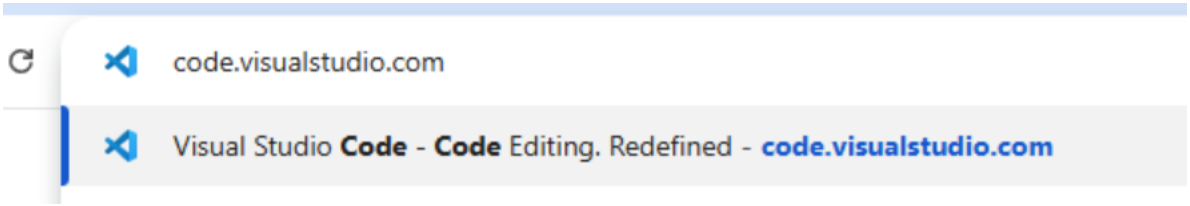
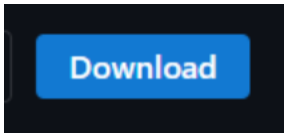
Visual Studio Code Mac (Apple) Installation Guide

Part 1: Installing the VS Code software on to your computer

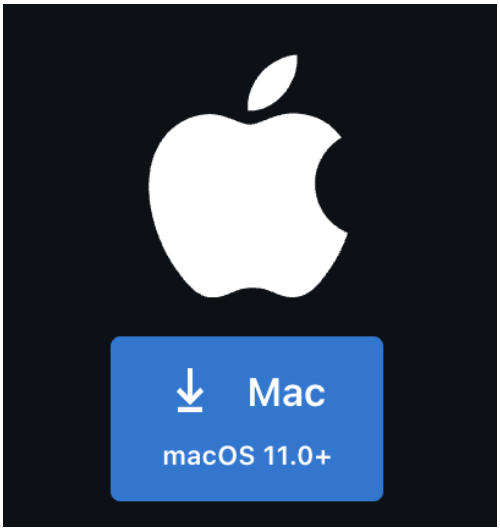
Step 1: Go to the official Visual Studio Code (VS Code) website at https://code.visualstudio.com/



Step 2: Look for a download button to download the software. (As of Fall 2025 it is on the top right corner, but website layout may change over time.)

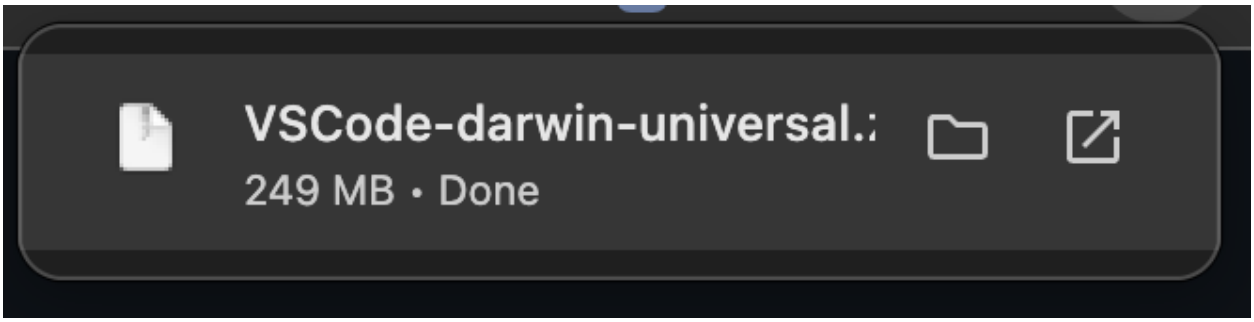


Step 3: Click on the Mac button if you are on an Apple device for the Mac installation. (If you are on a Windows 10 or 11 device, please refer to the Windows installation guide instead.)

