

Install Linux Mint on Windows (Dual Boot) Step-by-Step Guide

About This Guide: This guide walks you through installing Linux Mint alongside Windows on the same computer. Dual boot means you can choose which operating system to start when you turn on your computer.

What is Dual Boot?

Dual boot means having two operating systems on one computer. When you start your computer, you choose which one to use:

- **Windows** - For games, banking apps, and software that only works on Windows
- **Linux Mint** - For privacy, everyday work, and freedom from surveillance

Your files live on the same hard drive but in separate partitions. Neither operating system sees the other's files unless you specifically access them.

Before You Start - Understand Your Security Chip

What is TPM?

Trusted Platform Module (TPM) is a security chip built into modern computers. It encrypts your data and ensures no one has tampered with your system.

TPM Versions and Timeline:

Version	Year Introduced	Notes
TPM 1.2	2006	Early version, basic encryption
TPM 2.0	2014-2015	Current standard, required for Windows 11
fTPM (firmware-based)	2015+	Software TPM built into CPU, no separate chip needed

Important: BitLocker Consideration

If Windows BitLocker encryption is enabled, you **must disable it before dual boot**. BitLocker uses TPM to encrypt your entire Windows drive. Dual boot can cause BitLocker to lock you out.

How to check: Open Windows Settings > Privacy & Security > Device Encryption. If it says "On," turn it Off before proceeding.

What You Need

A computer with Windows already installed

- At least 50GB of free hard drive space
- A USB drive (8GB or larger)
- 45-60 minutes of uninterrupted time
- Backup of important files (recommended)

Step 1: Disable Fast Startup in Windows

Fast Startup makes Windows boot faster but can cause problems with dual boot.

1. Open **Control Panel > Power Options**
2. Click **Choose what the power buttons do**
3. Click **Change settings that are currently unavailable**
4. Uncheck **Turn on fast startup (recommended)**
5. Click **Save changes**

Step 2: Disable BitLocker (If Enabled)

1. Open **Windows Settings > Privacy & Security > Device Encryption**
2. If Device Encryption is **On**, turn it **Off**
3. Wait for decryption to complete (may take time depending on drive size)

Note: If your Windows was pre-installed and came with BitLocker enabled, the recovery key may be stored in your Microsoft account. Make sure you know your Microsoft login before proceeding.

Step 3: Create Space for Linux Mint

1. Open **Windows Settings > System > Storage**
2. Click **Advanced storage settings > Disks & volumes**
3. Select your Windows drive and click **Shrink volume**
4. Enter the amount of space to shrink (at least 50GB = 50,000 MB for Linux Mint)
5. Click **Shrink**

You will see unallocated space. Do not format this - Linux Mint will use it.

Step 4: Download and Prepare Linux Mint

1. Download Linux Mint from: linuxmint.com/download
2. Choose the **Cinnamon** edition (most user-friendly)
3. Download the ISO file to your computer

Step 5: Create Bootable USB Drive

1. Download **Rufus** from: **rufus.ie** (Windows tool to create bootable USB)
2. Insert your USB drive (8GB or larger)
3. Open Rufus
4. Select your USB drive under "Device"
5. Click **SELECT** and choose the Linux Mint ISO file
6. Click **START**
7. Wait for the process to complete (10-15 minutes)

Warning: This will erase everything on the USB drive. Make sure you have no important files on it.

Step 6: Boot from USB

1. Restart your computer
2. As it starts up, press **F2**, **F12**, or **Delete** to enter BIOS/UEFI (the key varies by manufacturer)
3. In BIOS settings:
 - Find **Secure Boot** and **disable** it (if available)
 - Find **USB Boot** and **enable** it
 - Set USB drive as the first boot priority
4. Save settings and exit

Tip: On most computers, you can press **F12** during startup to see a boot menu where you can choose the USB drive without changing BIOS settings.

Step 7: Install Linux Mint

1. Computer will boot from USB and show Linux Mint desktop
 2. Double-click **Install Linux Mint** icon on the desktop
 3. Choose your language and click **Continue**
 4. Select **Install Linux Mint alongside Windows**
 - Linux Mint will automatically create the needed partitions
 - You can adjust the slider to decide how much space each OS gets
 5. Click **Install Now**
 6. Follow the on-screen instructions:
 - Choose your time zone
 - Create your username and password
 7. Wait for installation to complete (15-25 minutes)
 8. Remove USB drive when prompted and click **Restart Now**
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Step 8: Using Dual Boot

After restart, you will see the **GRUB menu**:

- **Linux Mint** - Select this to boot into Linux
- **Windows** - Select this to boot into Windows

Tips for Success

- Always boot completely into one OS before switching
- Do not hibernate or use Windows Fast Startup
- If you have issues, restart the computer and try again

Common Problems and Solutions

Problem: Computer boots directly to Windows

Solution: Enter BIOS and make sure USB is first boot priority, or use boot menu (F12) to select USB

Problem: Black screen after selecting Linux Mint

Solution: Restart and in GRUB menu, select "Advanced Options" then "Recovery Mode"

Problem: Can't see the unallocated space in installer

Solution: Go back to Windows and make sure BitLocker is fully disabled, then restart the Linux Mint installer

Problem: Windows partition won't boot after Linux install

Solution: In Linux, open terminal and run: `sudo update-grub`

After Installation - Recommended First Steps

1. Update Linux Mint: Open Menu > Administration > Update Manager
2. Install firewall: Menu > Administration > Firewall
3. Remove any pre-installed apps you do not need

FAQ

Q: Will this slow down my computer?

A: No. Each operating system runs independently. You may see a brief menu at startup, otherwise performance is the same.

Q: Can I remove Linux Mint later?

A: Yes. You can use a partition manager to delete the Linux partitions and reclaim the space for Windows.

Q: Can Linux Mint access my Windows files?

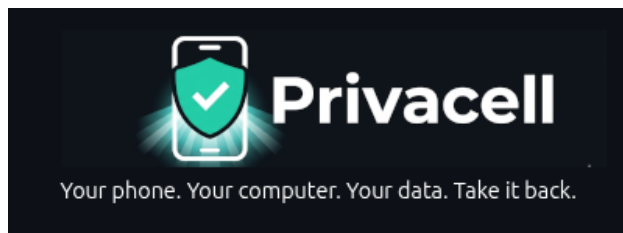
A: Yes, but only if you mount the Windows partition. Linux Mint will not automatically see your Windows files.

Ready to Get Started?

Want it done for you? Privacell offers Linux migration services.

Contact: privacell.ca/contact-us/

Would you like to talk to a human being?
We offer a free 30 minute consultation.
Call Gianni – 250.444.8404
www.privacell.ca



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