

How to Share Virtual Machines in VMware Workstation and Access Them from Remote Workstations

<http://www.sysprobs.com/how-to-share-virtual-machines-in-vmware-workstation-and-access-from-remote-workstations>

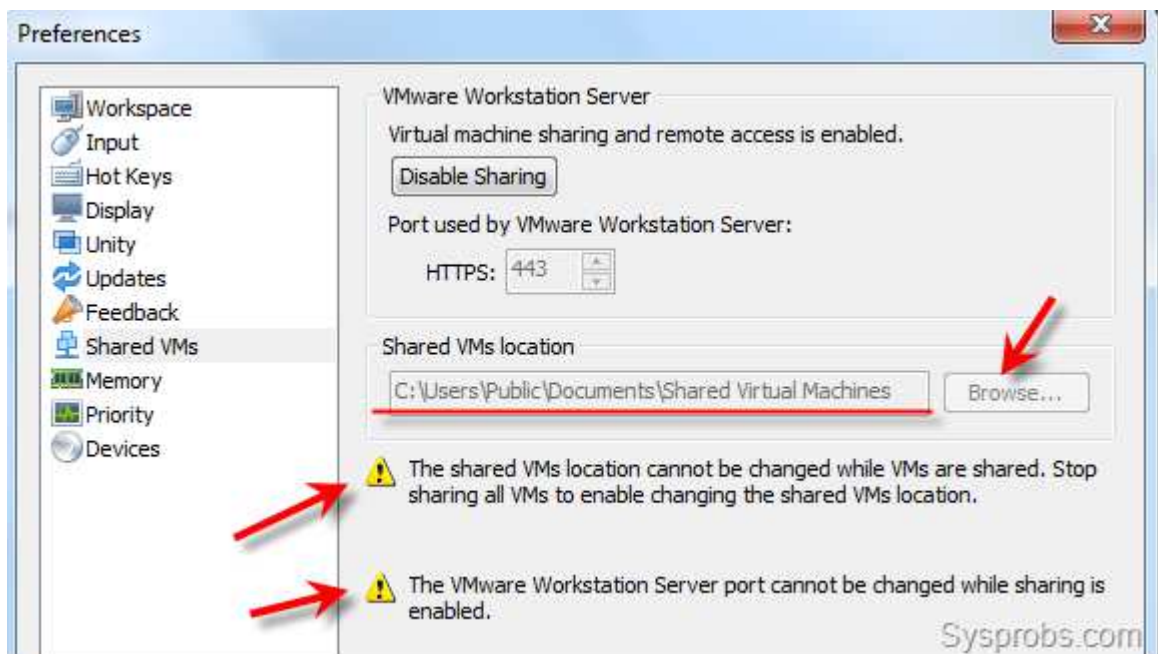
This is not a latest tip, but an useful one which I wanted to publish for long time. This guide shows how to share virtual machines on VMware workstation from a host computer, and access them from remote workstations through network. Virtual machine sharing in VMware workstation is called **'Shared VMs'** and it is a new built-in feature from VMware workstation 8 and later versions.

Basically **'Shared VMs'** feature allows you to share a particular virtual machine via network. So, remote users can use their VMware workstation to access shared virtual machines which running on your computer. You can create multiple users and assign different access levels for shared VMs. [According to VMware](#), upto 100 remote users can connect to a single shared virtual machine at the same time. It is really a great feature when it comes to production or testing environment. Instead of deploying same virtual machine on different computers, we can just share it from single host and access it from multiple remote hosts.

By default Virtual machine sharing and remote access are enabled when you install VMware workstation.

Things to Know about Sharing Virtual machines in VMware workstation

- 1) Virtual machine should be powered off for sharing.
- 2) There is a **'Shared Virtual machine directory'** on host to have all shared VMs' files and folders.



