

Download and Installation Instructions for Visual Basic 2010 Help Library

Updated April, 2014

The Visual Basic 2010 Help Library contains reference documentation and information that will provide you with extra assistance on any programming topic with just a click of a button. These help files are not necessary for the completion of your course; however they are a helpful resource.

Until the Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 release, the “**Help Library**” was named the “**MSDN (Microsoft Developer Network) Library**”, and therefore you will see these terms used interchangeably in the programming industry and also within our curriculum.

You may choose to configure and use the Help Library in one of two ways:

- **Online Help** – With this option you simply configure your Visual Basic 2010 Express software to automatically go online to Microsoft’s website whenever you need to pull up any help topic. No local download or install is required, although you will need a persistent Internet connection for this option to work.
- **Local Help** – With this option you choose components of the Help Library and download and install them on your computer. The Help Library consists of a number of optional components that are **very large** and may take a **long time to download** and install on your computer, even with a high speed Internet connection. However, once the installation is complete, you no longer need an Internet connection to pull up help topics.

We recommend using the Online Help option if possible for your student’s computer due to the speed and simplicity of this option. However the Local Help option is useful if your student must program on a computer with no Internet connection. You may also choose not to configure the Help Library at all as our curriculum materials are sufficient to guide the students through all programming activities!

The following instructions will guide you through the optional setup of both Help Library options; choose only the one that is right for you.

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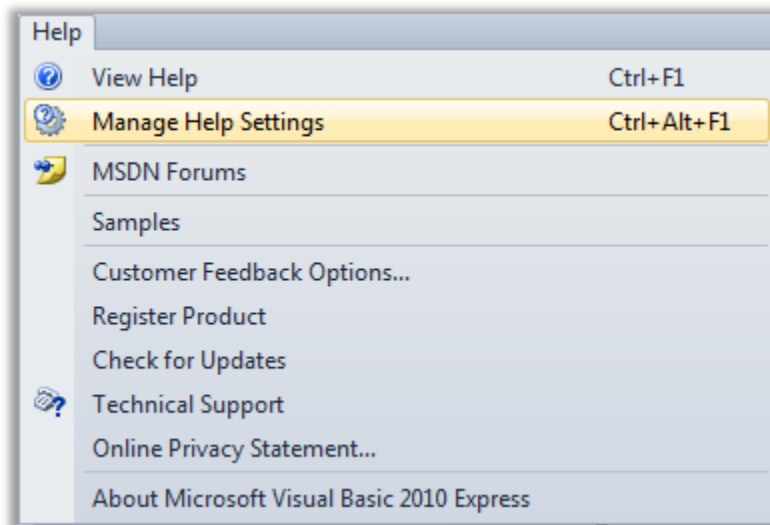
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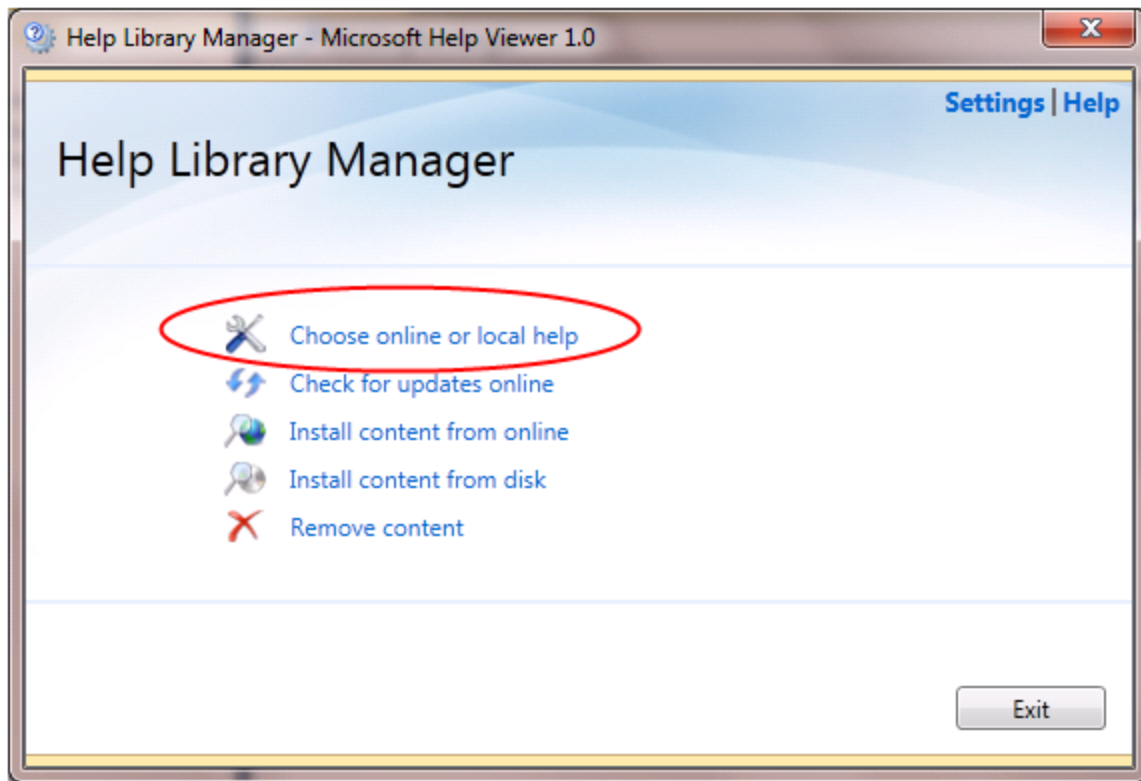
Accessing Help Settings in Visual Basic

