

Dyalog North America – 29-30 September 2025

Introduction to Link

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Goals

- Introduce you to Link
- Give you time to practice
 - Exporting a workspace to text files
 - Working with your new source format
 - Being hit by some of the "gotchas"
 - Creating a runtime environment / distribution
- Demo by Morten of GitHub + VS Code





Workshop Overview

14:00-15:00 Getting Started with Link

- What is Link?
- Starting a new project
- Converting an existing project

15:15-16:15 Configuration, Text Files, "Legacy" Features

- Configuration files, Text representations, Saved workspaces with Links
- Legacy Features: Case insensitivity, Flat workspaces

16:30-17:30 The Final Touches – Distribution & Code Sharing

- Launching from Text Source
- Saving workspaces with Active Links
- Building & Deploying a real application
- Demo: How Morten uses Link





But first - What exactly is Link?



- Each code item in the active workspace is linked to a file
 - [Unscripted] Namespaces map to a directory structure containing these files
- By default, the link is bi-directional:
 - If the item is modified using the APL editor, the source file is updated
 - If the source file is modified using an external tool, the workspace is updated



File System Watcher

- External source changes are detected using a "File System Watcher" - .NET is required
- Works fine for synchronising the WS with changes made in an external editor
- NOT appropriate for handling "bulk" changes
 - DO NOT unzip or copy lots of files into a watched folder
 - DO NOT do a large checkout/revert which changes many files
- DO NOT use live links to deploy code changes via shared drives to your production server!



Why is Link **IMPORTANT** ?

- With source code in text files we can use extremely attractive tools developed outside the APL community
 - Tools for editing, comparing, mergeing, refactoring, sharing, building, testing, computing statistics, ...
- ... in addition to all our own tools
- ... without losing any of what is good about interactive development









Why is Link (IMPORTANT)



























And now also "AI" / LLMs ...



```
= test_solution.apln M
                                      (i) README.md

▼ PLAN.md U ×  

■ day9.aplf M  

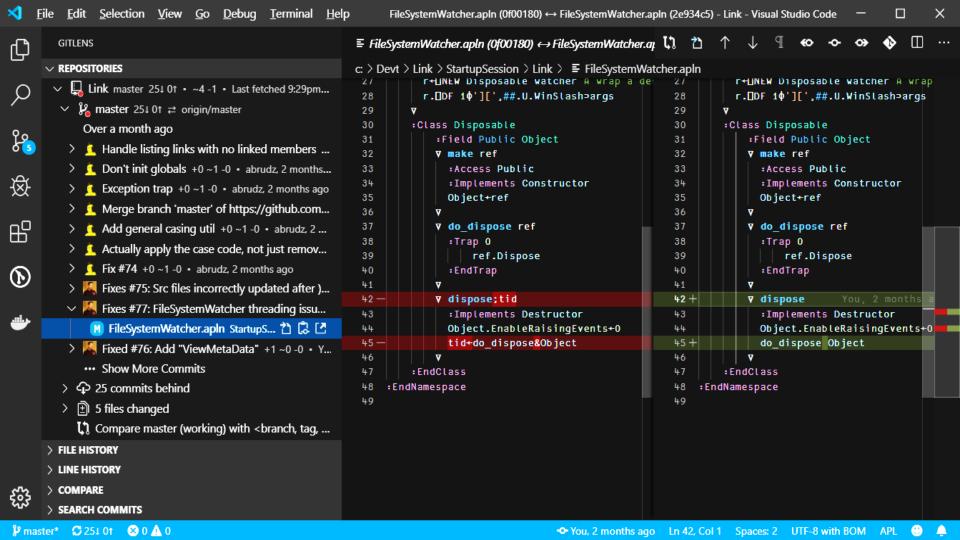
▼ CLAUDE.md  

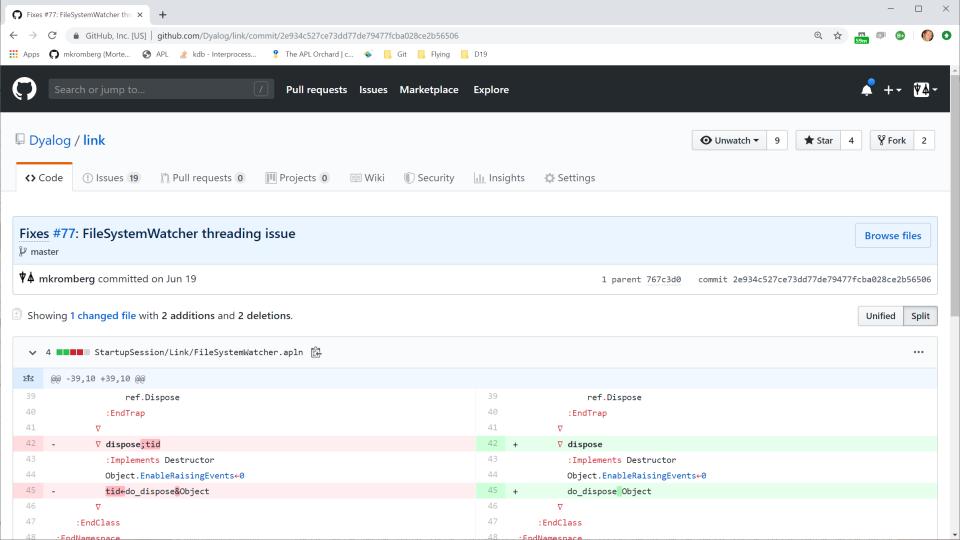
※ Claude Code ×  

                                                                                                                                                                           task-1.md M
      ▶ PLAN.md > ™ # Solution Plan for Task 1 - Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP)
        1 # Solution Plan for Task 1 - Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP)
                                                                                                   • Now let's test with pmat to generate permutations:
                                                                                                   • dyalog-script - execute_apl (MCP)(code: "A Import pmat from
        3 ## Problem Analysis
                                                                                                                                     dfns\n +'pmat'□CY'dfns'\n\nA Generate all permutations
        4 This is a classic Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP) where we need to:
                                                                                                                                      of 3 cities\nperms + pmat 3\n□+'All permutations of 1
                                                                                                                                      2 3:'\n∐←perms\n\nA Test calculating route
        5 1. Visit each city exactly once
                                                                                                                                     distance\ndistMatrix + 3 3p0 464 518 464 0 141 518 141
        6 2. Find the shortest possible route
                                                                                                                                      O\n∏+'Distance matrix:'\n∏+distMatrix\n\nA Calculate
7 3. Can start and end at any two different cities
                                                                                                                                     distance for route 1 2 3\nroute ← 1 2 3\npairs ←
                                                                                                                                     2./route A Consecutive pairs\n□+'Route:'
                                                                                                                                     route\n□←'Pairs:' pairs\n\nA Get distances for each
        9 ## Solution Approach
                                                                                                                                     pair\ndistances +
       10
                                                                                                                                     {distMatrix[ω[1];ω[2]]} "pairs\n□←'Distances:'
       11 ### Data Parsing
                                                                                                                                     distances\n□+'Total:' (+/distances)")
       12 1. Parse input lines in format "City1 to City2 = Distance"
                                                                                                         "output": "All permutations of 1 2 3:\n1 2 3\n1 3 2\n2 1 3\n2 3 1\n3 1 2\n3 2
       13 2. Extract unique city names
                                                                                                      1\nDistance matrix:\n 0 464 518\n464 0 141\n518 141 0\n Route: 1 2 3 \n Pa
       14 3. Build a distance matrix or lookup structure
                                                                                                      ... +11 lines (ctrl+o to expand)
S.
       15
       16 ### Algorithm Options
                                                                                                  • Perfect! Now let's implement the complete solution in a more terse APL style:
G.
       18 #### Option A: Brute Force with dfns Permutations (Recommended for small datasets)
                                                                                                   Update(src/day9.aplf)
       19 - Use 'pmat' from dfns workspace to generate all permutations
                                                                                                       Updated src/day9.aplf with 8 additions
       20 - Calculate total distance for each permutation
                                                                                                               Dav9+{
                                                                                                                   A This is the solution to:
       21 - Return minimum distance
                                                                                                                         https://adventofcode.com/2015/day/9
       22 - **Pros**: Simple, guaranteed optimal, leverages existing dfns
       23 - **Cons**: O(n!) complexity, only viable for small n (< 10-12 cities)
                                                                                                                    +'pmat'∏CY'dfns'
                                                                                                                   parsed+'(\w+) to (\w+) =
                                                                                                              (\d+)'□S{ω.(1+Lengthst"Offsets+"⊂Block)}⊢ω
       25 #### Option B: Build Custom TSP Solver
                                                                                                                    cities+up./2t parsed
       26 - Implement dynamic programming with bitmasks
                                                                                                                    n+≢cities
       27 - Or use nearest neighbor heuristic
                                                                                                          9 +
                                                                                                                    dist+n no0
                                                                                                                    {from to d+ω ⋄ i j+cities≀from to ⋄
       28 - **Pros**: More scalable
                                                                                                              dist[i;j]+dist[j;i]+±d}"parsed
       29 - **Cons**: Complex implementation, may not be needed for small dataset
                                                                                                                 [/+/{dist[\omega[1];\omega[2]]}^{2},/^{2}pmat n
                                                                                                         12
       31 ### Recommended Implementation Steps
                                                                                                   • Now let's run the tests to verify our solution:
       32
       33 1. **Parse input data**
                                                                                                   * Implementing Day9 function to pass tests... (esc to interrupt · ctrl+t to hide todos)
             - Use regex ''(\w+) to (\w+) = (\d+)' to extract cities and distances
                                                                                                     Examine existing skeleton and test files
             - Create bidirectional edge map (A→B and B→A have same distance)

    ₩rite tests for parsing input data

                                                                                                       □ Implement Day9 function to pass tests
       36
                                                                                                       □ Run full test suite
       37 2. **Build distance matrix**
             - Map city names to indices
             - Create n×n matrix where matrix[i,j] = distance from city i to city j
             - Use 0 or ∞ for non-connected pairs (though problem implies all pairs are
                                                                                                    ▶▶ accept edits on (shift+tab to cycle)
             given)
   8 Q
```





