API Platform Conference 2025 Composer Best Practices 2025



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Private Packagisthttps://packagist.com



What happened so far

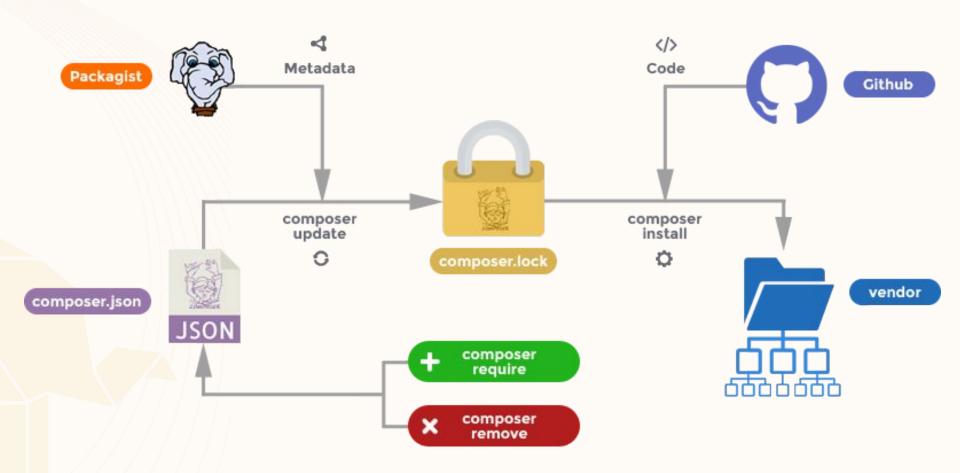
- February 5th, 2011 first lines of code
- March 1st, 2012 first alpha release
- November 14th, 2015 first stable release
- October 24th, 2020 second major release



What's actually new or different in 2025?

- <u>packagist.org</u> 1.x metadata shutdown
 - Still 2.7% of all install stats reported from Composer 1.x lock file installs
 - Switch to Composer 2! Stop using the v1 API!
 - Mission critical app? Private Packagist can proxy to Composer 1.x protocol
- New types of security attacks
 - First typo squatting
 - Now Al hallucinated package names
- Really trying not to change too much
- Occasionally new flags or commands
 - Today: composer audit, composer bump, composer update --minimal-changes, composer update --patch-only





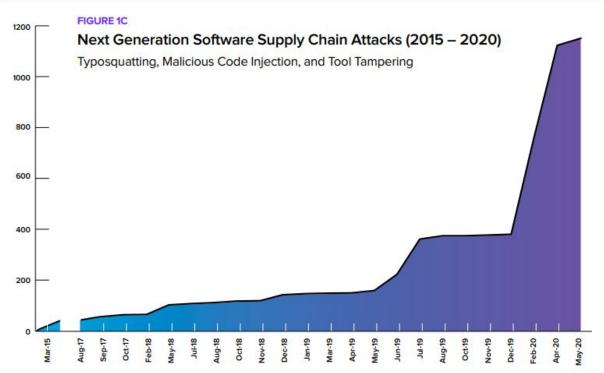


Why should you care about supply chain security?

- Online crime is rampant
- Criminals may attack your website to steal your visitors/users/customers identities, payment info, or other personal data even if it's just for phishing or social engineering
 - Don't think your data isn't valuable!
- Still essentially fighting the same OWASP Top 10 as 20 years ago
 - But also in your dependencies!



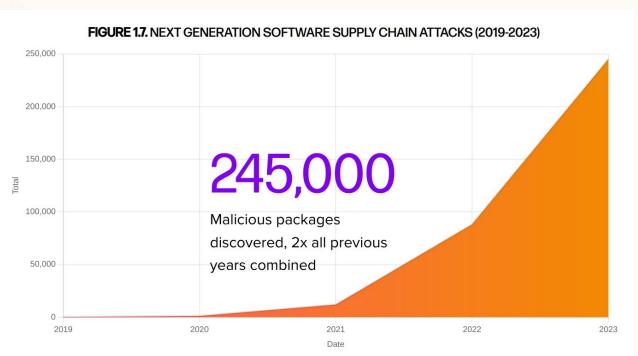
Supply Chain Attacks



"2020 State of the Software Supply Chain" by sonatype
https://www.sonatype.com/hubfs/Corporate/Software%20Supply%20Chain/2020/SON_SSSC-Report-2020_final_aug11.pdf



Supply Chain Attacks



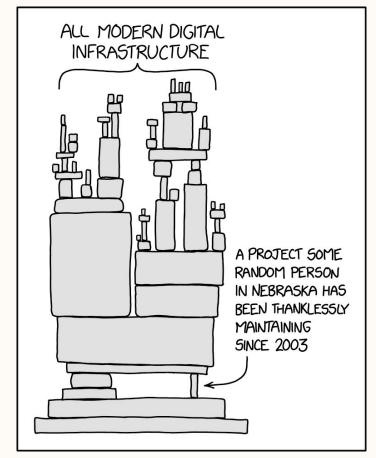
"9th Annual State of the Software Supply Chain" by sonatype

https://www.sonatype.com/hubfs/2023%20Sonatype-%209th%20Annual%20State%20of%20the%20Software%20Supply%20Chain-%20Update.pdf



Supply Chain Funding

- \$2,000 donations per year to OpenSSL
- \$841 in 3 days after Heartbleed 🤯
- Creation of Open Software Security Foundation (OpenSSF) at Linux Foundation
 - > \$10M raised by 2021
- German Government: Sovereign Tech Fund/Agency
 - https://sovereigntechfund.de since 2022
 - €17M budget in 2024, €11.5M in 2023
- Alpha-Omega
 - https://alpha-omega.dev/ since 2022
 - \$5M granted in 2024





Supply Chain Funding

- It's your supply chain, you need to help fund it!
- composer fund will tell you which of your dependencies need financial help
- Sponsor the PHP Foundation
 - https://thephp.foundation/sponsor/
- Buy a Private Packagist subscription to help fund Composer development
 - https://packagist.com
- Join the Open Source Pledge
 - Commit to sponsoring open source for at least \$2000/year per FTE-equivalent developer
 - https://opensourcepledge.com/



Packagist.org

- Metadata only
 - No checksums for GitHub stored packages
 - https://github.com/sansecio/composer-integrity-plugin
 - No signatures
 - https://www.drupal.org/project/infrastructure/issues/3325040 TUF
 - No way to upload code
- Positively
 - Everything over TLS
 - Installation from GitHub source archive URLs improves trust in artifacts
 - Smaller attack surface on packagist.org



