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How to deploy a React app with Netlify and set up continuous deployment via Github



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So far I have only used Heroku to deploy my web applications. Well, that changed today as I decided to branch out and try a different deployment service. I love Heroku, and it is so easy to use, but I hate how my applications go to sleep after 30 minutes of inactivity unless you pay a monthly fee. The sleeping application then takes 30 seconds to “wake-up” which feels like forever from a client’s perspective.

I decided to try Netlify after witnessing many other developers use this service to host their applications. I saw some pretty good reviews about Netlify, and from what I read

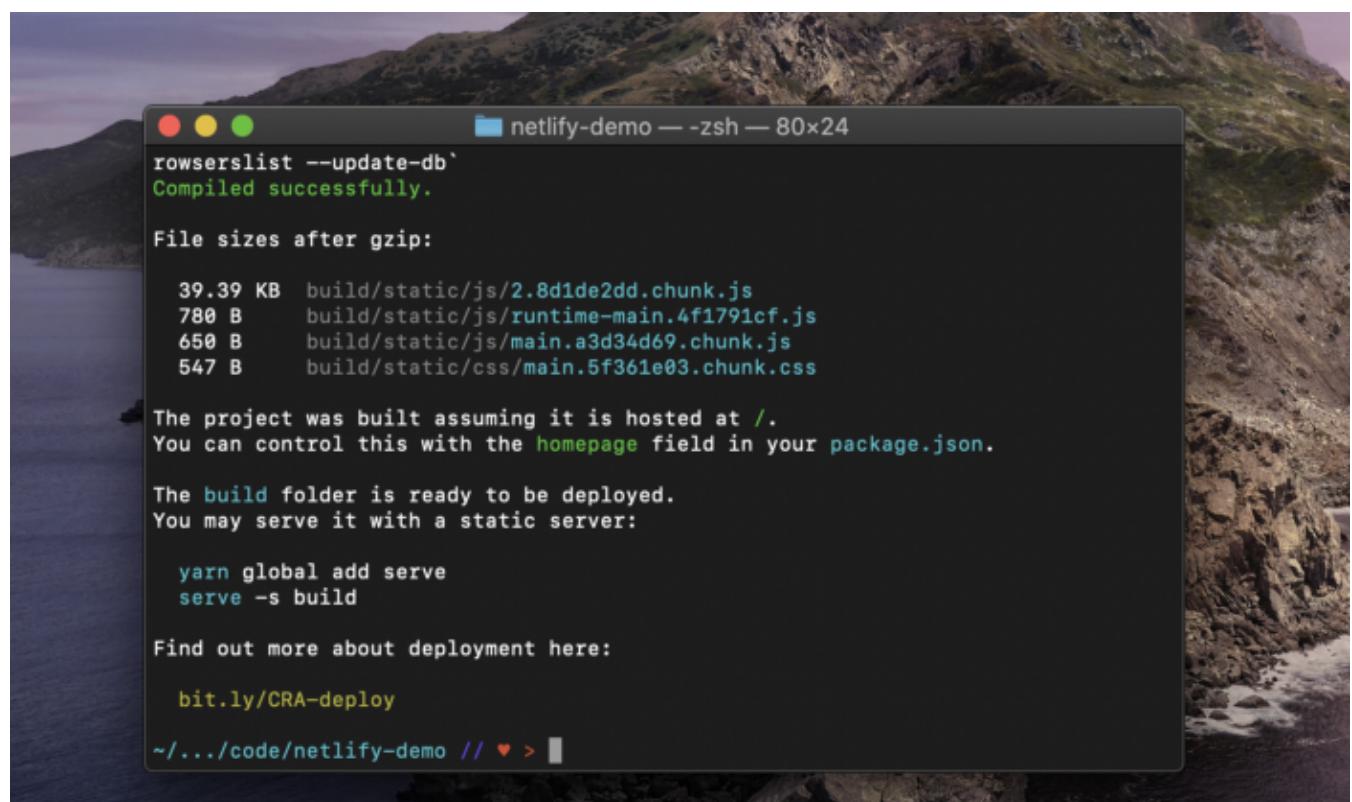
show you how to create a React app, deploy it to Netlify, add the project to Github, and lastly connect the Github repo to the Netlify app. This will allow for continuous deployment. Every time we push updates to Github, the Netlify app will update to the most current project or repo. Shall we begin?