Other Benefits of Text Source

- Easily share code between APL versions
 - Text files are backwards and forwards compatible

Drawbacks of Text Source

This space intentionally left blank

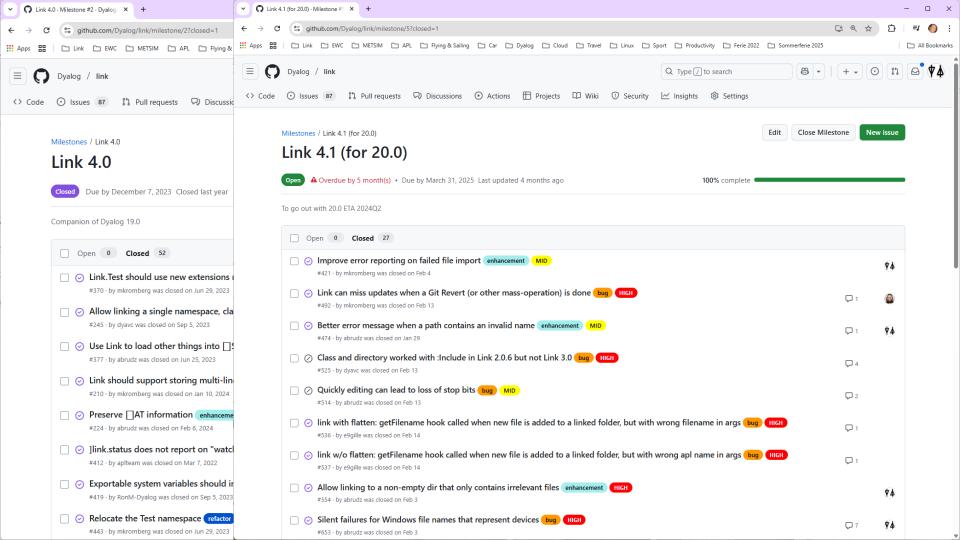


Current Link Versions

Link Version	Shipped with	Also supported on
4.1	20.0	19.0
4.0	19.0	18.2
Earlier	Never Mind	

- Since 4.0, Link is stable and well documented
- Move on from earlier versions as soon as possible





Exercise 0 - Documentation

Open the documentation in a browser:

