Electron Express

A Look at Node.js, Packages and Desktop Apps

Stephen Downes

National Research Council Canada

February 28, 2019

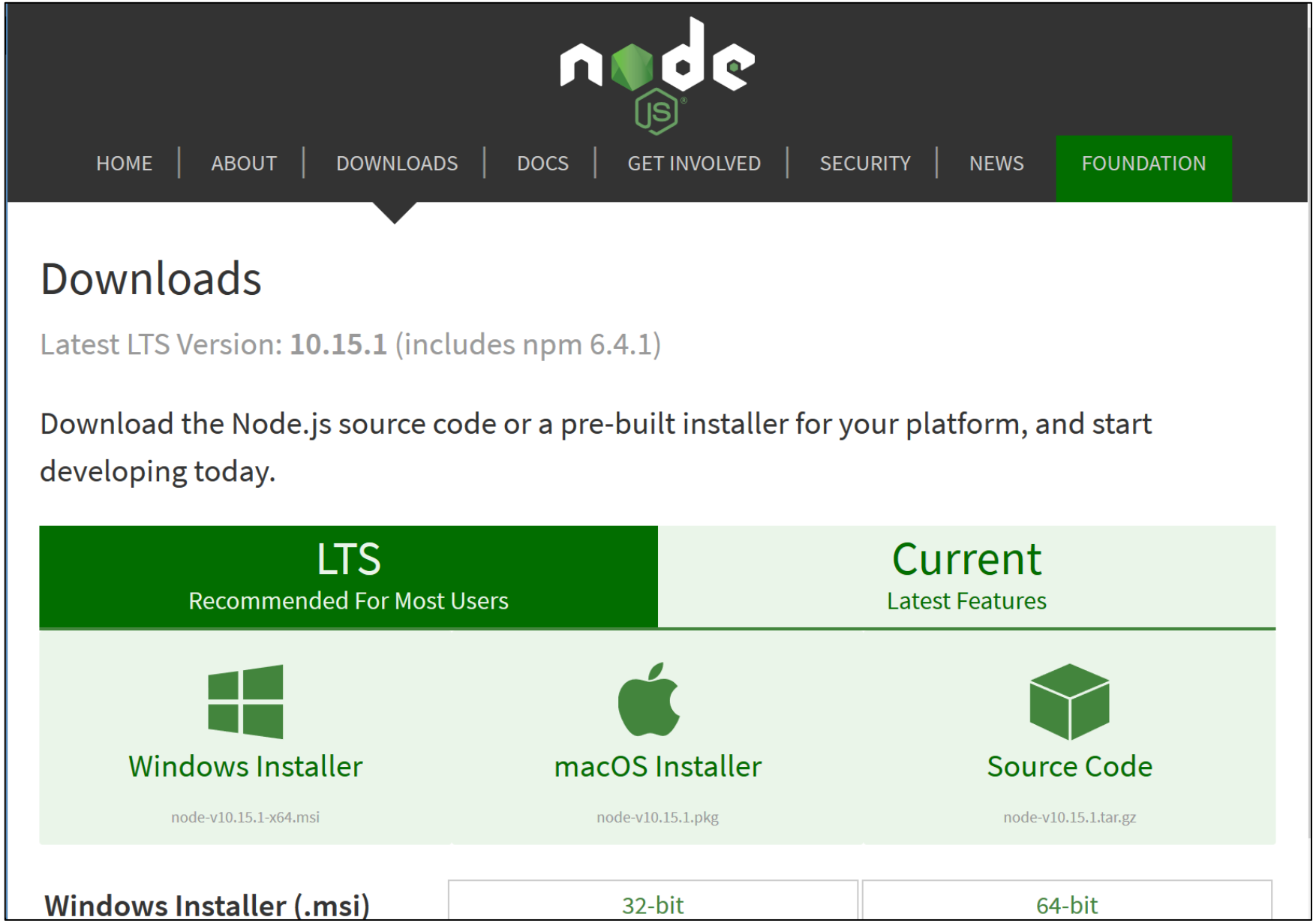
Install...

Node.js

Node.js is an environment that runs **Javascript** code.

Node can be used to run *web server* applications as well as *desktop* applications.

That's what this presentation is about.



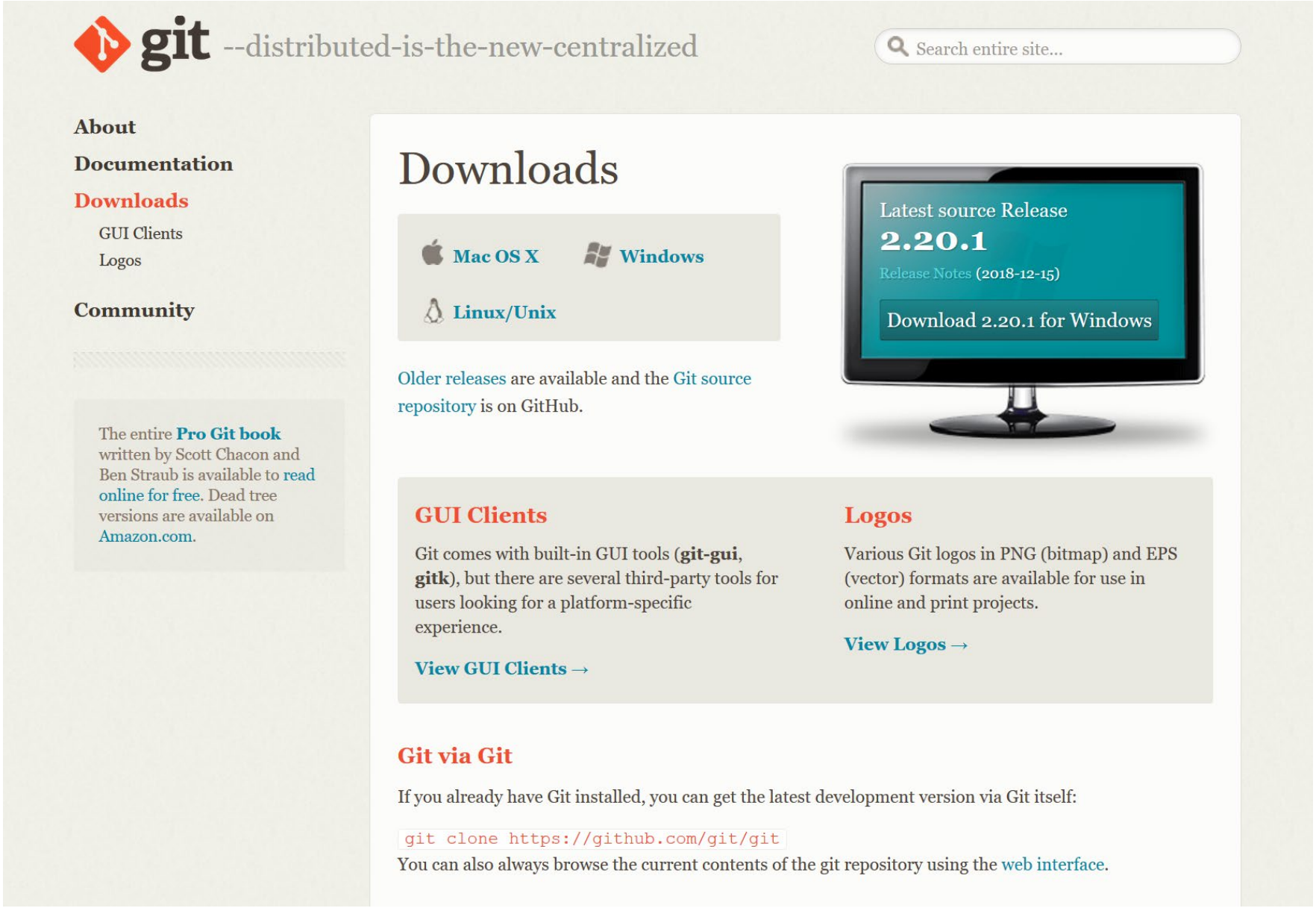
https://nodejs.org/en/download/

Install…

Git

Git allows to you access and update software from code versioning libraries.

We use it to get and run programs authored by other people.

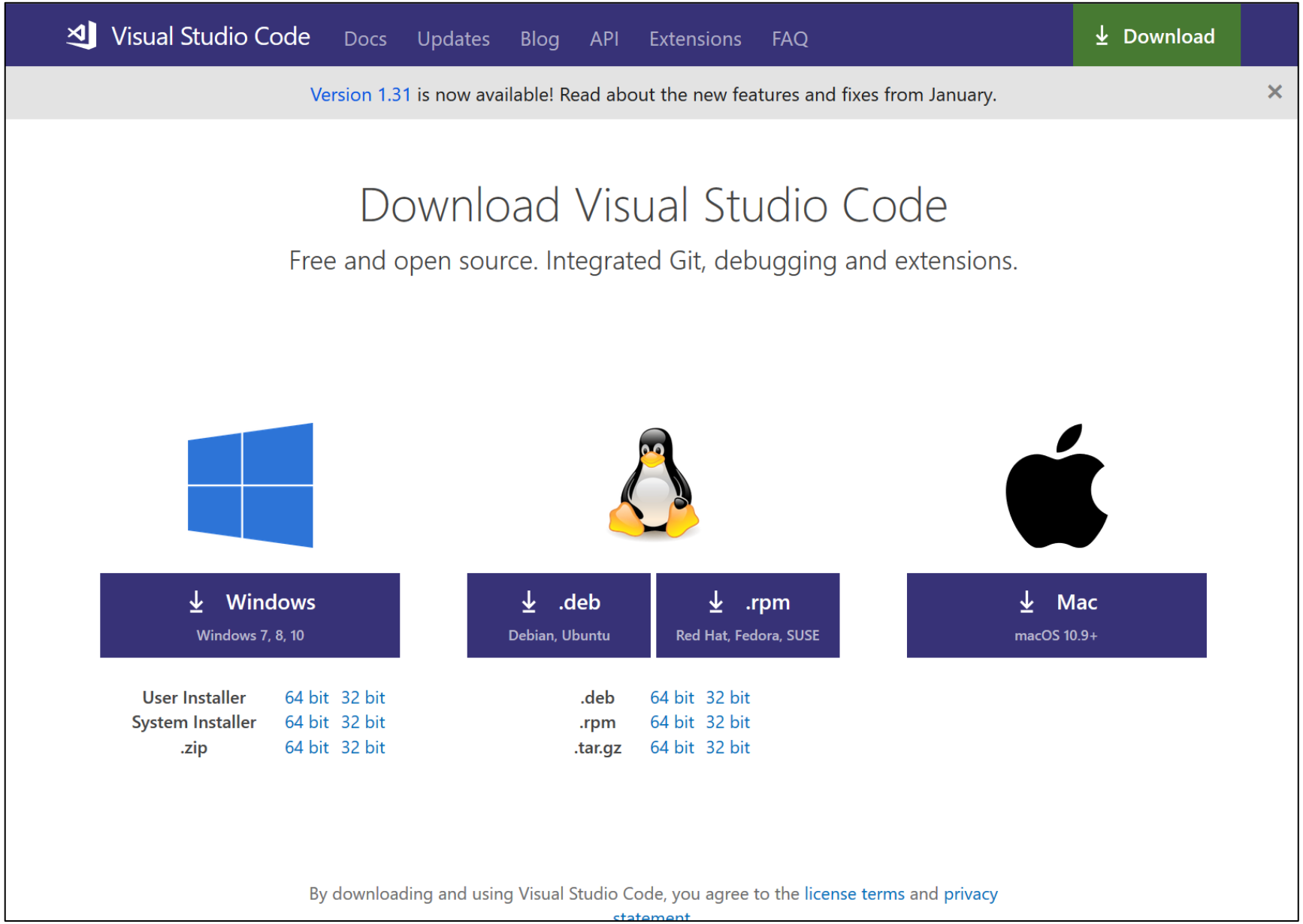


https://git-scm.com/downloads

Install…

Visual Studio Code

Visual Studio Code is an *Integrated Development Environment (IDE).*

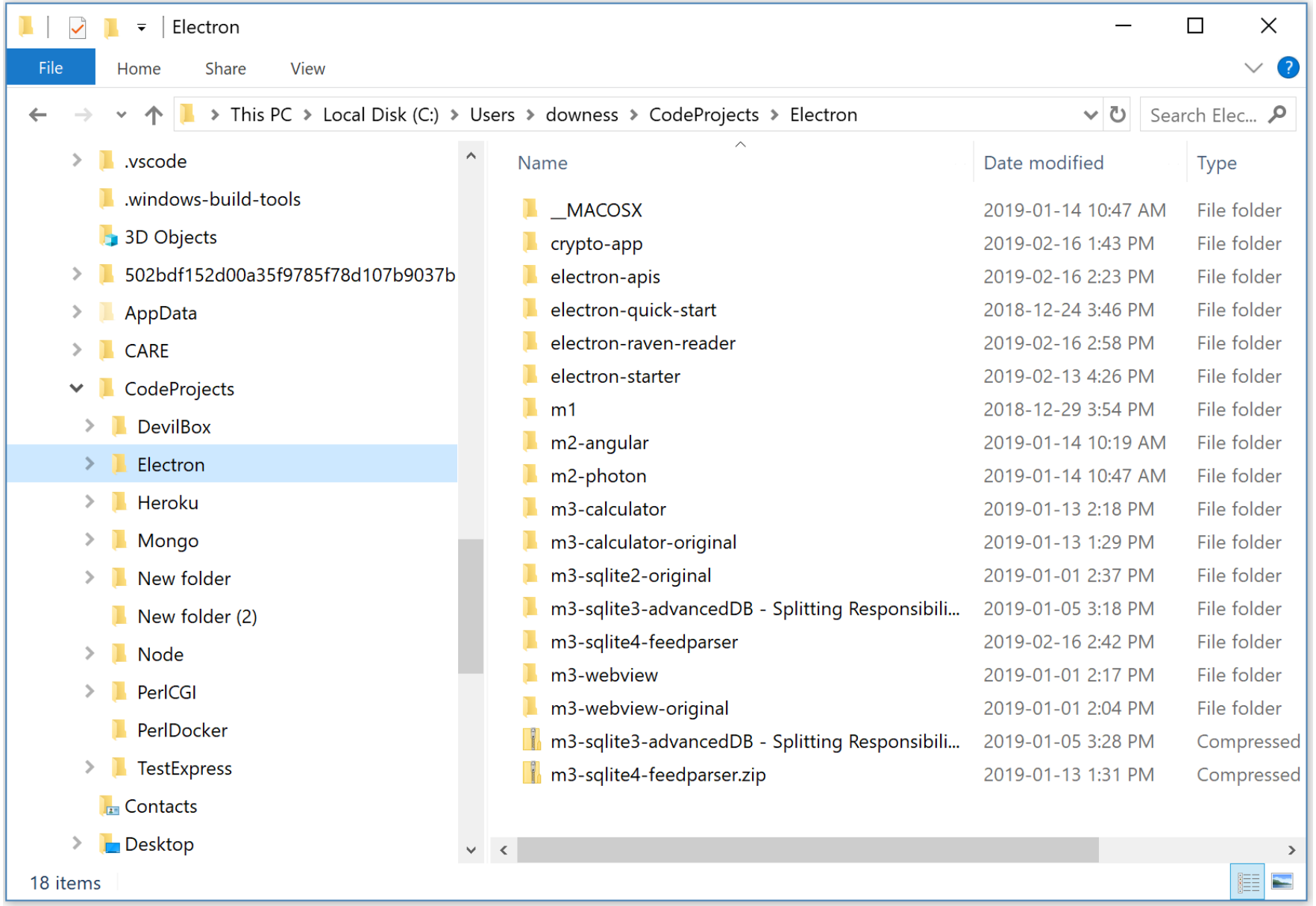


https://code.visualstudio.com/download

Core Concepts

Files and Folders

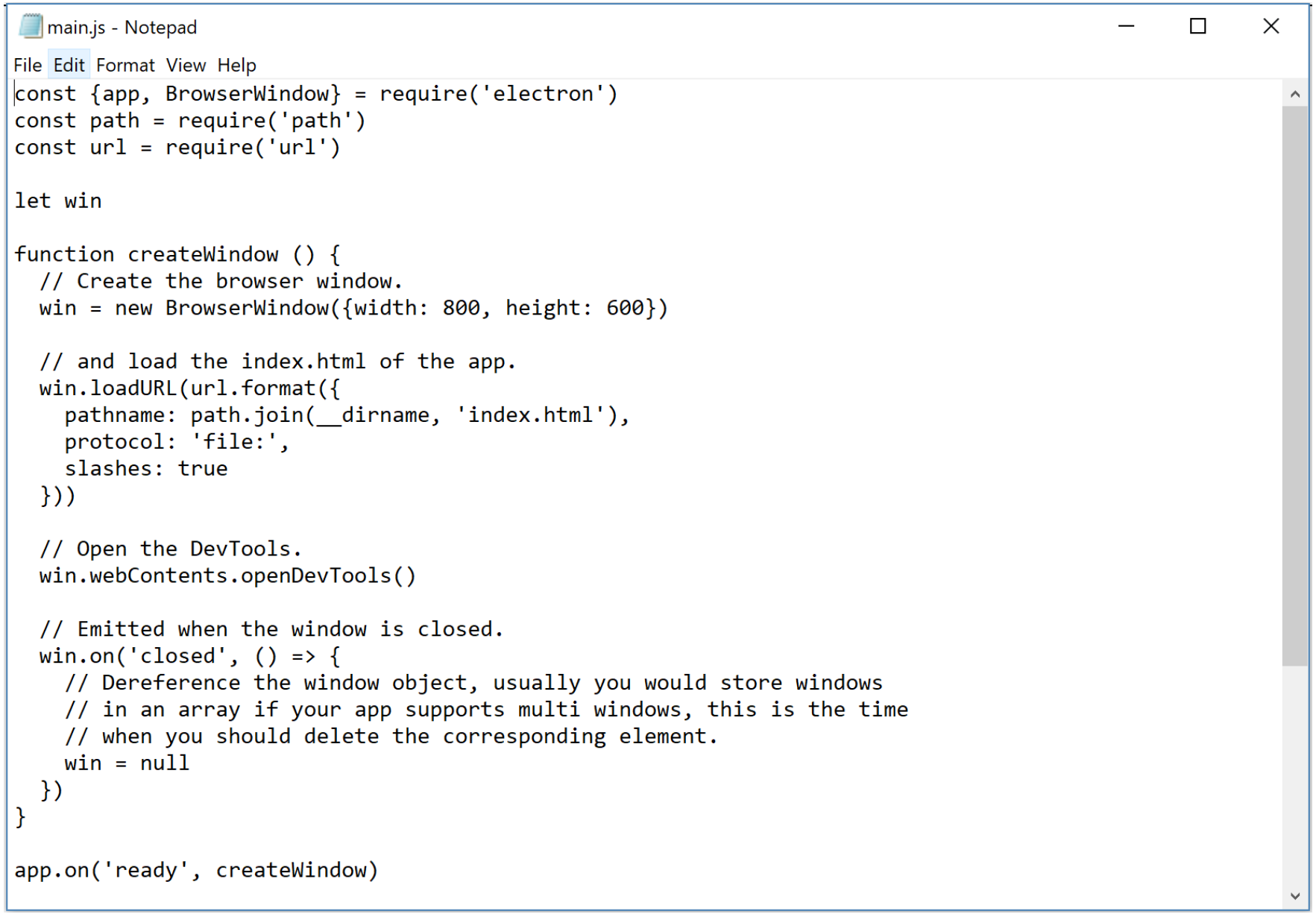
Like (say) Windows Explorer (pictured here)



Core Concepts

Text Editor

Like (say) Windows Notepad (pictured here)