Step 1: Create React App and

We will start off by creating a new react app. I will name my app “netlify-demo”. Below are the commands to create the React app. This step should be familiar and simple.

```
npm install -g create-react-app //This step can be skipped if needed
create-react-app netlify-demo
cd netlify-demo
npm run build
```

Here is a screenshot of what your terminal should look like after entering the above commands.



A screenshot of a terminal window titled "netlify-demo — zsh — 80x24". The window shows the output of the command "npm run build". The output includes messages about rowserslist compilation, file sizes after gzip (e.g., 39.39 KB for build/static/js/2.8d1de2dd.chunk.js), and deployment instructions. It also mentions the "build" folder is ready for deployment and provides a link to bit.ly/CRA-deploy. The terminal is set against a background image of a coastal landscape with mountains and water.

```
rowserslist --update-db
Compiled successfully.

File sizes after gzip:

 39.39 KB  build/static/js/2.8d1de2dd.chunk.js
 780 B     build/static/js/runtime-main.4f1791cf.js
 650 B     build/static/js/main.a3d34d69.chunk.js
 547 B     build/static/css/main.5f361e03.chunk.css

The project was built assuming it is hosted at /.
You can control this with the homepage field in your package.json.

The build folder is ready to be deployed.
You may serve it with a static server:

  yarn global add serve
  serve -s build

Find out more about deployment here:

  bit.ly/CRA-deploy

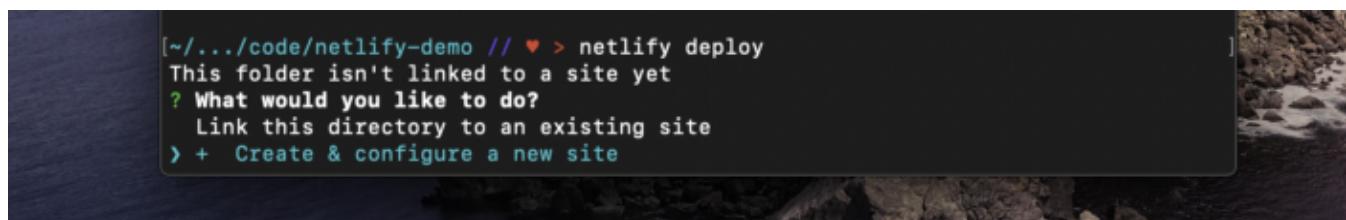
~/.code/netlify-demo // ❤ > |
```

Step 2: Install Netlify CLI and Deploy

Time to install Netlify CLI to deploy our application to Netlify from the terminal. Below are the next commands we will need to execute.

```
npm install netlify-cli -g  
netlify deploy
```

After entering netlify deploy, you will be prompted with a question. Choose “Create & configure a new site”. Below is a screenshot.



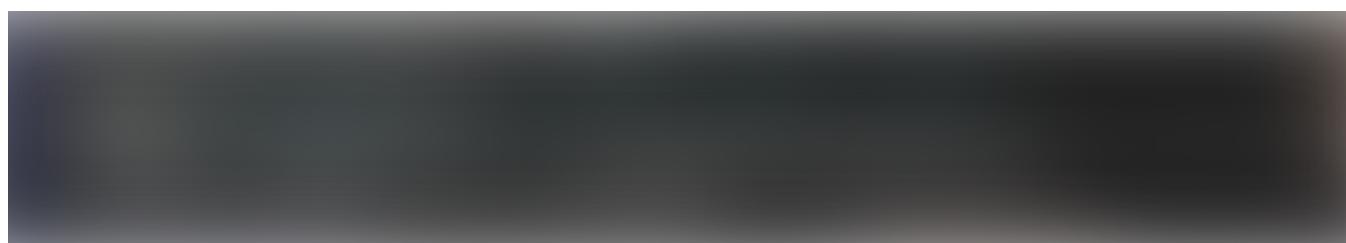
Choose the second option and select enter

Choose a name for the team. I'll choose Gene Campbell's III team which is the default option provided.



