



# Trace viewer

## Introduction

Playwright Trace Viewer is a GUI tool that lets you explore recorded Playwright traces of your tests meaning you can go back and forward through each action of your test and visually see what was happening during each action.

### You will learn

- How to record a trace
- How to open the HTML report
- How to open the trace viewer

## Recording a trace

Traces can be recorded by running your tests with the `--tracing` flag.

```
pytest --tracing on
```

Options for tracing are:

- `on`: Record trace for each test
- `off`: Do not record trace. (default)
- `retain-on-failure`: Record trace for each test, but remove all traces from successful test runs.

This will record the trace and place it into the file named `trace.zip` in your `test-results` directory.

► If you are not using Pytest, click here to learn how to record traces.

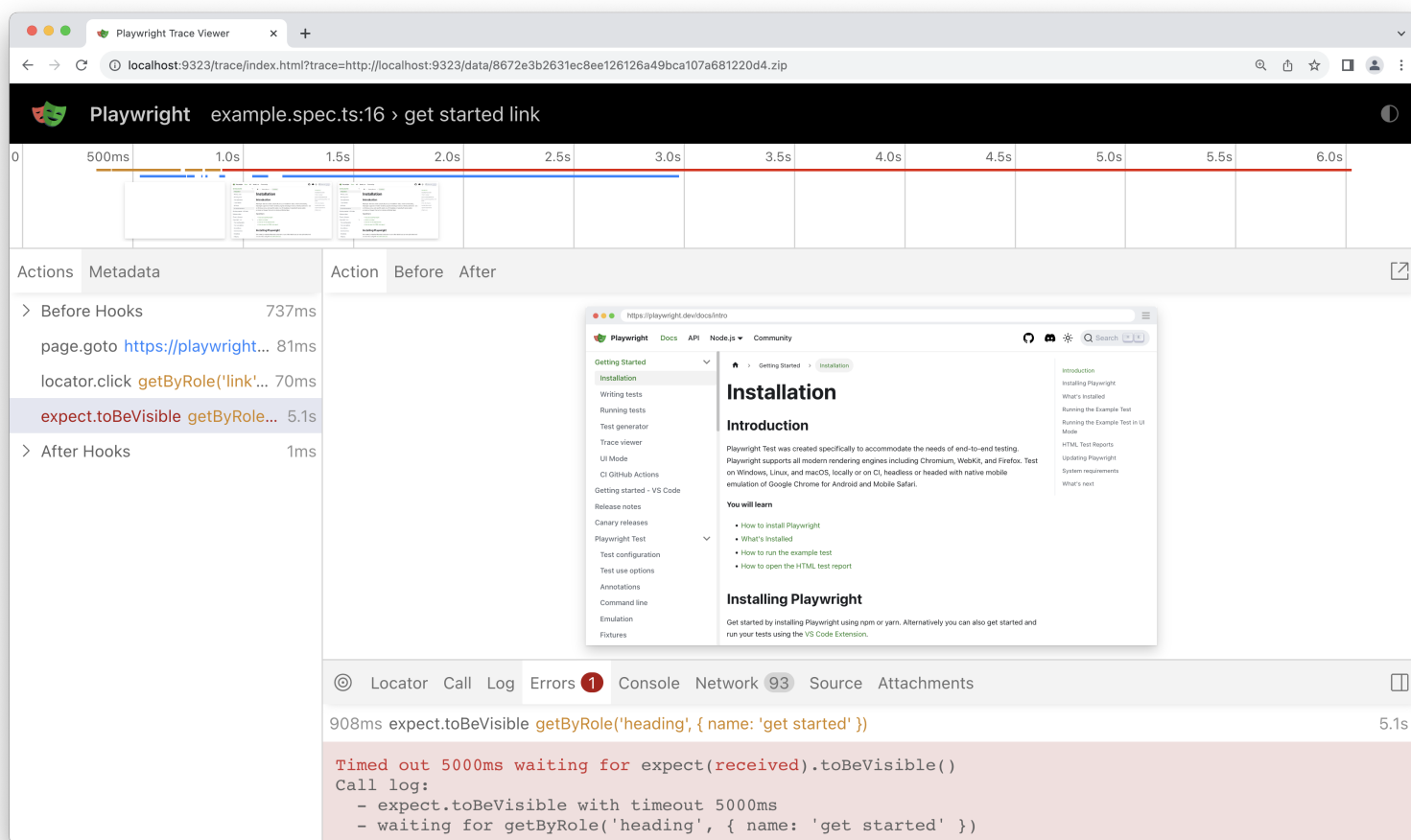
## Opening the trace

You can open the saved trace using the Playwright CLI or in your browser on `trace.playwright.dev`. Make sure to add the full path to where your `trace.zip` file is located. This should include the `test-results` directory followed by the test name and then `trace.zip`.

```
playwright show-trace trace.zip
```

## Viewing the trace

View traces of your test by clicking through each action or hovering using the timeline and see the state of the page before and after the action. Inspect the log, source and network during each step of the test. The trace viewer creates a DOM snapshot so you can fully interact with it, open devtools etc.



To learn more check out our detailed guide on [Trace Viewer](#).

## What's next

- [Run tests on CI with GitHub Actions](#)

- [Learn more about Trace Viewer](#)