

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Standard Operating Procedure	Date			09 th August 2025
SOP Title	SQL Server Management studio (SSMS) Uninstallation			
SOP Number	SNIPPYGUY_SOP_SSMS_Uninstallation_1.0			
SOP Location				
Department	MSSQL Database Administration (DBA)			
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SOP Prepared By (Author)	Sayan Dey			
SOP Creation Date	16 th August 2025			
SOP Reviewed By				
SOP Review Date		Next Review Date		
SOP Effective From	16 th August 2025	Last Update Date	16 th August 2025	
SOP Signed Off By		Signed Off Date		

VERSION HISTORY

SOP Number	Effective Date	Significant Changes	Previous SOP Number
SNIPPYGUY_SOP_SSMS_Uninstallation_1.0	16 th August 2025	Initial Creation	

SOP Number	Author	Reviewer
SNIPPYGUY_SOP_SSMS_Uninstallation_1.0	Sayan Dey	

Introduction

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides a detailed, step-by-step guideline for uninstalling SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) from Windows-based systems. SSMS is a widely used tool by Database Administrators (DBAs) and IT professionals for managing SQL Server databases, but in certain scenarios such as upgrades, troubleshooting, environment cleanup, or compliance requirements, it may need to be removed.

The uninstallation process outlined in this SOP ensures a consistent, safe, and error-free removal of SSMS without impacting the underlying SQL Server Database Engine or other SQL Server components. The procedure applies to all supported versions, including SSMS 20.2 and SSMS 21, as both follow the same uninstallation framework. By following this SOP, IT administrators and DBAs can:

- Safely remove SSMS without leaving residual files that may interfere with future installations.
- Ensure compliance with organizational software lifecycle and change management policies.
- Maintain system stability and readiness for reinstallation or upgrade.

This SOP is designed to minimize risks, provide clarity, and serve as a reference for both routine maintenance and support activities.

SOP Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to define a standardized and reliable process for uninstalling SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) from Windows systems. This ensures that the uninstallation is performed consistently, without impacting the underlying SQL Server Database Engine, related services, or other critical applications. This SOP is intended to:

- Provide IT administrators and DBAs with a step-by-step guide to safely uninstall SSMS.
- Support system upgrades, troubleshooting, compliance, and environment cleanup activities.
- Prevent configuration errors, residual file issues, or incomplete removals that may interfere with future installations.
- Ensure the process remains the same across SSMS versions, including 20.2 and 21, which share an identical uninstallation framework.

By following this SOP, organizations can maintain software hygiene, improve system reliability, and ensure compliance with IT asset management and change management policies.

Scope

This SOP applies to the uninstallation of SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) on all supported Microsoft Windows operating systems within the organization's IT environment. It covers the removal of SSMS versions 20.2 and 21, as well as any other recent versions that follow the same installation framework.

The scope includes:

- **Applicable Users:** Database Administrators (DBAs), System Administrators, IT Support Engineers, and authorized personnel responsible for software management.
- **Systems Covered:** Windows-based desktops, laptops, and servers where SSMS is installed.

Activities Included:

- Verification of installed SSMS version.
- Uninstallation via Windows Settings, Control Panel, or Command Line (silent/unattended).
- Post-uninstallation verification and cleanup of residual files.

Activities Not Included:

- Removal of SQL Server Database Engine, Integration Services (SSIS), Reporting Services (SSRS), or Analysis Services (SSAS).
- Backup or migration of SQL Server databases.
- Reinstallation or upgrade of SSMS (addressed in a separate SOP if required).

This scope ensures that uninstallation is performed only for the SSMS client tool, without affecting underlying SQL Server instances or business applications.

Potential Problems

During the uninstallation of **SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS)**, the following issues may occur. This section outlines possible problems along with recommended resolutions:

- **Uninstallation Fails or Freezes**
 - *Cause:* Corrupted installation files or incomplete previous updates.
 - *Resolution:*
 - Reboot the system and retry uninstallation.
 - Run the uninstall in **Safe Mode**.
 - Use Microsoft's **Program Install and Uninstall Troubleshooter** to remove broken entries.
- **SSMS Entry Missing from Programs/Apps List**
 - *Cause:* Registry corruption or partial removal.
 - *Resolution:*
 - Locate the **SSMS installer** for the installed version and run it → choose **Remove**.
 - Alternatively, manually remove using:
`wmic product where "Name like 'SQL Server Management Studio%'" call uninstall`
- **Residual Files/Registry Entries Remain**
 - *Cause:* Uninstaller does not delete configuration files or cache.
 - *Resolution:*
 - Manually delete folders from:
`%AppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio`

%LocalAppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio

- Optionally, clean registry entries (advanced users only).
- **Error: “Another installation is in progress”**
 - *Cause:* Windows Installer service is busy or another setup is running.
 - *Resolution:*
 - Wait until the current installation completes.
 - Restart Windows Installer service:


```
net stop msiserver
```

```
net start msiserver
```
- **Reinstallation Fails After Uninstallation**
 - *Cause:* Leftover components from previous installation interfering.
 - *Resolution:*
 - Ensure all residual files and registry keys are removed.
 - Reboot system before attempting reinstallation.
- **Accidental Removal of SQL Server Components (Rare)**
 - *Cause:* Confusing SSMS with SQL Server Database Engine or related services.
 - *Resolution:*
 - Reinstall SQL Server components using the original setup media.
- Restore configuration from backups if necessary.

