

Development Environment

Lecture 2

Hartmut Kaiser

<https://teaching.hkaiser.org/spring2026/csc4103/>

Git & Github

Managing Source Code Histories

Git and GitHub

- Git and GitHub are common tools used in programming
 - Help managing different versions of your code and collaborate with other developers
- Git was developed in 2005 by Linus Torvalds
 - Open source software for tracking changes in a distributed version control system
- Git is made freely available for anyone to modify and use
 - Available on all platforms, widely used
- Git tracks changes via a distributed version control system
 - Git can track the state of different versions of all files in your project
 - It is distributed because you can access your code files from another computer – and so can other developers.



Git and Github

- GitHub is a web-based platform where Git users build software together
- GitHub is also an hosting provider and version control platform you can use to collaborate on open source projects and share files
- When you're using GitHub, you're working with Git under the hood
- Git is the (command-line) tool that manages the files
 - VSCode (and many other IDEs) have a graphical user interface that sits on top of Git
- Github is (one of the existing and free) web-platforms you can use to host your Git repositories



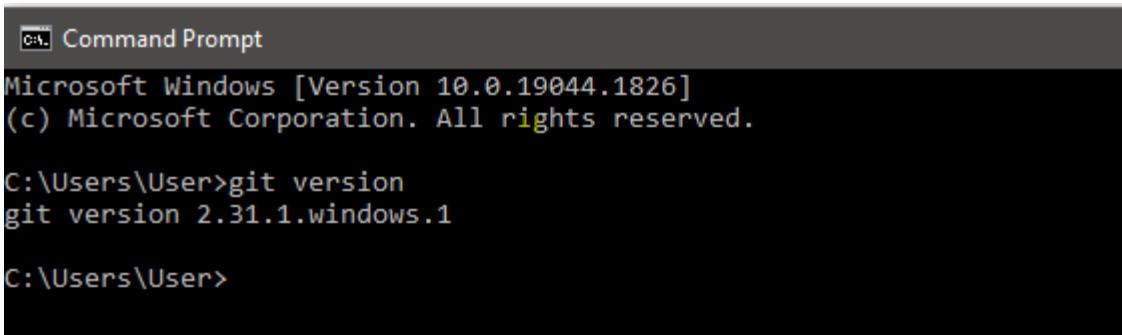
Git and Github

- Millions of people all over the world use these tools, and the numbers just keep going up
 - It is being used for any programming language
- More companies are requiring new hires to know how to use Git and GitHub
 - So if you're looking for a developer job, these are essential skills to have



Setting Things Up

- Install Git
 - Comes preinstalled in some Macs and Linux-based systems
 - Simple install for all platforms: <https://git-scm.com/download>



```
Command Prompt
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.19044.1826]
(c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\User>git version
git version 2.31.1.windows.1

C:\Users\User>
```

- Create account on Github: <https://github.com>



Connect Git to Github

- Set Git user name and email address (do this once)

```
git config --global user.name "Hartmut Kaiser"  
git config --global user.email "hkaiser@cct.lsu.edu"
```

- Use same email address as you used for registering on Github



Github Classroom

- Website helping to manage assignments
- Based on starter codes in a repository
 - Manages clones (copies) of this repository for each student
 - All repositories are hosted on Github
- Enables automatic grading
- Enables individual feedback to each student
- Well integrated in VSCode



Version Control

What is Version Control?

- A database that keeps track of all changes to files over time
- Allows for collaborative development
- Allows to track who made what changes and when
- Allows to revert changes and go back to previous state



What is Git

- Distributed version control system
- Entire code and history is kept on user's machine
 - Changes can be made without internet access
 - (Except pushing and pulling from a remote server)
- One of many different version control systems
 - Subversion, Perforce, Mercurial
 - Git one of the most widely used ones



How does Git work?

- Can be complicated at first, but it is based on a few key concepts
- Based on **Snapshots**
 - All history is based on snapshots
 - Records what all files look like at a given point in time
 - User decides when to take snapshots and of what files
 - Can go back to any previous snapshot
 - Later snapshots are still available



How does Git work?

- Key concept: **Commit**
- The act of taking a snapshot
 - Verb: the user committed the code
 - Noun: the user made a new commit
- Every project is made of many commits
 - List of commits defines the timeline of changes applied to files
- Three pieces of information:
 - How did files changes from previous state
 - A reference of the commit that came before it
 - **Parent commit**
 - A unique **hash code** identifying the commit
 - Something like: `c374f26626038f020dd12f842d4dc5d67d02f59d`



How does Git work?

