

# Disabling auto-export

When upgrading JIRA, one points the new JIRA installation at the old JIRA database. JIRA will automatically make any structural database modifications required to support new JIRA features.

To be safe, JIRA first tries to create an [XML backup](#) of your data at the point just before the upgrade. This would allow you to 'roll back' to the old JIRA version, should anything go wrong.

Sometimes the automatic XML backup procedure fails, often because of characters in the database that cannot be represented in XML (typically non-displayable control characters that have been cut-and-pasted in).



**JIRA**  
HOME

### JIRA Access Constraints

You cannot access JIRA at present. Look at the table below to identify the reasons

Time	Level	Type	Description	Exception
2004-06-11 09:59:22	(EventLevel: error)	(EventType: export-illegal-xml)	Illegal XML characters in data prevent successful export before the upgrade. <a href="#">Clean these characters from database.</a> To disable the export on upgrade, start JIRA with the flag <b>-Djira.autoexport=false</b>	Illegal XML characters found in data. Cannot export data before upgrade.

## Error page when an upgrade fails

In these circumstances, you can force the upgrade to proceed by editing `atlassian-jira/WEB-INF/classes/jira-application.properties`, and setting **jira.autoexport=false**.

Once you have upgraded JIRA, successfully, it is best to remove this parameter, as it is no longer needed.

If you have any upgrade problems not covered here or in the [upgrade documentation](#), please [contact us](#) — we're happy to help.