

# How to Use Github

The IDEAS Scientific Software Productivity Project  
[ideas-productivity.org/resources/howtos/](http://ideas-productivity.org/resources/howtos/)



**Overview:** This document describes best practices for using GitHub as a collaborative tool for developing scientific software. Because of the enthusiasm of the software development community for GitHub, there has been a lot of activity in this area, and we do not attempt to comprehensively catalog every approach here. Rather, we intend to draw attention to some workflows and rules of thumb to help scientific programmers to be more productive.

**Target Audience:** Scientific software project leaders and developers.

**Prerequisites:** First read the documents *What is version control?*, *How to do version control with Git*, and *What is Github?*

**Resources:**

- *Comparing Git workflows*
- *A successful Git branching model*
- *GitHub's help site*

This document was prepared by Barry Smith and Jeffrey Johnson with key contributions from YYY.

This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Science, Advanced Scientific Computing Research and Biological and Environmental Research programs.