



# **Manage FlexCache volumes**

## **ONTAP 9**

NetApp  
February 05, 2026

# Table of Contents

- Manage FlexCache volumes ..... 1
  - Learn about auditing ONTAP FlexCache volumes..... 1
  - Synchronize properties of an ONTAP FlexCache volume from an origin volume ..... 1
  - Update the configuration of ONTAP FlexCache relationships ..... 2
  - Enable file access time updates on the ONTAP FlexCache volume ..... 2
    - Overview ..... 3
    - Before you begin ..... 3
    - About this task ..... 3
  - Enable global file locking on ONTAP FlexCache volumes..... 4
    - Enable global file locking on new FlexCache volumes ..... 4
    - Enable global file locking on existing FlexCache volumes..... 5
  - Prepopulate ONTAP FlexCache volumes ..... 5
  - Delete ONTAP FlexCache relationships ..... 7

# Manage FlexCache volumes

## Learn about auditing ONTAP FlexCache volumes

Beginning with ONTAP 9.7, you can audit NFS file access events in FlexCache relationships using native ONTAP auditing and file policy management with FPolicy.

Beginning with ONTAP 9.14.1, FPolicy is supported for FlexCache volumes with NFS or SMB. Previously, FPolicy was not supported for FlexCache volumes with SMB.

Native auditing and FPolicy are configured and managed with the same CLI commands used for FlexVol volumes. However, there is some different behavior with FlexCache volumes.

- **Native auditing**

- You can't use a FlexCache volume as the destination for audit logs.
- If you want to audit read and writes on FlexCache volumes, you must configure auditing on both the cache SVM as well as on the origin SVM.

This is because file system operations are audited where they are processed. That is, reads are audited on the cache SVM and writes are audited on the origin SVM.

- To track the origin of write operations, the SVM UUID and MSID are appended in the audit log to identify the FlexCache volume from which the write originated.

- **FPolicy**

- Although writes to a FlexCache volume are committed on the origin volume, FPolicy configurations monitor the writes on the cache volume. This is unlike native auditing, in which the writes are audited on the origin volume.
- While ONTAP does not require the same FPolicy configuration on cache and origin SVMs, it is recommended that you deploy two similar configurations. You can do so by creating a new FPolicy policy for the cache, configured like that of the origin SVM but with the scope of the new policy limited to the cache SVM.
- The size of extensions in an FPolicy configuration is limited to 20KB (20480 bytes). When the size of extensions used in an FPolicy configuration on a FlexCache volume exceeds 20KB, the EMS message `nblade.fpolicy.extn.failed` is triggered.

## Synchronize properties of an ONTAP FlexCache volume from an origin volume

Some of the volume properties of the FlexCache volume must always be synchronized with those of the origin volume. If the volume properties of a FlexCache volume fail to synchronize automatically after the properties are modified at the origin volume, you can manually synchronize the properties.

### About this task

The following volume properties of a FlexCache volume must always be synchronized with those of the origin volume:

- Security style (`-security-style`)
- Volume name (`-volume-name`)
- Maximum directory size (`-maxdir-size`)
- Minimum read ahead (`-min-readahead`)

#### Step

1. From the FlexCache volume, synchronize the volume properties:

```
volume flexcache sync-properties -vserver svm_name -volume flexcache_volume
```

```
cluster1::> volume flexcache sync-properties -vserver vs1 -volume fcl
```

## Update the configuration of ONTAP FlexCache relationships

After events such as volume move, aggregate relocation, or storage failover, the volume configuration information on the origin volume and FlexCache volume is updated automatically. In case the automatic updates fail, an EMS message is generated and then you must manually update the configuration for the FlexCache relationship.

If the origin volume and the FlexCache volume are in the disconnected mode, you might need to perform some additional operations to update a FlexCache relationship manually.

#### About this task

If you want to update the configurations of a FlexCache volume, you must run the command from the origin volume. If you want to update the configurations of an origin volume, you must run the command from the FlexCache volume.

