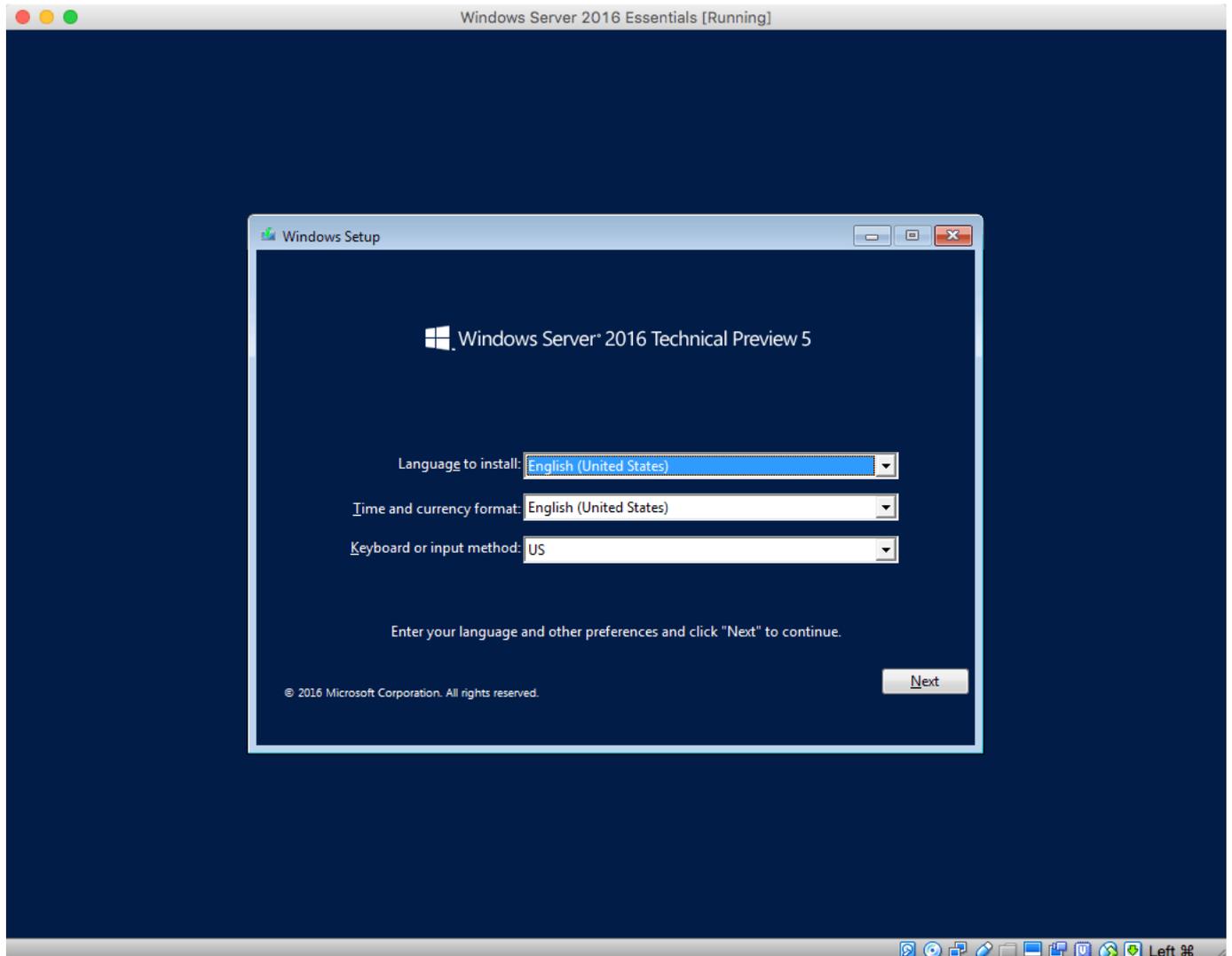




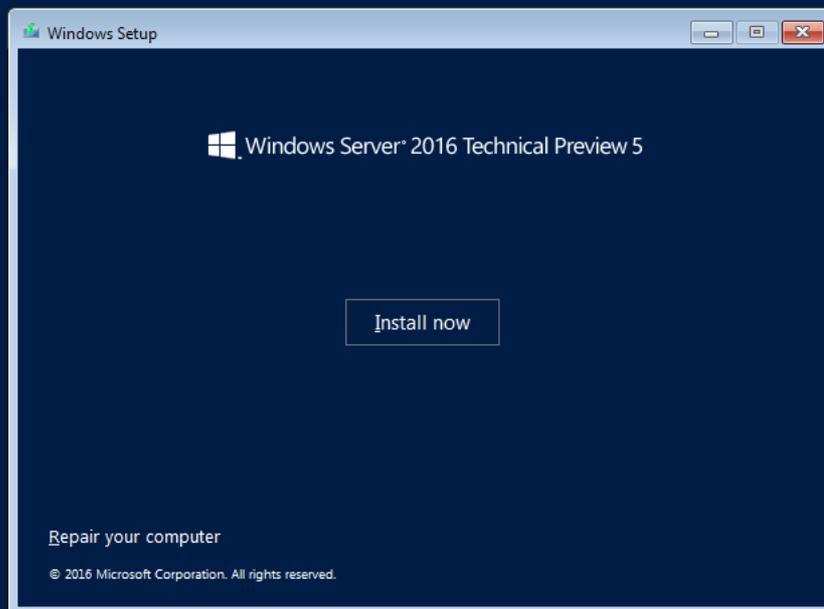
Begin the Installation

With your trusty USB/DVD in hand, create your VM or, if you're installing on dedicated hardware, slot in your media and power up the [PC](#). I'll be installing Windows Server 2016 Essentials in a Virtualbox VM (so I can grab screenshots of the installation process). I simply created a VM (using the Other Windows 64-bit option) with 4 GB RAM and a 120 GB hard drive – more than sufficient for a quick installation. Obviously, you can vary your own configuration to your needs.

You'll see a brief loading status bar (that was too quick for me to capture) before a familiar looking panel appears. I left the defaults with US settings, but you can tailor language and other regional settings should you need to.



Just like in previous releases, you'll be presented with a large **Install now** button, alongside an option to **Repair your computer**.