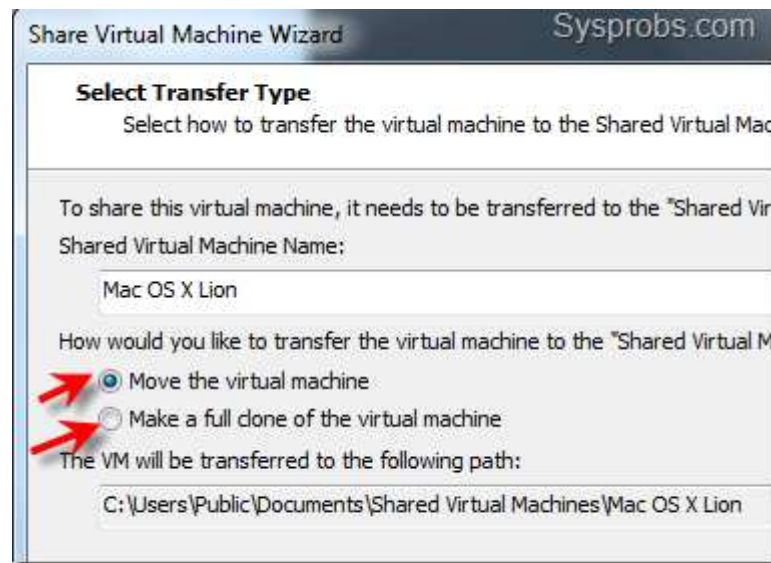
Because I already have shared VMs on my host, the above settings can not be changed. So, better change the settings before sharing any VMs or you have to stop the VMs share and edit the settings.

All files related to shared VM will be moved into 'Shared VMs location' after sharing.

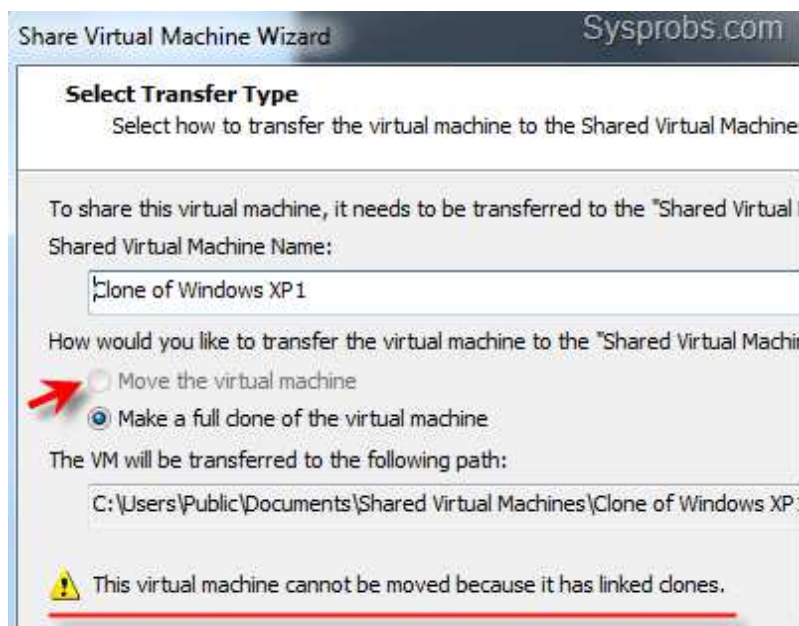
- 3) In two ways a VM can be shared.

a) Move the original VM (sharing the original VM). In this case, the particular machine will be moved to shared VMs location. You will not have separate (the original) copy of VM.

b) Make a full clone of VM and move it (sharing the clone VM). In this case, the full clone of VM will be shared and moved to shared VMs location. But you will still have your original VM separately.



