

Dockerfile Instruction Reference



The instructions that cover almost every image you will build, and how the layer cache actually works.

FROM -> COPY / RUN -> CMD -> Build

BASE & CONTEXT

- FROM <image>: the starting point
- WORKDIR <path>: sets the working dir
- COPY <src> <dest>: copy files in
- .dockerignore excludes build junk

BUILD TIME

- RUN <cmd> executes once, at build
- Each instruction is its own layer
- Group related steps together
- Order = your cache strategy

RUNTIME

- CMD: the default start command
- Runs every time a container starts
- EXPOSE just documents a port
- -p is still required to publish it

BUILD & TAG

- docker build -t name:tag
- Trailing . is the build context
- docker images to confirm it exists
- Don't rely on the latest tag