How to deploy Remote Desktop Services (RDS) 2019

Installing Remote Desktop Services (RDS) on Windows Server 2019 appears to take many steps, but in reality is quite easy. In this article, we dive into how to install these services in a domain environment that requires two servers.

Prerequisites

There are only two necessary steps before we embark on installing RDS. Those are:

- All servers are domain joined
- There are at least two available servers

The reason that we need two servers is that the RD Licensing role will go on the second server rather than all on one, as this is considered a Microsoft best practice. In this tutorial, we use the Domain Controller as the RD License server which would not be considered best practice. The reason for doing this in this tutorial is to keep the installation simple.

Installation of Remote Desktop Services base roles

In this first installation series, we are going to add the following roles to our primary RDS server:

- RD Connection Broker
- RD Web Access
- RD Session Host

Installation steps

1. Within Server Manager on the primary RDS server that we are installing, open the **Add Roles and Features Wizard**and select **Remote Desktop Services installation.**

2. For this tutorial we are going to choose **Quick Start,** but if you need further control over the installation process, you can use the **Standard Deployment** to modify more options during installation.

3. Next, we will choose **Session-based desktop deployment**, as this is a common RemoteApp and desktop session model that is commonly used in more traditional RDS deployments.

4. In the **Server Selection**, choose the server where we are installing RDS.

5. Choose **Restart the destination server automatically if required** and click on **Deploy** to start the installation.

6. Verify that all roles have succeeded in installation before moving on to the next steps.

Add secondary server

For this tutorial, we are going to use the Domain Server as our **RD Licensing** server, but to easily install that role, we can add an additional server to the Server Manager.

1. Add the secondary server by right-clicking on the **All Servers**, choosing **Add Servers**, and then picking the server from **Active Directory.**

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2. Navigate to **Remote Desktop Services** and click on the green plus for **RD Licensing.**

3. The **Add RD Licensing Servers** screen will appear and that will let you add the secondary server as a target for the **RD Licensing** role.

4. Click on **Add** to install the role on the secondary server.

5. Verify that the installation is complete by seeing the green plus replaced by the proper icon in **RD Licensing.**

Add RD Gateway Role

Finally, we need to add the **RD Gateway Role** to our primary RDS server.

1. Under the **Remote Desktop Services** screen, click on the green plus over **RD Gateway.**
2. Select the primary RDS server to use for the installation of this role.

3. Name the self-signed SSL certificate with a Fully-Qualified Domain Name.

4. Click on **Next** and then **Add** to install the role to our primary RDS server.

Configure deployment properties

Now that all the roles have been installed, we can configure the actual deployment properties.

1. Navigate to the **Remote Desktop Services** screen and under the **Tasks** dropdown, click on **Edit Deployment Properties.**

2. Leave the default settings on the **RD Gateway** screen and click on the **RD Licensing** menu item.

3. Choose **Per User** at the **RD Licensing** screen. You can choose either, but for the purposes of this tutorial, we want **Per User.**

4. Note the URL of the **RD Web Access** screen as this will be used later to access the applications deployed.

5. For the purposes of testing, you can leave the certificates **Not Configured,** and finally click on **OK** to save the deployment configuration.

If you do want to configure a certificate, you will have to do this for each and every role service individually

Verify Remote Desktop Services

By default, a QuickSessionCollection was created upon installation that contains Calculator, WordPad, and Paint as RemoteApps. This can be used to test the RDP deployment.

1. Navigate to the IIS URL originally located in **RD Web Access**, or you can use https://localhost/rdweb/ if you are located on the RDP server itself, to test IIS.

2. Log into the IIS RDS session using domain credentials.

3. Finally, launch a remote connection, either one you have defined or a default RemoteApp.

Remote Desktop Services may have a lot of steps to deploy, but once setup, it is easy to configure and use. RemoteApps offer a lot of flexibility as does the ability to define collections of RDP connections that can be offered to users.

RDS

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