- Key concept: **Repositories**
 - Often shortened to **repo**
- A collection of all files and their history
 - Consists of all commits
 - Place where all the work is stored
- Can live on a local machine or on a remote server (Github)
- Copying a remote repository to your local machine is called **cloning**
 - Allows for teams to work collaboratively
- Downloading commits from remote repository: **pulling** changes
- Adding local changes to a remote repository: **pushing** changes

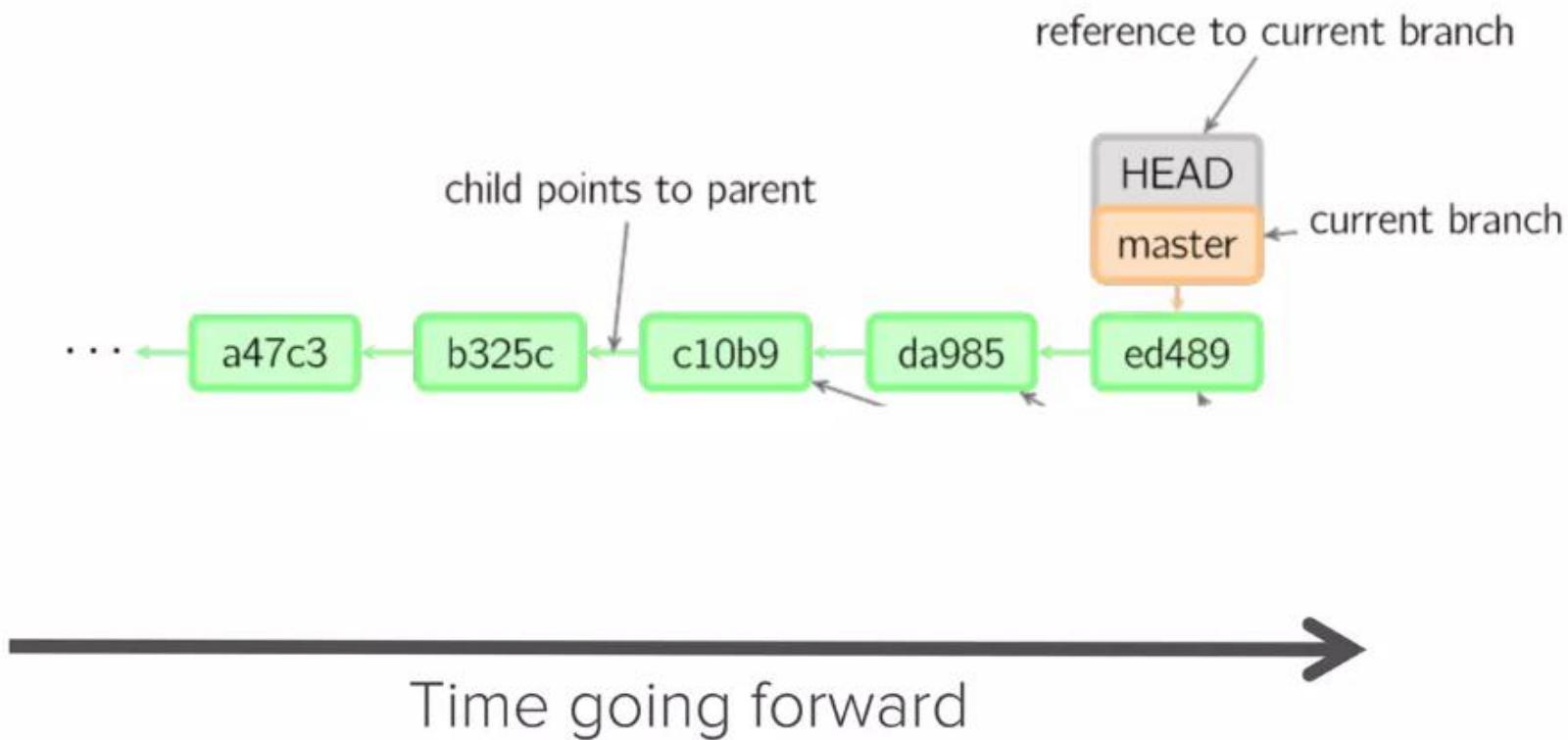


How does Git work?