⚠ Note: These issues are not specific to SSMS 20.2 or 21 — they apply to all modern versions as they share the same setup/uninstallation framework.

Prerequisites & Precautions

Before proceeding with the uninstallation of **SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS)**, the following prerequisites and precautions must be observed to ensure a safe and smooth process:

Prerequisites

1. **Administrative Privileges**
 - Ensure you are logged in with a Windows account that has local administrator rights.
2. **Identify SSMS Version**
 - Verify the installed version of SSMS:
 - Open SSMS → Go to **Help > About** → Note down the version (e.g., 20.2 or 21).
3. **System Readiness**
 - Close all active SSMS sessions, query windows, and connections to SQL Server.
 - Save any unsaved work to prevent data loss.
4. **Change Management Compliance (if applicable)**
 - Raise or update a change request in ServiceNow or the organization’s change management tool before proceeding.

Precautions

1. **Impact on SQL Server Instances**
 - Uninstalling SSMS does **not** remove or affect SQL Server Database Engine, databases, or services. Only the management tool will be removed.
2. **Configuration Backup (Optional but Recommended)**
 - Backup custom SSMS configurations, such as:
 - Registered servers (%AppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio).
 - Custom query templates or snippets.

3. Disk Cleanup Awareness

- Post-uninstallation, residual files may remain. It is recommended to manually check and clean leftover directories under:
%AppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio
%LocalAppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio

4. System Restart

- A restart may be required to fully clear resources and finalize the removal.

By completing the above prerequisites and adhering to these precautions, administrators ensure the uninstallation process is safe, controlled, and aligned with IT policies.

Definitions		
Sr. No.	Term	Definition
1	SQL Server	A relational database management system (RDBMS) developed by Microsoft for storing, managing, and retrieving data as requested by other software applications.
2	SSMS	A Microsoft-provided integrated environment used to manage SQL Server infrastructure, including configuration, query execution, and database administration tasks.
3	Installer	The executable file used to initiate the installation process of the SSMS application on a system.
4	Windows Authentication	A method of connecting to SQL Server using the current user's Windows credentials, eliminating the need for separate login credentials.
5	System Requirements	The minimum hardware and software specifications required for successful installation and optimal performance of SSMS.
6	Administrator Privileges	Elevated system permissions required to install or modify software and system settings.
7	Official Source	Microsoft's verified website or distribution channel from which software is downloaded to ensure authenticity and security.

Roles & Responsibilities	
Roles	Responsibilities
IT Support Staff / System Administrator/ Windows Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide administrative privileges required for uninstallation. ❖ Execute the uninstallation via Windows Settings, Control Panel, or command-line methods. ❖ Perform cleanup of residual files and verify system reboot if necessary. ❖ Document the uninstallation activity in compliance with IT asset management policies.
Database Administrator (DBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Verify the need for SSMS uninstallation (upgrade, troubleshooting, environment cleanup, etc.). ❖ Confirm that active SQL Server connections are closed before removal. ❖ Perform or supervise the uninstallation following this SOP. ❖ Backup and restore SSMS configurations (e.g., registered servers, query templates) if required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Validate that SQL Server instances remain unaffected post-uninstallation.
Change Manager / IT Compliance Officer (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Approve change requests raised for SSMS uninstallation. ❖ Ensure uninstallation activities comply with organizational policies, security, and audit requirements. ❖ Maintain records of the software removal for compliance and license tracking.
End User (if SSMS installed on personal workstation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Inform DBA/IT Support of the need for uninstallation. ❖ Backup any personal SSMS settings or scripts (optional). ❖ Avoid using SSMS during the uninstallation process.

Procedure

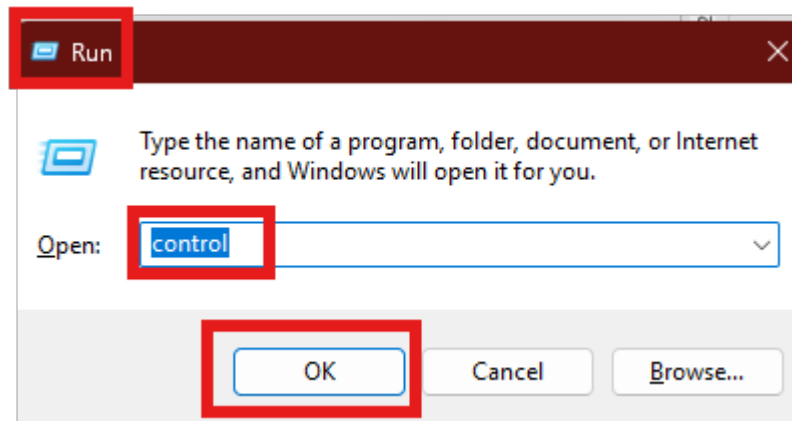
Applicable OS: Windows 10 and later, Windows Server 2016 and later