https://dyalog.github.io/link/4.1/

or

Use -? or -?? with user commands

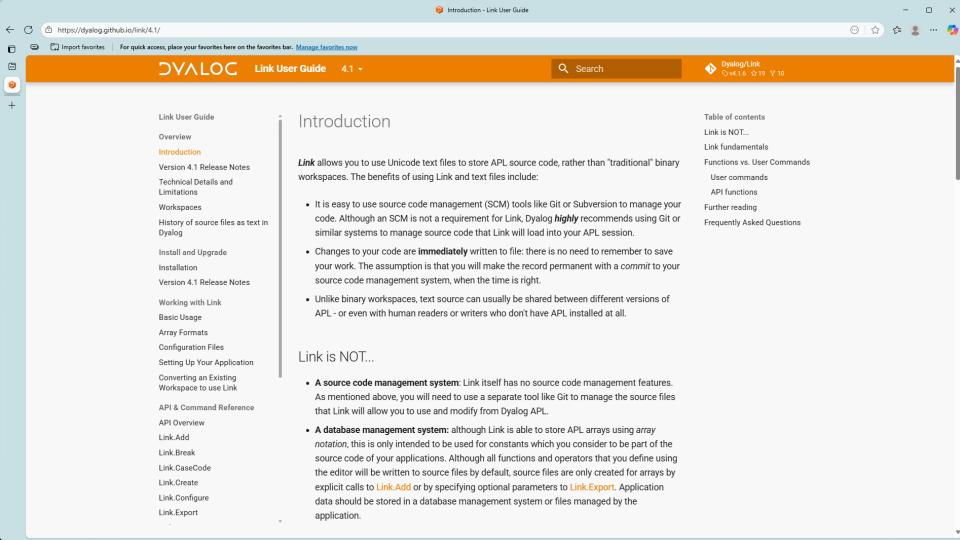
```
]link.create -?
```

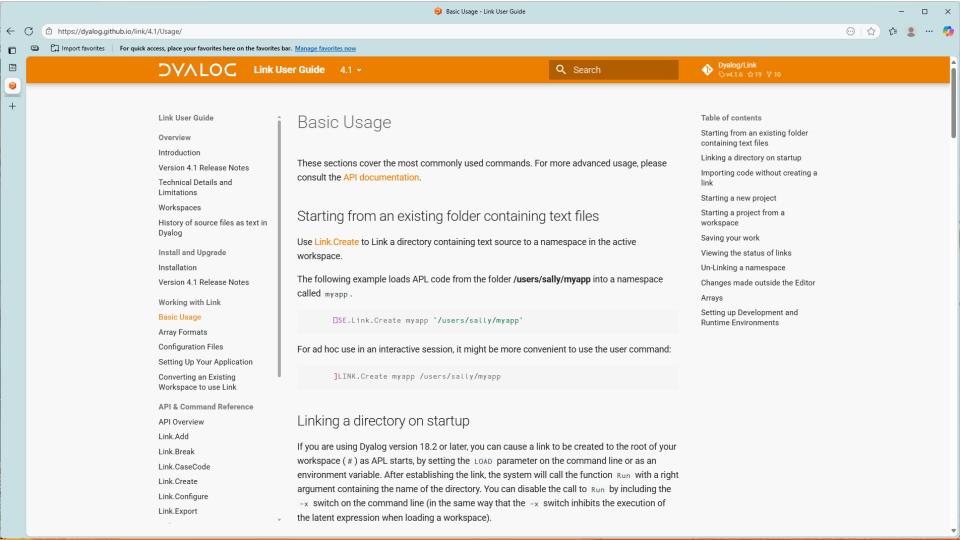
... Look at the last line of output



Documentation

```
c:\tmp\stats-work.dws - Dvalog APL/W-64 20.0 Unicode
     View Window Session Log Action Options Tools Threads Lavout Help
            Object 🛲 🖨 🖶 🦙 🔊 📠 Tool 🔎 🥽 🗞
                                     Edit 🏳 🏟 🤊 🥞 Session 🚄 邱 🔕 APL385 Unico
llink.create -?
 1LINK.Create
 Source: C:\Program Files\Dyalog\Dyalog APL-64 20.0 Unicode\SALT\spice\Link.dyalog
 Version: 3.01
 Syntax: 1-2 arguments (last arguments merged)
 Accepts modifiers -arrays[=] -beforeread= -beforewrite= -casecode -codeextensions= -fastload -flatten -forceextensions
 -forcefilenames -getfilename= -ignoreconfig -source= -sysvars -text= -typeextensions= -watch=
  Modifier 'source' accepts only values "ns", "dir", "auto"
  Modifier 'text' accepts only values "aplan", "plain"
  Modifier 'watch' accepts only values "none", "ns", "dir", "both"
 Link a namespace with a directory (create one but not both if non-existent)
     lLINK.Create [<ns>] <dir> [-source={ns|dir|auto}] [-watch={none|ns|dir|both}] [-casecode] [-forceextensions]
     [-forcefilenames] [-arrays{=name1,name2,...}] [-sysvars] [-flatten] [-beforeread=<fn>] [-beforewrite=<fn>]
     [-qetfilename=<fn>] [-codeextensions=<var>] [-typeextensions=<var>] [-fastload] [-ignoreconfig] [-text={aplan|plain}]
 ]LINK.Create -?? A for argument and modifier details
 ]FILE.Open https://dyalog.github.io/link/4.0/API/Link.Create
```



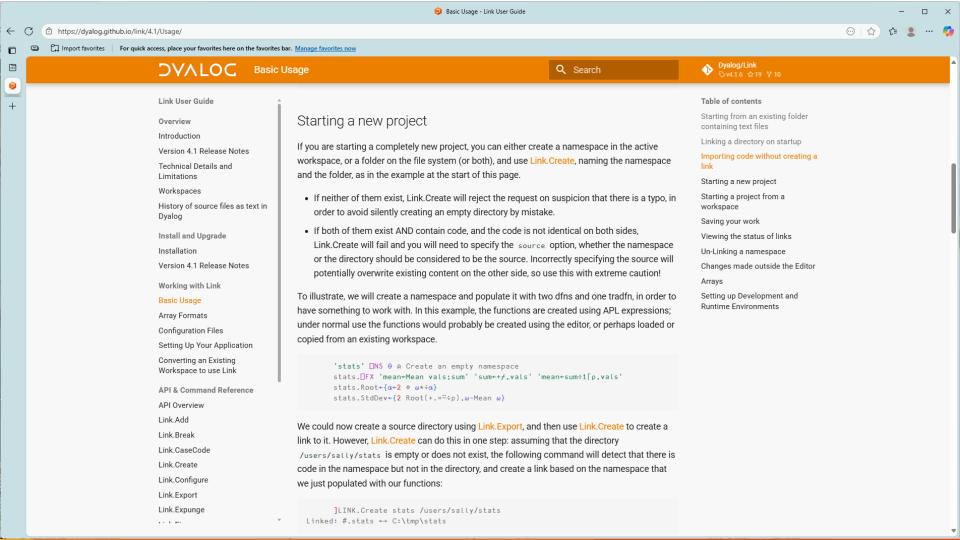


Starting a New Project

- At least one of myns (the namespace) or /my/dir (the directory) must exist
- If both exist, only one may be populated
- You can also create a Link to #

```
]link.create # /my/dir
```





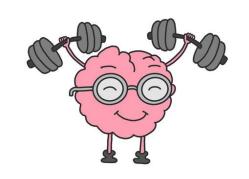
Source File Extensions

- Link creates files with extensions that identify the type of APL item exported
 - aplf and .aplo for functions and operators
 - .apla for arrays
 - .aplc and .apli for classes and interfaces
 - apln for namespaces that have source
 - namespaces w/out source become directories



Exercise 1 – Your first Link

- Create a namespace with at least one function in it
- Create a link between the namespace and a new or empty directory
- Verify that source files were created in the directory
- Edit a function and verify that the source file is updated
- Edit a source file using notepad or another external editor
 - Verify that the function is updated in the WS
-) CLEAR and re-create the link
- Verify that your code is loaded into the workspace





Variables

- By default, variables are NOT linked
 - Most variables are not part of the "source code"
- The -arrays switch will cause ALL arrays to be exported on Link.Create
- Once a source file exists for an array, Link will respond to source changes
- Link.Add can be used to create a source file, or update it



Variables

DVALOC

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Q Search

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Link Break

Arrays

By default, Link does not consider arrays to be part of the source code of an application and will not write arrays to source files unless you explicitly request it. Link is not intended to be used as a database management system; if you have arrays that are modified during the normal running of your application, we recommend that you store that data in an RDBMS or other files that are managed by the application code, rather than using Link for this.

However, if you have arrays that represent error tables, range definitions or other *constant* definitions that it makes sense to conside to be part of the source code, you can add them using Link.Add:

```
stats.Directions+'North' 'South' 'East' 'West'
]Link.Add stats.Directions
Added: #.stats.Directions
```

By default, Link uses *APL Array Notation* to store arrays in text files. Link 4.0 introduced experimental support for storing multi-line character data in simple text files. For more information, see the section on array formats.

Once you have created a source file for an array, Link will update that file if you use the editor to modify the array. Only if you modify the array using assignment or other means than the editor will you need to call Link.Add to force an update of the source file.

Changes made to source files, including the addition of new <code>.apla</code> files, will always be reflected in the workspace, if the link has been set up to watch the file system.

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Changes made outside the Editor

Arrays

Setting up Development and Runtime Environments



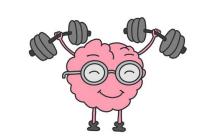
Assignment

- Link will create or update source files for functions, operators and variables if they are EDITED
 - For variables, existing source files will be updated
- Assigning new values to functions or variables using ← will
 NOT update the source file
 - The same is true for [NS, [CY, [FX] or any system function that modifies or creates definitions
- Use Link.Add to cause files to be created or updated



Exercise 2 - Variables

- Create a variable containing a constant that your application needs
- Write it to file using]Link.Add
- Inspect the file, edit it, and verify that the new value appears in the workspace
- Change the value in the workspace
 - Note that the file is NOT updated
 - Update it using]Link.Add
- Q: Can you write system variables to file?
 - (check the docs)





Link.Create - Recap

Link.Create creates a "live" link between a namespace and a directory

- One end of the link must be empty, code is replicated at the empty end of the link
- By default, changes made on either side are immediately replicated on the other
 - You can set -watch=ns | dir if you only want changes "watched for" on one side of the link
- Variables are not exported by default
- Only the editor (or Link.Add) will trigger file updates



Import and Export

If you do not want a live link after the operation:

- Import brings objects into a namespace from a directory
- Export "saves" the contents of a namespace to files

Most of the switches/options that apply to Create also apply to Import and Export



Namespace = Directory

- Each function, operator or array is linked to a file
- Namespaces which are defined using source text are also linked to a single file with extension .apln
 - If such a namespace contains "free" functions or variables, Link will ignore them
- Namespaces without source map to directories
- If an exported namespace contains sub-namespaces
 - Each one becomes a subdirectory
- If an imported directory contains subdirectories
 - Each one becomes a namespace

myns.apln

:Namespace myns

. . .

:EndNamespace



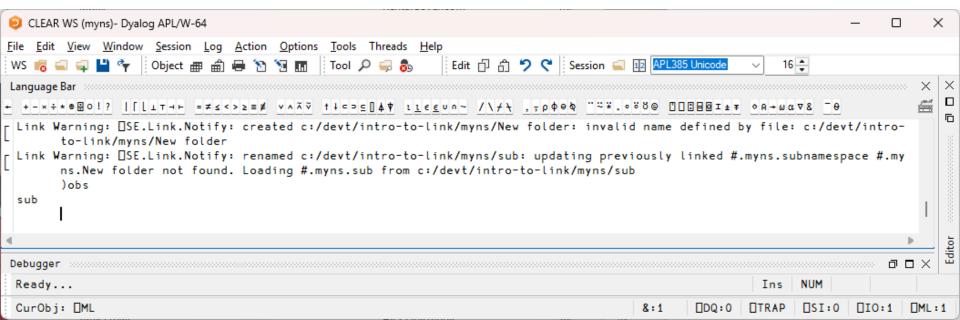
Exercise 3 - Subdirectories

- Create a subdirectory in your source structure
 - The name must be a valid APL namespace name
- Verify that a corresponding namespace is created in the workspace
-)ED a function in the namespace
- Rename the subdirectory
- Verify the effect in the workspace



Ugh

 If you started creating "New folder", Link will complain



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Converting an Existing Workspace to use Link

In order to start using Link to maintain code that resides in a workspace, you first need to export the code in the workspace to one or more folders.

