

Troubleshooting and Reference

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Troubleshooting Upgrade Packages

Table 1: Troubleshooting Upgrade Packages

Issue	Solution	
No available upgrades even after I refresh.	You are already running the latest version available for your deployment, and you have no upgrade packages loaded/configured.	
Suggested release is not marked.	The suggested release is listed only if you are eligible for it. It is not listed if you are already running the suggested release or higher, or if you cannot upgrade that far. Note that patches to suggested releases are not marked as suggested, although we do recommend you apply them.	
I don't see the packages I want.	and available for direct download. Unless you manually upload, the following are not listed:	
	• Device upgrades (major and maintenance) to a particular version, unless you have a device that supports that version.	
	• Device patches, unless you have at least one device at the appropriate maintenance release.	
	Hotfixes. You must manually upload these.	

Issue	Solution	
Copying upgrade packages from the management center to devices times out.	This often happens when there is limited bandwidth between the management center and its devices. You can try one of: • Configure devices to get upgrade packages directly from an internal web server. To do this, delete the upgrade package from the management center (optional but saves disk space), then re-add the upgrade package except this time specify a pointer (URL) to its location instead. See Copying Upgrade Packages to Devices from an Internal Server. • Allow devices to download the upgrade package from the internet. Devices with internet access automatically try that first, and only fall back on the management center if internet download fails.	
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Troubleshooting Threat Defense Upgrade

Table 2: Troubleshooting Threat Defense Upgrade

Issue	Solution Either: • You do not have anything that can be upgraded to that version right now. • No eligible devices have internet access. Upload the package to the management center or configure an internal server; see Managing Upgrade Packages with the Management Center.	
Upgrade button missing for my target version.		
Devices not listed in the upgrade wizard.	If you accessed the wizard directly from Devices > Threat Defense Upgrade and therefore did not select a target version, the workflow may be blank. To begin, choose a target version from the Upgrade to menu. The system determines which devices can be upgraded to that version and displays them in the Device Details pane.	
Target version not listed in the Upgrade to menu.		
Devices not listed in the upgrade wizard even though a target version is selected.	should see devices here, your user role could be prohibiting you from managing	

Issue	Solution	
Pruning daemon errors in the Message Center.	This most commonly happens for devices running Version 7.6.x or earlier when you do not start the upgrade within 10 minutes after the readiness check completes. Regardless, you can safely ignore these messages and proceed with the upgrade.	
	The full error is: Process Status - $device_name$. The pruning daemon exited n time(s).	

Unresponsive and Failed Threat Defense Upgrades



Caution

Do not reboot or shut down at any point during upgrade, even if the system appears inactive. You could place the system in an unusable state and require a reimage.

Table 3: Unresponsive and Failed Threat Defense Upgrades

Issue	Solution	
Cannot reach the device.	Devices can stop passing traffic during the upgrade or if the upgrade fails. Before you upgrade, make sure traffic from your location does not have to traverse the device itself to access the device's management interface.	
	You should also able to access the management center's management interface without traversing the device.	
Upgrade or patch appears hung/device appears inactive.	If device upgrade status has stopped updating on the management center but there is no report of upgrade failure, you can try canceling the upgrade; see below. If you cannot cancel or canceling does not work, contact Cisco TAC.	
	Tip: You can monitor upgrade logs on the device itself using expert mode and tail or tailf: tail /ngfw/var/log/sf/update.status.	
Upgrade failed.	If an upgrade fails and:	
	• The device reverted to its pre-upgrade state (auto-cancel is enabled), correct any issues and try again from the beginning.	
	• The device is still in maintenance mode, correct any issues and resume the upgrade. Or, cancel and try again later.	
	If you cannot retry or cancel, or if you continue to have issues, contact Cisco TAC.	
Patch failed.	You cannot cancel in-progress or failed patches. However, if a patch fails early, for example, during validation stages, the device may remain up and running normally. Simply correct any issues and try again.	
	If a patch fails after the device has entered maintenance mode, check for an uninstaller. If one exists, you can try running it to remove the failed patch; see Uninstall a Threat Defense Patch. After the uninstall finishes, you can correct any issues and try again.	
	If there is no uninstaller, if the uninstall fails, or if you continue to have issues, contact Cisco TAC.	

