Nessus Professional Trial Guide

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TOC

Introduction

Congratulations on starting your trial of Nessus Professional, the de-facto industry standard vulnerability assessment solution for security practitioners! Nessus Professional is the most comprehensive vulnerability assessment solution on the market today, designed to simplify assessments, save time, and provide accurate visibility into your networks.

This guide will assist you to ensure you get the most out of your trial. This guide is intended to be a starting point as you familiarize yourself with the interface, features, and capabilities of Nessus Professional. For an in-depth guide into all the options available in Nessus Professional, see the full Nessus User Guide.

Trial License vs Full License

During your Nessus Professional trial, you can try out some of the product's functionality, including conducting scans for up to 32 IP addresses and exporting reports. When you purchase the full Nessus Professional license, you will unlock expanded functionality and additional features, including scanning for unlimited IP addresses, scan scheduling, compliance and auditing tools, product support, and more. You can explore all of the features available in Nessus Professional by checking out the interactive Nessus Professional demo.

Get Started

Trial Email

After signing up for a Nessus trial, you should receive an email with instructions for how to activate your Tenable Community account. You will be prompted to create a log-in password and start your trial.

If you have already successfully activated your Tenable Community account, you can navigate to your Nessus trial management page. You should see your license key, as well as a link to **Download Nessus to Start Trial**.

Download and Install Nessus

To download Nessus, click **Download Nessus to Start Trial** in your Tenable Community account page or go directly to the Nessus downloads page: www.tenable.com/downloads/nessus.

There is a single Nessus package per operating system and processor. Download the appropriate package for your operating system.

> **Note:** You cannot download a Nessus trial on a VMware Virtual Appliance.

Example Nessus package file names and descriptions

Nessus Packages	Package Descriptions
Nessus-<version number>-Win32.msi	Nessus <version number> for Windows 7, 8, and 10 - i386
Nessus-<version number>-x64.msi	Nessus <version number> for Windows Server 2008, Server 2008 R2*, Server 2012, Server 2012 R2, 7, 8, and 10 - x86-64
Nessus-<version number>-debian6_amd64.deb	Nessus <version number> for Debian 6 and 7 / Kali Linux - AMD64
Nessus-<version number>.dmg	Nessus <version number> for Mac OS X 10.8, 10.9, and 10.10 - x86-64
Nessus-<version number>-es6.i386.rpm	Nessus <version number> for Red Hat ES 6 / CentOS 6 / Oracle Linux 6 (including Unbreakable Enterprise Kernel) - i386

Nessus Packages	Package Descriptions
Nessus-<version number>-fc20.x86_64.rpm	Nessus <version number> for Fedora 20 and 21 - x86_64
Nessus-<version number>-suse10.x86_64.rpm	Nessus <version number> for SUSE 10.0 Enterprise - x86_64
Nessus-<version number>-ubuntu1110_amd64.deb	Nessus <version number> for Ubuntu 11.10, 12.04, 12.10, 13.04, 13.10, and 14.04 - AMD64

Install and Configure Nessus

Install Nessus

For information on requirements to install Nessus, see the following topics in the *Nessus User Guide*:

- Hardware Requirements

- Software Requirements

For instructions, see the Appendix in this document or see the Installation topics in the *Nessus User Guide*.

Configure Nessus

Before You Begin

When you access Nessus in a web browser, a warning appears regarding a connection privacy problem, an untrusted site, an unsecure connection, or a related security certificate issue. This is expected and normal behavior. Nessus provides a self-signed SSL certificate.
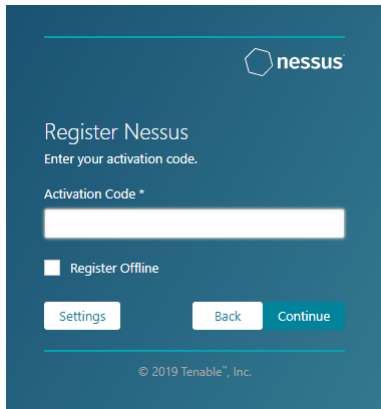
To configure Nessus:

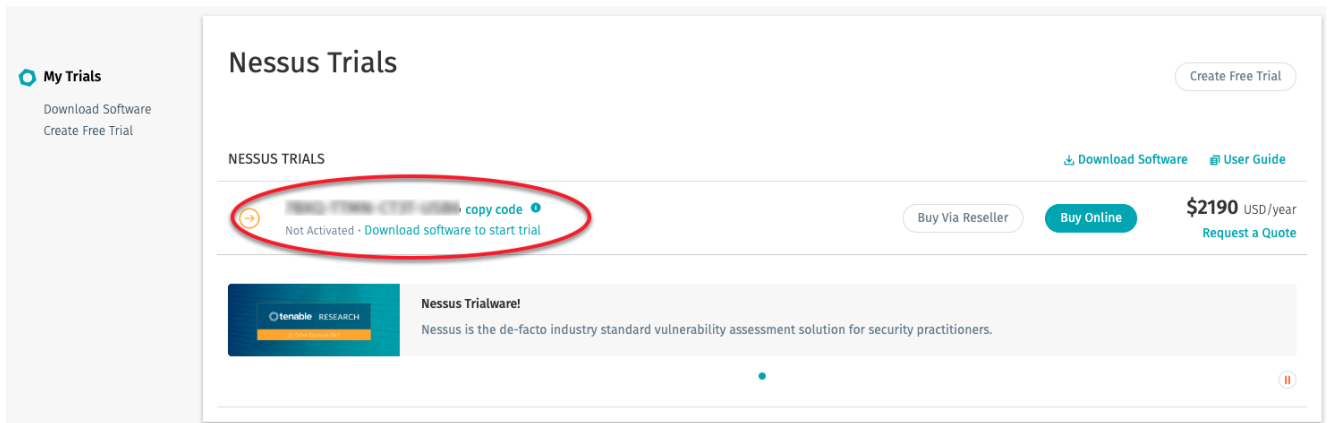1. On the **Welcome to Nessus** screen, select **Nessus Professional**.
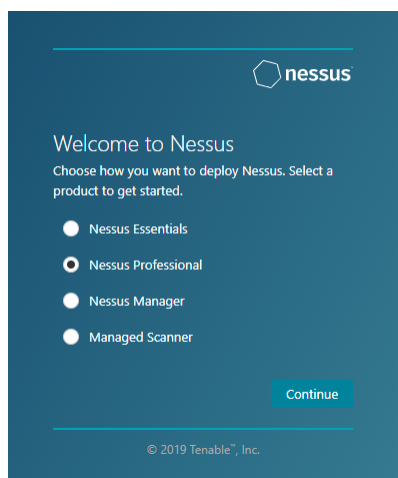
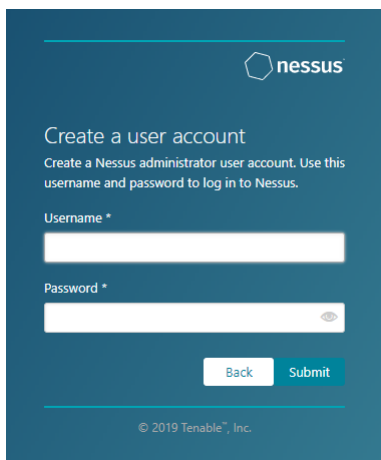2. Click **Continue**.

   The **Register Nessus** screen appears.

3. Type your **Activation Code**.

   The activation code is available on your Tenable Community account page.

4. Click **Continue**.

   The **Create a user account** screen appears.
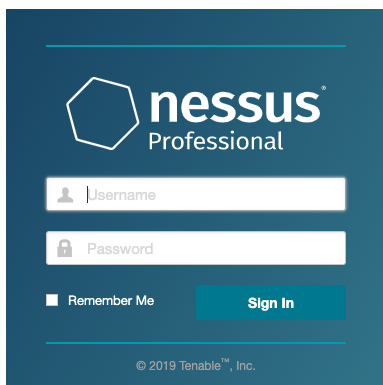
5. Create a Nessus administrator user account that you use to log in to Nessus:

    a. In the **Username** box, enter a username.

    b. In the **Password** box, enter a password for the user account.

6. Click **Submit**.

    Nessus finishes the configuration process, which may take several minutes.
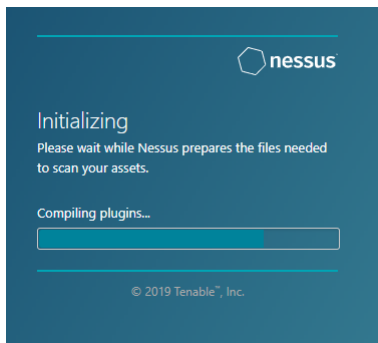
7. Using the administrator user account you created, **Sign In** to Nessus.

Navigate Nessus

The top navigation bar displays links to the two main pages: **Scans** and **Settings**. You can perform all Nessus primary tasks using these two pages. Click a page name to open the corresponding page.

Item	Description
🔔	Toggles the **Notifications** box, which displays a list of notifications, successful or unsuccessful login attempts, errors, and system information generated by Nessus.
Username	Displays a drop-down box with the following options: **My Account**, **What's New**, **Documentation**, and **Sign Out**.

Settings

The **Settings** page contains the information and settings related to your Nessus installation and license.

For the purposes of your trial, you can leave most settings at their default value.

