

# **PLaneT: Automatic Package Distribution**

Version 4.2.5

Jacob Matthews  
and Robert Bruce Findler

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The PLaneT system is a method for automatically sharing code packages, both as libraries and as full applications, that gives every user of a PLaneT client the illusion of having a local copy of every code package on the server. It consists of the central PLaneT package repository, a server that holds all PLaneT packages, and the PLaneT client, built into PLT Scheme, which transparently interacts with the server on your behalf when necessary.

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# 1 Using PLaneT

To use a PLaneT package in a program, require it using the `planet require` form (see §2.2 “Importing and Exporting: `require` and `provide`” for a full reference on the features of the `require` statement in general and the exact allowed grammar of PLaneT `require` statements). Here we explain how to use PLaneT by example.

## 1.1 Finding a Package

If you are new to PLaneT, the first thing to do is visit the PLaneT repository web site and see what packages are available. People contribute new PLaneT packages all the time — if you want to be notified whenever a new or updated package is released, you can subscribe to the (announcement-only) PLaneT-announce mailing list or use an RSS reader to subscribe to PLaneT’s RSS feed.

To use a package from PLaneT in your program, the easiest thing to do is copy the `require` code snippet off of that package’s page and paste it into your program. For instance, to use Schematics’ `spgsql.plt` package (a library for interacting with the PostgreSQL database), as of this writing you would copy and paste the line:

```
(require (planet "spgsql.ss" ("schematics" "spgsql.plt" 2 3)))
```

into your program. This line requires the file `"spgsql.ss"` in package version 2.3 of the `"spgsql.plt"` package written by `"schematics"`. That does two things: first, it downloads and installs a version of `"spgsql.plt"` that is compatible with package version 2.3 from the central PLaneT repository if a compatible version hasn’t already been installed. Second, it requires the module in file `"spgsql.ss"` from that package, making all of its exported bindings available for use.

Unlike with most package-distribution systems, package downloading and installation in PLaneT is *transparent*: there’s no need for you to do anything special the first time you want to use a package, and there’s no need for you to even know whether or not a particular package is installed on your computer or the computers where your code will be deployed.

## 1.2 Shorthand Syntax

As of PLT Scheme version 4.0, the code snippet above can also be written using a new shorter syntax:

```
(require (planet schematics/spgsql:2:3/spgsql))
```

The two forms behave identically. In the abbreviated syntax, however, it is illegal to write the trailing `".ss"` suffix on the file name to be required or the trailing `".plt"` on the package

file name. (They are mandatory for the long-form syntax.) It is also legal in the abbreviated syntax to omit a filename to be required entirely; in that case, PLaneT requires the file "main.ss" in the given package.

### 1.3 Networking troubles

Sometimes, when PLaneT tries to download and install a package for the first time, your operating system may block it from access to the network. If you are uncomfortable giving DrScheme free access to the network (or if your attempts to do so do not seem to work), then you can use your browser to manually install a planet package.

To see how this works, lets assume you want to install the PLAI package and

```
(require (planet plai/plai:1))
```

is not working for you.

- First, fire up a command-line window and use `planet url` to determine the url for downloading the package. To find the url for version (1 1) of the plai package, do this:

```
% planet url plai plai.plt 1 1
```

and get this as a response:

```
http://planet.plt-scheme.org/servlets/planet-  
servlet.ss?lang=%224.1.5.3%22&name=%22plai.plt%22&maj=1&min-  
lo=1&min-hi=%23f&path=%28%22plai%22%29
```

- Copy and paste that url into your browser, which should trigger the dowload of a file called `plai.plt`. Note that your browser will probably try to call the file something else. Rename it to `plai.plt`.

- Now run the command-line tool one more time to install the plt file:

```
% planet fileinject plai plai.plt 1 1
```

This command should be run from the same directory where you saved `plai.plt`.

This command may fail, since version (1 1) of the PLAI package depends on `cce/scheme:4:1`. If it does, simply repeat the above steps for that package first, and then continue with the `fileinject` command for PLAI.

- Finally, to check that the installation is successful, run `planet show`. You should see output like this (possibly with slightly different version numbers, if the packages have been updated since this was written):

```
Normally-installed packages:
```

```
  cce scheme.plt 4 1  
  plai plai.plt 1 1
```

Once that is complete, PPlaneT will use that version of the package for any subsequent requires and won't try to use the network.

