

Installation Guide for Active Directory Domain Services on Windows Server

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By Vipin PG | Published October 17, 2023 | Updated March 8, 2026 | Format: Article | 5 min read

In brief

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Directory services have become more critical than ever to managing IT infrastructure due to the increasing complexity of networking resources. The Active Directory is the most popular and significant name among the various directory services. Microsoft owns the Active Directory Domain Service.

Since its introduction, it has been a known and essential tool for network administrators. This Active Directory tutorial will explore what Active Directory is, how to effectively utilize its features, and how to install it on the Windows Server.

Windows Server stands out in the enterprise realm due to one standout feature: Active Directory. This single Sign-on product seamlessly integrates with numerous Microsoft products, thus making tasks such as user management an effortless and enjoyable experience. Active Directory Domain Service comes along with efficiency and convenience.

It is a go-to solution for network administrators seeking efficient resource management. Join us in this article as we discuss the details of 'Installing Active Directory Domain Service in Windows Server.' Ensure you read the article until the end to get the most out of it.

Before moving forward, let's shed some light on 'Microsoft's Active Directory Domain Service.'

Active Directory Domain Services (AD DS) is a hierarchical directory service by Microsoft. It stores and offers access to network object information. AD DS allows users to store crucial data, including user accounts and simultaneously enables authorized users to access this information. It maintains and organizes directory data in a logical, hierarchical structure, thus making it easily searchable and usable for admins and users.

AD DS includes a range of security features like authentication and access control. Features like these ensure secure access to directory objects. The service also has a schema defining object classes and attributes and a global catalog for accessing information across domains. In addition, it is equipped with a query and index mechanism for efficient searches and a replication service for distributing data across the network.

How to Install Active Directory Domain Service in Windows Server?

The step below includes the installation process of Active Directory Domain Service in Windows Server and promoting the server to a domain controller.

Note: Installing Active Directory Domain Service in Windows Server is possible differently. Here we have mentioned two simple and easy methods.

Installing Active Directory Domain Service in Windows Server via Windows PowerShell

1. Start with opening PowerShell. To do so, type PowerShell in the search box and open the Windows PowerShell console window with admin access.
1. Next, to install Active Directory Domain Services, type "Add-WindowsFeature AD-Domain-Services" in the newly opened screen and press Enter.
2. You need to create a new Active Directory Forest and Domain. Install Domain Name Services (DNS) using the Windows PowerShell screen.
3. So, again, open the PowerShell window on the screen.
4. Next, type "Install-ADDSForest -DomainName vdom.local -InstallDNS" and press Enter again. Doing so will form a new forest and Domain named vdom.local. Here users need to replace the correct name of the forest and Domain with vdom.local.
5. Now, twice on the Command Prompt Window, type the "Directory Services Restore Mode (DSRM)" password and press Enter. As you will press Enter, it will save the Password. In Windows PowerShell, the said Password is referred to as 'SafeModeAdministratorPassword.'
6. Again, type A on the Command Prompt Windows and press Enter. This will help you configure the server as a domain controller and install DNS.
7. Lastly, as the Domain controller promotion will complete, your server will automatically reboot to complete the entire process.

Installing Active Directory Domain Services on a newly installed Windows Server

Here's the step-by-step guide to installing Active Directory Domain Service in Windows Server.

1. Start by launching Server Manager. Once the Server Manager window begins appearing on your desktop screen, here's how you can start the Active Directory Domain Services installation process.
1. In the Server Manager window, right-click on Manage (in the top task bar) and click on the option Add Roles and Features.
2. As it launches the Add Roles and Features Wizard screen, click Next.
3. Now, on the next window, click on Installation Type (on the left-pane menu) and make sure the circular radio button associated with the option Role-based or feature-based installation is selected. If not, then select it and click on Next.
4. Now, select the server you will install AD DS on the Select destination server screen. You can also choose your local server. Here click again on Next.
5. As you proceed on the Server Roles screen/ page, choose Active Directory Domain Services from the list of options. Scroll the list until you find the relevant search.
6. As another pop-up appears, click on Add Features and then click on Next again.
7. Further on the Select Features screen, click Next, which will lead you to the Active Directory Domain Service Installation.
8. Again, on the Active Directory Domain Services screen, click on Next.
9. Now, click Install on the Confirm Installation Selection screen to proceed with the installation process. Before doing so, you can also tick the check box associated with the option 'Restart the destination server if required.' Or leave it if you wish to.

10. Once the Active Directory Domain Services installation process is complete, promote it to a Domain Controller. To do so, visit Server Manager, and beside the Manage tab, click the yellow exclamation notification and select Promote this server to a domain controller link from the sub-menu.
11. As you see the Active Directory Domain Services Configuration Wizard window, Add a new Forest and click the Next button under Deployment Configuration. If you are well versed technically, you can also choose other options depending upon your needs and understanding.
12. Further, on the Domain Controller Options screen, type and re-confirm a password. Here click on Next.
13. Now, on the DNS Options screen, click on Next. If you see the 'A delegation for this DNS server cannot be created because the authoritative parent zone nameserver cannot be found' error, you don't need to notice it.
14. Further on the Additional Options screen, change the NetBIOS domain name (If the name is not more than 15 characters), leave it as default, and click Next.
15. Further, on the Paths screen, click on Next again.
16. On the Review Options screen, you can review what you've done through this process. If everything is OK, click the Next button.
17. Next, prerequisites will be validated on the Prerequisites Check screen before Active Directory Domain Services is installed. You need to fix any error (if present) in the previous steps and then click on Install.
18. Once done, the server will itself Reboot, and you can now log into the Domain with the Password you saved in the steps above.

Conclusion

This was all for Installing Active Directory Domain Service. We hope the above steps will help you complete the process quickly.