Course guide · PBI

Power BI - Install and Account Setup

Step by step: the free app, the account and the free trial

Desktop | Microsoft Store | Service | Free | Trial

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Everything you need to start: installing the free Power BI Desktop, creating a Power BI account to publish and share, and turning on the free trial. Checked in November 2026; Microsoft's screens may change a little over time.

> **For the whole course, the free Power BI Desktop on Windows is enough. You only need an account for the lesson on publishing and sharing.**

Which route fits you?

To learn	To publish for yourself	To share with a team
Power BI Desktop on Windows, free, no account	Free account with a work or school email, My workspace	60-day trial, then Pro or a Fabric workspace

1. What you need

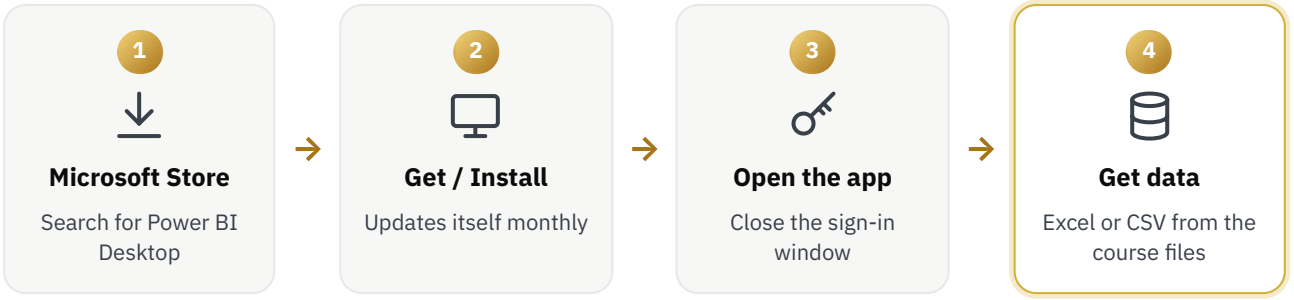
1. **Power BI Desktop is completely free**
   You build reports with it on your computer: get data, clean it in Power Query, model it, write DAX and draw visuals. No subscription needed.

2. **Windows only**
   Windows 10 or later, 4 GB RAM or more (2 GB minimum), a screen of at least 1440×900, and Microsoft Edge installed.

3. **There is no Mac version**
   On a Mac, use a Windows virtual machine (such as Parallels) or a cloud Windows PC, or build simple reports in the browser in the Power BI service.

2. Install Power BI Desktop

Install Power BI Desktop in 4 steps



4 **Preferred: Microsoft Store**

Open Microsoft Store, search for Power BI Desktop and click Get or Install. It updates itself every month and needs no admin rights.

5 **Or: Microsoft Download Center**

Search for "Download Power BI Desktop", download the 64-bit .exe and install it. This route needs admin rights.

6 **Don't install both**

Pick one route. Having the Store version and the .exe version on the same PC is not supported.

7 **First launch**

A sign-in window appears. You can close it and start working: signing in is not needed to build reports on your PC.

8 **Open the course files**

Home → Get data → Excel or Text/CSV, then pick the Sanabel store files attached to Lesson 1.

3. A Power BI account (to publish and share)

9 **What is the Power BI service?**

The website app.powerbi.com, where you publish, share and auto-refresh your reports. It is part of Microsoft Fabric.

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It needs a work or school email

Sign-up does not accept personal addresses such as Gmail, Hotmail or Outlook.com. Use your company or university email.

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Free sign-up steps

Open powerbi.com, click Start free (it may say Try free), enter your work email and follow the steps. You get a Fabric (Free) license and land on Home.

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What the free account allows

You create and view reports in your own My workspace, but you can't share them with colleagues without a Pro license or a Premium/Fabric workspace.

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"Sign-up is disabled"?

Your organization may block self-service sign-up. Ask your IT department for a license.

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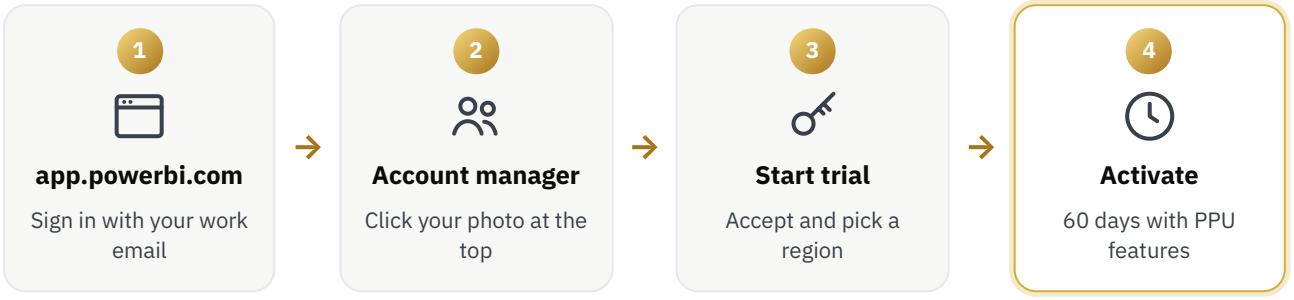
No work email?

Ask your employer or university for an account. Microsoft also documents a Microsoft 365 business trial that creates a new work email for you, but it asks for a payment card, so cancel before the trial ends if you don't want to subscribe.

4. The free trial (60 days)

Start the free trial



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What you get

A 60-day Fabric trial that includes a Power BI individual trial with Premium Per User features: sharing, collaboration and shared workspaces.

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How to start it

Sign in to app.powerbi.com, click your photo at the top to open Account manager, then Start trial. Accept the terms, choose a region (or keep the default) and click Activate.

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Before you start

The trial can usually be used only once and can't always be extended, and your company admin may turn trials off. Start it when you reach the publishing lesson.

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When the trial ends

Your account goes back to the free license automatically, and your reports stay in My workspace.

5. The mobile app

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Power BI Mobile

A free app for iOS and Android to view and interact with published reports. Sign in with the same Power BI account.

Quick summary

20 **To learn:** Power BI Desktop on Windows, free, no account.

21 **To publish for yourself:** a free account with a work email (My workspace).

22 **To share with a team:** the 60-day trial, then a Pro license or a Fabric workspace.

Sources: Microsoft Learn documentation for Power BI Desktop, self-service sign-up and the Fabric trial (November 2026). This course is by Quanzetta and is not affiliated with Microsoft.