

Virtual Machines

Before we start installing our operating system, we need to be familiar with the concept of virtual machines, or VMs. A virtual machine is just a copy of a real machine. Why would you want that? We've been working with physical machines so far, but there are cases in IT support where we need access to a machine that isn't physically in front of us. Let's say I have a Windows machine, and I want to learn another operating system like Linux. I don't want to buy another computer, or have two separate operating systems on my disk. Instead, I can use an application like Virtual Box to install Linux, and have it completely isolated from my machine. Virtual machines use physical resources like memory, CPU, and storage, but they offer the added benefit of running multiple operating systems at once. They're also easier to maintain and provision. Virtual machines have become a staple in many IT departments since they allow IT support specialist to create new virtual computers on-demand. They can also reclaim the resources they use when they're no longer needed. If you wanted to use software that's only available on one specific OS, it's easier to create a new virtual machine. Use the software and then delete the virtual machines once you're done. Throughout this program, you'll actually be using VMs to perform hands-on exercises. You'll be working on our Quick Labs platform, where you'll be presented tasks to complete from within a lab setting. We list out the specific tasks you'll need to complete and once you complete the tasks, you'll get the credit for the lab. Now that we know what a virtual machine is, you can see how they can be extremely useful.

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