

# Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant

vCenter Support Assistant 5.5

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# Contents

Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant	5
<b>1 vCenter Support Assistant Overview</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2 vCenter Support Assistant System Requirements</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3 Installing vCenter Support Assistant</b>	<b>11</b>
Install the Client Integration Plug-In in the vSphere Web Client	12
Deploy the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance	13
Power On the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance and Open the Home Page	14
Provide Lookup Service Address and Review Certificate	14
Provide vCenter Single Sign-On Credentials	15
Authorize vCenter Server Instances	15
Configure Proxy Settings	16
Provide Email Address	16
<b>4 Test vCenter Support Assistant Network Connectivity</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5 Post-Installation Configuration Changes</b>	<b>19</b>
Change Your vCenter Support Assistant Appliance Password	19
Replace Your SSL Certificate	19
Configure Network Settings for the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance	20
<b>6 Reinstall vCenter Support Assistant</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7 Uninstall vCenter Support Assistant</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>8 Update vCenter Support Assistant</b>	<b>25</b>
Index	27



# Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant

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*Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant* provides information about the VMware® vCenter™ Support Assistant™ system requirements and instructions for installing vCenter Support Assistant. It also describes the configuration and update process.

## Intended Audience

This information is intended for anyone who wants to install, configure, or update vCenter Support Assistant. It is written for VMware® vSphere® administrators.

## VMware Technical Publications Glossary

VMware Technical Publications provides a glossary of terms that might be unfamiliar to you. For definitions of terms as they are used in VMware technical documentation, go to <http://www.vmware.com/support/pubs>.



# vCenter Support Assistant Overview

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VMware® vCenter™ Support Assistant™ is a free VMware® vCenter Server™ plug-in that collects diagnostic data about your VMware® vSphere® environment, and alerts you to problems in your environment before they cause outages.

vCenter Support Assistant performs the following functions based on the collected information:

- Sends proactive alerts and recommended fixes. Automatic notifications within vCenter Server make you aware of problems within your environment and recommend solutions.
- Transmits selected support bundles automatically. You can configure vCenter Support Assistant to collect selected support bundles, regularly transmit them to VMware Technical Support, and match them to a dynamic list of known problems. vCenter Support Assistant sends the collected support bundles directly and securely to VMware without third party interaction.

A support bundle is a collection of diagnostic files that vCenter Support Assistant uses to analyze your environment and send you information about the status of the environment.

- Configures data collection times. You can select the files to send and set the collection frequency and transmission time to minimize impact on your system's performance.
- Sends monthly status emails. Monthly emails summarize the status of problems within your environment so that you can track problems over time.
- Allows you to file support requests from vSphere Web Client. You can create and submit support requests for any vSphere product for which you have purchased VMware support.

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**NOTE** You can file support requests by using vCenter Support Assistant, if you have purchased support directly from VMware.

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- Collects and attaches diagnostic information to support requests. You can generate support bundles for vCenter Server and vSphere and automatically attach them and other files to your support requests.
- Allows you to view existing support requests. You can view the status of your existing support requests, add comments for VMware Technical Support, view email exchanges, and upload additional diagnostic data or files.





# vCenter Support Assistant System Requirements

# 2

To install vCenter Support Assistant, ensure your system meets the software and hardware requirements.

## Software Requirements

- vCenter Server 5.1 or later.
- Adobe Flash Player must be installed on the machine running vSphere Client. You need it for the vCenter Support Assistant configuration UI. If Adobe Flash is not installed already, you might be prompted to install it.

## Hardware Requirements

You can run vCenter Support Assistant on any system that meets the minimum hardware requirements.

Hardware requirements for vCenter Support Assistant vary depending on the number of vCenter Server instances and ESXi hosts for which vCenter Support Assistant provides assistance.

