

Run Docker in WSL2 in 5 minutes (via systemd, without Docker Desktop!)

[#docker#wsl2](#)

Now WSL2 has [systemd support](#), we can run Docker in WSL without Docker desktop!

TL;DR

Ensure `/etc/wsl.conf` has

```
[boot]
```

```
systemd=true
```

1.

Restart WSL

```
wsl --shutdown
```

```
wsl --distribution Ubuntu
```

2.

3. Install docker-cli - see [my guide](#)

4. Log back into WSL > Profit 🌟

Complete Guide

Ensure WSL is up-to-date:

```
wsl --update
```

1.

(Optional) Install + configure Ubuntu distro (if you haven't already):

```
wsl --install Ubuntu
```

2.

Configure WSL (assuming "Ubuntu" is your distro):

```
# Open up "Ubuntu"
```

```
wsl --distribution Ubuntu
```

```
# Enable systemd via /etc/wsl.conf
```

```
{
```

```
cat <<EOT
```

```
[boot]
systemd=true
EOT
} | sudo tee /etc/wsl.conf
```

exit

3.

Restart WSL:

```
wsl --shutdown
wsl --distribution Ubuntu
```

4.

Check systemd is running - You should see 'OK: Systemd is running' message:

```
systemctl --no-pager status user.slice > /dev/null 2>&1 && echo 'OK: Systemd is
running' || echo 'FAIL: Systemd not running'
```

5.

Install docker-ce (cmds from [my post](#)):

```
# Install Docker
curl -fsSL https://download.docker.com/linux/ubuntu/gpg | sudo gpg --dearmor -o
/etc/apt/keyrings/docker.gpg
echo \
  "deb [arch=$(dpkg --print-architecture) signed-by=/etc/apt/keyrings/docker.gpg]
https://download.docker.com/linux/ubuntu \
  $(lsb_release -cs) stable" | sudo tee /etc/apt/sources.list.d/docker.list > /dev/null
sudo apt update
sudo apt install -y docker-ce docker-compose-plugin
```

```
# Install docker-compose
sudo ln -s /usr/libexec/docker/cli-plugins/docker-compose
/usr/bin/docker-compose
```

```
# Add yourself to the docker group
sudo usermod -aG docker $USER
```

```
# Exit bash - this is important!!!
exit
```

6.

Re-login (this is important!):

`wsl --distribution Ubuntu`

7.

8. You can now run `docker-cli` without Docker Desktop 😊:

`docker run --rm -it hello-world`