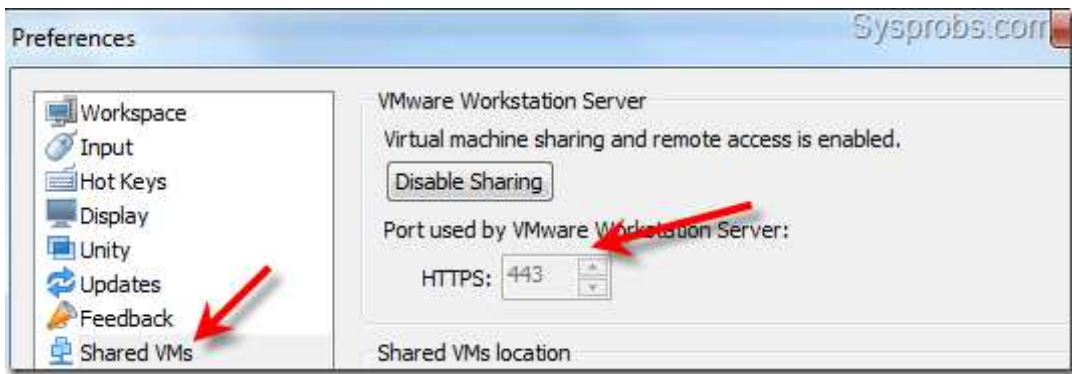
4) A Virtual machine with [linked clones](#) can be shared only by making full clone of VM.



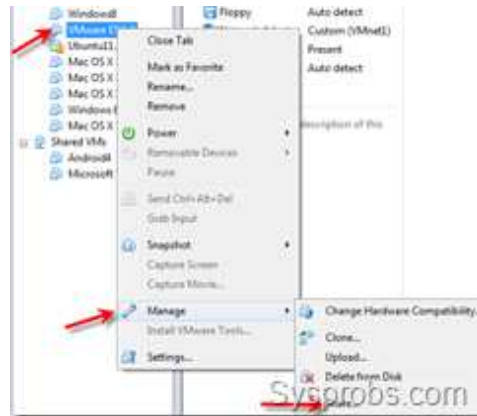
More useful and important information about [sharing virtual machines in VMware workstation is available here at official site.](#)

How to Share a Virtual Machine in VMware Workstation

1) Make sure virtual machine sharing is enabled and running. By default the VM sharing is working through 443 (https) port, so your computer firewall or any other firewall/anti virus programs should allow incoming https (443) port traffic.



2) Now right click on the virtual machine you would like to share and select **Share** under **Manage** option as shown below.



3) Next option is to select whether you like full or clone move, select the appropriate option.

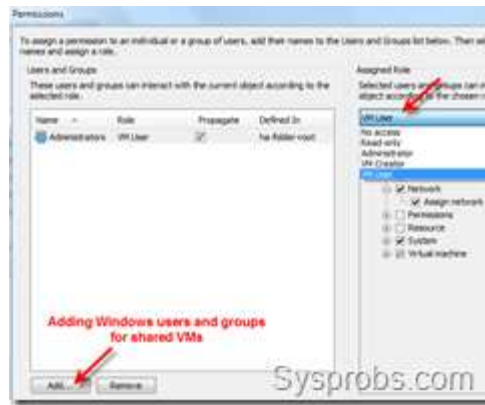
Important Note: By sharing a VM, the all related files (virtual hard disk and snapshot) will be moved the 'VM Shared Library' location from original location. So, make sure that the target location is having enough disk space to accommodate shared VM.

In this example, I have moved a full VM without cloning, and it consumed around 8GB disk space for all files.

Once VM is shared, it will be listed out under 'Shared VMs' as shown below. Also, one more new view will appear right side of screen to show the command tasks initiated by remote users (its very similar to vSphere hypervisors)



4) Permissions to control shared virtual machine can be managed under '**Permissions**' (Right Click on **Shared VM** → **Manage** → **Permissions**). There are few pre-made permission **Roles** available to assign to users. The local (or domain) windows users or groups can be added to users list from the host computer where VMware workstation is running.



By default local host computer's administrators group has full permission for shared VMs.

