CS107 / AC207

SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT FOR COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE LECTURE 4

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RECAP OF LAST TIME

- Introduction to version control systems
- Centralized and distributed approaches
- Bare essentials of git
- git rebase demo (rebasing is important to restore tidiness after you've been messy) [today]

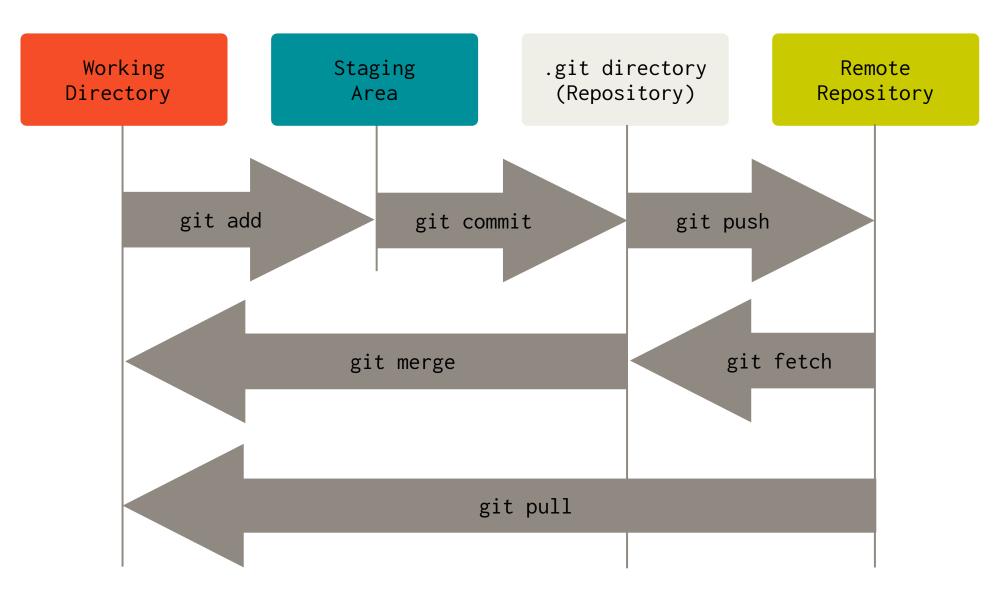
OUTLINE

- More git basics
- Remote repositories
- Branching in git

Content and some figures are based on the free Pro Git book written by Scott Chacon and Ben Straub.

MORE git BASICS

BASIC git COMMANDS YOU MUST INTERNALIZE



BASIC git COMMANDS YOU MUST INTERNALIZE



can use: git commit
-a: all
(will not add
untracked files)

git add: add new or modified files to the index (staging area in the .git/index file)

Remark: you could use "git add." to add any new or modified files in one go. This is **bad practice** because it may add files to the index that you did not intend to. Your colleagues will not be happy about this. Only lazy people do this.

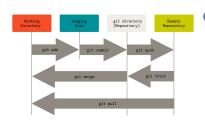
git commit:commit the staged changes to the repo

Remark: It is **good practice** to create small, well-arranged commits. You can always **rebase** if you think two (or more) small commits belong to one commit.

• git push: push commits to the upstream repository

Remark: The upstream repository never has a working directory checked out. It only consists of the contents inside the <code>.git</code> directory. It can be on a remote location or locally (e.g. for backup purposes). See the <code>--bare</code> option of <code>git</code> help <code>init</code>.

BASIC git COMMANDS YOU MUST INTERNALIZE



 git fetch: fetch new commits from the upstream repository (e.g. from your collaborators)

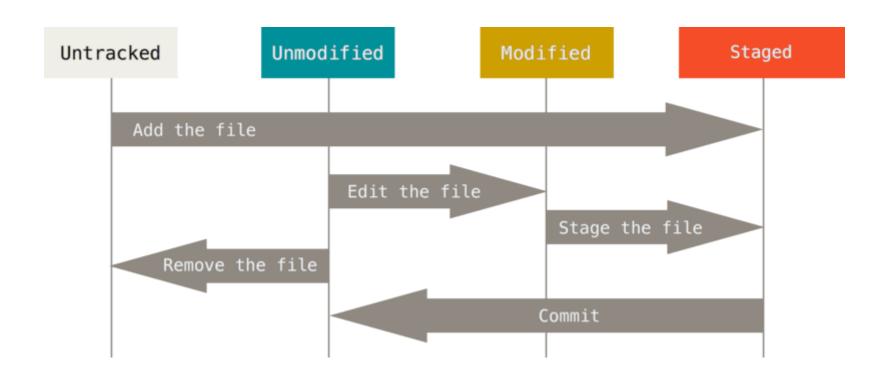
Remark: This will only update your local .git repository, not your working directory.