## 1.4 Fine-Grained Control Over Package Imports

The PPlaneT client is designed to balance two competing goals: transparent upgradability and control over the effect of a package requirement. To that end, the most basic PPlaneT require form offers maximum upgradability, but several more specialized forms allow finer-grained control over what versions of the named package may be downloaded.

The most basic planet require line, which is what is used in the form

```
(require (planet "spgsql.ss" ("schematics" "spgsql.plt" 2 3)))
```

in longhand notation, or

```
(require (planet schematics/spgsql:2:3/spgsql))
```

in shorthand notation, should be read “Require from PPlaneT *any* release of Schematics' "spgsql.plt" package that is backwards-compatible with package version 2.3.” (The actual package version used is determined by the PPlaneT search order.) To signal this explicitly, it is possible to write

```
(require (planet "spgsql.ss" ("schematics" "spgsql.plt" 2 (+ 3))))
```

or

```
(require (planet schematics/spgsql:2:>=3/spgsql))
```

both of which mean the same thing as the first pair of require lines.

The notion of “backwards-compatibility” has a specific meaning in PPlaneT: by definition, for the purposes of automation, a package is considered to be backwards-compatible with any other package of the same owner, name, and major version, and any *lower* minor version. Package maintainers are responsible for marking new releases that break backwards-compatibility by incrementing their major-version number. This means that all of the above require specifications will match any release of "unlib.plt" with major package version 3 (and any minor version), but will *never* match releases of "unlib.plt" with higher (or lower) major version numbers.

Of course a package author may make a mistake and introduced a backwards-incompatibility unintentionally, or may fix a bug that code in third-party libraries was already working around. In those cases, it may help to make use of the “upper bound” form of the planet require, in longhand form:

```
(require (planet "reduction-semanticss.ss"
```

Package versions should not be confused with program or library versions; a *package version* is a PPlaneT-specific version number that encodes backwards-compatibility information.

See §6.4 “Determine Your Package's Backwards-Compatibility” for a more detailed discussion of backwards-compatibility obligations for PPlaneT packages.

```
("robby" "redex.plt" 4 (- 3)))
```

and using shorthand notation:

```
(require (planet robby/redex:4:<=3/reduction-semantics))
```

In this require line, any version of the package "redex.plt" from package version 4.0 to package version 4.3 will match the require spec (though as with any PLaneT require specification, the PLaneT package search order determines which package is actually loaded).

It is also possible to specify both an upper and a lower bound, using the planet require's "range" form:

```
(require (planet "test.ss" ("schematics" "schemeunit.plt" 2 (9 10))))
```

or

```
(require (planet schematics/schemeunit:2:9-10/test))
```

This form matches any package in the specified range (inclusive on both ends), in this example the specifications match either package version 2.9 or 2.10 of the "schemeunit.plt" package, but do not match version with higher or lower minor version numbers (or any other major version number).

Using the range form, it is possible to require a specific version of a package as a special case (choosing the upper and lower bounds to be equal), but this is a common enough case that it has special support with the "exact-match" form:

```
(require (planet "unzip.ss" ("dherman" "zip.plt" 2 (= 1))))
```

or

```
(require (planet dherman/zip:2:=1/unzip))
```

match only the exact package version 2.1 of the "zip.plt" package.

## 1.5 Monitoring PLaneT's progress

PLaneT logs information about what it is doing to the info log (via log-info). In DrScheme, you can view the logs from the Show Log menu item in the View menu, and MzScheme's logging output can be controlled via command-line options and via environment variables. See §14.5 "Logging" for more details.

## **2 The PLaneT Search Order**

PLaneT has four strategies it uses in order to match a request with an appropriate package that.

### **2.1 Previous Linkage**

Whenever a file requires a package via PLaneT and that requirement is satisfied, the system makes a note of exactly which package satisfied that requirement and from then on always uses that exact same package, even if a newer version is available. This is done to prevent "magic upgrades" in which a program stops working after installation because an unrelated package was installed. Such connections are called links and are stored in a user-specific table called the linkage table.

### **2.2 Acceptable Local Package**

If the PLaneT client doesn't have any previous linkage information, it checks its list of already-installed PLaneT packages for one that meets the requirement, and uses it if available. Both PLaneT-installed packages and packages established through a development link (see §6.1.1 "Development Links") are checked simultaneously at this stage.