- Key concept: [Branches](#)
- All commits live on a branch
 - Each branch is a sequence of commits
- There can be many branches
- The main branch is often called [main](#) or [master](#) branch



Typical Structure of a Project

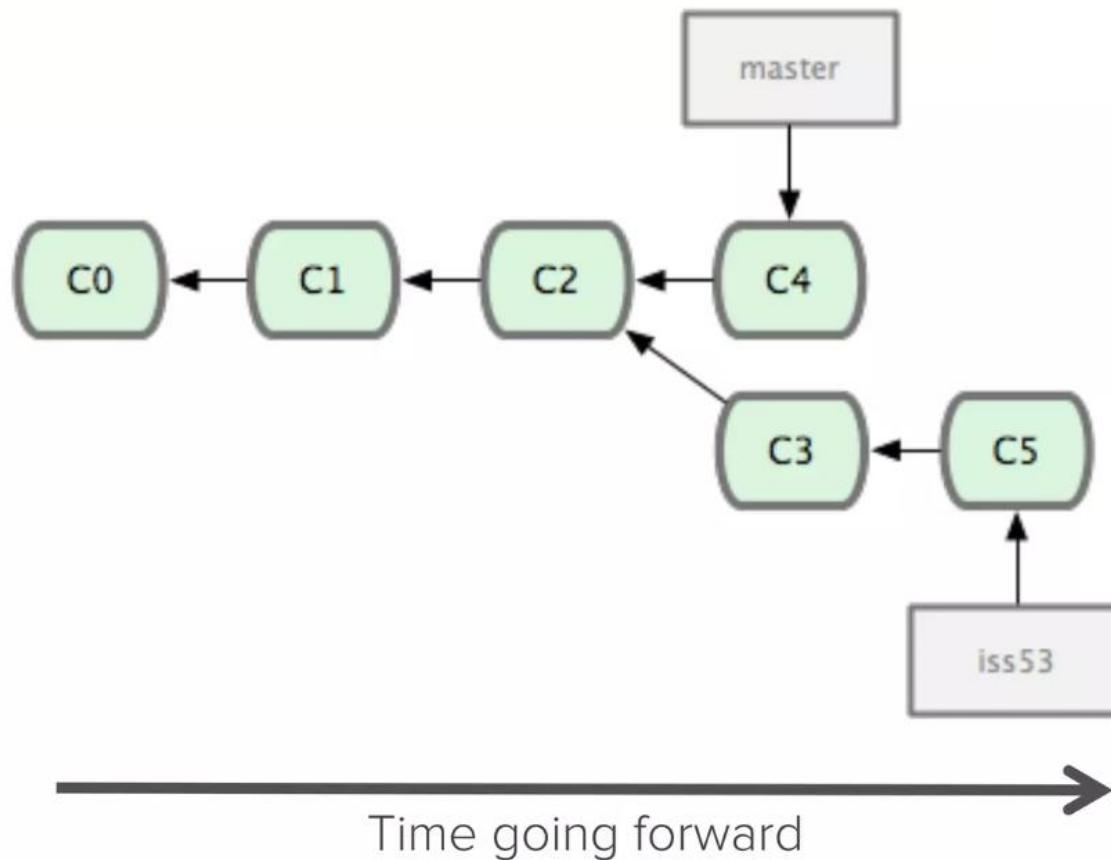


Typical Structure of a Project

- HEAD: Reference to the most recent commit
- MASTER: The main branch in a project
 - Sometimes called ‘main’
- Key concept: branching off **master** branch
 - Start of a branch points to a specific commit
 - Any changes to a project should start with a new branch

