How to manually set language for syntax highlighting in Visual Studio Code

Asked 4 years, 3 months ago   Active 1 month ago   Viewed 92k times

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Before the confusion begins, this question is about Code, the new lightweight Visual Studio Editor. You can get it from here:
https://code.visualstudio.com/

I have a textfile (.txt) with CSS in it and want to get syntax hightlighting. You can **open the command palette** with `ctrl` + `shift` + `p` . But there you can not set syntax like in Sublime.

Is there any other way to get the CSS coloring in from my textfile?

    editor   syntax-highlighting   visual-studio-code

edited Jul 25 at 11:03	asked Jun 11 '15 at 8:30
Matt	Florian Leitgeb
16.7k 7 77 120	**6,868** 3 16 31

For further emphasis, **the solutions here do NOT apply to Visual Studio** sadly. I just today learned of the existence of Visual Studio Code. It'd be nice if regular Visual Studio adopted a similar language mode switch. Oh Microsoft... – Mr.Z Mar 15 '18 at 15:23

4 Answers

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In the very right bottom corner, left to the smiley there was the icon saying "Plain Text". When you click it, the menu with all languages appears where you can choose your desired language.

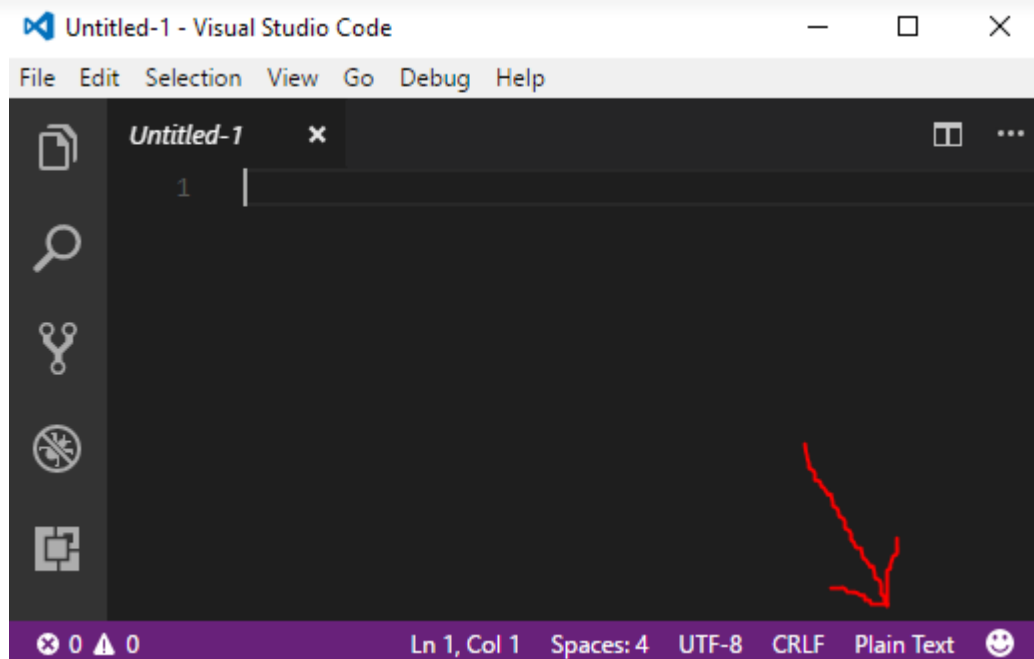**Join Stack Overflow** to learn, share knowledge, and build your career.

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edited Apr 27 '17 at 12:04   answered Jun 11 '15 at 9:30

Florian Leitgeb

6,868   3   16   31

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6   Ctrl + K, Ctrl + M & Ctrl + K, M: Too confusing. This solution is great! – Upendra Apr 26 '17 at 10:41

15   Omg, why isn't it part of the command palette too though!? I would never have found it there, thanks :) – jaredwilli Sep 20 '17 at 20:21

3   How do I make it so files with this extension always use the format? – frumbert Jul 25 '18 at 0:31

9   I like that red arrow. – Henning Fischer Sep 20 '18 at 14:15

1   The existing shortcut for it is indeed stupid. I went into the keyboard shortcuts, found "Change language mode" and set the shortcut to `cmd+opt+p` which is not quite the same as sublime but much easier for the muscle memory than K+M – Matt Fletcher Aug 20 at 19:32
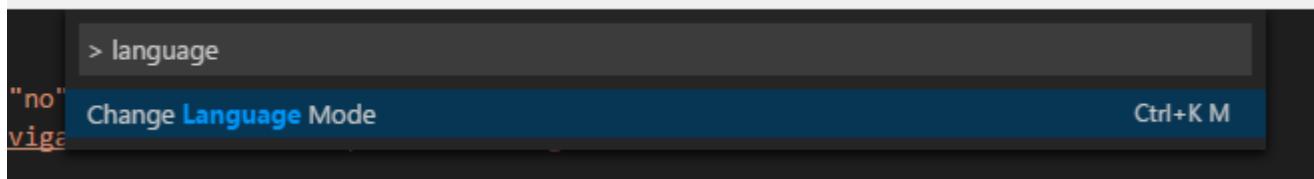