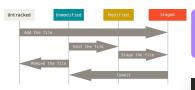
• git merge: update your working directory by merging new commits from your local repository (joining histories)

Remark: By default this merges the branch you are currently on. You can merge any other branches you like, we will see this in a few slides from now.

 git pull: fetch commits from the upstream repository and merge them with the current working directory

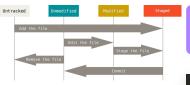
Remark: This saves you some time as most often you want this behavior, rather than executing git fetch followed by git merge.





From untracked to staged:

```
$ git status
   On branch master
   No commits yet
   Untracked files:
     (use "git add <file>..." to include in what will be committed)
           file
   nothing added to commit but untracked files present (use "git add" to
   $ git add file
12 $ git status
13 On branch master
14
15 No commits yet
16
   Changes to be committed:
     (use "git rm --cached <file>..." to unstage)
18
           new file: file
19
```

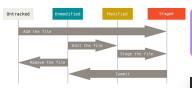


From staged to unmodified: record the snapshot

```
1 $ git commit -m "Added untracked file"
2 [master (root-commit) 68581f7] Added untracked file
3  1 file changed, 1 insertion(+)
4  create mode 100644 file
5 $ git status
6 On branch master
7 nothing to commit, working tree clean
```



From unmodified to modified: edit the tracked file



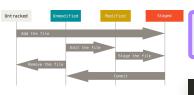
From *modified* to *staged*: add the file to the index

```
1 $ git add file
2 $ git status
3 On branch master
4
5 No commits yet
6
7 Changes to be committed:
8  (use "git restore --staged <file>..." to unstage)
9  modified: file
```

- We can now run git commit again to go from staged to unmodified (by recording a new snapshot)
- Instead of running git add file and then commit, we can combine these steps by

```
git commit -am <commit message>
```

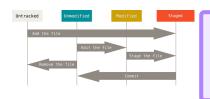
• "git commit -a" *is not* the same as "git add . "followed by git commit (the latter adds *untracked* files too!)



If you modify a **staged** file again:

```
$ echo "Modify a staged file" >> file
 2 $ qit status
   On branch master
   Changes to be committed:
     (use "git restore --staged <file>..." to unstage)
           modified: file
   Changes not staged for commit:
     (use "git add <file>..." to update what will be committed)
     (use "git restore <file>..." to discard changes in working director
           modified:
                      file
12 $ git add file
13 $ git status
14 On branch master
15 Changes to be committed:
     (use "git restore --staged <file>..." to unstage)
16
           modified:
                       file
17
```

- New modifications are separate from the ones you have staged earlier
- If they belong in the same commit, then you need to run git add file again to add your new changes to the already staged changes!



You can remove tracked files from the repository. Removing files has two faces in git:

- 1. Remove files from the .git repository, keep them in your file system
- 2. Remove files from both, .git repository *and* your file system.



1. Remove files from the .git repository, keep them in your file system

only know the files that are tracked

```
1 $ git ls-files # list files that are known to git
 2 file
   $ git rm --cached file
 4 rm 'file'
   $ git ls-files # no output = no files tracked
 7 file # the file is still with us, but not under VCS anymore
 8 $ git status
  On branch master
   Changes to be committed:
     (use "git restore --staged <file>..." to unstage)
11
           deleted:
                       file
12
13
   Untracked files:
     (use "git add <file>..." to include in what will be committed)
15
16
           file
```

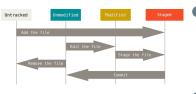
• We still need to commit the changes, even when we delete files from the repository. *Remember:* git thinks in terms of file systems, you must record a snapshot when you remove files too.



- 1. Remove files from the .git repository, keep them in your file system
- 2. Remove files from both, .git repository *and* your file system.

```
1 $ git rm file
2 rm 'file'
3 $ git status
4 On branch master
5 Changes to be committed:
6 (use "git restore --staged <file>..." to unstage)
7 deleted: file
```

- This time the file is gone (git does not report untracked files in the current directory)
- But fear not, we can still restore any removed files from the git file system snapshot using "git restore"
- There were couple of times where git really saved me from a lot of trouble thanks to restoring...



