

# File Watchers

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File | Settings | File Watchers



The page is available when the *File Watchers* plugin is enabled.

The plugin is not bundled with IntelliJ IDEA, but it is available from the [JetBrains plugin repository](#). Once enabled, the plugin is available at the IDE level, that is, you can use it in all your IntelliJ IDEA projects.

Use this page to create project *File Watchers* based on predefined IntelliJ IDEA *File Watcher* templates and thus enable *transpilation* in the project.

IntelliJ IDEA supports integration with various third-party [transpilers](#) that run in the background and perform the following:

- Translate *LESS*, *SASS*, and *SCSS* source code into *CSS* code.
- Translate *TypeScript* and *CoffeeScript* source code into *JavaScript* code, possibly also creating *source maps* to enable debugging.
- Compress *JavaScript* and *CSS* code.

Note that IntelliJ IDEA does not contain built-in transpilers but only supports integration with the tools that you have to download and install outside IntelliJ IDEA.

In IntelliJ IDEA, these transpiler configurations are called *File Watchers*. For each supported transpiler, IntelliJ IDEA provides a predefined *File Watcher* template. Predefined *File Watcher* templates are available at the IntelliJ IDEA level. To run a transpiler against your project files you need to create a project-specific *File Watcher* based on the relevant template, at least, specify the path to the transpiler to use on your machine.

You can download a *transpiler* of your choice and set it up as a *File Watcher*. However, in this case no predefined template is available so you will have to specify all the settings manually.

To be applicable, a *File Watcher* must be enabled by selecting the check box next to it on the **File Watchers** page of the **Settings** dialog box, see [Enabling and Disabling File Watchers](#). After that the *File Watcher* will be invoked automatically depending on the

The output of a *File Watcher* is stored in a separate file. The predefined templates suggest the type of the file depending on the transpiler type. By default the output file is created in the same folder as the input file when the *File Watcher* is invoked for the first time, whereupon this file is only updated. You can customize all these settings during *File Watcher* creation.

JavaScript files generated by *File Watchers* are excluded from code completion and refactoring.

In the **Project** tree view, the output file is shown under the original file which is shown as a node. This is done to improve visibility so you can easier locate necessary files.

File watchers have two dedicated *code inspections*:

- The *File watcher available* inspection is invoked in every file that is recognized as subject for applying a predefined file watcher (SASS, LESS, SCSS, TypeScript, or CoffeeScript). If none of the applicable predefined *File Watchers* is associated with the current project, IntelliJ IDEA suggests to add one.
- The *File watcher problems* inspection is invoked by a running *File Watcher* and highlights errors specific for it.

The **File Watchers** page consists of two parts:

- A list of *File Watchers* available in the current project. To activate a *File Watcher*, select the check box next to it. If an error occurs while a *File Watcher* is running, the *File Watcher* is automatically disabled.
- A toolbar to manage this list.

Item	Tooltip/ and shortcut	Description
	Add Alt+Insert	Click this button to open the <b>Choose template</b> pop-up list and choose the relevant type of <i>File Watcher</i> . After that IntelliJ IDEA opens the <b>New Watcher</b> dialog box for customizing the predefined <i>File Watcher</i> according to the settings of the current project.
	Edit Enter	Click this button to update the settings of the selected <i>File Watcher</i> in the <b>Edit Watcher</b> dialog box. The update is applied to the current project <i>File Watcher</i> only, it does not affect the predefined IntelliJ IDEA-level template.
	Remove Alt+Delete	Click this button to remove the selected <i>File Watcher</i> . The <i>File Watcher</i> is no longer applied to the files in the current project. Note that this action does not affect the corresponding predefined template which is still available at the IntelliJ IDEA level.
	Up(Ctrl+Alt+Up) Down (Ctrl+Alt+Down)	Use these buttons to change the order of <i>File Watcher</i> in the list. This determines the order of launching <i>File Watchers</i> , if more than one are enabled.
	Copy	Use this button to create a copy of the selected file watcher.
	Import	Click this button to import an existing file watcher and add it to the list of available file watchers.
	Export	Click this button to export the selected watchers to <code>watchres.xml</code> file, located under the user's home.

## See Also

### Procedures:

- [Using File Watchers](#)

### Reference:

- [New Watcher Dialog](#)

### Web Resources:

- [Developer Community](#) 