

Conventional Commits Quick Reference

Commit message format, types, scopes, breaking changes

Format

Commit Message Structure

```
<type>[optional scope]: <description>
[optional body]
[optional footer(s)]
```

Parts Explained

type	Category of change (feat, fix, etc.)
scope	Section of codebase affected (optional)
description	Short summary in imperative mood
body	Detailed explanation (optional, after blank line)
footer	Metadata like BREAKING CHANGE or issue refs

Rules

Imperative mood	"add feature" not "added feature"
Lowercase type	feat: not Feat:
No period	Description does not end with ""
Blank line	Separate body/footer from description

Types

Core Types (SemVer-relevant)

feat	New feature (triggers MINOR version bump)
fix	Bug fix (triggers PATCH version bump)

Extended Types (Common Convention)

build	Build system or external dependencies
chore	Maintenance tasks (no src/test changes)
ci	CI configuration and scripts
docs	Documentation only changes
perf	Performance improvement
refactor	Code change that neither fixes nor adds
revert	Reverts a previous commit
style	Formatting, whitespace (not CSS styling)
test	Adding or correcting tests

Scope

Scope Usage

```
feat(auth): add OAuth2 login flow
fix(parser): handle empty input gracefully
docs(readme): update installation steps
refactor(api): extract validation middleware
```

Scope Guidelines

Module name	feat(auth);, fix(parser):
Layer name	feat(api);, fix(db):
Feature area	feat(search);, fix(checkout):
Dependency	build(deps);, chore(npm):
Omit if broad	Use no scope for cross-cutting changes

Breaking Changes

Marking Breaking Changes

```
feat!: remove deprecated login endpoint
feat(api)!: change response format to JSON:API
fix!: drop Node 14 support
```

Footer-Style Breaking Change

```
feat(api): change user endpoint response
BREAKING CHANGE: response now returns array
instead of object. Update client parsing.
```

Rules

! after type/scope	Shorthand breaking change marker
BREAKING CHANGE:	Footer token (always uppercase)
BREAKING-CHANGE:	Also valid (hyphen form)
SemVer impact	Triggers MAJOR version bump
Any type	Breaking changes can apply to any type

Examples

Simple Commits

```
feat: add email notifications
fix: prevent race condition in checkout
docs: correct typo in contributing guide
style: format with prettier
refactor: simplify error handling logic
```

With Scope

```
feat(blog): add comment threading
fix(auth): refresh token before expiry
test(api): add missing edge case coverage
ci(github): add Node 20 to test matrix
```

With Body and Footer

```
fix(parser): handle nested quotes correctly

Previously, nested quotes caused the parser
to enter an infinite loop. This adds a depth
counter to prevent unbounded recursion.

Closes #234
```

Footer

Footer Tokens

BREAKING CHANGE:	Describes breaking API change
Closes #123	Auto-close issue on merge
Fixes #456	Auto-close issue (fix reference)
Refs #789	Reference issue without closing
Reviewed-by: name	Reviewer attribution
Co-authored-by: name	Co-author attribution

Multiple Footers

```
feat(api)!: redesign authentication flow

Migrate from session-based to JWT auth.

BREAKING CHANGE: /auth endpoints changed
Closes #101
Refs #98, #99
```

Tooling

Commit Linting

```
npm install -D @commitlint/cli \
  @commitlint/config-conventional
echo "module.exports = { extends: \
  ['@commitlint/config-conventional'] }" \
  > commitlint.config.js
```

Popular Tools

commitlint	Lint commit messages against convention
husky	Git hooks (run commitlint on commit)
commitizen (cz)	Interactive commit message builder
standard-version	Auto changelog + version bump
semantic-release	Fully automated release pipeline
release-please	Google's release automation tool

Commitizen Setup

```
npm install -D commitizen \
  cz-conventional-changelog
npx commitizen init cz-conventional-changelog
# Use: npx cz (or git cz with alias)
```

Common Patterns

Version Bump Mapping

fix:	PATCH (1.0.0 → 1.0.1)
feat:	MINOR (1.0.0 → 1.1.0)
BREAKING CHANGE	MAJOR (1.0.0 → 2.0.0)
docs:, style:, etc.	No version bump

Changelog Grouping

```
## [1.2.0] - 2026-03-27
### Features
- add email notifications (abc1234)
### Bug Fixes
- prevent race condition (#123) (def5678)
```

Revert Format

```
revert: feat(blog): add comment threading
This reverts commit abc1234def5678.
```