

Visual Studio Code open tab in new window on another screen (floating)

Asked 8 years ago Modified 11 months ago Viewed 411k times



644

I am trying to open a tab in a new window in Visual Studio Code so I can move it to another screen. If I drag the tab the other screen, a file is created. Is there a shortcut to open a tab in a new Visual Studio Code window so I can move it to another screen?



visual-studio-code



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edited Dec 1, 2023 at 2:50



Mark

185k ● 30 ● 542 ● 552

asked Apr 12, 2017 at 6:40



doorman

17k ● 22 ● 95 ● 161

24 Feature request for floating window support in the same instance:
github.com/Microsoft/vscode/issues/10121 – Roy Tinker Feb 1, 2018 at 19:28

1 Try the following link as a workaround: superuser.com/questions/1319288/vs-code-drag-tab-to-new-window/... – Miles Buckton Oct 26, 2018 at 13:14

Related to stackoverflow.com/questions/29964825/... discussed on Meta
meta.stackoverflow.com/questions/378537/... for possible merge. – Slate Jan 4, 2019 at 17:18

14 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default)



On Windows and Linux, press `CTRL + K`, then release the keys and press `O` (the letter O, not Zero).

1195

On macOS, press `CMD + K`, then `O` (without holding `CMD`).



This will open the active file tab in a new window/instance.



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edited Dec 20, 2021 at 18:03



Josh Correia

4,363 ● 3 ● 42 ● 63

answered Apr 12, 2017 at 7:15



kaijun

12.2k ● 1 ● 12 ● 12

39 Ctrl+K O opens up the select folder dialog in my case – doorman Apr 12, 2017 at 7:19

147 first press Ctrl+K, then release, then press O :) – kaijun Apr 12, 2017 at 7:23

- 199 that should be WAY easier. I should just be able to drag the tab to an empty space and it opens. Dropping the file is a much less useful feature. – [light24bulbs](#) Oct 25, 2017 at 13:53
- 43 @light24bulbs - It's maddening that a tool for developers is so clumsy. This doesn't even close the existing tab (so now I have 2 copies open)! – [charles-allen](#) Dec 11, 2017 at 8:47
- 47 While handy, I'd like to point out to anyone wondering, this only opens the same file in a new instance of VS code. Changes aren't persisted either across instances. If I have a markdown doc open in one instance, and I "ctrl-k, o", it opens the same md doc in a new VS code, and opening the preview on one screen, the preview will not reflect changes from the other instance even after saving – [Steve Eggering](#) Sep 11, 2018 at 18:40



This is a [very highly upvoted issue request in Github for Floating Windows](#).

236

Until they support it, you can try the following *workarounds*:




1. Duplicate Workspace in New Window ^[1]



The [Duplicate Workspace in new Window Command](#) was added in v1.24 (May 2018) to sort of address this.




1. Open up Keyboard Shortcuts `Ctrl + K`, `Ctrl + S`
2. Map `workbench.action.duplicateWorkspaceInNewWindow` to `Ctrl + Shift + N` or whatever you'd like

Command	Keybinding
 Duplicate Workspace in New Window <code>workbench.action.duplicateWorkspaceInNewWindow</code>	<code>Ctrl + Shift + N</code>

2. Open Active File in New Window ^[2]




Rather than manually open a new window and dragging the file, you can do it all with a single command.

1. Open Active File in New Window `Ctrl + K`, `O`

Command	Keybinding
 Open Active File in New Window	<code>Ctrl + K O</code>









3. New Window with Same File ^[3]

As AllenBooTung also pointed out, you can open/drag any file in a separate blank instance.

