Git & Version Control

Foundation Course @H-BRS, March 2024

Introduction to Version Control

What is Version Control?

Imagine you're working on a group project.

Version Control System (VCS) is a tool that does the following:

- Keep track of changes made to files in the project
- Allows you to see who changed what and when
- Lets you revert state of a particular file (or files) to an earlier version if needed
- Mix-and-match work by multiple people collaborating at the same time

Introduction to Git

What is Git?

Git is just one of the different types of VCSs.

Why do we teach it?

- It's the most widely used VCS today
- You'll need it during your studies and future work

Getting started

Git has phenomenal <u>official documentation</u>. In order to get started, make sure you have Git installed on your computer.

Then, we'll do the following:

- 1. Configure your global identity
- 2. Look into preferences and the .gitconfig file

Configure your global identity

When collaborating on a project, it's important that people know who you are.

```
$ git config --global user.name "John Doe"
$ git config --global user.email johndoe@example.com
```

Setting up preferences

When naming the main branch of your repository (more about this later), it is a convention to set the name to "main".

- Historically, the default branch name was "master"
- Many teams have switched to a more inclusive naming convention, which is what we'll be using as well ("main")

\$ git config --global init.defaultBranch main

Checking preferences

```
$ git config --list
user.name=John Doe
user.email=johndoe@example.com
color.status=auto
color.branch=auto
color.interactive=auto
color.diff=auto
```

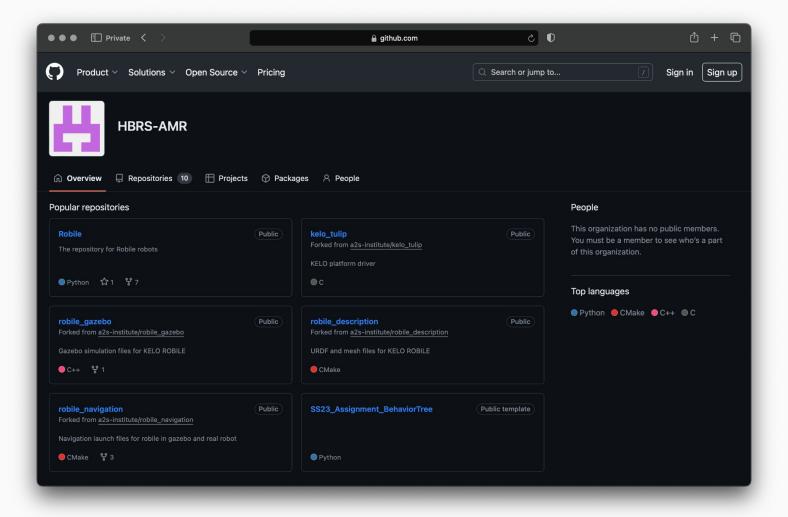
Introduction to GitHub

What is GitHub?

Git is version control system. GitHub is the online platform for storing Git repositories in the cloud.

It's not the only such platform! There's GitLab, BitBucket... GitHub is just the most commonly used one.

Many of the resources you'll need during your studies exist on GitHub.



Create an account

Create an account on GitHub (if you don't have it already).

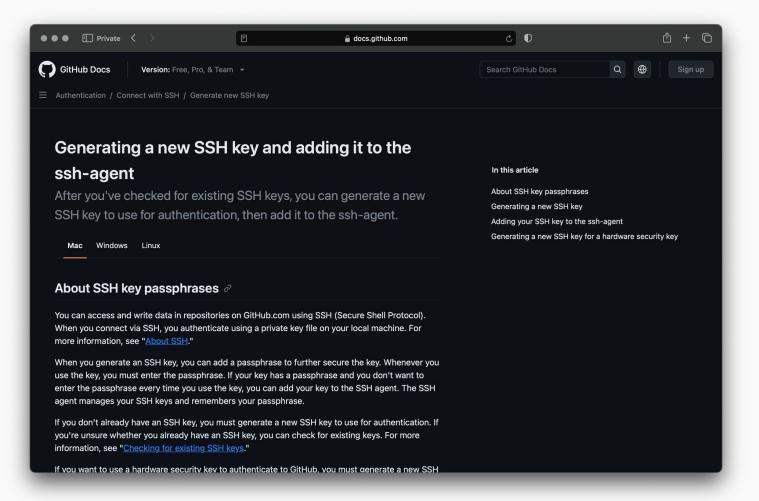
Setup two-factor authentication (if you don't have it already).

