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About the VMware Learning Platform User Guide

This guide describes the VMware® Learning Platform™ self-education lab and course management tool. This guide describes how to access labs available to you, run them, track them, and customize your experience.

Intended Audience

The primary audience for this guide is VMware® Learning Platform™ end users who intend to take an instructional lab.

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.
Overview of VMware Learning Platform

VMware® Learning Platform™ is a complete learning environment that integrates instructional materials, rich VM (virtual machine) labs, video, social media, and more. VMware Learning Platform is cloud-based, and its content management tool includes features to run and track training labs and courses.

VMware Learning Platform provides the following capabilities for users/students:

- Run, pause, and resume training labs in which you interact with simulated environments, such as virtualized desktop environments, or enterprise applications.
- Track the training labs and courses in which you have enrolled.
- View a transcript that shows training labs and courses you have finished.
- View a catalog of all available VMware training labs and courses.

Accessing VMware Learning Platform

You access VMware Learning Platform through a browser. You must have valid credentials from your tenant administrator to log in.

Contact your VMware Learning Platform administrator if you have trouble locating a lab.

**Note**  Passwords are case-sensitive.

Supported Browsers and Environments

The following browsers are supported. As a best practice, use the latest available version of your browser.

- Internet Explorer version 10 and above
- Firefox version 13 or above
- Chrome version 18 or above
- Safari version 6.0 or above

Your browser settings must accept cookies, run JavaScript, and allow web sockets.
Support for Mobile Devices

VMware Learning Platform supports mobile devices for split-screen functionality such that the lab’s instructional manual appears on the mobile device and the lab console appears on a desktop or laptop. VMware Learning Platform does not support the console of the virtual machine on the mobile device.

With the split-screen feature, you can use a full screen for the console of the lab and have the manual for the lab display on another desktop screen or appliance.
VMware Learning Platform Workflow for Lab Users

As a VMware Learning Platform lab user, you typically follow a standard workflow.

1. Access the lab through your browser and authenticate yourself using credentials sent to you by your tenant administrator.

   VMware Learning Platform displays your lab portal.

   The lab portal has three tabs:
   - **The left tab includes three items: Enrollments, Labs, and Transcript.**

     | Item     | Description                                      |
     |----------|--------------------------------------------------|
     | Enrollments | Displays labs in which you are already enrolled |
     | Labs       | Displays all labs                                |
     | Transcript | Displays a list of labs you have completed       |

   Included in the list of labs you have completed are the **Email Full Transcript** and the **All Tenants** options. **Email Full Transcripts** sends you an email with a PDF attachment of the lab transcripts. **All Tenants** tells the system to include lab transcripts from deleted tenants in the list of labs you have completed.

   - **Announcements/Offer** tab: Displays announcements, offers, and social media.

2. Select a lab in which to enroll (click **Enroll**) or resume a lab you had left (click **Enrolled**).

   VMware Learning Platform loads the lab you selected. After VMware Learning Platform finishes loading the lab, it displays a lab console that shows your enrollments. The length of time to connect to a lab varies depending on the lab environment's complexity and configuration.

   **Note** You can conduct a search for a lab by entering the title of a lab in the search box or by entering a keyword. For example, you might enter **Introduction** to list all labs in the current catalog that include the word “Introduction” in their titles.

3. (Optional) If the lab you started includes multiple consoles, click **Consoles** and select the one you want to work with. For example, your lab might include a Windows console icon and a Linux (RHEL) console icon. Most labs only have a single visible virtual machine that you interact with for the exercises, so the console tab is not shown.
4 Click **Start this Lab** to start the lab. If you start and then leave a lab, then VMware Learning Platform displays the **Resume the lab** control instead of the **Start this Lab** control. When you start a lab for the first time, you are presented with the option to start a guided tour of the console controls.

5 Click **Manual** to display the manual for your lab.

6 Progress through the modules of your lab and end or exit the lab as you choose. (Manuals are typically made up of modules that you complete sequentially).
Using the Lab Status and Lab Action Options

Each lab listed on a lab portal includes status and action options.