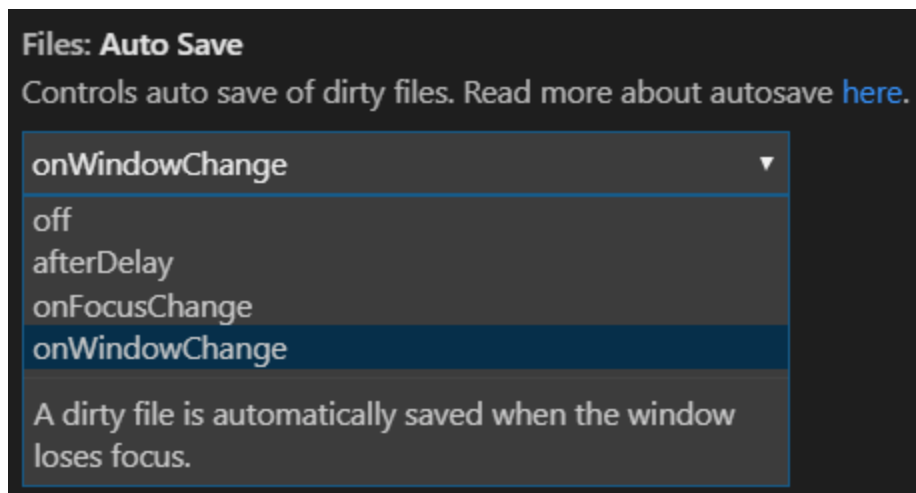
1. Open New Window  +  + 
2. Drag tab into new window

4. Open Workspace and Folder Simultaneously [\[4\]](#)

VS Code will not allow you to open the same folder in two different instances, but you can use [Workspaces](#) to open the same directory of files in a side by side instance.

1. Open Folder  + ,  + 
2. Save Current Project As a Workspace
3. Open Folder  + ,  + 

For **any workaround**, also consider setting setting up auto save so the documents are kept in sync by updating the `files.autoSave` setting to `afterDelay`, `onFocusChange`, OR `onWindowChange`



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edited Jan 10, 2020 at 15:21



[mbomb007](#)

4,301 ● 3 ● 49 ● 77

answered Nov 16, 2018 at 1:58



[KyleMit](#) ♦

30.9k ● 72 ● 511 ● 702

- 1 This has a real problem for me suddenly. When I open the second window, that instance has no working directory. This makes all my linters go crazy, as they can't find references. – [Jamie Marshall](#) Nov 6, 2021 at 17:59

Unfortunately not compatible with debugging ;__; The new window or workspace has no knowledge of the other one. Breakpoints don't sync for instance. All I wish is to have local variables on one screen and my code on the other, as they don't fit side by side with a vertical monitor. – [FrostKiwi](#) Aug 23, 2022 at 2:19 ✎

- 1 Still open and locked. We can't even upvote on it anymore. Stuck in the backlog and ignored – [John Demetriou](#) Jun 2, 2023 at 8:04

Issue now closed as resolved in VS Code 1.85 🙏 – [Hagrid67](#) Dec 28, 2023 at 22:03



42



When I want to split the screens I usually do one of the following:

1. open new window with: Ctrl+Shift+N
and after that I drag the current file I want to the new window.
2. on the File explorer - I hit Ctrl+Enter on the file I want - and then this file and the other file open together in the same screen but in split mode, so you can see the two files together. If the screen is wide enough this is not a bad solution at all that you can get used to.

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edited Jan 4, 2019 at 14:34



[TylerH](#)

21.1k ● 79 ● 79 ● 114

answered Apr 12, 2017 at 7:11



[nisanarz](#)

927 ● 1 ● 12 ● 22

-
- 5 Thanks @nisanarz this works but I think it would be more convenient if it would be possible to pop out the window like in Visual Studio. Also for the new window to act on the same code base when searching and opening new files. – [doorman](#) Apr 12, 2017 at 7:18

couldn't make the other options work with unsaved files. This one works fine – [Artur Carvalho](#) Mar 7, 2023 at 8:41

I mean seriously, how is this not fixed yet? I know this is not an IDE, but so many IDEs I just drag the tab outside and it creates a new window automatically – [John Demetriou](#) Jun 2, 2023 at 8:02

This just duplicates the file and creates a new one. It does not preserve current changes if any – [NelsonGon](#) Dec 2, 2023 at 16:19