Type in whatever you like!

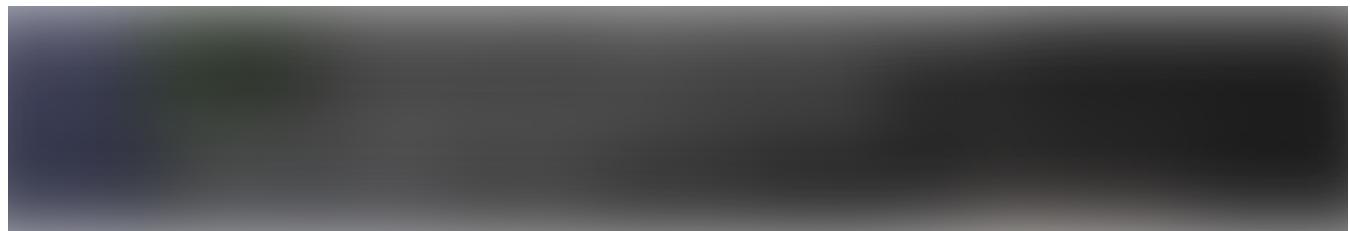
Next we will be prompted to enter a site name. This can be updated later. I'll enter “netlify-demo-123”.



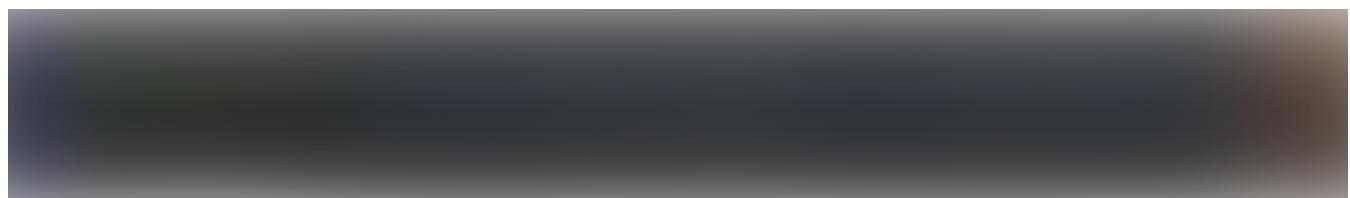
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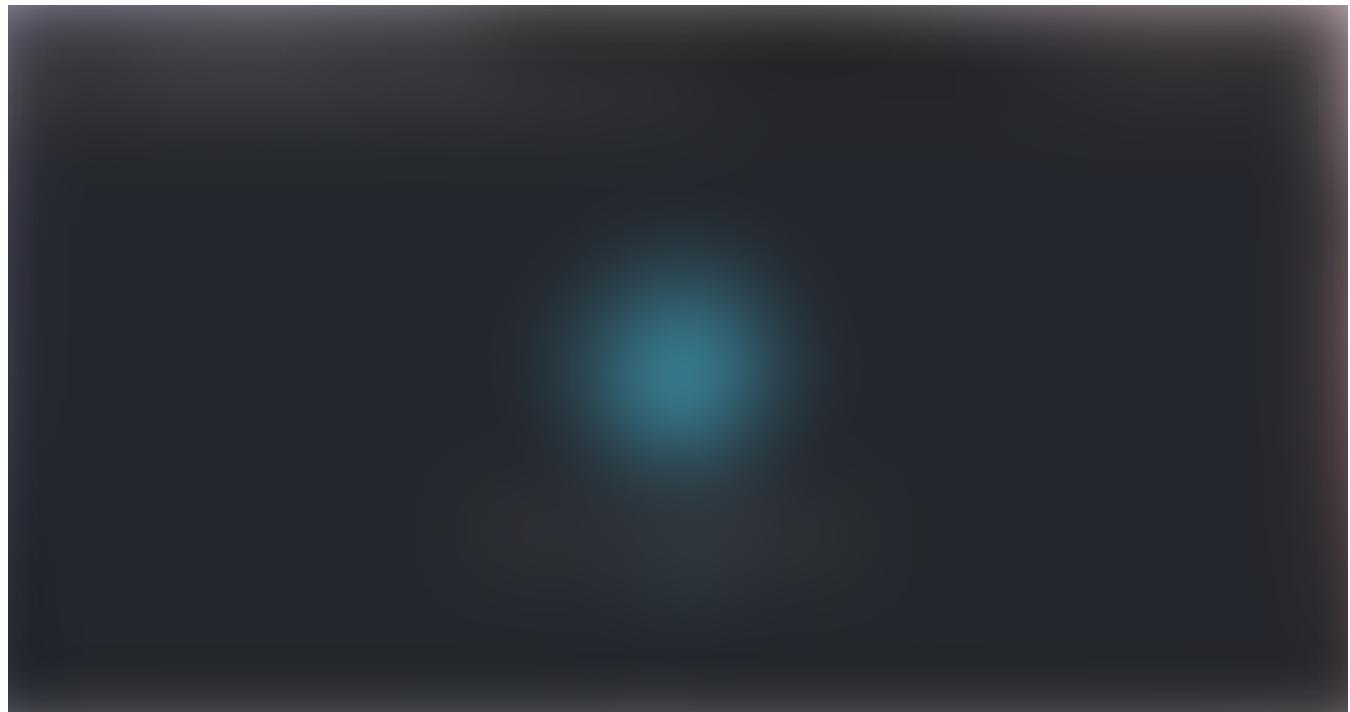
enter.