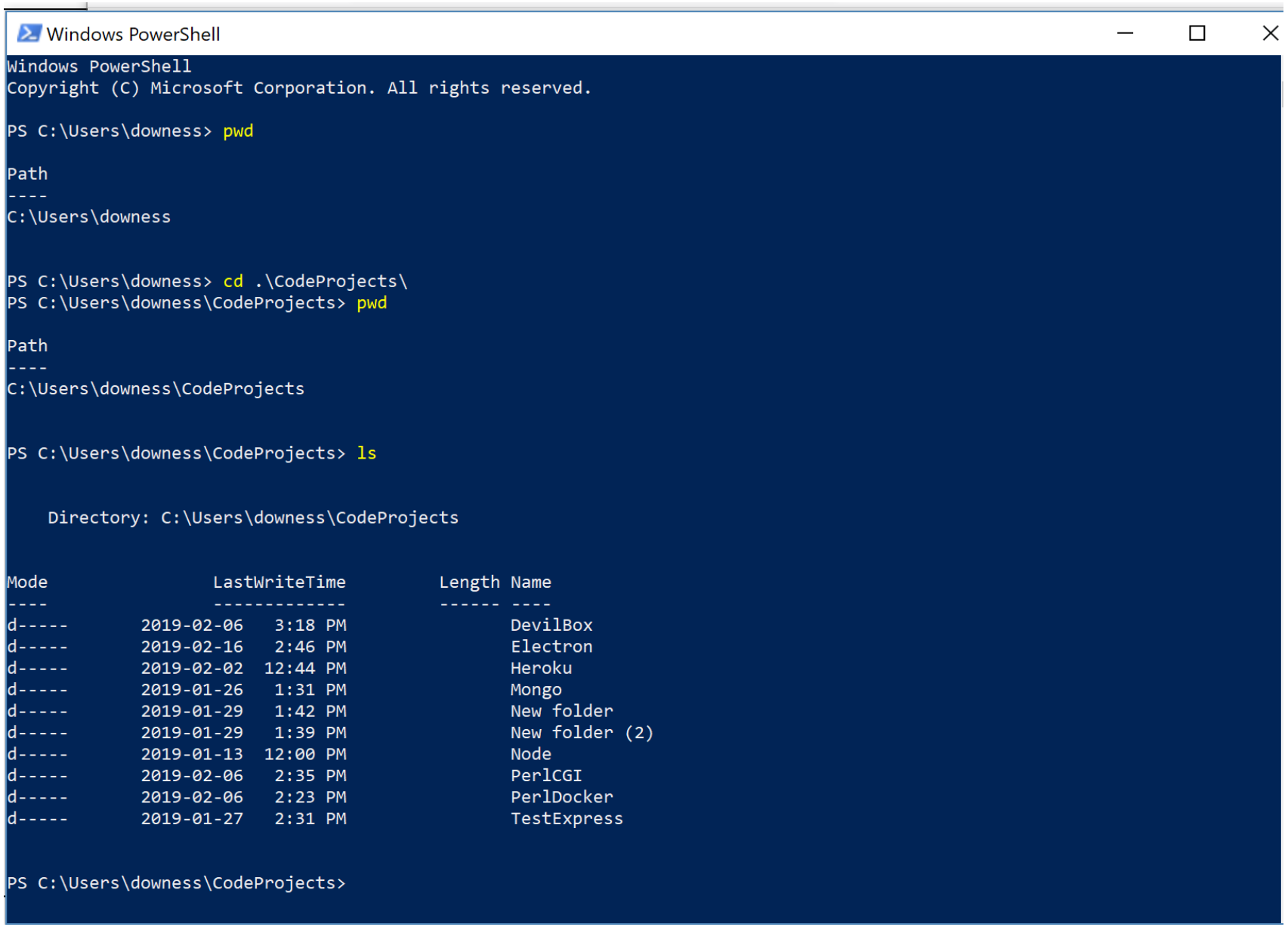


Core Concepts

Command Shell

Like (say) Windows Command Prompt or Power Shell (pictured here).

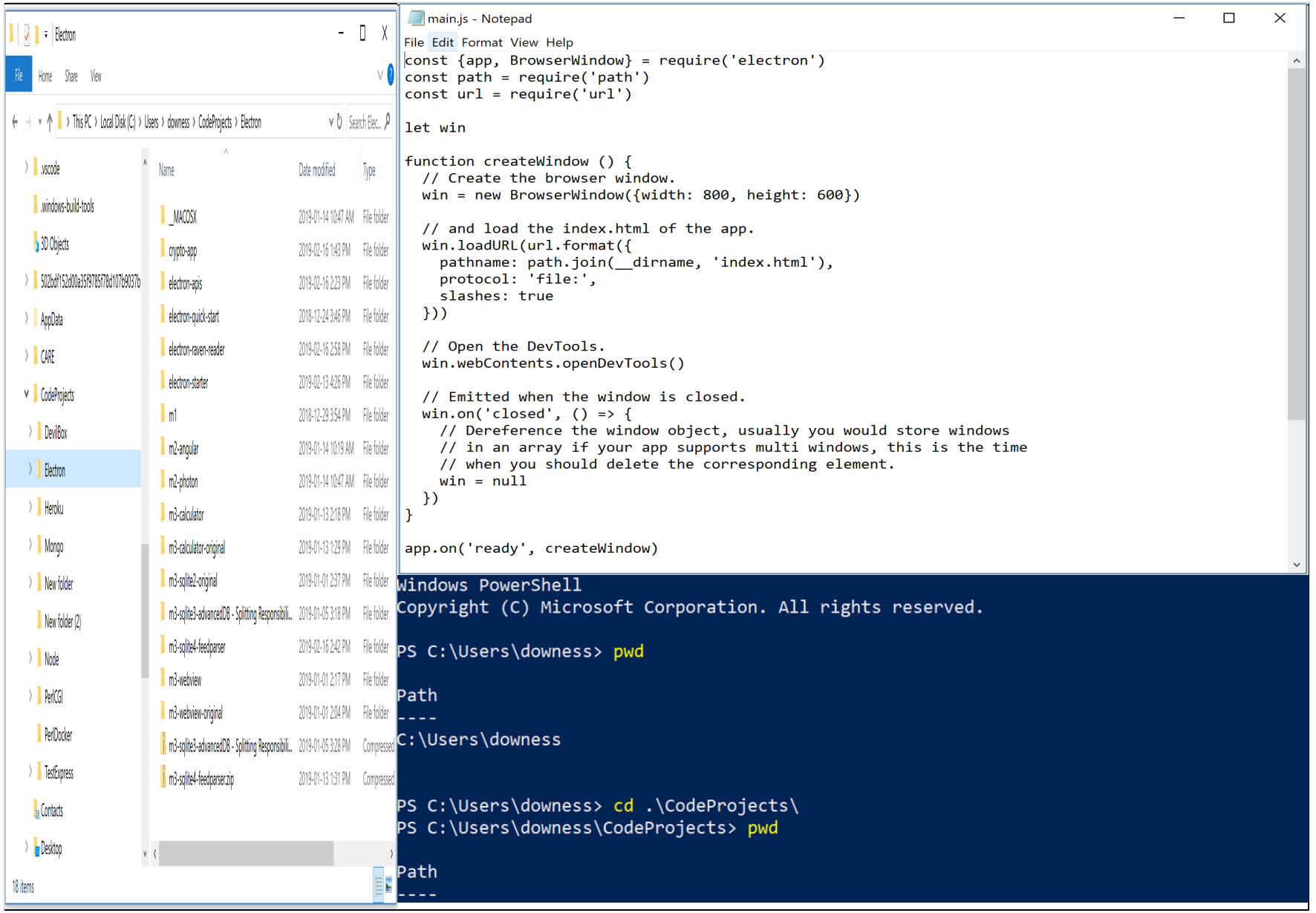
Executes typed commands (instead of clicking on icons)



https://cdn.comparitech.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Comparitech-Powershell-cheatsheet.pdf

Development Environment

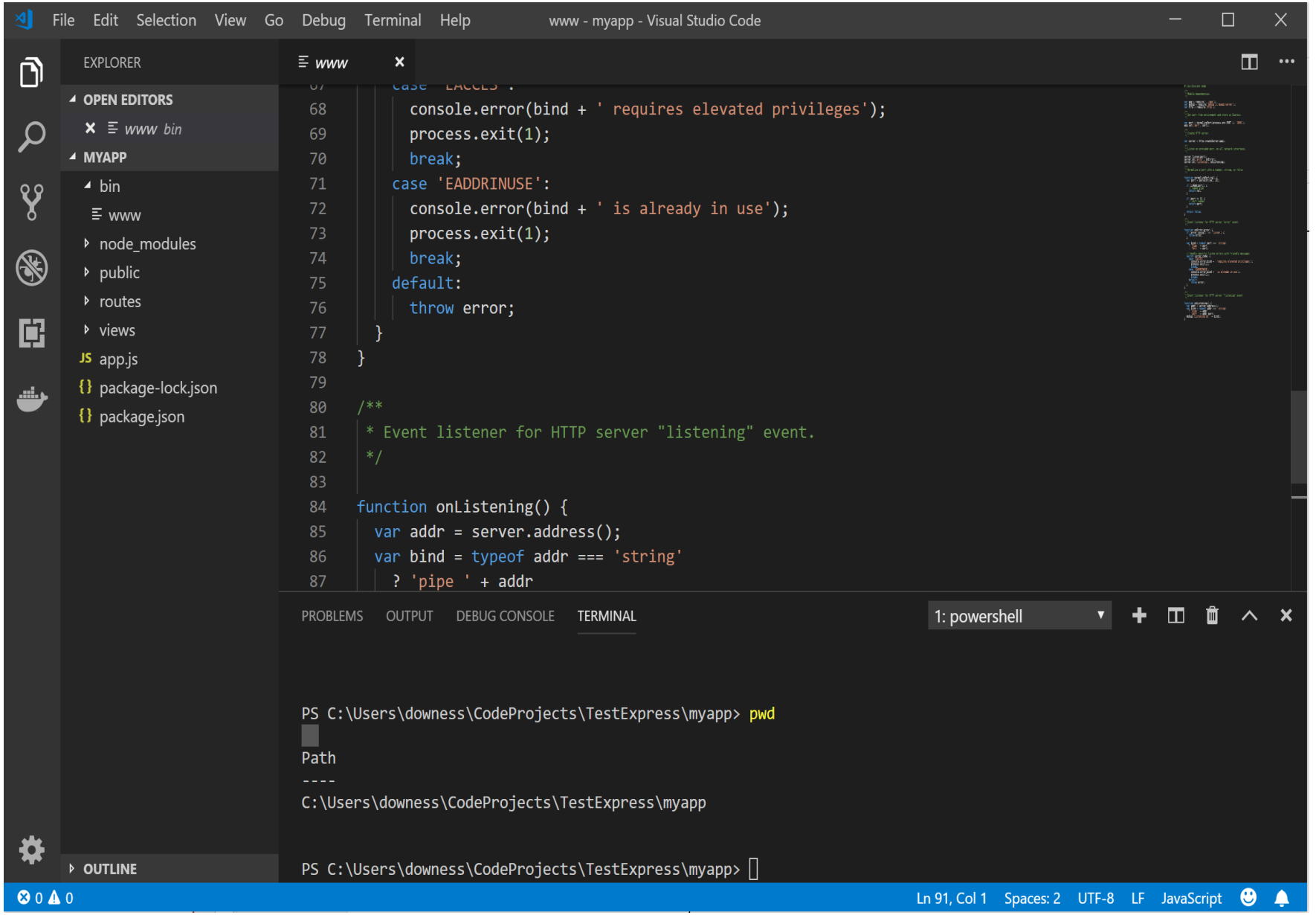
Integrates explorer, text editor and command shell



Development Environment

Visual Studio Code

Integrates and provides options for directories and files, text editor, and command window



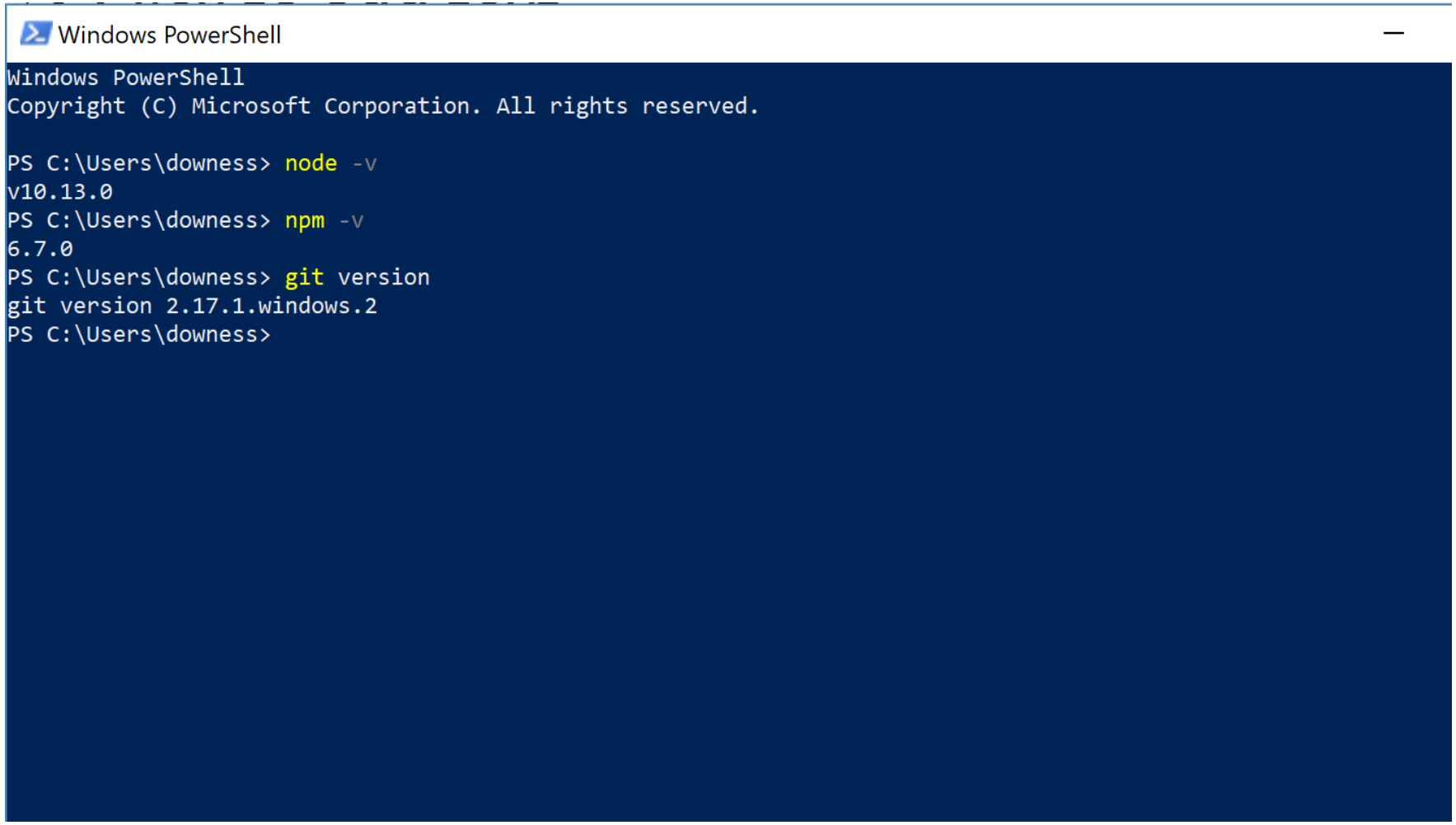
Path

Test

Git and Node run from the command line in the shell.

Test them in the command shell

If they don't work, they have to be added to the path (probably)



C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects

Path

Add to Path

Use the Windows system settings to add Git and/or Node to the Windows path.

The path tells Windows where to look for a command line program.

To add into PATH:

1. Right-Click on My Computer.
2. Click on Advanced System Settings.
3. Click on Environment Variables.
4. Then, under System Variables, look for the **path** variable and click edit.
5. **Add** the **path** to **git's** bin and cmd at the end of the string like this: ;C:\Program Files**Git**\bin**git**.exe;C:\Program Files**Git**\cmd.

Installing Git in PATH with GitHub client for Windows - Stack Overflow

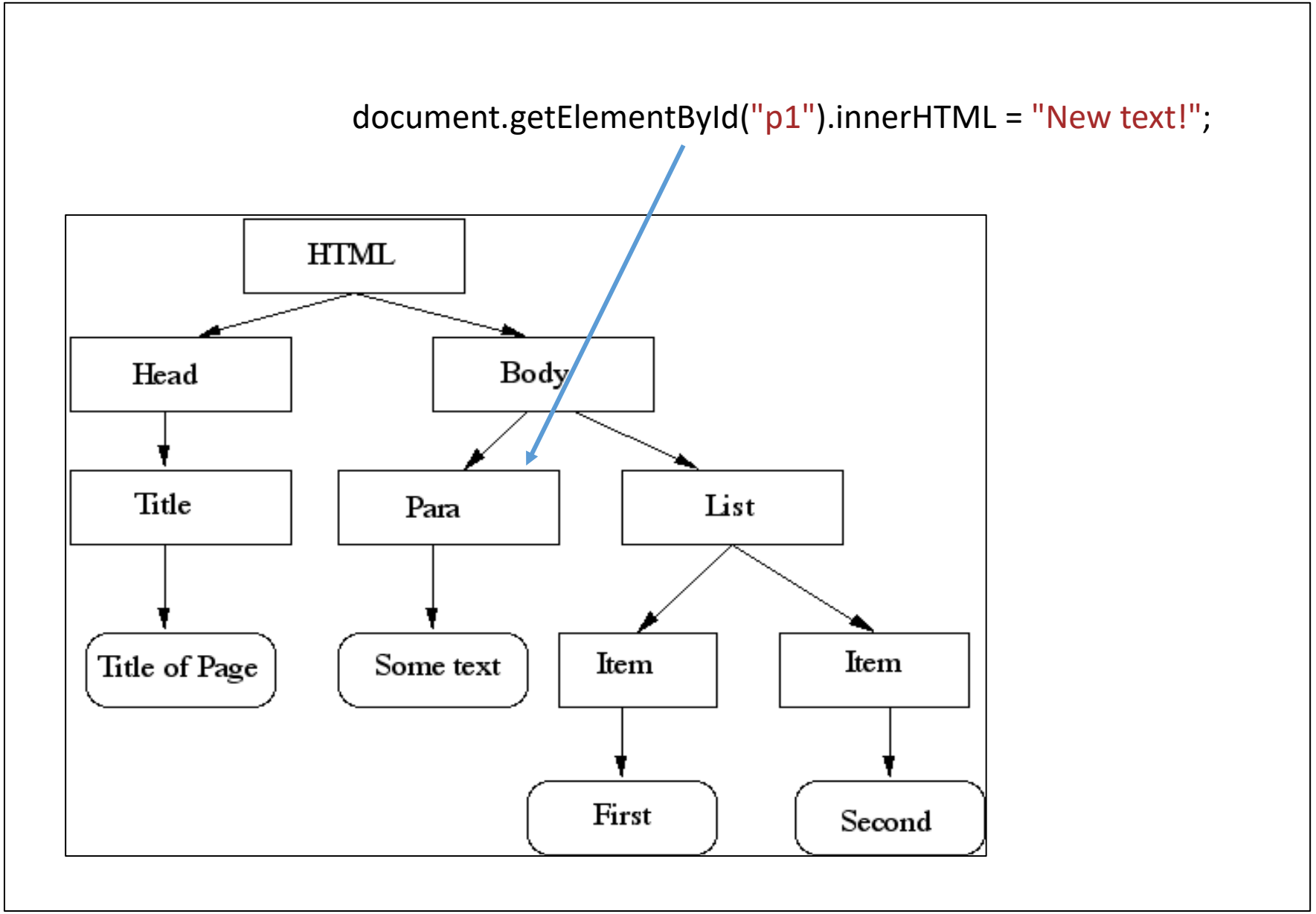
https://stackoverflow.com/questions/.../installing-git-in-path-with-github-client-for-wind...

https://stackoverflow.com/questions/26620312/installing-git-in-path-with-github-client-for-windows

Javascript

DOM

Javascript uses *selectors* to interoperate with a web page Document Object Model (DOM) to get and manipulate web page values. There is also an analogous Browser Object Model (BOM).

