

Containerize your Apps with Docker and Kubernetes

Deploy, scale, orchestrate, and manage containers with Docker and Kubernetes



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Dr. Gabriel N. Schenker

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Dr. Gabriel N. Schenker



BIRMINGHAM - MUMBAI

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Preface

Containerization is said to be the best way to implement DevOps and the main goal of this book is to provide end-to-end deployment solutions for your Azure environment.

This book will initiate with the implementation of deploying and managing containers along with getting you up and running with Docker and Kubernetes. Then, this book will explain operations for container management and orchestration in Docker using Azure's cloud solutions. You will also learn to deploy and manage highly scalable applications along with setting-up production ready Kubernetes cluster on Azure in an intact environment. Lastly, The book will also help you leverage Microsoft's Docker and Kubernetes tools to build apps that can be quickly deployed on Azure.

By the end of the book, you will get hands-on with some more advanced topics to further extend your knowledge about Docker and Kubernetes.

Who this book is for

If you are a developer, system administrator, or DevOps engineer who wants to use Docker and Kubernetes to run your mission-critical applications scalable, securely, and highly available on-prem or in the cloud, then this book is for you. In order to learn from this book, you should have some basic Linux/Unix skills such as installing packages, editing files, managing services, and so on. If you have some basic virtualization experience that would be an added advantage.

What this book covers

Chapter 1, What Are Containers and Why Should I Use Them?, this chapter focuses on the software supply chain and the friction within it. It then presents containers as a means to reduce this friction and add enterprise-grade security on top of it. In this chapter, we also look into how containers and the ecosystem around them are assembled. We specifically point out the distinction between the upstream OSS components (Moby) that form the building blocks of the downstream products of Docker and other vendors.

Chapter 2, Setting up a Working Environment, in this chapter discussed in detail how to set up an ideal environment for developers, DevOps and operators that can be used when working with Docker containers.

Chapter 3, Working with Containers, this chapter teaches how start, stop and remove containers. The chapter also teaches how to inspect containers to retrieve additional metadata of it. Furthermore, it introduces how to run additional processes or how to attach to the main process in an already running container. It is also showing how to retrieve logging information from a container that is produced by the processes running inside it. Finally, the chapter introduces the inner workings of a container including such things as Linux namespaces and cgroups.

Chapter 4, Creating and Managing Container Images, this chapter introduces the different ways how to create container images that serve as templates for containers. It introduces the inner structure of an image and how it is built.

Chapter 5, Data Volumes and System Management, this chapter introduces data volumes that can be used by stateful components running in containers. The chapter also introduces system level commands that are used to gather information about Docker and the underlying OS as well as commands to clean the system from orphaned resources. Finally, it introduces the system events generated by the Docker engine.

Chapter 6, Distributed Application Architecture, this chapter introduces the concept of a distributed application architecture and discusses the various patterns and best practices that are required to run a distributed application successfully. Finally, it discusses the additional requirements that need to be fulfilled to run such an application in production.

Chapter 7, Single-Host Networking, this chapter introduces the Docker container networking model and its single host implementation in the form of the bridge network. The chapter introduces the concept of software-defined networks and how they are used to secure containerized applications. Finally, it introduces how container ports can be opened to the public and thus make containerized components accessible from the outside world.

Chapter 8, Docker Compose, this chapter introduces the concept of an application consisting of multiple services each running in a container and how Docker Compose allows us to easily build, run and scale such an application using a declarative approach.

Chapter 9, Orchestrators, this chapter introduces the concept of orchestrators. It teaches why orchestrators are needed and how they conceptually work. The chapter will also provide an overview of the most popular orchestrators and name a few of their pros and cons.

Chapter 10, Orchestrating Containerized Applications with Kubernetes, this chapter introduces Kubernetes. Kubernetes is currently the clear leader in the container orchestration space. It starts with a high-level overview of the architecture of a Kubernetes cluster and then discusses the main objects used in Kubernetes to define and run containerized applications.

Chapter 11, Deploying, Updating, and Securing an Application with Kubernetes, this chapter teaches how to deploy, update and scale applications into a Kubernetes cluster. It also explains how zero downtime deployments are achieved to enable disruption free updates and rollbacks of mission-critical applications. This chapter also introduces Kubernetes secrets as a means to configure services with and protect sensitive data.

Chapter 12, Running a Containerized App in the Cloud, this chapter shows how to deploy a complex containerized application into a hosted Kubernetes cluster on Microsoft Azure using the Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS) offering. First it explains how to provision a Kubernetes cluster, second it shows how to host the Docker images in the Azure Container Registry and finally it demonstrates how to deploy, run, monitor, scale and upgrade the application. The chapter also demonstrates how to upgrade the version of Kubernetes in the cluster without causing any downtime.

To get the most out of this book

Ideally you have access to a laptop or personal computer with Windows 10 Professional or a recent version of Mac OS X installed. A computer with any popular Linux OS installed works too. If you're on a Mac you should install Docker for Mac and if you're on Windows then install Docker for Windows. You can download them from here: <https://www.docker.com/community-edition>.

If you are on an older version of Windows or are using Windows 10 Home edition, then you should install Docker Toolbox. You can find the Docker Toolbox here: https://docs.docker.com/toolbox/toolbox_install_windows/.

On the Mac, use the Terminal application, and on Windows, use a PowerShell console to try out the commands you will be learning. You also need a recent version of a browser such as Google Chrome, Safari or Internet Explorer. Of course you will need internet access to download tools and container images that we are going to use and explore in this book.

To follow *Chapter 12, Running a Containerized App in the Cloud*, you need access to Microsoft Azure. If you do not have an existing account on Azure it is possible to request a trial account here at <https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/free/>.

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An EPUB and mobi version of this book is available free of charge on Github. You can download them and the code bundle at <https://github.com/PacktPublishing/Containerize-your-Apps-with-Docker-and-Kubernetes>.

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Conventions used

There are a number of text conventions used throughout this book.

CodeInText: Indicates code words in text, database table names, folder names, filenames, file extensions, pathnames, dummy URLs, user input, and Twitter handles. For example; "The content of each layer is mapped to a special folder on the host system, which is usually a subfolder of `/var/lib/docker/`."

A block of code is set as follows:

```
COPY . /app
COPY ./web /app/web
COPY sample.txt /data/my-sample.txt
ADD sample.tar /app/bin/
ADD http://example.com/sample.txt /data/
```

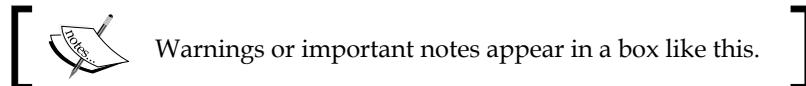
When we wish to draw your attention to a particular part of a code block, the relevant lines or items are set in bold:

```
FROM python:2.7
RUN mkdir -p /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY ./requirements.txt /app/
RUN pip install -r requirements.txt
CMD ["python", "main.py"]
```

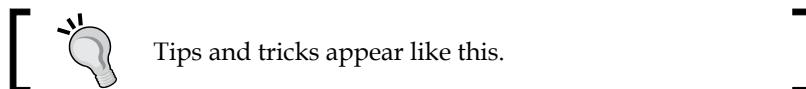
Any command-line input or output is written as follows:

```
az group create --name pets-group --location westeurope
```

Bold: Indicates a new term, an important word, or words that you see on screen. For example, in menus or dialog boxes appear in the text like this. Here is an example: "Select **System info** from the **Administration** panel."



Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.



Tips and tricks appear like this.

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1

What Are Containers and Why Should I Use Them?

This first chapter of this book will introduce you to the world of containers and their orchestration. This book assumes you have no prior knowledge in the area of containers, and will give you a very practical introduction into the topic.

In this chapter, we are focusing on the software supply chain and the friction within it. We then present containers as a means to reduce this friction and add enterprise-grade security on top of it. In this chapter, we also look into how containers and the ecosystem around them are assembled. We specifically point out the distinction between the upstream **Operations Support System (OSS)** components, united under the code name Moby, that form the building blocks of the downstream products of Docker and other vendors.

The chapter covers the following topics:

- What are containers?
- Why are containers important?
- What's the benefit for me or for my company?
- The Moby project
- Docker products
- The container ecosystem
- Container architecture

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Explain in a few simple sentences to an interested layman what containers are, using an analogy such as physical containers
- Justify to an interested layman why containers are so important, using an analogy such as physical containers versus traditional shipping, or apartment homes versus single family homes, and so on
- Name at least four upstream open source components that are used by the Docker products, such as Docker for Mac/Windows
- Identify at least three Docker products

Technical requirements

This chapter is a theoretical introduction into the topic. Therefore, there are no special technical requirements for this chapter.

What are containers?

A software container is a pretty abstract thing and thus it might help if we start with an analogy that should be pretty familiar to most of the readers. The analogy is a shipping container in the transportation industry.

We transport huge amounts of goods on trains, ships, and trucks. We unload them at target locations, which may be another means of transportation. Goods are often diverse and complex to handle. Before the invention of shipping containers, this unloading from one means of transportation and loading onto another was a really complex and tedious process. Take, for example, a farmer bringing a cart full of apples to a central train station where the apples are then loaded onto a train, together with all the apples from many other farmers. Or think of a winemaker bringing his barrels of wine with a truck to the port where they are unloaded, and then transferred to a ship that will transport the barrels overseas. Every type of good was packaged in its own way and thus had to be handled in its own way. Any loose goods risked being stolen or damaged in the process. Then, there came the container, and it totally revolutionized the transportation industry.

The container is just a metallic box with standardized dimensions. The length, width, and height of each container is the same. This is a very important point. Without the world agreeing on a standard size, shipping containers would not have become so successful. Nowadays, companies who want to have their goods transported from A to B package those goods into these standardized containers. Then, they call a shipper which comes with a standardized means for transportation. This can be a truck designed to load a container or a train whose wagons can each transport one or several containers. Finally, we have ships that are specialized in transporting huge amounts of containers. The shippers never need to unpack and repack goods. For a shipper, a container is just a black box; they are not interested in what is in it nor should they care in most cases. It is just a big iron box with standard dimensions. The packaging of goods into containers is now fully delegated to the parties that want to have their goods shipped, and they should know best how to handle and package those goods. Since all containers have the same standardized shape and dimensions, the shippers can use standardized tools to handle containers, that is, cranes that unload containers, say from a train or a truck, and load them onto a ship or vice versa. One type of crane is enough to handle all the containers that come along over time. Also, the means of transportation can be standardized, such as container ships, trucks, and trains. Because of all this standardization, all the processes in and around shipping goods could be standardized, and thus made much more efficient than they were before the age of containers.

I think by now you should have a good understanding of why shipping containers are so important and why they revolutionized the whole transportation industry. I chose this analogy because the software containers that we are going to look at here fulfill the exact same role in the software supply chain as shipping containers do in the supply chain of physical goods.

Let's discuss what developers used to do when they developed a new application. Once an application was completed in the eyes of the developers, they would hand this application over to the operations engineers that were then supposed to install it on the production servers and get it running. If the operations engineers were lucky, they even got an accurate document with installation instructions from the developers. So far so good, and life was easy. But things got a bit out of hand when there were many teams of developers in an enterprise that created quite different types of applications, yet all needed to be installed on the same production servers and kept running there. Usually, each application has some external dependencies such as which framework it was built on or what libraries it uses and so on.

What Are Containers and Why Should I Use Them?

Sometimes, two applications would use the same framework but in different versions that might or might not be compatible between each other. Our operations engineer's life became much harder over time. They had to be really creative with how they could load their servers, or their 'ship', with different applications without breaking something. Installing a new version of a certain application was a complex project on its own and often needed months of planning and testing. In other words, there was a lot of friction in the software supply chain. But these days, companies rely more and more on software and the release cycles become shorter and shorter. We cannot afford anymore to just have a new release maybe twice a year. Applications need to be updated in a matter of weeks or days, or sometimes even multiple times per day. Companies that do not comply risk going out of business due to the lack of agility. So, *what's the solution?*

A first approach was to use **virtual machines (VMs)**. Instead of running multiple applications all on the same server, companies would package and run a single application per VM. With it, the compatibility problems were gone and life seemed good again. Unfortunately, the happiness didn't last for long. VMs are pretty heavy beasts on their own since they all contain a full-blown OS such as Linux or Windows Server and all that for just a single application. This is as if in the transportation industry you would use a gigantic ship just to transport a truck load of bananas. What a waste. That can never be profitable. The ultimate solution to the problem was to provide something much more lightweight than VMs but also able to perfectly encapsulate the goods it needed to transport. Here, the goods are the actual application written by our developers plus (and this is important) all the external dependencies of the application, such as framework, libraries, configurations, and more. This holy grail of a software packaging mechanism was the Docker container.

Developers use Docker containers to package their applications, frameworks, and libraries, and then they ship those containers to the testers or to the operations engineers. For the testers and operations engineers, the container is just a black box. Crucially, it is a standardized black box. All containers, no matter what application runs inside them, can be treated equally. The engineers know that if any container runs on their servers, then any other containers should run too. And this is actually true, apart from some edge cases which always exist. Thus, Docker containers are a means to package applications and their dependencies in a standardized way. Docker then coined the phrase—Build, ship and run anywhere.

Why are containers important?

These days, the time between new releases of an application becomes shorter and shorter, yet the software itself doesn't become any simpler. On the contrary, software projects increase in complexity. Thus, we need a way to tame the beast and simplify the software supply chain.

Improving security

We also hear every day how much more cyber crimes are on the rise. Many well-known companies are affected by security breaches. Highly sensitive customer data gets stolen, such as social security numbers, credit card information, and more. But not only customer data is compromised, sensitive company secrets are also stolen.

Containers can help in many ways. First of all, Gartner has found in a recent report that applications running in a container are more secure than their counterparts not running in a container. Containers use Linux security primitives such as Linux kernel namespaces to sandbox different applications running on the same computers and **control groups (cgroups)**, to avoid the noisy neighbor problem where one bad application is using all available resources of a server and starving all other applications.

Due to the fact that container images are immutable, it is easy to have them scanned for known vulnerabilities and exposures, and in doing so, increase the overall security of our applications.

Another way we can make our software supply chain more secure when using containers is to use **content trust**. Content trust basically ensures that the author of a container image is who they pretend to be and that the consumer of the container image has a guarantee that the image has not been tampered with in transit. The latter is known as a **man-in-the-middle (MITM)** attack.

All that I have just said is of course technically also possible without using containers, but since containers introduce a globally accepted standard, it makes it so much easier to implement those best practices and enforce them.

OK, but security is not the only reason why containers are important. There are other reasons as explained in the next two sections.

Simulating production-like environments

One of them is the fact that containers make it easy to simulate a production-like environment, even on a developer's laptop. If we can containerize any application, then we can also containerize, say, a database such as Oracle or MS SQL Server. Now, everyone who has ever had to install an Oracle database on a computer knows that this is not the easiest thing to do and it takes a lot of space away on your computer. You wouldn't want to do that to your development laptop just to test whether the application you developed really works end to end. With containers at hand, I can run a full-blown relational database in a container as easily as saying 1, 2, 3. And when I'm done with testing, I can just stop and delete the container and the database is gone without leaving a trace on my computer.

Since containers are very lean compared to VMs, it is not uncommon to have many containers running at the same time on a developer's laptop without overwhelming the laptop.

Standardizing infrastructure

A third reason why containers are important is that operators can finally concentrate on what they are really good at, provisioning infrastructure, and running and monitoring applications in production. When the applications they have to run on a production system are all containerized, then operators can start to standardize their infrastructure. Every server becomes just another Docker host. No special libraries or frameworks need to be installed on those servers, just an OS and a container runtime such as Docker.

Also, the operators do not have to have any intimate knowledge about the internals of the applications anymore since those applications run self-contained in containers that ought to look like black boxes to the operations engineers, similar to how the shipping containers look to the personnel in the transportation industry.

What's the benefit for me or for my company?

Somebody once said that today, every company of a certain size has to acknowledge that they need to be a software company. Software runs all businesses, period. As every company becomes a software company, there is a need to establish a software supply chain. For the company to remain competitive, their software supply chain has to be secure and efficient. Efficiency can be achieved through thorough automation and standardization. But in all three areas, security, automation, and standardization, containers have proven their superiority.

Large and well-known enterprises have reported that when containerizing existing legacy applications (many call them traditional applications) and establishing a fully automated software supply chain based on containers, they can reduce the cost used for maintenance of those mission-critical applications by a factor of 50 to 60% and they can reduce the time between new releases of these traditional applications by up to 90%.

That said, the adoption of container technology saves these companies a lot of money, and at the same time it speeds up the development process and reduces the time to market.

The Moby project

Originally, when the company Docker introduced Docker containers, everything was open source. Docker didn't have any commercial products at this time. The Docker engine which the company developed was a monolithic piece of software. It contained many logical parts, such as the container runtime, a network library, a RESTful API, a command-line interface, and much more.

Other vendors or projects such as Red Hat or Kubernetes were using the Docker engine in their own products, but most of the time they were only using part of its functionality. For example, Kubernetes did not use the Docker network library of the Docker engine but provided its own way of networking. Red Hat in turn did not update the Docker engine frequently and preferred to apply unofficial patches to older versions of the Docker engine, yet they still called it the **Docker engine**.

Out of all these reasons and many more, the idea emerged that Docker had to do something to clearly separate the Docker open source part from the Docker commercial part. Furthermore, the company wanted to prevent competitors from using and abusing the name Docker for their own gains. This was the main reason why the Moby project was born. It serves as the umbrella for most of the open source components Docker developed and continues to develop. These open source projects do not carry the name Docker in them anymore.

The Moby project encompasses components for image management, secret management, configuration management, and networking and provisioning, to name just a few. Also, part of the Moby project are special Moby tools that are, for example, used to assemble components into runnable artifacts.

Some of the components that technically would belong to the Moby project have been donated by Docker to the **Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF)** and thus do not appear in the list of components anymore. The most prominent ones are `containerd` and `runc` which together form the container runtime.

Docker products

Docker currently separates its product lines into two segments. There is the **Community Edition (CE)** which is closed source yet completely free, and then there is the **Enterprise Edition (EE)** which is also a closed source and needs to be licensed on a yearly basis. The enterprise products are backed by 24 x 7 support and are supported with bug fixes much longer than their CE counterparts.

Docker CE

The Docker community edition includes products such as the Docker Toolbox, Docker for Mac, and Docker for Windows. All these three products are mainly targeting developers.

Docker for Mac and Docker for Windows are easy-to-install desktop applications that can be used to build, debug, and test Dockerized applications or services on a Mac or on Windows. Docker for Mac and Docker for Windows are complete development environments which deeply integrated with their respective hypervisor framework, networking, and filesystem. These tools are the fastest and most reliable way to run Docker on a Mac or on Windows.

Under the umbrella of the CE, there are also two products that are more geared towards operations engineers. Those products are Docker for Azure and Docker for AWS.

For example, with Docker for Azure, which is a native Azure application, you can set up Docker in a few clicks, optimized for and integrated to the underlying Azure **Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)** services. It helps operations engineers to accelerate the time it takes to build and run Docker applications in Azure.

Docker for AWS works in a very similar way, but for Amazon's cloud.

Docker EE

The Docker EE consists of the two products **Universal Control Plane (UCP)** and **Docker Trusted Registry (DTR)** that both run on top of Docker Swarm. Both are Swarm applications. Docker EE builds on top of the upstream components of the Moby project and adds enterprise-grade features such as **role-based access control (RBAC)**, multi tenancy, mixed clusters of Docker Swarm and Kubernetes, web-based UI, and content trust, as well as image scanning on top of it.

The container ecosystem

There has never been a new technology introduced in IT that has penetrated the landscape as quickly and thoroughly as containers. Any company that doesn't want to be left behind cannot ignore containers. This huge interest in containers from all sectors of the industry has triggered a lot of innovation in this sector. Numerous companies have specialized in containers and either provide products that build on top of this technology or build tools that support it.

Initially, Docker didn't have a solution for container orchestration thus other companies or projects, open source or not, tried to close this gap. The most prominent one is Kubernetes which was initiated by Google and then later donated to the CNCF. Other container orchestration products are Apache Mesos, Rancher, Red Hat's Open Shift, Docker's own Swarm, and more.

More recently, the trend goes towards a service mesh. This is the new buzz word. As we containerize more and more applications, and as we refactor those applications into more microservice-oriented applications, we run into problems that simple orchestration software cannot solve anymore in a reliable and scalable way. Topics in this area are service discovery, monitoring, tracing, and log aggregation. Many new projects have emerged in this area, the most popular one at this time being Istio, which is also part of the CNCF.

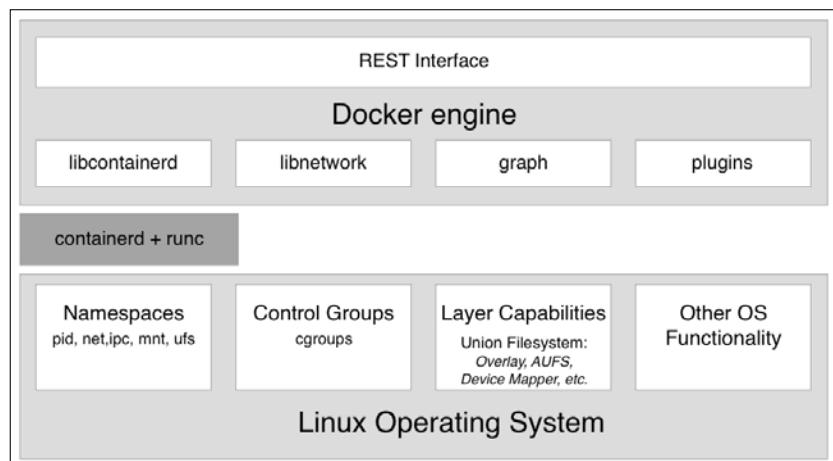
Many say that the next step in the evolution of software is functions, or more precisely, **Functions as a Service (FaaS)**. Some projects exist that provide exactly this kind of service and are built on top of containers. One prominent example is OpenFaaS.

What Are Containers and Why Should I Use Them?

We have only scratched the surface of the container ecosystem. All big IT companies such as Google, Microsoft, Intel, Red Hat, IBM, and more are working feverishly on containers and related technologies. The CNCF which is mainly about containers and related technologies, has so many registered projects, that they do not all fit on a poster anymore. It's an exciting time to work in this area. And in my humble opinion, this is only the beginning.

Container architecture

Now, let's discuss on a high level how a system that can run Docker containers is designed. The following diagram illustrates what a computer on which Docker has been installed looks like. By the way, a computer which has Docker installed is often called a Docker host, because it can run or host Docker containers:



High-level architecture diagram of the Docker engine

In the preceding diagram, we see three essential parts:

- On the bottom, we have the Linux operating system
- In the middle dark gray, we have the container runtime
- On the top, we have the Docker engine

Containers are only possible due to the fact that the Linux OS provides some primitives, such as namespaces, control groups, layer capabilities, and more which are leveraged in a very specific way by the container runtime and the Docker engine. Linux kernel namespaces such as **process ID (pid)** namespaces or **network (net)** namespaces allow Docker to encapsulate or sandbox processes that run inside the container. Control groups make sure that containers cannot suffer from the noisy neighbor syndrome, where a single application running in a container can consume most or all of the available resources of the whole Docker host. Control groups allow Docker to limit the resources, such as CPU time or the amount of RAM that each container gets maximally allocated.

The container runtime on a Docker host consists of `containerd` and `runc`. `runc` is the low-level functionality of the container runtime and `containerd`, which is based on `runc`, provides the higher-level functionality. Both are open source and have been donated by Docker to the CNCF.

The container runtime is responsible for the whole life cycle of a container. It pulls a container image (which is the template for a container) from a registry if necessary, creates a container from that image, initializes and runs the container, and eventually stops and removes the container from the system when asked.

The Docker engine provides additional functionality on top of the container runtime, such as network libraries or support for plugins. It also provides a REST interface over which all container operations can be automated. The Docker command-line interface that we will use frequently in this book is one of the consumers of this REST interface.

Summary

In this chapter, we looked at how containers can massively reduce the friction in the software supply chain and on top of that, make the supply chain much more secure.

In the upcoming chapter, we will familiarize ourselves with containers. We will learn how to run, stop, and remove containers and otherwise manipulate them. We will also have a pretty good overview over the anatomy of containers. For the first time, we're really going to get our hands dirty and play with these containers, so stay tuned.

Questions

Please solve the following questions to assess your learning progress:

1. Which statements are correct (multiple answers are possible)?
 1. A container is kind of a lightweight VM
 2. A container only runs on a Linux host
 3. A container can only run one process
 4. The main process in a container always has PID 1
 5. A container is one or more processes encapsulated by Linux namespaces and restricted by cgroups
2. Explain to an interested layman in your own words, maybe using analogies, what a container is.
3. Why are containers considered to be a game changer in IT? Name three to four reasons.
4. What does it mean when we claim: *If a container runs on a given platform then it runs anywhere...*? Name two to three reasons why this is true.
5. True or False: *Docker containers are only really useful for modern greenfield applications based on microservices.* Please justify your answer.
6. How much does a typical enterprise save when containerizing their legacy applications?
 1. 20%
 2. 33%
 3. 50%
 4. 75%
7. Which two core concepts of Linux are containers based on?

Further reading

Here is a list of links that lead to more detailed information regarding topics we have discussed in this chapter:

- *Docker overview* at <https://docs.docker.com/engine/docker-overview/>
- *The Moby project* at <https://mobyproject.org/>
- *Docker products* at <https://www.docker.com/get-docker>
- *Cloud Native Computing Foundation* at <https://www.cncf.io/>
- *containerd – industry standard container runtime* at <https://containerd.io/>

2

Setting up a Working Environment

In the last chapter, we learned what Docker containers are and why they're important. We learned what kinds of problem containers solve in a modern software supply chain.

In this chapter, we are going to prepare our personal or working environment to work efficiently and effectively with Docker. We will discuss in detail how to set up an ideal environment for developers, DevOps, and operators that can be used when working with Docker containers.

This chapter covers the following topics:

- The Linux command shell
- PowerShell for Windows
- Using a package manager
- Choosing a code editor
- Docker Toolbox
- Docker for macOS and Docker for Windows
- Minikube
- Cloning the Source Code Repository

After completing this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

- Use an editor on your laptop that is able to edit simple files such as a Dockerfile or a `docker-compose.yml` file
- Use a shell such as Bash on macOS and PowerShell on Windows to execute Docker commands and other simple operations, such as navigating the folder structure or creating a new folder
- Install Docker for macOS or Docker for Windows on your computer
- Execute simple Docker commands such as `docker version` or `docker container run` on your Docker for macOS or Docker for Windows
- Successfully install Docker Toolbox on your computer
- Use `docker-machine` to create a Docker host on VirtualBox
- Configure your local Docker CLI to remote access a Docker host running in VirtualBox

Technical requirements

For this chapter, you will need either macOS or Windows, preferably Windows 10 Professional, installed. You should also have free internet access to download applications and the permission to install those applications on your laptop.

The Linux command shell

Docker containers were first developed on Linux for Linux. It is thus natural that the primary command-line tool used to work with Docker, also called a shell, is a Unix shell; remember, Linux derives from Unix. Most developers use the Bash shell. On some lightweight Linux distributions, such as **Alpine**, Bash is not installed and consequently one has to use the simpler Bourne shell, just called **sh**. Whenever we are working in a Linux environment, such as inside a container or on a Linux VM, we will use either `/bin/bash` or `/bin/sh`, depending on their availability.

Although macOS X is not a Linux OS, Linux and OS X are both flavors of Unix and thus support the same types of tools. Among those tools are the shells. So, when working on a macOS, you will probably be using the Bash shell.

In this book, we expect from the readers a familiarity with the most basic scripting commands in Bash, and PowerShell if you are working on Windows. If you are an absolute beginner, then we strongly recommend that you familiarize yourself with the following cheat sheets:

- *Linux Command Line Cheat Sheet* by Dave Child at <http://bit.ly/2mTQr81>
- *PowerShell Basic Cheat Sheet* at <http://bit.ly/2EPHxze>

PowerShell for Windows

On a Windows computer, laptop, or server, we have multiple command-line tools available. The most familiar is the command shell. It has been available on any Windows computer for decades. It is a very simple shell. For more advanced scripting, Microsoft has developed PowerShell. PowerShell is very powerful and very popular among engineers working on Windows. On Windows 10, finally, we have the so-called **Windows Subsystem for Linux**, which allows us to use any Linux tool, such as the Bash or Bourne shells. Apart from this, there also exist other tools that install a Bash shell on Windows, for example, the Git Bash shell. In this book, all commands will use Bash syntax. Most of the commands also run in PowerShell.

Our recommendation for you is thus to either use PowerShell or any other Bash tool to work with Docker on Windows.

Using a package manager

The easiest way to install software on a macOS or Windows laptop is to use a good package manager. On a macOS, most people use **Homebrew** and on Windows, **Chocolatey** is a good choice.

Installing Homebrew on a macOS

Installing Homebrew on a macOS is easy; just follow the instructions at <https://brew.sh/>.

The following is the command to install Homebrew:

```
/usr/bin/ruby -e "$(curl -fsSL https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Homebrew/install/master/install)"
```

Once the installation is finished, test whether Homebrew is working by entering `brew --version` in the Terminal. You should see something like this:

```
$ brew --version
Homebrew 1.4.3
Homebrew/homebrew-core (git revision f4e35; last commit 2018-01-11)
```

Now, we are ready to use Homebrew to install tools and utilities. If we, for example, want to install the Vi text editor, we can do so like this:

```
$ brew install vim
```

This will then download and install the editor for you.

Installing Chocolatey on Windows

To install the Chocolatey package manager on Windows, please follow the instructions at <https://chocolatey.org/> or just execute the following command in a PowerShell Terminal that you have run as administrator:

```
PS> Set-ExecutionPolicy Bypass -Scope Process -Force; iex ((New-Object System.Net.WebClient).DownloadString('https://chocolatey.org/install.ps1'))
```

Once Chocolatey is installed, test it with the command `choco` without additional parameters. You should see output similar to the following:

```
PS> choco
Chocolatey v0.10.3
```

To install an application such as the Vi editor, use the following command:

```
PS> choco install -y vim
```

The `-y` parameter makes sure that the installation happens without asking for reconfirmation. Please note that once Chocolatey has installed an application, you need to open a new PowerShell window to use it.

Choosing a code editor

Using a good code editor is essential to working productively with Docker. Of course, which editor is the best is highly controversial and depends on your personal preference. A lot of people use Vim, or others such as Emacs, Atom, Sublime, or **Visual Studio (VS) Code**, to just name a few. If you have not yet decided which editor is best suited for you, then I highly recommend that you try VS Code. This is a free and lightweight editor, yet it is very powerful and is available for macOS, Windows, and Linux. Give it a try. You can download VS Code from <https://code.visualstudio.com/download>.

But if you already have a favorite code editor, then please continue using it. As long as you can edit text files, you're good to go. If your editor supports syntax highlighting for Dockerfiles and JSON and YAML files, then even better.

Docker Toolbox

Docker Toolbox has been available for developers for a few years. It precedes the newer tools such as Docker for macOS and Docker for Windows. The toolbox allows a user to work very elegantly with containers on any macOS or Windows computer. Containers must run on a Linux host. Neither Windows or macOS can run containers natively. Thus, we need to run a Linux VM on our laptop, where we can then run our containers. Docker Toolbox installs VirtualBox on our laptop, which is used to run the Linux VMs we need.



As a Windows user, you might already be aware that there exists so-called Windows containers that run natively on Windows. And you are right. Recently, Microsoft has ported the Docker engine to Windows and it is now possible to run Windows containers directly on a Windows Server 2016 without the need for a VM. So, now we have two flavors of containers, Linux containers and Windows containers. The former only run on Linux host and the latter only run on a Windows Server. In this book, we are exclusively discussing Linux containers, but most of the things we learn also apply to Windows containers.

Setting up a Working Environment

Let's use `docker-machine` to set up our environment. Firstly, we list all Docker-ready VMs we have currently defined on our system. If you have just installed Docker Toolbox, you should see the following output:

```
$ docker-machine ls
NAME      ACTIVE    DRIVER      STATE     URL
default   -         virtualbox  Running   tcp://192.168.99.100:2376
$
```

List of all Docker-ready VMs

The IP address used might be different in your case, but it will be definitely in the `192.168.0.0/24` range. We can also see that the VM has Docker version `18.04.0-ce` installed.

If, for some reason, you don't have a default VM or you have accidentally deleted it, you can create it using the following command:

```
$ docker-machine create --driver virtualbox default
```

The output you should see looks as follows:

```
$ docker-machine create --driver virtualbox default
Running pre-create checks...
Creating machine...
(default) Copying /Users/gabriel/.docker/machine/cache/boot2docker.iso to /Users/gabriel/.docker/machine/
machines/default/boot2docker.iso...
(default) Creating VirtualBox VM...
(default) Creating SSH key...
(default) Starting the VM...
(default) Check network to re-create if needed...
(default) Waiting for an IP...
Waiting for machine to be running, this may take a few minutes...
Detecting operating system of created instance...
Waiting for SSH to be available...
Detecting the provisioner...
Provisioning with boot2docker...
Copying certs to the local machine directory...
Copying certs to the remote machine...
Setting Docker configuration on the remote daemon...
Checking connection to Docker...
Docker is up and running!
To see how to connect your Docker Client to the Docker Engine running on this virtual machine, run: docker
$
```

Creating the VM called default in VirtualBox

To see how to connect your Docker client to the Docker Engine running on this virtual machine, run the following command:

```
$ docker-machine env default
```

Once we have our VM called `default` ready, we can try to SSH into it:

```
$ docker-machine ssh default
```

When executing the preceding command, we are greeted by a boot2docker welcome message.

Type `docker --version` in the Command Prompt as follows:

```
docker@default:~$ docker --version
Docker version 18.06.1-ce, build e68fc7a
```

Now, let's try to run a container:

```
docker@default:~$ docker run hello-world
```

This will produce the following output:

```
docker@default:~$ docker run hello-world
Unable to find image 'hello-world:latest' locally
latest: Pulling from library/hello-world
ca4f61b1923c: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:97ce6fa4b6cdc0790cda65fe7290b74cfecd9fa0c9b8c38e979330d547d22ce1
Status: Downloaded newer image for hello-world:latest
```

Hello from Docker!

This message shows that your installation appears to be working correctly.

To generate this message, Docker took the following steps:

1. The Docker client contacted the Docker daemon.
2. The Docker daemon pulled the "hello-world" image from the Docker Hub.
(amd64)
3. The Docker daemon created a new container from that image which runs the executable that produces the output you are currently reading.
4. The Docker daemon streamed that output to the Docker client, which sent it to your terminal.

To try something more ambitious, you can run an Ubuntu container with:

```
$ docker run -it ubuntu bash
```

Share images, automate workflows, and more with a free Docker ID:

<https://cloud.docker.com/>

For more examples and ideas, visit:

<https://docs.docker.com/engine/userguide/>

```
docker@default:~$ █
```

Running the Docker Hello World container

Docker for macOS and Docker for Windows

If you are using a macOS or have Windows 10 Professional installed on your laptop, then we strongly recommend that you install Docker for macOS or Docker for Windows. These tools give you the best experience when working with containers. Note, older versions of Windows or Windows 10 Home edition cannot run Docker for Windows. Docker for Windows uses Hyper-V to run containers transparently in a VM but Hyper-V is not available on older versions of Windows nor is it available in the Home edition.

Installing Docker for macOS

Navigate to the following link to download Docker for macOS at <https://docs.docker.com/docker-for-mac/install/>.

[ There is a stable version and a so-called edge version of the tool available. In this book, we are going to use some newer features and Kubernetes, which at the time of writing are only available in the edge version. Thus, please select this version.]

To start the installation:

1. Click on the **Get Docker for Mac (Edge)** button and follow the instructions.
2. Once you have successfully installed Docker for macOS, open a Terminal. Press command + spacebar to open Spotlight and type `terminal`, then hit `enter`. The Apple Terminal will open as follows:



Apple Terminal window

3. Type `docker --version` in the Command Prompt and hit `enter`. If Docker for macOS is correctly installed, you should get an output similar to the following:

```
$ docker --version
Docker version 18.02.0-ce-rc2, build f968a2c
```

4. To see whether you can run containers, enter the following command into the Terminal and hit *enter*:

```
$ docker run hello-world
```

If all goes well, your output should look something like the following:

```
$ docker run hello-world
Unable to find image 'hello-world:latest' locally
latest: Pulling from library/hello-world
ca4f61b1923c: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:97ce6fa4b6cdc0790cda65fe7290b74cfecd9fa0c9b8c38e979330d547d22ce1
Status: Downloaded newer image for hello-world:latest

Hello from Docker!
This message shows that your installation appears to be working correctly.

To generate this message, Docker took the following steps:
 1. The Docker client contacted the Docker daemon.
 2. The Docker daemon pulled the "hello-world" image from the Docker Hub.
    (amd64)
 3. The Docker daemon created a new container from that image which runs the
    executable that produces the output you are currently reading.
 4. The Docker daemon streamed that output to the Docker client, which sent it
    to your terminal.

To try something more ambitious, you can run an Ubuntu container with:
$ docker run -it ubuntu bash

Share images, automate workflows, and more with a free Docker ID:
https://cloud.docker.com/

For more examples and ideas, visit:
https://docs.docker.com/engine/userguide/
```

```
$ █
```

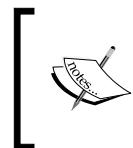
Running the Hello World container on Docker for macOS

Congratulations, you are now ready to work with Docker containers.

Installing Docker for Windows

Note, you can only install Docker for Windows on Windows 10 Professional or Windows Server 2016 since it requires Hyper-V, which is not available on older Windows versions or on the Home edition of Windows 10. If you are using Windows 10 Home or an older version of Windows, you will need to stick with Docker Toolbox.

1. Navigate to the following link to download Docker for Windows at <https://docs.docker.com/docker-for-windows/install/>.



There is a stable version and a so-called edge version of the tool available. In this book, we are going to use some newer features and Kubernetes, which at the time of writing are only available in the edge version. Thus, please select this version.

2. To start the installation, click on the **Get Docker for Windows (Edge)** button and follow the instructions. With Docker for Windows, you can develop, run, and test Linux containers and Windows containers. In this book, though, we are only discussing Linux containers.
3. Once you have successfully installed Docker for Windows. Open a PowerShell window and type docker --version in the Command Prompt. You should see something like the following:

```
PS> docker --version
Docker version 18.04.0-ce, build 3d479c0
```

Using docker-machine on Windows with Hyper-V

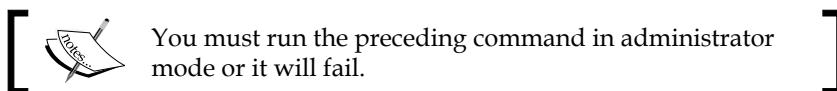
If you have Docker for Windows installed on your Windows laptop, then you also have Hyper-V enabled. In this case, you can't use Docker Toolbox since it uses VirtualBox, and Hyper-V and VirtualBox cannot coexist and run at the same time. In this case, you can use docker-machine with the Hyper-V driver.

1. Open a PowerShell console as an administrator. Install docker-machine using Chocolatey as follows:

```
PS> choco install -y docker-machine
```

2. Using Window's Hyper-V manager create a new internal switch called **DM Internal Switch**, where DM stands for **docker-machine**.
3. Create a VM called **default** in Hyper-V with the following command:

```
PS> docker-machine create --driver hyperv --hyperv-virtual-switch "DM Internal Switch" default
```



You should see the following output generated by the preceding command:

```
Running pre-create checks...
/boot2docker) Image cache directory does not exist, creating
it at C:\Users\ Docker\. docker\ machine\cache...
/boot2docker) No default Boot2Docker ISO found locally,
downloading the latest release...
/boot2docker) Latest release for github.com/boot2docker/
boot2docker is v18.06.1-ce
....
....
Checking connection to Docker...
Docker is up and running!
To see how to connect your Docker Client to the Docker Engine
running on this virtual machine, run: C:\Program Files\Doc
ker\ Docker\ Resources\bin\ docker-machine.exe env default
```

4. To see how to connect your Docker client to the Docker Engine running on this virtual machine, run the following:

```
C:\Program Files\ Docker\ Docker\ Resources\bin\ docker-machine.
exe env default
```

5. Listing all VMs generated by docker-machine gives us the following output:

```
PS C:\WINDOWS\system32> docker-machine ls
NAME      ACTIVE   DRIVER    STATE     URL
SWARM     DOCKER    ERRORS
default   .        hyperv   Running   tcp://[...]:2376
v18.06.1-ce
```

6. Now, let's SSH into our boot2docker VM:

```
PS> docker-machine ssh default
```

You should be greeted by the welcome screen.

We can test the VM by executing our `docker version` command, which is shown as follows:

```
docker@default:~$ docker version
Client:
  Version:          18.06.1-ce
  API version:      1.38
  Go version:       go1.10.3
  Git commit:       e68fc7a
  Built:            Tue Aug 21 17:20:43 2018
  OS/Arch:          linux/amd64
  Experimental:    false

Server:
  Engine:
    Version:          18.06.1-ce
    API version:      1.38 (minimum version 1.12)
    Go version:       go1.10.3
    Git commit:       e68fc7a
    Built:            Tue Aug 21 17:28:38 2018
    OS/Arch:          linux/amd64
    Experimental:    false
docker@default:~$ |
```

Version of the Docker client (CLI) and server

This is definitely a Linux VM, as we can see on the OS/Arch entry, and has Docker 18.06.1-ce installed.

Minikube

If you cannot use Docker for macOS or Windows or, for some reason, you only have access to an older version of the tool that does not yet support Kubernetes, then it is a good idea to install Minikube. Minikube provisions a single-node Kubernetes cluster on your workstation and is accessible through `kubectl`, which is the command-line tool used to work with Kubernetes.

Installing Minikube on macOS and Windows

To install Minikube for macOS or Windows, navigate to the following link at <https://kubernetes.io/docs/tasks/tools/install-minikube/>.

Follow the instructions carefully. If you have the Docker Toolbox installed, then you already have a hypervisor on your system since the Docker Toolbox installer also installed VirtualBox. Otherwise, I recommend that you install VirtualBox first.

If you have Docker for macOS or Windows installed, then you already have `kubectl` installed with it, thus you can skip that step too. Otherwise, follow the instructions on the site.

Finally, select the latest binary for Minikube for macOS or Windows and install it. For macOS, the latest binary is called `minikube-darwin-amd64` and for Windows it is `minikube-windows-amd64`.

Testing Minikube and kubectl

Once Minikube is successfully installed on your workstation, open a Terminal and test the installation.

1. First, we need to start Minikube. Enter `minikube start` at the command line. The output should look like the following:

```
Starting local Kubernetes v1.9.0 cluster...
Starting VM...
Downloading Minikube ISO
 142.22 MB / 142.22 MB [=====] 100.00% 0s
Getting VM IP address...
Moving files into cluster...
Downloading localkube binary
 162.41 MB / 162.41 MB [=====] 100.00% 0s
 0 B / 65 B [-----] 0.00%
 65 B / 65 B [=====] 100.00% 0sSetting up certs...
Connecting to cluster...
Setting up kubeconfig...
Starting cluster components...
Kubectl is now configured to use the cluster.
Loading cached images from config file.
$ |
```

Starting Minikube

2. Now, enter `kubectl version` and hit *enter* to see something like the following screenshot:

```
$ kubectl version
Client Version: version.Info{Major:"1", Minor:"9", GitVersion:"v1.9.0", GitCommit:"925c127ec6b946659ad0fd596fa959be43f0cc05"
, GitTreeState:"clean", BuildDate:"2017-12-15T21:07:38Z", GoVersion:"go1.9.2", Compiler:"gc", Platform:"darwin/amd64"}
Server Version: version.Info{Major:"", Minor:"", GitVersion:"v1.9.0", GitCommit:"925c127ec6b946659ad0fd596fa959be43f0cc05",
GitTreeState:"clean", BuildDate:"2018-01-26T19:04:38Z", GoVersion:"go1.9.1", Compiler:"gc", Platform:"linux/amd64"}
$ |
```

Determining the version of the Kubernetes client and server

If the preceding command fails, for example, by timing out, then it could be that your `kubectl` is not configured for the right context. `kubectl` can be used to work with many different Kubernetes clusters. Each cluster is called a context.

3. To find out which context `kubectl` is currently configured for, use the following command:

```
$ kubectl config current-context  
minikube
```

The answer should be `minikube`, as shown in the preceding output.

4. If this is not the case, use `kubectl config get-contexts` to list all contexts that are defined on your system and then set the current context to `minikube` as follows:

```
$ kubectl config use-context minikube
```

The configuration for `kubectl`, where it stores the contexts, is normally found in `~/.kube/config`, but this can be overridden by defining an environment variable called `KUBECONFIG`. You might need to unset this variable if it is set on your computer.

For more in-depth information about how to configure and use Kubernetes contexts, consult the link at <https://kubernetes.io/docs/concepts/configuration/organize-cluster-access-kubeconfig/>.

Assuming Minikube and `kubectl` work as expected, we can now use `kubectl` to get information about the Kubernetes cluster.

5. Enter the following command:

```
$ kubectl get nodes  
NAME      STATUS    ROLES     AGE      VERSION  
minikube  Ready     <none>   47d     v1.9.0
```

Evidently, we have a cluster of one node, which in my case has Kubernetes v1.9.0 installed on it.

Cloning the source code repository

This book is accompanied by source code publicly available in a GitHub repository at <https://github.com/appswithdockerandkubernetes/labs>. Clone that repository to your local machine.

First create a new folder for example, in your home folder such as `apps-with-docker-and-kubernetes` and navigate to it:

```
$ mkdir -p ~/apps-with-docker-and-kubernetes \  
cd apps-with-docker-and-kubernetes
```

And then clone the repository with the following command:

```
$ git clone https://github.com/appswithdockerandkubernetes/labs.  
git
```

Summary

In this chapter, we set up and configured our personal or working environment so that we can productively work with Docker containers. This equally applies for developers, DevOps, and operations engineers. In that context, we made sure that we use a good editor, have Docker for macOS or Windows installed, and can also use docker-machine to create VMs in VirtualBox or Hyper-V which we can use to run and test containers.

In the next chapter, we're going to learn all the important facts about containers. For example, we will explore how we can run, stop, list, and delete containers, but more than that, we will also dive deep into the anatomy of containers.

Questions

On the basis of your reading of this chapter, please answer the following questions:

1. What is docker-machine used for? Name three to four scenarios.
2. True or false? With Docker for Windows, one can develop and run Linux containers.
3. Why are good scripting skills (such as Bash or PowerShell) essential for a productive use of containers?
4. Name three to four Linux distributions on which Docker is certified to run.
5. Name all the Windows versions on which you can run Windows containers.

Further reading

Consider the following link for further reading:

- *Run Docker on Hyper-V with Docker Machine* at <http://bit.ly/2HGMPii>

3

Working with Containers

In the previous chapter, you learned how to optimally prepare your working environment for the productive and frictionless use of Docker. In this chapter, we are going to get our hands dirty and learn everything that is important to work with containers. Here are the topics we're going to cover in this chapter:

- Running the first container
- Starting, stopping, and removing containers
- Inspecting containers
- Exec into a running container
- Attaching to a running container
- Retrieving container logs
- Anatomy of containers

After finishing this chapter you will be able to do the following things:

- Run, stop, and delete a container based on an existing image, such as NGINX, busybox, or alpine
- List all containers on the system
- Inspect the metadata of a running or stopped container
- Retrieve the logs produced by an application running inside a container
- Run a process such as `/bin/sh` in an already-running container.
- Attach a Terminal to an already-running container
- Explain in your own words to an interested layman the underpinnings of a container

Technical requirements

For this chapter, you should have installed Docker for Mac or Docker for Windows. If you are on an older version of Windows or are using Windows 10 Home Edition, then you should have Docker Toolbox installed and ready to use. On macOS, use the Terminal application, and on Windows, a PowerShell console to try out the commands you will be learning.

Running the first container

Before we start, we want to make sure that Docker is installed correctly on your system and ready to accept your commands. Open a new Terminal window and type in the following command:

```
$ docker -v
```

If everything works correctly, you should see the version of Docker installed on your laptop output in the Terminal. At the time of writing, it looks like this:

```
Docker version 17.12.0-ce-rc2, build f9cde63
```

If this doesn't work, then something with your installation is not right. Please make sure that you have followed the instructions in the previous chapter on how to install Docker for Mac or Docker for Windows on your system.

So, you're ready to see some action. Please type the following command into your Terminal window and hit return:

```
$ docker container run alpine echo "Hello World"
```

When you run the preceding command the first time, you should see an output in your Terminal window similar to this:

```
Unable to find image 'alpine:latest' locally
latest: Pulling from library/alpine
2fdfelcd78c2: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:ccba511b...
Status: Downloaded newer image for alpine:latest
Hello World
```

Now that was easy! Let's try to run the very same command again:

```
$ docker container run alpine echo "Hello World"
```

The second, third, or nth time you run the preceding command, you should see only this output in your Terminal:

```
Hello World
```

Try to work out why the first time you run a command you see a different output than all the subsequent times. Don't worry if you can't figure it out, we will explain the reasons in detail in the following sections of the chapter.

Starting, stopping, and removing containers

You have successfully run a container in the previous section. Now we want to investigate in detail what exactly happened and why. Let's look again at the command we used:

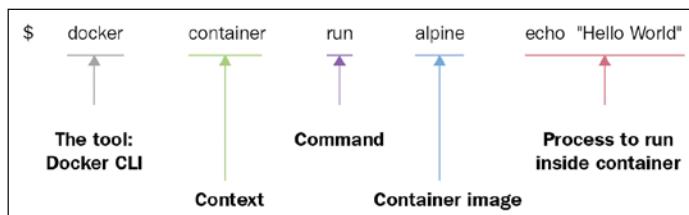
```
$ docker container run alpine echo "Hello World"
```

This command contains multiple parts. First and foremost, we have the word `docker`. This is the name of the Docker **command-line interface (CLI)**, which we are using to interact with the Docker engine that is responsible to run containers. Next, we have the word `container`, which indicates the context we are working with. As we want to run a container, our context is the word `container`. Next is the actual command we want to execute in the given context, which is `run`.

Let me recap—so far, we have `docker container run`, which means, *Hey Docker, we want to run a container....*

Now we also need to tell Docker which container to run. In this case, this is the so-called `alpine` container. Finally, we need to define what kind of process or task shall be executed inside the container when it is running. In our case, this is the last part of the command, `echo "Hello World"`.

The following figure can help you to get a better approach to the whole thing:



Anatomy of the docker container run expression

Now that we have understood the various parts of a command to run a container, let's try to run another container with a different process running inside it. Type the following command into your Terminal:

```
$ docker container run centos ping -c 5 127.0.0.1
```

You should see output in your Terminal window similar to the following:

```
Unable to find image 'centos:latest' locally
latest: Pulling from library/centos
85432449fd0f: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:3b1a65e9a05...
Status: Downloaded newer image for centos:latest
PING 127.0.0.1 (127.0.0.1) 56(84) bytes of data.
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=1 ttl=64 time=0.022 ms
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=2 ttl=64 time=0.019 ms
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=3 ttl=64 time=0.029 ms
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=4 ttl=64 time=0.030 ms
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=5 ttl=64 time=0.029 ms

--- 127.0.0.1 ping statistics ---
5 packets transmitted, 5 received, 0% packet loss, time 4103ms
rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 0.021/0.027/0.029/0.003 ms
```

What changed is that, this time, the container image we're using is `centos` and the process we're executing inside the `centos` container is `ping -c 5 127.0.0.1`, which pings the loopback address five times until it stops.

Let's analyze the output in detail:

- The first line is as follows:

```
Unable to find image 'centos:latest' locally
```

This tells us that Docker didn't find an image named `centos:latest` in the local cache of the system. So, Docker knows that it has to pull the image from some registry where container images are stored. By default, your Docker environment is configured such as that images are pulled from the Docker Hub at `docker.io`. This is expressed by the second line, as follows:

```
latest: Pulling from library/centos
```

- The next three lines of output are as follows:

```
85432449fd0f: Pull complete  
Digest: sha256:3b1a65e9a05...  
Status: Downloaded newer image for centos:latest
```

This tells us that Docker has successfully pulled the image centos:latest from the Docker Hub.

All the subsequent lines of the output are generated by the process we ran inside the container, which is the ping tool in this case. If you have been attentive so far, then you might have noticed the keyword latest occurring a few times. Each image has a version (also called a tag), and if we don't specify a version explicitly, then Docker automatically assumes it as latest.

If we run the preceding container again on our system, the first five lines of the output will be missing since, this time, Docker will find the container image cached locally and thus won't have to download it first. To verify this, try it out.

Running a random quotes container

For the subsequent sections of this chapter, we need a container that runs continuously in the background and produces some interesting output. That's why we have chosen an algorithm that produces random quotes. The API that produces those free random quotes can be found at https://talaikis.com/random_quotes_api/.

Now the goal is to have a process running inside a container that produces a new random quote every five seconds and outputs the quote to STDOUT. The following script will do exactly that:

```
while :  
do  
    wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api/quotes/random  
    printf '\n'  
    sleep 5  
done
```

Try it in a Terminal window. Stop the script by pressing *Ctrl+C*. The output should look similar to this:

```
{"quote": "Martha Stewart is extremely talented. Her designs are  
picture perfect. Our philosophy is life is messy, and rather than  
being afraid of those messes we design products that work the way we  
live.", "author": "Kathy Ireland", "cat": "design"}
```

```
{ "quote": "We can reach our potential, but to do so, we must  
reach within ourselves. We must summon the strength, the will,  
and the faith to move forward - to be bold - to invest in our  
future.", "author": "John Hoeven", "cat": "faith"}
```

Each response is a JSON-formatted string with the quote, its author, and its category.

Now, let's run this in an alpine container as a daemon in the background. For this, we need to compact the preceding script into a one-liner and execute it using the /bin/sh -c "... " syntax. Our Docker expression will look as follows :

```
$ docker container run -d --name quotes alpine \  
/bin/sh -c "while :; do wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api/quotes/  
random; printf '\n'; sleep 5; done"
```

In the preceding expression, we have used two new command-line parameters, -d and --name. The -d tells Docker to run the process running in the container as a Linux daemon. The --name parameter in turn can be used to give the container an explicit name. In the preceding sample, the name we chose is quotes.

If we don't specify an explicit container name when we run a container, then Docker will automatically assign the container a random but unique name. This name will be composed of the name of a famous scientist and an adjective. Such names could be boring_borg or angry_goldberg. Quite humorous our Docker engineers, isn't it?

One important takeaway is that the container name has to be unique on the system. Let's make sure that the quotes container is up and running:

```
$ docker container ls -l
```

This should give us something like this:

\$ docker container ls -l						
CONTAINER ID	IMAGE	COMMAND	CREATED	STATUS	PORTS	NAMES
6ce5e46da7ce	alpine	"/bin/sh -c 'while :; do wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api/quotes/random; printf '\n'; sleep 5; done"	41 seconds ago	Up 16 seconds		quotes

Listing the last run container

The important part of the preceding output is the STATUS column, which in this case is Up 16 seconds. That is, the container has been up and running for 16 seconds now.

Don't worry if the last Docker command is not yet familiar to you, we will come back to it in the next section.

Listing containers

As we continue to run containers over time, we get a lot of them in our system. To find out what is currently-running on our host, we can use the container `list` command as follows:

```
$ docker container ls
```

This will list all currently-running containers. Such a list might look similar to this:

```
$ docker container ls
CONTAINER ID        IMAGE               COMMAND             CREATED            STATUS              PORTS               NAMES
31d719b2f439        nginx:alpine       "nginx -g 'daemon of..."   35 seconds ago    Up 30 seconds      80/tcp              cranky_curiel
27b96de70b58        alpine:latest       "ping 127.0.0.1"       23 hours ago     Up 23 hours       c2
35b8dd512acb        alpine:latest       "/bin/sh"           23 hours ago     Up 23 hours       c1
$
```

List of all containers running on the system

By default, Docker outputs seven columns with the following meanings:

Column	Description
Container ID	The unique ID of the container. It is a SHA-256.
Image	The name of the container image from which this container is instantiated.
Command	The command that is used to run the main process in the container.
Created	The date and time when the container was created.
Status	The status of the container (created, restarting, running, removing, paused, exited, or dead).
Ports	The list of container ports that have been mapped to the host.
Names	The name assigned to this container (multiple names are possible).

If we want to list not only the currently running containers but all containers that are defined on our system, then we can use the command-line parameter `-a` or `--all` as follows:

```
$ docker container ls -a
```

This will list containers in any state, such as created, running, or exited.

Sometimes, we want to just list the IDs of all containers. For this, we have the parameter `-q`:

```
$ docker container ls -q
```

You might wonder where this is useful. The following command demonstrates where it can be very helpful:

```
$ docker container rm -f $(docker container ls -a -q)
```

Lean back and take a deep breath. Then, try to find out what the preceding command does. Don't read any further until you find the answer or give up.

Right: the preceding command deletes all containers that are currently defined on the system, including the stopped ones. The `rm` command stands for remove, and it will be explained further down.

In the previous section, we used the parameter `-l` in the list command. Try to use Docker help to find out what the `-l` parameter stands for. You can invoke help for the list command as follows:

```
$ docker container ls -h
```

Stopping and starting containers

Sometimes, we want to (temporarily) stop a running container. Let's try this out with the quotes container we used previously. Run the container again with this command:

```
$ docker container run -d --name quotes alpine \  
 /bin/sh -c "while :; do wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api/quotes/  
 random; printf '\n'; sleep 5; done"
```

Now, if we want to stop this container then we can do so by issuing this command:

```
$ docker container stop quotes
```

When you try to stop the quotes container, you will probably note that it takes a while for this command to be executed. To be precise, it takes about 10 seconds. *Why is this the case?*

Docker sends a Linux `SIGTERM` signal to the main process running inside the container. If the process doesn't react to this signal and terminate itself, Docker waits for 10 seconds and then sends `SIGKILL`, which will kill the process forcefully and terminate the container.