The simplest way to do this is to use Link.Export. In principle, it should be possible to write the entire contents of any workspace to an empty folder called <code>/folder/name</code> using the following:

```
'options' □NS θ
options.(arrays sysVars)+1
options □SE.Link.Export # '/folder/name'
```

or equivalently, using the user command:

```
]link.export # /folder/name -arrays -sysvars
```

You can also use Link.Create with the same arguments, if you want an active link to exist after the export has been done.

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-arrays

-sysVars

-sys vais

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Flat Workspaces and the -flatten Switch

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Options

-arrays

By default, Link assumes that the "source code" only consists of functions, operators, namespaces and classes. Variables are assumed to contain data which is transient and thus not part of the source. The <code>-arrays</code> causes all arrays in the workspace to be written to source files as well. You can also write selected variables to file, see the documentation for Link.Create for more options.

-sysVars

By default, Link will assume that you do **not** wish to record the settings for system variables, because your source will be loaded into an environment that already has the desired settings. If you want to be 100% sure to re-create your workspace exactly as it is, you can use <code>-sysVars</code> to record the values of system variables from each namespace in source files.

Beware that this will add a *lot* of mostly redundant files to your repository. It is probably a better idea to analyse your workspace carefully and only write system variables to file if you really need them, using Link.Add.

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-sysVars

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Case Coding

- Case-insensitive file systems (like Windows) do not distinguish between FOO.aplf and Foo.aplf
- Link avoids this issue using "case coding"



Case Coding

 Avoid file name clashes in case-insensitive file systems by adding an octal representation of the case to the file name:

```
∇foo

[1] 2+2

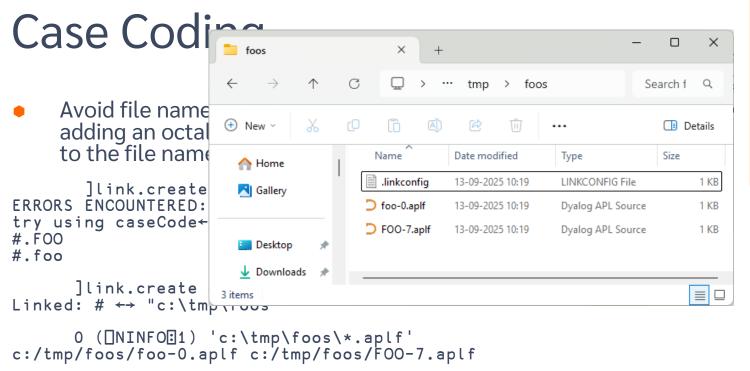
∇

∇FOO

[1] 3+3

∇
```





```
∇foo

[1] 2+2

∇

∇FOO

[1] 3+3

∇
```



API vs User Commands?

All user commands have an API equivalent. Or as Adám would put it, most API functions have a user command for interactive use.

```
]link.export # whatever -casecode
(caseCode:1) [SE.Link.Export # 'whatever'
```

When you automate Link operations, PLEASE DO NOT:

```
□UCMD 'link.export # whatever -casecode'
```

NB: that all user command switches are lowercase (casecode), while option namespace names are camelcase (caseCode).



Documentation is for the API

DVALOC

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Link.CaseCode

Link.Create

Link.Configure

Link.Export

caseCode

Default: off

The **caseCode** flag adds a suffix to file names on write.

If your application contains items with names that differ only in case (for example Debug and DEBUG), and your file system is case-insensitive (for example, under Microsoft Windows), then enabling caseCode will cause a suffix to be added to file names, containing an octal encoding of the location of uppercase letters in the name.

For example, with caseCode on, two functions named Debug and DEBUG will be written to files named Debug-1.aplf and DEBUG-37.aplf.



Note

Dyalog recommends that you avoid creating systems with names that differ only in case. This feature primarily exists to support the import of applications which already use such names. You will probably also want to enable forceFilenames if you enable caseCode.

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Syntax

Arguments

Result

Common options

source

watch

arrays

sysVars

forceExtensions forceFilenames

Advanced Options

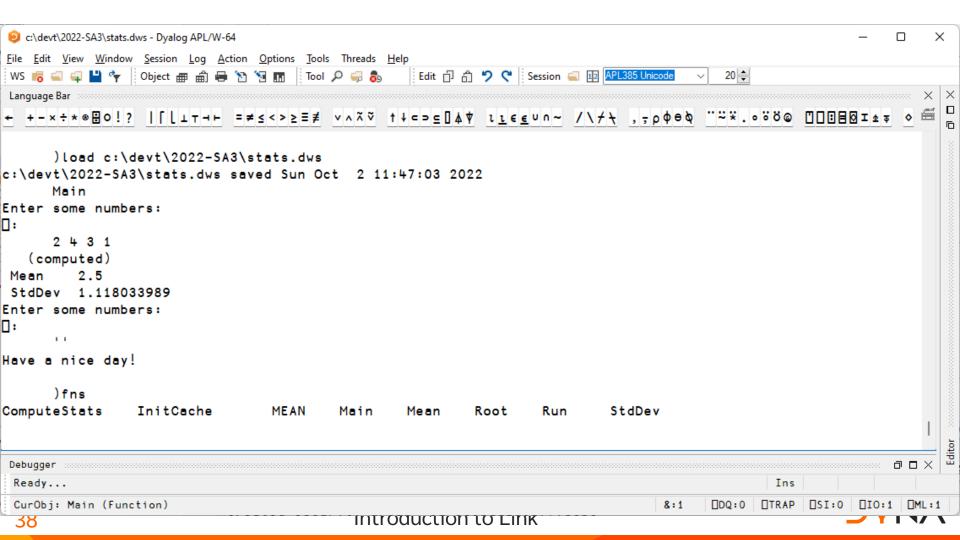
ignoreconfig

flatten

preloaded

caseCode

beforeWrite



Exercise 4

- Export the workspace stats.dws to a directory
- Note that
 - It contains two variables
 - Has a non-default ☐ML
 - Has two names which differ only in case



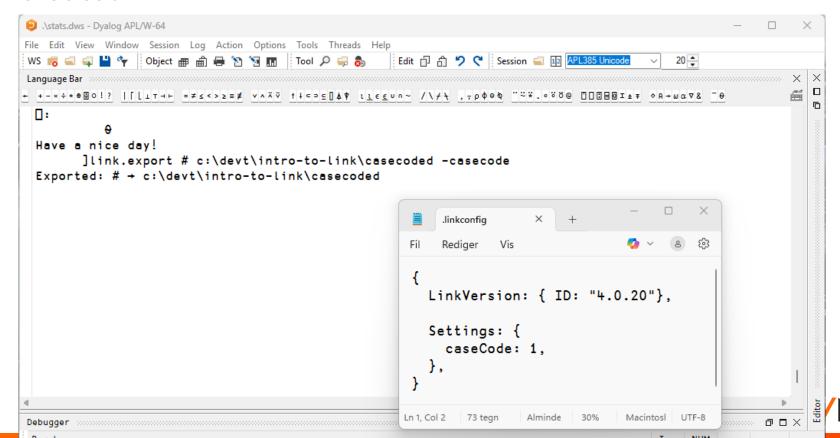


Exercise 4 - Discussion

- Use -casecode or rename?
- Which variables should be considered "source"
 - STATFNS?
 - RESULTS?
- ML=3:
 - Use –sysvars switch,]link.add ☐ML
 - ... or refactor to use ☐ML←1



