# RecruitLite AI

## Installation & Minimum System Requirements Guide

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Self-Hosted Windows Installer & IT-Managed Linux Deployment

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# 1. Overview

RecruitLite AI is distributed as a self-hosted application: one installation per company, running entirely on infrastructure you control. There are two ways to run it:

1. **Windows installer (recommended for most customers)** — a single-click setup that provisions everything automatically, including a lightweight container engine, with no prior technical setup required. Two builds are available — see Section 4.
2. **IT-managed Linux deployment** — for customers with their own infrastructure team, using the same Docker Compose configuration by hand (Section 9).

Both paths run the identical production stack — Nginx, the frontend, the backend API, PostgreSQL, and Redis — so a trial installation is never a lighter version of what a paying customer actually runs.

# 2. Minimum System Requirements

| Component | Minimum | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Operating System | Windows 10 (build 19041 / version 2004) or later, or Windows 11 | Required for WSL2, which the installer enables and configures automatically. |
| RAM | 8 GB | Matches the product's documented deployment target (4 vCPU / 8 GB RAM / 100 GB SSD). Below 8 GB, building the application images from source is not reliable. |
| CPU | 4 virtual CPUs (equivalent) | Deployment target; fewer cores will still run but the first build will be slower. |
| Disk space (first-time setup) | 15–20 GB free (standard installer) or up to 25 GB free (offline installer) | Covers the WSL2 engine, Docker images, build caches, and base images (Postgres, Redis). This is separate from ongoing storage. |
| Disk space (ongoing / long-term) | 100 GB SSD recommended | Covers growing database size and uploaded resume/document storage over time (stored on local disk). |
| Network | Internet access on first run — standard installer only | The standard installer (*RecruitLiteSetup.exe*) downloads the application images on first run, typically 15+ minutes depending on connection speed. The offline installer (*RecruitLiteSetup-Offline.exe*) bundles everything needed — application images and the container engine itself — and needs no internet connection at any point. See Section 4. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Browser | A current version of Chrome, Edge, or Firefox | For all users accessing the app, on the server or over the local network. |

> **What the installer does NOT require you to install yourself:** Docker Desktop, WSL2 (if not already present), or any database engine — the installer provisions a headless Docker Engine inside its own dedicated WSL2 distro automatically, for either installer build.

## 3. Pre-Installation Checklist

1. Confirm the target machine meets Section 2's minimum requirements.
2. Decide which installer build you need: if the machine has internet access, the standard installer is the smaller download and is recommended; if it does not (or will not reliably during setup), use the offline installer instead — it needs no internet access for the first run or at any point afterward.
3. Decide where this install will live: a dedicated server reachable by the whole office over the local network, or a single laptop for a one-person trial.
4. If installing on a shared server, confirm Windows Firewall will be allowed to permit inbound connections on port 80 when prompted (Section 6).
5. Close any other software that may compete heavily for RAM/CPU during the first build (e.g. another Docker Desktop instance, a different WSL2-based dev environment) — running two separate container engines at once on the same machine can starve both.

## 4. Installing on Windows (Recommended Path)

Two installer builds are available, both installing the identical application:

- **RecruitLiteSetup.exe** (standard, smaller download) — downloads the application images from the internet on first run. Recommended when the target machine has internet access.
- **RecruitLiteSetup-Offline.exe** (larger download) — bundles the application images and the container engine up front, so the first run needs no internet connection at all. Use this for a machine with no internet access, or where internet access during setup can't be guaranteed.

The installer is designed so that a non-technical user is never asked to type or click anything unexpected after clicking "Install" — a single automatic restart aside, and only on a genuinely clean machine that needs WSL2 enabled first.

1. Run the installer you chose above. Setup checks that the Windows version supports WSL2; if it doesn't, it stops with a plain message to update Windows first.
2. **Windows SmartScreen note:** because the installer is not yet code-signed, Windows may show an "unknown publisher" warning. Choose "More info" → "Run anyway" to continue — this is expected for a hand-delivered trial build.
3. Setup copies the application to *Program Files\RecruitLite AI* and offers to start the app immediately.

