Commit Messages

GIT commit messages are generally comprised of three sections: a short summary, a longer explanation, and links to references. Starting with this structure forces you to answer why the change is necessary before outlining the changes that you have made.

- The summary should be no longer than 50 characters
- Each line of the explanation should wrap at 72 characters
- If a commit fixes an issue, it should be denoted with Fixes: {url}
- If a commit references another commit, outside source, etc, it should be denoted with Refs: {url}

The summary is required but the longer explanation and refs may not always be necessary or apply to the situation at hand.

Template

You can tell GIT to use a template for commit messages with this structure. This is done by setting commit.template in ~/.gitconfig:

```
[commit]
  template = ~/.gitmessage
```

Then create ~/.gitmessage with the following:

```
#----------------------50----------------------|
#Summary (50 characters)

#--------------------------------72------------------------------
-|
#Explanation (wrap around 72 characters (80 - short indent on either s
ide))

#--------------------------------72------------------------------
-|

#--------------------------------72------------------------------
-|
#Refs:
#Fixes:
#--------------------------------72------------------------------
-|
```