itch.io is an open marketplace for independent digital creators with a focus on independent video games. It's a platform that enables anyone to sell the content they've created.

This guide covers a way to package your dragon ruby code and deploy it to itch.io.

Here's a roadmap before we get started.

Roadmap

1) Sign up for itch.io
2) Set up a new project
3) Setting game_metadata.txt
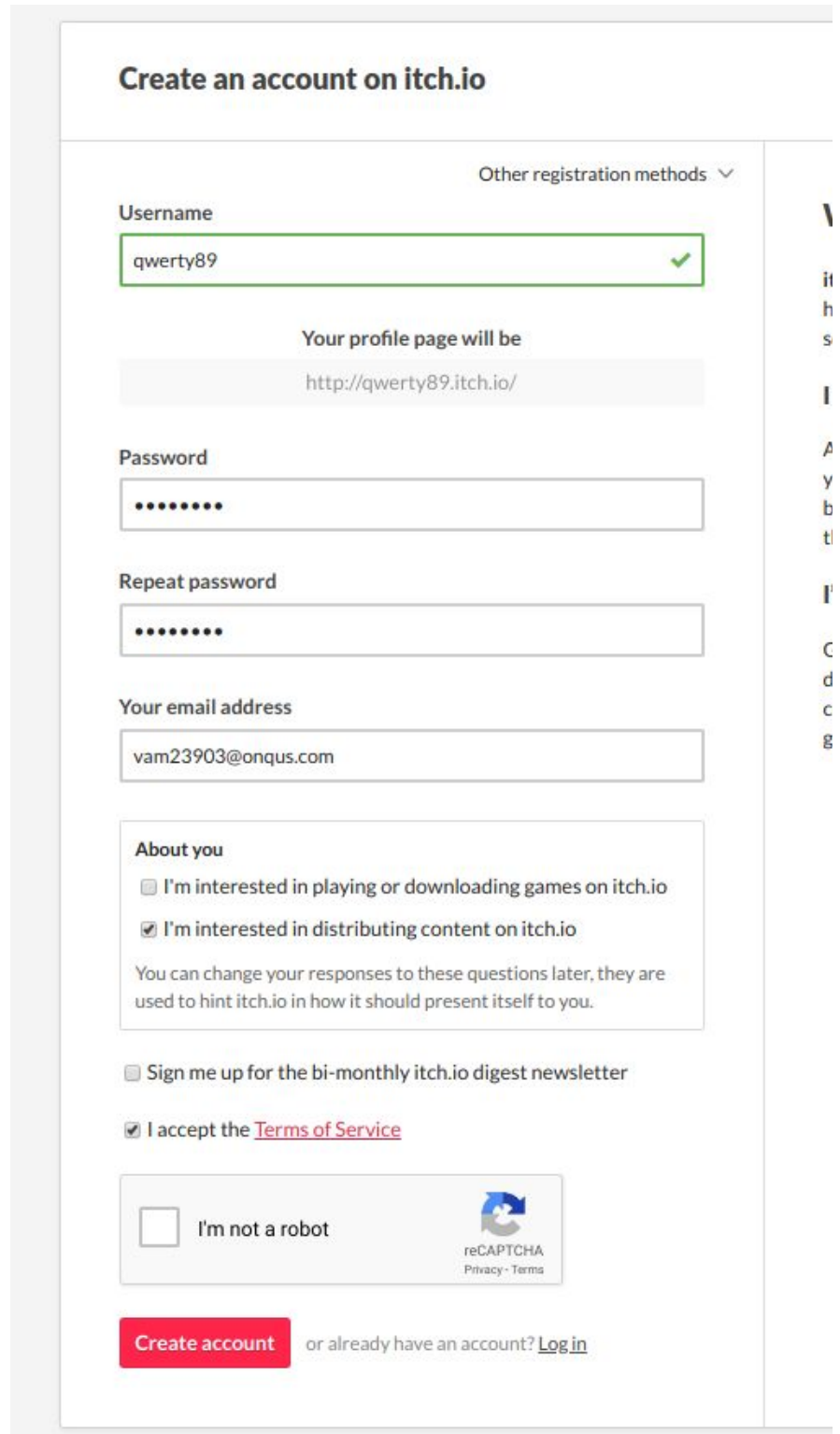4) Running the dragonruby-publish command
5) Setting up a HTML game