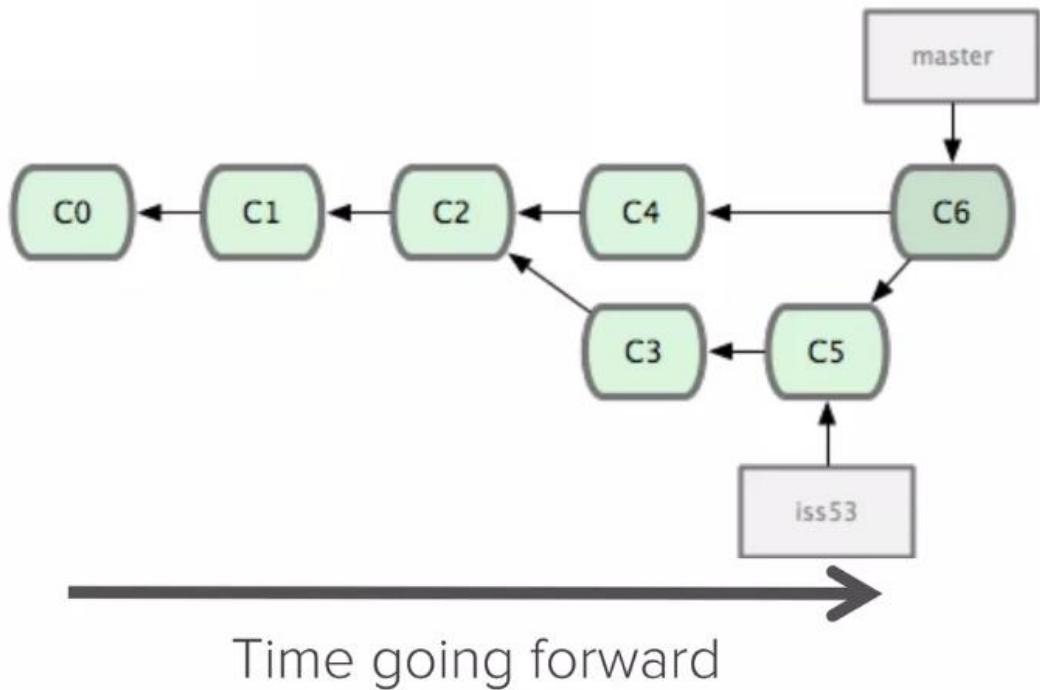


Branching off master



Typical Structure of a Project

- Key concept: Merging
- Once done with a feature the branch will be merged back to master