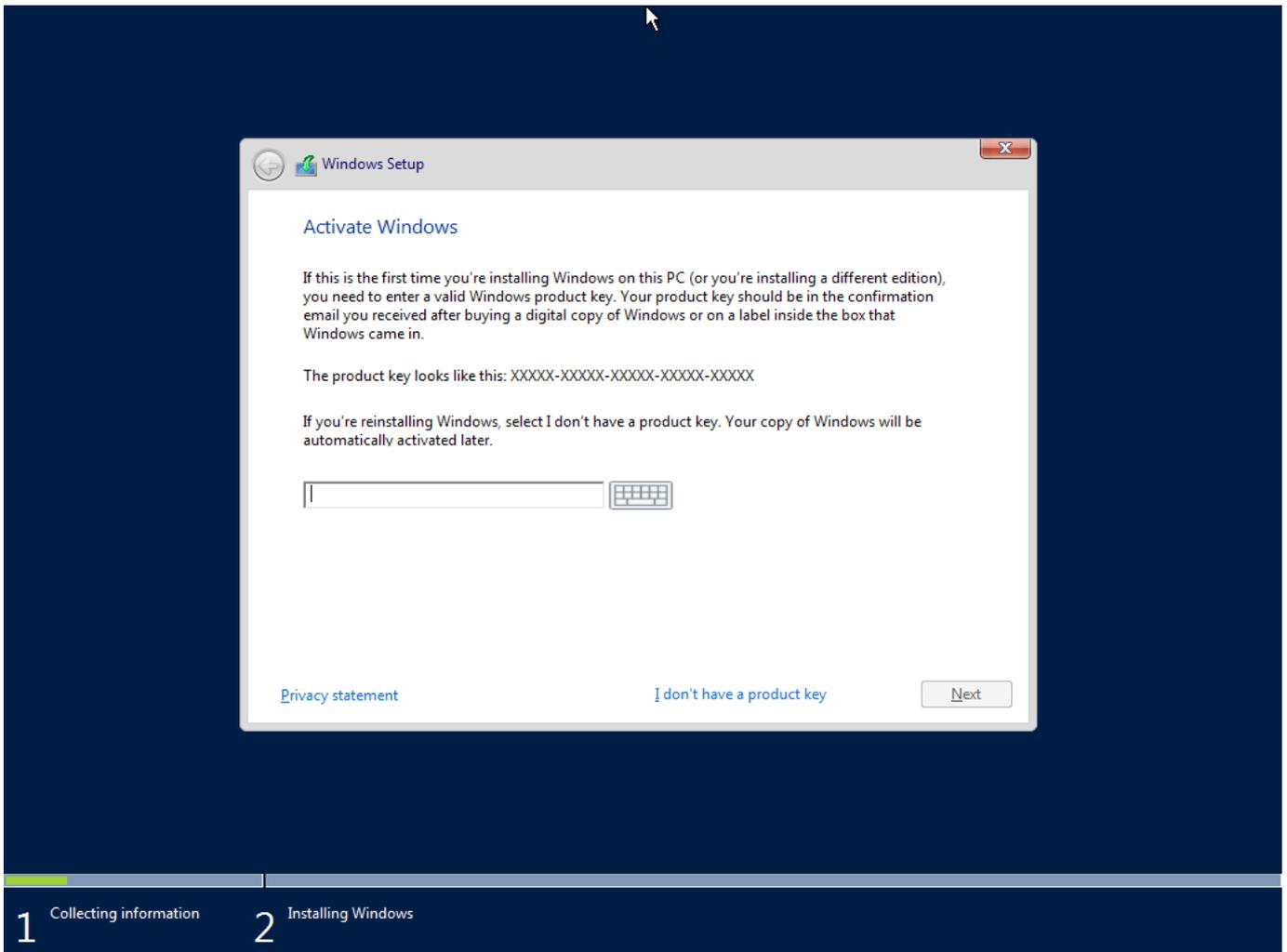


Click **Install now** and you'll be greeted with a reassuring screen informing you that **Setup is starting**.

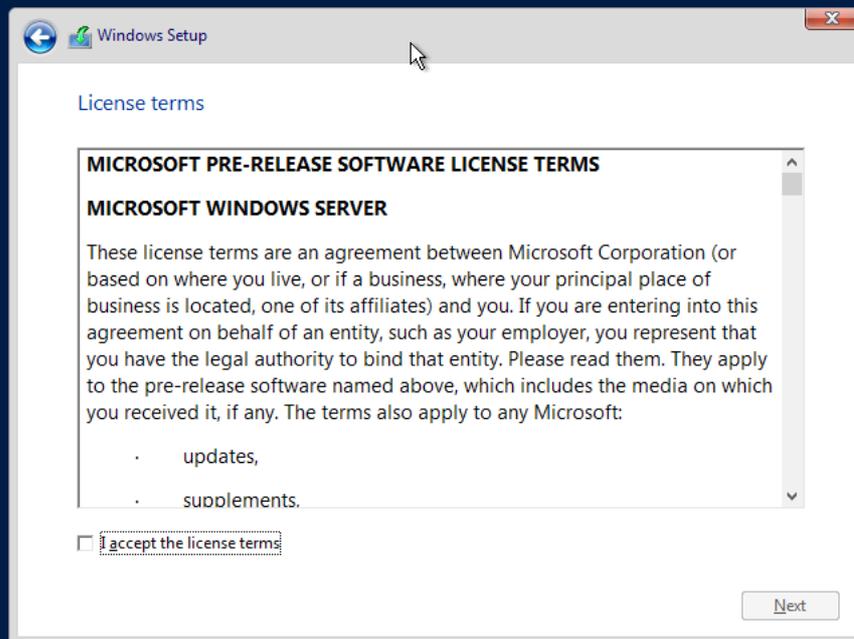


Setup is starting

Your next job is to activate the [software](#). On the Technet page you visited to download the software, you should have spotted an activation key for the evaluation release. If you didn't, at the time of writing, it's **NYK9H-Y2FDB-2XKGC-F2XHK-WTT88** but expect that to change at some point.



