Setting up your first Server in Cloud9

This document provides you with a brief introduction to the Cloud based development environment Cloud9. The key benefit of Cloud9 is that it enables you to get up and running straight away, without needing to download, install, configure and debug your own environment. You also have the added benefit that you can invite Collaborators to share your container. That includes <u>me</u>! So, if you are stuck, you can invite me to collaborate on your container. I will then be able to look at the code while you are working on it and help you fix any issues.
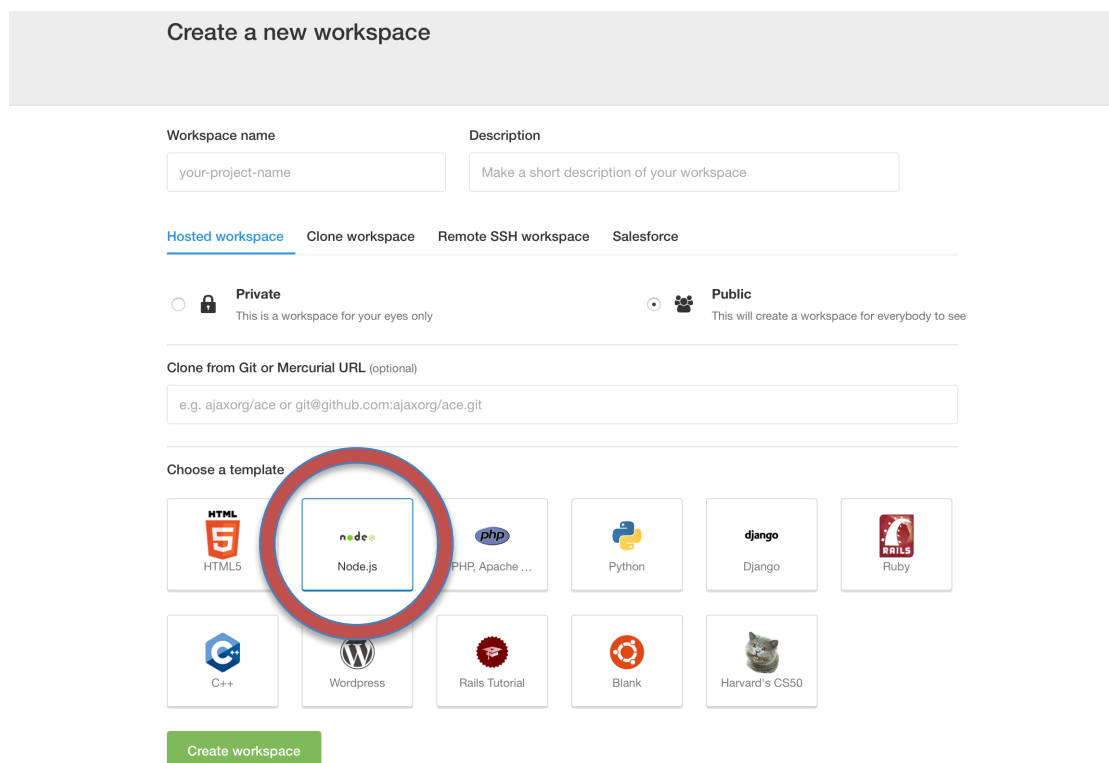
Step 1: Register with Cloud9 and login

This is straightforward of course. Just go to
www.c9.io
and follow the link to sign up. A free account will be fine.

Step 2: Start up a Workspace

Once you have successfully logged in, you will be prompted to start up a new workspace. Click the icon to create a new workspace and you will see this screen:
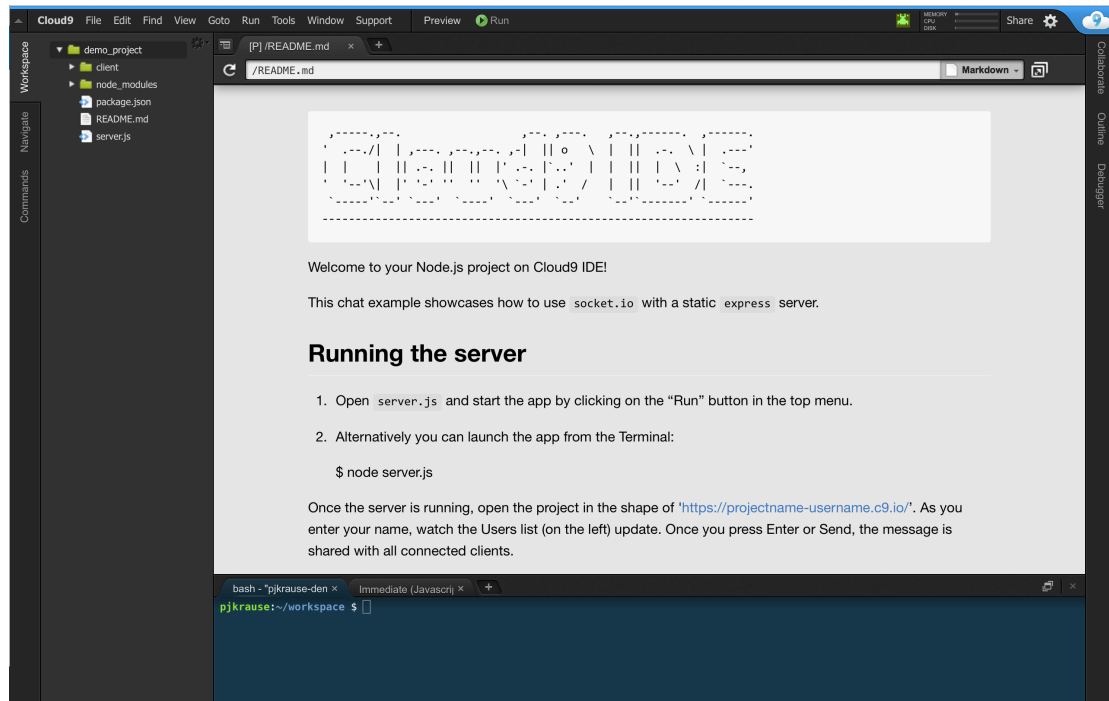