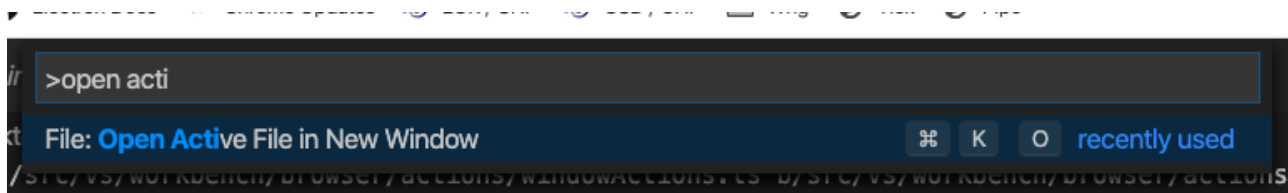
20



With [Visual Studio Code 1.43 \(Q1 2020\)](#), the `Ctrl + K` then `O` keyboard shortcut will work for a file.

See [issue 89989](#):

It should be possible to e.g. invoke the "**Open Active File in New Window**" command and open that file into an empty workspace in the web.



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edited Jan 23, 2024 at 21:01



Nato Boram

5,046 ● 9 ● 35 ● 65

answered Feb 26, 2020 at 17:17



VonC

1.3m ● 563 ● 4.7k ● 5.6k

It doesn't work for terminal tabs unfortunately – [Hossein](#) Dec 7, 2020 at 4:12



11



If the accepted answer isn't working for you, for example, your shortcut key may have been changed to do other things. You can launch the command input by `ctrl + Shift + P`, then type 'new window' and you will see the result `File: Open active tab in a new window`, and select it.

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answered Jun 1, 2021 at 0:32



Junlong Wang

456 ● 4 ● 14

1 The official answer should be updated by this one. – [ndq](#) Jul 17, 2022 at 13:53

This does not work for Jupyter notebooks – [NelsonGon](#) Dec 2, 2023 at 16:20



7



Press Command+K (wait, it will wait for pressing any key which you can see in the below bar) then press O. So, it is `Cmd+k+ o` (space represents little wait).

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answered Mar 31, 2021 at 5:12



Alok Tripathi

1,134 ● 12 ● 11

3 This is a duplicate of previous answers. – [paperskilltrees](#) Feb 11, 2022 at 17:34

I do like the clarification on the status bar message :) – [VibrationPositive](#) Aug 23, 2022 at 18:15

This clearly provided me a better understanding of what was really going on... Thank you! – [Rai](#) Sep 18, 2023 at 21:44



5

Just an update, Feb 1, 2019: `cmd+shift+n` on Mac now opens a new window where you can drag over tabs. I didn't find that out until I when through KyleMit's response and saw his key mapping suggestion was already mapped to the correct action.



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answered Feb 2, 2019 at 0:29



[snotbubblelou](#)

197 ● 3 ● 12



1 This is not the same thing as duplicating the workspace, though, because any dependencies or functions from libraries will not be loaded for your linters. A new windows lets you look at files, but it lacks all the functionality of a workspace. – [mbomb007](#) Jan 10, 2020 at 15:26



5

I found a way to achieve the "Duplicate Workspace in New Window" workflow from @mbomb007's workarounds via the command line:

Normally `code --new-window <path-to-folder>` will not open a new window if that folder is the root of an existing window.



`code --new-window <path-to-some-file>` followed by `code --add <path-to-folder>` does the trick. I put a 1s delay between those commands.



Issue [#2686](#) was closed with a recommendation for users to use the "Duplicate Workspace in New Window" workflow, but [didn't include a CLI solution](#). I would have posted this workaround there, but it's locked.

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edited Mar 13, 2022 at 1:41

answered Mar 12, 2022 at 2:09



[akjames](#)

51 ● 1 ● 4



3



I wanted to use my second screen for viewing a preview of a document. None of the suggestions worked well since the preview was not updated in the second window, even when the workspace was duplicated and autosave enabled.

My workaround was to simply increase the size of the window to span both screens, and use the standard split tab.

To expand one window across two screens, I recommend [Microsoft PowerToys](#). The FancyZones feature can be configured to allow zones to span across monitors, so a custom canvas can be created to quickly expand a single window to both screens.

