

What is the proper order for installing Microsoft software on a developer workstation?

Asked 16 years, 2 months ago Modified 5 years, 1 month ago

Viewed 5k times



I've done this a **million** times ... setting up a developer work station.

28



Is there a best practices, or installation checklist for installing Microsoft development software on a work station? What about applying updates and/or service packs? Is there a specific order for doing this, in hopes of minimizing any install issues.



Our current software library consists of:

- Visual Studio 2003
- Visual Studio 2008
- SQL Server 2005
- Microsoft Office 2007

We do use some other tools, but I usually hold off on installing them once I get a **good** build from Microsoft ... whether a **good** build is possible or not is another topic!
=)

Also, do you use any software like [Ghost](#) to create images of work station? Some easy way to restore your work station.

installation

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edited May 4, 2012 at 22:25



Chilledrat

2,605 ● 3 ● 30 ● 39

asked Oct 14, 2008 at 15:00



mattruma

16.7k ● 36 ● 108 ● 174

8 Answers

Sorted by:

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I would use the following and this order IS KEY if you want to do ASP.NET Development without issue.

33



- Operating System
- IIS for the OS <- If not done before VS, issues can be had
- OS Updates
- Office
- Office Updates
- SQL Server and tools
- SQL Server Updates

- VS 2003
- VS 2003 Updates
- VS 2005 (DON'T install SQL Express)
- VS 2005 Updates
- VS 2008
- VS 2008 Updates
- VS 2010
- VS 2010 Updates
- VS 2012
- VS 2012 Updates
- Any third party tools for development environments (Telerik, DevExpress, etc)

I have found that with this format, you will NOT have any issues, but if you change the order, I have had bad things happen before. Especially important is the IIS setup piece!

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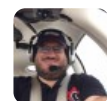
edited Sep 13, 2012 at 14:09



Miyagi Coder

5,532 ● 4 ● 35 ● 43

answered Oct 14, 2008 at 15:14



Mitchel Sellers

63.1k ● 15 ● 114 ● 174

As an add to this: If you're also installing 3rd party components or VS add-ins, don't install them until the rest of

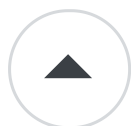
the stack is up and running. – [John Rudy](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 15:38

I believe you should install SQL Server and associated tools AFTER VS 2005 - then VS 2005 has the various SQL Server add ins. – [Ken Ray](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 16:12

God this is so dumb. So happy I am not a windows developer. – [Nick Stinemates](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 16:29

Ken, VS 2005 by default installs SQL Server Express, so it is best to have it installed FIRST, that way the proper templates are added when you install. IF SQL is not there, they will not install, at least that is what I have noticed in my last 5-10 workstation builds – [Mitchel Sellers](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 17:10

- 1 If you install Visual Studio (with SQL Server 2005 Express), the full-blown SQL Server 2005 installer doesn't bother installing SQL Server Management Studio, so either install SQL Server before VS or exclude SQL Server Express from the VS install. This is probably fixed with SQL Server 2008, although I've not checked. – [Roger Lipscombe](#) Apr 24, 2010 at 10:02
-



5



I'm definitely a Ghost addict. At a former work I would spend about 2-3 hours configuring properly everything needed for a user: Windows+patches, Office+patches, Acrobat Reader, etc. Once everything's ready I would create an image of the whole hard drive using Ghost, and store it somewhere (if possible, ZIP it and burn it to a DVD).

Then, when a new colleague arrived, I had Ghost restore the image onto a new hard drive - this was accomplished

in 20 minutes or less! After that, manual work was reduced to:

- Changing PC's name
- Changing Windows and Office License numbers (I remember there was a tool at TechRepublic for this, technically it's not illegal)
- Changing PC's IP address (if you're not using DHCP)
- Ready!

All of those steps can be easily scripted, if you wish. Anyway, it's just 10 minutes or less.

