Build Your Portfolio: Connect RStudio & VS Code to GitHub (Part 1)

What's This For?

By now, you've made a GitHub account, installed Git, and learned the basics.
Now it's time to **link GitHub to your computer** so you can build and push your portfolio.

You have two great tools to choose from:

- **RStudio** — great for R and Quarto work

- **Visual Studio Code (VS Code)** — flexible and great for coding in any language

You'll only need to follow one path, but we'll show both.

Option A — RStudio + GitHub (Recommended for R users)

This path is ideal if you're planning to build your portfolio with R, RMarkdown, or Quarto.

Step 1: Open RStudio

1. Click on the RStudio icon (blue circle with an R).

2. If you've never opened it before, give it a second to load.

Step 2: Check Git Setup

1. Click **Tools → Global Options → Git/SVN** (or **Version Control** in newer versions).

2. If Git is installed, you'll see something like:

   `Git executable: /usr/bin/git`

   If it says **not found**, go back to the Install Git section.

Step 3: Set Your Name & Email

Still in RStudio: - Enter your **GitHub username** as your name (e.g., `brian-data`) - Enter your **GitHub email** (the one you used when signing up)

Click **Apply** and then **OK**.

Step 4: Create a New Project from GitHub

1. Click **File → New Project → Version Control → Git**

2. Paste your GitHub repo's HTTPS link (e.g., `https://github.com/yourname/portfolio`)
3. Choose a folder on your computer
4. Click **Create Project**

You just cloned your repo! You'll see all your files in the top-right pane.

Option B — VS Code + GitHub

This path is great if you're working with Python, HTML, or just like a flexible editor.

Step 1: Open VS Code

- Look for the blue square icon with a white angle-bracket `</>`

Step 2: Install GitHub Extension

1. On the left bar, click the **Extensions icon** (looks like 4 boxes)
2. Search for **GitHub Pull Requests and Issues**

3. Click **Install**

Step 3: Sign Into GitHub

1. Click the **Accounts icon** in the bottom-left corner (circle with your initials or icon)
2. Choose **Sign in with GitHub**

3. Follow the popup instructions (it'll open in your browser)

VS Code is now linked to your GitHub account!

Step 4: Clone a Repo

1. Press Ctrl+Shift+P (or Cmd+Shift+P on Mac)
2. Type: `Git: Clone`
3. Paste your repo URL (e.g., `https://github.com/yourname/portfolio`)
4. Choose where to save it

VS Code will ask if you want to open it now—say yes!

Checkpoint: Make a Small Change

No matter which tool you used:

1. Open `README.md` or `index.qmd`

2. Add a sentence like:

   `Hello from my new portfolio!`

3. Save the file.

4. In RStudio: go to the **Git tab**, check the file, **Commit** and then **Push**

5. In VS Code: click the **Source Control icon**, write a message, click the   checkmark, then click **Push**

You're Connected!

If you got through those steps, your computer and GitHub are officially best friends. From here, you can keep building pages for your site and see them live on the web.

Next stop: Portfolio Workshop — creating your personal website!

Need help? Post in Canvas → **"GitHub Help" thread** with a screenshot. "'

Let me know if you'd like to add screenshots, gifs, or embed a video walkthrough!