**Table 2-1.** Minimum Hardware Requirements

Hardware	Requirements
Number of vCPUs	2
vRAM	2GB
Disk space	Minimum 65GB. The disk space is calculated by the equation: Disk space = 50GB + (number of vCenter Server instances * 300MB + number of ESXi hosts)* 50MB

## Networking Requirements

vCenter Support Assistant uses HTTPS and FTP connections to transfer support information.

**Table 2-2.** Required Network Connectivity

Machine	Connection To	Connection Type	Port
vSphere Web Client	vCenter Support Assistant appliance	Local network connection	8443
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	vCenter Server and ESX/ESXi hosts that you want to collect support data from	Local network connection	
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	<a href="https://vmware.com">https://vmware.com</a>	Internet connection	443

**Table 2-2.** Required Network Connectivity (Continued)

<b>Machine</b>	<b>Connection To</b>	<b>Connection Type</b>	<b>Port</b>
	https://supportassistant.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	443
	vcsa.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	443
	ftpsite.vmware.com	Internet connection	21
	vmware.com	Internet connection	80
	ftpsite.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	443
	https://phtransfer.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	443

# Installing vCenter Support Assistant

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vCenter Support Assistant is distributed as a virtual appliance in Open Virtualization Appliance (OVA) format. You deploy the vCenter Support Assistant appliance by using the standard vSphere OVF deployment wizard.

An appliance is a pre-configured virtual machine that typically includes a preinstalled guest operating system and other software.

Deploying an OVA template lets you add preconfigured virtual machines to your vCenter Server or ESXi inventory. Deploying an OVA template is similar to deploying a virtual machine from a template. However, you can deploy an OVA template from any local file system accessible from the vSphere Web Client, or from a remote Web server. The local file systems can include local disks such as the C: drive, removable media such as CD-ROM or USB drives, and shared network drives.

- 1 [Install the Client Integration Plug-In in the vSphere Web Client](#) on page 12  
The Client Integration Plug-in provides access to a virtual machine's console in the vSphere Web Client, and provides access to other vSphere infrastructure features.
- 2 [Deploy the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance](#) on page 13  
vCenter Support Assistant is distributed as a virtual appliance in OVA format that you can deploy by using the vSphere Web Client.
- 3 [Power On the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance and Open the Home Page](#) on page 14  
To use the vCenter Support Assistant appliance, you must first power it on and get an IP address for the appliance.
- 4 [Provide Lookup Service Address and Review Certificate](#) on page 14  
To establish connection to the lookup service server and review the lookup service certificate details, you must provide the lookup service address.
- 5 [Provide vCenter Single Sign-On Credentials](#) on page 15  
To connect to vCenter Server, you must provide the vCenter Single Sign-On credentials for vCenter Support Assistant.
- 6 [Authorize vCenter Server Instances](#) on page 15  
You can configure vCenter Support Assistant to collect support information and receive vCenter Support Assistant alerts from selected vCenter Server instances.
- 7 [Configure Proxy Settings](#) on page 16  
If you connect through a corporate firewall, you can configure the vCenter Support Assistant proxy settings.

8 [Provide Email Address](#) on page 16

You can optionally provide contact details to send notifications and reports on behalf of vCenter Support Assistant.

## Install the Client Integration Plug-In in the vSphere Web Client

The Client Integration Plug-in provides access to a virtual machine's console in the vSphere Web Client, and provides access to other vSphere infrastructure features.

You use the Client Integration Plug-in to deploy OVF or OVA templates and transfer files with the datastore browser. You can also use the Client Integration Plug-in to connect virtual devices that reside on a client computer to a virtual machine.

Install the Client Integration Plug-in only once to enable all the functionality the plug-in delivers. You must close the Web browser before installing the plug-in.

If you install the Client Integration Plug-in from an Internet Explorer browser, you must first disable Protected Mode and enable pop-up windows on your Web browser. Internet Explorer identifies the Client Integration Plug-in as being on the Internet instead of on the local intranet. In such cases, the plug-in is not installed correctly because Protected Mode is enabled for the Internet.