Issue Solution		
Upgrade or patch on a clustered device failed, and I want to reimage instead of retrying the upgrade.	If a cluster node upgrade fails and you choose to reimage the node, reimage it to the <i>current</i> version of the control node before you add it back to the cluster. Depending on when and how the upgrade failed, the current version of the control node can be the old version or the target version.	
	We do not support mixed-version clusters except temporarily during upgrade. Deliberately creating a mixed-version cluster can cause outages.	
	Remove the failed node from the cluster and reimage it to the target version. Upgrade the rest of the cluster to the target version, then add your reimaged node.	
I want to cancel an upgrade.	Canceling reverts the device to its pre-upgrade state. You can cancel failed and in-progress upgrades on the upgrade status pop-up, accessible from the Upgrade tab on the Device Management page. You cannot cancel patches.	
	If you cannot cancel or canceling does not work, contact Cisco TAC.	
I want to retry (resume) a failed upgrade.	You can resume an upgrade on the upgrade status pop-up, accessible from the Upgrade tab on the Device Management page.	
	If you continue to have issues, contact Cisco TAC.	
I want to change what happens when upgrade fails.	Part of the upgrade process is choosing what happens if it fails. This is done with the Automatically cancel on upgrade failure (auto-cancel) option:	
	• Auto-cancel enabled (default): If upgrade fails, the upgrade cancels and the device automatically reverts to its pre-upgrade state. This returns you to normal operations as quickly as possible while you regroup and try again.	
	• Auto-cancel disabled: If upgrade fails, the device remains as it is. This allows you to correct any issues and resume the upgrade.	
	For high availability and clustered devices, auto-cancel applies to each device individually. That is, if the upgrade fails on one device, only that device is reverted.	

Traffic Flow and Inspection

Schedule maintenance windows when upgrade will have the least impact, considering any effect on traffic flow and inspection.

Traffic Flow and Inspection for Threat Defense Upgrades

Software Upgrades for Standalone Devices

Devices operate in maintenance mode while they upgrade. Entering maintenance mode at the beginning of the upgrade causes a 2-3 second interruption in traffic inspection. Interface configurations determine how a standalone device handles traffic both then and during the upgrade.

Table 4: Traffic Flow and Inspection: Software Upgrades for Standalone Devices

Interface Configuration		Traffic Behavior
Firewall interfaces	Routed or switched including EtherChannel, redundant, subinterfaces. Switched interfaces are also known as bridge group or transparent interfaces.	Dropped. For bridge group interfaces on the ISA 3000 only, you can use a FlexConfig policy to configure hardware bypass for power failure. This causes traffic to drop during software upgrades but pass without inspection while the device completes its post-upgrade reboot.
IPS-only interfaces	Inline set, hardware bypass force-enabled: Bypass: Force	Passed without inspection until you either disable hardware bypass, or set it back to standby mode.
	Inline set, hardware bypass standby mode: Bypass: Standby	Dropped during the upgrade, while the device is in maintenance mode. Then, passed without inspection while the device completes its post-upgrade reboot.
	Inline set, hardware bypass disabled: Bypass: Disabled	Dropped.
	Inline set, no hardware bypass module.	Dropped.
	Inline set, tap mode.	Egress packet immediately, copy not inspected.
	Passive, ERSPAN passive.	Uninterrupted, not inspected.

Software Upgrades for High Availability and Clustered Devices

You should not experience interruptions in traffic flow or inspection while upgrading high availability or clustered devices. For high availability pairs, the standby device upgrades first. The devices switch roles, then the new standby upgrades.

For clusters, the data security module or modules upgrade first, then the control module. During the control security module upgrade, although traffic inspection and handling continues normally, the system stops logging events. Events for traffic processed during the logging downtime appear with out-of-sync timestamps after the upgrade is completed. However, if the logging downtime is significant, the system may prune the oldest events before they can be logged.

