

Release recommendation guide: ONTAP data management software



Learn about the key new capabilities and benefits that you can gain by upgrading to the latest release of NetApp® ONTAP®. Use this guide to help you determine when you should upgrade.

Recommendations and support for new releases

New releases are entitled to full support for 3 years. We recommend that you run your new release for 1 year after General Availability and then use the remaining time within full support to plan for your transition to a newer release. Service updates should be applied every 3-6 months. Critical updates warrant a quicker upgrade.

Version #	Release Date
9.12.1	FEB 2023
9.11.1	JULY 2022
9.10.1	JAN 2022
9.9.1	JUNE 2021
9.8	DEC 2020
9.7	JAN 2019

Note: If you are running a version prior to 9.7, it is likely to be on Limited Support or Self-Service Support. Please consider upgrading to versions with full support.

Support level	Full support			Limited support		Self-service support		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Year								
Access to online documentation	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Technical support	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES			
Root-cause analysis	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES			
Online software	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES			
Service updates (patch releases [P-releases])	YES	YES	YES					
Alerts about vulnerabilities	YES	YES	YES					

Table 1) Support entitlements for ONTAP releases.

ONTAP 9.12.1 General Availability

Release date: FEB 2023 | Support status: FULL SUPPORT

For the current release recommendation for this version, [click here](#).

Feature	Description	Customer value
Security		
Tamper-proof Snapshots	Leveraging SnapLock technology, Snapshot copies can now be protected from deletion. The protection can be applied to either primary or secondary systems.	Retain more recovery points by protecting snapshots on primary and secondary storage from deletion by ransomware attackers or rouge administrators.
Autonomous ransomware protection (ARP) enhancements	Immediately enable intelligent autonomous ransomware protection on secondary storage, based on the screening model already completed for the primary storage.	After a failover, instantly identify potential ransomware attacks on secondary storage. A Snapshot is immediately taken of the data that is starting to be affected, and administrators are notified, helping to stop an attack and enhance recovery.
FPolicy	One-click activation of ONTAP FPolicy to enable automatic blocking of known malicious files.	The simplified activation helps to protect against typical ransomware attacks that use common, known file extensions.
Additional security hardening	<p>Tamperproof retention logging in ONTAP insuring compromised administrator accounts cannot hide malicious actions.</p> <p>Log and audit all admin actions regardless of origin guaranteeing all actions impacting data are captured.</p> <p>Multifactor Authentication (MFA) on additional access points</p>	<p>Admin and user history cannot be altered or deleted without the systems knowledge.</p> <p>An alert is generated whenever system audit logs have been tampered with in any way notifying administrators of the change.</p> <p>MFA for CLI (SSH) supports Yubikey physical hardware token devices ensuring that an attacker cannot access the ONTAP system using stolen credentials or a compromised client system. Cisco DUO is now supported for MFA with System Manager.</p>
Object Workloads		
File-object duality (multi-protocol access)	Enables native S3 protocol read and write access to the same data source that already has NAS protocol access.	Concurrently access your storage as files or as objects from the same data source, eliminating the need for duplicate copies of data for use with different protocols (S3 or NAS), such as for analytics that use object data.
NAS		
FlexGroup Enhancements	In the event FlexGroup constituents become unbalanced, FlexGroup can now non-disruptively be rebalanced and managed from CLI, REST API, and System Manager.	For optimal performance, constituent members within a FlexGroup should have their used capacity evenly distributed.
Storage Efficiency		
Storage capacity enhancements	WAFL Space Reservation has been significantly reduced.	Provides up to 400TiB more usable capacity per aggregate.

Table 2) ONTAP 9.12.1 features.



Discover more features of this release in the Customer Communique

ONTAP 9.11.1

Release date: July 2022 | Support status: FULL SUPPORT

For the current release recommendation for this version, [click here](#).

Feature	Description	Customer value
Security		
Multi-admin verification	Industry-first, native approach that requires multiple approvals for sensitive admin tasks, such as “volume snapshot delete” or “volume delete.”	Prevent malicious and accidental changes to your data by making sure that a single cluster administrator, or a ransomware attacker with a compromised administrator account, cannot execute sensitive commands without approvals from one or more additional administrators.
Enhancements to autonomous ransomware protection	Uses machine learning to detect even more subtle ransomware attacks. Automatically creates a NetApp Snapshot™ copy and alerts administrators when abnormal file activity occurs.	Quickly identify threats and accelerate recovery in the event of a breach.
SnapLock Compliance for FlexGroup volumes	Secure multi-petabyte datasets for workloads such as EDA and Media & Entertainment by protecting the data with WORM file locking, so it can't be changed or deleted.	Protect data from ransomware attacks and compromised administrators, and preserve final versions of chip designs, movie files, and quarterly financials.
NAS Updates		
Asynchronous directory delete	File deletions to occur in the background of the ONTAP system, eliminating front end I/O.	Easily delete large directories and eliminate performance/latency impact to the host I/O.
Object Storage		
Enhancements to ONTAP S3	Additional ONTAP S3 APIs Object versioning at the bucket level, enabling multiple versions of an object to be kept in the same bucket	Simplify and expand the object data management capabilities of ONTAP S3. Recover more easily from an accidental deletion or overwrite.
Simplicity		
Enhancements to System Manager	Support added for advanced capabilities such as managing and configuring aggregates, visibility into system analytics, and hardware visualization for FAS systems.	Optimize storage resources and further improve audit management.

Table 3) ONTAP 9.11.1 features.



Discover more features of this release in the Customer Communique

ONTAP 9.10.1

Release date: January 2022 | Support status: FULL SUPPORT

For the current release recommendation for this version, [click here](#).

