

How to Cancel Your Adobe Subscription: What's New After Adobe's \$150 Million Settlement

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Quick answer

Sign in to your Adobe account, go to Manage Plan, select Cancel Your Plan, choose a reason, and confirm - you'll keep access until your current billing period ends. If you're on an annual plan and cancel before the 12 months are up, Adobe charges an early termination fee equal to 50% of your remaining contract balance; annual prepaid plans get no refund after 14 days. There's also a separate development worth checking first: following a 2026 government settlement over its cancellation practices, some current and former Adobe subscribers qualify for two free months of Adobe software, whether or not you're planning to cancel.

Adobe's cancellation process has been the subject of a lot of frustrated forum posts and "why is this so hard" articles over the years. That's no longer just user complaints, it became a federal case. In March 2026, Adobe agreed to a \$150 million settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice over exactly this issue, and the company has since updated both its cancellation flow and its subscription disclosures. If you're trying to cancel Adobe right now, here's the current process, the fee rules that actually apply, and a benefit you may already be entitled to.

Why Cancelling Adobe Looks Different Now

In June 2024, the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission sued Adobe and two of its executives, David Wadhwani, president of Adobe's digital media business, and Maninder Sawhney, a senior vice president of digital sales, in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. The FTC's investigation had started in December 2023. The complaint alleged that Adobe violated the Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act (ROSCA), a 2010 federal law that requires companies to clearly disclose subscription terms and provide a simple way to cancel. Specifically, regulators said Adobe hid its early termination fee, which could run into the hundreds of dollars on annual plans, behind fine print and inconspicuous hyperlinks, and made the cancellation process unnecessarily long, both online and over the phone. On March 13, 2026, Adobe settled. The company agreed to pay \$75 million in civil penalties to the DOJ and provide \$75 million worth of free services to eligible customers, \$150 million total. Adobe denied wrongdoing but agreed to the terms, which also require the company to clearly disclose any early termination fee before signup, explain how it's calculated, and send a reminder before a free trial longer than seven days converts into a paid subscription with a termination fee attached. The practical result: Adobe's own help documentation for cancelling a subscription was last updated on July 24, 2026, and now lists a shorter, six-step process with no repeated retention offers described in it, a contrast to older walkthroughs of the process that documented multiple upsell and "are you sure" screens along the way.

How to Cancel Your Adobe Subscription (Current Steps)

This is the process as documented on Adobe's own help pages today, for subscriptions purchased directly from Adobe:

1. Sign in to your Adobe account .
 2. In the Plans and payment window, select Manage plan next to the subscription you want to cancel.
 3. Select Cancel your plan.
 4. Review your plan details, then select Continue.
 5. Choose a reason for cancelling, then select Continue.
 6. Review the cancellation details , including any fee that applies , and select Confirm cancellation.
- You'll get a confirmation email once it's processed. You can also double-check by going back to your account's Plans page and confirming the subscription no longer shows as active. A few things worth knowing before you start:

- You can't cancel while a payment is processing or if there's a problem with your payment method. Adobe asks you to wait 24 hours and try again.
- If you have more than one Adobe plan, each one has to be cancelled separately , cancelling one doesn't touch the others.
- If you subscribed through Apple, Google, or Microsoft rather than directly through Adobe, you'll need to cancel through that platform instead of your Adobe account.

Cancelling a Free Trial

The steps are identical to cancelling a paid plan. Adobe requires billing details when you start a trial, and it will automatically begin charging you once the trial period ends , so if you don't want to be charged, cancel before the trial expires using the same steps above.

Refund Rules and the Early Termination Fee

What you owe (or get back) depends entirely on which plan type you're on. Adobe currently documents three:

Plan Type: Annual plan, paid monthly | Refund Within 14 Days: Full refund | After 14 Days: Early termination fee: 50% of the remaining balance on your contract

Plan Type: Annual plan, prepaid | Refund Within 14 Days: Full refund | After 14 Days: No refund for the unused portion of the year

Plan Type: Month-to-month plan | Refund Within 14 Days: Full refund | After 14 Days: No early termination fee , cancel anytime, no annual commitment to break

For most plans, cancelling within 14 days of your original purchase date gets you a full refund. Past that window, it comes down to which plan you picked.

