

InstallShield 2025 Express Edition Release Notes

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Introduction

InstallShield is the industry standard for authoring high-quality Windows Installer-based installations.

InstallShield 2025 Express Edition also offers new features, enhancements, and resolved issues that make it easy to use the latest technologies.

New Features in 2025 R2

InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition includes the following new feature:

- [Enhanced Virtual Machine Support](#)

Enhanced Virtual Machine Support

InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition enhances the virtual machine detection capability by introducing support for the following virtual environments where installations can be executed:

- Xen
- Amazon EC2 Instance
- QEMU
- Parallels Desktop
- Google Compute
- Microsoft Azure
- EverRun

This expanded support for virtual machines (mentioned above) enables InstallShield Express Edition to accurately identify the environment in which an installation is running, resulting in more reliable and predictable installation behavior. It allows for thorough compatibility checks across a wide range of virtual platforms, reduces the risk of installation errors, and ensures a seamless, smoother experience for users regardless of the underlying system.

Enhancements

InstallShield 2025 Express Edition includes the following enhancements:

- [InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition](#)
- [InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition](#)

InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition

InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition includes the following enhancement:

- [Visual Studio 2026 Integration in InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition](#)

Visual Studio 2026 Integration in InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition

InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition supports seamless integration with Visual Studio 2026, allowing you to create and manage InstallShield Express Edition projects directly from the latest Visual Studio IDE.

With the Visual Studio 2026 integration, you can:

- Create new InstallShield Express Edition projects in Visual Studio 2026.
- Edit InstallShield Express Edition projects in Visual Studio 2026.
- Upgrade projects to the latest version of InstallShield Express Edition.
- Build projects from the Visual Studio 2026 IDE and from the x64 MSBuild.



Note ▪ This change was tracked in *ISDEV-44878*.

InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition

InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition includes the following enhancements:

- [Command-Line Parameters to Specify File Description and Copyright Notice](#)
- [Support for New Microsoft .NET Framework Prerequisites](#)

Command-Line Parameters to Specify File Description and Copyright Notice

InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition introduces two new command-line parameters that allow you to customize file description and product copyright notice for a setup.exe file. These parameters must be used with the `ISCmdBld.exe` command-line tool when building a release to ensure that the setup.exe executable contains the desired data. The following are the new command-line parameters:

- **-fd**—Use this parameter to specify the desired file description for a setup.exe file, overriding the default file description.
- **-fc**—Use this parameter to specify the desired product copyright notice for a setup.exe file, overriding the default copyright notice.

For more information, see [ISCmdBld.exe](#) in the *InstallShield Express Edition Help Library*.



Note ▪ This change was tracked in *ISDEV-42570*.

Support for New Microsoft .NET Framework Prerequisites

InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition introduces the following two new prerequisites, available in the **Redistributables** explorer of the **Application Data** view:

- Microsoft .NET Framework 4.8.1 Full
- Microsoft .NET Framework 4.8.1 Web

These new prerequisites are supported only on Windows 10, Windows 11, Windows Server 2022, and later versions.



Note • This change was tracked in ISDEV-44634.

Important Information

Consider the following important information regarding the InstallShield 2025 Express Edition release:

- [Concurrent License Users Must Update the FlexNet Licensing Server Software](#)
- [Evaluating InstallShield Express Edition](#)
- [Obtaining the Installations for InstallShield, InstallShield Add-Ons, and the Redistributable Files](#)
- [Installing More than One Edition of InstallShield](#)
- [Installing More than One Version of InstallShield](#)
- [Removal of Update Notifications View](#)
- [Remove .NET/J# Tab and Include MSI Engine Options from the Releases View](#)

Concurrent License Users Must Update the FlexNet Licensing Server Software

If you are using a concurrent license of InstallShield Express Edition, you must update the version of the FlexNet Licensing Server software on the licensing server before you can start using InstallShield 2025 Express Edition.

The version of the FlexNet Licensing Server software that shipped with previous versions of InstallShield Express Edition cannot manage licenses of InstallShield 2025 Express Edition. InstallShield 2025 Express Edition will not check out licenses from older versions of the license server even when those licenses are available.



Note • The FlexNet Licensing Server software v11.19.0 can manage licenses of InstallShield 2024 Express Edition and InstallShield 2025 Express Edition. Upgrading from InstallShield 2024 Express Edition to InstallShield 2025 Express Edition lets you to use the existing FlexNet Licensing Server software v11.19.0. Upgrading from the InstallShield 2021 Express Edition and older versions require the upgrading of FlexNet Licensing Server software to v11.19.0.

You can download the installer for the new FlexNet Licensing Server software from the [Revenera Product and License Center](#).

For instructions on installing the FlexNet Licensing Server software, see [Setting Up Your License Server for Concurrent Licenses](#).

