

Clean Installation of n8n Using Docker on Windows

1 Purpose

This document provides step-by-step instructions for performing a clean, brand new installation of n8n using Docker on Windows. It assumes no prior n8n data and establishes a stable, repeatable baseline configuration.

2 Prerequisites

- Windows 10 or Windows 11
- Docker Desktop installed and running
- PowerShell access
- Local administrator privileges

3 Example Folder Structure

```
C:\Users\<username>\Docker\n8n\  
    docker-compose.yml  
    .n8n\
```

4 Docker Compose Configuration

Create a file named `docker-compose.yml` with the following contents:

```
services:  
  n8n:  
    image: n8nio/n8n:latest  
    container_name: n8n  
    restart: unless-stopped  
    ports:  
      - "5678:5678"  
    environment:  
      - N8N_USER_FOLDER=/home/node/.n8n
```

```
- N8N_LOG_LEVEL=info
volumes:
- C:/Users/<username>/Docker/n8n/.n8n:/home/node/.n8n
user: "1000:1000"
```

5 Initial Startup

Run the following commands from PowerShell:

```
cd C:\Users\<username>\Docker\n8n
docker compose up -d
```

6 First-Time Access

Open a browser and navigate to:

<http://localhost:5678>

Create the initial owner (admin) account when prompted.

7 Verification

Confirm:

- Dashboard is empty
- No duplicate `.n8n` folders exist

```
docker exec -it n8n sh -lc "ls -lah /home/node/.n8n"
```

8 Stopping and Restarting

```
docker compose down
docker compose up -d
```

9 Backup Recommendation

Once workflows exist, periodically back up the `.n8n` directory before upgrades or configuration changes.