In order to use the Help Library from the Visual Basic IDE, you will first need to access your Help Settings. To do this, open the Visual Basic 2010 Express software and choose “Help” from the top menu. At this point, you should see the following menu on the screen:



Now you can click on “Manage Help Settings” and then view the screen shown on the next page.

Note: All red circles below are added for emphasis and are not present on the actual pages.

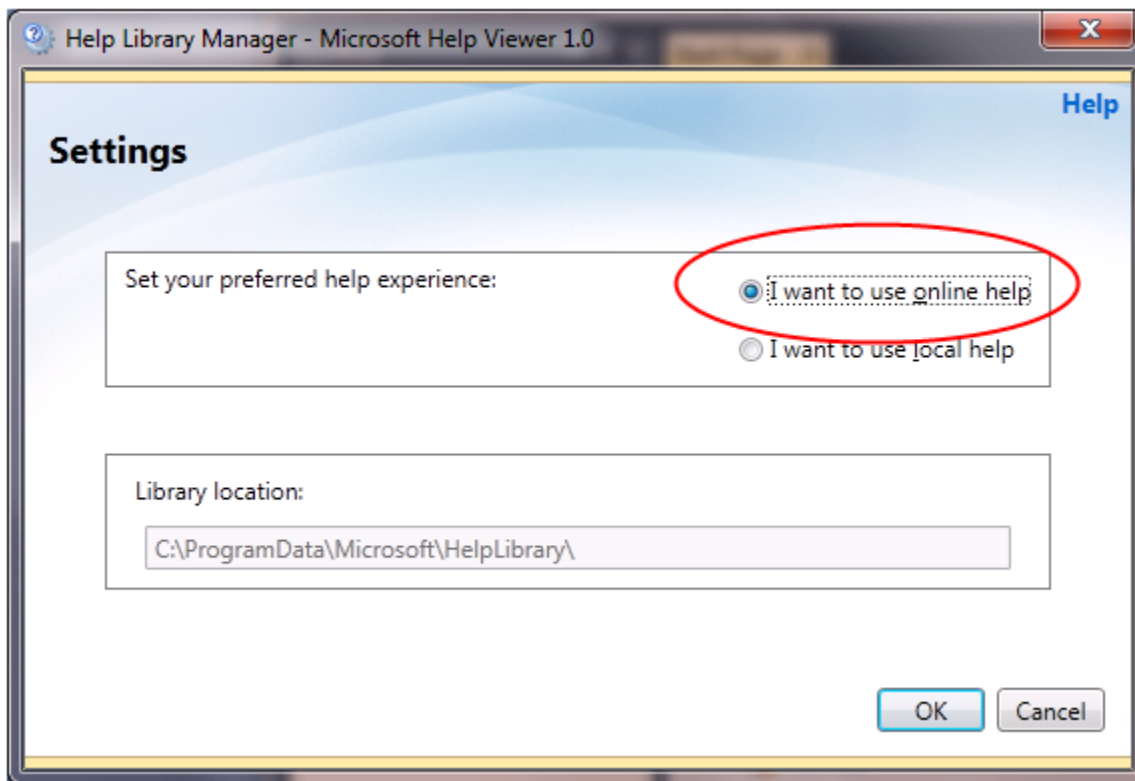


At this point, you will select the top option “Choose online or local help” as the starting point for both Online Help or Local Help.

Using Online Help

If your computer is regularly connected to the Internet, the Online Help is the best method of using Help Library (MSDN) resources. Using this method, the Visual Basic IDE will only connect to the Microsoft servers when you request help with a specific keyword or piece of code. This is the easiest method, as you do not have to download or install anything on your computer up front.

After clicking “Choose online or local help” from the first Help Library Manager screen, you will see the following Settings screen:



To use online help, from the Settings screen simply make sure the button labeled “I want to use online help” is selected and then click on the “OK” button. That’s it!

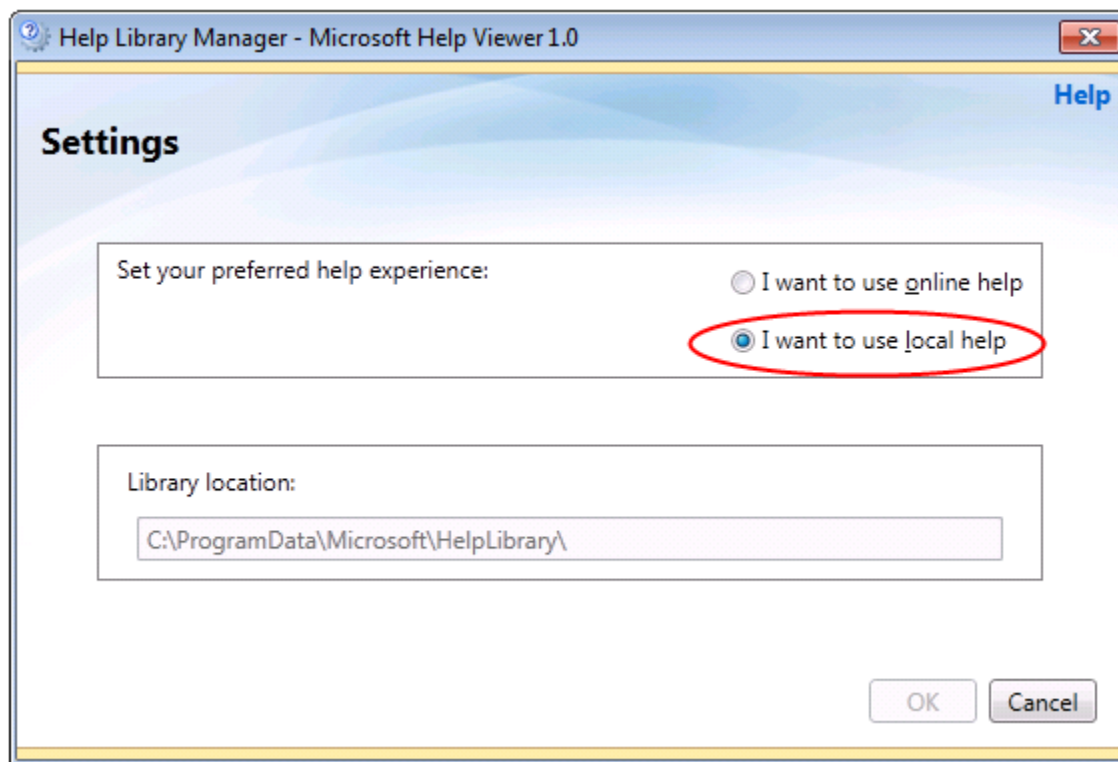
Now when you ask for help from within the Visual Basic IDE, the software will connect to Microsoft’s MSDN server and show you all of the relevant help information.