Evaluating InstallShield Express Edition

If you have not purchased a license for InstallShield Express Edition, you can install it and use it for a limited number of days without activating it or connecting it to a license server. When you use InstallShield Express Edition before activating it or connecting it to a license server, it operates in evaluation mode, and some of its functionality is not available. For details, see [Functionality Notes for the Evaluation Version of InstallShield](#). Note that the evaluation limitations are removed when you activate InstallShield Express Edition or when you connect it to a license server and check out a license for it.

Obtaining the Installations for InstallShield, InstallShield Add-Ons, and the Redistributable Files

The following installations are available for download from the Revenera Software Product and License Center as documented in the [InstallShield download and licensing instructions](#):

- InstallShield
- Redistributable files (for example, InstallShield prerequisites and InstallScript objects)
- Add-ons (if you are entitled to them) such as the Standalone Build and the InstallShield MSI Tools
- FlexNet Licensing Server software (if you purchased concurrent licenses and you need to set up your organization's license server)
- Skin Customization Kit
- InstallScript Object templates
- InstallShield service packs (if available)

Installing More than One Edition of InstallShield

Only one edition of InstallShield 2025—Premier, Professional, or Express—can be installed on a system at a time. In addition, the InstallShield 2025 DIM Editor cannot be installed on the same machine with any edition of InstallShield 2025.

Microsoft Visual Studio can be integrated with only one version of InstallShield at a time. The last version of InstallShield that is installed or repaired on a system is the one that is used for Visual Studio integration.

Installing More than One Version of InstallShield

InstallShield 2025 can coexist on the same machine with other versions of InstallShield.

The InstallShield 2025 Standalone Build can coexist on the same machine with other versions of the Standalone Build. In most cases, the Standalone Build is not installed on the same machine where InstallShield is installed. If you do install both on the same machine and you want to use the automation interface, review the [Installing the Standalone Build and InstallShield on the Same Machine](#) topic in the InstallShield Help Library to learn about special registration and uninstallation considerations.

Removal of Update Notifications View

Starting InstallShield 2021 R1, Update Notifications, where you can integrate FlexNet Connect and InstallShield to check for updates, is no longer supported. The merge modules used for this integration are no longer bundled with InstallShield. If you are an existing customer using this integration, you can continue using the integration by copying the merge modules from a previous InstallShield installation. For more details, [click here](#).

Remove .NET/J# Tab and Include MSI Engine Options from the Releases View

The **.NET/J#** tab and **Include MSI Engine** options in the **Releases** explorer on the **Media** view of the **Installation Designer** were originally provided to support .NET 1.1/2.0, Windows Installer 3.1, and J# redistributables. These technologies have become obsolete and no longer supported by the Microsoft. Therefore, in InstallShield 2025 Express Edition, the **.NET/J#** tab and **Include MSI Engine** options in the **Releases** explorer on the **Media** view of the **Installation Designer** have been removed (as well as the associated .NET 1.1/2.0 Core Language and .NET 1.1/2.0 Language Packs dialog boxes). InstallShield 2025 Express Edition build task will simply ignore these options if detected in the older version of project files.

Project Upgrade Alerts

The following information describes possible upgrade issues that may occur when you upgrade projects that were created with InstallShield 2016 Express Edition and earlier to InstallShield 2025 Express Edition. It also alerts you to possible changes in behavior that you may notice between new InstallShield 2025 Express Edition projects and projects that are upgraded from InstallShield 2016 Express Edition or earlier to InstallShield 2025 Express Edition.

- [General Information about Upgrading Projects that Were Created in Earlier Versions of InstallShield Express Edition](#)
- [Changes to the List of Supported Versions of Windows for Target Systems](#)
- [Localized String Considerations](#)

General Information about Upgrading Projects that Were Created in Earlier Versions of InstallShield Express Edition

InstallShield Express Edition creates a backup copy of the project with a file extension such as **.777** (for an **.ism** project) or **.2016** (for an **.issuite** project) before converting it. Delete the **.777** or **.2016** part from the original project's file name if you want to reopen the project in the earlier version of InstallShield Express Edition. Note that you cannot open InstallShield 2025 Express Edition projects in earlier versions of InstallShield Express Edition.

You can upgrade projects that were created with the following versions of InstallShield Express Edition to InstallShield 2025 Express Edition: InstallShield 2016 Express Edition and earlier, InstallShield 12 Express Edition and earlier, InstallShield DevStudio, InstallShield Professional 7 and earlier, and InstallShield Developer 8 and earlier.

Note that projects that were created with InstallShield MultiPlatform or InstallShield Universal cannot be upgraded to InstallShield 2025 Express Edition.

Changes to the List of Supported Versions of Windows for Target Systems

For all project types, Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2 are the minimum versions of Windows that are required for target systems to run the installations that are created in InstallShield Express Edition.