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answered Jul 26, 2021 at 7:19



eisenpony

615 ● 5 ● 11



3



You can find all issue tickets related to this feature by filtering with [the](#) `workbench-auxwindow` ("auxiliary windows") label in the issue tracker.

I'll try to keep this answer as up to date as I can with those developments.

VS Code 1.86 update

There's now a "Open Output in New Window" action in the Output Panel's title menu ([source](#)), and Notebooks are supported for floating windows ([source](#)).

[VS Code 1.85 update](#)

You can now drag editor tabs out of a window to create a new window for them. If you want to disable this, use the `workbench.editor.dragToOpenWindow` setting.

Commands and keybinding command IDs include:

- View: Copy Editor into New Window
(`workbench.action.editor.copyWithSyntaxHighlightingAction`)
- View: Move Editor into New Window (`workbench.action.editor.moveEditorToNextWindow`)
- View: Copy Editor Group into New Window
(`workbench.action.editor.copyGroupToNextWindow`)
- View: Move Editor Group into New Window
(`workbench.action.editor.moveGroupToNextWindow`)
- View: New Empty Editor Window (`workbench.action.newWindow`)

Terminals and search results are also supported in floating/auxiliary windows now too.

The right click / context menus of editor tabs now have the entries "Move into New Window" and "Copy into New Window".

VS Code 1.83/1.84 update

The VS Code team is now experimenting with implementation of floating windows in the latest [VS Code Insiders](#) (source: [1.83 release notes](#) and [1.84 release notes](#)). Quoting from the 1.83 release notes:

All editors across all windows operate on the same underlying editor models, so that changes made in one window are reflected live in all other windows. You can create any editor layout in the floating windows and open any editor you like, in as many windows as you want.

For our first working version, we envision that the Status bar would also be present in the floating windows so that editor information - such as line numbers and selection ranges - is shown. Stay tuned for more development in the coming months!

Currently, there is a command named `View: Move Active Editor into a New Window (Experimental)` with ID `workbench.action.experimentalMoveEditorIntoNewWindowAction` (if you want to bind a keyboard shortcut to it).

VS Code 1.82 answer

As for right now in the stable release of VS Code, the best workaround I see is to use the `File: Open Active File in New Window` command, which is bound by default to `ctrl/cmd + k, o`, or to manually open a new window, and drag the editor over there. But those aren't great because the file will be opened standalone, without any of the context of the workspace it was opened from (without workspace settings, extensions enabled for that workspace, workspace tasks, project configuration for that workspace, etc.). If you don't want that problem, then you can open the same workspace in a new window. I guess the downside of that could be that it could potentially use more system resources (Ex. extension host, filesystem watchers to keep the multiple windows with the same workspace in sync, etc.).

I thought I'd take the opportunity to highlight comments from the issue ticket that explain what makes this a hard problem to tackle / hard feature to implement (seriously- this is why I tell people not to make "+1" / "bump" comments. that thread is a swamp and an absolute nightmare to try to read through if you want to actually find the meaningful discussion). According to the maintainers, the challenge mostly comes difficult architecture changes and keeping good performance ([source](#)).

- <https://github.com/microsoft/vscode/issues/10121#issuecomment-287059917>

- <https://github.com/microsoft/vscode/issues/10121#issuecomment-345497635> TL;DR: [Chromium's process-isolation](#) makes this harder to implement.
- <https://github.com/microsoft/vscode/issues/10121#issuecomment-345770248> TL;DR: Each piece of the workbench would need refactoring to be self-contained, the master window would need to know what window each of its parts are in, and several services like the extension host would need to be moved into a shared backend that each window can communicate with (I wonder if [the sandbox work](#) helps with this?).