You cannot launch the virtual machine console in Internet Explorer without the Client Integration Plug-in. In other supported browsers, the virtual machine console can run without the plug-in.

The Client Integration Plug-in also lets you log in to the vSphere Web Client by using Windows session credentials.

For information about supported browsers and operating systems, see the *vSphere Installation and Setup* documentation.

### Prerequisites

If you use Microsoft Internet Explorer, disable Protected Mode.

### Procedure

- 1 In the vSphere Web Client, navigate to a link to download the Client Integration Plug-in.

Option	Description
<b>vSphere Web Client login page</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Open a Web browser and type the URL for the vSphere Web Client.</li> <li>b At the bottom of the vSphere Web Client login page, click <b>Download Client Integration Plug-in</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>Guest OS Details panel</b>	<p>This option is not available for browsers that run on a Mac OS.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Select a virtual machine in the inventory and click the <b>Summary</b> tab.</li> <li>b Click <b>Download Plug-in</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>OVF deployment wizard</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Select a host in the inventory and select <b>Actions &gt; All vCenter Actions &gt; Deploy OVF Template</b>.</li> <li>b Click <b>Download Client Integration Plug-in</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>Virtual machine console</b>	<p>This option is not available for Microsoft Internet Explorer, and for browsers that run on a Mac OS.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Select a virtual machine in the inventory, click the <b>Summary</b> tab, and click <b>Launch Console</b>.</li> <li>b At the top right corner of the virtual machine console window, click <b>Download Client Integration Plug-in</b>.</li> </ol>

- 2 If the browser blocks the installation either by issuing certificate errors or by running a pop-up blocker, follow the Help instructions for your browser to resolve the problem.

## Deploy the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance

vCenter Support Assistant is distributed as a virtual appliance in OVA format that you can deploy by using the vSphere Web Client.

### Prerequisites

Verify that your computing environment meets the following conditions:

- vCenter Server is installed and running.
- The host on which you are deploying the appliance has enough free disk space.
- The Client Integration plug-in is installed before you deploy an OVF template. This plug-in enables OVF deployment on your local file system.

### Procedure

- 1 Log in to the vSphere Web Client as an administrator.
- 2 In the vSphere Web Client, select an inventory object that is a valid parent object of a virtual machine, such as a datacenter, folder, cluster, resource pool, or host.
- 3 Select **Actions > All vCenter Actions > Deploy OVF Template**.
- 4 Type the path or the URL to the .ova file, and click **Next**.
- 5 Review the OVA details and click **Next**.
- 6 Read the EULA and click **Accept**, and then click **Next**.
- 7 In the Select name and folder step of the Deploy OVF Template wizard, specify the name and folder that the virtual machine will have when it is deployed at the target location.

The name must be unique within each vCenter Server virtual machine folder.

- 8 Select or search for a datacenter or folder for the virtual machine, and click **Next**.
- 9 In the Select Storage for OVF Template step of the wizard, select the disk format to store the virtual machine virtual disks.

Format	Description
<b>Thick Provisioned Lazy Zeroed</b>	Creates a virtual disk in a default thick format. Space required for the virtual disk is allocated when the virtual disk is created. Data remaining on the physical device is not erased during creation, but is zeroed out on demand at a later time on first write from the virtual machine.
<b>Thick Provision Eager Zeroed</b>	A type of thick virtual disk that supports clustering features such as Fault tolerance. Space required for the virtual disk is allocated at creation time. In contrast to the flat format, the data remaining on the physical device is zeroed out when the virtual disk is created. Creating disks in this format might take much longer than creating other types of disks.
<b>Thin Provision</b>	Use this format to save storage space. For the thin disk, you provision as much datastore space as the disk requires based on the value that you enter for the disk size. However, the thin disk starts small, and at first, uses only as much datastore space as the disk needs for its initial operations.

