

Overview

On January 31, 2022, the Microsoft Tech Community hosted a Windows Server AMA. The live hour of Q&A provided members the opportunity to ask questions and voice feedback with the product team. We hope you join us live next time!

Resources

[Navigating your IT career through rapid technology changes](#)

[Windows Server Website](#)

[Microsoft Mechanics](#)

[Windows Server YouTube Demos](#)

[Microsoft Evaluation Center](#)

[Cloud platform roadmap](#)

Introduction

Welcome to the Windows Server AMA! View the list of introductions in this [thread](#).

General Discussion

Q: *Is there a good book, or resource, for Windows server users, who want to go to Azure?* ([link](#))

A: The Windows Server Hybrid Admin Associate study guides combine both Windows Server and Azure (through Hybrid). There are some codes further down the forum that may still be available for free copies in e-book format! (They aren't just books on the exam but cover Windows Server & Hybrid generally.)

Q: *How to get into Azure and the Cloud? I just have experience in Windows Server. Any tips?* ([link](#))

A: If you are new to Azure, you should start with AZ900 Azure Fundamentals, and then continue to the AZ-140 Azure Administrator.

<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/azure-administrator/>

<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/azure-fundamentals/>

Even having experience with Windows Server, it is recommended to learn how the Cloud works and then you will learn how to migrate into the Cloud or how to have a Hybrid environment.

Azure Skills Navigator ramp guides are a great way to get started learning Azure by role: <https://aka.ms/AzureRampGuides>

These downloadable role-based guides map out your itinerary with a variety of resources to help build and deepen your knowledge of Azure. Each guide features carefully selected digital training, learning courses, videos, documents, certifications, and more. You can travel at your own pace, and then continue your Azure exploration with ongoing learning opportunities. Explore the guides by role to get started.

You can also check out our Windows Server Summit content which is available on-demand here: <https://aka.ms/windowsserversummit2022> . It's a quick run-through of topics -- nothing in-depth but may give you some ideas of topics that are of interest to you.

Q: For a new Azure Admin what's the best path for both learning functionality for daily work, and a certification path? ([link](#))

A: To me it comes down to applying what you're learning from books, websites, videos, etc. to tests on labs and eventually to a real environment. You can know about a bunch of stuff in theory, but (in my opinion) nothing beats doing something for real. Now, also in my experience, the real learning comes when you have to teach a tech to someone else. :)

Check out our official Azure Skills Navigator ramp up guide for Azure System Administrators. It lays out the best learning path and resources for this role: <https://aka.ms/SysAdminGuide>

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<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/azure-fundamentals/>

Q: Is there going to be an equivalent to the MCSE for Windows Server? Something like Windows Server Hybrid Solution Architect cert? ([link](#))

A1: Thank you for the great question. We have a new free personalized training program called Connected Learning Experience (CLX) with a specific track for AZ-104, AZ-800/801, and AZ-900.

CLX is a highly personalized program that helps IT professionals get Azure knowledge in the most efficient manner, where learners spend the minimum required hours based on their skill level. The 4-step program is driven to deliver exam readiness with a fast-paced & personalized learning journey.

The first step for a learner is to take a 20-question practice test. Based on the results, the program shows only relevant modules. So, a learner sees only new information helping them save time.

All modules are highly interactive, providing learners with first-hand experience of using Azure, increasing overall learner engagement, and helping them learn quickly.

All learners can sign up for instructor-led, virtual sessions that are held frequently and are available in multiple time zones.

Check out and sign up for the CLX program: [CloudEvents Portal](#)

A2: There are many great resources out there to learn for it. Back in the days I created a study guide for Az-104 which summarizes these resources and provides different links: <https://www.thomasmaurer.ch/2020/03/az-104-study-guide-azure-administrator/>

A3: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/shows/exam-readiness-zone/preparing-for-az-104-manage-azure-identities-and-governance-1-of-5/>

<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/resources/study-guides/az-104>

<https://aka.ms/examdemo>

Q: *Can any of you speak on the state of options for deploying k8s on Windows Server? I'm aware of AKS Hybrid Deployment as one option, discussed by Thomas on his blog last month (<https://www.thomasmaurer.ch/2022/12/install-and-run-kubernetes-on-windows-server/>). I'm asking about any other options if one may not be planning to integrate with Azure (no offense intended).*

And I don't mean for necessarily highly scalable apps--just the ability to leverage especially Linux containers via k8s orchestration, and even if only a single server.