Using Local Help

If your computer is not regularly connected to the Internet, you may choose to install the Help Library files on your computer. This method copies all of the help files from Microsoft one time and then allows you to access these resources at any time without a live Internet connection.

Please note that these files are **very large** and will take some time to download.

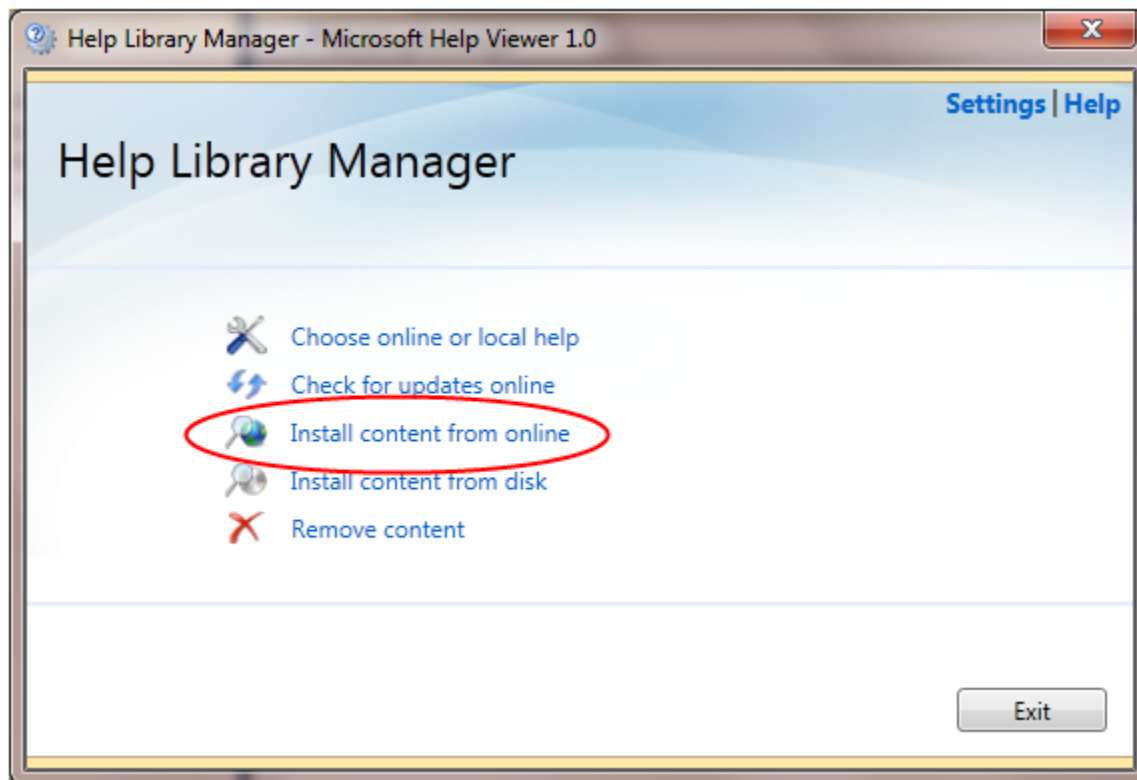
After clicking “Choose online or local help” from the first Help Library Manager screen, you will see the following Settings screen:



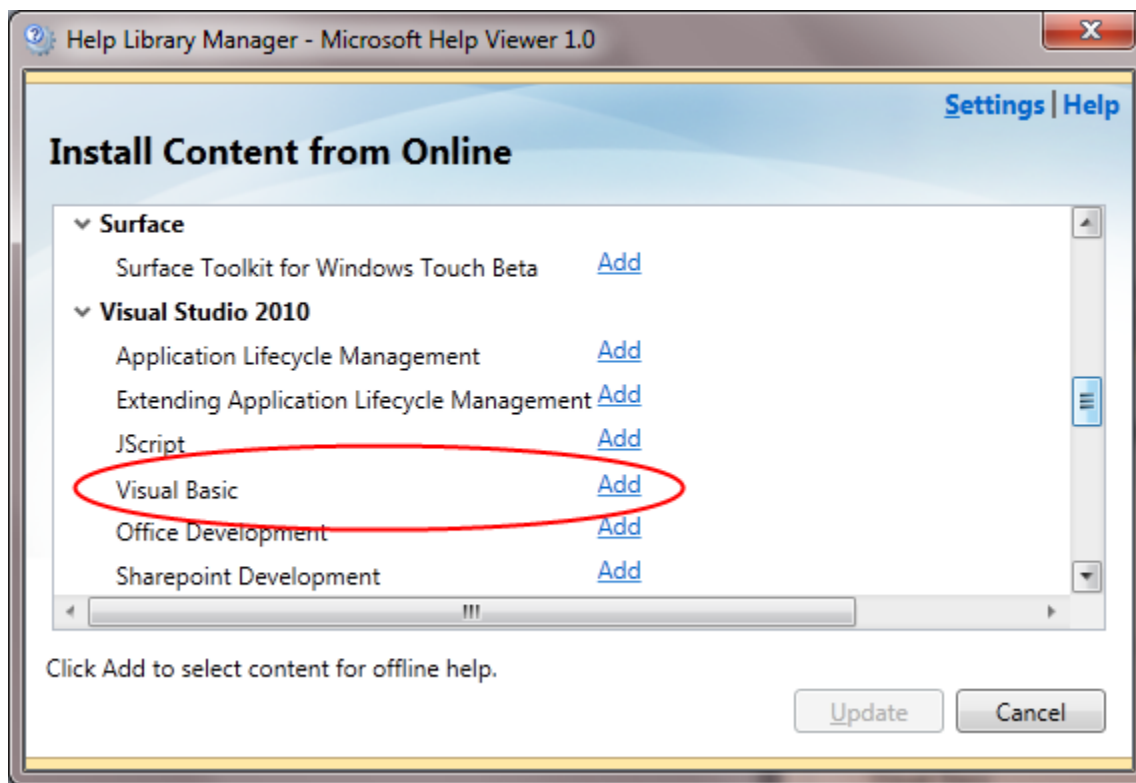
To use Local Help, from the Settings screen make sure the button labeled “I want to use local help” is selected. You may also choose the location where the help files will be downloaded on the “Library Location” field, although the default path is usually fine. Click on the “OK” button to continue.

You will return to the Help Library Manager screen in order to start the actual download.

From the Help Library Manager screen, click on the line that reads: “Install content from online”.



At this point, you will see the following screen, which will list all of the available help libraries on the Microsoft MSDN server.