Lab Details
Lab Details displays a brief description of the lab, including running time and costs.

Enroll/Enrolled
If you are not enrolled in a lab, then VMware Learning Platform displays the Enroll option. Click it to enroll into the lab and to make it accessible from the Enrolled option in the left tab. After you are enrolled in the lab, you see the Start This Lab option.

If you are already enrolled in a lab, then VMware Learning Platform displays the Enrolled option. Click it to have VMware Learning Platform display the Start This Lab option.

Resume this lab
If you exited that lab (but not ended it) the lab before completing it, then VMware Learning Platform displays the Resume This Lab option. Click it to resume the lab where you left off.

The Enrollments page
The following sample enrollment page shows lab details and the Start the Lab control. This example also displays an Announcements section.
Figure 3-1. A sample Enrollment screen for a lab
Using the Lab Console Toolbar

From the lab console, you can view the lab console walk-through or use the console toolbar to get help, set up your profile, select a language, or log out.

Console walk-through

You can take a walk-through tour of the console when you start a lab for the first time.

After the first time you start the lab, the system does not automatically start the walk-through tour. To manually start the walk-through, click the **Guide icon**.

Help

Click **Help** to display the following options:

- **Live Chat**: If enabled by your tenant admin, Live Chat opens a window that you can use to chat with support staff.

- **Raise Hand**: Clicking **Raise Hand** activates a help request for you and alerts the class instructor that you need help. For more information about requesting help in instructor-led labs, see the *Chapter 9 Taking an Instructor-Led Lab*.

- **Support Options**: Displays an email address for support requests and a support phone number.

- **Tips**: Displays tips about using the lab console.

- **User Guide**: Opens a PDF version of this document

- **About**: Displays VMware Learning Platform product information.

Privacy

Displays the VMware privacy policy.
My Profile

Clicking My Profile displays the Profile page. The Profile page comprises several subpages beginning with the General page. To close the Profile page, click outside the page. Make sure that you have saved your changes before you close the page.

Language and Time Zone preferences

Click Preferences to select what language and time zone to use. Selecting a language sets the language of the lab console to the selected language. For example, if you select German, the system switches the user interface to German. Also, selecting a language determines the language version of the instructional manual. For example, if you select German, the system uses the German version of the instructional manual associated with the lab.

Note When you switch to the language version you selected, you must end the lab and then restart the lab.

About (Bio)

Click About to add a short biography about yourself.

Password

Click Password to change your password.

Security Questions

Click Security Questions to update your security questions. Security questions help validate who you are in case you forgot your password.

Social

Click Social to log into one or more social media service (Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn).
VMware Learning Platform never shares social media password information.

Log Out

Clicking Log Out logs you out of the VMware Learning Platform lab console and returns you to the login page.

Change Language

The current language is displayed followed by a Globe icon. To change the language, click the icon to open the Change Language drop-down menu and select a language.
The lab console language changes to the language you select.

Note For anonymous users (users who are not logged in and therefore do not have a profile), the tenant administrator sets the default anonymous user language. Logged-in users do have a profile. If a logged-in user changes language, then that user’s profile is updated accordingly.
Using the Screen Display Options

You can use screen display options to manage your screen's appearance and behavior. Display options are located in the upper-right corner of the console.

- The Connection Strength control displays information about console latency. Your instructor or admin can use this information to diagnose any connection problems. This feature must be enabled by a tenant administrator.

- Use the Toggle Full-Screen control to resize the console. Console resizing includes the following actions:
  - When the end-user console is docked in the center or maximized, then VMware Learning Platform resizes it to fit into the space available in the browser.
  - If the console is floated, docked-left, or docked-right, then you can resize the console manually by dragging the handles near the edge of the console frame.
  - If the end-user console is supported with VMware tools, then the guest operating system resolution is updated to the new console size.
  - In unsupported consoles, the guest operating system resolution remains unchanged, but the console is scaled to the browser.

- Use the Maximize control to magnify (full screen) your screen.

- Use the Arrow controls to dock your screen display controls to the left or right side of your screen.

