

# Totara upgrade pathways

This is a transcript of a video on the Totara Academy

## **You told us you wanted faster access to new features and clearer upgrade timelines, and we listened.**

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Totara now offers two release pathways, giving you more control and flexibility over how you adopt new features and manage updates. Let's take a look at how each option works and who they're designed for.

First, there's the long-term support pathway, our default release option. This pathway is well suited to organisations that prefer planned annual upgrades, giving them time to prepare their teams and processes. With long-term support, you'll have access to one major release each year. For example, upgrading from Totara version 19 to version 20.

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Each major version is fully supported for up to four years, although you're encouraged to upgrade to the latest major version each year, so you can access the latest features and the best possible platform experience. In between these major versions, you'll get monthly patch updates. These updates focus purely on bug fixes and security patches, and you shouldn't notice any changes on your site. These patch updates won't include new features or user experience changes, so your site remains consistent and predictable between major upgrades.

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If your organisation is ready to embrace change a little faster, you might prefer the progressive pathway. This option supports a more agile, iterative approach to platform evolution with the added benefit of opt-in feature controls, so you can adopt new functionality on your terms and at your own pace. Under the progressive pathway, you'll receive multiple minor releases throughout the year, roughly once every 3 months.



These updates may introduce new features or usability enhancements, but importantly, any changes that could alter existing functionality are opt-in. That means they're not enabled by default, so you choose if and when to adopt them. For example, program and certification self-enrollment was introduced in Totara version 19.1.

2:18

If you're on the progressive pathway, you could choose to access that feature right away rather than waiting for it to be bundled into version 20. The progressive pathway gives you more innovation sooner, but it also means a commitment to keep moving forward. Once you've switched to progressive, you'll need to upgrade each time a release is available. Minor releases within the pathway, such as 20.1, 20.2, and 20.3, are only supported until the next release.

You can switch back to long-term support at the next major release if you choose. If you choose to remain on the long-term support pathway, you won't miss out entirely. All features introduced in minor releases in the progressive pathway will be included in the next major release. You'll just receive them a little later. This approach gives you a consistent experience while still ensuring you benefit from key improvements either through regular maintenance updates or new features released at the next major upgrade.

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In summary, when choosing your release pathway for the year, you have two options. Long-term support, where you'll receive one major update per year, plus monthly bug and security patches, although no new features until the next major release. Ideal for teams who manage change in larger planned phases rather than incrementally or progressive where you'll get early access to new features and improvements throughout the year along with regular bug and security patches.

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Ideal for teams who value early access to innovation and can easily absorb incremental change. But once you're on this path, you'll need to upgrade with each minor release and upgrade to the next major version when it becomes available. And remember, you're never locked in.

You can switch between pathways at the start of each major release cycle. For example, if you chose long-term support during version 19, you could switch to



progressive at the start of version 20. Then after upgrading to version 21, you could return to long-term support.

4:29

The choice is yours at the start of every major release cycle. Each pathway offers a different approach to managing updates. Whether you prefer the predictability of scheduled annual releases, or the flexibility to adopt new features as they become available. Your choice will depend on your organization's goals, readiness for ongoing improvements, and how quickly you want to benefit from new capabilities.

If you're unsure which option is right for you, your Totara partner can help you find the best fit.