 If you used –casecode, a .linkconfig file is created

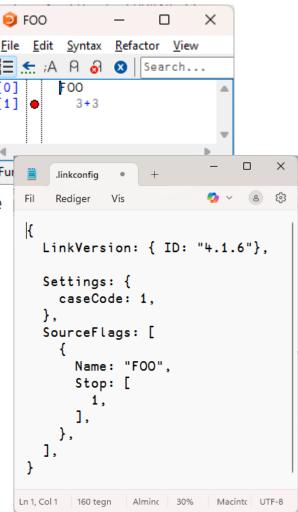




The .linkconfig file

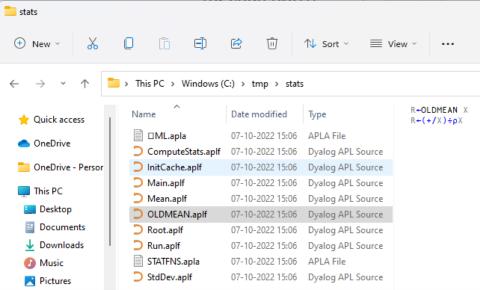
Introduced in Link 4.0

- Records non-default link options
 - So you don't need to say –casecode each time you create a link to that folder
- Tracks and reinstates Stop+Trace flags on Create]link.stop FOO 1
 - "Automatic" registration of stop bits in a file in the application direction is a bit controversial, may become an option
 - NB: A bit experimental; flags are not recorded if no other change is made to the source 🖰



Exercise 4 – Morten's Solution

```
)load c:\devt\intro-to-link\stats
c:\devt\intro-to-link\stats.dws saved Tue Oct 4 22:59:08 2022
      )fns
ComputeStats InitCache MEAN Main Mean Root Run StdDev
      )ed MEAN A rename to OLDMEAN
      )erase MFAN
      )vars
RESULTS STATENS
      ]link.export # c:\tmp\stats
Exported: # → c:\tmp\stats
      ]link.export [ML c:\tmp\stats
Exported: #. ☐ML → c:/tmp/stats/☐ML.apla
      ]link.export STATFNS c:\tmp\stats
Exported: #.STATFNS → c:/tmp/stats/STATFNS.apla
```



Issues with old applications

Link & Dyalog APL offer some help:

- -casecode for names that differ only in case
- -flatten for workspaces that are not divided into namespaces
- Underscores: "do not exist" in Unicode

You're on your own:

- Objects that have no text representation
- Derived functions



The -flatten switch

Even if everything in your old workspace is in #, it might benefit from being organised into separate directories (utilities, etc)

- f l atten allows you to load the contents of multiple directories into a flat workspace
- The link between individual functions and files is maintained



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Link.CaseCode

Link.Create Link.Configure

Link.Export

Link.Expunge Link.Fix

Link.GetFileName Link.GetItemName

Link.Import

Link.LaunchDir Link.Notify

Link.Refresh Link.Resync

Link.Status

Advanced Options

ignoreconfig

Default: off

The **ignoreconfig** allows you to ignore the .linkconfig file in the linked directory. This can be useful during debugging, especially if you have a damaged configuration file.

flatten

Default: off

The **flatten** flag prevents the creation of sub-namespaces in the active workspace.

The flatten option will load all items into the root of the linked namespace, even if the source code is arranged into sub-directories. This is typically used for applications that have source

Note that if **flatten** is set newly created items need special treatment:

which is divided into modules, but still expects to run in a "flat" workspace.

- If a function or operator is renamed in the editor, the new item will be placed in the same folder as the original item.
- If a new item is created, it will be placed in the root of the linked directory.
- It is also possible to use the getFilename setting to add application-specific logic to determine the file name to be used (or prompt the user for a decision).

A suggested workflow is to always create a stub source file in the correct directory and edit the function that appears in the workspace, rather than creating new functions in the workspace.

This option takes effect only when source is dir.

Syntax

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Common options source

watch arrays sysVars

forceExtensions forceFilenames

Advanced Options

ianoreconfia flatten preloaded

> caseCode beforeWrite beforeRead getFilename

codeExtensions customExtensions

typeExtensions fastLoad

ignoreconfig

text



Underscores

- There are no Underscored characters in Unicode
 - Underlining is seen as a style, like bold or italic
- The APL385 Unicode Font tells little white lies:
 UCS 9397+126 A From U+24B6
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
- Using a normal Unicode font, these display as:
 - ABCDEFGHUUKUMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
- Dyalog recommends that you try to eliminate these characters from your applications ASAP.
- The "font trick" is a temporary measure.



Non-Representable Objects

- Some objects that CAN be saved in a Dyalog workspace have no meaningful textual representation
 - GUI & COM objects
- You need to write code which creates these objects at run or build time
- Such "binary" objects are also non-transferrable between 32/64 or classic/unicode; they can only be loaded by the same architecture



Example: OLE Server...

Example of explicit creation of an otherwise un-representable object:



Derived Functions

Derived functions are currently not supported:

```
matmult ←+.×
]link.add matmult
ERRORS ENCOUNTERED: □SE.Link.Add:
Cannot get source of #.myns.matmult: Invalid name class (3.3)
```

Solutions:

- Define a dfn or tradfn, e.g matmult←{α+.×ω}
- Define a Namespace Script (or an APL Script) which creates your little dervs:

```
:Namespace Utils
    matmult ←+ . ×
:EndNamespace
```



Exercise 5: flatten (or do not)

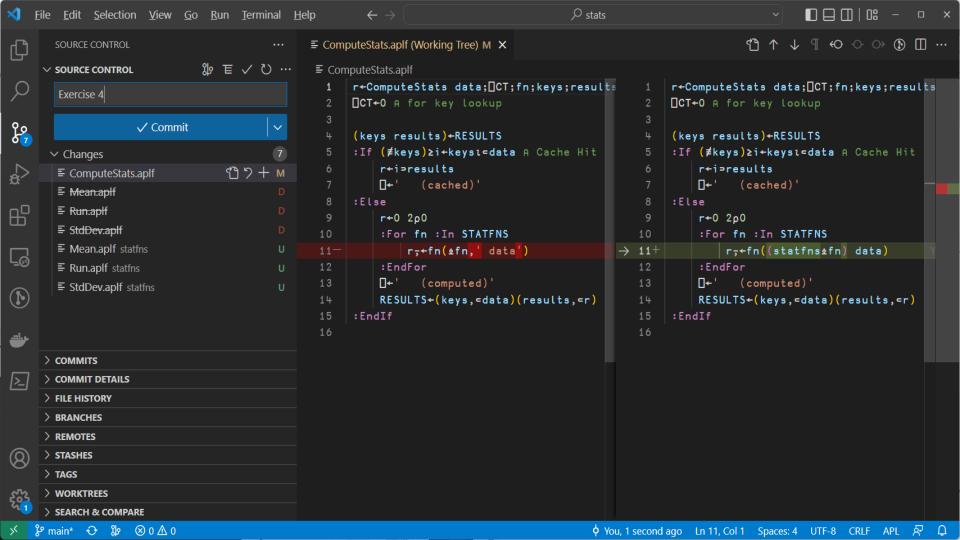
- Create a subdirectory called "statfns"
- Move the source files for the statistical functions (Mean, StdDev, Root) into it
- Get the application to run again



Exercise 5 - Discussion

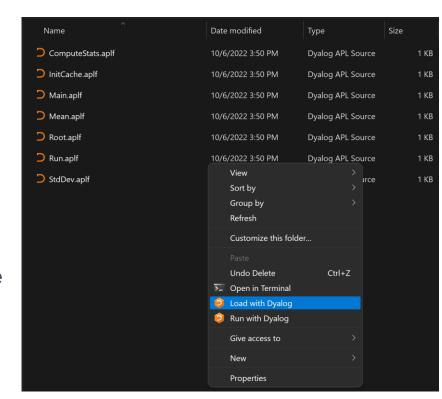
-flatten or refactor?





"Boot" from Source

- Right click in the file explorer
 - "Load with Dyalog" will do a Link.Create on a selected folder, or import a selected file
 - "Run with Dyalog" will look for a function called Run and invoke it if it exists after the link has been created.
-]FileAssociations can be used to select APL version





LOAD= parameter

- Point to a file, or a directory
- Can be specified on the command line, or in a .dcfg file
- Add –x to disable startup (just setting LOAD is actually equivalent to "Run with Dyalog")

```
Command Prompt
```

```
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.22000.978] (c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
```

```
C:\>dyalogrt.exe LOAD="C:/Git/ProjectA/MyFunction.aplf"
```

```
Example .dcfg file:
 Settings: {
      AutoPW: 1,
       MaxWS: "512M",
       DadoProjectsFolder: "C:/Git",
       PropertyExposeRoot: 1,
       LOAD: "C:/Git/stats"
```



The Run function

The stats workspace contains a function Run:

```
∇ Run dir
[1] Main
∇
```

 When launched by LOAD, the right argument will be the name of the folder that was loaded. Also:



Is the Workspace Dead?