Mostly that's all required from VMware workstation which is hosting shared virtual machines.

How to Access Shared VMs from Remote VMware Workstation

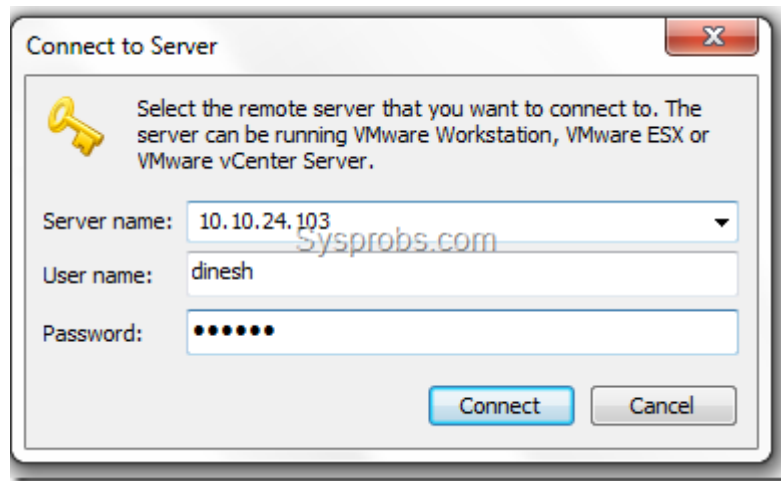
In this example, I will be accessing the shared VM (VMware ESXi5) from other laptop which is having VMware workstation 8 and connected network.

5) Make sure the network is working fine between the host (which is having shared VMs) and the remote computer (from where you are trying to access shared VM). You can try pinging hosts.

6) On the remote workstation, select '**Connect to Server**' as shown below.

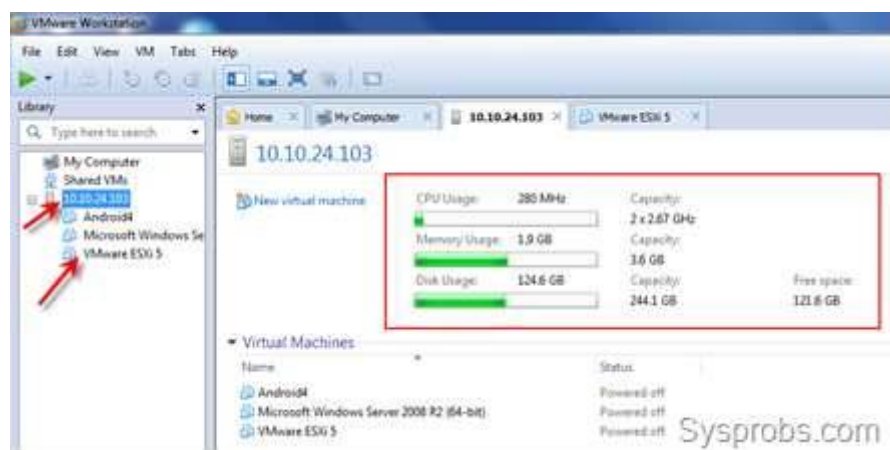


7) Type the IP address or hostname (if it can be resolved) and user name with password of target host. In this example, I have typed my Windows user name and password of the host computer which is having shared VMs.



If the network communication is fine and VMware VM sharing is working OK with allowed port 443 traffic in firewall (or firewall is completely switched off), you must be prompted to accept/ignore the certificate message and remember the user name/password screen.

8.) Once the authentication is succeeded, you can see the shared VMs under new tab with host's IP or PC name. The main screen will give the basic information about the available physical resources on the host. It will be easy to understand the available (or free) hardware resources before powering on any VMs, because the VM will be running from the original host, not from the remote host.



Depending on the permissions and roles level, you can play around with the shared VM from remote host.

I hope this guide would have given some basic information about how to share virtual machines in VMware workstation on a host and how to access it from a different remote host.