Composer Supply Chain Vulnerabilities

- Mar 11, 2021: Git Clone Security Vulnerability
 - https://blog.packagist.com/git-clone-security-vulnerability/
 - Git vulnerability on case insensitive filesystems can be exploited through Composer if you clone dependencies
- Apr 27, 2021: Composer Command Injection Vulnerability
 - https://blog.packagist.com/composer-command-injection-vulnerability/
 - Code execution through Mercurial repository URL injection
- Apr 13, 2022: Composer Command Injection Vulnerability
 - https://blog.packagist.com/cve-2022-24828-composer-command-injection-vulnerability/
 - Code execution through Git or Mercurial branch names



Composer Supply Chain Attacks

- May 19, 2022: GitHub Repo Jacking
 - Attacker registered GitHub username of former maintainer
 - Republished package with malicious code to steal AWS credentials
 - https://thehackernews.com/2022/05/pypi-package-ctx-and-php-library-phpass.html
 - https://github.blog/2024-02-21-how-to-stay-safe-from-repo-jacking/
 - Problematic with VCS repo URL references in composer.json too
 - Packagist.org uses GitHub repo ids: https://github.com/composer/packagist/pull/1411
- May 1, 2023: Packagist.org maintainer account takeover
 - https://blog.packagist.com/packagist-org-maintainer-account-takeover/
 - Editing of source URLs no longer allowed beyond 50k installs



Use your own Composer repository

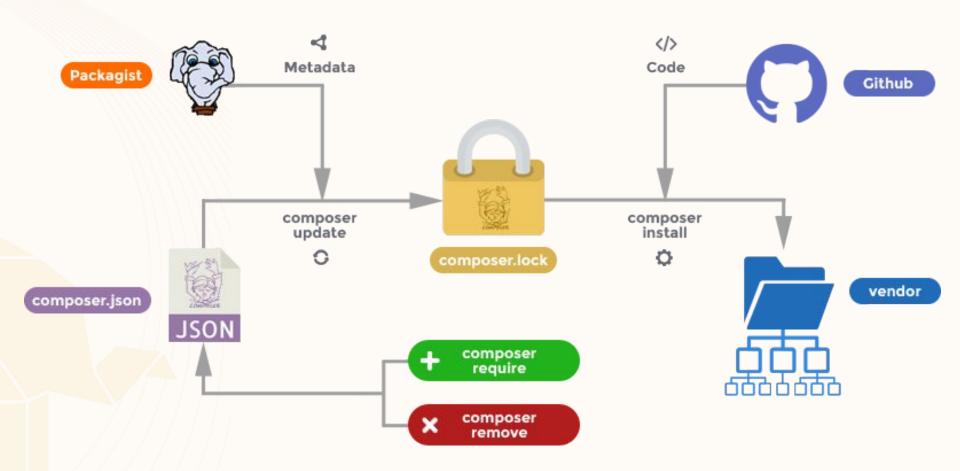
- Satis
- JFrog Artifactory
- Sonatype Nexus Repository
- Cloudsmith
- GitLab Package Registry
- ...
- Private Packagist



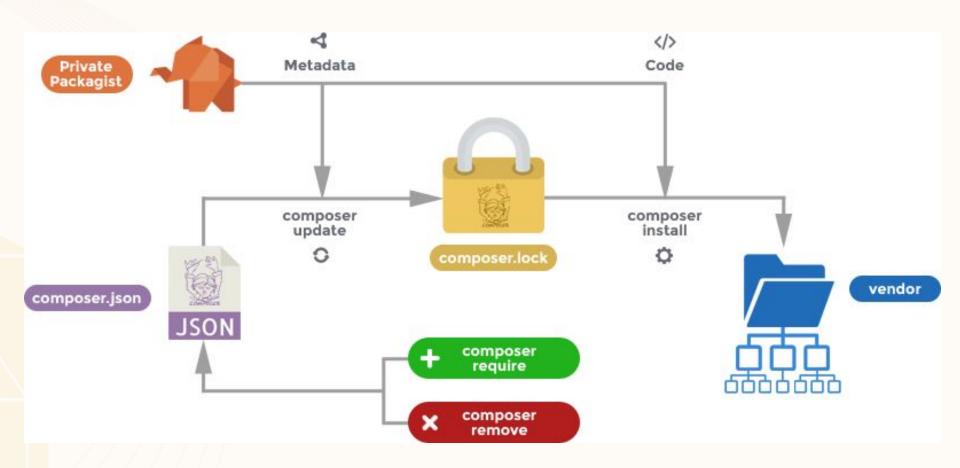
Private Packagist

- Stores a copy of all used versions of your dependencies
 - Safe from deletion
 - Safe from modification
- Serves package metadata **and** code
- Possible with some alternatives but usually with more effort and less convenience
 - e.g. copy all dependencies into git repositories, how do you keep those updated then?











Best Practice: Semantic Versioning

Promise of Compatibility

X.Y.Z

- Must be used consistently
 Dare to increment X!
- Only valuable if BC/Compatibility promise formalized
 - See https://symfony.com/doc/current/contributing/code/bc.html
 - Document in Changelog



Versions Constraints

• Exact Match: 1.0.0 1.2.3-beta2 dev-main

• Wildcard Range: 1.0.* 2.*

• **Hyphen Range:** 1.0-2.0 1.0.0 - 2.1.0 >=1.0.0 <2.1 >=1.0.0 <=2.1.0

(Unbounded Range: >= 1.0) Bad!

