

How to Update CommCare Application Content

Updating CommCare Content is the process of updating an installed application to a newer version of the application that has been released from CommCareHQ.

Note: Updating the CommCare software is different from updating a CommCare application!

There are two components to CommCare:

- 1- the **CommCare software** which is the the shell of the program. CommCare mobile client is the same for all projects.
- 2- the **CommCare content** which is often referred to as the "application" (forms, case management, multimedia, etc.)

These instructions are for the application content component. For instructions on updating the CommCare software, see [this](#) page.

Making Changes to Application Content

Before deploying changes to your application you may want to read [Making Changes to a Deployed Application](#) which outlines how changes can affect data exports or application usability.

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Releasing New Versions and Updates

Once you have lots of versions they will all be listed as follows:

The screenshot shows the 'Versions' tab in the CommCare interface. It displays a list of application versions. At the top left, there is a 'Make New Version' button. At the top right, there is a 'Show only released versions' toggle. The list contains several versions, each with a 'Latest', 'Released', and 'In Test' label. The 'Latest' label is highlighted in green. Below each version, there is a 'Publish' button and a 'Revert to this Version' button. The 'View More' link is at the bottom of the list.

The main function to be aware of is the **Latest Released** label. Once an application is marked as "**Released**" it means that when a mobile worker updates the application on their phone, CommCareHQ will send the most recent released version. You should be able to update your phone without re-installing your application with these steps:

- Make a new version of the application on CommCareHQ
- Click on "Released", and notice that the version that you clicked this on has "Latest" next to it
- Update the mobile app (see below)

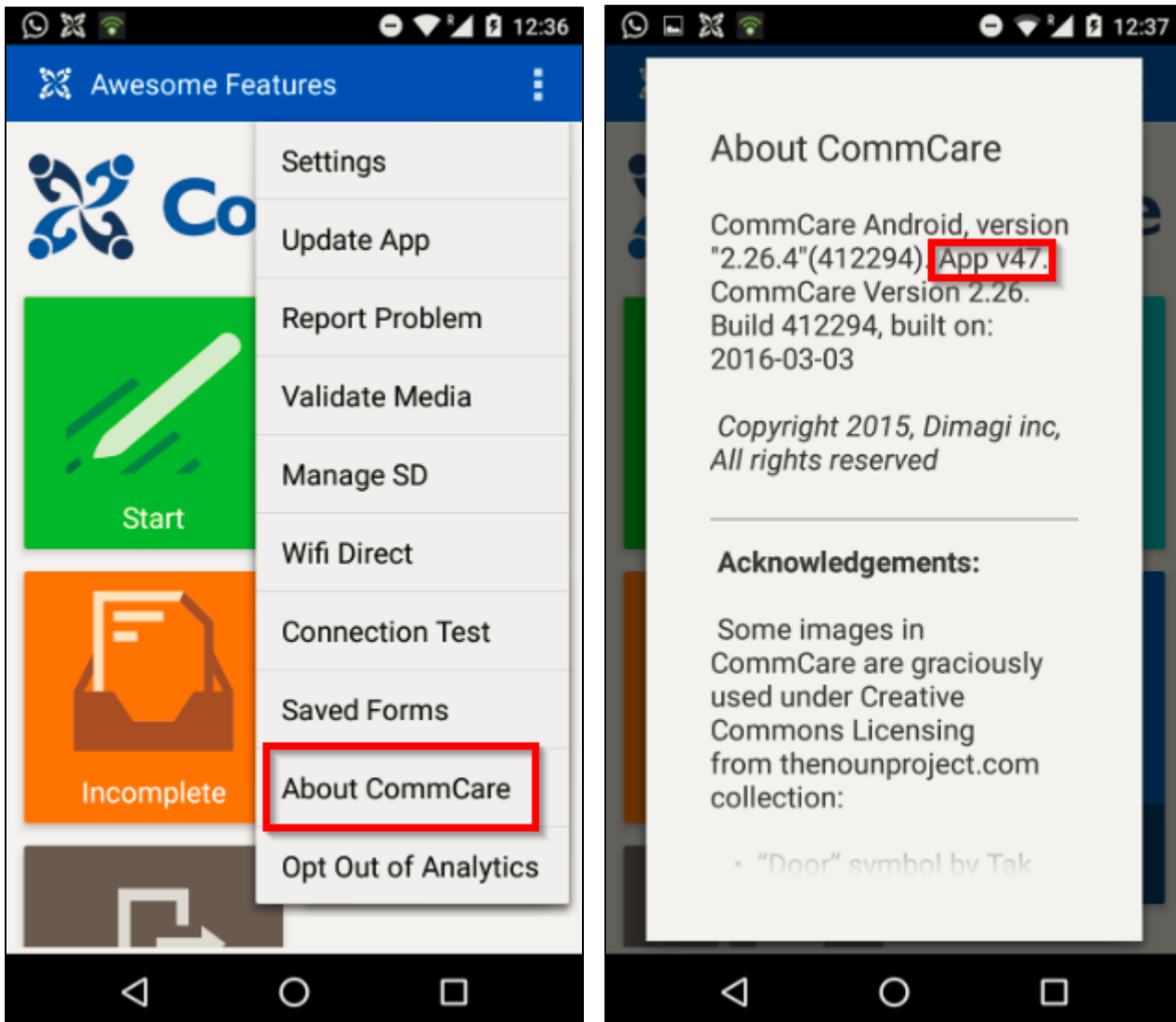
There are several other actions on this page:

- **View More** - this button will allow you to see older versions, which are hidden by default.
- **Revert** - this will restore your application on CommCareHQ to its state at the time of a version. For example, if you accidentally deleted a module, you can go revert to a version of the application that had the module.