In the preceding command, we have used the name of the container to specify which container we want to stop. But we could also have used the container ID instead.

How do we get the ID of a container? There are several ways of doing so. The manual approach is to list all running containers and find the one that we're looking for in the list. From there, we copy its ID. A more automated way is to use some shell scripting and environment variables. If, for example, we want to get the ID of the quotes container, we can use this expression:

```
$ export CONTAINER_ID=$(docker container ls | grep quotes | awk  
'{print $1}')
```

Now, instead of using the container name, we can use the variable `$CONTAINER_ID` in our expression:

```
$ docker container stop $CONTAINER_ID
```

Once we have stopped the container, its status changes to `Exited`.

If a container is stopped, it can be started again using the `docker container start` command. Let's do this with our quotes container. It is good to have it running again, as we'll need it in the subsequent sections of this chapter:

```
$ docker container start quotes
```

Removing containers

When we run the `docker container ls -a` command, we can see quite a few containers that are in `Exited` status. If we don't need these containers anymore, then it is a good thing to remove them from memory, otherwise they unnecessarily occupy precious resources. The command to remove a container is:

```
$ docker container rm <container ID>
```

Another command to remove a container is:

```
$ docker container rm <container name>
```

Try to remove one of your exited containers using its ID.

Sometimes, removing a container will not work as it is still running. If we want to force a removal, no matter what the condition of the container currently is, we can use the command-line parameter `-f` or `--force`.

Inspecting containers

Containers are runtime instances of an image and have a lot of associated data that characterizes their behavior. To get more information about a specific container, we can use the `inspect` command. As usual, we have to provide either the container ID or name to identify the container of which we want to obtain the data. So, let's inspect our sample container:

```
$ docker container inspect quotes
```

The response is a big JSON object full of details. It looks similar to this:

```
[  
  {  
    "Id": "c5c1c68c87...",  
    "Created": "2017-12-30T11:55:51.223271182Z",  
    "Path": "/bin/sh",  
    "Args": [  
      "-c",  
      "while :; do wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api/  
      quotes/random; printf '\n'; sleep 5; done"  
    ],  
    "State": {  
      "Status": "running",  
      "Running": true,  
      ...  
    },  
    "Image": "sha256:e21c333399e0...",  
    ...  
    "Mounts": [],  
    "Config": {  
      "Hostname": "c5c1c68c87dd",  
      "Domainname": "",  
      ...  
    },  
    "NetworkSettings": {  
      "Bridge": "",  
      "SandboxID": "2fd6c43b6fe5...",  
      ...  
    }  
  }  
]
```

The output has been shortened for readability.

Please take a moment to analyze what you got. You should see information such as:

- The ID of the container
- The creation date and time of the container
- From which image the container is built and so on

Many sections of the output, such as `Mounts` or `NetworkSettings` don't make much sense right now, but we will certainly discuss those in the upcoming chapters of the book. The data you're seeing here is also named the **metadata** of a container. We will be using the `inspect` command quite often in the remainder of the book as a source of information.

Sometimes, we need just a tiny bit of the overall information, and to achieve this, we can either use the **grep tool** or a **filter**. The former method does not always result in the expected answer, so let's look into the latter approach:

```
$ docker container inspect -f "{{json .State}}" quotes | jq
```

The `-f` or `--filter` parameter is used to define the filter. The filter expression itself uses the **Go template** syntax. In this example, we only want to see the state part of the whole output in the JSON format.

To nicely format the output, we pipe the result into the `jq` tool:

```
{
    "Status": "running",
    "Running": true,
    "Paused": false,
    "Restarting": false,
    "OOMKilled": false,
    "Dead": false,
    "Pid": 6759,
    "ExitCode": 0,
    "Error": "",
    "StartedAt": "2017-12-31T10:31:51.893299997Z",
    "FinishedAt": "0001-01-01T00:00:00Z"
}
```

Exec into a running container

Sometimes, we want to run another process inside an already-running container. A typical reason could be to try to debug a misbehaving container. *How can we do this?* First, we need to know either the ID or the name of the container, and then we can define which process we want to run and how we want it to run. Once again, we use our currently-running quotes container and we run a shell interactively inside it with the following command:

```
$ docker container exec -i -t quotes /bin/sh
```

The flag `-i` signifies that we want to run the additional process interactively, and `-t` tells Docker that we want it to provide us with a TTY (a terminal emulator) for the command. Finally, the process we run is `/bin/sh`.

If we execute the preceding command in our Terminal, then we will be presented with a new prompt. We're now in a shell inside the quotes container. We can easily prove that by, for example, executing the `ps` command, which will list all running processes in the context:

```
# / ps
```

The result should look somewhat similar to this:

```
/ # ps
PID  USER      TIME  COMMAND
  1 root      0:00 /bin/sh -c while :; do wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api
  85 root      0:00 /bin/sh
 110 root      0:00 sleep 5
 111 root      0:00 ps
```

List of Processes running inside the quotes Container

We can clearly see that the process with `PID 1` is the command that we have defined to run inside the quotes container. The process with `PID 1` is also named the main process.

Leave the container by entering `exit` at the prompt. We cannot only execute additional processes interactive in a container. Please consider the following command:

```
$ docker container exec quotes ps
```

The output evidently looks very similar to the preceding output:

```
$ docker container exec quotes ps
PID   USER      TIME    COMMAND
 1  root      0:00 /bin/sh -c while :; do wget -qO- https://talaikis.com/api
 520 root      0:00 sleep 5
 521 root      0:00 ps
$
```

List of Processes running inside the quotes Container

We can even run processes as daemon using the flag `-d` and define environment variables using the `-e` flag variables as follows:

```
$ docker container exec -it \
  -e MY_VAR="Hello World" \
  quotes /bin/sh
# / echo $MY_VAR
Hello World
# / exit
```

Attaching to a running container

We can use the `attach` command to attach our Terminal's standard input, output, and error (or any combination of the three) to a running container using the ID or name of the container. Let's do this for our quotes container:

```
$ docker container attach quotes
```

In this case, we will see every five seconds or so a new quote appearing in the output.

To quit the container without stopping or killing it, we can press the key combination `Ctrl + P Ctrl+ Q`. This detaches us from the container while leaving it running in the background. On the other hand, if we want to detach and stop the container at the same time, we can just press `Ctrl + C`.

Let's run another container, this time an Nginx web server:

```
$ docker run -d --name nginx -p 8080:80 nginx:alpine
```

Here, we run the Alpine version of Nginx as a daemon in a container named `nginx`. The `-p 8080:80` command-line parameter opens port 8080 on the host for access to the Nginx web server running inside the container. Don't worry about the syntax here as we will explain this feature in more detail in the *Chapter 7, Single-Host Networking*.

Let's see whether we can access Nginx, using the `curl` tool and running this command:

```
$ curl -4 localhost:8080
```

If all works correctly, you should be greeted by the welcome page of Nginx:

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Welcome to nginx!</title>
<style>
    body {
        width: 35em;
        margin: 0 auto;
        font-family: Tahoma, Verdana, Arial, sans-serif;
    }
</style>
</head>
<body>
<h1>Welcome to nginx!</h1>
<p>If you see this page, the nginx web server is successfully
installed and
working. Further configuration is required.</p>

<p>For online documentation and support please refer to
<a href="http://nginx.org/">nginx.org</a>.<br/>
Commercial support is available at
<a href="http://nginx.com/">nginx.com</a>.</p>

<p><em>Thank you for using nginx.</em></p>
</body>
</html>
```

Now, let's attach our Terminal to the `nginx` container to observe what's happening:

```
$ docker container attach nginx
```

Once you are attached to the container, you first will not see anything. But now open another Terminal, and in this new Terminal window, repeat the `curl` command a few times using the following script:

```
$ for n in {1..10}; do curl -4 localhost:8080; done
```

You should see the logging output of Nginx, which looks similar to this:

```
172.17.0.1 - - [06/Jan/2018:12:20:00 +0000] "GET / HTTP/1.1" 200 612
"--" "curl/7.54.0" "-"
172.17.0.1 - - [06/Jan/2018:12:20:03 +0000] "GET / HTTP/1.1" 200 612
"--" "curl/7.54.0" "-"
172.17.0.1 - - [06/Jan/2018:12:20:05 +0000] "GET / HTTP/1.1" 200 612
"--" "curl/7.54.0" "-"
```

Quit the container by pressing *Ctrl + C*. This will detach your Terminal and, at the same time, stop the `nginx` container.

To clean up, remove the `nginx` container with the following command:

```
$ docker container rm nginx
```

Retrieving container logs

It is a best practice for any good application to generate some logging information that developers and operators alike can use to find out what the application is doing at a given time, and whether there are any problems to help pinpoint the root cause of the issue.

When running inside a container, the application should preferably output the log items to `STDOUT` and `STDERR` and not into a file. If the logging output is directed to `STDOUT` and `STDERR`, then Docker can collect this information and keep it ready for consumption by a user or any other external system.

To access the logs of a given container, we can use the `docker container logs` command. If, for example, we want to retrieve the logs of our `quotes` container, we can use the following expression:

```
$ docker container logs quotes
```

This will retrieve the whole log produced by the application from the very beginning of its existence.

 Stop, wait a second – this is not quite true, what I just said, that the full log, from the beginning of the containers existence is available. By default, Docker uses the so-called `json-file` logging driver. This driver stores the logging information in a file. And if there is a file rolling policy defined, then `docker container logs` only retrieves what is in the current active log file and not what is in previous, rolled files that still might or might not be available on the host though.

If we want to only get a few of the latest entries, we can use the `-t` or `--tail` parameter, as follows:

```
$ docker container logs --tail 5 quotes
```

This will retrieve only the last five items the process running inside the container produced.

Sometimes, we want to follow the log that is produced by a container. This is possible when using the parameter `-f` or `--follow`. The following expression will output the last five log items and then follow the log as it is produced by the containerized process:

```
$ docker container logs --tail 5 --follow quotes
```

Logging drivers

Docker includes multiple logging mechanisms to help us get information from running containers. These mechanisms are named **logging drivers**. Which logging driver is used can be configured at the Docker daemon level. The default logging driver is `json-file`. Some of the drivers that are currently supported natively are:

Driver	Description
<code>none</code>	No log output for the specific container is produced.
<code>json-file</code>	This is the default driver. The logging information is stored in files, formatted as JSON.
<code>journald</code>	If the journals daemon is running on the host machine, we can use this driver. It forwards logging to the <code>journald</code> daemon.
<code>syslog</code>	If the <code>syslog</code> daemon is running on the host machine, we can configure this driver, which will forward the log messages to the <code>syslog</code> daemon.
<code>gelf</code>	When using this driver, log messages are written to a Graylog Extended Log Format (GELF) endpoint. Popular examples of such endpoints are Graylog and Logstash.
<code>fluentd</code>	Assuming that the <code>fluentd</code> daemon is installed on the host system, this driver writes log messages to it.



If you change the logging driver, please be aware that the docker container logs command is only available for the json-file and journald drivers.



Using a container-specific logging driver

We have seen that the logging driver can be set globally in the Docker daemon configuration file. But we can also define the logging driver on a container by container basis. In the following example, we are running a busybox container and use the --log-driver parameter to configure the none logging driver:

```
$ docker container run --name test -it \
    --log-driver none \
    busybox sh -c 'for N in 1 2 3; do echo "Hello $N"; done'
```

We should see the following:

```
Hello 1
Hello 2
Hello 3
```

Now, let's try to get the logs of the preceding container:

```
$ docker container logs test
```

The output is as follows:

```
Error response from daemon: configured logging driver does not support
reading
```

This is to be expected, since the none driver does not produce any logging output. Let's clean up and remove the test container:

```
$ docker container rm test
```

Advanced topic – changing the default logging driver

Let's change the default logging driver of a Linux host. The easiest way to do this is on a real Linux host. For this purpose, we're going to use Vagrant with an Ubuntu image:

```
$ vagrant init bento/ubuntu-17.04
$ vagrant up
$ vagrant ssh
```

Once inside the Ubuntu VM, we want to edit the Docker daemon configuration file. Navigate to the folder /etc/docker and run vi as follows:

```
$ vi daemon.json
```

Enter the following content:

```
{  
  "Log-driver": "json-log",  
  "log-opt": {  
    "max-size": "10m",  
    "max-file": 3  
  }  
}
```

Save and exit Vi by first pressing *Esc* and then typing `:w:q` and finally hitting the *Enter* key.

The preceding definition tells the Docker daemon to use the `json-log` driver with a maximum log file size of 10 MB before it is rolled, and the maximum number of log files that can be present on the system is 3 before the oldest file gets purged.

Now we have to send a `SIGHUP` signal to the Docker daemon so that it picks up the changes in the configuration file:

```
$ sudo kill -SIGHUP $(pidof dockerd)
```



Note that the preceding command only reloads the config file and does not restart the daemon.



Anatomy of containers

Many individuals wrongly compare containers to VMs. However, this is a questionable comparison. Containers are not just lightweight VMs. OK then, *what is the correct description of a container?*

Containers are specially encapsulated and secured processes running on the host system.

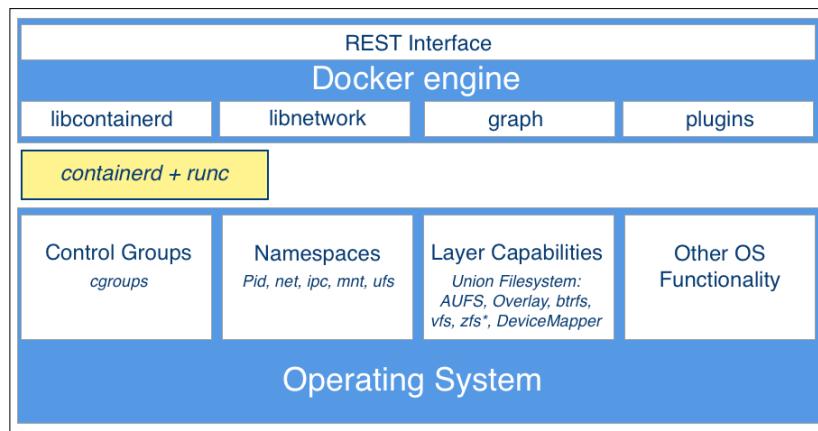
Containers leverage a lot of features and primitives available in the Linux OS. The most important ones are **namespaces** and **cgroups**. All processes running in containers share the same Linux kernel of the underlying host operating system. This is fundamentally different compared with VMs, as each VM contains its own full-blown operating system.

The startup times of a typical container can be measured in milliseconds, while a VM normally needs several seconds to minutes to startup. VMs are meant to be long-living. It is a primary goal of each operations engineer to maximize the uptime of their VMs. Contrary to that, containers are meant to be ephemeral. They come and go in a quick cadence.

Let's first get a high-level overview of the architecture that enables us to run containers.

Architecture

Here, we have an architectural diagram on how this all fits together:



High level architecture of Docker

On the lower part of the preceding figure, we have the Linux operating system with its cgroups, namespaces, and layer capabilities as well as other functionality that we do not need to explicitly mention here. Then, there is an intermediary layer composed of **containerd** and **runc**. On top of all that now sits the Docker engine. The Docker engine offers a RESTful interface to the outside world that can be accessed by any tool, such as the Docker CLI, Docker for Mac, and Docker for Windows or Kubernetes to just name a few.

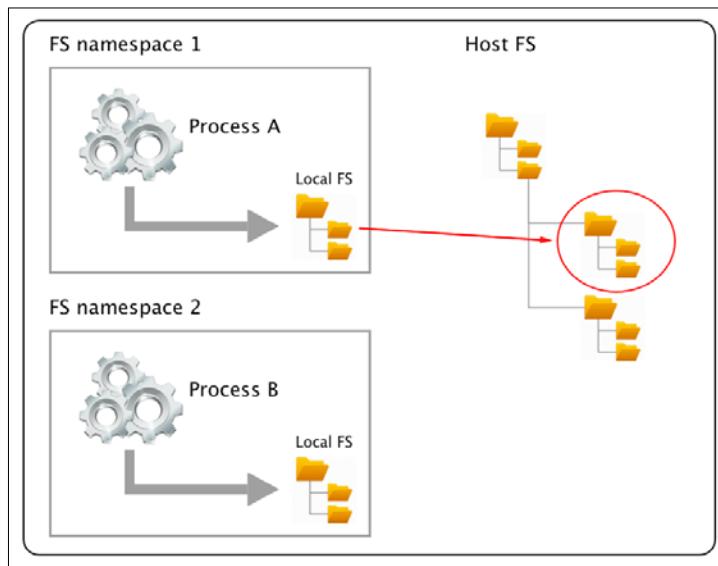
Let's now describe the main building blocks in a bit more detail.

Namespaces

Linux namespaces had been around for years before they were leveraged by Docker for their containers. A namespace is an abstraction of global resources such as filesystems, network access, process tree (also named PID namespace) or the system group IDs, and user IDs. A Linux system is initialized with a single instance of each namespace type. After initialization, additional namespaces can be created or joined.

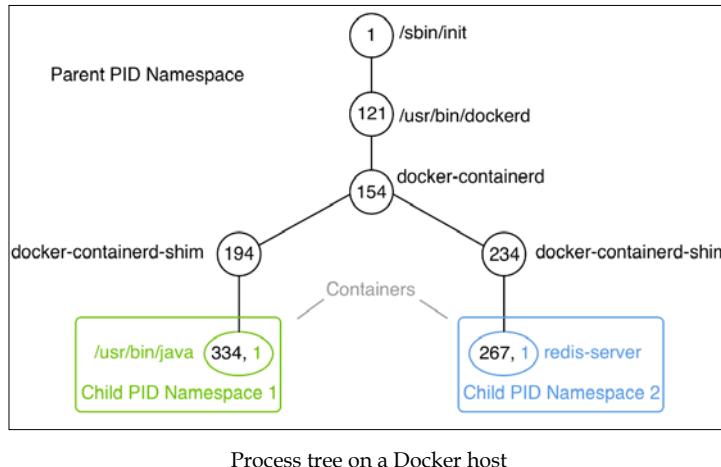
The Linux namespaces originated in 2002 in the 2.4.19 kernel. In kernel version 3.8, user namespaces were introduced and with it, namespaces were ready to be used by containers.

If we wrap a running process, say, in a filesystem namespace, then this process has the illusion that it owns its own complete filesystem. This of course is not true; it is only a virtual FS. From the perspective of the host, the contained process gets a shielded subsection of the overall FS. It is like a filesystem in a filesystem:



The same applies for all the other global resources for which namespaces exist. The user ID namespace is another example. Having a user namespace, we can now define a user `jdoe` many times on the system as long as it is living in its own namespace.

The PID namespace is what keeps processes in one container from seeing or interacting with processes in another container. A process might have the apparent PID 1 inside a container, but if we examine it from the host system, it would have an ordinary PID, say 334:



In a given namespace, we can run one to many processes. That is important when we talk about containers, and we have experienced that already when we executed another process in an already-running container.

Control groups (cgroups)

Linux cgroups are used to limit, manage, and isolate resource usage of collections of processes running on a system. Resources are CPU time, system memory, network bandwidth, or combinations of these resources, and so on.

Engineers at Google have originally implemented this feature starting in 2006. The cgroups functionality was merged into the Linux kernel mainline in kernel version 2.6.24, which was released in January 2008.

Using cgroups, administrators can limit the resources that containers can consume. With this, one can avoid, for example, the classical *noisy neighbor* problem, where a rogue process running in a container consumes all CPU time or reserves massive amounts of RAM and, as such, starves all the other processes running on the host, whether they're containerized or not.

Union filesystem (UnionFS)

The UnionFS forms the backbone of what is known as container images. We will discuss container images in detail in the next chapter. At this time, we want to just understand a bit better what a UnionFS is and how it works. UnionFS is mainly used on Linux and allows files and directories of distinct filesystems to be overlaid and with it form a single coherent file system. In this context, the individual filesystems are called branches. Contents of directories that have the same path within the merged branches will be seen together in a single merged directory, within the new, virtual filesystem. When merging branches, the priority between the branches is specified. In that way, when two branches contain the same file, the one with the higher priority is seen in the final FS.

Container plumbing

The basement on top of which the Docker engine is built; we can also call it the **container plumbing** and is formed by the two component—**runc** and **containerd**.

Originally, Docker was built in a monolithic way and contained all the functionality necessary to run containers. Over time, this became too rigid and Docker started to break out parts of the functionality into their own components. Two important components are runc and containerd.

Runc

Runc is a lightweight, portable container runtime. It provides full support for Linux namespaces as well as native support for all security features available on Linux, such as SELinux, AppArmor, seccomp, and cgroups.

Runc is a tool for spawning and running containers according to the **Open Container Initiative (OCI)** specification. It is a formally specified configuration format, governed by the **Open Container Project (OCP)** under the auspices of the Linux Foundation.

Containerd

Runc is a low-level implementation of a container runtime; containerd builds on top of it, and adds higher-level features, such as image transfer and storage, container execution, and supervision, as well as network and storage attachments. With this, it manages the complete life cycle of containers. Containerd is the reference implementation of the OCI specifications and is by far the most popular and widely-used container runtime.

Containerd has been donated to and accepted by the CNCF in 2017. There exist alternative implementations of the OCI specification. Some of them are rkt by CoreOS, CRI-O by RedHat, and LXD by Linux Containers. However, containerd at this time is by far the most popular container runtime and is the default runtime of Kubernetes 1.8 or later and the Docker platform.

Summary

In this chapter, you learned how to work with containers that are based on existing images. We showed how to run, stop, start, and remove a container. Then, we inspected the metadata of a container, extracted the logs of it, and learned how to run an arbitrary process in an already-running container. Last but not least, we dug a bit deeper and investigated how containers work and what features of the underlying Linux operating system they leverage.

In the next chapter, you're going to learn what container images are and how we can build and share our own custom images. We're also discussing the best practices commonly used when building custom images, such as minimizing their size and leveraging the image cache. Stay tuned!

Questions

To assess your learning progress please answer the following questions:

1. What are the states of a container?
2. Which command helps us to find out what is currently running on our host?
3. Which command is used to list the IDs of all containers?

Further reading

The following articles give you some more information related to the topics we discussed in this chapter:

- Docker container at <http://dockr.ly/2iLBV2I>
- Getting started with containers at <http://dockr.ly/2gmxKWB>
- Isolate containers with a user namespace at <http://dockr.ly/2gmyKdf>
- Limit container's resources at <http://dockr.ly/2wqN5Nn>

4

Creating and Managing Container Images

In the previous chapter, we learned what containers are and how to run, stop, remove, list, and inspect them. We extracted the logging information of some containers, ran other processes inside an already running container, and finally we dived deep into the anatomy of containers. Whenever we ran a container, we created it using a container image. In this chapter, we will be familiarizing ourselves with these container images. We will learn in detail what they are, how to create them, and how to distribute them.

This chapter will cover the following topics:

- What images are?
- Creating images
- Sharing or shipping images

After completing this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

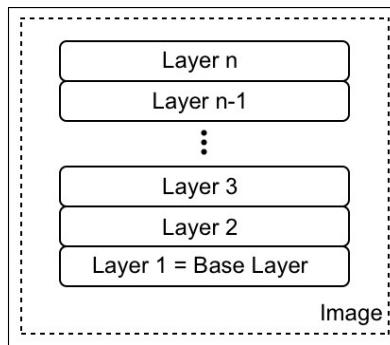
- Name three of the most important characteristics of a container image
- Create a custom image by interactively changing the container layer and committing it
- Author a simple Dockerfile using keywords such as `FROM`, `COPY`, `RUN`, `CMD`, and `ENTRYPOINT` to generate a custom image
- Export an existing image using `docker image save` and import it into another Docker host using `docker image load`
- Write a two-step Dockerfile that minimizes the size of the resulting image by only including the resulting artifacts (binaries) in the final image

What are images?

In Linux, everything is a file. The whole operating system is basically a filesystem with files and folders stored on the local disk. This is an important fact to remember when looking at what container images are. As we will see, an image is basically a big tarball containing a filesystem. More specifically, it contains a layered filesystem.

The layered filesystem

Container images are templates from which containers are created. These images are not just one monolithic block, but are composed of many layers. The first layer in the image is called the base layer:

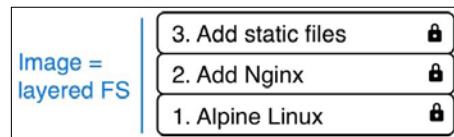


The image as a stack of layers

Each individual layer contains files and folders. Each layer only contains the changes to the filesystem with respect to the underlying layers. Docker uses a union filesystem – as discussed in *Chapter 3, Working with Containers* – to create a virtual filesystem out of the set of layers. A storage driver handles the details regarding the way these layers interact with each other. Different storage drivers are available that have advantages and disadvantages in different situations.

The layers of a container image are all immutable. Immutable means that once generated, the layer cannot ever be changed. The only possible operation affecting the layer is the physical deletion of it. This immutability of layers is important because it opens up a tremendous amount of opportunities, as we will see.

In the following image, we can see what a custom image for a web application using Nginx as a web server could look like:



A sample custom image based on Alpine and Nginx

Our base layer here consists of the Alpine Linux distribution. Then, on top of that, we have a layer where Nginx is added on top of Alpine. Finally, the third layer contains all the files that make up the web application, such as HTML, CSS, and JavaScript files.

As has been said previously, each image starts with a base image. Typically, this base image is one of the official images found on Docker Hub, such as a Linux distro, Alpine, Ubuntu, or CentOS. However, it is also possible to create an image from scratch.

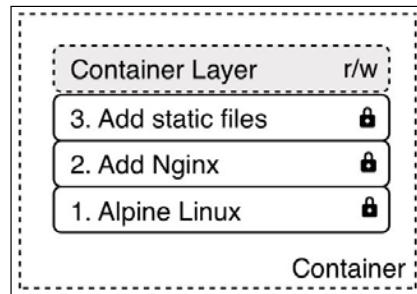
 Docker Hub is a public registry for container images. It is a central hub ideally suited for sharing public container images.

Each layer only contains the delta of changes in regard to the previous set of layers. The content of each layer is mapped to a special folder on the host system, which is usually a subfolder of `/var/lib/docker/`.

Since layers are immutable, they can be cached without ever becoming stale. This is a big advantage, as we will see.

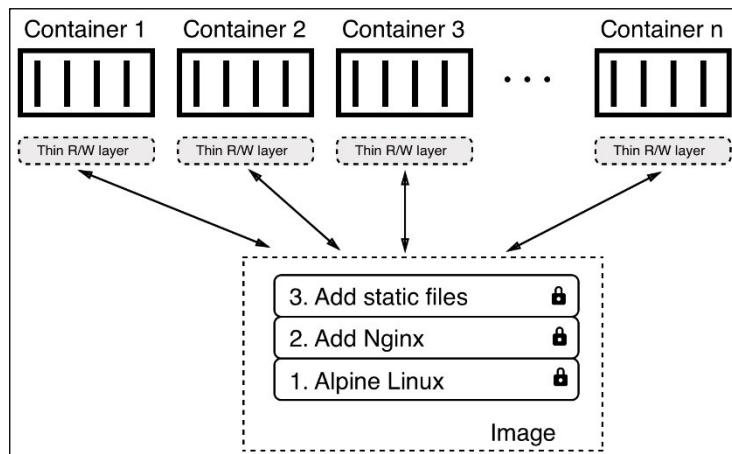
The writable container layer

As we have discussed, a container image is made of a stack of immutable or read-only layers. When the Docker engine creates a container from such an image, it adds a writable container layer on top of this stack of immutable layers. Our stack now looks as follows:



The writable container layer

The container layer is marked as read/write. Another advantage of the immutability of image layers is that they can be shared among many containers created from this image. All that is needed is a thin, writable container layer for each container:

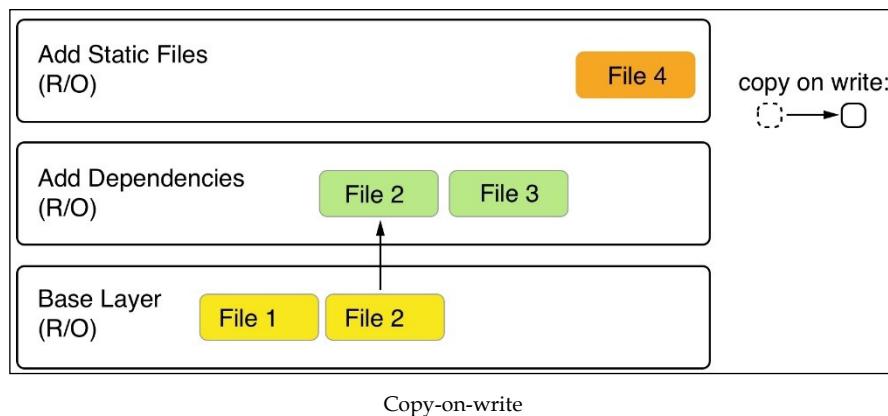


Multiple containers sharing the same image layers

This technique, of course, results in a tremendous reduction of resources that are consumed. Furthermore, this helps to decrease the loading time of a container since only a thin container layer has to be created once the image layers have been loaded into memory, which only happens for the first container.

Copy-on-write

Docker uses the copy-on-write technique when dealing with images. Copy-on-write is a strategy of sharing and copying files for maximum efficiency. If a layer uses a file or folder that is available in one of the low-lying layers, then it just uses it. If, on the other hand, a layer wants to modify, say, a file from a low-lying layer, then it first copies this file up to the target layer and then modifies it. In the following figure, we can see a glimpse of what this means:



The second layer wants to modify **File 2**, which is present in the base layer. Thus, it copied it up and then modified it. Now, let's say that we're sitting in the top layer of the preceding figure. This layer will use **File 1** from the base layer and **File 2** and **File 3** from the second layer.

Graph drivers

Graph drivers are what enable the union filesystem. Graph drivers are also called storage drivers and are used when dealing with the layered container images. A graph driver consolidates the multiple image layers into a root filesystem for the mount namespace of the container. Or, put differently, the driver controls how images and containers are stored and managed on the Docker host.

Docker supports several different graph drivers using a pluggable architecture. The preferred driver is overlay2 followed by overlay.

Creating images

There are three ways to create a new container image on your system. The first one is by interactively building a container that contains all the additions and changes one desires and then committing those changes into a new image. The second and most important way is to use a Dockerfile to describe what's in the new image and then build this image using that Dockerfile as a manifest. Finally, the third way of creating an image is by importing it into the system from a tarball.

Now, let's look at these three ways in detail.

Interactive image creation

The first way we can create a custom image is by interactively building a container. That is, we start with a base image that we want to use as a template and run a container of it interactively. Let's say that this is the `alpine` image. The command to run the container would then be as follows:

```
$ docker container run -it --name sample alpine /bin/sh
```

By default, the `alpine` container does not have the `ping` tool installed. Let's assume we want to create a new custom image that has `ping` installed. Inside the container, we can then run the following command:

```
/ # apk update && apk add iputils
```

This uses the Alpine package manager `apk` to install the `iputils` library, of which `ping` is a part. The output of the preceding command should look as follows:

```
fetch http://dl-cdn.alpinelinux.org/alpine/v3.7/main/x86_64/APKINDEX.tar.gz
fetch http://dl-cdn.alpinelinux.org/alpine/v3.7/community/x86_64/APKINDEX.tar.gz
v3.7.0-50-gc8da5122a4 [http://dl-cdn.alpinelinux.org/alpine/v3.7/main]
v3.7.0-49-g06d6ae04c3 [http://dl-cdn.alpinelinux.org/alpine/v3.7/
community]
OK: 9046 distinct packages available
(1/2) Installing libcap (2.25-r1)
(2/2) Installing iputils (20121221-r8)
Executing busybox-1.27.2-r6.trigger
OK: 4 MiB in 13 packages
```

Now, we can indeed use ping, as the following snippet shows:

```
/ # ping 127.0.0.1
PING 127.0.0.1 (127.0.0.1) 56(84) bytes of data.
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=1 ttl=64 time=0.028 ms
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=2 ttl=64 time=0.044 ms
64 bytes from 127.0.0.1: icmp_seq=3 ttl=64 time=0.049 ms
^C
--- 127.0.0.1 ping statistics ---
3 packets transmitted, 3 received, 0% packet loss, time 2108ms
rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 0.028/0.040/0.049/0.010 ms
```

Once we have finished our customization, we can quit the container by typing exit at the prompt. If we now list all containers with docker container ls -a, we can see that our sample container has a status of Exited, but still exists on the system:

```
$ docker container ls -a | grep sample
eff7c92a1b98    alpine      "/bin/sh"      2 minutes ago      Exited (0)
...
```

If we want to see what has changed in our container in relation to the base image, we can use the docker container diff command as follows:

```
$ docker container diff sample
```

The output should present a list of all modifications done on the filesystem of the container:

```
C /bin
C /bin/ping
C /bin/ping6
A /bin/traceroute6
C /etc/apk
C /etc/apk/world
C /lib/apk/db
C /lib/apk/dbinstalled
C /lib/apk/db/lock
C /lib/apk/db/scripts.tar
C /lib/apk/db/triggers
C /root
A /root/.ash_history
C /usr/lib
A /usr/lib/libcap.so.2
A /usr/lib/libcap.so.2.25
C /usr/sbin
```

```
C /usr/sbin/arping
A /usr/sbin/capsht
A /usr/sbin/clockdiff
A /usr/sbin/getcap
A /usr/sbin/getpcaps
A /usr/sbin/ipg
A /usr/sbin/rarpd
A /usr/sbin/rdisc
A /usr/sbin/setcap
A /usr/sbin/tftpd
A /usr/sbin/tracepath
A /usr/sbin/tracepath6
C /var/cache/apk
A /var/cache/apk/APKINDEX.5022a8a2.tar.gz
A /var/cache/apk/APKINDEX.70c88391.tar.gz
C /var/cache/misc
```

In the preceding list, A stands for *added*, and C for *changed*. If we had any deleted files, then those would be prefixed with D.

We can now use the docker container commit command to persist our modifications and create a new image from them:

```
$ docker container commit sample my-alpine
sha256:44bca4141130ee8702e8e8efdb1beb3cf4fe5aadb62a0c69a6995af49c
2e7419
```

With the preceding command, we have specified that the new image shall be called my-alpine. The output generated by the preceding command corresponds to the ID of the newly generated image. We can verify this by listing all images on our system, as follows:

```
$ docker image ls
```

We can see this image ID (shortened) as follows:

REPOSITORY TAG	IMAGE ID	CREATED	SIZE
my-alpine latest	44bca4141130	About a minute ago	5.64MB
...			

We can see that the image named my-alpine, has the expected ID of 44bca4141130 and automatically got a tag latest assigned. This happens since we did not explicitly define a tag ourselves. In this case, Docker always defaults to the tag latest.

If we want to see how our custom image has been built, we can use the history command as follows:

```
$ docker image history my-alpine
```

This will print the list of layers our image consists of:

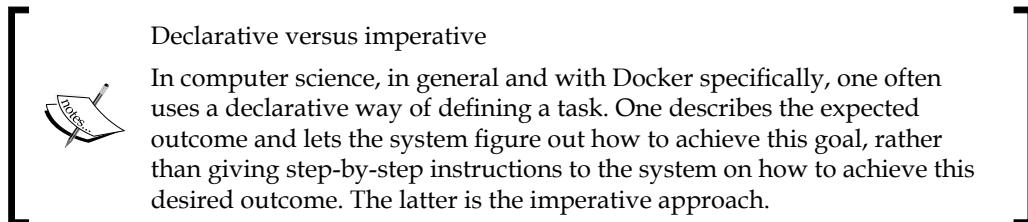
IMAGE	CREATED	CREATED BY	SIZE
COMMENT			
44bca4141130	3 minutes ago	/bin/sh	1.5MB
e21c3333399e0	6 weeks ago	/bin/sh -c #...	0B
<missing>	6 weeks ago	/bin/sh -c #...	4.14MB

The first layer in the preceding list is the one that we just created by adding the `iputils` package.

Using Dockerfiles

Manually creating custom images as shown in the previous section of this chapter is very helpful when doing exploration, creating prototypes, or making feasibility studies. But it has a serious drawback: it is a manual process and thus is not repeatable or scalable. It is also as error-prone as any task executed manually by humans. There must be a better way.

This is where the so-called Dockerfile comes into play. The Dockerfile is a text file that is usually literally called Dockerfile. It contains instructions on how to build a custom container image. It is a declarative way of building images.

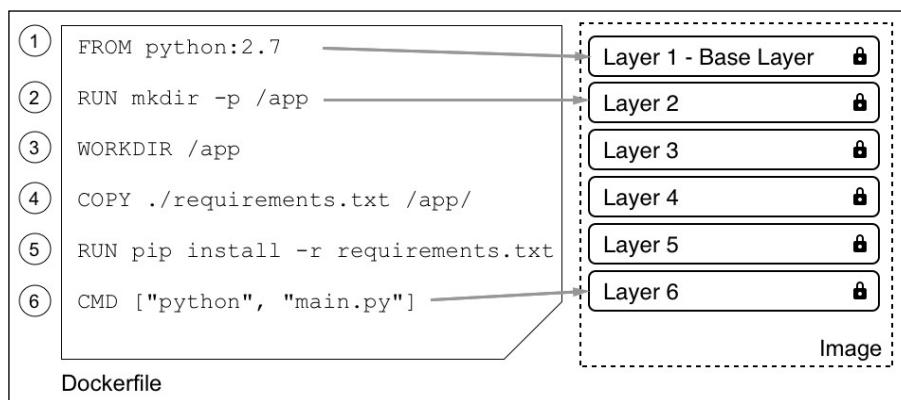


Let's look at a sample Dockerfile:

```
FROM python:2.7
RUN mkdir -p /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY ./requirements.txt /app/
RUN pip install -r requirements.txt
CMD ["python", "main.py"]
```

This is a Dockerfile as it is used to containerize a Python 2.7 application. As we can see, the file has six lines, each starting with a keyword such as `FROM`, `RUN`, or `COPY`. It is a convention to write the keywords in all caps, but that is not a must.

Each line of the Dockerfile results in a layer in the resulting image. In the following image, the image is drawn upside down compared to the previous illustrations in this chapter, showing an image as a stack of layers. Here, the base layer is shown on top. Don't let yourself be confused by this. In reality, the base layer is always the lowest layer in the stack:



The relation of Dockerfile and layers in an image

Now let's look at the individual keywords in more detail.

The `FROM` keyword

Most Dockerfiles start with the `FROM` keyword. With it, we define which base image we want to start building our custom image from. If we want to build starting with CentOS 7, for example, we would have the following line in the Dockerfile:

```
FROM centos:7
```

On Docker Hub, there are curated or official images for all major Linux distros, as well as for all important development frameworks or languages, such as Python, Node JS, Ruby, Go, and many more. Depending on our need, we should select the most appropriate base image.

For example, if I want to containerize a Python 2.7 application, I might want to select the relevant official `python:2.7` image.

If we really want to start from scratch, we can also use the following statement:

```
FROM scratch
```

This is useful in the context of building super minimal images that only, for example, contain a single binary, the actual statically linked executable, such as Hello-World. The scratch image is literally an empty base image.

`FROM scratch` corresponds to a no-op (no operation) in the Dockerfile, and as such does not generate a layer in the resulting container image.

The RUN keyword

The next important keyword is `RUN`. The argument for `RUN` is any valid Linux command, such as the following:

```
RUN yum install -y wget
```

The preceding command is using the CentOS package manager `yum` to install the `wget` package into the running container. This assumes that our base image is CentOS or RHEL. If we had Ubuntu as our base image, then the command would look similar to the following:

```
RUN apt-get update && apt-get install -y wget
```

It would look like this because Ubuntu uses `apt-get` as a package manager. Similarly, we could define a line with `RUN` like this:

```
RUN mkdir -p /app && cd /app
```

We could also do this:

```
RUN tar -xJC /usr/src/python --strip-components=1 -f python.tar.xz
```

Here, the former creates a `/app` folder in the container and navigates to it, and the latter untars a file to a given location. It is completely fine, and even recommended, for you to format a Linux command using more than one physical line, such as this:

```
RUN apt-get update \
&& apt-get install -y --no-install-recommends \
ca-certificates \
libexpat1 \
libffi6 \
libgdbm3 \
libreadline7 \
libsqLite3-0 \
libssl1.1 \
&& rm -rf /var/lib/apt/lists/*
```

If we use more than one line, we need to put a backslash (\) at the end of the lines to indicate to the shell that the command continues on the next line.

Try to find out what the preceding command does.

The COPY and ADD keywords

The COPY and ADD keywords are very important since, in the end, we want to add some content to an existing base image to make it a custom image. Most of the time, these are a few source files of, say, a web application or a few binaries of a compiled application.

These two keywords are used to copy files and folders from the host into the image that we're building. The two keywords are very similar, with the exception that the ADD keyword also lets us copy and unpack TAR files, as well as provide a URL as a source for the files and folders to copy.

Let's look at a few examples of how these two keywords can be used:

```
COPY . /app
COPY ./web /app/web
COPY sample.txt /data/my-sample.txt
ADD sample.tar /app/bin/
ADD http://example.com/sample.txt /data/
```

In the preceding lines of code:

- The first line copies all files and folders from the current directory recursively to the /app folder inside the container image
- The second line copies everything in the web subfolder to the target folder, /app/web
- The third line copies a single file, sample.txt, into the target folder, /data, and at the same time, renames it to my-sample.txt
- The fourth statement unpacks the sample.tar file into the target folder, /app/bin
- Finally, the last statement copies the remote file, sample.txt, into the target file, /data

Wildcards are allowed in the source path. For example, the following statement copies all files starting with sample to the mydir folder inside the image:

```
COPY ./sample* /mydir/
```

From a security perspective, it is important to know that by default, all files and folders inside the image will have a **user ID (UID)** and a **group ID (GID)** of 0. The good thing is that for both ADD and COPY, we can change the ownership that the files will have inside the image using the optional --chown flag, as follows:

```
ADD --chown=11:22 ./data/files* /app/data/
```

The preceding statement will copy all files starting with the name web and put them into the /app/data folder in the image, and at the same time assign user 11 and group 22 to these files.

Instead of numbers, one could also use names for the user and group, but then these entities would have to be already defined in the root filesystem of the image at /etc/passwd and /etc/group respectively, otherwise the build of the image would fail.

The WORKDIR keyword

The WORKDIR keyword defines the working directory or context that is used when a container is run from our custom image. So, if I want to set the context to the /app/bin folder inside the image, my expression in the Dockerfile would have to look as follows:

```
WORKDIR /app/bin
```

All activity that happens inside the image after the preceding line will use this directory as the working directory. It is very important to note that the following two snippets from a Dockerfile are not the same:

```
RUN cd /app/bin  
RUN touch sample.txt
```

Compare the preceding code with the following code:

```
WORKDIR /app/bin  
RUN touch sample.txt
```

The former will create the file in the root of the image filesystem, while the latter will create the file at the expected location in the /app/bin folder. Only the WORKDIR keyword sets the context across the layers of the image. The cd command alone is not persisted across layers.

The CMD and ENTRYPOINT keywords

The `CMD` and `ENTRYPOINT` keywords are special. While all other keywords defined for a Dockerfile are executed at the time the image is built by the Docker builder, these two are actually definitions of what will happen when a container is started from the image we define. When the container runtime starts a container, it needs to know what the process or application will be that has to run inside this container. That is exactly what `CMD` and `ENTRYPOINT` are used for—to tell Docker what the start process is and how to start that process.

Now, the differences between `CMD` and `ENTRYPOINT` are subtle, and honestly most users don't fully understand them or use them in the intended way. Luckily, in most cases, this is not a problem and the container will run anyway; it's just the handling of it that is not as straightforward as it could be.

To better understand how to use the two keywords, let's analyze what a typical Linux command or expression looks like—for example, let's take the `ping` utility as an example, as follows:

```
$ ping 8.8.8.8 -c 3
```

In the preceding expression, `ping` is the command and `8.8.8.8 -c 3` are the parameters to this command. Let's look at another expression:

```
$ wget -O - http://example.com/downloads/script.sh
```

Again, in the preceding expression, `wget` is the command and `-O - http://example.com/downloads/script.sh` are the parameters.

Now that we have dealt with this, we can get back to `CMD` and `ENTRYPOINT`. `ENTRYPOINT` is used to define the command of the expression while `CMD` is used to define the parameters for the command. Thus, a Dockerfile using `alpine` as the base image and defining `ping` as the process to run in the container could look as follows:

```
FROM alpine:latest
ENTRYPOINT ["ping"]
CMD ["8.8.8.8", "-c", "3"]
```

For both `ENTRYPOINT` and `CMD`, the values are formatted as a JSON array of strings, where the individual items correspond to the tokens of the expression that are separated by whitespace. This is the preferred way of defining `CMD` and `ENTRYPOINT`. It is also called the `exec` form.

Alternatively, one can also use what's called the `shell` form, for example:

```
CMD command param1 param2
```

We can now build an image from the preceding Dockerfile, as follows:

```
$ docker image build -t pinger .
```

Then, we can run a container from the `pinger` image we just created:

```
$ docker container run --rm -it pinger
PING 8.8.8.8 (8.8.8.8): 56 data bytes
64 bytes from 8.8.8.8: seq=0 ttl=37 time=19.298 ms
64 bytes from 8.8.8.8: seq=1 ttl=37 time=27.890 ms
64 bytes from 8.8.8.8: seq=2 ttl=37 time=30.702 ms
```

The beauty of this is that I can now override the `CMD` part that I have defined in the Dockerfile (remember, it was `["8.8.8.8", "-c", "3"]`) when I create a new container by adding the new values at the end of the `docker container run` expression:

```
$ docker container run --rm -it pinger -w 5 127.0.0.1
```

This will now cause the container to ping the loopback for 5 seconds.

If we want to override what's defined in the `ENTRYPOINT` in the Dockerfile, we need to use the `--entrypoint` parameter in the `docker container run` expression. Let's say we want to execute a shell in the container instead of the `ping` command. We could do so by using the following command:

```
$ docker container run --rm -it --entrypoint /bin/sh pinger
```

We will then find ourselves inside the container. Type `exit` to leave the container.

As I already mentioned, we do not necessarily have to follow best practices and define the command through `ENTRYPOINT` and the parameters through `CMD`, but we can instead enter the whole expression as a value of `CMD` and it will work:

```
FROM alpine:latest
CMD wget -O - http://www.google.com
```

Here, I have even used the `shell` form to define the `CMD`. But what does really happen in this situation where `ENTRYPOINT` is undefined? If you leave `ENTRYPOINT` undefined, then it will have the default value of `/bin/sh -c`, and whatever is the value of `CMD` will be passed as a string to the shell command. The preceding definition would thereby result in entering the following process to run inside the container:

```
/bin/sh -c "wget -O - http://www.google.com"
```

Consequently, `/bin/sh` is the main process running inside the container, and it will start a new child process to run the `wget` utility.

A complex Dockerfile

We have discussed the most important keywords commonly used in Dockerfiles. Let's look at a realistic and somewhat complex example of a Dockerfile. The interested reader might note that it looks very similar to the first Dockerfile that we presented in this chapter. Here is the content:

```
FROM node:9.4
RUN mkdir -p /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY package.json /app/
RUN npm install
COPY . /app
ENTRYPOINT ["npm"]
CMD ["start"]
```

OK, so what is happening here? Evidently, this is a Dockerfile that is used to build an image for a Node.js application; we can deduce this from the fact that the base image `node:9.4` is used. Then the second line is an instruction to create a `/app` folder in the filesystem of the image. The third line defines the working directory or context in the image to be this new `/app` folder. Then, on line four, we copy a `package.json` file into the `/app` folder inside the image. After this, on line five, we execute the `npm install` command inside the container; remember, our context is the `/app` folder and thus, `npm` will find the `package.json` file there that we copied on line four.

After all Node.js dependencies are installed, we copy the rest of the application files from the current folder of the host into the `/app` folder of the image.

Finally, on the last two lines, we define what the startup command shall be when a container is run from this image. In our case, it is `npm start`, which will start the Node application.

Building an image

Follow the below steps to build an image:

1. In your home directory, create a `FundamentalsOfDocker` folder and navigate to it:

```
$ mkdir ~/FundamentalsOfDocker  
$ cd ~/FundamentalsOfDocker
```

2. In the preceding folder, create a `sample1` subfolder and navigate to it:

```
$ mkdir sample1 && cd sample1
```

3. Use your favorite editor to create a file called `Dockerfile` inside this sample folder with the following content:

```
FROM centos:7  
RUN yum install -y wget
```

4. Save the file and exit your editor. Back in the Terminal, we can now build a new container image using the preceding Dockerfile as a manifest or construction plan:

```
$ docker image build -t my-centos .
```

Please note that there is a period at the end of the preceding command. This command means that the Docker builder is creating a new image called `my-centos` using the Dockerfile that is present in the current directory. Here, the period at the end of the command stands for *current directory*. We could also write the preceding command as follows, with the same result:

```
$ docker image build -t my-centos -f Dockerfile .
```

But we can omit the `-f` parameter, since the builder assumes that the Dockerfile is literally called `Dockerfile`. We only ever need the `-f` parameter if our Dockerfile has a different name or is not located in the current directory.

The preceding command gives us this (shortened) output:

```
Sending build context to Docker daemon 2.048kB  
Step 1/2 : FROM centos:7  
7: Pulling from library/centos  
af4b0a2388c6: Pull complete  
Digest: sha256:2671f7a3eea36ce43609e9fe7435ade83094291055f1c96d9d1d1d  
7c0b986a5d  
Status: Downloaded newer image for centos:7  
---> ff426288ea90
```

```
Step 2/2 : RUN yum install -y wget
--> Running in bb726903820c
Loaded plugins: fastestmirror, ovl
Determining fastest mirrors
* base: mirror.dal10.us.leaseweb.net
* extras: repos-tx.psychz.net
* updates: pubmirrors.dal.corespace.com
Resolving Dependencies
--> Running transaction check
-->> Package wget.x86_64 0:1.14-15.el7_4.1 will be installed
...
Installed:
wget.x86_64 0:1.14-15.el7_4.1
Complete!
Removing intermediate container bb726903820c
--> bc070cc81b87
Successfully built bc070cc81b87
Successfully tagged my-centos:latest
```

Let's analyze this output:

1. First, we have the following line:

```
Sending build context to Docker daemon 2.048kB
```

The first thing the builder does is package the files in the current build context, excluding the files and folder mentioned in the `.dockerignore` file, if present, and sends the resulting `.tar` file to the Docker daemon.

2. Next, we have the following lines:

```
Step 1/2 : FROM centos:7
7: Pulling from library/centos
af4b0a2388c6: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:2671f7a...
Status: Downloaded newer image for centos:7
--> ff426288ea90
```

The first line tells us which step of the Dockerfile the builder is currently executing. Here, we only have two statements in the Dockerfile, and we are on step 1 of 2. We can also see what the content of that section is. Here is the declaration of the base image, on top of which we want to build our custom image. What the builder then does is pull this image from Docker Hub if it is not already available in the local cache. The last line of the preceding snippet indicates which ID the just-built layer gets assigned by the builder.

3. Here's the next step. I have shortened it even more than the preceding one to concentrate on the essential part:

```
Step 2/2 : RUN yum install -y wget
---> Running in bb726903820c
...
...
Removing intermediate container bb726903820c
---> bc070cc81b87
```

Here, again, the first line indicates to us that we are in step 2 of 2. It also shows us the respective entry from the Dockerfile. On line two, we can see `Running in bb726903820c`, which tells us that the builder has created a container with ID `bb726903820c` inside, which it executes the `RUN` command. We have omitted the output of the `yum install -y wget` command in the snippet since it is not important in this section. When the command is finished, the builder stops the container, commits it to a new layer, and then removes the container. The new layer has ID `bc070cc81b87`, in this particular case.

4. At the very end of the output, we encounter the following two lines:

```
Successfully built bc070cc81b87
Successfully tagged my-centos:latest
```

This tells us that the resulting custom image has been given the ID `bc070cc81b87`, and has been tagged with the name `my-centos:latest`.

Creating and Managing Container Images

So, how does the builder work, exactly? It starts with the base image. From this base image, once downloaded into the local cache, it creates a container and runs the first statement of the Dockerfile inside this container. Then, it stops the container and persists the changes made in the container into a new image layer. The builder then creates a new container from the base image and the new layer, and runs the second statement inside this new container. Once again, the result is committed to a new layer. This process is repeated until the very last statement in the Dockerfile is encountered. After having committed the last layer of the new image, the builder creates an ID for this image and tags the image with the name we provided in the build command:

Step	Builder Container	Command	Resulting Image
①	Pull base Image		Layer 1 - Base Layer
②	Container Layer r/w Layer 1 - Base Layer	RUN mkdir -p /app	Layer 2 Layer 1 - Base Layer
③	Container Layer r/w Layer 2 Layer 1 - Base Layer	WORKDIR /app	Layer 3 Layer 2 Layer 1 - Base Layer
	⋮	⋮	⋮
⑦	Container Layer r/w Layer 6 Layer 5 Layer 4 Layer 3 Layer 2 Layer 1 - Base Layer	CMD ["python", "main.py"]	Layer 7 Layer 6 Layer 5 Layer 4 Layer 3 Layer 2 Layer 1 - Base Layer Final Image

The image build process visualized

Multistep builds

To demonstrate why a Dockerfile with multiple build steps is useful, let's make an example Dockerfile. Let's take a Hello World application written in C. Here is the code found inside the `hello.c` file:

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main (void)
{
    printf ("Hello, world!\n");
    return 0;
}
```

Now, we want to containerize this application and write this Dockerfile:

```
FROM alpine:3.7
RUN apk update &&
apk add --update alpine-sdk
RUN mkdir /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY . /app
RUN mkdir bin
RUN gcc -Wall hello.c -o bin/hello
CMD /app/bin/hello
```

Now, let's build this image:

```
$ docker image build -t hello-world .
```

This gives us a fairly long output, since the builder has to install the Alpine SDK, which, among other tools, contains the C++ compiler we need to build the application.

Once the build is done we can list the image and see its size shown as follows:

```
$ docker image ls | grep hello-world
hello-world      latest      e9b...      2 minutes ago      176MB
```

With a size of 176 MB, the resulting image is way too big. In the end, it is just a Hello World application. The reason for it being so big is that the image not only contains the Hello World binary, but also all the tools to compile and link the application from the source code. But this is really not desirable when running the application, say, in production. Ideally, we only want to have the resulting binary in the image and not a whole SDK.

It is precisely for this reason that we should define Dockerfiles as multistage. We have some stages that are used to build the final artifacts and then a final stage where we use the minimal necessary base image and copy the artifacts into it. This results in very small images. Have a look at this revised Dockerfile:

```
FROM alpine:3.7 AS build
RUN apk update && \
    apk add --update alpine-sdk
RUN mkdir /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY . /app
RUN mkdir bin
RUN gcc hello.c -o bin/hello
FROM alpine:3.7
COPY --from=build /app/bin/hello /app/hello
CMD /app/hello
```

Here, we have a first stage with an alias `build` that is used to compile the application, and then the second stage uses the same base image `alpine:3.7`, but does not install the SDK, and only copies the binary from the build stage, using the `--from` parameter, into this final image.

Let's build the image again as follows:

```
$ docker image build -t hello-world-small .
```

When we compare the sizes of the images, we get the following output:

```
$ docker image ls | grep hello-world
hello-world-small    latest      f98...      20 seconds ago      4.16MB
hello-world          latest      469...      10 minutes ago     176MB
```

We have been able to reduce the size from 176 MB down to 4 MB. This is reduction in size by a factor of 40. A smaller image size has many advantages, such as a smaller attack surface area for hackers, reduced memory and disk consumption, faster startup times of the corresponding containers, and a reduction of the bandwidth needed to download the image from a registry, such as Docker Hub.

Dockerfile best practices

There are a few recommended best practices to consider when authoring a Dockerfile, which are as follows:

- **Remember that containers are meant to be ephemeral.** By ephemeral, we mean that a container can be stopped and destroyed and a new one built and put in place with absolute minimum setup and configuration needed. That means that we should try hard to keep the time that is needed to initialize the application running inside the container to a minimum, as well as the time needed to terminate or clean up the application.
- **Order the individual commands in the Dockerfile so that we leverage caching as much as possible.** Building a layer of an image can take a considerable amount of time, sometimes a number of minutes. While developing an application, we will have to build the container image for our application multiple times. We want to keep the build times to a minimum.

When we're rebuilding a previously built image, the only layers that are rebuilt are the ones that have changed, but if one layer needs to be rebuilt, all subsequent layers also need to be rebuilt. This is very important to remember. Consider the following example:

```
FROM node:9.4
RUN mkdir -p /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY . /app
RUN npm install
CMD ["npm", "start"]
```

In this example, the `npm install` command on line five of the Dockerfile usually takes the longest. A classical Node.js application has many external dependencies, and those are all downloaded and installed in this step. This can take minutes until it is done. Therefore, we want to avoid running `npm install` each time we rebuild the image, but a developer changes their source code all the time during development of the application. That means that line four, the result of the `COPY` command, changes all the time and this layer has to be rebuilt each time. But as we discussed previously, that also means that all subsequent layers have to be rebuilt, which in this case includes the `npm install` command. To avoid this, we can slightly modify the Dockerfile and have the following:

```
FROM node:9.4
RUN mkdir -p /app
WORKDIR /app
```

```
COPY package.json /app/  
RUN npm install  
COPY . /app  
CMD ["npm", "start"]
```

What we have done here is, on line four, we've only copied the single file that the `npm install` command needs as a source, which is the `package.json` file. This file rarely changes in a typical development process. As a consequence, the `npm install` command also has to be executed only when the `package.json` file changes. All the remaining, frequently changed content is added to the image after the `npm install` command.

