

Introduction

This guide is intended to provide an overview and detailed guidance on how to activate and reactivate Windows 10 IoT Enterprise images in both the factory and the field.

All Windows 10 IoT Enterprise devices must be enabled for activation. Device activation may be completed by having devices contact Microsoft activation verification servers directly through an Internet connection or indirectly via a proxy tool. Alternatively, Windows 10 IoT offers a third option, allowing devices not connected to the Internet to remain in a deferred activation state, as described further below. This option is new to Windows 10 IoT.

This guide is primarily intended as a resource for individuals required to perform this activation process; however, it is also useful as a resource for administrators, planners, and technicians in other roles who need to understand how activation works or how to activate a device.

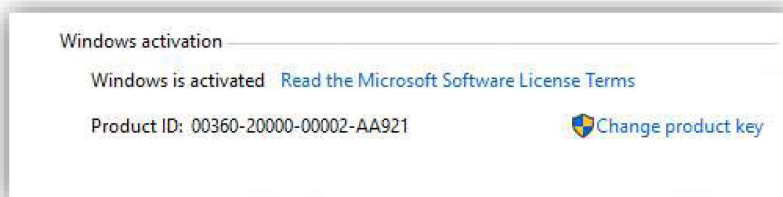
What is activation?

Activation is the process of registering Windows 10 IoT Enterprise with Microsoft to ensure the product is genuine. Activation is used to:

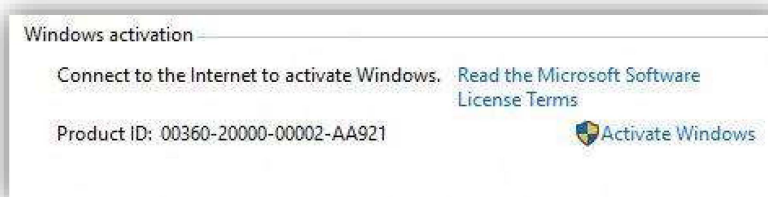
1. Reduce software piracy.
2. Protect the software industry, corporate intellectual property, software development investments, and product quality.
3. Ensure customers receive the product quality they expect.

By default, you must enable each device for activation. If the device is not connected to the Internet, it will remain in a deferred activation state. If the device is connected to the Internet, the device will automatically activate over the Internet. If the device connects to the Internet and the activation attempt fails due to an invalid licensing key or one that has exceeded its activation allotment, it will enter a not activated state. Thus, there are three potential device states:

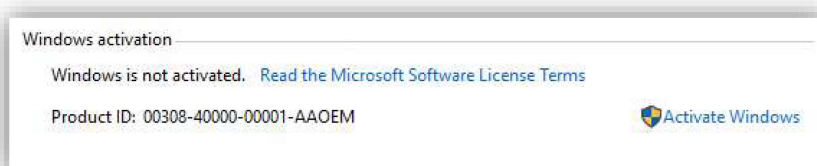
1. Activated state



2. Deferred activation state



3. Not activated state



After a device has been activated, it will remain activated unless a significant change triggers a need to reactivate the device, such as a motherboard replacement or completely reimaging the device.

Activation process overview

Each device must have a valid license key to support activation, and the process of activation encompasses several distinct steps, as follows:

1. Obtain a product key and apply it to the device.
2. Retrieve the licensing status information from the device.
3. Connect for activation, or leave in deferred activation state.
 - a. Leave the device in a state of deferred activation.
 - b. To activate: connect device to Internet directly; connect device to Internet indirectly using the proxy activation tool; or activate through Microsoft licensing servers using a telephone if no Internet connection is available. At this point, the device will automatically (or, in the case of telephone option, via user input) send licensing status. The device will then automatically:
 - i. Retrieve a confirmation ID from the Microsoft licensing servers.
 - ii. Apply the confirmation ID to your device. The device is now activated.
4. OEMs may have a sales-out reporting requirement to report licenses used.