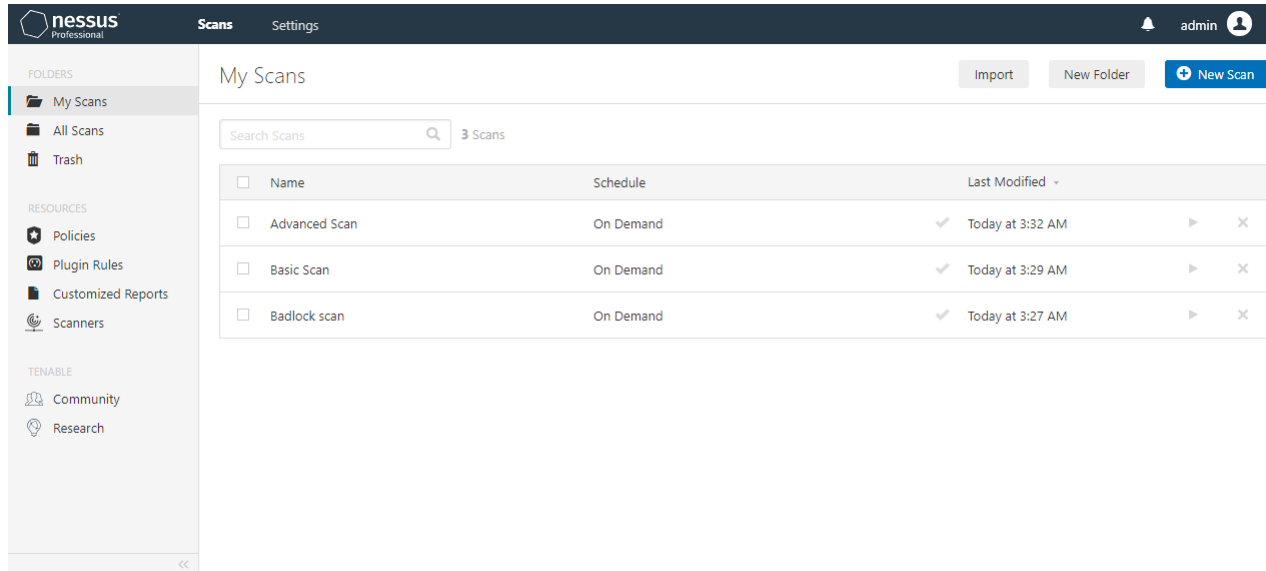From the **Settings** page, you can do the following:

- View information such as the license expiration date and software version.
- (Optional) Configure proxy settings if you skipped it during initial configuration or need to change the settings.
- Change your password.
- View scanner health.

For more information on configuring settings, see Settings in the *Nessus User Guide*.

Scans

On the **Scans** page, you can create, view, and manage scans and resources.

To access the **Scans** page, in the top navigation bar, click **Scans**. The left navigation bar displays the **Folders** and **Resources** sections.

Create a Scan

1. In the top navigation bar, click **Scans**.

   The **My Scans** page appears.

2. In the upper right corner, click the **New Scan** button.

   The **Scan Templates** page appears.

3. Click the scan template that you want to use.

4. Configure the scan's settings.

5. If you want to launch the scan later, click the **Save** button.

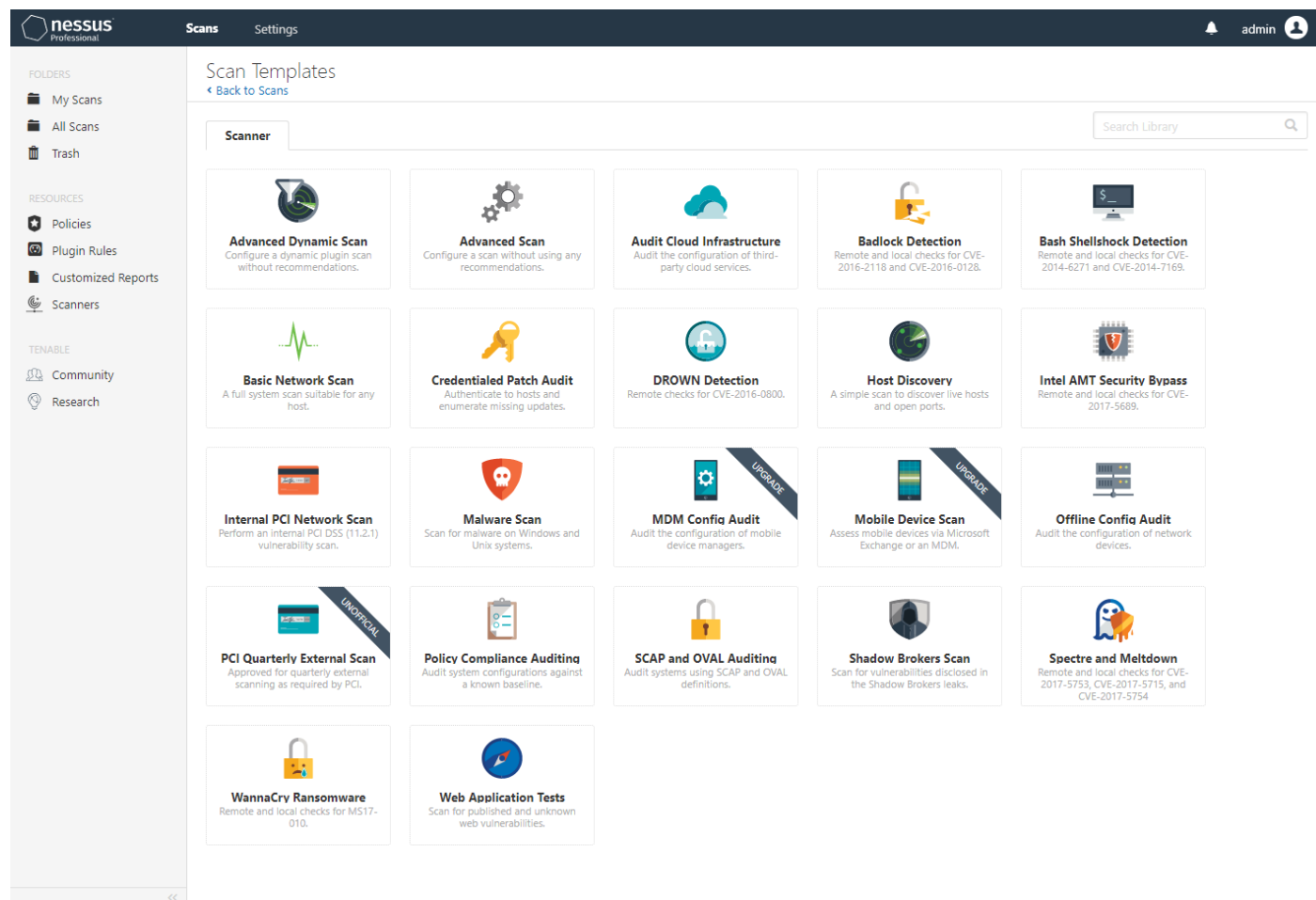   The scan is saved.