### **2.3 Acceptable Remote Package**

If there is no acceptable local package, the PLaneT client sends a request to the PLaneT server for a new package that would satisfy the requirement. The server then finds the newest matching package and sends it back to the client, which then installs it and uses it to satisfy the original requirement.

### **2.4 Cached Installation Archive**

If the remote server cannot be contacted (or fails in any way to deliver an acceptable package), the PLaneT client consults the uninstalled-packages cache, a cache of all previously-downloaded packages, even those that are not currently installed. PLT Scheme users who frequently upgrade their installations may have many packages downloaded but not installed at any given time; this step is intended to ensure that these users can still run programs even if they temporarily lose network connection.



### 3 The planet Command-Line Tool

The planet command-line tool allows a command-line interface to the most commonly-performed PLaneT tasks. It is invoked from the command line as

```
planet subcommand arg ...
```

where *command* is a subcommand from the following list, and *arg* is a sequence of arguments determined by that subcommand:

- **create**: create a PLaneT archive from a directory
- **install**: download and install a given package
- **remove**: remove the specified package from the local cache
- **show**: list the packages installed in the local cache
- **clearlinks**: clear the linkage table, allowing upgrades
- **fileinject**: install a local file to the planet cache
- **link**: create a development link
- **unlink**: remove development link associated with the given package
- **fetch**: download a package file without installing it
- **url**: get a URL for the given package
- **open**: unpack the contents of the given package
- **structure**: display the structure of a given .plt archive
- **print**: display a file within of the given .plt archive

Each of these commands is described in more detail below. All the functionality of the command-line tool is also provided with a programmatic interface by the "util.ss" library.

#### 3.1 create

Usage:

```
planet create [ <option> ... ] <path>
```

Create a PLaneT archive in the current directory whose contents are the directory <path>.

<option> is one of:

- `-f`, `-force`: force a package to be created even if its `info.ss` file contains errors.

### 3.2 install

Usage:

```
planet install <owner> <pkg> <maj> <min>
```

Download and install the package that `(require (planet "file.ss" (<owner> <pkg> <maj> <min>)))` would install.

### 3.3 remove

Usage:

```
planet remove [ <option> ... ] <owner> <pkg> <maj> <min>
```

Remove the specified package from the local cache, optionally also removing its distribution file.

`<option>` is one of:

- `-e`, `-erase`: also remove the package's distribution file from the uninstalled-package cache

### 3.4 show

Usage:

```
planet show [ <option> ... ]
```

List the packages installed in the local cache.

`<option>` is one of:

- `-p`, `-packages`: show packages only (default)
- `-l`, `-linkage`: show linkage table only
- `-a`, `-all`: show packages and linkage

### 3.5 clearlinks

Usage:

```
planet clearlinks
```

Clear the linkage table, allowing upgrades.

### 3.6 fileinject

Usage:

```
planet fileinject <owner> <plt-file> <maj> <min>
```

Install local file <plt-file> into the planet cache as though it had been downloaded from the planet server. It is treated as though it had the given owner name as its owner name, the given file's filename as the its package name, and the given major and minor version numbers.

### 3.7 link

Usage:

```
planet link <owner> <pkg> <maj> <min> <path>
```

Create a development link (see §6.1.1 “Development Links”) between the given package specifier and the specified directory name.

### 3.8 unlink

Usage:

```
planet unlink <owner> <pkg> <maj> <min>
```

Remove any development link (see §6.1.1 “Development Links”) associated with the given package.

### 3.9 fetch

Usage:

```
planet fetch <owner> <pkg> <maj> <min>
```

Download the given package file from the central PLaneT repository without installing it.

### 3.10 url

Usage:

```
planet url <owner> <pkg> <maj> <min>
```

Get a URL for the given package.

This is never necessary for normal use of planet, but may be helpful in some circumstances for retrieving packages.

### 3.11 open

Usage:

```
planet open <plt-file> <target>
```

Unpack the contents of the given package into the given directory without installing.

This command is not necessary for normal use of planet. It is intended to allow you to inspect package contents offline without needing to install the package.

### 3.12 structure

Usage:

```
planet structure <plt-file>
```

Print the structure of the PLaneT archive named by <plt-file> to the standard output port.

This command does not unpack or install the named .plt file.

### 3.13 print

Usage:

```
planet print <plt-file> <path>
```

Print the contents of the file named by <path>, which must be a relative path within the PLaneT archive named by <plt-file>, to the standard output port.

