Ignore files that have already been committed to a Git repository [duplicate]

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2832

How do I make Git forget about a file that was tracked, but is now in .gitignore? (35 answers)

Closed 6 years ago.



I have an already initialized Git repository that I added a <code>.gitignore</code> file to. How can I refresh the file index so the files I want ignored get ignored?

git caching version-control gitignore git-rm

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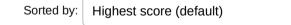
edited May 25, 2018 at 23:17

dreftymac

31.9k • 26 • 122 • 185



21 Answers





To untrack a *single* file that has already been added/initialized to your repository, *i.e.*, stop tracking the file but not delete it from your system use: git rm --cached filename

4706

To untrack *every* file that is now in your .gitignore:



First commit any outstanding code changes, and then, run this command:



git rm -r --cached .



This removes any changed files from the *index*(staging area), then just run:

git add .

Commit it:

git commit -m ".gitignore is now working"

To undo git rm --cached filename, use git add filename.

Make sure to commit all your important changes before running git add. Otherwise, you will lose any changes to other files.

Please be careful, when you push this to a repository and pull from somewhere else into a state where those files are still tracked, the files will be DELETED

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edited Oct 23, 2021 at 14:53

community wiki 14 revs, 14 users 20% takeshin

- be aware to commit all your changes before, otherwise you will loose control on all the changed files Hoang Pham Jan 13, 2010 at 14:48
- 9 @TravisWebb You would have to make sure you set up .gitignore first. Also I tend not to remove all files from the index, only the ones I need to by using Fileglobs such as *.o Jason S Dec 27, 2011 at 20:41
- git rm -r --cached . removed way more files than was in the git ignore for me :(:(. It removed files in directories that I don't even have listed Dean Hiller Aug 14, 2012 at 20:07
- 117 Great answer but git rm --cached filename seems a little less drastic imho.. Jim Morrison Oct 21, 2013 at 20:37 🖍

@JimMorrison you miss the point. if you have a large project with a complicated .gitignore (such as a C# project in Visual Studio) figuring out each individual file to remove is tedious. these three simple commands fixes everything painlessly. – longneck Nov 13, 2013 at 13:52



If you are trying to ignore changes to a file that's already tracked in the repository (e.g., a dev.properties file that you would need to change for your local environment but you would never want to check in these changes), then what you want to do is:

733



git update-index --assume-unchanged <file>



If you want to start tracking changes again:



git update-index --no-assume-unchanged <file>

See git-update-index(1) Manual Page.

Also have a look at the skip-worktree and no-skip-worktree options for update-index if you need this to persist past a git-reset (via)

Update: Here's a convenient alias for seeing which files are currently "ignored" (--assume-unchanged) in your local workspace

```
git config --global alias.ignored = !git ls-files -v | grep "^[[:lower:]]"
```

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edited Feb 28, 2023 at 10:16



answered Jul 6, 2012 at 17:09



- 19 This is genius! Brilliantly useful. Do you know if there's a way to get a list of all the 'on hold' files? artfulrobot Feb 5, 2013 at 13:06
- This'll work for you: git ls-files -v If the character printed is lower-case, the file is marked assume-unchanged. see: stackoverflow.com/a/2363495/677381 and: git-scm.com/docs/git-ls-files dyodji Feb 6, 2013 at 1:33 ✓
- Here's my slightly more verbose version of the ignored alias, as it appears in my ~/.gitconfig file: ignored = !git ls-files -v \$(git rev-parse -- show-toplevel) | (grep '^[[:lower:]]' || echo 'None ignored.') && echo '\nIgnore changes with: git update-index --assume-

unchanged <file> \nor track again with: git update-index --no-assume-unchanged <file>' The toplevel part of it makes sure it searches the entire repository. — Chris Feb 10, 2015 at 6:22 /

- Unfortunately --assume-unchanged doesn't work with git stash : the changes are reverted during git stash and not reapplied during git stash pop . See this question. Scott Weldon Apr 27, 2016 at 17:39
- 7 Not sure if the syntax is different on mac but I had to modify the alias slightly git config --global alias.hidden '!git ls-files -v | grep "^[[:lower:]]"' Crhistian Mar 13, 2018 at 16:14



To untrack a file that has already been added/initialized to your repository, ie stop tracking the file but not delete it from your system use: git rm --cached filename

384

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answered Sep 14, 2010 at 23:55







- This was the perfect way to remove the couple of files I'd added, committed, but later realized didn't need to be tracked. After adding those files to .gitignore, I was able to do this and untrack them perfectly. Andrew Larned Apr 8, 2011 at 16:17
- 9 Tip: for example if you add *.config to your .gitignore , you can do git rm --cached *.config to stop tracking all *.config files. dav_i Mar 6, 2013 at 13:30 /
- Also note doing this will delete the files from other repos you push to, even though it stays on your system. If you're just ignoring changes to files and don't want to delete them from other user's repos try using git update-index --assume-unchanged file.name dav_i Mar 8, 2013 at 10:15
- 1 IMO, this is *the correct answer*. Wiki answer works-kinda, but is awfully heavy-handed, especially given the question. (I'd fix the wiki, but I'm not sure how. "Soon!";) Olie Jul 17, 2014 at 3:20
 - @Olie be *extremely* careful with this "solution". This *will* remove the file in the repo, and anyone who pulls this change will have the file removed too. The best solution would be to assume-unchanged, as @dav_i said, or --skip-worktree as an alternative. Sebastianb Sep 12, 2017 at 20:37

Yes - .gitignore system only ignores files not currently under version control from git.



