

1. MongoDB Community Server

- Download the **ZIP** package (not MSI) from: <https://www.mongodb.com/try/download/community>.
- Extract the ZIP (e.g. to `c:\Users\your-username\Desktop`).
- Create a data folder, e.g.:

```
c:\Users\your-username\Desktop\mongodb-windows-x86_64-8.2.1\data
```

- Inside the folder where you extracted the server, there is a subfolder named `bin`; this is where `mongod.exe` is located.
- Start the server from the `bin` folder:

```
mongod.exe --dbpath c:\Users\your-username\Desktop\mongodb-windows-x86_64-8.2.1\data
```

Your server is running now. The next time, start the server in the same way: run `mongod.exe` with your data path.

2. MongoDB Database Tools

- Download the **ZIP** package (not MSI) from: <https://www.mongodb.com/try/download/database-tools>.
- Extract the ZIP (e.g. to `c:\Users\your-username\Desktop`).

3. Sample Databases

- Download the archive: <https://atlas-education.s3.amazonaws.com/sampledatab.archive>
- With the server running, restore the archive as follows.

The binary `mongorestore.exe` will be located in a directory such as:

```
c:\Users\your-username\Desktop\mongodb-database-tools-windows-x86_64-100.13.0\bin
```

If `sampledata.archive` is in your Downloads folder, run the command from `c:\Users\your-username\Downloads` as shown:

```
c:\Users\your-username\Downloads>c:\Users\your-username\Desktop\mongodb-database-tools-windows-x86_64-100.13.0\bin\
mongorestore --archive=sampledata.archive
```

This loads all sample databases (including `sample_mflix`).

4. VS Code Setup

- Install the extension: **MongoDB for VS Code**.
- In the “MongoDB” panel, click *Add Connection*. VS Code will show the correct URL: `mongodb://localhost:27017`. Click **OK**.
- Click *Create MongoDB Playground*. VS Code creates a file with example code; replace it with:

```
use('sample_mflix');
db.getCollectionNames();
```

- Run the Playground file from VS Code; the result should be:

```
[
  "movies",
  "theaters",
  "users",
  "embedded_movies",
  "comments",
  "sessions"
]
```

- After running the file, you may save it (e.g. as `mflix_exploration.mongodb.js`) in any folder where you plan to store your Playground scripts. VS Code will treat that folder as the workspace for MongoDB Playgrounds.