This should complete the process, and you will be able to access your live app at the Website Draft URL.



Copy and paste this url into your browser to see the app! Below is a screenshot of my app in the browser.



You can see my title name in the url with a bunch of random chars attached to the front of it. This is only for testing. Your deployed app url will look cleaner.

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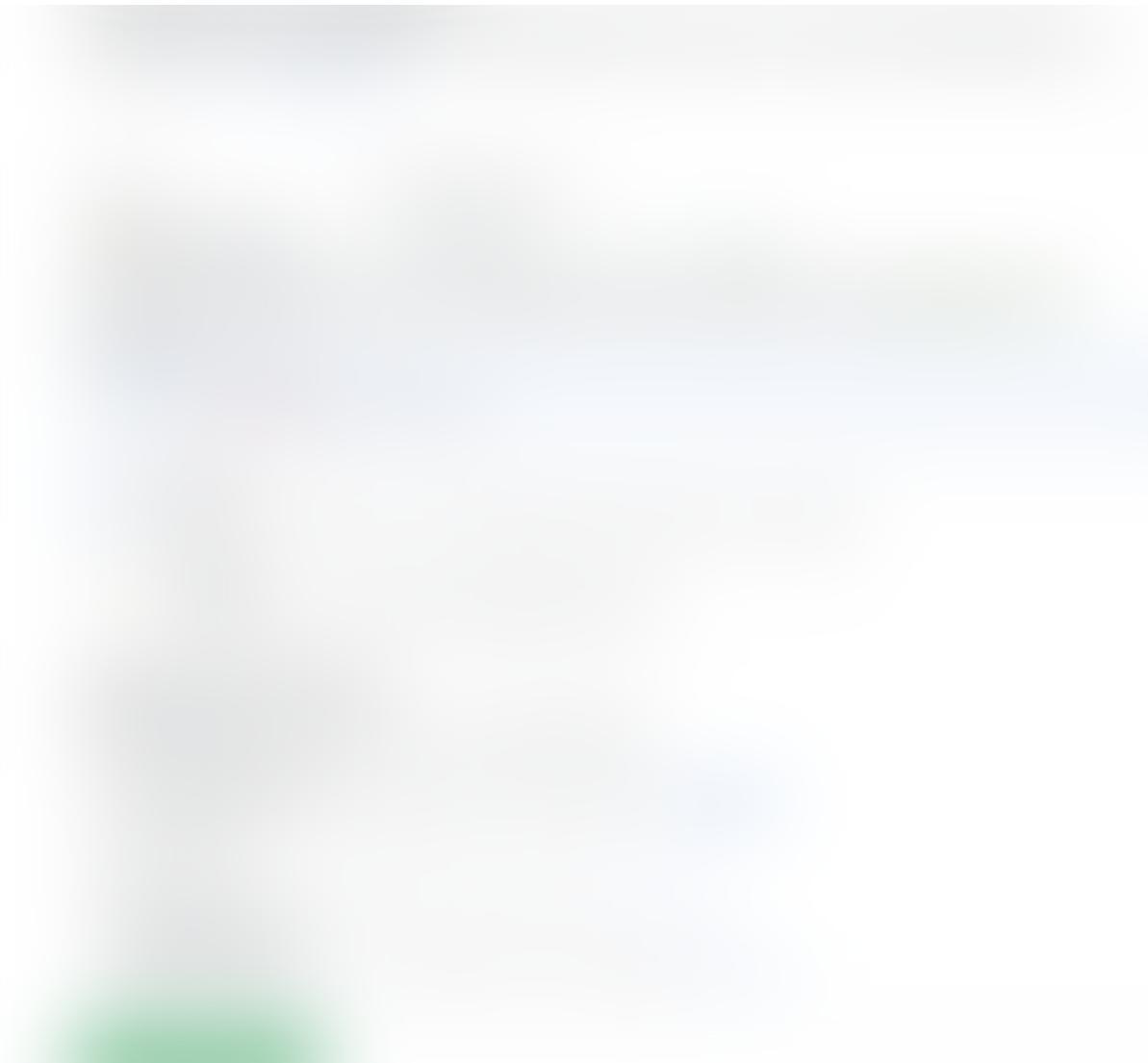
X