This command does not unpack or install the named .plt file.

## 4 The planet Language

```
#lang planet
```

When used with `#lang`, `planet` must be followed by a short-form `PLaneT` path. The path is used in the same way that `#lang` uses plain identifiers: `/lang/reader` is added to the given path to determine a module that supplies a module reader.

The `planet` module (as opposed to the reader used with `#lang`) implements the `planet` command-line tool.

## 5 Utility Libraries

The planet collection provides configuration and utilities for using PLaneT.

### 5.1 Client Configuration

```
(require planet/config)
```

The `planet/config` library provides several parameters useful for configuring how PLaneT works.

Note that while these parameters can be useful to modify programmatically, PLaneT code runs at module-expansion time, so most user programs cannot set them until PLaneT has already run. Therefore, to meaningfully change these settings, it is best to manually edit the `config.ss` file.

---

```
(PLANET-DIR) → path-string?  
(PLANET-DIR dir) → void?  
  dir : path-string?
```

The root PLaneT directory. If the environment variable `PLTPLANETDIR` is set, default is its value; otherwise the default is the directory in which "`config.ss`" is found.

---

```
(CACHE-DIR) → path-string?  
(CACHE-DIR dir) → void?  
  dir : path-string?
```

The root of the PLaneT client's cache directory.

---

```
(UNINSTALLED-PACKAGE-CACHE) → path-string?  
(UNINSTALLED-PACKAGE-CACHE dir) → void?  
  dir : path-string?
```

The root of the PLaneT client's uninstalled-packages cache. PLaneT stores package distribution files in this directory, and searches for them in this directory for them if necessary. Unlike the main PLaneT cache, which contains compiled files and is specific to each particular version of PLT Scheme, the uninstalled package cache is shared by all versions of PLT Scheme that use the same package repository, and it is searched if a package is not installed in the primary cache and cannot be downloaded from the central PLaneT repository (for instance due to a loss of Internet connectivity). This behavior is intended to primarily benefit users who upgrade their PLT Scheme installations frequently.

---

```
(LINKAGE-FILE) → path-string?  
(LINKAGE-FILE file) → void?  
  file : path-string?
```

The file to use as the first place PLaneT looks to determine how a particular PLaneT dependence in a file should be satisfied. The contents of this file are used to ensure that no "magic upgrades" occur after a package is installed. The default is the file "LINKAGE" in the root PLaneT directory.

---

```
(LOG-FILE) → (or/c path-string? false?)  
(LOG-FILE file) → void?  
  file : (or/c path-string? false?)
```

If *#f*, indicates that no logging should take place. Otherwise specifies the file into which logging should be written. The default is the file "INSTALL-LOG" in the root PLaneT directory.

---

```
(USE-HTTP-DOWNLOADS?) → boolean?  
(USE-HTTP-DOWNLOADS? bool) → void?  
  bool : any/c
```

PLaneT can use two different protocols to retrieve packages. If *#t*, PLaneT will use the HTTP protocol; if *#f* it will use the custom-built PLaneT protocol. The default value for this parameter is *#t* and setting this parameter to *#f* is not recommended.

---

```
(HTTP-DOWNLOAD-SERVLET-URL) → string?  
(HTTP-DOWNLOAD-SERVLET-URL url) → void?  
  url : string?
```

The URL for the servlet that will provide PLaneT packages if *USE-HTTP-DOWNLOADS?* is *#t*, represented as a string. This defaults to the value of the `PLTPLANETURL` environment variable if it is set and otherwise is "`http://planet.plt-scheme.org/servlets/planet-servlet.ss`".

---

```
(PLANET-SERVER-NAME) → string?  
(PLANET-SERVER-NAME host) → void?  
  host : string?
```

The name of the PLaneT server to which the client should connect if *USE-HTTP-DOWNLOADS?* is *#f*. The default value for this parameter is "`planet.plt-scheme.org`".

---

```
(PLANET-SERVER-PORT) → natural-number?
```



```
(PLANET-SERVER-PORT port) → void?  
  port : natural-number?
```

The port on the server the client should connect to if `USE-HTTP-DOWNLOADS?` is `#f`. The default value for this parameter is `270`.

## 5.2 Utilities

```
(require planet/util)
```

The `planet/util` library supports examination of the pieces of PLaneT. It is meant primarily to support debugging and to allow easier development of higher-level package-management tools. The functionality exposed by the `planet` command-line tool is also available programmatically through this library.