- Note that git uses the same command name to remove files as on the Linux command line itself: rm
- The same applies when you want to rename files. In that case you would use the mv command (move) in the Linux command line as well as for git: git mv

```
1 $ git mv file new_filename
2 $ git status
3 On branch master
4 Changes to be committed:
5 (use "git restore --staged <file>..." to unstage)
6 renamed: file -> new_filename
```

 To move a file means to change the file system. git wants you to commit a snapshot for this action, as usual.

- Every commit you make in git is recorded in the history.
- The history contains a huge amount of information and obviously is important when you need to comprehend changes that were not necessarily committed by you.
- For that reason, every commit must be documented accordingly.
- It is not easy to write good commit messages!

Good practices for commit messages:

• The anatomy of a commit message is:

```
Message subject: One single line, (should be) not more than 72 characters

Longer message body: The body provides more details if the commit

contains a complex change. It can consist of multiple paragraphs,

formatted at 72 characters per line maximum (some projects are very

strict on these format requirements because the commit will go into the

history of the project and it should maintain a consistent format).

These format requirements are usually implemented (or can be configured easily) in editors like vim or emacs when you write git commit messages.

You may omit the message body if your commit is small and the subject is descriptive enough.

The subject line above is actually 74 characters long...)
```

Write short and concise message subjects!

- You display the history with "git log"
- The anatomy of a history entry looks like this:

```
1 commit 72e96d44caf034fdad447eb40ff9cf001075bd0f
2 Author: Fabian Wermelinger <author@domain.net>
3 Date: Mon Jun 21 18:38:39 2021 +0200
4
5    Add src_field_ and dst_field_ for pointwise kernel inputs
6
7    Memory layout in fields is more favorable for pointwise operations than pitched layout in labs. This allows to test kernels that take a field
9    (without ghost cells) as input source.
```

- Commit identifier (SHA-1 hash)
- Commit author/committer and date
- Commit subject
- Followed by commit body

Searching the history: git log

- Often you need to search the history for specific keywords, commits or the commit author
- You can specify the --grep=<pattern> option to search for a regex pattern. This searches log messages (subject or body)
- You can specify the --author=<pattern> option to search for a particular author/committer using a regex pattern. This only searches author information but not commit messages.
- If you use the --grep option multiple times, any pattern may match. If you want that *all patterns must match* pass the --all-match option.

Formatting the output: git log

- You can change the format of how git displays the history log
- Use git log --pretty=oneline to display the commits in compact form (this option also exists as --oneline because it is used often). If you want a lot of information, you can use --pretty=fuller instead. See git help log for docs.
- Your git installation also ships with a graphical tool that you may use to explore the history. You can use the gitk tool or git gui

IGNORE DATA THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO TRACK

- Often you will have certain files in your project that you don't want under VCS
- In git you can use one or many .gitignore files for this purpose
- Recall that files starting with a " . " are hidden files

IGNORE DATA THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO TRACK

Example:

Content of .gitignore file:

```
1 # you can use comments too!
2 __pycache__/ # this ignores a whole directory
3 *.bak # name of backup files
4 *~ # some editors create backup files ending with '~'
```

Let's create an annoying file:

```
1 $ touch .DS_Store # annoying meta-data file in Mac OSX
2 $ git status
3 On branch master
4 Your branch is up to date with 'origin/master'.
5
6 Untracked files:
7  (use "git add <file>..." to include in what will be committed)
8     .DS_Store
9
10 nothing added to commit but untracked files present (use "git add" to track)
```

IGNORE DATA THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO TRACK

Example:

• We can add it to the .gitignore file:

- Notice that .DS_Store does no longer show up as an untracked file.
- Of course we have *modified* our tracked .gitignore file, which we must now stage and commit to make the changes persistent.

A FEW COMMENTS ON . gitignore

- It is essential that you keep your repository clean, the .gitignore file is the key to a clean house.
- You usually have one in the root directory and possibly others in more specific locations of your project
- Often they have specific entries for the programming language you are using. E.g. for python you want to ignore the __pycache__ directories.
- GitHub offers you some templates for this file at the time when you create a new repository, have a look at them to get an idea. I often prefer to create them from scratch and extend them incrementally.

