

markdown link to header

Asked 4 years, 9 months ago Modified 7 months ago Viewed 95k times



I'm using GitLab to write a read.me file.

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I tried to create a link to a header. According to the wiki an id should be automatically created:



[see here](#)



I created a header using:



```
### 1. This is my Header
```

and tried to create a link to it:

```
[link](#1--this-is-my-header)
```

but it is not working. What am I doing wrong?

hyperlink

gitlab

markdown

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asked Jul 7, 2018 at 9:23



[user7431005](#)

3,817 ● 4 ● 22 ● 48

Probably unrelated to programming. (GitLab? Tool used by programmers? I'm not sure) – [user202729](#) Jul 7, 2018 at 9:27

stackoverflow.com/questions/13757329/... ? – [user202729](#) Jul 7, 2018 at 9:28

@user202729 not sure how to use the #toc_4 headers. If I only write `[link](#toc_4)` it does not link to the 4th header – [user7431005](#) Jul 7, 2018 at 9:32

3 Answers

Sorted by:

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1. All text is converted to lower case.

2. All non-word text (e.g., punctuation, HTML) is removed.

3. All spaces are converted to hyphens.

4. Two or more hyphens in a row are converted to one.

5. If a header with the same ID has already been generated, a unique incrementing number is appended, starting at 1.

Note rule 4: "**Two or more hyphens in a row are converted to one.**" However, the example you tried has two hyphens in a row (after the 1). Remove one of them and you should have it.

```
[link](#1-this-is-my-header)
```

From time to time I have encountered a unique header which is converted into an ID in some non-obvious way. A quick way to work out the ID is to use your browser's `view source` and/or `inspect` tools to view the HTML source code. For example, you might find the following HTML for your example:

```
<h3 id="1-this-is-my-header">1. This is my Header</h3>
```

Then just use the contents of the `id` attribute with a hash to link to that header: `#1-this-is-my-header`.

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edited Nov 22, 2018 at 18:06

answered Jul 7, 2018 at 18:59



Vít Kotačka
1,432 ● 1 ● 16 ● 40



Waylan
35.5k ● 11 ● 78 ● 105

2 Thanks a lot for the answer, and +1. So the reference gets lost if we change (reword) the header? If yes, that feature is nearly worthless (at least for me). In 2022, is there a way around this? – Binarus May 17, 2022 at 19:40

2 @Binarus that depends on the implementation that you are using. This question and answer are specific to Gitlab. Some implementations allow you to define the "slug" used. Others do not. Unfortunately, as this is an extension to Markdown's behavior which is not defined in any spec, there is no consistency between implementations. Even those that allow you to define the slug are inconsistent in how to do so. Of course, you can always fall back to using raw HTML, which gives you complete control. – Waylan May 18, 2022 at 18:35

I see. The I'll take the HTML route. Thanks a lot again! – Binarus May 19, 2022 at 6:11

I've found adding a link to a header that contains html in it isn't working. For example, I have `#this.txt` and trying to link to it with `[test](#this.txt)` isn't working. Same goes for a bunch of combinations involving hyphens. – Recessive Jun 23, 2022 at 2:23

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Markdown IDs are generated using some rules i've been able to google: (text to lowercase, non-word punctuation removed, spaces converted to hyphens, two or more hyphens in a row converted to one, naming collisions have incremented number appended, ...)



I found an easy way to figure out what the anchor link should be. Use your browser's HTML inspector to inspect the header you want to link to. The header tag's ID should be what you use. So for example my heading looks like this in the HTML inspector:

```
<h2 id="markdown-header-changing-plsql-parameters-and-shared-developers-lifecycle">
  Changing PL/SQL parameters and shared developer's lifecycle
</h2>
```

And I can link to it in markup like so:

```
[See instructions below](#markdown-header-changing-plsql-parameters-and-shared-
developers-lifecycle)
```

And now "See instructions below" is linked to my header anchor.

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answered Jun 11, 2019 at 20:05



Rick Tilley

106 • 1 • 6

Using your browser's inspector is a good idea, but the HTML may differ depending on what generated it. For instance, the `grip` utility doesn't put an `id` tag on the `<h2>`, but instead inserts a `<a>` tag with class `anchor` and an `href` variable that begins with a `#` - which is the text to link to. Its `id` is this text prefixed with `user-content-`, and is not the right text to use. – David C. Sep 20, 2022 at 19:01



There is a simpler way than the inspector, at least in GitLab-flavored markdown : hover over the header and a "chain" icon appears : right-click on it and copy the link.



[header with clickable chain](#)



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answered Sep 15, 2022 at 14:39



WaterPython

1

Your answer could be improved with additional supporting information. Please [edit](#) to add further details, such as citations or documentation, so that others can confirm that your answer is correct. You can find more information on how to write good answers [in the help center](#). – Community Bot Sep 22, 2022 at 17:49

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