   -or-

   If you want to launch the scan immediately, click the ▾ button, and then click **Launch**.

   The scan is saved and launched.

Scan Templates

Templates facilitate the creation of scans and policies.

The Nessus interface provides brief explanations of each template in the product. Some templates may not be available during a trial and are available when you purchase a fully-licensed copy of Nessus Professional. To see a full list of the types of templates that are available in Nessus, see Scan and Policy Templates in the *Nessus User Guide*.

The template you choose determines what settings are configurable and how they can be set. For a detailed explanation of scan settings, refer to Scan and Policy Settings in the *Nessus User Guide*.

A policy is a set of predefined configuration options related to performing a scan. After you create a policy, you can select it as a template in the User Defined tab when you create a scan. For more information, see Create a Policy in the *Nessus User Guide*.

Example: Configure a Basic Network Scan

For your trial period, Tenable recommends using the **Basic Network Scan** template. This template has several default settings preconfigured, which allows you to quickly perform your first scan and view results without a lot of effort. This example walks you through configuring a basic network scan.

1. Configure **Basic** settings section.
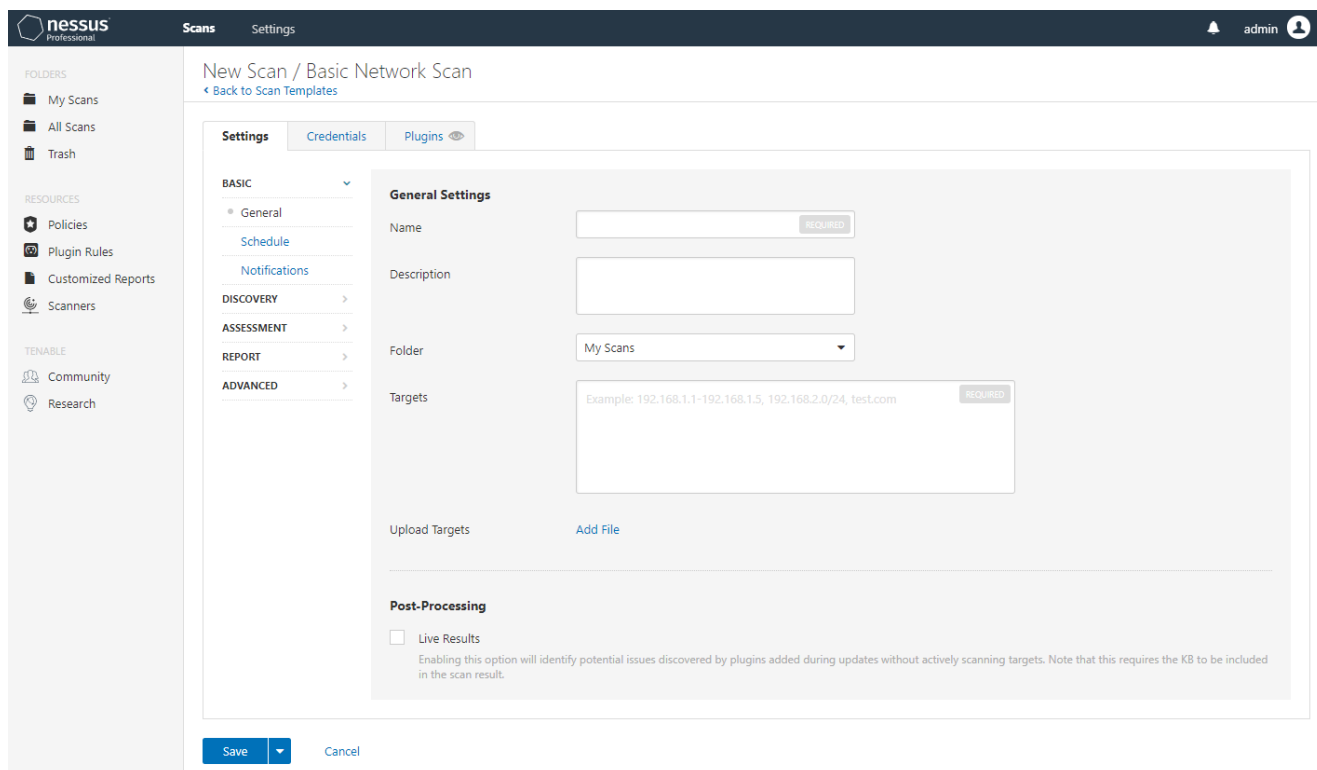
The following table describes the **Basic** settings:

Setting	Description
Name	The name of the scan or policy. The name appears in the Nessus interface.
Description	(Optional) A description of the scan or policy.
Folder	The folder where the scan appears after you save it.
Targets	Specifies one or more targets to be scanned. If you select a target group or upload a targets file, you are not required to specify additional targets.

> **Note:** For your trial period, you can scan up to 32 targets total. A fully-licensed installation of Nessus Professional allows you to scan an unlimited number of targets.

2. Configure remaining settings.

   Although you can leave the remaining settings at their preconfigured defaults, Tenable recommends reviewing the **Discovery**, **Assessment**, **Report**, and **Advanced** settings to ensure that they are appropriate for your environment.

   For more information, see the Scan Settings documentation in the *Nessus User Guide.*

3. (Optional) Configure credentials.

   To configure **Credentials** for a scan, click the **Credentials** tab.
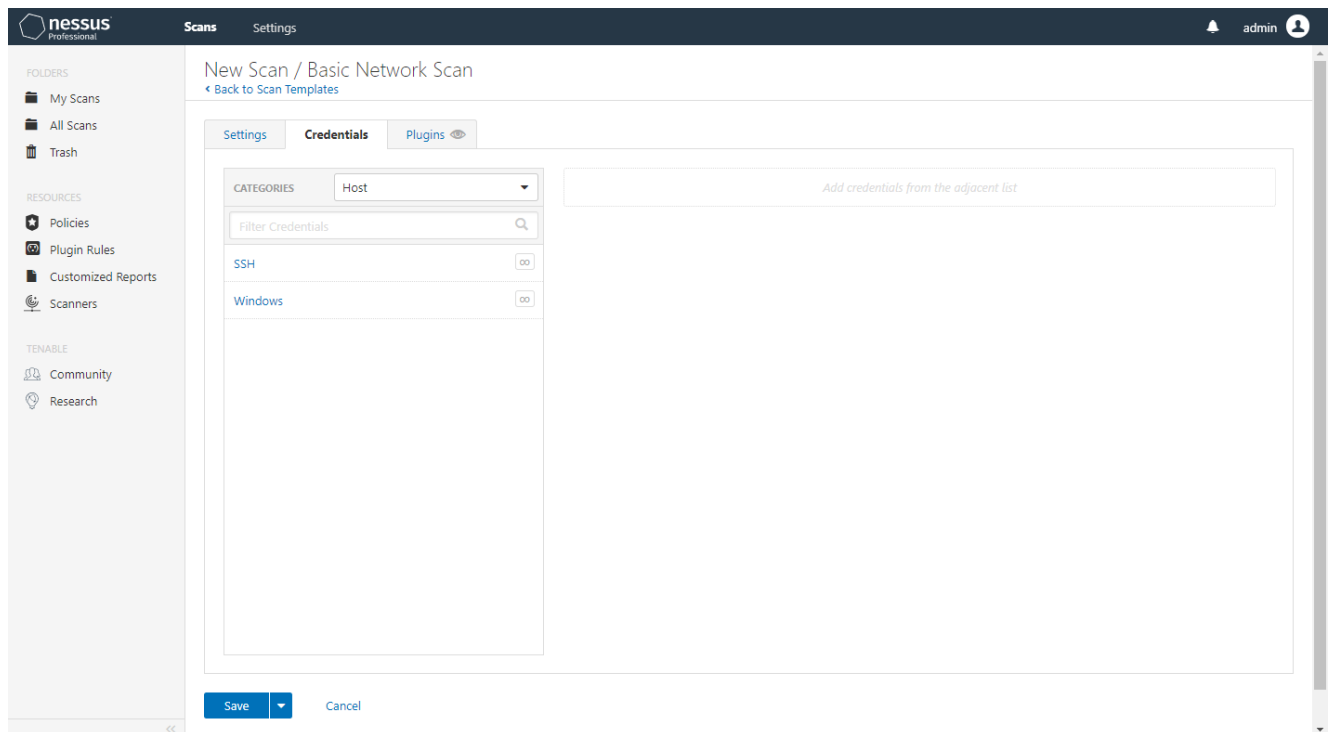
   This allows credentialed scans to run, which can result in much more complete results and a more thorough evaluation of the vulnerabilities in your environment.