Signing up for Itch.io

Head to https://itch.io/register to make a new account. Choose a username that you will remember (keep in mind others will see this username), a password, and provide a email address.

itch.io doesn't verify emails at signup, but it is necessary if you plan on buying other people's games or resetting your password.
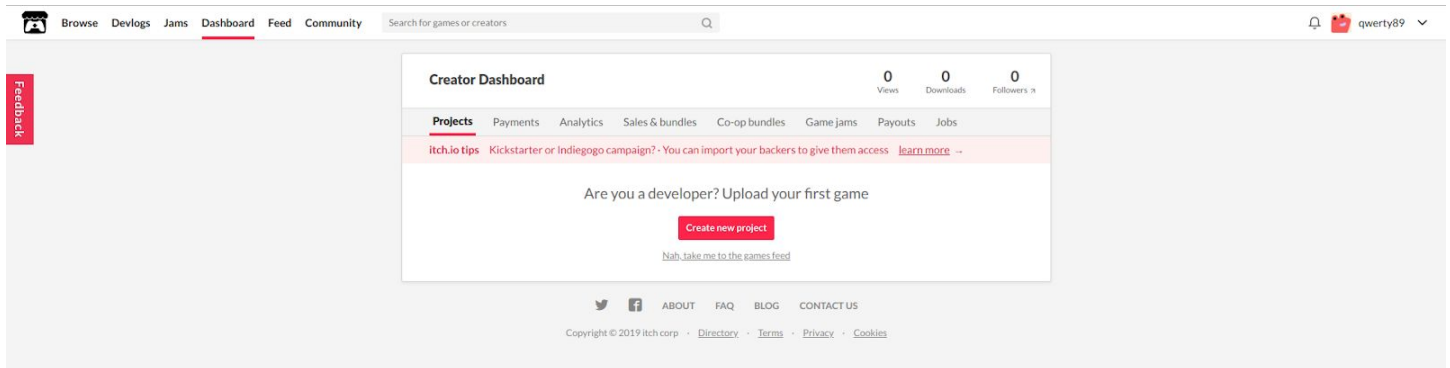
Select "Interested in distributing content" under "About you"
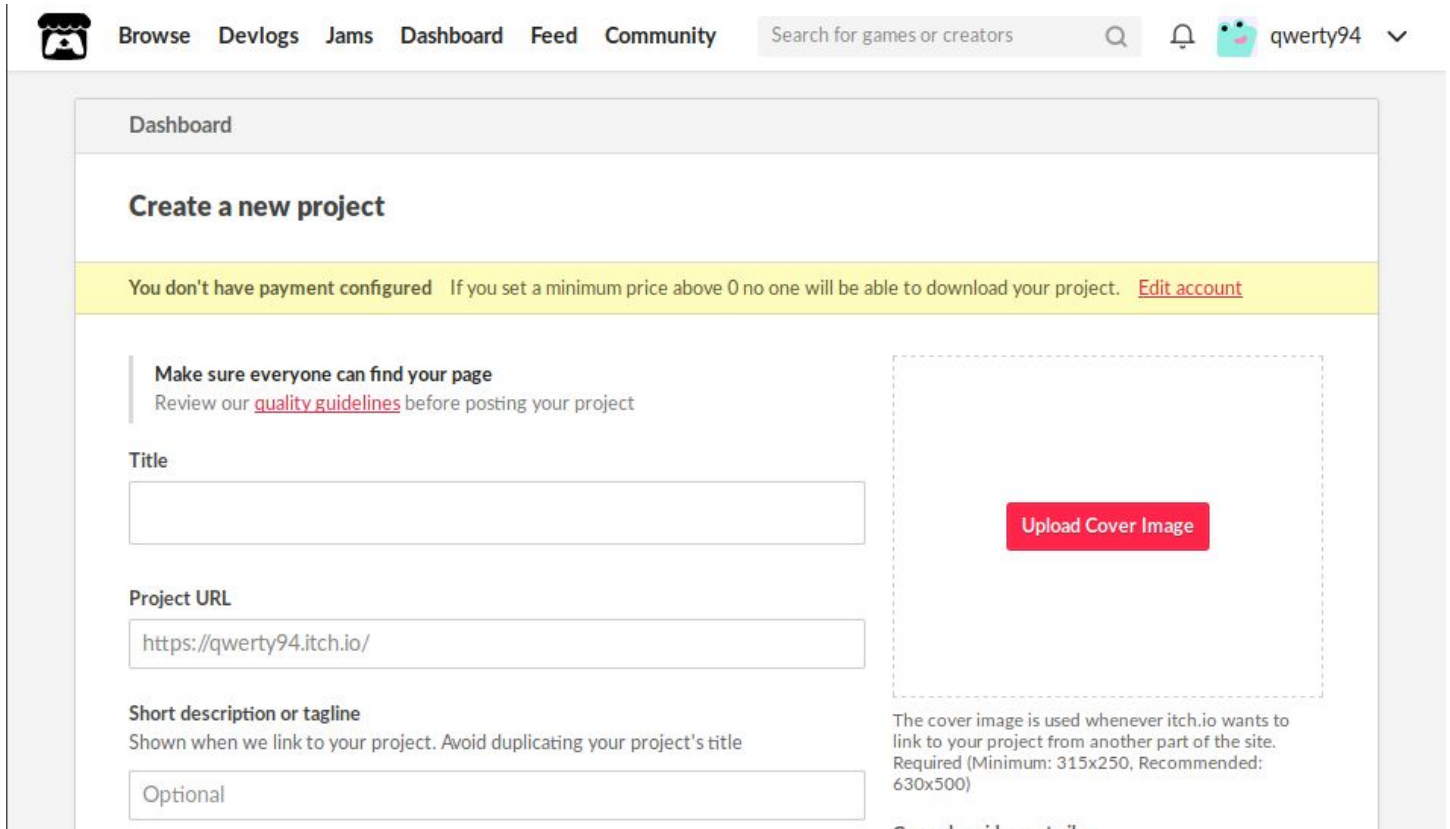
Accept the terms of service.