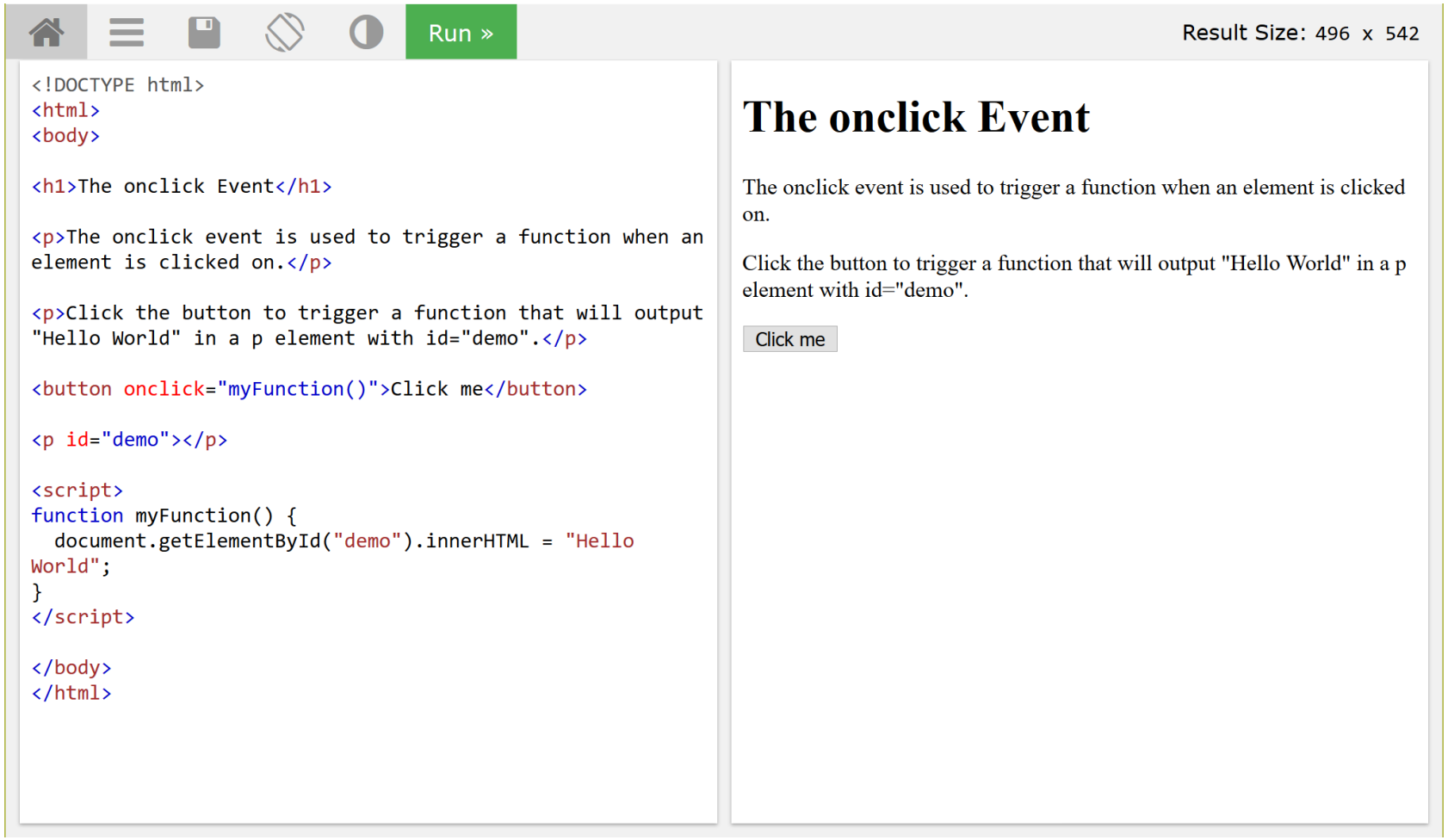


https://www.w3schools.com/js/js_htmldom.asp

Javascript

Events

Javascript uses *listeners* to respond to events on a web page such as page loads, clicks, changes in forms, mouse hovers, etc.



https://www.w3schools.com/jsref/tryit.asp?filename=tryjsref_onclick

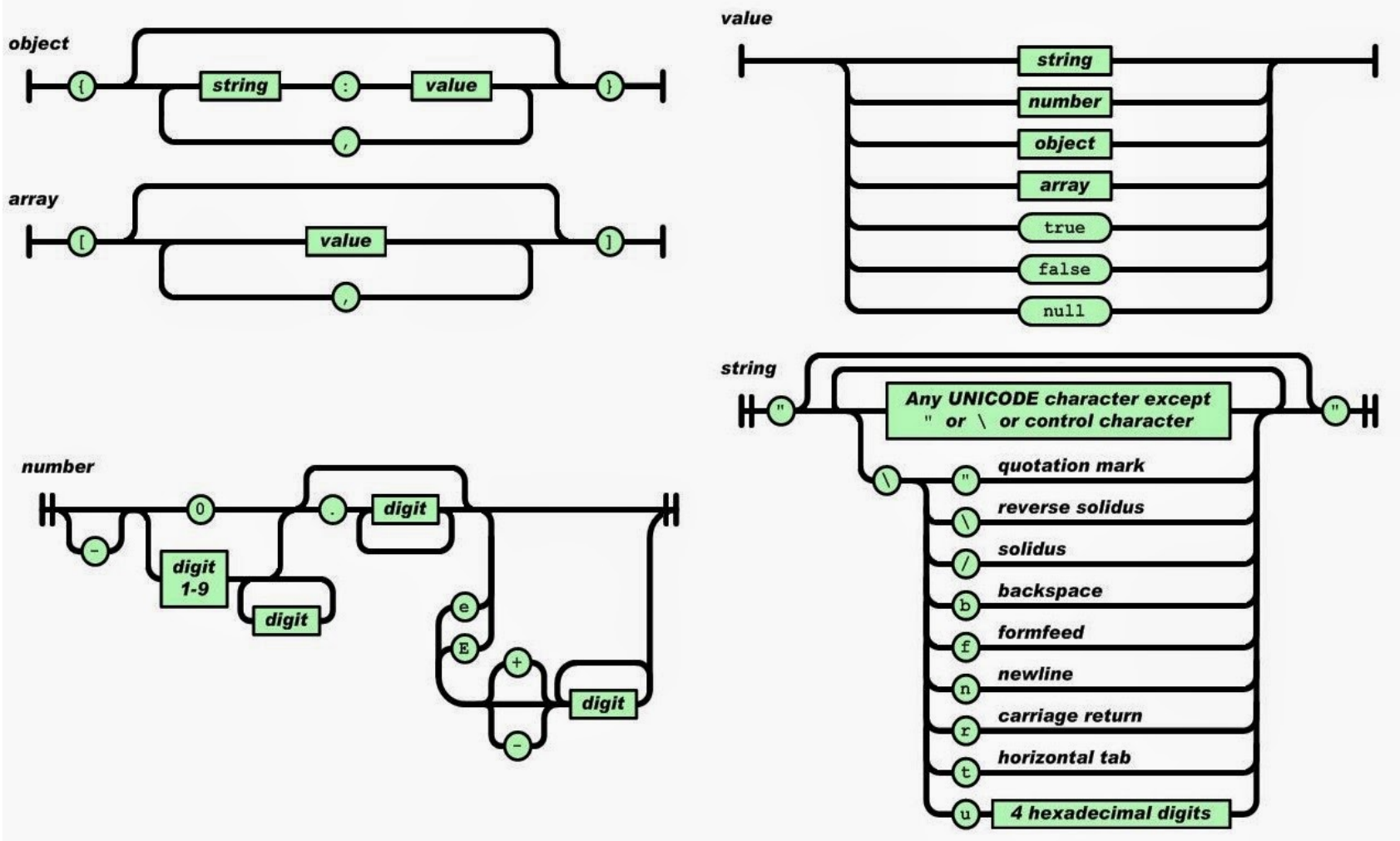
https://www.w3schools.com/jsref/dom_obj_event.asp

Javascript

JSON

In Javascript data structures are represented using text formatted as *Javascript Object Notation* (JSON).

Because JSON is text, it can be easily edited, and sent and stored almost anywhere.



https://www.w3schools.com/js/js_json_intro.asp

https://www.json.org/

Javascript

JSON

JSON is a *native* Javascript format. You can read and write to it directly using a selector.

So there is no complicated parsing of data being exchanged, as there is in XML.

XML

```
<empinfo>
   <employees>
      <employee>
         <name>James Kirk</name>
         <age>40></age>
      </employee>
      <employee>
         <name>Jean-Luc Picard</name>
         <age>45</age>
      </employee>
      <employee>
         <name>Wesley Crusher</name>
         <age>27</age>
      </employee>
   </employees>
</empinfo>
```

JSON

```
{  "empinfo" :
      {
            "employees" :  [
            {
                  "name" : "James Kirk",
                  "age" : 40,
            },
            {
                  "name" : "Jean-Luc Picard",
                  "age" : 45,
            },
            {
                  "name" : "Wesley Crusher",
                  "age" : 27,
            }
                              ]
      }
}
```

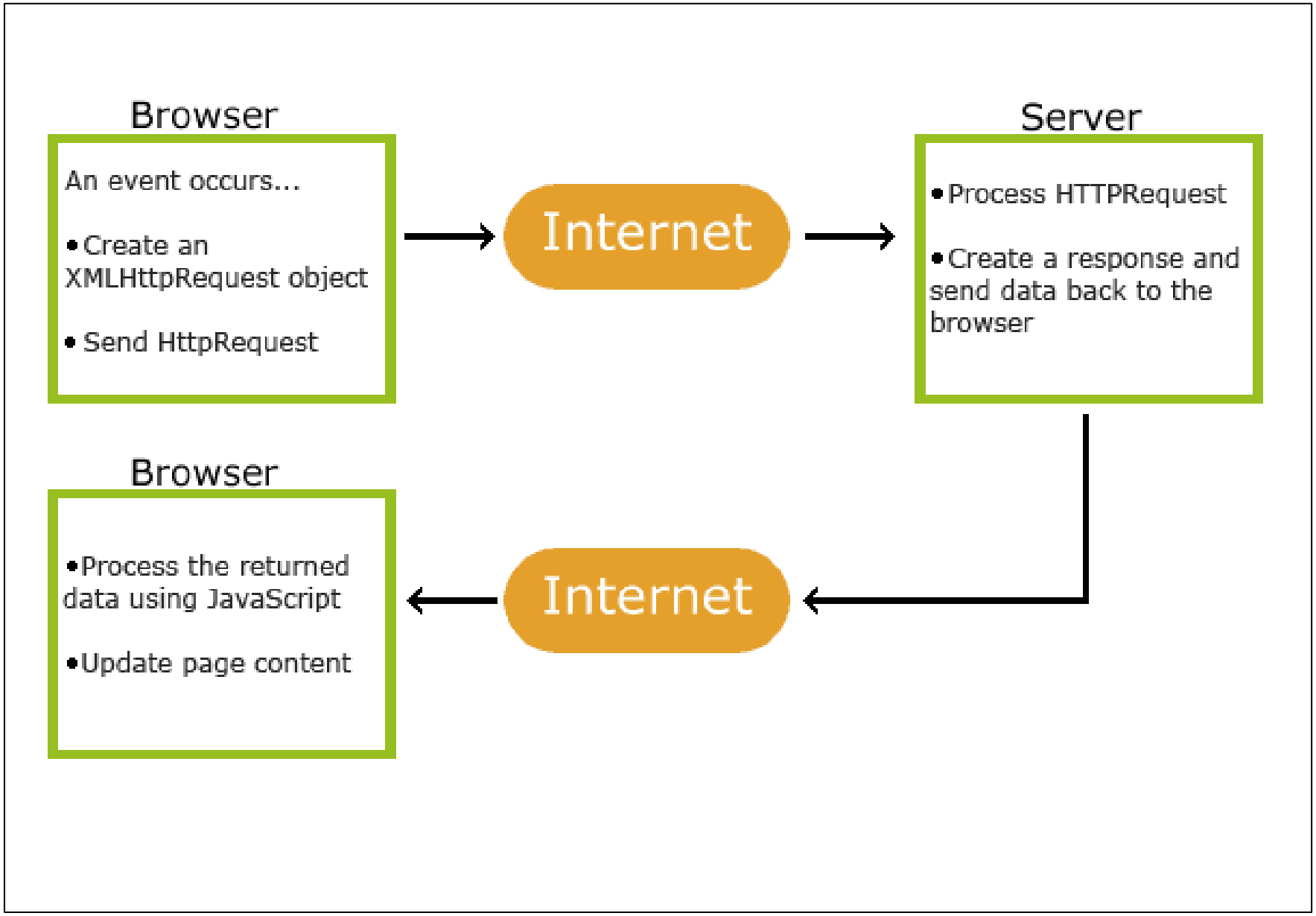
https://www.w3schools.com/js/js_json_intro.asp

https://www.json.org/

Javascript

AJAX

Javascript uses *Asynchronous JavaScript And XML* (AJAX) to read data from a web server after the page has loaded, update a web page without reloading the page, and send data to a web server - in the background.



https://www.w3schools.com/js/js_ajax_intro.asp

Javascript

AI Services

Send an API request using AJAX and API key to MS Cognitive Services (Computer Vision) to create alt text for images.

Analyze image:

Enter the URL to an image, then click the **Analyze image** button.

Image to analyze: http://upload.wikimedia
Subscription Key a178dfae365340c9b84a (To get your key, go to this page)
Analyze image

Image and Auto-generated Caption:

a large waterfall over a rocky cliff

Full Data from Response:


```
{
  "categories": [
    {
      "name": "outdoor_water",
      "score": 0.9921875,
      "detail": {
        "landmarks": []
      }
    }
  ],
  "color": {
    "dominantColorForeground": "Grey",
    "dominantColorBackground": "Green",
    "dominantColors": [
      "Grey",
      "Green"
    ],
    "accentColor": "4D5E2F",
    "isBwImg": false,
    "isBWImg": false
  },
  "description": {
    "tags": [
      "nature",
      "water",
      "waterfall",
      "outdoor",
```


Adapted from this page.

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\MS-API\Computer Vision

https://www.downes.ca/files/msindex.html

https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/cognitive-services/Computer-vision/quickstarts/javascript-analyze

Javascript

jQuery

jQuery is a Javascript library that simplifies Javascript (and especially selectors and listeners).

It's often included in web pages as a remote script (ie., `<script src="jquery.js">`)

jQuery

```
var myElement = $("#id01");
```

JavaScript

```
var myElement = document.getElementById("id01");
```

jQuery

```
$("#id").remove();
```

JavaScript

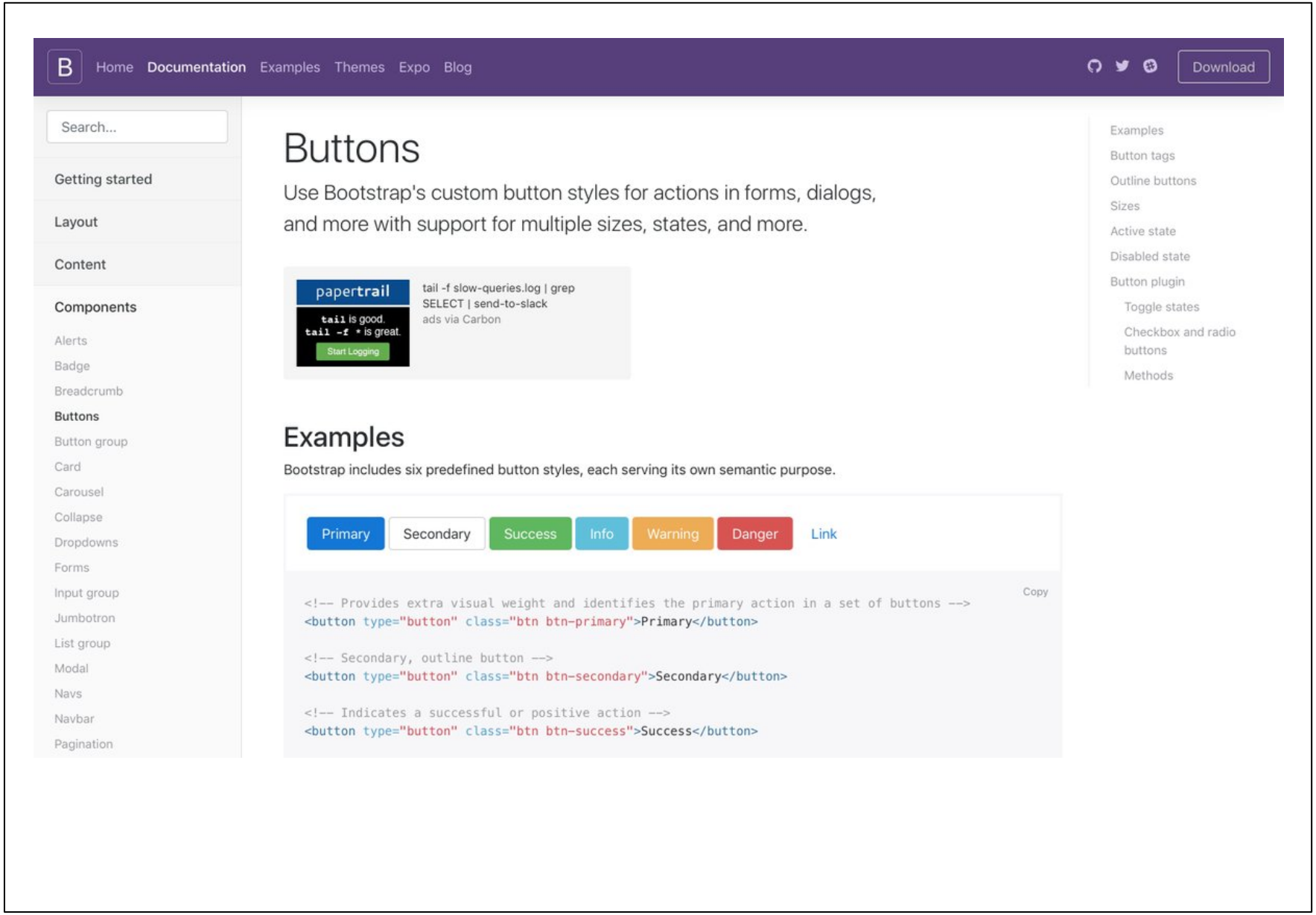
```
element.parentNode.removeChild(element);
```

https://www.w3schools.com/jquery/default.asp

Javascript

Bootstrap

Bootstrap is a Javascript library built on top of jQuery that automates a lot of web page styling and interface elements. It makes it a lot easier to support mobile devices and accessibility standards (aka ARIA).

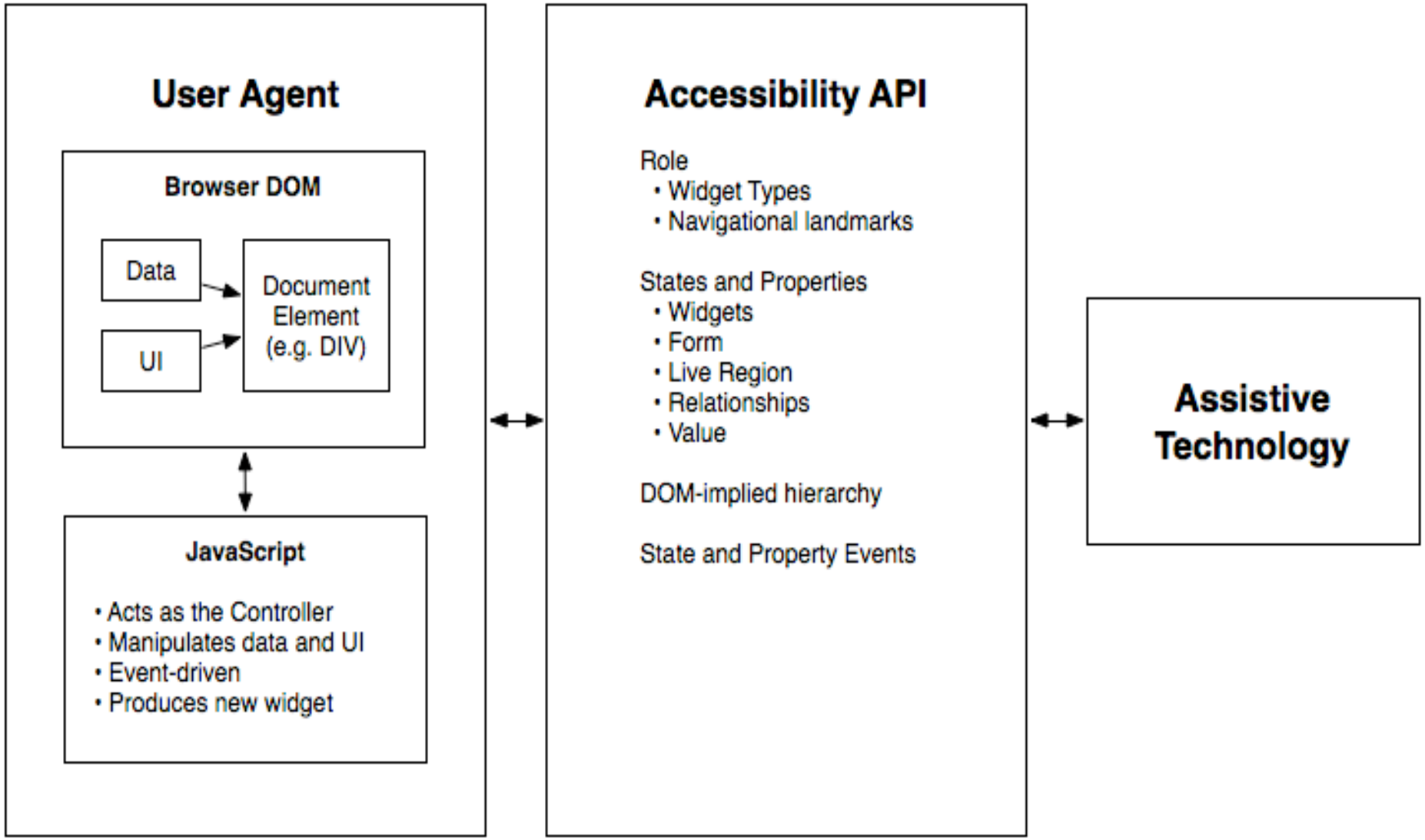


https://getbootstrap.com/

Javascript

ARIA

The Accessible Rich Internet Applications (ARIA) standard provides an interface between Javascript DOM elements and assistive technologies.

