

# SAP S/4HANA®

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Release and Maintenance Strategy, and Related Commercial Terms for the On-Premise Edition

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The purpose of this document is to provide answers to a selection of frequently asked questions about the support offerings, maintenance and release strategy, and related commercial terms for the on-premise edition of SAP S/4HANA®.

**Note:** This document focuses specifically on the release and maintenance strategy. For more detailed questions on release and maintenance strategy, please contact your local SAP representative.

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## General Introduction: Release and Maintenance Strategy for SAP S/4HANA

The release and maintenance strategy for SAP S/4HANA describes how and when SAP S/4HANA releases are planned; how long these releases will be in mainstream maintenance; and what will happen thereafter.

This release and maintenance strategy is intended to allow customers using the on-premise edition to benefit from the short innovation cycles of typical cloud deployments, while at the same time providing for long-term stability and investment protection.

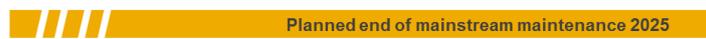
Our well-established SAP release and maintenance principles apply: SAP plans to deliver innovation through releases and feature packages. Feature packages are intended to include additional smaller functional enhancements. New releases are intended to contain larger innovations and are currently planned on an annual basis. The release strategy follows the principle of “one innovation codeline” – that is, the series of releases coming over time combine to form a continued innovation delivery based on an evolving codeline.

For the 1511, 1610, 1709, 1809 editions of SAP S/4HANA, mainstream maintenance will be provided for five years. SAP generally assumes that follow-on releases to SAP S/4HANA may have a similar mainstream maintenance period, but this will depend on the market environment.

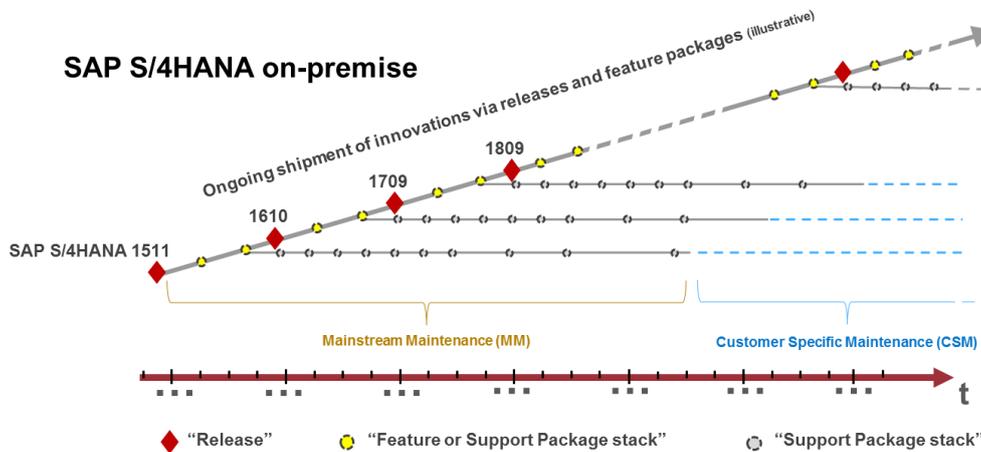
Through the sequence of SAP S/4HANA releases, SAP will provide a long-term planning timeline for SAP S/4HANA, with continuous innovation and long-term planning cycles until at least 2025.

The figure below illustrates the maintenance strategy for SAP S/4HANA, comparing it with the strategy for SAP® Business Suite 7.

### SAP Business Suite 7



### SAP S/4HANA on-premise



### Summary: release and maintenance strategy for SAP S/4HANA

SAP currently intends to make available:

- One major delivery (release) a year
- Mainstream maintenance of about five years for each release
- Ongoing shipment of innovations (releases and feature packages)
- Support packages during mainstream maintenance
- Customer-specific maintenance after mainstream maintenance

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Is the release and maintenance strategy for SAP S/4HANA based on the existing well-established release and maintenance principles of SAP?

Yes. The release and maintenance strategy is based on well-established SAP release and maintenance principles that include regular releases, feature packages, and support packages (see details in our [SAP Release Strategy](#)).

### 2. How long will releases for SAP S/4HANA be maintained?

For SAP S/4HANA, mainstream maintenance will be provided for five years, until the end of 2020 for the 1511 edition and until the end of 2023 for the 1809 edition. SAP's current plans are that follow-on releases to SAP S/4HANA may have a similar period of mainstream maintenance, but this will depend on the respective product and market requirements.

Through the sequence of SAP S/4HANA releases, SAP will provide a long-term planning timeline for SAP S/4HANA, with continuous innovation and long-term planning cycles until at least 2025. SAP intends to strive to make sure that each succeeding release has a sufficient overlap to provide for comfortable upgrade planning.

Given that SAP plans to ship the product on an approximate annual basis, this means that several releases of SAP S/4HANA will be in mainstream maintenance at any time in the future.

### 3. SAP has committed to mainstream maintenance for SAP Business Suite 7 core products until 2025. How does this compare to SAP S/4HANA?

The current releases of SAP Business Suite core application products such as SAP ERP, SAP SCM, SAP CRM, and SAP SRM are committed to mainstream maintenance until at least 2025. The same approach – continuous innovation until at least 2025 – will also be provided for SAP S/4HANA through a series of releases.