Step 3: Create Github repo and push up current project

I will now navigate over to Github's website to access my account. I'll create a new repo for the demo.



Complete the form to create the new repo.



Next, just follow the instructions displayed. Copy and paste the first option.

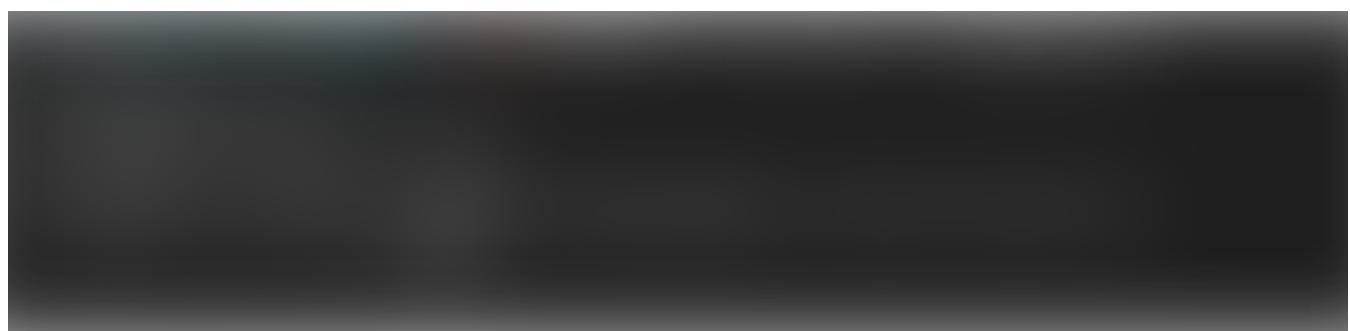
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I will now open Visual Studio from the terminal using the shortcut below.



Once Visual Studio opens up, open the terminal and paste in the commands from above(They can be entered in all at once).



If you run a git status after the commands are finishing running, you will notice the netlify folder isn't committed yet. We will run the following commands below, and then we are finished with Github for now.

```
git add .
git commit -m 'add netlify folder'
git push
```

Refresh the repo in the browser, and you should see all the updates.

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If so, we can move onto the final piece, connecting the repo with Netlify app.

Step 4: Set up Deployment settings for Netlify App

Head to Netlify's website and access your personal dashboard. You should see your application listed in the sites section. Click the application. It should look like the image below.



We will click site settings to access the deployment settings. Select Build and Deploy. Your screen should look like the screenshot below.

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Next, select “Link site to Git”. Choose “Github”. Choose the correct repo in the list. You can use the search filter if you like. I definitely did!

After you find the correct repo, click it. Below is a screenshot of how I configured my build.

