

# Authenticating to GitHub in GitHub Desktop

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You can securely access your account's resources on GitHub Desktop by authenticating to GitHub.

Mac Windows

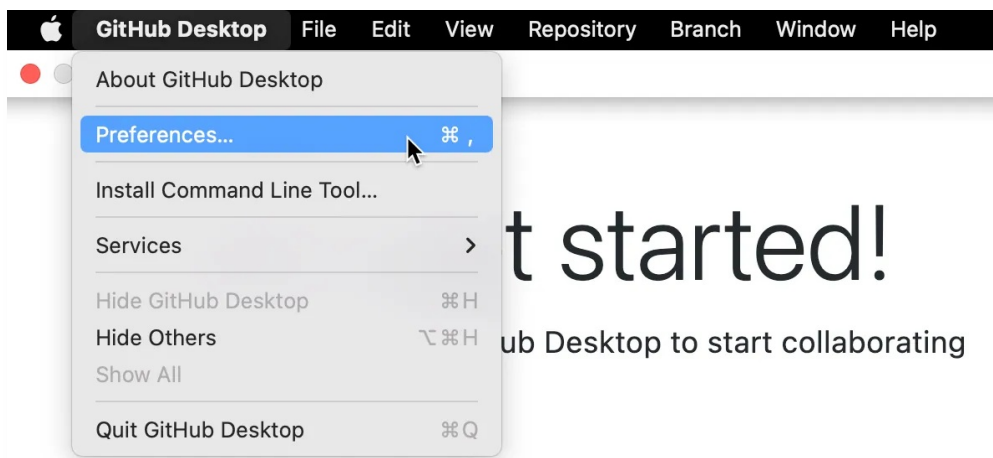
## About authentication [↗](#)

To keep your account secure, you must authenticate before you can use GitHub Desktop to access resources on GitHub.

Before you authenticate, you must already have an account on your GitHub Enterprise Server instance. If you're a member of an organization that uses GitHub Enterprise Server and you do not have an account, contact your GitHub Enterprise site administrator.

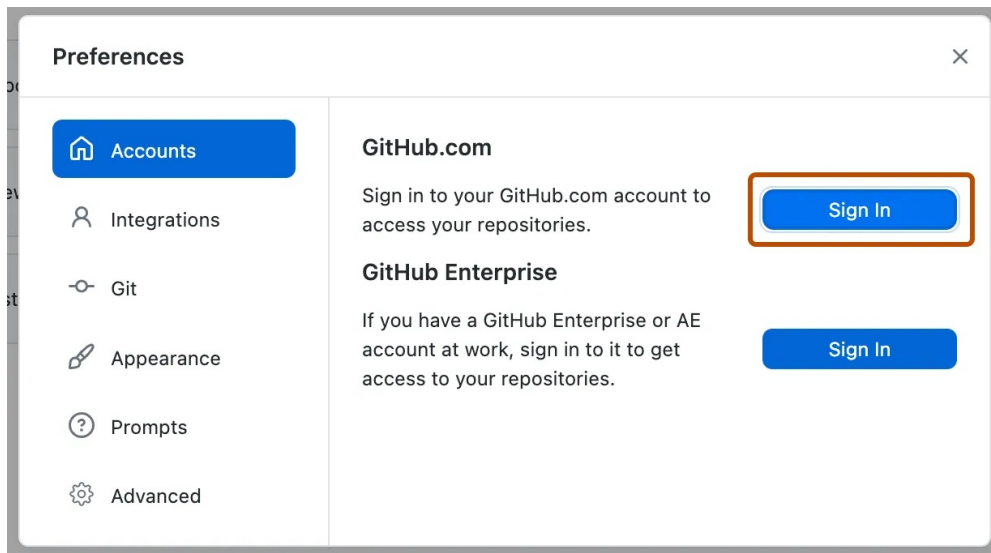
## Authenticating an account on GitHub [↗](#)

- 1 In the menu bar, select **GitHub Desktop**, then click **Preferences**.