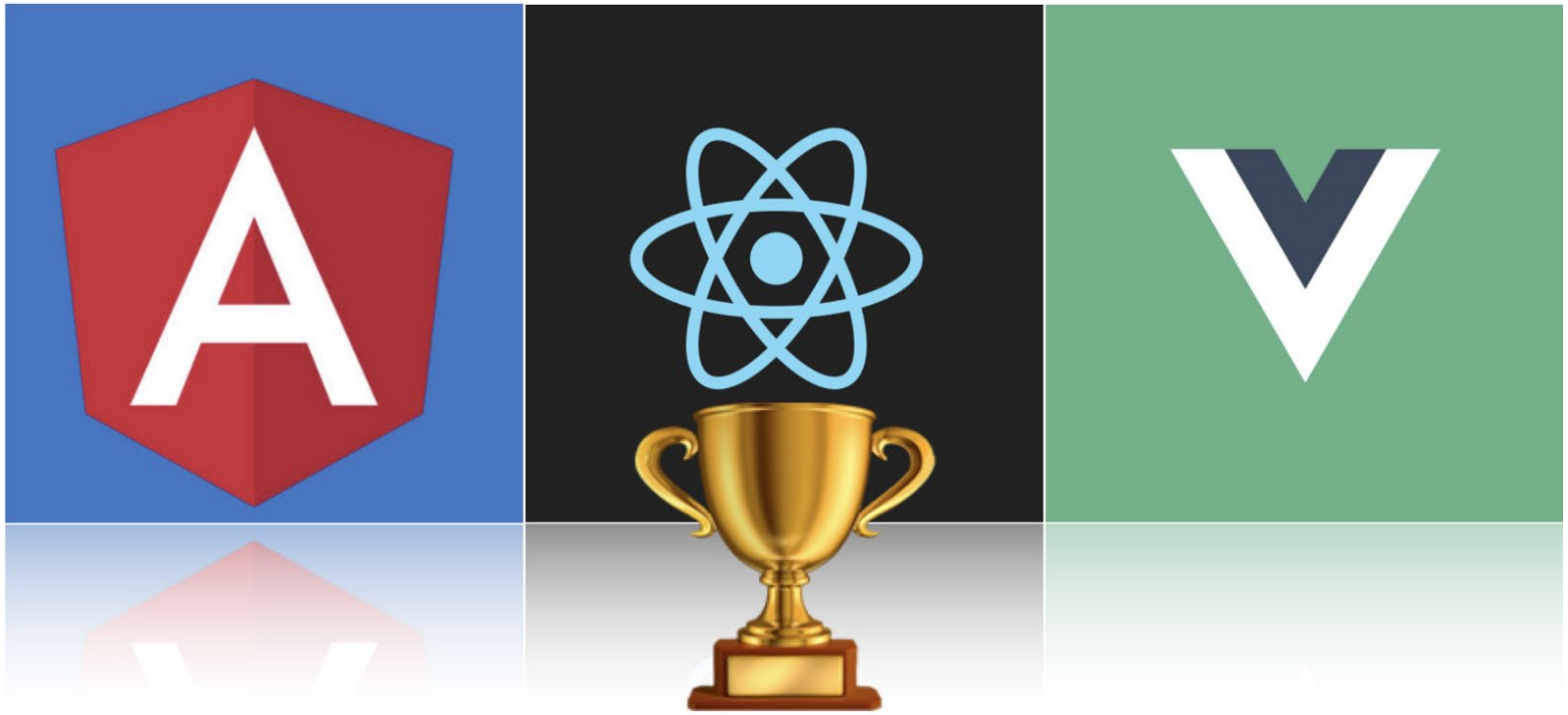


https://www.w3.org/TR/wai-aria/
https://developers.google.com/web/fundamentals/accessibility/semantics-aria/

Javascript

Frameworks

These are frontend libraries that manage interactions with backend services.



Angular: https://angular.io/
React: https://reactjs.org/
Vue: https://vuejs.org/

https://medium.com/zerotomastery/tech-trends-showdown-react-vs-angular-vs-vue-61ffaf1d8706
https://www.codeinwp.com/blog/angular-vs-vue-vs-react/

Node.js

Server

Node.js is a way of running Javascript on the server. In many ways, it *is* a web server. Node.js is run from the command line, and you can access it with a web browser.

Script in text file: app.js (edit in the text editor)

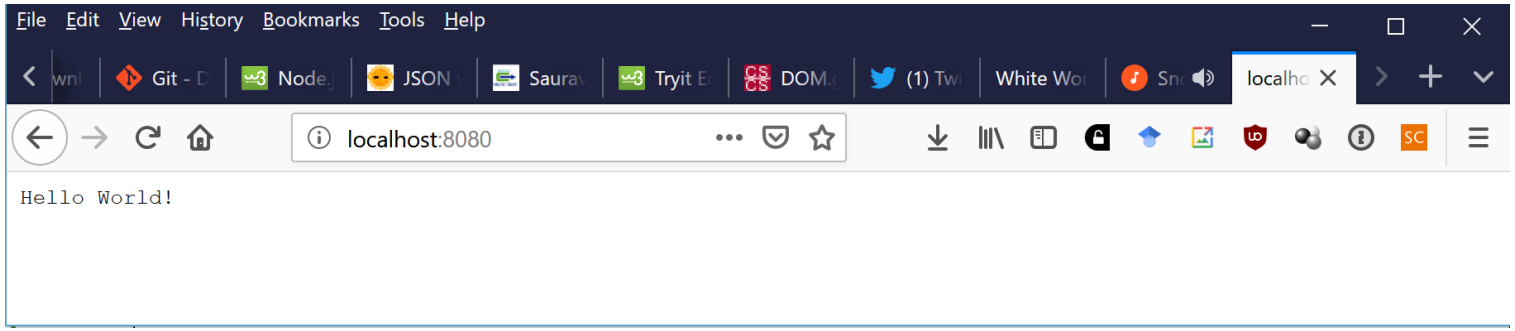
```
var http = require('http');
http.createServer(function (req, res) {
  res.writeHead(200, {'Content-Type': 'text/plain'});
  res.end('Hello World!');
}).listen(8080);
```

Run script (use the command line)

```
Windows PowerShell
Copyright (C) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

PS C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Node\app> node app.js
```

View in browser (http://localhost:8080)



C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Node\app

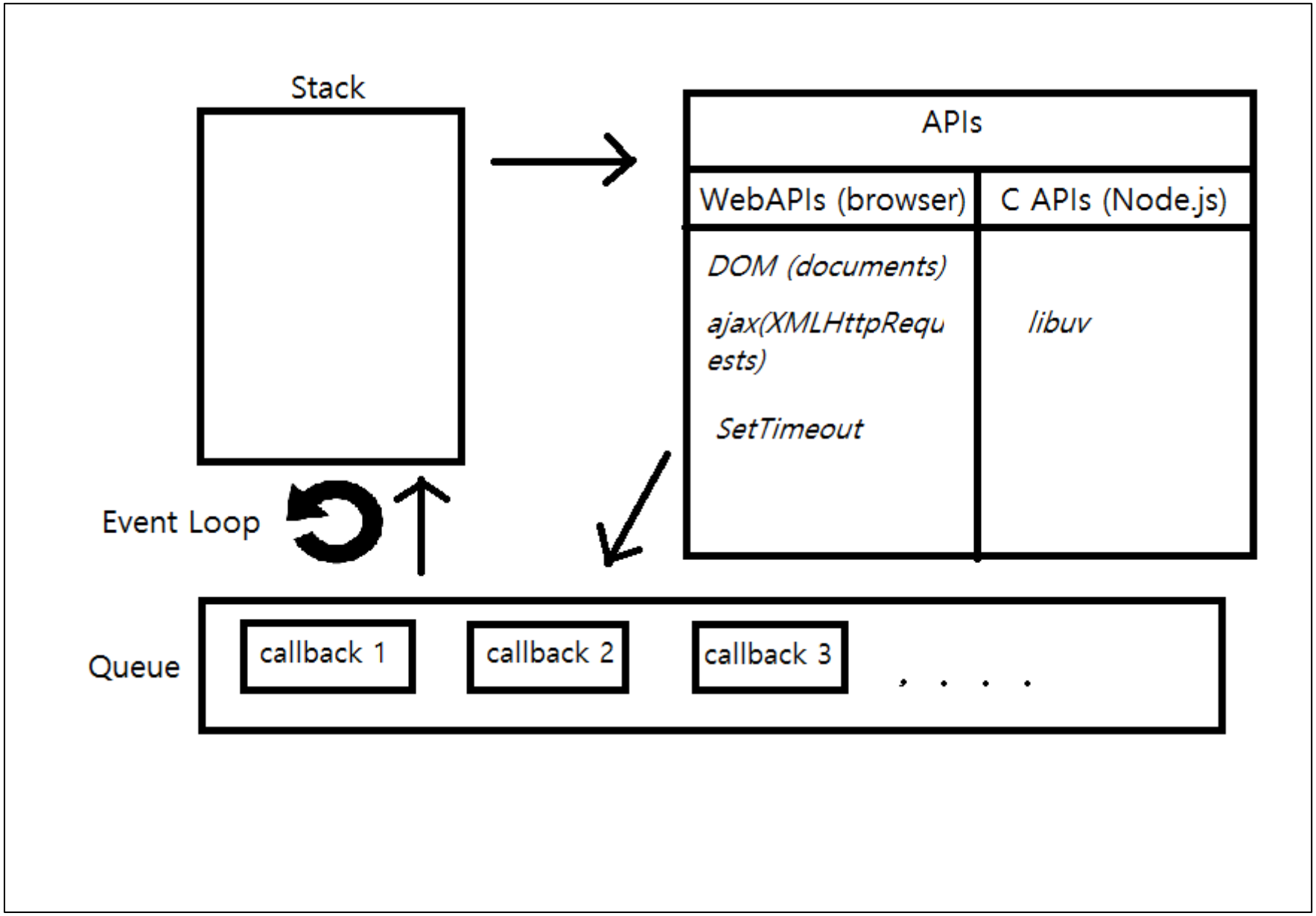
http://localhost:8080

https://www.w3schools.com/nodejs/default.asp

Node.js

Event Loop

Node.js runs commands one-by-one in the stack, but puts API calls to one side instead of waiting for them. When the stack is completed, it executes the first response in the queue sent back from the APIs.



http://vucuong12.github.io/2015/11/02/Javascript%20Event%20Loop%20with%20Node.js%20for%20Beginners/

Node.js

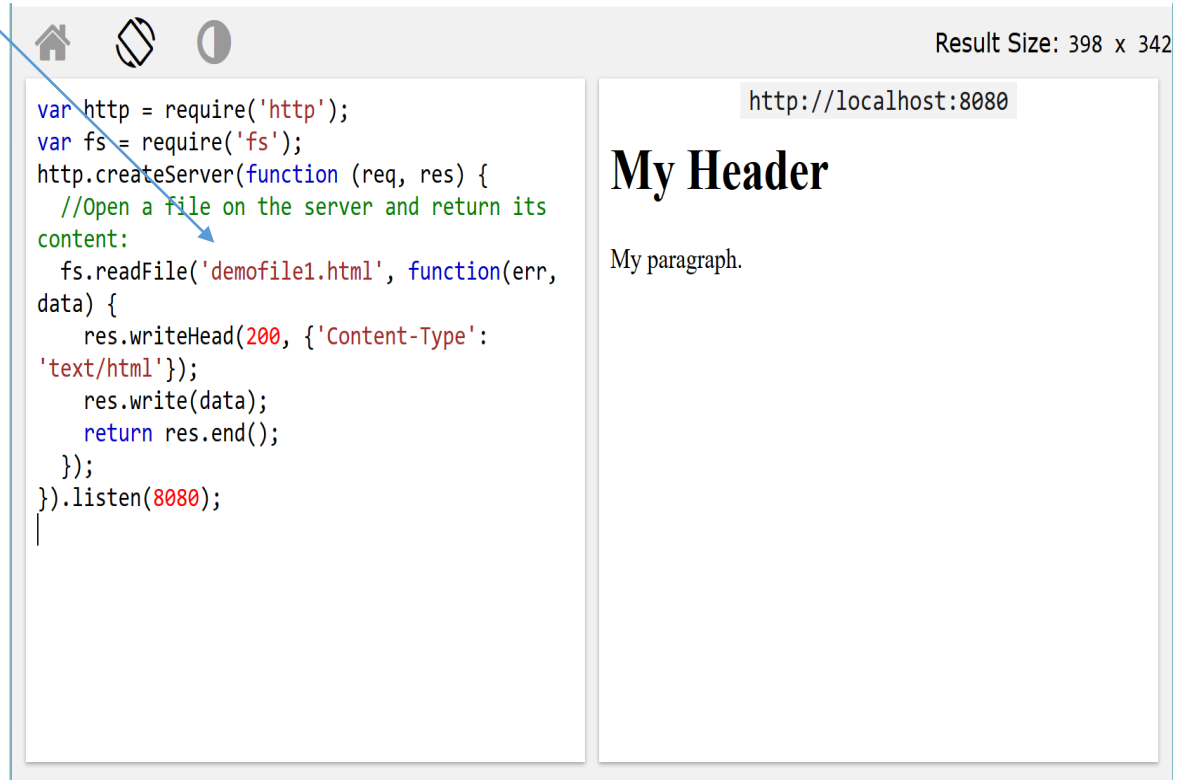
Files

Node.js can read and write to files on the local machine.

Thus it can read files and make them available to a web browser.

demofile1.html

```
<html>
<body>
<h1>My Header</h1>
<p>My paragraph.</p>
</body>
</html>
```



C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Node\w3schools

http://localhost:8080

https://www.w3schools.com/js/js_json_intro.asp

https://www.json.org/

Node.js

Modules

Other built-in Node.js modules include URL (for web requests), Events (for listeners), Upload Files, and Email.

```
var nodemailer = require('nodemailer');

var transporter = nodemailer.createTransport({
 service: 'gmail',
 auth: {
  user: 'youremail@gmail.com',
  pass: 'yourpassword'
 }
});

var mailOptions = {
 from: 'youremail@gmail.com',
 to: 'myfriend@yahoo.com',
 subject: 'Sending Email using Node.js',
 text: 'That was easy!'
};

transporter.sendMail(mailOptions, function(error, info){
 if (error) {
  console.log(error);
 } else {
  console.log('Email sent: ' + info.response);
 }
});
```

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Node\w3schools

http://localhost:8080

https://www.w3schools.com/nodejs/nodejs_email.asp

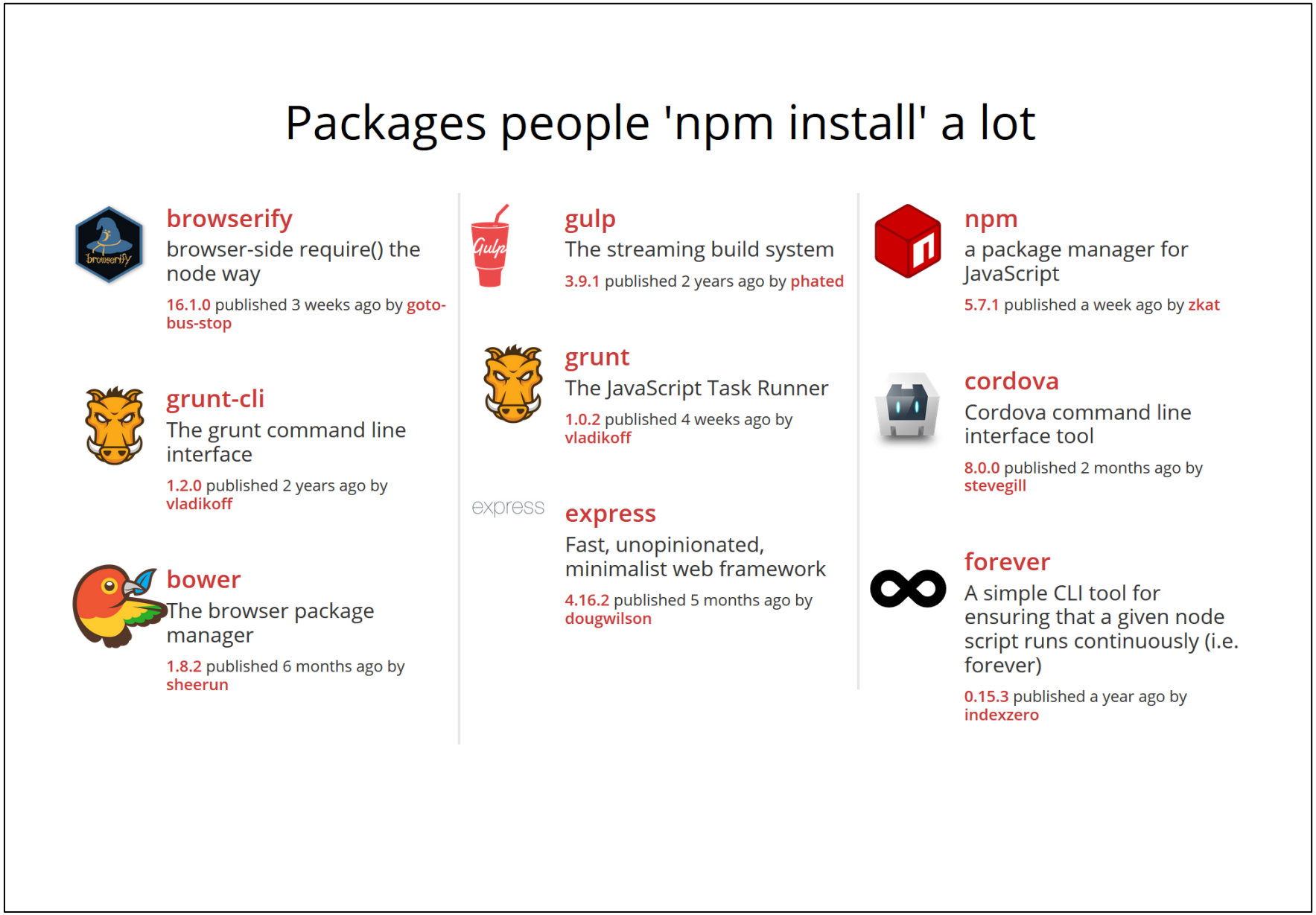
Node.js

NPM

NPM is the *Node Package Manager*. It comes with Node. It provides a way to obtain and install Node packages written by other developers.

NPM runs from the command line.