- **Keep the number of layers that make up your image relatively small.** The more layers an image has, the more the graph driver needs to work to consolidate the layers into a single root filesystem for the corresponding container. Of course, this takes time, and thus the fewer layers an image has, the faster the startup time for the container can be.

But *how can we keep our number of layers low?* Remember that in a Dockerfile, each line that starts with a keyword, such as `FROM`, `COPY`, or `RUN`, creates a new layer. The easiest way to reduce the number of layers is to combine multiple individual `RUN` commands into a single one—for example, say that we had the following in a Dockerfile:

```
RUN apt-get update  
RUN apt-get install -y ca-certificates  
RUN rm -rf /var/lib/apt/lists/*
```

We could combine these into a single concatenated expression, as follows:

```
RUN apt-get update \  
    && apt-get install -y ca-certificates \  
    && rm -rf /var/lib/apt/lists/*
```

The former will generate three layers in the resulting image, while the latter only creates a single layer.

The next three best practices all result in smaller images. Why is this important? Smaller images reduce the time and bandwidth needed to download the image from a registry. They also reduce the amount of disk space needed to store a copy locally on the Docker host and the memory needed to load the image. Finally, smaller images also means a smaller attack surface for hackers. Here are the best practices for reducing image size:

- Use a `.dockerignore` file. We want to avoid copying unnecessary files and folders into an image to keep it as lean as possible. A `.dockerignore` file works in exactly the same way as a `.gitignore` file, for those who are familiar with Git. In a `.dockerignore` file, we can configure patterns to exclude certain files or folders from being included in the context when building the image.
- Avoid installing unnecessary packages into the filesystem of the image. Once again, this is to keep the image as lean as possible.
- Use multistage builds so that the resulting image is as small as possible and only contains the absolute minimum needed to run your application or application service.

Saving and loading images

The third way to create a new container image is by importing or loading it from a file. A container image is nothing more than a tarball. To demonstrate this, we can use the `docker image save` command to export an existing image to a tarball:

```
$ docker image save -o ./backup/my-alpine.tar my-alpine
```

The preceding command takes our `my-alpine` image that we previously built and exports it into a `./backup/my-alpine.tar` file.

If, on the other hand, we have an existing tarball and want to import it as an image into our system, we can use the `docker image load` command as follows:

```
$ docker image load -i ./backup/my-alpine.tar
```

Sharing or shipping images

To be able to ship our custom image to other environments, we need to first give it a globally unique name. This action is often called tagging an image. We then need to publish the image to a central location from which other interested or entitled parties can pull it. These central locations are called **image registries**.

Tagging an image

Each image has a so-called **tag**. A tag is often used to version images, but it has a broader reach than just being a version number. If we do not explicitly specify a tag when working with images, then Docker automatically assumes we're referring to the *latest* tag. This is relevant when pulling an image from Docker Hub, for example:

```
$ docker image pull alpine
```

The preceding command will pull the `alpine:latest` image from the Hub. If we want to explicitly specify a tag, we do so like this:

```
$ docker image pull alpine:3.5
```

This will now pull the `alpine` image that has been tagged with `3.5`.

Image namespaces

So far, you have been pulling various images and haven't worried so much about where those images originated from. Your Docker environment is configured so that, by default, all images are pulled from Docker Hub. We also only pulled so-called official images from the Docker Hub, such as `alpine` or `busybox`.

Now it is time to widen our horizon a bit and learn about how images are namespaced. The most generic way to define an image is by its fully qualified name, which looks as follows:

```
<registry URL>/<User or Org>/<name>:<tag>
```

Let's look at this in a bit more detail:

- `<registry URL>`: This is the URL to the registry from which we want to pull the image. By default, this is `docker.io`. More generally, this could be `https://registry.acme.com`.

Other than Docker Hub, there are quite a few public registries out there that you could pull images from. The following is a list of some of them, in no particular order:

- Google at `https://cloud.google.com/container-registry`
- Amazon AWS at `https://aws.amazon.com/ecr/`
- Microsoft Azure at
`https://azure.microsoft.com/services/container-registry/`

- Red Hat at <https://access.redhat.com/containers/>
- Artifactory at <https://jfrog.com/integration/artifactory-docker-registry/>
- <User or Org>: This is the private Docker ID of either an individual or an organization defined on Docker Hub, or any other registry for that matter, such as microsoft or oracle.
- <name>: This is the name of the image that is often also called a repository.
- <tag>: This is the tag of the image.

Let's look at an example:

`https://registry.acme.com/engineering/web-app:1.0`

Here, we have an image, web-app, that is tagged with version 1.0 and belongs to the engineering organization on the private registry at <https://registry.acme.com>.

Now, there are some special conventions:

- If we omit the registry URL, then Docker Hub is automatically taken
- If we omit the tag, then latest is taken
- If it is an official image on Docker Hub, then no user or organization namespace is needed

A few samples in tabular form are as follows:

Image	Description
alpine	Official alpine image on Docker Hub with the latest tag.
ubuntu:16.04	Official ubuntu image on Docker Hub with the 16.04 tag or version.
microsoft/nanoserver	nanoserver image of Microsoft on Docker Hub with the latest tag.
acme/web-api:12.0	web-api image version 12.0 associated with the acme org. The image is on Docker Hub.
gcr.io/gnschenker/sample-app:1.1	sample-app image with the 1.1 tag belonging to an individual with the gnschenker ID on Google's container registry.

Official images

In the preceding table, we mentioned *official image* a few times. This needs an explanation. Images are stored in repositories on the Docker Hub registry. Official repositories are a set of repositories that are hosted on Docker Hub and are curated by individuals or organizations that are also responsible for the software that is packaged inside the image. Let's look at an example of what that means. There is an official organization behind the Ubuntu Linux distro. This team also provides official versions of Docker images that contain their Ubuntu distros.

Official images are meant to provide essential base OS repositories, images for popular programming language runtimes, frequently used data storage, and other important services.

Docker sponsors a team whose task it is to review and publish all those curated images in public repositories on Docker Hub. Furthermore, Docker scans all official images for vulnerabilities.

Pushing images to a registry

Creating custom images is all well and good, but at some point, we want to actually share or ship our images to a target environment, such as a test, QA, or production system. For this, we typically use a container registry. One of the most popular and public registries out there is Docker Hub. It is configured as a default registry in your Docker environment, and it is the registry from which we have pulled all our images so far.

On a registry, one can usually create personal or organizational accounts. For example, my personal account at Docker Hub is `gnschenker`. Personal accounts are good for personal use. If we want to use the registry professionally, then we probably want to create an organizational account, such as `acme`, on Docker Hub. The advantage of the latter is that organizations can have multiple teams. Teams can have differing permissions.

To be able to push an image to my personal account on Docker Hub, I need to tag it accordingly. Let's say I want to push the latest version of `alpine` to my account and give it a tag of `1.0`. I can do this in the following way:

```
$ docker image tag alpine:latest gnschenker/alpine:1.0
```

Now, to be able to push the image, I have to log in to my account:

```
$ docker login -u gnschenker -p <my secret password>
```

After a successful login, I can then push the image:

```
$ docker image push gnschenker/alpine:1.0
```

I will see something similar to this in the terminal:

```
The push refers to repository [docker.io/gnschenker/alpine]
04a094fe844e: Mounted from library/alpine
1.0: digest: sha256:5cb04fce... size: 528
```

For each image that we push to Docker Hub, we automatically create a repository. A repository can be private or public. Everyone can pull an image from a public repository. From a private repository, one can only pull an image if one is logged in to the registry and has the necessary permissions configured.

Summary

In this chapter, we have discussed in detail what container images are and how we can build and ship them. As we have seen, there are three different ways that an image can be created—either manually, automatically, or by importing a tarball into the system. We also learned some of the best practices commonly used when building custom images.

In the next chapter, we're going to introduce Docker volumes that can be used to persist the state of a container, and we will also introduce some helpful system commands that can be used to inspect the Docker host more deeply, work with events generated by the Docker daemon, and clean up unused resources.

Questions

Please try to answer the following questions to assess your learning progress:

1. How will you create a Dockerfile that inherits from Ubuntu version 17.04, and that installs ping and runs ping when a container starts. The default address to ping will be 127.0.0.1.
2. How will you create a new container image that uses alpine:latest and installs curl. Name the new image my-alpine:1.0.
3. Create a Dockerfile that uses multiple steps to create an image of a Hello World app of minimal size, written in C or Go.
4. Name three essential characteristics of a Docker container image.

5. You want to push an image named `foo:1.0` to your `jdoe` personal account on Docker Hub. Which of the following is the right solution?
 1. `$ docker container push foo:1.0`
 2. `$ docker image tag foo:1.0 jdoe/foo:1.0`
`$ docker image push jdoe/foo:1.0`
 3. `$ docker login -u jdoe -p <your password>`
`$ docker image tag foo:1.0 jdoe/foo:1.0`
`$ docker image push jdoe/foo:1.0`
 4. `$ docker login -u jdoe -p <your password>`
`$ docker container tag foo:1.0 jdoe/foo:1.0`
`$ docker container push jdoe/foo:1.0`
 5. `$ docker login -u jdoe -p <your password>`
`$ docker image push foo:1.0 jdoe/foo:1.0`

Further reading

The following list of references gives you some material that dives more deeply into the topic of authoring and building container images:

- Best practices for writing Dockerfiles at <http://dockr.ly/22WiJiO>
- Using multistage builds at <http://dockr.ly/2ewcUY3>
- About Storage drivers at <http://dockr.ly/1TuWndC>
- Graphdriver plugins at <http://dockr.ly/2eIVCab>
- User-guided caching in Docker for MAC at <http://dockr.ly/2xKafPf>

5

Data Volumes and System Management

In the last chapter, we learned how to build and share our own container images. Particular focus was put on how to build images that are as small as possible by only containing artifacts that are really needed by the containerized application.

In this chapter, we are going to learn how we can work with stateful containers, that is containers that consume and produce data. We will also learn how to keep our Docker environment clean and free from unused resources. Last but not least, we will be looking into the stream of events that a Docker engine is producing.

Here is a list of the topics we're going to discuss:

- Creating and mounting data volumes
- Sharing data between containers
- Using host volumes
- Defining volumes in images
- Obtaining exhaustive Docker system information
- Listing resource consumption
- Pruning unused resources
- Consuming Docker system events

After working through this chapter, you will be able to:

- Create, delete, and list data volumes
- Mount an existing data volume into a container
- Create durable data from within a container using a data volume
- Share data between multiple containers using data volumes
- Mount any host folder into a container using data volumes
- Define the access mode (read/write or read-only) for a container when accessing data in a data volume
- List the amount of space consumed by Docker resources on a given host, such as images, containers, and volumes
- Free your system from unused Docker resources, such as containers, images, and volumes
- Display Docker system events in a console in real time

Technical requirements

For this chapter, you need either Docker Toolbox installed on your machine or access to a Linux VM running Docker on your laptop or in the cloud. There is no code accompanying this chapter.

Creating and mounting data volumes

All meaningful applications consume or produce data. Yet containers are preferably meant to be stateless. How are we going to deal with this? One way is to use Docker volumes. Volumes allow containers to consume, produce, and modify state. Volumes have a life cycle that goes beyond the life cycle of containers. When a container that uses a volume dies, the volume continues to exist. This is great for the durability of state.

Modifying the container layer

Before we dive into volumes, let's first discuss what's happening if an application in a container changes something in the filesystem of the container. In this case, the changes are all happening in the writable container layer. Let's quickly demonstrate this by running a container and execute a script in it that is creating a new file:

```
$ docker container run --name demo \
    alpine /bin/sh -c 'echo "This is a test" > sample.txt'
```

The preceding command creates a container named `demo` and inside this container creates a file called `sample.txt` with the content `This is a test.` The container exits after this but remains in memory available for us to do our investigations. Let's use the `diff` command to find out what has changed in the container's filesystem in relation to the filesystem of the image:

```
$ docker container diff demo
```

The output should look like this:

```
A /sample.txt
```

Evidently a new file, `A`, has been added to the filesystem of the container as expected. Since all layers that stem from the underlying image (`alpine` in this case) are immutable, the change could only happen in the writeable container layer.

If we now remove the container from memory, its container layer will also be removed and with it all the changes will be irreversibly deleted. If we need our changes to persist even beyond the lifetime of the container, this is not a solution. Luckily, we have better options in the form of Docker volumes. Let's get to know them.

Creating volumes

Since, at this time, when using Docker for Mac or Windows containers are not running natively on OS X or Windows but rather in a (hidden) VM created by Docker for Mac and Windows, it is best we use `docker-machine` to create and use an explicit VM running Docker. At this point, we assume that you have Docker Toolbox installed on your system. If not, then please go back to *Chapter 2, Setting up a Working Environment*, where we provide detailed instructions on how to install Toolbox.

Use `docker-machine` to list all VMs currently running in VirtualBox:

```
$ docker-machine ls
```

If you do not have a VM called `node-1` listed then create one:

```
$ docker-machine create --driver virtualbox node-1
```

If you have a VM called `node-1` but it is not running then please start it:

```
$ docker-machine start node-1
```

Now that everything is ready, SSH into this VM called `node-1`:

```
$ docker-machine ssh node-1
```

You should be greeted by a `boot2docker` welcome image.

To create a new data volume, we can use the `docker volume create` command. This will create a named volume which can then be mounted into a container and be used for persistent data access or storage. The following command creates a volume, `my-data` using the default volume driver:

```
$ docker volume create my-data
```

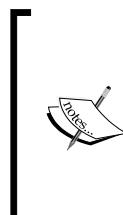
The default volume driver is the so-called local driver which stores the data locally in the host filesystem. The easiest way to find out where the data is stored on the host is by using the `inspect` command on the volume we just created. The actual location can differ from system to system and so, this is the safest way to find the target folder:

```
$ docker volume inspect my-data
[
  {
    "CreatedAt": "2018-01-28T21:55:41Z",
    "Driver": "local",
    "Labels": {},
    "Mountpoint": "/mnt/sda1/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-data/_data",
    "Name": "my-data",
    "Options": {},
    "Scope": "local"
  }
]
```

The host folder can be found in the output under `Mountpoint`. In our case, when using `docker-machine` with a LinuxKit-based VM running in VirtualBox, the folder is `/mnt/sda1/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-data/_data`.

The target folder often is a protected folder and we thus might need to use `sudo` to navigate to this folder and execute any operations in it. In our case, we do not need to use `sudo`:

```
$ cd /mnt/sda1/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-data/_data
```



If you are using Docker for Mac to create a volume on your laptop and then do a `docker volume inspect` on the volume you just created, the `Mountpoint` is shown as `/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-data/_data`. But you will discover that there is no such folder on the Mac. The reason is that the path is in relation to the hidden VM that Docker for Mac uses to run containers. At this time, containers cannot run natively on OS X. The same applies to volumes created with Docker for Windows.

There are other volume drivers available from third parties in the form of plugins. We can use the `--driver` parameter in the `create` command to select a different volume driver. Other volume drivers use different types of storage systems to back a volume, such as cloud storage, NFS drives, software-defined storage and more.

Mounting a volume

Once we have created a named volume, we can mount it into a container. For this, we can use the `-v` parameter in the `docker container run` command:

```
$ docker container run --name test -it \
-v my-data:/data alpine /bin/sh
```

The preceding command mounts the `my-data` volume to the `/data` folder inside the container. Inside the container, we can now create files in the `/data` folder and then exit:

```
# / cd /data
# / echo "Some data" > data.txt
# / echo "Some more data" > data2.txt
# / exit
```

If we navigate to the host folder that contains the volume data and list its content, we should see the two files we just created inside the container:

```
$ cd /mnt/sda1/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-data/_data
$ ls -l
total 8
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 10 Jan 28 22:23 data.txt
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 15 Jan 28 22:23 data2.txt
```

We can even try to output the content of say, the second file:

```
$ cat data2.txt
```

Let's try to create a file in this folder from the host and then use the volume with another container:

```
$ echo "This file we create on the host" > host-data.txt
```

Now, let's delete the `test` container and run another one based on CentOS. This time we are even mounting our volume to a different container folder, `/app/data`:

```
$ docker container rm test
$ docker container run --name test2 -it \
-v my-data:/app/data \
Centos:7 /bin/bash
```

Once inside the CentOS container, we can navigate to the folder `/app/data` where we have mounted the volume to and list its content:

```
# / cd /app/data
# / ls -l
```

As expected, we should see these three files:

```
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 10 Jan 28 22:23 data.txt
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 15 Jan 28 22:23 data2.txt
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 32 Jan 28 22:31 host-data.txt
```

This is the definitive proof that data in a Docker volume persists beyond the lifetime of a container, and also that volumes can be reused by other, even different containers from the one that used it first.

It is important to note that the folder inside the container to which we mount a Docker volume is excluded from the union filesystem. That is, each change inside this folder and any of its subfolders will not be part of the container layer, but persisted in the backing storage provided by the volume driver. This fact is really important since the container layer is deleted when the corresponding container is stopped and removed from the system.

Removing volumes

Volumes can be removed using the `docker volume rm` command. It is important to remember that removing a volume destroys the containing data irreversibly and thus is to be considered a dangerous command. Docker helps us a bit in this regard as it does not allow us to delete a volume that is still in use by a container. Always make sure before you remove or delete a volume that you either have a backup of its data or you really don't need this data anymore.

The following command deletes our `my-data` volume that we created earlier:

```
$ docker volume rm my-data
```

After executing the preceding command, double-check that the folder on the host has been deleted.

To remove all running containers to clean up the system, run the following command:

```
$ docker container rm -f $(docker container ls -aq)
```

Sharing data between containers

Containers are like sandboxes for the applications running inside them. This is mostly beneficial and wanted in order to protect applications running in different containers from each other. That also means that the whole filesystem visible to an application running inside a container is private to this application and no other application running in a different container can interfere with it.

At times though, we want to share data between containers. Say an application running in container A produces some data that will be consumed by another application running in container B. *How can we achieve this?* Well I'm sure you've already guessed it—we can use Docker volumes for this purpose. We can create a volume and mount it to container A as well as to container B. In this way, both applications A and B have access to the same data.

Now, as always when multiple applications or processes concurrently access data, we have to be very careful to avoid inconsistencies. To avoid concurrency problems, such as race conditions, we ideally have only one application or process that is creating or modifying data, while all other processes concurrently accessing this data only read it. We can enforce a process running in a container to only be able to read the data in a volume by mounting this volume as read only. Have a look at the following command:

```
$ docker container run -it --name writer \
-v shared-data:/data \
alpine /bin/sh
```

Here we create a container called `writer` which has a volume, `shared-data`, mounted in default read/write mode. Try to create a file inside this container:

```
# / echo "I can create a file" > /data/sample.txt
```

It should succeed. Exit this container and then execute the following command:

```
$ docker container run -it --name reader \
-v shared-data:/app/data:ro \
ubuntu:17.04 /bin/bash
```

And we have a container called `reader` that has the same volume mounted as read-only (ro). Firstly, make sure you can see the file created in the first container:

```
$ ls -l /app/data  
total 4  
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 20 Jan 28 22:55 sample.txt
```

And then try to create a file:

```
# / echo "Try to break read/only" > /app/data/data.txt
```

It will fail with the following message:

```
bash: /app/data/data.txt: Read-only file system
```

Let's exit the container by typing `exit` at the Command Prompt. Back on the host, let's clean up all containers and volumes:

```
$ docker container rm -f $(docker container ls -aq)  
$ docker volume rm $(docker volume ls -q)
```

Once this is done, exit the `docker-machine` VM by also typing `exit` at the Command Prompt. You should be back on your Docker for Mac or Windows. Use `docker-machine` to stop the VM:

```
$ docker-machine stop node-1
```

Using host volumes

In certain scenarios, such as when developing new containerized applications or when a containerized application needs to consume data from a certain folder produced, say, by a legacy application, it is very useful to use volumes that mount a specific host folder. Let's look at the following example:

```
$ docker container run --rm -it \  
-v $(pwd)/src:/app/src \  
alpine:latest /bin/sh
```

The preceding expression interactively starts an `alpine` container with a shell and mounts the subfolder `src` of the current directory into the container at `/app/src`. We need to use `$(pwd)` (or '`pwd`' for that matter) which is the current directory, as when working with volumes we always need to use absolute paths.

Developers use these techniques all the time when they are working on their application that runs in a container, and want to make sure that the container always contains the latest changes they make to the code, without the need to rebuild the image and rerun the container after each change.

Let's make a sample to demonstrate how that works. Let's say we want to create a simple static website using Nginx as our web server. First, let's create a new folder on the host where we will put our web assets, such as HTML, CSS, and JavaScript files and navigate to it:

```
$ mkdir ~/my-web  
$ cd ~/my-web
```

Then we create a simple web page like this:

```
$ echo "<h1>Personal Website</h1>" > index.html
```

Now, we add a Dockerfile which will contain the instructions on how to build the image containing our sample website. Add a file called Dockerfile to the folder with this content:

```
FROM nginx:alpine  
COPY . /usr/share/nginx/html
```

The Dockerfile starts with the latest Alpine version of Nginx and then copies all files from the current host directory into the containers folder, `/usr/share/nginx/html`. This is where Nginx expects web assets to be located. Now let's build the image with the following command:

```
$ docker image build -t my-website:1.0 .
```

And finally, we run a container from this image. We will run the container in detached mode:

```
$ docker container run -d \  
-p 8080:80 --name my-site\  
my-website:1.0
```

Note the `-p 8080:80` parameter. We haven't discussed this yet but we will do it in detail in *Chapter 7, Single-Host Networking*. At the moment, just know that this maps the container port 80 on which Nginx is listening for incoming requests to port 8080 of your laptop where you can then access the application. Now, open a browser tab and navigate to `http://localhost:8080/index.html` and you should see your website which currently consists only of a title, Personal Website.

Now, edit the file `index.html` in your favorite editor to look like this:

```
<h1>Personal Website</h1>
<p>This is some text</p>
```

And save it. Then refresh the browser. OK, that didn't work. The browser still displays the previous version of the `index.html` which consists only of the title. So let's stop and remove the current container, then rebuild the image, and rerun the container:

```
$ docker container rm -f my-site
$ docker image build -t my-website:1.0 .
$ docker container run -d \
  -p 8080:80 --name my-site \
  my-website:1.0
```

This time when you refresh the browser the new content should be shown. Well, it worked, but there is way too much friction involved. Imagine you have to do this each and every time that you make a simple change in your website. That's not sustainable.

Now is the time to use host-mounted volumes. Once again, remove the current container and rerun it with the volume mount:

```
$ docker container rm -f my-site
$ docker container run -d \
  -v $(pwd):/usr/share/nginx/html \
  -p 8080:80 --name my-site \
  my-website:1.0
```

Now, append some more content to the `index.html` and save it. Then refresh your browser. You should see the changes. And this is exactly what we wanted to achieve; we also call this an edit-and-continue experience. You can make as many changes in your web files and always immediately see the result in the browser without having to rebuild the image and restart the container containing your website.

It is important to note that the updates are now propagated bi-directionally. If you make changes on the host they will be propagated to the container and vice versa. Also important is the fact that when you mount the current folder into the container target folder, `/usr/share/nginx/html`, the content that is already there is replaced by the content of the host folder.

Defining volumes in images

If we go for a moment back to what we have learned about containers in *Chapter 3, Working with Containers*, then we have this: the filesystem of each container when started is made up of the immutable layers of the underlying image plus a writable container layer specific to this very container. All changes that the processes running inside the container make to the filesystem will be persisted in this container layer. Once the container is stopped and removed from the system, the corresponding container layer is deleted from the system and irreversibly lost.

Some applications, such as databases running in containers, need to persist their data beyond the lifetime of the container. In this case they can use volumes. To make things a bit more explicit let's look at a concrete sample. MongoDB is a popular open source document database. Many developers use MongoDB as a storage service for their applications. The maintainers of MongoDB have created an image and published it on Docker Hub which can be used to run an instance of the database in a container. This database will be producing data that needs to be persisted long term. But the MongoDB maintainers do not know who uses this image and how it is used. So they have no influence over the `docker container run` command with which the users of the database will start this container. How can they now define volumes?

Luckily, there is a way of defining volumes in the Dockerfile. The keyword to do so is `VOLUME` and we can either add the absolute path to a single folder or a comma-separated list of paths. These paths represent folders of the container's filesystem. Let's look at a few samples of such volume definitions:

```
VOLUME /app/data
VOLUME /app/data, /app/profiles, /app/config
VOLUME ["/app/data", "/app/profiles", "/app/config"]
```

The first line defines a single volume to be mounted at `/app/data`. The second line defines three volumes as a comma-separated list and the last one defines the same as the second line, but this time the value is formatted as a JSON array.

When a container is started, Docker automatically creates a volume and mounts it to the corresponding target folder of the container for each path defined in the Dockerfile. Since each volume is created automatically by Docker, it will have an SHA-256 as ID.

At container runtime, the folders defined as volumes in the Dockerfile are excluded from the union filesystem and thus any changes in those folders do not change the container layer but are persisted to the respective volume. It is now the responsibility of the operations engineers to make sure that the backing storage of the volumes is properly backed up.

We can use the `docker image inspect` command to get information about the volumes defined in the Dockerfile. Let's see what MongoDB gives us. First, we pull the image with the following command:

```
$ docker image pull mongo:3.7
```

Then we inspect this image and use the `--format` parameter to only extract the essential part from the massive amount of data:

```
$ docker image inspect \
  --format='{{json .ContainerConfig.Volumes}}' \
  mongo:3.7 | jq
```

Which will return the following result:

```
{
  "/data/configdb": {},
  "/data/db": {}
}
```

Evidently, the Dockerfile for MongoDB defines two volumes at `/data/configdb` and `/data/db`.

Now, let's run an instance of MongoDB as follows:

```
$ docker run --name my-mongo -d mongo:3.7
```

We can now use the `docker container inspect` command to get information about the volumes that have been created, among other things. Use this command to just get the volume information:

```
$ docker inspect --format '{{json .Mounts}}' my-mongo | jq
```

The expression should output something like this:

```
[
  {
    "Type": "volume",
    "Name": "b9ea0158b5...",
    "Source": "/var/lib/docker/volumes/b9ea0158b.../_data",
    "Destination": "/data/configdb",
    "Driver": "local",
    "Mode": "",
    "RW": true,
    "Propagation": ""
```

```
        },
        {
            "Type": "volume",
            "Name": "5becf84b1e...",
            "Source": "/var/lib/docker/volumes/5becf84b1.../_data",
            "Destination": "/data/db",
            "Driver": "local",
            "Mode": "",
            "RW": true,
            "Propagation": ""
        }
    ]
}
```

Note that the values of the `Name` and `Source` fields have been trimmed for readability. The `Source` field gives us the path to the host directory where the data produced by the MongoDB inside the container will be stored.

Obtaining Docker system information

Whenever we need to troubleshoot our system, the commands presented in this section are essential. They provide us with a lot about the Docker engine installed on the host and about the host operating system. Let's first introduce the `docker version` command. It provides abundant information about the Docker client and server that your current configuration is using. If you enter the command in the CLI, you should see something similar to this:



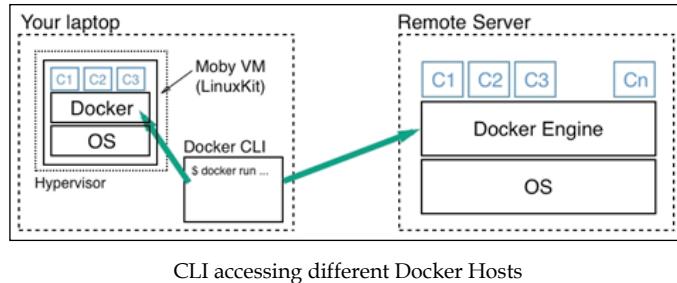
```
$ docker version
Client:
  Version:      18.04.0-ce
  API version:  1.37
  Go version:   go1.9.4
  Git commit:   3d479c0
  Built:        Tue Apr 10 18:13:16 2018
  OS/Arch:      darwin/amd64
  Experimental: true
  Orchestrator: swarm

Server:
  Engine:
    Version:      18.04.0-ce
    API version:  1.37 (minimum version 1.12)
    Go version:   go1.9.4
    Git commit:   3d479c0
    Built:        Tue Apr 10 18:23:05 2018
    OS/Arch:      linux/amd64
    Experimental: true
$
```

Version Information about Docker

In my case, I can see that on both client and server, I am using version 18.04.0-ce-rc2 of the Docker engine. I can also see that my orchestrator is Swarm and more.

Now to clarify what the client and what the server is, let's look at the following diagram:



CLI accessing different Docker Hosts

You can see that the client is the little CLI through which we send Docker commands to the remote API of the Docker host. The Docker host is the container runtime which hosts the containers and might run on the same machine as the CLI, or it might run on a remote server, on-premise or in the cloud. We can use the CLI to manage different servers. We do this by setting a bunch of environment variables such as DOCKER_HOST, DOCKER_TLS_VERIFY, and DOCKER_CERT_PATH. If these environment variables are not set on your working machine and you're using Docker for Mac or Windows then that means that you are using the Docker engine that runs on your machine.

The next important command is the `docker system info` command. This command provides information about what mode the Docker engine is operating in (swarm mode or not), what storage driver is used for the union filesystem, what version of the Linux kernel we have on our host, and much more. Please have a careful look at the output generated by your system when running the command. Analyze what kind of information is shown:

```
$ docker system info
Containers: 1
  Running: 0
  Paused: 0
  Stopped: 1
Images: 70
Server Version: 18.04.0-ce
Storage Driver: overlay2
  Backing Filesystem: extfs
  Supports d_type: true
  Native Overlay Diff: true
Logging Driver: json-file
Cgroup Driver: cgroupfs
Plugins:
  Volume: local
  Network: bridge host ipvlan macvlan null overlay
  Log: awslogs fluentd gcplogs gelf journald json-file logentries splunk syslog
Swarm: inactive
Runtimes: runc
Default Runtime: runc
Init Binary: docker-init
containerd version: 773c489c9c1b21a6d78b5c538cd395416ec50f88
runc version: 4fc53a81fb7c994640722ac585fa9ca548971871
init version: 949e6fa
Security Options:
  seccomp
    Profile: default
Kernel Version: 4.9.87-linuxkit-aufs
Operating System: Docker for Mac
OSType: linux
Architecture: x86_64
CPUs: 4
Total Memory: 1.952GiB
Name: linuxkit-025000000001
ID: WV5X:CY7N:LHIP:SWJ2:T55W:P5QM:MEYU:MM3V:55OH:RALF:5ZDN:QH7Y
Docker Root Dir: /var/lib/docker
Debug Mode (client): false
Debug Mode (server): true
File Descriptors: 22
Goroutines: 42
System Time: 2018-04-21T12:08:17.962868Z
EventsListeners: 2
HTTP Proxy: gateway.docker.internal:3128
HTTPS Proxy: gateway.docker.internal:3129
Registry: https://index.docker.io/v1/
Labels:
Experimental: true
Insecure Registries:
  127.0.0.0/8
Live Restore Enabled: false
```

Output of the Command docker system info

Listing resource consumption

Over time, a Docker host can accumulate quite a bit of resources such as images, containers, and volumes in memory and on disk. As in every good household, we should keep our environment clean and free unused resources to reclaim space. Otherwise, there will come the moment when Docker does not allow us to add any more new resources, meaning actions such as pulling an image can fail due to lack of available space on disk or in memory.

The Docker CLI provides a handy little `system df` command that lists how much resources currently are used on our system and how much of this space can possibly be reclaimed. The command is:

```
$ docker system df
```

If you execute this command on your system, you should see an output similar to this:

TYPE	TOTAL	ACTIVE	SIZE	RECLAIMABLE
Images	21	9	1.103GB	845.3MB (76%)
Containers	14	11	9.144kB	4.4kB (48%)
Local Volumes	14	14	340.3MB	0B (0%)
Build Cache			0B	0B

The last line in the output, the `Build Cache`, is only displayed on newer versions of Docker. This information has been added recently. The preceding output is explained as follows:

- In my case, the output tells me that on my system I am currently having 21 images locally cached of which 9 are in active use. An image is considered to be in active use if currently at least one running or stopped container is based on it. These images occupy 1.1 GB disk space. Close to 845 MB can technically be reclaimed since the corresponding images are not currently used.
- Further, I have 11 running containers on my system and three stopped ones for a total of 14 containers. I can reclaim the space occupied by the stopped containers which is 4.4 kB in my case.
- I also have 14 active volumes on my host that together consume about 340 MB of disk space. Since all volumes are in use, I cannot reclaim any space at this time.
- Finally, my `Build Cache` is currently empty and thus of course I cannot reclaim any space there too.

If I want even more detailed information about the resource consumption on my system, I can run the same command in verbose mode using the `-v` flag:

```
$ docker system df -v
```

This will give me a detailed list of all images, containers, and volumes with their respective size. A possible output could look like this:

```
$ docker system df -v
Images space usage:
REPOSITORY          TAG      IMAGE ID      CREATED ago      SIZE      SHARED SIZE      UNIQUE SIZE      CONTAINERS
fundamentalsofdocker/ch14-web    1.0       fe6612f845be   12 days ago ago   72.05MB      72.05MB      1.834kB      0
fundamentalsofdocker/web        2.0       944523644dd7   12 days ago ago   72.05MB      72.05MB      1.827kB      0
fundamentalsofdocker/ch13-web    2.0       b47675c8e53c   2 weeks ago ago   72.05MB      72.05MB      1.836kB      0
builder2              latest    074a05b21f3a   3 weeks ago ago   1.514GB      1.456GB      58.79kB      0
builder              latest    986422c5187   3 weeks ago ago   1.464GB      1.456GB      8.051MB      0
ruby                 alpine   b6200e3414c   3 weeks ago ago   55.52MB      4.148MB      51.38MB      1
microsoft/azure-cli        latest    052f16e53d04c  4 weeks ago ago   400.4MB      0B          400.4MB      0
nginx                alpine   91ce620619d8   4 weeks ago ago   18MB       4.148MB      13.86MB      1
perl                 5.26     3c2c4c3b2e15   5 weeks ago ago   879.2MB      879.2MB      0B          0
fundamentalsofdocker/ch08-web    1.0       922e085ed002   7 weeks ago ago   72.01MB      68.02MB      3.992MB      0
fundamentalsofdocker/ch08-db        1.0       4953d535c17   7 weeks ago ago   39.46MB      4.148MB      35.31MB      0
node                 9.6-alpine  a88ff852c3d4   8 weeks ago ago   68.02MB      68.02MB      0B          0
alpine               latest    3fd9065ef02   3 months ago ago   4.148MB      4.148MB      0B          0
confluentinc/cp-enterprise-kafka 4.0.0     07d1f1f8648f5  3 months ago ago   565.1MB      0B          565.1MB      0
hello-world           latest    f2a91732366c   5 months ago ago   1.848kB      0B          1.848kB      0
hseeberger/scalo-sbt        latest    da0e1be30b79   9 months ago ago   925.4MB      0B          925.4MB      0
Containers space usage:
CONTAINER ID      IMAGE      COMMAND      LOCAL VOLUMES      SIZE      CREATED ago      STATUS      NAMES
af0d0cc099c4      nginx:alpine  "ping 8.8.8.8"      0B          6 seconds ago ago   Up 4 seconds      xenodochial_easley
z02d742b04df      ruby:alpine  "/bin/sh"      0B          5 hours ago ago   Exited (0) 15 minutes ago  keen_lumiere
Local Volumes space usage:
VOLUME NAME      LINKS      SIZE
ch08-pets-data      0          47.24MB
Build cache usage: 0B
$
```

Verbose output of the system resources consumed by Docker

This verbose output should give us enough detailed information to make an informed decision as to whether or not we need to start cleaning up our system, and which parts we might need to clean up.

Pruning unused resources

Once we have concluded that some clean up is needed Docker provides us with so-called pruning commands. For each resource, such as images, containers, volumes, and networks there exists a `prune` command.

Pruning containers

In this section we want to regain unused system resources by pruning containers. Let's start with this command:

```
$ docker container prune
```

The preceding command will remove all containers from the system that are not in running status. Docker will ask for confirmation before deleting the containers that are currently in `exited` or `created` status. If you want to skip this confirmation step you can use the `-f` (or `--force`) flag:

```
$ docker container prune -f
```

Under certain circumstances, we might want to remove all containers from our system, even the running ones. We cannot use the `prune` command for this. Instead we should use a command, such as the following combined expression:

```
$ docker container rm -f $(docker container ls -aq)
```

Please be careful with the preceding command. It removes all containers without warning, even the running ones! Please, before you proceed look at the preceding command again in detail and try to explain what exactly happens and why.

Pruning images

Next in line are images. If we want to free all space occupied by unused image layers we can use the following command:

```
$ docker image prune
```

After we reconfirm to Docker that we indeed want to free space occupied by unused image layers, those get removed. Now I have to specify what we mean when talking about unused image layers. As you recall from the previous chapter, an image is made up of a stack of immutable layers. Now, when we are building a custom image multiple times, each time making some changes in, say, the source code of the application for which we're building the image, then we are recreating layers and previous versions of the same layer become orphaned. Why is this the case? The reason is that layers are immutable, as discussed in detail in the previous chapter. Thus, when something in the source that is used to build a layer is changed, the very layer has to be rebuilt and the previous version will be abandoned.

On a system where we often build images, the number of orphaned image layers can increase substantially over time. All these orphaned layers are removed with the preceding `prune` command.

Similar to the `prune` command for containers, we can avoid Docker asking us for a confirmation by using the force flag:

```
$ docker image prune -f
```

There is an even more radical version of the image prune command. Sometimes we do not just want to remove orphaned image layers but all images that are not currently in use on our system. For this, we can use the `-a` (or `--all`) flag:

```
$ docker image prune --force --all
```

After execution of the preceding command, only images that are currently used by one or more containers will remain in our local image cache.

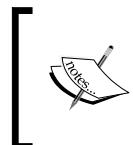
Pruning volumes

Docker volumes are used to allow for persistent access of data by containers. This data can be important and thus the commands discussed in this section should be applied with special care.

If you know that you want to reclaim space occupied by volumes and with it irreversibly destroy the underlying data, you can use the following command:

```
$ docker volume prune
```

This command will remove all volumes that are not currently in use by at least one container.



This is a destructive command and cannot be undone. You should always create a backup of the data associated with the volumes before you delete them except when you're sure that the data has no further value.



To avoid system corruption or malfunctioning applications, Docker does not allow you to remove volumes that are currently in use by at least one container. This applies even to the situation where a volume is used by a stopped container. You always have to remove the containers that use a volume first.

A useful flag when pruning volumes is the `-f` or `--filter` flag which allows us to specify the set of volumes which we're considering for pruning. Look at the following command:

```
$ docker volume prune --filter 'label=demo'
```

This will only apply the command to volumes that have a `label` with the `demo` value. The filtering flag format is `key=value`. If there is more than one filter needed, then we can use multiple flags:

```
$ docker volume prune --filter 'label=demo' --filter 'label=test'
```

The filter flag can also be used when pruning other resources such as containers and images.

Pruning networks

The last resource that can be pruned are networks. We will discuss networks in detail in *Chapter 7, Single-Host Networking*. To remove all unused networks, we use the following command:

```
$ docker network prune
```

This will remove the networks on which currently no container or service is attached. Please don't worry about networks too much at this time. We will come back to them and all this will make much more sense to you.

Pruning everything

If we just want to prune everything at once without having to enter multiple commands, we can use the following command:

```
$ docker system prune
```

The Docker CLI will ask us for a confirmation and then remove all unused containers, images, volumes, and networks in one go and in the right order.

Once again, to avoid Docker asking us for a confirmation, we can just use the force flag with the command.

Consuming Docker system events

The Docker engine, when creating, running, stopping, and removing containers and other resources such as volumes or networks, produces a log of events. These events can be consumed by external systems, such as some infrastructure services that use them to make informed decisions. An example of such a service could be a tool that creates an inventory of all containers that are currently running on the system.

We can hook ourselves into this stream of system events and output them, for example in a terminal, by using the following command:

```
$ docker system events
```

This command is a blocking command. Thus, when you execute it in your terminal session the according session is blocked. Therefore, we recommend that you always open an extra window when you want to use this command.

Assuming we have executed the preceding command in an extra terminal window, we can now test it and run a container like this:

```
$ docker container run --rm alpine echo "Hello World"
```

The output produced should look like this:

```
2018-01-28T15:08:57.318341118-06:00 container create
8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf166c6ecf3
(image=alpine,
name=confident_hopper)

2018-01-28T15:08:57.320934314-06:00 container attach
8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf166c6ecf3
(image=alpine, name=confident_hopper)

2018-01-28T15:08:57.354869473-06:00 network connect
c8fd270e1a776c5851c9fa1e79927141a1e1be228880c0aace4d0daebcccd190f
(container=8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf
166c6ecf3, name=bridge, type=bridge)

2018-01-28T15:08:57.818494970-06:00 container start
8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf166c6ecf3
(image=alpine, name=confident_hopper)

2018-01-28T15:08:57.998941548-06:00 container die
8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf166c6ecf3
(exitCode=0, image=alpine, name=confident_hopper)

2018-01-28T15:08:58.304784993-06:00 network disconnect
c8fd270e1a776c5851c9fa1e79927141a1e1be228880c0aace4d0daebcccd190f
(container=8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf
166c6ecf3, name=bridge, type=bridge)

2018-01-28T15:08:58.412513530-06:00 container destroy
8e074342ef3b20cfa73d17e4ef7796d424aa8801661765ab5024acf166c6ecf3
(image=alpine, name=confident_hopper)
```

In this output, we can follow the exact life cycle of the container. The container is created, started, and then destroyed. If the output generated by this command is not to your liking you can always change it by using the `--format` parameter. The value of the format has to be written using the Go template syntax. The following sample outputs the type, image, and action of the event:

```
$ docker system events --format 'Type={{.Type}} Image={{.Actor.Attributes.image}} Action={{.Action}}'
```

If we run the exact same container run command as before, the output generated now looks like this:

```
Type=container  Image=alpine      Action=create
Type=container  Image=alpine      Action=attach
Type=network    Image=<no value> Action=connect
Type=container  Image=alpine      Action=start
Type=container  Image=alpine      Action=die
Type=network    Image=<no value> Action=disconnect
Type=container  Image=alpine      Action=destroy
```

Summary

In this chapter, we have introduced Docker volumes that can be used to persist states produced by containers and make it durable. We can also use volumes to provide containers with data originating from various sources. We have learned how to create, mount and use volumes. We have learned various techniques of defining volumes such as by name, by mounting a host directory, or by defining volumes in a container image.

In this chapter, we have also discussed various system-level commands that either provide us with abundant information to troubleshoot a system, or to manage and prune resources used by Docker. Lastly, we have learned how we can visualize and potentially consume the event stream generated by the container runtime.

In the next chapter, we are going to get an introduction into the fundamentals of container orchestration. There we're going to discuss what's needed when we have to manage and run not just one or a few containers but potentially hundreds of them on many nodes in a cluster. We will see that there are a lot of challenges to solve. This is where orchestration engines come into play.

Questions

Please try to answer the following questions to assess your learning progress:

1. How will you create a named data volume with a name, for example `my-products`, using the default driver?
2. How will you run a container using the image `alpine` and mount the volume `my-products` in read-only mode into the `/data` container folder?

3. How will you locate the folder which is associated with the volume `my-products` and navigate to it? Also, how will you create a file, `sample.txt` with some content?
4. How will you run another `alpine` container to which you mount the `my-products` volume to the `/app-data` folder, in read/write mode? Inside this container, navigate to the `/app-data` folder and create a `hello.txt` file with some content.
5. How will you mount a host volume, for example `~/my-project`, into a container?
6. How will you remove all unused volumes from your system?
7. How will you determine the exact version of the Linux kernel and of Docker running on your system?

Further reading

The following articles provide more in-depth information:

- Use volumes at <http://dockr.ly/2EUjTml>
- Manage data in Docker at <http://dockr.ly/2EhBpzD>
- Docker volumes on PWD at <http://bit.ly/2sjIfDj>
- Containers—clean up your house at <http://bit.ly/2bVrCBn>
- Docker system events at <http://dockr.ly/2BlZmXY>

6

Distributed Application Architecture

In the previous chapter, we learned how we can use Docker volumes to persist created or modified state, as well as share data between applications running in containers. We also learned how to work with events generated by the Docker daemon and clean up unused resources.

In this chapter, we introduce the concept of a distributed application architecture and discuss the various patterns and best practices that are required to run a distributed application successfully. Finally, we will discuss the additional requirements that need to be fulfilled to run such an application in production.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What is a distributed application architecture?
- Patterns and best practices
- Running in production

After finishing this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

- Name at least four characteristics of a distributed application architecture
- Name at least four patterns that need to be implemented for a production-ready distributed application

What is a distributed application architecture?

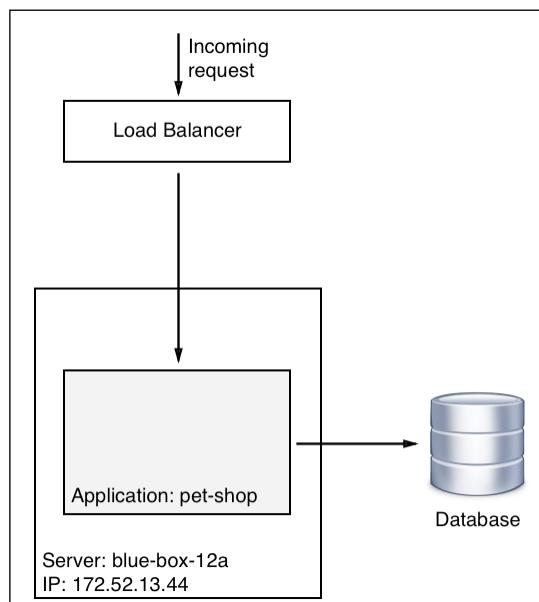
In this section, we are going to explain in detail what we mean when we talk about a distributed application architecture. First, we need to make sure that all words or acronyms we use have a meaning and that we are all talking the same language.

Defining the terminology

In this and the subsequent chapters, we will talk a lot about concepts that might not be familiar to everyone. To make sure we all talk the same language, let's briefly introduce and describe the most important of these concepts or words:

VM	Acronym for virtual machine. This is a virtual computer.
Node	Individual server used to run applications. This can be a physical server, often called bare metal, or a VM. A node can be a mainframe, supercomputer, standard business server, or even a Raspberry Pi. Nodes can be computers in a company's own data center or in the cloud. Normally, a node is part of a cluster.
Cluster	Group of nodes connected by a network used to run distributed applications.
Network	Physical and software-defined communication paths between individual nodes of a cluster and programs running on those nodes.
Port	Channel on which an application such a web server listens for incoming requests.
Service	This, unfortunately, is a very overloaded term and its real meaning depends on the context in which it is used. If we use the term service in the context of an application such as an application service, then it usually means that this is a piece of software that implements a limited set of functionality which is then used by other parts of the application. As we progress through this book, other types of services that have a slightly different definition will be discussed.

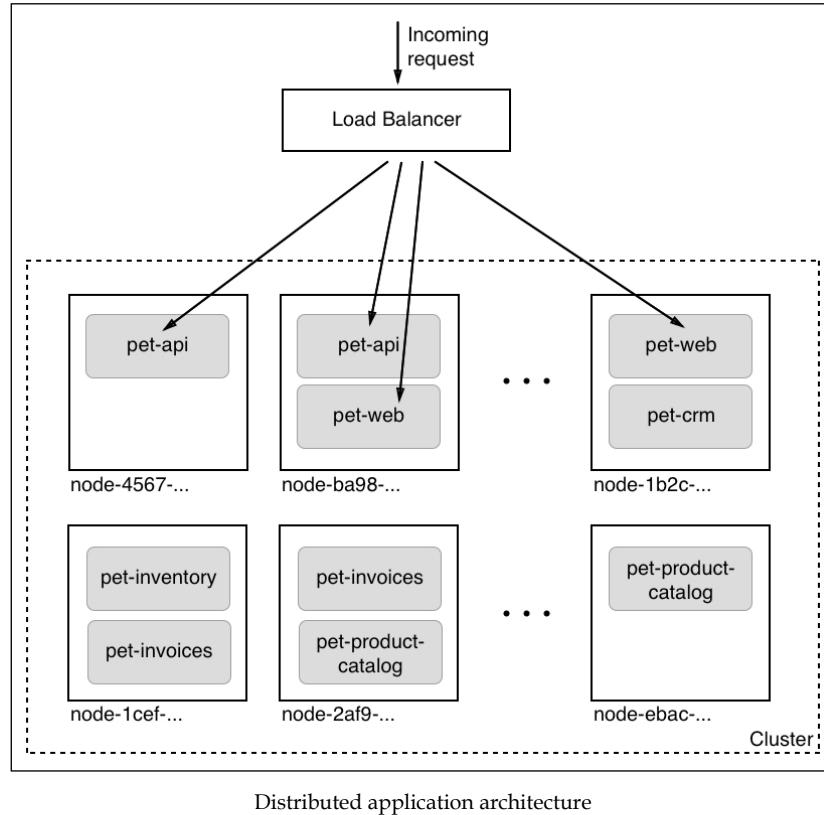
Naively said, a distributed application architecture is the opposite of a monolithic application architecture, but it's not unreasonable to look at this monolithic architecture first. Traditionally, most business applications have been written in such a way that the result can be seen as one single, tightly coupled program that runs on a named server somewhere in a data center. All its code is compiled into a single binary or a few very tightly coupled binaries that need to be co-located when running the application. The fact that the server, or more general host, on which the application is running has a well-defined name or static IP address is also important in this context. Let's look at the following diagram to illustrate this type of application architecture a bit more clearly:



Monolithic application architecture

In the preceding diagram, we see a server named **blue-box-12a** with an IP address of `172.52.13.44` running an application called **pet-shop**, which is a monolith consisting of a main module and a few tightly coupled libraries.

Now, let's look at the following diagram:



Here, all of a sudden, we don't have only a single named server anymore, but we have a lot of them and they don't have human-friendly names, but rather some unique IDs that can be something like a **universal unique identifier (UUID)**. The **pet-shop** application, all of a sudden, also does not consist of a single monolithic block anymore but rather of a plethora of interacting yet loosely coupled services such as **pet-api**, **pet-web**, and **pet-inventory**. Furthermore, each service runs in multiple instances in this cluster of servers or hosts.

You might be wondering why we are discussing this in a book about Docker containers, and you are right to ask. While all the topics we're going to investigate apply equally to a world where containers do not (yet) exist, it is important to realize that containers and container orchestration engines help to address all the problems in a much more efficient and straightforward way. Most of the problems that used to be very hard to solve in a distributed application architecture become quite simple in a containerized world.

Patterns and best practices

A distributed application architecture has many compelling benefits, but it has also one very significant drawback compared to a monolithic application architecture—the former is way more complex. To tame this complexity, the industry has come up with some important best practices and patterns. In the following sections, we are going to look into some of the most important ones in more detail.

Loosely coupled components

The best way to address a complex subject has always been to divide it into smaller sub problems that are more manageable. As an example, it would be insanely complex to build a house in one single step. It is much easier to build the house up from simple parts that are then combined into the final result.

The same also applies to software development. It is much easier to develop a very complex application if we divide this application into smaller components that interoperate and together make up the overall application. Now, it is much easier to develop these components individually if they are only loosely coupled to each other. What this means is that component A makes no assumptions about the inner workings of, say, components B and C, but is only interested in how it can communicate with those two components across a well-defined interface. If each component has a well-defined and simple public interface through which communication with the other components in the system and the outside world happens, then this enables us to develop each component individually, without implicit dependencies to other components. During the development process, other components in the system can be replaced by stubs or mocks to allow us to test our component.

Stateful versus stateless

Every meaningful business application creates, modifies, or uses data. Data is also called state. An application service that creates or modifies persistent data is called a stateful component. Typical stateful components are database services or services that create files. On the other hand, application components that do not create or modify persistent data are called stateless components.

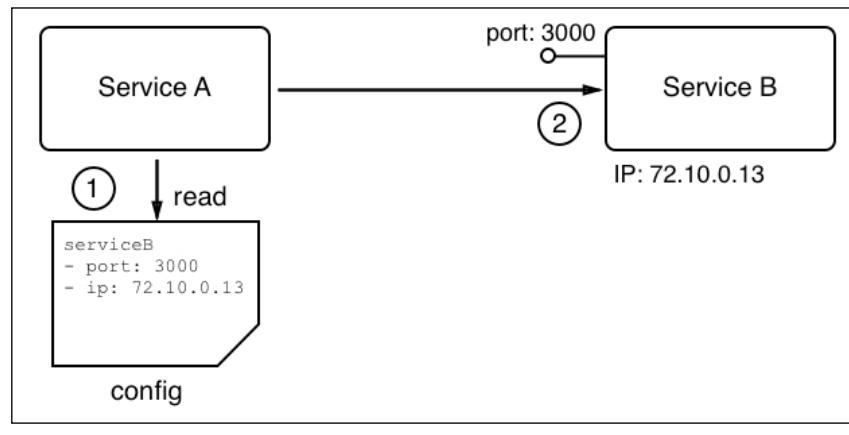
In a distributed application architecture, stateless components are much simpler to handle than stateful components. Stateless components can be easily scaled up and scaled down. They can also be quickly and painlessly torn down and restarted on a completely different node of the cluster—all this because they have no persistent data associated with them.

Given that fact, it is helpful to design a system in a way that most of the application services are stateless. It is best to push all the stateful components to the boundary of the application and limit their number. Managing stateful components is hard.

Service discovery

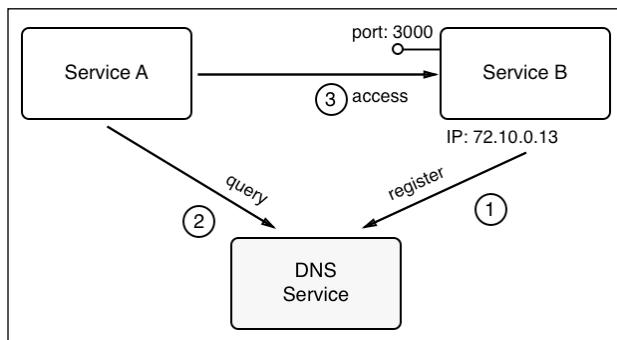
As we build applications that consist of many individual components or services that communicate with each other, we need a mechanism that allows the individual components to find each other in the cluster. Finding each other usually means that one needs to know on which node the target component is running and on which port it is listening for communication. Most often, nodes are identified by an IP address and a port, which is just a number in a well-defined range.

Technically, we could tell Service A, which wants to communicate with a target, Service B, what the IP address and port of the target are. This could happen, for example, through an entry in a configuration file:



Components are hardwired

While this might work very well in the context of a monolithic application that runs on one or only a few well-known and curated servers, it totally falls apart in a distributed application architecture. First of all, in this scenario, we have many components, and keeping track of them manually becomes a nightmare. It is definitely not scalable. Furthermore, Service A typically should or will never know on which node of the cluster the other components run. Their location may not even be stable as component B could be moved from node X to another node Y, due to various reasons external to the application. Thus, we need another way in which Service A can locate Service B, or any other service for that matter. What is most commonly used is an external authority that is aware of the topology of the system at any given time. This external authority or service knows all the nodes and their IP addresses that currently pertain to the cluster; it knows all services that are running and where they are running. Often, this kind of service is called a **DNS service**, where **DNS** stands for **Domain Name System**. As we will see, Docker has a DNS service implemented as part of the underlying engine. Kubernetes also uses a DNS service to facilitate communication between components running in the cluster:



Components consult an external locator service

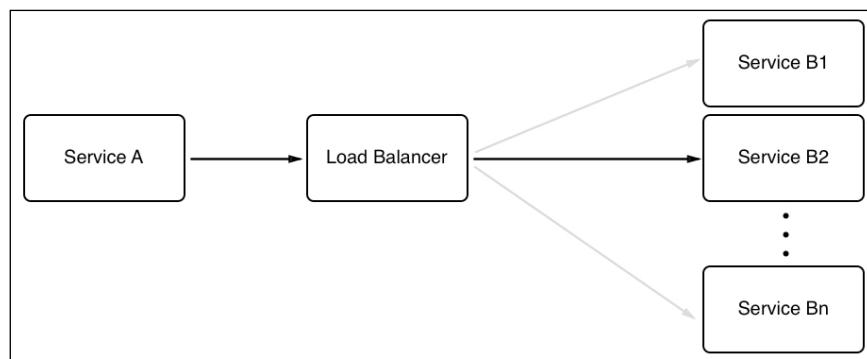
In the preceding diagram, we see how Service A wants to communicate with Service B. But it can't do this directly; it has to first query the external authority, a registry service, here called a **DNS Service**, about the whereabouts of Service B. The registry service will answer with the requested information and hand out the IP address and port number with which Service A can reach Service B. Service A then uses this information and establishes communication with Service B. Of course, this is a naive picture of what's really happening on a low level, but it is a good picture to understand the architectural pattern of service discovery.

Routing

Routing is the mechanism of sending packets of data from a source component to a target component. Routing is categorized into different types. One uses the so-called OSI model (see reference in the *Further reading* section of this chapter) to distinguish between different types of routing. In the context of containers and container orchestration, routing at layers 2, 3, 4, and 7 is relevant. We will dive into more detail about routing in the subsequent chapters. Here, let's just say that layer 2 routing is the most low-level type of routing, which connects a MAC address to a MAC address, while layer 7 routing, which is also called application-level routing, is the most high-level one. The latter is, for example, used to route requests having a target identifier that is a URL such as `example.com/pets` to the appropriate target component in our system.

