

VMware to Proxmox

Prepare a real cutover

For an administrator preparing a first pilot VM. Outcome: a measured time window, business acceptance tests and a documented cutover decision.

The starting rule

Test an isolated copy, demonstrate restore and validate the service before reopening writes. Booting the VM is not enough.

The case: a quotation application

Item	Fictional pilot data
Service	One VM with a local application and database. Two disks: 80 and 200 GB. UEFI firmware.
Dependencies	DNS, directory, document share and SMTP. Disable outgoing mail and jobs on the copy.
Method	Cold import selected after a compatible pilot. Record versions and settings in the worksheet.
Business requirement	120 minutes of approved downtime; no accepted writes lost.
Pilot measurement	240 GB to transfer; measured effective throughput: 80 MB/s.

Worked calculation

$240 \times 1,000 \div 80 = 3,000$ seconds = 50 minutes.

Decimal units. Add 10 min for the freeze, 15 min to boot and 20 min for acceptance: **95 min**. Of the approved 120 min, 25 min remain.

Decision: revise the plan

A tested abort takes 30 min. The minimum time budget becomes 125 min, before any extra margin. A 120-minute window is insufficient: reduce the final transfer, change the method or agree a longer window.

These figures illustrate the reasoning. Measure the full workflow: extraction, conversion or another transfer may add time. RTO: target recovery duration. RPO: tolerable data loss expressed as time.

The VM boots.

Is the service ready?

Define each expected result before the rehearsal. Keep a dated report and have the business owner approve the workflows.

Check	Expected result and evidence
System	OS started; disks found; isolated network matches the plan. Keep configuration and logs.
Business	Log in; create, reopen and export a test quotation as PDF. Keep the test reference and approval.
Data	Find the last pre-freeze document; check application consistency. Keep the method and result.
Recovery	Restore the target backup in an isolated environment. Record duration, scope and limits.
Operations	Check monitoring, backup and scheduled jobs. Keep reports before retiring the source.

Exercise: 3 minutes

The user can log in but cannot produce a PDF. Fifteen minutes remain in the window; returning to the source takes 25 minutes. A colleague suggests reopening access and fixing the problem later.

1. Which success criterion is missing?
2. Does the return still fit the window?
3. What should the pilot have triggered?

Worked answer

1. Business acceptance fails despite a successful boot.
2. No: at least 10 minutes are missing. Keep access closed, inform the decision-maker and apply the agreed scenario with a decision on the overrun.
3. Fix the export dependency and place the abort decision early enough to preserve the recovery reserve.

What changes the rollback plan

Before reopening, the preserved source may be reused according to the tested plan. After new writes on the target, recover or reconcile them before returning. A directory or distributed database requires its own procedure.

03 / COMPLETE AND KEEP

Your migration worksheet

Copy into the change ticket or fill in on paper. Unresolved prerequisites for recovery prevent approval of the cutover.

Preparation	Your information
Service and owners	Business owner: _____ Operator: _____
Versions and resources	ESXi / Proxmox / OS / application: _____ Disks / firmware / drivers: _____
Dependencies and isolation	Networks / DNS / directory / jobs / mail: _____
Method and freeze	Tool + version / test / last consistent state: _____
Calculation and decision	Volume: _____ Throughput: _____ Total: _____ min Recovery reserve: _____ Decision deadline: _____
Backup restored	Date / scope / duration / evidence / limits: _____
Rollback	Before reopening: _____ After new writes: _____

Acceptance and reopening approval

Test / expected result	Observation / evidence / approver
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Decision: approve / postpone. Owner: _____

Date: _____ Remaining conditions: _____

Retire the source after: _____

References for adapting the method

Official Proxmox documentation: VM import and configuration

virt-v2v manual: guest conversion

Source edition checked on 27 September 2026. This workbook proposes a method; it does not replace your versions' prerequisites. No production migration test is claimed.