Once we register for an itch.io account, we're redirected to the creator dashboard

Here, we can make a project to upload our game to.

Click the red button titled "Create new project", which takes us to this form:

Setting up a new project

Let's walk through these fields together. You can follow along with what I would put for each field (bolded).

1) Title: fill in this field with the official name of your game/project.
   MyDRGame
2) Project URL: This field should populate automatically, but you can change the directory of the url.
   So I'm going to shorten the url by changing it to **"https://qwerty89.itch.io/mydrgame"**
3) Short description: Describe your game briefly here, try and make it appealing.
   A testing application for DR documentation
4) Classification, kind of project, and release status are most self-explanatory, itch.io briefly describes each option on the dropdown. **Games, Downloadable, Released** respectively**.**
5) Pricing: This is up to you. This option determines the price to download your game. Once a user pays the amount needed, they have access to download your game.
   $0 or donate, but you decide this.
6) Uploads: Dragonruby comes with a publishing application that auto-uploads to itch.io. We don't need to do this step right now.
   Don't do this step now.
7) Details: This is the description that shows up on the game page! For example, take this itch.io game:
   https://weaponizedwalrus.itch.io/super-prowler/. This portion on it's website is the game's details. Here, we want to describe the game with a brief introduction and concept, any game notes, and author/publisher details.
   We're going to keep the details light for now.
   Super Dragon Ruby Game!
   Built using the stellar power of Ruby 💎!

