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For all those who've always wanted to have Microsoft Office 365 but cannot afford to pay for it, Microsoft announced a very exciting opportunity that allows students and teachers to get Office 365 for free. The best part is there is no catch. All you need have is an e-mail address that belongs to your school or university's web domain. There's no deadline for this offer at the moment but it might be possible that it will end at a certain point. Those who are not familiar with Office 365 we have got you covered. We will explain how it works and the services you can get. What is Office 365?There are 4 types of Office 365 plan options:Business (Maximum of 300 users)Enterprise (Unlimited number of users)Education (Unlimited number of users)Government (Unlimited number of users)Here we are specifically talking about Office 365 for Education. This package has been customized according to specific needs of educational institutions and it offers a variety of services to enhance the productivity of students and teachers. Here are some salient features of the Free Office 365 plan:Online Web versions of Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, and OutlookDesktop version of OneNoteMicrosoft Teams, a digital platform that integrates the conversations, content, and apps your school requires to be more collaborative and engagedClass and Staff notebooksProfessional Learning Community (PLC) groupsSelf-grading quizzes with FormsDigital storytelling with SwayInform and engage with communication sites and team sites throughout your intranet using SharePointCompliance solutions with a unified eDiscovery centerRights management, data loss prevention, and encryptionEnterprise video service for creating, managing, and sharing videos in secure manner across an organizationApp development without coding to extend business data quickly with custom web and mobile appsWorkflow automation in applications and services to automate business processes without writing codeManage schedules and daily tasks with Microsoft StaffHubEmail with 50 GB mailbox capacityFile storage and sharing with unlimited OneDrive storageUnlimited email storage with In-Place archivingAdvanced email with archiving and legal holdHD video conferencingMaximum number of users: unlimitedAll these amazing services and features are worth the price when you buy Office 365 and imagine how great it would be if you get all these for free. In the next section we will show you how you can get your own Office 365 account at no cost what so ever How to Register for Free Office 365We are going to walk you through the steps to get your Free Office 365. Keep in mind that we're not talking about the trial version here that you can only use for a month. You will get the full version with all the features for unlimited time until your term at your school ends. Here's how you get it:Visit this link: Office for Students, Teachers and Schools.Under the "Get Office 365 for free" heading enter your school's e-mail address that's been given to you. Remember, you won't be able to get the offer if you submit an e-mail address other than your school's (e.g Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo). If your school or university is qualified to avail this opportunity then you will receive an e-mail regarding your free office 365 license.Keep in mind that only registered schools and universities can avail this offer. If your school isn't authorized yet, there's still a way to register it for this great offer. Keep reading to know how.What to do if your School isn't registered?Assuming your school / university isn't registered to avail this offer there's a way you can get it registered. If you're in the Senior management of your school or if you work in the IT department, you can enroll your school by going to this link: Register your School and submitting the form after filling it accurately.If you're just a student or a teacher then you can ask your Principal or the Head of your school's IT department to submit the form on behalf of your school. Once the registration process is complete your school will be authorized to get Office 365 for free. All students and teachers will then be able to apply by following the steps we explained above.After all of this is done you can freely enjoy your very own Office 365. Don't forget to share it with your colleagues. Google's Gmail and Microsoft's Outlook.com are the two most popular free email services in the world, and either one is a perfectly good choice for your primary email account. As long as you're willing to settle for an address in someone else's domain, that is.For those who prefer a personalized email address that uses a custom domain they own, the options from either company have historically required a paid business account (G Suite from Google, Office 365 Business from Microsoft) using a complex, almost overwhelming set of administration tools designed for full-time network administrators. You also have to be willing and able to configure DNS records and mail exchange handlers, a process that can seem as esoteric as anything they teach at Hogwarts.So imagine my surprise and delight when I discovered a well-hidden feature that allows anyone with an Office 365 Home or Personal subscription to attach a personalized email address to that account, with up to 50 GB of email storage for that account as well as support for email encryption. The web-based interface is ad-free, and you can use any email client, including the Windows 10 Mail app or the Outlook program included with Office 365, to access your account.If you have a subscription to Office 365 Home, you can share that subscription with up to five people, each of whom also gets to create a personalized email address in your custom domain.You have to pay an annual fee to register and manage the domain, but there are no extra charges as long as your Office 365 subscription is active.(It's worth noting that Microsoft's official documentation for these "Premium Outlook.com features for Office 365 subscribers" doesn't mention the personalized email address. Instead, those details are in a separate FAQ: "Get a personalized email address in Office 365.")So, what's the catch? There are three:First, you are required to use GoDaddy to purchase or manage your custom domain. There's no way to connect a domain from another registrar to this account. And GoDaddy's prices are not exactly competitive. I paid \$12 and change for the first year of my .com domain, but renewals are a pricey \$18 a year, and you'll have to pay another \$10 a year if you want your contact information to be confidential, making for a \$28 annual bill after the year-one promo offer expires.By contrast, Google Domains charges a flat \$12 for a .com domain, with privacy protection as a no-cost option. Likewise, Namecheap charges \$13 for a .com domain and promises that its WhoisGuard privacy protection service is "free forever."(If you already own a domain that you want to use with your Office 365 subscription, you'll need to transfer it to GoDaddy first. After the transfer is complete, you can attach that domain to your Office 365 consumer subscription.)Second, Microsoft already saw you calculating how much you could save by ditching your expensive corporate account for this much cheaper option. The license terms for Office 365 consumer subscriptions explicitly state that "[t]he service/software may not be used for commercial, non-profit, or revenue-generating activities." Likewise, the Microsoft Services Agreement specifies that Outlook.com is "for your personal, noncommercial use, unless you have commercial use rights under a separate agreement with Microsoft."Of course, there's no technical check that will stop you from switching a small business over to the premium features of Office 365 Home in Outlook.com, but that license agreement should frighten off most prudent business owners.Finally, you get one and only one personalized email address per mailbox. This feature doesn't support creating additional aliases using your custom domain beyond the first one you create for each mailbox.If you currently have an Office 365 Home or Personal subscription that's associated with an Outlook.com mailbox (specifically, an email address ending in @outlook.com, @hotmail.com, @live.com, or @msn.com), here's how to add a personalized email address:You might have to wait a few minutes for GoDaddy and Outlook.com to complete the connection, but you can check the status any time by opening Outlook.com again, signing in with the Microsoft account associated with your Office 365 subscription, and going to Settings > Premium > Personalized Email Address. As the owner of the subscription you can see all the users associated with your subscription. Manage custom email addresses from this Outlook.com Settings page. Any user with whom you've shared your Office 365 Home subscription can go to that same settings page after signing in with their Microsoft account to create their own address in your new shared domain.If all of this sounds vaguely familiar, it's not just your imagination. Microsoft first rolled this feature out as a standalone Outlook.com Premium subscription back in 2016, but closed the program in late 2017. For the handful of readers who still have one of these subscriptions, Microsoft sent out a notice this week that it will shut down the Outlook.com Premium dashboard at the end of February 2020 and will not renew those subscriptions when they expire.If you already have an Office 365 Home or Personal subscription and you want to attach a custom domain, the extra cost, even at GoDaddy's inflated prices, is probably worth it, especially if you have other shared users who also would benefit from having a personalized email address.The alternatives are a G Suite account or an Office 365 Business Essentials subscription, both of which cost \$5 per user per month and don't include the Office 365 desktop apps. An Office 365 Business Premium subscription, with email and the desktop apps, costs \$12.50 per user per month. At those prices, don't be surprised if some small businesses with one to five users decide to tempt the Microsoft licensing gods. 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