

Visual Studio Code never reopens previous file or folder

Asked 5 years ago Active 4 months ago Viewed 36k times



63



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I have the exact opposite Problem of this question: [Visual Studio Code always reopens previous file or folder](#)

VSCode never seems to remember my previously opened files and does always start with an empty window. I checked, if my Shortcut has the Parameter "-n" by accident (which would force this behaviour), but it's not there.

Is there a way to force VSCode to remember opened files and folders?

visual-studio-code

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edited May 23 '17 at 10:31



Community ♦

1 ● 1

asked Mar 31 '16 at 8:31



phifi

2,055 ● 1 ● 17 ● 33

6 [Hot exit](#) has been implemented in the November 2016 release, but only dirty files (unsaved files) are remembered through sessions to this date (jan-2017). If you have no opened folders, saved files will not be reopened when you restart VS Code. This functionality has yet to be implemented and is tracked [here](#). – Otiel Jan 18 '17 at 14:07 ✎

This should be resolved with VSCode 1.52 (Nov. 2020) and the new `window.reopenFolders=preserve` option. See [my updated answer below](#) – VonC Nov 12 '20 at 10:34

7 Answers

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~~It seems, VsCode only remembers opened files, if you also have a folder opened. It doesn't matter, if this is just a Dummy Folder somewhere on your drive – if you open files outside of this folder, they will be remembered as well.~~

~~I'm not sure if this is as designed, or a bug.~~

Edit: This is a bug and tracked [here](#)

Edit 2: To sum up the answers from below there are now two settings concerning this issue:

[Hot exit](#) has been implemented, which restores files which weren't saved before VS Code is closed. To change this, use this setting:

```
files.hotExit: "onExit"
```

To reopen all files, use this setting:

```
window.restoreWindows: "all"
```

But there is still an open issue with this found [here](#).

...

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edited Feb 12 '19 at 16:14

answered Mar 31 '16 at 9:01



phifi

2,055 ● 1 ● 17 ● 33

- 2 I use vs code on MacOS High Sierra. If simply close the window and reopen then "window.restoreWindows": "all" doesn't work. It only works if I quit and restart VS Code – [skarfa](#) Dec 5 '17 at 22:06

Can you be more precise on the terms "close the window - reopen" and "quit - restart"? If you meant the option "Close Window" from the File menu, for me, this does also work as expected - but I am on Windows. – [phifi](#) Dec 6 '17 at 9:48

While this issue has not been resolved, one workaround is: set window.restoreWindows to all, and then write a script that first launches code without args, and then launches it with args. For example, on Windows, I wrote a batch file "open-in-vscode.bat" that simply contains: "C:\Program Files\Microsoft VS Code\bin\code" && "C:\Program Files\Microsoft VS Code\bin\code" %* – [Antonio Maiorano](#) May 24 '18 at 17:45

If I close the window and reopen to the same folder using `code .` on command line then old editors will reopen. Donotwant. – [William Entriken](#) Nov 27 '18 at 15:52

Go to: Open File --> Preferences --> Settings and add `"window.restoreWindows": "all"` to your settings.json file. Remember to add a comma to the preceding statement.

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This will reopen all the windows you had open on the close of your last session.



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edited Feb 12 '19 at 16:34

answered Oct 11 '17 at 4:01



phifi

2,055 ● 1 ● 17 ● 33



Lews Therin

170 ● 1 ● 10

It seems that you didn't read the accepted answer, as this is addressed there. – [phifi](#) Oct 11 '17 at 9:03

- 3 The syntax is incorrect. `window.restoreWindows": "all"`, I need 50 Rep to comment so... this is the only way. – [Lews Therin](#) Oct 16 '17 at 1:40

You meant, that you need 50 Rep to edit your post? I corrected it for you. – [phifi](#) Oct 16 '17 at 12:57

You could try the settings option:

11

```
"window.reopenFolders": "all"
```

This should reopen everything that was opened when you closed the editor, but I haven't tested it. I usually prefer that nothing gets reopened, so I use `none`. The default is `one`.