8) Genre and Tags: We should choose a genre for our new game from one of the options on the drop down. Here, you can also link additional stores where your app might be published.
   This step depends on what your game is about and where else people can find it.
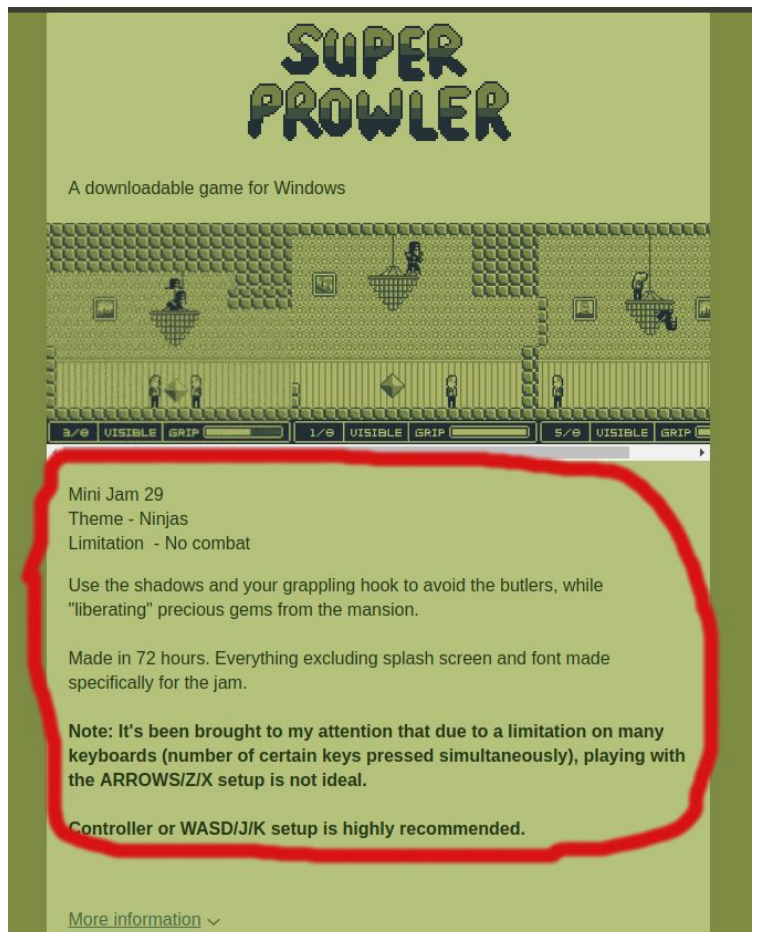
9) You can also select a community mode and access for your itch.io game. Details about each option are on the signup form.

Now click "Save", which will take you to your game's itch.io site. Itch.io generates a site based upon our details and hey! Our game description is automatically on here!

Uploading your DR game to Itch.io!

Dragonruby contains a handy publishing executable that can package our ruby game and upload it onto Itch.io. This executable is named "dragonruby-publish" and can be found in your installation directory. "dragonruby-publish" uses some fields inside myapp/metadata/game_metadata.txt to upload to itch.io, so we need to fill those out!

1) devid should equal your itch.io username for the account we created
2) devtitle can be your company/organization name or simply what you would call yourself, whether it be a hobbyist or a student.
3) gameid is what you would call your game informally. It might be an acroymn or a shortened form of it's official title.
4) gametitle should be the title of project we created on itch.io.
5) version is used for distinguishing different versions of your game on itch.io, if you upload multiple times. Remember, you'll need to increment the version number if you plan on releasing new versions!
6) icon refers to the path to a game icon, which you can set to any icon you want.

Save and exit. This is my configuration for game_metadata.txt:

```
devid=qwerty94
devtitle=qwerty94 The Game Developer
gameid=mydrgame
gametitle=MyDRGame
version=0.1
icon=metadata/icon.png
```

After that, "dragonruby-publish" is ready to be run! Let's go ahead and run it!

We need to run the executable and pass in the directory of your game (usually mygame) as an argument. And off we go! So if your game is in a folder called "mygame", you would run "./dragonruby-publish mygame". If you're running Windows, Your dragonruby-publish executable might have a .exe, so you might need to include ".exe" in the command.

dragonruby-publish is compiling our ruby code into Windows, Mac, and Linux executables and will attempt to push them to itch. "dragonruby-publish" uses a tool called "butler" to upload the game executables. However, we need to authorize "butler" with itch, because itch.io wants to make sure it's you.

