Set up your Railway account

About 10 minutes, once. Railway is the platform that runs your app on the internet: it builds your `Dockerfile` from your GitHub repo and gives the result a public web address (URL). You'll sign in, check which free trial you got, let Railway see only the repos it needs, and make sure it can't cost you anything. You don't deploy anything here.

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1. Sign in with GitHub (2 min)

1. Go to https://railway.com and click **Login**.
2. Choose **GitHub**, and approve. Use the GitHub account your lab repos are in.

That's your account. There's no separate password: you sign in with GitHub every time.

2. See which trial you're on (2 min)

A new account starts on Railway's free **Trial**: a one-time $5 of credit, which lasts up to 30 days; after that, or once the $5 is used, it becomes the **Free** plan, which gives $1 of credit a month.

Railway checks your GitHub account automatically, looking at how old and how active it is, and puts you on one of two trials:

Trial	What you can do
Full Trial	everything
Limited Trial	deploy code and databases, but your app can only reach a few things on the internet outside Railway

The idea board never calls anything outside Railway, so it deploys on either. If you're on the Limited Trial and want the full one, Railway's verification page is https://railway.com/verify. It's automatic: Railway doesn't answer verification requests by email, so there's no one to ask.

Your plan and how much credit you have left are on your workspace's **Usage** page.

3. Let Railway see only the repos it needs (4 min)

Railway reads your code through an app installed on your GitHub account. Give it the repos you deploy, not your whole account.

1. In Railway, click **New Project**, then **GitHub repo**.
2. The first time, Railway asks you to install its GitHub app, or shows no repos. Click **Configure GitHub App**.
3. In the GitHub window that opens, under **Repository access**, choose **Only select repositories**, pick `e190bo-lab-06`, and click **Save**.
4. Back in Railway, `e190bo-lab-06` is in the list. Don't click it yet: deploying it is the last part of the lab. Leave the page, and the empty project goes away; if one is left on your dashboard, delete it.

To add a repo later, or to see which ones Railway can read: https://github.com/settings/installations → **Configure** next to Railway → **Repository access**. A repo you just added that doesn't show up in Railway usually needs the list refreshed there.

4. Keep it free (2 min)

- **Railway can't charge you without a card.** On the Trial and Free plans, with no payment method on file, there's nothing to bill: when the credit runs out, Railway stops your apps instead. Don't add a card for this course.
- **A small app uses very little.** Railway charges for memory and processor time while an app runs, at $10 per gigabyte (GB) of memory per month; the idea board uses about 70 megabytes (MB), roughly 70 cents a month, so the $5 covers it with plenty to spare. The **Usage** page shows what you've actually used.

- **Delete what you're done with.** Once your check-in is over, delete the project, from the project's **Settings**. A deleted project costs nothing.

5. If something stops you

Tell us as soon as it happens, on Zulip or at office hours, rather than when the lab is due. In particular, tell us if:

- Railway asks for a card or a payment before it will let you deploy.
- You're on the Limited Trial and something in the lab doesn't work.
- Your repo won't appear even after step 3 and a refresh.
- Paying for anything would be a problem for you: there's another way to get the lab done.