An alternative to NPM is Facebook's YARN.



https://www.npmjs.com/

https://yarnpkg.com/en/

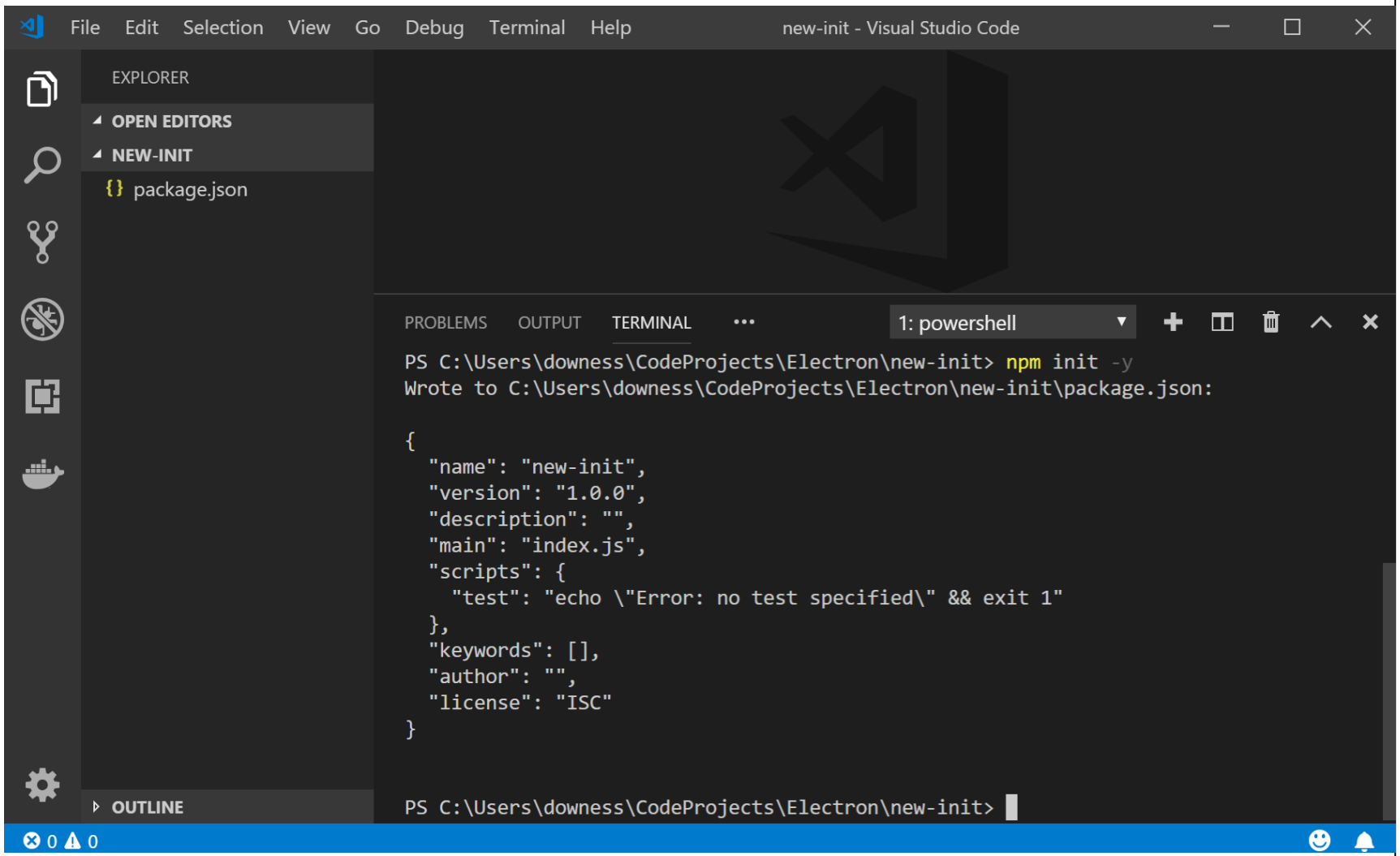
NPM

Init

NPM relies on a file called package.json to tell it what to do.

Create a new package.json file using the command npm init.

(You could also use a text editor but this is easier)



https://docs.npmjs.com/creating-a-package-json-file

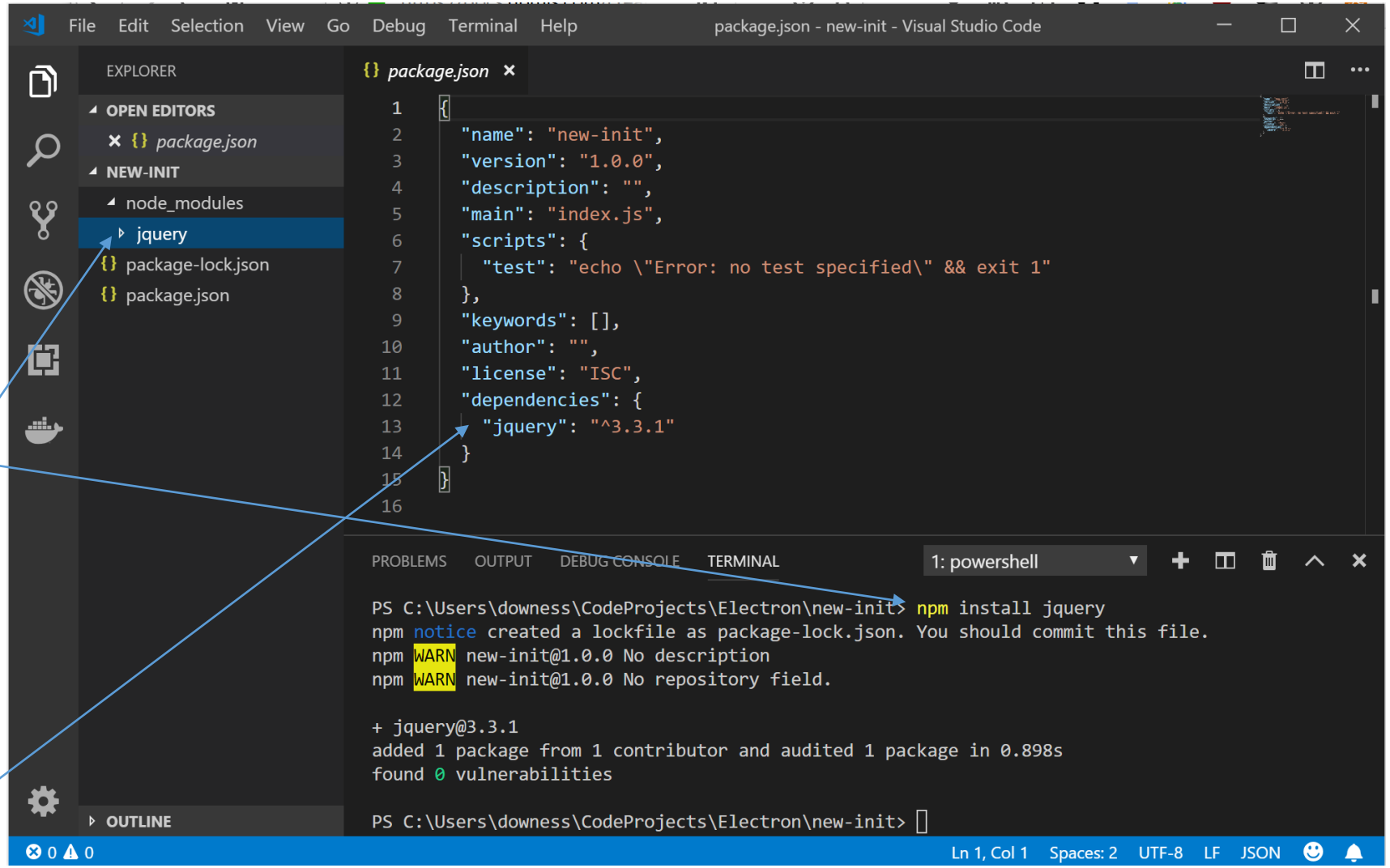
NPM

Install

Install a new Node package using the npm install command.

For example, to install jQuery: npm install jQuery

This downloads files, and also adds a line in package.json, as shown.



https://docs.npmjs.com/cli/install

NPM

Const

Use a package by declaring a ‘const’ in a script. This makes objects and functions available to the script.

Node won’t run the if-then in curl.get() until it gets a response from the web server.

The example uses jQuery to scrape the IMDB website for James Bond films.

```
const curl = require("curl");
const jsdom = require("jsdom");

const url = "http://www.imdb.com/list/ls004489992/";

curl.get(url, null, (err,resp,body)=>{
  if(resp.statusCode == 200){
     parseData(body);
  }
  else{
     //some error handling
     console.log("error while fetching url");
  }
});

function parseData(html){
    const {JSDOM} = jsdom;
    const dom = new JSDOM(html);
    const $ = (require('jquery'))(dom.window);

    //let's start extracting the data
}
```

https://medium.com/@asimmittal/using-jquery-nodejs-to-scrape-the-web-9bb5d439413b

Updated script for example: https://gist.github.com/Downes/630c639ca77e01a21782ce2e22b20ad8

NPM

Windows

Save some heartache and run this. It installs Windows dev tools globally (-g) including Visual Studio Build and Python 2.7 (needed for some Node.js modules).

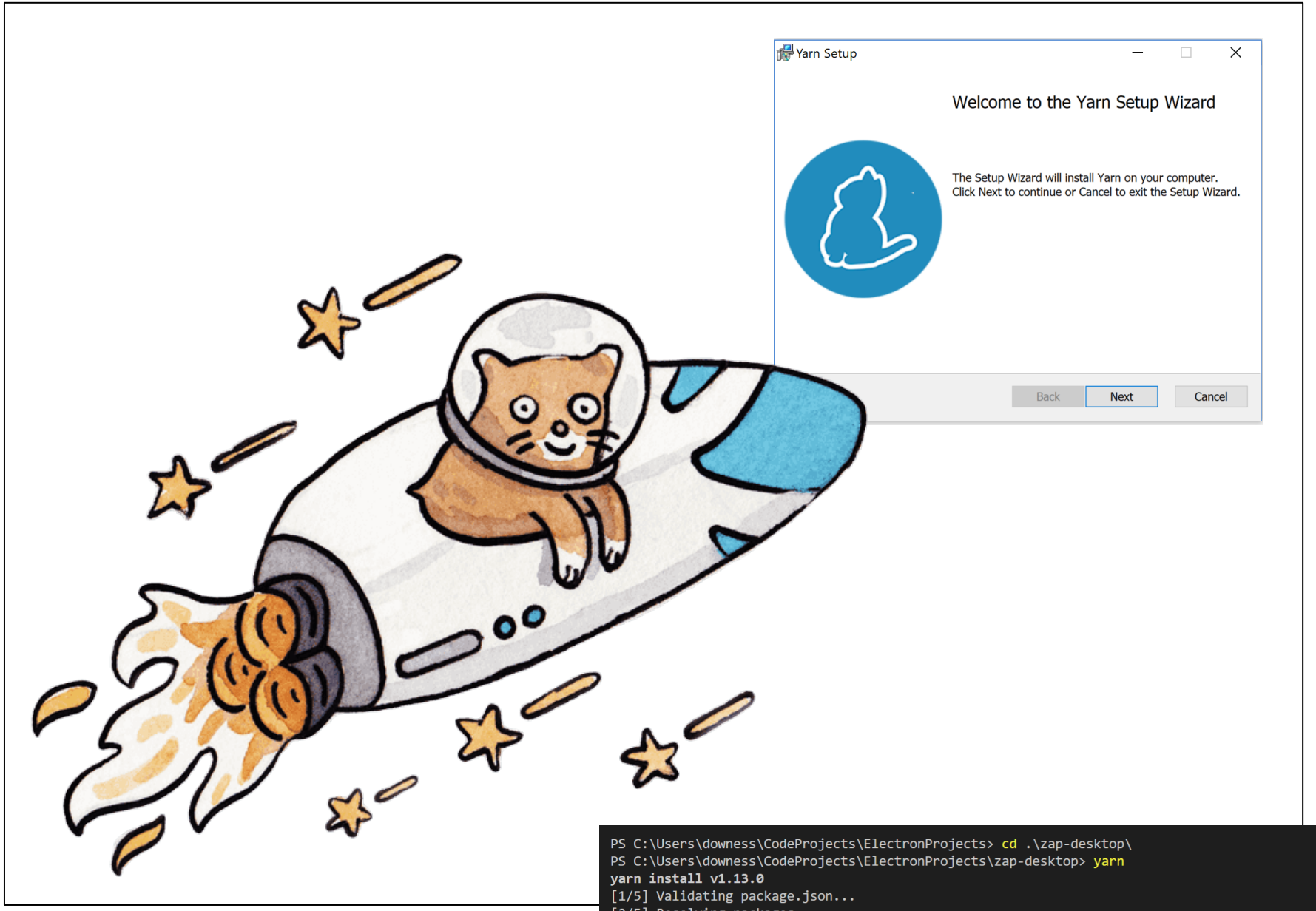
npm install --global --production windows-build-tools

https://github.com/tensorflow/tfjs/issues/741

Yarn

Install

Yarn is an alternative to NPM.
- builds package.json



https://yarnpkg.com/

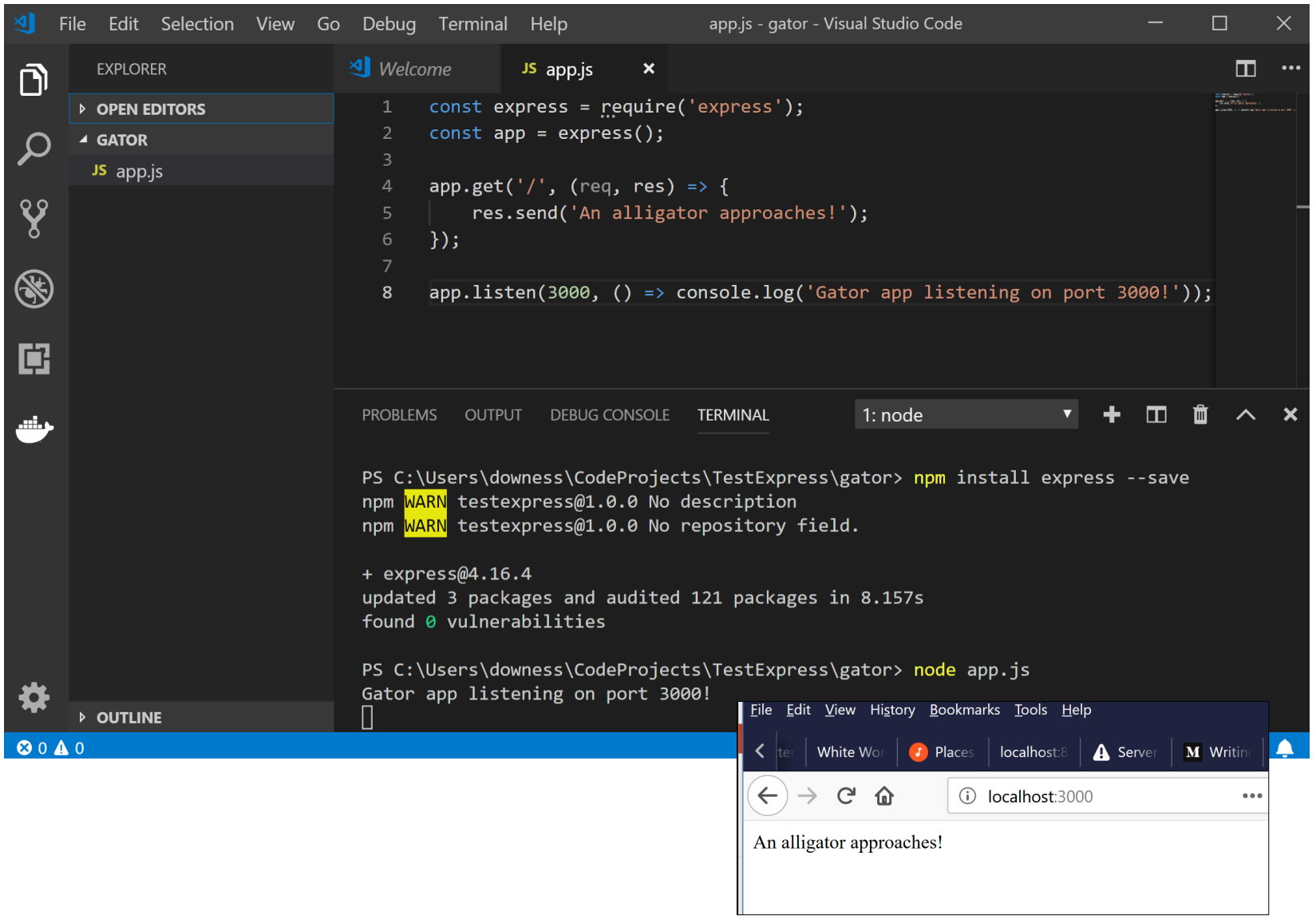
```
PS C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects> cd .\zap-desktop\
PS C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\zap-desktop> yarn
yarn install v1.13.0
[1/5] Validating package.json...
[2/5] Resolving packages...
[3/5] Fetching packages...
[############----------------------------------------------------------------------------] 276/2152
```

Express

Install

The Express Node framework is a set of features for web and mobile applications. It is installed using npm.

It is launched and used like any other Node module using a pair of const declarations.



https://expressjs.com/

Other frameworks: Koa, Hapi
https://www.airpair.com/node.js/posts/nodejs-framework-comparison-express-koa-hapi

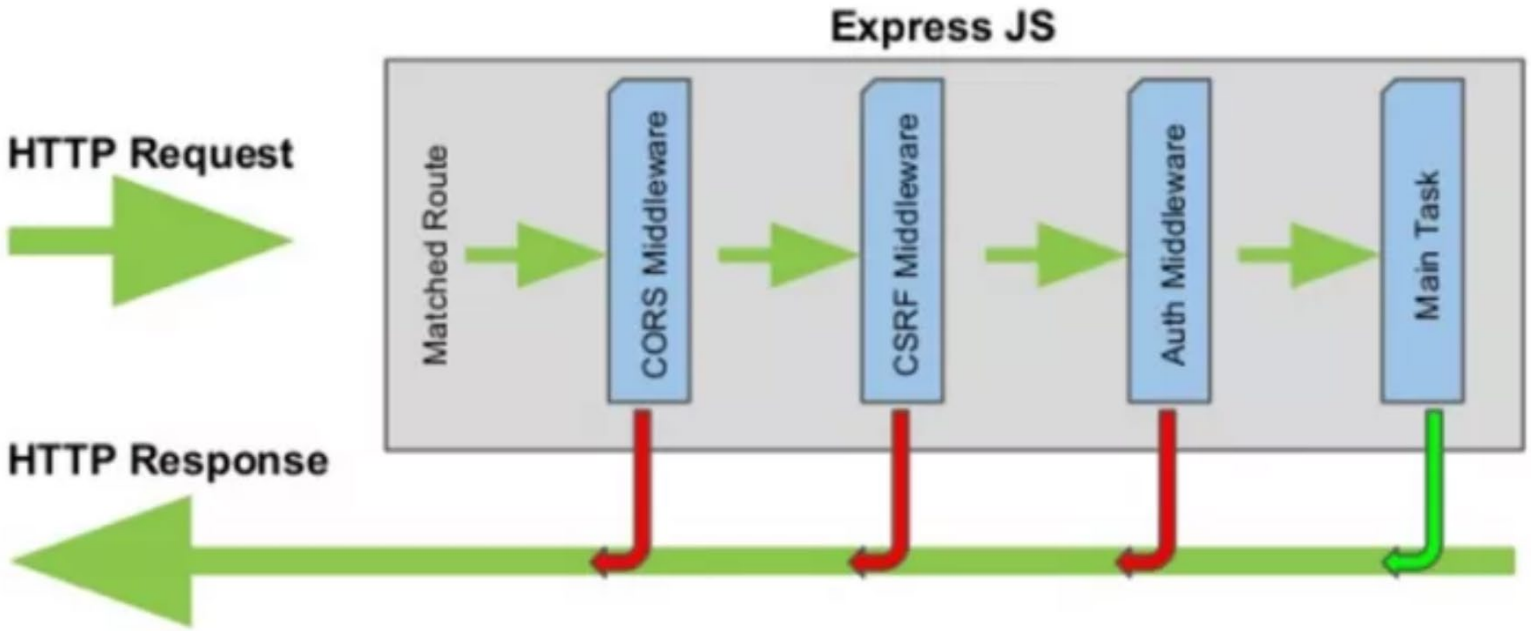
Express

Middleware

Express receives requests and returns a response.

Middleware is used to process the request before sending a response.

Eg. Is the user authorized to receive a response.