- 10 Select a datastore to store the deployed OVF template and click **Next**.  
The configuration file and virtual disk files are stored on the datastore. Select a datastore large enough to accommodate the virtual machine and all associated virtual disk files.
- 11 In the Setup networks step of the wizard, select a Source network in the table and map it to a Destination network.  
The Source column lists all networks that are defined in the OVF template. The Destination column contains a list of target networks.

- 12 The vCenter Support Assistant .ova file is set up to allow network customization, select the IP protocol, and click **Next**.
- 13 In the Customize template step of the wizard, customize the deployment properties, and click **Next**.

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**NOTE** All required properties must have a valid value before you can continue. If you leave the fields empty, the wizard sets the Network configuration to DHCP.

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- 14 After reviewing your settings selections, select **Power on after deployment**, and click **Finish** to complete the wizard and deploy the template.

## Power On the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance and Open the Home Page

To use the vCenter Support Assistant appliance, you must first power it on and get an IP address for the appliance.

### Procedure

- 1 Log in to the vSphere Client as an administrator.
- 2 Right-click the vCenter Support Assistant appliance and select **Power > Power On**.
- 3 In the vSphere Client, on the **Summary** tab of the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance, view the IP address of the appliance.
- 4 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.  
**https://vCenter\_Support\_Assistant\_Appliance\_IP\_address**
- 5 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.  
The default user name is **root** and the default password is **vmware**.
- 6 Read the privacy terms and conditions.
- 7 Select **I understand and consent to vCenter Support Assistant's Privacy Terms and Conditions above** and click **Next**.

## Provide Lookup Service Address and Review Certificate

To establish connection to the lookup service server and review the lookup service certificate details, you must provide the lookup service address.

vCenter Support Assistant must know the location of the vCenter Server instances that it monitors. To get the list of the vCenter Server instances in your environment you must provide the vCenter Server lookup service address.

### Procedure

- 1 In the **Lookup Service Address** text box, type the vCenter Lookup Service address.  
You must provide the lookup service address to register vCenter Support Assistant components with vSphere.  
For example, **https://vCenter\_Server\_IP:7444**.  
vCenter Support Assistant establishes a connection to the server.
- 2 (Optional) Click **Show Details** to view the full certificate details and click **OK**.
- 3 Click **Next**.

## Provide vCenter Single Sign-On Credentials

To connect to vCenter Server, you must provide the vCenter Single Sign-On credentials for vCenter Support Assistant.

vCenter Support Assistant has its own solution user, which vCenter Support Assistant uses to retrieve support information from the vCenter Server instances. To create the vCenter Single Sign-On solution user for vCenter Support Assistant you need to provide vCenter Single Sign-On administrative credentials.

This action registers a new vCenter Single Sign-On solution user account for vCenter Support Assistant in vCenter Single Sign-On.

### Procedure

- 1 On the SSO Credentials page of the Install vCenter Support Assistant wizard, in the **SSO Administrator user name** and **Password** text boxes, provide the user name and password of the vCenter Single Sign-On administrator.
- 2 Click **Finish**.

## Authorize vCenter Server Instances

You can configure vCenter Support Assistant to collect support information and receive vCenter Support Assistant alerts from selected vCenter Server instances.

You can also configure vCenter Support Assistant after the installation. You must authorize vCenter Support Assistant so that it can interact with the vCenter Server instances for several tasks:

- Generating support bundles.
- Creating and deleting alarms.
- Triggering alarms.
- Getting licensing information.
- Querying for network information about ESXi hosts, for example, IP addresses.

### Procedure

- 1 In the **Default Administrator User Name** and **Default Administrator Password** text boxes, type the user name and the password of the vCenter Server administrator.

The default user name is **root**, and the default password is **vmware**.

- 2 Select the vCenter Server instances you want to monitor.
- 3 (Optional) Select the **Disable strict certificate checks** check box if you do not want to receive error messages when some of the vCenter Server instances use an invalid SSL certificate.

