

# File Templates

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File templates are specifications of the contents to be generated when creating a new file. They let you create the source files that already contain some initial code.

You can view, edit and create the templates on the [File Templates page](#) of the [Settings dialog](#) (**File | Settings | File Templates** for Windows and Linux or **IntelliJ IDEA | Preferences | File Templates** for Mac OS).

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## Overview

File templates are written in the [Velocity Template Language](#) (VTL). So they may include:

- Fixed text (markup, code, comments, etc.). In a file based on a template, the fixed text is used literally, as-is.
- [File template variables](#). When creating a file, the variables are replaced with their values.
- [#parse directives](#) to include other templates defined in the **Includes** tab on the **File Templates** page of the **Settings** dialog box.
- Other VTL constructs.

Here is a typical template example. (This template is used for creating a Java class.)

```
#if (${PACKAGE_NAME} != "")package ${PACKAGE_NAME};#end
#parse("File Header.java")
public class ${NAME} {
}
```

In this template:

- `${PACKAGE_NAME}` and `${NAME}` are template variables.
- The `#parse` directive is used to include other template, the template `File Header.java`.
- The first line contains an `#if` VTL directive.

Applying this template leads to generating a file whose contents look similar to this:

```
package demo;

/**
 * Created by IntelliJ IDEA.
 * User: John.Smith
 * Date: 6/1/11
 * Time: 12:54 PM
 * To change this template use File | Settings | File Templates.
 */
public class Demo {
}
```

## Predefined, internal, and custom file templates

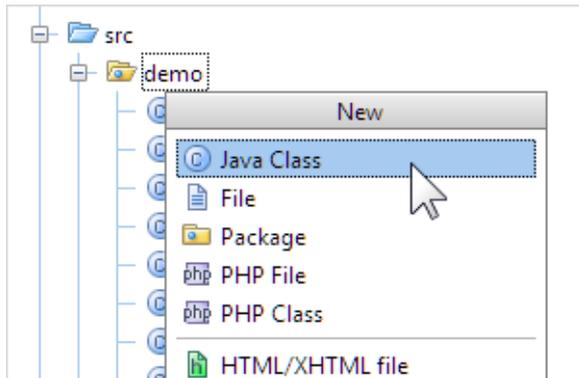
IntelliJ IDEA comes with a set of predefined file templates. You can use these templates as-is or modify them as necessary. You can as well create your own file templates (custom file templates).

Internal file templates are a subset of the predefined templates. These templates differ from all the other templates in that they cannot be deleted.

On the [File Templates](#) page of the [Settings dialog](#), the names of internal templates are shown in bold. The names of the custom templates and the predefined templates that you have modified are shown in blue.

### When are file templates used?

Whenever you create a new file, you can choose to create an empty file (e.g. **File | New | File**) or use a file template. In the latter case, the initial contents of the new file will be generated according to the template you have selected. (Basically, all the options in the **New** menu except **File**, **Package** and **Directory** correspond to using a template.)



### Are the choices of templates context-sensitive?

Generally, the set of the templates you can choose from when creating a new file depends on your [module](#) nature and configuration as well as the properties of your current location in the **Project** tool window. For example, you are not offered to use a template for an ActionScript class or interface, or an MXML component if your module is not a Flash module. Similarly, you cannot choose to create a Java class, interface, etc. outside of Java source or test directories ([roots](#)).

However, there are many templates that are available in any context.