# Releasing the app to google play store

## Generating the app build files

To publish the app to google play store, first you need to create a build. Following are the steps to generate the build. For more details you can refer to the Expo build setup document <https://docs.expo.dev/build/setup/>.

1. Install the EAS CLI :

npm install -g eas-cli

1. Login to expo account:

eas login

1. Configure the project:

eas build:configure

1. Run Build

eas build --platform android

In the command prompt select “yes” for “Generate new keystore” when the build is generated first time. In sub sequent builds same keystore will be used from the connected expo account.

1. Wait for build to complete. Once the build is complete you can list the build

eas build:list

You can go to expo dashboard and check the generated build and download it.

Once the build is ready and downloaded to system, you can go to your google play console account and start the publishing the app.

## Publishing the App to Google Play store

Publishing Android app on Google Play Store for the first time involves several steps.

1. Google Play Developer Account:

You need a Google Play Developer account. If you don’t have one, you can create it by visiting the Google Play Console.

1. Signed App Bundle (AAB) or APK:

Ensure you have a signed Android App Bundle (AAB) or APK ready for upload. You can follow the steps mentioned above to generate the app bundle.

1. Store Listing Details:
   1. Prepare store listing details including app title, description, screenshots, icon, privacy policy link and any other required assets.
2. Create a New App Entry:

Create a app in google play console. Choose a default language and enter a title for your app. This title will appear on Google Play Store. Once the app is created, go to the app page.

1. Internal Testing:

This test is used to perform the initial QA checks. You can distribute your application among 100 invited testers. Google requires minimum of 20 test users to accept the invite and opt-in for testing at least for 14 days. You can go to the “Internal Testing” screen and under Testers tab you can add user list by providing the email address.

Go to the “releases” tab and create the release by uploading the bundle file. Before uploading the bundle file, you need to enable the “Google manage and protect your app signing key” option. After filling all the fields save and publish the app. Now the app will be available for internal testing. These steps are mentioned in full detailed in the following link: https://medium.com/flutter-community/internal-close-and-open-testing-on-google-play-3685d931842a

Then copy the invite link at the bottom of the tab and share it with the added users and ask them to accept the invite and download the app.

1. Closed Testing:

Closed tests useful for testing the application with a wider set of testers for gathering more targeted feedback. You can create a new track for testing, and You can use individual emails or Google groups in the testers group. When the build submitted to closed testing, it will first go to review and then available to test. You can start this parallel with internal testing and you can use the same set of test users. Google requires minimum of 20 test users to accept the invite and opt-in for testing at least for 14 days. In closed testing you need to select at least one country/region. And upload the bundle or select the already uploaded bundle (in internal testing) from library. Fill all the required details and save and publish the release. Once the release is published you need to manually submit the release for review.

1. Open Testing:

Open tests are useful for collecting qualitative feedback of your app or game from a large number of testers. Same as close testing, when you submit the build to open tests, it first goes through review and then available for testing and If you’re testing a paid app, testers have to purchase it to test it. Open Testing app is visible to the general public on Google Play and anyone can join, but it comes with *Pre-release* warning. The user can test the application and provide comments, but reviews are only visible to the developer. You can choose an unlimited or limited numbers of public testers. If you choose x limited persons, only x persons will see your application on the store and will be able to download it. You can also control the countries and regions where your application is available for testing.