This impacts the vCenter Support Assistant connections to all vCenter Server instances and disables all certificate validation checks, such as host name verification and certificate expiry checks. The change is applied when you attempt to authorize the vCenter Server instances.

- 4 (Optional) For each vCenter Server instance where the administrator user is different from the default administrator, provide the credentials in the **Administrator User Name** and the **Administrator Password** text boxes.
- 5 Click **Next**.

## Configure Proxy Settings

If you connect through a corporate firewall, you can configure the vCenter Support Assistant proxy settings.

By default, the proxy is disabled. If you define a proxy server and disable it, vCenter Support Assistant saves the configuration and lets you enable the proxy server later.

### Procedure

- 1 Select the **Use proxy server** check box and provide the details about your proxy settings.
- 2 Click **Test Connectivity** to verify the connection to, and through the proxy server.

If the test fails, check whether your proxy allows you to connect to all points that vCenter Support Assistant uses.

- 3 Click **Next**.

### What to do next

See [Chapter 2, “vCenter Support Assistant System Requirements,”](#) on page 9 for more information about networking connectivity requirements.

## Provide Email Address

You can optionally provide contact details to send notifications and reports on behalf of vCenter Support Assistant.

Email reports are sent on a monthly basis, and contain a summary of the collection bundles, fixed problems, alarms, and recommended updates.

### Procedure

- 1 In the Provide Email Address page of the Installation wizard, in the **Email addresses, one per line** text box, type the email addresses that must receive notifications and reports.
- 2 Click **Finish** to save the changes and exit the wizard.



# Test vCenter Support Assistant Network Connectivity

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# 4

After you configure the vCenter Support Assistant network connectivity settings, you can test the connections to ensure that all vCenter Support Assistant connections are properly working.

## **Procedure**

- 1 In a Web browser, log in to vCenter Support Assistant.
- 2 Click the **Overview** tab.
- 3 In the Miscellaneous section, click **Test connectivity**.

A message displays the connectivity status.



# Post-Installation Configuration Changes

# 5

You can make configuration changes after you install the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance.

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**NOTE** To change the vCenter Support Assistant network setting, for example, to change the IP address, the DNS server, the hostname, the Default Gateway, or the Subnet Mask, use the **VA Settings** tab. Use the **VA Settings** tab to ensure that the changes are applied correctly and vCenter Support Assistant is properly configured.

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This chapter includes the following topics:

- [“Change Your vCenter Support Assistant Appliance Password,”](#) on page 19
- [“Replace Your SSL Certificate,”](#) on page 19
- [“Configure Network Settings for the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance,”](#) on page 20

## Change Your vCenter Support Assistant Appliance Password

You can change the password you used to log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.

### Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.
- 2 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 3 Click the **VA Settings** tab.
- 4 Provide your current vCenter Support Assistant appliance password, type and confirm your new password, and click **Save**.

## Replace Your SSL Certificate

vCenter Support Assistant uses a self-signed certificate. You can change your SSL certificate according to your company policy for SSL certificates.

### Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.
- 2 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 3 Click the **VA Settings** tab.
- 4 Under SSL Configuration, in the **Private key (.pem)** text box, click **Choose File**.
- 5 In the file browser window, navigate to the directory that contains your certificate, select the private key (\*.pem) that matches the certificate chain, and click **Open**.

- 6 If your private key is protected by a password, in the **Key password** text box, type the password .
- 7 In the **Certificate chain (.pem, .p7b)** text box, click **Choose File** to select your certificate chain file.
- 8 In the file browser window, navigate to the directory that contains your certificate chain, select your SSL certificate chain (\*.pem, \*.p7b), and click **Open**.

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**NOTE** If you attempt to add an expired certificate, a warning message states that you are not allowed to add the certificate.

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- 9 Click **Apply** to apply the changes.

