

# npm-developers

## Developer Guide

### DESCRIPTION

So, you've decided to use npm to develop (and maybe publish/deploy) your project.

Fantastic!

There are a few things that you need to do above the simple steps that your users will do to install your program.

### About These Documents

These are man pages. If you install npm, you should be able to then do `man npm-thing` to get the documentation on a particular topic, or `npm help thing` to see the same information.

### What is a package

A package is:

- a) a folder containing a program described by a package.json file
- b) a gzipped tarball containing (a)
- c) a url that resolves to (b)
- d) a `<name>@<version>` that is published on the registry with (c)
- e) a `<name>@<tag>` that points to (d)
- f) a `<name>` that has a "latest" tag satisfying (e)
- g) a `git` url that, when cloned, results in (a).

Even if you never publish your package, you can still get a lot of benefits of using npm if you just want to write a node program (a), and perhaps if you also want to be able to easily install it elsewhere after packing it up into a tarball (b).

Git urls can be of the form:

```
git://github.com/user/project.git#commit-ish
git+ssh://user@hostname:project.git#commit-ish
git+http://user@hostname/project/blah.git#commit-ish
git+https://user@hostname/project/blah.git#commit-ish
```