

docker container exec

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Description	Execute a command in a running container
Usage	<code>docker container exec [OPTIONS] CONTAINER COMMAND [ARG...]</code>
Aliases An alias is a short or memorable alternative for a longer command.	<code>docker exec</code>

The `docker exec` command runs a new command in a running container.

The command you specify with `docker exec` only runs while the container's primary process (`PID 1`) is running, and it isn't restarted if the container is restarted.

The command runs in the default working directory of the container.

The command must be an executable. A chained or a quoted command doesn't work.

- This works: `docker exec -it my_container sh -c "echo a && echo b"`
- This doesn't work: `docker exec -it my_container "echo a && echo b"`

Option	Default	Description
<code>-d, --detach</code>		Detached mode: run command in the background
<code>--detach-keys</code>		Override the key sequence for detaching a container
<code>-e, --env</code>		API 1.25+ Set environment variables
<code>--env-file</code>		API 1.25+ Read in a file of environment variables
<code>-i, --interactive</code>		Keep STDIN open even if not attached
<code>--privileged</code>		Give extended privileges to the command
<code>-t, --tty</code>		Allocate a pseudo-TTY
<code>-u, --user</code>		Username or UID (format: <code><name uid>[:<group gid>]</code>)
<code>-w, --workdir</code>		API 1.35+ Working directory inside the container

[Run `docker exec` on a running container](#)

First, start a container.

This creates and starts a container named `mycontainer` from an `alpine` image with an `sh` shell as its main process. The `-d` option (shorthand for `--detach`) sets the container to run in the background, in detached mode, with a pseudo-TTY attached (`-t`). The `-i` option is set to keep `STDIN` attached (`-i`), which prevents the `sh` process from exiting immediately.

Next, execute a command on the container.

This creates a new file `/tmp/execWorks` inside the running container `mycontainer`, in the background.

Next, execute an interactive `sh` shell on the container.

This starts a new shell session in the container `mycontainer`.

[Set environment variables for the exec process \(`--env`, `-e`\)](#)

Next, set environment variables in the current bash session.

The `docker exec` command inherits the environment variables that are set at the time the container is created. Use the `--env` (or the `-e` shorthand) to override global environment variables, or to set additional environment variables for the process started by `docker exec`.

The following example creates a new shell session in the container `mycontainer`, with environment variables `$VAR_A` set to `1`, and `$VAR_B` set to `2`. These environment variables are only valid for the `sh` process started by that `docker exec` command, and aren't available to other processes running inside the container.

[Escalate container privileges \(`--privileged`\)](#)

See [docker run --privileged](#).

[Set the working directory for the exec process \(`--workdir`, `-w`\)](#)

By default `docker exec` command runs in the same working directory set when the container was created.

You can specify an alternative working directory for the command to execute using the `--workdir` option (or the `-w` shorthand):

[Try to run `docker exec` on a paused container](#)

If the container is paused, then the `docker exec` command fails with an error: