

Playwright — Quick Reference

A short, copy-ready reference for setting up Playwright, running tests, debugging, and a concise LinkedIn post you can publish.

Installation

```
npm init playwright@latest
```

Generated files/folders (auto-created):

- `node_modules` — libraries installed for the project.
- `tests` — example/generated tests to validate setup.
- `.gitignore` — files/folders to exclude from Git commits.
- `package.json` — scripts and dependency metadata.
- `package-lock.json` — locks dependency versions for reproducible installs.
- `playwright.config.ts` — primary configuration file for the Playwright framework.

To use CodeGen:

```
npx playwright codegen
```

Test Execution — CLI

- Run all tests: `npx playwright test`
- Headed mode: `npx playwright test --headed`
- Run for a specific browser (example Chromium):
 - `npx playwright test --project=chromium --headed`
- Note: projects must be defined in `playwright.config.ts`.
- Run a particular spec file:
 - `npx playwright test <file_name.ts> --project=chromium`
- Run a particular test by name:
 - `npx playwright test -g "<test-name>"`
- Note: test names should be unique to safely target them.
- Open the report: `npx playwright show-report`
- Enable trace (records traces for debugging):
 - `npx playwright test --project=chromium --trace on`
- Enable UI mode (visual test runner):
 - `npx playwright test --ui`

UI Mode benefits:

- Run individual tests and projects defined in config.
- Inspect network calls and execution trace.

- View hooks (before/after) and logs.
 - Create and inspect locators (like browser inspector).
 - See where clicks/text input happened (highlights in UI).
 - Auto-watch: re-runs tests when code changes.
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Test Execution — Code Helpers

- Skip a test in code: `test.skip()`
 - Run only a test: `test.only()`
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Test Explorer (Playwright extension)

- Options: show browser, pick visible projects, enable trace viewer.
 - Keeps browser open after run for exploration.
 - Shows execution time and easy navigation to failing steps.
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Trace Viewer & Debugging

- Always-on trace in CLI: `npx playwright test --project=chromium --trace on`
 - Default in config often is: `trace: 'on-first-retry'` — change to `'on'` to always generate traces.
 - Start debugger: `npx playwright test --debug`
 - Opens interactive debugger + browser window.
 - Step through each action and inspect the browser during execution.
 - Helpful for picking locators and reproducing flaky steps.
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