



How do I install Windows 8 (Windows 8.1) with an .exe file?

- Parallels Desktop

Symptoms

I purchased Windows® 8(.1) and received the **.exe** file (Windows8_install.exe). How do I create a virtual machine from it?

Resolution

In order to install Windows 8(.1) in a Parallels Desktop virtual machine, you must have a full installation source of Windows 8(.1) (ISO image, DVD). It is not possible to install Windows in a Parallels Desktop virtual machine using an **.exe** file. Therefore, please do the following:

1. Contact one of the [Microsoft Authorized OEM Distributors](#) to request either a Windows 8.iso installation image or physical DVD.

Note: If you have another Windows PC (XP or later) available you can use [this Microsoft article](#) to create an **.iso** image. (You should only select **ISO image** and save it later at some other location: you do not need to burn it to a disk or create a bootable flash drive.)

2. Once you have a full installation source of Windows 8/8.1, please see [Installing Windows on your Mac using Parallels Desktop](#) to learn how to install a Windows virtual machine.

If you are using Parallels Desktop 10, you may download a 90-day Windows trial. For more information, please visit [Modern.IE Test Environment in Parallels Desktop 10](#).

Please also note that Parallels Technical Support does not provide any assistance beyond this article regarding this out of scope issue.

Alternative solution if you have a Windows 7® license

If you have a Windows 7 license, following these steps:

1. Go to [Microsoft Software Recovery](#).
2. Follow the required steps to download a Windows 7 installation image (ISO).
3. Install a [Windows 7 virtual machine](#)
4. In the Windows 7 virtual machine, go to the [Upgrade to Windows 8.1 from Windows 7](#) page.
5. Download and launch [Upgrade Assistant](#).
6. Proceed with an upgrade.

As an alternative resource on this topic, we also recommend visiting this blog post:

[How to Install Windows on Mac with an .Exe Image File in Parallels Desktop](#)

trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.