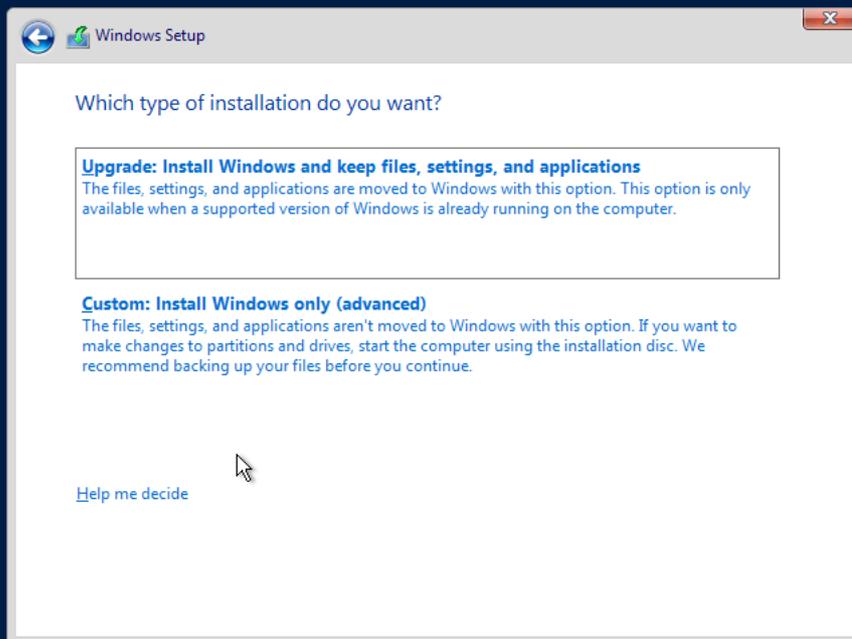
You can choose to skip activation, but you will be required to enter a key at some point, so why not get the job done up front? Enter the key and hit **Next**.



1 Collecting information

2 Installing Windows

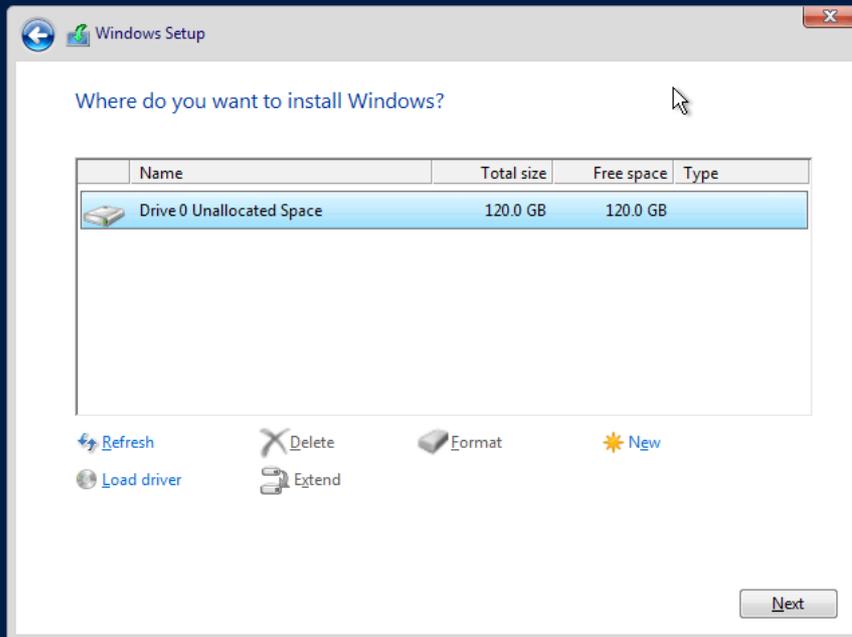
Carefully read and make notes on the [Windows](#) Server 2016 License terms (or just hit Next to skip them) and you'll be asked to select an installation type. As this is a clean install ([Microsoft](#) are recommending a clean installation of Windows Server 2016, although I'm sure IT Pros out there will be developing migration walkthroughs for older editions) we'll select **Custom**.