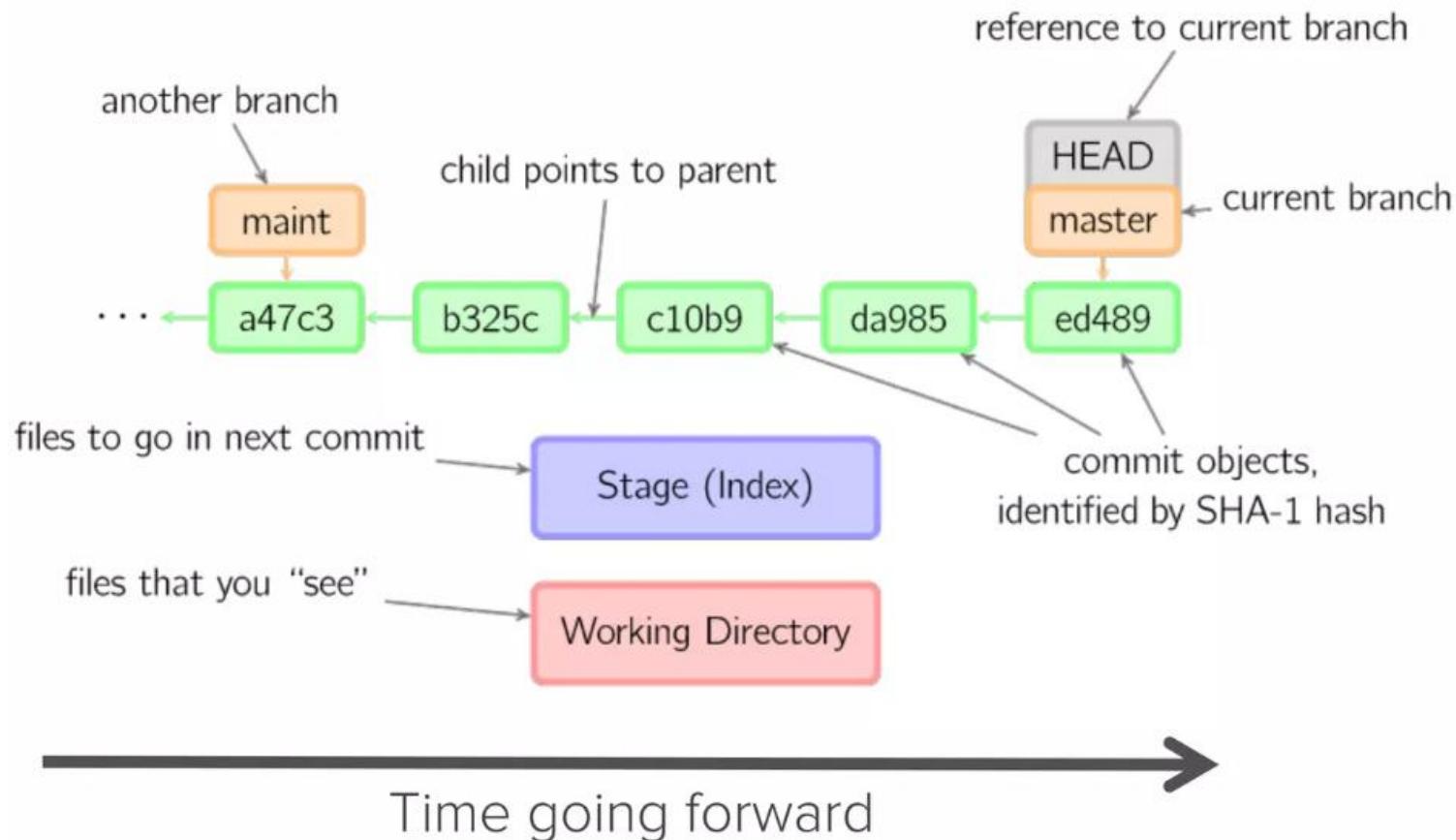


Making a Commit

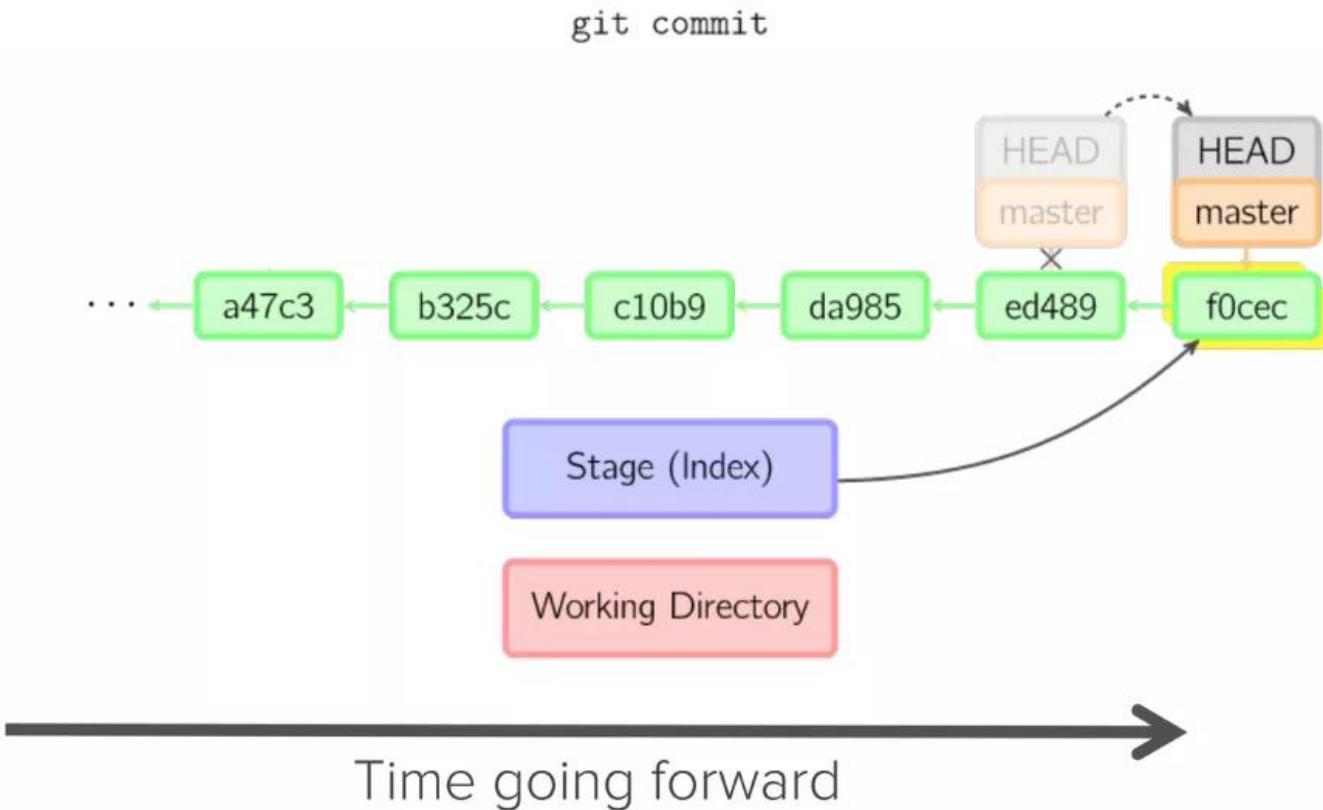
- Files can be in a lot of states and places
- Files are being edited in your local file system
 - The [working directory](#)
- A file that is ready to be committed needs to be [staged](#) (added to the index)
 - Use `'git add ...'` command to define the set of files that should be part of a commit
 - Use `'git commit ...'` command to create actual commit



Making a Commit



Making a Commit



Additional Resources

- Official Git site: <https://git-scm.com>
- Github guides: <https://guides.github.com>
- Interactive Git tutorial: <https://try.github.io>
- Git cheatsheet: <https://www.ndpsoftware.com/git-cheatsheet.html>



Remote Repositories on Github

- Pulling and pushing code
- Pull requests
- Github Classroom creates pull request 'Feedback'
 - Allows to see all changes to starter code
 - Don't close this PR! Please.