Note that hitless upgrades are not supported for single-unit clusters. Interruptions to traffic flow and inspection depend on interface configurations of the active unit, just as with standalone devices.

Software Revert (Major/Maintenance Releases)

You should expect interruptions to traffic flow and inspection during revert, even in a high availability/scalability deployment. This is because revert is more successful when all units are reverted simultaneously. Simultaneous revert means that interruptions to traffic flow and inspection depend on interface configurations only, as if every device were standalone.

Software Uninstall (Patches)

For standalone devices, interruptions to traffic flow and inspection during patch uninstall are the same as for upgrade. In high availability/scalability deployments, you must explicitly plan an uninstall order that minimizes disruption. This is because you uninstall patches from devices individually, even those that you upgraded as a unit.

Traffic Flow and Inspection for Chassis Upgrades

Upgrading FXOS reboots the chassis. For FXOS upgrades to Version 2.14.1+ that include firmware upgrades, the device reboots twice—once for FXOS and once for the firmware. This includes Version 7.4.1+ chassis upgrades for the Secure Firewall 3100/4200 in multi-instance mode.

Even in high availability or clustered deployments, you upgrade FXOS on each chassis independently. To minimize disruption, upgrade one chassis at a time; see Upgrade Order.

Table 5: Traffic Flow and Inspection: FXOS Upgrades

Threat Defense Deployment	Traffic Behavior	Method
Standalone	Dropped.	_
High availability	Unaffected.	Best Practice: Update FXOS on the standby, switch active peers, upgrade the new standby.
	Dropped until one peer is online.	Upgrade FXOS on the active peer before the standby is finished upgrading.
Inter-chassis cluster	Unaffected.	Best Practice: Upgrade one chassis at a time so at least one module is always online.
	Dropped until at least one module is online.	Upgrade chassis at the same time, so all modules are down at some point.
Intra-chassis cluster (Firepower 9300 only)	Passed without inspection.	Hardware bypass enabled: Bypass: Standby or Bypass-Force.
	Dropped until at least one module is online.	Hardware bypass disabled: Bypass: Disabled .
	Dropped until at least one module is online.	No hardware bypass module.

Traffic Flow and Inspection when Deploying Configurations

Snort typically restarts during the first deployment immediately after upgrade. This means that for management center upgrades, Snort could restart on all managed devices. Snort does not restart after subsequent deployments unless, before deploying, you modify specific policy or device configurations.

Restarting the Snort process briefly interrupts traffic flow and inspection on all devices, including those configured for high availability/scalability. Interface configurations determine whether traffic drops or passes without inspection during the interruption. When you deploy without restarting Snort, resource demands may result in a small number of packets dropping without inspection.

Table 6: Traffic Flow and Inspection: Deploying Configuration Changes

Interface Configuration		Traffic Behavior
Firewall interfaces	Routed or switched including EtherChannel, redundant, subinterfaces.	Dropped.
	Switched interfaces are also known as bridge group or transparent interfaces.	
IPS-only interfaces	Inline set, Failsafe enabled or disabled.	Passed without inspection.
		A few packets might drop if Failsafe is disabled and Snort is busy but not down.
	Inline set, Snort Fail Open: Down: disabled.	Dropped.
	Inline set, Snort Fail Open: Down: enabled.	Passed without inspection.
	Inline set, tap mode.	Egress packet immediately, copy not inspected.
	Passive, ERSPAN passive.	Uninterrupted, not inspected.

Time and Disk Space

Time to Upgrade

We recommend you track and record your own upgrade times so you can use them as future benchmarks. The following table lists some things that can affect upgrade time.



Caution

Do not make or deploy configuration changes during upgrade. Even if the system appears inactive, do not manually reboot or shut down. In most cases, do not restart an upgrade in progress. You could place the system in an unusable state and require a reimage. If you encounter issues with the upgrade, including a failed upgrade or unresponsive appliance, see Unresponsive and Failed Threat Defense Upgrades, on page 3.

Table 7: Upgrade Time Considerations

Consideration	Details	
Versions	Upgrade time usually increases if your upgrade skips versions.	
Models	Upgrade time usually increases with lower-end models.	