• Next Significant Release ~1.2 ~1.2.3

>=1.2.0 <2.0.0 >=1.2.3 <1.3.0

Operatoren: " " AND, "||" OR



Best Choice for Libraries

Versions Constraints

Allowing multiple majors with minimum requirements

^1.1.4 || ^2.3.1 || ^3.0.2

"Compatible with versions 1, 2 and 3, but only from the respective minimum versions"

Excluding broken versions

^1.1.3 !=1.4.1 !=1.7.2

"^1.1.3 but not the broken versions 1.4.1 and 1.7.2"



Stabilities

- Order
- Automatically from tags

1.2.3

1.3.0-beta3

Automatically from branches

Branch

2.0

Main

myfeature

Stability selection

<mark>"foo/bar": "</mark>1.3.*@beta"

"foo/bar": "2.0.x-dev"

"minimum-stability": "alpha"

dev -> alpha -> beta -> RC -> stable

-> stable

-> beta

- -> Version (Stability)
- -> 2.0.x-dev (dev)
- -> dev-main (dev)
- -> dev-myfeature (dev)



Aliases

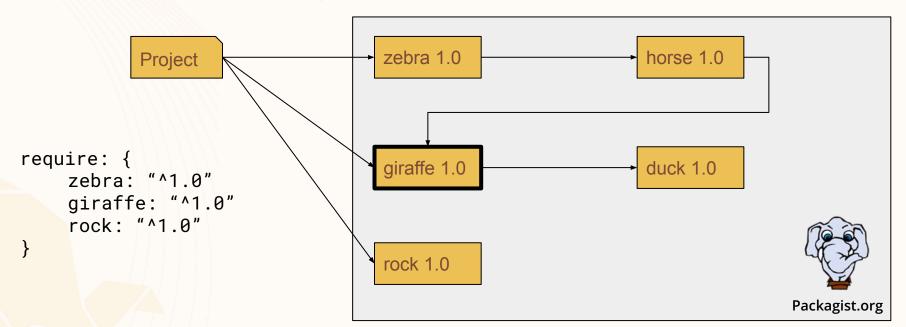
```
Dependency
name: "dep/foo"
require: {
    "some/package": "^1.2.0"
My project
require: {
    "dep/foo": "^1.0.0"
    "some/package": "dev-myfix as 1.2.3"
```



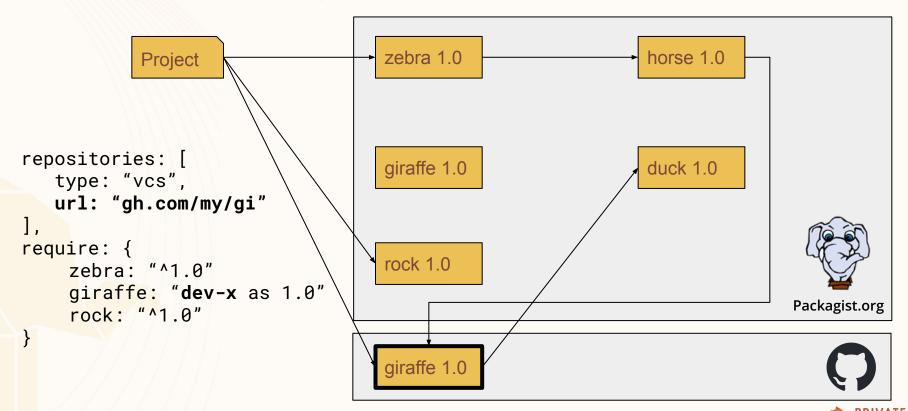
Forking

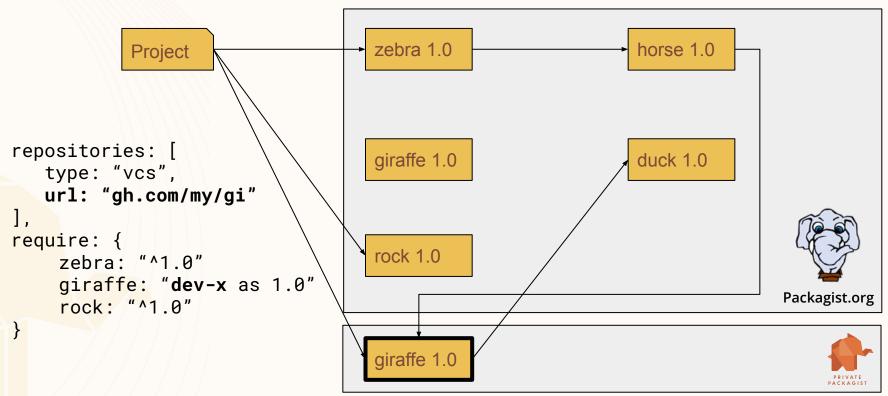
- Best option: Avoid forking
 - Send a PR upstream
 - Work with upstream maintainers
- Option 2: Temporary fork
 - Urgent fix
 - Can't wait for upstream merge
- Option 3: Permanent fork
 - Upstream no longer maintained
 - Upstream disagrees with your changes