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edited Aug 8 '16 at 13:55   answered Nov 13 '15 at 16:12

Matt   gitsitgo

64.6k   18   123   166   **5,349**   3   28   42

38   If you are seeing the Extensions panel, you may be pressing Ctrl + K, Ctrl + M instead of Ctrl + K, M, which was the mistake I made. – Chris Mar 13 '17 at 17:56 ✏

13   cmd + K M on a Mac. – Adam Parkin Oct 16 '17 at 16:03 ✏

5   @gitsitgo, What's with the meaning of K M? – Pacerier Feb 16 '18 at 15:04

1   macOS: shift + cmd + P – gderaco Jun 12 '18 at 15:53

6   This should be renamed to "Change Syntax Highlighting" – Simon Somlai Jul 18 '18 at 9:04
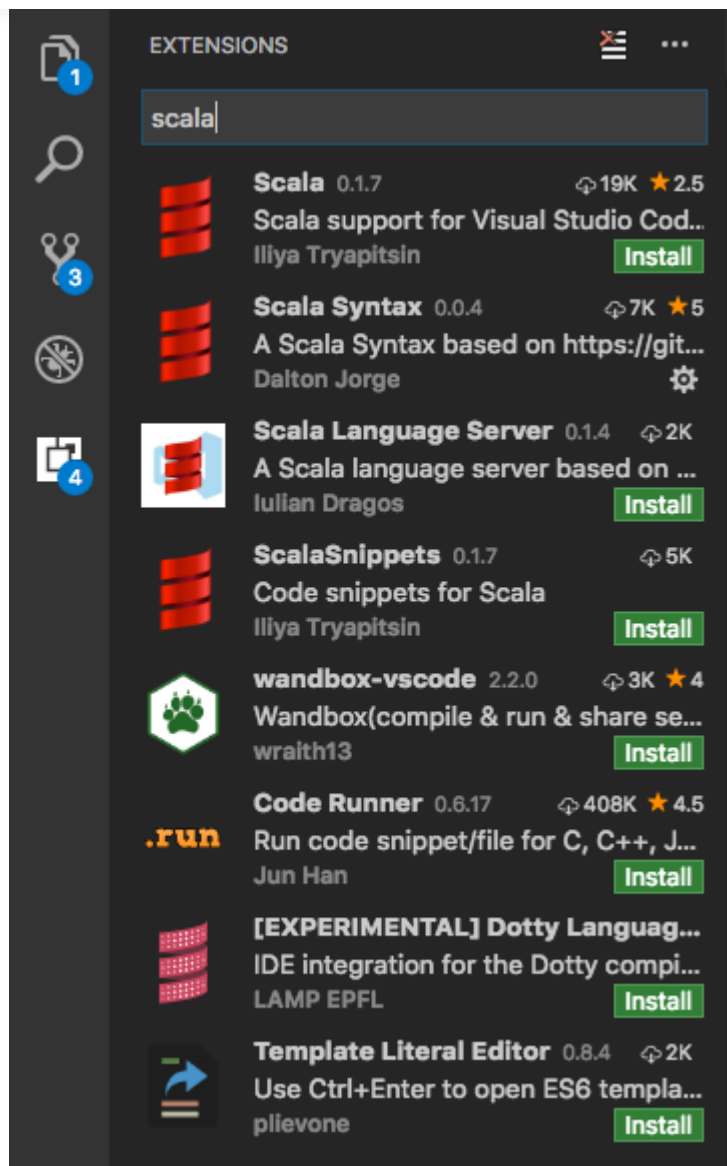

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Another reason why people might struggle to get Syntax Highlighting working is because they don't have the appropriate syntax package installed. While some default syntax packages come pre-installed (like Swift, C, JS, CSS), others may not be available.

To solve this you can Cmd + Shift + P → "install Extensions" and look for the language you want to add, say "Scala".

