

# NPM Quick Tips — #2 Use Shortcuts to Install Packages

by [Marcus Pöhls \(/tutorials/author/marcus\)](#) on October 19 2015, tagged in [NPM \(/tutorials/tag/npm\)](#), [NPM- \(/tutorials/author/marcus\)](#)

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The previous NPM quick tips were all about **installing packages** (<https://futurestud.io/blog/npm-quick-tips-1-install-packages>) and we want to enhance it by showing you shortcuts for package installations. NPM integrates multiple time savers for repetitive commands executed from the command line.

To run the commands used within this article, we leverage NPM in version **2.14.0**. You should be save running any **2.x** version of NPM. The commands are also available in NPM 3.

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## NPM Quick Tips Series Overview

1. [#1 Install Packages \(npm-quick-tips-1-install-packages\)](#)
  2. [#2 Use Shortcuts to Install Packages](#)
  3. [#3 Show Installed and Outdated Packages \(npm-quick-tips-3-show-installed-and-outdated-packages\)](#)
  4. [How to Uninstall Packages \(npm-how-to-uninstall-packages\)](#)
  5. [Update All Node.js Dependencies to Their Latest Version \(npm-update-all-node-js-dependencies-to-their-latest-version\)](#)
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## Prerequisites

If you want to execute the commands showed within this article without hesitation, initialize a new Node project with **npm init** . Use the new project as a playground and run commands to verify they really work :)

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## Install Package

We already showed you the increasing number of NPM package installations. There are more than 2 billion downloaded packages within the last 30 days. That means, there is a very high demand on installing packages.

Everybody who has worked with NPM, knows the **npm install** command. Submitting this command (without a packagename to install specified) on your command line, NPM searches the current directory for a **package.json** file with defined dependencies to install. If there is no **package.json** available, NPM won't do anything. If there is a **package.json** available, NPM installs the defined dependencies.

Of course you can install a new package to your local Node project without specifying it within the **package.json** file first. You can shortcut the install command by only using **i** instead of **install** :

```
1 | npm i lodash
```

The command above installs the **lodash** package into the local **node\_modules** folder.

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## Install Multiple Packages With One Command

Within the previous NPM quick tips, we showed you how to install multiple packages within one command. Use the **i** shortcut as you would do installing only one package.

```
1 | npm i lodash hapi thinky when
```

This will install the packages locally and don't add them as dependencies to your project. Later within this post, we show you how to install and add packages as dependencies within one command.

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## Install Package From Github Repository

As with packages hosted on NPM directly, you can install packages directly from GitHub repositories. NPM handles “shortcuts” to GitHub repos in case you only specify the username and repository.

```
1 | npm i https://github.com/lodash/lodash.git (https://github.com/lodash/lodash.git)
2 | npm i lodash/lodash
```

If you rely on a specific branch for a package, you can install it right away by adding **#branchname** to the GitHub url:

```
1 | npm i lodash/lodash#es
```

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## Install Package and Save as Dependency

Installing and adding dependencies to your project is a usual step when time goes by and the development advances. If there is already a package you want to use as a dependency for your project, you can easily install and also add it to the **dependencies** section within your **package.json**. Your peers won't run into code issues and mental confusion due to the missing package.

The **--save** flag shortcuts to **-S** :

```
1 | npm i -S lodash
```

Of course you can install multiple packages at once and define them as a project dependency simultaneously:

```
1 | npm i -S lodash hapi thinky when
```

```
1 | "dependencies": {  
2 |   "hapi": "^9.0.3",  
3 |   "lodash": "^3.10.1",  
4 |   "thinky": "^2.1.6",  
5 |   "when": "^3.7.3"  
6 | }
```

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## Install Package and Save as devDependency

With NPM, you can add development dependencies to your project called **devDependencies**. These type of dependencies are only required for development purposes, like testing your code or specify the code coverage. Usually, you would add the **--save-dev** flag to an install command.

The **--save-dev** flag shortcuts to **-D** :

```
1 | npm i -D mocha istanbul
```

```
1 | "devDependencies": {  
2 |     "istanbul": "^0.3.18",  
3 |     "mocha": "^2.2.5"  
4 | }
```

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## Install Global Packages

Besides local packages used within your project, you can install globally available packages on your machine. These are usually packages which expose a command line utility to help you generate a new project seamlessly, use the available functionality directly from command line, or any other capabilities. By default, you need to pass the **--global** flag to any install command and of course it has its own shortcut as well.

The **--global** flag shortcuts to **-g** :

```
1 | npm i -g mocha
```

The **previous NPM quick tips on installing packages** (<https://futurestud.io/blog/npm-quick-tips-1-install-packages>) laid the foundation for this post and we advanced the installation process by using shortcuts when installing packages. NPM offers a lot ways to speed up your development flow of times you just need to uncover the smalls thing for tasks you do most often (like installing packages).

Do you have another shortcut which we missed within this article? It would be great if you're going to share it with the community! Let everyone know in the comments or shout out [@futurestud\\_io](https://twitter.com/futurestud_io) ([https://twitter.com/futurestud\\_io](https://twitter.com/futurestud_io)).

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## Additional Resources

- NPM quick tips #1 — Install Packages (<https://futurestud.io/blog/npm-quick-tips-1-install-packages>)
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