4. Launch scan.

   After you have configured all your settings, save and launch the scan.

The time it takes to complete a scan involves many factors such as network speed and congestion, so the scan may take some time to run.

Scan Results

You can view scan results to help you understand your organization's security posture and vulnerabilities. Color-coded indicators and customizable viewing options allow you to customize how you view your scan's data.

You can view scan results in one of several views:

Page	Description
Hosts	Displays all scanned targets.
Vulnerabilities	Lists identified vulnerabilities, sorted by severity.
Remediations	If the scan's results include **Remediation** information, this list displays suggested remediations that address the highest number of vulnerabilities.
Notes	Displays additional information about the scan and the scan's results.
History	Displays a listing of scans: **Start Time**, **End Time**, and the **Scan Statuses**.

Viewing scan results by vulnerabilities gives you a view into potential risks on your assets.

View Vulnerabilities

You can view vulnerabilities found by a scan, or vulnerabilities found on a specific host by a scan. When you drill down on a vulnerability, you can view information such as plugin details, description, solution, output, risk information, vulnerability information, and reference information.

To view vulnerabilities:

1. In the top navigation bar, click **Scans**.

   The **My Scans** page appears.

2. Click the scan for which you want to view vulnerabilities.

   The scan's results page appears.

3. Do one of the following:

- Click a specific host to view vulnerabilities found on that host.

- Click the **Vulnerabilities** tab to view all vulnerabilities.

   The **Vulnerabilities** tab appears.

4. (Optional) To sort the vulnerabilities, click an attribute in the table header row to sort by that attribute.

5. To view details for the vulnerability, click the vulnerability row.

   The vulnerability details page appears, displaying plugin information and output for each instance on a host.

Create a Scan Report

You can create a scan report to help you analyze the vulnerabilities and suggested remediations on affected hosts. You can create a scan report in PDF, HTML, or CSV format, and customize it to contain only certain information.

When you create a scan report, it includes the results that are currently visible on your scan results page. You can also select certain hosts or vulnerabilities to further narrow your report.

To export a scan in Nessus or Nessus DB format, which allows you to import the scan into another Nessus instance or Tenable product, see Export a Scan in the *Nessus User Guide*.

To create a scan report:

1. In the top navigation bar, click **Scans**.

   The **My Scans** page appears.

2. Click a scan.

   The scan's results page appears.

3. (Optional) To create a scan report that includes specific scan results, do the following:

   - Search to narrow your scan results.
   - Use filters to narrow your scan results.

4. In the upper-right corner, click **Report**.

5. From the drop-down box, select the format in which you want to export the scan results.

6. Configure the report for your selected format:

   CSV

   a. Select the check boxes for the columns you want to appear in the CSV report.

   > **Note:** To select all columns, click **Select All**. To clear all columns, click **Clear**. To reset columns to the system default, click **System**.

   b. (Optional) To save your current configuration as the default for CSV reports, select the **Save as default** check box.

   c. Click **Generate Report**.

Nessus creates the scan report.

HTML or PDF

Do one of the following:

- Create a high-level summary scan report:

  a. Select **Executive Summary**.

  b. Click **Generate Report**.

     Nessus creates the scan report.

- Create a custom scan report:

  a. Select **Custom**.

  b. Configure the following settings:

     - **Data** — Select **Vulnerabilities Remediations** to include that information in the report.

     - **Group Vulnerabilities By** — From the drop-down box, select whether vulnerabilities should be grouped by **Host** or **Plugin**.

       - If you group by **Host**, select whether to include **Scan Information** and **Host Information**.

     - If your report includes **Vulnerabilities**, select the **Vulnerabilities Details** that you want to include. If a vulnerability does not have available data for the details you selected, Nessus omits it for that result.

     - **Formatting Options** (PDF only) — Select whether to **Include page breaks between vulnerability results**.

  c. (Optional) To save your current configuration as the default for HTML reports, select the **Save as default** check box.

  d. Click **Generate Report**.

     Nessus creates the scan report.

Conclusion

By following these simple steps, you now have a foundation to begin your exploration into Nessus Professional. Trusted by millions of security professionals worldwide, Nessus Professional is the industry's most widely deployed vulnerability assessment solution.