A web browser should pop up, and Itch should ask your to Authorize butler.
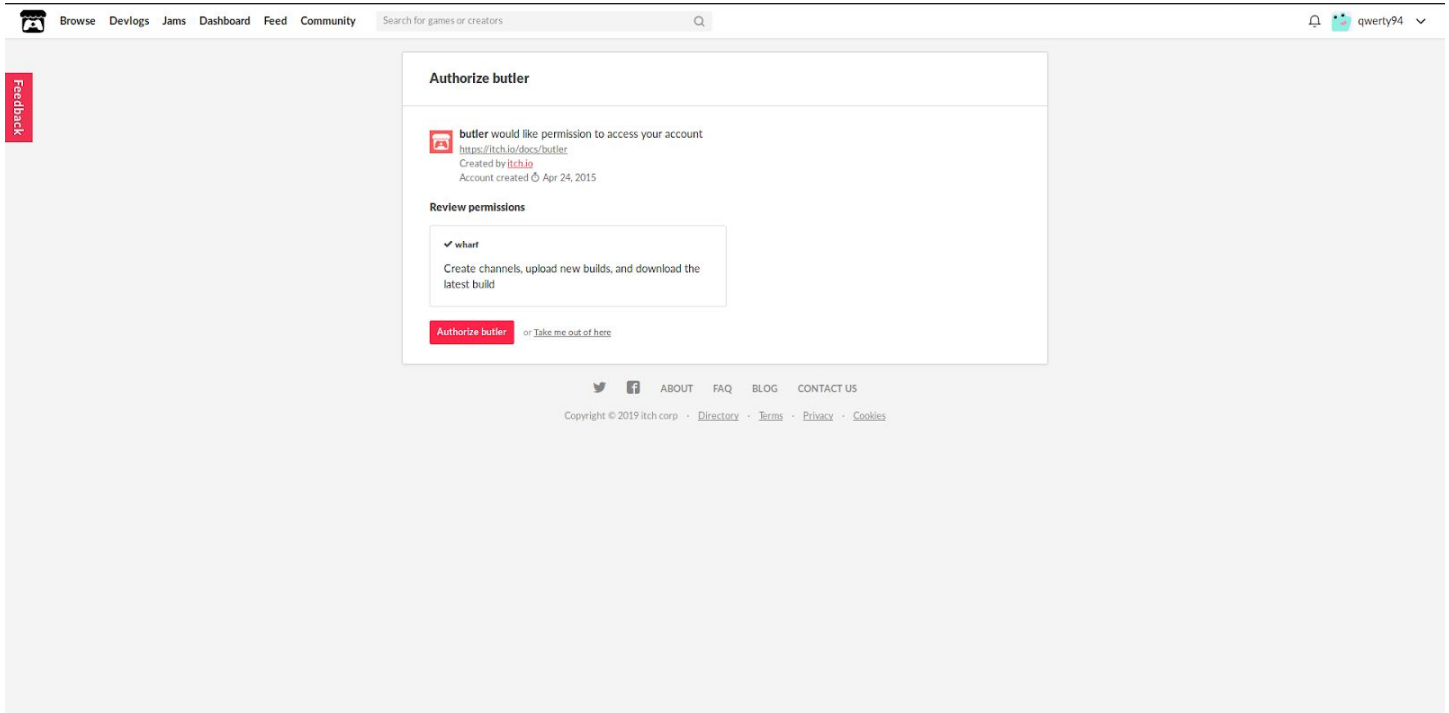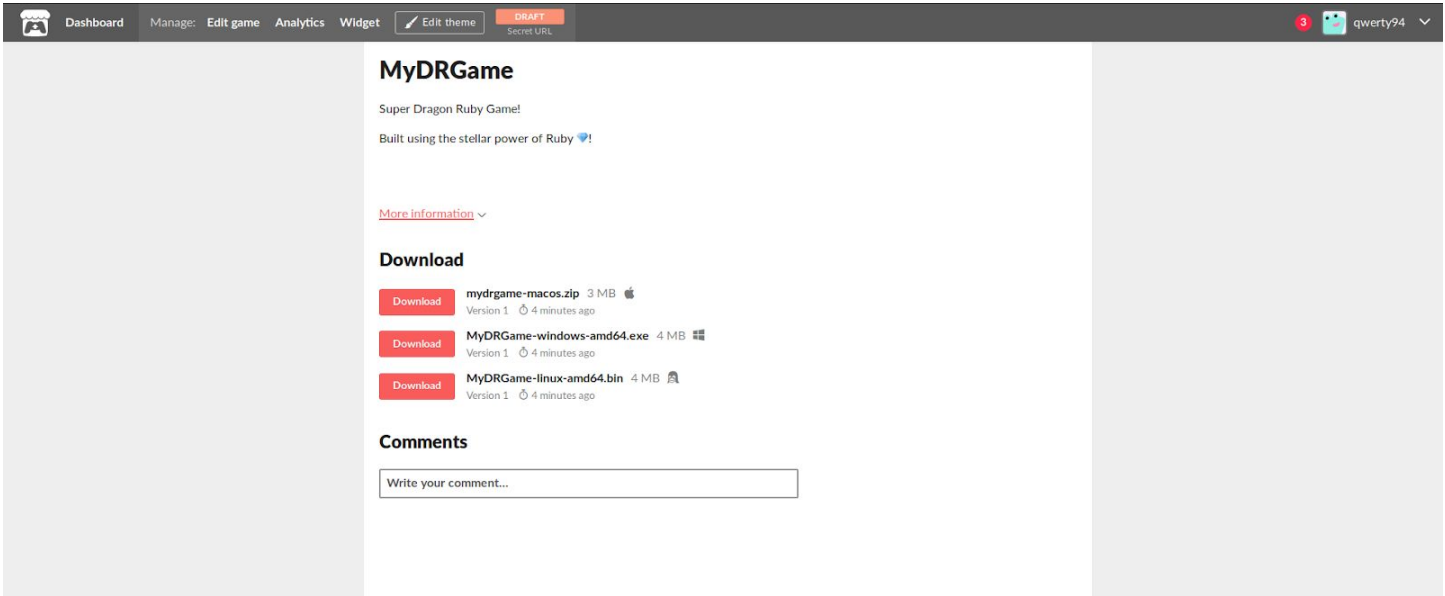

