

About Parallels Desktop 16 for Mac

Parallels Desktop® 16 for Mac is the simplest, most powerful solution for running Windows and Windows applications on Mac® without rebooting. For more information, see the Parallels Desktop 16 for Mac documentation.

What's New in Parallels Desktop 16

Performance

Faster than ever

Time is one of the essential resources. In each new version, we try to make Parallels Desktop and virtual machines work faster.

- Parallels Desktop 16 starts up to 2x as fast as version 15.
- Windows resumes and quits up to 20% faster.
- Reverting to a snapshot is up to 30% faster.

Longer battery life

Parallels Desktop helps to save the battery when your Mac is not plugged in. In the improved Travel Mode, Windows consumes less computing and network resources, which results in up to 10% longer battery life.

Graphics

Faster DirectX 11 graphics

Parallels Desktop 16 provides up to 20% faster DirectX 11 graphics on Macs equipped with AMD Radeon graphics cards.

Improved OpenGL 3 support for Windows and Linux

This version brings full support for OpenGL 3.3 Compatibility Profile to support more applications. Run more Windows applications, including DIALux EVO 9, SAMSON Connect, ProPresenter 6, ClinCheck Pro, Rhino 6 and more.

In Linux, you can now use more applications, including Steam, Firefox Quantum web browser, and get better multimonitor support for the KDE window manager.

Ready for macOS Big Sur 11

macOS Big Sur 11 support

Though macOS Big Sur 11 is not officially released yet, Parallels Desktop 16 already supports the upcoming operating system and, in some scenarios, delivers even better performance compared to macOS Catalina. In macOS Big Sur, Parallels Desktop offers an easier onboarding experience by using the native macOS system extensions instead of the deprecated kernel ones.

Metal graphics support for macOS Big Sur virtual machines

Get the world's first Metal graphics support for macOS virtual machines – run Mac apps like Maps, Pages, Final Cut Pro, Adobe Premiere, and many others.

Note: Metal graphics is supported for macOS Big Sur (and later) virtual machines if Parallels Desktop 16 is installed in macOS Big Sur (and later) as well.

New devices support

On Macs with macOS Big Sur 11, you can use the i1iO Automated Scanning Table (from X-Rite) and CC Debugger (from Texas Instruments) with Windows apps.

Usability

Improved Trackpad gestures

Added support for a two-finger pinch gesture to rotate the content in Windows 10 applications, such as Maps, Photos, Edge, and more. Zoom gesture was also improved to provide a smoother experience.

Configurable timer for auto pause

If there are no active processes in Windows, it pauses automatically to save Mac's power resources. Now, in the Startup & Shutdown pane of virtual machine configuration, you can choose a time period of inactivity, after which Windows gets paused. Additionally, Parallels Desktop 16 shows a new snippet card to explain this feature to new users.

Select Windows edition before installation

Installing Windows from an ISO image with multiple Windows editions is now fully automatic. Parallels Desktop 16 will offer to select the desired Windows edition before you start the installation without you having to sit in front of your Mac to manually choose

the edition, enter the license key, etc.

Smart detection of external disks

When you start a virtual machine stored on an external disk, Parallels Desktop 16 now checks whether the disk connected to Mac and prompts you to connect it using the disk name. Once the disk is connected, Parallels Desktop 16 automatically detects it so you can start the virtual machine in one click.

Shared Profile: native Mac icons

Parallels Desktop indicates Windows folders in File Explorer that are shared with macOS using the native macOS Finder icons. For example, if the Documents folder in Windows is shared with the macOS Documents folder, they will both have the same macOS icon.

Shared Profile: data safety

When you choose to delete a file from a Windows folder that is shared from macOS, Parallels Desktop warns you that this file will be removed entirely from Mac's hard disk.

Stay focused and not disturbed

If you enable Do Not Disturb in macOS, Focus Assist automatically turns on in Windows 10 for you to not be distracted by sounds and pop-up notifications from Windows apps.

Devices

Optimize disk space usage

You no longer need to check how much unused space can be reclaimed manually. Now, on the General tab of virtual machine configuration, you can make Windows to automatically return all unused disk space to Mac on each shutdown (see Reclaimable space).

For example, after you download or copy a 10 GB file to Windows which occupies 40 GB on Mac's hard disk, the Windows disk extends to 50 GB. If you then remove this file, the disk is still 50 GB. Now when you shut down Windows, its disk size will be automatically reduced back to 40 GB.

Improved Boot Camp support

Create and use Boot Camp-based virtual machines on large hard disks up to 32

TB size.

Use Samsung Portable SSD X5 with Windows

In Parallels Desktop 16, you can use the Samsung Portable SSD X5 external storage with Windows virtual machines.

Automatically connect recently used Bluetooth devices to Windows

Parallels Desktop remembers the Bluetooth device that was last connected to Windows and tries to reconnect it automatically the next time Windows starts up.

Bluetooth Secure Simple Pairing support

Now you can connect modern Bluetooth devices to your virtual machine without having to enter a PIN code.

Shared Printing improvements

The new printer driver for Windows 10 allows you to print on both sides and supports much more paper sizes including A0 – A6, JIS B5, JIS B6, Double Japanese Postcard Rotated, #10 Envelope, Envelope ISO B, Envelope C5, Envelope DL, Envelope Monarch, and more.

Appearance

Improved Dark Mode support

Parallels Desktop 16 provides a refreshed Dark Mode look with better colors, contrasts, fonts, etc.

macOS Big Sur native look

On macOS Big Sur, Parallels Desktop 16 follows the updated macOS design to provide a cohesive look, including using new monochrome icons, contrast, and other update UI elements.

