Getting Started Guide for the IBM Rational ClearCase Product Family: Overview

New to IBM Rational ClearCase? Gain familiarity with the product and get up and running with it by using the resources below. This list will be updated as new material becomes available.

This article provides the first stop on the road to getting started with IBM Rational ClearCase. Through this article, we will give an introduction to ClearCase, and provide a roadmap to the resources at developerWorks Rational for getting up to speed and deploying or using Rational ClearCase quickly and easily depending on your role in your organization (as a user, administrator, or project manager). This roadmap will give you categorized pointers to developerWorks Rational resources: real-world articles, documentation, training, and support tips that will aid in making effective use of Rational ClearCase and related products. This roadmap is oriented toward first-time users of Rational ClearCase, towards administrators who are approaching relatively new ClearCase deployments, and toward project managers who are considering widespread deployments of ClearCase. As you get started with Rational ClearCase, you may want to bookmark the Web page that provides a roadmap to using ClearCase for your role. When you have questions, you may find a developerWorks Rational resource that helps you through that next step with real-world guidance from a number of experts or pointers to the appropriate section of ClearCase documentation or training.

What is Rational ClearCase?

Rational ClearCase is a version control and configuration management system, generally considered to be the premier product of its type in the software industry. It provides an integrated system for the essential functions of version control, configuration management, build management, workspace management, and process configurability that can scale with the size of your team. By automating many of the necessary, yet error-prone tasks associated with software development, Rational ClearCase enables teams of all sizes to build the highest-quality software and Web applications. Version control tools have traditionally only provided configuration management of source code, Rational ClearCase helps software teams control everything that evolves in development — including requirements, models, source code, documentation, and test scripts through integrations with other Rational tools. The links below will give you some more general overview material on ClearCase and will help you choose which version of Rational ClearCase best suits your needs.

Rational ClearCase Product Information
For a general introduction to ClearCase, these pages describe ClearCase in detail and give you links to read more about what ClearCase does, who it's for, and when to use it.

Rational ClearCase Demos
For high-level guided overviews of ClearCase and ClearCase LT, spend a few minutes with these online demonstrations.

What is Rational ClearCase LT?
This leads to information on Rational ClearCase LT, Rational Software's entry-level Configuration Management and Version Control tool.

How do I use Rational ClearCase?

Successful software development is based upon the success of your team and its use of Rational ClearCase. Your use of Rational ClearCase will depend on your role on the team. The Getting Started Guide for Rational ClearCase considers three different roles: team member, administrator, and project manager. For each role, we provide a guide or roadmap to the different resources on developerWorks.
Rational that will get you up and running as quickly as possible, and to give real-world advice about using Rational ClearCase.

**Team Member** – You will be using Rational ClearCase in the context of designing, creating, building, testing, or documenting your software. In the roadmap, we’ve set up the steps that you’ll need to take in order to get up and running using ClearCase: checking files out and in, performing builds, and using the "rules of the road" that your Project Manager and Administrator create so that the team can produce its software.

**Administrator** – You will be in charge of a Rational ClearCase installation or of setting up and maintaining the Rational ClearCase environment for one or more software development groups. In the roadmap, we’ve set up the steps that will get you to the initial planning of the deployment, deciding the hardware and network infrastructure you’ll need depending on the size of your project, establishing polices for the team (“rules of the road for team members”), migrating your existing assets into Rational ClearCase as well as a wealth of troubleshooting tips. We’re trying to provide the information that you need to get your team up and running smoothly as quickly as possible.

**Project Manager** – You will be responsible for deciding how the development team uses ClearCase in the context of your software development project so that the team can work efficiently. In this roadmap, we’ve set up the steps that you’ll need to understand how a ClearCase deployment will provide value for your team, the different ways that you can organize your ClearCase usage, and tips for the kinds of configuration management processes that we’ve found useful and what to avoid.

**What Rational ClearCase training is available?**

It’s important that you and your team get the training that they need to effectively use Rational ClearCase. There are a number of Web-based courses available at developerWorks Rational to get you up to speed quickly. You can also sign up for instructor-led courses that cover other topics, such as administration, in more detail. Here are some links to our course offerings.

**SCM101: Principles of Software Configuration Management with Rational ClearCase UCM**
This Web-based course introduces software developers to the principles of software configuration management, as well as to Rational's software configuration management solution: ClearCase UCM. Conceptual explanations, typical user scenarios, and self-check exercises will introduce you to using UCM to maintain and track changes to software.

**SCM250: Essentials of Rational ClearCase LT**
This Web-based training course covers the fundamentals of using Rational ClearCase LT and applying the UCM approach to the software development process.

**Where do I go for Rational ClearCase support?**

**Rational ClearCase Support page**
This page is the place to go to get help solving a problem, to get the latest patches and downloads, or simply to learn more about Rational ClearCase.