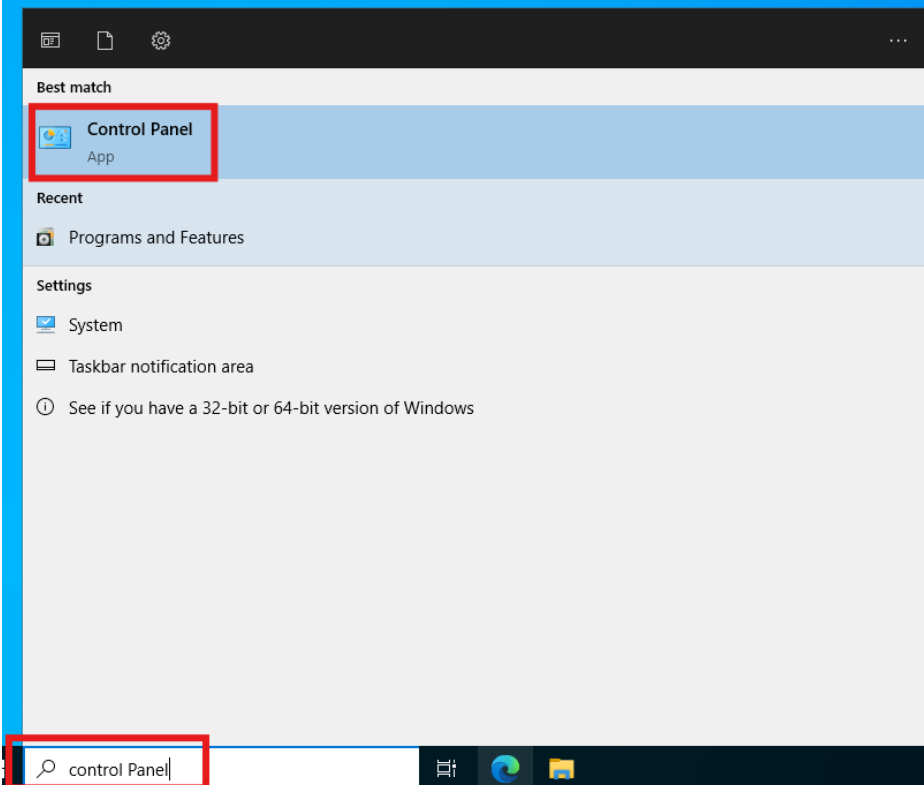
SSMS Versions: 20.2, 21 (and all modern versions – process identical)

Method 1: Uninstall Using Control Panel (Graphical Interface)

