

How long to lease?

One of the most important decisions that you make when you configure a DHCP server is the length of time to specify for the lease duration. The default value is eight days, which is appropriate in many cases. However, you may encounter situations in which a longer or shorter interval may be appropriate:

- » The more stable your network, the longer the lease duration can safely exist. If you only periodically add new computers to your network (or replace existing computers), you can safely increase the lease duration past eight days.
- » The more volatile the network, the shorter the lease duration should be. For example, you may have a wireless network in a university library, used by students who bring their laptop computers into the library to work for a few hours at a time. For this network, a duration as short as one hour may be appropriate.



WARNING

Don't configure your network to allow leases of infinite duration. Although some administrators feel that this duration cuts down the workload for the DHCP server on stable networks, no network is permanently stable. Whenever you find a DHCP server that's configured with infinite leases, look at the active leases. I guarantee that you'll find IP leases assigned to computers that no longer exist.

Managing a Windows Server 2019 DHCP Server

The exact steps to follow when you configure and manage a DHCP server depend on the network operating system or router you're using. The following paragraphs describe how to work with a DHCP server in Windows Server 2019. The procedures for other operating systems are similar.

If you haven't already installed the DHCP server on the server, install it using the Server Manager (click Server Manager in the task bar, and then use Add Roles and Features to add the DHCP role). Once the DHCP server role is installed, you can manage it by opening the DHCP management console, as shown in Figure 6-2. To open this console, open System Manager and choose Tools ⇨ DHCP.

To get started with a DHCP server, you must create at least one scope. You can create a scope by using the New Scope Wizard, which you start by selecting the server you want to create the scope on and then clicking New Scope. The wizard asks for the essential information required to define the scope, including the scope's name, its starting and ending IP addresses, and the subnet mask. You can