I.e. if you've already added a file called test.txt using git-add, then adding test.txt to .gitignore will still cause changes to test.txt to be tracked.

90

You would have to git rm test.txt first and commit that change. Only then will changes to test.txt be ignored.



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edited Jan 2, 2017 at 17:44



answered Jul 18, 2009 at 8:15



13 This isn't entirely true, it is possible to ignore changes in a tracked file... see my answer: stackoverflow.com/a/11366713/677381 – dyodji Jan 3, 2013 at 22:08

git update-index --assume-unchanged <file> and git rm --caheced <file> was not actually working for me. I have done git rm <file> and then created new file after that <file> is successfully ignored. I am using git version 1.8.1 -- If that was the issue. - mujaffars Feb 24, 2016 at 6:24 /

your syntax is wrong here. it's git rm test.txt and here's a link to a more comprehensive answer stackoverflow.com/questions/12661306/...

- Linnea Huxford Dec 24, 2016 at 20:13

This is the correct answer if your .gitignore is not working for some specific files. The accepted answer will cause a commit for all of your files. – devfaysal Feb 9, 2020 at 3:39



57

Remove trailing whitespace in .gitignore

Also, make sure you have no trailing whitespace in your .gitignore. I got to this question because I was searching for an answer, then I had a funny feeling I should open the editor instead of just cat'ing .gitignore. Removed a single extra space from the end and **poof** it works now :)



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answered Feb 2, 2012 at 15:59



MikeJansen **3,436** • 3 • 27 • 40

- 4 I had exactly the same problem, :P. I also got to this question because of that. Good thing you have this documented here. +1 Hindol Jul 11, 2012 at 5:08
- 3 If like me you use vi to quickly edit .gitignore use ':set list' to show whitespace. Sam Giles Mar 12, 2013 at 16:35

1 This happenened to me when I did a echo node_modules >> .gitignore (at least on windows) - Khôi May 3, 2014 at 20:16

For weeks I was frustrated with this until I saw your whitespace post. Thanks, fixed my problem. – Blazes Oct 8, 2015 at 22:01



I followed these steps



git rm -r --cached .
git add .
git reset HEAD



After that, git delete all files (*.swp in my case) that should be ignoring.



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answered Jul 15, 2011 at 7:22



- be careful with that one, as it assumes you want to add all files except what's ignored, and usually that's not the case RoeeK Jan 19, 2017 at 22:32
- 1 Awesomeness! +1 Codetard Oct 14, 2019 at 20:35



Complex answers everywhere!



Just use the following



git rm -r --cached .



It will remove the files you are trying to ignore from the origin and not from the master on your computer!

After that just commit and push!

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answered Jul 19, 2017 at 5:38



This was only half of the solution. Also needed a 2nd command: git add . Credit to: dylanwooters.wordpress.com/2015/10/24/... – Ben Oct 7, 2022 at 16:34



If you want to stop tracking file without deleting the file from your local system, which I prefer for ignoring config/database.yml file. Simply try:



git rm --cached config/database.yml
this will delete your file from git history but not from your local system.



now, add this file to <code>.gitignore</code> file and commit the changes. And from now on, any changes made to config/database.yml will not get tracked by git.

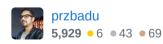


\$ echo config/database.yml >> .gitignore

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answered Mar 2, 2014 at 9:00





To remove just a few specific files from being tracked:



git update-index --assume-unchanged path/to/file



If ever you want to start tracking it again:



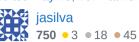
git update-index --no-assume-unchanged path/to/file



https://stackoverflow.com/questions/1139762/ignore-files-that-have-already-been-committed-to-a-git-repository

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edited May 23, 2014 at 15:27



answered Aug 21, 2013 at 14:20





As day i says, in order to keep the file in repo and yet removing it from changes without creating an extra commit you can use:

29

git update-index --assume-unchanged filename



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5 Undo: git update-index --no-assume-unchanged filename - Chemical Programmer Nov 24, 2015 at 12:01

1 what if you want to do that for all files in a folder in one go? - bg17aw Dec 2, 2016 at 12:54



- 1. Move the file out of the git-controlled directory
- 2. Check the removal into git
- 3. Move the file back into the git-controlled directory



After moving the file back, git will ignore it.



Works with directories too!

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edited Nov 18, 2023 at 3:43

.0 • 6 • 30 • 72

answered Nov 15, 2015 at 4:03



1,293 • 1 • 16 • 26



Not knowing guite what the 'answer' command did, I ran it, much to my dismay. It recursively removes every file from your git repo.