Feature	Description	Customer value
Security		
Autonomous ransomware protection	Automatically creates a NetApp Snapshot copy and alerts administrators when abnormal file activity occurs.	Quickly detect ransomware attacks and speed up recovery.
Simplicity		
ONTAP System Manager	Automatically downloads firmware updates for disks, shelves, service processors, and more. Provides additional integration with the NetApp Active IQ® Digital Advisor tool, NetApp Cloud Manager, and certificate management.	Simplify administration and help maintain business continuity.
ONTAP File System Analytics	Provides extra telemetry to identify the top files, directories, and users that are generating workloads to your file share.	Identify workload performance issues, improving implementation of quality of service, and resource planning.
Performance		
NVMe over TCP (NVMe/TCP) support for NetApp AFF systems	Enables you to use NVMe/TCP on your existing Ethernet network.	Achieve high performance and reduce TCO for your enterprise SAN and modern workloads on AFF systems.
NVMe over Fibre Channel (NVMe/FC) support for NetApp FAS systems	Enables you to use NVMe/FC protocol on your hybrid arrays.	Enable uniform migration to NVMe.
Hybrid cloud		
Native hybrid cloud backup for object storage	Uses NetApp SnapMirror® replication storage technology to back up to your choice of object storage: to on-premises storage with NetApp StorageGRID® solutions, to the cloud with Amazon S3, or to another ONTAP S3 bucket on NetApp AFF and FAS systems.	Protect your ONTAP S3 data using your choice of object storage targets.
Collaboration		
Global file locking for NetApp FlexCache®	Enables exclusive file read locks in an origin-to-cache relationship for workloads that require enhanced locking.	Ensure file consistency at cache locations during updates to source files at origin.

Table 4) ONTAP 9.10.1 features.



Discover more features of this release in the Customer Communique

ONTAP 9.9.1

Release date: June 2021 | Support status: FULL SUPPORT

For the current release recommendation for this version, [click here](#).

Feature	Description	Customer value
Security		
Enhanced security for CLI remote access management	Adds support for SHA512 and SSH A512 password hashing.	Protects administrator account credentials from malicious actors who are trying to gain system access.
Data protection		
MetroCluster IP enhancements	Provides support for MetroCluster configurations that are up to twice as large as the previous limit.	Enable continuous data availability.
SnapMirror business continuity enhancements	Offers more replication options for backup and disaster recovery for large data containers for NAS workloads.	Improve data protection.
Performance		
Increased SAN performance	Delivers up to four-times higher SAN performance for single LUN applications such as VMware datastores.	Achieve high performance in your SAN environment.
Hybrid cloud		
New object storage option for hybrid cloud backup	Enables use of StorageGRID as a destination for NetApp Cloud Backup Service.	Simplify and automate backup of your on-premises ONTAP data.

Table 5) ONTAP 9.9.1 features.



Discover more features of this release in the Customer Communique

ONTAP 9.8

Release date: December 2020 | Support status: FULL SUPPORT
 For the current release recommendation for this version, [click here](#).

Feature	Description	Customer value
Hybrid cloud		
FlexCache with SMB and NetApp Cloud Volumes ONTAP	Instantly delivers data to support business collaboration across your hybrid cloud.	Enable collaboration and increase productivity.
SnapMirror Cloud replication of Snapshot copies to S3	Takes advantage of cloud resources (on-premises and public cloud) for data protection.	Improve data protection and reduce costs.
FabricPool support for data tiering from FAS (HDD) to public/private cloud	Tiers data across more of your hybrid cloud.	Reduce TCO.
Simplicity		
Support for S3 protocol on AFF and FAS	Enables a unified infrastructure that supports block, file, and object storage on NetApp AFF and FAS systems.	Simplify IT management and lower TCO with a unified infrastructure.
ONTAP File System Analytics	File monitoring within System Manager that provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity usage and trending - File and directory counts - File activity and age histogram 	Increase visibility into your file workloads to improve resource planning and performance troubleshooting.
Large LUN support for All SAN Array (now up to 128TB)	Provides support for up to 128TB so you have fewer objects to manage (for virtual machines and databases).	Simplify IT management.
Continuous availability		
SnapMirror Business Continuity	Near instant failover for your most important business applications, such as SAP and Oracle. Applications can fail over to a secondary copy of storage without requiring the application to reconnect to the storage or disrupting that application's users.	Increase flexibility for delivering business continuity to more of your data and critical workloads, enabling even better TCO.
Nondisruptive transition from FC to IP for MetroCluster	Enables nondisruptive fabric consolidation across sites.	Maintain data access to your critical applications while refreshing your core data network.
Storage efficiency		
Temperature-sensitive storage efficiency	Further compress your cold data blocks.	Increase storage efficiency by up to 33%, further reducing your TCO.
Security		
Internet Protocol security (IPsec)	Encrypts data in flight for critical applications.	Strengthen protection for your critical data.

Table 6) ONTAP 9.8 features.



Discover more features of this release in the Customer Communique

ONTAP 9.7

Release date: January 2019 | Support Status: NEARING END OF FULL SUPPORT, CONSIDER UPGRADING
For the current release recommendation for this version, [click here](#).

Feature	Description	Customer value
Security		
Data-at-rest encryption enabled by default	Automatically protects data by encryption. The new security dashboard found in Active IQ Unified Manager provides detailed visibility for all your clusters.	Simplify and strengthen data protection.
Data protection		
FabricPool mirroring to the cloud	Enables you to mirror the same data to multiple cloud storage destinations.	Increase resilience.

Table 7) ONTAP 9.7 features.



Discover more features of this release in the Customer Communique