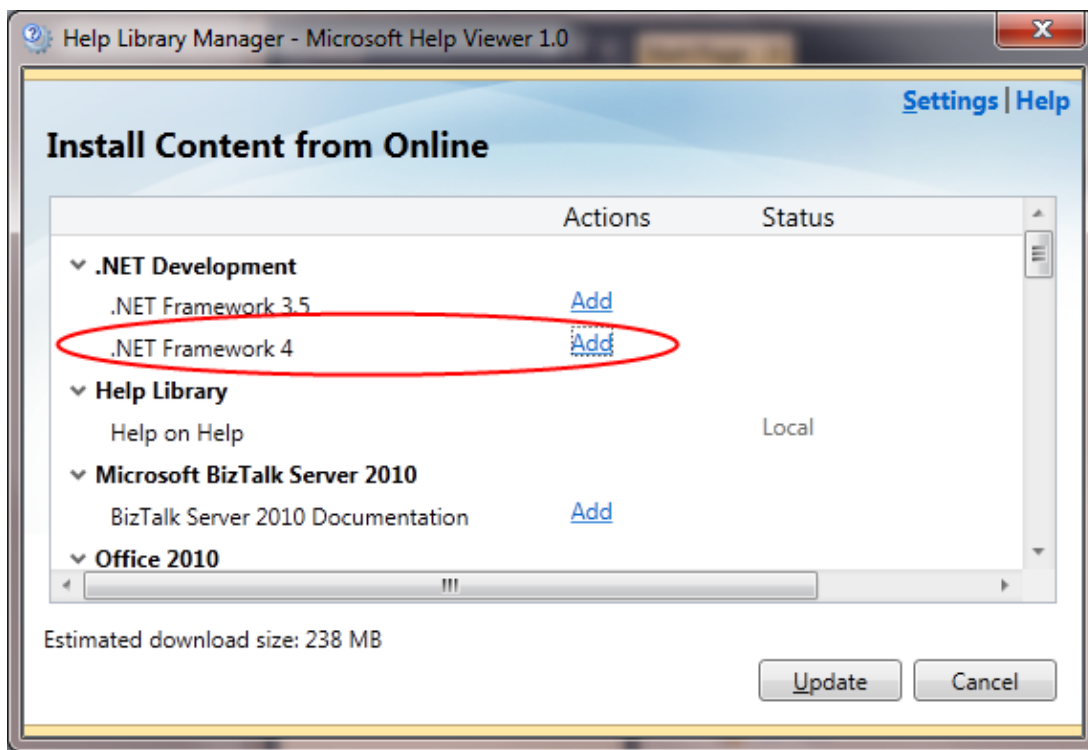


You should NOT install all of these components, only the ones relevant for your Visual Basic course!

Scroll down the list until you see the “Visual Basic” library and then click on the word “Add”. The word “Add” should then change to “Cancel” and a status should appear to the right of the “Visual Basic” item that says “Update Pending”.

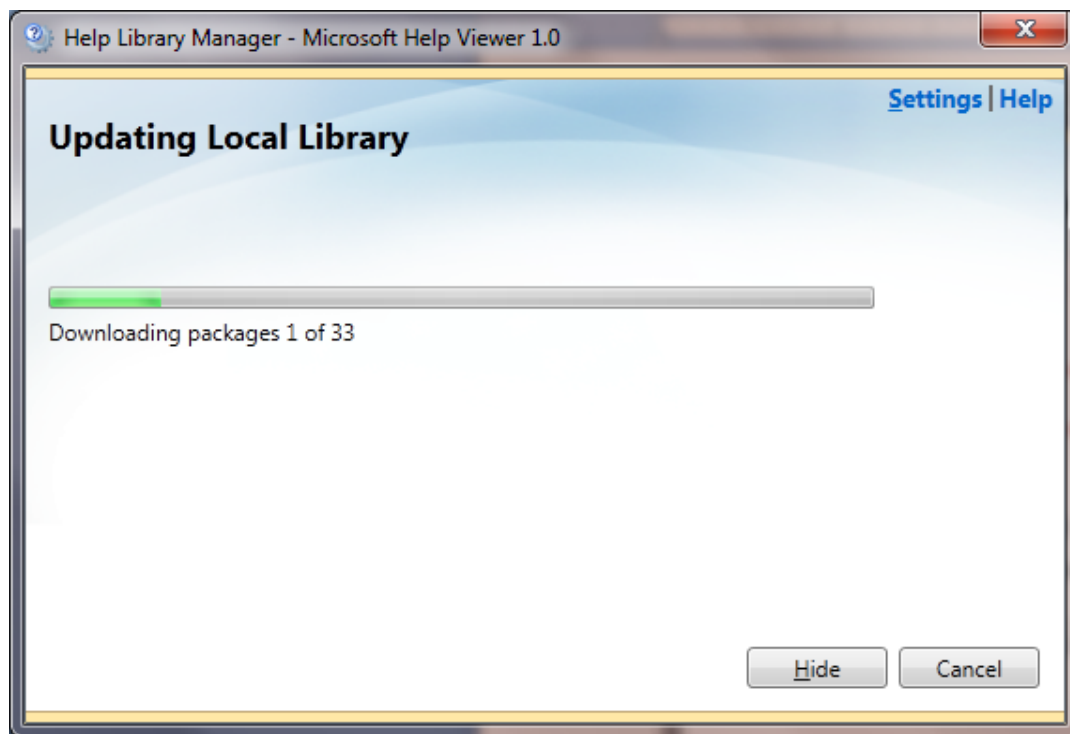
At this point, you may choose to add the “.NET Framework 4” library as well. This will add approximately 500MB to your download! Visual Basic uses the .NET Framework under the covers, and you may wish to use additional .NET objects on your own apart from the topics discussed in the course. Be aware that this option will increase your download time, and you may also choose to repeat this procedure later to add in the .NET help material.