---

```
(download/install-pkg owner pkg maj min) → (or/c pkg? #f)  
  owner : string?  
  pkg : string?  
  maj : natural-number/c  
  min : natural-number/c
```

Downloads and installs the package specified by the given owner name, package name, major and minor version number. Returns false if no such package is available; otherwise returns a package structure for the installed package.

---

```
(current-cache-contents)  
→ (listof  
  (list/c string?  
    (listof  
      (list/c string?  
        (cons/c natural-number/c  
          (listof natural-number/c))))))  
(current-cache-contents contents) → void?  
  contents : (listof  
    (list/c string?  
      (listof  
        (list/c string?  
          (cons/c natural-number/c  
            (listof natural-number/c))))))
```

Holds a listing of all package names and versions installed in the local cache.

---

```
(current-linkage)
```

```
→ (listof (list/c path-string?
           (list/c string?
                 (list/c string?)
                 natural-number/c
                 natural-number/c)))
```

Returns the current linkage table.

The linkage table is an association between file locations (encoded as path strings) and concrete planet package versions. If a require line in the associated file requests a package, this table is consulted to determine a particular concrete package to satisfy the request.

---

```
(make-planet-archive directory [output-file]) → path-string?
  directory : path-string?
  output-file : (or/c path? path-string?)
                = (string-append (path->string name) ".plt")
```

Makes a .plt archive file suitable for PLaneT whose contents are all files in the given directory and returns that file's name. If the optional filename argument is provided, that filename will be used as the output file's name.

---

```
(unpack-planet-archive plt-file output-dir) → any
  plt-file : (or/c path? path-string?)
  output-dir : (or/c path? path-string?)
```

Unpacks the PLaneT archive with the given filename, placing its contents into the given directory (creating that path if necessary).

---

```
(remove-pkg owner pkg maj min) → any
  owner : string?
  pkg : string?
  maj : natural-number/c
  min : natural-number/c
```

Removes the specified package from the local planet cache.

---

```
(display-plt-file-structure plt-file) → any
  plt-file : (or/c path-string? path?)
```

Print a tree representing the file and directory structure of the PLaneT archive .plt file named by *plt-file* to (`current-output-port`).

---

```
(display-plt-archived-file plt-file
                          file-to-print) → any
  plt-file : (or/c path-string? path?)
  file-to-print : string?
```

Print the contents of the file named *file-to-print* within the PLaneT archive .plt file named by *plt-file* to (`current-output-port`).

---

```
(unlink-all) → any
```

Removes the entire linkage table from the system, which will force all modules to relink themselves to PLaneT modules the next time they run.

---

```
(add-hard-link owner pkg maj min dir) → any
  owner : string?
  pkg : string?
  maj : natural-number/c
  min : natural-number/c
  dir : path?
```

Adds a development link between the specified package and the given directory; once a link is established, PLaneT will treat the cache as having a package with the given owner, name, and version whose files are located in the given path. This is intended for package development; users only interested in using PLaneT packages available online should not need to create any development links.

If the specified package already has a development link, this function first removes the old link and then adds the new one.

---

```
(remove-hard-link owner pkg maj min) → any
  owner : string?
  pkg : string?
  maj : natural-number/c
  min : natural-number/c
```

Removes any hard link that may be associated with the given package.

---

```
(resolve-planet-path spec) → path?
  spec : quoted-planet-require-spec?
```

Returns the file system path to the file specified by the given quoted planet require specification. This function downloads and installs the specified package if necessary, but does not verify that the actual file within it actually exists.

---

```
(this-package-version)
(this-package-version-name)
(this-package-version-owner)
(this-package-version-maj)
(this-package-version-min)
```

Macros that expand into expressions that evaluate to information about the name, owner, and version number of the package in which they appear. `this-package-version` returns a list consisting of a string naming the package's owner, a string naming the package, a number indicating the package major version and a number indicating the package minor version, or `#f` if the expression appears outside the context of a package. The others are convenience macros that select out the relevant field, or return `#f` if the expression appears outside the context of a PLaneT package.

### 5.3 Terse Status Updates

```
(require planet/terse-info)
```

This module provides access to some PLaneT status information. This module is first loaded by PLaneT in the initial namespace (when PLaneT's resolver is loaded), but PLaneT uses `dynamic-require` to load this module each time it wants to announce information. Similarly, the state of which procedures are registered (via `planet-terse-register`) is saved in the namespace, making the listening and information producing namespace-specific.

