



Subscription Products — Overview

Subscription Products Documentation · August 4, 2026

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What it is

Subscription Products lets a merchant sell **any existing product** on a recurring schedule. A customer who subscribes gets a new order raised automatically at their chosen cadence, optionally charged to the card they checked out with.

The design decision that shapes everything

Subscription is a property, not a product type.

The module creates no product type, no attribute groups, no categories and no type-scoped delivery methods. A merchant switches subscriptions on for a product they already sell, and it keeps everything it already had — its categories, URLs, reviews, images, price levels and variants.

The alternative (a dedicated `subscription` product type) was rejected because it meant an existing product could never be sold on subscription without being rebuilt under that type, duplicating the catalog.

Two consequences follow, and most of the module's behaviour comes from them:

1. Eligibility is per SKU. A customer buys a *sub-product*, not a product, so "sold on subscription" is a SKU-level fact. A coffee product can offer the 250g and 500g bags on subscription while the 1kg bag stays one-time only. A SKU with no eligibility row is not subscribable, whatever the product-level plan says.

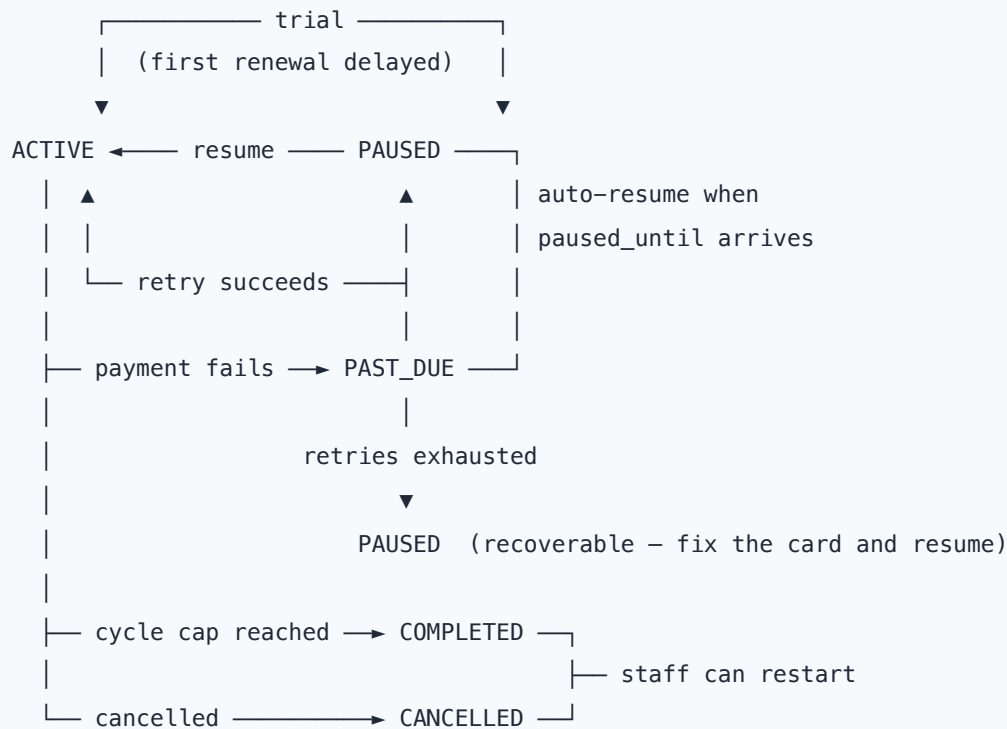
2. Buying is a per-line choice. The same SKU can be bought once on one order line and subscribed on another. What decides is a *purchase intent* recorded against the cart line at add-to-cart and carried onto the order line at checkout. A line with no intent is an ordinary purchase. The exception is a **subscription-only** plan, where there is no one-time option to choose, so every line of an eligible SKU subscribes — which also covers orders raised without the storefront (admin, POS, imports).

The moving parts

THING	WHAT IT HOLDS
Plan (per product)	The policy its subscriptions share: offered cadences, trial delay, cycle cap, dunning rules, discounts, price lock, whether customers may pause or skip, out-of-stock behaviour
Plan interval	One cadence the plan offers the shopper ("Monthly", "Every 3 Months"), with an optional per-cadence discount
Plan SKU	Which SKUs are actually sold on subscription, with an optional forced cadence and per-SKU discount
Line intent	"This cart/order line was bought as a subscription, on this cadence"
Subscription	A live agreement: one customer × one SKU, with its schedule, price, payment profile and status
Subscription event	Append-only history — every renewal, failure, pause, price change

Cadence lives on the **plan**, not on the product's variant axis. An earlier design made each cadence its own SKU via a "Billing Interval" attribute group, which forced every subscribable product to become a variant product and consumed the axis merchants needed for size and colour.

Lifecycle



FAILED still exists for agreements stopped before dunning-exhaustion started pausing instead; staff can reactivate those the same way.

What it deliberately does not do

- **No expiry date.** A subscription ends by cycle cap, cancellation, or dunning exhaustion — never by a calendar date. There is no "ends on" field.
- **No free trials.** The trial setting delays the *first renewal*; the customer still pays the normal price at checkout. Price the product accordingly.
- **No proration.** Changing terms takes effect from the next renewal.
- **No catalog changes on install.** No product type, attribute groups or categories are created, and uninstalling leaves subscription data in place so an accidental uninstall cannot destroy live agreements.

Related

- **Configuration Guide** — switching it on
- **Technical Reference** — the code