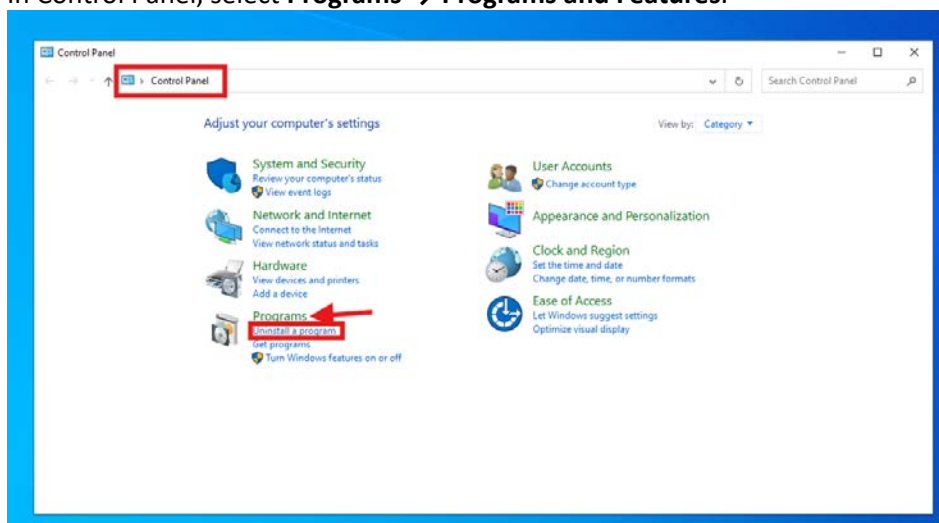
1. Open Control Panel

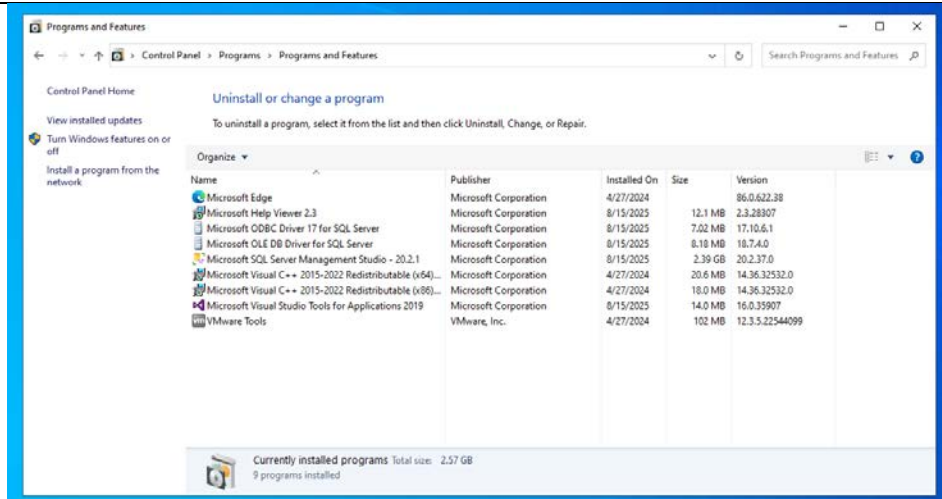
- Press Windows + R, type control, and press **Enter**. Or in search box type Control Panel.





- The **Control Panel** window opens.
- 2. **Navigate to Programs and Features**
 - In Control Panel, select **Programs** → **Programs and Features**.



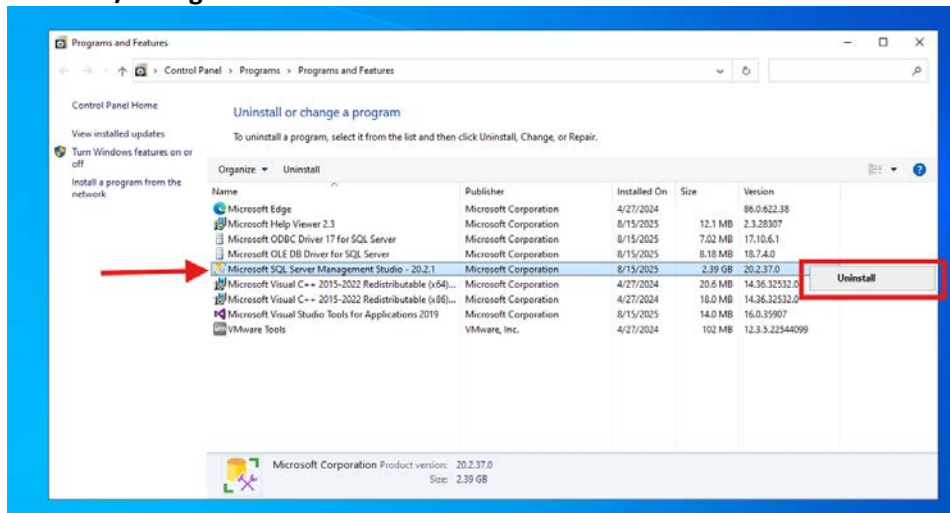


3. Locate SSMS

- In the list of installed programs, find **Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio**.

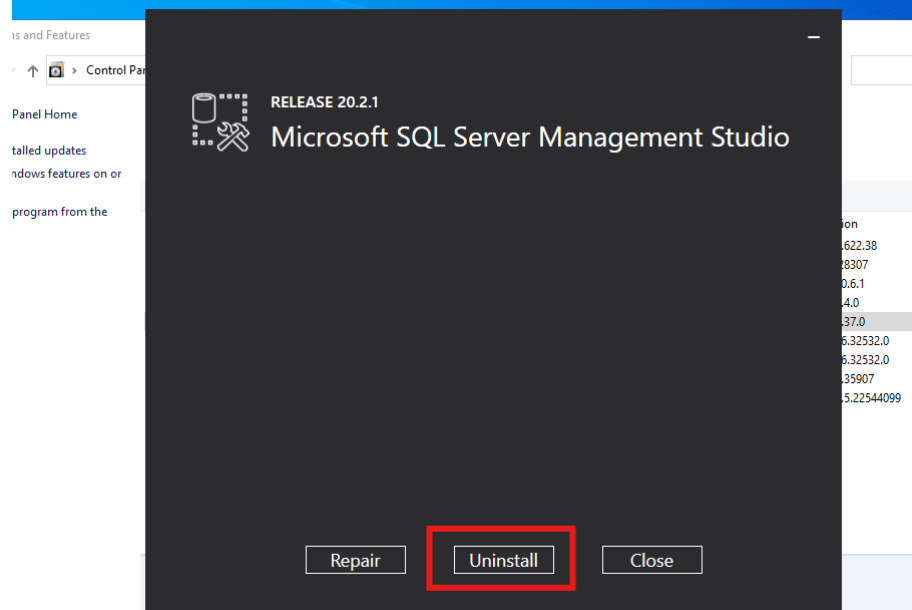
4. Start Uninstallation

- Right-click on **Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio** → Select **Uninstall/Change**.