4. On first start, the installer silently provisions a dedicated, headless Docker Engine (never Docker Desktop) inside its own WSL2 distro, generates this install's own unique secrets (database password, JWT secrets, backup encryption key), and builds and starts all application containers — from the bundled images if you used the offline installer, or by downloading them if you used the standard one.
5. If the machine needs a restart to finish enabling WSL2, this is the one interruption — setup automatically resumes after the restart, so you only ever click "Restart."
6. The installer waits for the application to report itself genuinely healthy (not just "container started") before opening your browser automatically.
7. Four Start Menu shortcuts are created: Start, Stop, Backup, and Uninstall (plus an optional Desktop icon for Start).

> **First build takes time.** With the standard installer, expect 15 minutes or more on the very first start — the backend image alone downloads several hundred megabytes of AI libraries. With the offline installer, the first build runs from the bundled images with no download at all, and is typically faster. Every subsequent start, on either build, reuses the already-built images and starts in seconds.

## 5. First Launch & Company Registration

The first real action in the browser is registering your company. This automatically creates your Company Admin login and starts a 30-day free CORE trial — no license key is required to begin.

A paid license key, once issued, is pasted into the app itself later from Settings (Section 10) — no reinstall and no new download is needed to go from trial to paid.

## 6. Using RecruitLite AI as a Shared Office Server

If RecruitLite AI is installed once on a shared machine rather than on each person's own laptop, everyone else reaches it from their own browser using that machine's real network address — *http://localhost* only ever means "this machine" and is useless to anyone else.

- Every time Start runs, it detects the server's real network address, prints it clearly (separate from *http://localhost*), and writes it to *server-address.txt* in the install folder.
- Give that address (e.g. *http://192.168.x.x*) to your team instead of *localhost*.
- If a teammate's laptop can't connect, check that Windows Firewall on the server allows inbound connections on port 80 — Windows may prompt for this the first time the program listens on the network; allow it if asked.
- If the server's network address changes later (e.g. a new DHCP lease), the links in password-reset emails and the interviewer-calendar connect flow can go stale. Either delete *.env.production* and restart (regenerates everything, including fresh secrets), or edit the address directly and restart, then re-register the calendar connection with Google/Microsoft to match.

> **Known limitation:** on a server with more than one plausible network adapter, the address-detection logic picks whichever one has a default gateway first; it does not attempt to disambiguate further.

## 7. Starting, Stopping, Backing Up, and Uninstalling

| Start Menu shortcut | What it does |
|---|---|
| Start | Starts the application stack and opens your browser once it's healthy. |
| Stop | Brings the application down; your data (database, uploaded resumes) is left untouched. |
| Backup | Runs the disaster-recovery backup script (Section 8) — use the in-app Backup & Restore screen for everyday backups instead. |
| Uninstall | Removes the application. You are asked whether to permanently delete all data (database, uploaded resumes, secrets) — this defaults to "No," so a later reinstall picks up where the old install left off unless you explicitly choose a clean wipe. |

## 8. Backup & Restore

Two complementary mechanisms exist; neither replaces the other.

### 8.1 In-app (self-service, normal path)

Administration → Backup & Restore inside the running application: scheduled daily/weekly backups, an on-demand "Back up now," browser download, and restore — no PowerShell, file paths, or server console access needed. This requires the application itself to be running.

### 8.2 Script-based (disaster-recovery fallback)

*installer/backup.ps1* (Start Menu shortcut: "Backup RecruitLite AI Data") and *installer/restore.ps1* (no shortcut — support use only) work even if the application itself won't start, since they operate on the Docker volumes directly.

