BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

AN EXTENDED GUIDE · NO. 2349

Updated November 2026

"This PC Can't Run Windows 11" — Your Real Options

Every realistic path when your computer is left behind — and how to pick the right one

Plain-English Windows help from:

Bill's Home Tech

Portage County, Ohio

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

Bill Davis — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com · Atwater, Ohio

Book a visit · billshometech.com/book

What's Inside

Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.

The 60-Second Version 3

The Short Version 3

First, Double-Check It Really Can't 4

Option 1: Keep Windows 10, Safely (Free) 4

Option 2: Revive It With ChromeOS Flex (Free) 5

Option 3: Buy a New Windows 11 PC 6

Option 4: Keep Using It As-Is (With Eyes Open) 6

Matching the Option to How You Use Your PC 7

Before Any Change: Back Up 8

Scams That Target This Exact Moment 8

How Long Can I Safely Keep Windows 10? 9

Common Worries, Answered Plainly 9

When to Call Bill 10

Everyday Cheat Sheet 12

A Note From Bill 13

Your Visit — and My Promise 14

SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

A "can't run Windows 11" result is common and does not mean your computer is broken or unsafe to use. First, confirm it with PC Health Check — a failure only on TPM or Secure Boot can sometimes be turned on. Then pick from several good paths: keep Windows 10 safe for free by enrolling in Extended Security Updates (now running into October 2027); revive an older laptop with free ChromeOS Flex if you mostly browse and email; or buy a sensible new Windows 11 PC and have your files moved over.

Back up your files before any change, watch out for scare-tactic scams, and take the decision at your own pace — the free update program means there is no rush.

1 The Short Version

You ran the check, or Windows told you outright: this computer cannot run Windows 11. First, take heart — your PC did not break, you did nothing wrong, and you are in enormous company. Millions of good, working computers simply predate Windows 11's requirements. Second, you have more good options than the warnings suggest, and none of them require you to rush out and spend money today.

This guide lays out every realistic path, from the free and easy to the "time for a new one," and helps you pick the one that fits how you actually use your computer. The goal is for you to feel in control of the decision rather than pushed into it.

- A "can't run Windows 11" verdict is common and does not mean your PC is unsafe to touch.
- You can keep Windows 10 safe for free with Microsoft's Extended Security Updates into 2027.
- An older laptop can often be revived with free ChromeOS Flex.
- Buying a new PC is a fine choice too — just one of several, not the only one.

GOOD TO KNOW

There is no clock forcing a decision this week. The free update program buys you time well into 2027, so you can choose calmly and at your own pace.

2 First, Double-Check It Really Can't

Before accepting the verdict, it is worth a quick second look, because sometimes a computer fails the Windows 11 check only because of a security feature that is switched off rather than missing. Turning on something called TPM or Secure Boot in the computer's startup settings can occasionally flip a "no" into a "yes."

- Run Microsoft's PC Health Check app and read exactly which requirement failed.
- If it failed only on "TPM 2.0" or "Secure Boot," those can sometimes be turned on.
- If it failed on "processor" or "unsupported CPU," that is a true hardware limit — the machine genuinely can't upgrade.

WATCH OUT

Turning on TPM or Secure Boot happens in a technical startup screen (the BIOS) where a wrong move can stop the computer booting. This is a textbook moment to let me check it for you — I can tell in a few minutes whether your PC is a genuine 'no' or just needs a setting flipped, without any risk.

3 Option 1: Keep Windows 10, Safely (Free)

The simplest path is to stay exactly where you are and keep your Windows 10 computer protected. Microsoft's free Extended Security Updates program keeps delivering the important security patches, and it has been extended to run through October 2027. Your familiar computer does not change at all; it just keeps getting protected.

1. Open Settings Update & Security Windows Update.
2. Look for the option to enroll in Extended Security Updates and select it.

3. Sign in with a free Microsoft account if asked — that is usually how home users qualify.
4. Once enrolled, check for updates to confirm they are flowing.