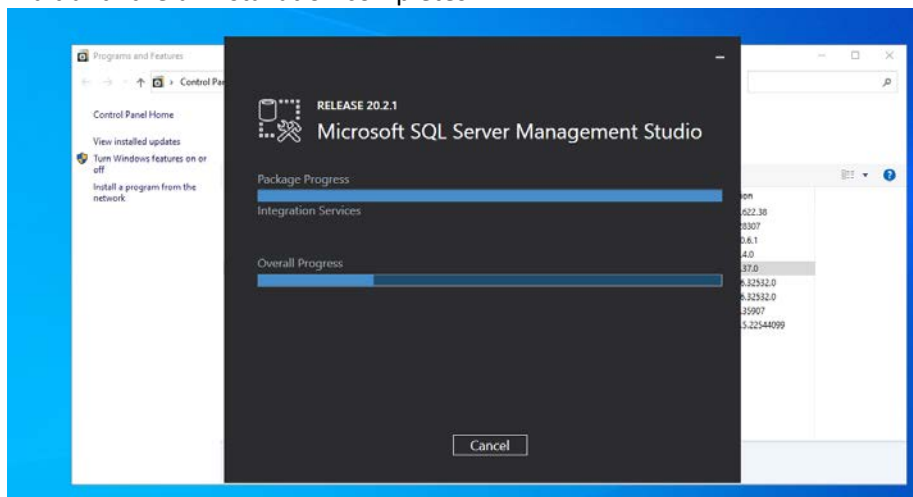
5. Run Setup Wizard

- The SSMS Setup window will appear.
- Select **Uninstall**.



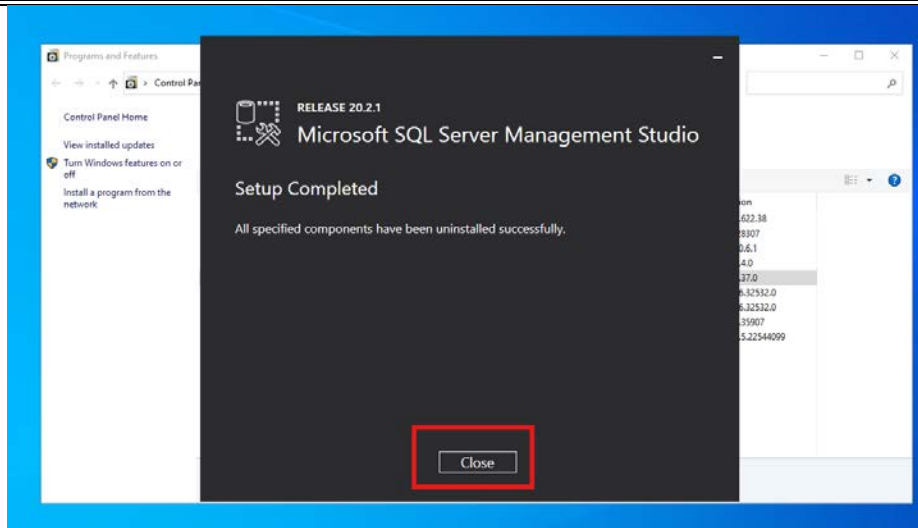
6. **Proceed with Removal**

- Follow the on-screen instructions.
- Wait until the uninstallation completes.



7. **Completion**

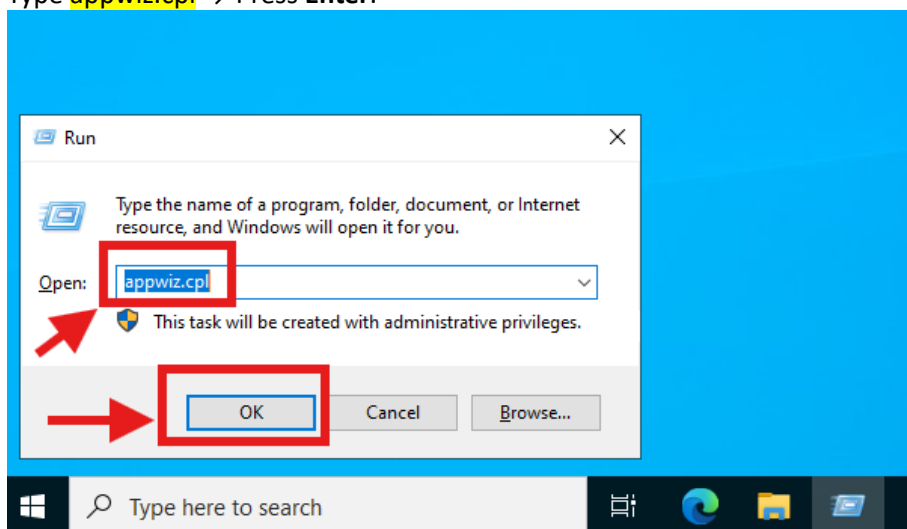
- Once removal is finished, click **Close**.