A FEW COMMENTS ON . gitignore

- git is great for VCS of text files
- It can handle binary files but they are more difficult to track. This often leads to bloating up the size of your .git repository.
- Ignore such files in your .gitignore files. E.g. for PDF files:

```
1 *.pdf # ignore all pdf's
```

If you must make an exception, force add the file to the index:

```
1 $ git add --force important.pdf
```

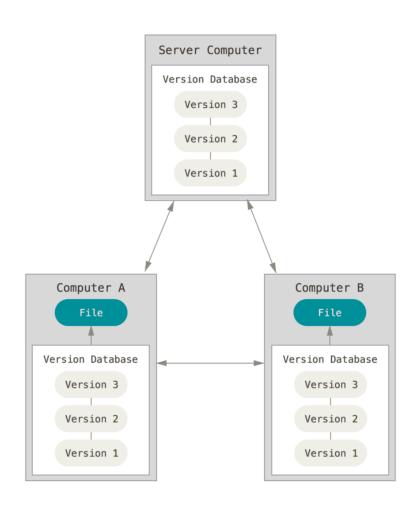
• You can use "!" as *negation* in your .gitignore files:

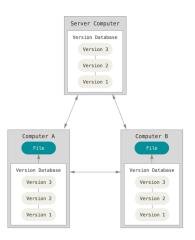
```
1 * # ignore everything (remember the wildcard in the shell, it expands to anything)
2 !*.py # except any file with the .py suffix
```

GETTING git help

- All commands in git have proper manual pages
- You can get them in two ways:
 - 1. Via git: git help commit
 - 2. Via man: man git-commit

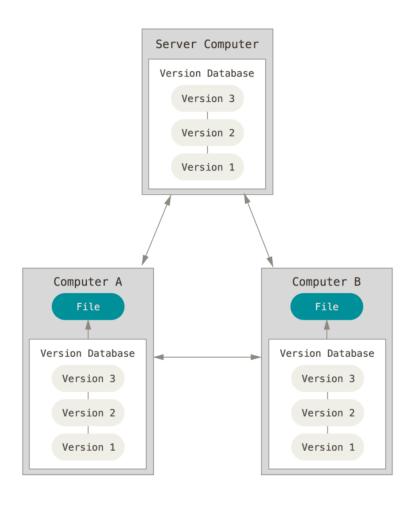
Recall distributed VCS:





- The "server computer" is called a remote.
- It can be a server from GitHub, for example, but it can also be local on your computer.
- The term "remote" does not necessarily imply that it is some place else on the internet, only that the remote repository is *somewhere* else.
- All that a remote repository needs is the content of the .git directory, such a repository is called a bare repository.
- You can list the remotes with git remote show.

Let us emulate these git repositories:

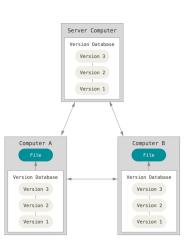


Let us emulate these git repositories:

• As soon as you work with collaborators, you may run into git rejecting your push because your local repository is not up to date with the remote you are trying to push to:

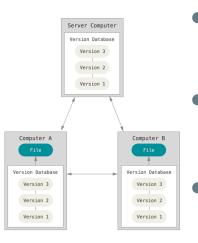
```
! [rejected] master -> master (fetch first)
error: failed to push some refs to '../remote/'
hint: Updates were rejected because the remote contains work that you do
hint: not have locally. This is usually caused by another repository pushing
hint: to the same ref. You may want to first integrate the remote changes
hint: (e.g., 'git pull ...') before pushing again.
hint: See the 'Note about fast-forwards' in 'git push --help' for details.
```

• Simply fetch and merge these changes first before you push. *Recall*: git pull does both of these tasks in one shot.

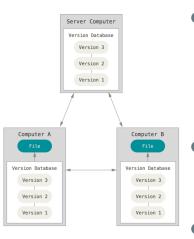


Let us emulate these git repositories:

- The pull in the previous demo went smooth. In the real world, this may not always be the case.
- In many cases git is very good at performing merges...
 - ...but what should git do when two collaborators modify the *exact same* place in a file?
- Let's continue our demo and see...



Let us emulate these git repositories:



- Merge conflicts are not uncommon and are possibly the trickiest part in git. They are hard to avoid in distributed VCS.
- And are another good reason why you want to keep your individual commits small and well-structured.
- git offers you a tool to resolve merge conflicts:git help mergetool

- You can add as many remotes as you like.
- If you do not setup a tracking branch for git push, then you must explicitly say which remote you want to push to and which branch.
- The same is true for git pull.
- On GitHub you can choose to use https or ssh to communicate with a remote.
- If you use https you now must create a token in "Settings/Developer Settings".
- For ssh you should generate an ssh key using ssh-keygen -t rsa
 -b 4096 and upload the public key part to GitHub.

