>Death Below Stairs</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		1/2/2018	Mystery	7.5		Below Stairs Mystery J
11	<i>Scandal Above Stairs</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		7/3/2018	Mystery	7.5		Below Stairs Mystery J
12	<i>Death in Kew Gardens</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		6/4/2019	Mystery	7.5		Below Stairs Mystery J
13	<i>Murder in the East End</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		8/4/2020	Mystery	7.5		Below Stairs Mystery J
14	<i>Death at the Crystal Palace</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		7/6/2021	Mystery	8.0		Below Stairs Mystery J
15	<i>The Secret of Bow Lane</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		8/2/2022	Mystery	8.0		Below Stairs Mystery J
16	<i>Mrs. Holloway's Christmas P</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai JA / AG Pu		12/25/2023	Mystery	8.0	Kim Killion	Below Stairs Mystery J
17	<i>Speculations in Sin</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley		3/5/2024	Mystery	8.0	Larry Rost	Below Stairs Mystery J
18	<i>A Measure of Menace</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai self		9/30/2024	Mystery	8.0	Kim Killion	Below Stairs Mystery J
19	<i>A Moveable Feast</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai self-publish		7/2/2025	Mystery	8.0	Kim Killion	Below Stairs Mystery J
20	<i>A Silence in Belgrave Square</i>	Jennifer Ashley	Ashley Gai Berkley Pri		8/12/2025	Mystery	8.0	Emily Osbr	Below Stairs Mystery J
21	<i>Shady Hollow</i>	Juneau Black		Vintage Cri	10/21/2015	Mystery	9.0	Perry De L	Shady Hollow Myster J

Limitations in Excel Online:

Macros

VBA code

Limited chart types

Limited chart customization

Limited pivot tables

No analysis tools

Limited formatting

No custom number formats

Limited data validation

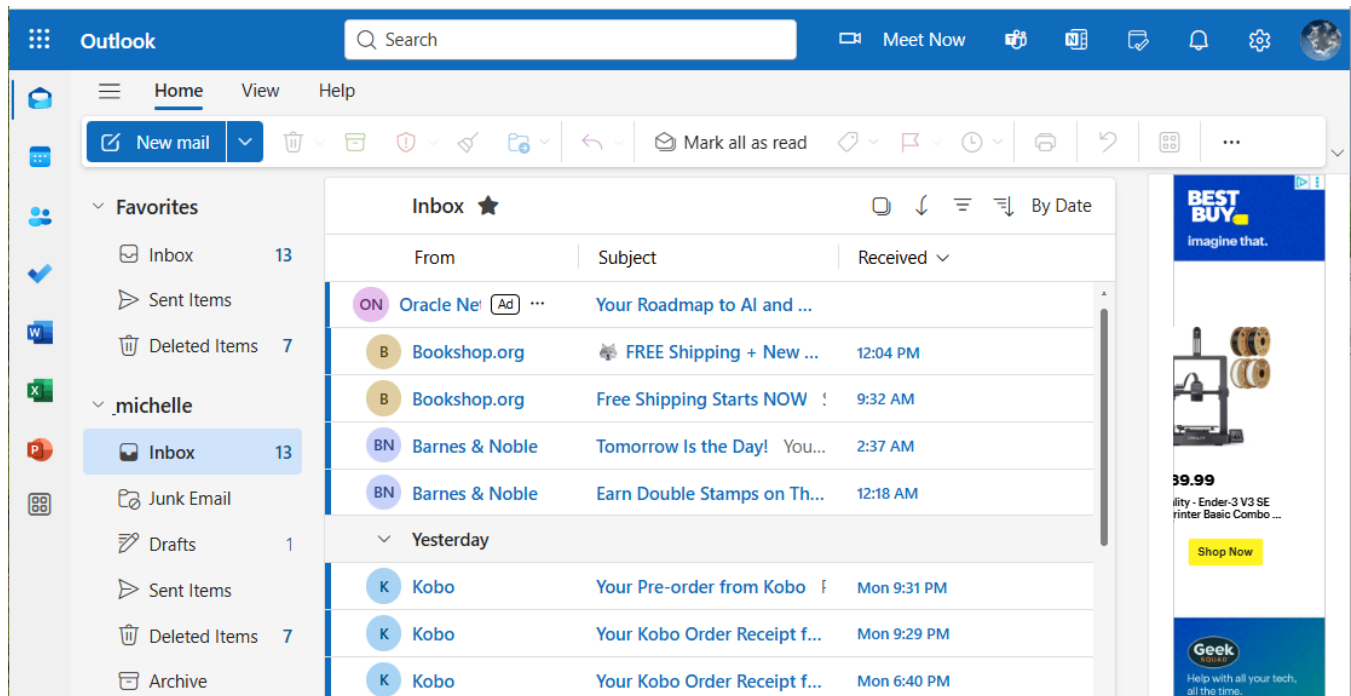
No advanced filter

No form controls

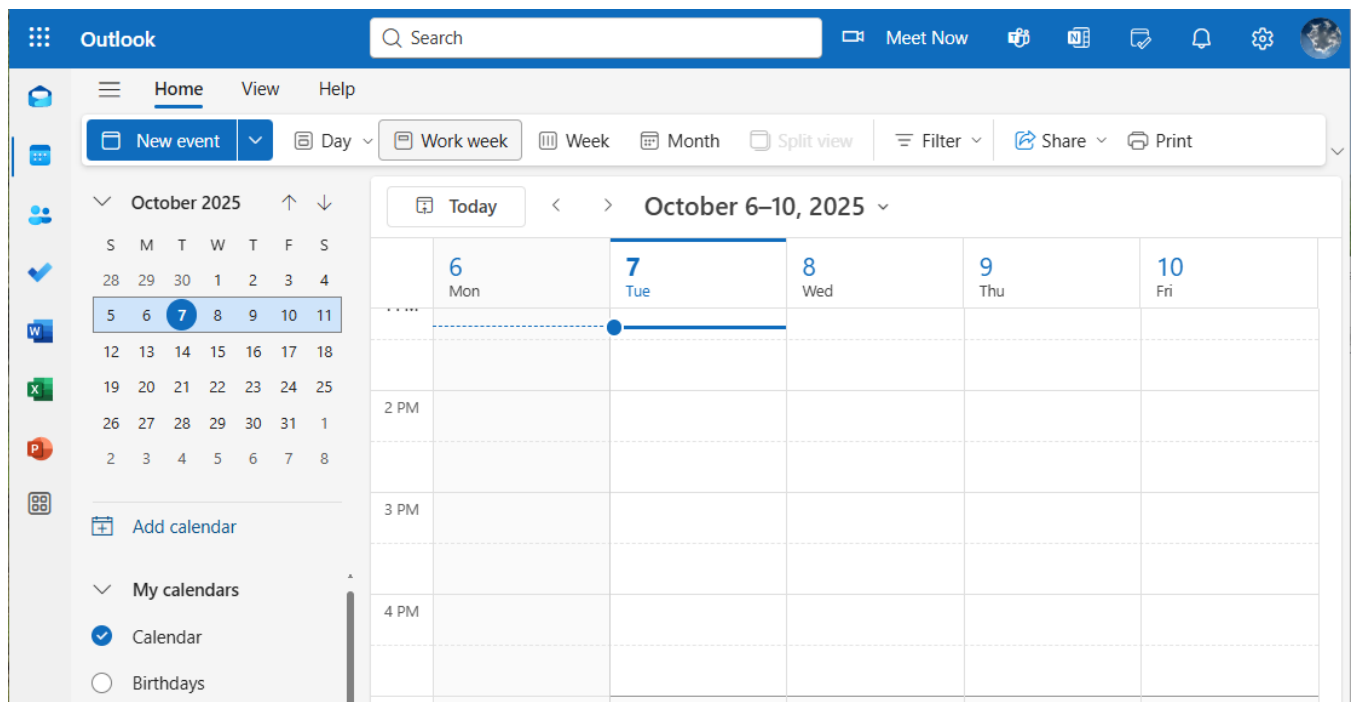
Limited page layout

Limited View options

Email Online



Calendar Online



Most people should be able to do the things they need to in the free online version of Office 365. You just need to remember you can *only* use it online.

Microsoft 365 Subscription

NOTE: Emeritus professors and staff with valid WVU logins *should* be able to download Office 365 for free.

Purchasing a yearly subscription allows you to install the office suite on up to five different devices.

What Am I Buying?