Find the suitable Syntax package, install it and reload. This will pick up the correct syntax for your files with the predefined extension, i.e. `.scala` in this case.

```
"files.associations": {
  "*.es": "javascript"
},
```

answered May 22 '17 at 11:37

Nobita
15.3k   6   45   58

4   Thanks - the files.associations was what I was after – statler Sep 9 '17 at 6:14

1   You get the cookie from me with the file association tidbit, thank you! – user188757 Feb 1 '18 at 21:11
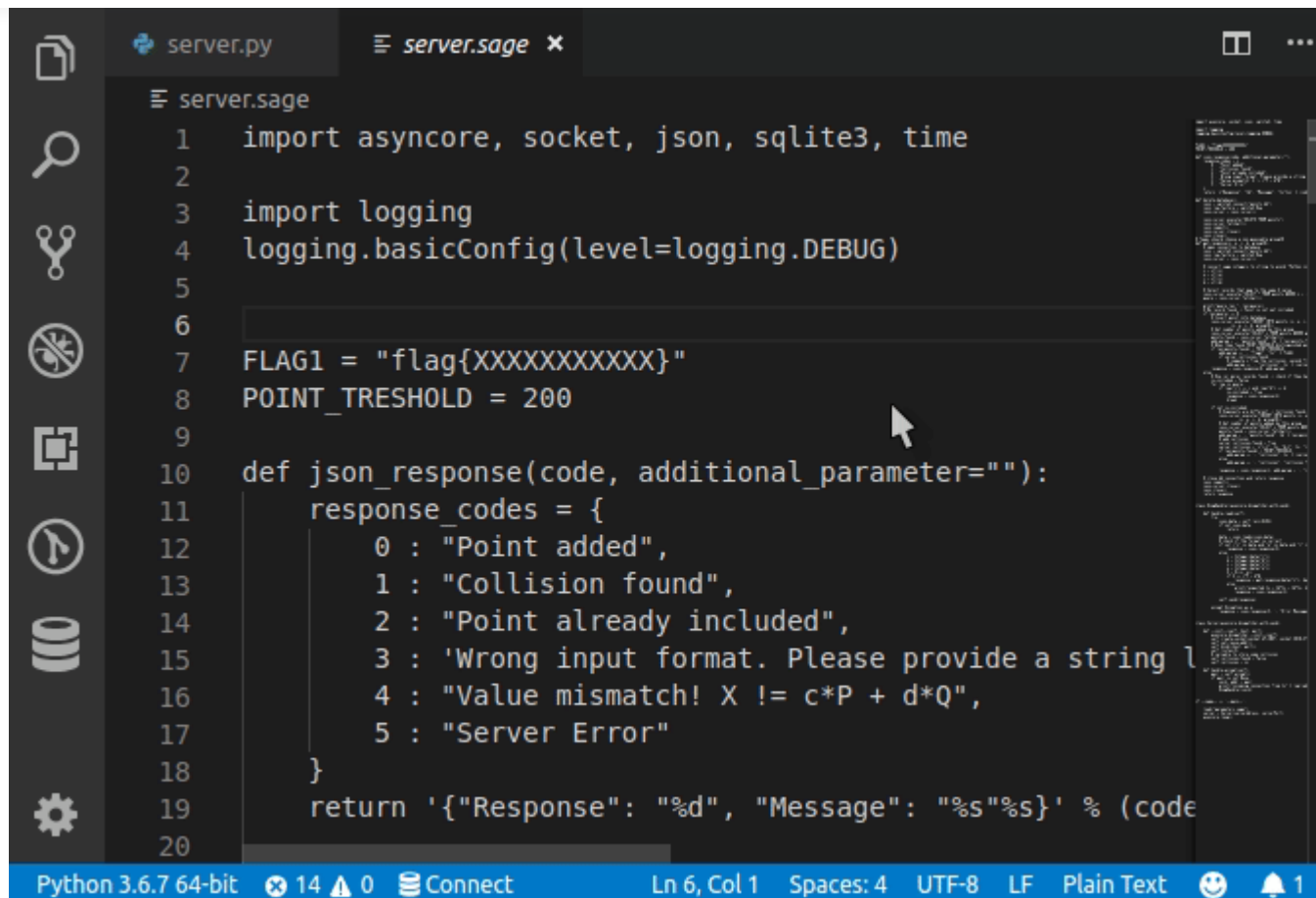
Syntax Highlighting for custom file extension

6   Any custom file extension can be associated with standard syntax highlighting with `custom files association` in User Settings as follows.

Note that this will be a permanent setting. In order to set for the current session alone, type in the preferred language in `Select Language Mode` box (without changing `file association` settings)

Installing new Syntax Package

If the required syntax package is not available by default, you can add them via the **Extension Marketplace** (`Ctrl+Shift+X`) and search for the language package.

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