- 2 In the "Preferences" window, on the **Accounts** pane, click the **Sign In** button next

to "GitHub.com".



- 3 In the "Sign in Using Your Browser" modal window, click **Continue With Browser**. GitHub Desktop will open your default browser.

- 4 To authenticate to GitHub, in the browser, type your GitHub.com credentials and click **Sign in**.

Alternatively, if you were already signed in to GitHub, follow the prompts to return to GitHub Desktop to finish authenticating.

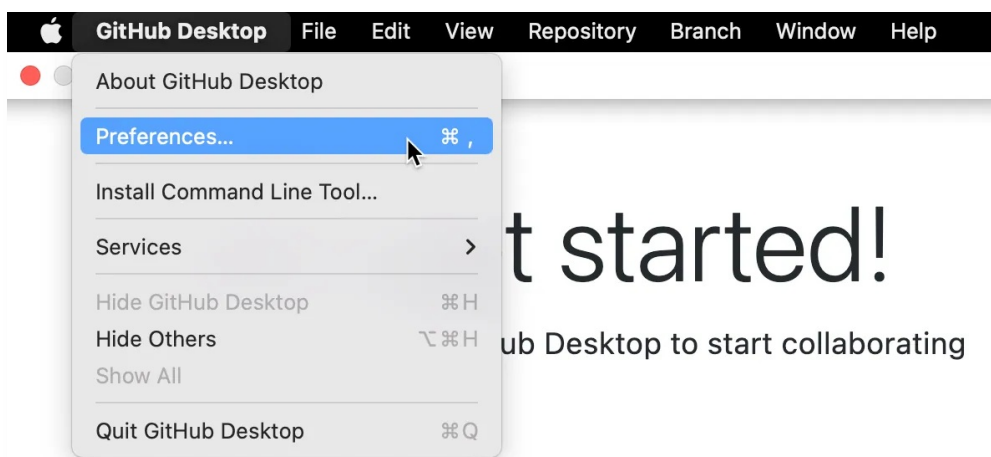
- 5 If you have configured two-factor authentication (2FA) for GitHub, do one of the following:
  - If you set up 2FA via SMS, retrieve your 2FA code from an SMS message.
  - If you set up 2FA with a TOTP application, generate a 2FA code.

Then enter your 2FA code in the prompt on GitHub and click **Verify**.

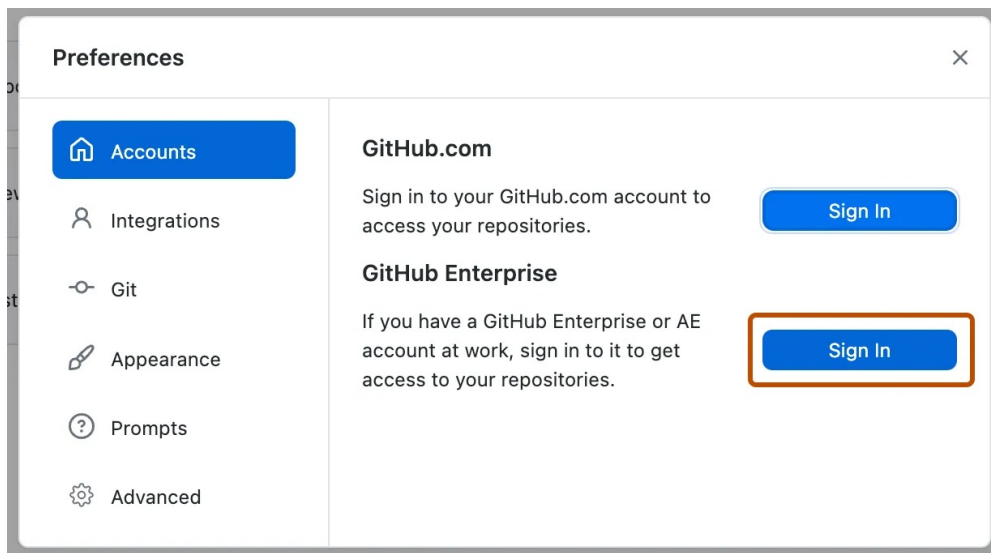
- 6 After GitHub authenticates your account, follow the prompts to return to GitHub Desktop.