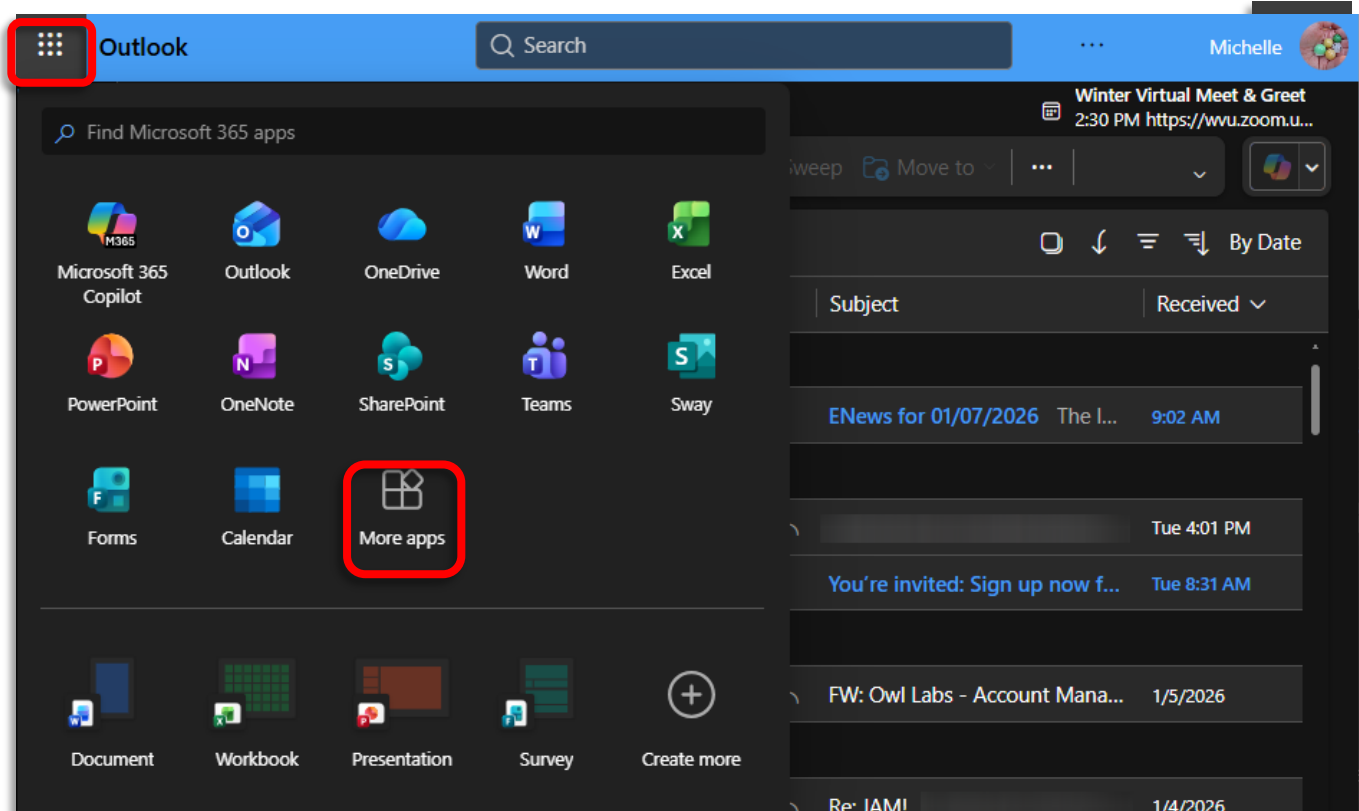
With a MS 365 subscription you get:

- Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook which can be installed on up to five devices.
- 1 TB OneDrive cloud storage
- Microsoft Teams (replaced Skype)
- Access and Publisher
- Technical support (they say)

