Horizon Virtual Desktops and Computer Labs Landing Page

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On this page:

Overview

What is VMware Horizon Client?
VMware Horizon Client is a virtual desktop platform that allows undergraduate students to access a virtual version of the Athena computing environment and provides students with pre-configured virtual labs that contain course-specific software.

Who should use it?
The virtual Athena computing environment is available to undergraduate students. Sessions are available for no more than 24 hours and all unsaved data is deleted immediately at the end of the session.

Virtual Computer Labs are available to faculty, instructors, and Department, Lab, and Center (DLC) IT support providers for deployment as virtual Athena Ubuntu 18.0.4 or Windows 10 machines for an MIT class of up to 100 students for the duration of a single academic term. After the course term is over they are deleted.
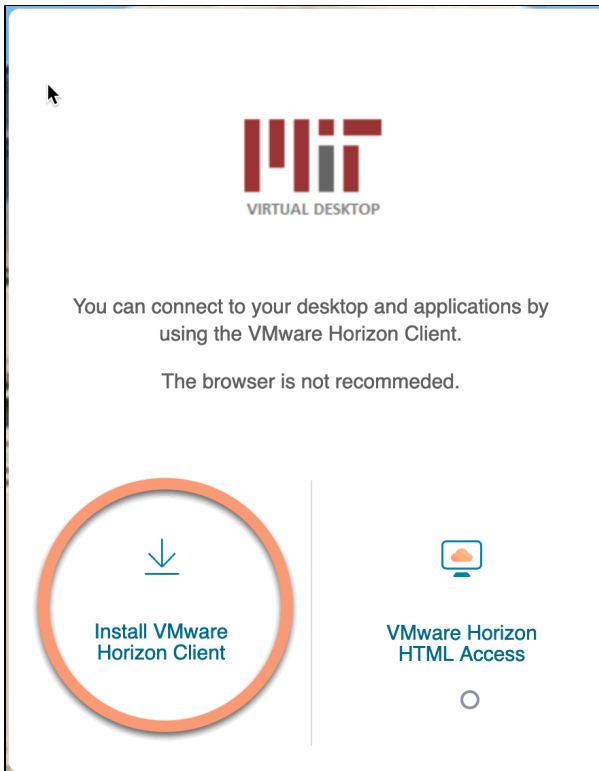
How to Obtain

Requesting Virtual Computer Labs
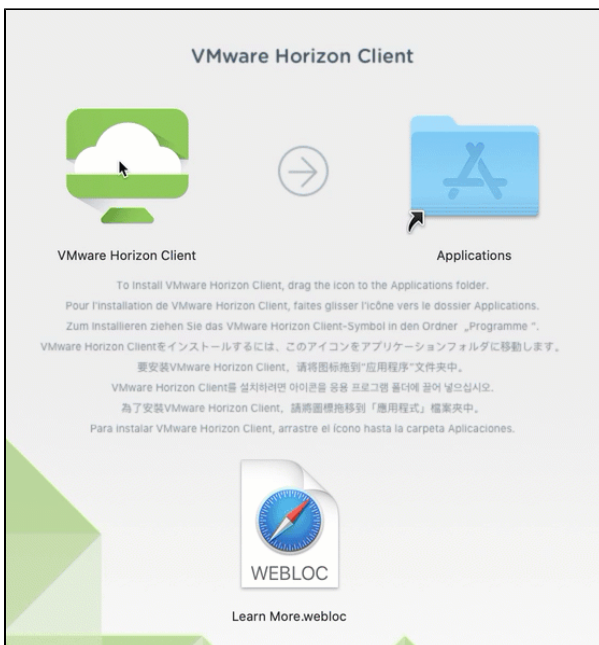
- Request a Virtual Lab for Your Class

Installing VMware Horizon Client

All users of the Horizon environment first need to install the VMware Horizon Client.

1. You must either be on MITnet on campus or connect using an MIT VPN service to download or use Horizon.
2. Go to https://vdi.mit.edu to download the app.

3. Click **Install VMware Horizon Client**

4. Open the installer you downloaded, and agree to the license agreement.
   Result: The installer will open.
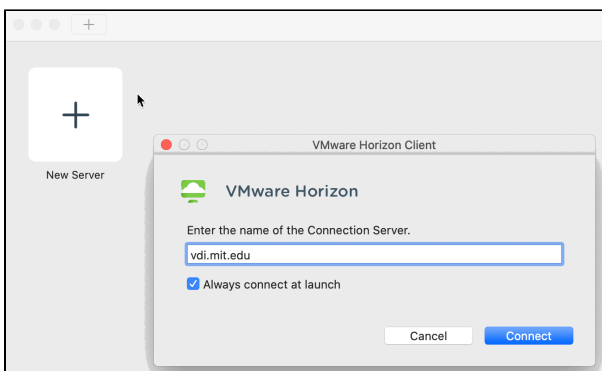5. Drag and drop the client icon into your applications folder.