Pro and Business editions only

Prepare virtual machines for transfer and further deployment

If you need to transfer a virtual machine to another Mac, share it with somebody or deploy over many Macs, Parallels Desktop 16 simplifies this process with this new feature. Simply right-click the virtual machine in the Control Center and select Prepare for Transfer. Parallels Desktop 16 will pack the virtual machine to a single file and reduce its size for easier and faster upload. Parallels Desktop 16 uses a reliable in-place packing algorithm and, unlike zipping, does not require extra disk space to pack the virtual machine.

Business administrators can use a virtual machine package in combination with the new Parallels Desktop 16 Business Edition feature – corporate virtual machine provisioning (see below).

Rename custom Host-Only networks

When you create a Host-Only network, you can specify your name for it.

Increased productivity while working with Git repositories

Especially for those who use Parallels virtual machines for software development, executing “git status” for Git repositories located in Linux shared folders has become up to 75% faster.

Business edition only

Corporate virtual machine provisioning

System administrators can create pre-configured Windows virtual machines with all the necessary applications installed, prepare a package, upload to cloud storage, and specify a download link and description in Parallels My Account.

When Business users first open Parallels Desktop, they will be offered to download this virtual machine. The process is simple and secure – users will get the ready-for-use virtual machine in one click.

Allow upgrades to new major versions

Upgrading Parallels Desktop for Mac Business Edition may be a complicated procedure since system administrators have to set up local update servers, deploy new major versions, and write invitation emails to upgrade. To simplify this process, system administrators can now enable a setting in Parallels My Account that will allow copies of Parallels Desktop to upgrade to a new major version.

Passwordless update

Installing Parallels Desktop updates no longer requires administrator credentials. In companies where users are not admins of their Macs, this improvement greatly simplifies keeping the product up to date.

What was deprecated or removed from Parallels Desktop 16

According to the statistics from the users who participate in the Parallels Customer Experience program, some of the product features are used very seldom or not used at all. And a few features became very complicated to support because of new technical restrictions. We have decided to either stop supporting them or completely remove from Parallels Desktop and focus on more important features and further enhancements.

Please see below which features were removed and which deprecated. Removed features are no longer available in Parallels Desktop 16 while deprecated ones continue working though they are not supported anymore and will be removed in the next product versions.

All the features mentioned below are not business-critical, so these changes will have no impact (or very little) on your work.

Removed features:

- Adding Windows applications to Launchpad

This functionality was deprecated in Parallels Desktop 15 because the API wasn't available in macOS 10.15 Catalina. In Parallels Desktop 16, it was completely removed.

- Windows Applications folder in Launchpad

This feature was removed for the same reason as above.

- Additional actions in the Windows app context menu

When you right-click a Windows app icon in the Dock, its context menu appears. It contained various additional actions like "Keep Mac Awake" or "Use in Full Screen", etc. In Parallels Desktop 16, all additional actions were removed from the context menu because of a very low usage.

- Keeping Internet Explorer and Edge passwords in Mac Keychain

This functionality was deprecated in Parallels Desktop 15 because it didn't work in Internet Explorer and was likely to stop working in Edge. In Parallels Desktop 16, the feature was completely removed.

- PMU virtualization

This feature was removed because of a very low usage.

- “Power” and “Configure” buttons in the virtual machine Quick Look card

These buttons were removed due to technical restrictions.

- Windows Recycle Bin is merged with the Trash

This functionality was removed because it became rather complicated to support due to technical restrictions.

Deprecated features:

- Parallels Mounter

Parallels Mounter allows you to browser the hard disk contents when the virtual machine is offline. This functionality was deprecated because of a very low usage while it's rather complicated to support. The virtual machine .pvm/.pvs/.hdd files are no longer associated with Parallels Mounter. In Parallels Desktop 17, this functionality will be available via the command-line interface (CLI) only.

- Mouse smooth scrolling checkbox

The **Enable smooth scrolling** checkbox was removed from the virtual machine configuration because this functionality works fine and very few users disable it.

- Vertical synchronization

The **Vertical synchronization** checkbox was removed from the virtual machine configuration because this functionality works fine and very few users disable it.

Known Issues

- We are checking how Parallels Desktop works in macOS Big Sur 11 that will be officially released soon. The list of currently known Big Sur-related issues is available at <https://kb.parallels.com/125039>

- Cannot install Windows 10 Insider Preview build 20175 in a virtual machine.

- Parallels Tools for Windows cannot be installed in a Boot Camp virtual machine with an NTFS formatted and 4K sector size disk.

- Vertical blue lines appear on the left and right sides of the RHEL 8.2 virtual machine window after resizing.

- Cannot install Parallels Tools in a virtual machine with Manjaro 20.0.3 GNOME.

- Virtual machines with Fedora 32 Workstation may freeze during the Parallels Tools installation.

System Requirements

- Any Mac computer with an Intel Core 2 Duo, Core i3, Core i5, Core i7, Core i9, Intel Core M or Xeon processor.
- Mac's operating system: macOS Big Sur 11*, macOS 10.15 Catalina, macOS 10.14 Mojave, macOS 10.13 High Sierra.
- 4 GB of memory (8 GB recommended).
- 500 MB of disk space on the boot volume (Macintosh HD) for Parallels Desktop installation.
- Additional disk space for virtual machines (SSD drives recommended for better performance). For example, for Windows 10 you need at least 16 GB of disk space.
- Internet connection (for product activation, some features, etc.).

* Once macOS Big Sur 11 is officially released, you may need to update Parallels Desktop.

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Contact Information

Product website: [parallels.com](https://www.parallels.com)