

Moving Files

Unlike many other VCS systems, Git doesn't explicitly track file movement. If you rename a file in Git, no metadata is stored in Git that tells it you renamed the file. However, Git is pretty smart about figuring that out after the fact — we'll deal with detecting file movement a bit later.

Thus it's a bit confusing that Git has a `mv` command. If you want to rename a file in Git, you can run something like:

```
git mv file_from file_to
```

and it works fine. In fact, if you run something like this and look at the status, you'll see that Git considers it a renamed file:

```
git mv README.md README
git status
On branch master
Your branch is up-to-date with 'origin/master'.
Changes to be committed:
  (use "git reset HEAD <file>..." to unstage)

        renamed:    README.md -> README
```

However, this is equivalent to running something like this:

```
mv README.md README
git rm README.md
git add README
```

Git figures out that it's a rename implicitly, so it doesn't matter if you rename a file that way or with the `mv` command. The only real difference is that `git mv` is one command instead of three — it's a convenience function. More importantly, you can use any tool you like to rename a file, and address the add/rm later, before you commit.

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