### 4. What happens after 2025?

SAP will inform our customers in due time. The current commitment for SAP Business Suite software is comparable with the current cycles for SAP S/4HANA. Both offerings provide security for at least 10 years into the future.

### 5. What happens after mainstream maintenance?

Once mainstream maintenance of an SAP S/4HANA release ends, customer-specific maintenance applies (for more information, see SAP Note [52505](#)).

### 6. Does SAP plan to ship innovation in SAP S/4HANA in the same way that it does for core products in SAP Business Suite 7?

SAP will deliver innovation through releases and feature packages for SAP S/4HANA. Releases are planned to contain larger innovations and are currently planned on an annual basis. Feature packages shipped in-between releases are intended to include additional smaller functional enhancements. To ensure short innovation cycles, features in SAP S/4HANA will not be shipped through SAP enhancement packages.

**7. How does the SAP S/4HANA release model allow for both innovation and long-term planning timelines?**

First, the short sequence of releases and feature packages provides for a continuous flow of innovations and new capabilities. If customers decide to follow a progressive adoption strategy, they can take advantage of cloud-like innovations (through releases and feature packages). Second, SAP also offers a long-term perspective for our more conservative customers for longer mainstream maintenance phases of the individual SAP S/4HANA releases. SAP's long-term maintenance offering is not based on a single release but on a number of subsequent releases optimized to the individual situation of every individual product. The sequence of overlapping releases for SAP S/4HANA is intended to represent a long-term planning option.

**8. Are the SAP S/4HANA releases, feature packages, and support packages different from other SAP products?**

No, all of the SAP shipment vehicles have the same characteristics and follow the same SAP rules.

**9. Can customers run existing add-ons with SAP S/4HANA?**

Customers can run only those add-ons that are explicitly made available for SAP S/4HANA. This is necessary to make sure that these add-ons work properly with SAP S/4HANA and fulfil the simplification requirements as well as other prerequisites for SAP S/4HANA.

Customers can find a list of add-ons available for SAP S/4HANA in the [Product Availability Matrix](#) from SAP. For more information on the licensing model for existing functionality under SAP S/4HANA, see the separate [FAQ on SAP S/4HANA compatibility packages](#).

**10. What happens when the mainstream maintenance of a release of SAP S/4HANA ends?**

The respective release of SAP S/4HANA will automatically enter a customer-specific maintenance phase. The SAP release and maintenance policy will make sure that at least one new release of SAP S/4HANA is available and in mainstream maintenance at that point in time.

**11. How will SAP help customers move from a current installation of SAP Business Suite to SAP S/4HANA, or from an installed release of SAP S/4HANA to a follow-on release, in a simple and nondisruptive way?**

SAP has invested heavily in improvements of software lifecycle tools and methodologies such as SAP Activate to help customers move to SAP S/4HANA and to reduce upgrade efforts for further releases. An explanation of the involved methodology in form of a project roadmap can be found [here](#) for system conversions from SAP Business Suite to SAP S/4HANA and [here](#) for release upgrades within the SAP S/4HANA product.

**12. Does a direct upgrade path always exist for an SAP S/4HANA release prior to the most current one?**

If the starting release is in mainstream maintenance, a direct upgrade from a previous SAP S/4HANA release (or feature or support package) to a later SAP S/4HANA release should usually be available. If the SAP S/4HANA starting release is already in customer-specific maintenance, a two-step or multistep upgrade may be required; for more information on this scenario, see the [Product Availability Matrix](#) from SAP.

**13. Is there a direct upgrade path available for SAP Business Suite core products to SAP S/4HANA?**

A technical and commercial conversion to SAP S/4HANA is required for SAP Business Suite software because SAP S/4HANA is a separate product. For more information related to the transition to SAP S/4HANA, see the blog [SAP S/4HANA System Conversion – At a glance](#) for further details.

**14. What is the versioning convention for SAP S/4HANA releases?**

Instead of traditional release numbering (x.y.: <SAP name> 3.6), releases of SAP S/4HANA releases are versioned according to the year and month of the shipment date (YYMM). So for SAP S/4HANA 1511, the 1511 stands for November 2015).

**15. How does the release strategy for the on-premise edition of SAP S/4HANA relate to the cloud deliveries of SAP S/4HANA?**

The release strategies of the on-premise and cloud editions of SAP S/4HANA are aligned as the underlying development code line is the same.

**16. Do customers need to “switch on” the new functionality?**

Feature packages shipped with SAP S/4HANA follow the existing feature package rules and are currently planned to – as far as possible – provide features that are deactivated by default with the option to activate them. For technical reasons, features may be activated from the beginning.

**17. Will SAP S/4HANA also offer enhancement packages as with SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA?**

No. Features and new capabilities for SAP S/4HANA will be shipped through releases and feature packages.

**18. Where do I find the road map of SAP S/4HANA and SAP S/4HANA Cloud?**

All SAP road maps are published under <http://www.sap.com/roadmaps>. The latest road maps can be found at:

- [SAP S/4HANA \(on premise\)](#)
- [SAP S/4HANA \(Cloud\)](#)

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