At my current work I'm just a developer so I'm not in charge of preparing machines for new coworkers anymore. However, from this past experience I'd say using Ghost is the fastest and most cost effective way to setup new computers!

Especially the Windows installation and going to Windows Update - argh!! I really hate losing so much time at these steps, it can be tolerated if you only do that **once**.

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answered Oct 14, 2008 at 15:51

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Joe Pineda

5,641 ● 4 ● 34 ● 41

Do you use Ghost for creating an image of your current workstation? – [mattruma](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 16:21



5



I'd do:

- Operating System
- Office
- .Net framework runtimes
- Security Updates
- SQL Server
- Visual Studio
- Source control client
- Anti-virus/security software (if applicable)
- Any other tools (Notepad++, ftp client, etc)
- Security Updates

SQL Server comes before Visual studio because I use the Developer Edition or a full edition from MSDN. If you install Visual Studio first, it will want to put Sql Server Express Edition on my system, which I don't want.

That just leaves the order for visual studio installs. In general you want to install the older products first. However, there may be a situation where that's not the case. If you have, say, VS2008 Standard and VS2003 Professional you might want to install the professional

edition later. But I haven't been able to play with that particular scenario.

Finally, I normally prefer to apply all patches at once. It saves time. However, I want to make sure my .Net runtimes are up to date before installing the development tools, and in the case of multiple editions of Visual Studio (or any other complicated package) I prefer to make sure each instance of the software is fully up to date before installing the next. This helps with compatibility issues.

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edited Jun 5, 2013 at 13:30


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answered Oct 14, 2008 at 15:08



Joel Coehoorn

415k ● 114 ● 577 ● 813

This has changed for me over the last few years. I now push security updates further down the list. One of the things AV software really watches (and slows down the most) is software installs, and so saving that until a little later really speeds things up for me. I do still want that running before downloading internet-based tools, though. – Joel Coehoorn Jun 5, 2013 at 13:31 



I tend to go in chronological order. The oldest software to the most recent.

3

In your case I would do something like



1. Office 2007 (I usually install office first)
2. VS2003
3. Install VS2003 updates through Microsoft update
4. SQL Server 2005
5. Install SQL Server 2005 through Microsoft Update



And so on...

When the setup is over and the machine is configured I do a full base image with [Acronis True Image](#).

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answered Oct 14, 2008 at 15:05

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Pascal Paradis

4,295 ● 5 ● 38 ● 50

This is true in the case of machine used for web development only. Am I wrong? – [Pascal Paradis](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 15:23



I don't use Ghost as none of the workstations I setup are ever identical.

2

As far as install order, I would do:



- Office 2007
- SQL Server 2005
- VS 2003
- VS 2008



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answered Oct 14, 2008 at 15:07

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Brian Knoblauch

21.3k ● 16 ● 61 ● 96



1



My recommendation is to start with the OS and its updates, then add Office if you need that and then install Virtual PC or VMWare. This way you can separate the different versions (and betas) of all the development stuff into different VPC's. Your real hardware will stay clean and you are able to switch between environments very smoothly.

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answered Jan 23, 2009 at 14:34

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thijs

3,465 ● 1 ● 29 ● 46



1



For a web platform, Microsoft has a nice package installer here:

<http://www.microsoft.com/web/channel/products/WebPlatformInstaller.aspx>

I like using [sysprep](#) before imaging a machine so that I can create multiple workstations with the same config

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answered Feb 7, 2009 at 22:00

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ajma

12.2k ● 12 ● 72 ● 92



0



You should be able to install each piece of software regardless of the order you install it in. That being said, if you want to be 'safe', start with the lowest version of each and work your way up, installing the updates/SP's as you go along.



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answered Oct 14, 2008 at 15:07



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[IAmCodeMonkey](#)

1,568 ● 1 ● 11 ● 11

1 I'm not a big fan of **should**. – [mattruma](#) Oct 14, 2008 at 16:24