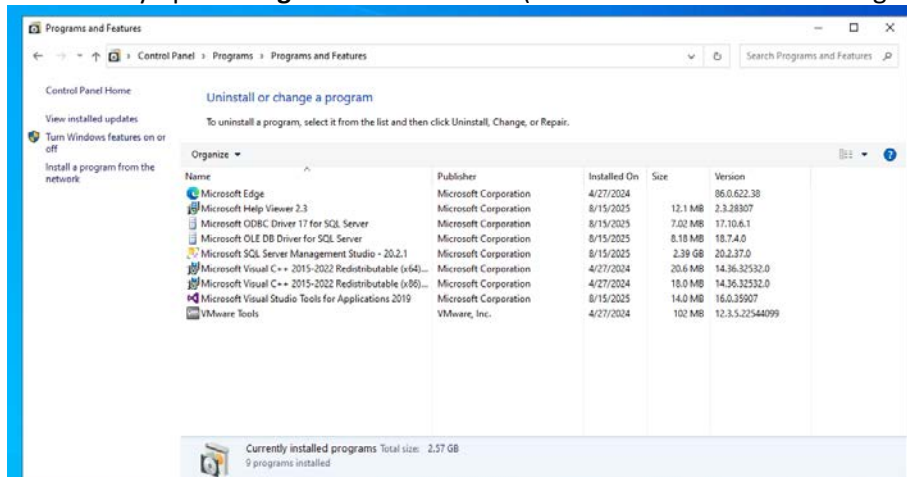
- Optionally, restart the machine if prompted.

Method 2: Uninstall Using appwiz.cpl (Shortcut to Programs and Features)

1. **Open Run Command**
 - Press Windows + R.
2. **Launch Programs and Features**
 - Type **appwiz.cpl** → Press Enter.



- This directly opens **Programs and Features** (same as Control Panel → Programs).

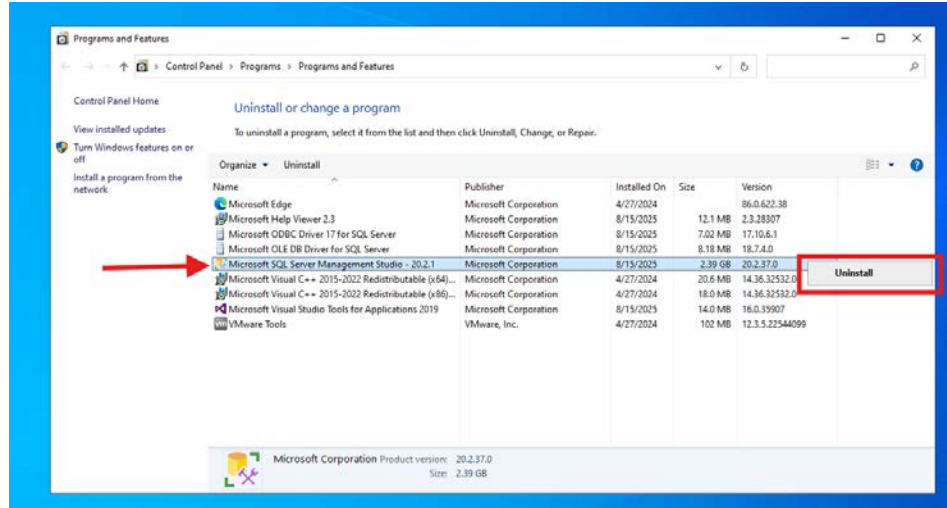


3. Locate SSMS

- Scroll through the installed programs list to find **Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio**.

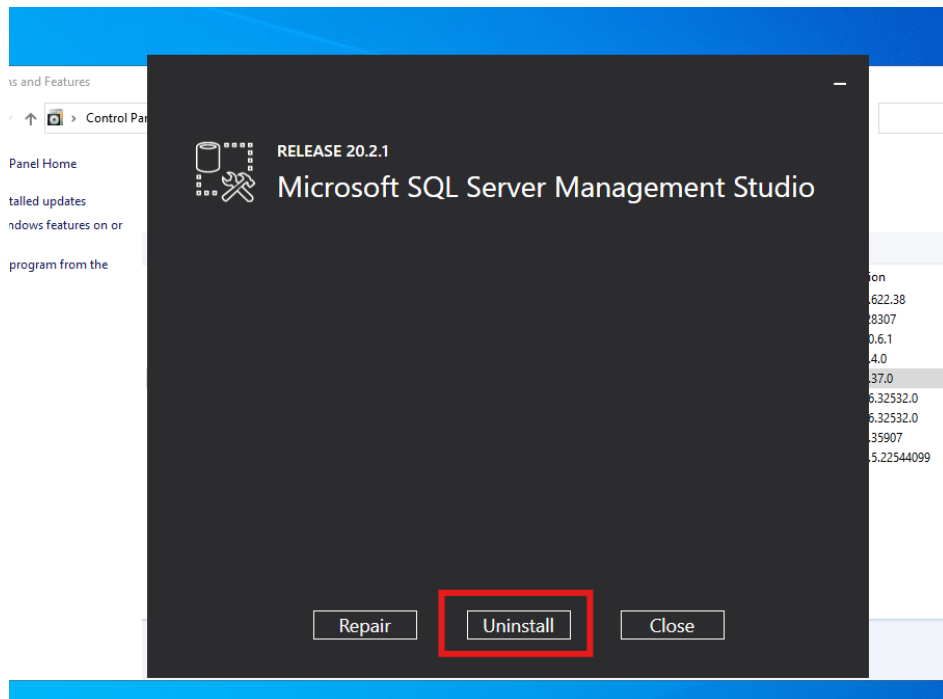
4. Initiate Uninstallation

- Right-click on **Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio** → Select **Uninstall/Change**.



