How to Use Git and GitHub

Command Line Instructions

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Tutorials

Here are a couple of tutorials that may be helpful if you don't have experience using a Unix-style command line.

- A tutorial with instructions to follow on your own computer
- Another tutorial with instructions to follow on your own computer
- An in-browser tutorial you can run without installing anything

Learn to use the command line on your own computer

If you want to try out using the command line on your own computer, try the first tutorial mentioned above. This tutorial was written for a specific university, and assumes students are logging in to specific Unix machines. The directions there for how to open the terminal will be a little off, but you should be able to follow along with everything else they do. Check below for how to access the terminal on your OS.

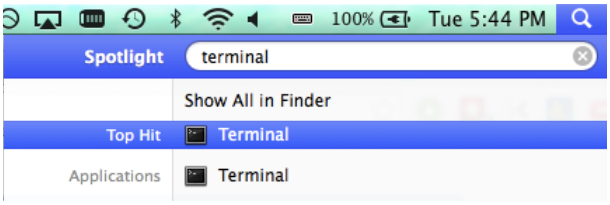
Windows users

If you are on Windows, the native command prompt is a bit different from the ones you'd find on a Unix-based operating system like Ubuntu or Mac. If you do not already have a more Unix-like command prompt installed, we highly recommend following the instructions on this page to install Git. You will need Git later in the course anyway, and it includes a Unix-like bash prompt called Git Bash that you can use to try out the tutorial linked above.

Mac

Option 1: Open Finder, go to Applications/Utilities and launch Terminal,

Option 2: Search for Terminal within Spotlight in the top-right corner of the screen.



Linux

Please Google for instructions specific to your distribution.

Learn how to use the command line in your browser

If you want a walk-through of the basic BASH prompt commands in your browser (no need to install anything), you can check out the second tutorial mentioned above.

Learn about Man Pages

Man pages are manual pages or help pages that are available for most commands you can run on the command line. You can access these pages by typing `man <command>`, into the command line, for whatever command you are interested in. For example, if you wanted to learn about `ls`, you would type `man ls`. Learning to read these is essential for being at home on the command line, and the man page should be the first place you turn when trying to use a command you're unfamiliar with.

It takes a bit of practice to learn how to read a man page. This page has some useful advice on how to get started.

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