When looking for updates, CommCare apps will look at the **latest, released** build. If an application is already updated to (or was installed with) the newest build which has been marked as "Latest Released", it won't update, even if newer (unreleased) builds have been created. If the latest released build's version is lower than the installed build, an update will not occur. If, for example, the last release was version **70**, the currently installed build is version **73** (for testing and development) and there exists a newer unreleased build **74**, the app will not attempt to update. If **74** is released, the current build will update the next time it checks.

Determining Your Current App Version

On CommCare Android you can view the current app version by choosing **About CommCare** from the settings menu either before or after logging in.



You can also determine the deployed version on CommCareHQ by using the **Application Status Report** in the [Manage Deployment Reports](#).

Application Update Settings

Auto-Update

CommCare can be configured to check for updates on a regular schedule. This is specified by the **Auto Update Frequency** setting in the **Advanced Settings** section of the **Application Settings**. When set to auto-update, CommCare will attempt to check CommCareHQ for new resources on a daily or weekly schedule. This check occurs in the background, immediately after login. If updates are found, they will be downloaded and applied the next time the user logs in. Users can cancel updates being downloaded by navigating to "Settings -> Update App" on the mobile device.

If the app can't contact the server, it will try again on a future login.

Advanced Feature: Update Target Options: Allows you to turn on Developer Mode and use the Latest Saved State of your app without making a full release.

Manual Update

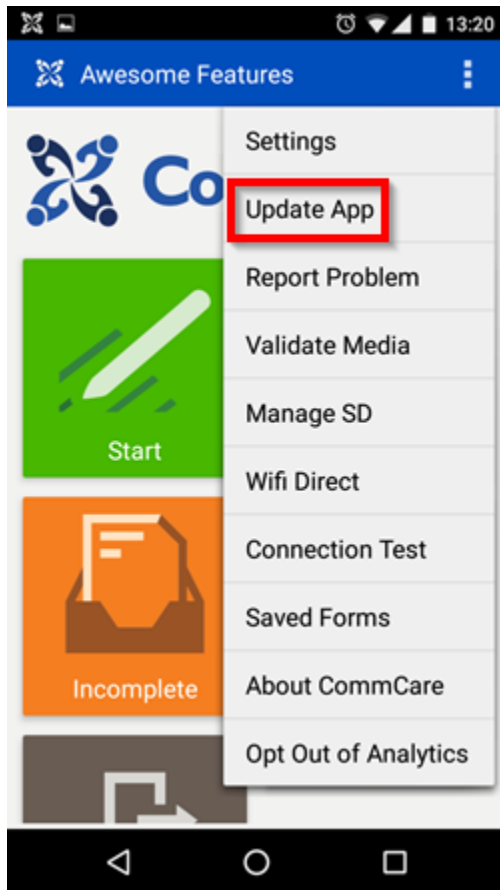
A manual update can also be initiated from the CommCare mobile application.

Updating CommCare on Mobile

Android

Option 1 - Normal Update (Recommended Workflow): This option is the normal update workflow for apps, and is recommended in most scenarios. Your device will need to have a network connection in order to update this way.