That may not be the kind of deployment that gets most people excited, but in the context of "diving into cloud learning", some shops may well need this ability to "jog" before they can "run" (where "walking" would be in their having been able to get started with the support in Docker Desktop for Windows to run Kubernetes and orchestrate Linux containers).

[\(link\)](#)

A: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/aks/hybrid/setup> - the Kubernetes service on Windows Server is called 'Azure Kubernetes Service' for complex reasons, but doesn't actually need a connection to Azure to run or setup.

Q1: *That's indeed interesting to hear. I'd recommend [a higher-level page](#) on this for folks, as it better sets the stage (whereas yours was one of two ways to proceed to install it). It also clarifies (what seem) some pretty hefty requirements that people need to know about.*

In particular, folks should note also that it can't be used if your Windows Server is itself on a virtualized machine (as some may have in a lab or even for their prod deployment, such as with a hosting provider or "departmental server"). And that prohibition of virtualization may well be true for any k8s option on Windows (if there are any others than this for Windows Server), since supporting Linux containers will require a vm (or wsl on Windows desktop).

Anyway, it will be interesting to see if you guys may get a chance to touch on this topic at all. I realize it could be something you feel is not suitable.

A1: There is a very interesting offer for you currently in preview, check out AKS Edge Essentials. This can be deployed on Windows 10/11 IoT Enterprise/Enterprise/Pro and Windows Server 2019, 2022, and as AKS always does, it supports Linux and Windows Containers. <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/aks/hybrid/aks-edge-overview>

A1 Response: It does indeed sound very interesting. That said, I looked but could not find confirmation: it seems it won't work with nested virtualization, so again not something folks can try first on a lab vm running Windows Server, nor if their prod Windows Server deployment is itself on a VM. If anyone may know otherwise, do speak up. But I'll presume this is the situation (and yes, it makes sense. Just clarifying it for some readers.)

Q: *Any tips on how to set up a lab environment for someone who is studying Azure?* ([link](#))

A: You can create a Free azure account, that will give you \$200 azure credit that you can use to set up your lab.

<https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/free/>

A1: Excellent question! It depends a bit on what services on Azure you want to study. Since this is a Windows Server AMA, I guess you are interested in Windows Server environments connected to Azure, for management or migration reasons. First, I would definitely check out to create an Azure account: <https://azure.microsoft.com/free/> this will provide you with some free services for 12 months as well as some services which are always free and a start credit. Now for the on-premises lab environment I created a tiny Windows Server lab running on Intel NUC, you can read more about this here: <https://www.thomasmaurer.ch/2021/11/my-windows-server-and-azure-arc-hybrid-cloud-lab-kit/> This allows you to test things like Azure AD, Azure Arc, Azure Migrate, AKS hybrid, and more.

Q: *Does Microsoft consider to setup a dedicated Azure Stack HCI exam and certification? It's a huge topic together with HW, networking, Azure Arc, Automanage, 3rd party HW extensions and Azure Update Management Center and Azure Monitoring.* ([link](#))

A: The only Certification that we have right now for Azure Stack is AZ-600

Azure Stack Hub Operator Associate

<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/azure-stack-hub-operator/>

A1: Thank you for the feedback about Azure Stack HCI. Feedback like this is very helpful for us to shape our learning content in the future. Stay tuned for announcements in the future for new training opportunities for HCI, in the meantime, please check out our official Microsoft Learn Collection page full of Stack HCI resources: <https://aka.ms/AzureStackHCICTA>

A2: No announcements at this point in time. However many of these topics are addressed by the AZ-800 and AZ-801 Windows Server Hybrid exams.