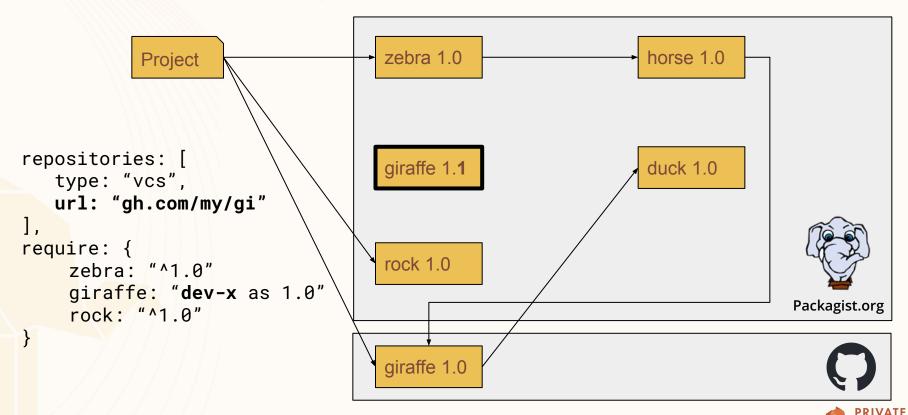






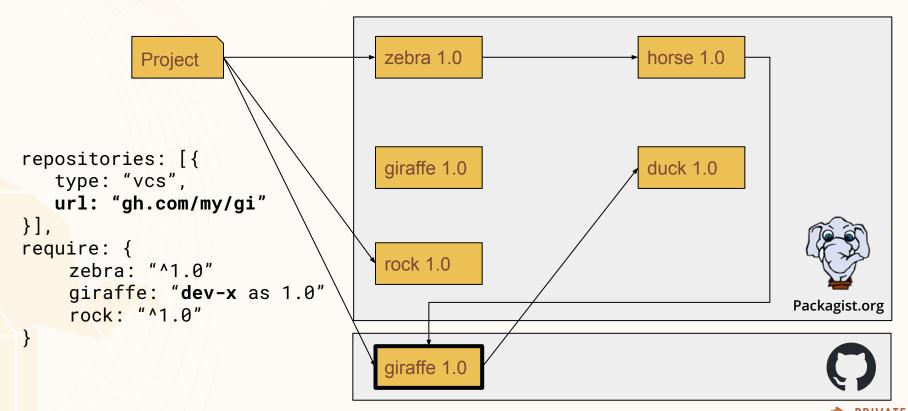


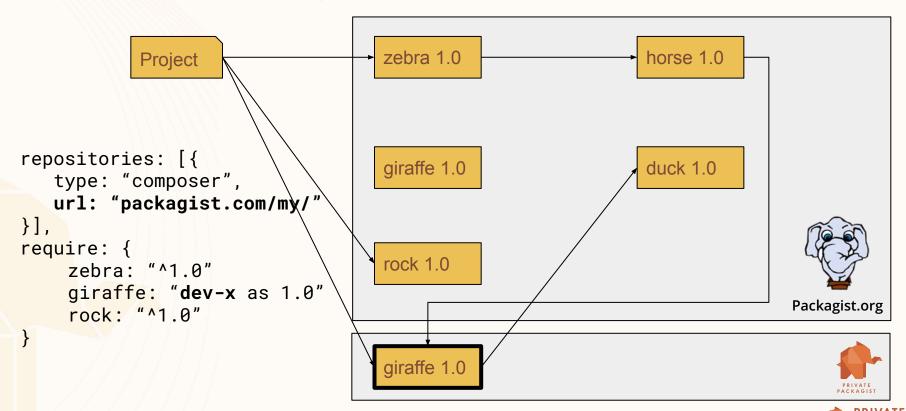




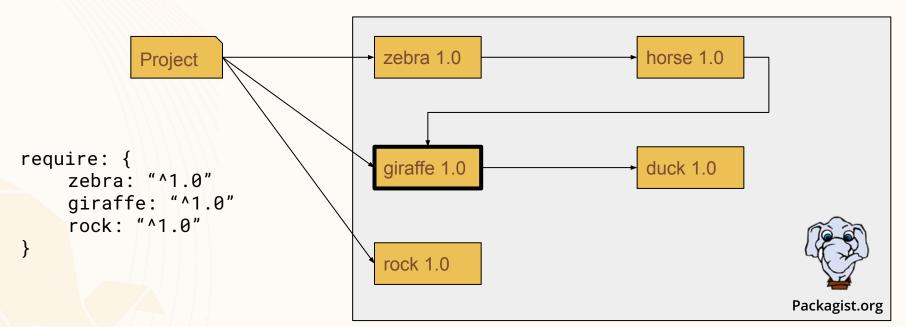
- Good quick solution
- Problematic in the long run
 - Have to monitor upstream package for new releases
 - VCS repositories are slow
 - Can be solved by using your own Composer repository
 - Private Packagist
 - GitLab Packages
 - Sonatype Nexus Repository
 - JFrog Artifactory
 - etc.



