



## **Get started**

### Volume caching

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# Get started

## Learn about Volume Caching

Volume caching, a feature of ONTAP 9 software, is a remote caching capability that simplifies file distribution, reduces WAN latency by bringing resources closer to where your users and compute resources are, and lowers WAN bandwidth costs. Volume caching provides a persistent, writable volume in a remote place. You can use Volume caching to speed up access to data or to offload traffic from heavily accessed volumes. Cache volumes are ideal for read-intensive workloads, especially where clients need to access the same data repeatedly.

With Volume Caching, you have caching capabilities for the cloud, specifically for Amazon FSx for NetApp ONTAP, Cloud Volumes ONTAP, and on-premises as working environments.

Volume caching also provides branch office access to corporate datasets. By serving *hot data*, data that needs to be accessed frequently from multiple controllers in a cluster, you can increase the performance delivered to key applications. And, by caching hot data local to users at multiple locations around the world, you can enhance their collaboration by enabling simultaneous access to centralized datasets while also reducing the response time they receive when accessing the hot data.

### NetApp Console

Volume caching is accessible through the NetApp Console.

The NetApp Console provides centralized management of NetApp storage and data services across on-premises and cloud environments at enterprise grade. The Console is required to access and use NetApp data services. As a management interface, it enables you to manage many storage resources from one interface. Console administrators can control access to storage and services for all systems within the enterprise.

You don't need a license or subscription to start using NetApp Console and you only incur charges when you need to deploy Console agents in your cloud to ensure connectivity to your storage systems or NetApp data services. However, some NetApp data services accessible from the Console are licensed or subscription-based.

Learn more about the [NetApp Console](#).

### What is a cache?

A cache is a temporary storage location that resides between a host and the source of data. The objective of a cache is to store frequently accessed portions of source data in a way that allows the data to be served faster than it would be by fetching the data from the source. Caches are most beneficial in read-intensive environments where data is accessed more than once and is shared by multiple hosts. A cache system is faster than the system with data source, which is achieved through a faster storage system and proximity of the cache storage space to the host.

### Benefits of Volume Caching

Volume caching offers the following benefits:

- Accelerate performance in a hybrid cloud infrastructure

- Remove cloud silos by caching data from one cloud provider to another
- Lower storage costs
- Collaborate across geographic locations
- Ability to adapt to changing IT environments faster
- On-demand or subscription-based Volume Caching hosted in the cloud

## What you can do with Volume Caching

Volume caching provides you with full use of several NetApp technologies to accomplish the following goals:

- Cache data from one cloud provider to another
- View and edit a cache export policy
- Resize an existing cache
- Delete a cache

## Cost

NetApp doesn't charge you for Volume Caching, but you'll need to check your cloud provider for applicable data ingress and egress charges.

## Licensing

No special ONTAP licenses are needed for Volume Caching.

## How Volume Caching works

A cache volume is a sparsely populated volume that is backed by a source volume. The cache volume can be on the same cluster as or on a different cluster than that of the source volume.

The cache volume provides access to data in the source volume without requiring that all the data be in the cache volume. Data storage in the caching volume is efficiently managed by retaining only the hot data (working, or recently used data).

Volume caching reads requests if the cache volume contains the data requested by the client. Otherwise, the Volume Caching service requests the data from the source volume and stores the data before serving the client request. Subsequent requests for the data are then served directly from the cache volume. This improves performance when the same data is accessed repeatedly, because after the first request, the data no longer must travel across the network or be served from an overloaded system.

## Volume caching prerequisites

Get started by verifying the readiness of your operational environment, login, network access, and web browser.

To use Volume Caching, you should ensure that your environment meets all requirements.

- ONTAP 9.8 and later
  - Cluster Admin ONTAP permissions

- Intercluster LIFs on the clusters
- In the NetApp Console:
  - The Console agent needs to be set up in the NetApp Console. All source and target clusters must be on the same Console agent. Refer to the [BlueXP Quick start](#) and [Learn about Console agents](#).
  - The working environment should be set up.
  - The clusters should be added in the target working environment and in an ON or degraded state.
  - Standard NetApp Console requirements. Refer to [NetApp Console requirements](#).

## Quick start for Volume Caching

Here's an overview of the steps needed to get started with Volume Caching. The links within each step take you to a page that provides more details.

1

### Review prerequisites

[Ensure your environment meets these requirements.](#)

2

### Set up Volume Caching

[Set up vlume caching.](#)

3

### What's next?

Here's what you might do next.

- [Create a cache.](#)
- [Manage a cache, edit a cache, resize a cache, or delete a cache.](#)
- [Monitor Volume Caching operations.](#)

## Set up Volume Caching

To use Volume Caching, perform a few steps to set it up.

- Review [prerequisites](#) to ensure that your environment is ready.
- Create a Console agent.
- Create systems that can support Volume Caching.

### Create a Console agent in the NetApp Console

The next step is to create a Console agent in the NetApp Console.

To create a Console agent before using Volume Caching, refer to the NetApp Console documentation that describes [How to create a Console agent](#).

## Create systems

If you haven't done so already, you need to create the systems for the source and target.

- [Create an Amazon FSx for ONTAP system](#)
- [Launch Cloud Volumes ONTAP in AWS](#)
- [Launch Cloud Volumes ONTAP in Azure](#)
- [Launch Cloud Volumes ONTAP in GCP](#)
- [Add existing Cloud Volumes ONTAP systems](#)
- [Discover ONTAP clusters](#)

## Access Volume Caching

You use the NetApp Console to access the Volume Caching option.

To log in to the NetApp Console, you can use your NetApp Support Site credentials. [Learn more about logging in.](#)

### Steps

1. Open a web browser and go to the [NetApp console](#).

The NetApp Console login page appears.

2. Log in to the Console.
3. From the Console left navigation, select **Mobility > Volume caching**.

The Volume Caching Dashboard appears.

**Volume caching**

**FlexCache volume caching**

Cache volumes from one ONTAP working environment to others - in the cloud or on-premises

Using FlexCache, volume caching simplifies file distribution, reduces WAN latency, and lowers WAN bandwidth costs. Accelerate distributed product development across multiple sites, supercharge branch office access to corporate datasets, and facilitate cloud bursting & hybrid cloud caching with volume caching in BlueXP.

[Add a cache](#)

**Origin**

ONTAP

**Cache**

ONTAP

**Remote clients**

Read & Write

**Fast**

Create a dozens of caches with just a few clicks.

**Efficient**

Create a caches in bulk and adopt the settings of their origin volumes

**Unified**

View all of the caches across your data estate in a single, unified place.

**i** If a Console agent is not set up, the option **Add a Console agent** appears. Refer to [Set up Volume Caching](#).

# Frequently asked questions for Volume Caching

This FAQ can help if you're just looking for a quick answer to a question.

## **What's the Volume Caching URL?**

For the URL, in a browser, enter: <https://console.netapp.com/> to access the BlueXP console.

## **Do you need a license to use Volume Caching?**

A NetApp License File (NLF) is not required.

## **How do you enable Volume Caching?**

Volume caching does not require any enablement. The Volume Caching option automatically appears on the NetApp Console left navigation.

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