

# Setup and Installation

This page provides an overview on setting up and installing Phoenix FD.

## Overview

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This guide serves as a reference for the installation of Phoenix FD for 3ds Max and 3ds Max Design. You can download the latest official version of Phoenix FD from <http://www.chaosgroup.com> with the account supplied to you by Chaos Group or your reseller.

This page covers installation of Phoenix FD through the Phoenix installer. For additional setup and troubleshooting, see the following pages:

- [Trial Installation of Phoenix FD for 3ds Max](#) - Includes details on how to sign up and use the trial version of the software.
- [Installation Troubleshooting](#) - Provides solutions to common installation issues.
- [Silent Install and Uninstall](#) - Instructions for silently installing or uninstalling Phoenix FD through the command line.
- [Uninstalling Phoenix FD](#) - Instructions for manually uninstalling Phoenix FD through the included Phoenix uninstaller.
- [Set Up Your Phoenix FD License](#) - Instructions for setting up and managing the Phoenix floating licensing system.

If you experience any problems, please check the [Installation Troubleshooting](#) page.

In order to run Phoenix FD for 3ds Max, you need to have access to the License Server (installed on your machine or a connection to one over your network).

## System requirements

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Please make sure that your system fulfills these requirements before installing Phoenix FD:

Phoenix FD for 3ds Max comes in 2 build types - compatible with V-Ray Next and V-Ray 5. If you don't have V-Ray, it does not matter at all which one you install - Phoenix would still be able to simulate, load, save and preview caches, and it would render with the Scanline Renderer. If you do have V-Ray Next or V-Ray 5, please take care to install a matching Phoenix build.

<b>Processor</b>	Intel® 64-bit or compatible processor with <b>SSE 4.2</b> support
<b>RAM</b>	8 GB RAM and 8 GB swap minimum – recommended 32 GB or more RAM, 32 GB or more swap file
<b>Operating system</b>	Windows® 7 SP1, Windows® 8.1 Professional, or Windows® 10 Professional operating system
<b>3ds Max</b>	3ds Max® 2015 / 3ds Max Design® 2015 or later, 64-bit versions only
<b>USB port</b>	Required for dongle licensing, USB 2.0 or newer
<b>TCP/IP</b>	Only IPv4 is supported. IPv6 is currently not supported.
<b>Chaos License Server</b>	4.5.1 or later

## Hardware Advice for Faster Simulating

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Here's some tips to help you make sure your Phoenix sims calculate as fast as possible.

Hardware	Recommendation
Bus speed	Phoenix transfers huge amounts of data between memory and the CPU. The entire simulation grid gets processed tens to hundred times per simulation step, so the bus speed is the bottleneck in most simulations.
CPU speed	Processor speed is more important than core count. Also, NUMA and multiprocessor architectures do not perform well with Phoenix. Simulating on one NUMA node is often faster than waiting for multiple nodes to synchronize.

Fast Storage	Both large and small simulations take significant time just to write the cache files from the simulation and to read them back for the preview, so good storage speed can help decrease simulation times up to 30%. Turning off the preview for all grid and particle channels during large simulations could also help speed up the simulation.
GPU	GPUs are currently only used for the GPU preview of fire/smoke simulations.

## Software Advice for Faster Simulating

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On some machines, the Anti-Virus software may treat Phoenix FD's files *.aur*, *.f3d* and *.vdb* as a potential risk and consume significant processing power to scan them. Since cache files are often hundreds of Megabytes or more, this could cause the simulation to slow down several times.

Consider adding an exception in your Anti-Virus software for these file formats.

You may also add Phoenix FD log file extension (*.log*) or the log file directory (accessible through the [Phoenix Preferences](#)) to the exceptions of the Anti-Virus software.

It may also be beneficial to add an exception for the **3ds Max** process (*3dsmax.exe*).

Here is a short step by step guide by Microsoft on [Adding an Exclusion for Windows Defender](#).

## Installation of Phoenix FD

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The Phoenix FD installer will automatically remove any previous installations. This will allow you to seamlessly upgrade from older versions of Phoenix FD. If you experience problems, you can manually uninstall the previous versions to perform a clean install. For more information, please refer to the [Uninstalling Phoenix FD](#) page.

Before running the installation, make sure your Windows account has administrative privileges and the dongle is not plugged in.