We need to press "Authenticate!" to proceed. If all goes well, we should see this:
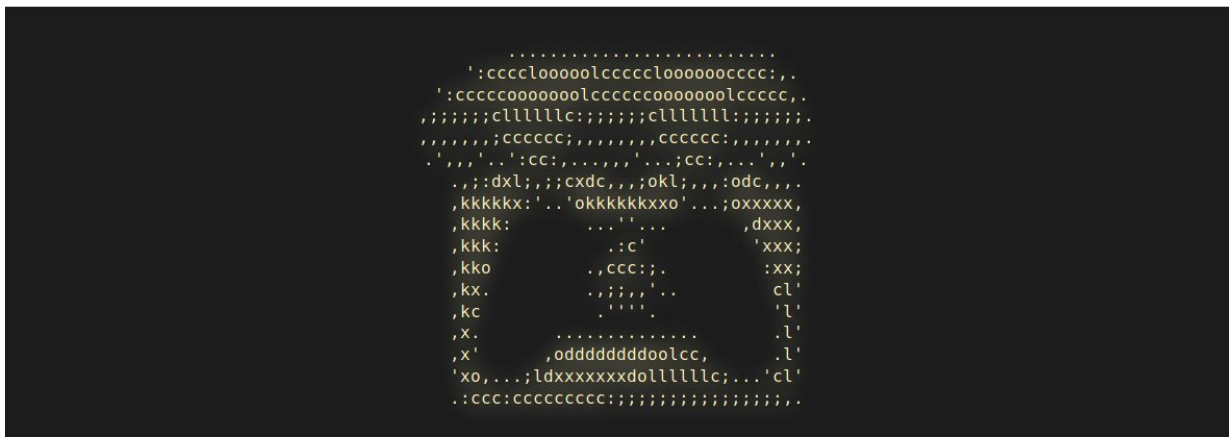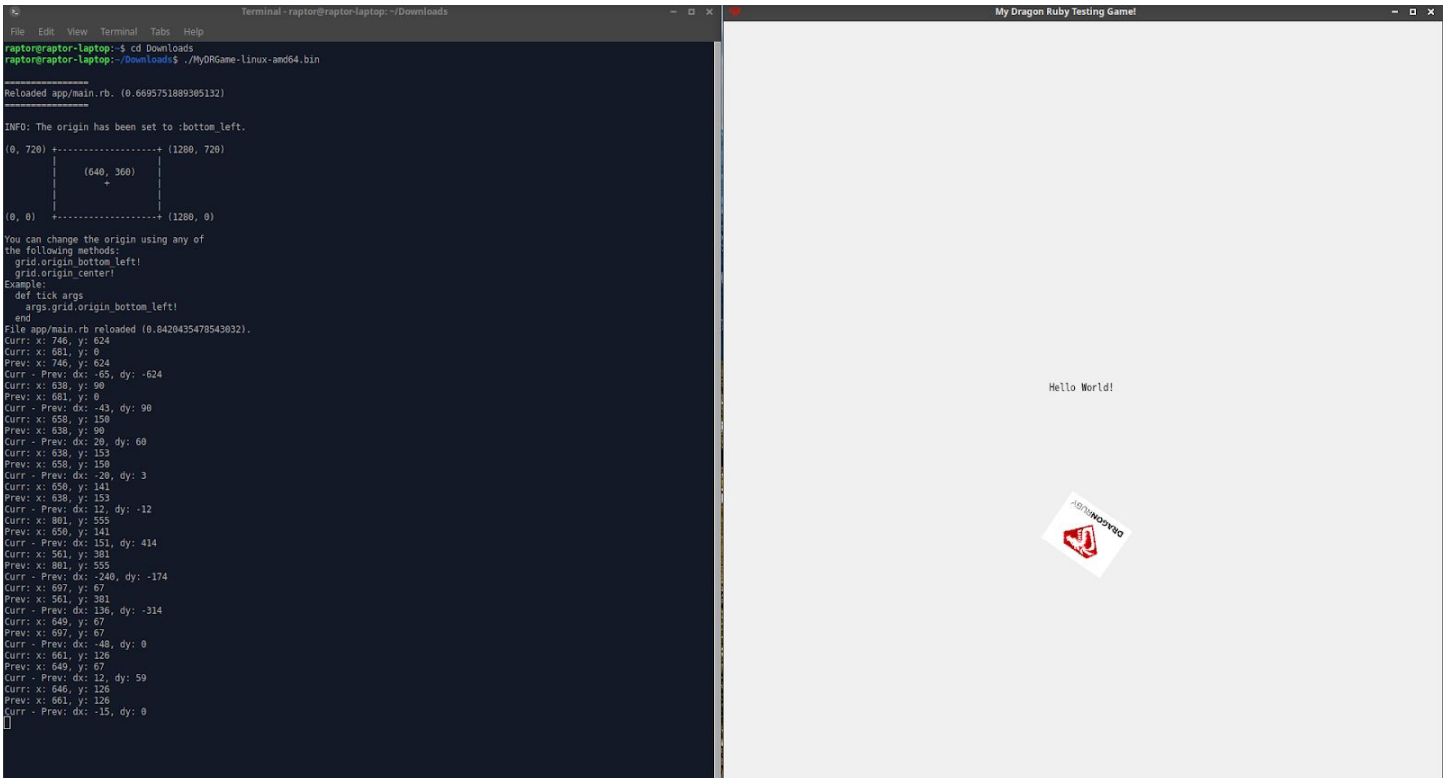