Load balancing

Load balancing is used whenever Service A requests a service from Service B, but the latter is running in more than one instance, as shown in the following diagram:



Request of Service A load balanced to Service B

If we have multiple instances of a service such as Service B running in our system, we want to make sure that every, of those instances gets an equal amount of workload assigned to it. This task is a generic one, which means that we don't want the caller to have to do the load balancing, but rather an external service that intercepts the call and takes over the part of deciding to which of the target service instances to forward the call. This external service is called a **load balancer**. Load balancers can use different algorithms to decide how to distribute the incoming calls to the target service instances. The most common algorithm used is called round robin. This algorithm just assigns requests in a repetitive way, starting with instance 1 then 2 until instance n . After the last instance has been served, the load balancer starts over with instance number 1.

Defensive programming

When developing a service for a distributed application, it is important to remember that this service is not going to be standalone, but is dependent on other application services or even on external services provided by third parties, such as credit card validation services or stock information services, to just name two. All these other services are external to the service we are developing. We have no control over their correctness or their availability at any given time. Thus, when coding, we always need to assume the worst and hope for the best. Assuming the worst means that we have to deal with potential failures explicitly.

Retries

When there is a possibility that an external service might be temporarily unavailable or not responsive enough, then the following procedure can be used. When the call to the other service fails or times out, the calling code should be structured in such a way that the same call is repeated after a short wait time. If the call fails again, the wait should be a bit longer before the next trial. The calls should be repeated up until a maximum number of times, each time increasing the wait time. After that, the service should give up and provide a degraded service, which could mean to return some stale cached data or no data at all, depending on the situation.

Logging

Important operations in a service should always be logged. Logging information needs to be categorized to be of a real value. A common list of categories is debug, info, warning, error, and fatal. Logging information should be collected by a central log aggregation service and not be stored on an individual node of the cluster. Aggregated logs are easy to parse and filter for relevant information.

Error handling

As mentioned earlier, each application service in a distributed application is dependent on other services. As developers, we should always expect the worst and have appropriate error handling in place. One of the most important best practices is to fail fast. Code the service in such a way that unrecoverable errors are discovered as early as possible and, if such an error is detected, have the service fail immediately. But don't forget to log meaningful information to STDERR or STDOUT, which can be used by developers or system operators later to track malfunctions of the system. Also, return a helpful error to the caller, indicating as precisely as possible why the call failed.

One sample of fail fast is to always check the input values provided by the caller. *Are the values in the expected ranges and complete?* If not, then do not try to continue processing, but immediately abort the operation.

Redundancy

A mission-critical system has to be available all the time, around the clock, 365 days a year. Downtime is not acceptable, since it might result in a huge loss of opportunities or reputation for the company. In a highly distributed application, the likelihood of a failure of at least one of the many involved components is non-neglectable. One can say that the question is not whether a component will fail, but rather when a failure will occur.

To avoid downtime when one of the many components in the system fails, each individual part of the system needs to be redundant. This includes the application components as well as all infrastructure parts. What that means is that if we, say, have a payment service as part of our application, then we need to run this service redundantly. The easiest way to do that is to run multiple instances of this very service on different nodes of our cluster. The same applies, say, for an edge router or a load balancer. We cannot afford for this to ever go down. Thus the router or load balancer must be redundant.

Health checks

We have mentioned various times that in a distributed application architecture, with its many parts, failure of an individual component is highly likely and it is only a matter of time until it happens. For that reason, we run every single component of the system redundantly. Proxy services then load balance the traffic across the individual instances of a service.

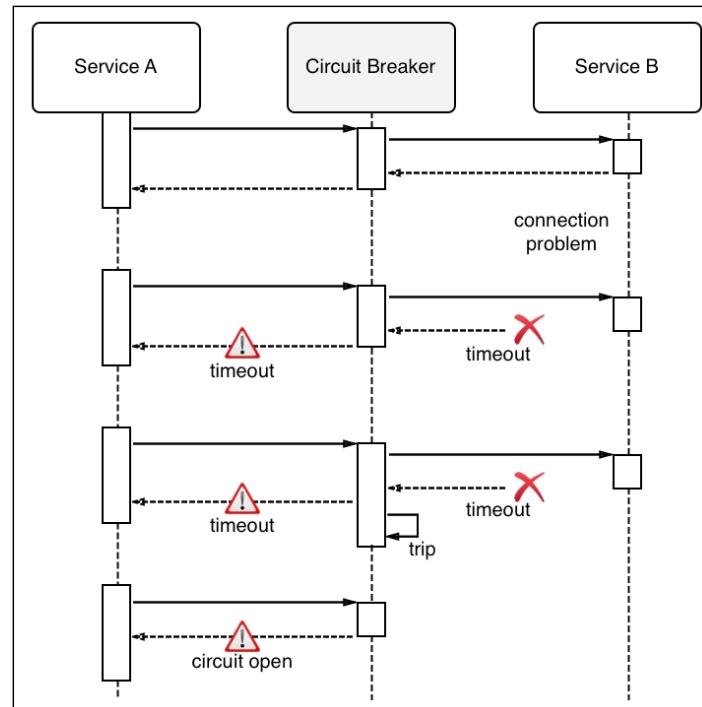
But now there is another problem. *How does the proxy or router know whether a certain service instance is available or not?* It could have crashed or it could be unresponsive. To solve this problem, one uses so-called health checks. The proxy, or some other system service on behalf of the proxy, periodically polls all the service instances and checks their health. The questions are basically *Are you still there? Are you healthy?* The answer of each service is either *Yes* or *No*, or the health check times out if the instance is not responsive anymore.

If the component answers with *No* or a timeout occurs, then the system kills the corresponding instance and spins up a new instance in its place. If all this happens in a fully automated way, then we say that we have an auto-healing system in place.

Circuit breaker pattern

A **circuit breaker** is a mechanism that is used to avoid a distributed application going down due to a cascading failure of many essential components. Circuit breakers help to avoid one failing component tearing down other dependent services in a domino effect. Like circuit breakers in an electrical system, which protect a house from burning down due to the failure of a malfunctioning plugged-in appliance by interrupting the power line, circuit breakers in a distributed application interrupt the connection from Service A to Service B if the latter is not responding or is malfunctioning.

This can be achieved by wrapping a protected service call in a circuit breaker object. This object monitors for failures. Once the number of failures reaches a certain threshold, the circuit breaker trips. All subsequent calls to the circuit breaker will return with an error, without the protected call being made at all:



Circuit breaker pattern

Running in production

To successfully run a distributed application in production, we need to consider a few more aspects beyond the best practices and patterns presented in the preceding sections. One specific area that comes to mind is introspection and monitoring. Let's go through the most important aspects in detail.

Logging

Once a distributed application is in production, it is not possible to debug it. But how can we then find out *what exactly is the root cause of a malfunction of the application that has been reported by a user?* The solution to this problem is to produce abundant and meaningful logging information. Developers need to instrument their application services in such a way that they output helpful information, such as when an error happens or a potentially unexpected or unwanted situation is encountered. Often, this information is output to STDOUT and STDERR, from where it is then collected by system daemons that write the information to local files or forward it to a central log aggregation service.

If there is sufficient information in the logs, developers can use those logs to track down the root cause of errors in the system that have been reported.

In a distributed application architecture, with its many components, logging is even more important than in a monolithic application. The paths of execution of a single request through all the components of the application can be very complex. Also, remember that the components are distributed across a cluster of nodes. Thus, it makes sense to log everything of importance and to each log entry add things such as the exact time when it happened, the component in which it happened, and the node on which the component ran, to name just a few. Furthermore, the logging information should be aggregated in a central location so that it is readily available for developers and system operators to analyze.

Tracing

Tracing is used to find out how an individual request is funneled through a distributed application and how much time is spent overall for the request and in every individual component. This information, if collected, can be used as one of the sources for dashboards that show the behavior and health of the system.

Monitoring

Operators like to have dashboards showing live key metrics of the system, which show them the overall health of the application in one glance. These metrics can be non-functional metrics such as memory and CPU usage, number of crashes of a system or application component, health of a node, and so on, as well as functional and thus application-specific metrics such as the number of checkouts in an ordering system or the number of items out of stock in an inventory service.

Most often, the base data used to aggregate the numbers that are used for a dashboard are extracted from logging information. This can either be system logs, which will mostly be used for non-functional metrics, and application-level logs, for functional metrics.

Application updates

One of the competitive advantages for a company is to be able to react in a timely manner to changing market situations. Part of this is to be able to quickly adjust an application to fulfill new and changed needs or to add new functionality. The faster we can update our applications, the better. Many companies these days roll out new or changed features multiple times per day.

Since application updates are so frequent, these updates have to be non-disruptive. We cannot allow the system to go down for maintenance when upgrading. It all has to happen seamlessly and transparently.

Rolling updates

One way of updating an application or an application service is to use rolling updates. The assumption here is that the particular piece of software that has to be updated runs in multiple instances. Only then can we use this type of update.

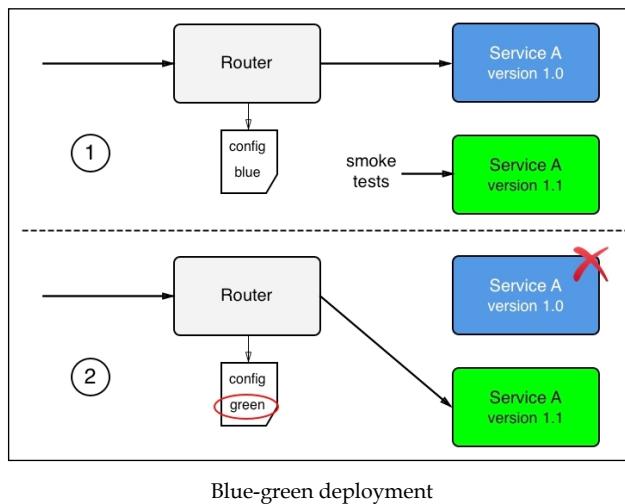
What happens is that the system stops one instance of the current service and replaces it with an instance of the new service. As soon as the new instance is ready, it will be served traffic. Usually, the new instance is monitored for some time to see whether or not it works as expected and, if it does, the next instance of the current service is taken down and replaced by a new instance. This pattern is repeated until all service instances have been replaced.

Since there are always a few instances running at any given time, current or new, the application is operational all the time. No downtime is needed.

Blue-green deployments

In blue-green deployments, the current version of the application service, called blue, handles all the application traffic. We then install the new version of the application service, called green, on the production system. The new service is not yet wired with the rest of the application.

Once green is installed, one can execute smoke tests against this new service and, if those succeed, the router can be configured to funnel all traffic that previously went to blue to the new service, green. The behavior of green is then observed closely and, if all success criteria are met, blue can be decommissioned. But if, for some reason, green shows some unexpected or unwanted behavior, the router can be reconfigured to return all traffic to blue. Green can then be removed and fixed, and a new blue-green deployment can be executed with the corrected version:



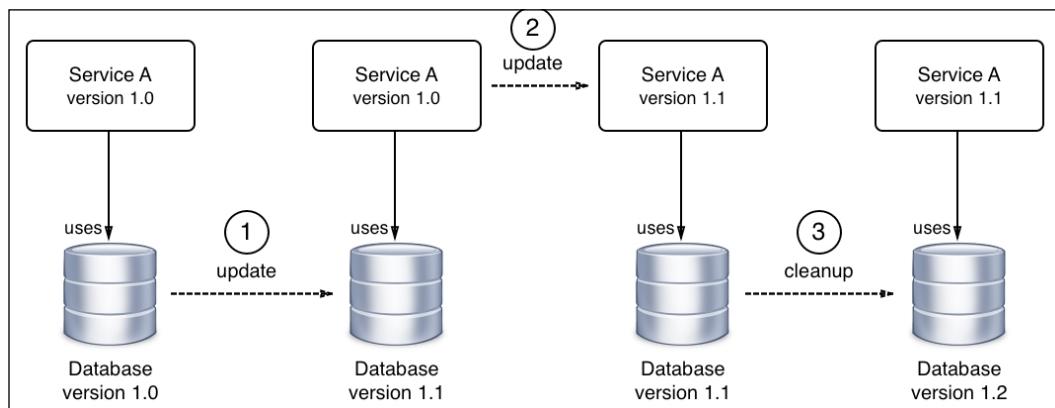
Canary releases

Canary releases are releases where we have the current version of the application service and the new version installed on the system in parallel. As such, they resemble blue-green deployments. At first, all traffic is still routed through the current version. We then configure a router so that it funnels a small percentage, say 1%, of the overall traffic to the new version of the application service. The behavior of the new service is then monitored closely to find out whether or not it works as expected. If all the criteria for success are met, then the router is configured to funnel more traffic, say 5% this time, through the new service. Again, the behavior of the new service is closely monitored and, if it is successful, more and more traffic is routed to it until we reach 100%. Once all traffic is routed to the new service and it has been stable for some time, the old version of the service can be decommissioned.

Why do we call this a canary release? It is named after the coal miners who would use canary birds as an early warning system in the mines. Canary birds are particularly sensitive to toxic gas and if such a canary bird died, the miners knew they had to abandon the mine immediately.

Irreversible data changes

If part of our update process is to execute an irreversible change in our state, such as an irreversible schema change in a backing relational database, then we need to address this with special care. It is possible to execute such changes without downtime if one uses the right approach. It is important to recognize that, in such a situation, one cannot deploy the code changes that require the new data structure in the data store at the same time as the changes to the data. Rather, the whole update has to be separated into three distinct steps. In the first step, one rolls out a backward-compatible schema and data change. If this is successful, then one rolls out the new code in the second step. Again, if that is successful, one cleans up the schema in the third step and removes the backwards-compatibility:



Rolling out an irreversible data or schema change

Rollback

If we have frequent updates to our application services that run in production, sooner or later there will be a problem with one of those updates. Maybe a developer, while fixing a bug, introduced a new one, which was not caught by all the automated, and maybe manual, tests, so the application is misbehaving and it is imperative that we roll back the service to the previous good version. In this regard, a rollback is a recovery from a disaster.

Again, in a distributed application architecture, it is not a question of whether a rollback will ever be needed, but rather when a rollback will have to occur. Thus we need to absolutely be sure that we can always roll back to a previous version of any service that makes up our application. Rollbacks cannot be an afterthought but have to be a tested and proven part of our deployment process.

If we are using blue-green deployments to update our services, then rollbacks should be fairly simple. All we need to do is switch the router from the new green version of the service back to the previous blue version.

Summary

In this chapter, we learned what a distributed application architecture is and what patterns and best practices are helpful or needed to successfully run a distributed application. Lastly, we discussed what is needed in addition to run such an application in production.

In the next chapter, we will dive into networking limited to a single host. We're going to discuss in detail how containers living on the same host can communicate with each other and how external clients can access containerized applications if necessary.

Questions

Please answer the following questions to assess your understanding of this chapter's content.

1. When and why does every part in a distributed application architecture have to be redundant? Explain in a few short sentences.
2. Why do we need DNS services? Explain in 3 to 5 sentences.
3. What is a circuit breaker and why is it needed?
4. What are some important differences between a monolithic application and a distributed or multi-service application?
5. What is a blue-green deployment?

Further reading

The following articles provide more in-depth information:

- CircuitBreaker at <http://bit.ly/1NU1sgW>
- *The OSI model explained* at <http://bit.ly/1UCcvMt>
- BlueGreenDeployment at <http://bit.ly/2r2IxNJ>

7

Single-Host Networking

In the last chapter, we learned about the most important architectural patterns and best practices that are used when dealing with a distributed application architecture.

In this chapter, we will introduce the Docker container networking model and its single-host implementation in the form of the bridge network. This chapter also introduces the concept of software-defined networks and how they are used to secure containerized applications. Finally, it demonstrates how container ports can be opened to the public and thus make containerized components accessible to the outside world.

This chapter will contain the following topics:

- The container network model
- Network firewalling
- The bridge network
- The host network
- The null network
- Running in an existing network namespace
- Port management

After completing this module, you will be able to do the following:

- Draft the container networking model – along with all the essential components onto a whiteboard
- Create and delete a custom bridge network
- Run a container attached to a custom bridge network
- Inspect a bridge network

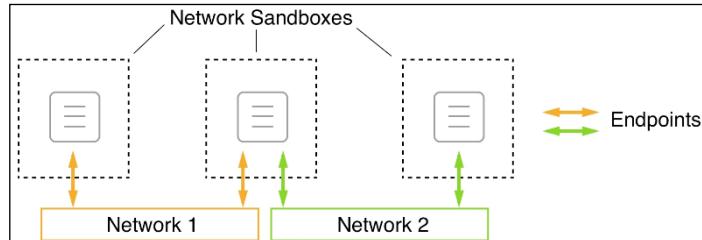
- Isolate containers from each other by running them on different bridge networks
- Publish a container port to a host port of your choice

Technical requirements

For this chapter, the only thing you will need is a Docker host that is able to run Linux containers. You can use your laptop with either Docker for Mac or Windows or Docker Toolbox installed.

The container network model

So far, we have worked with single containers. But in reality, a containerized business application consists of several containers that need to collaborate to achieve a goal. Therefore, we need a way for individual containers to communicate with each other. This is achieved by establishing pathways that we can use to send data packets back and forth between containers. These pathways are called **networks**. Docker has defined a very simple networking model, the so-called **container network model (CNM)**, to specify the requirements that any software that implements a container network has to fulfill. The following is a graphical representation of the CNM:



The Docker container network model

The CNM has three elements – sandbox, endpoint, and network:

- **Sandbox:** The sandbox perfectly isolates a container from the outside world. No inbound network connection is allowed into the sandboxed container. Yet, it is very unlikely that a container will be of any value in a system if absolutely no communication with it is possible. To work around this, we have element number two, which is the endpoint.

- **Endpoint:** An endpoint is a controlled gateway from the outside world into the network's sandbox that shields the container. The endpoint connects the network sandbox (but not the container) to the third element of the model, which is the network.
- **Network:** The network is the pathway that transports the data packets of an instance of communication from endpoint to endpoint, or ultimately from container to container.

It is important to note that a network sandbox can have zero to many endpoints, or, said differently, each container living in a network sandbox can either be attached to no network at all or it can be attached to multiple different networks at the same time. In the preceding diagram, the middle of the three network sandboxes is attached to both networks 1 and 2 through a respective endpoint.

This networking model is very generic and does not specify where the individual containers that communicate with each other run over a network. All containers could, for example, run on one and the same host (local) or they could be distributed across a cluster of hosts (global).

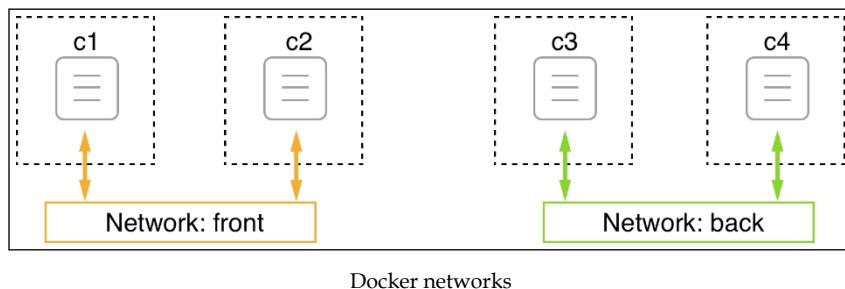
Of course, the CNM is just a model describing how networking works among containers. To be able to use networking with our containers, we need real implementations of the CNM. For both local and global scope, we have multiple implementations of the CNM. In the following table, we give a short overview of the existing implementations and their main characteristics. The list is in no particular order:

Network	Company	Scope	Description
Bridge	Docker	Local	Simple network based on Linux bridges allowing networking on a single host
Macvlan	Docker	Local	Configures multiple layer 2 (that is, MAC) addresses on a single physical host interface
Overlay	Docker	Global	Multinode-capable container network based on Virtual Extensible LAN (VXLAN)
Weave Net	Weaveworks	Global	Simple, resilient, multihost Docker networking
Contiv Network Plugin	Cisco	Global	Open source container networking

All network types not directly provided by Docker can be added to a Docker host as a plugin.

Network firewalling

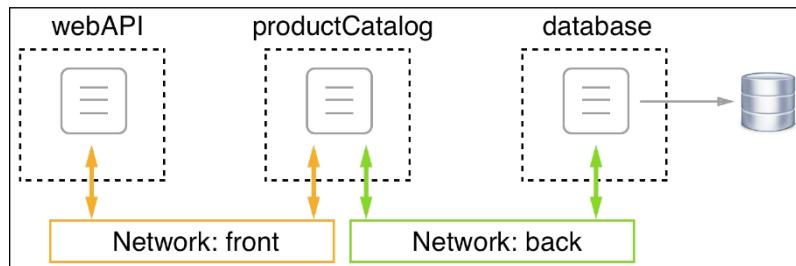
Docker has always had the mantra of security first. This philosophy had a direct influence on how networking in a single and multihost Docker environment was designed and implemented. Software-defined networks are easy and cheap to create, yet they perfectly firewall containers that are attached to this network from other non-attached containers, and from the outside world. All containers that belong to the same network can freely communicate with each other, while others have no means to do so:



Docker networks

In the preceding diagram, we have two networks called **front** and **back**. Attached to the front network, we have containers **c1** and **c2**, and attached to the back network, we have containers **c3** and **c4**. **c1** and **c2** can freely communicate with each other, as can **c3** and **c4**. But **c1** and **c2** have no way to communicate with either **c3** or **c4**, and vice versa.

Now what about the situation where we have an application consisting of three services, **webAPI**, **productCatalog**, and **database**? We want **webAPI** to be able to communicate with **productCatalog**, but not with the database, and we want **productCatalog** to be able to communicate with the database service. We can solve this situation by placing **webAPI** and the database on different networks and attach **productCatalog** to both of these networks, as shown in the following diagram:



Container attached to multiple networks

Since creating SDNs is cheap, and each network provides added security by isolating resources from unauthorized access, it is highly recommended that you design and run applications so that they use multiple networks and run only services on the same network that absolutely need to communicate with each other. In the preceding example, there is absolutely no need for the web API component to ever communicate directly with the database service, so we have put them on different networks. If the worst-case scenario happens and a hacker compromises the web API, they have no ability to access the database from there without first also hacking the product catalog service.

The bridge network

The Docker bridge network is the first implementation of the container network model that we're going to look at in detail. This network implementation is based on the Linux bridge. When the Docker daemon runs for the first time, it creates a Linux bridge and calls it `docker0`. This is the default behavior, and can be changed by changing the configuration. Docker then creates a network with this Linux bridge and calls the network bridge. All the containers that we create on a Docker host and that we do not explicitly bind to another network leads to Docker automatically attaching to this bridge network.

To verify that we indeed have a network called `bridge` of type `bridge` defined on our host, we can list all networks on the host with the following command:

```
$ docker network ls
```

This should provide an output similar to the following:

\$ docker network ls			
NETWORK ID	NAME	DRIVER	SCOPE
928c8ce47bf2	bridge	bridge	local
bdb36adcf70c	host	host	local
af82006f2f2d	none	null	local

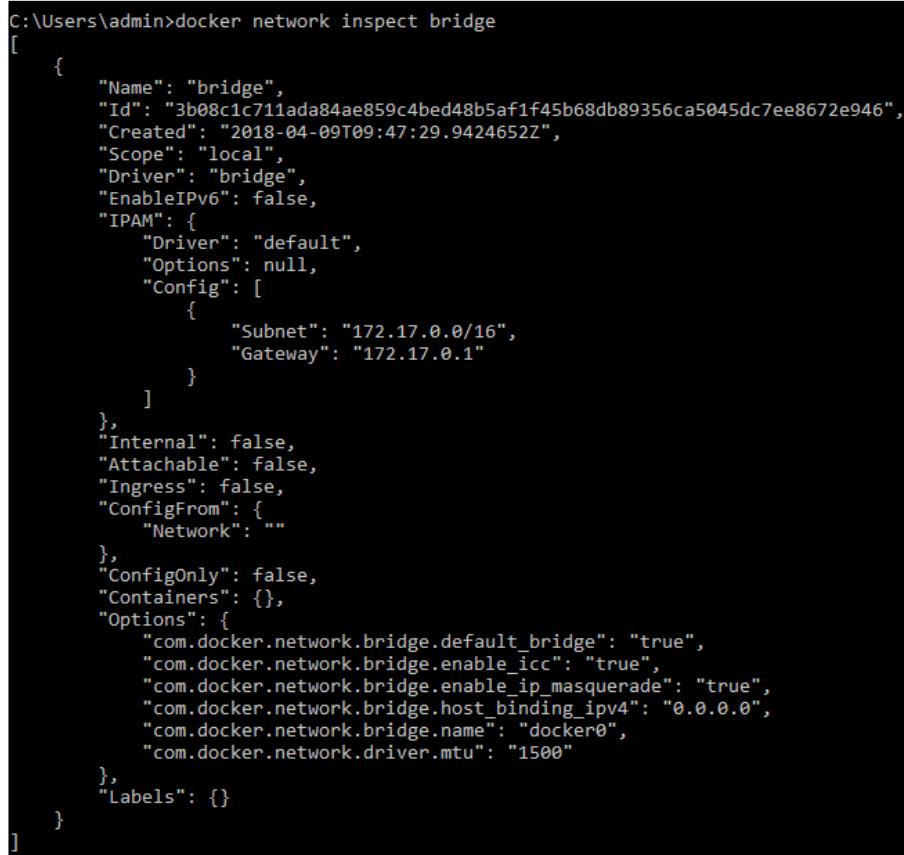
Listing of all Docker networks available by default

In your case, the IDs will be different, but the rest of the output should look the same. We do indeed have a first network called `bridge` using the driver `bridge`. The scope being `local` just means that this type of network is restricted to a single host and cannot span across multiple hosts. In a later chapter, we will also discuss other types of networks that have a global scope, meaning they can span whole clusters of hosts.

Now, let's look a little bit deeper into what this bridge network is all about. For this, we are going to use the Docker inspect command:

```
$ docker network inspect bridge
```

When executed, this outputs a big chunk of detailed information about the network in question. This information should look like the following:



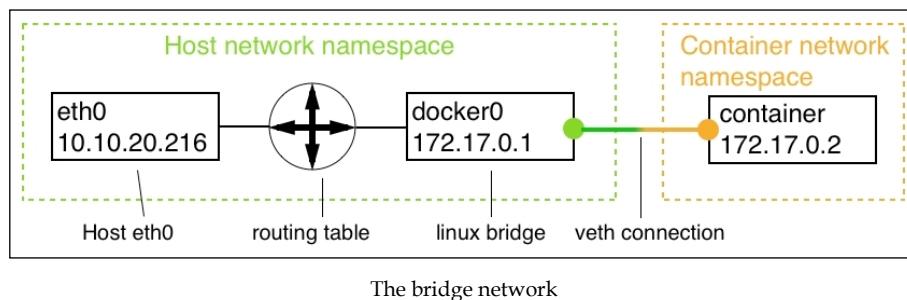
The screenshot shows a terminal window on a Windows system (C:\Users\admin) displaying the output of the command 'docker network inspect bridge'. The output is a JSON object representing the bridge network configuration. Key details include the network name ('bridge'), ID ('3b08c1c711ada84ae859c4bed48b5af1f45b68db89356ca5045dc7ee8672e946'), creation time ('2018-04-09T09:47:29.9424652Z'), scope ('local'), driver ('bridge'), and enableIPv6 setting (false). The IPAM section specifies a subnet of '172.17.0.0/16' and a gateway of '172.17.0.1'. The network is not internal or attachable, and it has no ingress or egress rules. It also has no config from another network. The options section includes various Docker-specific configurations like 'com.docker.network.bridge.default_bridge: true', 'com.docker.network.bridge.enable_icc: true', etc.

```
C:\Users\admin>docker network inspect bridge
[{"Name": "bridge", "Id": "3b08c1c711ada84ae859c4bed48b5af1f45b68db89356ca5045dc7ee8672e946", "Created": "2018-04-09T09:47:29.9424652Z", "Scope": "local", "Driver": "bridge", "EnableIPv6": false, "IPAM": {"Driver": "default", "Options": null, "Config": [{"Subnet": "172.17.0.0/16", "Gateway": "172.17.0.1"}]}, "Internal": false, "Attachable": false, "Ingress": false, "ConfigFrom": {"Network": ""}, "ConfigOnly": false, "Containers": {}, "Options": {"com.docker.network.bridge.default_bridge": "true", "com.docker.network.bridge.enable_icc": "true", "com.docker.network.bridge.enable_ip_masquerade": "true", "com.docker.network.bridge.host_binding_ipv4": "0.0.0.0", "com.docker.network.bridge.name": "docker0", "com.docker.network.driver.mtu": "1500"}, "Labels": {}}]
```

Output generated when inspecting the Docker bridge network

We have already seen the `ID`, `Name`, `Driver`, and `Scope` values when we listed all the networks, so that is nothing new. But let's have a look at the **IP address management (IPAM)** block. IPAM is software that is used to track IP addresses that are used on a computer. The important part in the IPAM block is the `Config` node with its values for `Subnet` and `Gateway`. The subnet for the bridge network is defined by default as `172.17.0.0/16`.

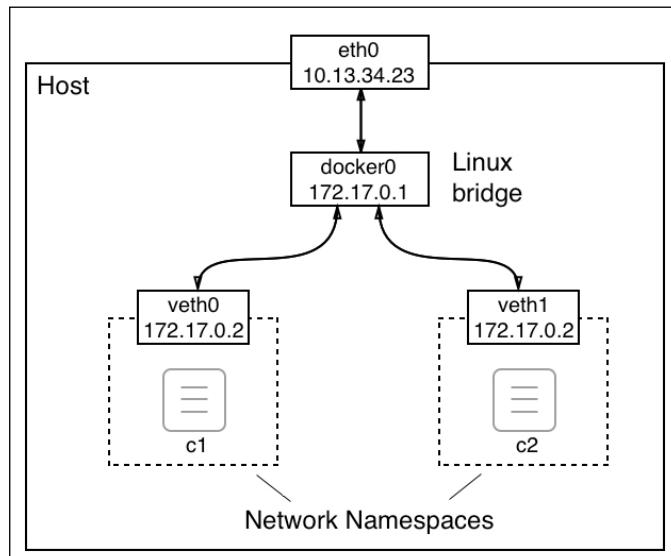
This means that all containers attached to this network will get an IP address assigned by Docker that is taken from the given range, which is `172.17.0.2` to `172.17.255.255`. The `172.17.0.1` address is reserved for the router of this network whose role in this type of network is taken by the Linux bridge. One can expect that the very first container that will be attached to this network by Docker will get the `172.17.0.2` address. All subsequent containers will get a higher number; the following diagram illustrates this fact:



In the preceding diagram, we can see the network namespace of the host, which includes the host's `eth0` endpoint, which is typically a NIC if the Docker host runs on bare metal or a virtual NIC if the Docker host is a VM. All traffic to the host comes through `eth0`. The Linux bridge is responsible for the routing of the network traffic between the host's network and the subnet of the bridge network.

Single-Host Networking

By default, only traffic from the egress is allowed, and all ingress is blocked. What this means is that while containerized applications can reach the internet, they cannot be reached by any outside traffic. Each container attached to the network gets its own **virtual ethernet (veth)** connection with the bridge. This is illustrated in the following diagram:



Details of the bridge network

The preceding diagram shows us the world from the perspective of the host. We will explore how the situation looks from within a container later on in this section.

We are not limited to just the bridge network, as Docker allows us to define our own custom bridge networks. This is not just a feature that is nice to have, but it is a recommended best practice to not run all containers on the same network, but to use additional bridge networks to further isolate containers that have no need to communicate with each other. To create a custom bridge network called `sample-net`, use the following command:

```
$ docker network create --driver bridge sample-net
```

If we do this, we can then inspect what subnet Docker has created for this new custom network as follows:

```
$ docker network inspect sample-net | grep Subnet
```

This returns the following value:

```
"Subnet": "172.18.0.0/16",
```

Evidently, Docker has just assigned the next free block of IP addresses to our new custom bridge network. If, for some reason, we want to specify our own subnet range when creating a network, we can do so by using the `--subnet` parameter:

```
$ docker network create --driver bridge --subnet "10.1.0.0/16" test-net
```

To avoid conflicts due to duplicate IP addresses, make sure you avoid creating networks with overlapping subnets.

Now that we have discussed what a bridge network is and how one can create a custom bridge network, we want to understand how we can attach containers to these networks. First, let's interactively run an Alpine container without specifying the network to be attached:

```
$ docker container run --name c1 -it --rm alpine:latest /bin/sh
```

In another Terminal window, let's inspect the `c1` container:

```
$ docker container inspect c1
```

In the vast output, let's concentrate for a moment on the part that provides network-related information. It can be found under the `NetworkSettings` node. I have it listed in the following output:

```
, "NetworkSettings": {  
    "Bridge": "",  
    "SandboxID": "ae53496fba49de3d0a4727105cc0799b7fdb30746d76700238cb47c611f3eb68",  
    "HairpinMode": false,  
    "LinkLocalIPv6Address": "",  
    "LinkLocalIPv6PrefixLen": 0,  
    "Ports": {},  
    "SandboxKey": "/var/run/docker/netns/ae53496fba49",  
    "SecondaryIPAddresses": null,  
    "SecondaryIPv6Addresses": null,  
    "EndpointID": "c063a725d1f66e867b5769a80d1477cc88d07618860655fa3033a97478e55713",  
    "Gateway": "172.17.0.1",  
    "GlobalIPv6Address": "",  
    "GlobalIPv6PrefixLen": 0,  
    "IPAddress": "172.17.0.4",  
    "IPPrefixLen": 16,  
    "IPv6Gateway": "",  
    "MacAddress": "02:42:ac:11:00:04",  
    "Networks": {  
        "bridge": {  
            "IPAMConfig": null,  
            "Links": null,  
            "Aliases": null,  
            "NetworkID": "026e653c2504e464748b4ce9b25cce69d29bc82a52105a25920f2b796663e635",  
            "EndpointID": "c063a725d1f66e867b5769a80d1477cc88d07618860655fa3033a97478e55713",  
            "Gateway": "172.17.0.1",  
            "IPAddress": "172.17.0.4",  
            "IPPrefixLen": 16,  
            "IPv6Gateway": "",  
            "GlobalIPv6Address": "",  
            "GlobalIPv6PrefixLen": 0,  
            "MacAddress": "02:42:ac:11:00:04",  
            "DriverOpts": null  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Network settings section of the container metadata

In the preceding output, we can see that the container is indeed attached to the bridge network since the `NetworkID` is equal to `026e65...`, which we can see from the preceding code is the ID of the bridge network. We can also see that the container got the IP address of `172.17.0.4` assigned as expected and that the gateway is at `172.17.0.1`. Please note that the container also had a `MacAddress` associated with it. This is important as the Linux bridge uses the Mac address for routing.

So far, we have approached this from the outside of the container's network namespace. Now, let's see how the situation looks when we're not only inside the container, but inside the container's network namespace. Inside the `c1` container, let's use the `ip` tool to inspect what's going on. Run the `ip addr` command and observe the output that is generated as follows:

```
/ # ip addr
1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 65536 qdisc noqueue state UNKNOWN qlen 1
    link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00
    inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
2: tunl0@NONE: <NOARP> mtu 1480 qdisc noop state DOWN qlen 1
    link/ipip 0.0.0.0 brd 0.0.0.0
3: ipGtln0@NONE: <NOARP> mtu 1452 qdisc noop state DOWN qlen 1
    link/tunnel6 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00
19: eth0@if20: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP,M-DOWN> mtu 1500 qdisc noqueue state UP
    link/ether 02:42:ac:11:00:04 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    inet 172.17.0.4/16 brd 172.17.255.255 scope global eth0
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
/ #
```

Container namespace as seen by the IP tool

The interesting part of the preceding output is the number 19, the `eth0` endpoint. The `veth0` endpoint that the Linux bridge created outside of the container namespace is mapped to `eth0` inside the container. Docker always maps the first endpoint of a container network namespace to `eth0`, as seen from inside the namespace. If the network namespace is attached to an additional network, then that endpoint will be mapped to `eth1`, and so on.

Since at this point we're not really interested in any endpoint other than `eth0`, we could have used a more specific variant of the command, which would have given us the following:

```
/ # ip addr show eth0
195: eth0@if196: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP,M-DOWN> mtu 1500
    qdisc noqueue state UP
        link/ether 02:42:ac:11:00:02 brd
        ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
        inet 172.17.0.2/16 brd 172.17.255.255 scope
            global eth0
                valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever.
```

In the output, we can also see what MAC address (`02:42:ac:11:00:02`) and what IP (`172.17.0.2`) have been associated with this container network namespace by Docker.

We can also get some information about how requests are routed by using the `ip route` command:

```
/ # ip route
default via 172.17.0.1 dev eth0
172.17.0.0/16 dev eth0 scope link src 172.17.0.2
```

This output tells us that all traffic to the gateway at `172.17.0.1` is routed through the `eth0` device.

Now, let's run another container called `c2` on the same network:

```
$ docker container run --name c2 -d alpine:latest ping 127.0.0.1
```

The `c2` container will also be attached to the bridge network, since we have not specified any other network. Its IP address will be the next free one from the subnet, which is `172.17.0.3`, as we can readily test:

```
$ docker container inspect --format "{{.NetworkSettings.
IPAddress}}" c2
172.17.0.3
```

Now, we have two containers attached to the bridge network. We can try to inspect this network once again to find a list of all containers attached to it in the output.:

```
$ docker network inspect bridge
```

The information is found under the `Containers` node:

```
"ConfigOnly": false,
"Containers": {
    "27b96de70b58cd918d35c235a7c180f56f71df58cf4cec50b8f0103dd529b95f": {
        "Name": "c2",
        "EndpointID": "8883649774c5c4c53063da02598c8d09fe7ee427145b348b1d1703f31213e9ca",
        "MacAddress": "02:42:ac:11:00:03",
        "IPv4Address": "172.17.0.3/16",
        "IPv6Address": ""
    },
    "35b8dd512acb985647833e1cc52625e129c15e903fd8a0c0ab247932bc910166": {
        "Name": "c1",
        "EndpointID": "28269a9cc630135ab287052fa69c72f28c57a10bd5e7523c451bf2d0976fd1b5",
        "MacAddress": "02:42:ac:11:00:02",
        "IPv4Address": "172.17.0.2/16",
        "IPv6Address": ""
    }
},
"Options": {}
```

The containers section of the output of `docker network inspect bridge`

Once again, we have shortened the output to the essentials for readability.

Now, let's create two additional containers, `c3` and `c4`, and attach them to the `test-net`. For this, we use the `--network` parameter:

```
$ docker container run --name c3 -d --network test-net \
    alpine:latest ping 127.0.0.1
$ docker container run --name c4 -d --network test-net \
    alpine:latest ping 127.0.0.1
```

Let's inspect network `test-net` and confirm that the containers `c3` and `c4` are indeed attached to it:

```
$ docker network inspect test-net
```

This will give us the following output for the `Containers` section:

```
"Containers": {
    "134295caa6012df5dc7d541436954af1a5264c6f69d5b8012e88f9c12faf40f1": {
        "Name": "c3",
        "EndpointID": "5693cd9329437a9ecec1d27f439887bb0258837b9342a1c32204fa4571298457",
        "MacAddress": "02:42:0a:01:00:02",
        "IPv4Address": "10.1.0.2/16",
        "IPv6Address": ""
    },
    "4a277d33ebfb74f00d31be272d2d74cbfec4b17666e44d88e26cf83b0a790cc": {
        "Name": "c4",
        "EndpointID": "a1e9ecafebdcf816261883c171434273d9973832d43255b5aa224b081853ed0f",
        "MacAddress": "02:42:0a:01:00:03",
        "IPv4Address": "10.1.0.3/16",
        "IPv6Address": ""
}
```

Containers section of the command `docker network inspect test-net`

The next question we're going to ask ourselves is whether the two `c3` and `c4` containers can freely communicate with each other. To demonstrate that this is indeed the case, we can `exec` into the container `c3`:

```
$ docker container exec -it c3 /bin/sh
```

Once inside the container, we can try to ping container `c4` by name and by IP address:

```
/ # ping c4
PING c4 (10.1.0.3): 56 data bytes
64 bytes from 10.1.0.3: seq=0 ttl=64 time=0.192 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.3: seq=1 ttl=64 time=0.148 ms
...
...
```

The following is the result of the ping using the IP address of the container c4:

```
/ # ping 10.1.0.3
PING 10.1.0.3 (10.1.0.3): 56 data bytes
64 bytes from 10.1.0.3: seq=0 ttl=64 time=0.200 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.3: seq=1 ttl=64 time=0.172 ms
...
...
```

The answer in both cases confirms to us that the communication between containers attached to the same network is working as expected. The fact that we can even use the name of the container we want to connect to shows us that the name resolution provided by the Docker DNS service works inside this network.

Now we want to make sure that the bridge and the test-net networks are firewalled from each other. To demonstrate this, we can try to ping the c2 container from the c3 container, either by its name or by its IP address:

```
/ # ping c2
ping: bad address 'c2'
```

The following is the result of the ping using the IP address of the target container c2 instead:

```
/ # ping 172.17.0.3
PING 172.17.0.3 (172.17.0.3): 56 data bytes
^C
--- 172.17.0.3 ping statistics ---
43 packets transmitted, 0 packets received, 100% packet loss
```

The preceding command remained hanging and I had to terminate the command with *Ctrl+C*. From the answer to pinging c2, we can also see that the name resolution does not work across networks. This is the expected behavior. Networks provide an extra layer of isolation, and thus security, to containers.

Earlier, we learned that a container can be attached to multiple networks. Let's attach a c5 container to the sample-net and test-net networks at the same time:

```
$ docker container run --name c5 -d \
--network sample-net \
--network test-net \
alpine:latest ping 127.0.0.1
```

We can then test that `c5` is reachable from the `c2` container similar to when we tested the same for containers `c4` and `c2`. The result will show that the connection indeed works.

If we want to remove an existing network, we can use the `docker network rm` command, but note that one cannot accidentally delete a network that has containers attached to it:

```
$ docker network rm test-net
Error response from daemon: network test-net id 863192... has
active endpoints
```

Before we continue, let's clean up and remove all containers:

```
$ docker container rm -f $(docker container ls -aq)
```

Then we remove the two custom networks that we created:

```
$ docker network rm sample-net
$ docker network rm test-net
```

The host network

There exist occasions where we want to run a container in the network namespace of the host. This can be necessary when we need to run some software in a container that is used to analyze or debug the host network's traffic. But keep in mind that these are very specific scenarios. When running business software in containers, there is no good reason to ever run the respective containers attached to the host's network. For security reasons, it is strongly recommended that you do not run any such container attached to the host network on a production or production-like environment.

That said, *how can we run a container inside the network namespace of the host?* Simply by attaching the container to the host network:

```
$ docker container run --rm -it --network host alpine:latest /bin/
sh
```

If we now use the `ip` tool to analyze the network namespace from within the container, we will see that we get exactly the same picture as we would if we were running the `ip` tool directly on the host. For example, if I inspect the `eth0` device on my host, I get this:

```
/ # ip addr show eth0
2: eth0: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc pfifo_
    fast state UP qlen 1000
        link/ether 02:50:00:00:00:01 brd
```

```
ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
inet 192.168.65.3/24 brd 192.168.65.255 scope
global eth0
    valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
inet6 fe80::c90b:4219:ddb9:92bf/64 scope link
    valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
```

Here, I find that 192.168.65.3 is the IP address that the host has been assigned and that the MAC address shown here also corresponds to that of the host.

We can also inspect the routes to get the following (shortened):

```
/ # ip route
default via 192.168.65.1 dev eth0 src 192.168.65.3 metric 202
10.1.0.0/16 dev cni0 scope link src 10.1.0.1
127.0.0.0/8 dev lo scope host
172.17.0.0/16 dev docker0 scope link src 172.17.0.1
...
192.168.65.0/24 dev eth0 scope link src 192.168.65.3 metric 202
```

Before I let you go on to the next section of this chapter, I want to once more point out that the use of the host network is dangerous and needs to be avoided if possible.

The null network

Sometimes, we need to run a few application services or jobs that do not need any network connection at all to execute the task. It is strongly advised that you run those applications in a container that is attached to the none network. This container will be completely isolated, and thus safe from any outside access. Let's run such a container:

```
$ docker container run --rm -it --network none alpine:latest /bin/
sh
```

Once inside the container, we can verify that there is no eth0 network endpoint available:

```
/ # ip addr show eth0
ip: can't find device 'eth0'
```

There is also no routing information available, as we can demonstrate by using the following command:

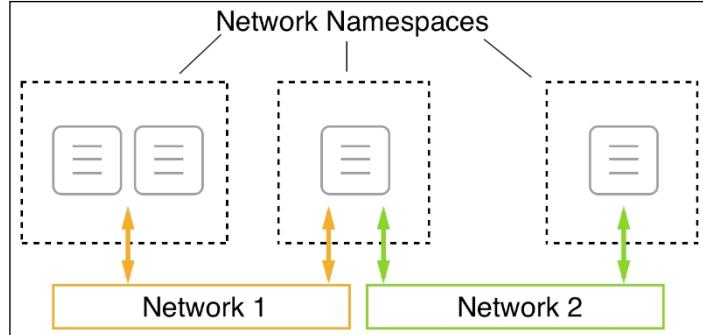
```
/ # ip route
```

This returns nothing.

Running in an existing network namespace

Normally, Docker creates a new network namespace for each container we run. The network namespace of the container corresponds to the sandbox of the container network model we described earlier on. As we attach the container to a network, we define an endpoint that connects the container network namespace with the actual network. This way, we have one container per network namespace.

Docker provides an additional way to define the network namespace in which a container runs. When creating a new container, we can specify that it should be attached to or maybe we should say included in the network namespace of an existing container. With this technique, we can run multiple containers in a single network namespace:



Multiple containers running in a single network namespace

In the preceding diagram, we can see that in the leftmost network namespace, we have two containers. The two containers, since they share the same namespace, can communicate on localhost with each other. The network namespace (and not the individual containers) is then attached to **Network 1**.

This is useful when we want to debug the network of an existing container without running additional processes inside that container. We can just attach a special utility container to the network namespace of the container to inspect. This feature is also used by Kubernetes when it creates a pod. We will hear more about Kubernetes and pods in subsequent chapters of this book.

Now, let's demonstrate how this works.

1. First, we create a new bridge network:

```
$ docker network create --driver bridge test-net
```

2. Next, we run a container attached to this network:

```
$ docker container run --name web -d --network test-net
nginx:alpine
```

3. Finally, we run another container and attach it to the network of our web container:

```
$ docker container run -it --rm --network container:web
alpine:latest /bin/sh
```

Specifically, note how we define the network: `--network container:web`. This tells Docker that our new container shall use the same network namespace as the container called `web`.

Since the new container is in the same network namespace as the web container running Nginx, we're now able to access Nginx on localhost! We can prove this by using the `wget` tool, which is part of the Alpine container, to connect to Nginx. We should see the following:

```
/ # wget -qO - localhost
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<title>Welcome to nginx!</title>
...
</html>
```

Note that we have shortened the output for readability. Please also note that there is an important difference between running two containers attached to the same network and two containers running in the same network namespace. In both cases, the containers can freely communicate with each other, but in the latter case, the communication happens over localhost.

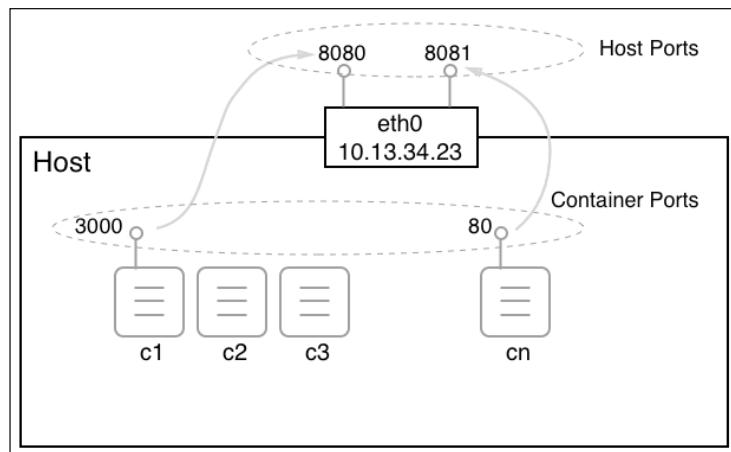
To clean up the container and network we can use the following command:

```
$ docker container rm --force web
$ docker network rm test-net
```

Port management

Now that we know how we can isolate or firewall containers from each other by placing them on different networks, and that we can have a container attached to more than one network, we have one problem that remains unsolved. *How can we expose an application service to the outside world?* Imagine a container running a web server hosting our webAPI from before. We want customers from the internet to be able to access this API. We have designed it to be a publicly accessible API. To achieve this, we have to, figuratively speaking, open a gate in our firewall through which we can funnel external traffic to our API. For security reasons, we don't just want to open the doors wide, but to have only a single controlled gate through which traffic flows.

We can create such a gate by mapping a container port to an available port on the host. We're also calling this container port to publish a port. Remember, the container has its own virtual network stack, as does the host. Therefore, container ports and host ports exist completely independently, and by default have nothing in common at all. But we can now wire a container port with a free host port and funnel external traffic through this link, as illustrated in the following screenshot:



Mapping container ports to host ports

But now it is time to demonstrate how one can actually map a container port to a host port. This is done when creating a container. We have different ways of doing so:

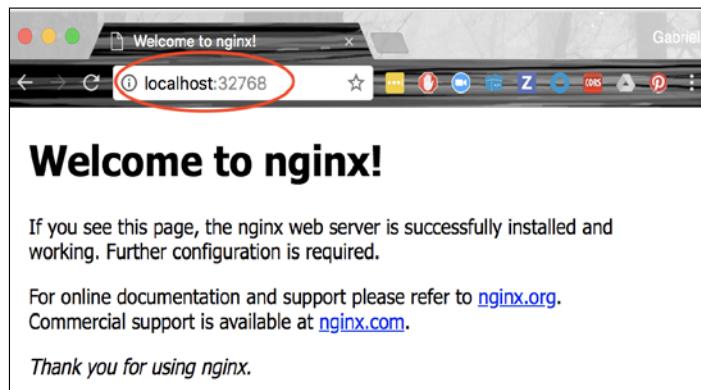
- First, we can let Docker decide which host port our container port shall be mapped to. Docker will then select one of the free host ports in the range of 32xxx. This automatic mapping is done by using the `-P` parameter:

```
$ docker container run --name web -P -d nginx:alpine
```

The preceding command runs an Nginx server in a container. Nginx is listening at port 80 inside the container. With the `-P` parameter, we're telling Docker to map all the exposed container ports to a free port in the 32xxx range. We can find out which host port Docker is using by using the `docker container port` command:

```
$ docker container port web  
80/tcp -> 0.0.0.0:32768
```

The Nginx container only exposes port 80, and we can see that it has been mapped to the host port 32768. If we open a new browser window and navigate to `localhost:32768`, we should see the following screenshot:



The welcome page of Nginx

- An alternative way to find out which host port Docker is using for our container is to inspect it. The host port is part of the `NetworkSettings` node:

```
$ docker container inspect web | grep HostPort  
"HostPort": "32768"
```

- Finally, the third way of getting this information is to list the container:

```
$ docker container ls
CONTAINER ID        IMAGE               ...
PORTS              NAMES
56e46a14b6f7      nginx:alpine     ...   0.0.0.0:32768->80/tcp  web
```

Please note that in the preceding output, the /tcp part tells us that the port has been opened for communication with the TCP protocol, but not for the UDP protocol. TCP is the default, and if we want to specify that we want to open the port for UDP, then we have to specify this explicitly. The 0.0.0.0 in the mapping tells us that traffic from any host IP address can now reach the container port 80 of the web container.

Sometimes, we want to map a container port to a very specific host port. We can do this by using the parameter -p (or --publish). Let's look at how this is done with the following command:

```
$ docker container run --name web2 -p 8080:80 -d nginx:alpine
```

The value of the -p parameter is in the form of <host port>:<container port>. Therefore, in the preceding case, we map container port 80 to host port 8080. Once the web2 container runs, we can test it in the browser by navigating to localhost:8080, and we should be greeted by the same Nginx welcome page that we saw in the previous example that dealt with automatic port mapping.

When using the UDP protocol for communication over a certain port, then the publish parameter will look like -p 3000:4321/udp. Note that if we want to allow communication with both TCP and UDP protocols over the same port, then we have to map each protocol separately.

Summary

In this chapter, we have learned about how containers running on a single host can communicate with each other. First, we looked at the CNM that defines the requirements of a container network and then we looked at several implementations of the CNM, such as the bridge network. We then looked at how the bridge network functions in detail and also what kind of information Docker provides us with about the networks and the containers attached to those networks. We also learned about adopting two different perspectives, from both outside and inside the container.

In the next chapter, we're going to introduce Docker Compose. We will learn about creating an application that consists of multiple services, each running in a container, and how Docker Compose allows us to easily build, run, and scale such an application using a declarative approach.

Questions

To assess your skills, please try to answer the following questions:

1. Name the three core elements of the **container network model (CNM)**.
2. How will you create a custom bridge network called for example, frontend?
3. How will you run two nginx:alpine containers attached to the frontend network.
4. For the frontend network, get the following:
 1. IPs of all attached containers.
 2. The subnet associated with the network.
5. What is the purpose of the host network?
6. Name one or two scenarios where the use of the host network is appropriate.
7. What is the purpose of the none network?
8. In what scenarios should the none network be used?

Further reading

Here are some articles that describe the topics presented in this chapter in more detail:

- Docker networking overview at <http://dockr.ly/2sXGzQn>
- Container networking at <http://dockr.ly/2HJfQKn>
- What is a Bridge at <https://bit.ly/2HyC3Od>
- Use bridge networks at <http://dockr.ly/2BNxjRr>
- Use Macvlan networks at <http://dockr.ly/2ETjy2x>
- Networking using the host network at <http://dockr.ly/2F4aI59>

8

Docker Compose

In the previous chapter, we learned a lot about how container networking works on a single Docker host. We introduced the **Container Network Model (CNM)**, which forms the basis of all networking between Docker containers, and then we dove deep into different implementations of the CNM, specifically the bridge network.

This chapter introduces the concept of an application consisting of multiple services, each running in a container, and how Docker Compose allows us to easily build, run, and scale such an application using a declarative approach.

The chapter covers the following topics:

- Demystifying declarative versus imperative
- Running a multi-service application
- Scaling a service
- Building and pushing an application

After completing this chapter, the reader will be able to do the following:

- Explain in a few short sentences the main differences between an imperative and declarative approach for defining and running an application
- Describe in their own words the difference between a container and a Docker Compose service
- Author a Docker Compose YAML file for a simple multi-service application
- Build, push, deploy, and tear down a simple multi-service application using Docker Compose
- Use Docker Compose to scale an application service up and down

Technical requirements

The code accompanying this chapter can be found at <https://github.com/appswithdockerandkubernetes/labs/tree/master/ch08>.

Demystifying declarative versus imperative

Docker Compose is a tool provided by Docker that is mainly used where one needs to run and orchestrate containers running on a single Docker host. This includes but is not limited to development, **continuous integration (CI)**, automated testing, and manual QA.

Docker Compose uses files formatted in YAML as input. By default, Docker Compose expects these files to be called `docker-compose.yml`, but other names are possible. The content of a `docker-compose.yml` is said to be a *declarative* way of describing and running a containerized application potentially consisting of more than a single container.

So, *what is the meaning of declarative?*

First of all, *declarative* is the antonym of *imperative*. Well, that doesn't help much. Now that I have introduced another definition, I need to explain both of them:

- **Imperative:** It's a way in which we can solve problems by specifying the exact procedure which has to be followed by the system.

If I tell a system such as the Docker daemon imperatively how to run an application then that means that I have to describe step by step what the system has to do and how it has to react if some unexpected situation occurs. I have to be very explicit and precise in my instructions. I need to cover all edge cases and how they need to be treated.

- **Declarative:** It's a way in which we can solve problems without requiring the programmer to specify an exact procedure to be followed.

A declarative approach means that I tell the Docker engine what my desired state for an application is and it has to figure out on its own how to achieve this desired state and how to reconcile it if the system deviates from it.

Docker clearly recommends the declarative approach when dealing with containerized applications. Consequently, the Docker Compose tool uses this approach.

Running a multi-service app

In most cases, applications do not consist of only one monolithic block, but rather of several application services that work together. When using Docker containers, each application service runs in its own container. When we want to run such a multi-service application, we could start all the participating containers with the well-known `docker container run` command. But this is inefficient at best. With the Docker Compose tool, we are given a way to define the application in a declarative way in a file that uses the YAML format.

Let's have a look at the content of a simple `docker-compose.yml` file:

```
version: "3.5"
services:
  web:
    image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-
    web:1.0
    ports:
      - 3000:3000
  db:
    image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0
    volumes:
      - pets-data:/var/lib/postgresql/data

volumes:
  pets-data:
```

The lines in the file are explained as follows:

- `version:` In this line, we specify the version of the Docker Compose format we want to use. At the time of writing, this is version 3.5.
- `services:` In this section, we specify the services that make up our application in the `services` block. In our sample, we have two application services and we call them `web` and `db`:
 - `web:` The `web` service is using the image `appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0` from the Docker Hub and is publishing container port `3000` to the host port, also `3000`.
 - `db:` The `db` service, on the other hand, is using the image `appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0`, which is a customized PostgreSQL database. We are mounting a volume called `pets-data` into the container of the `db` service.

Docker Compose

- **volumes:** The volumes used by any of the services have to be declared in this section. In our sample, this is the last section of the file. The first time the application is run, a volume called `pets-data` will be created by Docker and then, in subsequent runs, if the volume is still there, it will be reused. This could be important when the application, for some reason, crashes and has to be restarted. Then, the previous data is still around and ready to be used by the restarted database service.

Navigate to the subfolder `ch08` of the `labs` folder and start the application using Docker Compose:

```
$ docker-compose up
```

If we enter the preceding command, then the tool will assume that there must be a file in the current directory called `docker-compose.yml` and it will use that one to run. In our case, this is indeed the case and the application will start. We should see the output as follows:

```
$ docker-compose up
Creating network "ch08_default" with the default driver
Creating volume "ch08_pets-data" with default driver
Pulling web (appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0)...
1.0: Pulling from appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web
605ce1bd3f31: Already exists
d9c1bb40879c: Already exists
d610e8516793: Already exists
66cc3fe80117: Pull complete
e253bc30f8b0: Pull complete
1aeeedab40d88: Pull complete
09092f231cdf: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:907f7c06a1ba2ba4b463b1b6c2a002a7fcbef5fc726473e177ed10227a246949
Status: Downloaded newer image for appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0
Pulling db (appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0)...
1.0: Pulling from appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db
ff3a5c916c92: Already exists
a503b44e1ce0: Already exists
211706713093: Already exists
8df57d533e71: Already exists
7858f71c02fb: Already exists
55a8ef17ba59: Already exists
3fb44f23d323: Already exists
65cad41156b3: Already exists
5492a5bead70: Already exists
df43dbde4904: Pull complete
Digest: sha256:36a9f43628cfbf1483c7368cd730ef9fbfbefa468fc5c8511b895a27a9391bab
Status: Downloaded newer image for appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0
Creating ch08_web_1 ... done
Creating ch08_db_1 ... done
Attaching to ch08_db_1, ch08_web_1
```

Running the sample application, part 1

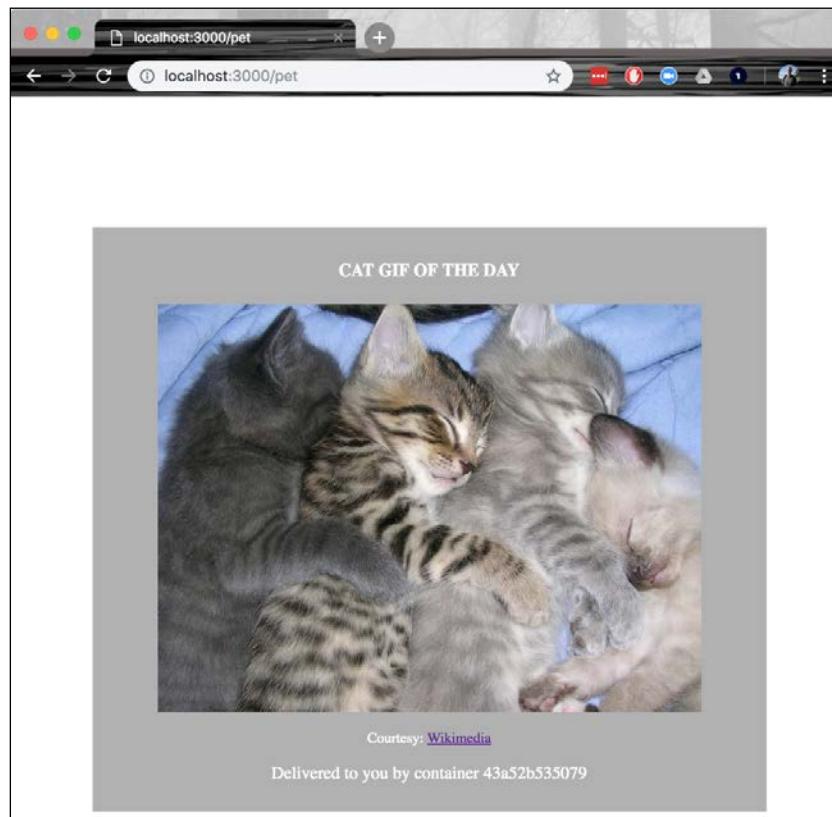
```
db_1 | done
db_1 | server started
web_1 | Listening at 0.0.0.0:3000
db_1 | CREATE DATABASE
db_1 |
db_1 | CREATE ROLE
db_1 |
db_1 |
db_1 | /usr/local/bin/docker-entrypoint.sh: running /docker-entrypoint-initdb.d/init-db.sql
db_1 | CREATE TABLE
db_1 | ALTER TABLE
db_1 | ALTER ROLE
db_1 | INSERT 0 1
db_1 | waiting for server to shut down....2018-03-21 12:52:40.709 UTC [34] LOG: received fast shutdown
request
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.711 UTC [34] LOG: aborting any active transactions
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.712 UTC [34] LOG: worker process: logical replication launcher (PID 41) exi
ted with exit code 1
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.712 UTC [36] LOG: shutting down
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.737 UTC [34] LOG: database system is shut down
db_1 | done
db_1 | server stopped
db_1 |
db_1 | PostgreSQL init process complete; ready for start up.
db_1 |
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.817 UTC [1] LOG: listening on IPv4 address "0.0.0.0", port 5432
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.817 UTC [1] LOG: listening on IPv6 address "::", port 5432
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.821 UTC [1] LOG: listening on Unix socket "/var/run/postgresql/.s.PGSQL.543
2"
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.832 UTC [49] LOG: database system was shut down at 2018-03-21 12:52:40 UTC
db_1 | 2018-03-21 12:52:40.835 UTC [1] LOG: database system is ready to accept connections
```

Running the sample application, part 2

The preceding output is explained as follows:

- In the first part of the output, we can see how Docker Compose pulls the two images that constitute our application. This is followed by the creation of a network `ch08_default` and a volume `ch08_pets-data`, followed by the two containers `ch08_web_1` and `ch08_db_1`, one for each service, web and db. All the names are automatically prefixed by Docker Compose with the name of the parent directory, which in this case is called `ch08`.
- After that, we see the logs produced by the two containers. Each line of the output is conveniently prefixed with the name of the service, and each service's output is in a different color. Here, the lion's share is produced by the database and only one line is from the web service.

We can now open a browser tab and navigate to `localhost:3000/pet`. We should be greeted by a nice cat image and some additional information about the container it came from, as shown in the following screenshot:



The sample application in the browser

Refresh the browser a few times to see other cat images. The application selects the current image randomly from a set of 12 images whose URLs are stored in the database.

As the application is running in interactive mode and thus the Terminal where we ran Docker Compose is blocked, we can cancel the application by pressing *Ctrl+C*. If we do so, we will see the following:

```
^CGracefully stopping... (press Ctrl+C again to force)
Stopping ch08_web_1 ... done
Stopping ch08_db_1 ... done
```

We will notice that the database service stops immediately while the web service takes about 10 seconds to do so. The reason for this being that the database service listens to and reacts to the `SIGTERM` signal sent by Docker while the web service doesn't, and thus Docker kills it after 10 seconds.

If we run the application again, the output will be much shorter:

```
$ docker-compose up
Creating network "ch08_default" with the default driver
Creating ch08_web_1 ... done
Creating ch08_db_1 ... done
Attaching to ch08_web_1, ch08_db_1
db_1  | 2018-03-02 01:25:35.874 UTC [1] LOG:  listening on IPv4 address "0.0.0.0", port 5432
db_1  | 2018-03-02 01:25:35.875 UTC [1] LOG:  listening on IPv6 address ":::", port 5432
db_1  | 2018-03-02 01:25:35.877 UTC [1] LOG:  listening on Unix socket "/var/run/postgresql/.s.PGSQL.5432"
db_1  | 2018-03-02 01:25:35.890 UTC [19] LOG:  database system was shut down at 2018-03-02 01:25:23 UTC
db_1  | 2018-03-02 01:25:35.894 UTC [1] LOG:  database system is ready to accept connections
web_1  | Listening at 0.0.0.0:3000

```

Output of docker-compose up

This time, we didn't have to download the images and the database didn't have to initialize from scratch, but it was just reusing the data that was already present in the volume `pets-data` from the previous run.

We can also run the application in the background. All containers will run as daemons. For this, we just need to use the `-d` parameter, as shown in the following code:

```
$ docker-compose up -d
```

Docker Compose offers us many more commands than just up. We can use it to list all services that are part of the application:

Name	Command	State	Ports
<hr/>			
ch08_db_1	docker-entrypoint.sh postgres	Up	5432/tcp
ch08_web_1	/bin/sh -c node src/server.js	Up	0.0.0.0:3000->3000/tcp

Output of docker-compose ps

This command is similar to docker container ls, with the only difference being that it only lists containers that are part of the application.

To stop and clean up the application, we use the docker-compose down command:

```
$ docker-compose down
Stopping ch08_web_1 ... done
Stopping ch08_db_1 ... done
Removing ch08_web_1 ... done
Removing ch08_db_1 ... done
Removing network ch08_default
```

If we also want to remove the volume for the database, then we can use the following command:

```
$ docker volume rm ch08_pets-data
```

Why is there a ch08 prefix in the name of the volume? In the docker-compose.yml file, we have called the volume to use pets-data. But as we have already mentioned, Docker Compose prefixes all names with the name of the parent folder of the docker-compose.yml file plus an underscore. In this case, the parent folder is called ch08.

Scaling a service

Now, let's, for a moment, assume that our sample application has been live on the web and become very successful. Loads of people want to see our cute animal images. So now we're facing a problem since our application has started to slow down. To counteract this problem, we want to run multiple instances of the web service. With Docker Compose, this is readily done.

Running more instances is also called **scaling up**. We can use this tool to scale our web service up to, say, three instances:

```
$ docker-compose up --scale web=3
```

If we do this, we are in for a surprise. The output will look similar to the following screenshot:

```
$ docker-compose up --scale web=3
WARNING: The "web" service specifies a port on the host. If multiple containers for this
service are created on a single host, the port will clash.
Starting ch08_web_3 ...
Starting ch08_web_3 ... error

ERROR: for ch08_web_3  Cannot start service web: driver failed programming external conne
ctivity on endpoint ch08_web_3 (534216cc36e0284b775e48c6450e25ff21fe90ff6d7b8b9716f421cb9
8560351): Bind for 0.0.0.0:3000 failed: port is already allocated

ERROR: for web  Cannot start service web: driver failed programming external connectivity
on endpoint ch08_web_3 (534216cc36e0284b775e48c6450e25ff21fe90ff6d7b8b9716f421cb98560351
): Bind for 0.0.0.0:3000 failed: port is already allocated
ERROR: Encountered errors while bringing up the project.
$
```

Output of docker-compose --scale

The second and third instances of the web service fail to start. The error message tells us why: we cannot use the same host port more than once. When instances 2 and 3 try to start, Docker realizes that port 3000 is already taken by the first instance. *What can we do?* Well, we can just let Docker decide which host port to use for each instance.

If, in the `ports` section of the `compose` file, we only specify the container port and leave out the host port, then Docker automatically selects an ephemeral port. Let's do exactly this:

1. First, let's tear down the application:

```
$ docker-compose down
```

2. Then, we modify the `docker-compose.yml` file to look as follows:

```
version: "3.5"
services:
  web:
    image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0
    ports:
      - 3000
  db:
```

```
image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0
volumes:
- pets-data:/var/lib/postgresql/data

volumes:
pets-data:
```

3. Now, we can start the application again and scale it up immediately after that:

```
$ docker-compose up -d
$ docker-compose scale web=3
Starting ch08_web_1 ... done
Creating ch08_web_2 ... done
Creating ch08_web_3 ... done
```

4. If we now do a `docker-compose ps`, we should see the following screenshot:

\$ docker-compose ps				
Name	Command	State	Ports	
ch08_db_1	docker-entrypoint.sh postgres	Up	5432/tcp	
ch08_web_1	/bin/sh -c node src/server.js	Up	0.0.0.0:32769->3000/tcp	
ch08_web_2	/bin/sh -c node src/server.js	Up	0.0.0.0:32771->3000/tcp	
ch08_web_3	/bin/sh -c node src/server.js	Up	0.0.0.0:32770->3000/tcp	

Output of `docker-compose ps`

5. As we can see, each service has been associated to a different host port. We can try to see whether they work, for example, using curl. Let's test the third instance, `ch08_web_3`:

```
$ curl -4 localhost:32770
Pets Demo Application
```

The answer, `Pets Demo Application`, tells us that, indeed, our application is still working as expected. Try it out for the other two instances to be sure.

Building and pushing an application

We can also use the `docker-compose build` command to just build the images of an application defined in the underlying `compose` file. But to make this work, we'll have to add the build information to the `docker-compose` file. In the folder, we have a file, `docker-compose.dev.yml`, which has those instructions already added:

```
version: "3.5"
services:
  web:
    build: web
    image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-
    web:1.0
    ports:
      - 3000:3000
  db:
    build: database
    image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0
    volumes:
      - pets-data:/var/lib/postgresql/data

volumes:
  pets-data:
```

Please note the `build` key for each service. The value of that key indicates the context or folder where Docker is expecting to find the Dockerfile to build the corresponding image.

Let's use that file now:

```
$ docker-compose -f docker-compose.dev.yml build
```

The `-f` parameter will tell the Docker Compose application which `compose` file to use.

To push all images to Docker Hub, we can use `docker-compose push`. We need to be logged in to Docker Hub so that this succeeds, otherwise we get an authentication error while pushing. Thus, in my case, I do the following:

```
$ docker login -u appswithdockerandkubernetes -p <password>
```

Assuming the login succeeds, I can then push the following code:

```
$ docker-compose -f docker-compose.dev.yml push
```

The preceding command pushes the two images to the account `appswithdockerandkubernetes` on Docker Hub. You can find these two images at the URL: <https://hub.docker.com/u/appswithdockerandkubernetes/>.

Summary

In this chapter, we introduced the tool `docker-compose`. This tool is mostly used to run and scale multi-service applications on a single Docker host. Typically, developers and CI servers work with single hosts and those two are the main users of Docker Compose. The tool is using YAML files as input that contain the description of the application in a declarative way.

The tool can also be used to build and push images among many other helpful tasks. The code accompanying this chapter can be found in `labs/ch08`.

In the next chapter, we are going to introduce orchestrators. An **orchestrator** is an infrastructure software that is used to run and manage containerized applications in a cluster and it makes sure that these applications are in their desired state at all the time.

Questions

To assess your learning progress please answer the following questions:

1. How will you use `docker-compose` to run an application in daemon mode?
2. How will you use `docker-compose` to display the details of the running service?
3. How will you scale up a particular web service to say, three instances?

Further reading

The following links provide additional information on the topics discussed in this chapter:

- *The official YAML website* at <http://yaml.org/>
- *Docker Compose documentation* at <http://dockr.ly/1FL2VQ6>
- *Compose file version 3 reference* at <http://dockr.ly/2iHUpex>

9

Orchestrators

In the previous chapter, we introduced Docker Compose, a tool that allows us to work with multi-service applications that are defined in a declarative way on a single Docker host.

This chapter introduces the concept of orchestrators. It teaches why orchestrators are needed and how they work conceptually. This chapter will also provide an overview of the most popular orchestrators and names a few of their pros and cons.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are orchestrators and why do we need them?
- The tasks of an orchestrator
- Overview of popular orchestrators

After finishing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Name three to four tasks an orchestrator is responsible for
- List two to three of the most popular orchestrators
- Explain to an interested layman in your own words and with appropriate analogies why we need container orchestrators

What are orchestrators and why do we need them?

In *Chapter 6, Distributed Application Architecture*, we learned which patterns and best practices are commonly used to successfully build, ship, and run a highly distributed application. Now, if our highly distributed application is containerized, then we're facing the exact same problems or challenges that a non-containerized distributed application faces. Some of these challenges are those discussed in *Chapter 6, Distributed Application Architecture*, service discovery, load balancing, scaling, and so on.

Similar to what Docker did with containers—standardizing the packaging and shipping of software with the introduction of containers—we would like to have some tool or infrastructure software that handles all or most of the challenges mentioned. This software turns out to be what we call orchestrators or, as we also call them, orchestration engines.

If what I just said doesn't make much sense to you yet, then let's look at it from a different angle. Take an artist who plays an instrument. They can play wonderful music to an audience all on their own, just the artist and their instrument. But now take an orchestra of musicians. Put them all in a room, give them the notes of a symphony, ask them to play it, and leave the room. Without any director, this group of very talented musicians would not be able to play this piece in harmony; it would sound like a cacophony. Only if the orchestra has a conductor who orchestrates the group of musicians will the resulting music of the orchestra be enjoyable to our ears:



A container orchestrator is like the conductor of an orchestra

Instead of musicians, we now have containers, and instead of different instruments, we have containers that have different requirements to the container hosts to run. And instead of the music being played in varying tempi, we have containers that communicate with each other in particular ways and have to scale up and scale down. In this regard, a container orchestrator has very much the same role as a conductor of an orchestra. It makes sure that the containers and other resources in a cluster play together in harmony.

I hope you can now see more clearly what a container orchestrator is and why we need one. We can now ask ourselves how the orchestrator is going to achieve the expected outcome, namely to make sure all the containers in the cluster play with each other in harmony. Well, the answer is, the orchestrator has to execute very specific tasks, similar to the way in which the conductor of an orchestra also has a set of tasks they execute in order to tame and at the same time elevate the orchestra.

The tasks of an orchestrator

So, what are the tasks that we expect an orchestrator worth its money to execute for us? Let's look at them in detail. The following list shows the most important tasks that, at the time of writing, enterprise users typically expect from their orchestrator.

Reconciling the desired state

When using an orchestrator, one tells it in a declarative way how one wants it to run a given application or application service. We learned what *declarative* versus *imperative* means in *Chapter 8, Docker Compose*. Part of this declarative way of describing the application service we want to run is elements such as which container image to use, how many instances to run of this service, which ports to open, and more. This declaration of the properties of our application service is what we call the *desired state*.

So, when we now tell the orchestrator the first time to create such a new application service based on the declaration, then the orchestrator makes sure to schedule as many containers in the cluster as requested. If the container image is not yet available on the target nodes of the cluster where the containers are supposed to run, then the scheduler makes sure they're downloaded from the image registry first. Next, the containers are started with all the settings, such as networks to which to attach, or ports to expose. The orchestrator works as hard as it can to exactly match in reality in the cluster what it got in our declaration.

Once our service is up and running as requested, that is, it is running in the desired state, then the orchestrator continues to monitor it. Each time the orchestrator discovers a discrepancy between the actual state of the service and its desired state, it again tries its best to reconcile the desired state.

What could such a discrepancy between the actual and desired states of an application service be? Well, let's say one of the replicas of the service, that is, one of the containers, crashes due to, say, a bug, then the orchestrator will discover that the actual state differs from the desired state in the number of replicas – there is one replica missing. The orchestrator will immediately schedule a new instance to another cluster node, which replaces the crashed instance. Another discrepancy could be that there are too many instances of the application service running, if the service has been scaled down. In this case, the orchestrator will just randomly kill as many instances as needed to achieve parity between the actual and the desired number of instances. Another discrepancy could be when the orchestrator discovers that there is an instance of the application service running a wrong (maybe old) version of the underlying container image. By now, you should get the picture, *right?*

Thus, instead of us actively monitoring our application's services running in the cluster and correcting any deviation from the desired state, we delegate this tedious task to the orchestrator. This works very well, if we use a declarative and not an imperative way of describing the desired state of our application services.

Replicated and global services

There are two quite different types of services that we might want to run in a cluster managed by an orchestrator. They are **replicated** and **global** services. A replicated service is a service which is required to run in a specific number of instances, say 10. A global service, in turn, is a service that is required to have an instance running on every single worker node of the cluster. I have used the term *worker node* here. In a cluster managed by an orchestrator, we typically have two types of nodes, **managers** and **workers**. A manager node is usually exclusively used by the orchestrator to manage the cluster and does not run any other workload. Worker nodes, in turn, run the actual applications.

So, the orchestrator makes sure that, for a global service, an instance of it is running on every single worker node, no matter how many there are. We do not need to care about the number of instances, but only that on each node it is guaranteed to run a single instance of the service.

Once again, we can fully rely on the orchestrator to take care of this feat. In a replicated service, we will always be guaranteed to find the exact desired number of instances, while for a global service, we can be assured that on every worker node, there will always run exactly one instance of the service. The orchestrator will always work as hard as it can to guarantee this desired state.



In Kubernetes, a global service is also called a **daemon set**.



Service discovery

When we describe an application service in a declarative way, we are never supposed to tell the orchestrator on which cluster nodes the different instances of the service have to run. We leave it up to the orchestrator to decide which nodes best fit this task.

It is, of course, technically possible to instruct the orchestrator to use very deterministic placement rules, but this would be an anti-pattern and is not recommended at all.

So, if we now assume that the orchestration engine has complete and free will as to where to place individual instances of the application service and, furthermore, that instances can crash and be rescheduled by the orchestrator to different nodes, then we will realize that it is a futile task for us to keep track of where the individual instances are running at any given time. Even better, we shouldn't even try to know this since it is not important.

OK, you might say, but what about if I have two services, A and B, and Service A relies on Service B; *shouldn't any given instance of Service A know where it can find an instance of Service B?*

There I have to say loudly and clearly – no, it shouldn't. This kind of knowledge is not desirable in a highly distributed and scalable application. Rather, we should rely on the orchestrator to provide us the information we need to reach other service instances we depend on. It is a bit like in the old days of telephony, when we could not directly call our friends but had to call the phone company's central office, where some operator would then route us to the correct destination. In our case, the orchestrator plays the role of the operator, routing a request coming from an instance of Service A to an available instance of Service B. This whole process is called **service discovery**.

Routing

We have learned so far that in a distributed application, we have many interacting services. When Service A interacts with Service B, it happens through the exchange of data packets. These data packets need to somehow be funneled from Service A to Service B. This process of funneling the data packets from a source to a destination is also called **routing**. As authors or operators of an application, we do expect the orchestrator to take over this task of routing. As we will see in later chapters, routing can happen on different levels. It is like in real life. Suppose you're working in a big company in one of their office buildings. Now, you have a document that needs to be forwarded to another employee of the company. The internal post service will pick up the document from your outbox and take it to the post office located in the same building. If the target person works in the same building, the document can then be directly forwarded to that person. If, on the other hand, the person works in another building of the same block, the document will be forwarded to the post office in that target building, from where it is then distributed to the receiver through the internal post service. Thirdly, if the document is targeted at an employee working in another branch of the company located in a different city or even country, then the document is forwarded to an external postal service such as UPS, which will transport it to the target location, from where, once again, the internal post service takes over and delivers it to the recipient.

Similar things happen when routing data packets between application services running in containers. The source and target containers can be located on the same cluster node, which corresponds to the situation where both employees work in the same building. The target container can be running on a different cluster node, which corresponds to the situation where the two employees work in different buildings of the same block. Finally, the third situation is when a data packet comes from outside of the cluster and has to be routed to the target container running inside the cluster.

All these situations and more have to be handled by the orchestrator.

Load balancing

In a highly available distributed application, all components have to be redundant. That means that every application service has to be run in multiple instances so that if one instance fails, the service as a whole is still operational.

To make sure that all instances of a service are actually doing work and not just sitting around idle, one has to make sure that the requests for service are distributed equally to all the instances. This process of distributing workload among service instances is called **load balancing**. Various algorithms exist for how the workload can be distributed. Usually, a load balancer works using the so-called round robin algorithm, which makes sure that the workload is distributed equally to the instances using a cyclic algorithm.

Once again, we expect the orchestrator to take care of load balancing requests from one service to another or from external sources to internal services.

Scaling

When running our containerized, distributed application in a cluster managed by an orchestrator, we also want an easy way to handle expected or unexpected increases in workload. To handle an increased workload, we usually just schedule additional instances of a service that is experiencing this increased load. Load balancers will then automatically be configured to distribute the workload over more available target instances.

But in real-life scenarios, the workload varies over time. If we look at a shopping site such as Amazon, it might have a high load during peak hours in the evening, when everyone is at home and shopping online; it may experience extreme loads during special days such as Black Friday; and it may experience very little traffic early in the morning. Thus, services need to not just be able to scale up, but also to scale down when the workload goes down.

We also expect orchestrators to distribute the instances of a service in a meaningful way when scaling up or down. It would not be wise to schedule all instances of the service on the same cluster node, since if that node goes down, the whole service goes down. The scheduler of the orchestrator, which is responsible for the placement of the containers, needs to also consider not placing all instances into the same rack of computers, since if the power supply of the rack fails, again the whole service is affected. Furthermore, service instances of critical services should even be distributed across datacenters to avoid outages. All these decisions and many more are the responsibility of the orchestrator.

Self-healing

These days, orchestrators are very sophisticated and can do a lot for us to maintain a healthy system. Orchestrators monitor all containers running in the cluster and they automatically replace crashed or unresponsive ones with new instances.

Orchestrators monitor the health of cluster nodes and take them out of the scheduler loop if a node becomes unhealthy or is down. A workload that was located on those nodes is automatically rescheduled to different available nodes.

All these activities where the orchestrator monitors the current state and automatically repairs the damage or reconciles the desired state lead to a so-called **self-healing** system. We do not, in most cases, have to actively engage and repair damage. The orchestrator will do this for us automatically.

But there are a few situations that the orchestrator cannot handle without our help. Imagine a situation where we have a service instance running in a container. The container is up and running and, from the outside, looks perfectly healthy. But the application inside is in an unhealthy state. The application did not crash, it just is not able to work as designed anymore. *How could the orchestrator possibly know about this without us giving it a hint?* It can't! Being in an unhealthy or invalid state means something completely different for each application service. In other words, the health status is service dependent. Only the authors of the service or its operators know what health means in the context of a service.

Now, orchestrators define seams or probes, over which an application service can communicate to the orchestrator in what state it is. Two fundamental types of probe exist:

- The service can tell the orchestrator that it is healthy or not
- The service can tell the orchestrator that it is ready or temporarily unavailable

How the service determines either of the preceding answers is totally up to the service. The orchestrator only defines how it is going to ask, for example, through an HTTP GET request, or what type of answers it is expecting, for example, OK or NOT OK.

If our services implement logic to answer the preceding health or availability questions, then we have a truly self-healing system, since the orchestrator can kill unhealthy service instances and replace them with new healthy ones, and it can take service instances that are temporarily unavailable out of the load balancer's round robin.

Zero downtime deployments

These days, it gets harder and harder to justify a complete downtime for a mission-critical application that needs to be updated. Not only does that mean missed opportunities, but it can also result in a damaged reputation for the company. Customers using the application are just not ready to accept such an inconvenience anymore and will turn away quickly. Furthermore, our release cycles get shorter and shorter. Where, in the past, we would have one or two new releases per year, nowadays, a lot of companies update their applications multiple times a week or even multiple times per day.

The solution to that problem is to come up with a zero downtime application update strategy. The orchestrator needs to be able to update individual application services batch-wise. This is also called **rolling updates**. At any given time, only one or a few of the total number of instances of a given service are taken down and replaced by the new version of the service. Only if the new instances are operational and do not produce any unexpected errors or show any misbehavior will the next batch of instances be updated. This is repeated until all instances are replaced with their new version. If, for some reason, the update fails, we expect the orchestrator to automatically roll the updated instances back to their previous version.

Other possible zero downtime deployments are so-called **canary releases** and **blue-green deployments**. In both cases, the new version of a service is installed in parallel with the current, active version. But initially, the new version is only accessible internally. Operations can then run smoke tests against the new version and when the new version seems to be running just fine, then, in the case of blue-green deployment, the router is switched from the current blue to the new green version. For some time, the new green version of the service is closely monitored and, if everything is fine, the old blue version can be decommissioned. If, on the other hand, the new green version does not work as expected, then it is only a matter of setting the router back to the old blue version to achieve a complete rollback.

In the case of a canary release, the router is configured in such a way that it funnels a tiny percentage, say 1%, of the overall traffic through the new version of the service, while 99% of the traffic is still routed through the old version. The behavior of the new version is closely monitored and compared to the behavior of the old version. If everything looks good, then the percentage of the traffic funneled through the new service is slightly increased. This process is repeated until 100% of the traffic is routed through the new service. If the new service has run for a while and everything looks good, then the old service can be decommissioned.

Most orchestrators support at least the rolling update type of zero downtime deployment out of the box. Blue-green and canary releases are often quite easy to implement.

Affinity and location awareness

Sometimes, certain application services require the availability of dedicated hardware on the nodes they run on. For example I/O-bound services require cluster nodes with an attached high-performance **solid-state drive (SSD)**, or some services require an **Accelerated Processing Unit (APU)**. Orchestrators allow us to define node affinities per application service. The orchestrator will then make sure that its scheduler only schedules containers on cluster nodes that fulfill the required criteria.

Defining an affinity to a particular node should be avoided; this would introduce a single point of failure and thus compromise high availability. Always define a set of multiple cluster nodes as the target for an application service.

Some orchestration engines also support what is called **location awareness** or **geo-awareness**. What this means is that one can request the orchestrator to equally distribute instances of a service over a set of different locations. One could, for example, define a label `datacenter` with the possible values `west`, `center`, and `east` and apply the label to all cluster nodes with the value that corresponds to the geographical region in which the respective node is located. Then, one instructs the orchestrator to use this label for geo-awareness of a certain application service. In this case, if one requests nine replicas of the service, the orchestrator would make sure that three instances are deployed to nodes in each of the three datacenters, `west`, `center`, and `east`.

Geo-awareness can even be defined hierarchically; for example, one can have a datacenter as the top-level discriminator, followed by the availability zone and then the server rack.

Geo-awareness or location awareness is used to decrease the probability of outages due to power supply failures or datacenter outages. If the application instances are distributed across server racks, availability zones, or even datacenters, it is extremely unlikely that everything goes down at once. One region will always be available.

Security

These days, security in IT is a very hot topic. Cyberwarfare is at an all-time high. Most high-profile companies have been victims of hacker attacks, with very costly consequences. One of the worst nightmares of each **chief information officer (CIO)** or **chief technology officer (CTO)** is to wake up in the morning and hear in the news that their company has become a victim of a hacker attack and that sensitive information has been stolen or compromised.

To counter most of these security threats, we need to establish a secure software supply chain and enforce security defense in depth. Let's look at some of the tasks one can expect from an enterprise-grade orchestrator.

Secure communication and cryptographic node identity

First and foremost, we want to make sure that our cluster managed by the orchestrator is secure. Only trusted nodes can join the cluster. Each node that joins the cluster gets a cryptographic node identity, and all communication between the nodes must be encrypted. For this, nodes can use **mutual transport layer security (MTLS)**. To authenticate nodes of the cluster with each other, certificates are used. These certificates are automatically rotated periodically or on request to protect the system in case a certificate is leaked.

The communication that happens in a cluster can be separated into three types. One talks about communication planes. There are **management**, **control**, and **data** planes:

- The management plane is used by the cluster managers or masters to, for example, schedule service instances, execute health checks, or create and modify any other resources in the cluster, such as data volumes, secrets, or networks.
- The control plane is used to exchange important state information between all nodes of the cluster. This kind of information is, for example, used to update the local IP tables on clusters which are used for routing purposes.
- The data plane is where the application services communicate with each other and exchange data.

Normally, orchestrators mainly care about securing the management and control plane. Securing the data plane is left to the user, yet the orchestrator may facilitate this task.

Secure networks and network policies

When running application services, not every service needs to communicate with every other service in the cluster. Thus, we want the ability to sandbox services from each other and only run those services in the same networking sandbox that absolutely need to communicate with each other. All other services and all network traffic coming from outside of the cluster should have no possibility of accessing the sandboxed services.

There are at least two ways in which this network-based sandboxing can happen. We can either use a **software-defined network (SDN)** to group application services or we can have one flat network and use network policies to control who does and does not have access to a particular service or group of services.

Role-based access control (RBAC)

One of the most important tasks, next to security, an orchestrator must fulfill to make it enterprise ready is to provide role-based access to the cluster and its resources. RBAC defines how subjects, users, or groups of users of the system, organized into teams and so on, can access and manipulate the system. It makes sure that unauthorized personnel cannot do any harm to the system nor see any resources available in the system they're not supposed to know of or see.

A typical enterprise might have user groups such as Development, QA, and Prod, and each of those groups can have one to many users associated with it. John Doe, the developer, is a member of the Development group and, as such, can access resources dedicated to the development team, but he cannot access, for example, the resources of the Prod team, of which Ann Harbor is a member. She, in turn, cannot interfere with the Development team's resources.

One way of implementing RBAC is through the definition of **grants**. A grant is an association between a subject, a role, and a resource collection. Here, a role is comprised of a set of access permissions to a resource. Such permissions can be to create, stop, remove, list, or view containers; to deploy a new application service; to list cluster nodes or view the details of a cluster node; and many more.

A resource collection is a group of logically related resources of the cluster, such as application services, secrets, data volumes, or containers.

Secrets

In our daily life, we have loads of secrets. Secrets are information that is not meant to be publicly known, such as the username and password combination you use to access your online bank account, or the code to your cell phone or your locker at the gym.

When writing software, we often need to use secrets, too. For example, we need some certificate to authenticate our application service with some external service we want to access, or we need a token to authenticate and authorize our service when accessing some other API. In the past, developers, for convenience, have just hardcoded those values or put them in clear text in some external configuration files. There, this very sensitive information has been accessible to a broad audience that in reality should never have had the opportunity to see those secrets.

Luckily, these days, orchestrators offer what's called secrets to deal with such sensitive information in a highly secure way. Secrets can be created by authorized or trusted personnel. The values of those secrets are then encrypted and stored in the highly available cluster state database. The secrets, since they are encrypted, are now secure at rest. Once a secret is requested by an authorized application service, the secret is only forwarded to the cluster nodes that actually run an instance of that particular service, and the secret value is never stored on the node but mounted into the container in a `tmpfs` RAM-based volume. Only inside the respective container is the secret value available in clear text.

We already mentioned that the secrets are secure at rest. Once they are requested by a service, the cluster manager or master decrypts the secret and sends it over the wire to the target nodes. *So, what about the secrets being secure in transit?* Well, we learned earlier that the cluster nodes use MTLS for their communication, thus the secret, although transmitted in clear text, is still secure since data packets will be encrypted by MTLS. Thus, secrets are secure at rest and in transit. Only services that are authorized to use secrets will ever have access to those secret values.

Content trust

For added security, we want to make sure that only trusted images run in our production cluster. Some orchestrators allow us to configure a cluster so that it can only ever run signed images. Content trust and signing images is all about making sure that the authors of the image are the ones that we expect them to be, namely our trusted developers or, even better, our trusted CI server. Furthermore, with content trust, we want to guarantee that the image we get is fresh and not an old and maybe vulnerable image. And finally, we want to make sure that the image cannot be compromised by malicious hackers in transit. The latter is often called a **man-in-the-middle (MITM)** attack.

By signing images at the source and validating the signature at the target, we can guarantee that the images we want to run are not compromised.

Reverse uptime

The last point I want to discuss in the context of security is reverse uptime. *What do we mean by that?* Imagine that you have configured and secured a production cluster. On this cluster, you're running a few mission-critical applications of your company. Now, a hacker has managed to find a security hole in one of your software stacks and has gained root access to one of your cluster nodes. That alone is already bad enough but, even worse, this hacker could now mask their presence on this node they are root on the machine, after all, and then use it as a base to attack further nodes of your cluster.



Root access in Linux or any Unix-type operating system means that one can do anything on this system. It is the highest level of access that someone can have. In Windows, the equivalent role is that of an Administrator.



But *what if we leverage the fact that containers are ephemeral and cluster nodes are quickly provisioned, usually in a matter of minutes if fully automated?* We just kill each cluster node after a certain uptime of, say, 1 day. The orchestrator is instructed to drain the node and then exclude it from the cluster. Once the node is out of the cluster, it is torn down and replaced by a freshly provisioned node.

That way, the hacker has lost their base and the problem has been eliminated. This concept is not yet broadly available, though, but to me it seems to be a huge step towards increased security and, as far as I have discussed it with engineers working in this area, it is not difficult to implement.

Introspection

So far, we have discussed a lot of tasks that the orchestrator is responsible for and that it can execute in a completely autonomous way. But there is also the need for human operators to be able to see and analyze what's currently running on the cluster and in what state or health the individual applications are. For all this, we need the possibility of introspection. The orchestrator needs to surface crucial information in a way that is easily consumable and understandable.

The orchestrator should collect system metrics from all the cluster nodes and make it accessible to the operators. Metrics include CPU, memory and disk usage, network bandwidth consumption, and more. The information should be easily available on a node-per-node basis, as well in an aggregated form.

We also want the orchestrator to give us access to logs produced by service instances or containers. Even more, the orchestrator should provide us `exec` access to each and every container if we have the correct authorization to do so. With `exec` access to containers, one can then debug misbehaving containers.

In highly distributed applications, where each request to the application goes through numerous services until it is completely handled, tracing requests is really important task. Ideally, the orchestrator supports us in implementing a tracing strategy or gives us some good guidelines to follow.

Finally, human operators can best monitor a system when working with a graphical representation of all the collected metrics and logging and tracing information. Here, we are speaking about dashboards. Every decent orchestrator should offer at least some basic dashboard with a graphical representation of the most critical system parameters.

But human operators are not all that concerned about introspection. We also need to be able to connect external systems with the orchestrator to consume this information. There needs to be an API available, over which external systems can access data such as cluster state, metrics, and logs and use this information to make automated decisions, such as creating pager or phone alerts, sending out emails, or triggering an alarm siren if some thresholds are exceeded by the system.

Overview of popular orchestrators

At the time of writing, there are many orchestration engines out there and in use. But there are a few clear winners. The number one spot is clearly held by Kubernetes, which reigns supreme. A distant second is Docker's own SwarmKit, followed by others such as Microsoft **Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS)**, Apache Mesos, or AWS **Elastic Container Service (ECS)**.

Kubernetes

Kubernetes was originally designed by Google and later donated to the **Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF)**. Kubernetes was modeled after Google's proprietary Borg system, which has been running containers on supermassive scale for years. Kubernetes was Google's attempt to go back to the drawing board and completely start over and design a system that incorporates all the lessons learned with Borg.

Contrary to Borg, which is proprietary technology, Kubernetes was open sourced early on. This was a very wise choice by Google, since it attracted a huge number of contributors from outside of the company and, over only a couple of years, an even more massive ecosystem evolved around Kubernetes. One can rightfully say that Kubernetes is the darling of the community in the container orchestration space. No other orchestrator has been able to produce so much hype and attract so many talented people willing to contribute in a meaningful way to the success of the project as a contributor or an early adopter.

In that regard, Kubernetes in the container orchestration space to me looks very much like what Linux has become in the server operating system space. Linux has become the de facto standard of server operating systems. All relevant companies, such as Microsoft, IBM, Amazon, RedHat, and even Docker, have embraced Kubernetes.

And there is one thing that cannot be denied: Kubernetes was designed from the very beginning for massive scalability. After all, it was designed with Google Borg in mind.

One negative aspect that one could voice against Kubernetes is that it is complex to set up and manage, at least at the time of writing. There is a significant hurdle to overcome for newcomers. The first step is steep. But once one has worked with this orchestrator for a while, it all makes sense. The overall design is carefully thought through and executed very well.

In the newest release of Kubernetes, 1.10, whose **general availability (GA)** was in March 2018, most of the initial shortcomings compared to other orchestrators such as Docker Swarm have been eliminated. For example, security and confidentiality is now not only an afterthought, but an integral part of the system.

New features are implemented at a tremendous speed. New releases are happening every 3 months or so, more precisely, about every 100 days. Most of the new features are demand-driven, that is, companies using Kubernetes to orchestrate their mission-critical applications can voice their needs. This makes Kubernetes enterprise ready. It would be wrong to assume that this orchestrator is only for start-ups and not for risk-averse enterprises. The contrary is the case. *On what do I base this claim?* Well, my claim is justified by the fact that companies such as Microsoft, Docker, and RedHat, whose clients are mostly big enterprises, have fully embraced Kubernetes and provide enterprise-grade support for it if it is used and integrated into their enterprise offerings.

Kubernetes supports both Linux and Windows containers.

Docker Swarm

It is well-known that Docker popularized and commoditized software containers. Docker did not invent containers, but standardized them and made them broadly available, not least by offering the free image registry Docker Hub. Initially, Docker focused mainly on the developer and the development life cycle. But companies that started to use and love containers soon also wanted to use containers, not just during development or testing of new applications, but also to run those applications in production.

Initially, Docker had nothing to offer in that space, so other companies jumped into that vacuum and offered help to the users. But it didn't take long and Docker recognized that there was a huge demand for a simple yet powerful orchestrator. Docker's first attempt was a product called classic Swarm. It was a standalone product that enabled users to create a cluster of Docker host machines that could be used to run and scale their containerized applications in a highly available and self-healing way.

The setup of a classic Docker Swarm, though, was hard. A lot of complicated manual steps were involved. Customers loved the product but struggled with its complexity. So Docker decided it could do better. It went back to the drawing board and came up with SwarmKit. SwarmKit was introduced at DockerCon 2016 in Seattle and was an integral part of the newest version of the Docker engine. Yes, you got that right, SwarmKit was and still is to this day an integral part of the Docker engine. Thus, if you install a Docker host, you automatically have SwarmKit available with it.

SwarmKit was designed with simplicity and security in mind. The mantra was and still is that it has to be almost trivial to set up a swarm, and the swarm has to be highly secure out of the box. Docker Swarm operates on the assumption of least privilege.

Installing a complete, highly available Docker Swarm is literally as simple as starting with a `docker swarm init` on the first node in the cluster, which becomes the so-called leader, and then a `docker swarm join <join-token>` on all other nodes. The `join-token` is generated by the leader during initialization. The whole process takes less than 5 minutes on a Swarm with up to 10 nodes. If it is automated, it takes even less time.

As I already mentioned, security was top on the list of must-haves when Docker designed and developed SwarmKit. Containers provide security by relying on Linux kernel namespaces and cgroups as well as Linux syscall whitelisting (seccomp) and the support of Linux capabilities and the **Linux security module (LSM)**. Now, on top of that, SwarmKit adds MTLS and secrets that are encrypted at rest and in transit. Furthermore, Swarm defines the so-called **container network model (CNM)**, which allows for SDNs that provide sandboxing for application services running on the swarm.

Docker SwarmKit supports both Linux and Windows containers.

Microsoft Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS)

AKS is Microsoft's offering of a fully hosted, highly available, scalable and fault tolerant Kubernetes cluster. It takes the burden of you to provision and manage a Kubernetes cluster and lets you concentrate on deploying and running your containerized applications. With AKS a user can literally provision a production ready cluster in a matter of minutes. Furthermore the applications running on such a cluster can reach out easily into the rich eco-system of services provided by Azure such as Log Analytics or identity management.

It is a powerful orchestration service based on the newest versions of Kubernetes that makes sense if you are already heavily invested in the Azure ecosystem. Each AKS cluster can be managed through the Azure portal, via Azure Resource Manager templates or via the Azure CLI. Applications are deployed and maintained using the well-known Kubernetes CLI `kubectl`.

Microsoft, in its own words, claims the following:

AKS makes it quick and easy to deploy and manage containerized applications without container orchestration expertise. It also eliminates the burden of ongoing operations and maintenance by provisioning, upgrading, and scaling resources on demand, without taking your applications offline.

Apache Mesos and Marathon

Apache **Mesos** is an open source project and was originally designed to make a cluster of servers or nodes look like one single big server from the outside. Mesos is software that makes the management of computer clusters simple. Users of Mesos should not have to care about individual servers, but just assume they have a gigantic pool of resources to their disposal, which corresponds to the aggregate of all the resources of all the nodes in the cluster.

Mesos, in IT terms, is already pretty old, at least compared to the other orchestrators. It was first publicly presented in 2009. But at that time, of course, it wasn't designed to run containers since Docker didn't even exist yet. Similar to what Docker does with containers, Mesos uses Linux cgroups to isolate resources such as CPU, memory, or disk I/O for individual applications or services.

Mesos is really the underlying infrastructure for other interesting services built on top of it. From the perspective of containers specifically, **Marathon** is important. Marathon is a container orchestrator running on top of Mesos which is able to scale to thousands of nodes.

Marathon supports multiple container runtimes, such as Docker or its own Mesos containers. It supports not only stateless but also stateful application services, for example, databases such as PostgreSQL or MongoDB. Similar to Kubernetes and Docker SwarmKit, it supports many of the features described earlier in this chapter, such as high availability, health checks, service discovery, load balancing, and location awareness, to just name some of the most important ones.

Although Mesos and, to a certain extent, Marathon are rather mature projects, their reach is relatively limited. It seems to be most popular in the area of big data, that is, to run data crunching services such as Spark or Hadoop.

Amazon ECS

If you are looking for a simple orchestrator and have already heavily bought into the AWS ecosystem, then Amazon's ECS might be the right choice for you. It is important to point out one very important limitation of ECS: if you buy into this container orchestrator, then you lock yourself into AWS. You will not be able to easily port an application running on ECS to another platform or cloud.

Amazon promotes its ECS service as a highly scalable, fast container management service that makes it easy to run, stop, and manage Docker containers on a cluster. Next to running containers, ECS gives direct access to many other AWS services from the application services running inside the containers. This tight and seamless integration with many popular AWS services is what makes ECS compelling for users who are looking for an easy way to get their containerized applications up and running in a robust and highly scalable environment. Amazon also provides its own private image registry.

With AWS ECS, you can use Fargate to have it fully manage the underlying infrastructure so that you can concentrate exclusively on deploying containerized applications and do not have to care about how to create and manage a cluster of nodes. ECS supports both Linux and Windows containers.

In summary, ECS is simple to use, highly scalable, and well-integrated with other popular AWS services, but it is not as powerful as, say, Kubernetes or Docker SwarmKit and it is only available on Amazon AWS.

Summary

This chapter demonstrated why orchestrators are needed in the first place and how they conceptually work. It pointed out which orchestrators are the most prominent ones at the time of writing and discussed the main commonalities and differences between the various orchestrators.

The next chapter will introduce the currently most popular container orchestrator, called Kubernetes. It will elaborate on all the concepts and objects Kubernetes uses to deploy and run a distributed, resilient, robust, and highly available application in a cluster on-premises or in the cloud.

Questions

Answer the following questions to assess your learning progress:

1. Why do we need an orchestrator? Name two to three reasons.
2. Name three to four typical responsibilities of an orchestrator.
3. Name at least two container orchestrators, as well as the main sponsor behind them.

Further reading

The following links provide some deeper insight to orchestration-related topics:

- *Kubernetes - production-grade orchestration* at <https://kubernetes.io/>
- *Docker Swarm Mode overview* at <https://docs.docker.com/engine/swarm/>
- *Mesosphere - container orchestration services* at <http://bit.ly/2GMpk03>
- *Containers and orchestration explained* at <http://bit.ly/2DFoQgx>
- *Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS)* at <https://bit.ly/2MECYzY>

10

Orchestrating Containerized Applications with Kubernetes

In the last chapter, we introduced orchestrators. Like a conductor in an orchestra, an orchestrator makes sure that all our containerized application services play together nicely and contribute harmoniously toward a common goal. Such orchestrators have quite a few responsibilities, which we have discussed in detail. We also provided a short overview of the most important container orchestrators on the market.

In this chapter, we're going to introduce **Kubernetes**. Kubernetes is currently the clear leader in the container orchestration space. We are starting with a high-level overview of the architecture of a Kubernetes cluster, and then we will discuss the main objects used in Kubernetes to define and run containerized applications.

The topics discussed in this chapter are as follows:

- Architecture
- Kubernetes masters
- Cluster nodes
- Introduction to MiniKube
- Kubernetes support in Docker for Mac and Docker for Windows
- Pods
- Kubernetes ReplicaSet
- Kubernetes deployment
- Kubernetes service
- Context-based routing

After finishing this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

- Draft the high-level architecture of a Kubernetes cluster on a napkin
- Explain three to four main characteristics of a Kubernetes pod
- Describe the role of Kubernetes ReplicaSets in two to three short sentences
- Explain the two to three main responsibilities of a Kubernetes service
- Create a pod in Minikube
- Configure Docker for Mac or Windows to use Kubernetes as an orchestrator
- Create a deployment in Docker for Mac or Windows
- Create a Kubernetes service to expose an application service internally (or externally) to the cluster

Technical requirements

The link to the code files can be found here at <https://github.com/appswithdockerandkubernetes/labs/tree/master/ch10>.

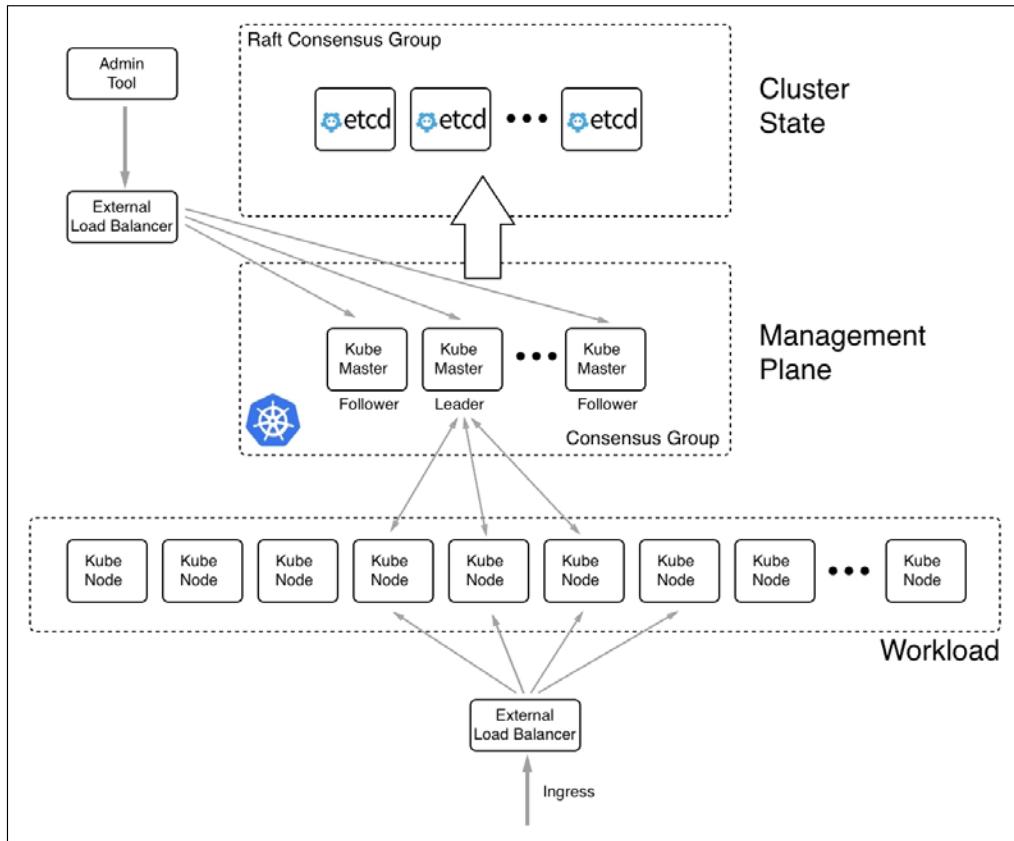
Architecture

A Kubernetes cluster consists of a set of servers. These servers can be VMs or physical servers. The latter are also called **bare metal**. Each member of the cluster can have one of two roles. It is either a Kubernetes master or a (worker) node. The former is used to manage the cluster, while the latter will run the application's workload. I have put the worker in parentheses, since in Kubernetes parlance you only talk about a node when talking about a server that runs an application's workload. But in Docker parlance and in the Swarm, the equivalent is a worker node. I think that the notion of a worker node better describes the role of the server than a simple node.

In a cluster, you have a small and odd number of masters and as many worker nodes as needed. Small clusters might only have a few worker nodes, while more realistic clusters might have dozens or even hundreds of worker nodes. Technically, there is no limit on how many worker nodes a cluster can have; in reality, you might experience a significant slowdown in some management operations when dealing with thousands of nodes, though. All members of the cluster need to be connected by a physical network, the so-called **underlay network**.

Kubernetes defines one flat network for the whole cluster. Kubernetes does not provide any networking implementation out of the box but relies on plugins from third parties. Kubernetes only defines the **Container Network Interface (CNI)** and leaves the implementation to others. The CNI is pretty simple. It basically states that each pod running in the cluster must be able to reach any other pod also running in the cluster without any **Network Address Translation (NAT)** happening in between. The same must be true between cluster nodes and pods; that is, applications or daemons running directly on a cluster node must be able to reach each pod in the cluster, and vice versa.

In the following diagram, I try to illustrate the high-level architecture of a Kubernetes cluster:



High-level architecture diagram of Kubernetes

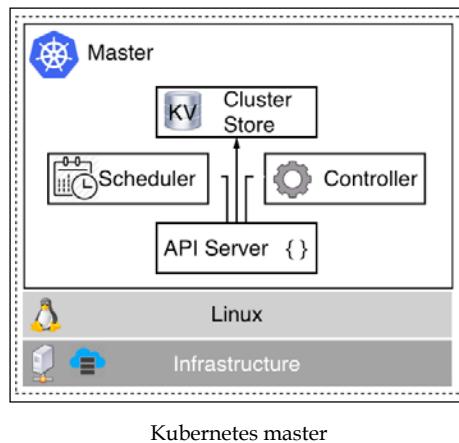
The preceding diagram is explained as follows:

- On the top center, we have a cluster of **etcd** nodes. etcd is a distributed key-value store that, in a Kubernetes cluster, is used to store all the states of the cluster. The number of etcd nodes has to be odd as mandated by the **Raft** consensus protocol, which they use to coordinate among themselves. When we talk about the cluster state, we do not include data that is produced or consumed by applications running in the cluster, but rather we're talking about all the information on the topology of the cluster, what services are running, network settings, secrets used, and more. That said, this etcd cluster is really mission critical to the cluster, and, thus, we should never run only one etcd server in a production environment or any environment that needs to be highly available.
- We then have a cluster of Kubernetes master nodes that also form a consensus group among themselves, similar to the etcd nodes. The number of master nodes also has to be an odd number. We can run the cluster with a single master, but we should never do that in a production or mission-critical system. There, we always should have at least three master nodes. Since the master nodes are used to manage the whole cluster, we are also talking about the management plane. The master nodes use the etcd cluster as their backing store. It is a good practice to put a **Load Balancer (LB)** in front of the master nodes with a well-known **Fully Qualified Domain Name (FQDN)**, such as `https://admin.example.com`. All tools that are used to manage the Kubernetes cluster should access it through this LB, rather than using the public IP address of one of the master nodes. This is shown in the top left-hand side of the preceding diagram.
- Towards the bottom of the diagram, we have a cluster of worker nodes. The number of nodes can be as low as 1 and does not have an upper limit. Kubernetes master and worker nodes communicate with one another. It is a bidirectional form of communication, which is different than the one we know from Docker Swarm. In Docker Swarm, only the manager nodes communicate with the worker nodes and never the other way around. All ingress traffic accessing the applications running in the cluster should be going through another load balancer. This is the application load balancer or reverse proxy. We never want external traffic to directly access any of the worker nodes.

Now that we have an idea about the high-level architecture of a Kubernetes cluster, let's dive a bit deeper and first look at the Kubernetes master and worker nodes.

Kubernetes master nodes

Kubernetes master nodes are used to manage a Kubernetes cluster. The following is a high-level diagram of such a master:



Kubernetes master

At the bottom of the preceding diagram, we have the Infrastructure, which can be a VM on-premise, in the cloud, or on a server (often called **bare metal**). Currently, Kubernetes masters only run on Linux. Most popular Linux distributions, such as RHEL, CentOS, and Ubuntu, are supported. On this Linux machine, we then have at least the following four Kubernetes services running:

- **API server:** This is the gateway to Kubernetes. All requests to list, create, modify, or delete any resources in the cluster must go through this service. It exposes a REST interface that tools such as `kubectl` use to manage the cluster and applications in the cluster.
- **Controller:** The controller, or more precisely the controller manager, is a control loop that observes the state of the cluster through the API server and makes changes, attempting to move the current or effective state toward the desired state.
- **Scheduler:** The scheduler is a service that tries its best to schedule pods on worker nodes considering various boundary conditions, such as resource requirements, policies, quality-of-service requirements, and more.
- **Cluster store:** This is an instance of etcd that is used to store all information about the state of the cluster.

To be more precise, etcd, which is used as a cluster store, does not necessarily have to be installed on the same node as the other Kubernetes services. Sometimes, Kubernetes clusters are configured that use standalone clusters of etcd servers, as shown in the architecture diagram in the previous section. But which variant to use is an advanced management decision and is outside of the scope of this book.

We need at least one master, but to achieve high availability, we need three or more master nodes. This is very similar to what we have learned about the manager nodes of a Docker Swarm. In this regard, a Kubernetes master is equivalent to a Swarm manager node.

Kubernetes masters never run an application's workload. Their sole purpose is to manage the cluster. Kubernetes masters build a **Raft consensus group**. The Raft protocol is a standard protocol used in situations where a group of members need to make decisions. It is used in many well-known software products such as MongoDB, Docker SwarmKit, and Kubernetes. For a more thorough discussion of the Raft protocol, see the link in the Further reading section.

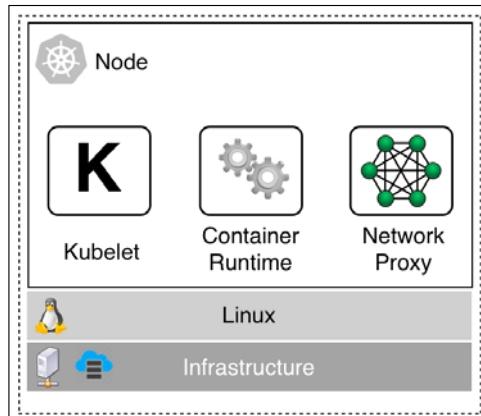
As we have mentioned in the previous section, the state of the Kubernetes cluster is stored in etcd. If the Kubernetes cluster is supposed to be highly available, then etcd must also be configured in high-availability mode, which normally means that one has at least three etcd instances running on different nodes.

Let's state once again that the whole cluster state is stored in etcd. This includes all the information about all the cluster nodes, all the replica sets, deployments, secrets, network policies, routing information, and so on. It is, therefore, crucial that we have a robust backup strategy in place for this key-value store.

Now let's look at the nodes that will be running the actual workload of the cluster.

Cluster nodes

Cluster nodes are the nodes on to which Kubernetes schedules an application's workload. They are the workhorses of the cluster. A Kubernetes cluster can have a few, dozens, hundreds, or even thousands, of cluster nodes. Kubernetes has been built from the ground up for high scalability. Don't forget that Kubernetes has been modeled after Google Borg, which has been running tens of thousands of containers for years:



Kubernetes worker node

A worker node can run on a VM or on bare metal, on-premise, or in the cloud. Originally, worker nodes could only be configured on Linux. But since Version 1.10 of Kubernetes, worker nodes can also run on Windows Server 2010. It is perfectly fine to have a mixed cluster with Linux and Windows worker nodes.

On each node, we have three services that need to run, which are described as follows:

- **Kubelet:** This is the first and foremost service. Kubelet is what's called the **primary node agent**. The Kubelet service uses pod specifications to make sure all of the containers of the corresponding pods are running and healthy. Pod specifications are files written in YAML or JSON format, and they declaratively describe a pod. We will get to know what pods are in the next section. PodSpecs are provided to Kubelet primarily through the API server.
- **Container Runtime:** The second service that needs to be present on each worker node is a container runtime. Kubernetes, by default, has used containerd since Version 1.9 as its container runtime. Before that, it would have used the Docker daemon. Other container runtimes, such as rkt or CRI-O, can be used. The container runtime is responsible for managing and running the individual containers of a pod.
- **kube-proxy:** Finally, there is kube-proxy. It runs as a daemon and is a simple network proxy and load balancer for all application services running on that particular node.

Now that we have learned about the architecture of Kubernetes and the master and worker nodes, it is time to introduce the tooling that we can use to develop applications targeted at Kubernetes.

Introducing Minikube

Minikube is a tool that creates a single node Kubernetes cluster in VirtualBox or Hyper-V (other hypervisors are supported) ready to be used during development of a containerized application. We have shown in *Chapter 2, Setting up a Working Environment*, how Minikube, and with it, the tool `kubectl` can be installed on your Mac or Windows laptop. As stated, Minikube is a single node Kubernetes cluster, and thus the node is, at the same time, a Kubernetes master as well as a worker node.

Let's make sure that Minikube is running with the following command:

```
$ minikube start
```

Once Minikube is ready, we can access its single node cluster using `kubectl`. And we should see something similar to the following screenshot:

```
$ kubectl get nodes
NAME      STATUS    ROLES      AGE      VERSION
minikube  Ready     <none>    2d       v1.9.0
$
```

Listing all nodes in Minikube

As mentioned before, we have a single node cluster with a node called `minikube`. Don't get confused by the value `<none>` in the column `ROLES`; the node plays the role of a worker and a master node at the same time.

Now, let's try to deploy a pod to this cluster. Don't worry about what a pod exactly is at this time; we will dive into all the details about it further along in this chapter. For the moment, just take it as is.

We can use the file `sample-pod.yaml` in the subfolder `ch10` of our `labs` folder to create such a pod. It has the following content:

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Pod
metadata:
  name: nginx
spec:
  containers:
    - name: nginx
```

```
image: nginx:alpine
ports:
- containerPort: 80
- containerPort: 443
```

Let's use the Kubernetes CLI called `kubectl` to deploy this pod:

```
$ kubectl create -f sample-pod.yaml
pod "nginx" created
```

If we now list all of the pods, we should see this:

```
$ kubectl get pods
NAME      READY     STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
nginx    1/1       Running   0          51s
```

To be able to access this pod, we need to create a service. Let's use the `sample-service.yaml` file, which has the following content:

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Service
metadata:
  name: nginx-service
spec:
  type: LoadBalancer
  ports:
  - port: 8080
    targetPort: 80
    protocol: TCP
    name: http
  - port: 443
    protocol: TCP
    name: https
  selector:
    app: nginx
```

Again, don't worry about what exactly a service is at this time. We'll explain it all in detail further down. Let's just create this service:

```
$ kubectl create -f sample-service.yaml
```

Now we can use `curl` to access the service:

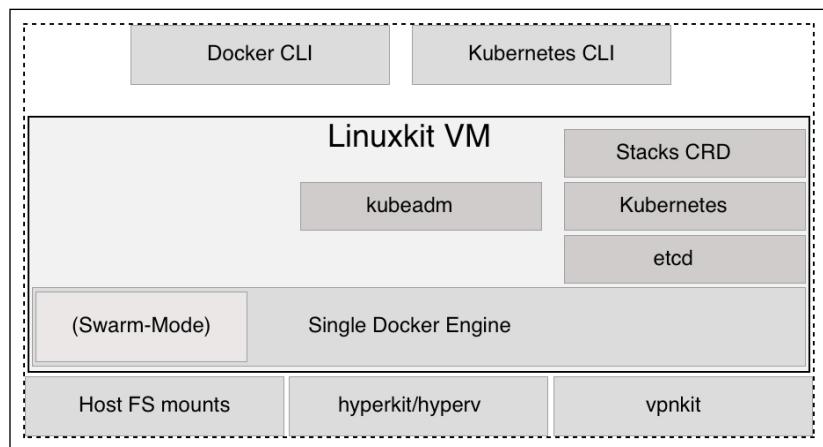
```
$ curl -4 http://localhost
```

We should be receiving the Nginx welcome page as an answer. Before you continue, please remove the two objects you just created:

```
$ kubectl delete po/nginx
$ kubectl delete svc/nginx-service
```

Kubernetes support in Docker for Desktop

Starting from Version 18.01-ce, Docker for Mac and Docker for Windows have started to support Kubernetes out of the box. Developers that want to deploy their containerized applications to Kubernetes can use this orchestrator instead of SwarmKit. Kubernetes support by default is turned off and has to be enabled in the settings. The first time Kubernetes is enabled, Docker for Mac or Windows will need a moment to download all components that are needed to create a single-node Kubernetes cluster. Contrary to Minikube, which is also a single-node cluster, the version provided by the Docker tools uses containerized versions of all Kubernetes components:



Kubernetes support in Docker for Mac and Windows

The preceding diagram gives a rough overview on how Kubernetes support has been added to Docker for Mac and Windows. Docker for Mac uses hyperkit to run a LinuxKit-based VM. Docker for Windows uses Hyper-V to achieve the same. Inside the VM, the Docker engine is installed. Part of the engine is SwarmKit, which enables Swarm-Mode. Docker for Mac or Windows uses the kubeadm tool to set up and configure Kubernetes in that VM. The following three facts are worth mentioning:

- Kubernetes stores its cluster state in etcd; thus, we have etcd running on this VM.
- Then, we have all the services that make up Kubernetes.

- Finally, some services that support the deployment of Docker stacks from the Docker CLI into Kubernetes. This service is not part of the official Kubernetes distribution, but is Docker specific.

All components of Kubernetes are running in containers in the LinuxKit-based VM. These containers can be hidden through a setting in Docker for Mac or Windows. See further down in the section for a complete list of Kubernetes system containers running on your laptop, if you have Kubernetes support enabled. To avoid repetition, from now on, I will only talk about **Docker for Desktop**, instead of Docker for Mac and Docker for Windows. Everything that I will be saying applies equally to both editions.

One big advantage of Docker for Desktop with Kubernetes enabled over Minikube is that the former allows developers to use a single tool to build, test, and run a containerized application targeted at Kubernetes. It is even possible to deploy a multi-service application into Kubernetes, using a Docker Compose file.

Now, let's get our hands dirty:

- First, we have to enable Kubernetes.
- On the Mac, click on the Docker icon in the menu bar and select **Preferences**.
- In the dialog box that opens, select the **Kubernetes** option, as shown in the following screenshot:



Enabling Kubernetes in Docker for Mac

4. Then, select the **Enable Kubernetes** checkbox. Also, tick the other **Show system containers** (advanced) checkbox.
5. Click on the **Apply** button. You will be warned that the installation and configuration of Kubernetes takes a few minutes:



Warning that the installation and configuration of Kubernetes takes a while

6. Click the **Install** button to start the installation. Now it's time that you take a break and enjoy a nice cup of tea.

Once the installation has finished (Docker notifies us of this by showing a green status icon in the settings dialog), we can test it. Since we now have two Kubernetes clusters running on our laptop, Minikube and Docker for Mac, we need to configure `kubectl` to access the latter. First, let's list all contexts that we have:

```
$ kubectl config get-contexts
CURRENT  NAME          CLUSTER          AUTHINFO          NAMESPACE
*        docker-for-desktop  docker-for-desktop-cluster  docker-for-desktop
*        minikube        minikube           minikube
$
```

List of contexts for `kubectl`

Here, we can see that, on my laptop, I have the two contexts mentioned previously. Currently still, the Minikube context is active, visible by the asterisk in the CURRENT column. We can switch to the `docker-for-desktop` context using the following command:

```
$ kubectl config use-context docker-for-desktop
Switched to context "docker-for-desktop".
$
```

Changing the context for the Kubernetes CLI

Now we can use Kubectl to access the cluster that Docker for Mac just created. We should see this:

\$ kubectl get nodes					
NAME	STATUS	ROLES	AGE	VERSION	
docker-for-desktop	Ready	master	15m	v1.9.2	
\$ █					

The single node Kubernetes cluster created by Docker for Mac

OK, this looks very familiar. It is pretty much the same as what we saw when working with Minikube. The version of Kubernetes that my Docker for Mac is using is 1.9.2. We can also see that the node is a master node.

If we list all containers that are currently running on our Docker for Mac, we get this list (note that I use the `--format` argument to output only the Container ID and Names of the containers), as shown in the following screenshot:

\$ docker container ls --format "table {{.ID}}\t{{.Names}}"	
CONTAINER ID	NAMES
0cdfdf5f5e5a86	k8s_compose_compose-5d4ff4d67b6-gbrjrh_docker_c3f07e06-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
0edd323f6ccb	k8s_compose_compose-api-7bb7b5968f-f98jk_docker_c1e89385-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
218514b4fc00	k8s_POD_compose-5d4ff4d67b6-gbrjrh_docker_c3f07e06-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
a78a64fc9f7e	k8s_POD_compose-api-7bb7b5968f-f98jk_docker_c3e89385-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
f64fbcc5070c	k8s_sidecar_kube-dns-f6f4fd4bdf-9b8kn_kube-system_ab66aab5-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
4b6138bd34e7	k8s_dnsmasq_kube-dns-f6f4fd4bdf-9b8kn_kube-system_ab66aab5-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
b7f1394d8e48a	k8s_kubedns_kube-dns-f6f4fd4bdf-9b8kn_kube-system_ab66aab5-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
a16b63a8f614	k8s_kube-proxy_kube-proxy-p4cf8_kube-system_ab6e9881-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
655f8dc04a1c	k8s_POD_kube-proxy-p4cf8_kube-system_ab6e9881-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
1088b5a2fe05c	k8s_POD_kube-dns-f6f4fd4bdf-9b8kn_kube-system_ab66aab5-2e3b-11e8-860f-025000000001_0
23f1808a6f8a	k8s_kube-scheduler_kube-scheduler-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_3a369b3ba7d6d3b6fa014295eab94925_0
89a1032beee7	k8s_kube-controller-manager_kube-controller-manager-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_b098d9f7b8045512f23cb04fe3f64f5_0
bb25965301d8	k8s_etcd_etcd-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_7278f85057e8bf5cb81c9f96d3b25320_0
126d0edc29f0	k8s_kube-apiserver_kube-apiserver-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_8d19d05a3d7b137bafa35348cb849dd5_0
d87992c3ea6e	k8s_POD_kube-scheduler-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_3a369b3ba7d6d3b6fa014295eab94925_0
063fd1f120ea5	k8s_POD_kube-controller-manager-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_b098d9f7b8045512f23cb04fe3f64f5_0
22a1c70f6c4e	k8s_POD_kube-apiserver-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_8d19d05a3d7b137bafa35348cb849dd5_0
91ec502f1467	k8s_POD_etcd-docker-for-desktop_kube-system_7278f85057e8bf5cb81c9f96d3b25320_0
\$ █	

Kubernetes system containers

In the list, we can identify all the now-familiar components that make up Kubernetes, such as the following:

- API server
- etcd
- Kube proxy
- DNS service
- Kube controller
- Kube scheduler

There are also containers that have the word compose in them. These are Docker-specific services and are used to allow us to deploy Docker Compose applications on to Kubernetes. Docker translates the Docker Compose syntax and implicitly creates the necessary Kubernetes objects such as deployments, pods, and services.

Normally, we wouldn't want to clutter our list of containers with these system containers. We can thus uncheck the **Show system containers** checkbox in the settings for Kubernetes.

Now let's try to deploy a Docker Compose application to Kubernetes. Navigate to the subfolder ch10 of our labs folder. We deploy the app as a stack using the docker-compose.yml file:

```
$ docker stack deploy -c docker-compose.yml app
```

This is what we see:

```
$ docker stack deploy -c docker-compose.yml app
Stack app was created
Waiting for the stack to be stable and running...
  - Service db has one container running
  - Service web has one container running
Stack app is stable and running
```

Deploy stack to Kubernetes

We can test the application, for example, using curl, and we will see that it is running as expected:

```
$ curl localhost:3000/pet
<html>
<head>
  <link rel="stylesheet" href="main.css">
</head>
<body>
  <div class="container">
    <h4>Cat Gif of the day</h4>
    
    <p><small>Courtesy: <a href="http://www.buzzfeed.com/copyranter/the-best-cat-gifs-of-the-day-5c5964c9b8-b5jq9">copyranter</a></small></p>
    <p>Delivered to you by container web-5c5964c9b8-b5jq9</p>
  </div>
</body>
$
```

Pets application running in Kubernetes on Docker for Mac

Now, you should be curious and wonder what exactly Docker did when we executed the `docker stack deploy` command. We can use `kubectl` to find out:

```
$ kubectl get all
NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  UP-TO-DATE  AVAILABLE  AGE
deploy/web  1        1        1          1          9m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY     AGE
rs/web-5c5964c9b8  1        1        1          9m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  UP-TO-DATE  AVAILABLE  AGE
deploy/web  1        1        1          1          9m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY     AGE
rs/web-5c5964c9b8  1        1        1          9m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  AGE
statefulsets/db  1        1        9m

NAME            READY   STATUS    RESTARTS  AGE
po/db-0         1/1     Running   0          9m
po/web-5c5964c9b8-b5jq9  1/1     Running   0          9m

NAME           TYPE    CLUSTER-IP      EXTERNAL-IP    PORT(S)      AGE
svc/db          ClusterIP    None           <none>       55555/TCP    9m
svc/kubernetes ClusterIP    10.96.0.1     <none>       443/TCP     45m
svc/web          ClusterIP    None           <none>       55555/TCP    9m
svc/webPublished LoadBalancer  10.111.43.147  localhost    3000:32590/TCP 9m
$
```

A list of all Kubernetes objects, created by the `docker stack deploy` command

Docker created a deployment for the `web` service and a stateful set for the `db` service. It also automatically created Kubernetes services for `web` and `db` so that they can be accessed inside the cluster. It also created the Kubernetes service `svc/web-published`, which is used for external access.

This is pretty cool to say the least and decreases friction tremendously in the development process for teams targeting Kubernetes as the orchestrator.

Before you continue, please remove the stack from the cluster:

```
$ docker stack rm app
```

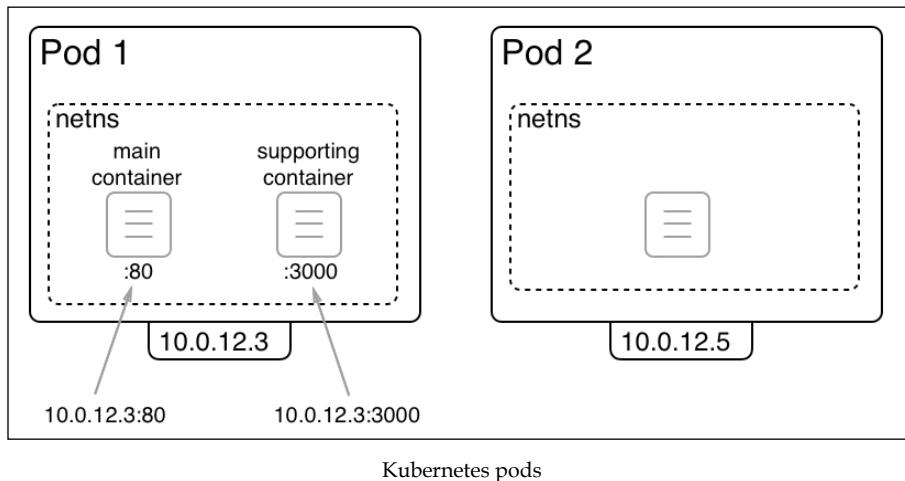
Also make sure you reset the context for `kubectl` back to Minikube, as we will be using Minikube for all our samples in this chapter:

```
$ kubectl config use-context minikube
```

Now that we have had an introduction to the tools we can use to develop applications that will eventually run in a Kubernetes cluster, it is time to learn about all the important Kubernetes objects that are used to define and manage such an application. We are starting with the **pod**.

Pods

Contrary to what is possible in a Docker Swarm, you cannot run containers directly in a Kubernetes cluster. In a Kubernetes cluster, you can only run pods. Pods are the atomic unit of deployment in Kubernetes. A pod is an abstraction of one or many co-located containers that share the same Kernel namespaces, such as the network namespace. No equivalent exists in the Docker SwarmKit. The fact that more than one container can be co-located and sharing the same network namespace is a very powerful concept. The following diagram illustrates two pods:



Kubernetes pods

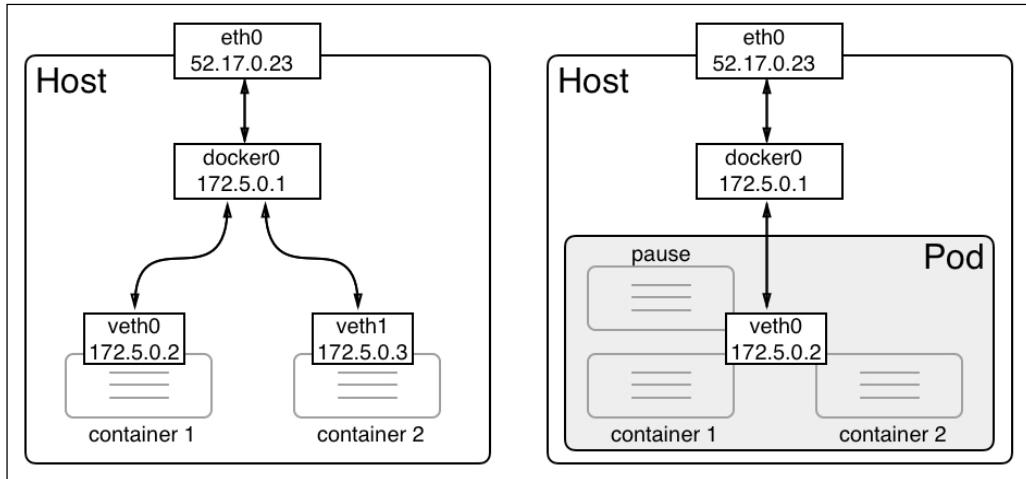
In the preceding diagram, we have two pods, **Pod 1** and **Pod 2**. The first pod contains two containers, while the second one contains only a single container. Each pod gets an IP address assigned by Kubernetes that is unique in the whole Kubernetes cluster. In our case, these are the IP addresses 10.0.12.3 and 10.0.12.5. Both are part of a private subnet managed by the Kubernetes network driver.

A pod can contain one or many containers. All these containers share the same kernel namespaces, and in particular they share the network namespace. This is marked by the dashed rectangle surrounding the containers. Since all containers running in the same pod share the network namespace, each container needs to make sure to use its own port, since duplicate ports are not allowed in a single network namespace. In this case, in **Pod 1**, the main container is using port 80, while the supporting container is using port 3000.

Requests from other pods or nodes can use the pod's IP address combined with the corresponding port number to access the individual containers. For example, you could access the application running in the main container of **Pod 1** through 10.0.12.3:80.

Comparing Docker Container and Kubernetes pod networking

Now let's compare Docker's container networking and the networking of a Kubernetes pod. In the diagram here, we have the former on the left-hand side and the latter on the right-hand side:



Containers in pod sharing network namespace

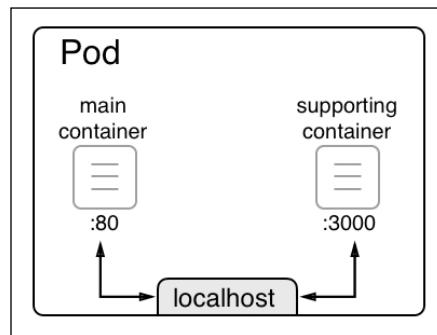
When a Docker container is created and no specific network is specified, the Docker engine creates a **virtual ethernet (veth)** endpoint. The first container gets **veth0**, and the next one gets **veth1**, and so on. These virtual ethernet endpoints are connected to the Linux bridge **docker0** that Docker automatically creates upon installation. Traffic is routed from the bridge docker0 to every connected veth endpoint. Every container has its own network namespace. No two containers use the same namespace. This is deliberate, to isolate applications running inside the containers from one another.

For a Kubernetes pod, the situation is different. When creating a new pod, Kubernetes first creates a so-called **pause container**, whose only purpose is to create and manage the namespaces that the pod will share with all containers. Other than that, it does nothing useful, but is just sleeping. The pause container is connected to the bridge docker0 through veth0. Any subsequent container that will be part of the pod is using a special feature of the Docker engine that allows it to reuse an existing network namespace. The syntax to do so looks as follows:

```
$ docker container create --net container:pause ...
```

The important part is the `--net` argument, which uses as a value `container:<container name>`. If we create a new container this way, Docker does not create a new veth endpoint, but the container uses the same one as the pause container.

Another important consequence of multiple containers sharing the same network namespace is the way they communicate with one another. Let's consider the following situation of a pod containing two containers, one listening at port 80 and the other at port 3000:



Containers in pods communicate via localhost

When two containers use the same Linux kernel network namespace, they can communicate with each other through localhost; this is similar to when two processes are running on the same host, as they can communicate with each other through localhost too. This is illustrated in the preceding diagram. From the main container, the containerized application inside it can reach out to the service running inside the supporting container through `http://localhost:3000`.

Sharing the network namespace

After all this theory, you might be wondering how a pod is actually created by Kubernetes. Kubernetes is only using what Docker provides. So, *how does this network namespace share work?* First, Kubernetes creates the so-called pause container, as mentioned previously. This container has no other function than to reserve the kernel namespaces for that pod and keep them alive, even if no other container inside the pod is running. Let's simulate the creation of a pod, then. We start by creating the pause container and take Nginx for this purpose:

```
$ docker container run -d --name pause nginx:alpine
```

And now we add a second container called `main`, attaching it to the same network namespace as the `pause` container:

```
$ docker container run --name main -dit \
--net container:pause \
alpine:latest /bin/sh
```

Since the `pause` and the sample container are both part of the same network namespace, they can reach each other through `localhost`. To show this, we first have to `exec` into the `main` container:

```
$ docker exec -it main /bin/sh
```

Now we can test the connection to Nginx running in the `pause` container and listening on port 80. Here is what we get if we use the `wget` utility to do so:

```
/ # wget -qO - localhost
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<title>Welcome to nginx!</title>
<style>
    body {
        width: 35em;
        margin: 0 auto;
        font-family: Tahoma, Verdana, Arial, sans-serif;
    }
</style>
</head>
<body>
<h1>Welcome to nginx!</h1>
<p>If you see this page, the nginx web server is successfully installed and
working. Further configuration is required.</p>

<p>For online documentation and support please refer to
<a href="http://nginx.org/">nginx.org</a>.<br/>
Commercial support is available at
<a href="http://nginx.com/">nginx.com</a>.</p>

<p><em>Thank you for using nginx.</em></p>
</body>
</html>
/ # █
```

Two containers sharing the same network namespace

The output shows that we can indeed access Nginx on `localhost`. This is proof that the two containers share the same namespace. If that is not enough, we can use the `ip` tool to show `eth0` inside both containers and we will get the exact same result, specifically, the same IP address, which is one of the characteristics of a pod, where all its containers share the same IP address:

```
/ # ip a show eth0
1: eth0@if12: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP,M-DOWN> mtu 1500 qdisc noqueue state UP
    link/ether 02:42:ac:11:00:02 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
        inet 172.17.0.2/16 brd 172.17.255.255 scope global eth0
            valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
/ #
```

Displaying the properties of `eth0` with the `ip` tool

If we inspect the `bridge` network, we can see that only the `pause` container is listed. The other container didn't get an entry in the `Containers` list, since it is reusing the `pause` container's endpoint:

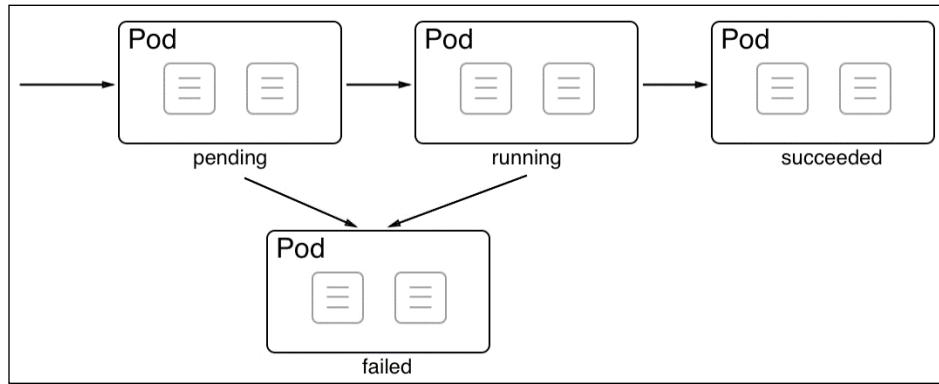
```
$ docker network inspect bridge
[
  {
    "Name": "bridge",
    "Id": "41909c08794041ccbc3a9d2e034426f2344f5310bd1cbfcbae65c5f25a05f541",
    "Created": "2018-03-26T22:16:44.790966007Z",
    "Scope": "local",
    "Driver": "bridge",
    "EnableIPv6": false,
    "IPAM": {
      "Driver": "default",
      "Options": null,
      "Config": [
        {
          "Subnet": "172.17.0.0/16",
          "Gateway": "172.17.0.1"
        }
      ]
    },
    "Internal": false,
    "Attachable": false,
    "Ingress": false,
    "ConfigFrom": {
      "Network": ""
    },
    "ConfigOnV": false,
    "Containers": {
      "896ec65ca4a1de1f1d9c987b68e888c1115cf64f44ba3842953d29a2b9a0ea8": {
        "Name": "pause",
        "EndpointID": "890fc0527f7cb6484d24b7886772db23bb5a0502fe34269fc306277ea7a6f95e",
        "MacAddress": "02:42:ac:11:00:02",
        "IPv4Address": "172.17.0.2/16",
        "IPv6Address": ""
      }
    },
    "Options": {
      "com.docker.network.bridge.default_bridge": "true",
      "com.docker.network.bridge.enable_icc": "true",
      "com.docker.network.bridge.enable_ip_masquerade": "true",
      "com.docker.network.bridge.host_binding_ipv4": "0.0.0.0",
      "com.docker.network.bridge.name": "docker0",
      "com.docker.network.driver.mtu": "1500"
    },
    "Labels": {}
  }
]
```

Inspecting the Docker default bridge network

Pod life cycle

We have learned earlier in this book that containers have a life cycle. A container is initialized, run, and ultimately exited. When a container exits, it can do this gracefully with an exit code zero, or it can terminate with an error, which is equivalent to a non-zero exit code.

Similarly, a pod has a life cycle. Due to the fact that a pod can contain more than one container, this life cycle is slightly more complicated than the one of a single container. The life cycle of a pod is shown in the following diagram:



Life cycle of Kubernetes pods

When a pod is created on a cluster node, it first enters into **pending** status. Once all containers of the pod are up and running, the pod enters **running** status. The pod only enters into this state if all its containers run successfully. If the pod is asked to terminate, it will request all its containers to terminate. If all containers terminate with an exit code of zero, then the pod enters into **succeeded** status. This is the happy path.

Now let's look at some scenarios that lead to the pod being in **failed** state. There are three possible scenarios:

- If, during the startup of the pod, at least one container is not able to run and fails (that is, it exits with a non-zero exit code), the pod moves from the **pending** state to the **failed** state.
- If the pod is in **running** status and one of the containers suddenly crashes or exits with a non-zero exit code, the pod transitions from the **running** state into the **failed** state.
- If the pod is asked to terminate and during the shutdown at least one of the containers exits with a non-zero exit code, the pod also enters into the **failed** state.

Pod specification

When creating a pod in a Kubernetes cluster, we can use either an **imperative** or a **declarative** approach. We have discussed the difference of the two approaches earlier in this book, but to rephrase the important aspect, using a declarative approach signifies that we write a manifest that describes the end state we want to achieve. We leave the details of the how to the orchestrator. The end state that we want to achieve is also called the **desired state**. In general, the declarative approach is strongly preferred in all of the established orchestrators, and Kubernetes is no exception.

Thus, in this chapter, we will exclusively concentrate on the declarative approach. Manifests or specifications for a pod can be written using either YAML or JSON format. In this chapter, we will concentrate on YAML, since it is easier to read for us humans. Let's look at a sample specification. Here is the content of the `pod.yaml` file that can be found in the `ch10` subfolder of our `labs` folder:

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Pod
metadata:
  name: web-pod
spec:
  containers:
    - name: web
      image: nginx:alpine
      ports:
        - containerPort: 80
```

Each specification in Kubernetes starts with the version information. Pods have been around for quite some time, and thus the API version is v1. The second line specifies the type of Kubernetes object or resource we want to define. Obviously, in this case, we want to specify a pod. Next comes a block with metadata. At the bare minimum, we need to give the pod a name. Here, we call it `web-pod`. The next block that follows is the spec block, which contains the specification of the pod. The most important part (and the only one in this simple sample) is the list of all containers that are part of this pod. We only have one container here, but multiple containers are possible. The name we choose for our container is `web`, and the container image is `nginx:alpine`. Finally, we define the list of ports the container is exposing.

Once we have authored such a specification, we can apply it to the cluster using the Kubernetes CLI `kubectl`. In the terminal, navigate to the `ch10` subfolder and execute the following command:

```
$ kubectl create -f pod.yaml
```

This will respond with pod "web-pod" created. We can then list all pods in the cluster with kubectl get pods:

```
$ kubectl get pods
  NAME      READY     STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
  web-pod   1/1      Running   0          2m
```

As expected, we have one of one pods in running status. The pod is called web-pod, as defined. We can get more detailed information about the running pod by using the describe command:

```
$ kubectl describe pod/web-pod
Name:           web-pod
Namespace:      default
Node:          minikube/192.168.99.105
Start Time:    Sun, 25 Mar 2018 22:47:49 -0500
Labels:         <none>
Annotations:   <none>
Status:        Running
IP:            172.17.0.3
Containers:
  web:
    Container ID: docker://e8784dfc2e3fcf1de4bfb9ab1508176799b6024b96d9447126e1db5dd5e2201f
    Image:          nginx:alpine
    Image ID:      docker-pullable://nginx@sha256:17c4704e19a11cd47545fa3c17e6903fc88672021f7f907f212d6663baef6ab57
    Port:          80/TCP
    State:         Running
      Started:    Sun, 25 Mar 2018 22:47:50 -0500
    Ready:         True
    Restart Count: 0
    Environment:  <none>
    Mounts:
      /var/run/secrets/kubernetes.io/serviceaccount from default-token-fhdsm (ro)
Conditions:
  Type      Status
  Initialized  True
  Ready      True
  PodScheduled  True
Volumes:
  default-token-fhdsm:
    Type:      Secret (a volume populated by a Secret)
    SecretName: default-token-fhdsm
    Optional:   false
  QoS Class:  BestEffort
  Node-Selectors: <none>
  Tolerations:  <none>
Events:
  Type  Reason     Age   From           Message
  ----  ----      ---   ----
  Normal Scheduled  5m   default-scheduler  Successfully assigned web-pod to minikube
  Normal SuccessfulMountVolume  5m   kubelet, minikube  MountVolume.SetUp succeeded for volume "default-token-fhdsm"
  Normal Pulled     5m   kubelet, minikube  Container image "nginx:alpine" already present on machine
  Normal Created    5m   kubelet, minikube  Created container
  Normal Started    5m   kubelet, minikube  Started container
```

Describing a pod running in the cluster

Please note the notation pod/web-pod in the previous describe command. Other variants are possible, for example, pods/web-pod or po/web-pod. pod and po are aliases of pods. The kubectl tool defines many aliases, to make our lives a bit easier.

The `describe` command gives us a plethora of valuable information about the pod, not least of which is the list of events that happened with this pod affected. The list is shown at the end of the output.

The information in the `Containers` section is very similar to what we find in a `docker container inspect` output.

We can also see a `Volumes` section with some entry of type `Secret`. We will discuss Kubernetes secrets in the next chapter. Volumes, on the other hand, are discussed next.

Pods and volumes

In the chapter about containers, we have learned about volumes and their purpose to access and store persistent data. As containers can mount volumes, pods can do so as well. In reality, it is really the containers inside the pod that mount the volumes, but that is just a semantic detail. Let's first see how we can define a volume in Kubernetes. Kubernetes supports a plethora of volume types, and we're not diving into too much detail about this. Let's just create a local volume implicitly by defining a `PersistentVolumeClaim` called `my-data-claim`:

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: PersistentVolumeClaim
metadata:
  name: my-data-claim
spec:
  accessModes:
    - ReadWriteOnce
  resources:
    requests:
      storage: 2Gi
```

We have defined a claim that requests 2 GB of data. Let's create this claim:

```
$ kubectl create -f volume-claim.yaml
```

We can list the claim using `kubectl` (`pvc` is the shortcut for `PersistentVolumeClaim`):

\$ kubectl get pvc							
NAME	STATUS	VOLUME	CAPACITY	ACCESS MODES	STORAGECLASS	AGE	
my-data-claim	Bound	pvc-aac3bb2c-3224-11e8-a07f-080027c10823	2Gi	RWO	standard	14m	
\$							

List of PersistentStorageClaim objects in the cluster

In the output, we can see that the claim has implicitly created a volume called pvc-<ID>. We are now ready to use the volume created by the claim in a pod. Let's use a modified version of the pod specification that we used previously. We can find this updated specification in the `pod-with-vol.yaml` file in the `ch10` folder. Let's look at this specification in detail:

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Pod
metadata:
  name: web-pod
spec:
  containers:
    - name: web
      image: nginx:alpine
      ports:
        - containerPort: 80
      volumeMounts:
        - name: my-data
          mountPath: /data
  volumes:
    - name: my-data
      persistentVolumeClaim:
        claimName: my-data-claim
```

In the last four lines, in the block `volumes`, we define the list of volumes we want to use for this pod. The volumes that we list here can be used by any of the containers of the pod. In our particular case, we only have one volume. We define that we have a volume `my-data` that is a persistent volume claim whose claim name is the one we just created before. Then, in the container specification, we have the `volumeMounts` block, where we define the volume we want to use and the (absolute) path inside the container where the volume will be mounted. In our case, we mount the volume to the `/data` folder of the container filesystem. Let's create this pod:

```
$ kubectl create -f pod-with-vol.yaml
```

Then, we can exec into the container to double-check that the volume has mounted by navigating to the `/data` folder, create a file there, and exit the container:

```
$ kubectl exec -it web-pod -- /bin/sh
/ # cd /data
/data # echo "Hello world!" > sample.txt
/data # exit
```

If we are right, then the data in this container must persist beyond the life cycle of the pod. Thus, let's delete the pod and then recreate it and exec into it to make sure the data is still there. This is the result:

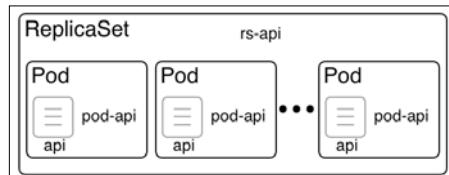
```
$ kubectl delete po/web-pod
pod "web-pod" deleted
$ kubectl create -f pod-with-vol.yaml
pod "web-pod" created
$ kubectl exec -it web-pod -- /bin/sh
/ # cat /data/sample.txt
Hello world!
/ #
```

Data stored in volume survives pod recreation

Kubernetes ReplicaSet

A single pod in an environment with high availability requirements is insufficient. *What if the pod crashes? What if we need to update the application running inside the pod but cannot afford any service interruption?* These questions and more can only indicate that pods alone are not enough and that we need a higher-level concept that can manage multiple instances of the same pod. In Kubernetes, the **ReplicaSet** is used to define and manage such a collection of identical pods that are running on different cluster nodes. Among other things, a **ReplicaSet** defines which container images are used by the containers running inside a pod and how many instances of the pod will run in the cluster. These properties and the many others are called the **desired state**.

The ReplicaSet is responsible for reconciling the desired state at all times, if the actual state ever deviates from it. Here is a Kubernetes ReplicaSet:



Kubernetes ReplicaSet

In the preceding diagram, we see such a ReplicaSet called an **rs-api**, which governs a number of pods. The pods are called **pod-api**. The ReplicaSet is responsible for making sure that at any given time there are always the desired number of pods running. If one of the pods crashes for whatever reason, the ReplicaSet schedules a new pod on a node with free resources instead. If there are more pods than the desired number, the ReplicaSet kills the superfluous pods. We can thus say that the ReplicaSet guarantees a self-healing and scalable set of pods. There is no limit on how many pods a ReplicaSet can be comprised of.

ReplicaSet specification

Similar to what we have learned about pods, Kubernetes also allows us to either imperatively or declaratively define and create a `ReplicaSet`. Since the declarative approach is by far the recommended one in most cases, we're going to concentrate on this approach. Here is a sample specification for a Kubernetes `ReplicaSet`:

```
apiVersion: apps/v1
kind: ReplicaSet
metadata:
  name: rs-web
spec:
  selector:
    matchLabels:
      app: web
  replicas: 3
  template:
    metadata:
      labels:
        app: web
    spec:
      containers:
        - name: nginx
          image: nginx:alpine
          ports:
            - containerPort: 80
```

This looks an awful lot like the pod specification we introduced earlier. Let's concentrate on the differences, then. First, on line 2, we have the `kind` which was `Pod` and is now `ReplicaSet`. Then, on lines 6–8, we have a `selector` that determines the pods that will be part of the `ReplicaSet`. In this case, it is all pods that have a label `app` with the value `web`. Then, on line 9, we define how many replicas of the pod we want to run, three, in this case. Finally, we have the `template` section, which first defines the `metadata` and then the `spec`, which defines the containers that run inside the pod. In our case, we have a single container using the `nginx:alpine` image and exporting port 80.

The really important elements are the number of replicas and the selector that specifies the set of pods governed by the `ReplicaSet`.

In our `ch10` folder, we have a file called `replicaset.yaml` that contains the preceding specification exactly. Let's use this file to create the `ReplicaSet`:

```
$ kubectl create -f replicaset.yaml
replicaset "rs-web" created
```

If we list all the ReplicaSets in the cluster, we get this (`rs` is a shortcut for `replicaset`):

```
$ kubectl get rs
NAME      DESIRED   CURRENT   READY    AGE
rs-web     3          3         3        51s
```

In the preceding output, we can see that we have a single ReplicaSet called `rs-web` whose desired state is three (pods). The current state also shows three pods and all three pods are ready. We can also list all pods in the system, and we get this:

```
$ kubectl get pods
NAME        READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
rs-web-6qz1d  1/1    Running   0          4m
rs-web-frj2m  1/1    Running   0          4m
rs-web-zd2kt  1/1    Running   0          4m
```

Here, we see our three expected pods. The names of the pods are using the name of the ReplicaSet with a unique ID appended to each pod. In the `READY` column, we see how many containers are defined in the pod and how many of them are ready. In our case, we have only a single container per pod, and in each case, it is ready. Thus, the overall status of the pod is `Running`. We also see how many times each pod had to be restarted. In our case, we did not have any restarts yet.

Self-healing

Now let's test the magic powers of the self-healing of the ReplicaSet by randomly killing one of its pods and observing what's going to happen. Let's delete the first pod from the previous list:

```
$ kubectl delete po/rs-web-6qz1d
pod "rs-web-6qz1d" deleted
```

Then, let's list all pods again. We expect to see only two pods, *right?* Wrong:

```
$ kubectl get pods
NAME        READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
rs-web-frj2m  1/1    Running   0          22h
rs-web-q6cr7  1/1    Running   0          41s
rs-web-zd2kt  1/1    Running   0          22h
$
```

List of pods after having killed a pod of the ReplicaSet

OK, evidently the second pod in the list has been recreated as we can see from the AGE column. This is auto-healing in action. Let's see what we discover if we describe the ReplicaSet:

```
$ kubectl describe rs/rs-web
Name:           rs-web
Namespace:      default
Selector:       app=web
Labels:         app=web
Annotations:    <none>
Replicas:       3 current / 3 desired
Pods Status:   3 Running / 0 Waiting / 0 Succeeded / 0 Failed
Pod Template:
  Labels:  app=web
  Containers:
    nginx:
      Image:      nginx:alpine
      Port:       80/TCP
      Environment: <none>
      Mounts:     <none>
      Volumes:    <none>
  Events:
    Type  Reason          Age   From            Message
    ----  ----          ----  ----            -----
    Normal SuccessfulCreate 4m   replicaset-controller  Created pod: rs-web-q6cr7

```

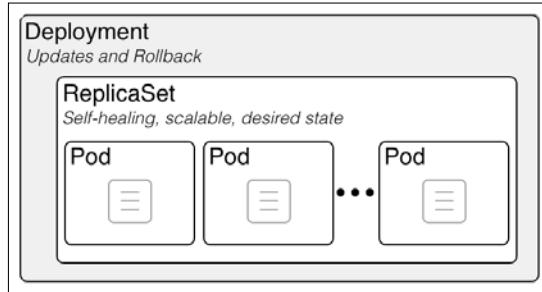
Describing the ReplicaSet

And, indeed, we find an entry under `Events` that tells us that the `ReplicaSet` created the new pod `rs-web-q6cr7`.

Kubernetes deployment

Kubernetes takes the single responsibility principle very seriously. All Kubernetes objects are designed to do one thing and one thing only. And they are designed to do this one thing very well. In this regard, we have to understand Kubernetes ReplicaSets and Deployments. The ReplicaSet, as we have learned, is responsible for achieving and reconciling the desired state of an application service. This means that the ReplicaSet manages a set of pods.

The deployment augments a ReplicaSet by providing rolling update and rollback functionality on top of it. In Docker Swarm, the swarm service would incorporate the functionality of both the ReplicaSet and the Deployment. In this regard, SwarmKit is much more monolithic than Kubernetes. The following diagram shows the relationship of a Deployment to a ReplicaSet:



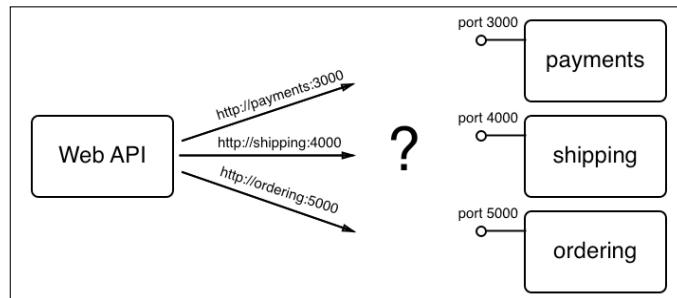
Kubernetes deployment

In the preceding diagram, the **ReplicaSet** is defining and governing a set of identical pods. The main characteristics of the ReplicaSet are that it is self-healing, scalable, and always does its best to reconcile the desired state. The Kubernetes deployment in turn adds rolling update and rollback functionality to the plate. In this regard, a deployment is really a wrapper object to a ReplicaSet.

We will learn more about rolling updates and rollbacks in the next chapter of this book.

Kubernetes service

The moment we start to work with applications consisting of more than one application service, we have a need for service discovery. In the following diagram, we illustrate this problem:

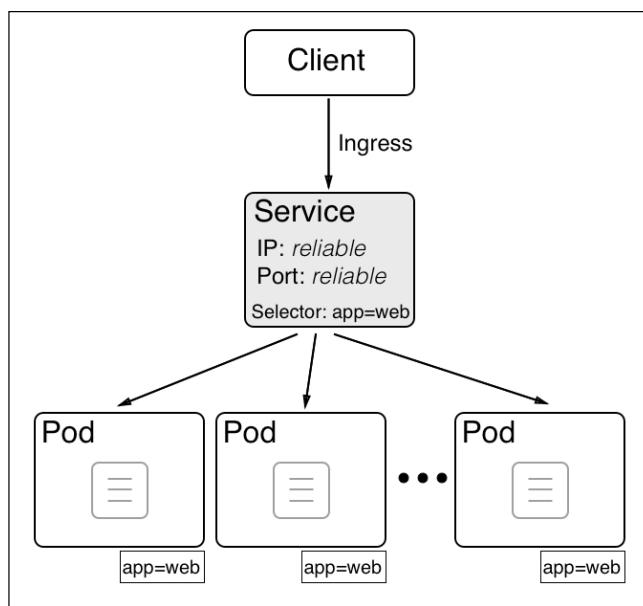


Service discovery

In this diagram, we have a **Web API** service that needs access to three other services – **payments**, **shipping**, and **ordering**. The Web API should at no time have to care about how and where to find those three services. In the API code, we just want to use the name of the service we want to reach and its port number. A sample would be the URL `http://payments:3000` that is used to access an instance of the payments service.

In Kubernetes, the payments application service is represented by a ReplicaSet of pods. Due to the nature of highly distributed systems, we cannot assume that pods have stable endpoints. A pod can come and go in the blink of an eye. But that's a problem if we need to access the corresponding application service from an internal or external client. If we cannot rely on pod endpoints being stable, *what else can we do?*

This is where Kubernetes services come into play. They are meant to provide stable endpoints to ReplicaSets or Deployments, as shown here:

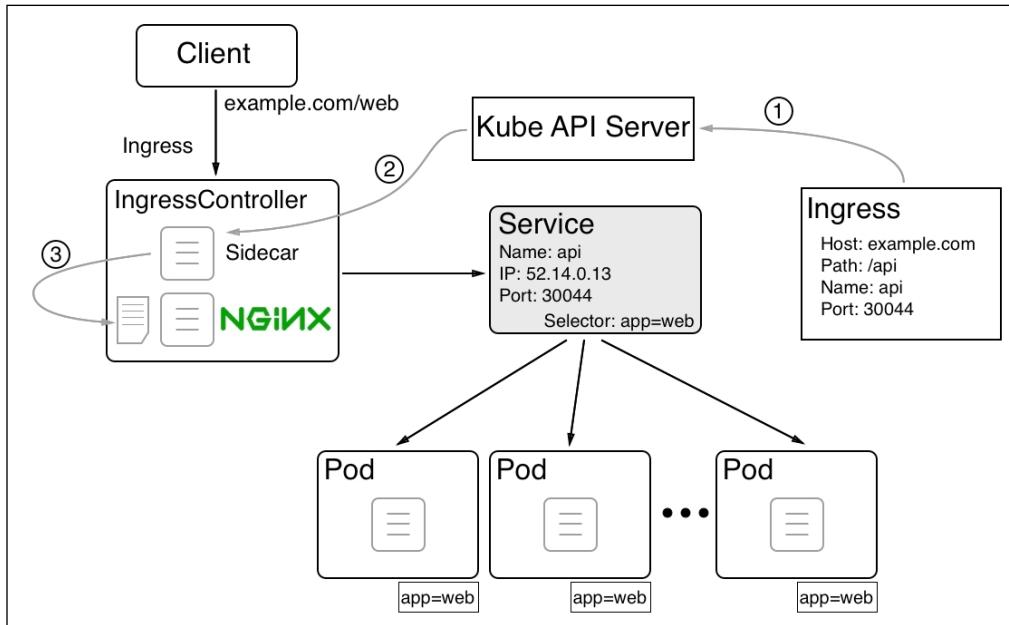


Kubernetes service providing stable endpoints to clients

In the preceding diagram, in the center, we see such a Kubernetes service. It provides a reliable cluster-wide IP address also called a **virtual IP (VIP)**, as well as a reliable port that's unique in the whole cluster. The pods that the Kubernetes service is proxying are determined by the selector defined in the service specification. Selectors are always based on labels. Every Kubernetes object can have zero to many labels assigned. In our case, the selector is **app=web**; that is, all pods that have a label called **app** with a value of **web** are proxied.

Context-based routing

Often, we want to configure context-based routing for our Kubernetes cluster. Kubernetes offers us various ways to do so. The preferred and most scalable way at this time is to use an **IngressController** for this job. The following diagram tries to illustrate how this ingress controller works:



Context-based routing using a Kubernetes ingress controller

In this diagram, we can see how context-based (or layer 7) routing works when using an ingress controller, such as Nginx. Here, we have a deployment of an application service called web. All the pods of this application service have a label **app=web**. We then have a Kubernetes service called web that provides a stable endpoint to those pods. The service has a (virtual) IP of 52.14.0.13 and exposes port 30044. That is, if a request comes to any node of the Kubernetes cluster for the name web and port 30044, then it is forwarded to this service. The service then load balances the request to one of the pods.

So far, so good, but how is an ingress request from a client to the URL `http[s]://example.com/web` *routed to our web service*? First, we have to define the routing from a context-based request to a corresponding `<service name>/<port>` request. This is done through an Ingress object:

1. In the Ingress object, we define the host and path as the source and the (service) name, and the port as the target. When this Ingress object is created by the Kubernetes API server, then a process that runs as sidecar in the IngressController picks this change up.
2. Modifies the configuration file of the Nginx reverse proxy.
3. By adding the new route, Nginx is then asked to reload its configuration and thus will be able to correctly route any incoming requests to `http[s]://example.com/web`.

Summary

In this chapter, we have learned the basics of Kubernetes. We had an overview of its architecture and an introduction to the main resources used to define and run applications in a Kubernetes cluster. We also introduced Minikube and Kubernetes support for Docker for Mac and Windows.

In the next chapter, we're going to deploy an application into a Kubernetes cluster. Then, we're going to be updating one of the services of this application using a zero downtime strategy. Finally, we're going to instrument application services running in Kubernetes with sensitive data, using secrets. Stay tuned.

Questions

Please answer the following questions, to assess what you have learned from this chapter:

1. Explain in a few short sentences what the role of a Kubernetes master is.
2. List the elements that need to be present on each Kubernetes (worker) node.
3. True or false: We cannot run individual containers in a Kubernetes cluster.
4. Explain the reason containers of a pod can use localhost to communicate with each other.
5. What is the purpose of the so-called pause container in a pod?

6. Bob tells you: Our application consists of three Docker images: web, inventory, and db. Since we can run multiple containers in a Kubernetes pod, we are going to deploy all the services of our application in a single pod. List three to four reasons why this is a bad idea.
7. Explain in your own words why we need Kubernetes ReplicaSets.
8. Under what circumstances do we need Kubernetes deployments?
9. List at least three types of Kubernetes services and explain their purposes and their differences.

Further reading

Here is a list of articles with more detailed information on various topics discussed in this chapter:

- *The Raft Consensus Algorithm* (<https://raft.github.io/>)
- *Docker Compose and Kubernetes with Docker for Desktop* (<https://dockr.ly/2G8Iqb9>)

11

Deploying, Updating, and Securing an Application with Kubernetes

In the last chapter, we learned about the basics of the container orchestrator, Kubernetes. We got a high-level overview of the architecture of Kubernetes and learned much about the important objects used by Kubernetes to define and manage a containerized application.

In this chapter, we will learn how to deploy, update, and scale applications into a Kubernetes cluster. We will also explain how zero downtime deployments are achieved to enable disruption-free updates and rollbacks of mission critical applications. Finally, in this chapter, we are introducing Kubernetes secrets as a means to configure services with and protect sensitive data.

The chapter covers the following topics:

- Deploying a first application
- Zero-downtime deployments
- Kubernetes secrets

After working through this chapter, you will be able to:

- Deploy a multi-service application into a Kubernetes cluster
- Update an application service running in Kubernetes without causing downtime
- Define secrets in a Kubernetes cluster
- Configure an application service to use Kubernetes secrets

Technical requirements

In this chapter, we're going to use Minikube on our local computer. Please refer to *Chapter 2, Setting up a Working Environment*, for more information on how to install and use Minikube.

The code for this chapter can be found in the `ch11` subfolder of the `labs` folder. Please make sure you have cloned the GitHub repository at <https://github.com/appswithdockerandkubernetes/labs>, as described in *Chapter 2, Setting up a Working Environment*.

In your Terminal, navigate to the folder `labs/ch11`.

Deploying a first application

We will take our pets application, which we first introduced in *Chapter 8, Docker Compose*, and deploy it into a Kubernetes cluster. Our cluster will be Minikube, which, as you know, is a single-node cluster. But, from the perspective of a deployment, it doesn't really matter how big the cluster is and where the cluster is located—in the cloud, in your company's data center, or on your personal workstation.

Deploying the web component

Just as a reminder, our application consists of two application services, the Node.js-based web component and the backing PostgreSQL database. In the previous chapter, we learned that we need to define a Kubernetes `Deployment` object for each application service we want to deploy. Let's do this first for the web component. As always in this book, we will choose the declarative way of defining our objects. Here is the YAML defining a `Deployment` object for the web component:

```
! web-deployment.yaml ×
You, 2 days ago | 1 author (You)
1  apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1      You, 19 days ago • A
2  kind: Deployment
3  metadata:
4    name: web
5  spec:
6    replicas: 1
7    selector:
8      matchLabels:
9        app: pets
10       service: web
11    template:
12      metadata:
13        labels:
14          app: pets
15          service: web
16    spec:
17      containers:
18        - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0
19          name: web
20          ports:
21            - containerPort: 3000
22              protocol: TCP
23
```

Kubernetes deployment definition for the web component

The preceding deployment definition can be found in the `web-deployment.yaml` file in the labs folder `ch11`. The lines of code are as follows:

- **On line 4:** We define the name for our `Deployment` object as `web`
- **On line 6:** We declare that we want to have one instance of the `web` component running
- **From line 8 to 10:** We define which pods will be part of our deployment, namely those which have the labels `app` and `service` with values, `pets` and `web` respectively
- **On line 11:** In the template for the pods starting at line 11, we define that each pod will have the two labels `app` and `service` applied
- **From line 17:** We define the single container that will be running in the pod. The image for the container is our well-known `appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0` image and the name of the container will be `web`
- **Ports:** Finally, we declare that the container exposes port `3000` for TCP-type traffic



Make sure that you have set the context of `kubectl` to Minikube. See [Chapter 2, Setting up a Working Environment](#), for details on how to do that.



We can deploy this Deployment object using `kubectl`:

```
$ kubectl create -f web-deployment.yaml
```

We can double-check that the deployment has been created again using our Kubernetes CLI, and we should see the following output:

```
$ kubectl get all
NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  UP-TO-DATE  AVAILABLE  AGE
deploy/web  1        1        1          1          5m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY     AGE
rs/web-769b88f67  1        1        1          5m

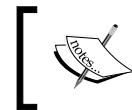
NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  UP-TO-DATE  AVAILABLE  AGE
deploy/web  1        1        1          1          5m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY     AGE
rs/web-769b88f67  1        1        1          5m

NAME      READY     STATUS    RESTARTS  AGE
po/web-769b88f67-4fccx  1/1      Running   0          5m

NAME      TYPE      CLUSTER-IP      EXTERNAL-IP      PORT(S)      AGE
svc/kubernetes  ClusterIP      10.96.0.1      <none>       443/TCP      8d
$
```

Listing all resources running in Minikube



At the time of writing, there seems to be a bug in Minikube or `kubectl` that displays certain resources twice when using the command `kubectl get all`. You can just ignore the duplicate output.



In the preceding output, we see that Kubernetes created three objects – the deployment, a pertaining ReplicaSet, and a single pod (remember we specified that we want one replica only). The current state corresponds to the desired state for all three objects, thus we are fine so far.

Now, the web service needs to be exposed to the public. For this, we need to define a Kubernetes Service object of type `NodePort`. Here is the definition, which can be found in the `web-service.yaml` file in the `labs` folder `ch11`:

```
! web-service.yaml ×
1  apiVersion: v1
2  kind: Service
3  metadata:
4    name: web
5  spec:
6    type: NodePort
7    ports:
8      - port: 3000
9        protocol: TCP
10       selector:
11         app: pets
12         service: web
```

Definition of the Service object for our web component

The preceding lines of codes are as follows:

- **On line 4:** We set the name of this Service object to web.
- **On line 6:** We define the type of Service object we're using. Since the web component has to be accessible from outside of the cluster, this cannot be a Service object of type ClusterIP but must be either of type NodePort or LoadBalancer. We have discussed the various types of Kubernetes services in the previous chapter and so will not go into further detail about this. In our sample, we're using a NodePort type of service.
- **On lines 8 and 9:** We specify that we want to expose port 3000 for access through the TCP protocol. Kubernetes will map container port 3000 automatically to a free host port in the range of 30,000 to 32,768. Which port Kubernetes effectively chooses can be determined using the kubectl get service or kubectl describe command for the service after it has been created.
- **From line 10 to 12:** We define the filter criteria for the pods for which this service will be a stable endpoint. In this case, it is all pods that have the labels app and service with values pets and web respectively.

Having this specification for a Service object, we can create it using kubectl:

```
$ kubectl create -f web-service.yaml
```

We can list all services to see the result of the preceding command:

\$ kubectl get services						
NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT(S)	AGE	
kubernetes	ClusterIP	10.96.0.1	<none>	443/TCP	9d	
web	NodePort	10.103.113.40	<none>	3000:30125/TCP	3m	
\$						

The Service object created for the web component

In the output, we see that a service called `web` has been created. A unique `clusterIP` `10.103.113.40` has been assigned to this service, and the container port `3000` has been published on port `30125` on all cluster nodes.