- We have encountered branches already but not said much about them up to now.
- In your GitHub repo, main or master *are branches*. In git everything is a branch.
- Branches are your *main tool* for development. They allow you to get messy without breaking anything in the main branch and you can just discard them and start over.
- Historically, branching is an expensive task in VCS, not so in git
- In git, a branch is just an alias name for a SHA-1 hash that points to a particular snapshot

\$ cat .git/refs/heads/master
d5278fbd2931b75e9f41ef031448fa1b2696fce4

 Assume you have a new repository and you just created the initial commit A:

A master

The "pointer" named master contains the same SHA-1 entry as the one generated for commit A.

• Now suppose we make two more commits B and C. The pointer that describes the master branch moves along:

A---B---C master

 At this point in your development stage, you notice a strange behavior of your code and you suspect that a bug has been introduced. How to proceed now?

• You could continue on master but this is not a good idea because fixing a bug requires you to throw things around. Create a new branch for this bug fix:

```
Note: in older versions of git a new branch was checked out like this

git checkout -b bugfix1 # the -b option creates the branch if it does not exist

The reason this is confusing is because git checkout has dual meaning:

1. It can checkout branches

2. It can checkout individual files and restore their content

Newer versions of git split these tasks by introducing two new commands:

1. git switch: switch branches

2. git restore: restore files
```

Our revision timeline now looks like this:

```
A---B---C master # branch point is C
bugfix1 # branch point is C, active branch and what HEAD points to
```

Our revision timeline now looks like this:

```
A---B---C master # branch point is C bugfix1 # branch point is C, active branch and what HEAD points to
```

There is a special pointer in git called HEAD. It always points to the currently active branch.

 Now we do some work and fix this bug. Assume the next two commits D and E implement these fixes:

```
A---B---C master # this is the active branch now

D---E bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fixing code
```

We also switched back to the master branch.

Which git command did we use for this? git switch master

• We have now tested our changes on the bugfix1 branch and are back on the master branch as we would like to merge the history of bugfix1 into master.

```
A---B---C master # this is the active branch now

D---E bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fixing code
```

- Because there are no new commits on master since we branched off, the merge is trivial. git has two options:
 - 1. Fold bugfix1 and master together (fast-forward merge)
 - 2. Create a *merge commit* which joins bugfix1 and master in a common commit.

• Situation before merge:

```
A---B---C master # this is the active branch now
D---E bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fixing code
```

• Fast-Forward merge: this is the default that git assumes. Assume you are on the master branch, the command for this merge is git merge [--ff] bugfix1 (the fast-forward option --ff is implied if not given)

After this merge your history looks like this:

```
A---B---C---D---E master
\
bugfix1 # this branch is now dangling
```

The bugfix1 branch is now fully merged in master. We do not need it anymore and it is good practice to remove it:

```
git branch -d bugfix1
```

```
A---B---C---D---E master
```

• Situation before merge:

```
A---B---C master # this is the active branch now
D---E bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fixing code
```

 Non Fast-Forward merge: this type of merge creates a common join commit for the merge:

```
git merge --no-ff bugfix1
```

After this merge your history looks like this:

```
A---B---C-----F master # F is called a merge commit
\ /
D---E bugfix1 # this branch is now dangling
```

Same story for keeping your repository clean:

```
git branch -d bugfix1
```

Compare the difference of the two approaches:

FAST-FORWARD

WITH MERGE-COMMIT

```
$ git log --oneline --graph
* 57f4883 (HEAD -> master) Commit E
* d5278fb Commit D
* 9cb047b Commit C
* b51859a Commit B
* 2c1f77c Commit A
```

Linear history:

Non-linear history:

```
A---B---C---D---E master
```

```
A---B---C-----F master
\ / /
D---E
```

Compare the difference of the two approaches:

FAST-FORWARD

WITH MERGE-COMMIT

```
$ git log --oneline --graph
* 57f4883 (HEAD -> master) Commit E
* d5278fb Commit D
* 9cb047b Commit C
* b51859a Commit B
* 2c1f77c Commit A
```

- Some people argue that creating merge commits adds noise to your history (technically they are not needed)
- They preserve your branching history, which may be useful to understand at some point in your project(s)
- Some projects have policies for that, be aware of it

STASHING CHANGES WITHOUT COMMITTING

Assume you find yourself in this situation:

```
A---B---C master
\
D-* bugfix1 # a bugfix branch, active branch ('*' means modified files)
```

Common scenario: you stop work on the bugfix1 branch temporarily and need to switch to some other branch (say master). Your work on bugfix1 is not ready to be committed yet.