## Authenticating an account on GitHub Enterprise Server [↗](#)

- 1 In the menu bar, select **GitHub Desktop**, then click **Preferences**.



- 2 In the "Preferences" window, on the **Accounts** pane, click the **Sign In** button next to "GitHub Enterprise".

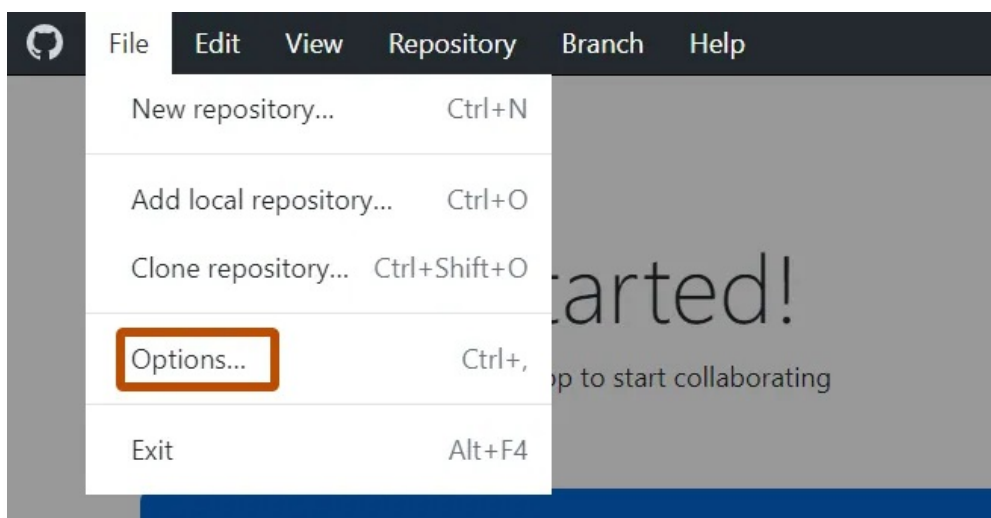


- 3 To add an account on your GitHub Enterprise Server instance, in the "Sign in" modal window, type the URL for your instance under "Enterprise address," then click **Continue**.
- 4 In the "Sign in Using Your Browser" modal window, click **Continue With Browser**. GitHub Desktop will open your default browser.
- 5 To authenticate to your GitHub Enterprise Server instance account, type your account credentials and click **Sign in**.

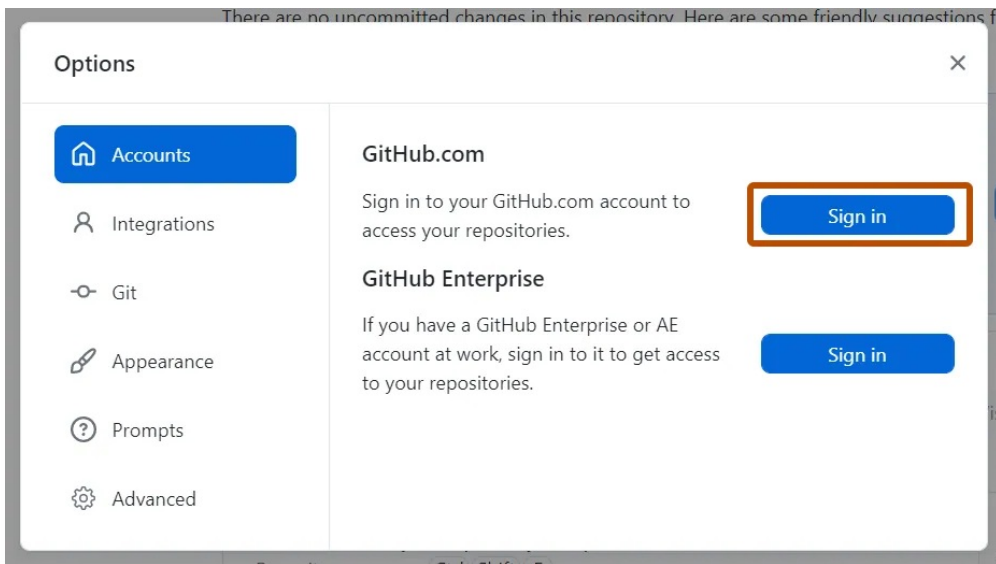
Alternatively, if you were already signed in to your GitHub Enterprise Server instance account, follow the prompts to return to GitHub Desktop to finish authenticating.

