Microsoft 365 vs LibreOffice

Two ways to get the programs for writing letters, making lists, and doing budgets. One costs a yearly fee. The other is free. Both get the job done — here is how to pick.

Microsoft 365, in plain words

- Word — for writing letters and documents. Excel — for lists and budgets. PowerPoint — for slideshows. Outlook — for email and your calendar.
- It is a subscription. Personal costs about $100 a year for one person. Family costs about $130 a year and covers up to six people. You can also pay by the month, which costs more over time.
- OneDrive is included — that is 1 TB of online storage per person. Your files are saved to the internet automatically, so you can open them from your computer, tablet, or phone.
- Copilot AI is included now. That is a built-in helper that can draft text and answer questions inside the apps.
- Works everywhere: Windows computers, Macs, iPhones, iPads, and Android phones.
- One-time option: Office Home 2024 costs about $150 once, with no yearly bill. But it has no OneDrive storage, no Copilot, and no new features over time.

LibreOffice, in plain words

- Free forever. No subscription, no account, no bill. It is made by volunteers and a nonprofit.
- Writer is the Word equivalent, Calc is the Excel equivalent, and Impress is the PowerPoint equivalent. It also includes drawing and database programs.
- It opens Word, Excel, and PowerPoint files, and it can save back into those formats. So a file someone emails you will open fine.

- The honest catch: a very complicated file with fancy formatting can look slightly different than it does in Word. For everyday letters, lists, and budgets, it works just fine.
- No cloud storage built in — your files save to your own computer. No AI helper — by design, nothing ever leaves your computer.

Note: Prices change Microsoft raised its prices in 2025 when it added Copilot to the plans. Check the current price before you buy. LibreOffice is free and always will be.

Which one should you pick?

- Pay for Microsoft 365 if: you trade files back and forth with family or an office that uses Word and Excel, you want your files backed up online automatically, or you like the idea of the AI helper.
- Choose free LibreOffice if: you mostly write letters and keep simple lists on one computer, and you do not want a yearly bill.
- You can have both. Many people keep LibreOffice for everyday work and let a family member's Microsoft 365 handle shared files.

When to call Sean instead

- You are not sure which one fits how you work.
- You want help installing either program.
- A file someone sent you will not open.
- You want your files reachable from more than one device.

Call Sean at (813) 770-6082.

Need a hand? Call Sean at **(813) 770-6082**.