Q: I am attempting to complete my azure-500 certification and have taken some practice tests and have not been successful. I'm attempting to locate official study information because I have not been able to pass the practice tests period I keep seeing information from different study guides that doesn't seem to align with the practice tests so dot dot I'm not entirely sure if I'm studying the correct things and really would just like some guidance on what exactly I should be studying for in these exams period of the four domains in this exam it seems like there are so many Technologies to manage and learn that it's not clear and I otherwise need to understand all of them which dot dot to me seems more of an architect certification then it does for this kind of test. can one of you please help me understand which Technologies within each of the domains I should focus on. Thank you for your time. ([link](#))

A: Hi, exactly for this I created a study guide, which can help you identify the right topics as well as the right resources. you can check it out here: <https://www.thomasmaurer.ch/2020/05/az-500-study-guide-microsoft-azure-security-technologies-2021/> This will have links to Microsoft Learn and more!

A2: [AZ-500 Exam Study Guide \(microsoft.com\)](#)

<https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/training/paths/manage-identity-access/>

Questions from Microsoft Speakers:

Q: What was the first certification exam you took? Mine was the NT4 MCSE "Networking Essentials" exam (almost a quarter of a century ago!!) ([link](#))

A1: Dos 6.22 and Windows 3.11 for support professionals... Followed up by NT3.51

A2: Windows 2000. By the time I took Windows Server 2003 I was an MS employee and taking them was part of my job requirements in MS Support. Even the beta exams that had 850 questions

A2 Response: Those were evil. Just part of the fun of being a 'blue'.

A3: Mine was the Windows 2000 Server one and I failed it. :(The next exam I took was already the Windows Server 2003, and I passed. :)

A3 Response: I used to be on a cert forum with a bunch of people who had the NT 3.51 certs (and one who was in the first 100 to get it). Always makes me feel like I'm youthful to know that there are people like Rick who have even more ancient certs)

A4: Me too, it was Windows Server 2000!

Q: Besides Tech Community, where do you usually go to find study, training, and learning resources for Microsoft Certifications like AZ-800/801? Where would you like Microsoft to publish official learning content for the most convenient experience? ([link](#))

A1: On Microsoft Learn platform <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/training/> So you can add it to your profile to do your study on-demand.

A2: There are some Exam Readiness Overview videos here: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/shows/exam-readiness-zone/> - this works for a large number of exams, not just the Hybrid ones

Here is the study guide for AZ-801 https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/itops-talk-blog/az-801-study-guide-configuring-windows-server-hybrid-advanced/ba-p/2742508?WT.mc_id=modinfra-41943-orthomas

Here's is the study guide I wrote for AZ-800 - has all the links to relevant documentation, books, videos, training modules etc https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/itops-talk-blog/az-800-study-guide-administering-windows-server-hybrid-core/ba-p/2736091?WT.mc_id=modinfra-39512-orthomas

Q: What's a Windows Server / Windows Server Hybrid / Windows Server on Azure topic you'd like to see more resources published on? ([link](#))

A1: Central monitoring (One Dashboard) of 100+ Hybrid Servers with Realtime alerts

A2: How to run AKS on-prem without Azure. This is a complex topic and every time you try to find documentation on it, it ends up pointing to using Azure or having an Azure subscription.

A3: I know Microsoft Learning has some stuff on what a Windows server is and what it does. I liked back in the MCSE days how there was stuff to cover the fundamentals and there were good books. Also, Microsoft Virtual Academy had some great stuff. To brush up on some server fundamentals would be nice to see more stuff from Microsoft Learning.

A3 Response: Similar to Microsoft Virtual Academy, you can check out our Microsoft Virtual Training Days (VTDs): [Microsoft Virtual Training Days - Azure](#)

VTDs are: Pre-recorded large-scale training to support skilling. Always on training opportunity with direction for content, audience and agenda.

Q: What resources do you prefer to use when studying for a new certification or learning a new technology? Books, learn.microsoft.com training modules, training videos, other tools? ([link](#))

A: All that's applicable and that will give me in-depth understanding beyond preparation for Certification Exam Success.

A Response: I found some great interactive labs for WSHAA the other day - sort of click through versions of what you would do hands on in an official class. <https://t.co/gE4Lg3HNMg>

Q: Have you got or are you planning to get the Windows Server Hybrid Admin Associate certification? If you have it, have you done your renewal yet (I did my renewal last week!) ([link](#))

A: I did my renewal back in September. I love the open book format.

That's a wrap!

Thank you for joining this fun hour! We hope you'll continue to ask questions and share your feedback.

See you next time!