## Authenticating an account on GitHub [🔗](#)

- 1 Use the **File** menu, then click **Options**.



- 2 In the "Options" window, on the **Accounts** pane, click the **Sign In** button next to "GitHub.com".



- 3 In the "Sign in Using Your Browser" modal window, click **Continue With Browser**. GitHub Desktop will open your default browser.

**Warning:** Authenticating to GitHub using your username and password is not supported. We require authenticating using the browser instead.

- 4 To authenticate to GitHub, in the browser, type your GitHub.com credentials and click **Sign in**.

Alternatively, if you were already signed in to GitHub, follow the prompts to return to GitHub Desktop to finish authenticating.

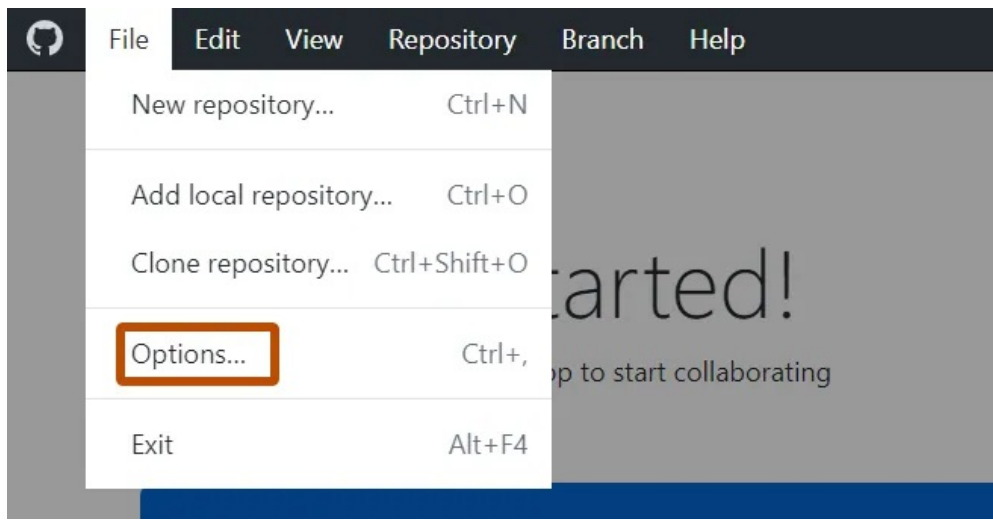
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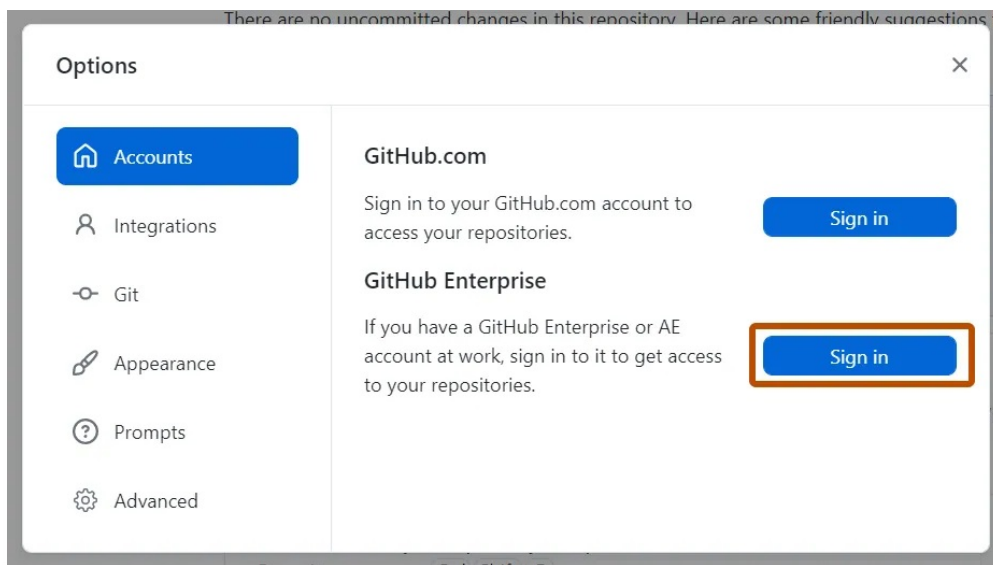
- 6 After GitHub authenticates your account, follow the prompts to return to GitHub Desktop.

