

---

# FAQs

---

## What is Cumulus Linux?

Cumulus Linux is a Switch Operating System for industry standard hardware. Cumulus Linux is a Linux distribution based on Debian. Cumulus Linux is designed to run on “off the shelf” networking systems which provides the performance boost of switching silicon. Cumulus Linux presents a native Linux environment where the front panel ports are presented and managed as if they were normal server-based NICs, in other words Cumulus Linux accelerates the data forwarding path while preserving the control plane abstractions of standard Linux. The Cumulus Linux CLI is the Bash shell and the Linux kernel is not only used to manage hardware and system resources, but unlike other networking software merely based on Linux, Cumulus Linux provides the native Linux experience throughout. Since Cumulus Linux maintains the standard device abstractions, all interactions with userspace tools are familiar and work out of the box. This differentiates the solution from networking software that is merely Linux based and allows a device running Cumulus Linux to be managed, automated, and monitored with widely available commercial packages and open source Linux tools.

## How is Cumulus Linux licensed?

Cumulus Linux is licensed on a per instance basis. Each deployed network system requires a license. Licenses are provided for a specific term and are bundled as part of a subscription. All software functionality is available with the subscription. A Cumulus Linux subscription includes support and maintenance of the software in addition to the license rights. As long as you have an active contract with Cumulus Networks you'll have access to a range of support options. These support options include access to Cumulus Networks Global Support Services (GSS) on a 24x7 or 8x5 basis (depending on level of subscription). Details on Cumulus Networks' support policy including its packages are located [here](#). There is no 'time bomb' in Cumulus Linux but at the end of a subscription, the rights to use the software, get updates, and receive support cease until the subscription is renewed.

## What are the general hardware and memory requirements for Cumulus Linux?

Current releases of Cumulus Linux support the PPC based Broadcom reference architectures. For a complete list of supported hardware platforms, please look at our [hardware compatibility list](#).

However, Cumulus Linux is designed from the ground up to be extensible to all standard industry networking silicon solutions, from Broadcom, Intel, and Marvel using CPUs from PPC, x86, and MIPS

## If a specific brand of hardware is not supported, how can it be added to Cumulus Networks' qualification list?

Cumulus Networks is continuously working with hardware partners to qualify their hardware with Cumulus Linux. If there is a specific network system that is compatible with Broadcom's Trident+ reference architecture, please contact [sales@cumulusnetworks.com](mailto:sales@cumulusnetworks.com) for information regarding its potential qualification status or the steps needed to have it added to the qualification list.

Other reference architectures are being considered and will be added as appropriate.

## Where is Cumulus Linux currently used?

Cumulus Linux is currently being used in large scale data centers - at service providers, web 2.0 companies and large enterprises. It is targeted at data center access and aggregation. As Cumulus Linux is deployed in new network functional locations, more features will be added. Please contact [sales@cumulusnetworks.com](mailto:sales@cumulusnetworks.com) if you have any questions.

## How do I download Cumulus Linux?

Cumulus Linux is currently in limited release, and Cumulus Networks will be on boarding customers through a qualification process. Please register on the main Cumulus Networks website or contact us at [sales@cumulusnetworks.com](mailto:sales@cumulusnetworks.com) for further information.

## How do I get updates for Cumulus Linux?

Cumulus Linux can be updated similarly to any other Linux Distribution. Any package included in Cumulus Linux Distribution and its related update will be available in a Cumulus Networks Archive. As default, Cumulus Linux installs with the sources.list file pointing to [repo.cumulusnetworks.com](http://repo.cumulusnetworks.com). Hence updating a specific package is as simple as:

```
apt-get update
```

```
apt-get install {packagename}
```

This will update the latest package from Cumulus Linux repository. Alternatively, users can also download the latest “image” (binary) from Cumulus Networks’ main website and install it on the specific network system. But this procedure is used only for initial system install, and will not provide the latest updates. Apt-get will still need to be executed to bring the system up to date.

## Can I install new packages - not included in the image?

Cumulus Linux allows customers to install custom software updates from other repositories, if the package is not available in Cumulus Linux repository. This includes customer created packages. Currently all packages must support the PowerPC architecture. Updates using standard installation commands, apt-get, easy-install/pip, etc are supported. Please review Cumulus Networks official support policy on custom installed apps[here](#).

## How do I install new packages?

Installing packages on Cumulus Linux uses standard installation mechanism as with any Debian distribution. Generally apt-get is used to install a package. But easy-install and other commands can also be used. As default, Cumulus Linux installs with the sources.list file pointing to[repo.cumulusnetworks.com](http://repo.cumulusnetworks.com). But if packages are located in alternative repositories, the particular repositories can be added to the sources.list file in /etc/apt/. Installing a new package uses the following standard sequence of commands:

```
apt-get update
```

```
apt-get install {packagename}
```

This will install the latest version of the package. To force apt-get to install from a particular repo, then apt-get install -t {repo} {packagename}

## Is Cumulus Linux open source?

Cumulus Linux is not open source but contains a large number of open source components. Those open source components are available in Debian or other upstream repositories. Cumulus Linux's

proprietary intellectual property encompasses IP surrounding hardware acceleration for which Cumulus Networks is not in the position to distribute source code. For the rest of Cumulus Linux functionality, Cumulus Networks is committed to pushing bug fixes and enhancements into the open source community.

## How are bugs reported on Cumulus Linux?

Issues on Cumulus Linux can be entered into the Cumulus Networks support portal, or entered by a Cumulus Networks support engineer via phone support. Access to the support portal or phone support is restricted to subscription holders.

## What do I do if I have hardware issues?

Cumulus Networks provides end-to-end support for all systems listed in the **hardware compatibility list**. This includes determining whether an issue is hardware related or not. Cumulus Networks Global Support Services organization will work with you and your hardware vendor to ensure a smooth replacement of faulty hardware.