

Using IBM® software support web sites

Where do I find answers to technical questions about IBM software?

IBM technical support information for software products is available at:

<http://www.ibm.com/software/support> . Search for specific technical information by entering keywords, or select a specific product support page from the Products A to Z list.

How can I effectively search these sites for answers?

The search box at the top of the support page searches all IBM knowledgebases, defaults to an OR between keywords, and returns many results. Use the search box below the product name heading for a focused search using only that product's knowledgebase. Here are some product page search hints:

- Use multiple search terms (search engine defaults to AND between keywords) - e.g., performance,degrad*
- Use exact phrases with quotes - e.g., "XMLConfig -import"
- Use product names - e.g., WebSphere Studio Application Developer
- Exclude or include words (use NOT and OR) - e.g., database NOT restart*
- Include wildcards in your search - (e.g., web*)
- Narrow search results by adding search terms to the search results. e.g., on result set for APARs, enter version number in search box
- Refine search results by selecting a document type. e.g., Downloadable files
- Click **Advanced Search** to help you create an effective query
- Search for multiple products by clicking **Search all software support** in the search box

Where can I read in-depth technical information about IBM software products, written by experts in the field?

The gateway to WebSphere technical information for WebSphere developers *and* administrators is available at: <http://www.ibm.com/websphere/developer> . It contains:

- Zones and roadmaps for specific WebSphere products
- Assistance for new WebSphere users
- Latest news on WebSphere products and offerings
- In-depth technical articles to keep you informed
- Links to downloads, technical previews, and plug-ins
- Tutorials for new and experienced users
- Links to many WebSphere support pages

How can I receive e-mail notifications about technical alerts and new downloads or fix packs for my products?

- Click **Register** to establish an IBM User ID and password on the product support page (do this just once)
- Click **MySupport** and log in with your IBM User ID and password
- Complete the profile form, choosing all the products you are interested in. Choose the **e-mail option** at the bottom of the form to sign up for weekly e-mail notifications.

What do I need to know to contact support for assistance?

Once you enroll in the IBM Passport Advantage program, the IBM Software Support Engineering staff can help you resolve issues. Steps to follow:

1. Define the problem - be as specific as possible
 - Try to recreate the problem - define the steps and the symptoms
2. Determine if this is an existing problem

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- Search the IBM product support site, since the issue may already be documented and resolved
 - Available information includes: Technotes, product documentation (InfoCenters), APARs, fix packs, white papers, Redbooks, and in-depth technical articles on WSDD
3. If you are unable to find a solution, gather the necessary background information
 - What is the software version and release number
 - Document the steps needed to reproduce the problem
 - Were changes made to the system before the problem occurred? If so, document the changes
 - Record any messages or diagnostic information that was received
 - Collect any associated dumps and traces
 4. Determine the business impact
 - Sev1 - unable to use the software, critical impact on operations
 - Sev2 - significant business impact; software use severely limited
 - Sev3 - software is usable, with less significant features limited
 - Sev4 - minimal business impact; circumvention in place
 5. Submit the problem to IBM in one of the following ways:
 - Via the ESR (Electronic Service Request) tool. Click **Submit and Track a problem** on the support page or go to: <http://www.ibm.com/software/support/probsub.html>
 - Submit the problem via phone support: 1-800-426-7378

How do I gain access to the ESR tool?

As a customer with a Passport Advantage contract, access the ESR tool at:

<http://www.ibm.com/software/support/probsub.html> to open, track and report on PMRs. Two user roles are associated with the ESR tool:

1. Primary STC (Site Technical Contact) - completes the customer profile with customer and contract numbers, and can add up to 9 more secondary technical contacts. The STC can change the customer profile, add technical contacts, add named callers, and use the ESR tool. Secondary technical contacts, once registered on the support site, can add an unlimited number of named callers, and can use the ESR tool
2. Named callers, once registered on the support site, follow the brief instructions on the named caller e-mail to complete the ESR registration, and then use the ESR tool for PMR activity

How can I tell IBM what I think about the web sites?

- You will occasionally receive a pop-up survey when you access the product sites. Please take a few moments to provide your feedback.
- When you access a document through search, please respond to the short form at the bottom of the document.
- Click **Feedback** under Support on the left panel of the product pages
- Tell us what you find helpful on the sites and what can be improved. We greatly value your comments and use your feedback as the basis for future enhancements.