

Upgrade Options for Windows Server 2012 R2

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Published: June 24, 2013

Updated: November 1, 2013

Applies To: Windows Server 2012 R2

This topic includes information about upgrading to Windows Server® 2012 R2 from a variety of previous operating systems using a variety of methods.

The process of moving to Windows Server 2012 R2 might vary greatly depending on which operating system you are starting with and the pathway you take. We use the following terms to distinguish among different actions, any of which could be involved in a new Windows Server 2012 R2 deployment.

- **Installation** is the basic concept of getting the new operating system on your hardware. Specifically, a **clean installation** requires deleting the previous operating system. For information about installing Windows Server 2012 R2, see [System Requirements and Installation Information for Windows Server 2012 R2](#). For information about installing other versions of Windows Server, see [Windows Server Installation and Upgrade](#).
- **Upgrade** means moving from your existing operating system release to a more recent release, while staying on the same hardware. For example, if your server is running Windows Server 2012, you can upgrade it to Windows Server 2012 R2. You can upgrade from an evaluation version of the operating system to a retail version, from an older retail version to a newer version, or, in some cases, from a volume-licensed edition of the operating system to an ordinary retail edition.
- **License conversion** in some operating system releases, you can convert a particular edition of the release to another edition of the same release in a single step with a simple command and the appropriate license key. We call this “license conversion.” For example, if you are running Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard, you can convert it to Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter.
- **Migration** means moving from your existing operating system to Windows Server 2012 R2 by transferring to a different set of hardware. Migration, which might vary considerably depending on the server roles you have installed, is discussed in detail at <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/windowsserver/dn458795>.

Depending on your scenario, you might encounter a variety of different upgrade pathways.

[Upgrading previous retail versions of Windows Server to Windows Server 2012 R2](#)

The table below briefly summarizes which already licensed (that is, not evaluation) Windows operating systems can be upgraded to which editions of Windows Server 2012 R2.

Note the following general guidelines for supported paths:

- In-place upgrades from 32-bit to 64-bit architectures are not supported. All editions of Windows Server 2012 R2 are 64-bit only.
- In-place upgrades from one language to another are not supported.
- In-place upgrades from one build type (fre to chk, for example) are not supported.
- If the server is a domain controller, see <http://technet.microsoft.com/library/hh994618.aspx> for important information.
- Upgrades from pre-release versions of Windows Server 2012 R2 are not supported. Perform a clean installation to Windows Server 2012 R2.
- Upgrades that switch from a Server Core installation to the Server with a GUI mode of Windows Server 2012 R2 in one step (and vice versa) are not supported. However, after upgrade is complete, Windows Server 2012 R2 allows you to switch freely between Server Core and Server with a GUI modes. For more information about these installation options, how to convert between them, and how to use the new Minimal Server Interface and Features on Demand, see <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/hh831786>.

If you do not see your current version in the left column, upgrading to this release of Windows Server 2012 R2 is not supported.

If you see more than one edition in the right column, upgrade to either edition from the same starting version is supported.

If you are running:	You can upgrade to these editions:
Windows Server 2008 R2 Datacenter with SP1	Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter
Windows Server 2008 R2 Enterprise with SP1	Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard or Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter
Windows Server 2008 R2 Standard with SP1	Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard or Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter

Windows Web Server 2008 R2 with SP1	Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard
Windows Server 2012 Datacenter	Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter
Windows Server 2012 Standard	Windows Server 2012 R2 Standard or Windows Server 2012 R2 Datacenter
Hyper-V Server 2012	Hyper-V Server 2012 R2
Windows Storage Server 2012 Standard	Windows Storage Server 2012 R2 Standard
Windows Storage Server 2012 Workgroup	Windows Storage Server 2012 R2 Workgroup