#### Step

1. Update the configuration of the FlexCache relationship:

```
volume flexcache config-refresh -peer-vserver peer_svm -peer-volume  
peer_volume_to_update -peer-endpoint-type [origin | cache]
```

## Enable file access time updates on the ONTAP FlexCache volume

Beginning with ONTAP 9.11.1, you can enable the `-atime-update` field on the FlexCache volume to permit file access time updates. You can also set an access time update period with the `-atime-update-period` attribute. The `-atime-update-period` attribute controls how often access time updates can take place and when they can propagate to the origin volume.

## Overview

ONTAP provides a volume-level field called `-atime-update`, to manage access time updates on files and directories that are read using `READ`, `READLINK`, and `REaddir`. Atime is used for data lifecycle decisions for files and directories that are infrequently accessed. The infrequently accessed files are eventually migrated to archive storage and are often later moved to tape.

The `atime-update` field is disabled by default on existing and newly created FlexCache volumes. If you are using FlexCache volumes with ONTAP releases earlier than 9.11.1, you should leave the `atime-update` field disabled so caches aren't unnecessarily evicted when a read operation is performed on the origin volume. With large FlexCache caches, however, administrators use special tools to manage data and help to ensure that hot data remains in the cache and cold data is purged. This is not possible when `atime-update` is disabled. However, beginning with ONTAP 9.11.1, you can enable `-atime-update` and `-atime-update-period`, and use the tools required to manage the cached data.

## Before you begin

- All FlexCache volumes must be running ONTAP 9.11.1 or later.
- You must use the advanced privilege mode.

## About this task

Setting `-atime-update-period` to 86400 seconds allows no more than one access time update per 24-hour period, regardless of the number of read-like operations performed on a file.

Setting the `-atime-update-period` to 0 sends messages to the origin for each read access. The origin then informs each FlexCache volume that the atime is outdated, which impacts performance.

### Steps

1. Set the privilege mode to advanced:

```
set -privilege advanced
```

2. Enable file access time updates and set the update frequency:

```
volume modify -volume vol_name -vserver <SVM name> -atime-update true -atime  
-update-period <seconds>
```

The following example enables `-atime-update` and sets `-atime-update-period` to 86400 seconds, or 24 hours:

```
c1: volume modify -volume origin1 vs1_c1 -atime-update true -atime  
-update-period 86400
```

3. Verify that `-atime-update` is enabled:

```
volume show -volume vol_name -fields atime-update,atime-update-period
```

```
c1::*> volume show -volume cachel_origin1 -fields atime-update,atime-
update-period
vserver volume          atime-update atime-update-period
-----
vs2_c1  cachel_origin1 true          86400
```

4. After `-atime-update` is enabled, you can specify if the files on a FlexCache volume can be scrubbed automatically and a scrubbing interval:

```
volume flexcache config modify -vserver <SVM name> -volume <volume_name> -is
-atime-scrub-enabled <true|false> -atime-scrub-period <integer>
```

Learn more about `-is-atime-scrub-enabled` parameter in the [ONTAP command reference](#).

## Enable global file locking on ONTAP FlexCache volumes

Beginning with ONTAP 9.10.1, global file locking can be applied to prevent reads across all related cached files.

With global file locking enabled, modifications to the origin volume are suspended until all FlexCache volumes are online. You should only enable global file locking when you have control over the reliability of the connections between cache and origin due to suspension and possible timeouts of modifications when FlexCache volumes are offline.

### Before you begin

- Global file locking requires the clusters containing the origin and all associated caches to be running ONTAP 9.9.1 or later. Global file locking can be enabled on new or existing FlexCache volumes. The command can be run on one volume and applies to all associated FlexCache volumes.
- You must be in the advanced privilege level to enable global file locking.
- If you revert to a version of ONTAP earlier than 9.9.1, global file locking must first be disabled on the origin and associated caches. To disable, from the origin volume, run: `volume flexcache prepare-to-downgrade -disable-feature-set 9.10.0`
- The process to enable global file locking depends on whether the origin has existing caches:
  - [Enable global file locking on new FlexCache volumes](#)
  - [Enable global file locking on existing FlexCache volumes](#)

## Enable global file locking on new FlexCache volumes

### Steps

1. Create the FlexCache volume with `-is-global-file-locking` set to true:

```
volume flexcache create volume volume_name -is-global-file-locking-enabled
true
```



The default value of `-is-global-file-locking` is “false”. When any subsequent `volume flexcache create` commands are run on a volume, they must be passed with `-is-global-file-locking enabled` set to “true”.

