

Java JRE Release 1.7.0_51 Update

Updating one's Java Runtime Environment (JRE)

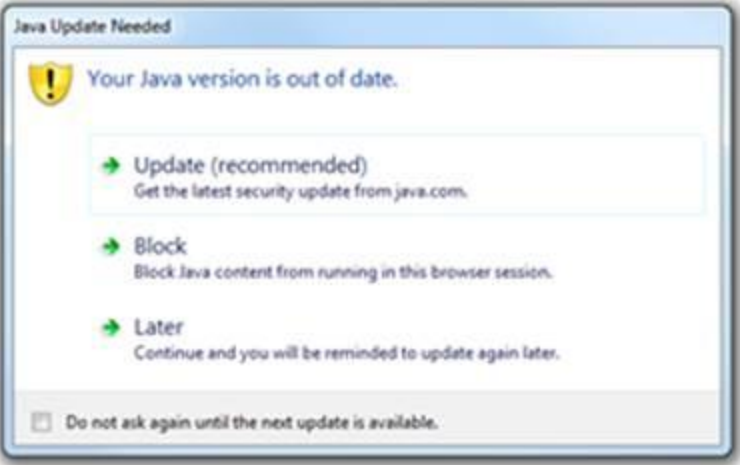
Oracle released JRE 1.7.0_51 on January 14, 2014. This version of the JRE no longer supports unsigned applets and requires that Java applets include new required attributes (which Skillsoft had already introduced with Skillsoft Course Player 7.9).

The purpose of this Java Update is to make Skillport and Skillsoft course users aware of potential problems that may occur if one does not upgrade to the new JRE.

Upon release, JRE 1.7.0_51 was defined by Oracle as a new security baseline. Oracle uses the security baseline functionality to encourage users to upgrade to the latest JRE. They do this by blocking certain functionality in older JREs when a new security baseline is established. What does this mean?

When a user first performs a function in their browser calling for Java Runtime support, users who have not yet upgraded are notified that a new JRE is available, and receive a prompt to upgrade it:



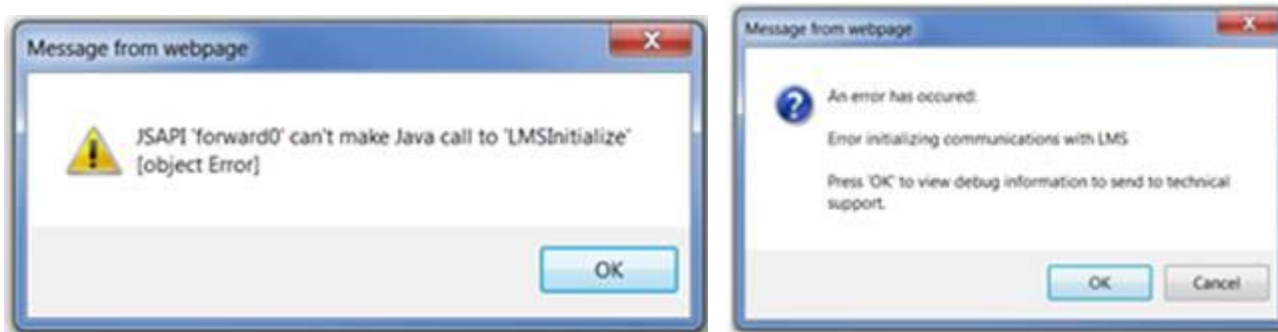
What do you see?	What is it?	What should you do?
<p>When a Java operation is attempted while using Chrome:</p> 	<p>This prompt indicates that the newest Java Runtime Environment is not installed. The message text may differ slightly depending on the current release of Java but the essence of the message is the same.</p>	<p>Invoke the recommended Update function.</p>

If users do not choose Update to install the new version right away (they either click Block or Later), their earlier-version JRE will behave differently than it had; blocking certain functionality that was previously permitted. Specifically, their JRE will no longer allow the use of unsigned applets, and it will also block a component called LiveConnect, which is a Java function Skillsoft's Course Player

requires. There is no visual indication that LiveConnect has been blocked, except by looking at the Java Console (a function not familiar to most users).

The symptoms the user will experience will be extreme performance issues, including but not limited to:

- Course page advances taking upwards of two minutes,
- lack of audio,
- disappearing course controls,
- if using SCORM content or communicating with a third-party LMS, the player will display a communication error as shown below:



These symptoms mean the user has an earlier version of the JRE, and that user should upgrade his/her PC to JRE 1.7.0_51 in order for the Skillsoft content to work properly.