Consideration	Details	
Virtual appliances	Upgrade time in virtual deployments is highly hardware dependent.	
High availability and clustering	In a high availability or clustered configuration, devices upgrade one at a time to preserve continuity of operations, with each device operating in maintenance mode while it upgrades. Upgrading a device pair or entire cluster, therefore, takes longer than upgrading a standalone device.	
Configurations	Upgrade time can increase with the complexity of your configurations.	
Components	You may need additional time to perform operating system or virtual hosting upgrades, upgrade package transfers, readiness checks, VDB and intrusion rule (SRU/LSP) updates, configuration deployment, and other related tasks.	

Disk Space to Upgrade

To upgrade, the upgrade package must be on the device. For device upgrades where the device does not have access to the internet, you must also have enough space on the management center (in either /Volume or /var) for the device upgrade package. Or, you can use an internal server to store them. Readiness checks should indicate whether you have enough disk space to perform the upgrade. Without enough free disk space, the upgrade fails. For more information, see Configuration and Deployment Checks.

Upgrade Feature History

Table 8: 20250219

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Threat Defense Upgrade		

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Devices with internet access download upgrade packages from the internet.	Any (some restrictions)	You can now begin device and chassis upgrades without the upgrade package. At the appropriate time, devices will get the package directly from the internet. This saves time and management center disk space. Devices without internet access can continue to get the package from the management center or an internal server. Note that devices try the internal server (if configured) before either the internet or the management center. If the internal server download fails, newer devices with internet access try the internet then the management center, while older devices and devices without internet access just try the management center. (In this context, "newer" means threat defense 7.6+ or chassis 7.4.1+.) Restrictions: Management center and devices must be able to access the internet. There is no way to force a device with internet access to try the management center before it tries the internet. Not supported for hotfixes.
Upgrade threat defense or chassis without a manual readiness check.	7.7.0	 Download location: https://cdo-ftd-images.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ You no longer have to run time-consuming pre-upgrade readiness checks for threat defense or chassis upgrades. Instead, these checks are now regularly run by the system and reported in the health monitor. This allows you to preemptively fix any issues that will block upgrade. The Database module, new for devices, manages monitors database schema and configuration data (EO) integrity. The FXOS Health module, new for devices, monitors the FXOS httpd service on FXOS-based devices. The Disk Status module is now more robust, alerting on disk health issues reported by daily running of smartctl (a Linux utility for monitoring reliability, predicting failures, and performing other self-tests). Version restrictions: This feature is supported for upgrades from Version 7.7+. Devices running earlier versions still require the in-upgrade readiness check.

Table 9: 20240808

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Threat Defense Upgrade		

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Chassis upgrade for the Secure Firewall 3100 in multi-instance mode.	7.4.1	For the Secure Firewall 3100 in multi-instance mode, you upgrade the operating system and the firmware (chassis upgrade) separately from the container instances (threat defense upgrade). New/modified screens: • Upgrade the chassis: Devices > Chassis Upgrade • Upgrade threat defense: Devices > Threat Defense Upgrade
Generate and download post-upgrade configuration change reports from the threat defense and chassis upgrade wizards.	Any	You can now generate and download post-upgrade configuration change reports from the threat defense and chassis upgrade wizards, as long as you have not cleared your upgrade workflow. Previously, you used the Advanced Deploy screens to generate the reports and the Message Center to download them. Note that you can still use this method, which is useful if you want to quickly generate change reports for multiple devices, or if you cleared your workflow. New/modified screens: • Devices > Threat Defense Upgrade > Configuration Changes • Devices > Chassis Upgrade > Configuration Changes