Add an SSH key

To collaborate on GitHub (cloning/pulling/pushing code), you can use two methods:

- 1. HTTPS (using your username and password)
- 2. SSH (using a pair of cryptographic keys)

It is recommended to use SSH due to security reasons and ease of use. We'll use the <u>official documentation</u> by GitHub to go through the setup together.



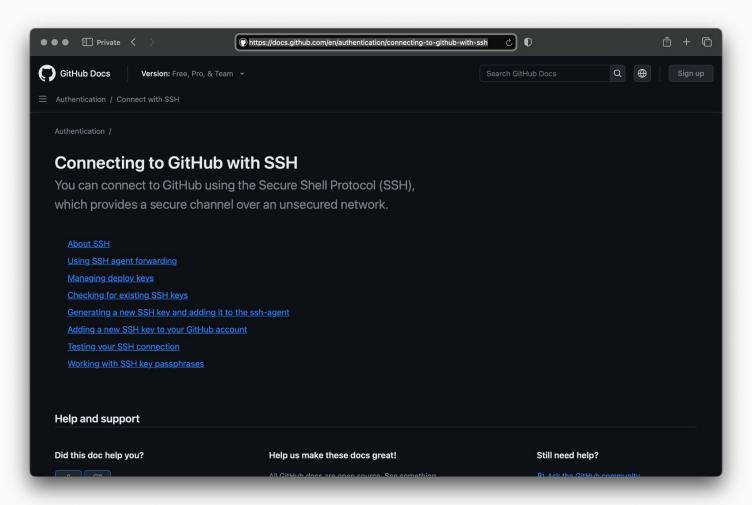
What did we just do?

1. First we generate the SSH key

- a. This creates two keys: private key (**never share it**) and a public key (that one you'll share with GitHub)
- b. You'll be asked to enter a passphrase, make sure it's not easily guessable, but also something that you'll remember

2. Adding the SSH key to the ssh-agent

- a. Ssh-agent is a security guard program on your computer for managing keys
- Adding the private key tells the ssh-agent tells it to use it for locking/unlocking things automatically



Basics of working with Git

What is a Git repository?

Git repository is a special "folder" for your project that Git uses to track and record changes.

It contains all of your project files and the history of changes.

Cloning a repository

\$ git clone git@github.com:HBRS-AMR/Robile.git

You can create a complete copy of someone else's Git repository on your computer using the **git clone** command.

Initializing a repository

```
$ git init .
```

Note the dot at the end: in Linux (and other UNIX-like operating systems), that represents the current directory in the filesystem.

You can use this command to create a new Git repository on your system.

Basic flow

```
$ git add [files|directories]
$ git commit -m "..."
```

First command adds all files/directories to staging.

Second command commits staged content as a new commit snapshot.

Staging area vs commit snapshot

Staging area is a "prep" room where you get everything ready for the final presentation. That's where you decide which files you want to include in your next commit (snapshot).

Ready, set, go! Committing is like taking a photo of your repository; all the changes in the staging area are recorded into your project's history.

Branching and merging

```
$ git checkout -b [branch-name]
...
$ git checkout -b main
$ git merge [branch-name] main
```

Imagine writing a story in a notebook. Branching is like exploring different storylines without messing up with the original plot.

Merging is deciding that the storyline belongs to the main plot.

Stashing

\$ git stash

Stashing is like putting your work aside for a moment, without committing anything, or wishing to lose anything

Very useful when jumping between branches on a project and always being interrupted in the middle of your work by a noisy project manager.