With Link, you no longer need to save workspaces (?)

- Well, except for distribution of your application
- Or saving WIP including live data that is not stored in Link, in order to resume work later
- Or saving "crash workspaces"
- Anything else?



Saved Workspaces with Links

From v4.0, Link handles workspaces with "live" links kinda OK

This is not a very well tested feature

- Do NOT rely on this as a way to manage multiple variations over your source code.
- The correct way to manage branches of your source code is to use something like Git[Hub], we'll look at that soon.



Saved Links

```
]link.create # c:\devt\intro-to-link\export
Linked: # ←→ c:\devt\intro-to-link\export
      data←?100p100
Lunch time!
      )save c:\tmp\stats-work.dws
c:\tmp\stats-work.dws A saved Tue Sep 23 18:20:43 2025
Back from lunch!
      )load c:\tmp\stats-work.dws
c:\tmp\stats-work.dws A saved Tue Sep 23 18:20:43 2025
Link Warning: 1 link restored: #
IF source files match WS contents, the link is just restored. If not, see next slide.
```



If source does not match WS

differences by copy/pasting source etc.

```
| Comments | Comments
```



C:\devt\intro-to-link\old-export\Main.a

Main;data;fn;n;result
□A Compute Stats until input

File Edit View Help

A Morten was here

IF you do not agree with the recommended "Direction", you must manually resolve the

Exercise 6 – Saved Links

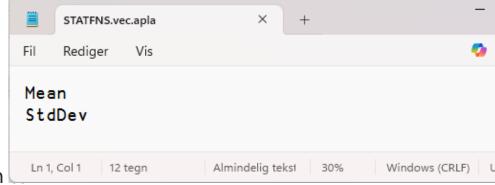
- Save a workspace with a Link in it
- Edit a function source file using the editor of your choice
- Reload the workspace and sort things out



"Simple" Text Arrays

- By default, APL Array Notation is used to store all arrays
- This is not always the best format if your data is
 - A character vector with completely regular line endings
 - CR (UCS 13), LF (10) or CRLF (13 10)
 - A vector of character vectors with no line endings (like STATFNS)
 - A character matrix





-text=plain|aplan

- The –text switch allows you to select "plain" text formats
 - The default is APL Array Notation: -text=aplan

]link.export STATFNS c:\tmp\stats -text=plain

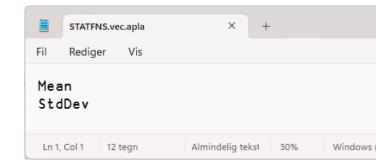
- Note that the penultimate segment of the name controls the form of the APL array that will be created from the file.
 - In this case, .vec. tells Link that the file should be loaded into a vector of vectors

```
STATFNS.apla X +

Fil Rediger Vis

(
   'Mean'
   'StdDev'
)

Ln 1, Col 1 22 tegn Almindelig 1 30%
```



Text files which are not in APLAN format will have a penultimate "sub-extension" section in the file name which records the format of the original array in the workspace. The below table describes the array file extensions, what the content represents, and the specific criteria for storage in plain text file.

For all plain text types, the array must be non-empty.

File Extension	Array Characteristics	Prohibited characters (Ducs)
.CR.apla	Simple vector with each line terminated by Ducs 13	10 11 12 133 8232 8233
.LF.apla	Simple vector with each line terminated by Ducs 10	11 12 13 133 8232 8233
.CRLF.apla	Simple vector with each line terminated by Ducs 13 10	11 12 133 8232 8233 *
.vec.apla	Vector of simple character vectors (no scalar elements)	11 12 13 133 8232 8233
.mat.apla	Simple character matrix	10 11 12 13 133 8232 8233

Link User Guide

Overview

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DVALOC

Technical Details and Limitations

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History of source files as text in Dyalog

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Working with Link

Basic Usage

Array Formats

Configuration Files

Setting Up Your Application

Array Formats

By default, Link uses APL Array Notation (APLAN) to store arrays in text files. While APLAN is a good format for describing numeric data, nested arrays and many high rank arrays, it is not ideal for storing text data. Link 4.0 introduced experimental support for storing multi-line character data in simple text files.

The configuration setting text can be used to enable this feature: If text is set to 'aplan' (the default) then all arrays will be store using APLAN. If text is set to 'plain' then text arrays that adhere to a set of very specific criteria will instead be stored in plain text files. You can set this option when a link is created, or using Link.Configure.

Text files which are not in APLAN format will have a penultimate "sub-extension" section in the file name which records the format of the original array in the workspace. The below table describes the array file extensions, what the content represents, and the specific criteria for storage in plain text file.

For all plain text types, the array must be non-empty.



The middle segment of the name

- Declares the form of the APL array, NOT the file
 - The file will have the separator decided by ☐NPUT
- Once a file has e.g. .vec. in the name, the array format is fixed.
 - You need to delete the file if you want to change the
 - Or rename it and re-create the link
 - NB: If you delete the file while watch=both, the variable will be expunded!
- You can set the default for future files

 link.configure myns text:plain

text:plain, continued

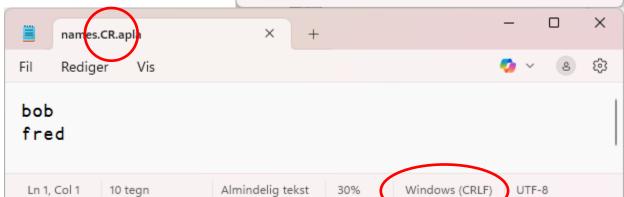
Once the default is set to "plain":

```
NL←□UCS 13 A "Carriage Return" names←'bob',NL,'fred',NL
```

]link.add names

Added: #.myns.names





Text:plain, continued

If watching the directory, then after saving the edited file:

```
↑('.'@(NL∘=)names)(□UCS names)
j i l l . b o b . f r e d .
106 105 108 108 13 98 111 98 13 102 114 101 100 13
```



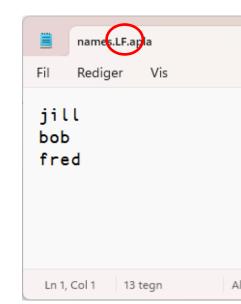


Text:plain, continued

Renaming the file to *.LF.apla gives a nasty warning:

However, if you re-create the Link, note that the line endings are LF's:

```
↑('.'@(=∘(□UCS 10))names)(□UCS names)
j i l l . b o b . f r e d .
106 105 108 108 10 98 111 98 10 102 114 101 100 10
```





Final words about "Data"

- As a general rule, Link is not for saving "data"
 - It is for "source code"
- However, this is a grey area
 - Are mortality tables or other assumptions code or data?
 - If they need to be tracked and audited, using text source brings many useful tools to bear
 - One persons data is another ones code



Oh, and ...

- Did I say "text:plain" is not very well tested ...
-]Link.Resync doesn't work with text:plain
 - Hopefully fixed before v20.0 is shipped
- Otherwise, Link 4.1.7 will be in a DSS update (and on GitHub)



Exercise 7 – text:plain

Switch to using text:plain in the stats app

- Use]link.configure to change the default to text:plain
- Verify the contents of the .linkconfig file
- Replace STATFNS.apla with STATFNS.vec.apla
- Verify that the application still works



Boot or Build?

