



Generating a new SSH key and adding it to the ssh-agent

MAC | WINDOWS | LINUX

After you've checked for existing SSH keys, you can generate a new SSH key to use for authentication, then add it to the ssh-agent.

If you don't already have an SSH key, you must [generate a new SSH key](#). If you're unsure whether you already have an SSH key, check for [existing keys](#).

If you don't want to reenter your passphrase every time you use your SSH key, you can [add your key to the SSH agent](#), which manages your SSH keys and remembers your passphrase.

Article versions

GitHub.com

GitHub Enterprise 2.10

GitHub Enterprise 2.9

GitHub Enterprise 2.8

Generating a new SSH key

1 Open Git Bash.

2 Paste the text below, substituting in your GitHub email address.

```
$ ssh-keygen -t rsa -b 4096 -C "your_email@example.com"
```

This creates a new ssh key, using the provided email as a label.

```
Generating public/private rsa key pair.
```

3 When you're prompted to "Enter a file in which to save the key," press Enter. This accepts the default file location.

```
Enter a file in which to save the key (/c/Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa): [Press enter]
```

4 At the prompt, type a secure passphrase. For more information, see "[Working with SSH key passphrases](#)".

```
Enter passphrase (empty for no passphrase): [Type a passphrase]
Enter same passphrase again: [Type passphrase again]
```

Adding your SSH key to the ssh-agent

Before adding a new SSH key to the ssh-agent to manage your keys, you should have [checked for existing SSH keys](#) and [generated a new SSH key](#).

If you have [GitHub Desktop](#) installed, you can use it to clone repositories and not deal with SSH keys. It also comes with the Git Bash tool, which is the preferred way of running `git` commands on Windows.

1 Ensure the ssh-agent is running:

If you are using the Git Shell that's installed with GitHub Desktop, the ssh-agent should be running.

If you are using another terminal prompt, such as Git for Windows, you can use the "Auto-launching the ssh-agent" instructions in "[Working with SSH key passphrases](#)", or start it

manually:

```
# start the ssh-agent in the background
$ eval $(ssh-agent -s)
Agent pid 59566
```

- 2 Add your SSH private key to the ssh-agent. If you created your key with a different name, or if you are adding an existing key that has a different name, replace `id_rsa` in the command with the name of your private key file.

```
$ ssh-add ~/.ssh/id_rsa
```

- 3 Add the SSH key to your GitHub account.

Further reading

["About SSH"](#)

["Working with SSH key passphrases"](#)

 [Contact a human](#)

