

Error: Key already in use

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This error occurs when you try to [add a key](#) that's already been added to another account or repository.

Finding where the key has been used [↗](#)

To determine where the key has already been used, open a terminal and type the `ssh` command. Use the `-i` flag to provide the path to the key you want to check:

```
$ ssh -T -i ~/.ssh/id_rsa git@github.com
# Connect to GitHub.com using a specific ssh key
> Hi USERNAME! You've successfully authenticated, but GitHub does not
> provide shell access.
```

The *username* in the response is the account on GitHub.com that the key is currently attached to. If the response looks something like "username/repo", the key has been attached to a repository as a [deploy key](#).

To force SSH to use only the key provided on the command line, use `-o` to add the `IdentitiesOnly=yes` option:

```
ssh -v -o "IdentitiesOnly=yes" -i ~/.ssh/id_rsa git@github.com
```

Fixing the issue [↗](#)

To resolve the issue, first remove the key from the other account or repository and then [add it to your account](#).

If you don't have permissions to transfer the key, and can't contact a user who does, remove the keypair and [generate a brand new one](#).

Deploy keys [↗](#)

Once a key has been attached to one repository as a deploy key, it cannot be used on another repository. If you're running into this error while setting up deploy keys, see "[Managing deploy keys](#)."

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