STASHING CHANGES WITHOUT COMMITTING

Assume you find yourself in this situation:

```
A---B---C master
\
D-* bugfix1 # a bugfix branch, active branch ('*' means modified files)
```

Common scenario: you stop work on the bugfix1 branch temporarily and need to switch to some other branch (say master). Your work on bugfix1 is not ready to be committed yet.

If committing is too early, you can use git stash to temporarily stash your changes:

```
1 $ git stash # push current work on top of stash stack
2 Saved working directory and index state WIP on bugfix1: b955cbe Adding new file on bugfi
3 $ git stash list # list all stashed work, WIP means Work In Progress
4 stash@{0}: WIP on bugfix1: b955cbe Adding new file on bugfix1
5 $ git status
6 On branch bugfix1
7 nothing to commit, working tree clean
8 $ git switch master # do some other work on master
9 Switched to branch 'master'
```

STASHING CHANGES WITHOUT COMMITTING

Assume you find yourself in this situation:

```
A---B---C master
\
D-* bugfix1 # a bugfix branch, active branch ('*' means modified files)
```

Common scenario: you stop work on the bugfix1 branch temporarily and need to switch to some other branch (say master). Your work on bugfix1 is not ready to be committed yet.

If committing is too early, you can use git stash to temporarily stash your changes:

Lets return to our previous state but now we have a collaborator who did work on master in the meantime (the commit labels A, B,... are only symbolic, don't take them literally):

```
A---B---C---D---E master # work has advanced on this branch

F---G bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fix, active branch
```

Can you apply a fast-forward merge strategy in this case?

```
A---B---C---D---E master # work has advanced on this branch
\
F---G bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fix, active branch
```

Can you apply a fast-forward merge strategy in this case?

- You can not. Remember, once a history is recorded by computing the SHA-1 hash, we can not change it anymore.
- There are two options:
 - 1. Merge via a merge commit (same as before)
 - 2. If bugfix1 is a branch that only exists in your local .git repository, we can rebase and therefore rewrite the local history that none of your collaborators has seen yet.

```
A---B---C---D---E master # work has advanced on this branch

F---G bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fix, active branch
```

- Merge via merge commit: same as in the previous case where work on master did not advance:
 - 1. git switch master (change to the target branch)
 - 2. git merge bugfix1

```
A---B---C---D---E---H master # this is the active branch now

F------G bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fix, now dangling
```

3. git branch -d bugfix1 (clean up)

```
A---B---C---D---E master # work has advanced on this branch

F---G bugfix1 # this branch contains the bug fix, active branch
```

- Rebase and merge: here we first rebase our bugfix1 branch onto the advanced master branch and then use a fast-forward merge to linearize the history (we start with the state shown above):
 - 1. git rebase master (Rewriting history here!)

```
A---B---C---D---E master # work has advanced on this branch

F'---G' bugfix1 # after rebase, active branch
```

- Commits F' and G' have a different SHA-1 than F and G, therefore, history is rewritten!
- Their time stamp remains the same
- 2. git switch master && git merge bugfix1

```
A---B---C---D---E---F'---G' master # rebased history

bugfix1 # now dangling
```

3. git branch -d bugfix1 (clean up)

- git rebase unwinds commits and re-applies them on top of another commit. Naturally, this changes your history
- Rebased histories can have commit time stamps that are not in chronological order
- But rebasing allows to linearize your history
- Some projects have policies for these merge strategies. Be sure to check them out before collaborating.

You can get into *big trouble* if you rebase a history and (forcefully) push it to a remote where others can pull from. git does not allow you to do this by default, but you can force it with git push --force. It will *invalidate* the history in all your collaborators' local repositories. Be careful.

RECAP

- More git basics: use git status often.
- Remote repositories: differences between a normal .git repository and a bare .git repository, merge conflicts.
- Branching in git: fast-forward merges and rebasing, linear and non-linear histories.

REFERENCE

- Pro Git book by Scott Chacon and Ben Straub, Apress (Chapters 2, 3 and 4)
- git command reference