You're successfully authenticated! You can close this page.

And boom! We're done! If we navigate to our game website, we should now see downloads for our game that we just had uploaded!

And we can download and run our game!

Setting up a HTML game

Let's navigate to our Creator Dashboard. Now that we've published and downloaded our game, we should now game downloads and views! Let's edit our project description. Click the "edit" under the project's name.

We need to change the "Kind of project" with itch.io. We had set it to Downloadable, meaning that anyone who wanted to play our game would have to download our game. Let's go ahead and change that to HTML.
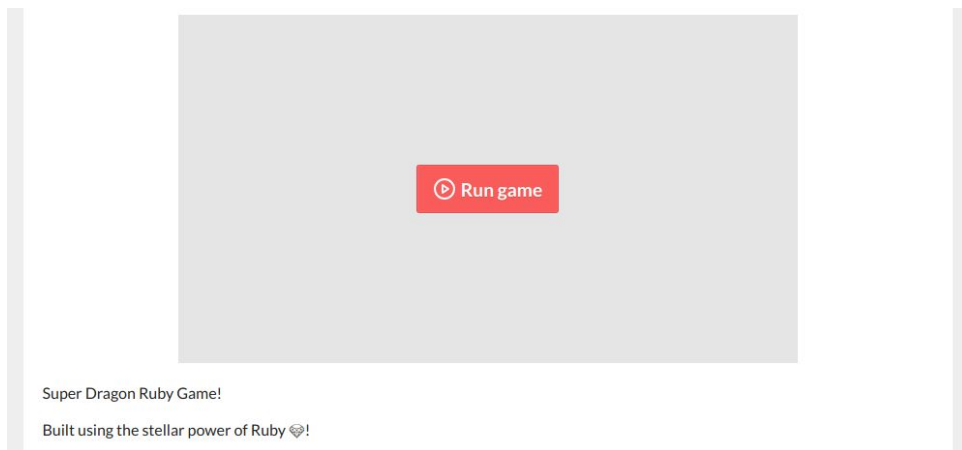
Now, we need to set our HTML zip file to be played on our project page. Scroll down to "Uploads", and find the HTML5 zip file. Tick "This file will be played in the browser."
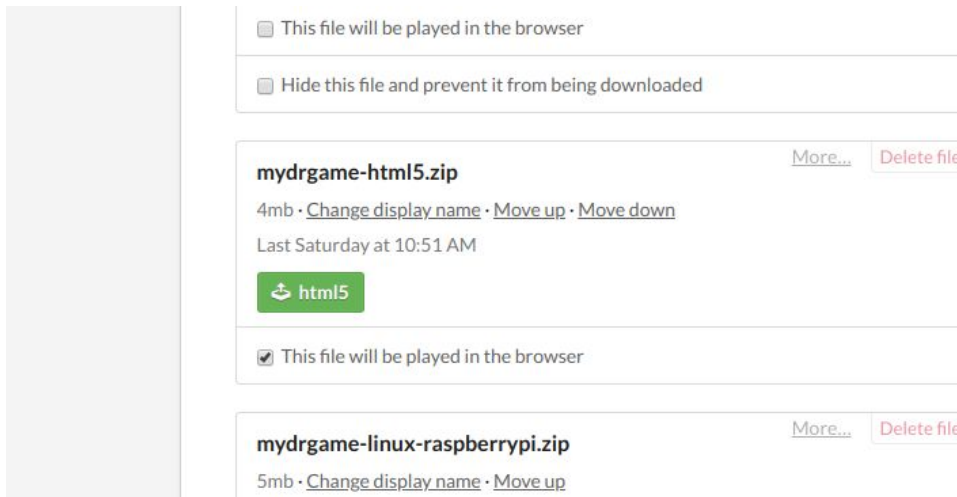
Save your changes at the bottom of the page, and if we navigate to our itch.io page, we should see our embedded HTML game for viewers to play!

Conclusion

From this guide, you've learned to package your DragonRuby game to Windows, Mac, and Linux platforms. You've made use of "dragonruby-publish" to upload your creation to itch.io. You configured your project and game page so that viewers can download your game. Your viewers can now even run your DragonRuby game in their browser!

Make your ideas into a reality! ❤