**Using BFG to delete a file completely from a Git repository**  
This is useful if you want to remove any large files from your git repository. (Note: Removing the file from the HEAD commit is not sufficient, as it will still leave historical versions. That’s the point of this document) .  
  
Introduction: <https://help.github.com/articles/removing-sensitive-data-from-a-repository/>  
  
Following the steps from <https://rtyley.github.io/bfg-repo-cleaner/> …

**1) Clone your repository using “—mirror”:**

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| --- |
| C:\Users\jeremy\tmp>git clone --mirror https://github.com/ripley57/FilesPrivate.git  Cloning into bare repository 'FilesPrivate.git'... |

**2) Download “bfg.jar”.**<http://repo1.maven.org/maven2/com/madgag/bfg/1.13.0/bfg-1.13.0.jar>   
(This link is available on page https://rtyley.github.io/bfg-repo-cleaner/)

**3) Run BFG to remove our file from the repository:**

|  |
| --- |
| C:\Users\jeremy\tmp\FilesPrivate.git>java -jar ..\bfg-1.13.0.jar --delete-files mystuff.tar.gz |

**Note: You can only specify a filename, without the filepath. Which means that you need to be careful if the filename exists in different locations in the repository, because all locations will be deleted.**The output from BFG:

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| --- |
| C:\Users\jeremy\tmp\FilesPrivate.git>java -jar ..\bfg-1.13.0.jar --delete-files mystuff.tar.gz  Using repo : C:\Users\jeremy\tmp\FilesPrivate.git  Found 14 objects to protect  Found 2 commit-pointing refs : HEAD, refs/heads/master  …  Deleted files  -------------  Filename Git id  ----------------------------------  mystuff.tar.gz | 317d79ba (3.2 MB)  In total, 83 object ids were changed. Full details are logged here:  C:\Users\jeremy\tmp\FilesPrivate.git.bfg-report\2018-06-07\09-38-49  BFG run is complete! When ready, run: git reflog expire --expire=now --all && git gc --prune=now --aggressive |

**4) Run the last-but-one step:**

|  |
| --- |
| C:\Users\jeremy\tmp\FilesPrivate.git>git reflog expire --expire=now --all && git gc --prune=now --aggressive  Counting objects: 357, done.  Delta compression using up to 4 threads.  Compressing objects: 100% (278/278), done.  Writing objects: 100% (357/357), done.  Total 357 (delta 186), reused 124 (delta 0) |

**5) Run the final step:**

|  |
| --- |
| C:\Users\jeremy\tmp\FilesPrivate.git>git push |

**BUT** after doing this, the file still existed when I did a fresh clone of the repository (or examined the repository in the github UI) !!! **=>** This is known as the “HEAD” commit. From <https://github.com/rtyley/bfg-repo-cleaner/issues/53#issuecomment-50088997>

*“So, to summarise your issue:*

* *You're running the BFG to remove big files from your repository.*
* *There are some big files in your HEAD commit (ie '*[*protected*](https://rtyley.github.io/bfg-repo-cleaner/#protected-commits)*') and so the BFG is not removing those files from*that*commit.*
* *However, those files are also in some previous commits. The BFG*is*removing the files from those older commits, and you'd prefer for it to not do that - you'd like the history of those files to remain intact.”*

**ANSWER:** We also need to explicitly remove the file from the HEAD commit (and then re-run the BFG steps again from scratch ):  
 **Using a regular (i.e. not a “—mirror”) clone of the repository:**

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| --- |
| git rm mystuff.tar.gz |

**And now we re-run all the BFG steps again (in a fresh –mirror clone).**

*JeremyC 7-6-2018***END**