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I choose master for the branch. I had trouble getting my react app to run without adding the following “CI=” to “npm run build” in the build command. Here is a link to the [article](#) that helped me find the issue and solution. Click “deploy site” if your form looks like mine above.

You should now be brought back to the overview project screen.



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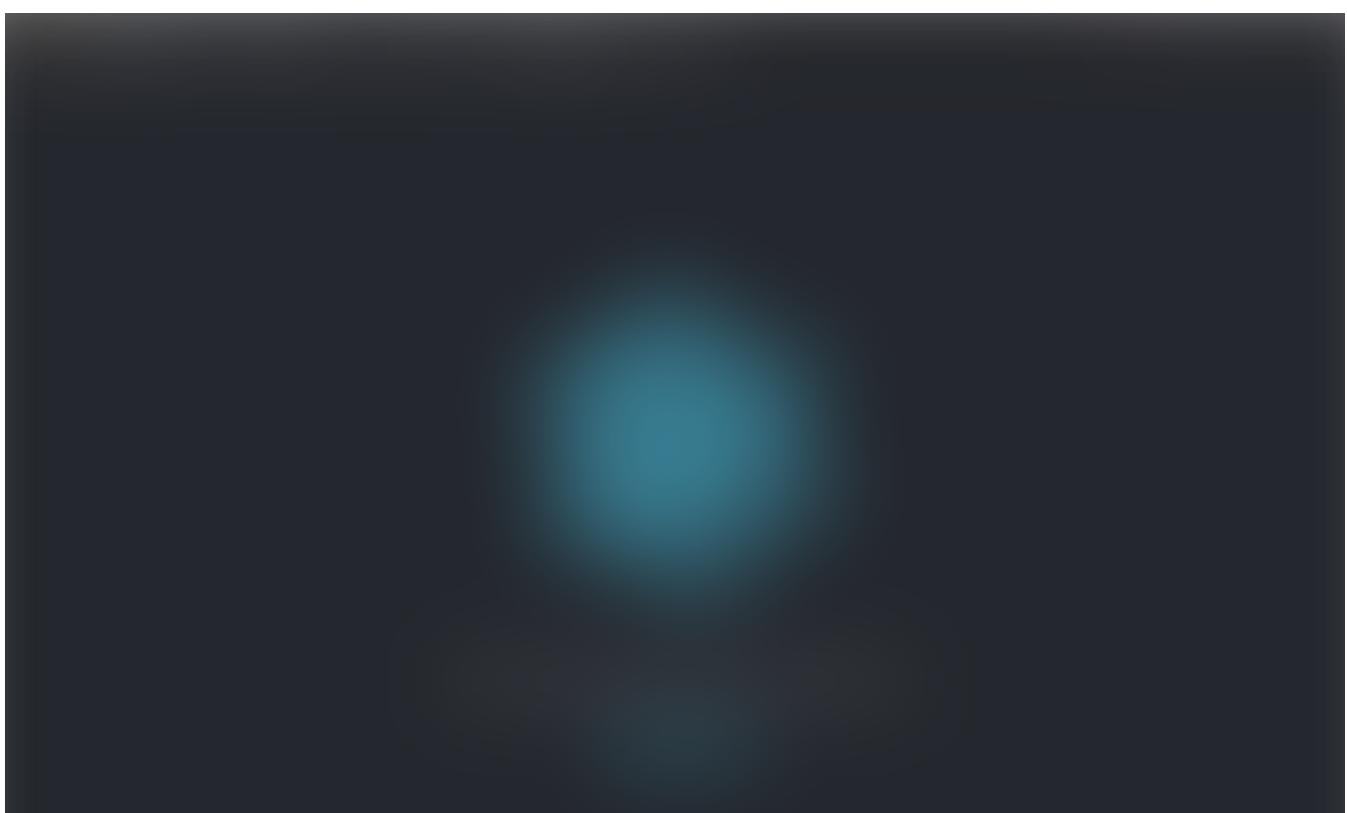
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You will notice under the app name that site deploy is in progress. You can click the yellow text to view the actual terminal as the site is being built and deployed. If deployment is successful, green text with a link to your web app should replace the yellow text under the app name.



