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1.6 Getting Started - First-Time Git Setup

First-Time Git Setup

Now that you have Git on your system, you'll want to do a few things to customize your Git environment. You should have to do these things only once on any given computer; they'll stick around between upgrades. You can also change them at any time by running through the commands again.

Git comes with a tool called `git config` that lets you get and set configuration variables that control all aspects of how Git looks and operates. These variables can be stored in three different places:

1. `[path]/etc/gitconfig` file: Contains values applied to every user on the system and all their repositories. If you pass the option `--system` to `git config`, it reads and writes from this file specifically. Because this is a system configuration file, you would need administrative or superuser privilege to make changes to it.
2. `~/.gitconfig` or `~/.config/git/config` file: Values specific personally to you, the user. You can make Git read and write to this file specifically by passing the `--global` option, and this affects all of the repositories you work with on your system.
3. `config` file in the Git directory (that is, `.git/config`) of whatever repository you're currently using: Specific to that single repository. You can force Git to read from and write to this file with the `--local` option, but that is in fact the default. Unsurprisingly, you need to be located somewhere in a Git repository for this option to work properly.

Each level overrides values in the previous level, so values in `.git/config` trump those in `[path]/etc/gitconfig`.

On Windows systems, Git looks for the `system` file in the `c:\program files\git` directory (or `c:\program files (x86)\git` for 32-bit).

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