

# Changelog

A **changelog** is a log or record of all notable changes made to a project. The project is often a website or software project, and the changelog usually includes records of changes such as bug fixes, new features, etc. Some open source projects include a changelog as one of the top level files in their distribution.

A changelog has historically included all changes made to a project. The "Keep a CHANGELOG" site instead advocates that a changelog *not* include *all* changes, but that it should instead contain "a curated, chronologically ordered list of notable changes for each version of a project" and should not be a "dump" of a git log "because this helps nobody".<sup>[1]</sup>

Although the canonical naming convention for the file is *ChangeLog*,<sup>[2]</sup> it is sometimes alternatively named as *CHANGES* or *HISTORY* (*NEWS* is usually a different file reflecting changes between releases, not between the commits). Another convention is to call it a CHANGELOG.<sup>[1]</sup> Some project maintainers will append a *.txt* suffix to the file name if the changelog is plain text, or a *.md* suffix if it is in Markdown.

Some revision control systems are able to generate the relevant information that is suited as a changelog if the goal is to include all changes.

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## Format

Changelog files are organized by paragraphs, which define a unique change within a function or file. The GNU Coding standards recommend the following format:<sup>[3]</sup>

```
YYYY-MM-DD  John Doe  <johndoe@example.com>

* myfile.ext (myfunction): my changes made
  additional changes

* myfile.ext (unrelated_change): my changes made
  to myfile.ext but completely unrelated to the above

* anotherfile.ext (somefunction): more changes
```

Note that between the date and the name, and again between the name and the email address, there are two spaces each. It is common to enclose the email address in < and >. The Emacs Editor creates such entries when creating additional changelog entries.

## Changelogs in Wikis

Most Wiki software includes *changelogs* as a fundamental feature (often called *history* in this context). For example, the "View History" link at the top <sup>[4]</sup> of a Wikipedia entry links to that page's changelog. This feature is vital for complying with the attribution requirements of some copyright licenses.

# Product Changelogs

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A product changelog allows keeping customers in the loop about what's new. It helps to announce new features, latest releases, and relevant news directly in-app.

## See also

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- [Change control](#)
- [Release notes](#)
- [Web feed](#)
- [Diff](#)

## Notes

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1. ["Keep a CHANGELOG"](http://keepachangelog.com) (<http://keepachangelog.com>). Retrieved 2016-01-09.
2. [The GNU automake manual](https://www.gnu.org/software/automake/manual/html_node/Gnits.html#Gnits) ([https://www.gnu.org/software/automake/manual/html\\_node/Gnits.html#Gnits](https://www.gnu.org/software/automake/manual/html_node/Gnits.html#Gnits))
3. ["GNU Coding Standards: Style of Change Logs"](https://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/html_node/Style-of-Change-Logs.html) ([https://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/html\\_node/Style-of-Change-Logs.html](https://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/html_node/Style-of-Change-Logs.html)). Gnu.org. Retrieved 2013-04-22.
4. [Help:Page\\_history](#)

## External links

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- [GNU Coding Standards: Change Logs](https://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/standards.html#Change-Logs) (<https://www.gnu.org/prep/standards/standards.html#Change-Logs>)
  - [Keep a CHANGELOG](http://keepachangelog.com/) (<http://keepachangelog.com/>)
  - [Noticeable.io](http://noticeable.io) (<http://noticeable.io>)
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