Unfortunately, there is nothing Skillsoft can do to mitigate these issues. The security baseline behavior is something Oracle has implemented to drive users to new JREs upon release. Hence, users are strongly encouraged to perform the JRE upgrade.



Note that a JRE upgrade requires that one have Windows Administrative rights on his/her PC to affect the download-and-install. Some users with “locked-down” PCs may require that their IT Support functions to facilitate this update process.

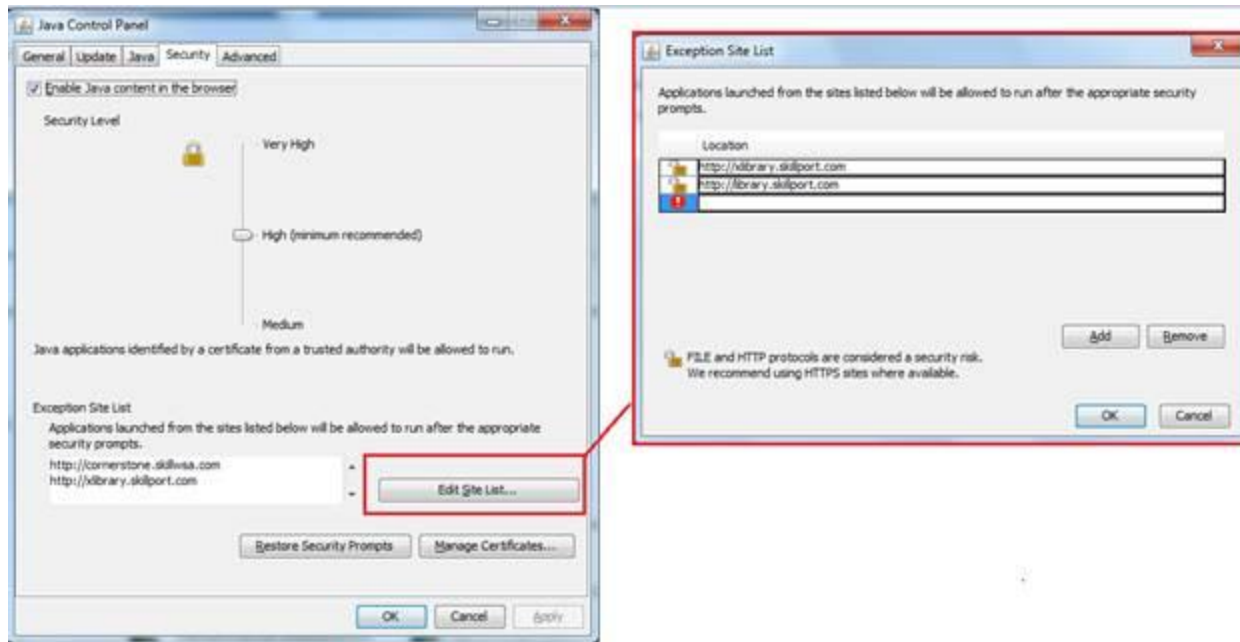
After the JRE Update

After the JRE update, there will be off-the-shelf content that will not launch. Specifically, all retired legacy NETg content, and retired legacy EK content that was not designated as “Gap” content. EK “Gap” content and all custom EK content was re-packaged so it will function with this new JRE release.

JRE 1.7.0_51 also introduces another feature that would allow clients to keep the security level at “High (minimum recommended) and add an exception. The Exception Site List feature allows end users to run Java applets and Java Web Start applications that do not meet the latest security requirements.







Adding 'http://xlibrary.skillport.com' and 'http://library.skillport.com' appears to resolve the issue as well.

As was previously communicated, JRE 1.7.0_51 no longer supports unsigned Java applets, so customers will need to switch to using signed applets if they haven't already. Also, versions of the Skillsoft Course Player older than 7.9 will no longer work with JRE 1.7.0_51, due to the missing required attributes. Using the Exception Site List functionality described above should allow the older SCP versions to work with JRE 1.7.0_51, but Skillsoft recommends upgrading to the latest version of SCP.



If you have questions regarding the information in this Java update, please contact **Skillsoft Customer Support**.