Stackoverflow to the rescue... How to revert a "git rm -r ."?



git reset HEAD



Did the trick, since I had uncommitted local files that I didn't want to overwrite.



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answered Apr 12, 2011 at 20:39



- The git rm -r --cached . didn't work for me. Git was still claiming an my textmate project file was not being tracked even though .tmproj is in my global ignore file. Resetting my local repro like this worked, though. Actually I added the 'hard' option as in git reset --hard HEAD. That should have nearly the same effect in this case. - IAmNaN May 16, 2012 at 19:33
- Be careful with the --hard flag. It will throw out any uncommitted changes without a warning! Mikko Rantalainen Mar 1, 2013 at 13:02



Put the **.gitignore** file into your repository root **not** in **.git** folder.



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answered Jun 18, 2013 at 21:08



1,670 • 1 • 22 • 32







If the files are already in version control you need to remove them manually.

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answered Jul 16, 2009 at 19:28

23









- 2 I tried git rm --cached and git reset HEAD both tools I'm fairly familiar with and just could get it from the repo. Success came from first rm --cached, then actually manually deleting it, committing the delete, then recreating it manually. And it's gone. doublejosh Apr 17, 2012 at 23:17 /
- This worked for me like so: rm foo/bar && git add -u && git commit -m "removed foo/bar" && git push . Then running touch foo/bar && git status will show the file is now properly ignored. AWrightIV Feb 21, 2014 at 3:03



Another problem I had was I placed an inline comment.

tmp/* # ignore my tmp folder (this doesn't work)



This works

ignore my tmp folder
tmp/

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answered Dec 6, 2011 at 13:14



kindahero **5,827** • 3 • 26 • 33



Thanks to your answer, I was able to write this little one-liner to improve it. I ran it on my .gitignore and repo, and had no issues, but if anybody sees any glaring problems, please comment. This should git rm -r --cached from .gitignore:

16

 $\texttt{cat \$(git rev-parse --show-toplevel)/.gitIgnore | sed "s/\/\$//" | grep -v "^\#" | xargs -L 1 -I \{\} find \$(git rev-parse --show-parse --show-pars$



toplevel) -name "{}" | xargs -L 1 git rm -r --cached



Note that you'll get a lot of fatal: pathspec '<pathspec>' did not match any files. That's just for the files which haven't been modified.



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answered Jul 3, 2012 at 17:25



Is the sed s//\$// supposed to be s/\$// ? Also, what's the point of the sed and grep commands? I'm guessing it's comment filtering from the gitignore?

- Fake Name Aug 17, 2016 at 17:27 /



11

I have found a weird problem with .gitignore. Everything was in place and seemed correct. The only reason why my .gitignore was "ignored" was, that the line-ending was in Mac-Format (\r). So after saving the file with the correct line-ending (in vi using :set ff=unix) everything worked like a charm!



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1 If anyone has problems with .gitignore after creating the file in windows notepad, there is more information here: stackoverflow.com/guestions/11451535/gitignore-not-working/... – Matt Parkins Dec 4, 2012 at 11:16

The __gitignore __format is each line is either a comment (starting with a __#) or the whole line (including any whitespace) is full filename pattern. If you have __\r mixed into the line, __git __will ignore only files that end up with _\r (you can create those if you want!). See __man __gitignore __for details, it's worth reading. __Mikko Rantalainen Mar 1, 2013 at 13:05 __*



One other problem not mentioned here is if you've created your .gitignore in Windows notepad it can look like gibberish on other platforms as I found out. The key is to make sure you the encoding is set to ANSI in notepad, (or make the file on linux as I did).

10

From my answer here: https://stackoverflow.com/a/11451916/406592



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answered May 21, 2013 at 9:43





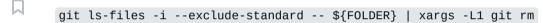


If you need to stop tracking a lot of ignored files, you can combine some commands:

git ls-files -i --exclude-standard | xargs -L1 git rm --cached



This would stop tracking the ignored files. If you want to actually remove files from filesystem, do not use the --cached option. You can also specify a folder to limit the search, such as:



1

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This should be the accepted answer. git rm -r --cached . removes lot of other things! - Shital Shah Jan 2, 2019 at 18:13



One thing to also keep in mind if .gitignore does not seem to be ignoring untracked files is that you should not have comments on the same line as the ignores. So this is okay





 $\mbox{\# ignore all foo.txt, foo.markdown, foo.dat, etc.} \\ \mbox{foo}^{\star}$

But this will not work:



foo* # ignore all foo.txt, foo.markdown, foo.dat, etc.

gitignore interprets the latter case as "ignore files named "foo* # ignore all foo.txt, foo.markdown, foo.dat, etc.", which, of course, you don't have.

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answered Feb 19, 2016 at 22:52





On my server linux server (not true on my local dev mac), directories are ignored as long as I don't add an asterisk:

www/archives/*



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answered Mar 9, 2013 at 6:36







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