Notice the URL is cleaner than the website draft url

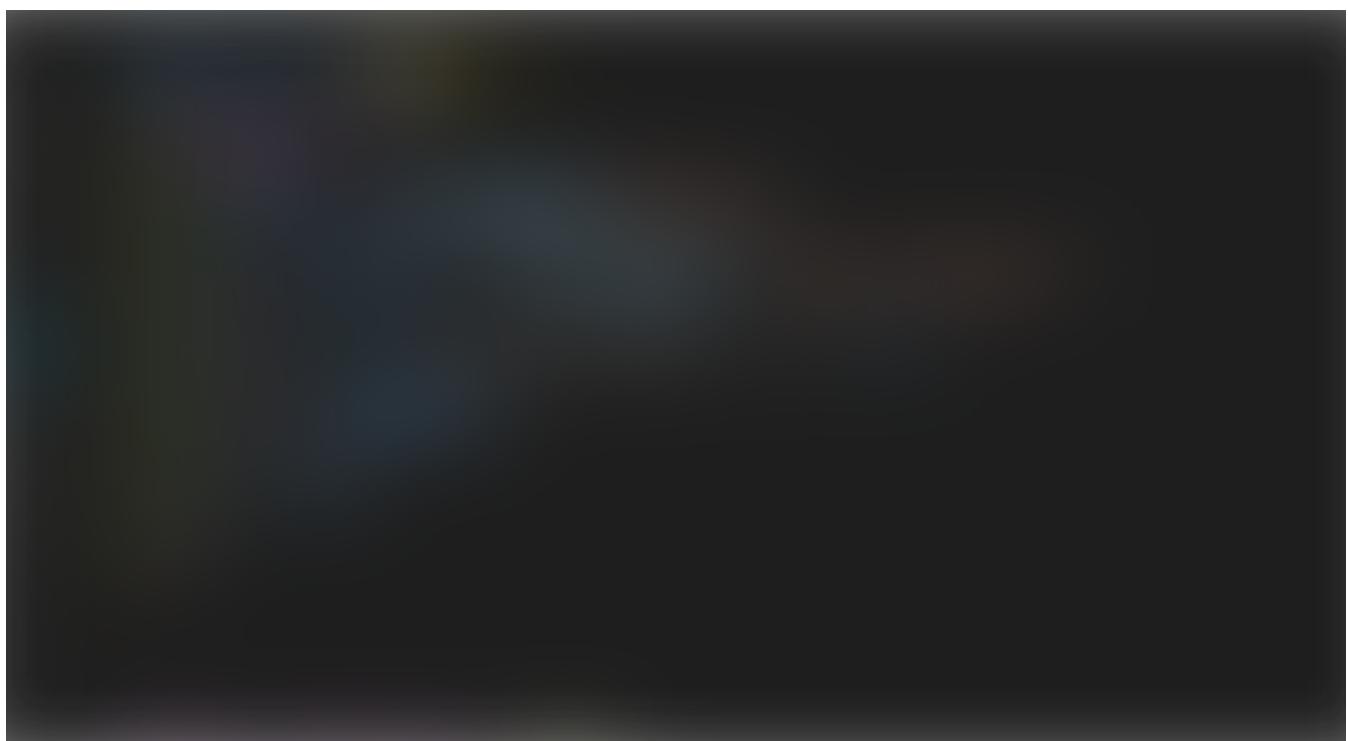
Click the link to access the web app.



And just like that we have everything set up! Now every time we push up new git commits for this project, Netlify will pull and deploy the most current repo. For the last step, I'll show an example of this.

Step 5: Make some changes to the project, push up the commits, and see the results

For a quick demonstration, I will delete everything inside the header tag on the App.js file. I will replace the deleted content with a h1 tag that reads “Yo, We did it!”. Below is a screenshot of my changes before I commit and push them to Github.