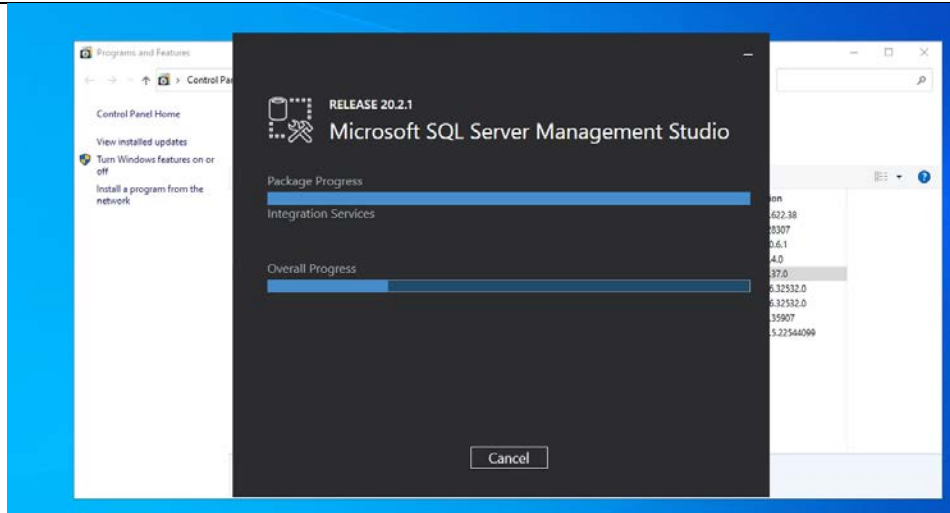
5. Run Setup Wizard

- SSMS Setup window launches.
- Choose **Uninstall**.

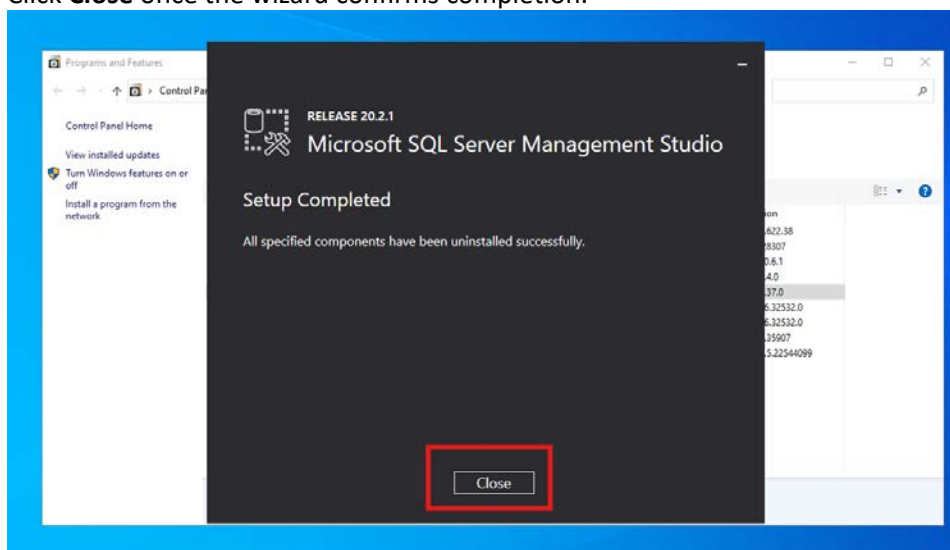


6. Complete Process

- Wait for the removal to finish.