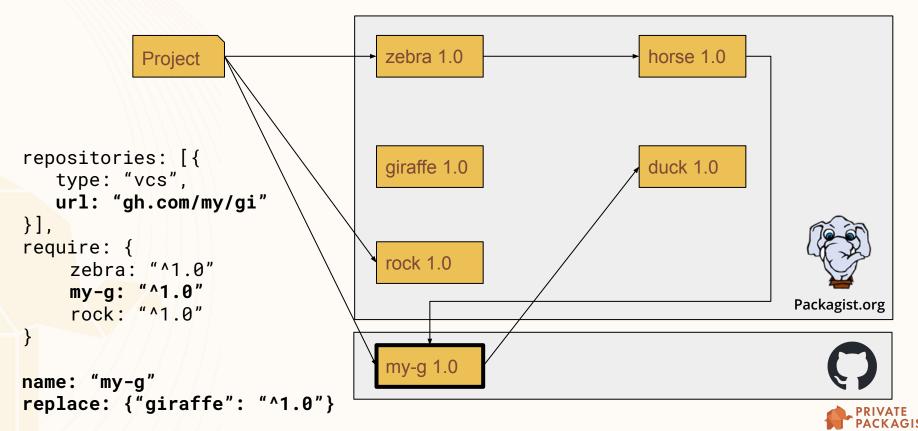


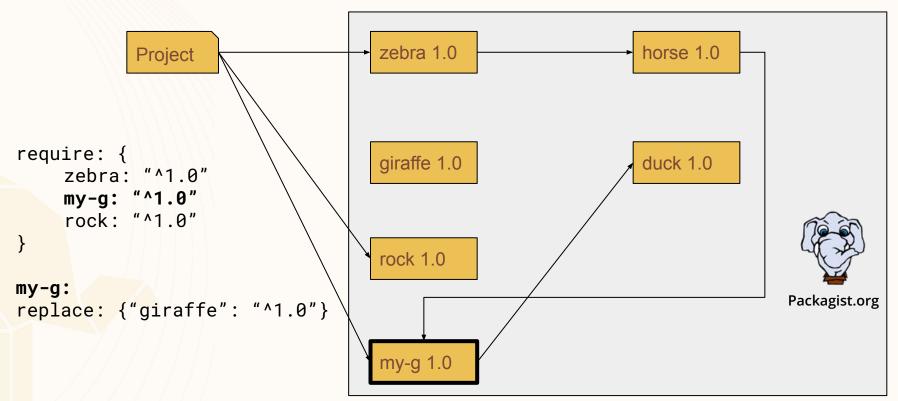


Forking: Permanent fork

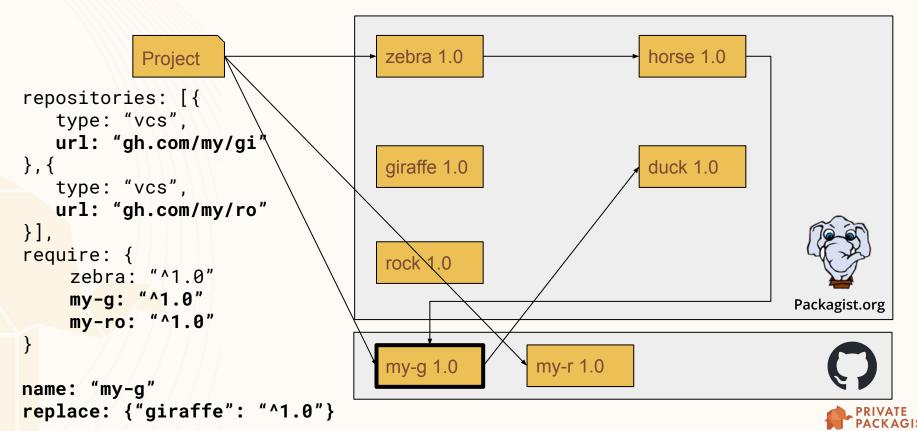


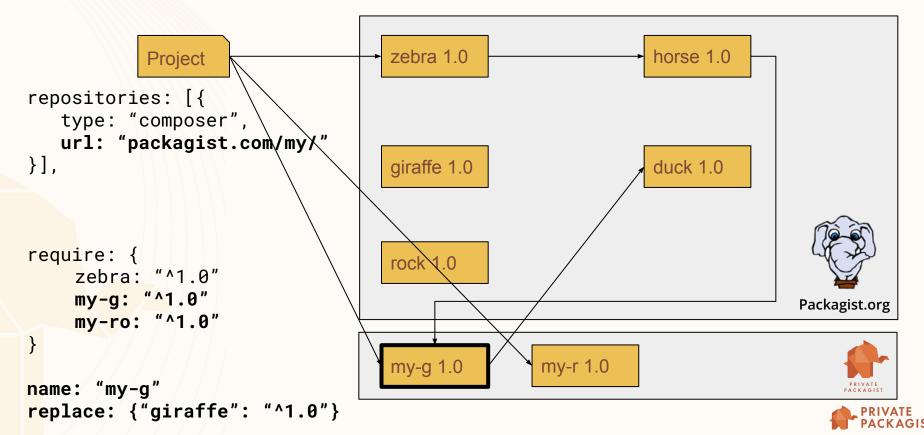




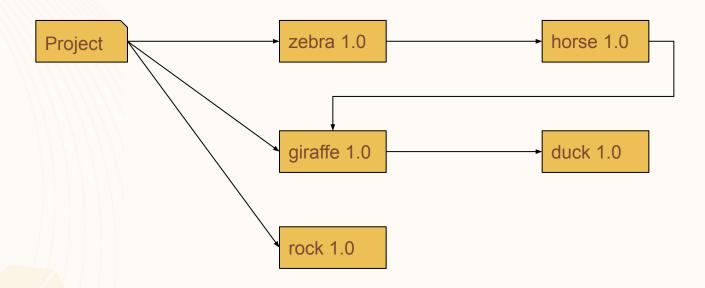








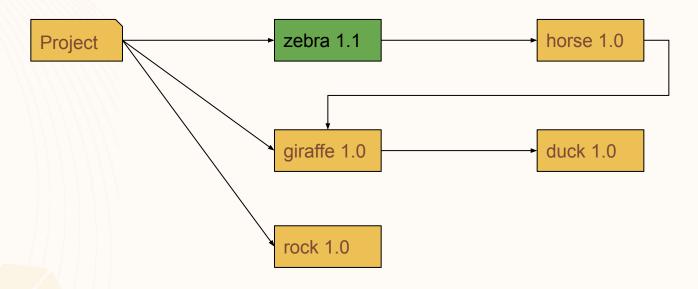
Partial Updates



Now each package releases 1.1

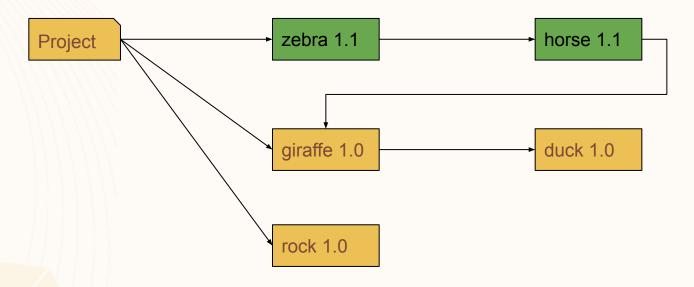


Partial Updates



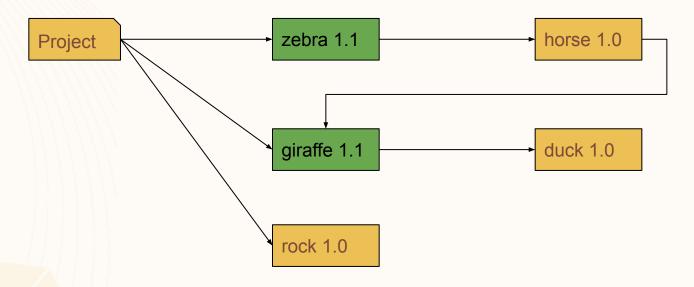
\$ composer update --dry-run zebra/zebra
Updating zebra/zebra (1.0 -> 1.1)





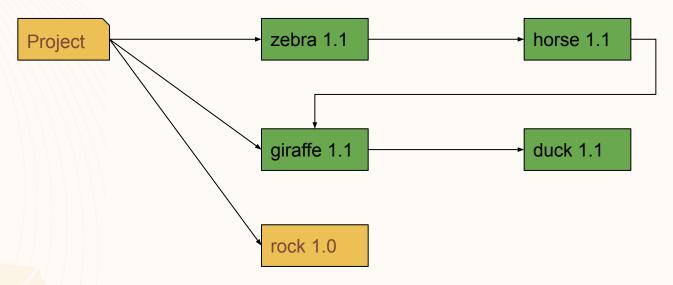
\$ composer update --dry-run zebra/zebra --with-dependencies
 Updating horse/horse (1.0 -> 1.1)
 Updating zebra/zebra (1.0 -> 1.1)





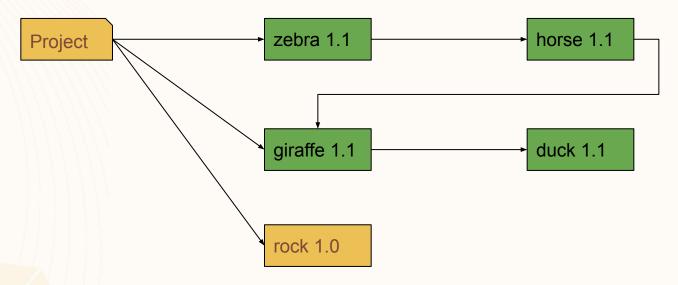
\$ composer update --dry-run zebra/zebra giraffe/giraffe
 Updating zebra/zebra (1.0 -> 1.1)
 Updating giraffe/giraffe (1.0 -> 1.1)