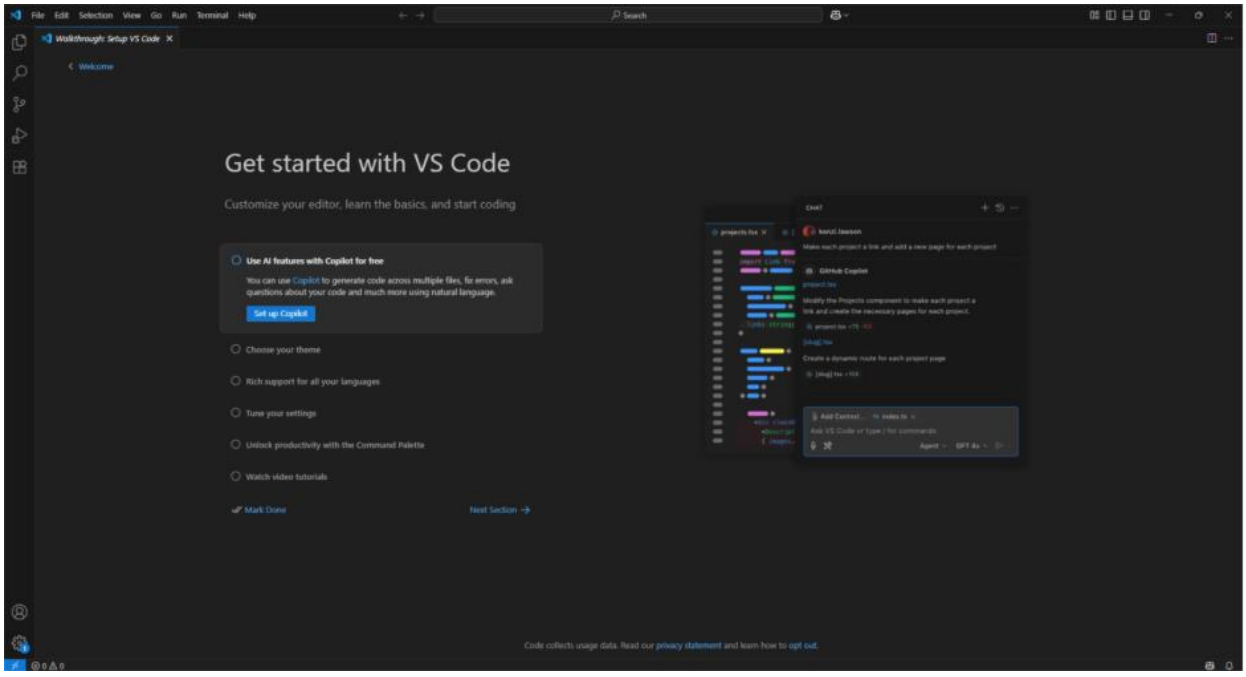


Step 4: Navigate to the top right of your browser, and there should be a button that looks like the following:

Click on this download button and the following window should pop up:



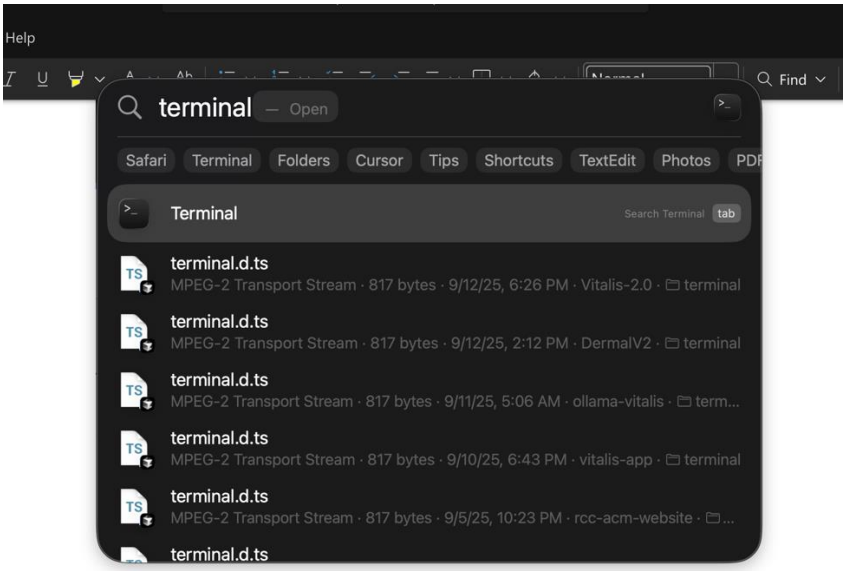
Follow the instructions to install VS Code on your Mac by dragging the VS Code icon into your application folder. Once you do so, you should be able to open the program which should look like the following:



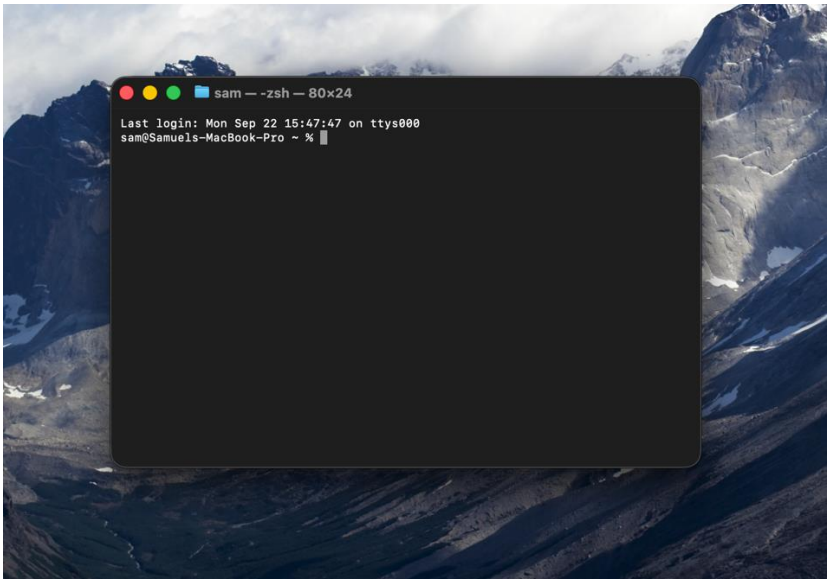
Part 2: Installing clang as your compiler

Step 1: Open the terminal application by going to your applications folder and searching for it there.

*Alternatively, you can press command + spacebar to open the spotlight search, then type terminal to search for the terminal application. *This alternative will be the new default soon as MacOS is discontinuing the applications app starting from MacOS Tahoe 26.*



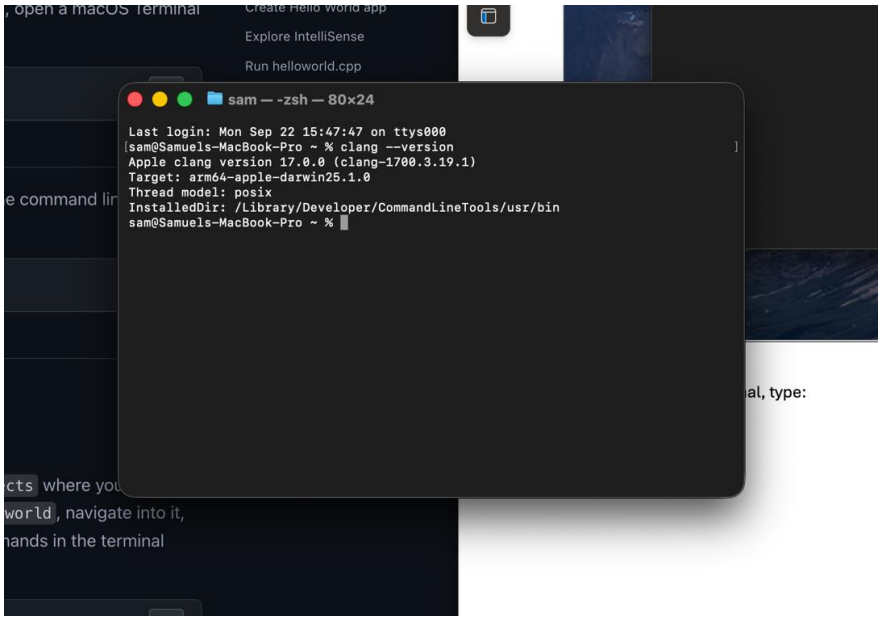
The terminal should look something like this:



Step 2: Within the terminal, type:

```
clang --version
```

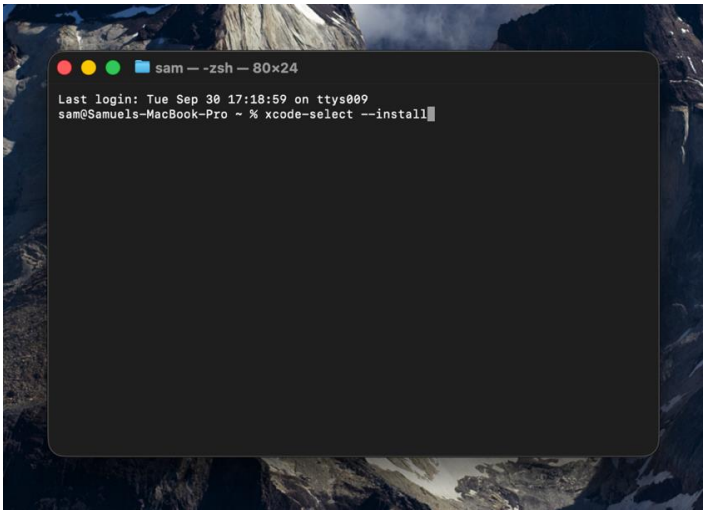
This will check your computer to see if you have an existing version of clang, and if so, your terminal should list the clang version and should look something like this:



