WINDOWS SERVER 2022
Remote Desktop Services CALs

Customer installation & activation guide | Digisoft ZA | digisoft-za.co.za

Before you start
This guide is for Windows Server 2022 Remote Desktop Services Client Access Licences (RDS CALs). These are not Windows Server operating system product keys. You must install the CAL pack on an activated Remote Desktop licence server. Have your supplied RDS CAL key or agreement details ready.

1 Install the Remote Desktop Licensing role

01 Sign in to your Windows Server 2022 machine with an administrator account.

02 Open Server Manager and select Manage > Add Roles and Features.

03 Select Role-based or feature-based installation, choose your server, then select Remote Desktop Services.

04 Under Role Services, select Remote Desktop Licensing. Choose Add Features when prompted. Complete the wizard and select Install.

2 Activate the Remote Desktop licence server

05 In Server Manager, open Tools > Remote Desktop Services > Remote Desktop Licensing Manager.

06 Right-click your server name and choose Activate Server.

07 Select Automatic connection (recommended). Enter the requested company/contact information and complete the activation wizard. If your server cannot connect, use the Web Browser or Telephone option shown in the wizard.

3 Redeem / install your RDS CAL licence key

08 In Remote Desktop Licensing Manager, right-click the now-activated licence server and select Install Licenses.

09 Select the licence programme that matches your purchase. For a retail key, this is typically License Pack (Retail Purchase) / Packaged Lic. (Retail or Prod. Pack). For a volume agreement, choose the appropriate programme instead.

10 Enter the RDS CAL licence key or agreement details supplied with your order. On the retail-key screen, select Add if prompted, then Next.

11 If the wizard requests these details, select Windows Server 2022, the purchased Per User or Per Device type, and the number of CALs purchased. Complete the wizard with Finish.

12 Expand your licence server in the manager and confirm the new RDS CAL pack is listed with the expected licence type and quantity.

4 Configure the server to use the licences

Installing CALs alone is not enough. Configure each RD Session Host to use the correct licence server and licensing mode.

13 If your deployment uses an RD Connection Broker: open Server Manager > Remote Desktop Services > Overview > Edit Deployment Properties > RD Licensing. Set Per User or Per Device and add your licence server.

14 If your deployment has no RD Connection Broker: on the RD Session Host open gpedit.msc (or the relevant domain Group Policy) and navigate to Computer Configuration > Administrative Templates > Windows Components > Remote Desktop Services > Remote Desktop Session Host > Licensing.

15 Enable Use the specified Remote Desktop license servers and enter the licence server name. Enable Set the Remote Desktop licensing mode and select the same type as your CALs. Apply the settings.

Important compatibility note
For workgroup-based RDS deployments, Microsoft requires Per Device CALs; Per User CALs are not permitted for this configuration. Use the type actually purchased and appropriate for your deployment.

5 Check activation or resolve errors

Licence key not accepted? Verify that you selected the correct licence programme, entered the correct key or agreement number, and used the correct CAL version. Do not enter an RDS CAL key in Windows Settings > Activation.

Licences show but users still cannot connect? Check the licence-server name, matching Per User/Per Device mode, and Remote Desktop Licensing Diagnoser. Ensure the RD Session Host can reach the licence server.

Need assistance? Contact Digisoft ZA through the support contact details on digisoft-za.co.za. Provide your order number, a screenshot of the error, and the licence programme you selected. Do not send your full licence key in screenshots.

Microsoft reference documentation

Activate licence server: Microsoft Learn - Activate RD licence server
Install CALs: Microsoft Learn - Install RDS CALs
Configure session hosts: Microsoft Learn - License RD Session Hosts