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answered Apr 22 '16 at 15:01



ghlecl

1,837 ● 1 ● 14 ● 13

7 I tried it, but it didn't work. It seems, this does not affect opened files without opened folders. – [phifi](#) Jun 9 '16 at 9:02

2 Looks like this setting was updated to "window.restoreWindows": "all". Still containing all the options of 'none', 'one', 'folders', or 'all'. At least this is what solved it for me. – [dlchang](#) Jul 11 '17 at 17:40

@anhtv13 either by the shortcut [CTRL] + [, or through the Menu "File --> Preferences --> Settings" – [phifi](#) Feb 12 '19 at 16:17

So I needed that functionally too, currently it's just

5

```
"window.restoreWindows": "none",
```

in the settings.

Controls how windows are being reopened after a restart. Select 'none' to always start with an empty workspace, 'one' to reopen the last window you worked on, 'folders' to reopen all windows that had folders opened or 'all' to reopen all windows of your last session.

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answered Sep 18 '17 at 8:02



Matz

973 ● 8 ● 23

1 You're right, this fixed it - I just forgot to double check, if I had the most up to date version of VS Code installed. As of Version 1.16.1 it works now as I expected it to. The issue from my first comment is still a thing though. I'll edit it to my very first Answer... – [phifi](#) Sep 18 '17 at 12:34 ✎

They added [this functionality](#) in November 2016.

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Here is the setting for changing hot exit behavior:

```
"files.hotExit": "onExit"
```

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answered Mar 9 '17 at 15:48



Adam Miller

737 ● 1 ● 10 ● 22

4

I have tried the `window.reopenFolders` options, and found that the folder(s) and file(s) will re-open if starting VSCode from the desktop icon, but if I click on a file in explorer and it uses VSCode to open (and VSCode is not currently running), the previous folder and files don't open. I'm not sure if there is a workaround for this.



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answered Sep 16 '16 at 14:58



Howard Cripe

41 ● 1

Good point, i never paid too much attention to this, but after mentioning it, i now know why even the folder workspace is not remembered or reopened sometimes. It looks like the previous workspace is reseted on opening any other file with VSCode. – [phifi](#) Sep 20 '16 at 13:00

Damn this is a huge bug. Plus the fact that VS Code cannot re-open unsaved files, this is just unusable for the moment... – [Jérôme MEVEL](#) Nov 10 '16 at 2:36

1

This will also work in case of unintended shutdown (like an OS restart for OS updates, or anything where VSCode is forcefully killed) with VSCode 1.42 (Q1 2020).

See [vscode/issue 12058](#) ("Save UI state periodically to prevent loss on shutdown") and [PR 87158](#) with [commit 54ab792](#), which includes the comment:



```
// In some environments we do not get enough time to persist state on shutdown.  
// In other cases, VSCode might crash, so we periodically save state to reduce  
// the chance of loosing any state.  
// The window loosing focus is a good indication that the user has stopped working  
// in that window so we pick that at a time to collect state.
```

[bpasero](#) adds [in the issue](#):

Pushed a change (#87158) that will:

- save state every 60s
- save state when the window loses focus

The real fix is for Electron to provide API to detect the system shutdown case on Windows (e.g. what [electron/electron#15620](#) suggests).

These changes will probably not help when VSCode has focus and windows restarts, though in my testing it works when any non-vscode UI is popping up (e.g. some prompt from Windows to apply updates).

I think this is the best we can do for now.

Regarding the `window.reopenFolders=all` mentioned in [issue 15949](#), the [last \(Sept 2020\) comment](#) illustrates it is not solved yet.

Update Nov. 2020 [for issue 15949](#) in VSCode 1.52:

The sum of options in `window.restoreWindows` would then be:

- **preserve** (new): all windows are restored, independent of how VSCode was started
- **all**: all windows are restored, but not when you start VSCode on a file or folder
- **folders**: only folders are restored, but not when you start VSCode on a file or folder
- **one**: only a single window is restored, but not when you start VSCode on a file or folder
- **none**: no window is ever restored

I have pushed `window.restoreWindows: preserve` as new choice.
`all` is still the default.

See:

[New setting to restore previous session windows](#)

A new setting value `preserve` for the existing `window.restoreWindows` setting allows to enforce that every window you had opened before closing VSCode is restored when you start VSCode, even if VSCode is explicitly asked to open a specific folder or file.

A common example is double-clicking on a file to open it in VSCode or using the terminal to open a specific file or folder.

Without `window.restoreWindows: preserve` in that case, VSCode will only open the file or folder as instructed, but not restore any other window.

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edited Nov 27 '20 at 16:46

answered Jan 4 '20 at 14:00



VonC

1.0m ● 434 ● 3605 ●
4227