1 Collecting information

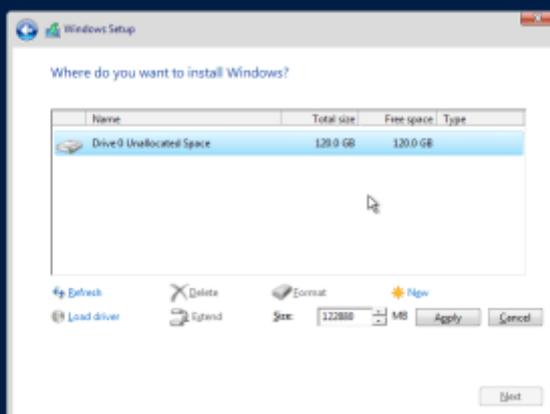
2 Installing Windows

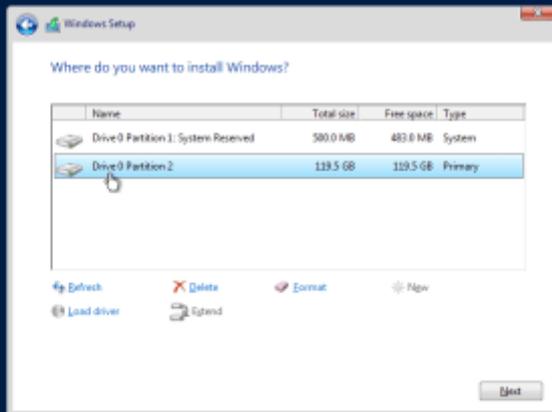
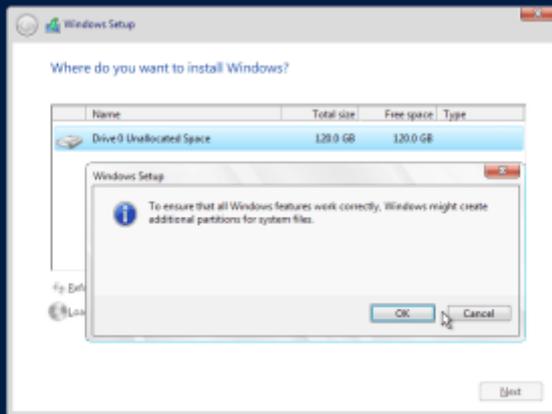
You'll be presented with a list of your [hard drives](#). I'd always recommend installing the OS on a standalone hard drive, dedicating additional drives for data. Separating the OS from your data ensures that you can reinstall the OS (if you need to) without fear of impacting your data. [Note](#) that Windows Server 2016 does not allow ATA/PATA/IDE/EIDE connections for boot, page, or data drives as stated in the hardware requirements.



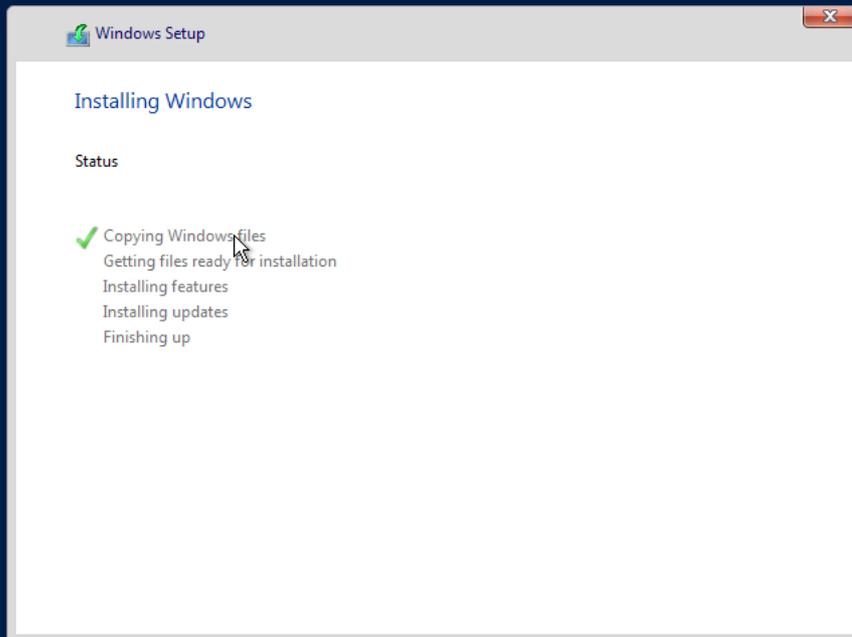
1 Collecting information 2 Installing Windows

The standard options are available here for creating/deleting partitions and formatting drives you wish to wipe. If your chosen drive hasn't been previously partitioned, use the **New** option to create the required configuration. [Windows](#) Server will reserve some space of the drive for who knows what, following which you're good to go.





Selecting **Next** kicks off the installation.



1 Collecting information 2 Installing Windows

As usual, [Windows](#) Server should be happy enough to install from here without intervention. As I mentioned earlier, my attempts to install TP5 on physical hardware have been blocked by reasonably strange bluescreens and complaints of missing drivers. Fingers crossed those issues will be sorted out in the final release.

My VM installation was far better behaved. Installation completed in a few minutes and, following a couple of reboots, [Windows](#) Server 2016 Essentials is ready for configuration.

Customize settings

Type a password for the built-in administrator account that you can use to sign in to this computer.

User name	<input type="text" value="Administrator"/>
Password	<input type="password"/>
Reenter password	<input type="password"/>



Finish