



- [Contact Support](#)
- [Back to GitHub](#)

[SSH](#) / Generating SSH Keys

Generating SSH Keys

- [mac](#)
- [windows](#)
- [linux](#)
- [all](#)

If you have decided not to use the [recommended HTTPS method](#), we can use SSH keys to establish a secure connection between your computer and GitHub. The steps below will walk you through generating an SSH key and then adding the public key to your GitHub account.

Step 1: Check for SSH keys

*Have an existing keypair you'd like to use? You can skip to **Step 4**.*

First, we need to check for existing ssh keys on your computer. Open up TerminalTerminalGit Bashthe command line and run:

```
cd ~/.ssh# Checks to see if there is a directory named ".ssh" in your user directory
```

If it says "No such file or directory" skip to **step 3**. Otherwise continue to **step 2**.

Step 2: Backup and remove existing SSH keys

Since there is already an SSH directory you'll want to back the old one up and remove it:

```
ls# Lists all the subdirectories in the current directory
# config id_rsa id_rsa.pub known_hosts
```

```
mkdir key_backup# Makes a subdirectory called "key_backup" in the current directory
```

```
cp id_rsa* key_backup# Copies the id_rsa keypair into key_backup
```

```
rm id_rsa*# Deletes the id_rsa keypair
```

Step 3: Generate a new SSH key

To generate a new SSH key, enter the code below. We want the default settings so when asked to enter a file in which to save the key, just press enter.

```
ssh-keygen -t rsa -C "your_email@youremail.com"# Creates a new ssh key using the provided email
# Generating public/private rsa key pair.
# Enter file in which to save the key (/Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa): [Press enter]
```

```
ssh-keygen -t rsa -C "your_email@youremail.com"# Creates a new ssh key using the provided email
# Generating public/private rsa key pair.
# Enter file in which to save the key (/c/Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa): [Press enter]
```

```
ssh-keygen -t rsa -C "your_email@youremail.com"# Creates a new ssh key using the provided email
```

```
# Generating public/private rsa key pair.
# Enter file in which to save the key (/home/you/.ssh/id_rsa):

ssh-keygen -t rsa -C "your_email@youremail.com" # Creates a new ssh key using the provided email
# Generating public/private rsa key pair.
# Enter file in which to save the key (/your_home_path/.ssh/id_rsa):
```

Now you need to enter a passphrase.

Why do passphrases matter?

```
# Enter passphrase (empty for no passphrase): [Type a passphrase]
# Enter same passphrase again: [Type passphrase again]
```

Which should give you something like this:

```
# Your identification has been saved in /Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa.
# Your public key has been saved in /Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa.pub.
# The key fingerprint is:
# 01:0f:f4:3b:ca:85:d6:17:a1:7d:f0:68:9d:f0:a2:db your_email@youremail.com
```

```
# Your identification has been saved in /c/Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa.
# Your public key has been saved in /c/Users/you/.ssh/id_rsa.pub.
# The key fingerprint is:
# 01:0f:f4:3b:ca:85:d6:17:a1:7d:f0:68:9d:f0:a2:db your_email@youremail.com
```

```
# Your identification has been saved in /home/you/.ssh/id_rsa.
# Your public key has been saved in /home/you/.ssh/id_rsa.pub.
# The key fingerprint is:
# 01:0f:f4:3b:ca:85:d6:17:a1:7d:f0:68:9d:f0:a2:db your_email@youremail.com
```

```
# Your identification has been saved in /your_home_path/.ssh/id_rsa.
# Your public key has been saved in /your_home_path/.ssh/id_rsa.pub.
# The key fingerprint is:
# 01:0f:f4:3b:ca:85:d6:17:a1:7d:f0:68:9d:f0:a2:db your_email@youremail.com
```

Step 4: Add your SSH key to GitHub

Run the following code to copy the key to your clipboard.

```
pbcopy < ~/.ssh/id_rsa.pub # Copies the contents of the id_rsa.pub file to your clipboard
```

Be warned: it is important to copy the key exactly without adding newlines or whitespace. Thankfully the pbcopy command makes it easy to perform this setup perfectly.

Run the following code to copy the key to your clipboard.

```
clip < ~/.ssh/id_rsa.pub # Copies the contents of the id_rsa.pub file to your clipboard
```

Be warned: it is important to copy the key exactly without adding newlines or whitespace. Thankfully the clip command makes it easy to perform this setup perfectly.

Run the following code to copy the key to your clipboard.

```
sudo apt-get install xclip # Downloads and installs xclip
```

```
xclip -sel clip < ~/.ssh/id_rsa.pub # Copies the contents of the id_rsa.pub file to your clipboard
```

Be warned: it is important to copy the key exactly without adding newlines or whitespace. Thankfully the xclip command makes it easy to perform this setup perfectly.

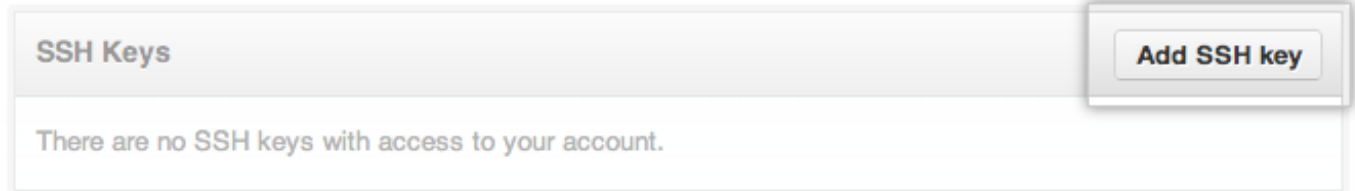
Open the id_rsa.pub file with a text editor. This is your SSH key. Select all and copy to your clipboard.