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edited Apr 26, 2024 at 8:06

answered Oct 4, 2023 at 20:56



starball

54k ● 34 ● 236 ● 931

- 1 Isn't it basically resolved in 1.85 ? They have closed the issue as completed. Thanks. – [Hagrid67](#) Dec 28, 2023 at 22:01

@Hagrid67 The feature will continue being developed and improved upon. See the link in the very first sentence of this answer post. The initial implementation may be considered done, but the feature in general is far from being "finished" and my never be (and that can be a good thing) – [starball](#) Dec 28, 2023 at 22:03 ✎

As of 1.85, this should be the accepted answer. The only solution that lets you use the debug console in one window and place breakpoints in another one. – [Jake Stevens-Haas](#) Jan 8, 2024 at 14:54



Thanks to a recent update in VSCode, you can now just drag the file to an empty location and it will popup a new window! (Provided your VSCode version is > v1.85.x)

2

I am personally running VSCode in WSL2 and it works great for me!



[More info here](#)



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answered Jan 5, 2024 at 1:03



Jordan Gardiner

49 ● 3

Mark's answer and my answer post here already say this... – [starball](#) Jan 5, 2024 at 1:18 ✎



Here is a demo - it is available in Insiders now - of the ability to open an editor in a new window as mentioned by @starball.

1

There is this setting which is enabled by default:



Workbench > Editor: Drag to Open Window
Controls if editors can be dragged out of the window to open them in a new window.
Press and hold Alt-key while dragging to toggle this dynamically.



This means that you could disable that setting but still drag and drop an editor or editor group to create a new file by also holding down the Alt key at the same time.

You can either drag an editor (or an editor group) out of the current window to open all of them in a new window OR use a command on the current editor.

The commands are

```
View: Move Editor into New Window
workbench.action.moveEditorToNewWindow

workbench.action.experimentalMoveEditorIntoNewWindowAction

View: Move Editor Group into New Window
workbench.action.moveEditorGroupToNewWindow

View: Copy Editor Group into New Window
workbench.action.copyEditorGroupToNewWindow

View: Copy Editor into New Window
workbench.action.copyEditorToNewWindow
```

Those currently do not have a default keybindings.

In addition, each editor tab's context menu includes 2 new options:

```
Move into New Window
Copy into New Window
```

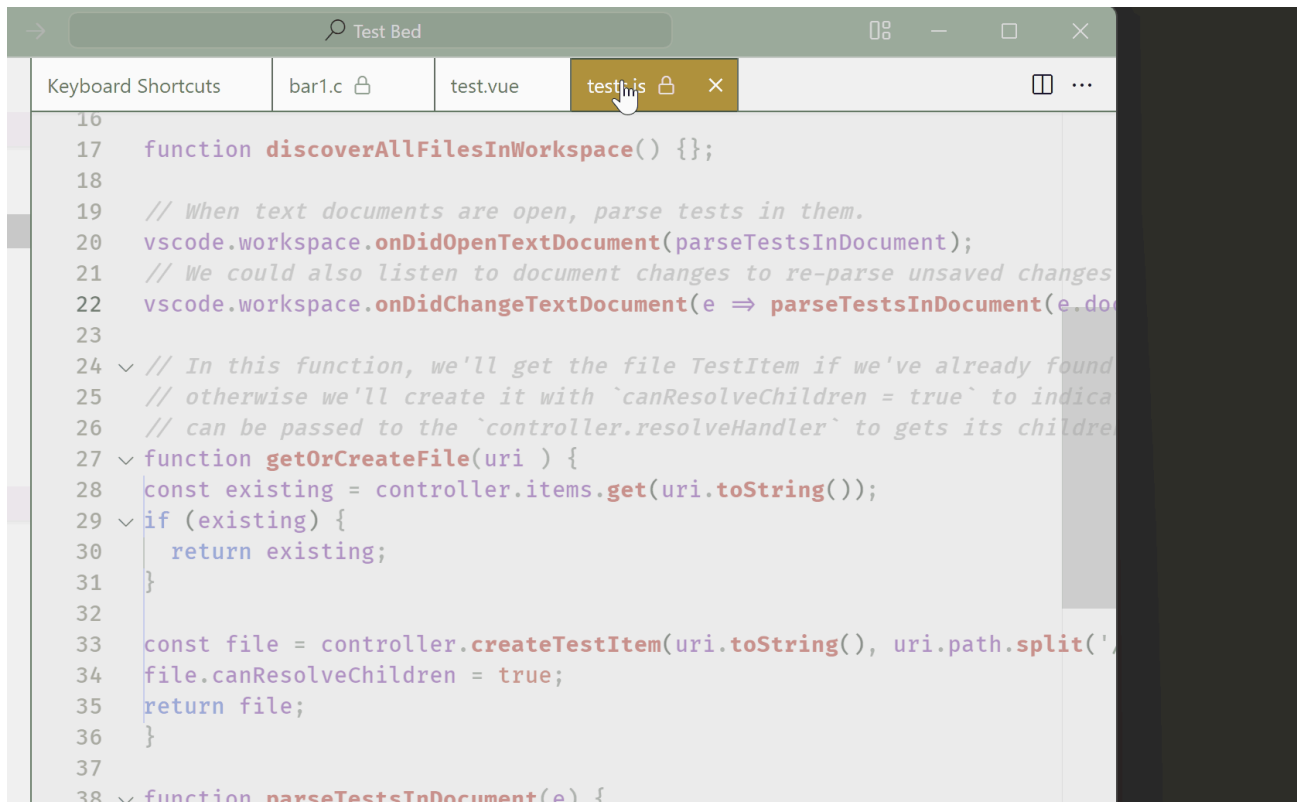
The editor group tab bar also includes these context menu options, see demo:



The **Copy** versions will make another copy of the current edit group or editor in a new window without removing them from the original window.

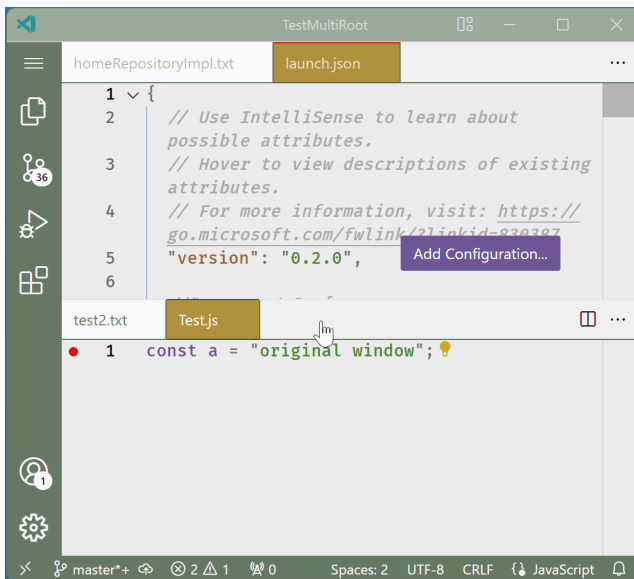
Tabs can be dragged back and forth between the new window and the main workspaces window. The floating window has no views or panels associated with it - like the SideBar or Panel where the terminal typically lives.

Demo using the editor move command:



On a drag and drop (currently on dragging it appears as if it cannot be dropped - ignore that for now, it can be dropped) the new window's top left will be located where it is dropped.

Demo showing dragging an editor group:



Note that to drag an entire group you start from the area to the right of the group - click and drag.

To drag an individual file click and drag from it's tab.

You can have mutiple floating or detached windows open, and you can drag editor tabs between them.

For multiple monitors, you can have the windows on any of the monitors but a new window created by command or context menu option is created on the same window. To actually get a new window to another monitor you have to drag and drop it there.

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edited Dec 4, 2023 at 18:56

answered Oct 4, 2023 at 22:23



Mark

185k ● 30 ● 542 ● 552



-1

You can also hit Win+Shift+[n]. N being the position the app is in the taskbar. Eg if it's pinned as the first app hit WIn+Shift+1 and windows will open a new instance and then you can drag the tab over to the new window.



Most convenient workaround for me so far.



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edited Feb 16, 2022 at 12:46

answered Aug 31, 2020 at 22:53



Brad

950 ● 10 ● 19



If you are using the excellent

-5



VSCode for Mac, 2020

simply tap **Apple-Shift-N** (as in "new window")



Drag whatever you want there.

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answered Aug 11, 2020 at 17:40



Fattie

11.7k ● 75 ● 450 ● 759

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