

Publication formats of the FDT2 Online Help

The FDT2 online help is published in two different formats:

- MS Help 1 (.chm): This format is supported by the Windows platform by default and does not need a particular viewer application – a simple doubleclick starts the help system.
- MS Help Viewer (.mshc/.msha): This format is generated for integration of the FDT2 help content into the Visual Studio 201x development environment.

Viewing MS Help 1 (.chm) content - troubleshooting

The MS Help 1 system initially had several security flaws which were fixed over the time by Microsoft, resulting in more and more restricted security settings on OS level that now may cause malfunction of .chm help files in certain situations. See Microsoft Security Bulletin [MS05-026](#) which references some issues and workarounds in the following knowledge base articles:

[892675](#) *Certain Web sites and HTML Help features may not work after you install security update 896358 or security update 890175*

Symptoms:

- HTML Help table of contents may not function
- certain HTML Help features, such as the Related Topics feature, may not work when the .chm file is opened from a remote location

[896054](#) *You cannot open remote content by using the InfoTech protocol after you install security update 896358, security update 840315, or Windows Server 2003 Service Pack 1.*

Symptoms:

- topic may not appear when you click a link
- when you try to use a Universal Naming Convention (UNC) path to open a .chm file that is on a network shared folder, topics in the .chm file may not appear.

General recommendation:

- Trying to view a help file from a **network share** can cause the content to be blocked. Copy the help file to your **local hard drive** and open it from there.

[896905](#) *After you install security update 896358, content that should be displayed in a different frame is displayed in the frame that contains the HTML Help ActiveX control.*

[905215](#) *Some URL schemes are ignored when you use the URL schemes in the parameters of an HTML Help ActiveX control after you install security update 896358*

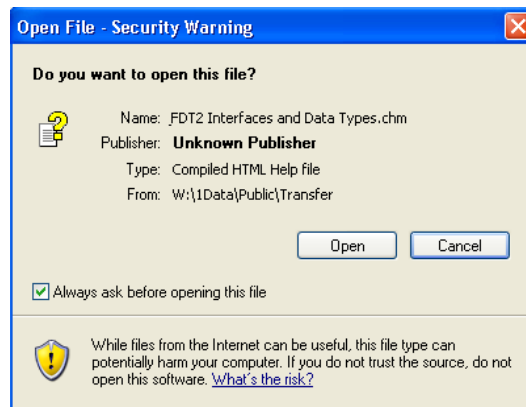
[902225](#) *You cannot open HTML Help files from Internet Explorer after you install security update 896358 or Windows Server 2003 Service Pack 1*

Symptoms:

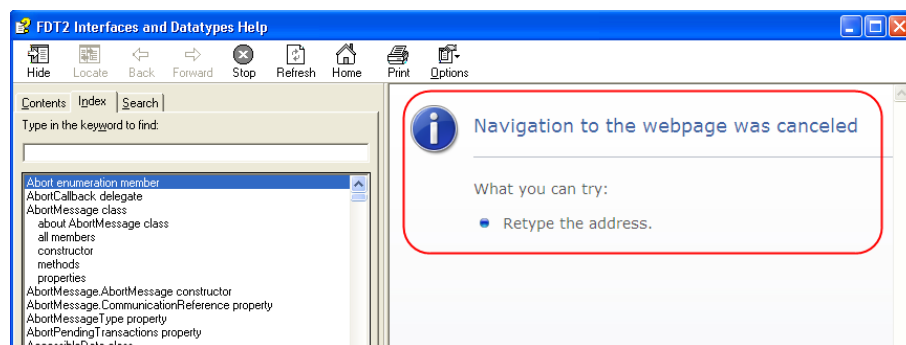
- .chm files downloaded from the internet may be blocked when you click **Open** in the **File Download** dialog box

Solution:

- Help files **downloaded from the web** may need to be **unblocked** before their content can be viewed:
 - If a security dialog appears, asking if you want to open the file, uncheck the "**Always ask before opening this file**" checkbox before clicking **Open** to avoid this dialog the next time you open the help file again.