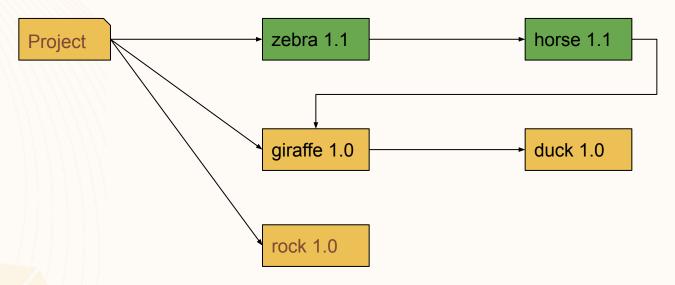


\$ composer update zebra/zebra giraffe/giraffe --with-dependencies
 Updating duck/duck (1.0 -> 1.1)
 Updating giraffe/giraffe (1.0 -> 1.1)
 Updating horse/horse (1.0 -> 1.1)
 Updating zebra/zebra (1.0 -> 1.1)



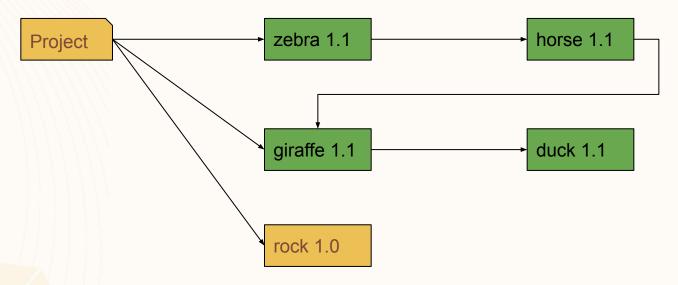






\$ composer update zebra/zebra --with-dependencies
Updating horse/horse (1.0 -> 1.1)
Updating zebra/zebra (1.0 -> 1.1)

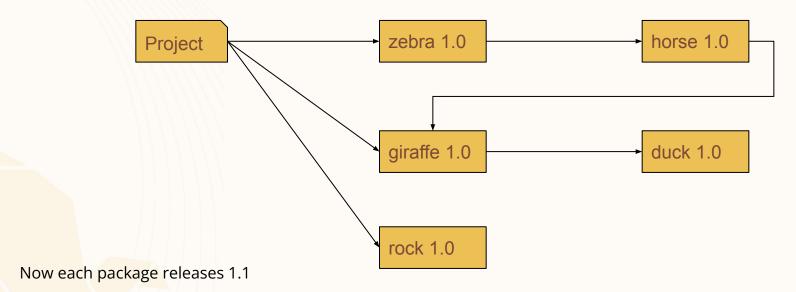






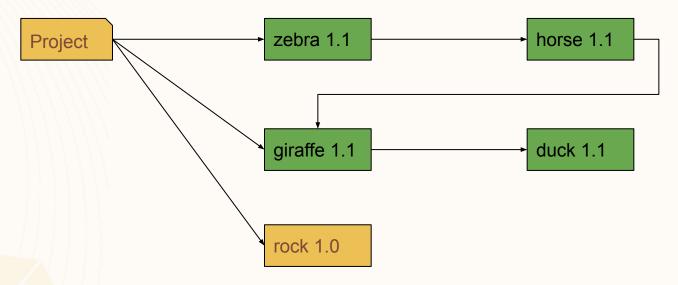
- Since Composer 2.7
- Problem
 - I want to update one dependency
 - There's a conflict
 - I need to update more, but I don't want to update everything
- Solution
 - Partial updates with dependencies **but** keeping them at the same version as the lock file if possible





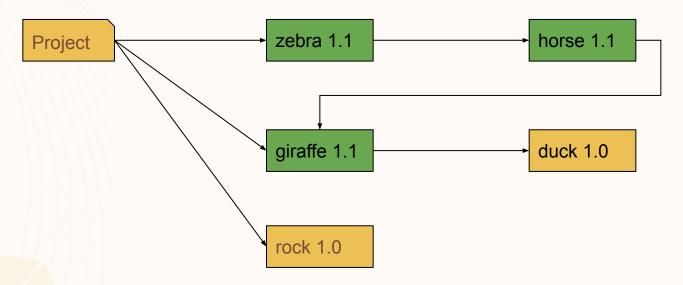
- zebra 1.1 requires horse ^1.1
- horse 1.1 requires giraffe ^1.1
- giraffe 1.1 still requires duck ^1.0





```
$ composer update zebra/zebra --with-all-dependencies
    Updating duck/duck (1.0 -> 1.1)
    Updating giraffe/giraffe (1.0 -> 1.1)
    Updating horse/horse (1.0 -> 1.1)
    Updating zebra/zebra (1.0 -> 1.1)
```





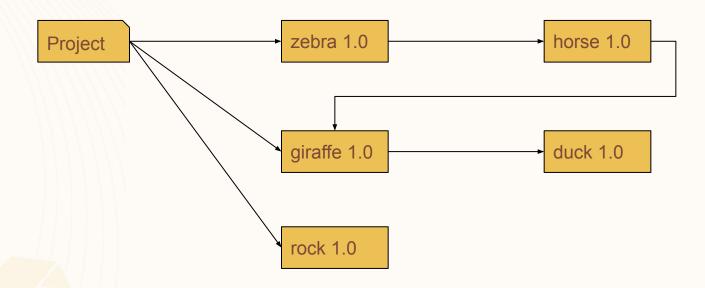


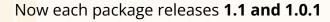
update --patch-only

- Since Composer 2.8
- Only update Z in semver X.Y.Z
- Can be combined with other update options



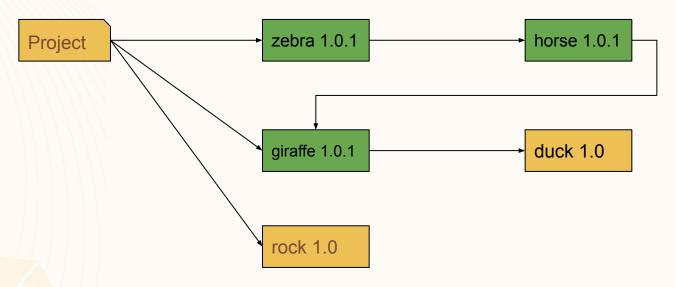
update --patch-only







update --patch-only





composer bump

- Since Composer 2.4
- update --bump-after-update since Composer 2.8
- Increases lower limits of composer.json constraints to current versions

```
"require": { "zebra/zebra": "^1.2.3" }
$ composer update --bump-after-update
   Updating zebra/zebra (1.3.5 -> 1.4.2)
"require": { "zebra/zebra": "^1.4.2" }
```

