

Microsoft 365 Licensing Guide for India

A plain-language breakdown of Microsoft 365 plans, what actually drives your price, and how to pick the right mix for your team.

Updated September 2026 · 10+ yrs Microsoft partner experience
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Understanding Microsoft 365 Plans

Microsoft 365 is licensed per user, per month, across a few plan families. Picking the right one — and not just the most expensive one — is the single biggest lever on your monthly cost.

Business Plans (up to 300 users)

Plan	What it includes	Best for
Business Basic	Hosted email, Teams, web/mobile Office apps (no desktop install)	Frontline or browser-first roles
Business Standard	Everything in Basic + desktop Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook	Most day-to-day office roles
Business Premium	Everything in Standard + Intune device management + Defender for Business	Teams handling sensitive data or BYOD devices

Enterprise Plans (no user cap)

Plan	What it adds over Business	Best for
E3	No 300-user cap, advanced compliance & eDiscovery, Windows Enterprise licensing	Organizations over 300 users or with compliance needs
E5	Advanced threat protection, deeper compliance, Power BI Pro included	Higher-risk or regulated organizations

Common mistake: Licensing everyone on the same high tier "to keep things simple." Mixing tiers by actual role need is almost always the more cost-effective approach.

What Changes Your Price

- **Plan family and tier** — Business vs Enterprise, and which specific plan within each.
- **Annual vs monthly commitment** — annual is typically priced lower per user.
- **Add-ons** — Copilot, Teams Phone, and advanced security add-ons are priced separately, per user.
- **License mix** — uniform licensing across every role usually costs more than a mix matched to actual need.

A Simple Decision Framework

- ☐ Under 300 users, no specific compliance need → Business Standard or Premium
 - ☐ Handling sensitive data or BYOD devices → Business Premium (adds Intune + Defender for Business)
 - ☐ Over 300 users → E3 (no cap) or E5 for higher-risk roles
 - ☐ Need eDiscovery, legal hold, or advanced retention → E3 or E5
 - ☐ Want AI assistance in Word/Excel/Outlook → Add Copilot on top of your base plan for the roles that need it
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Getting an Accurate Quote

Microsoft updates list pricing periodically, and your actual cost depends on plan mix, commitment term, and any add-ons — which is why a static price list goes stale fast. The reliable way to get a number you can budget against is sharing your user count and current setup with a partner for a current, itemized quote.

Want help with this, not just the guide?

Rua Technologies is an authorized Microsoft partner delivering licensing, migration, security, and support to businesses across India.

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