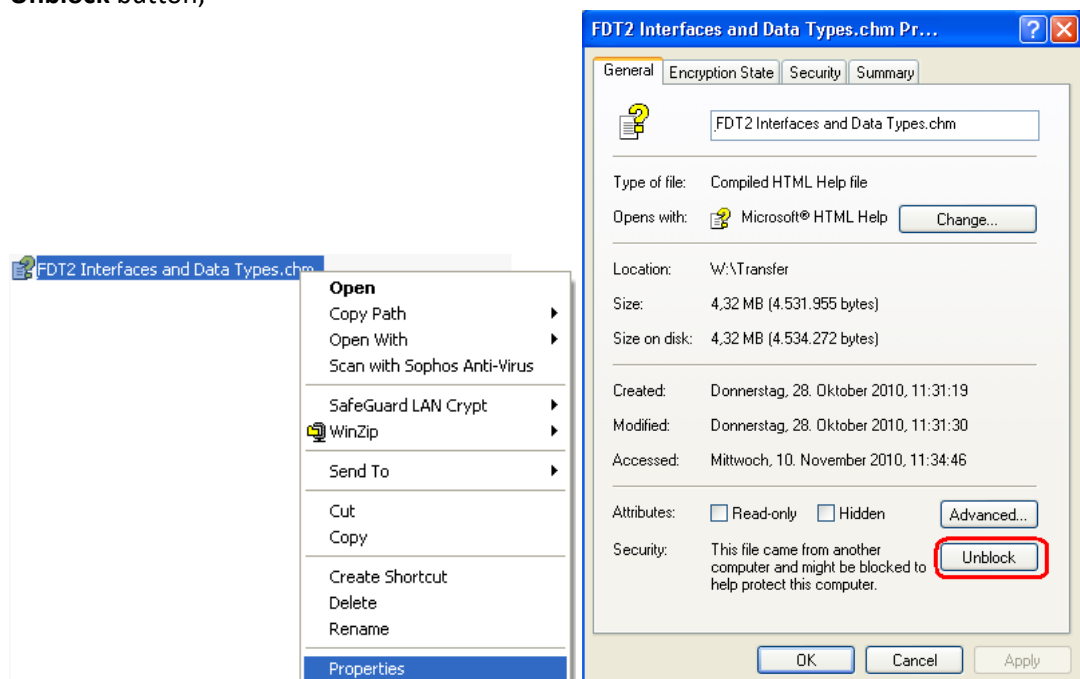


- If there is no information in the content pane after opening a help file, e.g.



the file is still blocked. Do the following:

1. open Windows Explorer, right-click the .chm file, select **Properties** and then click the **Unblock** button;




2. Apply the file property changes and open the help file again.

Installing and Viewing MS Help Viewer (.mshc) content

Visual Studio uses an independent online help system (MS Help Viewer, also known as MS Help 3) with an own help file format (MSHC – **M**icrosoft **H**elp **C**ontainer).

Visual Studio 2010, 2010 SP1 (MS Help Viewer 1.0/1.1)

Help Container are managed by the Help Library Manager:

- VS 2010 start menu: Visual Studio Tools ► Manage Help Settings or
- VS 2010 main menu: Help ► Manage Help Settings or
- Within Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 Documentation: Toolbar icon  (Help Library Manager)