- It is fine (even encouraged!) to dynamically load text source during development
- For small or open-source applications, it is also fine for distribution / runtime if performance is not an issue
- It is NOT recommended to dynamically load source from large numbers of text files in production environments



Exercise 8 - Distribution

- Write a "BuildWS" function which
 - Load the source into the workspace
 - If source is already Linked, see Link.Break
 - Uses SAVE to create a workspace that will run when loaded

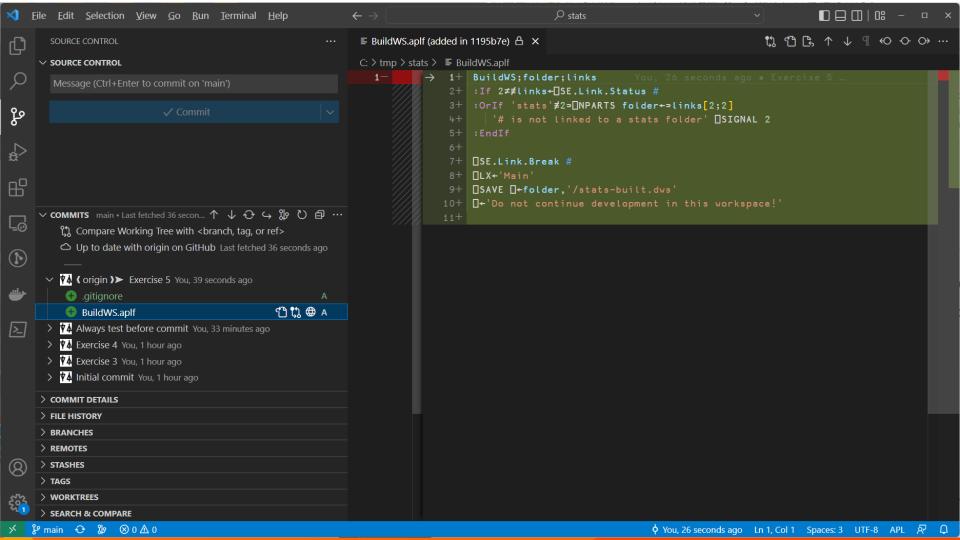


Exercise 8 - Solution

```
∇ BuildStats; home; wsid
       :If O=≢home←1⊃□NPARTS 4⊃5179I⊃□SI
\lceil 1 \rceil
[2]
            →0-□←'Unable to determine source directory!'
[3]
       :EndIf
[4]
       SE.Link.Import #(home,'/export')
[5]
    ∏LX←'Main'
[6]
       O □SAVE wsid←home, '/runstats.dws'
       □←'Saved: ',wsid
[7]
     \Delta
```

dyalog.exe LOAD=C:\devt\intro-to-link\BuildStats.aplf





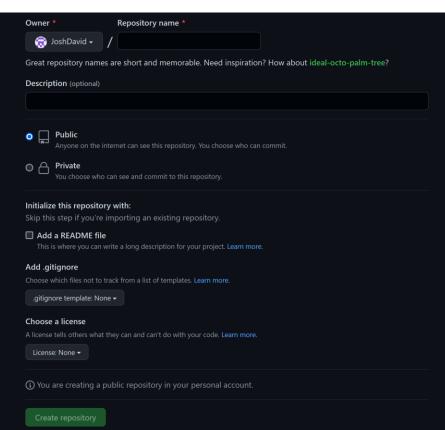
A Day in the Life ...

... Of a text-based APL developer

- Create GitHub repo
- Clone it locally
- Populate it
- Make a change, roll back
- Roll forward,
- Make branch, commit, pull request
- Finally, look at METSIM Build & Run
- Talk about -preload



Creating a GitHub Repository



Picking a License



I need to work in a community.

Use the license preferred by the community you're contributing to or depending on. Your project will fit right in.

If you have a dependency that doesn't have a license, ask its maintainers to add a license.



I want it simple and permissive.

The MIT License is short and to the point. It lets people do almost anything they want with your project, like making and distributing closed source versions.

Babel, .NET, and Rails use the MIT License.



I care about sharing improvements.

The **GNU GPLv3** also lets people do almost anything they want with your project, *except* distributing closed source versions.

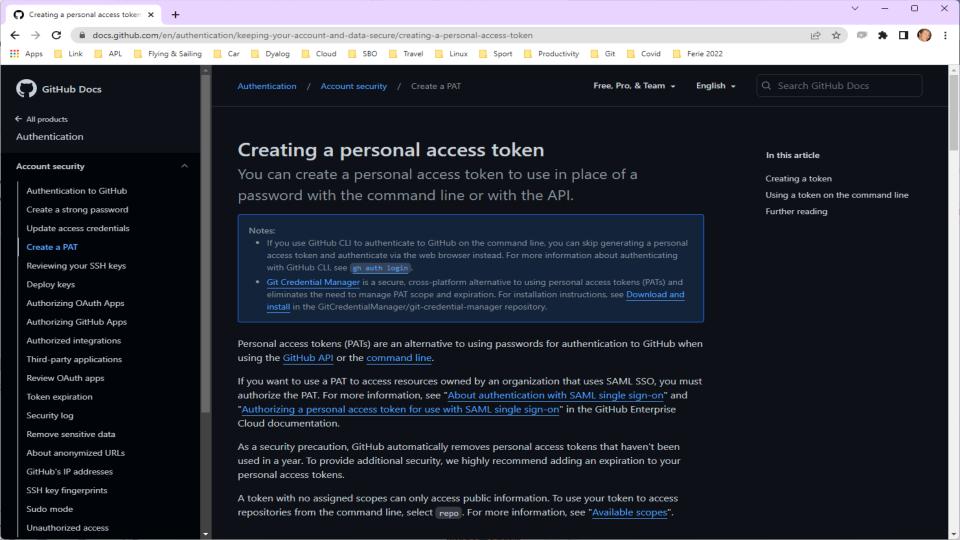
Ansible, Bash, and GIMP use the GNU GPLv3.



Cloning your repo

- You can set your Git client up to communicate via HTTPS or SSH
- HTTPS is easier to setup, and with Personal Access Tokens (PAT) and 2FA (Two-factor Authentication) it probably satisfies your security needs
- Once set up, try cloning your new "repo", or:
 git clone https://github.com/dialog-training/2022-SA3 /some/folder





How Morten Works – Live Demo

- VS Code & Git Lens
- METSIM build



```
[1]
        DEV←v/'yY1'∈2 □NQ'.' 'GetEnvironment' 'DEV'
[2]
        PULL←v/'pull'e□C 2 □NQ'.' 'GetCommandLine'
[3]
[4]
        □←'Building METSIM ',((DEV+1)>'runtime' 'development'),' workspace...'
[5]
        :If O=≢GITPATH←1⊃NPARTS T1↓1⊃1 NPARTS 4⊃5179±1⊃NSI
[6]
             GITPATH\leftarrow \epsilon 1 \square NPARTS\{\omega, '/'/\sim (-1 \uparrow \omega) \epsilon'/ \ \}\{0 = \neq \omega : 'c : \forall \omega \} 2 \square NQ' . ' 'GetEnvironment' 'GITPATH' 'GITPATH' 'GITPATH' 'GITPATH'
[7]
        :EndIf
[8]
        :If ~^/m←□NEXISTS dirs←GITPATH∘, "'metsim/dyalog' 'AtfIn/APLSource/A2K' 'deltawi/code/DWI'
[9]
             □←'Unable to build METSIM® for Dyalog APL, cannot find:'
[10]
             Π←- '
                     '。, "(~m)/dirs
[11]
             →0
[12]
        :EndIf
[13]
        nss←'#' 'A2K' 'dwi'
[14]
[15]
        :For (ns dir) :InEach nss dirs
[16]
             ai3←[AI[3]
[17]
             □←'Processing ',dir,'... '
[18]
             :If PULL
                 □←dir(1>pull←□SHELL'git' '-C'dir'pull')
[19]
[20]
             :EndIf
[21]
             :If DEV
[22]
                  z←(fastLoad:1 ♦ flatten:v/'metsim'∈dir) SE.Link.Create ns dir
[23]
             :Else
[24]
                  z←(fastLoad:1 ♦ flatten:v/'metsim'∈dir)□SE.Link.Import ns dir
[25]
             :EndIf
             \Box \leftarrow (1 \mp 0.001 \times (3 \Rightarrow \Box AI) - ai3), seconds'
[26]
[27]
         :EndFor
                                                 Introduction to Link
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```

∇ Build;GITPATH;gitrepos;warn;ai3;dirs;nss;ns;dir;z;type;filename;flags;resource;icon;cmdline;details;DEV;m;P