Enter a project name of your choice, a description if you want, and then select "Node.js" under "Choose a template". Leave "Public" selected and then click the "Create workspace" button.

Step 3: Opening the Workspace

It will take a few moments for Cloud9 to create a new workspace. It will show a progress bar while it is doing this. As soon as the workspace has been created you will see a screen similar to that below:
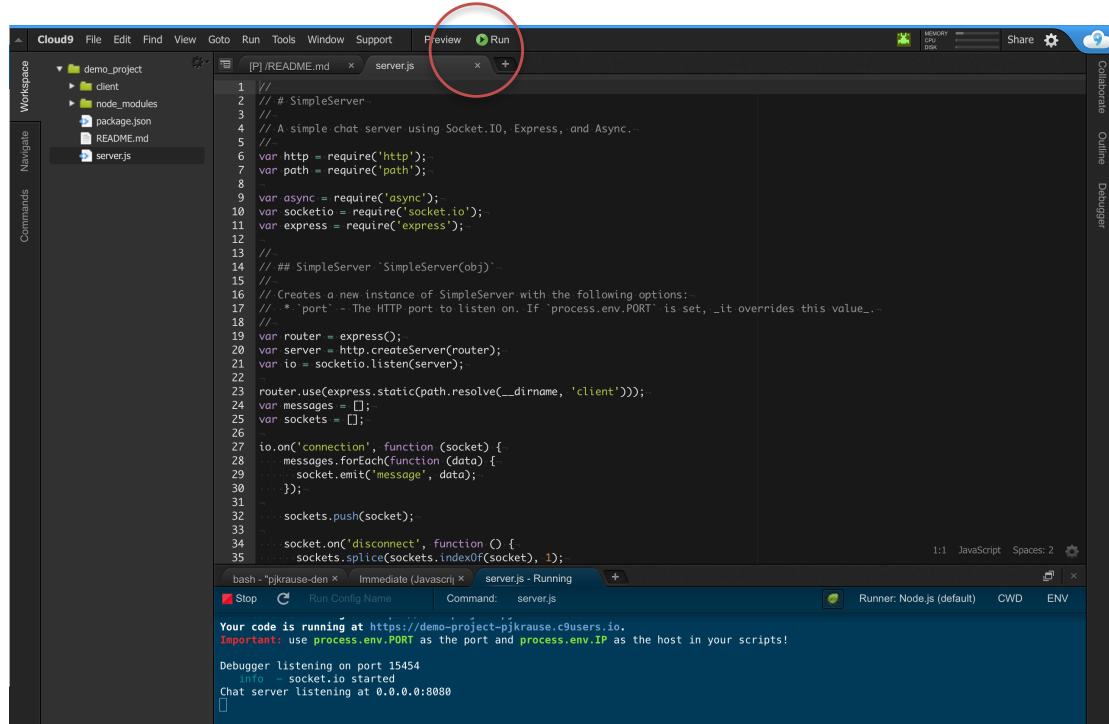

You will see that there is:
- A finder window for your container's directory structure on the left hand side;
- An editing pane to the right hand of the finder window;
- A Linux console in the bottom section.

Cloud9 has very helpfully created for you a demo project. It is worth running it just to see something happening.

Step 4: Running your first Node.js project

So, what is Node.js? We will talk more about it later in the course, but for now we need just mention that it is a JavaScript library that enables you to quickly build a custom server to serve a web site or web application. As you see from the ReadMe file, Cloud9 has prepared a chat app for you.

As you will see from the ReadMe file, there are two ways to run this. Let's take the simplest one first. If you double click the "server.js" file in the finder window, you will see this file opens in the main editing pane. Don't worry about the content of this just now – just run the project by clicking the "Run" icon on the top bar. You will see a very helpfully informative new console window open on the bottom of the IDE view:

This is telling you (hopefully!) that the project is running and its web address.

If you copy the web address ("demo-project-pjkrause.c9users.io" in my case, but yours will be different) into a new browser window, you can start up a chat. Open up a couple of windows (preferably using different browsers) and have a chat with yourself. Share the link with a friend and that is even more sociable! It will also work well on your phone (making my point about single app for all devices!).

If you close one of the windows, you will see that the corresponding name disappears from the "Local Users" pane in the other browser(s) straight away. So, overall, this is a simple but effective demonstration of where we are trying to get to in the course!