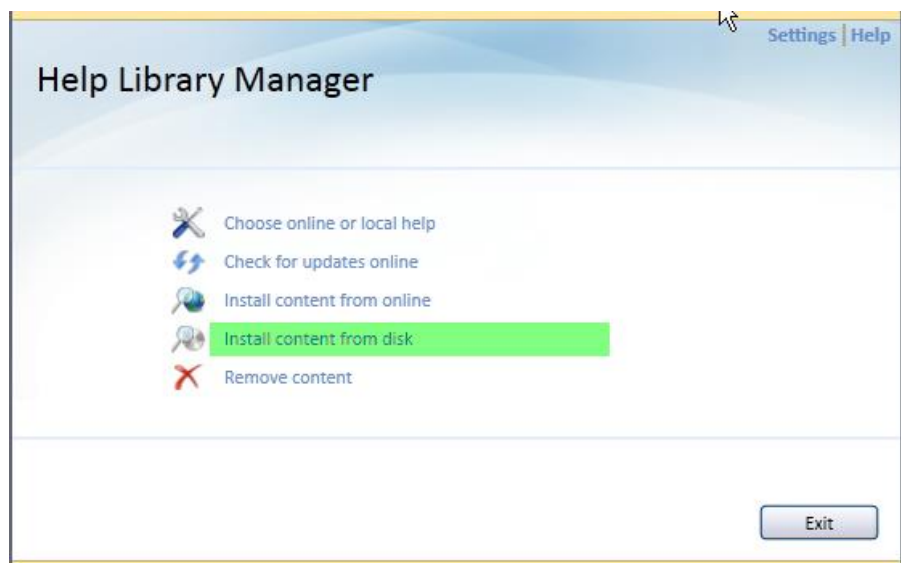
The Help Library Manager allows to install or remove help packages / books. A help package is a single .mshc file or a pair of .mshc and .mshi (index) file wrapped in a signed .cab file. A book is a group of packages installed together.

Installation of FDT2 help content

Step 1:

Select option

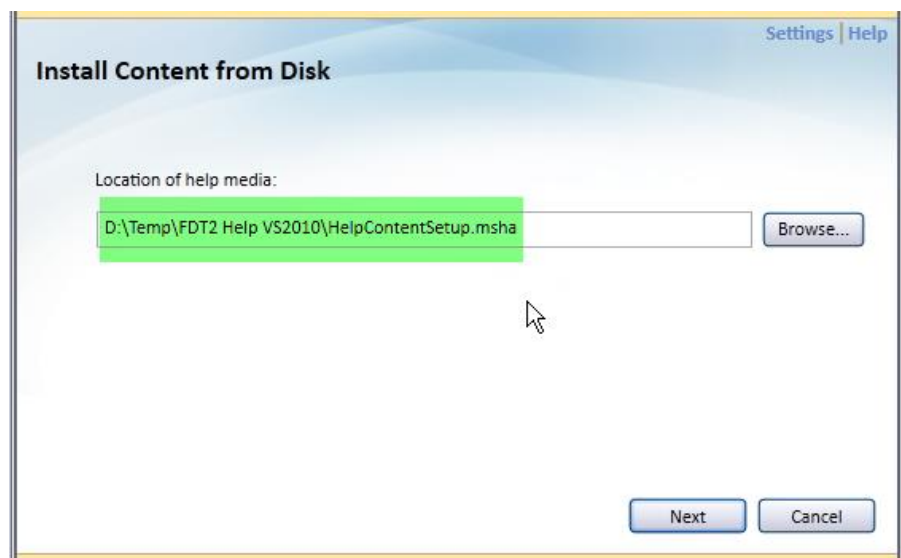
"Install content from disk"



Step 2:

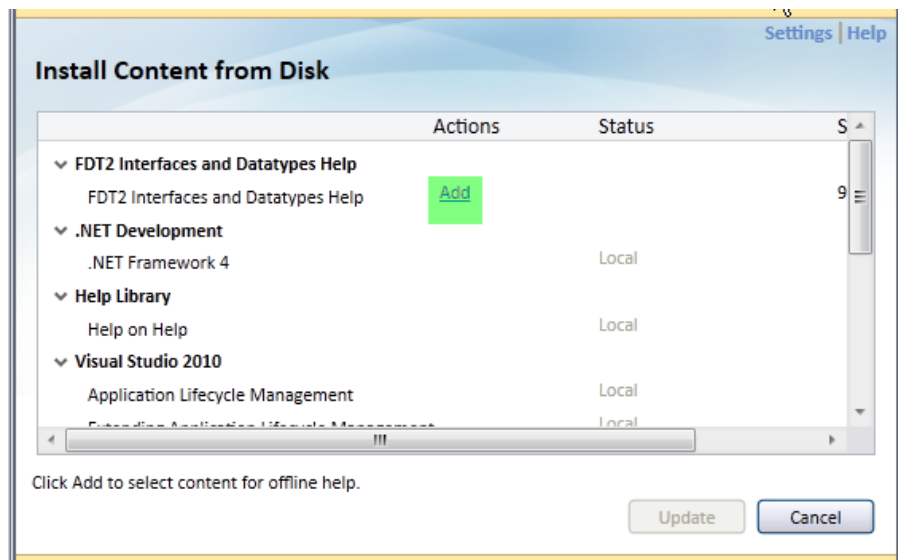
Browse to the folder with help files and **select the MS Help Asset file** (helpContentSetup.msha):

Note: MS Help Viewer V1.0 / V1.1 only accepts the exact filename helpContentSetup.msha !



Step 3:

Search for the new help collection entry,
select **Add**,
then push **Update** button

**Step 4:**

Confirm the security alert

(Screenshot shows alert for a help collection packaged as .cab file and digitally signed by the FDT Group AISBL.

Unsigned help collections show a slightly different alert asking for administrator rights to install the help collection)



Visual Studio 2012/2013/2015/2017-19 (MS Help Viewer 2.0/2.1/2.2/2.3)

Help Container are managed within the Microsoft Help Viewer 2.x:

- VS20xx start menu: Microsoft Help Viewer, switch to Manage Content tab or
- VS20xx main menu: Help ► Add and Remove Help Content

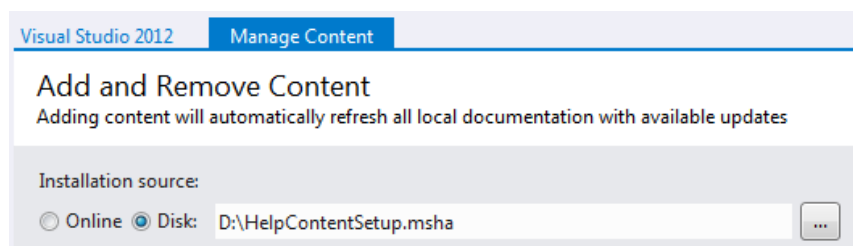
Installation of FDT2 help content

Step 1:

Select

“Installation Source: Disk”

then set the **path** to the **MS Help asset file**
(helpContentSetup.msha):



Step 2:

Select **Add**,

then push **Update** button

Name	Action	Status	Size
FDT Group AISBL			
- FDT2 Interfaces and Datatypes Help			
FDT2 Interfaces and Datatypes Help	Add		8 MB
- Available Documentation			
- Recommended			
.NET Framework 4.5	Remove	Local	747 MB
Microsoft Help Viewer 2.0 Documentation	Remove	Local	1 MB
Visual Studio 2012 Fundamentals	Remove	Local	279 MB

Additional or updated content may be available by enabling "Go online to get content and check for updates" in Viewer Options (in Help Viewer top icon bar, or Ctrl + O).

There are no pending act

Estimated download
Free disk space:
Required disk space:

[Update](#)

Step 3:

Confirm the security alert

(Screenshot shows alert for a help collection packaged as .cab file and digitally signed by the FDT Group AISBL.

Unsigned help collections show a slightly different alert asking for administrator rights to install the help collection)

**Security Alert**

The content has been signed by using a certificate issued to FDT Group AISBL.

Do not install this content unless you trust its source. The certificate issuer is VeriSign Class 3 Code Signing 2010 CA.

Do you want to continue?

[View certificate](#)

[Yes](#)

[No](#)

General recommendation for the installation of Help Viewer Content

Trying to install a MS Help Viewer file from a **network share** can cause bad formatting of content and script errors. Copy the help file to your **local hard drive** and install the content from there.