> **TIP**
> For many people this is the best first move, full stop: no cost, no new computer, no learning curve, and well over a year of breathing room to decide what comes next.

4 Option 2: Revive It With ChromeOS Flex (Free)

If your computer feels slow and you mostly use it for the web, email, and video, you can give it a genuinely new life with free software from Google called ChromeOS Flex. It replaces Windows with a light, fast, secure system that keeps getting updates — and it often makes an old laptop feel years younger.

- Ideal if your computing is mostly browsing, email, YouTube, and banking through a website.
- Keeps receiving security updates from Google, so the "unsupported" worry goes away.
- Frequently speeds up an old, sluggish machine dramatically.
- Not suited to Windows-only programs — if you depend on a specific app, this is not the path.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> ChromeOS Flex does replace Windows, so your Windows programs go away and your files need backing up first. But you can try it from a USB stick without changing anything, to see if you like it before you commit. I have a full guide on this.

5 Option 3: Buy a New Windows 11 PC

Sometimes the right answer really is a new computer, especially if your current one is quite old, slow, or you depend on Windows programs. A new PC comes with Windows 11, years of support ahead, and the speed of modern hardware. The trick is buying sensibly rather than overspending or being talked into extras you do not need.

- For everyday use — email, web, photos, documents — a mid-range laptop is plenty; you do not need the most expensive model.
- Look for at least 8 GB of memory (16 GB is a comfortable step up) and a solid-state drive (SSD), which makes a computer feel fast.
- Decline the high-pressure "setup fees" and "extended warranties" at the register unless you have thought them through.
- Buying the machine is the easy part; moving your files and settings over is where help pays off.

WATCH OUT

I help people choose and set up new computers all the time — including moving your files and photos over, re-installing the programs you actually use, and clearing out the junk that comes pre-loaded. It turns a stressful purchase into a smooth handover, and you are not left staring at an empty new machine.

6 Option 4: Keep Using It As-Is (With Eyes Open)

You can also simply keep using the computer the way it is for a while, which is a reasonable bridge if you are not ready to decide. The key is to lower the risk with a few habits rather than ignore it entirely.

1. Keep your web browser current and set to update itself.
2. Leave Microsoft Defender turned on for background protection.
3. Do banking and shopping on a phone or newer device when you can.
4. Back up your files so nothing important lives only on this machine.

WATCH OUT

This is fine as a short bridge, not a permanent plan. Without the free update program, the machine slowly becomes a softer target — so treat 'as-is' as 'for now, while I decide,' and enrolling in the free updates is almost always worth the few minutes it takes.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

7 Matching the Option to How You Use Your PC

The right choice depends far less on the computer than on what you do with it. Find the row that sounds like you.

If you mostly…	A good path is…
Email, web, and video only	ChromeOS Flex (free) revives the machine; or keep Windows 10 with free updates
Use a specific Windows program	Keep Windows 10 with free updates now; plan for a new Windows 11 PC
Want zero change right now	Enroll in free Extended Security Updates and carry on
Have a very old, slow PC	New Windows 11 PC, or ChromeOS Flex if your needs are light
Just want it decided for you	Call Bill — we match the path to your real habits

GOOD TO KNOW

Notice that 'keep Windows 10, enrolled in free updates' fits almost everyone as a first step. It costs nothing and buys time, so you can take the bigger decisions slowly.

8 Before Any Change: Back Up

No matter which path you pick, copy your important files somewhere safe first. This is what makes every other decision low-stakes, because your photos and documents are protected regardless of what happens to this particular computer.

- Copy Documents, Pictures, and Desktop to an external drive or USB stick.
- Or use a cloud service (OneDrive, Google Drive, iCloud) so a copy lives online.
- Both together is best — a copy in your hand and a copy in the cloud.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you are unsure where your files live or what to save, that is one of the most common things I help with. We make a labeled, safe copy together, and then every other option becomes stress-free.

