Adding a license to a repository
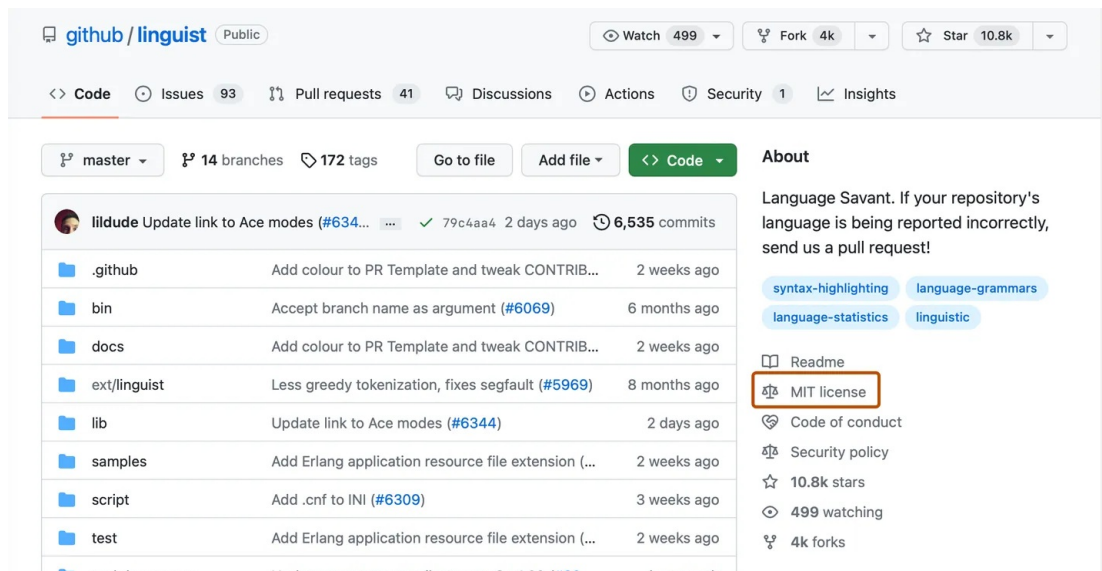
In this article

Including an open source license in your repository

Further reading

You can include an open source license in your repository to make it easier for other people to contribute.

If you include a detectable license in your repository, people who visit your repository will see it at the top of the repository page. To read the entire license file, click the license name.
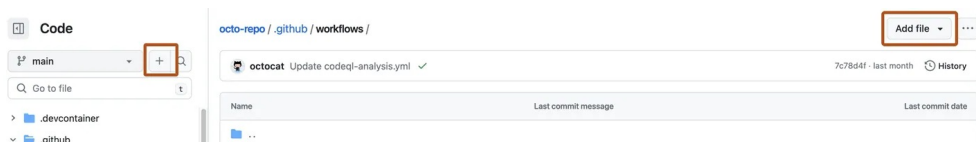

Open source licenses enable others to freely use, change, and distribute the project in your repository. For more information on repository licenses, see "Licensing a repository."
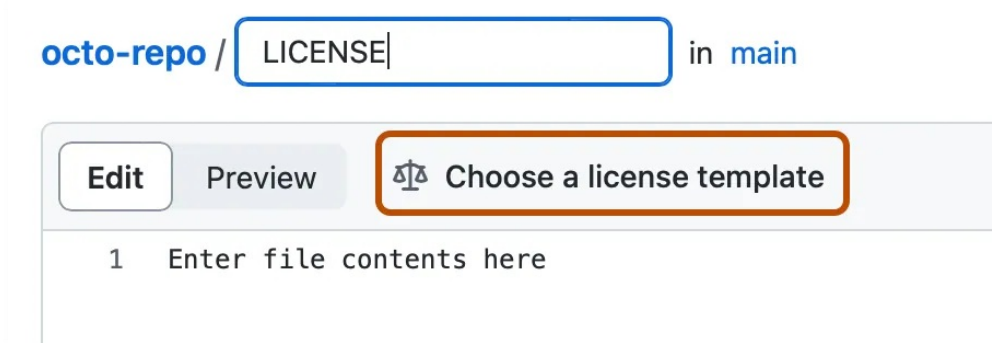
Including an open source license in your repository 🔗

