

What is HomeGroup? How to use and set up on Windows

HomeGroup is a feature that helps share resources on a local network simply, integrated in Windows 7 and higher versions. Unlike Workgroup, HomeGroup has a password security mechanism, making it easier to control access.

HomeGroup helps connect computers on the same network, share files and printers quickly. This feature is suitable for individual users, office workers and businesses that want to create an effective internal sharing system.

HomeGroup is different from Workgroup and Domain

HomeGroup is a feature of Windows 7 that helps computers on the same network share files, folders, printers quickly and securely. It acts as a local connection group, helping devices communicate with each other without complicated setup.

- HomeGroup is optional: Not required when connecting to a local network.
- Password protection: Only devices that enter the correct password can join.
- No other account required: Users do not need a separate account to connect.
- Only works on a local network: Cannot extend to the internet like a Domain.

HomeGroup Setup Guide

How to create a HomeGroup on Windows:

Step 1: Open Control Panel, then find the HomeGroup icon.

Step 2: Click on the **Create a homegroup** button to open the next window.

Step 3: Select the resources you want to share (Documents, Music, Videos...).

Step 4: Windows will generate a password, save it to add other devices to the group.

Step 5: Click Finish to complete the setup.

Note:

- Windows 7 Home Basic and Starter do not support creating HomeGroup.



How to join or leave a HomeGroup

Step 1: Open Control Panel => Go to HomeGroup.

Step 2: If there is a group in the network, you will see the Join Now option.

Step 3: Click Join Now, enter the HomeGroup password and click Next.

Step 4: Select the content you want to share => Click Finish to complete.

Note:

- A computer can only join one HomeGroup at a time. If you want to join another group, you must leave the old group first.
- If you no longer want to use it, open the HomeGroup sharing window, then click the link **Leave the homegroup...**

How to use

HomeGroup makes it easy to share files and printers between computers on the same local network. To access shared files, open Windows Explorer and navigate to HomeGroup in the left pane.

Here you will see a list of devices connected to the group. Click on a device to see the shared files and folders, including Documents, Music, Pictures, Videos. Note that if the computer containing the file is turned off, the data will not be displayed.

Manage file sharing permissions

By default, files in a HomeGroup are shared as read-only. To change access permissions:

- Change shared resources: Right-click on HomeGroup in Windows Explorer => select Change HomeGroup settings.

- Edit permissions for each file/folder: Open Libraries, select the file/folder to share => click Share with on the toolbar to reset access rights.
- In addition to files, HomeGroup also automatically shares printers with all computers in the group.

Instructions for changing password

Windows automatically generates a password when you create a HomeGroup, but you can change this password to make it easier to remember or to remove a computer from the group.

- Open HomeGroup sharing in Control Panel.
- Click Change the password..., view the current password if necessary.
- Enter the new password => select Next => Finish.
- Repeat these steps on all computers in the HomeGroup to avoid connection errors.

Troubleshooting

If you encounter problems connecting or sharing resources in HomeGroup, check the following causes:

- Computer cannot share files/printers: Some laptops can access resources but cannot share.
- IPv6 is not enabled: HomeGroup requires IPv6 to function (Windows 7 is enabled by default).
- Hard drive encryption: If the computer has Trusted Platform Module (TPM) enabled, it may not join HomeGroup.

Windows provides automatic error correction tools:

- Open HomeGroup sharing in Control Panel.
- Select Start the HomeGroup troubleshooter at the bottom of the window.

HomeGroup is a useful feature that helps individual users and businesses easily share files, folders, and printers on the internal network without complicated setup. With password security, access control capabilities, and ease of use, HomeGroup is a great choice to optimize data exchange in the work environment.

However, Microsoft has removed HomeGroup on Windows 10 versions from 1803 onwards. If you are using Windows 10/11, consider alternatives such as OneDrive, Nearby Sharing or LAN sharing (SMB, FTP) to ensure the best performance and security.

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