Environment Branches

In this exercise, we will be introducing the concepts of application environments. These allow us to deploy both a test and production version of our application, meaning we can make and test changes while still providing our service.

1. In the left menu, hover over **Repository** and click **Branches**

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**2.** Click **New branch**

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3. Name your branch “test” and click **Create branch**

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Now we are going to set our new “test”branch as a **Protected Branch**. A Protected Branch prevents anyone from pushing directly to the “test” branch, meaning that a Merge Request must be created and merged to the branch.

We will go into more detail on Merge Requests in the next tutorial.

This allows us to make sure that all changes to the **test** branch are reviewed first.

**To set up a protected branch:**

1. Navigate to the Repository settings via **Settings > Repository**

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1. Click **Expand** next to the **Protected Branches**

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Under **Protect a branch**, use the following values:

**Branch**: test

**Allowed to merge**: Maintainers

**Allowed to push**: No one

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Once you’ve entered the values, click **Protect**

Confirm that both master and test are now set to:

**Allowed to merge:** maintainers

**Allowed to push**: no one

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**We can now proceed with enabling CI on the next exercise 003-enabling-ci-and-merge!**