---

```
(planet-terse-register proc [namespace]) → void?
  proc : (-> (or/c 'download 'install 'finish) string? any/c)
  namespace : namespace? = (current-namespace)
```

Registers `proc` as a function to be called when `planet-terse-log` is called with a matching namespace argument. Note that `proc` is called asynchronously (ie, on some thread other than the one calling `planet-terse-register`).

---

```
(planet-terse-log id msg [namespace]) → void?
  id : (or/c 'download 'install 'finish)
  msg : string?
  namespace : namespace? = (current-namespace)
```

This function is called by PLaneT to announce when things are happening. The namespace passed along is used to identify the procs to notify.

## 6 Developing Packages for PLaneT

To put a package on PLaneT, or release an upgrade to an already-existing package:

### 6.1 Write Your Package

PLaneT can distribute whatever programs you write, but keep these guidelines in mind as you write:

- Organize your code into modules. Since the PLaneT client is integrated into the `require` form, it works best if your code is arranged into modules.
- When one module in your program depends on another, it is best to require it using the relative-file-name form rather than the `planet require` form. For instance, if your program contains files `primary.ss` and `helper.ss` where `primary.ss` requires `helper`, use the form

```
(require "helper.ss")
```

instead of

```
(require (planet "helper.ss" ("username" "packagename.plt" 1 0)))
```

in files that will also be a part of the package.

#### 6.1.1 Development Links

To aid development, PLaneT allows users to establish direct associations between a particular planet package with an arbitrary directory on the filesystem, for instance connecting the package named by the `require` line

```
(require (planet "file.ss" ("my" "mypackage.plt" 1 0)))
```

to the directory `~/home/myname/svn/mypackages/devel/`.

These associations are intended to allow developers to use their own directory structures, version control systems, and so on while still being able to use the packages they create as though they were distributed directly by PLaneT. Development links are local to a particular user and repository (but not to a particular MzScheme minor revision).

To establish a development link, use the `planet` command-line tool:

```
planet link myname mypackage.plt 1 0 ~/svn/mypackages/devel
```

Once you are finished developing a package, you should remove any development links you have established for it, again using the `planet` command-line tool:

```
planet unlink myname mypackage.plt 1 0
```

You may alternately use the functions [add-hard-link](#) and [remove-hard-link](#).

## 6.2 Prepare Your Distribution

### 6.2.1 Arrange Files Into a Directory

Make sure that all source files, documentation, etc. that you want to be a part of the package are in a single directory and its subdirectories. Furthermore make sure that nothing else, *e.g.* unneeded backup files, is in that directory (with the exception that the subdirectories and files CVS or Subversion creates are automatically skipped by the packaging tool).

### 6.2.2 Create Documentation [Optional]

Use Scribble to write documentation for your package. See *Scribble: PLT Documentation Tool* for instructions on how to write Scribble documentation.

### 6.2.3 Create an "info.ss" File [Optional]

If you put a file named "info.ss" in your package's root directory, the PLaneT system (as well as the rest of the PLT Scheme tool suite) will look in it for descriptive metadata about your package. The PLaneT system looks for certain names in that file:

- The `'blurb` field: If present, the blurb field should contain a list of XHTML fragments encoded as x-expressions (see the xml collection for details) that PLaneT will use as a short description of your project.
- The `'release-notes` field: If present, the release-notes field should contain a list of XHTML fragments encoded as x-expressions (see the xml collection for details) that PLaneT will use as a short description of what's new in this release of your package.
- The `'categories` field: If present, the categories field should be a list of symbols corresponding to the categories under which this package should be listed.

The valid categories are:

- `'devtools`: Development Tools
- `'net`: Networking and Protocols
- `'media`: Graphics and Audio
- `'xml`: XML-Related

- `'datastructures`: Data Structures and Algorithms
- `'io`: Input/Output and Filesystem
- `'scientific`: Mathematical and Scientific
- `'system`: Hardware/Operating System-Specific Tools
- `'ui`: Textual and Graphical User Interface
- `'metaprogramming`: Metaprogramming Tools
- `'planet`: PLaneT-Related
- `'misc`: Miscellaneous

If you put symbols other than these the categories field, they will be ignored. If you put no legal symbols in the categories field or do not include this field in your info.ss file, your package will be categorized as "Miscellaneous."

