Workspace setup: Environment variables

Setting up your environment variables.

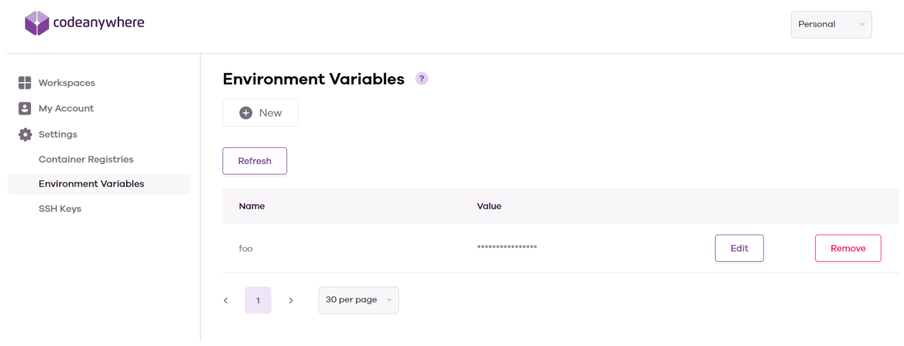
Environment variables

The **environment** means where the project is run. Codeanywhere provides an environment to develop - Heroku provides an environment for hosting/production. A **variable** is analogous to a "bucket" that stores a value for access later. In code, they are declared like `planet = "Earth"` or `let answer = 42`. Combine them into an environment variable and you have a stored value that is not declared in the code; This allows different values to be set in each environment without having to change the code. More importantly, they are used to store sensitive information that should not be written in the code or be available for anyone to see, such as secret keys and access credentials.

Codeanywhere settings

Codeanywhere docs

Env vars can be set in the Codeanywhere dashboard. If set in the dashboard, the scope is global. Be careful to use unique names if you have multiple projects.



After restarting the Codeanywhere workspace, all terminal sessions will have the variables available.

```
# app.py
import os

print(os.getenv("test"))
```

env.py

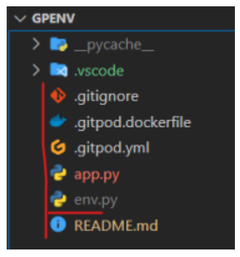
To use an env.py file, create one in the root directory of the workspace - the same level as the app.py/manage.py file that will be executed for Flask or Django projects.

Set the variable using the os module with this command `os.environ["variable_name"] = value`

```
# env.py
import os

os.environ["envpy_test"] = "envpy"
```

As these variables are set using code, they do not exist in the terminal - the echo command will not work. To check these are working, you will need to import them into the python file and print them.




```
# app.py
import os

if os.path.exists("env.py"):
    import env

print(os.getenv("envpy_test"))
```

```
/workspace/gpenv (main) $ python app.py
envpy
```

> Remember! Always add your env.py file to the **.gitignore** file so you don't commit your secret variables to your git repository; This is extremely important.
>
> API services may scan GitHub repositories for exposed API keys, and if one is found, access will be halted until corrective action is taken. If your API key is exposed, anyone who finds it can use it and may cause your account to be charged excess usage fees, as well as having access to your data.