**🌟 Laravel Beginner Notes – Setup & Common Issues (Windows + CMD)**

**📁 Step 1: Create a New Laravel Project**

**✅ Pre-requisites:**

- PHP installed (via XAMPP recommended)

- Composer installed

- Node.js installed (for frontend assets)

- VS Code or any text editor

**🔧 Command to create a Laravel project:**

bash

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composer create-project laravel/laravel firstProject

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**📁 Step 2: Navigate to Your Project**

bash

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cd "C:\Users\YourName\Web Development\Laravel\firstProject"

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**🛠️ Step 3: Install Laravel Breeze (Starter Kit - optional)**

bash

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composer require laravel/breeze --dev

php artisan breeze:install none   # or react/vue/livewire

npm install

npm run dev

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**🧪 Step 4: Choose Testing Framework**

You'll be asked:

"Which testing framework do you prefer?"

- 0 for **Pest** (recommended for beginners)

- 1 for **PHPUnit**

Just press Enter to accept default Pest.

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## 🚀 Step 5: Serve the Application

bash

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php artisan serve

Visit: http://127.0.0.1:8000

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## ❌ Common Errors & Fixes

### 1. vendor/autoload.php not found

**Reason:** You haven't run composer install.

✅ Fix:

bash

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composer install

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### 2. ZIP extension or unzip not found

**Error:**

pgsql

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Failed to download from dist: The zip extension and unzip/7z commands are both missing

✅ Fix:

- Edit php.ini and enable:

ini

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extension=zip

- Restart Apache from XAMPP.

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### 3. MissingAppKeyException

**Reason:** Laravel encryption key is missing.

✅ Fix:

bash

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```
cp .env.example .env     # Or: copy .env.example .env (Windows)
php artisan key:generate
```

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### 4. database.sqlite does not exist

**Reason:** You're using SQLite but haven't created the file yet.

✅ Fix:

- Create an empty file:

bash

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```
type nul > database/database.sqlite
```

- Update .env:

env

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```
DB_CONNECTION=sqlite

DB_DATABASE=C:/Users/YourName/Web
Development/Laravel/firstProject/database/database.sqlite
```

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### 5. Ambiguous class resolution warnings

**Reason:** Duplicate class definitions (harmless for beginners).

✅ Fix (optional):

bash

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```
composer dump-autoload --optimize
```

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### 🧩 Useful Commands

| Command | Description |
| --- | --- |
| composer install | Installs dependencies from composer.lock |
| php artisan serve | Starts the Laravel server |

| Command | Description |
| --- | --- |
| php artisan migrate | Creates tables in the database |
| php artisan make:controller | Creates a new controller |
| php artisan make:model ModelName -m | Creates a model with migration |
| php artisan key:generate | Generates APP_KEY in .env |
| npm install && npm run dev | Installs frontend assets |

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📌 **Tips for Beginners**

- Always check .env settings first for DB or app-related issues.
- Use php artisan list to explore all Artisan commands.
- Use forward slashes / in .env paths, even on Windows.