



Configure BranchCache

ONTAP 9

NetApp
January 23, 2026

This PDF was generated from <https://docs.netapp.com/us-en/ontap/smb-admin/configure-branchcache-concept.html> on January 23, 2026. Always check docs.netapp.com for the latest.

Table of Contents

- Configure BranchCache 1
 - Learn about ONTAP SMB BranchCache configuration 1
 - Requirements for configuring ONTAP SMB BranchCache 1
 - Configure BranchCache on ONTAP SMB servers 1
 - Learn about configuring BranchCache at the remote office in ONTAP SMB 5

Configure BranchCache

Learn about ONTAP SMB BranchCache configuration

You configure BranchCache on your SMB server using ONTAP commands. To implement BranchCache, you must also configure your clients, and optionally your hosted cache servers at the branch offices where you want to cache content.

If you configure BranchCache to enable caching on a share-by-share basis, you must enable BranchCache on the SMB shares for which you want to provide BranchCache caching services.

Requirements for configuring ONTAP SMB BranchCache

After meeting some prerequisites, you can set up BranchCache.

The following requirements must be met before configuring BranchCache on the CIFS server for your SVM:

- ONTAP must be installed on all nodes in the cluster.
- CIFS must be licensed and a SMB server must be configured. The SMB license is included with [ONTAP One](#). If you don't have ONTAP One and the license is not installed, contact your sales representative.
- IPv4 or IPv6 network connectivity must be configured.
- For BranchCache 1, SMB 2.1 or later must be enabled.
- For BranchCache 2, SMB 3.0 must be enabled and the remote Windows clients must support BranchCache 2.

Configure BranchCache on ONTAP SMB servers

You can configure BranchCache to provide BranchCache services on a per-share basis. Alternatively, you can configure BranchCache to automatically enable caching on all SMB shares.

About this task

You can configure BranchCache on SVMs.

- You can create an all-shares BranchCache configuration if you want to offer caching services for all content contained within all SMB shares on the CIFS server.
- You can create a per-share BranchCache configuration if you want to offer caching services for content contained within selected SMB shares on the CIFS server.

You must specify the following parameters when configuring BranchCache:

| Required parameters | Description |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>SVM name</i> | BranchCache is configured on a per SVM basis. You must specify on which CIFS-enabled SVM you want to configure the BranchCache service. |

| Required parameters | Description |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Path to hash store</i> | <p>BranchCache hashes are stored in regular files on the SVM volume. You must specify the path to an existing directory where you want ONTAP to store the hash data. The BranchCache hash path must be read-writable. Read-only paths, such as snapshot directories are not allowed. You can store hash data in a volume that contains other data or you can create a separate volume to store hash data.</p> <p>If the SVM is an SVM disaster recovery source, the hash path cannot be on the root volume. This is because the root volume is not replicated to the disaster recovery destination.</p> <p>The hash path can contain blanks and any valid file name characters.</p> |

You can optionally specify the following parameters:

| Optional parameters | Description |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Supported Versions</i> | ONTAP support BranchCache 1 and 2. You can enable version 1, version 2, or both versions. The default is to enable both versions. |
| <i>Maximum size of hash store</i> | <p>You can specify the size to use for the hash data store. If the hash data exceeds this value, ONTAP deletes older hashes to make room for newer hashes. The default size for the hash store is 1 GB.</p> <p>BranchCache performs more efficiently if hashes are not discarded in an overly aggressive manner. If you determine that hashes are discarded frequently because the hash store is full, you can increase the hash store size by modifying the BranchCache configuration.</p> |
| <i>Server key</i> | You can specify a server key that the BranchCache service uses to prevent clients from impersonating the BranchCache server. If you do not specify a server key, one is randomly generated when you create the BranchCache configuration. You can set the server key to a specific value so that if multiple servers are providing BranchCache data for the same files, clients can use hashes from any server using that same server key. If the server key contains any spaces, you must enclose the server key in quotation marks. |

| Optional parameters | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Operating mode</i> | <p>The default is to enable BranchCache on a per-share basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a BranchCache configuration where you enable BranchCache on a per-share basis, you can either not specify this optional parameter or you can specify <code>per-share</code>. • To automatically enable BranchCache on all shares, you must set the operating mode to <code>all-shares</code>. |

Steps

1. Enable SMB 2.1 and 3.0 as needed:

- a. Set the privilege level to advanced: `set -privilege advanced`
- b. Check the configured SVM SMB settings to determine whether all needed versions of SMB are enabled: `vserver cifs options show -vserver vserver_name`
- c. If necessary, enable SMB 2.1: `vserver cifs options modify -vserver vserver_name -smb2-enabled true`

The command enables both SMB 2.0 and SMB 2.1.

- d. If necessary, enable SMB 3.0: `vserver cifs options modify -vserver vserver_name -smb3-enabled true`
- e. Return to the admin privilege level: `set -privilege admin`

2. Configure BranchCache: `vserver cifs branchcache create -vserver vserver_name -hash -store-path path [-hash-store-max-size {integer[KB|MB|GB|TB|PB]}] [-versions {v1-enable|v2-enable|enable-all}] [-server-key text] -operating-mode {per-share|all-shares}`

The specified hash storage path must exist and must reside on a volume managed by the SVM. The path must also be located on a read-writable volume. The command fails if the path is read-only or does not exist.

If you want to use the same server key for additional SVM BranchCache configurations, record the value you enter for the server key. The server key does not appear when you display information about the BranchCache configuration.

