



JS

Creating NPM Package

Build, Test, and Publish Vanilla JavaScript Libraries
Like a Pro

OLUWATOBI SOFELA



Creating NPM Package with Vanilla JavaScript

Build, Test & Publish Vanilla JavaScript Libraries Like a Pro

This book is available at

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Introduction

Welcome to NPM Package!

NPM is a database (storage) for thousands of packages. Developers use it to share, manage, find, and install libraries.



A package is sometimes called a library, plugin, framework, or tool. It is a directory (or project) with a `package.json` file for recording information about it.

Publishing NPM packages is a fantastic way to share your code with others and become a better developer. It is a vital step in contributing to the developer community and showcasing a variety of skills, such as:

- communication skills
- collaboration skills
- organizational skills
- technical skills
- documentation skills
- problem-solving skills

Becoming an NPM package publisher is a unique way to create a finished product that others can use as part of or the main component of their apps.

This beginner-friendly book discusses everything you need to know to create, test, and publish NPM packages like a pro.

How This Book Can Help You

The best way to learn is through progressive practice. In other words, the easiest way to become a proficient package publisher is to proactively build NPM plugins—rather than merely reading or watching videos about them.

As such, this book is intentionally project-oriented to get you to practice as much as possible while learning the fundamental concepts of becoming an NPM package publisher.

Therefore, you will do yourself a favor by opening your text editor (such as VS Code) and code-along as you go through the book. By so doing, you will avoid being part of those stuck in “Tutorial Hell.”

The Roadmap

This book’s main project is a Tweet Button—which you can scale up to whatever magnitude your imagination can afford.

Don’t let the project type scare you off! You are on for an exciting ride—where you will learn the fundamental concepts needed to publish any NPM package. So, give it a chance.

Dependencies

It is highly recommended that you use the exact version of dependencies specified in this book. By doing so, you will spend less time dealing with bugs that a newly released dependency version may cause.

After finishing this book’s lessons, you can upgrade the dependencies to the latest version. If the bump (update) causes a bug, search online or the package’s community for the appropriate fix.

Prerequisite

Familiarity with Git, GitHub, and JavaScript will help you learn NPM package publishing better. So, to be better prepared for this book’s content, it’s best to be familiar with the elementary aspects of those tools.

Questions and Comments

If you have questions or comments about this book, email contact@codesweetly.com or direct message me on Twitter (@oluwatobiss).

Let's Get It Started!

The following chapter will discuss how to configure the project.

Project Configuration

Below are the required system and file configurations for creating NPM packages.

1. Setting Up Your System

Please ensure your system has the following installations:

- Git
- Node 22.13 (or greater)
- NPM 10.9 (or greater)



- Use the [Git tutorial](#) to install, update, or verify Git on your system.
- Use the [package manager](#) tutorial to install, update, or verify Node and NPM on your system.

2. Creating a Project Directory

Create a new folder for your project like so:

```
mkdir thank-you-tweet-button-001
```



You can use any name you prefer. For instance, I've used `thank-you-tweet-button-001` for this guide.



- Specify a [name](#) that is less than or equal to 214 characters.
- Use lowercase letters only in the name.
- Your package's name should not contain "js" or "node".

Afterward, navigate to your project directory using the command line.

```
cd path/to/thank-you-tweet-button-001
```

3. Creating a package.json File

Use NPM to initialize a [package.json file](#) for your project.

```
npm init -y
```

Let's also configure Git.

4. Initializing a Git Repository

Create a `.git` repo in your project's [root directory](#):

```
git init
```

You now need to specify the files you want Git to ignore.

5. Specifying the Files Git Should Ignore

Create a `.gitignore` file in your project's root directory:

```
touch .gitignore
```

Afterward, open the newly created `.gitignore` file and write the names of the files, folders, or file types you want Git to ignore.

Here's an example:

Figure 1. `.gitignore`

```
/node_modules  
/dist
```

The snippet above instructs Git to ignore tracking the current directory's `node_modules` and `dist` folders.



- A current directory is the folder in which you are currently working.
- A current directory is sometimes called a “current working directory (CWD)” or “working directory.”
- See the [.gitignore file example](#) to learn more about `gitignore`.

It's now time to stage and commit your recent changes.

6. Staging and Committing Your Project's Changes to Git

Enter the following command on your terminal to stage and commit your recent changes.

```
git add -A && git commit -m "Initialize project using CodeSweetly's guide"
```

The command above tells Git to stage and commit all modified and untracked files in the project.

Let's now configure a remote repository for the project.

7. Configuring a GitHub Remote Repository

1. Go to the [GitHub website](#) and sign in or [sign up](#) if you do not have an account.
2. After signing up for an account, create a home (a repository) in GitHub for your Git repository. (You can use `thank-you-tweet-button-001` as the repo's name or any other name you prefer.)
3. Once you've created a remote repository for your package, link your project's `.git` directory (located locally on your system) with the remote repository on GitHub. To connect to the remote repository, go to your package's root directory via your local terminal and run the `git remote add` command. Here's the syntax:

```
git remote add origin https://github.com/your-username/remote-repo-name.git
```



- Replace your-username in the code above with your GitHub username. Likewise, replace remote-repo-name with your remote repository's name.
- See [GitHub Docs](#) to learn more about creating a GitHub repository.

You can also add the remote repo to your package.json file so that people who want to contribute to your project can easily access it.

Figure 2. package.json: Add repository field (line 4-7)

```
1 {
2   "name": "thank-you-tweet-button-001",
3   "version": "1.0.0",
4   "repository": {
5     "type": "git",
6     "url": "https://github.com/your-username/app-repo-name.git"
7   },
8   "scripts": {
9     "test": "echo \"Error: no test specified\" && exit 1"
10  }
11 }
```

Let's provide the remote repo's Issues URL as the package's bug tracker. And an email people can use to report issues:

Figure 3. package.json: Add bugs field (line 8-11)

```
1 {
2   "name": "thank-you-tweet-button-001",
3   "version": "1.0.0",
4   "repository": {
5     "type": "git",
6     "url": "https://github.com/your-username/app-repo-name.git"
7   },
8   "bugs": {
9     "url": "https://github.com/your-username/app-repo-name/issues",
10    "email": "your-project-email@host.com"
11  },
12  "scripts": {
13    "test": "echo \"Error: no test specified\" && exit 1"
14  }
15 }
```

Afterward, stage and commit your changes:

```
git add -A && git commit -m "Configure project's remote repo"
```

Let's now push the local Git repository upstream.

8. Uploading Your Local Git Directory to the Remote Repo

After successfully connecting your local directory to the remote repository, you can begin to push (upload) your local project upstream. Here's how:

```
git push -u origin main
```

The command above instructs Git to push your local `main` branch's `.git` directory to the remote `origin` branch on GitHub.



Refreshing your remote repository's page should now reflect your upload.

The next step is to write your code's test case. So, let's do that now.

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6. Preventing Git from Monitoring the Environment File

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7. Installing the Plugin for Loading the .env File

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8. Loading the .env File While Releasing Your Project's Latest Version

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9. Staging and Committing Your Changes

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Epilogue

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What's Next?

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One Last Favor

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