How the early termination fee is actually calculated

Adobe's own example: if you cancel in month 9 of a 12-month annual-paid-monthly term, you're charged 50% of the fee for the 3 remaining months. Using that formula against Adobe's current published monthly prices for two common plans, here's what that looks like in dollars:

Cancel After: Month 3 | Months Remaining: 9 months | Creative Cloud Pro (\$69.99/mo): \$314.96 | Single App Plan (\$22.99/mo): \$103.46

Cancel After: Month 6 | Months Remaining: 6 months | Creative Cloud Pro (\$69.99/mo): \$209.97 | Single App Plan (\$22.99/mo): \$68.97

Cancel After: Month 9 | Months Remaining: 3 months | Creative Cloud Pro (\$69.99/mo): \$104.99 | Single App Plan (\$22.99/mo): \$34.49

These figures are calculated using Adobe's published 50%-of-remaining-balance formula and its standard North American monthly pricing , your actual fee may differ based on your specific plan, region, or any discounts applied at signup. Adobe now shows your exact fee during the cancellation flow itself, before you confirm.

What Happens to Your Account and Files After You Cancel

Cancelling doesn't delete your Adobe account or your work , it downgrades you to a free membership. Here's exactly what changes:

- App access: You keep full access to paid apps and services until your current billing period ends. After that, you drop to the free Creative Cloud tier.
- Cloud storage: Your storage allowance drops to 5GB. If you're over that limit, you have 30 days to move files off Adobe's cloud before you risk losing access to them. Files sitting in free storage can eventually be deleted after a period of inactivity, but Adobe sends an email warning before that happens.
- Local files: Anything saved to your own computer stays exactly where it is , cancelling doesn't touch local copies.
- Lightroom (cloud): Adobe keeps your original images stored for one year after cancellation. You can still open Lightroom during that year to download your originals.
- Lightroom Classic: You keep full access to photos on your local drive , importing, organizing, exporting, printing, and publishing all still work. What you lose is the Develop and Map modules, plus Lightroom mobile.
- Generative credits: Any unused Firefly/generative credits attached to your subscription expire immediately on cancellation.
- Changed your mind? If you're still within your billing period, you can reactivate straight from your Adobe account , apps, services, and storage are restored, and billing picks back up on schedule.

You May Already Be Owed Free Adobe Access

This is the part most cancellation guides won't tell you, because it's new: as part of the March 2026 settlement, Adobe has already started emailing eligible customers offering two free months of Adobe software , separate from anything to do with cancelling. Who qualifies: You're eligible if you had a Creative Cloud subscription at any point between January 2019 and July 2025, and you paid an early termination fee that, combined with your regular subscription payments, ended up costing more than a plain month-to-month plan would have cost over that same period. This benefit is only available to U.S. customers. If you still have an active subscription: You don't need to do anything. Two free months are applied automatically to each active subscription, and you'll see the credit under Billing and Payment in the Your Plan section of your Adobe account within 72 hours of receiving the settlement email. Billing resumes normally after the two free months. If you prepaid annually, the credit is applied at your next renewal and the renewal price is prorated. If you're a former customer with no active subscription: You can redeem two free months of one product from a list that includes Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, After Effects, InDesign, Lightroom, the Photography plan, Acrobat Studio, Firefly Pro, Adobe Express Premium, or Behance Pro. No credit card is required. You'll need to use the link in the settlement email to redeem it, and you have until December 31, 2027, to do so. Access ends automatically after the two months unless you choose to start a paid subscription. If you think you qualify but no longer have access to the email address tied to your old Adobe account, Adobe support can help you sort that out directly.

Settlement at a Glance

Case filed | June 2024, U.S. District Court, Northern District of California

Filed by | Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission

Law cited | Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act (ROSCA)

Settlement announced | March 13, 2026

Total settlement value | \$150 million

Breakdown | \$75M civil penalty to DOJ + \$75M in free services to customers

Benefit redemption deadline | December 31, 2027 (former customers)

Cancelling an Adobe subscription today is a shorter process than it used to be, and the fees involved are no longer buried where you'd have to go looking for them. If you've paid a termination fee in the past few years, it's worth checking your inbox , or your spam folder , before you do anything else with your account.

References

1. account.adobe.com - plans - <https://account.adobe.com/plans>