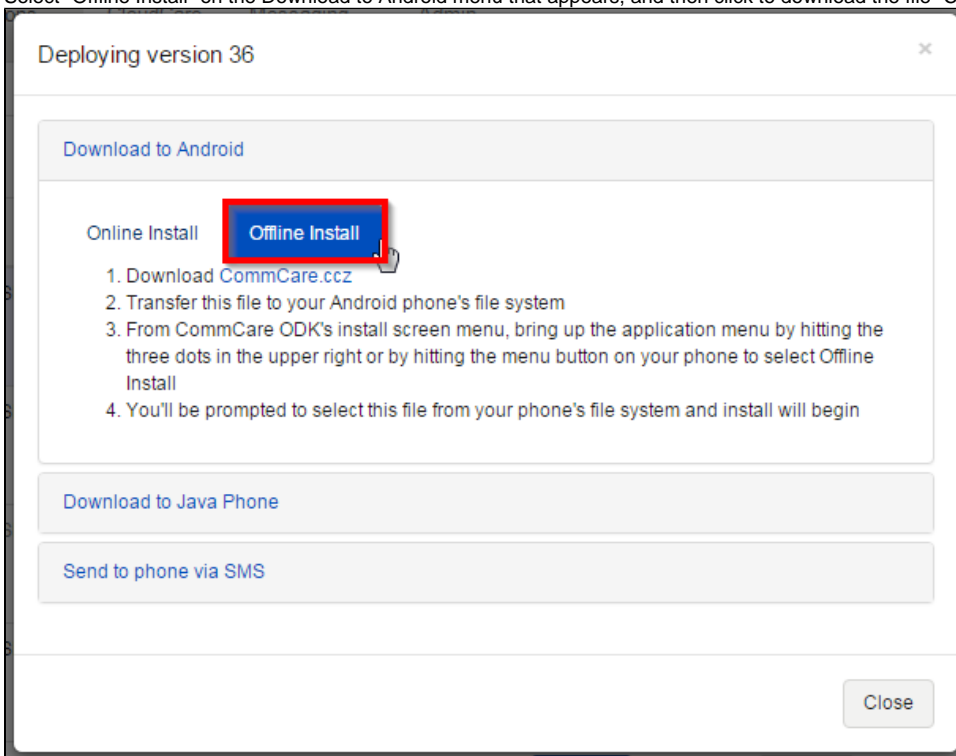
1. Log into CommCare (it is not possible to update CommCare when using Demo mode)
2. From the CommCare home screen, open the settings menu by pressing the three dots in the upper right-hand corner (or your phone's Settings button)
3. Select **Update App** and CommCare will look for a new version, and download it if available. The version of the app that is downloaded will be the most recent starred build.
4. When the download is complete, select the green update button to complete the upgrade process and log you out of the app
5. Once the app is updated, you will see a message that reads "App update was successful" and you can log in again to start using the new app version



Option 2 - Offline Update: This option is primarily useful in scenarios where you know that you will not have a network connection when performing the update. Note that you WILL still need a connection to download the .ccz file initially (step 3 below). This option may also be useful if you want to update to a specific version that is not the latest starred build, or (for advanced users) to update to a .ccz that you have edited locally.

1. Connect your phone to the computer. Open the phone's SD card. (Sometimes phones will have two SD card folders - one in internal memory and one that is the actual physical SD card. In this case try using the internal SD card first).

2. Make sure you have a file browser on your phone (This should come automatically with all devices). If you do not, you can download one from the Play Store (ex. Amaze File Explorer).
3. On HQ, go to the Deploy page for your app, find the build you want to update to, and then press the "Deploy" button for that build.
4. Select "Offline Install" on the Download to Android menu that appears, and then click to download the file "CommCare.ccz".



5. Copy the downloaded .ccz file to your phone.
6. From the CommCare home screen, open the settings menu by pressing the three dots in the upper right-hand corner (or your phone's Settings button)
7. Select **Update App**. If you do not have a connection, the app update screen will say "No network connectivity". However, you can open the settings menu on that screen (the three dots in the upper right-hand corner), and then select **Offline Update**.
8. Choose the .ccz file that you just downloaded. If you cannot find the file, you may need to tell your device to "show internal storage" or "display advanced devices", which should be in the settings drop down when you open the initial file selection from CommCare. If this doesn't work, install Amaze File Explorer and select the file that way.
9. Select **Update App** once more to start the update process.

CommCare for Feature Phones

Remote update is not well supported on feature phones; in general you should expect to simply remove the old version of the app and install the new version.

There is a update feature which sometimes works in areas with very good connectivity: Login as "admin" or a user with admin rights, and from the home screen navigate to **Settings -> Check for Updates** or in the login screen go to **Options -> Tools -> Check for Updates**

When new features are added they are generally added to **Major** and **Minor** updates to CommCare. If an application on HQ is moved to a higher **Minor** or **Major** version number (1.2 -> 1.3 for instance), an application's resource files won't be able to be downloaded by an older version of CommCare.

Advanced Software Upgrades

Since CommCare's resources are almost always included with the application files, upgrading CommCare often happens at the same time as the Application Resources are updated, and as such a **full re-installation** should be used to update both at the same time (see note below). This method of upgrading is not fully supported, but can be used by experts.

In-Place Upgrade

In-Place upgrades basically involve installing the application onto the phone *without* first removing the old version. This is possible using the **OTA**, **Phone-to-Phone**, and **Memory Card** installation techniques. It is never recommended unless you are using a completely offline deployment, or in specific future use cases where **OTA** installation is being used to manage remote upgrades.

The below are guidelines for the *minimum* that should be required when performing an upgrade. Keep in mind that the *safest* way to upgrade an app is to always follow the **full re-installation** instructions.

Major Version (1.N.N -> 2.N.N)

Major version bumps will first require the migration of your application's resources to the newest version using CommCare HQ. Once a build of the app is available on the newest version is available, you should follow the **full re-installation** instructions.

Minor Version (1.1.N -> 1.2.N)

Minor version bumps shouldn't require any changes to your application resources (although they will often permit you to include new features in them), simply create a new build with the existing resources and perform a **full re-installation**.

Maintenance Version (1.1.1 -> 1.1.2)

Maintenance releases are generally designed to be safe for an **in-place upgrade** on top of the old app (generally in order to correct bugs with OTA upgrades, although this feature isn't widely usable yet). However, a **full re-installation** is still recommended.