If you choose to add the .NET help library now, click on the word “Add” next to “.NET Framework 4” as seen in the next screen image:



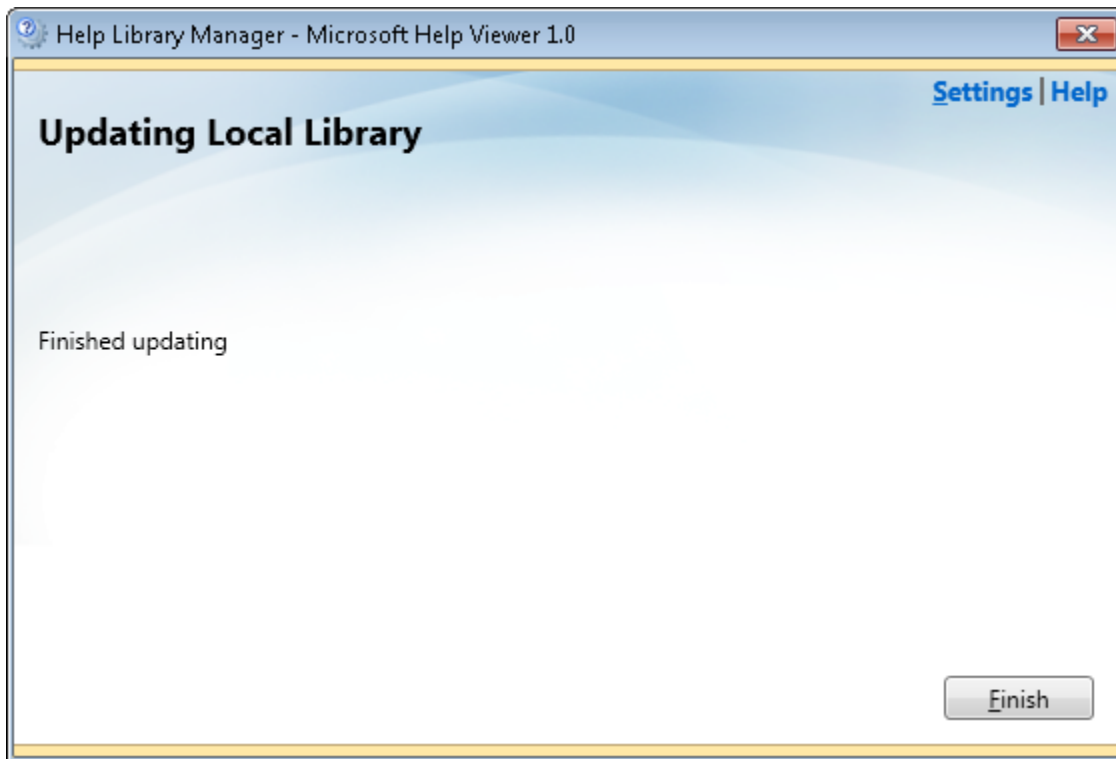
At this point, you are ready to download the libraries! Click on the bottom “Update” button to begin the download.

While your libraries are downloading, you will see the following status screen (the total number of packages depends on the options you selected above):



Again, please be aware that this download may take a long time to complete. The total time needed will depend on the speed of your Internet connection.

Eventually the update will complete:



Once you see the “Finish” screen pictured above, you have completed the install process for the local help files! Click the Finish button to close the screen.

Now when you are using the Visual Basic IDE and hit “F1” for help, you will access the help files on your local computer without needing an Internet connection.