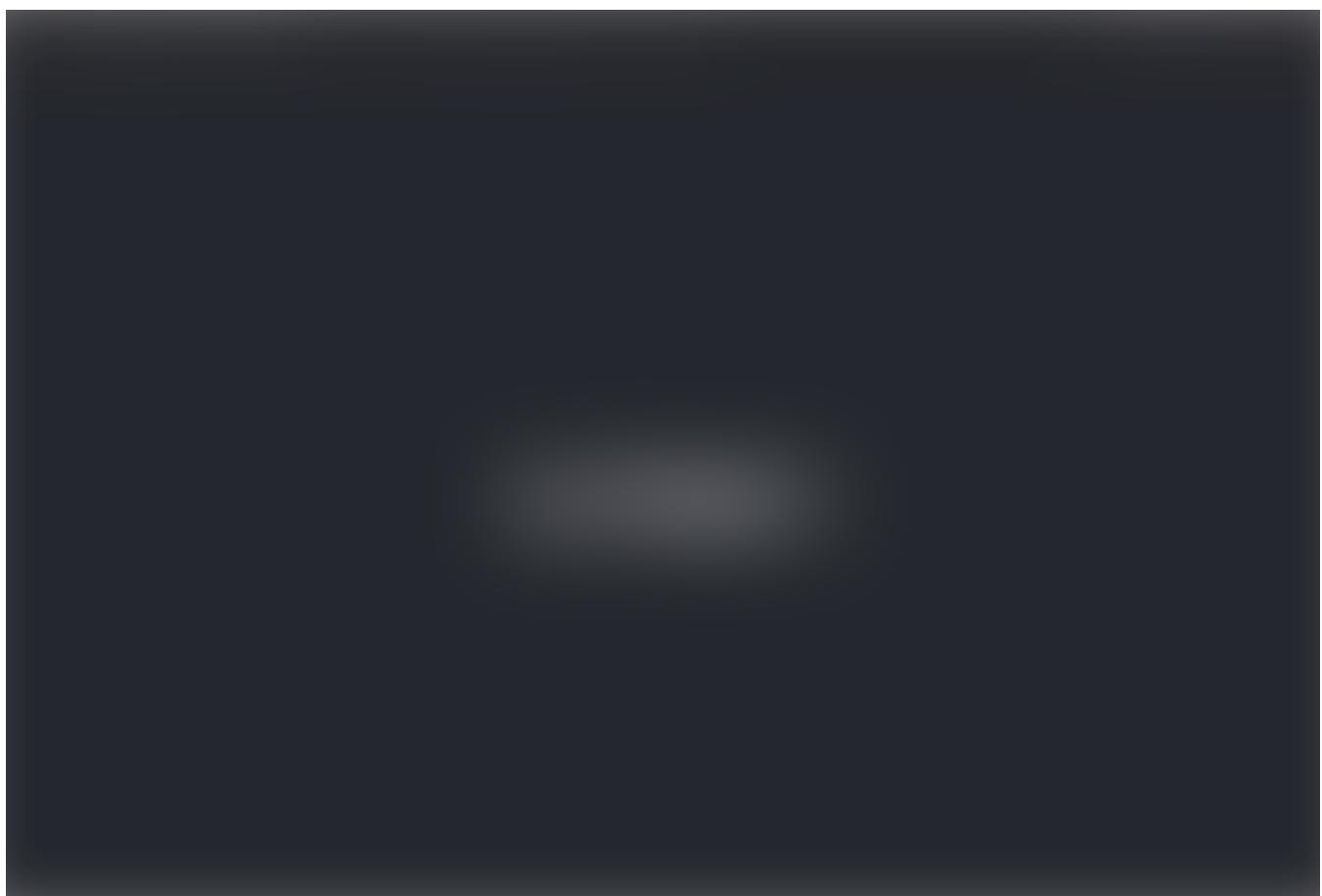
I will now add, commit, and push the updates to Github. After the commands finish running, navigate back to the Netlify website. Click the Deploys section in your dashboard, and you should see a new build being made. You can also see the my commit message associated with the update.



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Once the build is complete, let's refresh the live app link.



Wahoo! Our live application is now running on the most current version. If you ever want to make changes to the application in the future, just add, commit, and push your changes to Github. Netlify will handle the rest!

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I hope you found this article helpful, and easy to understand. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me on [LinkedIn](#). You can also check out my portfolio site [here](#). Have a great day!

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