CORS – Cross Origin Resource Sharing
https://expressjs.com/en/resources/middleware/cors.html

CSRF – Cross Site Request Forgery

Auth – Passwords / OAuth

https://blog.codeanalogies.com/2017/11/03/understanding-the-basics-of-express-js/

Express

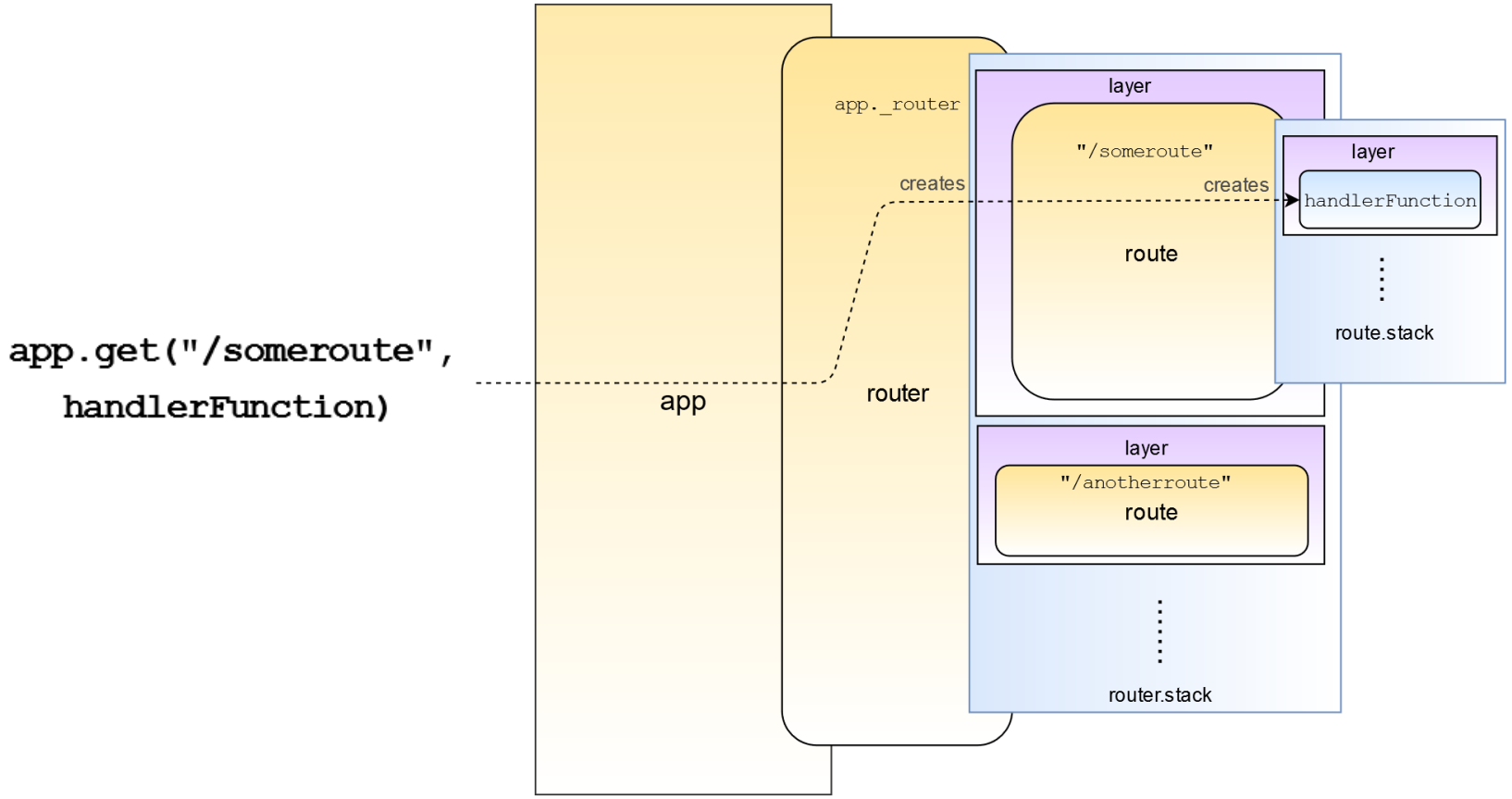
Routes

Express requests are handled by various *routes* corresponding to a request type (GET, POST, PUT, etc) and an optional path.

```
const express = require('express')
const app = express()

app.get('/', (req, res) => res.send('Hello World!'))

app.listen(3000, () => console.log('Example app listening on port 3000!'))
```



https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Learn/Server-side/Express_Nodejs/routes

Express

Response

Express responses are handled by the response object (res). For example, res.send() or res.json()

The response can also be formatted by template engines, eg. Pug

The response object

```
1  app.get('/api/test', (req, res) => {
2    res.send({ hello: 'world' });
3  });
```

Using a template engine

```
$ npm install pug --save
```

```
app.set('view engine', 'pug')
```

```
app.get('/', function (req, res) {
  res.render('index', { title: 'Hey', message: 'Hello there!' })
})
```

https://expressjs.com/en/guide/using-template-engines.html

https://github.com/expressjs/express/wiki#template-engines

https://fullstack-developer.academy/res-json-vs-res-send-vs-res-end-in-express/

Express

Generator

This is a single-command installer for a full Express application.

To run:
$ npm start

Then browse to:
localhost:3000

```
$ npm install express-generator -g
```

```
$ express --view=pug myapp
```

```
.
├── app.js
├── bin
│   └── www
├── package.json
├── public
│   ├── images
│   ├── javascripts
│   └── stylesheets
│       └── style.css
├── routes
│   ├── index.js
│   └── users.js
└── views
    ├── error.pug
    ├── index.pug
    └── layout.pug

7 directories, 9 files
```

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ExpressProjects\Generate

http://localhost:3000

https://expressjs.com/en/starter/generator.html

Express

REST/MySQL

DB Connection uses a MySQL module (and installed DB) and Express routes for Create, Read, Update and Delete (CRUD) operations.

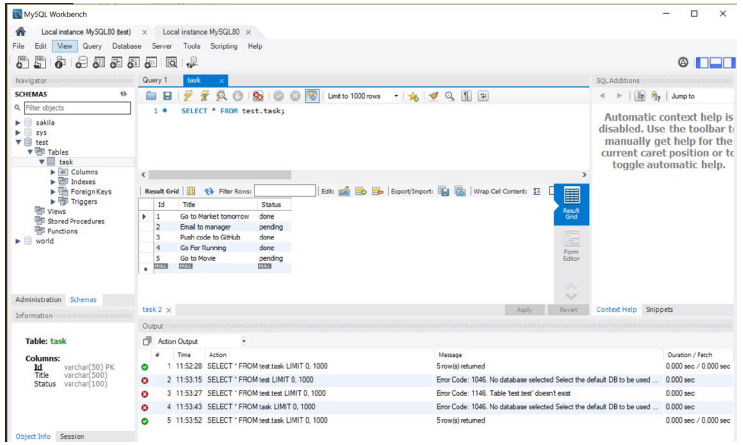
C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ExpressProjects\MySQLAPI

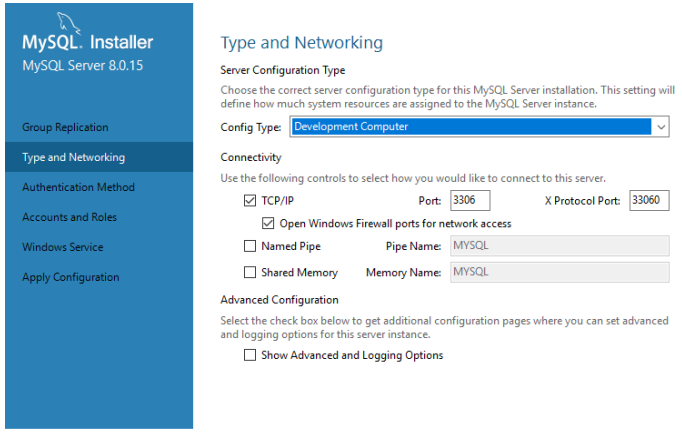
http://localhost:3000/tasks

create **dbconnection.js**

```
1  var mysql=require('mysql');
2   var connection=mysql.createPool({
3
4  host:'localhost',
5   user:'root',
6   password:'',
7   database:'demo'
8
9  });
10  module.exports=connection;
```

Path	Request Type
http://localhost:3000/Tasks	GET
http://localhost:3000/Tasks/1	GET
http://localhost:3000/Tasks/1	DELETE
http://localhost:3000/Tasks	POST (pass data in body)
http://localhost:3000/Tasks/1	PUT (pass data in body)





https://jinalshahblog.wordpress.com/2016/10/06/rest-api-using-node-js-and-mysql/

Feathers

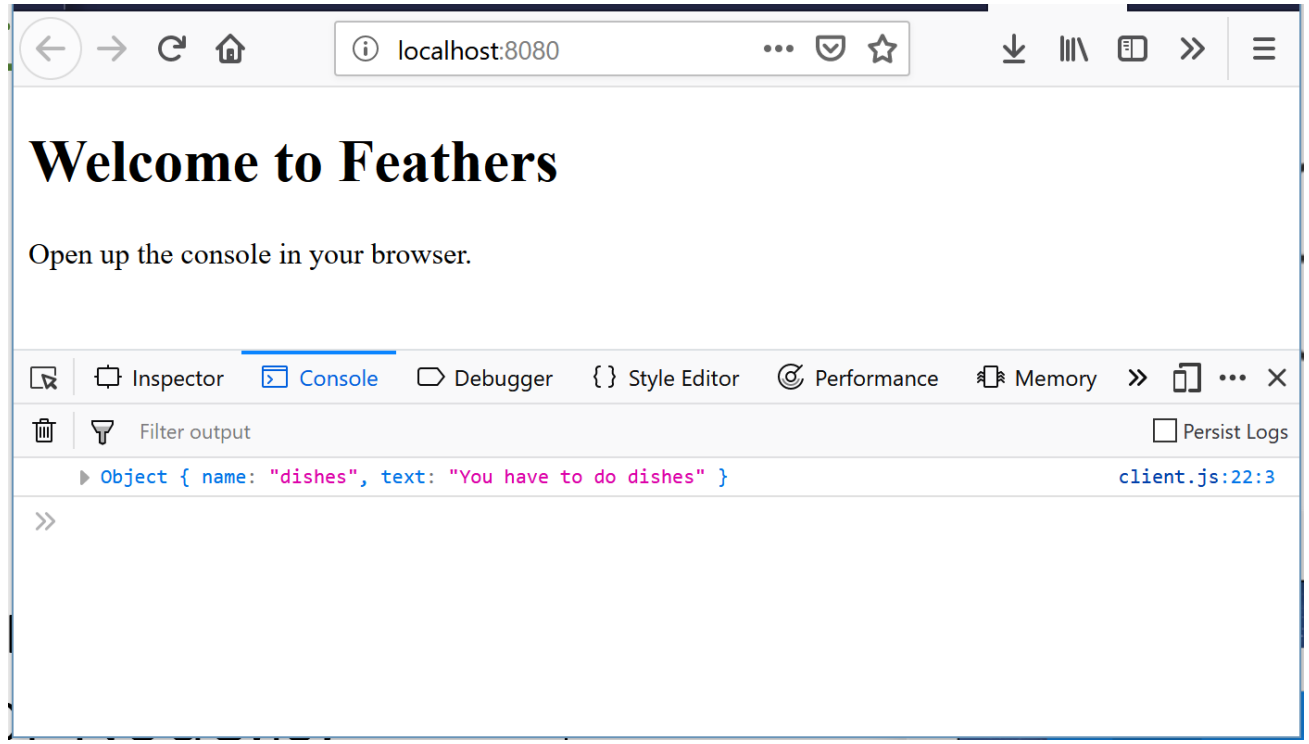
Express

A REST and real-time API layer for Node.js, React Native and the browser that can be built on Express.

This example uses http

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ExpressProjects\Feathers

http://localhost:8080



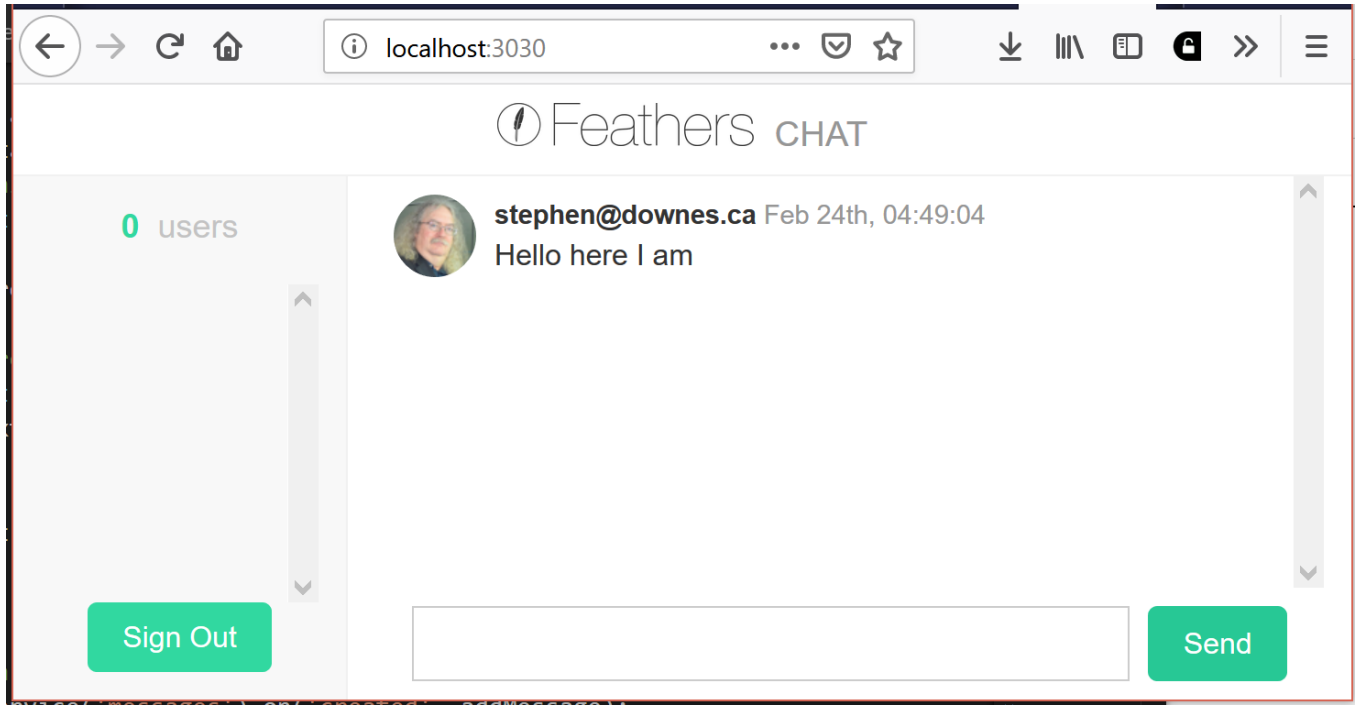
https://feathersjs.com/

https://docs.feathersjs.com/api/express

Feathers

Chat

This chat demonstrates the use of Feathers to create an app, services and hooks. The front-end is a longish Javascript (but could be a framework)



$ npm install @feathersjs/cli –g
$ mkdir feathers-app
$ cd feathers-app
$ feathers generate app (REST) (Postman: https://app.getpostman.com/)
$ feathers generate service (NeDB) (https://github.com/louischatriot/nedb)
$ feathers generate authentication (JWT) (https://auth0.com/docs/jwt)
$ feathers generate hook (x3)

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ExpressProjects\Chat

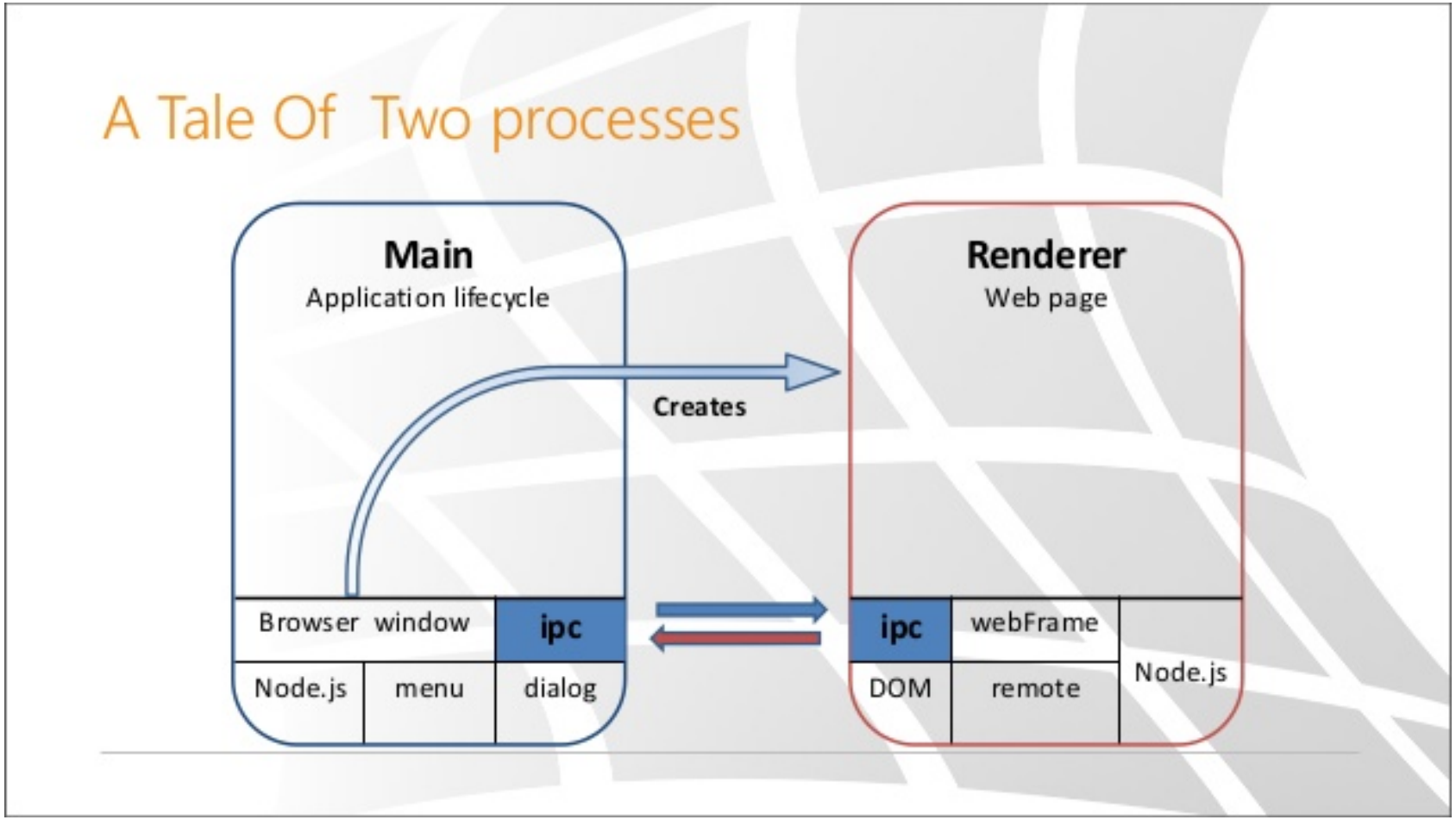
http://localhost:3030/

https://docs.feathersjs.com/guides/chat/creating.html

Electron

Processes

Electron is based on a combination of two processes – the main Node.js application, and a Chromium engine as a display renderer. They communicate through Inter-Process Communication (IPC).



https://www.slideshare.net/nirnoy9/bringing-javascript-to-the-desktop-with-electron

https://electronjs.org/

Electron

Packaging

The Electron application is converted from a Node.js app to a free-standing Mac, Windows or Linux app using an electron-packager.