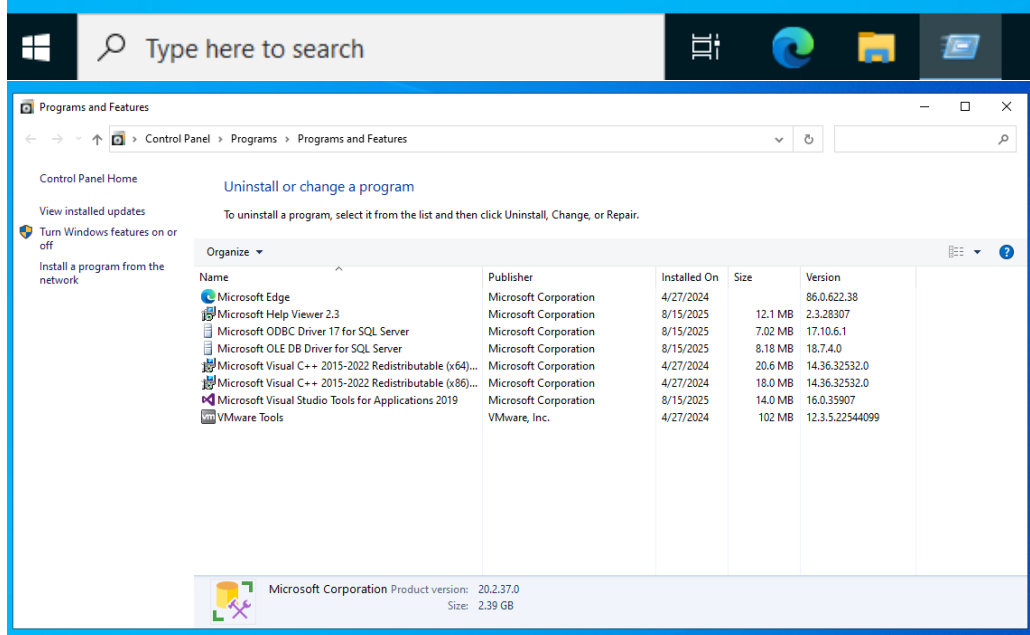
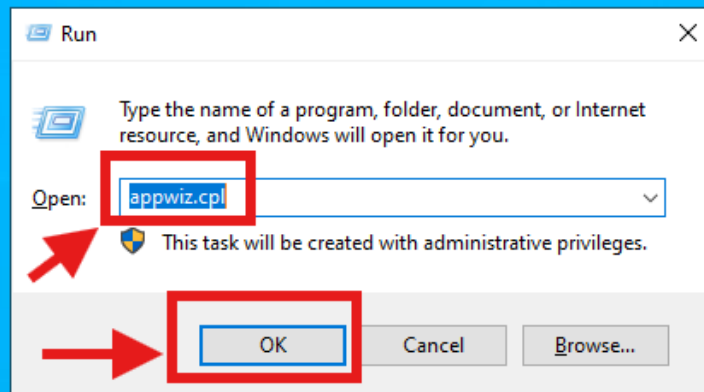
- Click **Close** once the wizard confirms completion.



- Optionally, restart the machine if prompted.

Verification After Uninstallation

- Open **appwiz.cpl** again → confirm **Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio** is no longer listed.



- Check Start Menu → ensure SSMS is not available.
- Optionally, remove leftover files from:
`%AppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio`
`%LocalAppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio`

Method 3: Command Line / Silent Uninstall

This method is useful for automation, bulk removal, or remote execution of SSMS uninstallation without requiring user interaction. Works on Windows 10 / 11 and Windows Server 2016 and above. We will cover this separately.

⚠ Note: Both Control Panel and appwiz.cpl lead to the same Programs and Features module, so the uninstallation process is identical. The difference is only in how you access it.

Post-Uninstallation Verification Checklist

After uninstalling **SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS)**, the following checks must be performed to confirm successful and clean removal:

1. Verify SSMS Removal from Installed Programs

- Open appwiz.cpl (Run → appwiz.cpl).
- Confirm **Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio** is no longer listed.

2. Verify Start Menu and Shortcuts

- Check **Start Menu**, **Desktop**, and **Taskbar** for SSMS shortcuts.
- Confirm **SSMS does not launch** if searched from Windows Search.

3. Verify File System Cleanup *(Optional but Recommended)*

- Navigate to and check if folders are removed:
- %AppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio
- %LocalAppData%\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio
- C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio
- C:\Program Files\Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio
- Delete any residual files manually if still present.

4. Verify Registry Entries (Advanced)

- Open Registry Editor (regedit).
- Navigate to:
- HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio
- HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\SQL Server Management Studio
- Confirm no SSMS entries remain (optional – for advanced admins only).

5. Confirm SQL Server Database Engine is Unaffected

- Open **SQL Server Configuration Manager** or run sqlcmd to verify database engine and services are running normally.
- Ensure no databases or SQL instances are impacted.

6. Reboot System

- Restart the machine to clear cached services and finalize uninstallation.

7. Documentation & Compliance

- Update change management or IT asset management system (ServiceNow, CMDB, etc.) with:
 - Date & time of uninstallation.
 - SSMS version removed (20.2 / 21).
 - Performed by (name/role).

Process Steps

Sr No.	Task	Owner
1	Raise/approve change request (if required)	Change Manager
2	Verify need for SSMS uninstallation	DBA Team
3	Identify installed SSMS version	DBA Team
4	Backup SSMS configurations (optional)	DBA Team
5	Provide administrative access (optional)	Windows Team
6	Close active SSMS sessions	DBA Team
7	Perform uninstallation Monitor uninstall process & handle errors	DBA Team
8	Verify SSMS is removed	DBA Team
9	Validate SQL Server instances are unaffected	DBA Team
10	Clean up residual files (if any)	Windows Team
11	Reboot system (if required)	Windows Team
12	Update documentation & CMDB/asset records	Change Manager/ DBA Team

FORMS/TEMPLATES TO BE USED**Internal References**

External References

Release Note: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/ssms/release-notes-20>

Support Policy: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/ssms/support-policy>

Installation Link: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/ssms/release-notes-20>

Uninstall Link: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/ssms/install/uninstall>

About Snippyguy

Snippyguy is a purpose-led transformation partner to many of the world's largest businesses. For more than years, it has been collaborating with clients and communities to build a greater future through innovation and collective knowledge. Snippyguy offers an integrated portfolio of cognitive powered business, technology, and engineering services and solutions. The company's consultants in various countries help empower individuals, enterprises, and societies to build on vision and innovation.

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