Table 10: 20240203

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Threat Defense Upgrade		

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Improved upgrade starting page and package management.	Any	A new upgrade page makes it easier to choose, download, manage, and apply upgrades to your entire deployment. The page lists all upgrade packages that apply to your current deployment, with suggested releases specially marked. You can easily choose and direct-download packages from Cisco, as well as manually upload and delete packages.
		Patches are not listed unless you have at least one appliance at the appropriate maintenance release (or you manually uploaded the patch). You must manually upload hotfixes.
		New/modified screens:
		• System(\$\frac{\phi}{2}\$) > Product Upgrades is now where you upgrade devices, as well as manage upgrade packages.
		• System (*) > Content Updates is now where you update intrusion rules, the VDB, and the GeoDB.
		• Devices > Threat Defense Upgrade takes you directly to the threat defense upgrade wizard.
		Deprecated screens/options:
		• System (*) > Updates is deprecated. All threat defense upgrades now use the wizard.
		The Add Upgrade Package button on the threat defense upgrade wizard has been replaced by a Manage Upgrade Packages link to the new upgrade page.
Enable revert from the threat		You can now enable revert from the threat defense upgrade wizard.
defense upgrade wizard.	upgrading to 7.2+	Other version restrictions: You must be upgrading threat defense to Version 7.2+.
View detailed upgrade status from the threat defense upgrade wizard.	Any	The final page of the threat defense upgrade wizard now allows you to monitor upgrade progress. This is in addition to the existing monitoring capability on the Upgrade tab on the Device Management page, and on the Message Center. Note that as long as you have not started a new upgrade flow, Devices > Threat Defense Upgrade brings you back to this final wizard page, where you can view the detailed status for the current (or most recently complete) device upgrade.
Suggested release notifications.	Any	The management center now notifies you when a new suggested release is available. If you don't want to upgrade right now, you can have the system remind you later, or defer reminders until the next suggested release. The new upgrade page also indicates suggested releases.
		See: Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center New Features by Release

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Firmware upgrades included in FXOS upgrades.	Any	Chassis/FXOS upgrade impact. Firmware upgrades cause an extra reboot. For the Firepower 4100/9300, FXOS upgrades to Version 2.14.1 now include firmware upgrades. Secure Firewall 3100 in multi-instance mode (new in Version 7.4.1) also bundles FXOS and firmware upgrades. If any firmware component on the device is older than the one included in the FXOS bundle, the FXOS upgrade also updates the firmware. If the firmware is upgraded, the device reboots twice—once for FXOS and once for the firmware. Just as with software and operating system upgrades, do not make or deploy configuration changes during firmware upgrade. Even if the system appears inactive, do not manually reboot or shut down during firmware upgrade. See: Cisco Firepower 4100/9300 FXOS Firmware Upgrade Guide
Scheduled tasks download patches and VDB updates only.	Any	The Download Latest Update scheduled task no longer downloads maintenance releases; now it only downloads the latest applicable patches and VDB updates. To direct-download maintenance (and major) releases to the management center, use System (*) > Product Upgrades . See: Software Update Automation

Table 11: December 13, 2022

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Select devices to upgrade from the threat defense upgrade wizard.	Any	Use the wizard to select devices to upgrade. You can now use the threat defense upgrade wizard to select or refine the devices to upgrade. On the wizard, you can toggle the view between selected devices, remaining upgrade candidates, ineligible devices (with reasons why), devices that need the upgrade package, and so on. Previously, you could only use the Device Management page and the process was much less flexible.
Unattended threat defense upgrades.	Any	The threat defense upgrade wizard now supports unattended upgrades, using a new Unattended Mode menu. You just need to select the target version and the devices you want to upgrade, specify a few upgrade options, and step away. You can even log out or close the browser.
Simultaneous threat defense upgrade workflows by different users.	Any	We now allow simultaneous upgrade workflows by different users, as long as you are upgrading different devices. The system prevents you from upgrading devices already in someone else's workflow. Previously, only one upgrade workflow was allowed at a time across all users.

