

# **VS Code - The First Step**

# What is VSCode (Visual Studio Code)

It is an IDE (Integrated Development Environment) for you to do (almost) anything with it.

1. File Explorer
2. Text Editor
3. Git/GitHub Access Tool
4. Terminal
5. ... Anything with VSCode Extensions.

# 1. Installation & Setup

## Download & Install

1. Go to [code.visualstudio.com](https://code.visualstudio.com)
2. Download for your OS (Windows/Mac/Linux)
3. Run the installer with default settings

## First Launch

- Open VS Code from Start Menu (Windows) or Applications (Mac)
- You'll see the Welcome screen with helpful getting-started guides

## 2. Opening Your Project

### Method 1: File Menu

File → Open Folder → Select your project directory

### Method 2: Drag & Drop

- Simply drag your project folder into the VS Code window

## Method 3 (Optional): Terminal/Command Line

Read the Optional section if you want to use a command line tool  
code .

```
# Navigate to your project folder  
cd /path/to/your/project  
# Open current directory in VS Code  
code .
```

# 3. Command Palette - Your Best Friend

**Shortcut:** `Ctrl+Shift+P` (Windows/Linux) or `Cmd+Shift+P` (Mac)

For Mac users, always use `Cmd` for `Ctrl`.

## What is it?


- Central hub for ALL VS Code commands
- Type what you want to do, VS Code finds it

## Examples:

```
> Open Settings  
> Git: Clone  
> Markdown: Open Preview  
> Python: Run Python File
```

## 4. Essential Extensions

### How to Install Extensions

1. Click Extensions icon in sidebar (  ) or press `Ctrl+Shift+X`
2. Search for extension name
3. Click "Install"



## 5. Usage and Tips

Shortcuts are easy to use, but you can always use Command Palette (view -> Command Palette) and give a command name to get the same results.

### 1. File Explorer Tips

- `Ctrl+P` - Quick file open
- `Ctrl+Shift+E` - Focus on Explorer
- Right-click for context menus

## 2. Integrated Terminal

- `Ctrl+`` - Toggle terminal
- `Ctrl+Shift+``` - New terminal
- Multiple terminals supported

## 3. Split Editor

- `Ctrl+\` - Split editor
- `Ctrl+1,2,3` - Focus different editor groups
- Drag tabs to rearrange

## 4. Essential Keyboard Shortcuts

Action	Windows/Linux	Mac
Command Palette	Ctrl+Shift+P	Cmd+Shift+P
Quick Open	Ctrl+P	Cmd+P
Toggle Terminal	Ctrl+`	Cmd+`
Save	Ctrl+S	Cmd+S
Find	Ctrl+F	Cmd+F
Replace	Ctrl+H	Cmd+Alt+F
Comment Line	Ctrl+/*	Cmd+/*

## 5. Common Beginner Mistakes to Avoid

 **Don't:** Open individual files instead of the project folder

 **Do:** Always use "Open Folder" for projects

- This is an important concept when you use VSCode.
- VSCode is an IDE, not an editor.

✗ **Don't:** Ignore the red squiggly lines (errors)

✓ **Do:** Hover over them to see what's wrong

✗ **Don't:** Forget to save your work

✓ **Do:** Use `Ctrl+S` frequently or enable auto-save

When a file is not saved, VSCode displays a circle mark; you should make sure it is a cross mark, meaning the file is saved.

not saved ->

A screenshot of a VS Code tab for a file named '1\_vsc.md'. The text '3, U' is visible. To the right of the text is a solid black circle icon, indicating the file has not been saved.

saved ->

A screenshot of a VS Code tab for a file named '1\_vsc.md'. The text '3, U' is visible. To the right of the text is a white 'X' icon inside a square, indicating the file has been saved.

**(Optional) VSCode code CLI**

# What is "code" CLI?

The code command opens Visual Studio Code from the terminal, allowing you to launch files, folders, or projects with optional customization flags.

## Installation & Setup

- On Windows and Mac, installing VSCode usually adds the `code` command automatically.
- On Mac/Linux, you may need to run `Shell Command: Install 'code' command in PATH` from VSCode's Command Palette to enable it.

## Adding code to PATH (Windows)

On Windows, you should add `code` to your PATH environment.

1. In Terminal, run `where code` to find the location of `code`.

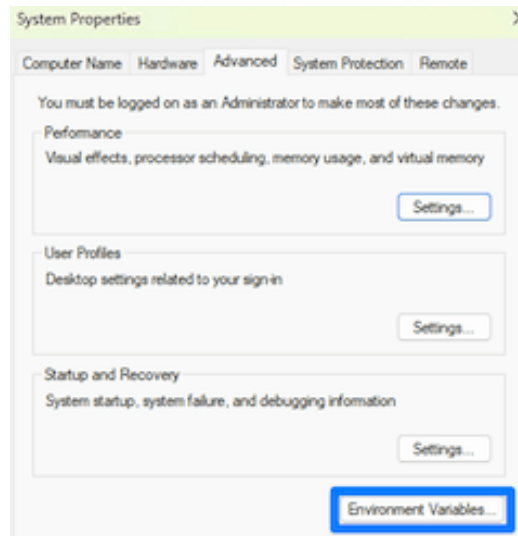
```
C:\Users\smcho>where code
C:\Users\smcho\AppData\Local\Programs\Microsoft VS Code\bin\code
C:\Users\smcho\AppData\Local\Programs\Microsoft VS Code\bin\code.cmd
C:\Users\smcho>code
```



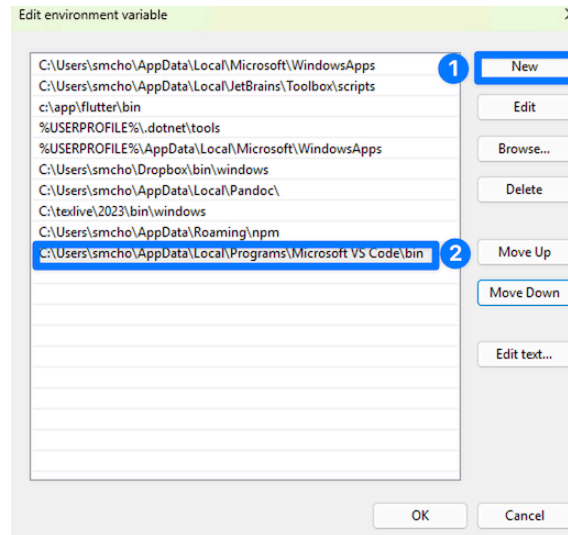
2. Open View advanced system settings and Open Environment Variables .



View advanced system settings



### 3. Add the path to the dialog box.



## Use code on Terminal

When `code` program is in your path, you can open VSCode using command line.

- This example shows how we can open the `ASE` directory using `code` on a command line.

```
code ASE230
```