> **Important:** in-app backups are encrypted at rest using a key stored only in this install's *.env.production* file. If that file is lost (server wiped, install directory deleted, or a reinstall generates a fresh one), any backup still sitting in the *backups/* folder that hasn't been downloaded yet becomes permanently unreadable — there is no recovery path by design. Backups already downloaded through the app are unaffected, since they are handed over decrypted. **Practical implication:** include *.env.production* itself in your routine off-site backups, alongside the database.

## 9. Alternative: IT-Managed Linux Deployment

A customer with their own IT/infrastructure staff may prefer to run RecruitLite AI on a Linux server they already manage. This uses the exact same production Docker Compose configuration the Windows installer stages, run by hand:

1. Copy *docker-compose.prod.yml*, *env.production.template*, *docker/*, *backend/*, and *frontend/* to the server.
2. Fill in *env.production.template* to produce a real *.env.production*, with real secrets and the server's actual address.
3. Run: `docker compose -f docker-compose.prod.yml up -d --build`

This path runs identically to the Windows installer underneath — same images, same configuration shape — so there is no feature difference between the two.

## 10. Licensing Activation

- Every install starts on a 30-day free trial automatically at company registration — no key needed to begin.
- Licensing is priced by active user count, not by role or module.
- To activate or upgrade, paste the license key your vendor issues into Settings → Licensing from inside the app — no reinstall, no remote "flip of a switch," and no lockout while waiting.

## 11. Known Limitations

- **No HTTPS/TLS out of the box.** Nginx serves plain HTTP on port 80 only. This is fine on a trusted local office network reached by IP address. If this install ever needs to be reached over anything other than a trusted local network (a remote office, port-forwarded to the internet, etc.), putting your own HTTPS-terminating reverse proxy in front of it is your responsibility — the installer does not set this up.
- **No code-signing on the installer yet.** Expect a Windows SmartScreen "unknown publisher" warning on first run (Section 4).
- **Below 8 GB RAM is not supported.** Building the application images from source is memory-heavy; lowering WSL2's memory ceiling does not fix genuinely insufficient physical RAM.
- **Standard installer's first-run build needs internet access** and can take 15+ minutes to download the application images. If the target machine has no internet access, use the offline installer (*RecruitLiteSetup-Offline.exe*) instead — it bundles everything needed, including the container engine, and needs no network connection at any point (Section 4).
- **Multi-NIC servers:** address auto-detection picks whichever network adapter has a default gateway first; it is not built to disambiguate further on a server with several plausible outward-facing adapters.

## 12. Troubleshooting

| Symptom | Likely cause / fix |
|---|---|
| Setup stops immediately with a Windows-version message | The machine is below Windows 10 build 19041 — update Windows before retrying. |
| SmartScreen blocks the installer | Click "More info" → "Run anyway" — the installer is not yet code-signed (Section 11). |
| First start fails partway through with no clear error | Two known causes found during testing: a rare WSL2 platform crash (the installer now auto-retries up to 3 times) and Windows Defender real-time scanning interfering with the WSL2 virtual disk (the installer now excludes that folder automatically). If it still fails, retry Start once more before escalating. |
| The app is very slow or fails to build on a small machine | Confirm the machine has at least 8 GB RAM; this is a hard minimum for the from-source build the installer performs. |
| Teammates on other computers can't reach the shared install | Confirm you gave them the server's network address, not *localhost*, and that Windows Firewall allows inbound connections on port 80 (Section 6). |
| A downloaded backup won't restore, or a saved backup can't be read after reinstalling | If *.env.production* was lost or regenerated, older undownloaded backups are permanently unreadable by design (Section 8) — always keep *.env.production* in your off-site backups. |
| No internet access at the install site, and the standard installer can't download the first-run images | Use the offline installer (*RecruitLiteSetup-Offline.exe*) instead — it needs no internet connection at any point (Section 2, Section 4). |

*End of Installation & Minimum System Requirements Guide. For day-to-day use of the application, see the companion RecruitLite AI User Manual.*