To continue scanning after your trial period ends and unlock additional features, purchase a Nessus Professional license. You can buy from your Tenable Community account page, or through a Tenable partner.

Purchasing directly from your Tenable Community page unlocks your current build to a 365-day, full license subscription with no need to obtain another activation code.

References

For more information, see the following pages:

- Nessus Professional Product Information

- Nessus Documentation

- Nessus User Guide

- Nessus Release Notes

- Interactive Nessus Professional Demo

Appendix: Installation Procedures

To install Nessus on your operating system, see the following procedures:

- Install Nessus on Linux

- Install Nessus on Mac OS X

- Install Nessus on Windows

Install Nessus on Linux

Use Commands to Install Nessus

From a command prompt, run the Nessus install command specific to your operating system.

Example Nessus Install Commands

Red Hat version 6

```
# rpm -ivh Nessus-<version number>-es6.x86_64.rpm
```

Debian version 6

```
# dpkg -i Nessus-<version number>-debian6_amd64.deb
```

FreeBSD version 10

```
# pkg add Nessus-<version number>-fbsd10-amd64.txz
```

Start the Nessus Daemon

From a command prompt, restart the `nessusd` daemon.

Example Nessus Daemon Start Commands

Red Hat, CentOS, Oracle Linux, Fedora, SUSE, FreeBSD

```
# service nessusd start
```

Debian/Kali and Ubuntu

```
# /etc/init.d/nessusd start
```

Perform the remaining configuration steps in your web browser.

Install Nessus on Mac OS X

Extract the Nessus files

Double-click the `Nessus-<version number>.dmg` file.

Start Nessus Installation

Double-click **Install Nessus.pkg**.

Complete the Tenable, Inc. Nessus Server Install

When the installation begins, the **Install Tenable, Inc. Nessus Server** screen will be displayed and provides an interactive navigation menu.

Introduction

The **Welcome to the Tenable, Inc. Nessus Server Installer** window provides general information about the Nessus installation.

1. Read the installer information.

2. To begin, select the **Continue** button.

License

1. On the **Software License Agreement** screen, read the terms of the **Tenable, Inc.** Nessus software license and subscription agreement.

2. **OPTIONAL**: To retain a copy of the license agreement, select **Print** or **Save**.

3. Next, select the **Continue** button.

4. To continue installing Nessus, select the **Agree** button, otherwise, select the **Disagree** button to quit and exit.

Installation Type

On the **Standard Install on <DriveName>** screen, choose one of the following options:

- Select the **Change Install Location** button.

- Select the **Install** button to continue using the default installation location.

Installation

When the **Preparing for installation** screen appears, you will be prompted for a username and password.

1. Enter the **Name** and **Password** of an administrator account or the root user account.

2. On the **Ready to Install the Program** screen, select the **Install** button.

Next, the **Installing Tenable, Inc. Nessus** screen will be displayed and a **Status** indication bar will illustrate the remaining installation progress. The process may take several minutes.

Summary

When the installation is complete, the **The installation was successful** screen appears.

After the installation completes, select **Close**.

Perform the remaining configuration steps in your web browser.

Install Nessus on Windows

Start Nessus Installation

1. Navigate to the folder where you downloaded the Nessus installer.

2. Next, double-click the file name to start the installation process.

Complete the Windows InstallShield Wizard

1. First, the **Welcome to the InstallShield Wizard for Tenable, Inc. Nessus** screen appears. Select **Next** to continue.

2. On the **License Agreement** screen, read the terms of the Tenable, Inc. Nessus software license and subscription agreement.

3. Select **I accept the terms of the license agreement**, then click **Next**.
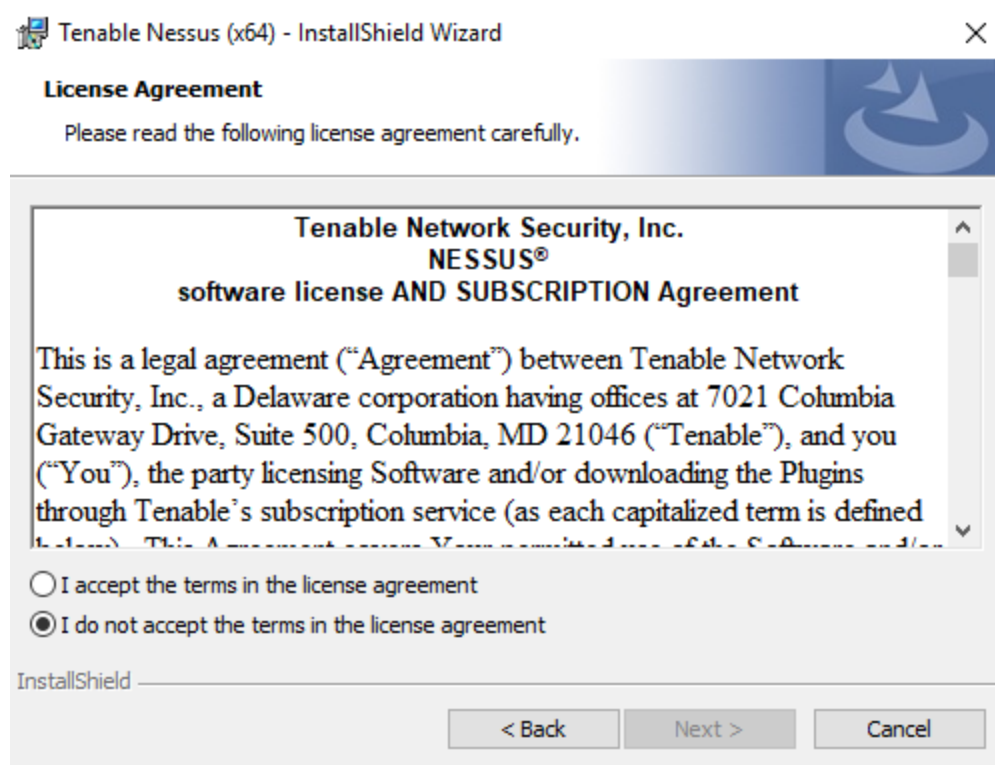
4. On the **Destination Folder** screen, select the **Next** button to accept the default installation folder. Otherwise, select the **Change** button to install Nessus to a different folder.