Result: The VMware Horizon Client is installed and ready for use.

Getting Started with Virtual Computing Environments

1. You must either be on MITnet on campus or connect using an MIT VPN service to download or use Horizon.
2. Open the VMware Horizon Client (see above for installation instructions).
3. The first time you use the system, you may see some requests for permissions and an admin password for your computer may be

requested. MacOS users may also need to grant some permissions in their preferences. Granting access will give you access to the full range of services offered by the Virtual Computing Environments.

4. You may also be prompted to update to the latest version of VMware Horizon Client. It is recommended to always run the latest versions of your software so you have the most up to date security patches and bug fixes.
5. Once the VMware Horizon Client opens, enter the name of the connection server (you may need to click **new server** first): **vdi.mit.edu**

6. Click **Connect**
   Result: You will be prompted to enter your MIT Kerberos username and password, then to authenticate via Duo Authentication Landing Page.

   ⓘ If you have access to more than one virtual environment you will need to select which to open. Virtual Labs will have the course number in the name.
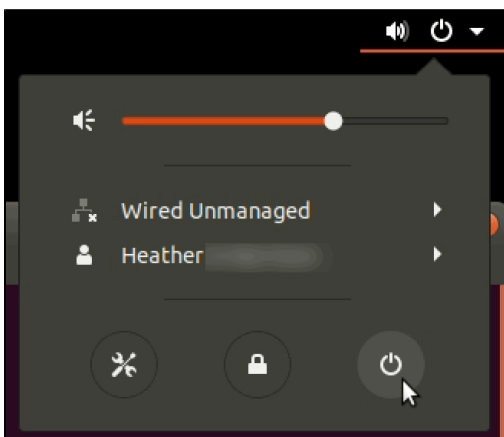7. Authenticate.
   Result: It may take a minute for the virtual environment to open. You may be asked if you'd like to enable drive sharing.
8. Deny or allow as you prefer. We recommend allowing drive sharing. It is often convenient to save files to your local computer for future use. You may also need to upload local media to your Virtual Desktop to complete assignments.
   Result: Your Virtual Environment is open and ready to use.

   ⓘ It is especially important to logout when you are done with a Virtual Athena Environment session as licenses are limited and a shared resource. To logout, click the power icon at the top right and click on the power icon in the menu.

Documentation/Training

- AFS on Athena
- Getting Started with Athena
- Pharos Printing Landing Page

FAQs

- **Can I print to the Pharos printers?** Yes. See: Pharos Printing Landing Page.

- **Why can't I login?** There area few possible reasons.
  - Certificate problems: Go to the Certificate Test Page to determine if this is the issue. If your certificates are not working properly, see: Certificates Landing Page.
  - Your AFS Locker is full: Login to Athena using the dialups and run the command `quota -v` to check your quota. If your quota is full, the temporary files created at login using the Virtual Athena Computing Environment can't be created and login will fail. See: How can I clean up my locker and get below my quota?

- There are no more licenses available: The Virtual Athena Computing Environment is a shared resource and the number of licenses available are fixed. Wait a bit and try again as other users will inevitably end their sessions and free up licenses. If the issue persists, contact IS&T at what's best for this?

- **How long do sessions last for the Athena Computing Environment?** Up to 24 hours. Once a session reaches the 24 hour limit, it will be ended and all related unsaved deleted in an unrecoverable fashion immediately. Save early and save often!

- **How long do sessions last for the Virtual Lab Machines?** The entire semester. They will be ended and deleted in an unrecoverable fashion approximately a week after the class ends.

- **How do I tell how long I've been logged in?** At your athena% prompt, Use the command `last`. It will show you what time you initially logged in for this session.

- **What's the root password on the virtual Ubuntu and Athena machines?** At your athena% prompt, use the command `tellme root` to find out.

- **Can I get a Virtual Athena session that lasts more than 24 hours?** If you have an academic need for such a session, send a request to what goes here?. It will be reviewed. Requests to extend existing sessions should be sent as early as possible as they take time to process.

- **I don't see the virtual lab for my class. What do I do?** Contact your professor or TA. They are the ones who can add you to the list of authorized students for their course's virtual lab.

See Also

- Athena Computing Environment
- Virtual Computer Labs
- Request a Virtual Lab for Your Class

Getting Help

- IS&T Service Desk - Get Help

> 🛈 Additional escalation information for Help Staff can be found here: [hd:BoardEffect Recon].