Do not use on libraries for others, will limit compatibility



Composer 2.4: composer audit

- composer audit Command
 - Lists vulnerable versions in composer.lock
 - Uses packagist.org vulnerability db API
 - GitHub advisory database
 - FriendsOfPHP/security-advisories
 - Returns non-zero if vulnerabilities found -> can check in CI
- composer update implies audit --format=summary
- composer require --dev roave/security-advisories:dev-latest



Update Dependencies Frequently

- Smaller changes
 - Smaller likelihood of failures
 - Less fear to update
 - Less chance of falling behind a lot
- Set up a schedule or regular reminder to run dependency updates
- Set up alerting for discovered vulnerabilities in deps:
 - SCA tools (Software Composition Analysis)
 - GitHub Dependabot
 - Snyk
 - Aikido
 - Mend SCA
 - Private Packagist Security Monitoring
 - many more



Update Dependencies Frequently

Better yet: Automate your updates

- Mend Renovate https://www.mend.io/renovate/
- GitHub Dependabot https://github.com/dependabot

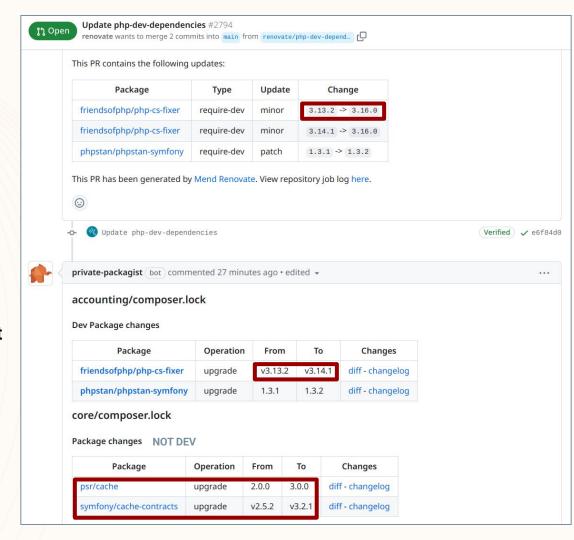
Get a pull request anytime an update is necessary



Caution!

Private Packagist Update Review

GitHub BitBucket GitLab



Update Dependencies Frequently

Better yet: Automate your updates

- Mend Renovate https://www.mend.io/renovate/
- GitHub Dependabot https://github.com/dependabot
- Conductor by Private Packagist https://packagist.com/features/conductor

Get a pull request anytime an update is necessary

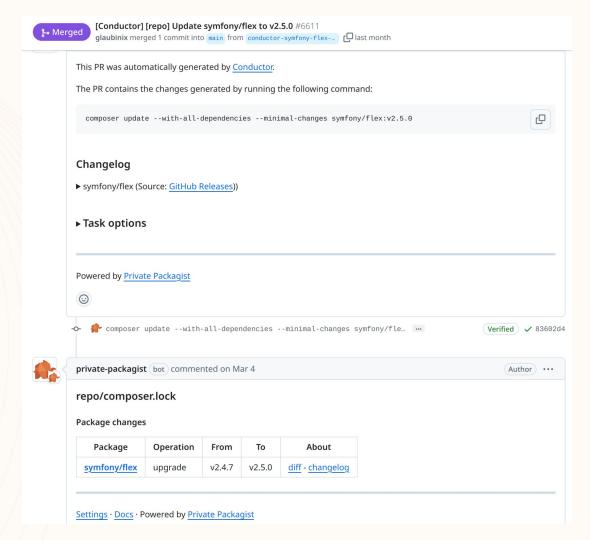


Introducing

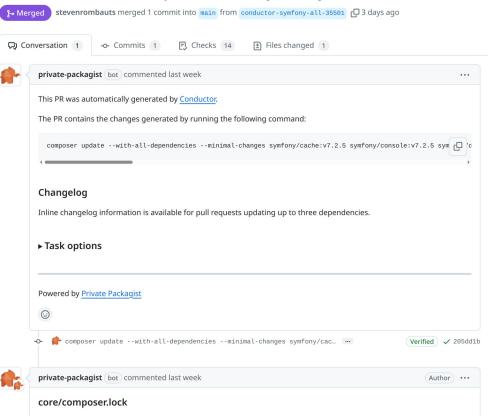


Automatic dependency updates for Composer

Sign up now for Early Access



[Conductor] [core] Update all of symfony #6827





[Conductor] [core] Update all of symfony #6827

Package changes

Package	Operation	From	То	About
symfony/cache	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	<u>diff</u> - <u>changelog</u>
symfony/console	upgrade	v7.2.1	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/dependency-injection	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/doctrine-bridge	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/error-handler	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/form	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/framework-bundle	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/http-foundation	upgrade	v7.2.3	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/http-kernel	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	<u>diff</u> - <u>changelog</u>
symfony/messenger	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	<u>diff</u> - <u>changelog</u>
symfony/process	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/property-info	upgrade	v7.2.3	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/serializer	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/twig-bridge	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/type-info	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/validator	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/var-exporter	upgrade	v7.2.4	v7.2.5	diff - changelog
symfony/yaml	upgrade	v7.2.3	v7.2.5	<u>diff</u> - <u>changelog</u>

Settings · Docs · Powered by Private Packagist

Differences from other solutions

- composer update runs in your Cl
 - more control
 - better debugging options
 - full support for Composer plugins
 - run custom code before doing the update with access to your secrets
- Made for PHP
 - better default grouping behavior
 - no unexpected / unexplained updates
 - suitable use of composer update arguments like
 --minimal-changes
 - Care about high quality PHP support

Working with monorepos

- Creates a symlink in vendor/
- Automatically infers version from git state
 - **But:** composer.json changes in deps require composer update



composer.lock

Contents

- all dependencies including transitive dependencies
 - all metadata (name, description, require, autoload, extra, ...)
- Exact version for every package
- Download URLs (source, dist, mirrors)

Purpose

- Reproducibility across teams, users and servers
- Isolation of bug reports to code vs. potential dependency breaks
- Transparency through explicit updating process



Commit The Lock File

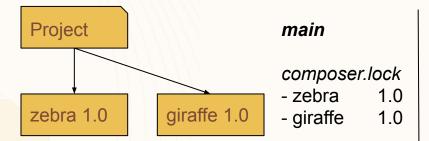
- If you don't
 - composer install without a lock file is a composer update
 - You're not managing your dependencies, they're just doing whatever they want
 - Conflict can randomly occur on install
 - You may not get the same code
- The lock file exists to be committed!