## Authenticating an account on GitHub Enterprise [🔗](#)

- 1 Use the **File** menu, then click **Options**.



- 2 In the "Options" window, on the **Accounts** pane, click the **Sign In** button next to "GitHub Enterprise".



- 3 To add a GitHub Enterprise account, type your credentials under "Enterprise address," then click **Continue**.
- 4 If you have configured two-factor authentication for GitHub Enterprise, do one of the following:
  - If you set up 2FA via SMS, retrieve your 2FA code from an SMS message.
  - If you set up 2FA with a TOTP application, generate a 2FA code.

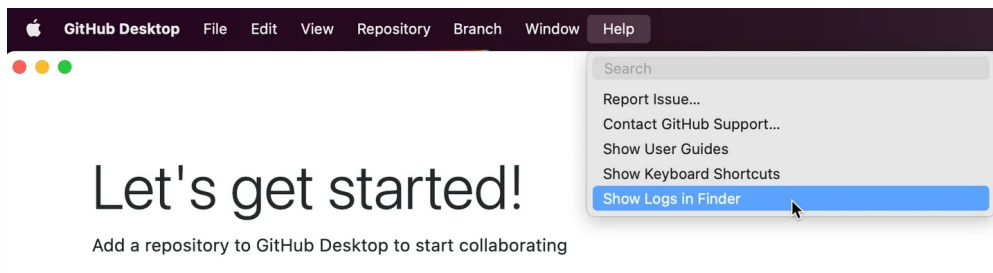
## Troubleshooting authentication issues [🔗](#)

If GitHub Desktop encounters an authentication error, you can use error messages to troubleshoot.

If you encounter an authentication error, first try signing out and signing back in to your account on GitHub Desktop.

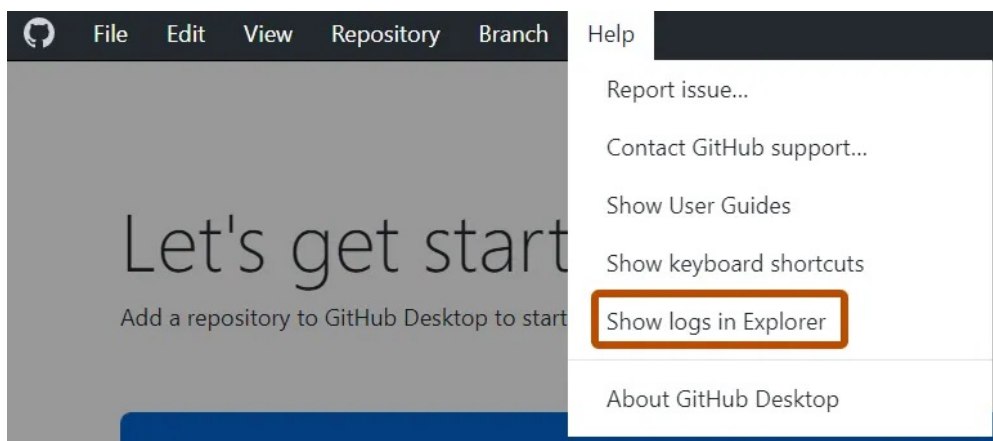
For some errors, GitHub Desktop will prompt you with an error message. If you are not prompted, or to find more information about any error, view the GitHub Desktop log files by using the following steps.