## Enable global file locking on existing FlexCache volumes

### Steps

1. Global file locking must be set from the origin volume.
2. The origin cannot have any other existing relationships (for example, SnapMirror). Any existing relationships must be dissociated. All caches and volumes must be connected at the time of running the command. To check the connection status, run:

```
volume flexcache connection-status show
```

The status for all the listed volumes should display as `connected`. For more information, see [View the status of a FlexCache relationship](#) or [Synchronize properties of a FlexCache volume from an origin](#).

3. Enable global file locking on the caches:

```
volume flexcache origin config show/modify -volume volume_name -is-global-file-locking-enabled true
```

### Related information

- [ONTAP command reference](#)

## Prepopulate ONTAP FlexCache volumes

You can prepopulate a FlexCache volume to reduce the time it takes to access cached data.

### Before you begin

- You must be a cluster administrator at the advanced privilege level
- The paths you pass for prepopulation must exist or the prepopulate operation fails.

### About this task

- Prepopulate reads files only and crawls through directories
- The `-isRecursion` flag applies to the entire list of directories passed to prepopulate

### Steps

1. Prepopulate a FlexCache volume:

```
volume flexcache prepopulate -cache-vserver vs_server_name -cache-volume -path-list path_list -isRecursion true|false
```

- The `-path-list` parameter indicates the relative directory path you want to prepopulate starting from the origin root directory. For example, if the origin root directory is named `/origin` and it contains directories `/origin/dir1` and `/origin/dir2`, you can specify the path list as follows: `-path-list dir1, dir2` or `-path-list /dir1, /dir2`.

- The default value of the `-isRecursion` parameter is `True`.

This example prepopulates a single directory path:

```
cluster1:*> flexcache prepopulate start -cache-vserver vs2 -cache
-volume fg_cachevol_1 -path-list /dir1
(volume flexcache prepopulate start)
[JobId 207]: FlexCache prepopulate job queued.
```

This example prepopulates files from several directories:

```
cluster1:*> flexcache prepopulate start -cache-vserver vs2 -cache
-volume fg_cachevol_1 -path-list /dir1,/dir2,/dir3,/dir4
(volume flexcache prepopulate start)
[JobId 208]: FlexCache prepopulate job queued.
```

This example prepopulates a single file:

```
cluster1:*> flexcache prepopulate start -cache-vserver vs2 -cache
-volume fg_cachevol_1 -path-list /dir1/file1.txt
(volume flexcache prepopulate start)
[JobId 209]: FlexCache prepopulate job queued.
```

This example prepopulates all files from the origin:

```
cluster1:*> flexcache prepopulate start -cache-vserver vs2 -cache
-volume fg_cachevol_1 -path-list / -isRecursion true
(volume flexcache prepopulate start)
[JobId 210]: FlexCache prepopulate job queued.
```

This example includes an invalid path for prepopulation:

```
cluster1:*> flexcache prepopulate start -cache-volume
vol_cache2_vs3_c2_vol_origin1_vs1_c1 -cache-vserver vs3_c2 -path-list
/dir1, dir5, dir6
(volume flexcache prepopulate start)

Error: command failed: Path(s) "dir5, dir6" does not exist in origin
volume
      "vol_origin1_vs1_c1" in Vserver "vs1_c1".
```

2. Display the number of files read:



```
job show -id job_ID -ins
```

#### Related information

- [job show](#)

## Delete ONTAP FlexCache relationships

You can delete a FlexCache relationship and the FlexCache volume if you no longer require the FlexCache volume.

#### Steps

1. From the cluster that has the FlexCache volume, take the FlexCache volume offline:

```
volume offline -vserver svm_name -volume volume_name
```

2. Delete the FlexCache volume:

```
volume flexcache delete -vserver svm_name -volume volume_name
```

The FlexCache relationship details are removed from the origin volume and the FlexCache volume.

## 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.