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Git Commands Quick Reference Guide

This quick reference guide covers essential Git commands for repository setup, staging, branching, merging, and working with remote repositories, making it a handy tool for developers to streamline their workflow.

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Setup & Init

Command	Description
git init	Initialise a new local repository in the current directory
git clone <url>	Clone a remote repository into a new local directory
git config --global user.name "Name"	Set the name attached to all commits globally
git config --global user.email "email"	Set the email address attached to all commits globally

Staging & Snapshots

Command	Description
git status	Show the working tree status — staged, unstaged, and untracked files
git add <file>	Stage a specific file, ready to be included in the next commit
git add .	Stage all changed and new files in the current directory
git reset <file>	Unstage a file while preserving its changes in the working directory
git diff	Show unstaged changes between the working directory and the index
git diff --staged	Show changes staged for the next commit vs the last commit
git commit -m "message"	Commit all staged changes with a descriptive message
git commit --amend	Replace the last commit with a new one — useful for fixing messages or adding missed files

Branching & Merging

Command	Description
git branch	List all local branches; the current branch is highlighted
git branch <name>	Create a new branch at the current commit
git checkout <branch>	Switch to an existing branch
git checkout -b <name>	Create a new branch and switch to it immediately
git switch <branch>	Switch branches (modern alternative to checkout)
git merge <branch>	Merge the specified branch into the current branch
git branch -d <name>	Delete a branch that has already been merged
git rebase <branch>	Reapply commits on top of another branch for a cleaner history

Remote Repositories

Command	Description
git remote -v	List all configured remote connections with their URLs
git remote add <name> <url>	Add a new remote connection under a short alias
git fetch <remote>	Download changes from the remote without merging them locally
git pull	Fetch and merge changes from the tracked remote branch
git push <remote> <branch>	Upload local commits to a remote branch
git push -u origin <branch>	Push and set the upstream tracking branch in one step
git remote rm <name>	Remove a remote connection by its alias

History & Inspection

Command	Description
git log	Show the full commit history for the current branch
git log --oneline	Show a compact one-line summary of each commit
git log --graph	Display the branch and merge history as an ASCII graph
git show <commit>	Show the metadata and content changes of a specific commit
git blame <file>	Show who last modified each line of a file and when

Undoing Changes

Command	Description
git revert <commit>	Create a new commit that undoes the changes from a specific commit
git reset --soft HEAD~1	Undo the last commit, keeping changes staged
git reset --hard HEAD~1	Undo the last commit and discard all changes permanently
git restore <file>	Discard unstaged changes in a file, reverting to the last commit
git clean -fd	Remove untracked files and directories from the working tree

Stashing

Command	Description
git stash	Temporarily shelve uncommitted changes to work on something else
git stash pop	Re-apply the most recently stashed changes and remove them from the stash
git stash list	List all stashed changesets
git stash drop	Discard the most recent stash entry