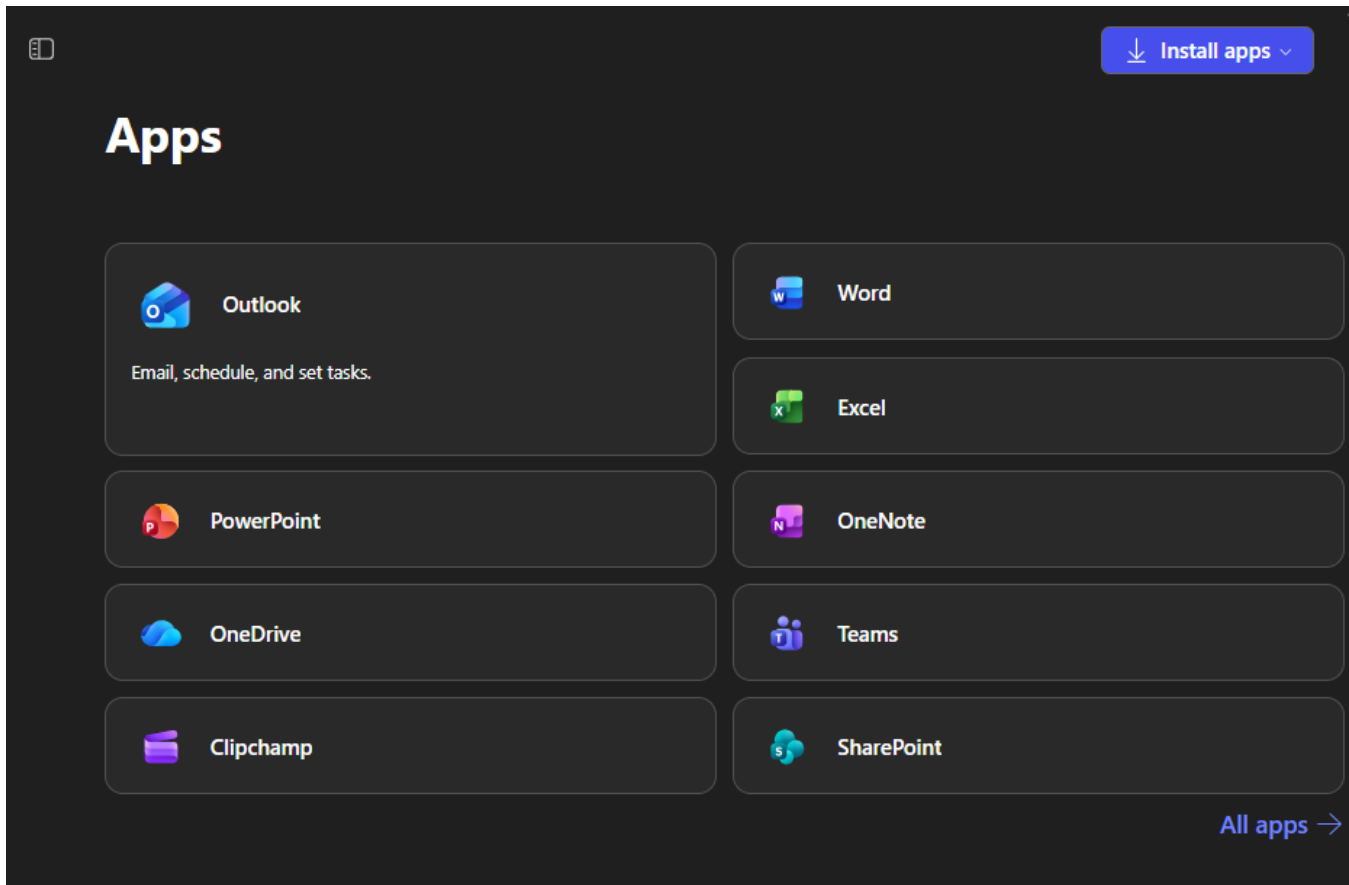
Installing Office 365

Unfortunately, it seems like every time I log in to Microsoft 365, they have changed the way you install apps. Here is what worked for me, but it may have changed when you are reading this.

1. Sign into Office 365: <https://www.office.com>.



2. In the top left corner of the window, click the **App Launcher** icon.
3. From the drop-down menu select **More apps**.



4. On the Apps screen, in the upper right corner click **Install apps**.

With a subscription you can install Office on up to five devices. So you can have the full program on your desktop, your laptop, your spouse's laptop, your tablet, and your phone.

If you only use the basic features of Microsoft Office, you should be fine with only the free online versions of Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

But if you create complicated spreadsheets, give fancy presentations, use mail merge, or prefer to work offline, you'll need to purchase the subscription.

As of January 2026, Microsoft 365 personal is \$100 a year.

For comparison, cable is \$420 to \$840 per year, Disney Plus (with ads) is \$144 per year, a membership at Planet Fitness is \$180 per year, and a cup of coffee every week-day is about \$1000 (assuming a \$4 cup of coffee and 250 weekdays).

Curious about [Cloud Storage? I have a handout you can read!](#)

Want to learn more about [Microsoft Office? I have a handout for that too!](#)