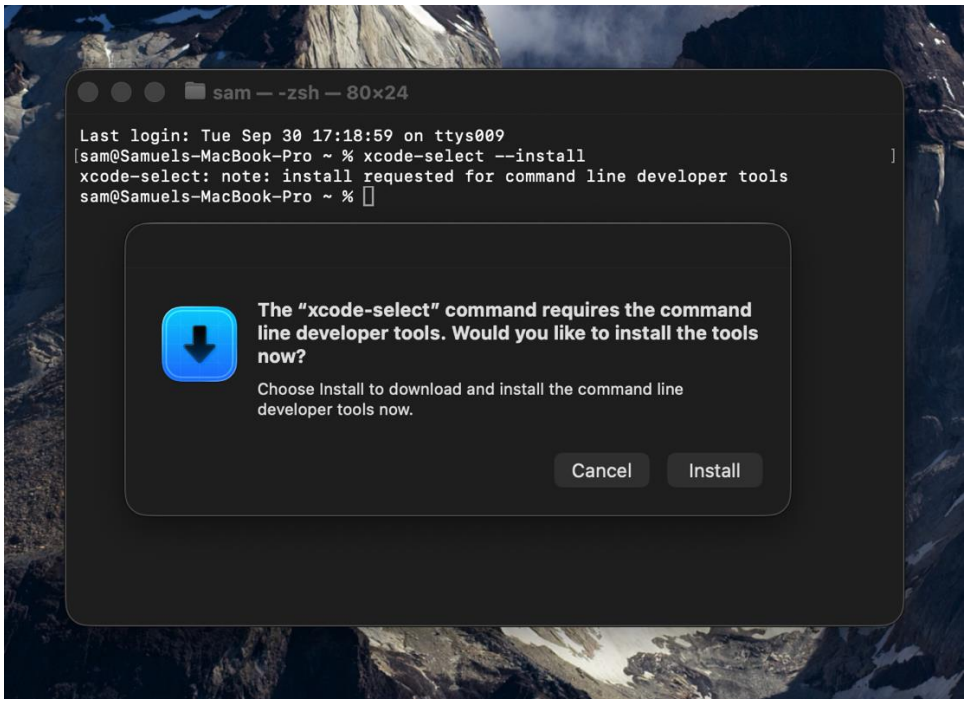
Step 3: If your terminal does not list a clang version, this means that one does not exist on your machine, and we must install one.

Type:

```
xcode-select –install
```



You will be asked if you would like to install the command line developer tools. Click install to install the command line tools.



