

Word, Excel & Microsoft 365 | Medium | 2 min read

Office says 'Product deactivated' or 'Unlicensed product'

Seeing a banner such as 'Product Deactivated', 'Unlicensed Product' or 'Activation failed' is worrying, but it is usually fixable. It means Office cannot confirm that your account has a valid licence, so it limits what you can do. Often your files are fine and you can still open and read them.

Check which account you are using

1. Open Word or Excel and click **File**, then **Account**.
2. Look at the user information. Is it the right email address? Sometimes people sign in with a personal address when their licence is on their work address, or the other way round.
3. If it is wrong, click **Sign out**, close all Office programs, reopen one and sign in with the correct account.

Common reasons

- **The subscription expired or was not paid.** Check with whoever manages your account.
- **The licence was removed.** An administrator may have unassigned it by mistake, perhaps when changing plans.
- **Too many devices.** Most plans limit how many devices you can install on. Signing out of devices you no longer use can free one up. Business administrators and home account owners can manage this on their Microsoft account pages.

Try these fixes

1. Sign out and sign in again, as above.
2. Restart the computer.
3. Update Office: click **File**, **Account**, **Update Options**, then **Update Now**.
4. Remove saved Office sign-ins: open **Credential Manager** from the Windows search box, choose **Windows Credentials**, and remove entries with Office or MicrosoftOffice in the name. Then sign in again.
5. Check the licence on the web. A business admin can look at the licences in the Microsoft 365 admin centre. At home, sign in at your Microsoft account page and check **Services & subscriptions**.

What not to do

- Do not enter keys from unknown sources.
- Do not use 'activators' downloaded from the internet. They often contain malware.

When to get more help

If the message appears on several computers or after a plan change, contact us. We can check your licences and reassign them correctly.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.