

The New Machine Checklist

In dependency order. Everything here is quick on an empty machine and tedious on a full one.

MACHINE

SET UP ON

SIGNED IN AS

1 - RECOVERY, BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

- ☐ Account password generated and stored in a password manager
- ☐ Two-factor enabled - an app or a key, not SMS, if there is a choice
- ☐ Recovery codes printed and put somewhere physical
- ☐ Disk encryption turned on, and the key written down OFF this device
- ☐ Find-my / remote wipe enabled and tested once
- ☐ A separate admin account, so daily use is not administrator

2 - BACKUP, BEFORE THERE IS ANYTHING TO LOSE

- ☐ External drive attached and the first backup actually completed
- ☐ A second copy somewhere off-site (cloud counts, sync does not)
- ☐ One file restored from each copy, to prove they work
- ☐ Schedule set, and the first scheduled run confirmed

3 - DATA, THEN APPS, THEN PREFERENCES

- ☐ Files copied over - and the old machine kept until the restore test passes
- ☐ Applications installed fresh from source, not cloned from an old image
- ☐ Licence keys and downloads collected in one place
- ☐ Browser: profile, extensions, and a look at what they can read
- ☐ Preferences, shortcuts and wallpaper - last, on purpose

4 - THE ONES PEOPLE SKIP

- ☐ Automatic updates on, for the system AND the browser
- ☐ Firewall on; sharing services off unless you use them
- ☐ Serial number and purchase date recorded (below)
- ☐ Old machine wiped - after the restore test, not before

WRITE IT DOWN - keys, accounts, where things are stored, what you skipped

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