3. Verify that the BranchCache configuration is correct: `vserver cifs branchcache show -vserver vserver_name`

Examples

The following commands verify that both SMB 2.1 and 3.0 are enabled and configure BranchCache to automatically enable caching on all SMB shares on SVM vs1:

```

cluster1::> set -privilege advanced
Warning: These advanced commands are potentially dangerous; use them
only when directed to do so by technical support personnel.
Do you wish to continue? (y or n): y

cluster1::*> vserver cifs options show -vserver vs1 -fields smb2-
enabled,smb3-enabled
vserver smb2-enabled smb3-enabled
-----
vs1      true      true

cluster1::*> set -privilege admin

cluster1::> vserver cifs branchcache create -vserver vs1 -hash-store-path
/hash_data -hash-store-max-size 20GB -versions enable-all -server-key "my
server key" -operating-mode all-shares

cluster1::> vserver cifs branchcache show -vserver vs1

                                Vserver: vs1
                Supported BranchCache Versions: enable_all
                        Path to Hash Store: /hash_data
                Maximum Size of the Hash Store: 20GB
Encryption Key Used to Secure the Hashes: -
                CIFS BranchCache Operating Modes: all_shares

```

The following commands verify that both SMB 2.1 and 3.0 are enabled, configure BranchCache to enable caching on a per-share basis on SVM vs1, and verify the BranchCache configuration:

```

cluster1::> set -privilege advanced
Warning: These advanced commands are potentially dangerous; use them
only when directed to do so by technical support personnel.
Do you wish to continue? (y or n): y

cluster1::*> vserver cifs options show -vserver vs1 -fields smb2-
enabled,smb3-enabled
vserver smb2-enabled smb3-enabled
-----
vs1      true      true

cluster1::*> set -privilege admin

cluster1::> vserver cifs branchcache create -vserver vs1 -hash-store-path
/hash_data -hash-store-max-size 20GB -versions enable-all -server-key "my
server key"

cluster1::> vserver cifs branchcache show -vserver vs1

                                Vserver: vs1
        Supported BranchCache Versions: enable_all
                                Path to Hash Store: /hash_data
        Maximum Size of the Hash Store: 20GB
Encryption Key Used to Secure the Hashes: -
        CIFS BranchCache Operating Modes: per_share

```

Related information

- [Learn about BranchCache version support](#)
- [Learn about configuring BranchCache at the remote office](#)
- [Create a BranchCache-enabled SMB share](#)
- [Enable BranchCache on existing shares](#)
- [Modify BranchCache configurations on shares](#)
- [Learn about disabling BranchCache on shares](#)
- [Delete the BranchCache configuration on shares](#)

Learn about configuring BranchCache at the remote office in ONTAP SMB

After configuring BranchCache on the SMB server, you must install and configure BranchCache on client computers and, optionally, on caching servers at your remote office. Microsoft provides instructions for configuring BranchCache at the remote office.

Instructions for configuring branch office clients and, optionally, caching servers to use BranchCache are on the Microsoft BranchCache web site.

Copyright information

Copyright © 2026 NetApp, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the U.S. No part of this document covered by copyright may be reproduced in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or storage in an electronic retrieval system—without prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Software derived from copyrighted NetApp material is subject to the following license and disclaimer:

THIS SOFTWARE IS PROVIDED BY NETAPP “AS IS” AND WITHOUT ANY EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, WHICH ARE HEREBY DISCLAIMED. IN NO EVENT SHALL NETAPP BE LIABLE FOR ANY DIRECT, INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, SPECIAL, EXEMPLARY, OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PROCUREMENT OF SUBSTITUTE GOODS OR SERVICES; LOSS OF USE, DATA, OR PROFITS; OR BUSINESS INTERRUPTION) HOWEVER CAUSED AND ON ANY THEORY OF LIABILITY, WHETHER IN CONTRACT, STRICT LIABILITY, OR TORT (INCLUDING NEGLIGENCE OR OTHERWISE) ARISING IN ANY WAY OUT OF THE USE OF THIS SOFTWARE, EVEN IF ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

NetApp reserves the right to change any products described herein at any time, and without notice. NetApp assumes no responsibility or liability arising from the use of products described herein, except as expressly agreed to in writing by NetApp. The use or purchase of this product does not convey a license under any patent rights, trademark rights, or any other intellectual property rights of NetApp.

The product described in this manual may be protected by one or more U.S. patents, foreign patents, or pending applications.

LIMITED RIGHTS LEGEND: Use, duplication, or disclosure by the government is subject to restrictions as set forth in subparagraph (b)(3) of the Rights in Technical Data -Noncommercial Items at DFARS 252.227-7013 (FEB 2014) and FAR 52.227-19 (DEC 2007).

Data contained herein pertains to a commercial product and/or commercial service (as defined in FAR 2.101) and is proprietary to NetApp, Inc. All NetApp technical data and computer software provided under this Agreement is commercial in nature and developed solely at private expense. The U.S. Government has a non-exclusive, non-transferrable, nonsublicensable, worldwide, limited irrevocable license to use the Data only in connection with and in support of the U.S. Government contract under which the Data was delivered. Except as provided herein, the Data may not be used, disclosed, reproduced, modified, performed, or displayed without the prior written approval of NetApp, Inc. United States Government license rights for the Department of Defense are limited to those rights identified in DFARS clause 252.227-7015(b) (FEB 2014).

Trademark information

NETAPP, the NETAPP logo, and the marks listed at <http://www.netapp.com/TM> are trademarks of NetApp, Inc. Other company and product names may be trademarks of their respective owners.