Step 4: Once you have finished the installation, type:

```
xcode-select -p
```

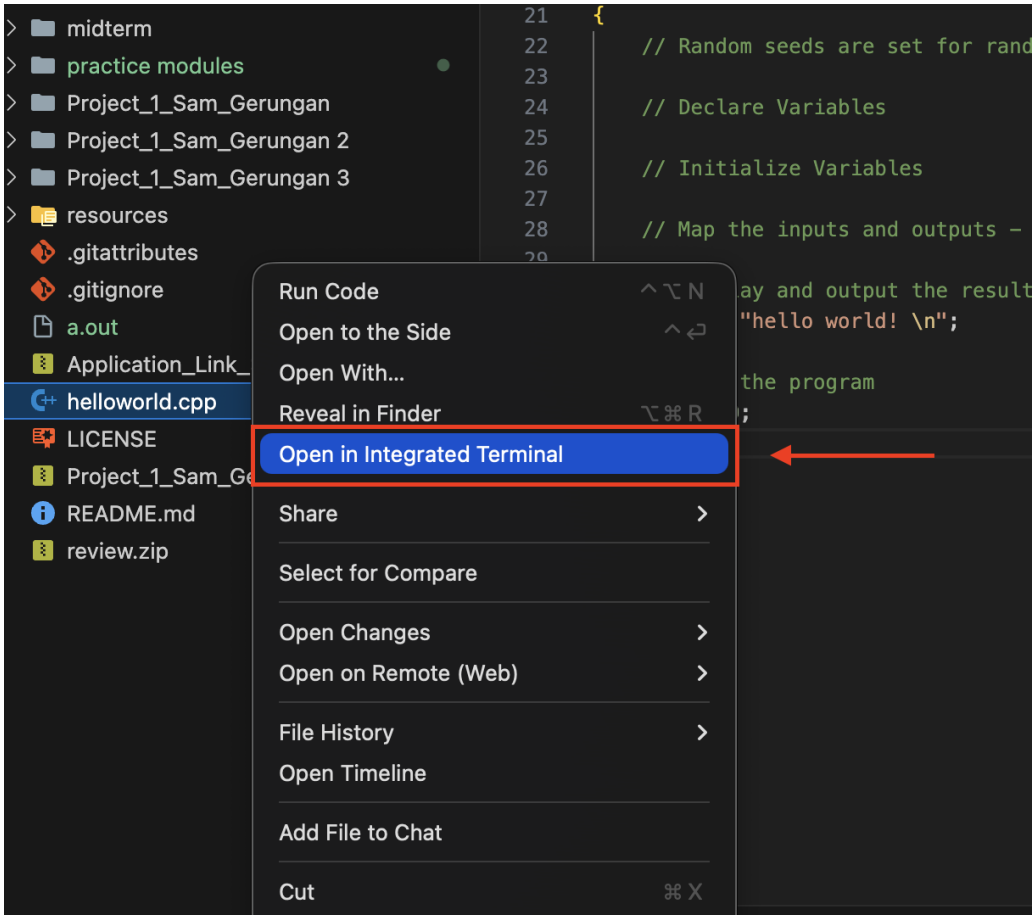
If your terminal has the following path configured: `/Library/Developer/CommandLineTools` then clang has been properly installed.

```
sam@Samuels-MacBook-Pro ~ % xcode-select -p
/Library/Developer/CommandLineTools
sam@Samuels-MacBook-Pro ~ %
```

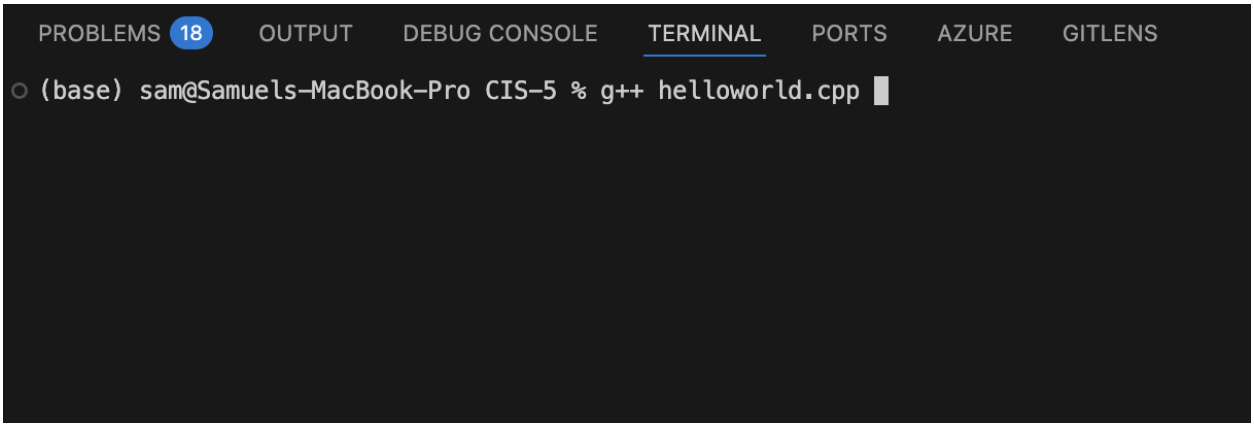
Part 3: Quickly Compiling Your Code in VS Code

Have your class or homework folder open in VS Code (recommend making one if you don't have one already.)

Right click your program file within the file explorer on the right and click on **Open in Integrated Terminal.** This opens a terminal within VS Code that automatically paths to the selected file's directory.



To compile your program, type:
`g++ (name of C++ file here)`



Then type:
`./a.out`
to run your program.