- Use the Place in Center Screen control to center your screen display.

- Use the Floating window control to toggle between a docked or floating screen.

- Use the Refresh control to re-establish your console connection and reload your console. This option does not perform a screen refresh. Use this option only if your console locks up or your connection drops.
Using the Lab Console Settings

Your lab console includes settings for controlling your virtual machine.

- **Send Text**: Displays the Send Text to Console window. You can copy and paste text from your lab manual or enter new text in the window. When you click **Send Text**, VMware Learning Platform sends the text you entered to your lab console. The text appears at the pointer location inside your console. You can also highlight text in the lab manual then drag the selected text onto your console.

- **CTRL+ALT+DEL**: Sends the **CTRL+ALT+DEL** key combination to the virtual machine (VM). The result of sending the key combination is operation-system dependent.

- **Notes**: Displays metadata about the lab (notes, user name, and password for each VM) as configured by the tenant administrator.

- **Power Down**: Powers down the VM for the lab you are running.

- **Power Reset**: Hard-reboots the machine as if the reset button on the physical hardware had been selected. It is independent of the power options.

- **Connection Strength**: Displays a bar graph icon from which you can view latency statistics for your connection. Console connection monitoring is an optional feature set up by a tenant administrator.
Using Lab Options

While you are working on a lab, you can use lab options to extend the time remaining in your lab, to end or temporarily exit a lab, or to submit your lab results for grading. You can also use lab options to set keyboard and console attributes.

Status Options

Status options are located on the white ribbon above the console pane. They include the following settings.

- **Time Remaining**: Displays the amount of time remaining for you to complete your lab.

  **Note** Labs have two time limits: Time Remaining and Expiration Date. Time remaining is the total amount of time that the lab can be active. The counter for Time Remaining only changes when the lab is in use.

  When the Expiration Date arrives, the lab ends even if there is allotted time still available. For example, a lab might have been configured with a one-hour limit to do the lab, but expire in three days. As a result, you can use the lab for up to one hour of total time and break up that time into smaller intervals spread out over three days. In this case, the lab would end when the first of the time limits is reached.

- **End**: Displays a screen that allows you to confirm or cancel the ending of your lab. If you confirm that you want to “end” your lab, then VMware Learning Platform considers you have completed the lab and returns you to the VMware Learning Platform lab console login page. As a result, you are unable to resume the lab. You must click **Exit** to come back and resume your lab.

- **Exit**: Displays a screen that allows you to confirm or cancel the exiting from your lab. If you confirm that you want to “exit” your lab, VMware Learning Platform returns you to the lab console login page. VMware Learning Platform also provides you with an option to resume the lab. The **Exit** option is displayed only if your tenant admin has enabled it.

- **Extend**: Allows you to extend the time remaining in your lab. The **Extend** option is displayed only if your tenant admin has enabled it.

- **Finish**: If your admin has configured your lab for grading, then the system displays the **Finish** option instead of the **End** option.
When you click **Finish**, the lab is ended and your work is sent for grading. Note that once you click **Finish**, you are not able to return to the lab.

- **Reset**: If you reset a lab, all its virtual machines (VMs) are restored to their original state. You are not able to recover any work you have done. The **Reset** option is displayed only if your tenant admin has enabled it.

### Keyboard and Console Options

Options for keyboard and console settings are located by clicking on the gear menu. Select the checkbox for the options you want to use.

- **Keyboard Layout**: Select your keyboard layout to adjust any incorrect keys being sent to the console.

- **Intercept Paste**: Intercept the paste shortcut keys and send the text copied from your browser (or elsewhere) to the console. This option could interfere with the console's own copy and paste commands.

- **Manual Shortcuts**: If enabled, you can change the page in the manual with Ctrl key combinations even when the console has focus. See the gear menu for key combinations for your environment.

- **Fix non-ANSI US keyboard layouts**: Remap the keys pressed on your keyboard to send US ANSI key code equivalents to the console. If you are using a non-US keyboard or have the keyboard set a non-US language in your operating system, enabling this option could help send the correct keys to the console.