The Lock file will conflict



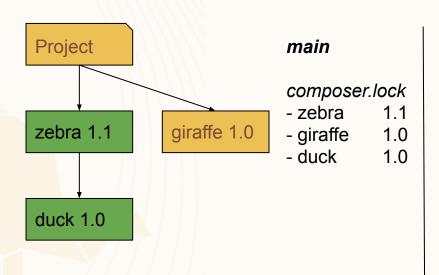
Day 0: "Initial Commit"







Week 2: Strange new zebras require duck

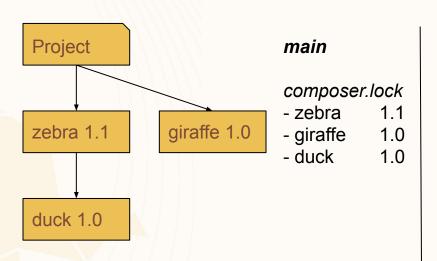


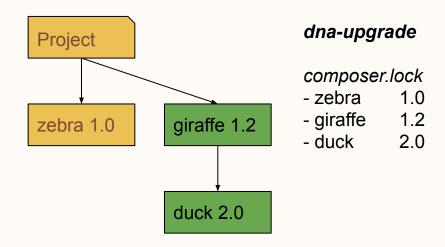






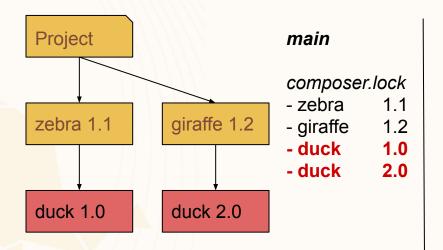
Week 4: Giraffe evolves to require duck 2.0







Text-based Merge



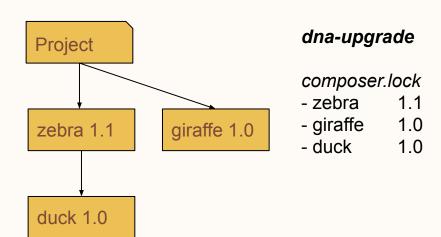
Merge results in invalid dependencies





Reset composer.lock

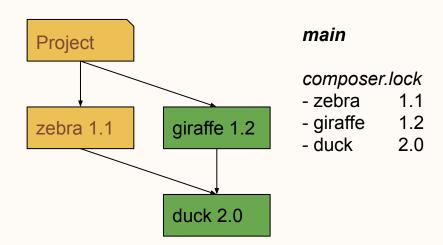
```
git checkout <refspec> -- composer.lock
git checkout main -- composer.lock
```





Apply the update again

composer update giraffe
 --with-dependencies

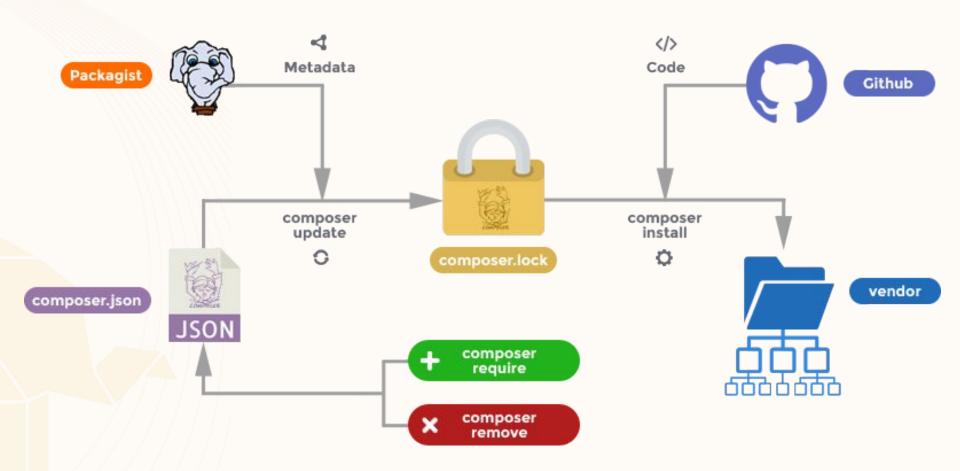




How to resolve lock merge conflicts?

- composer.lock cannot be merged without conflicts
 - contains hash over relevant composer.json values
- git checkout <refspec> -- composer.lock
 - git checkout main -- composer.lock
- Reapply changes
 - composer update <list of deps>
 - put exact command in git commit message









Never Deploy without a Lock File

Do not run composer update during deployments

Recommended use of Composer in your Deployment Process

- commit composer.lock
- CI/CD
 - run composer install (not update!)
 - generate any potentially generated code
 - dump an optimized autoloader
 - package everything into an archive
- deployment
 - upload to production servers, move in place
 - (run composer check-platform-reqs)
 - switch webserver to use new code

Result

- no surprises in production
 - same dependency versions as tested
 - no risk of composer conflicts during deploy
 - code doesn't change at runtime
- deploying to multiple servers
 - exact same state everywhere
 - no unnecessarily repeated work



Caching

- First install
 - Download foo/bar 1.0.0 ref c0d2bc8b
 - Write to \$HOME/.composer/cache/files/foo/bar/c0d2bc8b.zip
 - Unzip to vendor/foo/bar/
- Switch branches, next install
 - Download foo/bar 1.1.3 ref 3e708f6c
 - Write to \$HOME/.composer/cache/files/foo/bar/3e708f6c.zip
 - Unzip to vendor/foo/bar/
- Switch back to original branch, install again
 - Unzip \$HOME/.composer/cache/files/foo/bar/c0d2bc8b.zip to vendor/foo/bar/



Caching

Cl Considerations

- Multiple developers
- Multiple branches
- Concurrent builds
- CI specific caching properties, e.g. per-branch cache state?

Caching vendor/

- Builds on different composer.lock states with shared cache require frequent re-downloading of dependencies
- Writing modified state can be slow

Caching \$HOME/.composer/cache

- Can easily be shared across builds without having to delete or overwrite contents
- Still frequent unzipping
 - **But:** Can be combined with vendor/ caching to avoid re-downloading and unnecessary unzipping

Containers

Use filesystem layers to avoid re-installing entirely without lock file changes



Questions / Feedback?



https://packagist.com

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@naderman@phpc.social

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