Be warned: it is important to copy the key exactly without adding newlines or whitespace.

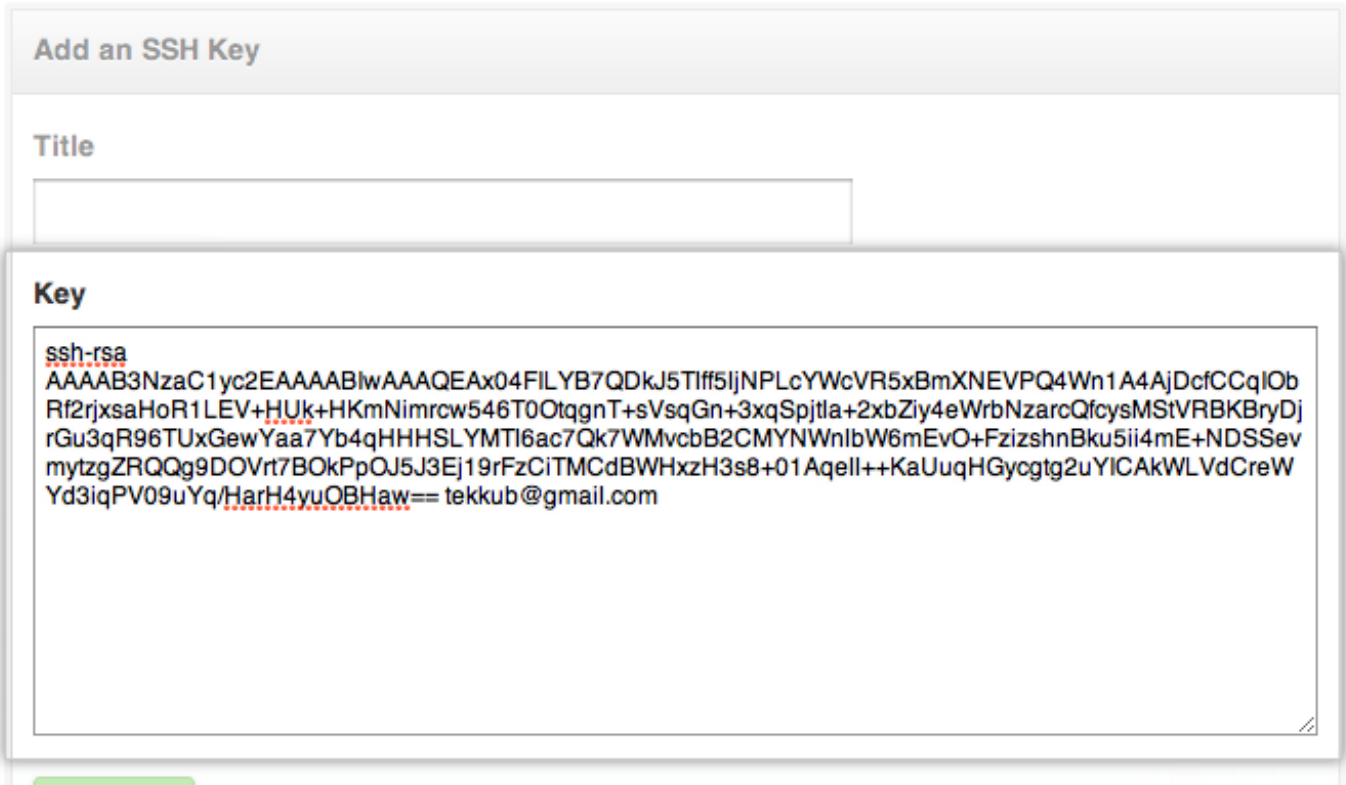


1.  Go to your [Account Settings](#)

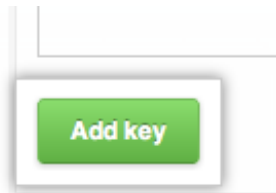
2. Click "[SSH Keys](#)" in the left sidebar
- 3.



Click "Add SSH key"

4. 

Paste your key into the "Key" field



5. Click "Add key"
6. Confirm the action by entering your GitHub password

Step 5: Test everything out

To make sure everything is working you'll now SSH to GitHub. Don't change the `git@github.com` part. That's supposed to be there.

```
ssh -T git@github.com# Attempts to ssh to github
```

You may see this warning:

```
# The authenticity of host 'github.com (207.97.227.239)' can't be established.  
# RSA key fingerprint is 16:27:ac:a5:76:28:2d:36:63:1b:56:4d:eb:df:a6:48.  
# Are you sure you want to continue connecting (yes/no)?
```

Don't worry, this is supposed to happen. Verify that the fingerprint matches the one here and type "yes".

```
# Hi username! You've successfully authenticated, but GitHub does not  
# provide shell access.
```

If that username is correct, you've successfully set up your SSH key. Don't worry about the shell access thing, you don't want that anyway.

If you see "access denied" please consider using [HTTPS](https://help.github.com/articles/https-to-ssh) instead of SSH. If you need SSH start at [these instructions](https://help.github.com/articles/ssh-troubleshooting) for diagnosing the issue.

-
- [contact a human](#)
 - [Terms of Service](#)
 - [Privacy](#)
 - [Security](#)

© 2012 GitHub Inc. All rights reserved.