

A `.gitignore` file is a text file used by Git to specify intentionally untracked files that Git should ignore. These are typically files that are generated as part of your build process or sensitive files that you don't want to include in your repository.

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**(1) Create a `.gitignore` file:**

```
touch .gitignore
```

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**(2) Edit the `.gitignore` file:**

```
# Ignore build artifacts
build/
dist/

# Ignore IDE files
.vscode/
.idea/

# Ignore sensitive information
secret.txt
```

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**(3) Save the `.gitignore` file:** Save your changes and close the file.

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**(4) Commit the `.gitignore` file:**

After creating and editing the `.gitignore` file, you should commit it to your repository so that other collaborators will also ignore the specified files.

```
git add .gitignore
git commit -m "Add .gitignore file"
```

**(5) Some commonly ignored files are as follows:**

- Dependency caches
- Compiled code
- Build output directories, like `/bin`, `/out`, or `/target`
- Runtime file generated, like `.log`, `.lock`, or `.tmp`
- Hidden system files, like `Thumbs.db` or `DS_Store`

- Personal IDE config files, such as `.idea/workspace.xml`