## Setting up the installation

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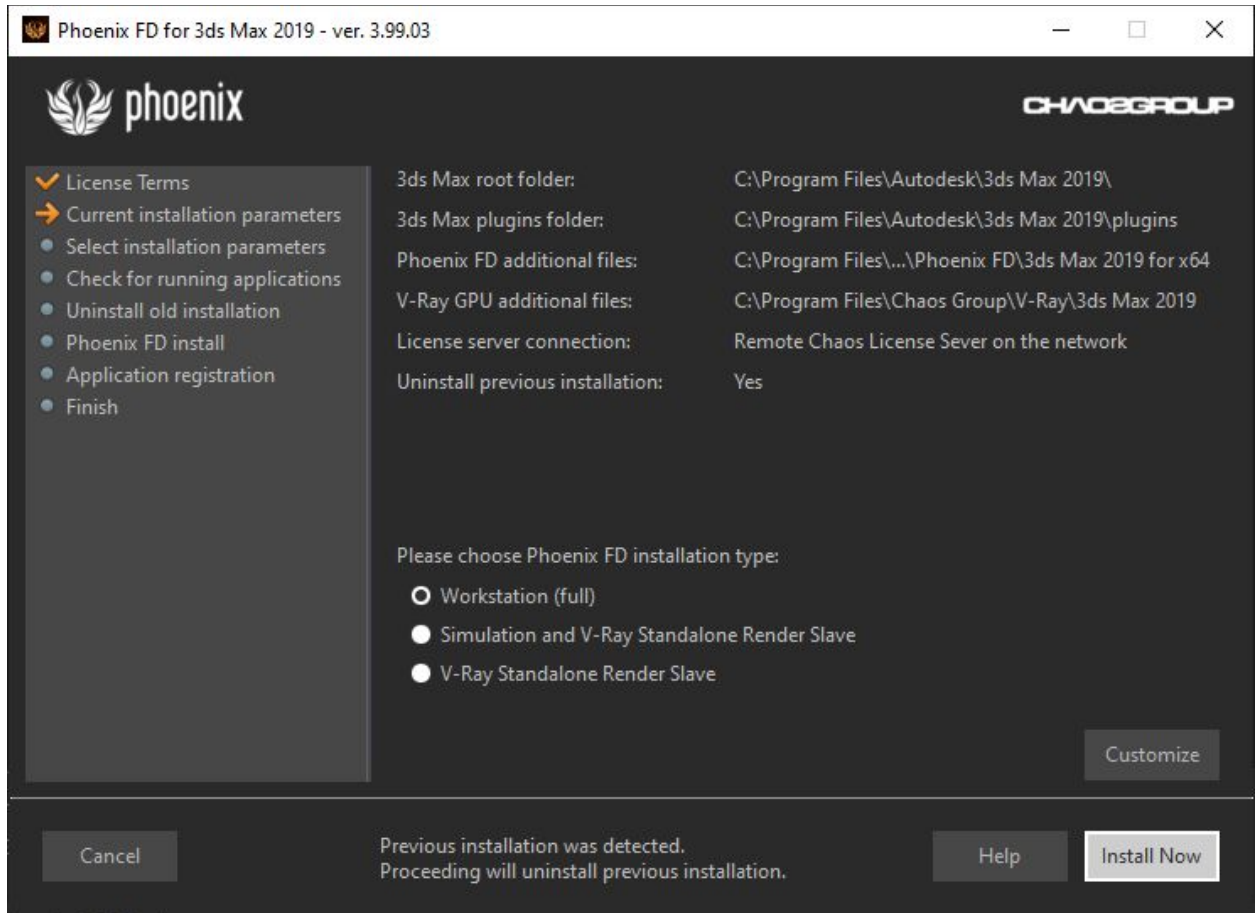
Run the installer.

1. Upon the start of the installation, Windows may ask you for permission to run the installer with administrator privileges. Please confirm.
2. You will be presented with the Phoenix FD [licensing agreements](#). Please take a moment to review the agreements. Click the **I Agree** button to proceed:
3. During the next step, you can choose the installation type. The available installation types are:

**Workstation (full)** – This is a full installation and includes all components necessary to use Phoenix FD. It includes Phoenix FD for 3ds Max, V-Ray Standalone render plugin, and an update to the Chaos License Server.

**Simulation and V-Ray Standalone Render Slave** – This installation includes Phoenix FD for 3ds Max and V-Ray Standalone render plugin. Select this option if you intend to use the machine for network simulations or for distributed rendering of your Phoenix FD cache files. Note: Phoenix FD does not support *distributed* simulations yet.

