Windows - How to Switch Domain Controller

Find Current Domain Controller

You can grab the domain controller that the computer is currently connected to with these steps:

1. Select the “**Start**” button.
2. Type “**CMD**“.
3. Hold “**Shift**” and right-click “**Command Prompt**“.
4. Select “**Run as different user**“.
5. Type credentials for a Domain Admin user account.
6. At the Command Prompt, type:
   - `nltest /dsgetdc:domainname`

Switch Domain Controller Command

Actually switch the domain controller computer is using with these steps.

1. Select the “**Start**” button.
2. Type “**CMD**“.
3. Hold “**Shift**” and right-click “**Command Prompt**“.
4. Select “**Run as different user**“.
5. Type credentials for a Domain Admin user account.
6. At the command prompt, type:
   - `nltest /Server:ClientComputerName /SC_RESET:DomainName\DomainControllerName`

Note: This option is not permanent, as a restart of the computer may grab a different DC.

Set Domain Controller Via Registry

1. Hold the **Windows Key** and press “**R**” to bring up the Windows Run dialog.
2. Type “**Regedit**“, then press “**Enter**“.
3. Navigate to:
   - **HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE**
   - **SYSTEM**
   - **CurrentControlSet**
   - **Services**
   - **Netlogon**
   - **Parameters**
4. Create a String value called “**SiteName**“, and set it to the name of the Active Directory site whose domain controllers the computer should use (e.g. Default-First-Site-Name). This value sets the site, not a specific domain controller.

To point the secure channel at one specific domain controller instead, use `nltest /sc_reset:domain.com\DC1`.

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Sources:

- https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/troubleshoot/windows-server/active-directory/how-domain-controllers-are-located
- https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/previous-versions/windows/it-pro/windows-server-2012-r2-and-2012/cc731935(v=ws.11)

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