If we want to test this deployment, we need to first find out what IP address Minikube has, and then use this IP address to access our `web` service. The following is the command that we can use to do this:

```
$ IP=$(minikube ip)
$ curl -4 $IP:30125/
  Pets Demo Application
```

OK, the response is `Pets Demo Application`, which is what we expected. The `web` service is up and running in the Kubernetes cluster. Next, we want to deploy the database.

Deploying the database

A database is a stateful component and has to be treated differently to stateless components, such as our `web` component. We have discussed the difference between stateful and stateless components in a distributed application architecture in detail in *Chapter 6, Distributed Application Architecture*, and *Chapter 9, Orchestrators*.

Kubernetes has defined a special type of `Replicaset` object for stateful components. The object is called a `StatefulSet`. Let's use this kind of object to deploy our database. The definition can be found in the `labs/ch11/db-stateful-set.yaml` file. The details are as follows:

```
! db-stateful-set.yaml ×
You, 2 days ago | 1 author (You)
1  apiVersion: apps/v1      You, 19 days ago • Adding exis
2  kind: StatefulSet
3  metadata:
4    name: db
5  spec:
6    selector:
7      matchLabels:
8        app: pets
9        service: db
10     serviceName: db
11   template:
12     metadata:
13       labels:
14         app: pets
15         service: db
16     spec:
17       containers:
18         - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-db:1.0
19           name: db
20           ports:
21             - containerPort: 5432
22             volumeMounts:
23               - mountPath: /var/lib/postgresql/data
24                 name: pets-data
25     volumeClaimTemplates:
26       - metadata:
27         name: pets-data
28       spec:
29         accessModes:
30           - ReadWriteOnce
31         resources:
32           requests:
33             storage: 100Mi
34
```

A StatefulSet for the DB component

OK, this looks a bit scary, but it is not. It is a bit longer than the definition of the deployment for the web component due to the fact that we also need to define a volume where the PostgreSQL database can store the data. The volume claim definition is on lines 25 to 33. We want to create a volume with the name `pets-data` and of a maximum size equal to 100 MB. On lines 22 to 24, we use this volume and mount it into the container at `/var/lib/postgresql/data` where PostgreSQL expects it. On line 21, we also declare that PostgreSQL is listening at port 5432.

As always, we use `kubectl` to deploy the StatefulSet:

```
$ kubectl create -f db-stateful-set.yaml
```

If we now list all resources in the cluster we can see the additional objects created:

```
$ kubectl get all
NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  UP-TO-DATE  AVAILABLE  AGE
deploy/web  1        1        1          1          27m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY     AGE
rs/web-769b88f67  1        1        1          27m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  UP-TO-DATE  AVAILABLE  AGE
deploy/web  1        1        1          1          27m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY     AGE
rs/web-769b88f67  1        1        1          27m

NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  AGE
statefulsets/db  1        1        49s

NAME            READY  STATUS  RESTARTS  AGE
po/db-0          1/1   Running  0         49s
po/web-769b88f67-qdzxrf  1/1   Running  0         27m

NAME      TYPE      CLUSTER-IP      EXTERNAL-IP      PORT(S)      AGE
svc/kubernetes  ClusterIP  10.96.0.1      <none>       443/TCP      10d
svc/web      NodePort  10.103.113.40  <none>       3000:30125/TCP 27m
$
```

The StatefulSet and its pod

We see that a `StatefulSet` and a pod have been created. For both, the current state corresponds to the desired state and thus the system is healthy. But that doesn't mean that the web component can access the database at this time. Service discovery would not work so far. Remember that the web component wants to access the db service under the name db.

To make service discovery work inside the cluster, we have to define a Kubernetes `Service` object for the database component too. Since the database should only ever be accessible from within the cluster, the type of `Service` object we need is `ClusterIP`. Here is the specification, which can be found in the `labs/ch11/db-service.yaml` file:

```
! db-service.yaml ×
Gabriel Schenker, 2 days ago
1  apiVersion: v1
2  kind: Service
3  metadata:
4    name: db
5  spec:
6    type: ClusterIP
7    ports:
8      - port: 5432
9        protocol: TCP
10   selector:
11     app: pets
12     service: db
```

Definition of the Kubernetes Service object for the database

The database component will be represented by this `Service` object and it will be reachable by the name `db`, which is the name of the service, as defined on line 4. The database component does not have to be publicly accessible, so we decided to use a `Service` object of type `ClusterIP`. The selector on lines 10 to 12 defines that this service represents a stable endpoint for all pods that have the according labels defined, that is, `app: pets` and `service: db`.

Let's deploy this service with the following command:

```
$ kubectl create -f db-service.yaml
```

And we should now be ready to test the application. We can use the browser this time to enjoy the funny cat images:



Testing the pets application running in Kubernetes

[ 192.168.99.100 is the IP address of my Minikube. Verify your address using the command `minikube ip`. The port number 30125 is the number that Kubernetes automatically selected for my web Service object. Replace this number with the port that Kubernetes assigned to your service. Get the number by using the command `kubectl get services`.]

Now we have successfully deployed the pets application to Minikube, which is a single-node Kubernetes cluster. We had to define four artifacts to do so, which are as follows:

- A Deployment and a Service object for the web component
- A StatefulSet and a Service object for the database component

To remove the application from the cluster, we can use the following small script:

```
kubectl delete svc/web  
kubectl delete deploy/web  
kubectl delete svc/db  
kubectl delete statefulset/db
```

Streamlining the deployment

So far, we have created four artifacts that needed to be deployed to the cluster. And this is only a very simple application, consisting of two components. Imagine having a much more complex application. It would quickly become a maintenance nightmare.

Luckily, we have several options as to how we can simplify the deployment.

The method that we are going to discuss here is the possibility of defining all the components that make up an application in Kubernetes in a single file.

Other solutions that lie outside of the scope of this book would include the use of a package manager, such as **Helm**.

If we have an application consisting of many Kubernetes objects such as Deployment and Service objects, then we can keep them all in one single file and separate the individual object definitions by three dashes. For example, if we wanted to have the deployment and the service definition for the web component in a single file, this would look as follows:

```
apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1
kind: Deployment
metadata:
  name: web
spec:
  replicas: 1
  selector:
    matchLabels:
      app: pets
      service: web
  template:
    metadata:
      labels:
        app: pets
        service: web
    spec:
      containers:
        - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0
          name: web
          ports:
            - containerPort: 3000
              protocol: TCP
---
apiVersion: v1
kind: Service
metadata:
  name: web
spec:
  type: NodePort
  ports:
```

```
- port: 3000
  protocol: TCP
selector:
  app: pets
  service: web
```

We have collected all the four object definitions for the pets application in the `labs/ch11/pets.yaml` file, and we can deploy the application in one go:

```
$ kubectl create -f pets.yaml
deployment "web" created
service "web" created
statefulset "db" created
service "db" created
$ █
```

Using a single script to deploy the pets application

Similarly, we have created a script, `labs/ch11/remove-pets.sh`, to remove all artifacts of the pets application from the Kubernetes cluster:

```
$ ./remove-pets.sh
deployment "web" deleted
service "web" deleted
statefulset "db" deleted
service "db" deleted
$ █
```

Removing pets from the Kubernetes cluster

We have taken our pets application we introduced in *Chapter 8, Docker Compose*, and defined all the Kubernetes objects that are necessary to deploy this application into a Kubernetes cluster. In each step, we have made sure that we got the expected result, and once all artifacts existed in the cluster, we have shown the running application.

Zero downtime deployments

In a mission-critical environment, it is important that the application is always up and running. These days we cannot afford any downtime anymore. Kubernetes gives us various means of achieving this. An update of an application in the cluster that causes no downtime is called a **zero downtime deployment**. In this chapter, we will present two ways of achieving this. These are as follows:

- Rolling updates
- Blue-green deployments

Let's start by discussing rolling updates.

Rolling updates

In the previous chapter, we learned that the Kubernetes Deployment object distinguishes itself from the ReplicaSet object in that it adds rolling updates and rollbacks on top of the latter's functionality. Let's use our web component to demonstrate this. Evidently, we will have to modify the manifest or description of the deployment for the web component.

We will use the same deployment definition as in the previous section, with one important difference—we will have five replicas of the web component running. The following definition can also be found in the `labs/ch11/web-deploy-rolling-v1.yaml` file:

```
apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1
kind: Deployment
metadata:
  name: web
spec:
  replicas: 5
  selector:
    matchLabels:
      app: pets
      service: web
  template:
    metadata:
      labels:
        app: pets
        service: web
    spec:
      containers:
        - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0
          name: web
          ports:
            - containerPort: 3000
              protocol: TCP
```

We can now create this deployment as usual and also, at the same time, the service that makes our component accessible:

```
$ kubectl create -f web-deploy-rolling-v1.yaml
$ kubectl create -f web-service.yaml
```

Once we have deployed the pods and the service, we can test our web component with the following command:

```
$ PORT=$(kubectl get svc/web -o yaml | grep nodePort | cut -d' ' -f5)
$ IP=$(minikube ip)
$ curl -4 ${IP}:${PORT}/
  Pets Demo Application
```

As we can see, the application is up and running and returns us the expected message, Pets Demo Application.

Now developers have created a new version, 2.0, of the web component. The code of the new version of the web component can be found in the `labs/ch11/web/src` folder, and the only change is located on line 12 of the file `server.js`:

```
 9  app.set('views', __dirname);
10
11 app.get('/',function(req,res){
12   res.status(200).send('Pets Demo Application v2\n');
13 });
14
```

Code change for version 2.0 of the web component

The developers have built the new image as follows:

```
$ docker image build -t appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch11-web:2.0 web
```

And, subsequently, they pushed the image to Docker Hub:

```
$ docker image push appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch11-web:2.0
```

We now want to update the image used by our pods that are part of the web Deployment object. We can do this by using the `set image` command of `kubectl`:

```
$ kubectl set image deployment/web \
  web=appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch11-web:2.0
```

If we then test the application again, we get the confirmation that the update has indeed happened:

```
curl -4 ${IP}:${PORT}/
  Pets Demo Application v2
```

Now, how do we know that there hasn't been any downtime during this update? Did the update really happen in a rolling fashion? What does rolling update mean at all? Let's investigate. First, we can get a confirmation from Kubernetes that the deployment has indeed happened and was successful by using the `rollout status` command:

```
$ kubectl rollout status deploy/web
  deployment "web" successfully rolled out
```

If we describe the deployment `web` with `kubectl describe deploy/web`, we get the following list of events at the end of the output:

Events:					
Type	Reason	Age	From	Message	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	12m	deployment-controller	Scaled up replica set web-769b88f67 to 5	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled up replica set web-55cdf67cd to 1	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled down replica set web-769b88f67 to 4	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled up replica set web-55cdf67cd to 2	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled down replica set web-769b88f67 to 3	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled up replica set web-55cdf67cd to 3	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled down replica set web-769b88f67 to 2	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled up replica set web-55cdf67cd to 4	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m	deployment-controller	Scaled down replica set web-769b88f67 to 1	
Normal	ScalingReplicaSet	3m (x2 over 3m)	deployment-controller	(combined from similar events): Scaled down replica set web-769b88f67 to 0	

List of events found in the output of the deployment description of the web component

The first event tells us that when we created the deployment, a ReplicaSet `web-769b88f67` with five replicas was created. Then we executed the update command and the second event in the list tells us that this meant creating a new ReplicaSet called `web-55cdf67cd` with, initially, one replica only. Thus, at that particular moment there existed six pods on the system, the five initial pods, and one pod with the new version. But since the desired state of the Deployment object states that we want five replicas only, Kubernetes now scales down the old ReplicaSet to four instances, which we see in the third event. Then, again, the new ReplicaSet is scaled up to two instances and, subsequently, the old ReplicaSet scaled down to three instances, and so on, until we have five new instances and all the old instances have been decommissioned. Although, we cannot see any precise time (other than three minutes) when that happened, the order of the events tells us that the whole update happened in a rolling fashion.

During a short time period, some of the calls to the web service would have had an answer from the old version of the component and some calls would have received an answer from the new version of the component. But at no time would the service have been down.

We can also list the Recordset objects in the cluster and will get the confirmation of what I said in the preceding section:

\$ kubectl get rs					
NAME	DESIRED	CURRENT	READY	AGE	
web-55cdf67cd	5	5	5	27m	
web-769b88f67	0	0	0	36m	

List all Recordset objects in the cluster

We see that the new recordset has five instances running and the old one has been scaled down to zero instances. The reason why the old Recordset object is still lingering around is that Kubernetes provides us with the possibility of rolling back the update and, in that case, will reuse the Recordset.

To roll back the update of the image in case some undetected bug sneaked in to the new code, we can use the rollout undo command:

```
$ kubectl rollout undo deploy/web
deployment "web"
$ curl -4 ${IP}:${PORT}/
Pets Demo Application
```

I have also listed the test command using curl in the preceding snippet to verify that the rollback indeed happened. If we list the recordsets, we see the following output:

```
$ kubectl get rs
NAME      DESIRED  CURRENT  READY   AGE
web-55cdf67cd  0        0        0       36m
web-769b88f67  5        5        5       45m
$
```

Listing RecordSet objects after rollback

This confirms that the old RecordSet (web-769b88f67) object has been reused and the new one has been scaled down to zero instances.

Sometimes though we cannot, or do not want to, tolerate the mixed state of an old version coexisting with new version. We want an all-or-nothing strategy. This is where blue-green deployments come into play, which we will discuss next.

Blue-green deployment

If we want to do a blue-green style deployment for our component web of the pets application, then we can do so by using labels creatively. Let's first remind ourselves how blue-green deployments work. Here is a rough step-by-step instruction:

1. Deploy a first version of the component web as blue. We will label the pods with a label `color: blue` to do so.
2. Deploy the Kubernetes service for these pods with the label `color: blue` in the selector section.
3. Now we can deploy version 2 of the web component, but this time the pods have a label `color: green`.

4. We can test the green version of the service that it works as expected.
5. Now we flip traffic from blue to green by updating the Kubernetes service for the web component. We modify the selector to use the label `color: green`.

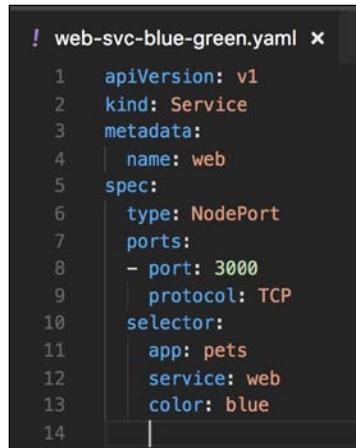
Let's define a Deployment object for version 1, blue:

```
! web-deploy-blue.yaml ✘
You, 2 days ago | 1 author (You)
1  apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1      You, 19 days ago • Add
2  kind: Deployment
3  metadata:
4    name: web-blue
5  spec:
6    replicas: 1
7    selector:
8      matchLabels:
9        app: pets
10       service: web
11       color: blue
12    template:
13      metadata:
14        labels:
15          app: pets
16          service: web
17          color: blue
18    spec:
19      containers:
20        - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0
21          name: web
22          ports:
23            - containerPort: 3000
24              protocol: TCP
25
```

Specification of the deployment blue for the web component

The preceding definition can be found in the `labs/ch11/web-deploy-blue.yaml` file. Please note line 4 where we define the name of the deployment as `web-blue` to distinguish it from the upcoming deployment `web-green`. Also note that we have added the label `color: blue` on lines 11 and 17. Everything else remains the same as before.

Now we define the `Service` object for the `web` component. It will be the same as we used before with a minor change, as you will see in the following screenshot:



```
! web-svc-blue-green.yaml ×
1  apiVersion: v1
2  kind: Service
3  metadata:
4    name: web
5  spec:
6    type: NodePort
7    ports:
8      - port: 3000
9        protocol: TCP
10       selector:
11         app: pets
12         service: web
13         color: blue
14
```

Kubernetes service for the web component supporting blue-green deployments

The only difference to the definition of the `service` we used earlier in this chapter is line 13, which adds the label `color: blue` to the selector. We can find the preceding definition in the `labs/ch11/web-svc-blue-green.yaml` file.

We can then deploy the blue version of the `web` component with the following command:

```
$ kubectl create -f web-deploy-blue.yaml
$ kubectl create -f web-svc-blue-green.yaml
```

Once the service is up and running, we can determine its IP address and port number and test it:

```
$ PORT=$(kubectl get svc/web -o yaml | grep nodePort | cut -d' ' -f5)
$ IP=$(minikube ip)
$ curl -4 ${IP}:${PORT}/
Pets Demo Application
```

As expected, we get the response `Pets Demo Application`.

Now we can deploy the green version of the `web` component. The definition of its `Deployment` object can be found in the `labs/ch11/web-deploy-green.yaml` file and looks as follows:

```
! web-deploy-green.yaml ✘
You, a day ago | 1 author (You)
1 apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1      You, 19 days ago • A
2 kind: Deployment
3 metadata:
4   name: web-green
5 spec:
6   replicas: 1
7   selector:
8     matchLabels:
9       app: pets
10      service: web
11      color: green
12   template:
13     metadata:
14       labels:
15         app: pets
16         service: web
17         color: green
18     spec:
19       containers:
20         - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch11-web:2.0
21           name: web
22           ports:
23             - containerPort: 3000
24               protocol: TCP
25
```

Specification of the deployment green for the web component

The interesting lines are as follows:

- **Line 4:** With the name `web-green` to distinguish from `web-blue` and allow for parallel install
- **Lines 11 and 17:** Having the color `green`
- **Line 20:** Now using version `2.0` of the image

Now we're ready to deploy this green version of the service, and it should run separate from the blue service:

```
$ kubectl create -f web-deploy-green.yaml
```

We can make sure that both deployments coexist:

\$ kubectl get deploy						
NAME	DESIRED	CURRENT	UP-TO-DATE	AVAILABLE	AGE	
web-blue	1	1	1	1	23h	
web-green	1	1	1	1	3s	
\$ █						

Displaying the list of Deployment objects running in the cluster

As expected, we have both blue and green running. We can verify that blue is still the active service:

```
$ curl -4 ${IP}:${PORT}/  
Pets Demo Application
```

Now comes the interesting part. We can flip traffic from blue to green by editing the existing service for the web component. So, execute the following command:

```
$ kubectl edit svc/web
```

Change the value of the label color from blue to green. Then save and quit the editor. The Kubernetes CLI will automatically update the service. When we now query the web service again, we get this:

```
$ curl -4 ${IP}:${PORT}/  
Pets Demo Application v2
```

This confirms that the traffic has indeed switched to the green version of the web component (note the v2 at the end of the response to the curl command).

If we realize that something went wrong with our green deployment and the new version has a defect, we can easily switch back to the blue version by editing the service web again and replacing the value of the label color from green back to blue. This rollback is instantaneous and should always work. We can then remove the buggy green deployment and fix the component. When we have corrected the problem, we can deploy the green version once again.

Once the green version of the component is running as expected and performing well, we can decommission the blue version:

```
$ kubectl delete deploy/web-blue
```

When we're ready to deploy a new version, 3.0, this one becomes the blue version. We update the labs/ch11/web-deploy-blue.yaml file accordingly and deploy it. Then we flip the service web from green to blue, and so on.

We have successfully demonstrated, with our component web of the pets application, how blue-green deployment can be achieved in a Kubernetes cluster.

Kubernetes secrets

Sometimes, services that we want to run in the Kubernetes cluster have to use confidential data such as passwords, secret API keys or certificates, to name just a few. We want to make sure that this sensitive information can only ever be seen by the authorized or dedicated service. All other services running in the cluster should not have any access to this data.

For this reason, Kubernetes secrets have been introduced. A secret is a key-value pair where the key is the unique name of the secret and the value is the actual sensitive data. Secrets are stored in etcd. Kubernetes can be configured such that secrets are encrypted at rest, that is, in etcd, and in transit, that is, when the secrets are going over the wire from a master node to the worker nodes on which the pods of the service using this secret are running.

Manually defining secrets

We can create a secret declaratively the same way we created any other object in Kubernetes. Here is the YAML for such a secret:

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Secret
metadata:
  name: pets-secret
type: Opaque
data:
  username: am9obi5kb2UK
  password: c0VjcmV0LXBhc1N3MHJECg==
```

The preceding definition can be found in the `labs/ch11/pets-secret.yaml` file. Now you might wonder what the values are. Are these the real (unencrypted) values? No, they are not. And they are also not really encrypted values but just base64 encoded values. Thus they are not really secure, since base64-encoded values can be easily reverted to clear text values. How did I get these values? That's easy:

```
$ echo "john.doe" | base64
am9obi5kb2UK
$ echo "sEcReT-paSswOrD" | base64
c0VjcmV0LXBhc1N3MHJECg==
$
```

Creating base64-encoded values for the secret

We can then create the secret and describe it:

```
$ kubectl create -f pets-secret.yaml
secret "pets-secret" created
$ kubectl describe secrets/pets-secret
Name:      pets-secret
Namespace: default
Labels:    <none>
Annotations: <none>

Type:  Opaque

Data
=====
password:  16 bytes
username:  9 bytes
$ █
```

Creating and describing the Kubernetes secret

In the description of the secret, the values are hidden and only their length is given. *So maybe the secrets are safe now?* No, not really. We can easily decode this secret using the `kubectl get` command:

```
$ kubectl get secrets/pets-secret -o yaml
apiVersion: v1
data:
  password: c0VjcmV0LXBhc1N3MHJECg==
  username: am9obi5kb2UK
kind: Secret
metadata:
  creationTimestamp: 2018-03-31T20:36:05Z
  name: pets-secret
  namespace: default
  resourceVersion: "154786"
  selfLink: /api/v1/namespaces/default/secrets/pets-secret
  uid: 22d818bd-3523-11e8-a3cb-080027c10823
type: Opaque
$ █
```

Kubernetes secret decoded

As we can see in the preceding screenshot, we have our original secret values back. And we can decode them:

```
$ echo "c0VjcmV0LXBhc1N3MHJECg==" | base64 --decode
sEcReT-paSSwOrD
```

Thus, the consequences are that this method of creating a Kubernetes is not to be used in any other environment than development, where we deal with non-sensitive data. In all other environments, we need a better way to deal with secrets.

Creating secrets with kubectl

A much safer way to define secrets is to use `kubectl`. First, we create files containing the base64-encoded secret values similar to what we did in the preceding section, but this time we store the values in temporary files:

```
$ echo "sue-hunter" | base64 > username.txt  
$ echo "123abc456def" | base64 > password.txt
```

Now we can use `kubectl` to create a secret from those files as follows:

```
$ kubectl create secret generic pets-secret-prod \  
  --from-file=./username.txt \  
  --from-file=./password.txt  
secret "pets-secret-prod" created
```

The secret can then be used the same way as the manually-created secret.

Why is this method more secure than the other one you might ask? Well, first of all, there is no YAML that defines a secret and is stored in some source code version control system, such as GitHub, which many people have access to and so can see and decode the secrets. Only the admin person that is authorized to know the secrets ever sees their values and uses them to directly create the secrets in the (production) cluster. The cluster itself is protected by role-based access control so that no unauthorized people have access to it nor can they possibly decode the secrets defined in the cluster.

But now, let's see how we can actually use the secrets that we have defined.

Using secrets in a pod

Let's say we want to create a Deployment object where the web component uses our secret called `pets-secret` that we introduced in the preceding section. We use the following command to create the secret in the cluster:

```
$ kubectl create -f pets-secret.yaml
```

In the `labs/ch11/web-deploy-secret.yaml` file, we can find the definition of the Deployment object. We had to add the part starting from line 23 to the original definition of the Deployment object:

```
! web-deploy-secret.yaml *  
You, 2 days ago | 1 author (You)  
1  apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1      You, 19 days ago • Ad  
2  kind: Deployment  
3  metadata:  
4    name: web  
5  spec:  
6    replicas: 1  
7    selector:  
8      matchLabels:  
9        app: pets  
10       service: web  
11    template:  
12      metadata:  
13        labels:  
14          app: pets  
15          service: web  
16      spec:  
17        containers:  
18          - image: appswithdockerandkubernetes/ch08-web:1.0  
19            name: web  
20            ports:  
21              - containerPort: 3000  
22                protocol: TCP  
23            volumeMounts:  
24              - name: secrets  
25                mountPath: "/etc/secrets"  
26                readOnly: true  
27            volumes:  
28              - name: secrets  
29                secret:  
30                  secretName: pets-secret
```

Deployment object for web component with a secret

On lines 27 through 30 we define a volume called secrets from our secret `petsecret`. We then use this volume in the container, as described on lines 23 through 26. We mount the secrets in the container filesystem at `/etc/secrets` and we mount the volume in read-only mode. Thus, the secret values will be available to the container as files in said folder. The names of the files will correspond to the key names, and the content of the files will be the values of the corresponding keys. The values will be provided in unencrypted form to the application running inside the container.

In our case, having the keys' `username` and `password` in the secret, we will find two files, named `username` and `password`, in the `/etc/secrets` folder in the container filesystem. The file `username` should contain the value `john.doe`, and the file `password` the value `sEcret-pasSw0rD`. Here is the confirmation:

```
$ kubectl exec -it web-597b7f7749-87mq5 -- /bin/sh
/app # cd /etc/secrets/
/etc/secrets # ls -l
total 0
lrwxrwxrwx  1 root      root            15 Apr  2 01:26 password -> ..data/password
lrwxrwxrwx  1 root      root            15 Apr  2 01:26 username -> ..data/username
/etc/secrets # cat username && cat password
john.doe
sEcret-pasSw0rD
/etc/secrets #
```

Confirming that secrets are available inside the container

On line 1 of the preceding output, we exec into the container where the `web` component runs. Then, on lines 2 to 5, we list the files in the `/etc/secrets` folder, and finally, on lines 6 to 8, we show the content of the two files which, unsurprisingly, show the secret values in clear text.

Since any application written in any language can read simple files, this mechanism of using secrets is very backwards compatible. Even an old COBOL application can read clear text files from the filesystem.

Sometimes, though, applications expect secrets to be available in environment variables. Let's look at what Kubernetes offers us in this case.

Secret values in environment variables

Let's say our web component expects the username in the environment variable, PETS_USERNAME and the password in PETS_PASSWORD, then we can modify our deployment YAML to look as follows:

```
! web-deploy-secret-env.yaml ×

1  apiVersion: extensions/v1beta1
2  kind: Deployment
3  metadata:
4    name: web
5  spec:
6    replicas: 1
7    selector:
8      matchLabels:
9        app: pets
10       service: web
11    template:
12      metadata:
13        labels:
14          app: pets
15          service: web
16    spec:
17      containers:
18        - image: fundamentalsofdocker/ch08-web:1.0
19          name: web
20          ports:
21            - containerPort: 3000
22              protocol: TCP
23          env:
24            - name: PETS_USERNAME
25              valueFrom:
26                secretKeyRef:
27                  name: pets-secret
28                  key: username
29            - name: PETS_PASSWORD
30              valueFrom:
31                secretKeyRef:
32                  name: pets-secret
33                  key: password
34
```

Deployment mapping secret values to environment variables

On lines 23 through 33, we define the two environment variables, PETS_USERNAME and PETS_PASSWORD, and map the corresponding key-value pair of the pets-secret to them.

Note, we don't need a volume anymore but we directly map the individual keys of our `pets-secret` into corresponding environment variables valid inside the container. The following sequence of commands shows that the secret values are indeed available inside the container in the respective environment variables:

```
$ kubectl exec -it web-694f958cd4-6zq89 -- /bin/sh  
/app # echo $PETS_USERNAME && echo $PETS_PASSWORD  
john.doe  
sEcReT-pasSw0rD  
/app #
```

Secret values are mapped to environment variables

In this section, we have shown how to define secrets in a Kubernetes cluster and how to use those secrets in containers running as part of the pods of a deployment. We have shown two variants on how secrets can be mapped inside a container, the first one using files and the second approach using environment variables.

Summary

In this chapter, we have learned how to deploy an application into a Kubernetes cluster and how to set up application-level routing for this application. Furthermore, we have learned ways to update application services running in a Kubernetes cluster without causing any downtime. Finally, we have used secrets to provide sensitive information to application services running in the cluster.

In the next and final chapter, we are going to learn how to deploy, run, monitor and debug a containerized sample application in the cloud using Microsoft's Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS) offering. Stay tuned.

Questions

To assess your learning progress, please answer the following questions:

1. You have an application consisting of two services, the first one being a web API and the second one a DB, such as Mongo. You want to deploy this application into a Kubernetes cluster. In a few short sentences, explain how you proceed.
2. Describe in your own words in a few sentences the components you need to establish layer 7 (or application level) routing for your application.
3. List the main steps needed to implement blue-green deployment for a simple application service. Avoid going into too much detail.

4. Name three or four types of information that you would provide to an application service through Kubernetes secrets.
5. Name the sources that Kubernetes accepts when creating a secret.

Further reading

Here are a few links that provide additional information on the topics discussed in this chapter:

- Performing a rolling update at <https://bit.ly/2o2okEQ>
- Blue-green deployment at <https://bit.ly/2r2IxNJ>
- Secrets in Kubernetes at <https://bit.ly/2C6hMZf>

12

Running a Containerized App in the Cloud

In the previous chapter, we learned how to deploy a multi-service application into a Kubernetes cluster. We configured application-level routing for that application and updated its services using a zero-downtime strategy. Finally, we provided confidential data to the running services by using Kubernetes secrets.

In this chapter, we will show how to deploy a complex containerized application into a hosted Kubernetes cluster on Microsoft Azure. There, we will use the so-called **Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS)** offering. AKS fully manages the Kubernetes cluster for us so that we can concentrate on deploying, running, and, if needed, upgrading our application.

Here are the topics we will be discussing in this chapter:

- Creating a fully managed Kubernetes cluster in Azure
- Pushing Docker images to the Azure container registry
- Deploying the application into the Kubernetes cluster
- Scaling the Pets application
- Monitoring the cluster and application
- Upgrading the application with zero downtime
- Upgrading Kubernetes
- Debugging an application while it is running in AKS
- Cleaning up

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Provision a fully managed Kubernetes cluster in AKS
- Deploy a multi-container based application into your cluster
- Monitor the health of your Kubernetes cluster and the application running on it
- Execute a rolling update of your application in AKS
- Interactively debug a Node.js application running on a Kubernetes cluster in AKS

Technical requirements

We are going to use the AKS hosted on Microsoft Azure. Thus, it is necessary to have an account on Azure. If you do not have an existing account, you can ask for a free trial account at <https://azure.microsoft.com/services/kubernetes-service/>.

To access Azure, we will also use the Azure CLI. Thus, make sure you have the latest version of it available on your computer. Since this is a book about containers, we will not natively install the CLI but use a containerized version of it.

We also use the `ch12` and `ch12-dev-spaces` folders of our `labs` repository from GitHub. The link to the code files can be found at <https://github.com/appswithdockerandkubernetes/labs/tree/master>.

Creating a fully managed Kubernetes cluster in Azure

So far, we have used a local node-1 Kubernetes cluster to deploy our applications. This is well suited for the development, testing, and debugging on a containerized application destined to run on Kubernetes. Eventually, though, we will want to deploy the finished application in a production environment. There exist various ways to achieve this. We could, for example, self-host a highly available, scalable Kubernetes cluster, yet that is no easy feat. In this chapter, we are going to delegate the hard work of provisioning and hosting a highly available and massively scalable Kubernetes cluster to Microsoft and will be using their AKS running on Azure.

We will then deploy our Pets application to this cluster. Once deployed, we will want to monitor the behavior of the cluster and of our application on it. Later, we will scale the web part of the application and then update the web part and trigger a rolling update that should cause zero downtime.

Finally, we will show how one can use Dev Spaces in AKS to remote debug an application, such as our Node.js frontend, while it is running in the cloud.

AKS can be used and operated in three different ways. First and foremost, we can use a graphical web UI provided by the Azure portal. The next two are well suited for automation:

- We can use the Azure CLI to provision and manage the Kubernetes cluster combined with `kubectl` to deploy, scale, or update the application in the cluster, and more
- We can use tools such as Terraform and Azure resource templates to do the same

In this chapter, we will concentrate on the Azure CLI and `kubectl`.

Running the Azure CLI

As mentioned earlier, we will need the Azure CLI to access Microsoft Azure. It is important to use a new or the newest version of the CLI to be able to access all the AKS-related resources. We will not run the CLI natively on our computer this time but rather use a containerized version of it. Microsoft has created a container with the CLI installed on it. In our case, we also want to use the Docker (`docker`) and the Kubernetes CLI (`kubectl`) from within the container, but those tools are not installed by default. Thus, I have created a Dockerfile that can be used to create new Docker images based on the Microsofts one that will have the tools installed. Follow the steps:

1. Open a new Terminal window and navigate to the `ch12` subfolder of your `labs` folder:

```
cd ~/labs/ch12
```

2. Execute the following command to build our customized Azure CLI container:

```
docker image build -t custom-azure-cli:v1 azure-cli
```

3. Once this image is built, we can execute the following command to interactively run a container with the newest version of Azure, Docker, and Kubernetes CLI:

```
docker container run --rm -it \
-v /var/run/docker.sock:/var/run/docker.sock \
-v $(pwd):/src \
custom-azure-cli:v1
```

Please note how we mount the Docker socket into the container so as that we can execute any Docker command from within the container. We are also mounting the current folder into the `/src` folder inside the container to have access to the source code of this chapter.

After the container instance has started, you will be presented with the following prompt:

```
bash-4.4#
```

We can test the container using the following commands:

```
bash-4.4# docker version
Client:
  Version: 18.06.0-ce
  API version: 1.38
  Go version: go1.10.3
  Git commit: Offfa825
  Built: Wed Jul 18 19:04:39 2018
  OS/Arch: linux/amd64
  Experimental: false
Server:
  Engine:
    Version: 18.06.0-ce
    API version: 1.38 (minimum version 1.12)
    Go version: go1.10.3
    Git commit: Offfa825
    Built: Wed Jul 18 19:13:46 2018
    OS/Arch: linux/amd64
    Experimental: true
```

The output of running the `kubectl` command is as follows:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl version
Client Version: version.Info{Major:"1", Minor:"11",
GitVersion:"v1.11.2", GitCommit:"bb9ffb1654d4a729bb4cec18ff088eac
c153c239", GitTreeState:"clean", BuildDate:"2018-08-07T23:17:28Z",
GoVersion:"go1.10.3", Compiler:"gc", Platform:"linux/amd64"}
Server Version: version.Info{Major:"1", Minor:"9",
GitVersion:"v1.9.9", GitCommit:"57729ea3d9a1b75f3fc7bbbadc597ba70
7d47c8a", GitTreeState:"clean", BuildDate:"2018-06-29T01:07:01Z",
GoVersion:"go1.9.3", Compiler:"gc", Platform:"linux/amd64"}
```

The output shows us that we're running Docker 18.06.0-ce and Kubernetes v1.11.2 on the client and v1.9.9 on the server.

To be able to use the Azure CLI to work with our account on Microsoft Azure, we first need to log in to the account. To do that, enter the following on the `bash-4.4#` command prompt:

```
az login
```

You will be prompted with a message similar to this:

```
To sign in, use a web browser to open the page https://microsoft.com/
devicelogin and enter the code CMNB2TSND to authenticate.
```

Once you have successfully authenticated, you should see a response similar to the following in the Terminal window:

```
[  
 {  
   "cloudName": "AzureCloud",  
   "id": "186760ad-9152-4499-b317-xxxxxxxxxx",  
   "isDefault": true,  
   "name": "xxxxxxxxxx",  
   "state": "Enabled",  
   "tenantId": "f5e90e29-00df-4ea6-b8a4-xxxxxxxxxx",  
   "user": {  
     "name": "gnschenker@xxxxxx.xxx",  
     "type": "user"  
   }  
 }
```

We are now ready to start working with Azure in general and AKS specifically.

Azure resource groups

In Azure, an important concept is **resource groups**. A resource group is a container for all kinds of cloud resources that logically belong together. In our case, all elements making up the Kubernetes cluster that we're going to provision in AKS belong to the same resource group. Thus, let's start by creating such a group. We will use the Azure CLI to do so. We will name the group `pets-group` and it will be located in the `westeurope` region. Use the following command to create the resource group:

```
az group create --name pets-group --location westeurope
```

The response of this command looks similar to this:

```
{  
  "id": "/subscriptions/186760ad-9152-4499-b317-xxxxxxxxxxxx/  
resourceGroups/pets-group",  
  "location": "westeurope",  
  "managedBy": null,  
  "name": "pets-group",  
  "properties": {  
    "provisioningState": "Succeeded"  
  },
```

Once we have created a service group, we need to create a service principal so that our AKS cluster will be able to interact with other Azure resources. To do so, use the following command:

```
az ad sp create-for-rbac \  
  --name pets-principal \  
  --password adminadmin \  
  --skip-assignment
```

This results in an output similar to this:

```
{  
  "appId": "a1a2bdbca07-49bd-ae77-fb8b6948869d",  
  "displayName": "azure-cli-2018-08-27-19-26-20",  
  "name": "http://pets-principal",  
  "password": "adminadmin",  
  "tenant": "f5e90e29-00df-4ea6-b8a4-ce8553f10be7"  
}
```

In the preceding output, `appId` and `password` are important, and you should note them down somewhere so that you can access them in the commands in the following sections.

Provisioning the Kubernetes cluster

Finally, we are ready to provision our Kubernetes cluster in AKS. We can use the following command to do so:

```
az aks create \  
  --resource-group pets-group \  
  --name pets-cluster \  
  --node-count 1 \  
  --generate-ssh-keys \  
  --service-principal <appId> \  
  --client-secret <password>
```

Note, you need to replace the <appId> and <password> placeholders with the values you noted down after creating the service principal. Also note that we have created a Kubernetes cluster with a single worker node for the moment. Later on we can scale this cluster up (and down) using the Azure CLI.

The response to the preceding command looks like this:

```
SSH key files '/root/.ssh/id_rsa' and '/root/.ssh/id_rsa.pub' have
been generated under ~/.ssh to allow SSH access to the VM. If using
machines without permanent storage like Azure Cloud Shell without an
attached file share, back up your keys to a safe location
- Running ..
```

The whole provisioning takes a few minutes (as indicated by the - Running .. status).

While we're waiting for the command to complete, we can open a new browser window and navigate to the Azure portal at <https://portal.azure.com> and log in to our account. Once successfully authenticated, we can then navigate to the **Resource groups** option and should see the pets-group resource group in the list of resource groups. If we click on this group, we should see pets-cluster listed as a resource in the group:

NAME	TYPE	LOCATION
pets-cluster	Kubernetes service	West Europe

Kubernetes cluster in AKS

Once the cluster has been created, we see the final output in the Terminal window shown as follows:

```
{
  "aadProfile": null,
  "addonProfiles": null,
  "agentPoolProfiles": [
    {
      "count": 1,
      "name": "agentpool",
      "type": "Kubernetes"
    }
  ],
  "id": "/subscriptions/185760ad-9152-4499-b317-c9bff441fb9d/resourceGroups/pets-group/providers/Microsoft.ContainerService/managedClusters/pets-cluster",
  "location": "West Europe",
  "managedClusterProperties": {
    "agentPool": {
      "count": 1,
      "name": "agentpool",
      "type": "Kubernetes"
    },
    "dnsPrefix": "petscdn",
    "kubernetesVersion": "1.14.9"
  },
  "name": "pets-cluster",
  "osType": "Linux",
  "resourceGroup": "pets-group",
  "type": "Microsoft.ContainerService/managedClusters"
```

```
        "count": 1,
        "maxPods": 110,
        "name": "nodepool1",
        "osDiskSizeGb": null,
        "osType": "Linux",
        "storageProfile": "ManagedDisks",
        "vmSize": "Standard_DS1_v2",
        "vnetSubnetId": null
    }
],
"dnsPrefix": "pets-clust-pets-group-186760",
"enableRbac": true,
"fqdn": "pets-clust-pets-group-186760-d706beb4.hcp.westeurope.
azmk8s.io",
"id": "/subscriptions/186760ad-9152-4499-b317-
c9bfff441fb9d/resourcegroups/pets-group/providers/Microsoft.
ContainerService/managedClusters/pets-cluster",
"kubernetesVersion": "1.9.9",
"linuxProfile": {
    "adminUsername": "azureuser",
    "ssh": {
        "publicKeys": [
            {
                "keyData": "ssh-rsa AAAAB3NzaC1yc2EAAAQABAAQDMp
2BFCRUo7v1ktVQa57ep7zLg7HEjsRQAk7UnovDXrLg1nBuzMs1HZY3mJ5ulxU00
YWeUuxObeHjRh+ZJHc4+xKaDV8M6GmuHjD8HJnw5tsCbV8w/A+5oUOEcaeJn5sQMCkmS
DovmDQZchAjLjVHQlSTiEqjLYmjjqYmhqYpO2vRsnZXpelRrlmfNWoSV5J3L7/
hayI2fg35X/H4xnxF1sm403O9pwYEKYYBFfNzCXigNnqyBvxOqwURZUW/caIpTqAhS6
K+D1xPa2w7y1A5qcZS++SnJOHCHyRKZ3UQ4BVZTSejBhxYTr5/dgJE+LEvLk2i
YUo4kUmbxDsVssnWJ"
            }
        ]
    }
},
"location": "westeurope",
"name": "pets-cluster",
"networkProfile": {
    "dnsServiceIp": "10.0.0.10",
    "dockerBridgeCidr": "172.17.0.1/16",
    "networkPlugin": "kubenet",
    "networkPolicy": null,
    "podCidr": "10.244.0.0/16",
    "serviceCidr": "10.0.0.0/16"
},
"nodeResourceGroup": "MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope",
"provisioningState": "Succeeded",
"resourceGroup": "pets-group",
"servicePrincipalProfile": {
    "clientId": "ala2bdbca07-49bd-ae77-fb8b6948869d",
    "secret": null
},
```

```
  "tags": null,  
  "type": "Microsoft.ContainerService/ManagedClusters"  
}
```

To access the cluster, we need to configure `kubectl` by using the following command:

```
az aks get-credentials --resource-group pets-group --name pets-cluster
```

If successful, this will generate the following response in the Terminal:

```
Merged "pets-cluster" as current context in /root/.kube/config
```

Now we can try to use `kubectl` by getting all nodes of the cluster:

```
kubectl get nodes
```

This results in something similar to this:

NAME	STATUS	ROLES	AGE	VERSION
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	Ready	agent	13m	v1.9.9

We see that our cluster consists of one worker node whose Kubernetes version is 1.9.9 and who has been up for 13 minutes. The attentive reader might have noticed that the version of Kubernetes is a bit outdated. The most recent version available on AKS at the time of writing is 1.11.2. This is perfectly fine and gives us the possibility to show how we can upgrade the cluster to a newer version of Kubernetes.

Pushing Docker images to the Azure Container Registry (ACR)

When deploying a containerized application onto a Kubernetes cluster hosted on Azure, it is of benefit to have the underlying Docker images stored in the same security context and close to the cluster. Thus, the ACR is a good choice. Before we deploy our application to the cluster, we will thus push the necessary Docker images to the ACR.

Creating an ACR

Once more we will use the Azure CLI to create a registry for our Docker images on Azure. The registry will also belong to the `pets-group` resource group we created in the *Azure resource groups* section in this chapter. We can use the following command to create a registry named `<registry-name>`:

```
az acr create --resource-group pets-group --name <registry-name>
--sku Basic
```

Please note that the name of the registry is `<registry-name>`, which needs to be unique on Azure. Thus, you need to come up with your own unique name and cannot use the same one as the author of this book. This is the reason that we are using a `<registry-name>` placeholder instead of a real name here. In my case, I have named the registry `gnsPetsRegistry`.

Note that the preceding command takes a while. The command's answer then looks similar to the following:

```
{
  "adminUserEnabled": false,
  "creationDate": "2018-08-27T19:57:01.434521+00:00",
  "id": "/subscriptions/186760ad-9152-4499-b317-xxxxxxxxxxxxx/
resourceGroups/pets-group/providers/Microsoft.ContainerRegistry/
registries/gnsPetsRegistry",
  "location": "westeurope",
  "loginServer": "gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io",
  "name": "gnsPetsRegistry",
  "provisioningState": "Succeeded",
  "resourceGroup": "pets-group",
  "sku": {
    "name": "Basic",
    "tier": "Basic"
  },
  "status": null,
  "storageAccount": null,
  "tags": {},
  "type": "Microsoft.ContainerRegistry/registries"
}
```

Note the `loginServer` entry in the preceding output. The value of that key corresponds to the URL that we need to use to prefix the Docker images when we tag them so that they can then be pushed to the ACR.

After we have created the registry, we can log in to it using this command:

```
az acr login --name <registry-name>
```

The answer should be:

Login Succeeded

In the Azure portal, we should now see our registry listed as an additional resource of the pets-group:

NAME	TYPE	LOCATION
gnsPetsRegistry	Container registry	West Europe
pets-cluster	Kubernetes service	West Europe

ACR Pets registry

We are now ready to push images to our ACR.

Tagging and pushing Docker images

In the previous chapters, we built the Docker images we're going to use in this chapter. But to be able to push those images to the ACR, we need to first re-tag the images with the correct URL prefix for the ACR. To get this prefix (or **ACR login server**, as it is also called; we already saw this in the output of the command that was used to create the registry), we can use the following command:

```
az acr list --resource-group pets-group --query "[].{acrLoginServer:loginServer}" --output table
```

The preceding command should result in an output similar to this:

```
AcrLoginServer
-----
gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io
```

OK, now that we have a registry in the ACR, we can finally tag our Docker images accordingly. In my case, using the `gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io` URL, the command for the `pets-web:v1` Docker image looks like this:

```
docker image tag pets-web:v1 gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web:v1
```

Once this is done, we can push the image with the following command:

```
docker image push gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web:v1
```

If everything works OK, you should see something similar to this:

```
The push refers to repository [gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web]
9d5c9e1e5f97: Pushed
39f3a72e04a3: Pushed
3177c088200b: Pushed
5f896b8130b3: Pushed
287ef32bfa90: Pushed
ce291010afac: Pushed
73046094a9b8: Mounted from alpine
v1: digest: sha256:9a32931874f4fdf5... size: 1783
```

Now do the same for the Docker `pets-db:v1` image:

```
docker image tag pets-db:v1 gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-db:v1
docker image push gnspetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-db:v1
```

Configuring the service principal

As a final step, we need to give the AKS service principal that we created earlier in this chapter the necessary rights to access and pull images from our container registry. First, we get the ACR resource ID (`<acrId>`) using the following command:

```
az acr show --resource-group pets-group \
--query "id" \
--output tsv \
--name <registry-name>
```

This should result in an output similar to this:

```
/subscriptions/186760ad-9152-4499-b317-xxxxxxxxxxxx/resourceGroups/
pets-group/providers/Microsoft.ContainerRegistry/registries/
gnSPetsRegistry
```

Having this information, we can assign the service principal identified by `<appId>` the necessary read access to the container registry identified by `<acrId>`:

```
az role assignment create --assignee <appId> --scope <acrId>
--role Reader
```

Here, <appId> is the application ID of the principal that we stored previously and <acrId> is the ACR resource ID. The output looks similar to this:

```
{
  "canDelegate": null,
  "id": "/subscriptions/.../roleAssignments/1b7c2a63-c4d3-41a9-a1bc-
bd9d65966f43",
  "name": "1b7c2a63-c4d3-41a9-a1bc-bd9d65966f43",
  "principalId": "ab5fe519-3982-4aac-95e0-761c242aa61b",
  "resourceGroup": "pets-group",
  "roleDefinitionId": "/subscriptions/.../roleDefinitions/acdd72a7-
3385-48ef-bd42-f606fba81ae7",
  "scope": "/subscriptions/.../registries/gnspetsregistry",
  "type": "Microsoft.Authorization/roleAssignments"
}
```

Deploying an application into the Kubernetes cluster

After we have successfully pushed our Docker images into the ACR, we are ready to deploy the application into the Kubernetes cluster in AKS. For this, we can use the manifest file, `pets.yaml`, which is part of the source code in the `ch12` folder. Please open this file with your editor and modify the file to match your environment. Replace the repository URL prefixing the Docker images with your specific URL.

In the following snippet, we see the default value, `gnspetsRegistry`, that you have to replace with your own <registry name> value:

```
containers:
- name: web
  image: gnspetsRegistry.azurecr.io/pets-web:v1
```

Save the changes. Then use `kubectl` to apply the manifest:

```
kubectl apply -f /src/pets.yaml
```

The output of the preceding command should be similar to this:

```
deployment.apps/db created
service/db created
deployment.apps/web created
service/web created
```

We are creating a LoadBalancer type service for the frontend of the Pets application that will have been assigned a public IP address by AKS. This takes a moment and we can observe the status with the following command:

```
kubectl get service web --watch
```

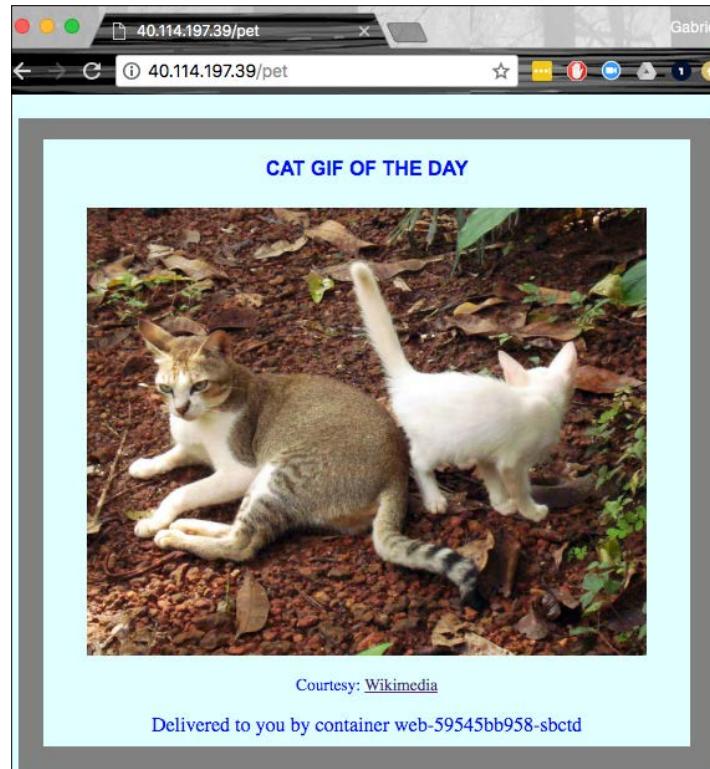
Initially, the output will be similar to this (see the pending output in the EXTERNAL-IP column):

NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT(S)	AGE
web	LoadBalancer	10.0.49.36	<pending>	80:31035/TCP	41s

Once the deployment is finished, <pending> will be replaced by the public IP address, and be ready to use to access our Pets application:

NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT(S)	AGE
web	LoadBalancer	10.0.49.36	40.114.197.39	80:31035/TCP	2m

Open a browser window at `http://<IP address>/pet` and you should see a nice cat image:



Pets application running in Kubernetes on AKS

With this, we have successfully deployed a complex application into our Kubernetes cluster on AKS.

Scaling the Pets application

There are two ways that we can scale our Pets application, which are as follows:

- The first one is by scaling the number of application instances
- The second one is by scaling the number of worker nodes in the cluster

The second approach, of course, only makes sense if we scale the number of application instances at the same time too, so that those additional instances will leverage the resources of the newly added cluster nodes.

Scaling the number of app instances

Scaling the number of instances that a given application service is running is easy, and we can use `kubectl` to do so. Let's assume that our Pets application is so successful that we need to increase the number of web instances to three while the database can still handle the incoming traffic with a single instance. Let's first see what pods are currently running in our cluster:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl get pods
NAME           READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
db-6746668f6c-wdscl   1/1     Running   0          2h
web-798745b679-8kh2j   1/1     Running   0          2h
```

And we can see that we have one pod for each of the two services, `web` and `db`, up and running. None of the pods have been restarted so far. Let's scale our `web` deployment to three instances:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl scale --replicas=3 deployment/web
deployment.extensions/web scaled
```

And this is the result of the scale operation:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl get pods
NAME           READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE
db-6746668f6c-wdscl   1/1     Running   0          2h
web-74dbc994bc-6f7qh   1/1     Running   0          14s
web-74dbc994bc-199bh   1/1     Running   0          1m
web-74dbc994bc-rz8vs   1/1     Running   0          14s
```

In the browser running the Pets application, refresh the view a few times and notice that the ID of the container instance changes every so often. This is the Kubernetes load balancer in action, distributing the calls to the different web instances.

[ The best way to get different instances of the web service is by opening several incognito browser windows.]

Scaling the number of cluster nodes

So far, we have only worked with one cluster (worker) node. We can use the Azure CLI to increase the number of nodes and thus provide more computing power to our application. Let's scale our cluster to three nodes:

```
az aks scale --resource-group=pets-group --name=pets-cluster  
--node-count 3
```

This will take a few minutes and, when done, you should see a response in the Terminal similar to this:

```
{  
  "aadProfile": null,  
  "addonProfiles": null,  
  "agentPoolProfiles": [  
    {  
      "count": 3,  
      "maxPods": 110,  
      "name": "nodepool1",  
      "osDiskSizeGb": null,  
      "osType": "Linux",  
      "storageProfile": "ManagedDisks",  
      "vmSize": "Standard_DS1_v2",  
      "vnetSubnetId": null  
    }  
  ],  
  "dnsPrefix": "pets-clust-pets-group-186760",  
  "enableRbac": true,  
  "fqdn": "pets-clust-pets-group-186760-d706beb4.hcp.westeurope.azurek8s.  
io",  
  "id": "/subscriptions/186760ad-9152-4499-b317-xxxxxxxxxxxx/  
resourcegroups/pets-group/providers/Microsoft.ContainerService/  
managedClusters/pets-cluster",  
  "kubernetesVersion": "1.9.9",  
  "linuxProfile": {  
    "adminUsername": "azureuser",  
    "ssh": {
```

```
"publicKeys": [
  {
    "keyData": "ssh-rsa AAAAB3NzaC1E...",
  }
]
}
},
},
{
  "location": "westeurope",
  "name": "pets-cluster",
  "networkProfile": {
    "dnsServiceIp": "10.0.0.10",
    "dockerBridgeCidr": "172.17.0.1/16",
    "networkPlugin": "kubenet",
    "networkPolicy": null,
    "podCidr": "10.244.0.0/16",
    "serviceCidr": "10.0.0.0/16"
  },
  "nodeResourceGroup": "MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope",
  "provisioningState": "Succeeded",
  "resourceGroup": "pets-group",
  "servicePrincipalProfile": {
    "clientId": "ala2bdbca07-49bd-ae77-xxxxxxxxxxxx",
    "secret": null
  },
  "tags": null,
  "type": "Microsoft.ContainerService/ManagedClusters"
}
```

We can verify the progress of the provisioning of the worker nodes using the following command:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl get nodes --watch
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 Ready agent 1d v1.9.9
aks-nodepool1-54489083-2 NotReady agent 0s v1.9.9
...
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 Ready agent 1d v1.9.9
aks-nodepool1-54489083-2 Ready agent 2m v1.9.9
aks-nodepool1-54489083-1 Ready agent 20s v1.9.9
```

Of course, the addition of extra worker nodes does not automatically redistribute the service instances of our application. To achieve this we need to scale, for example, the web service again:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl scale --replicas=5 deployment/web
deployment.extensions/web scaled
```

We can now use the wide output to see on which nodes the pods have landed:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl get pods --output='wide'
NAME                  READY   STATUS    RESTARTS   AGE     IP
NODE ...
db-6746668f6c-wdscl  1/1    Running   0          3h      10.244.0.24
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 ...
web-59545bb958-2v4zp 1/1    Running   0          2m      10.244.1.3
aks-nodepool1-54489083-2 ...
web-59545bb958-7mpfx 1/1    Running   0          31m     10.244.0.31
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 ...
web-59545bb958-9mc6m  1/1    Running   0          2m      10.244.1.2
aks-nodepool1-54489083-2 ...
web-59545bb958-sbctd  1/1    Running   0          35m     10.244.0.29
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 ...
web-59545bb958-tvthv  1/1    Running   0          31m     10.244.0.30
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 ...
```

We can see that three pods are on the first and two (the additional ones) have been deployed to the third node.