9 Scams That Target This Exact Moment

The confusion around Windows 10 ending is a scammer's dream, and the fear of an "unsupported" PC is precisely what they exploit. Expect pop-ups, emails, and even phone calls claiming your computer is now hacked, illegal, or unprotected, pressuring you to pay or hand over control.

- Microsoft does not phone you about your PC, and no real warning demands instant payment.
- A pop-up with a number telling you to call "support" is always a scam — close the browser.
- Never let an unexpected caller take remote control of your computer.
- No legitimate company asks for gift cards, wire transfers, or cryptocurrency.

WATCH OUT

If a message about your 'out-of-date' PC frightens you, that fear is the trick. Don't click or call the number shown — ring me, and I'll tell you in a minute whether it's real. It almost never is.

10 How Long Can I Safely Keep Windows 10?

A fair question behind all of this is simply how much time you really have. The honest answer is: more than the warnings imply, and enough to decide without pressure. With the free Extended Security Updates program now running through October 2027, a Windows 10 computer can stay protected for well over a year while you choose your path.

- Enrolled in the free updates, your PC keeps getting security patches into late 2027.
- Not enrolled, the computer still works — but slowly becomes a softer target, so enrolling is the smart first move.
- Your browser (Chrome, Edge, Firefox) keeps updating itself regardless, which covers much of everyday risk.
- There is no single date on which a Windows 10 PC 'stops working' — it's a gradual thing, not a cliff.

GOOD TO KNOW

Think of the free update program as buying yourself a comfortable runway. Enroll now, and the decision between upgrading, switching, or replacing becomes something you do when it suits you — not a scramble.

11 Common Worries, Answered Plainly

The end of Windows 10 support has stirred up a lot of worry, much of it overblown. Here are the honest answers to the questions people ask most.

You're worried...	The plain answer
My computer is now unsafe to turn on	No — it works fine; the risk is gradual, and the free updates cover it
I must buy a new PC immediately	No — you have free options and over a year of breathing room
I'll lose my files	No — none of these options touches your files if you back up first
I'm not technical enough for any of this	That's exactly what a house call is for — nothing here is beyond help
Those scary pop-ups mean I've been hacked	No — they're scams exploiting the confusion; never call the number

GOOD TO KNOW

Almost every worry about this change dissolves once you see it clearly: the computer still works, your files are safe if backed up, and you have free, calm options. The loudest voices online are often the scammers.

12 When to Call Bill

A "can't run Windows 11" verdict is really a fork in the road with several good branches, and I am happy to walk it with you. I come to you here in Portage County, look at your actual computer and how you use it, and help you pick the path that genuinely fits — not the one that costs the most.

Whether that means enrolling you in the free updates, reviving the laptop with ChromeOS Flex, choosing and setting up a sensible new PC with your files moved over, or simply backing you up and keeping things as they are for now, I make sure it is done right and leave you a plain note of what we did and why.

- You want to be sure the "no" is real and not just a setting that's switched off.
- You're weighing a new computer and don't want to overspend or be upsold.

- You'd like an old laptop revived with ChromeOS Flex and your files kept safe.
- You simply want the decision made with you, calmly, by someone you trust.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this handy. A "no" is a fork in the road, not a dead end — and the free path buys time into 2027.

I want to…	Do this…
Be sure it's really a no	Run PC Health Check; a TPM/Secure Boot fail can sometimes be turned on
Keep Windows 10 safe, free	Settings Windows Update enroll in Extended Security Updates (into 2027)
Revive an old, slow laptop	Try free ChromeOS Flex (great for web, email, video)
Buy a new PC wisely	8 GB+ memory, an SSD, skip the pushy register add-ons
Protect my files first	Copy Documents, Pictures, Desktop to a drive AND the cloud
Handle a scare pop-up/call	It's a scam — don't click or call the number; ring Bill
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

Call or text (330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.