**V-Ray Standalone Render Slave** – This will install the V-Ray Standalone render plugin.



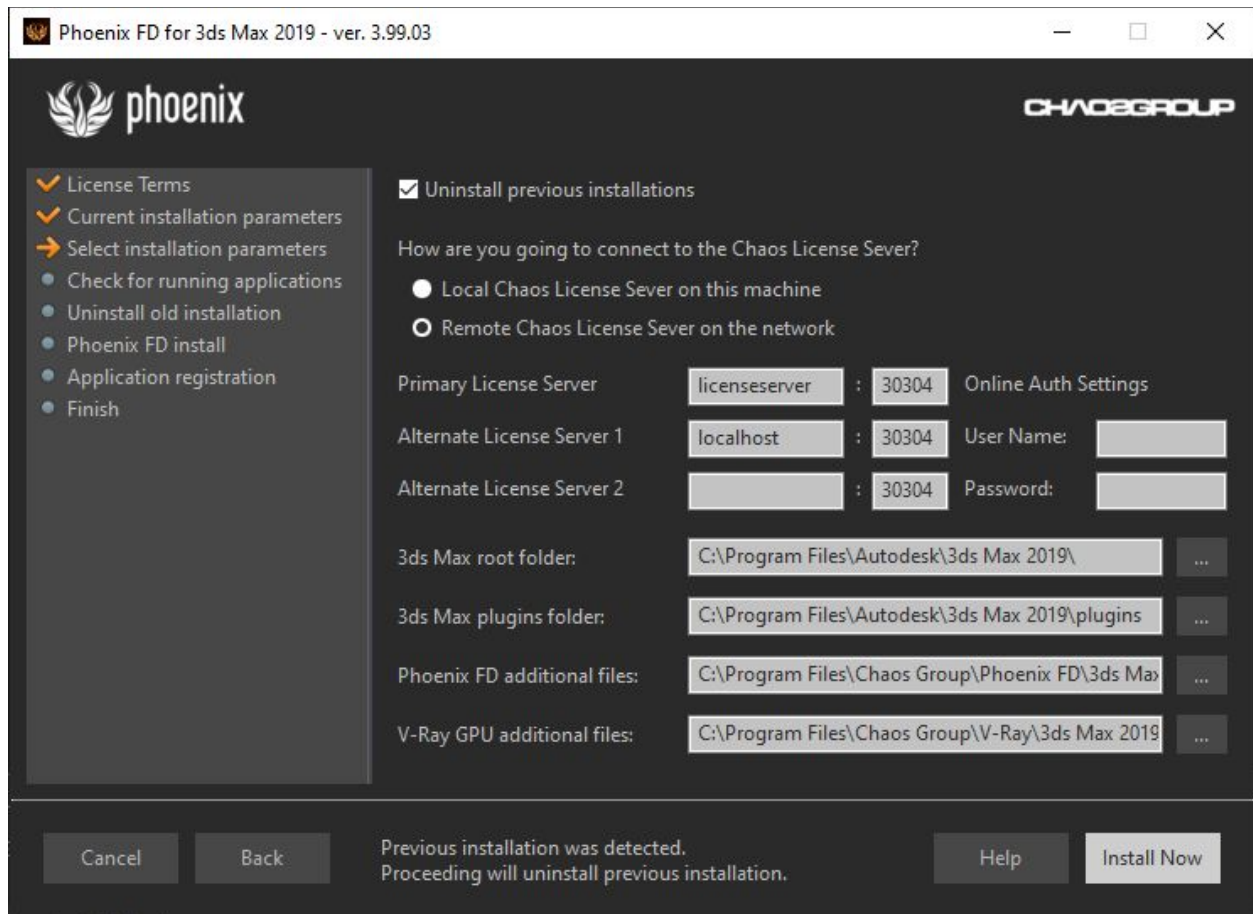
4. After you choose the installation type, you can click the Customize button and adjust the corresponding installation settings. If you have selected the Workstation installation, you will see the full list of customizable settings:

**Uninstall previous installations** – Leave this checked to automatically uninstall any previous versions.

**How are you going to connect to the Chaos License Server?** – Specifies whether the Chaos License Server will run locally or on another machine.

If you select the **Remote Chaos License Server on the network** option, you will have to fill in the IP address of your Chaos License Server in the field labeled **Primary License Server**. Please leave the port 30304 unchanged.