```
gitrepos←GitStatus~GITPATH∘,~{(-1+ωι'/')↑ω}~(≢GITPATH)↓~dirs
[30]
[31]
       □←-qitrepos
[32]
[33]
       :If ν/~gitrepos.branchε'main' 'main...origin/main'
[34]
           □←'** Warning: not building exclusively from main branches'-warn←1
[35]
       :EndIf
[36]
       :If ~^/gitrepos.clean
[37]
           □←'** Warning: repos contain uncommited changes: ',(#GITPATH)↓"(~gitrepos.clean)/gitrepos.path-warn←1
[38]
       :EndIf
[39]
[40]
       :If O≠≢RIDE←2 □NQ'.' 'GetEnvironment' 'RIDE' A LEAVE THIS AS GLOBAL for Run to inspect!
[41]
           □←'*** NB NB RIDE is set: ',RIDE,' ***'
[42]
       :EndIf
[43]
[44]
       :If warn
           Π←'Proceed (Y/N)?'
[45]
[46]
           \rightarrow (\vee/'yY'\in[])\downarrow0
[47]
       :EndIf
[48]
[49]
       □←'Copying SQAPL and Conga'
       'Conga' ☐ CY' conga'
[50]
[51]
       'SQA'□CY'sqapl'
[52]
[53]
       A2K.∆WI←dwi.WI
[54]
       GITREPOS←gitrepos
[55]
[56]
       TWSID←'C:\METSIMD\METSIM'
[57]
       ΠLX←'Run'
                                            Introduction to Link
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```

[29]

□←'Verifying git status...'¬warn←0

```
[60]
           O MSAVE MWSID
[61]
           □←'Saved: ',□WSID
[62]
[63]
       :Else A Build a stand-alone executable
[64]
           ΔRTS←1
[65]
           filename←'C:\METSIMD\METSIM.exe'
[66]
           type←'StandaloneNativeExe'
[67]
           flags←8 A Runtime
[68]
           resource←''
[69]
           icon←'c:\METSIMD\METSIM.ico'
[70]
           cmdline←'METSIM.exe MAXWS=512M METSIM FORMSIZE="1000 1600"'
[71]
           details←['Comments' 'METSIM® for Dyalog APL'
[72]
                'CompanyName' 'MSI Inc.'
[73]
                'FileDescription' 'METSIM® executable for Dyalog APL'
[74]
                'FileVersion'(↑'Mmm YYYY'(1200I)1 ∏DT'J')
[75]
                'ProductVersion'(↑'Mmm YYYY'(1200±)1 ∏DT'J')
[76]
               'LegalCopyright'('Copyright MSI Inc. ',₹1⊃□TS)
                'ProductName' 'METSIM® for Dyalog APL']
[77]
[78]
[79]
           :If 1=2 \square NQ'.' 'bind'filename type flags resource icon cmdline details
[80]
               □←'Created executable with command line ',cmdline
[81]
                :If □NEXISTS buildfile←GITPATH, 'metsim/installer/METSIM/METSIM.exe'
[82]
                    buildfile([NCOPY: 'IfExists' 'Replace')filename
[83]
                   □←'Also updated ',buildfile
[84]
               :EndIf
[85]
           :Else
[86]
[87]
           :EndIf
[88]
       :EndIf
                                           Introduction to Link
```

[59]

:If DEV

```
[3]
[4]
        config < ReadConfig
[5]
        loadsrc+4>5179I1>∏SI
[6]
[7]
        :If config.DEV A In developer mode, patch changes since last Build
[8]
             □←'Setting up development environment - Patching and Linking'
[9]
             :If 0=\not\equiv GITPATH \leftarrow \{(^{-1}+1i^{-1}metsim/dyalog'\in C \omega)\uparrow\omega\}\in 1 INPARTS loadsrc
[10]
                 GITPATH\leftarrow \epsilon 1 \square NPARTS\{\omega, '/'/\sim (-1 \uparrow \omega) \epsilon'/ \}\{0 = \neq \omega : 'c : \forall v \} config.GITPATH
[11]
             :EndIf
             dirs+GITPATHo, "'metsim/dyalog' 'AtfIn/APLSource/A2K' 'deltawi/code/DWI'
[12]
[13]
             nss←'#' 'A2K' 'dwi'
[14]
[15]
             :For (ns dir) :InEach nss dirs
[16]
                 path←GITPATH, {( 1+ωι'/')↑ω}(≢GITPATH)↓dir
[17]
                 build←(GITREPOS.pathi⊂path)⊃GITREPOS
[18]
                 □←repo←build.hash GitStatus path
[19]
                 :If build.branch≢repo.branch
[20]
                      □←'*** Unable to patch - this workspace was built from branch [',build.branch,'] - rebuild requ
[21]
                      :Continue
[22]
                 :EndIf
[23]
                 saved←13 □NINFO □WSID, '.dws'
[24]
                 (names times) ←0 13 [NINFO]('Wildcard' 1)('Recurse' 1) ⊢dir,'/*'
[25]
                 parts←□NPARTS(times>saved)/names
[26]
                 names ← (m ← ((3 ¬ parts) ∈ ⊂ '.dyalog') ∨ (4 ↑ "3 ¬ parts) ∈ ⊂ '.apl')/2 ¬ parts
[27]
                 ∏EX names~⊂'Run
                                                Introduction to Link
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```

∇ Run;GITPATH;dirs;nss;z;ns;dir;repo;chanqed;files;prefix;names;parts;m;file;ext;name;path;build;loadsrc;□TRA

A Start Dyalog METSIM

ΠTRAP←O 'C' '→ERROR'

[1]

[2]

```
∏EX names~⊂'Run'
[27]
[28]
               :For (path name ext) :In m/parts
[29]
                   □←'Patching ',path,name,ext
[30]
                    :If ext≡'.apla'
[31]
                        ns □SE.Link.Fix 1>□NGET(path,name,ext)1
[32]
                    :Else
[33]
                        2(♠ns). ☐FIX'file://',path,name,ext
[34]
                    :EndIf
[35]
               :EndFor
[36]
               z←(fastLoad:1 ♦ preloaded:1 ♦ flatten:v/'metsim'edir) SE.Link.Create ns dir
[37]
           :EndFor
[38]
           :If ∨/m←~□NEXISTS □SE.Link.Links.dir
[39]
               □←'*** WARNING: source folder(s) not found: ',₹m/□SE.Link.Links.dir
[40]
           :EndIf
[41]
           :If 0=≢loadsrc
[42]
               □←'*** WARNING: this is not a development workspace - no file links ***'
[43]
           :EndIf
[44]
           □←'Config:'
[45]
           □JSON⊡'Compact' O-config
[46]
       :ElseIf 0≠≢loadsrc
[47]
           □←'*** WARNING: development workspace - file links exist ***'
[48]
       :EndIf
```



```
[52]
       dwi.DEBUG ~~ config.TRAP DWI ERRORS
[53]
[54]
       □WSID←'C:\METSIMD\METSIM'
[55]
       A2K.DEBUG INTERRUPTS←'#.DEBUG INTERRUPTS'
[56]
       A2K.DISPLAY ERRORS←config.DISPLAY TRAPPED ERRORS/'#.DISPLAY ERRORS'
[57]
       ΔDEBUG←isRuntime
[58]
       silent ← v/'1 y Y' ∈ 2 □NQ'.' 'Get Environment' 'SIL'
[59]
[60]
       :If config.DEV^~isRuntimevsilent
[61]
           Π←'
                     LOAD'
[62]
       :Else
[63]
           :If O≠≢RIDE
[64]
                3502 IRIDE ♦ 3502 I 1
[65]
               Wmsg'RIDE enabled - disable before shipping! '48
[66]
           :EndIf
[67]
          LOAD
[68]
           OFF
[69]
       :EndIf
[70]
       →0
[71]
[72]
      ERROR:
      □TRAP←0 'S'
[73]
[74]
     'EF'□WC'Form' 'METSIM® Startup Error'('Size' 300 1000)('Coord' 'Pixel')
      'EF.TXT'□WC'Text'(<a-□DMX.DM)(10 10)('Font' 'APL385 Unicode')
[75]
[76]
       ΠDQ'EF'
     \nabla
                                           Introduction to Link
```



[50]

[51]

A2K.∆WI←dwi.WI

dwi.Init #