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Skip pre-upgrade troubleshoot generation for threat defense devices.	Any	You can now skip the automatic generating of troubleshooting files before major and maintenance upgrades by disabling the new Generate troubleshooting files before upgrade begins option. This saves time and disk space.
		To manually generate troubleshooting files for a threat defense device, choose System(**) > Health > Monitor, click the device in the left panel, then View System & Troubleshoot Details, then Generate Troubleshooting Files.
Auto-upgrade to Snort 3	Any	Upgrade impact. All eligible devices upgrade to Snort 3 when you deploy.
after successful threat defense upgrade is no longer optional.		When you upgrade threat defense to Version 7.3+, you can no longer disable the Upgrade Snort 2 to Snort 3 option.
ориоли.		After the software upgrade, all eligible devices will upgrade from Snort 2 to Snort 3 when you deploy configurations. Although you can switch individual devices back, Snort 2 is not supported on threat defense 7.7+. You should stop using it now.
		For devices that are ineligible for auto-upgrade because they use custom intrusion or network analysis policies, manually upgrade to Snort 3 for improved detection and performance. For migration assistance, see the Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center Snort 3 Configuration Guide for your version.

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Combined upgrade and	7.3.0	Reimage Impact.
install package for Secure Firewall 3100.		In Version 7.3, we combined the threat defense install and upgrade package for the Secure Firewall 3100, as follows:
		• Version 7.1–7.2 install package: cisco-ftd-fp3k.version.SPA
		• Version 7.1–7.2 upgrade package: Cisco_FTD_SSP_FP3K_Upgrade- <i>version-build</i> .sh.REL.tar
		Version 7.3+ combined package: Cisco_FTD_SSP_FP3K_Upgrade-version-build.sh.REL.tar
		Although you can upgrade threat defense without issue, you cannot reimage from older threat defense and ASA versions directly to threat defense Version 7.3+. This is due to a ROMMON update required by the new image type. To reimage from those older versions, you must "go through" ASA 9.19+, which is supported with the old ROMMON but also updates to the new ROMMON. There is no separate ROMMON updater.
		To get to threat defense Version 7.3+, your options are:
		• Upgrade from threat defense Version 7.1 or 7.2 — use the normal upgrade process.
		See the appropriate Upgrade Guide.
		• Reimage from threat defense Version 7.1 or 7.2 — reimage to ASA 9.19+ first, then reimage to threat defense Version 7.3+.
		See Threat Defense ASA: Firepower 1000, 2100; Secure Firewall 3100 and then ASA Threat Defense: Firepower 1000, 2100 Appliance Mode; Secure Firewall 3100 in the Cisco Secure Firewall ASA and Secure Firewall Threat Defense Reimage Guide.
		• Reimage from ASA 9.17 or 9.18 — upgrade to ASA 9.19+ first, then reimage to threat defense Version 7.3+.
		See the Cisco Secure Firewall ASA Upgrade Guide and then ASA → Threat Defense: Firepower 1000, 2100 Appliance Mode; Secure Firewall 3100 in the Cisco Secure Firewall ASA and Secure Firewall Threat Defense Reimage Guide.
		• Reimage from threat defense Version 7.3+ — use the normal reimage process.
		See <i>Reimage the System with a New Software Version</i> in the Cisco FXOS Troubleshooting Guide for the Firepower 1000/2100 and Secure Firewall 1200/3100/4200 with Firepower Threat Defense.
Content Undates		

Content Updates

Feature	Minimum Threat Defense	Details
Automatic VDB downloads.	Any	The initial setup on the management center schedules a weekly task to download the latest available software updates, which now includes the latest vulnerability database (VDB). We recommend you review this weekly task and adjust if necessary. Optionally, schedule a new weekly task to actually update the VDB and deploy configurations. New/modified screens: The Vulnerability Database check box is now enabled by default in the system-created Weekly Software Download scheduled task.
Install any VDB.	Any	Starting with VDB 357, you can now install any VDB as far back as the baseline VDB for that management center. After you update the VDB, deploy configuration changes. If you based configurations on vulnerabilities, application detectors, or fingerprints that are no longer available, examine those configurations to make sure you are handling traffic as expected. Also, keep in mind a scheduled task to update the VDB can undo a rollback. To avoid this, change the scheduled task or delete any newer VDB packages. New/modified screens: On System(*) > Updates > Product Updates > Available Updates, if you upload an older VDB, a new Rollback icon appears instead of the Install icon.

Upgrade Feature History