5. On the **Ready to Install the Program** screen, select the **Install** button.

The **Installing Tenable, Inc. Nessus** screen will be displayed and a **Status** indication bar will illustrate the installation progress. The process may take several minutes.

If presented, Install WinPcap

As part of the Nessus installation process, WinPcap needs to be installed. If WinPcap was previously installed as part of another network application, the following steps will not appear, and you will continue with the installation of Nessus.

1. On the **Welcome to the WinPcap Setup Wizard** screen, select the **Next** button.

2. On the **WinPcap License Agreement screen**, read the terms of the license agreement, and then select the **I Agree** button to continue.

3. On the **WinPcap Installation options** screen, ensure that the **Automatically start the WinPcap driver at boot time** option is checked, and then select the **Install** button.

4. On the **Completing the WinPcap Setup Wizard** screen, select the **Finish** button. The **Tenable Nessus InstallShield Wizard Completed** screen appears.

5. Select the **Finish** button.
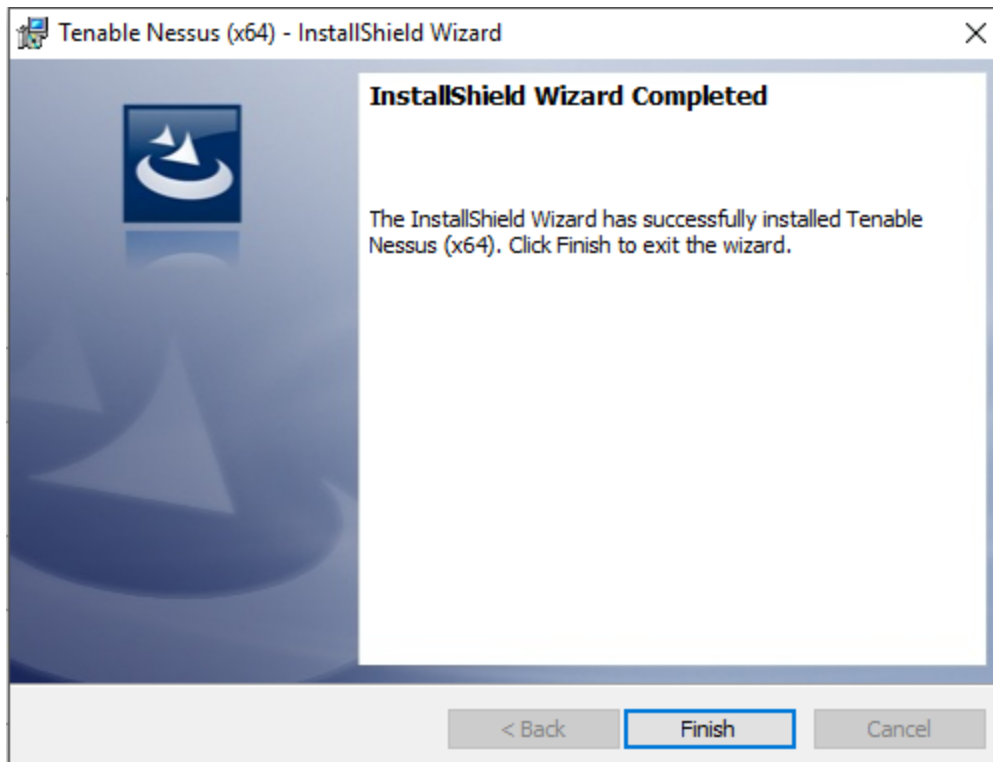
After the **InstallShield Wizard** completes, the **Welcome to Nessus** page loads in your default browser.

Perform the remaining configuration steps in your web browser.