



# Documentation and Compatibility

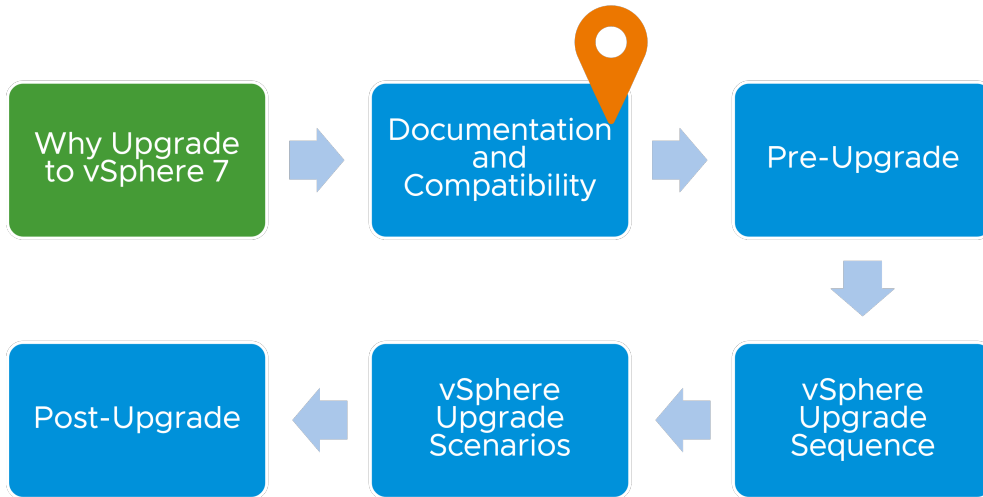
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## Documentation and Compatibility

### You Are Here

This document is part of the vSphere 7 Upgrade Activity Path. [Click here](#) to return to the activity path.



## Documentation and Compatibility

This section includes the key information to be reviewed prior to beginning the upgrade process: product release notes, product documentation, interoperability matrices, and the VMware Compatibility Guide. It is also important to verify the stability and consistency of the environment using a health check, and to understand what is involved in performing a rollback in the event of a migration or upgrade issue.

### Product Release Notes

[Product release notes](#), which are published for every product released by VMware, are a key resource and must be reviewed before getting started.

Here is a summary of what you will find in the vSphere product release notes:

**What's New** – Highlights of what is new in the current release.

**Earlier Releases of vCenter Server 7** – Links to release notes of previous releases.

**Patches Contained in This Release** – Links to VMware knowledge base documentation for patches, which contains details such as filename, build, download size, and checksums.

**Upgrade Notes for This Release** – This very important section covers incompatible upgrade or migration paths for releases.

**Resolved Issues** – Includes all resolved items in a product release, or security-related issues for a security update.

**Known Issues** – Outlines any issues to consider prior to upgrading that may impact your environment after your upgrade is complete.

### Product Documentation

Be sure to review [product documentation](#) prior to beginning an install, an upgrade, or patching. Product documentation contains links to product release notes, configuration maximums, [vCenter Server](#) and [ESXi install and upgrade](#) guides, and more. The process to perform common tasks can change between releases, so it is helpful to review the documentation for any updated or deprecated workflows.

### Interoperability Matrices

[VMware Product Interoperability Matrices](#) are a key component to a successful upgrade, and can help confirm that your upgrade path or product versions will be compatible when performing an upgrade.

There are four kinds of Interoperability Matrices: Interoperability, Multi-Cloud Interoperability, 3rd Party Solution Interoperability and Upgrade Path interoperability.

#### Interoperability

Verify that two VMware product versions are compatible with one another.

Example: *Can I run vCenter Server 7.0 Update 3 and VMware Site Recovery Manager 8.5?*

#### Multi-Cloud

Verify that a VMware Cloud solution is compatible with an on-premises product or solution.

Example: *Can I use VMware Cloud on AWS with vCenter Server 7 Update 3?*

#### 3rd Party Solution

Verify that a VMware product or solution is compatible with a 3rd party component such as, an operating system, database, hardware accelerator and more.

Example: *Can I install vSphere Bitfusion 4.5.0 on the Ubuntu 20.04 operating system?*

#### Upgrade Path

Validate that when doing an in-place upgrade, you are executing an upgrade between supported versions.

Example: *Can I upgrade from vCenter Server 6.5 Update 2 to vCenter Server 7?*

## VMware Compatibility Guide

Did you know that one of the most common reasons for a vSphere diagnostic crash is incompatible firmware or driver versions? Be aware that the VMKlinux driver stack is deprecated in vSphere 7. VMware vSphere 6.7 is the last version of vSphere that contains VMKlinux drivers. For more information, see the VMware blog post [What is the Impact of the VMKlinux Driver Stack Deprecation?](#).

The [VMware Compatibility Guide](#) can help you to understand if your physical hardware is compatible with the ESXi version to which you plan to upgrade. To use the tool, you first must get the device IDs of your adapters. The VMware knowledge base article [Determining Network/Storage firmware and driver version in ESXi 4.x and later \(1027206\)](#) explains this process and how to obtain the driver or firmware version via the esxcfg CLI command.

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**Note:** Many hardware CPUs have been deprecated in vSphere 7, and you must verify your hardware devices and details prior to an upgrade. After you gather hardware details, enter them into the Hardware Compatibility Guide to review the supported versions for your hardware, including the necessary firmware and drivers for any peripheral devices you have.

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Automating this process is also possible. VMware recently released a VMware Fling titled [ESXi Compatibility Checker](#). This Fling connects to a vSphere environment and automatically validates your server hardware against the VMware Hardware Compatibility Guide.

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**Note:** Many hardware vendors maintain a separate Hardware Compatibility Guide that must be referenced during upgrade planning to ensure proper hardware compatibility.

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## Third-Party Solution Compatibility

Ensure that you consider software from other vendors that touches your vSphere environment, such as backup tools, monitoring tools, and other non-VMware software. Consult with the respective vendors to ensure that they are compatible with the version of vSphere to which you are planning to upgrade.