Monitoring the cluster and application

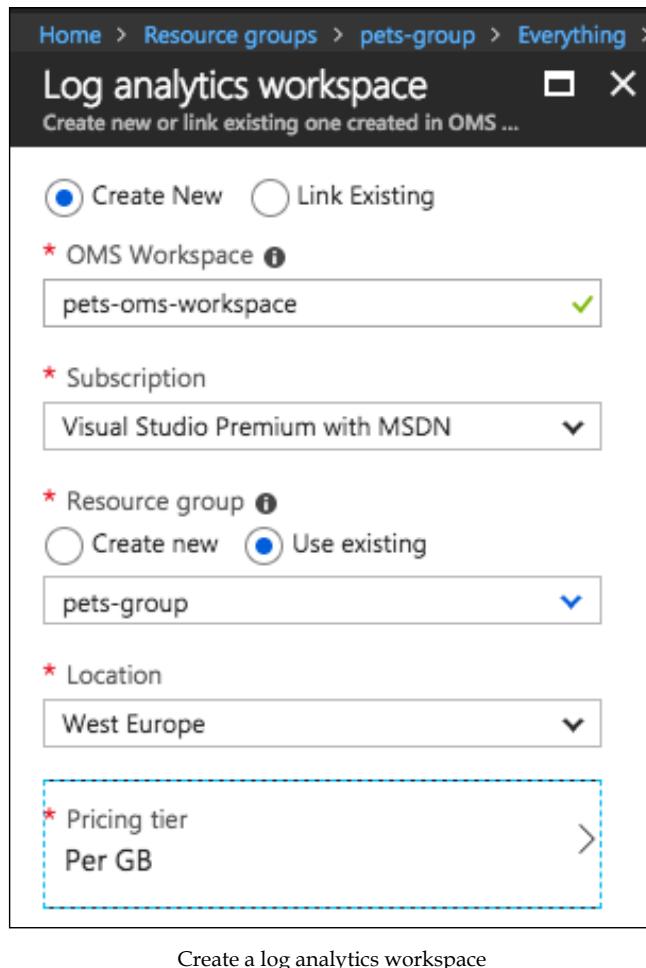
In this section, we will show three different elements of our Kubernetes cluster. We will do the following:

- Monitor the container health
- View the logs of the Kubernetes masters
- View the logs of kublets installed on each worker node

Creating a log analytics workspace

To store the monitoring and logging data produced by our cluster, we need a log analytics workspace. We will use the Azure portal GUI to create one in our pets-group resource group, with the following steps:

1. In the portal, click on the **+Create a resource** option.
2. Select the **Log Analytics** option and then **Create**. Enter the required data, similar to the one shown in the following screenshot:



Create a log analytics workspace

Running a Containerized App in the Cloud

Once the workspace has been created, we should see it in the overview of our **pets-group** resource group:

The screenshot shows the Azure portal's 'Resource groups' blade for the 'pets-group' resource group. On the left, there's a navigation menu with options like Overview, Activity log, Access control (IAM), Tags, Events, Quickstart, Resource costs, and Deployments. The 'Overview' tab is selected. At the top, there are buttons for Add, Edit columns, Delete resource group, Refresh, Move, Assign tags, and Delete. Below these are details about the subscription: Visual Studio Premium with MSDN, Subscription ID 186760ad-9152-4499-b317-c9bff441fb9d, and Deployments 1 Succeeded. A 'Tags (change)' section with a link to 'Click here to add tags' is also present. The main area lists resources under 'Filter by name...' with dropdowns for All types and All locations. There are three items listed: 'gnpetsregistry' (Container registry), 'pets-cluster' (Kubernetes service), and 'pets-oms-workspace' (Log Analytics). The 'pets-oms-workspace' entry is highlighted with a red box.

Log analytics workspace in the pets-group resource group

3. Click on the pets-oms-workspace entry to see the details of the workspace:

The screenshot shows the 'pets-oms-workspace' log analytics workspace details page. The top navigation bar shows 'Home > Resource groups > pets-group > pets-oms-workspace'. The left sidebar has links for Overview, Activity log, Access control (IAM), Tags, and Diagnose and solve problems. The main content area is titled 'OMS Portal' with a 'Delete' button. It shows the 'Essentials' section with the following details:

- Resource group (change): pets-group
- Status: Active
- Location: West Europe
- Subscription name (change): Visual Studio Premium with MSDN
- Subscription ID: 186760ad-9152-4499-b317-c9bff441fb9d
- Workspace Name: pets-oms-workspace
- Workspace Id: 517aa47a-0f69-49c2-921e-f4448b4de533
- Pricing tier: Per GB
- Management services: Operations logs

The 'Workspace Id' field is highlighted with a red box.

Detail view of the pets-oms-workspace log analytics workspace

Note down <workspace ID> of the workspace you just created, as we need it in the next section.

Monitoring the container health

Let's use the Azure CLI to enable monitoring for `pets-cluster`. We could have done this when we created the cluster, but it is also possible to do it at a later time.

We use the Azure CLI once again to enable monitoring of our cluster. Use the following command to do so and make sure to replace `<workspace ID>` with the ID of your workspace that you have just created:

```
az aks enable-addons \
    -a monitoring \
    -g pets-group \
    -n pets-cluster \
    --workspace-resource-id <workspace ID>
```

Please be patient as this command takes a while. It eventually should respond with the following (shortened for readability):

```
...
"properties": {
    "provisioningState": "Succeeded"
},
...
```

Note that we could also have used the Azure portal GUI or an Azure Resource Manager template to enable monitoring.

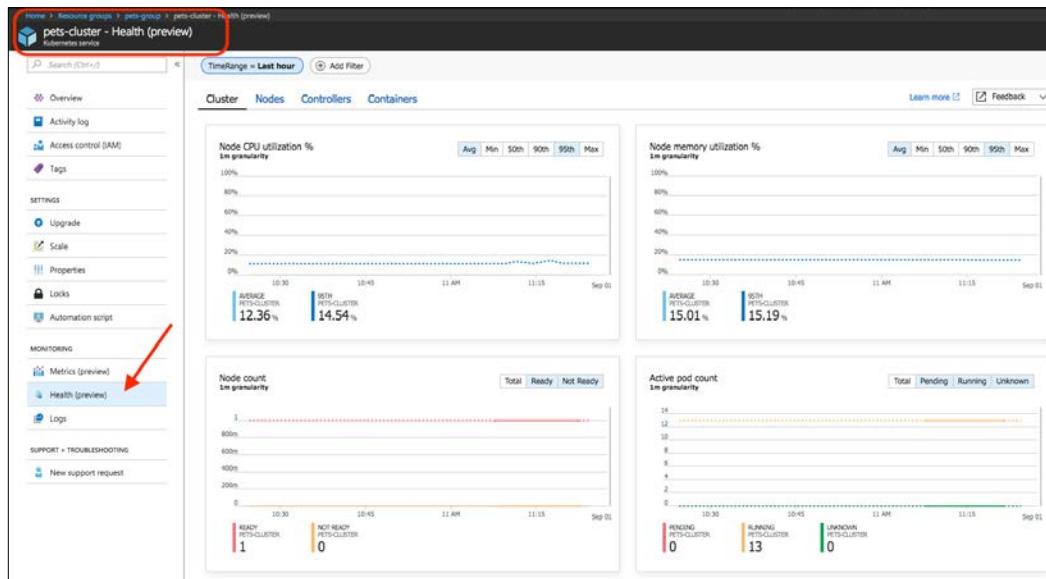
Monitoring is based on a **Log Analytics** agent, which is running on each node of the Kubernetes cluster and will collect memory and processor metrics from all controllers, nodes, and containers that the native Kubernetes Metrics API is providing. The resulting metrics are collected by the agents and forwarded and stored in the Log Analytics workspace.

Once we have enabled monitoring for our cluster, we can verify that the Log Analytics agent has been deployed into the `kube-system` namespace once for each worker node (3):

```
bash-4.4# kubectl get ds omsagent --namespace=kube-system
NAME      DESIRED CURRENT READY UP-TO-DATE AVAILABLE
NODE SELECTOR          AGE
omsagent   3        3       3      3           3     beta.kubernetes.io/
os=linux   1d
```

Running a Containerized App in the Cloud

We can now open the Azure portal to view the metrics of our cluster. Navigate to **Resource groups** | **pets-group** | **pets-cluster** and then click on the **Health (preview)** option to see a display similar to the following screenshot:



Microsoft Azure AKS Health view

In this view, we can see the aggregated metrics for the CPU and memory utilization as well as the node count and active pod count per cluster, node, controller, and container.

Viewing the logs of Kubernetes masters

By default, diagnostic logs are disabled, and we have to first turn them on. We can use our Log Analytics **pets-oms-workspace** workspace as the target for the logs. To enable the diagnostic logs, we will use the Azure portal this time. Follow the steps:

1. Navigate to the `pets-group` resource group and select the **Diagnostic settings** option on the left side. You should see something like this:

NAME	RESOURCE TYPE	RESOURCE GROUP	DIAGNOSTICS STATUS
pets-cluster	Kubernetes service	pets-group	Disabled

Diagnostic log settings for the resource group `pets-group`

2. Select the `pets-cluster` entry and then click on the **Turn on diagnostics** link. Fill out the form with values similar to the one shown in the following screenshot:

Home > Resource groups > pets-group - Diagnostic settings > Diagnostics settings

Diagnostics settings

Save Discard Delete

* Name: pets-diagnostics ✓

Archive to a storage account

Stream to an event hub

Send to Log Analytics

Log Analytics >
pets-oms-workspace

LOG

kube-apiserver

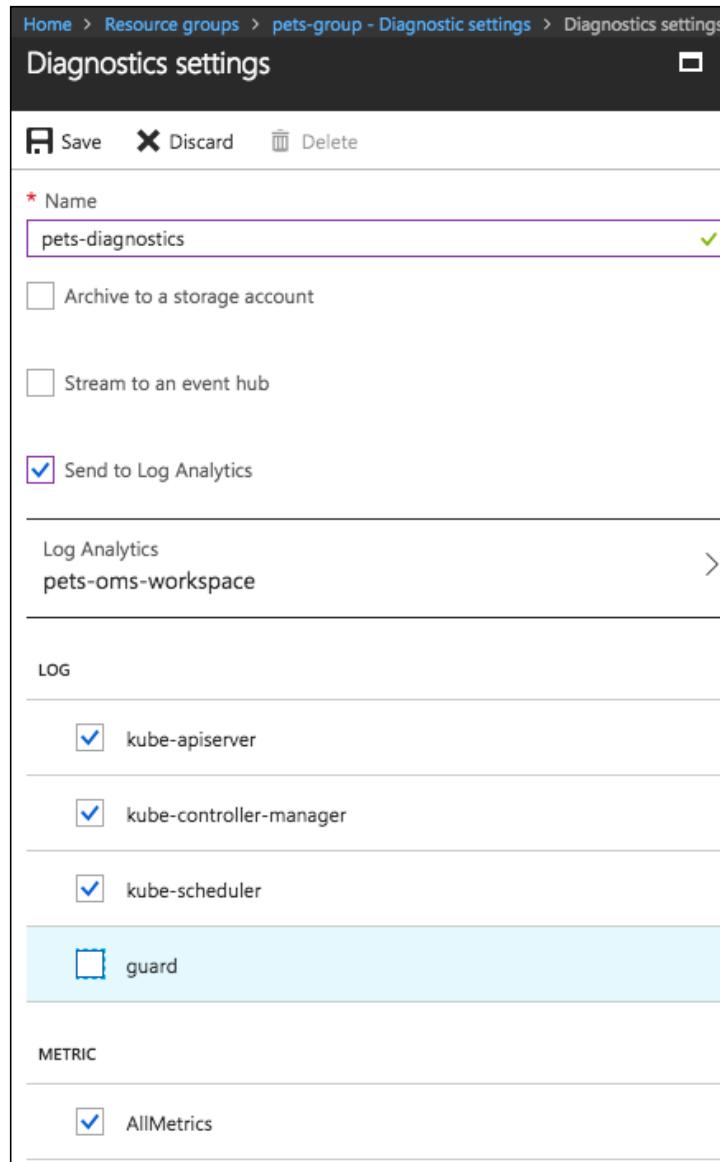
kube-controller-manager

kube-scheduler

guard

METRIC

AllMetrics



Setting for the diagnostic logs of the Kubernetes cluster

3. Make sure that you select **Send to Log Analytics** checkbox and select **pets-oms-workspace** as the target for the logs.
4. Click on the **Save** button to update the settings.

Give the system a few minutes or hours to collect some relevant information before you proceed.

To analyze the logs, navigate to the **pets-group** resource group and select the **pets-cluster** entry. Then select the **Logs** option on the left side and you will be presented with a view similar to the one shown in the followings screenshot:

The screenshot shows the Azure Log Analytics interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'pets-cluster - Logs' and a search bar. Below it is a query editor with a schema pane containing a complex log query. The main area shows a table of log entries with columns: LogEntrySource, LogEntry, TimeGenerated (UTC), Computer, and Image. The table lists several log entries from the 'ssh-helper' container on node 'aks-nodepool1-54489083-0'. A red arrow points to the 'Logs' link in the left sidebar under the 'MONITORING' section.

LogEntrySource	LogEntry	TimeGenerated (UTC)	Computer	Image
> stdout	Connected!\n	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	Connecting to DB!\n	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/94/Www.p.../	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	Connecting to DB!\n	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	Connected!\n	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/97/Cat_and_kitten.../	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c/Ragdoll_Blue_C.../	2018-09-01T10:17:08.278	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	Connecting to DB!\n	2018-09-01T10:17:08.277	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian
> stdout	Connected!\n	2018-09-01T10:17:08.277	aks-nodepool1-54489083-0	debian

Analyze Logs generated by the Kubernetes cluster and the containers running on it

In the preceding screenshot, we can see the default query that generated log entries produced by the `ssh-helper` container running Kubernetes on node `aks-nodepool1-54489083-0`. This container will be introduced in the next section.

We can now use the rich query language provided to us by Azures Log Analytics to get more insight into the vast amount of logging data.

Viewing the kublet and container logs

Sometimes it is necessary to investigate the logs of a kubelet on a particular node in the Kubernetes cluster. To do so, we need to establish an SSH connection to that particular node and can then use the Linux tool, `journalctl`, to access those logs.

First we need to find the node (or VM) of which we want to investigate the kublet's logs. Let's list all the VMs that are part of our pets-cluster cluster in the resource group, pets-group, in the westeurope region. Azure has implicitly created a resource group called MC_<group name>_<cluster name>_<region name> where it put all the resources (including the VMs) of our Kubernetes cluster. Thus, in my case, the group name is MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope. Here is the command that gives me the list of VMs:

```
bash-4.4# az vm list --resource-group MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope -o table

Name          ResourceGroup
Location      Zones
-----
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope
westerurope
```

We can now add the public SSH keys that we use to connect to the cluster through the Azure CLI to this VM (with the name aks-nodepool1-54489083-0) with the following command:

```
bash-4.4# az vm user update \
--resource-group MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope \
--name aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 \
--username azureuser \
--ssh-key-value ~/.ssh/id_rsa.pub
```

Now we need to get the address of this VM and can do so with this command:

```
bash-4.4# az vm list-ip-addresses --resource-group MC_pets-group_pets-
cluster_westeurope -o table

VirtualMachine          PrivateIPAddresses
-----
aks-nodepool1-54489083-0 10.240.0.4
```

Having all this information, we need a way to SSH into this VM. We cannot just do this directly from our local workstation without additional hassles, but an easy way is to run a helper container (called ssh-helper) in the Kubernetes cluster interactively from which we can then SSH into the VM. Let's start such a helper container using the kubectl command:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl run -it --rm ssh-helper --image=debian
root@ssh-helper-86966767d-v2xqg:/#
```

This container does not have an SSH client installed. Let's do this now. Inside this helper container run the following command:

```
root@ssh-helper-86966767d-v2xqg:/# apt-get update && apt-get install openssh-client -y
```

In another Terminal, we can attach to our Azure CLI container as follows:

```
$ docker container exec azure-cli /bin/bash
```

Then, inside the container, run the following command to see all running pods in our cluster:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl get pods
```

Here is the result of running the preceding command:

NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE
db-6746668f6c-msv8m	1/1	Running	0	1d
ssh-helper-86966767d-v2xqg	1/1	Running	0	2m
web-74dbc994bc-5d2j6	1/1	Running	0	1d
web-74dbc994bc-ljml9	1/1	Running	0	1d
web-74dbc994bc-tj6p2	1/1	Running	0	1d

SSH helper pod running in our Kubernetes cluster

The next step is to copy our private SSH key into the pod to the expected location. We can use this command to do so:

```
bash-4.4# kubectl cp ~/.ssh/id_rsa ssh-helper-86966767d-v2xqg:/id_rsa
```

From within the helper container, we now need to change the access rights to this SSH key using this command:

```
root@ssh-helper-86966767d-v2xqg:/# chmod 0600 id_rsa
```

Finally, we're ready to SSH into the target VM:

```
root@ssh-helper-86966767d-v2xqg:/# ssh -i id_rsa azureuser@10.240.0.4
```

We should then see something similar to this:

```
The authenticity of host '10.240.0.4 (10.240.0.4)' can't be established.
ECDSA key fingerprint is SHA256:p103ZLFd0pkkPTtzDphSXCuNl0npBJ01JmU
iLI5aSzY. Are you sure you want to continue connecting (yes/no)? yes
Warning: Permanently added '10.240.0.4' (ECDSA) to the list of known
hosts. Welcome to Ubuntu 16.04.5 LTS (GNU/Linux 4.15.0-1021-azure
x86_64)
```

```
* Documentation: https://help.ubuntu.com * Management: https://landscape.canonical.com
* Support: https://ubuntu.com/advantage

Get cloud support with Ubuntu Advantage Cloud Guest:
http://www.ubuntu.com/business/services/cloud

3 packages can be updated.
0 updates are security updates.

*** System restart required ***

The programs included with the Ubuntu system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/*copyright.

Ubuntu comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by
applicable law.

To run a command as administrator (user "root"), use "sudo <command>".
See "man sudo_root" for details.
```

```
azureuser@aks-nodepool1-54489083-0:~$
```

And we're in! We can now access the desired node of our Kubernetes cluster remotely.



What we just showed, to access the cluster over a helper container or pod, is a well established way of debugging a remote and secured Kubernetes cluster.

Now that we're finally on the VM, using SSH, we can get access to the logs of the local kubelet. Do this with the following command:

```
azureuser@aks-nodepool1-54489083-0:~$ sudo journalctl -u kubelet -o
cat
```

And we should see something along the lines of this (shortened):

```
Stopped Kubelet.
Starting Kubelet...
net.ipv4.tcp_retries2 = 8
Bridge table: nat
Bridge chain: PREROUTING, entries: 0, policy: ACCEPT
Bridge chain: OUTPUT, entries: 0, policy: ACCEPT
Bridge chain: POSTROUTING, entries: 0, policy: ACCEPT
Chain PREROUTING (policy ACCEPT)
...
...
```

```
I0831 08:30:52.872882 8787 server.go:182] Version: v1.9.9
I0831 08:30:52.873306 8787 feature_gate.go:226] feature gates: &{}
map[]
I0831 08:30:54.082665 8787 mount_linux.go:210] Detected OS with
systemd
W0831 08:30:54.083717 8787 cni.go:171] Unable to update cni config: No
networks found in /etc/cni/net.d
I0831 08:30:54.091357 8787 azure.go:249] azure: using client_
id+client_secret to retrieve access token
I0831 08:30:54.091777 8787 azure.go:382] Azure cloudprovider using
rate limit config: QPS=3, bucket=10
...
```

In a similar way, we can now access the logs of any of the containers running on this node. To list all containers running on our web frontend, execute the following command:

```
azureuser@aks-nodepool1-54489083-0:~$ docker container ls | grep pets-
web

614b6d27dc13      gnpetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web@
sha256:43d3f3b3...
493341aff54a      gnpetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web@
sha256:43d3f3b3...
f5b730aa1449      gnpetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web@
sha256:43d3f3b3...
```

Apparently, I have three instances running on this node. Let's analyze the logs of the first one:

```
azureuser@aks-nodepool1-54489083-0:~$ docker container logs
614b6d27dc13

Listening at 0.0.0.0:80
Connecting to DB
Connected!
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/dc/Cats_Petunia_and_
Mimosa_2004.jpg
Connecting to DB
Connected!
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9e/Green_eyes_kitten.
jpg
...
```

 Keep in mind though that the technique shown here can be potentially dangerous since we just got root access to the cluster node. Use this technique only on non-production systems, or in an emergency if there is no better way to access the relevant information.

Upgrading the application with zero downtime

Now that we have the Pets application successfully running in the cloud, we are getting some requests for change. Users seem to not particularly like the background color of our application. Let's change that and then roll out the changes in a fashion that causes zero downtime to the application.

In the following steps, we will first do the code change in our project, then build a new version of the corresponding container image, push it to the ACR, and deploy it from there:

1. In the `ch12/web/src` folder of the `labs` folder, locate the `main.css` file and open it in your editor
2. Change the background color of the `body` element to a color of your liking, such as `lightgreen`
3. Save the changes
4. From within the Azure CLI container build, tag and push the new version `v2` of the `pets-web` container:

```
docker image build -t pets-web:v2 /src/web
docker image tag pets-web:v2 gnpetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-
web:v2
docker push gnpetsregistry.azurecr.io/pets-web:v2
```

5. Once the new version of the Docker image of the `web` service is in the ACR, we can issue the update command for the `web` service:

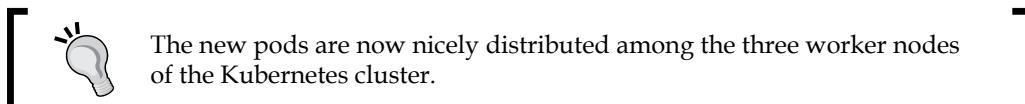
```
kubectl set image deployment web web=gnpetsregistry.azurecr.
io/pets-web:v2
```

6. During the (rolling) update, we can monitor the pods:

```
kubectl get pods --output='wide' --watch
```

In the `pets.yaml` manifest, we have defined that the `maxSurge` and `maxUnavailable` values are each 1. This means that one pod at a time is updated so that always at least four ($5-1=4$) pods are available at any given time and thus the application is always fully functional.

7. Refresh the browser window with the Pets application running, and verify that the background color has indeed changed to the new value.



Upgrading Kubernetes

We noted earlier that the version of Kubernetes (v1.9.9) installed on our cluster nodes is pretty outdated. It is now time to demonstrate how we can upgrade Kubernetes without causing any downtime to the Pets application. Note, we can only upgrade Kubernetes in steps; that is, one minor version at a time. We can find out which versions are available to us to upgrade to with this command:

```
az aks get-upgrades --resource-group pets-group --name pets-cluster
--output table
```

The output generated by the command should look similar to this:

Name	ResourceGroup	MasterVersion	NodePoolVersion	Upgrades
default	pets-group	1.9.9	1.9.9	1.9.10,
		1.10.3, 1.10.5, 1.10.6		

Since we are currently on version v1.9.9, we can only upgrade in the same minor version 9 or to one of the versions v1.10.x. Once we're on version v1.10.x, we can then upgrade to v1.11.x.

Let's upgrade our cluster to version v1.10.6:

```
az aks upgrade --resource-group pets-group --name pets-cluster
--kubernetes-version 1.10.6
```

The upgrade will happen node by node, guaranteeing that the applications running on the cluster are always operational. The whole upgrade takes a few minutes. We can observe the progress using the following command:

```
kubectl get nodes --watch
```

We should see how one node at a time is drained and then disabled before it is upgraded and made ready again.

Once it's finished, an output similar to this one will be generated:

```
{
  "aadProfile": null,
  "addonProfiles": null,
  "agentPoolProfiles": [
    {
      "count": 3,
      "maxPods": 110,
      "name": "nodepool1",
      "osDiskSizeGb": null,
      "osType": "Linux",
```

```
        "storageProfile": "ManagedDisks",
        "vmSize": "Standard_DS1_v2",
        "vnetSubnetId": null
    }
],
"dnsPrefix": "pets-clust-pets-group-186760",
"enableRbac": true,
"fqdn": "pets-clust-pets-group-186760-d706beb4.hcp.westeurope.
azmk8s.io",
"id": "/subscriptions/186760ad-9152-4499-b317-xxxxxxxxxxxx/
resourcegroups/pets-group/providers/Microsoft.ContainerService/
managedClusters/pets-cluster",
"kubernetesVersion": "1.10.6",
"linuxProfile": {
    "adminUsername": "azureuser",
    "ssh": {
        "publicKeys": [
            {
                "keyData": "ssh-rsa ..."
            }
        ]
    }
},
"location": "westeurope",
"name": "pets-cluster",
"networkProfile": {
    "dnsServiceIp": "10.0.0.10",
    "dockerBridgeCidr": "172.17.0.1/16",
    "networkPlugin": "kubenet",
    "networkPolicy": null,
    "podCidr": "10.244.0.0/16",
    "serviceCidr": "10.0.0.0/16"
},
"nodeResourceGroup": "MC_pets-group_pets-cluster_westeurope",
"provisioningState": "Succeeded",
"resourceGroup": "pets-group",
"servicePrincipalProfile": {
    "clientId": "a1a2bdbca07-49bd-ae77-xxxxxxxxxxxx",
    "secret": null
},
"tags": null,
"type": "Microsoft.ContainerService/ManagedClusters"
}
```

To verify the upgrade, we can use this command:

```
az aks show --resource-group pets-group --name pets-cluster --output
table
```

This results in the following output:

Name	Location	ResourceGroup	KubernetesVersion
ProvisioningState	Fqdn		
pets-cluster	westeurope	pets-group	1.10.6
Succeeded		pets-clust...	

We have successfully upgraded our three-node cluster from Kubernetes v1.9.9 to v1.10.6. This upgrade includes the master nodes. During the whole process, the application deployed on the cluster was fully operational.

Debugging the application while it is running in AKS

So far we have seen how we can deploy and run applications in Kubernetes on AKS. This is interesting for operation engineers that work with *finished* applications. Developers though would sometimes love to interactively develop and debug applications directly in the cloud, specifically if these applications consist of many individual services or components running in containers on Kubernetes. At the time of writing, Microsoft offers a preview of so-called Azure Dev Spaces on AKS, which allow developers to do exactly this kind of interactive development and debugging.

Creating a Kubernetes cluster for development

In this section, we are going to create a Kubernetes cluster in Azure's AKS that can be used for development purposes. We will be using this cluster to show how to remote debug an application running on it. We will use the Azure portal to provision the cluster:

1. Open the Azure portal at <https://portal.azure.com/> and log in to your account
2. Select the **+ Create a resource** option and select **Kubernetes Service**
3. Fill out the necessary details needed to create a Kubernetes cluster for development purposes

In the following screenshot, we can see a sample configuration that the author used during the writing of this section:

The screenshot shows the 'Create Kubernetes cluster' wizard in the Azure portal. The top navigation bar includes 'Home > New > Kubernetes Service > Create Kubernetes cluster'. The main title is 'Create Kubernetes cluster'. A green validation message 'Validation passed' is displayed. Below it, tabs for 'Basics', 'Authentication', 'Networking', 'Monitoring', 'Tags', and 'Review + create' are present, with 'Review + create' being the active tab. The configuration details are listed under several sections:

Section	Setting	Value
BASICS	Subscription	Visual Studio Premium with MSDN
	Resource group	(new) pets-dev-group
	Region	West Europe
	Kubernetes cluster name	pets-dev-cluster
	Kubernetes version	1.11.2
	DNS name prefix	gns-pets-dev
	Node count	1
	Node size	Standard_DS2_v2
AUTHENTICATION		
Enable RBAC	No	
NETWORKING		
HTTP application routing	Yes	
Network configuration	Basic	
MONITORING		
Enable container monitoring	Yes	
Log Analytics workspace	(new) pets-dev-workspace	
TAGS		
(none)		

At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Create', 'Previous', and 'Download a template for automation'.

Configuration of a Kubernetes development cluster in AKS

Specifically, note that I created a new resource group, `pets-dev-group`, selected the value `pets-dev-cluster` for the cluster name, and created a new Log Analytics workspace, `pets-dev-workspace`, to capture all log and monitoring data produced by the cluster and the applications running on it. It is also important to have HTTP application routing turned on.

After clicking on the **Create** button, the whole provisioning takes a few minutes. You can continue with the installation of the Azure CLI on your workstation in the meantime, as described in the next section.

Configuring the environment

In this section, we are going to configure our working environment (that is, our computer), to be able to work with Azure from the command line. Follow the steps:

1. To work with Azure Dev Spaces, install the Azure CLI natively on your workstation. Here is how you can do this on a Mac:

```
$ brew install azure-cli
```

2. Make sure you have the newest version of the CLI. The version returned should be 2.0.44 or newer:

```
$ az --version
azure-cli (2.0.45)
...

```

3. Log in to Azure:

```
$ az login
```

Do not continue until the provisioning of your Kubernetes development cluster is complete.

4. To set up the Azure Dev Space in our development Kubernetes cluster use the following command:

```
$ az aks use-dev-spaces -g pets-dev-group -n pets-dev-cluster

The installed extension 'dev-spaces-preview' is in preview.
Installing Dev Spaces (Preview) commands...
Installing Azure Dev Spaces (Preview) client components...

By continuing, you agree to the Microsoft Software License Terms
(https://aka.ms/azds-LicenseTerms) and Microsoft Privacy Statement
(https://aka.ms/privacystatement). Do you want to continue? (Y/n):

You may be prompted for your administrator password to authorize
the installation process.
Password:

[INFO] Downloading Azure Dev Spaces (Preview) Package...
[INFO] Downloading Bash completion script...

Successfully installed Azure Dev Spaces (Preview) to /usr/local/
bin/azds.

An Azure Dev Spaces Controller will be created that targets
resource 'pets-dev-cluster' in resource group 'pets-dev-group'.
Continue? (y/N): Y
```

```
Creating and selecting Azure Dev Spaces Controller 'pets-dev-cluster' in resource group 'pets-dev-group' that targets resource 'pets-dev-cluster' in resource group 'pets-dev-group'...

Select a dev space or Kubernetes namespace to use as a dev space.
[1] default
Type a number or a new name: pets

Dev space 'pets' does not exist and will be created.

Select a parent dev space or Kubernetes namespace to use as a parent dev space.
[0] <none>
[1] default
Type a number: 0

Creating and selecting dev space 'pets'...2s

Managed Kubernetes cluster 'pets-dev-cluster' in resource group 'pets-dev-group' is ready for development in dev space 'pets'.
Type `azds prep` to prepare a source directory for use with Azure Dev Spaces and `azds up` to run.
```

Deploying and running a service

We are now ready to build, deploy, and run our first service in the Kubernetes cluster on AKS.

Navigate to the ch12-dev-spaces/web subfolder of your labs folder:

```
$ cd ~/labs/ch12-dev-spaces/web
```

And run the azds prep command, as indicated in the preceding output. This will create the **Helm charts** for this component:

```
$ azds prep --public

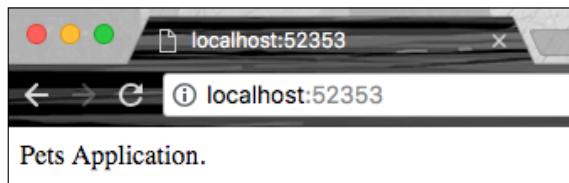
Preparing 'web' of type 'node.js' with files:
./.dockerignore
/azds.yaml
/charts/web/.helmignore
/charts/web/Chart.yaml
/charts/web/templates/_helpers.tpl
/charts/web/templates/deployment.yaml
/charts/web/templates/ingress.yaml
/charts/web/templates/NOTES.txt
/charts/web/templates/secrets.yaml
/charts/web/templates/service.yaml
/charts/web/values.yaml
Type 'azds up' to run.
```

To build the artefacts and run them in AKS, we can now simply use the following command:

```
$ azds up

Using dev space 'pets' with target 'pets-dev-cluster'
Synchronizing files...1s
Installing Helm chart...10s
Waiting for container image build...7s
Building container image...
Step 1/8 : FROM node:10.9-alpine
Step 2/8 : RUN mkdir /app
Step 3/8 : WORKDIR /app
Step 4/8 : COPY package.json /app/
Step 5/8 : RUN npm install
Step 6/8 : COPY ./src /app/src
Step 7/8 : EXPOSE 80
Step 8/8 : CMD node src/server.js
Built container image in 51s
Waiting for container...8s
(pending registration) Service 'web' port 'http' will be available at
http://web.2785a289211f45f6a8fa.westeurope.aksapp.io/
Service 'web' port 80 (TCP) is available at http://localhost:52353
press Ctrl+C to detach
web-6488b5585b-c9cg5: Listening at 0.0.0.0:80
```

We can immediately open a browser window at `http://localhost:52353`, as indicated in the preceding output, to access our service that is now running in AKS. A few minutes later, we should also be able to use the public DNS (`http://web.2785a289211f45f6a8fa.westeurope.aksapp.io`) provided in the preceding output to access the service. What we should see is the following screenshot:



Pets application running in Azure Dev Spaces

At any time, we can stop (or detach) the service by pressing *Ctrl + C* in the Terminal and then we can update the code. When done, simply start the new version with `$ azds up` again. Do this now and press *Ctrl + C*. Then change the message in the `server.js` file to be `My Pets Application`. Save the changes and then execute the following command:

```
$ azds up
```

Once the application is ready, refresh the browser, and you should see the changed message.

To prepare for the next exercise, hit *Ctrl + C* and then execute the following command to stop and remove the component from our Kubernetes cluster:

```
$ azds down

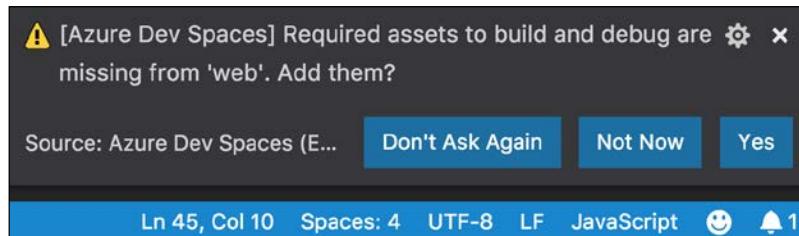
'web' identifies Helm release 'pets-web-9c1bf6d2' which includes these
services:
  web
Are you sure you want to delete this release? (y/N): Y

Deleting Helm release 'pets-web-9c1bf6d2'...19s
```

Remote debugging a service using Visual Studio Code

Of course this is a bit slow and we can do better by using remote debugging in **Visual Studio Code (VS Code)**:

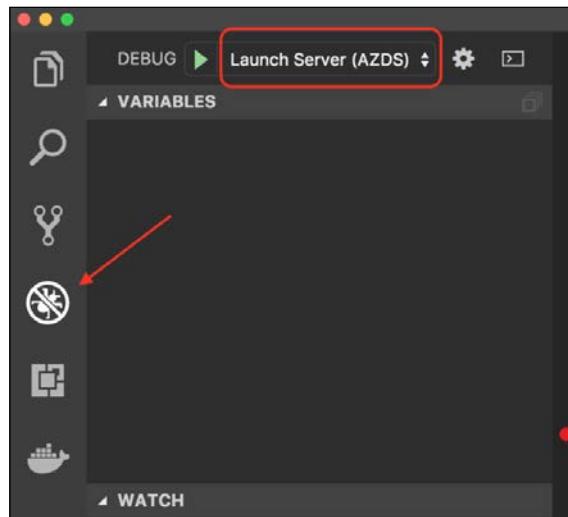
1. Open VS Code and download and install the **Azure Dev Spaces** extension for it. Then restart VS Code.
2. Open VS Code from within the `ch12-dev-spaces/web` folder. You will be asked if the Azure Dev Spaces extension should create the assets needed to build and debug the `web` component. Select the **Yes** option:



Visual Studio Code creating build and debug assets

You will notice that a folder, `.vscode`, will be created in your project that contains the two files, `launch.json` and `tasks.json`. These are used when remote debugging the web service.

3. In VS Code, hit `F5` and observe how the service is built and run in AKS in debug mode. This will use the launch task called **Launch Server (AZDS)**, as we can see in the debug pane of VS Code:



Launching the web service in debug mode on AKS

4. Set a breakpoint on line 13 of the `server.json` file:

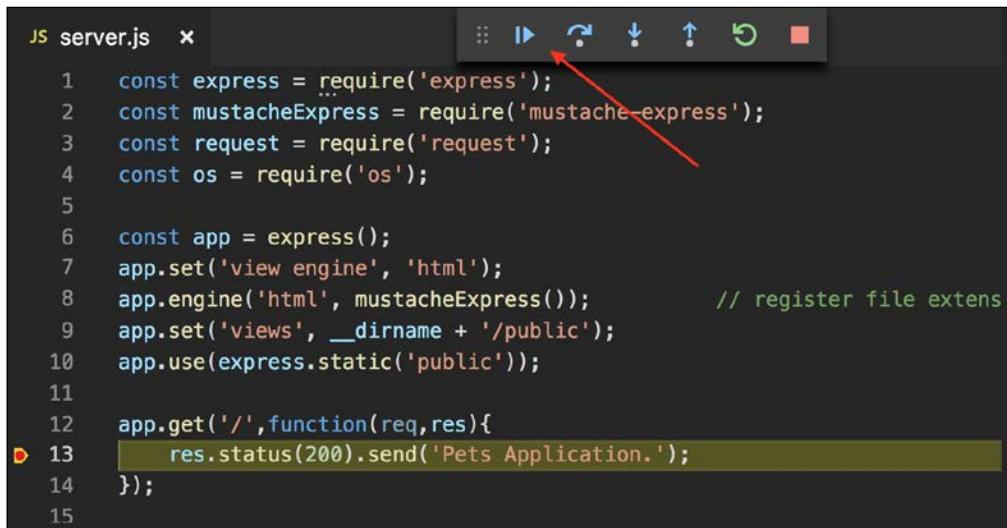
```

11
12 app.get('/',function(req,res){
13   res.status(200).send('Pet Application.');
14 });
15
  
```

Setting a breakpoint in the code of the web service

If you now refresh the browser at `http://localhost:52353`, the code execution should stop at the breakpoint.

You can use the debug toolbar in VS Code to step through the code line by line or continue execution:



A screenshot of the VS Code interface showing a file named 'server.js'. The code is as follows:

```
JS server.js x
1 const express = require('express');
2 const mustacheExpress = require('mustache-express');
3 const request = require('request');
4 const os = require('os');
5
6 const app = express();
7 app.set('view engine', 'html');
8 app.engine('html', mustacheExpress()); // register file extens
9 app.set('views', __dirname + '/public');
10 app.use(express.static('public'));
11
12 app.get('/',function(req,res){
13     res.status(200).send('Pets Application.');
14 });
15
```

The line '13' is highlighted with a yellow background, indicating it is the current line of execution. A red arrow points to the step-over icon (a right-pointing arrow) in the debug toolbar.

Debugging step by step

Enabling edit-and-continue style development in the cloud

To allow an edit-and-continue experience, we can do even better. For this, we have a second launch task called **Attach (AZDS)**, which is based on nodemon. Whenever we update the code locally, this is mirrored in the container running remotely in AKS, and nodemon upon detection of changes will automatically restart the application in the container. As a consequence, we can change and update the code in VS Code, save the changes, and a few seconds later, use and debug the new code in AKS.

If your application is still running from the previous exercise then stop debugging now, press *Ctrl + C* in the console, and then execute the `$ azds down` command to stop and remove the service.

In the debug view of VS Code, select the launch task **Attach to Server (AZDS)** and then hit *F5*. Once the service is deployed, you can set breakpoints as before and navigate through the code, but, in addition to that, you can now also change the code in `server.js`.

Once you save the changes, the changed files will be synced with AKS and nodemon restarts the application running inside the container on Kubernetes. Try this by adding the following code snippet to the `server.js` file:

```
16    app.get('/pet', function(req,res){  
● 17      res.render('app', {  
18        url: 'https://bit.ly/2nngIvD',  
19        hostname: os.hostname()  
20      });  
21    });
```

Adding code to a running component in AKS

After you have saved the file and waited for a few seconds, navigate to the URL `http://localhost:52353/pet`. You should see a nice cat picture.

Cleaning up

To avoid unnecessary cost, we should clean up (that is delete) all resources that we have created on Microsoft Azure. This is rather straightforward since we have grouped all our resources in the `pets-group` and `pets-dev-group` resource groups, and we only need to delete the groups to get rid of all contained resources. We can do this with our Azure CLI:

```
bash-4.4# az group delete --name pets-group  
Are you sure you want to perform this operation? (y/n): y  
  
bash-4.4# az group delete --name pets-dev-group  
Are you sure you want to perform this operation? (y/n): y
```

The whole process will take a few minutes to terminate.

You might also want to double check in the Azure portal that indeed all resources have been deleted.

Summary

In this chapter, we have learned how to provision a fully hosted Kubernetes cluster on the Microsoft cloud offering AKS. Furthermore, we have learned how to deploy, run, monitor, upgrade, and even interactively debug an application running in this cluster on AKS. We have also gotten a brief overview of how we can update the version of Kubernetes on AKS without disrupting the applications running in the cluster.

With this, you have successfully worked through this book, and it is time for me to say thank you for choosing my book as a guide on your journey from a Docker newbie to an expert who containerizes their complex and mission-critical applications and deploys them onto Kubernetes running in the cloud.

Questions

To assess your knowledge, please answer the following questions:

1. Which three options do you have to provision a fully hosted Kubernetes cluster on AKS?
2. Name two to three reasons why it makes sense to host your Docker images in the ACR when using AKS.
3. Explain in three to four short sentences the main steps needed to run your containerized application on AKS.
4. Show how you can get access to the container log files of your app running on AKS.
5. Describe how you can scale the number of nodes in your Kubernetes cluster on AKS.

Further reading

The following articles will give you some more information related to the topics we discussed in this chapter:

- *Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS)* at <https://bit.ly/2Jg1X9d>
- *Upgrade an Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS) cluster* at <https://bit.ly/2wCYA4P>
- *What is Azure Log Analytics?* at <https://bit.ly/2LN4Tbr>
- *Introducing Dev Spaces for AKS* at <https://bit.ly/2N1jFba>

Assessment

Chapter 1: What Are Containers and Why Should I Use Them?

1. Correct answers are: 4, 5.
2. A Docker container is, to IT, what a shipping container is to the transportation industry. It defines a standard on how to package goods. In this case, goods are the application(s) developers write. The suppliers (in this case, the developers) are responsible for packaging the goods into the container and making sure everything fits as expected. Once the goods are packaged into a container, it can be shipped. Since it is a standard container, the shippers can standardize their means of transportation such as lorries, trains, or ships. The shipper doesn't really care what's in a container. Also, the loading and unloading process from one transportation means to another (for example, train to ship) can be highly standardized. This massively increases the efficiency of transportation. Analogous to this is an operations engineer in IT who can take a software container built by a developer and ship it to a production system and run it there in a highly standardized way, without worrying about what's in the container. It will just work.
3. Some of the reasons why containers are game changers are:
 - Containers are self-contained and thus if they run on one system, they run anywhere where a container can run.
 - Containers run on-premise and in the cloud, as well as in hybrid environments. This is important for today's typical enterprises since it allows a mostly smooth transition from on-premise to cloud.
 - Container images are built or packaged by the people who know best – the developers.

- Container images are immutable which is important for a good release management.
 - Containers are enablers of a secure software supply chain-based on encapsulation (using Linux namespaces and cgroups), secrets, content trust, and image vulnerability scanning.
4. A container runs anywhere where a container can run because:
 - Containers are self-contained black boxes. They encapsulate not only an application but all its dependencies, such as libraries and frameworks, configuration data, certificates, and so on.
 - Containers are based on widely accepted standards such as OCI.
 - TODO: add more reasons.
 5. False! Containers are useful for modern applications as well as to containerize traditional applications. The benefit for an enterprise when doing the latter is huge. Cost savings in the maintenance of legacy apps of 50% or more have been reported. The time between new releases of such legacy applications could be reduced by up to 90%. These numbers have been publicly reported by real enterprise customers.
 6. 50% or more.
 7. Containers are based on Linux namespaces (network, process, user, and so on) and **control groups (cgroups)**.

Chapter 2: Setting up a Working Environment

1. `docker-machine` can be used to do the following:
 - Create a VM configured as Docker host in different environments, such as VirtualBox
 - SSH into a Docker host
 - Configure the local Docker CLI for access of a remote Docker host
 - List all hosts in a given environment
 - Remove or destroy existing hosts
2. True. Docker for Windows creates a Linux VM in Hyper-V, on which it then runs Linux containers.

3. Container are optimally used in CI/CD, which is all about automation. Each step, from building a container image, shipping the image, and finally running containers from this image, is ideally scripted for maximum productivity. With it, one achieves a repeatable and auditable process.
4. Ubuntu 17.4 or later, CentOS 7.x, Alpine 3.x, Debian, Suse Linux, RedHat Linux, and so on.
5. Windows 10 Professional or Enterprise Edition, Windows Server 2016.

Chapter 3: Working with Containers

1. The states of a container are as follows
 - Created
 - Running
 - Exited
2. The following command helps us to find out what is currently running on our host:

```
$ docker container ls
```

3. The following command is used to list down the IDs of all containers:

```
$ docker container ls -q
```

Chapter 4: Creating and Managing Container Images

Here are possible answers to the questions:

1. Dockerfile:

```
FROM ubuntu:17.04
RUN apt-get update
RUN apt-get install -y ping
ENTRYPOINT ping
CMD 127.0.0.1
```
2. To achieve the result you can execute the following steps:

```
$ docker container run -it --name sample \
    alpine:latest /bin/sh
/ # apk update && \
    apk add -y curl && \
```

```
rm -rf /var/cache/apk/*
/ # exit
$ docker container commit sample my-alpine:1.0
$ docker container rm sample
```

3. As a sample here is the Hello World in C:

1. Create a file hello.c with this content:

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main()
{
    printf("Hello, World!");
    return 0;
}
```

2. Create a Dockerfile with this content:

```
FROM alpine:3.5 AS build
RUN apk update && \
    apk add --update alpine-sdk
RUN mkdir /app
WORKDIR /app
COPY hello.c /app
RUN mkdir bin
RUN gcc -Wall hello.c -o bin/hello

FROM alpine:3.5
COPY --from=build /app/bin/hello /app/hello
CMD /app/hello
```

4. Some characteristics of a Docker image are:

- It is immutable
- It is composed of immutable layers
- Each layer contains only what has changed (the delta) in regard to the lower lying layers
- An image is a (big) tarball of files and folders
- an image is a template for containers

5. Option 3 is correct. First we need to make sure we're logged in and then we tag the image and finally push it. Since it is an image we're using docker image ... and not docker container ... (as in number 4).

Chapter 5: Data Volumes and System Management

The easiest way to play with volumes is to use the Docker Toolbox as when directly using Docker for Mac or Docker for Windows, then the volumes are stored inside a (somewhat hidden) Linux VM that Docker for Mac/Win uses transparently.

Thus, we suggest the following:

```
$ docker-machine create --driver virtualbox volume-test  
$ docker-machine ssh volume-test
```

And now that you're inside a Linux VM called `volume-test`, you can execute the following exercises:

1. To create a named volume run the following command:

```
$ docker volume create my-products
```

2. Execute the following command:

```
$ docker container run -it --rm \  
-v my-products:/data:ro \  
alpine /bin/sh
```

3. To get the path on the host for the volume use, for example, this command:

```
$ docker volume inspect my-products | grep Mountpoint
```

Which (if using docker-machine and VirtualBox) should result in:

```
"Mountpoint": "/mnt/sda1/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-products/_  
data"
```

Now execute the following command:

```
$ sudo su  
$ cd /mnt/sda1/var/lib/docker/volumes/my-products/_data  
$ echo "Hello world" > sample.txt  
$ exit
```

4. Execute the following command:

```
$ docker run -it --rm -v my-products:/data:ro alpine /bin/sh  
# / cd /data  
# / cat sample.txt
```

In another terminal execute:

```
$ docker run -it --rm -v my-products:/app-data alpine /bin/sh  
# / cd /app-data  
# / echo "Hello other container" > hello.txt  
# / exit
```

5. Execute a command such as this:

```
$ docker container run -it --rm \  
-v $HOME/my-project:/app/data \  
alpine /bin/sh
```

6. Exit both containers and then back on the host, execute this command:

```
$ docker volume prune
```

7. Run the following command:

```
$ docker system info | grep Version
```

Which should output something similar to this:

```
Server Version: 17.09.1-ce  
Kernel Version: 4.4.104-boot2docker
```

If you have been using docker-machine to create and use a Linux VM in VirtualBox, don't forget to clean up after you're done:

```
$ docker-machine rm volume-test
```

Chapter 6: Distributed Application Architecture

1. In a system consisting of many parts, failure of at least one part is only a matter of time. To avoid any downtime if such a situation occurs, one runs multiple instances of each component. If one of the instances fails, there are still others to serve the requests.
2. In a distributed application architecture, we have many moving parts. If Service A needs access to an instance of Service B, then it cannot know where to find such an instance. Instances can be on any random node of the cluster and they can even come and go as the orchestration engine sees fit, so we do not identify the target instance by, say, its IP address and port, but rather by its name and port. A DNS service knows how to resolve a service name into an IP address since it has all the information about all service instances running in the cluster.

3. A circuit breaker is a mechanism that helps to avoid cascading failures in a distributed application triggered by a single failing service. The circuit breaker observes a request from one service to another and measures the latency over time and the number of request failures or timeouts. If a certain target instance causes too many failures, the calls to it are intercepted and an error code is returned to the caller, instantly giving the target time to recover if possible, and the caller, in turn, knows instantly that it either should degrade its own service or try with another instance of the target service.
4. A monolith is an application that consists of one single code base that is highly coupled. If changes to the code are made, no matter how minimal, the whole application has to be compiled, packaged, and redeployed. A monolith is simple to deploy and monitor in production due to the fact that it has very few moving parts. Monoliths are difficult to maintain and extend. A distributed application consists of many loosely coupled services. Each service originates from its own independent source code base. Individual services can and often have independent life cycles. They can be developed and revised independently. Distributed applications are more difficult to manage and monitor.
5. One talks about a blue-green deployment when a currently running version of a service, called blue, is replaced by a new release of the same service, called green. The replacement happens without any downtime since while the blue version is still running, the green version of the service is installed on the system and, once ready, a simple change in the configuration of the router that funnels traffic to the service is needed so that the traffic is now all directed to green instead of blue.

Chapter 7: Single-Host Networking

1. The three core elements are sandbox, endpoint, and network
2. Execute this command:

```
$ docker network create --driver bridge frontend
```

3. Run this command:

```
$ docker container run -d --name n1 \
--network frontend -p 8080:80 \
nginx:alpine
$ docker container run -d --name n2 \
--network frontend -p 8081:80 \
nginx:alpine
```

Test that both Nginx instances are up and running:

```
$ curl -4 localhost:8080  
$ curl -4 localhost:8081
```

You should be seeing the welcome page of Nginx in both cases.

4. To get the IPs of all attached containers, run:

```
$ docker network inspect frontend | grep IPv4Address
```

You should see something similar to the following:

```
"IPv4Address": "172.18.0.2/16",  
"IPv4Address": "172.18.0.3/16",
```

To get the subnet used by the network, use the following (for example):

```
$ docker network inspect frontend | grep subnet
```

You should receive something along the lines of the following (obtained from the previous example):

```
"Subnet": "172.18.0.0/16",
```

5. The host network allows us to run a container in the networking namespace of the host.
6. Only use this network for debugging purposes or when building a system-level tool. Never use the host network for an application container running production!
7. The none network is basically saying that the container is not attached to any network. It should be used for containers that do not need to communicate with other containers and do not need to be accessed from outside.
8. The none network could for example, be used for a batch process running in a container that only needs access to local resources such as files which could be accessed through a host mounted volume.

Chapter 8: Docker Compose

1. The following code can be used to run the application in daemon mode.

```
$ docker-compose up -d
```

2. Execute the following command to display the details of the running service.

```
$ docker-compose ps
```

This should result in the following output:

Name	Command	State	Ports
<hr/>			
mycontent_nginx_1	nginx -g daemon off;	Up	0.0.0.0:3000- >80/tcp

3. The following command can be used to scale up the web service:

```
$ docker-compose up --scale web=3
```

Chapter 9: Orchestrators

Here are the sample answers to the questions of this chapter:

1. Here are some reasons why we need an orchestration engine:
 - Containers are ephemeral and only an automated system (the orchestrator) can handle this efficiently.
 - For high availability reasons, we want to run multiple instances of each container. The number of containers to manage quickly becomes huge.
 - To meet the demand of today's internet, we need to quickly scale up and down.
 - Containers, contrary to VMs, are not treated as pets and fixed or healed when they misbehave, but are treated as cattle. If one misbehaves, we kill it and replace it with a new instance. The orchestrator quickly terminates an unhealthy container and schedules a new instance.
2. Here are some responsibilities of a container orchestration engine:
 - Manages a set of nodes in a cluster
 - Schedules workload to the nodes with sufficient free resources
 - Monitors the health of nodes and workload
 - Reconciles current state with desired state of applications and components
 - Provides service discovery and routing
 - Load balances requests
 - Secures confidential data by providing support for secrets

3. Here is an (incomplete) list of orchestrators, sorted by their popularity:
 - Kubernetes by Google, donated to the CNCF
 - SwarmKit by Docker—that is, **Operations Support System (OSS)**
 - AWS ECS by Amazon
 - Azure AKS by Microsoft
 - Mesos by Apache—that is, OSS
 - Cattle by Rancher
 - Nomad by HashiCorp

Chapter 10: Orchestration Containerized Applications with Kubernetes

1. The Kubernetes master is responsible for managing the cluster. All requests to create objects, the scheduling of pods, the managing of `ReplicaSets`, and more is happening on the master. The master does not run application workload in a production or production-like cluster.
2. On each worker node, we have the `kubelet`, the proxy, and a container runtime.
3. The answer is Yes. You cannot run standalone containers on a Kubernetes cluster. Pods are the atomic unit of deployment in such a cluster.
4. All containers running inside a pod share the same Linux kernel network namespace. Thus, all processes running inside those containers can communicate with each other through `localhost` in a similar way that processes or applications directly running on the host can communicate with each other through `localhost`.
5. The pause container's sole role is to reserve the namespaces of the pod for the containers that run in the pod.
6. This is a bad idea since all containers of a pod are co-located, which means they run on the same cluster node. But the different component of the application (that is, `web`, `inventory`, and `db`) usually have very different requirements in regards to scalability or resource consumption. The `web` component might need to be scaled up and down depending on the traffic and the `db` component in turn has special requirements on storage that the others don't have. If we do run every component in its own pod, we are much more flexible in this regard.

7. We need a mechanism to run multiple instances of a pod in a cluster and make sure that the actual number of pods running always corresponds to the desired number, even when individual pods crash or disappear due to network partition or cluster node failures. The ReplicaSet is this mechanism that provides scalability and self-healing to any application service.
8. We need deployment objects whenever we want to update an application service in a Kubernetes cluster without causing downtime to the service. Deployment objects add rolling update and rollback capabilities to ReplicaSets.
9. Kubernetes service objects are used to make application services participate in service discovery. They provide a stable endpoint to a set of pods (normally governed by a ReplicaSet or a deployment). Kube services are abstractions which define a logical set of pods and a policy on how to access them. There are four types of Kube services:
 - **ClusterIP:** Exposes the service on an IP address only accessible from inside the cluster; this is a **virtual IP (VIP)**
 - **NodePort:** Publishes a port in the range 30,000–32767 on every cluster node
 - **LoadBalancer:** This type exposes the application service externally using a cloud provider's load balancer such as ELB on AWS
 - **ExternalName:** Used when you need to define a proxy for a cluster external service such as a database

Chapter 11: Deploying, Updating, and Securing an Application with Kubernetes

1. Assuming we have a Docker image in a registry for the two application services, the web API and Mongo DB, we then need to do the following:
 - Define a deployment for Mongo DB using a `StatefulSet`; let's call this deployment `db-deployment`. The `StatefulSet` should have one replica (replicating Mongo DB is a bit more involved and is outside of the scope of this book).
 - Define a Kubernetes service called `db` of type `ClusterIP` for the `db-deployment`.
 - Define a deployment for the web API; let's call it `web-deployment`. Let's scale this service to three instances.
 - Define a Kubernetes service called `api` of type `NodePort` for `web-deployment`.

- If we use secrets, then define those secrets directly in the cluster using `kubectl`.
 - Deploy the application using `kubectl`.
2. To implement layer 7 routing for an application, we ideally use an `IngressController`. The `IngressController` is a reverse proxy such as Nginx that has a sidecar listening on the Kubernetes Server API for relevant changes and updating the reverse proxy's configuration and restarting it, if such a change has been detected. We then need to define Ingress resources in the cluster which define the routing, for example from a context-based route such as `https://example.com/pets` to `<a service name>/<port>` pair such as `api/32001`. The moment Kubernetes creates or changes this Ingress object, the `IngressController`'s sidecar picks it up and updates the proxy's routing configuration.
 3. Assuming this is a **cluster internal** inventory service:
 - When deploying version 1.0 we define a deployment called `inventory-deployment-blue` and label the pods with a label `color: blue`.
 - We deploy the Kubernetes service of type `ClusterIP` called `inventory` for the preceding deployment with the selector containing `color: blue`.
 - When ready to deploy the new version of the payments service, we first define a deployment for version 2.0 of the service and call it `inventory-deployment-green`. We add a label `color: green` to the pods.
 - We can now smoke test the "green" service and when everything is OK, we can update the inventory service such as the selector contains `color: green`.
 4. Some type of information that is confidential and thus should be provided to services through Kubernetes secrets include: passwords, certificates, API key IDs, API key secrets or tokens.
 5. Sources for secret values can be files or base-64 encoded values.

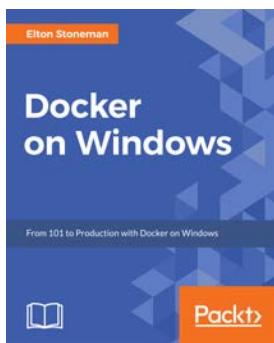
Chapter 12: Running a Containerized App in the Cloud

1. You can use either the graphical user interface of the Azure portal, the Azure CLI or Azure Resource Templates combined with a tool such as Terraform to provision a fully hosted cluster on AKS.
2. Here are a few reasons why it makes sense to use the Azure Container Registry to store images:
 3. To avoid high latency when deploying images into a production system, it is important to have them stored in a container registry close to the Kubernetes cluster where the containers created from the images will be running.
 4. For security reasons, one might not want the hosts of the Kubernetes cluster to reach outside of the Azure network to download images from an external container registry such as Docker Hub. The ACR can be in the same (internal) network as the Kubernetes cluster.
 5. The bandwidth used to download container images is cheaper if it is inside the same data center than when using external data links.
 6. If we want to concentrate on a single vendor and not deal with multiple vendors.
3. To run a containerized application in AKS we need to:
 1. Provision a fully managed Kubernetes cluster on AKS
 2. Build and push the container images to the ACR
 3. Use `kubectl` to deploy the application into the cluster
4. One way to view the container logs or the `kubelet` logs of any worker node is to SSH into that node. We do that by running a special container on said host from within which we will establish the SSH connection to the host. We can then use a tool such as `journalctl` to analyze the system logs, or just execute normal docker commands on the host to retrieve the container logs.
5. We can use the Azure CLI to scale the number of worker nodes up or down. The command to do so is:

```
az aks scale --resource-group=<group-name> --name=<cluster-name> --node-count <num-nodes>
```


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