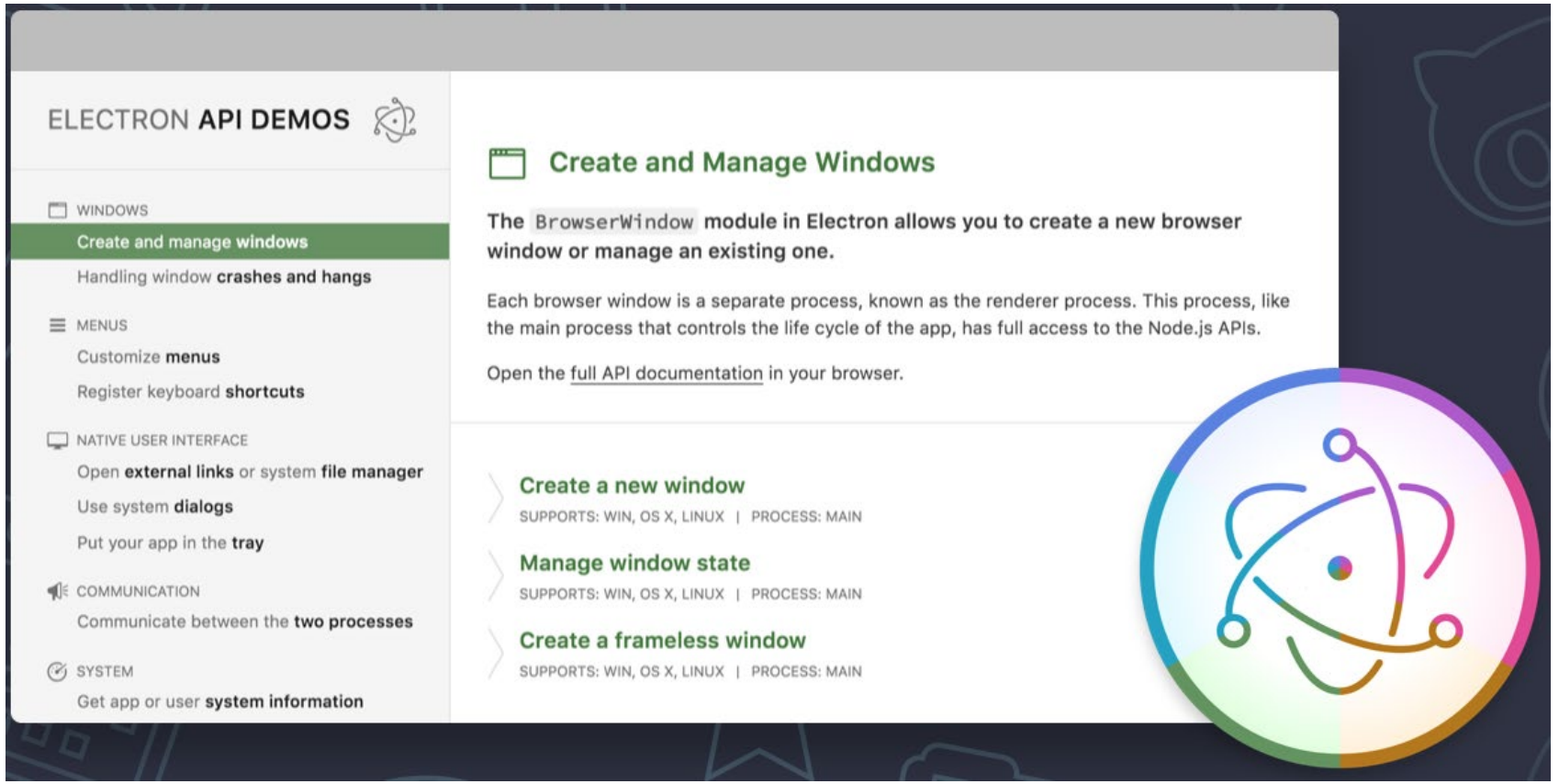
https://www.slideshare.net/nirnoy9/bringing-javascript-to-the-desktop-with-electron

https://electronjs.org/

Electron

APIs

As an application (as opposed to a website) Electron has access to computer files and processes. The Electron API Demo shows these at work.



$ git clone https://github.com/electron/electron-api-demos
$ cd electron-api-demos
$ npm install
$ npm start

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Electron\electron-apis\electron-api-demos

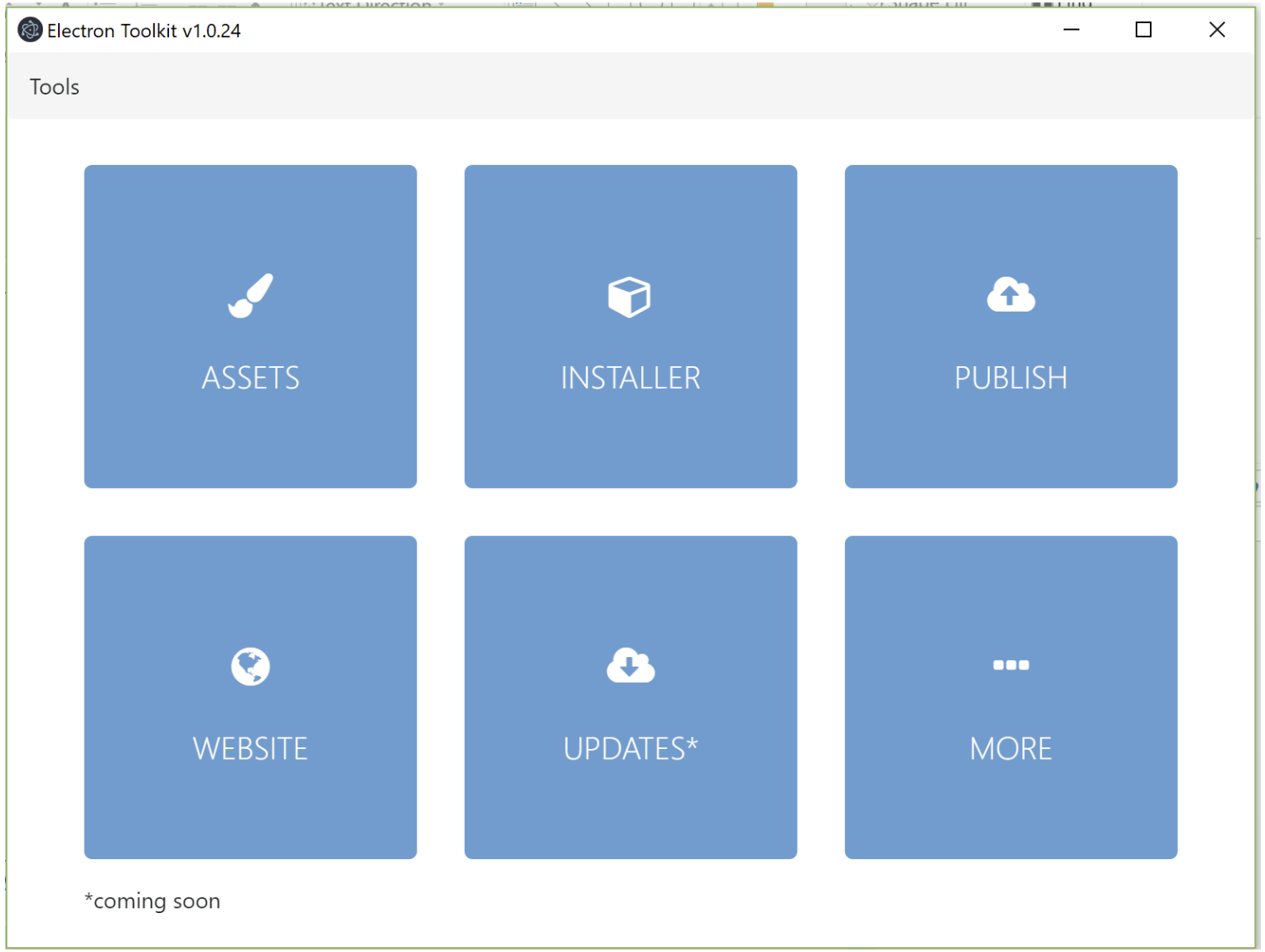
https://github.com/electron/electron-api-demos

Electron

Toolkit

The Electron Toolkit automates a number of the tasks involved in building Electron applications, including asset management, website, and publishing to GitHub.

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\Toolkit



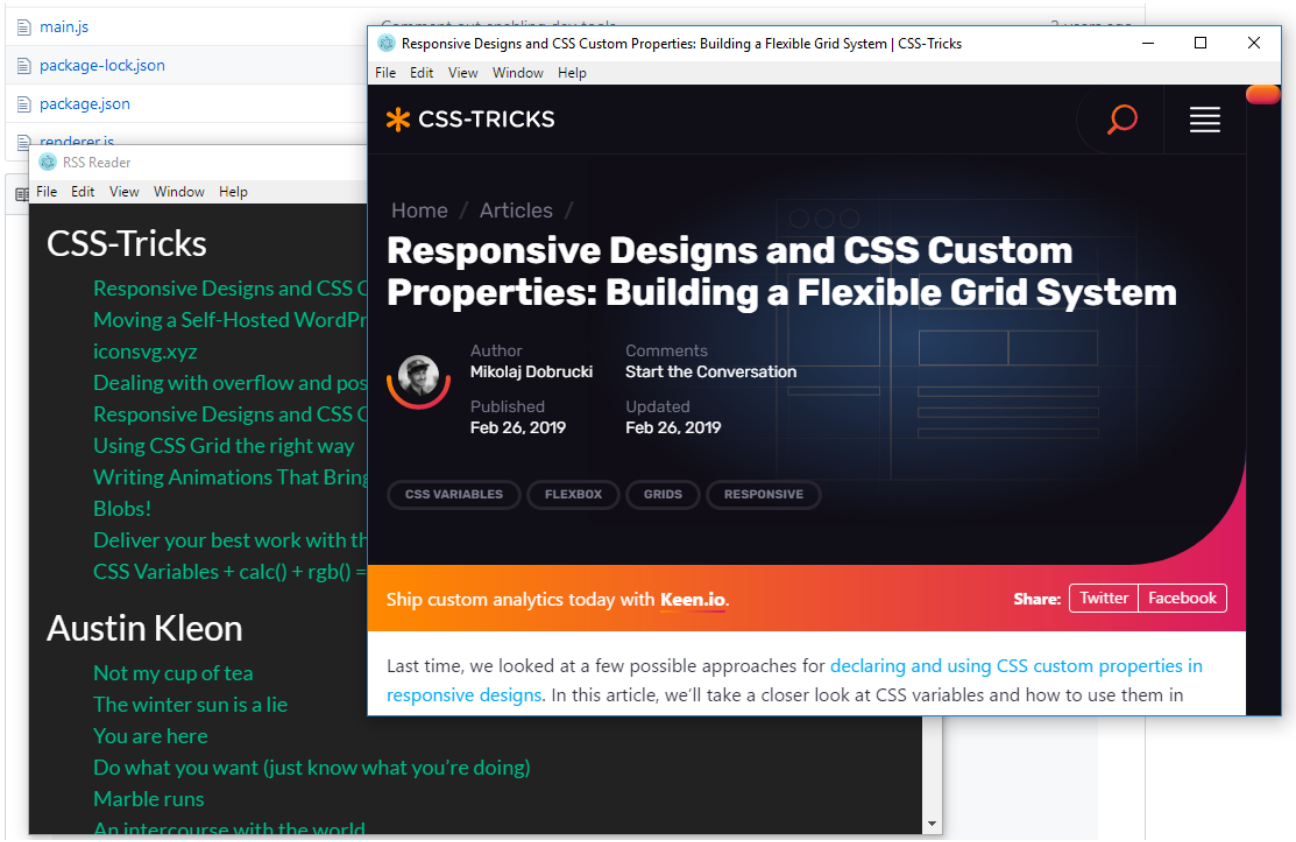
https://www.npmjs.com/package/electron-toolkit

Electron

RSS Reader

This demo harvests some predefined RSS feeds and allows you to read the articles. Note that because Chromium is a browser there's no problem loading external sites.

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Electron\rss-reader-electron




```
$ git clone https://github.com/timothyjellison/rss-reader-electron
$ cd rss-reader-electron
$ npm install
$ npm start
```

https://github.com/timothyjellison/rss-reader-electron

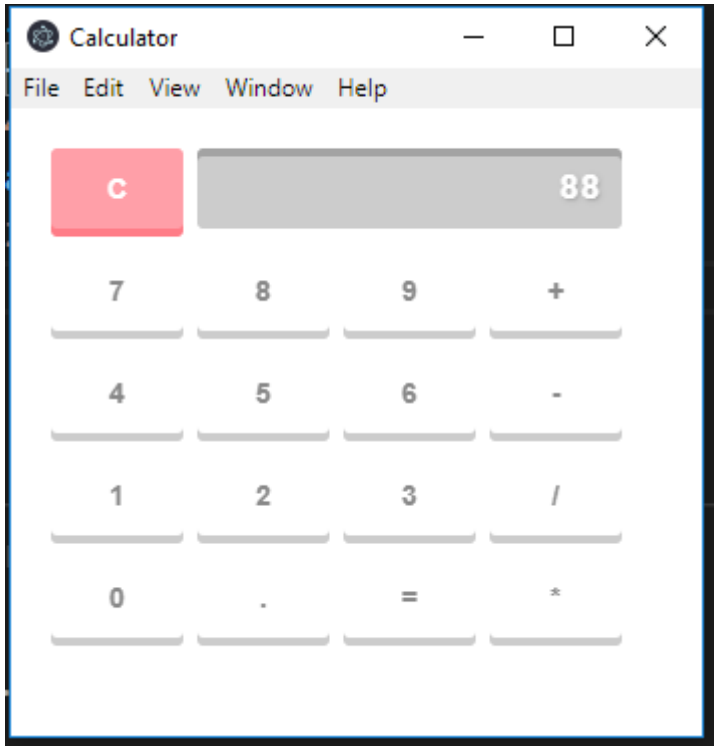
Electron

jQuery

This simple demo shows Electron using jQuery for formatting.

package.json

```
{
  "name": "m3-calculator",
  "version": "1.0.0",
  "description": "",
  "main": "bootstrap.js",
  "scripts": {
    "start": "electron .",
    "test": "echo \"Error: no
  },
  "author": "",
  "license": "ISC",
  "dependencies": {
    "electron": "^4.0.1",
    "electron-reload": "^1.2.1
    "jquery": "^3.2.1"
  }
}
```



C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Electron\m3-calculator-original

https://halfanhour.blogspot.com/2019/01/learning-electron-part-2.html

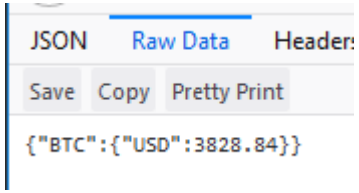
Electron

Web APIs

This demo accesses an external web service (in JSON, top) and displays a notification when it exceeds a set price.

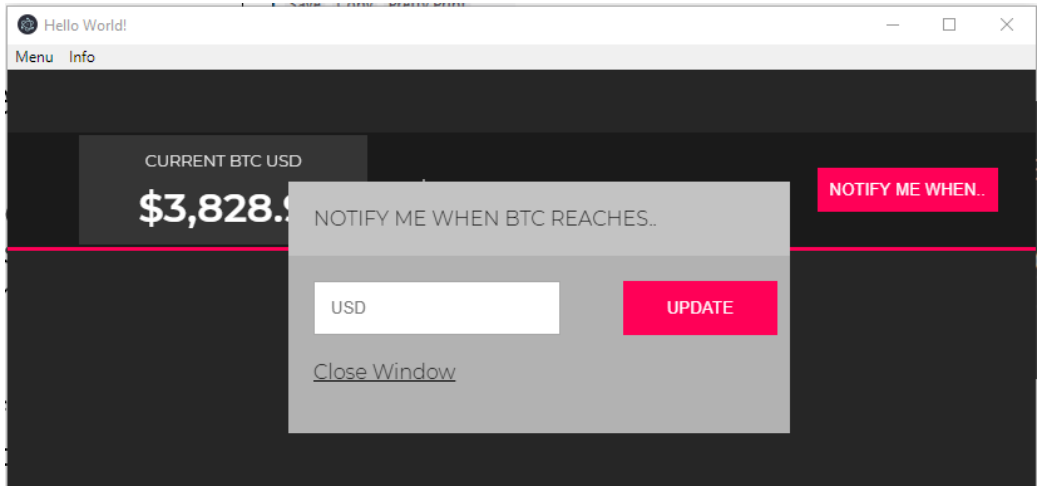
Good course from Coursetro

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\Electron\crypto-app




```
function getBTC() {
    axios.get('https://min-api.cryptocompare.com/data/pricemulti?fsyms=BTC&tsyms=USD')
    .then(res => {
        const cryptos = res.data.BTC.USD
        price.innerHTML = '$'+cryptos.toLocaleString('en')

        if (targetPrice.innerHTML != '' && targetPriceVal < res.data.BTC.USD) {
            console.log('Notification should be sent')
```



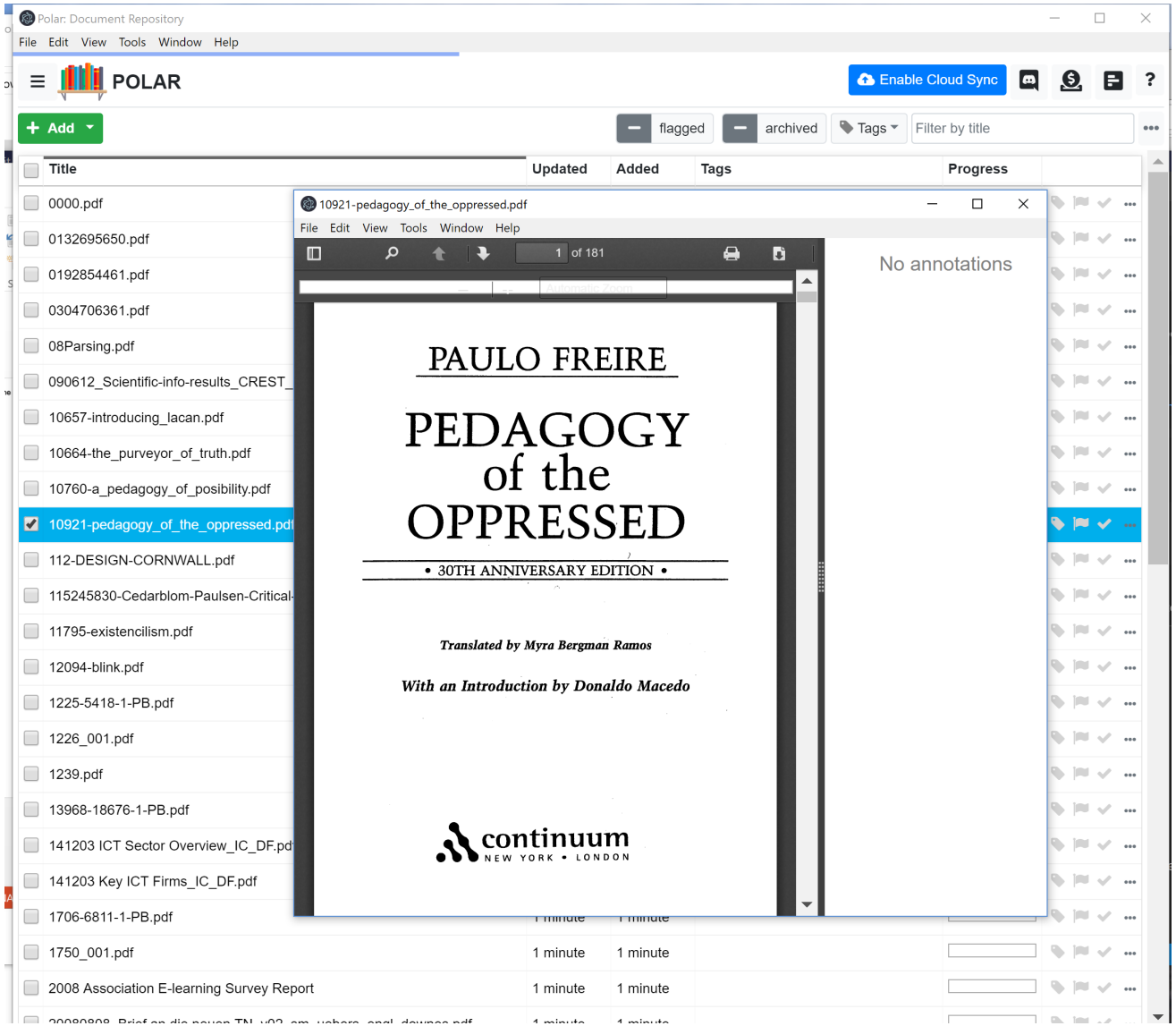
https://coursetro.com/courses/22/Creating-Desktop-Apps-with-Electron-Tutorial

Electron

Bookshelf

Access and view PDF and other documents from a repository. Also has cloud sync, chat, annotations.

Frontend uses a Vue framework.