1 On GitHub.com, navigate to the main page of the repository.

2 Above the list of files, select the **Add file** ▾ dropdown menu, then click + **Create new file**.

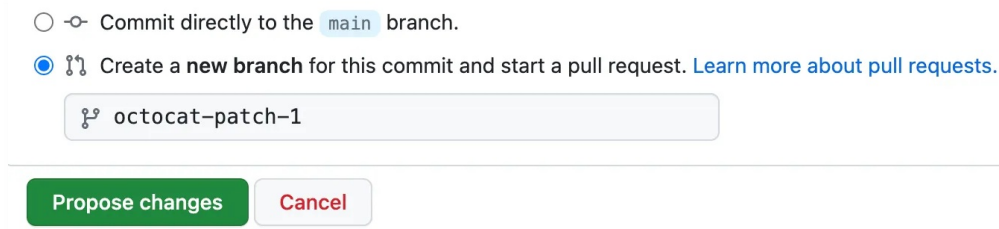Alternatively, you can click + in the file tree view on the left.

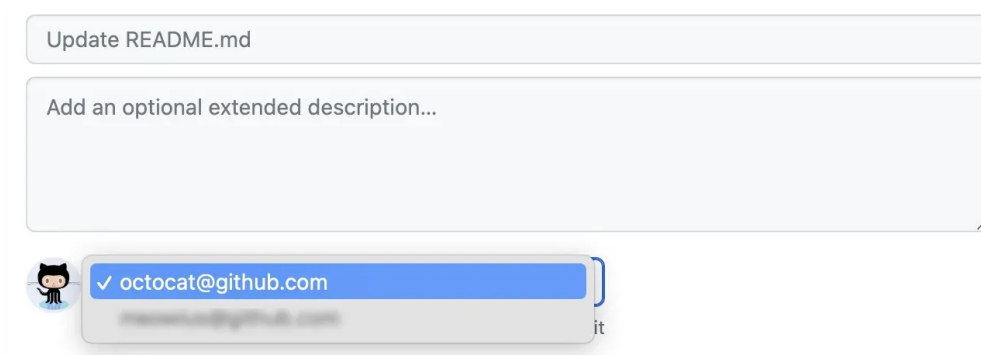3 In the file name field, type *LICENSE* or *LICENSE.md* (with all caps).

4 Under the file name, click **Choose a license template**.

octo-repo / LICENSE| in main

Edit   Preview   ⚖️ Choose a license template

1   Enter file contents here

5 On the left side of the page, under "Add a license to your project," review the available licenses, then select a license from the list.

6 Click **Review and submit**.

7 Click **Commit changes...**

8 In the "Commit message" field, type a short, meaningful commit message that describes the change you made to the file. You can attribute the commit to more than one author in the commit message. For more information, see "Creating a commit with multiple authors."

9 Below the commit message fields, decide whether to add your commit to the current branch or to a new branch. If your current branch is the default branch, you should choose to create a new branch for your commit and then create a pull request. For more information, see "Creating a pull request."

○ ⊸ Commit directly to the main branch.

◉ ⥮ Create a **new branch** for this commit and start a pull request. Learn more about pull requests.

⑂ octocat-patch-1

Propose changes   Cancel

10 If you have more than one email address associated with your account on GitHub.com, click the email address drop-down menu and select the email address to use as the Git author email address. Only verified email addresses appear in this drop-down menu. If you enabled email address privacy, then a no-reply will be the default commit author email address. For more information about the exact form the no-reply email address can take, see "Setting your commit email address."

Update README.md

Add an optional extended description...

🐱 ✓ octocat@github.com

it

11 Click **Commit changes** or **Propose changes**.

Further reading 🔗

- "[Setting guidelines for repository contributors](#)"