## Configure Network Settings for the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance

If you have deployed and configured your vCenter Support Assistant appliance by using the vSphere Web Client, vCenter Support Assistant displays the network settings that you defined during the deployment process. If you configured the vCenter Support Assistant appliance in a different way, for example from the Linux console of the appliance, you might receive an error. In such a case, you must configure the network settings after the vCenter Support Assistant appliance installation.

### Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.
- 2 Log in with your user name and password.
- 3 In the **VA Settings** tab, under Network Configuration, provide the hostname, IPv4 default gateway, and DNS servers addresses.  
  
If your network interface controllers are using DHCP, the Network Configuration is automatically populated.
- 4 For each network interface controller that uses a static IPv4 assignment, you must provide an IPv4 address and an IPv4 mask.
- 5 Click **Save**.

# Reinstall vCenter Support Assistant

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Reinstall vCenter Support Assistant appliance to redirect it from one lookup service to another.

## **Procedure**

- 1 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 2 On the **Overview** tab, under Summary click **Reinstall**.
- 3 Follow the steps of the installation wizard to complete the process.



# Uninstall vCenter Support Assistant

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Remove the vCenter Support Assistant appliance configuration and all the changes vCenter Support Assistant made to your system.

## Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, log in to vCenter Support Assistant.
- 2 Click the **Overview** tab.
- 3 In the Summary section, click **Uninstall**.

A warning message states that vCenter Support Assistant cannot function until you configure it again.

- 4 Click **OK**.

The uninstall process removes the vCenter Support Assistant authorizations to collect support information from the vCenter Server instances.





# Update vCenter Support Assistant

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You can regularly check for available updates for vCenter Support Assistant and install them.

## Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, log in to vCenter Support Assistant.
- 2 On the **VA Updates** tab, click the **Check updates** button.

A list of all available updates appears. If you have the latest version of the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance, a message states that no updates are available.

- 3 Click **Install Updates** to update vCenter Support Assistant.
- 4 Read the EULA and click **Accept** to install the updates.



# Index

## A

appliance home page, opening **14**  
appliance password, changing **19**

## C

certificate chain  
    changing **19**  
    replacing **19**  
changing configuration **19**  
Client Integration Plug-in, installing **12**  
concepts **7**  
configuration  
    changing **19**  
    removing **23**  
connectivity, testing **17**  
contact details, providing **16**

## D

deploying the OVA template **13**

## E

email reports, providing email address **16**

## G

granting permissions, vCenter Server **15**

## H

hardware requirements **9**

## I

installing, Client Integration Plug-in **12**  
installing vCenter Support Assistant **11**

## L

lookup service address, providing **14**

## N

network settings, configuring **20**  
networking requirements **9**

## P

password, changing **19**  
post-installation configuration **19**  
privacy terms and conditions, reviewing **14**  
product concepts **7**  
providing credentials, Single Sign-On **15**  
providing contact details, email reports **16**

providing Single Sign-On credentials **15**  
proxy, configuring **16**  
proxy settings **16**  
proxy enabling **16**

## R

reinstalling vCenter Support Assistant **21**  
removing, vCenter Support Assistant **23**  
requirements  
    connectivity **9**  
    hardware **9**  
    networking **9**  
    software **9**

## S

Single Sign-On, providing credentials **15**  
SSL certificate, changing **19**  
system requirements **9**

## T

testing connectivity settings **17**

## U

uninstalling **23**  
updating, vCenter Support Assistant **25**

## V

vCenter Server instances, authorizing **15**  
vCenter Support Assistant  
    about **5**  
    authorizing **15**  
    reinstalling **21**  
    removing **23**  
    updating **25**  
vCenter Support Assistant appliance, powering  
    on **14**  
vCenter Support Assistant configuration **19**  
vCenter Support Assistant installing **11**  
vCenter Support Assistant privacy terms and  
    conditions **14**  
virtual machine console, installing **12**