**Specify installation paths** – Please check if the default folders are correct. Common settings for Workstation installation for 3ds Max 2018 with default paths should look like the screenshot below:



5. When ready, click the **Install Now** button.

## Completing the installation

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Please skip the steps that are not relevant for your installation type.

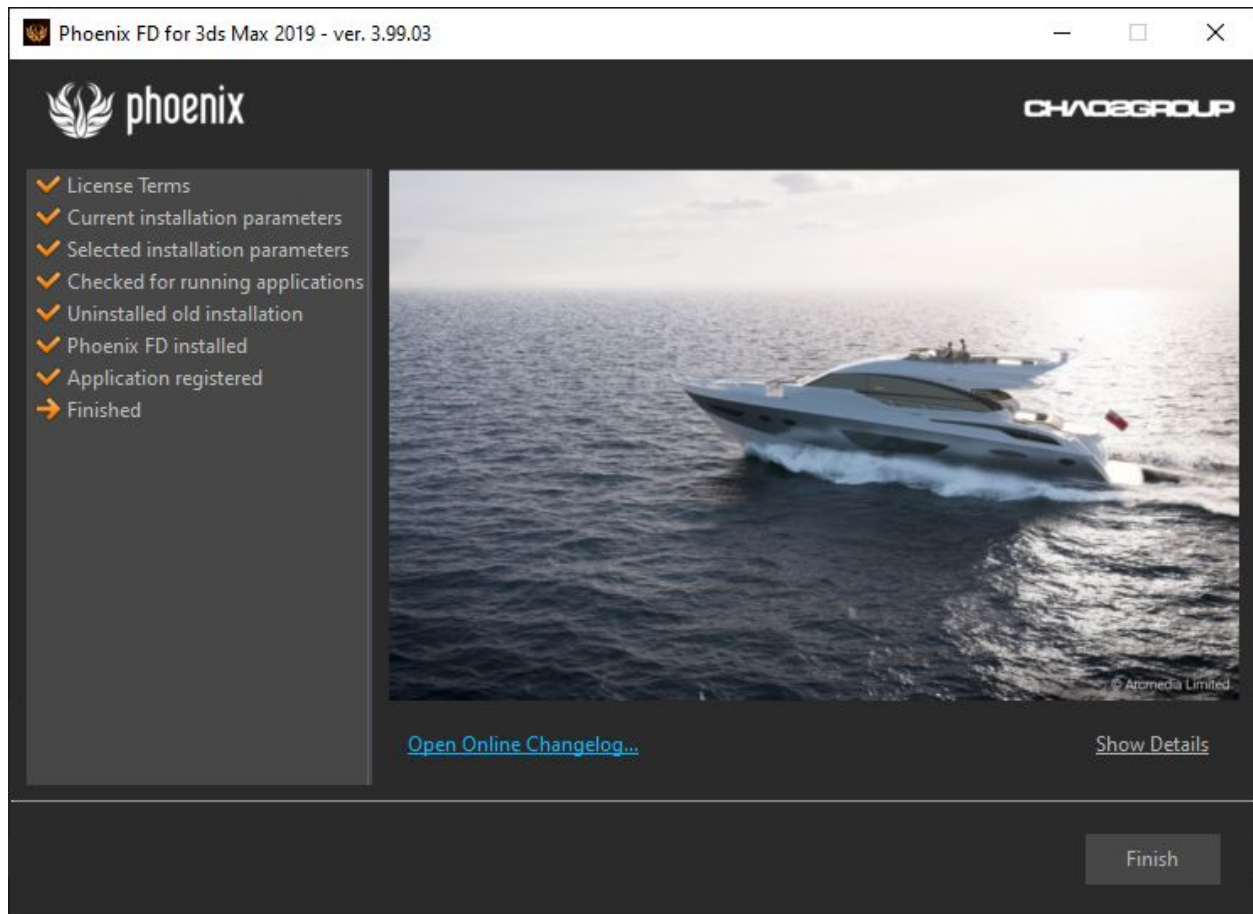
1. After you click the **Install Now** button, the installer will proceed to uninstall any previous versions and install Phoenix FD on your machine:

2. If the installation was successful, you will get this screen.

**Visit our online documentation site** will open a new browser window/tab to the [Phoenix FD for 3ds Max Docs](#).

**Open the changelog file after the installation** will open the text file with changes broken down by releases (also available through the [Version Change Logs](#)).

Click the **Finish** button:



To make sure that your license server is up and running and you have the necessary licenses, please proceed to the [Set Up Your Phoenix FD License](#) page.