Pushing and pulling

```
$ git push origin [branch-name]
$ git pull origin [branch-name]
```

Pushing code is sending updates to GitHub. Pulling is retrieving them.

Let's get to work!

What will you do?

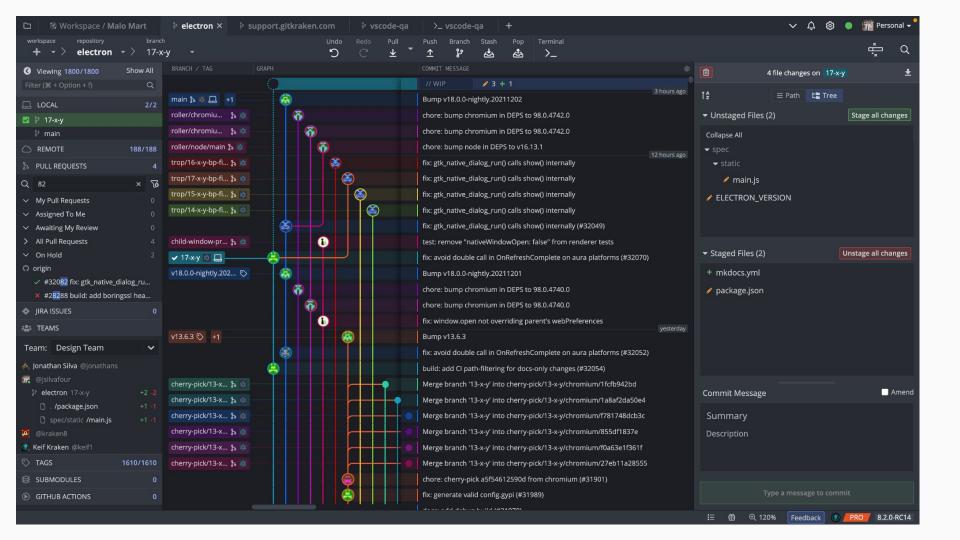
- 1. Divide into groups
- 2. One person in each group should create a new GitHub repository
- 3. Invite your team members as collaborators
- 4. Let everyone clone the repository
- 5. Everyone should checkout a new branch with their name
- 6. Create a file, write something nice about yourself!
- 7. Push it
- 8. Create a pull request
- 9. Merge all pull requests

Good-to-know stuff

Using a GUI client

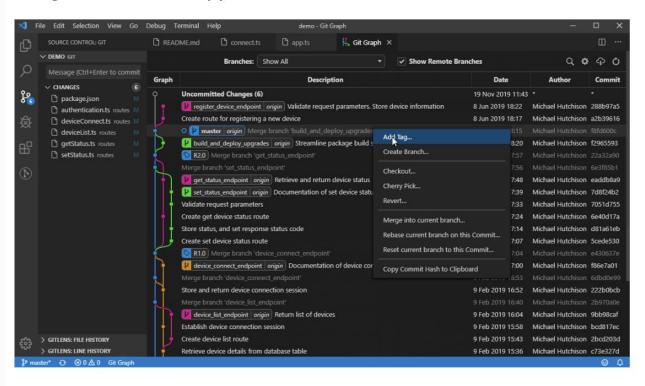
Using a graphical user interface can be beneficial (easier to visualize all the branches, commits, their history, etc.)

You can install it as a separate piece of software (for example GitKraken), or have it as part of your Integrated Development Environment (IDE).



Git Graph extension for Visual Studio Code

View a Git Graph of your repository, and easily perform Git actions from the graph. Configurable to look the way you want!



Meaning of .gitignore

Certain files are not supposed to be tracked. For example:

- Files containing confidential data such as secrets (.env, ...)
- Folders with dependencies or virtual environment configurations (node_modules, venv, ...)
- Temporary files

These files/folders can be listed in .gitignore

```
Code
         Blame
    1
          # IDEs
    2
          .idea
          .vscode
          # Python & virtual environment
          __pycache__
          venv
    8
          # OS
   10
          .DS_Store
          Thumbs.db
   11
   12
   13
          # Maps
   14
          maps
```