Localized String Considerations

Changes to the handling and detection of localized strings were introduced starting in InstallShield 2016 Express Edition. For example, localized string content that includes square brackets around invalid characters can now trigger a build time warning or error. Accordingly, the following new warning and errors might occur when you are working with your installation.

Error or Warning Number	Message	Troubleshooting Information
-7355	The %4 value for string %2 does not meet validation criteria for table %1 column %3.	This warning occurs if a localized string value does not meet validation criteria for a column in the String Editor table. To resolve this warning, update the flagged value in the String Editor.
-7354	The %4 value for string %2 does not contain a legitimate value for table %1 column %3.	This error occurs if a localized string value does not contain a legitimate value in the named column of the String Editor table. To resolve this error, update the flagged value in the String Editor.

Resolved Issues

This section lists the customer issues that were resolved in the following version of InstallShield Express Edition:

- [InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition](#)
- [InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition](#)

InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition

The following issues have been resolved in InstallShield 2025 R2 Express Edition:

Issue Number	Issue Summary
ISDEV-44479	Using the SYSINFO.bIsVirtualMachine flag and ISDetectVM function—both in the SetAllUsers.dll file within the <ISRedistPlatformDependentFolder> directory—incorrectly detected a physical Windows machine as a Hyper-V virtual machine. This issue has been fixed.
ISDEV-44739	
ISDEV-44684	Launching a Basic MSI based setup.exe file—build using the InstallShield 2023 R2 Premier Edition—resulted in the following error: Error reading setup initialization file. This issue has been fixed.
ISDEV-44626	The build log displayed incorrect signing messages when no digital signature was configured. This issue has been fixed. Additionally, icon files are now signed only when the Sign Files in Package setting is set to Yes and the Exclude Patterns and Files setting is properly configured.
ISDEV-44498	A crash was observed when a large number of features were included using the Required Features setting in the General area for a feature in the Setup Design explorer. This issue has been fixed.
ISDEV-44860	Clicking the hyperlinks associated with error codes in the build log redirected to an invalid web page instead of the help article in the Revenera community. This issue has been fixed.

InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition

The following issues have been resolved in InstallShield 2025 R1 Express Edition:

Issue Number	Issue Summary
ISDEV-44337	Executing a setup.exe with a custom command-line parameter—including an odd number of double quotation marks—led to the display of multiple instances of setup.exe in Task Manager and the creation of multiple folders in the %TEMP% directory. This issue has been fixed.
ISDEV-44252	A failure was observed when executing the /z (command-line parameter for Setup.exe) with the '=' symbol; specifically, the CMDLINE property failed to retain any value after the '=' symbol. This issue has been fixed.

Issue Number	Issue Summary
ISDEV-43626	Creating or updating a 64-bit registry key in a Quick Patch project on a 64-bit target system failed to include or update the same registry key in the 64-bit directory; instead, the key was added or updated in the 32-bit directory. This issue has been fixed.

System Requirements

This section contains the minimum requirements for systems that run InstallShield Express Edition (the authoring environment), as well as for target systems that run the installations created with InstallShield Express Edition (the run-time environment).

- [For Systems Running InstallShield Express Edition](#)
- [For Target Systems](#)

For Systems Running InstallShield Express Edition

InstallShield Express Edition runs on the latest versions of these operating systems, fully updated with the most recent patches and service packs.

Item	Description
Processor	Pentium III-class PC (500 MHz or higher recommended)
RAM	1 GB of RAM (2 GB preferred)
Hard Disk	1 GB free space
Display	Designed for XGA resolution at 1024 × 768 or higher
Operating System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows Server 2012 R2 • Windows 10 • Windows Server 2016 • Windows Server 2019 • Windows 11 • Windows Server 2022 • Windows Server 2025
Privileges	Administrative privileges on the system
Mouse	Microsoft IntelliMouse or other compatible pointing device

Item	Description
Optional Integration with Visual Studio	<p>The following versions of Microsoft Visual Studio can be integrated with InstallShield Premier or Professional Editions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Studio 2012 • Visual Studio 2013 • Visual Studio 2015 • Visual Studio 2017 • Visual Studio 2019 • Visual Studio 2022 <p>The following editions of these versions of Visual Studio can be integrated with InstallShield Premier or Professional Editions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional • Premium • Ultimate • Enterprise

For Target Systems

Target systems must meet the following minimum operating system requirements:

- Windows 7
- Windows Server 2008 R2
- Windows 8
- Windows Server 2012
- Windows Server 8.1
- Windows Server 2012 R2
- Windows 10
- Windows Server 2016
- Windows Server 2019
- Windows 11
- Windows Server 2022
- Windows Server 2025

Target systems must also support the SSE2 instruction set.

Known Issues

There are no known issues in InstallShield 2025 Express Edition.

Legal Information

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