- **Reverse Vertical Scroll Direction**: Change the mouse scrolling direction sent to the console. This setting can help with mice or trackpads that have the scroll direction reversed (sometimes called "natural").
Using the Lab Manual

You can choose how to display lab manuals, either docking or floating the manual, or displaying the manual on a second appliance.

General options

Click **Manual** to display the instructional manual panel.

- The X icon closes the panel.
- The **Arrow-on-Screen** icon makes the manual panel a floating window. Once you make the panel a floating window, you can click the X to dock the panel on the previous side and close it.
- Clicking the **Arrow** icon toggles between a left dock or right dock of the manual panel.
- Clicking **Table of Contents** displays links to each module of the manual. Manuals are typically comprised of modules which you complete sequentially.
- Your lab comprises virtual machines. If your tenant administrator has included a network topology image in your tenant, then your lab console includes a **Network Topology** option. Clicking **Network Topology** displays an image that shows the network topology of the virtual machines that are used in your lab.
- **Split Screen** displays the Use a Second Screen or Device screen that includes links to open the manual in a new window and email a link to open the manual with another device such as an iPad or a second window on your desktop.

Thus, you can go full screen on your console and have the lab's manual on another desktop screen or on your iPad. VMware Learning Platform keeps the manual steps on the second screen in sync with the main screen. When you change to the next step on one of your screens, it changes on your other screen. In order to get to that second screen, you can email yourself a link, scan a QR code or copy and paste a special key.

Drag/Drop option

The Drag/Drop feature allows you to drag text from the lab's instructional manual and drop it into a field in the lab console. To use the Drag/Drop feature:

1. Select some text in the manual.
2  Drop the text into the appropriate area on the lab console.

Copy/Paste option

You can copy text from your browser or elsewhere, including a lab manual to the console. To enable this feature, go the gear menu on the white ribbon above the console and select Intercept Paste.
Taking an Instructor-Led Lab

An instructor-led lab is a specified lab taken at a specified time with an instructor present. There are a few differences between what you see on your lab console in instructor-led labs and what you see in on-demand labs.

Classes

- You can check for whether you have been added to a class.
- Your instructor can use the Instructor Console to monitor your progress while the class is in session.

Impact on the Lab Console

When you start the lab, your lab console does the following:

- Alert you if your lab is being monitored.
- Provide a button to send a message to the instructor console.
Additional User Features for VMware Learning Platform

VMware Learning Platform includes additional features to help users as they complete labs.

Detection of closed browsers

VMware Learning Platform can detect when a user has walked away from a lab. For example, if the user quits the browser without clicking **End Lab**, then VMware Learning Platform pauses the user’s lab and bookmarks where the user is in the manual. When the user returns to the lab, VMware Learning Platform returns the user back to where the user left off.

Detection of inactive browsers

VMware Learning Platform can detect if the user has not moved the mouse or pressed a key on their keyboard for a period of time (the default is 10 minutes). If the user has left the browser inactive, then VMware Learning Platform pauses the user’s lab and bookmarks where the user is in the manual. When the user returns to the lab, VMware Learning Platform returns the user back to where the user left off.

Lab Time Running Out

When the time is has nearly run out on a lab, VMware Learning Platform flashes the timer in yellow. When the remaining lab time is low, VMware Learning Platform flashes the whole screen in red.

You can click **Extend** in the warning box or on the console frame to add more time to the lab.

Email Transcript

Transcript pages include the Email Transcript option. Click **Email Full Transcript** if you want VMware Learning Platform to send your lab transcript to the email address you provided.

Speed Test

A speed test helps diagnose a slow or intermittent connection from your browser to VMware Learning Platform.
To run a speed test, open a browser with a URL of the form `http://learningplatform.vmware.com/tenant_name/speed-test/` where `tenant_name` is the unique name given to your tenant and click **Start Test**.

The speed test screen displays information about VMware Learning Platform and Cloud speed and VMware Learning Platform and Cloud network latency.

- A good speed score is 1.5 MB/s or greater.
- A good latency score is 300 ms or less.