C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\polar-bookshelf

https://github.com/burtonator/polar-bookshelf

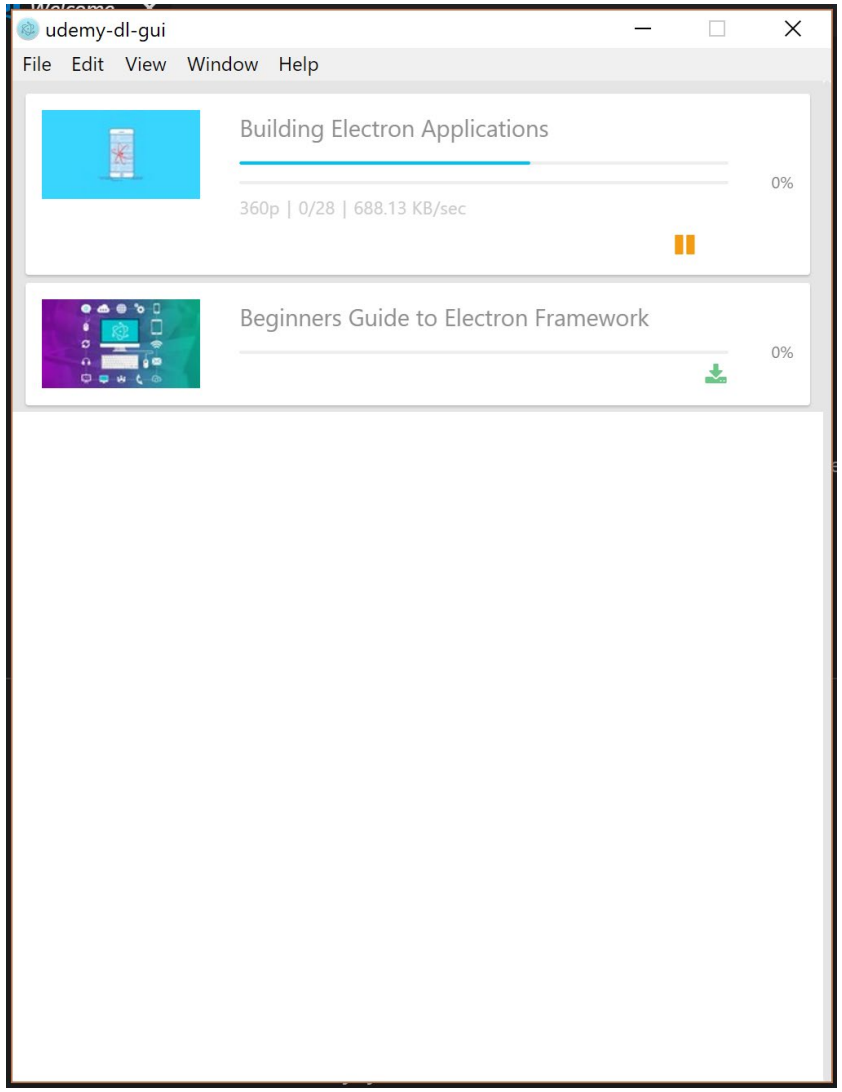
Electron

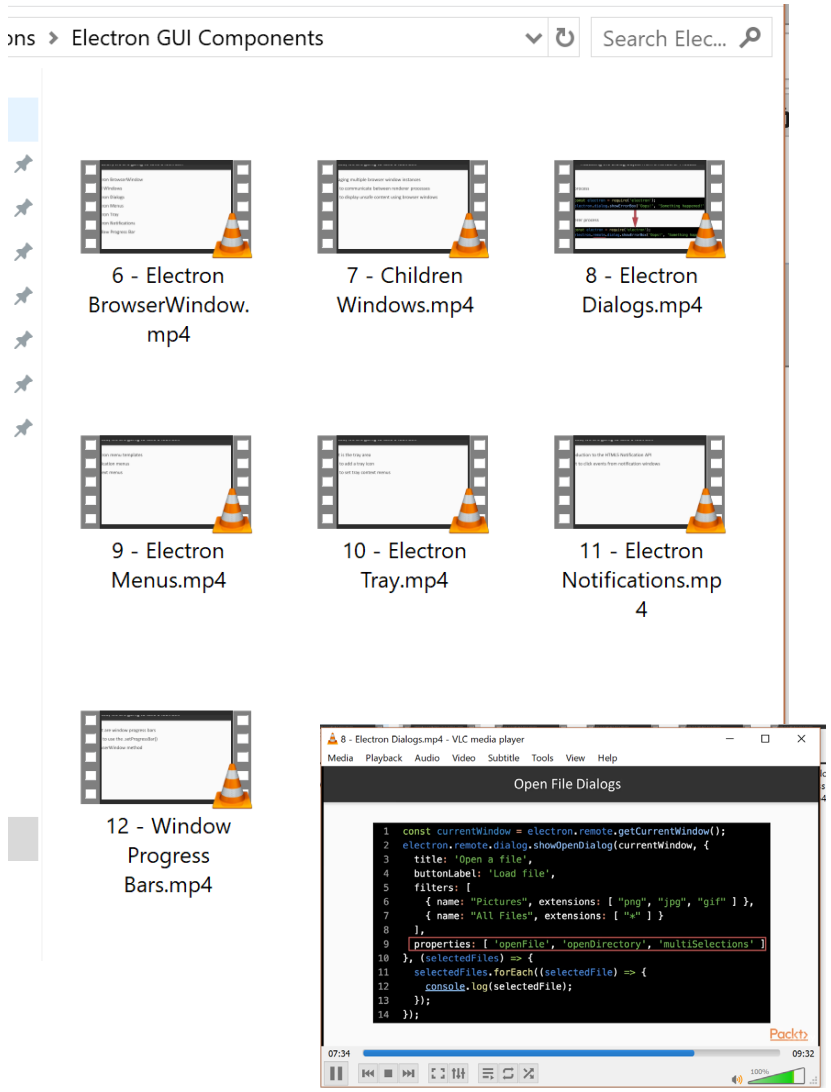
Udemy DL

Downloads Udemy courses for offline viewing on one's own computer.

Uses Udemy login credentials to access purchased courses.

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\udemy-dl-gui





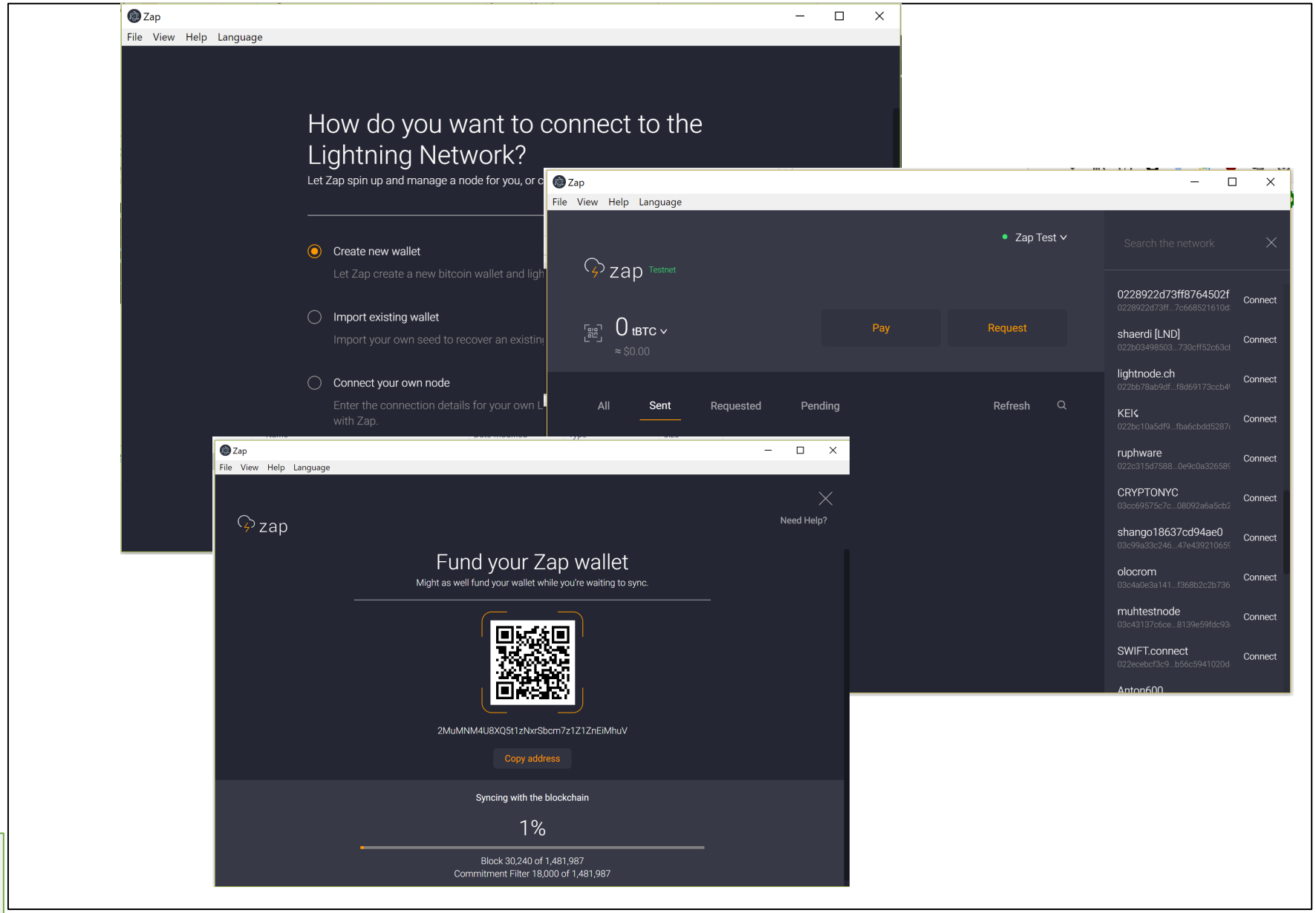
https://github.com/riazXrazor/udemy-dl-gui

Electron

Zap

Client that connects to the Bitcoin Lightning Network (BLN) or the testnet version of the bitcoin network (tBTC). Runs on top of Lightning Network Daemon (LDN) and uses Autopilot.

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\zap-desktop



https://github.com/LN-Zap/zap-desktop

https://ln-zap.github.io/zap-tutorials/zap-desktop-getting-started

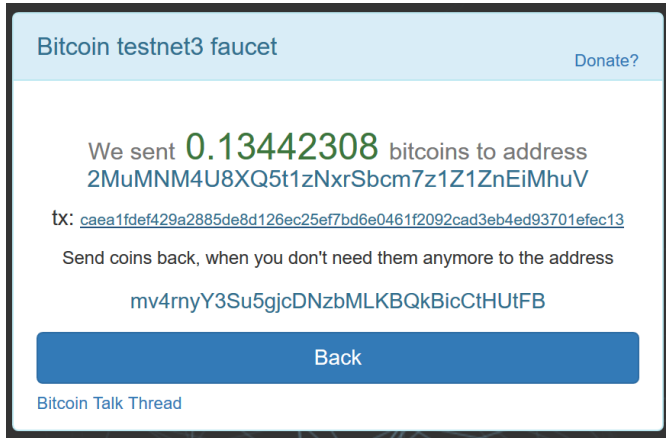
Electron

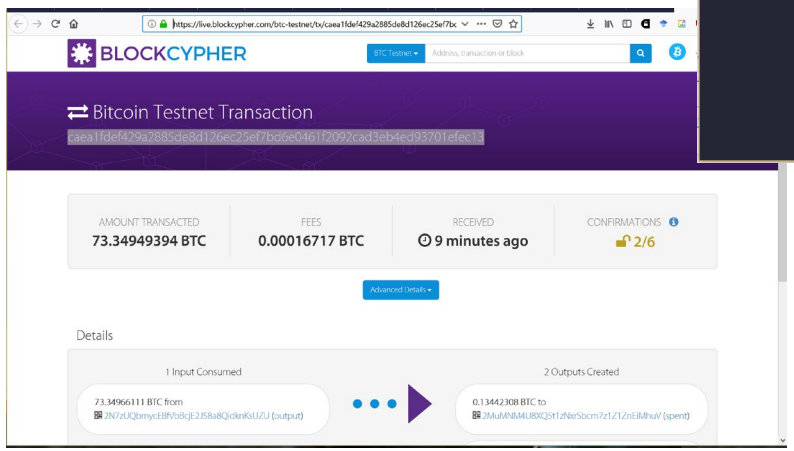
Testing Zap

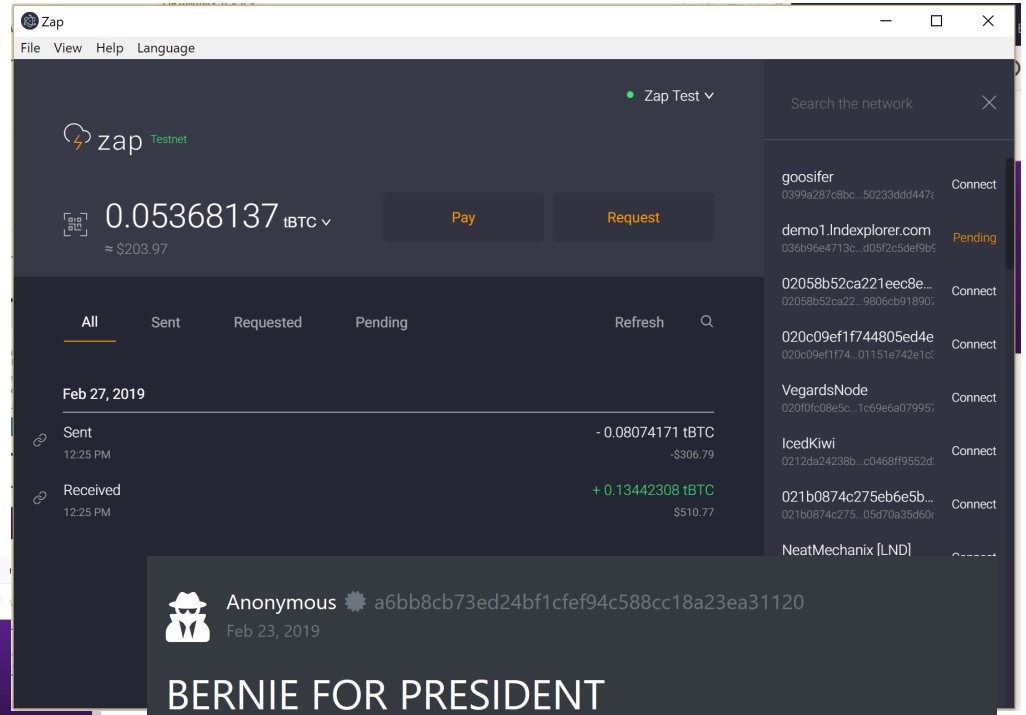
I put tBTC into my wallet using a ‘faucet’ and then monitored the transaction.

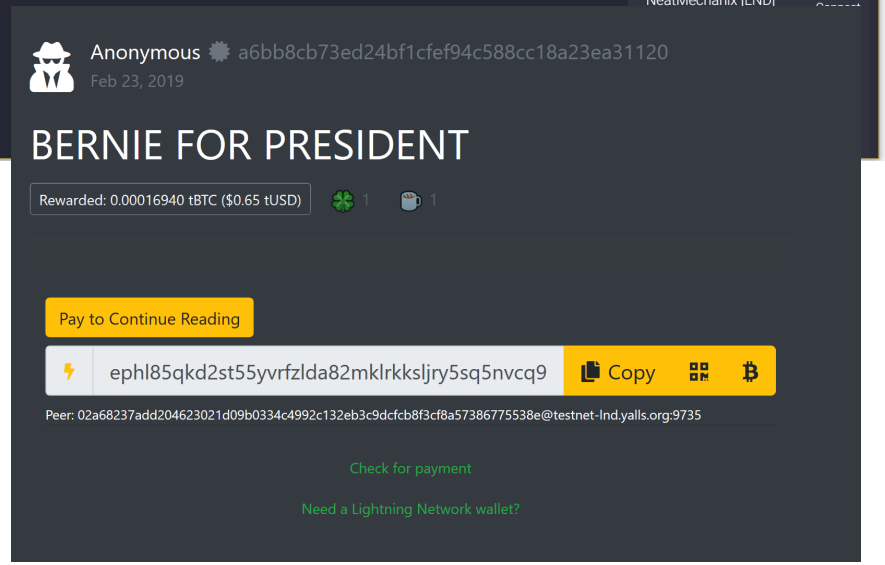
Then connect with peers on the network, create a ‘channel’ with tBTC, then ‘pay’ to (eg) read article.

C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\zap-desktop









https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMj6UA3-f3cRfKmG1xRm3j0KBRCvbX4vW

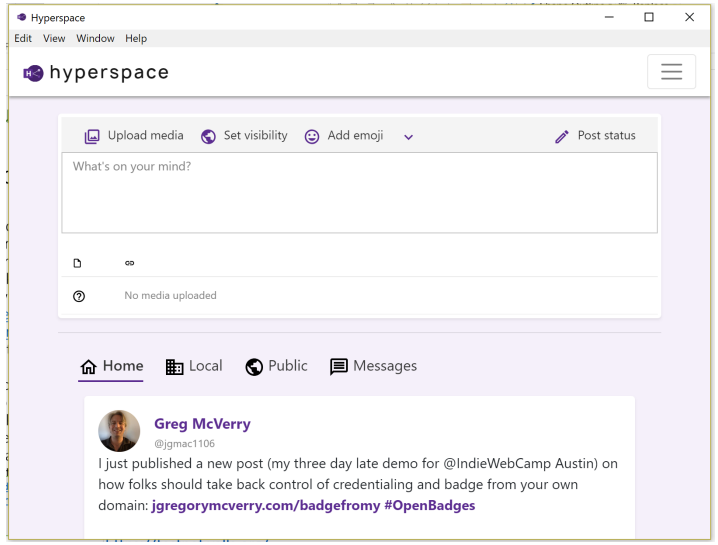
https://testnet.yalls.org/

Future

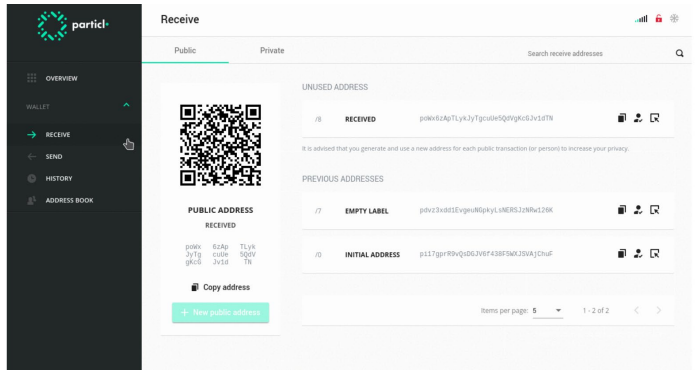
Directions

Future directions range from social networks (Eg. Hyperspace for Mastodon), privacy (Particl), cloud (eg. Docker),

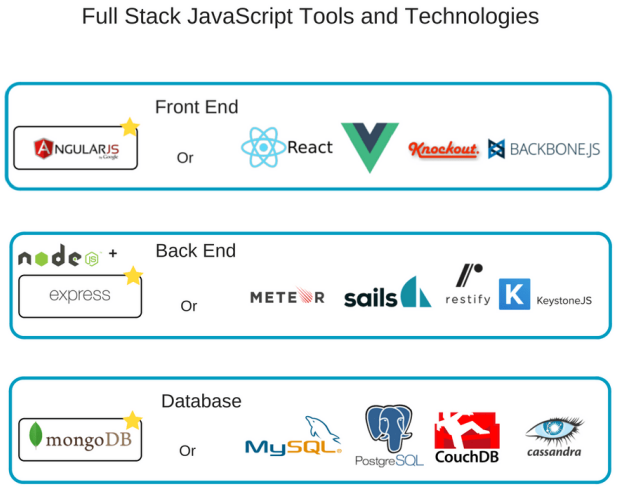
https://nodejs.org/en/docs/guides/nodejs-docker-webapp/



https://electronjs.org/apps/hyperspace



https://electronjs.org/apps/particl



C:\Users\downess\CodeProjects\ElectronProjects\zap-desktop

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMj6UA3-f3cRfKmG1xRm3j0KBRCvbX4vW

https://testnet.yalls.org/