Java Licensing FAQ

Executive Summary

- Oracle announced in 2019 that Java would now require a paid subscription

- Additionally, as of January 2023, Oracle has announced a new "Per Employee" metric, requiring all employees to be licensed for Java

- In Oracle's view, every desktop, server, and employee uses Java. This could translate into hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars in unexpected costs annually for Java subscriptions

- Oracle has assigned certain releases and updates of Java as Freeware, along with others to be considered commercial or requiring a subscription. To understand these differences, along with Support options and Java Subscription Term options, please refer to the Appendix of this FAQ

Questions

How do I locate devices that use Java?

It is easier to define where Java is not used or not needed than to determine where it is installed. This is still true for those organizations who have not segregated their Java environment. Virtually every server, desktop, and laptop has Java installed either through imaging or "clone-and-clip" deployment approaches. Moreover, applications, devices, and users can often download Java updates or a new release version that requires a subscription.

How much does an Oracle Java subscription cost?

Oracle had previously announced that the pricing will be $2.50 per user (desktop or laptop) per month; or $25.00 per licensable core per month. There are tiers based on the quantity of license subscriptions. However, this pricing was only available until March 1, 2023. New subscriptions are based upon the new "Per Employee" metric. However, there may be methods to mitigate some of the impact of this change.

Note: Please refer to the tables in the Appendix to learn about the specifics of Oracle's new "Per Employee" metric and what releases of Java are free or paid, depending on the release number and the update number.

Who We Are

Miro Consulting specializes in license management, software audit advisory, negotiation tactics, support management, and cloud services for Oracle, IBM, Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS) & Salesforce.

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How does Oracle define an employee?
Oracle defines an employee as:

"i) all of Your full-time, part-time, temporary employees, and (ii) all of the full-time employees, part-time employees and temporary employees of Your agents, contractors, outsourcers, and consultants that support Your internal business operations."

This means their definition is very inclusive. Even if your employee, contractor, or agent doesn't use Oracle Java or even a computer, they will still require an Oracle Java subscription.

Are there Java alternatives?
Yes, you can switch to Open Oracle JDK or to any of the others, but this might not be practical for your organization for numerous reasons.

What if I'm not an Oracle customer?
If you are using the Oracle Java – formerly, Sun Java – you still need to pay for a Java subscription, both to stay in legal compliance and to receive security updates.

Will Oracle "Grandfather" users who installed Java before this announcement?
No, Oracle has not announced any provisions for grandfathering historic users. All new Oracle Java versions and updates will require a subsctiption.

Are all the current releases of Java licensable?
No. The Oracle Java 8 releases after January 2019 will require a subscription. There are some exceptions, however, Oracle has announced that version 17 is a long-term support (LTS) version and is free to use commercially until September 2024. Additionally, version 21, which came out in Sept 2023, and is also long-term support (LTS) version, is free to use commercially until September 2026.

(Note: Only Java 7 and above are supported by Oracle. Java 7 has exited Extended Support effective July 2022. Java 8 is already in Extended Support through December 2030.)

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Will Java automatically update itself from a free version to a paid version?
Yes. However, this can be circumvented if you disable the automatic update feature, and make other changes.

What information does Oracle Java send to Oracle about me when it "phones home" (collects data)?
Oracle states that they do not collect personally identifiable information. They describe it as *"anonymous technical data"* that they call *"telemetry."* However, Oracle gets informed whenever someone within your organization downloads Java. Such things as *"Method/Venue"* which Oracle defines as indicating *"... if it is an auto-update transaction... [or] a manual download..."*. IP Address is mentioned as part of the data, which could be a security-related issue.

Why does Java "phone home"?
They indicate that the *"... purpose of the telemetry transmitted to Oracle during the Java installation and auto-update process is to find any technical problems or anomalies that occur..."* such as a missing file or compatibility with an updated browser.

When does Java "phone home"?
Oracle is notified upon any download of Java and periodically during subsequent automatic updates of Java if they are not disabled.

Can I install it manually without Java "phoning home"?
Yes, Oracle does provide a method to install Java without the initial data collection. Go to https://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp and follow the instructions about not being connected to the internet.

Can I turn off the "phone home" function for Java?
Yes, there is a detailed way on how to limit the notifications received by Oracle. Go to https://www.java.com/en/download/help/java_update.html for those instructions.

What should I do now?
Get expert advice on determining your exposure and options by contacting Miro Consulting.

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Appendix Item 1

Java 4 to Java 8 – Update Guide

(Note: for these releases, the update number determines whether it is free or paid)

Java Release	Last Free Release	First Paid Release
4	4u30	4u31
5	5u22	5u23
6	6u45	6u51
7	7u80	7u85
8	8u202	8u211

Appendix Item 2

Java 8 to Java 25 – Release Guide

(Note: for these releases, some are free and some are not, but it's important to also look at the table in Appendix Item 1)

Oracle Java Support Roadmap						
Release	LTS	Subscription*	GA Date	Premier Support Until	Extended Support Until	Sustaining Support
8	Yes	Conditional**	Mar 2014	Mar 2022	Dec 2030	Indefinite
9 - 10	No	No	Sept 2017 - Mar 2018	Mar 2018 - Sept 2018	Not Available	Indefinite
11	Yes	Yes	Sept 2018	Sept 2023	Jan 2032	Indefinite
12 - 16	No	Yes	Mar 2019 - Mar 2021	Sept 2019 - Sept 2021	Not Available	Indefinite
17	Yes	No (Until Sept 2024)	Sept 2021	Sept 2026	Sept 2029	Indefinite
18 - 20	No	No	Mar 2022 - Mar 2023	Sept 2022 - Sept 2023	Not Available	Indefinite
21	Yes	No (Until Sept 2026)	Sept 2023	Sept 2028	Sept 2031	Indefinite
22	No	No	Mar 2024	Sept 2024	Not Available	Indefinite
23	No	No	Sept 2024	Mar 2025	Not Available	Indefinite
24	No	No	Mar 2025	Sept 2025	Not Available	Indefinite
25	Yes	TBD	Sept 2025	Sept 2030	Sept 2033	Indefinite
Past Support Dates						

Free* - In certain circumstances, it is only Freeware if commerical features are turned off. Contact Miro for details

Update**: For Java 7 and Java 8, usage is only free up to a certain Update number. If they are updated to newer releases, they require a subscription. Please refer to Appendix Table 1 for details

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Appendix Item 3
Overview of Java Support

Support Type	Mainstream Support	Extended Support
Long Term Support	5 years	3 years
Non-Long-Term Support	6 months	None

Appendix Item 4
Java Subscription Term Options

Timeframe	Term Discount	Quantity Discount	Additional Terms
5 Years	Discounted Pricing	Yes	No Back Usage Fees
3 Years	Tiered Pricing	No	As much as 50% off Back Usage fees
1 Year	Tiered Pricing	No	Full Back Usage Fees

Note: for further explanation on Term Discounts as it relates to your organization, please contact Miro for details

Appendix Item 5
Java "Per Employee" Metric Pricing Per Month

Number of Employees	Price Per Employee (U.S.)
1 – 999	$15.00
1,000 – 2,999	$12.00
3,000 – 9,999	$10.50
10,000 – 19,999	$8.25
20,000 – 29,999	$6.75
30,000 – 39,999	$5.70
40,000 – 49,999	$5.25
50,000+	**Contact for details**

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