- 1 In the menu bar, select **Help**, then click **Show Logs in Finder**.



- 2 Select the log file from the date when you encountered the authentication error.

- 1 Use the **Help** drop-down menu and click **Show Logs in Explorer**.



- 2 Select the log file from the date when you encountered the authentication error.

Review the troubleshooting information below for the error message that you encounter.

## Bad credentials [🔗](#)

```
Error: Bad credentials
```

This error means that there is an issue with your stored account credentials.

To troubleshoot, sign out of your account on GitHub Desktop and then sign back in.

## Empty token [🔗](#)

```
info: [ui] [AppStore.withAuthenticatingUser] account found for repository: node -  
USERNAME (empty token)
```

This error means that GitHub Desktop is unable to find the access token that it created in the system keychain.

To troubleshoot, sign out of your account on GitHub Desktop and then sign back in.

## Repository not found [🔗](#)

```
fatal: repository 'https://github.com/<user>/<repo>.git' not found
```

(The error was parsed as 8: The repository does not seem to exist anymore. You may not have access, or it may have been deleted or renamed.)

This error means that you do not have permission to access the repository that you are trying to clone.

To troubleshoot, contact the person in your organization who administers permissions.

## Could not read from remote repository

```
git@github.com: Permission denied (publickey).
fatal: Could not read from remote repository.
```

Please make sure you have the correct access rights and the repository exists.

This error means that you do not have a valid SSH key set up.

To troubleshoot, see "[Generating a new SSH key and adding it to the ssh-agent.](#)"

## Failed to clone

```
fatal: clone of 'git@github.com:<user>/<repo>' into submodule path '<path>'
failed
Failed to clone 'src/github.com/<user>/<repo>'. Retry scheduled
Cloning into '<path>'...
git@github.com: Permission denied (publickey).
fatal: Could not read from remote repository.
Please make sure you have the correct access rights
and the repository exists.
```

This error means that either the repository that you are trying to clone has submodules that you do not have access to or you do not have a valid SSH key set up.

If you do not have access to the submodules, troubleshoot by contacting the person who administers permissions for the repository.

If you do not have a valid SSH key set up, see "[Generating a new SSH key and adding it to the ssh-agent.](#)"

## Unable to read AskPass response

```
error: unable to read askpass response from '/Users/<path>/GitHub
Desktop.app/Contents/Resources/app/static/ask-pass-trampoline.sh'
fatal: could not read Username for 'https://github.com': terminal prompts
disabled
```

This error can be caused by multiple events.

If the `Command Processor` registry entries are modified, GitHub Desktop will respond with an `Authentication failed` error. To check if these registry entries have been modified, follow these steps.

- 1 Open the Registry Editor ( `regedit.exe` ) and navigate to the following locations.  
`HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Command Processor\`  
`HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Command Processor\`
- 2 Check to see if there is an `Autorun` value in either location.
- 3 If there is an `Autorun` value, delete it.

If your Windows username has extended Unicode characters, it may cause an AskPass response error. To troubleshoot, create a new Windows user account and migrate your files to that account. For more information, see "[Create a user account in Windows](#)" in the Microsoft documentation.

## Further reading

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- "[About authentication to GitHub](#)"

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