- The `'can-be-loaded-with` field: If present, the can-be-loaded-with field should be a quoted datum of one of the following forms:

```

can-be-loaded-with = (quote all)
                    | (quote none)
                    | (list (quote all-except) VER-SPEC ...)
                    | (list (quote only) VER-SPEC ...)

```

where VER-SPEC is a PLaneT package version specification.

Depending on your package's behavior, it may or may not be okay for multiple versions of the same package to be loaded at one time on the entire system — for instance, if your package relies on writing to a particular file and assumes that nothing else writes to that same file, then multiple versions of the same package being loaded simultaneously may be a problem. This field allows you to specify whether your package can be loaded simultaneously with older versions of itself. If its value is `'all`, then the package may be loaded with any older version. If it is `'none`, then it may not be loaded with older versions at all. If it is `(list 'all-except VER-SPEC ...)` then any package except those that match one of the given VER-SPEC forms may be loaded with this package; if it is `(list 'only VER-SPEC ...)` then only packages that match one of the given VER-SPEC forms may be loaded with this package.

When checking to see if a package may be loaded, PLaneT compares it to all other currently-loaded instances of the same package with any version: for each comparison, it checks to see if the newer package's can-be-loaded-with field allows the older package to be loaded. If all such comparisons succeed then the new package may be loaded; otherwise PLaneT signals an error.

The default for this field is `'none` as a conservative protection measure. For many packages it is safe to set this field to `'any`.

- The `'homepage` field: If present, the URL field should be a string corresponding to a URL for the package. PLaneT provides this link with the description of your package on the main PLaneT web page.

- The `'primary-file` field: If present, the `primary-file` field should be either a string corresponding to the name (without path) of the main Scheme source file of your package, or a list of such strings. The PLaneT web page corresponding to this package will present all files listed here as interface files for your package; it will give direct links to each package and a listing of all names provided by the package along with their contracts (if present).

If you include only a single string, it will be used as the `require` line printed on your package's page. If you include a list of strings, then the first legal file string in the list will be used.

- The `'required-core-version` field: If present, the `required-core-version` field should be a string with the same syntax as the output of the `version` function. Defining this field indicates that PLaneT should only allow users of a version of `mzscheme` equal to or more recent than the version specified by this field. This allows you finer-grained control of your package's core-language requirements than its inclusion in a particular repository; for instance, setting this field to `"300.2"` would cause the PLaneT server not to serve it to `MzScheme v300.1` or older clients.
- The `'version` field: If present, the `version` field should be a string that describes the version number of this code that should be presented to users (e.g., `"0.15 alpha"`). This field does not override or in any way interact with your package's package version number, which is assigned by PLaneT, but may be useful to users.
- The `'repositories` field: If present, the `repositories` field should be a list consisting of some subset of the strings `"4.x"` and `"3xx"`. The string `"4.x"` indicates that this package should be included in the `v4.x` repository (which contains packages that are intended to run in PLT Scheme versions at or above version 4.0), and the string `"3xx"` indicates that the package should be included in the `v3xx` repository (containing packages intended to run in PLT Scheme versions in the 3xx series). A single package (and a single version of a package) may be included in multiple repositories with the same PLaneT version number.

In addition, PLaneT uses the `setup-plt` installer to install packages on client machines, so most fields it looks for can be included with their usual effects. In particular, adding a `'name` field indicates that the Scheme files in the package should be compiled during installation; it is a good idea to add it.

An example `info.ss` file looks like this:

```
#lang setup/infotab
(define name "My Application")
(define blurb
  '("My application runs 60% faster on 20% less peanut "
    "butter. It even shows a fancy graphic!"))
(define primary-file "my-app.ss")
(define categories '(system xml))
```



See the PLT mzc: MzScheme Compiler Manual, chapter 7 for more information on info.ss files.

### 6.3 Build a Distribution Archive

Use the planet command-line tool in its archive-creation mode to create a planet archive:

```
planet create /home/jacob/my-app/
```

This will create a planet archive named "my-app.plt" in the current directory whose contents are the contents of "/home/jacob/my-app" and all its subdirectories.

Alternately, you can run `make-planet-archive` with the name of the directory you've prepared as its argument:

```
(make-planet-archive "/home/jacob/my-app/")
```

This function will build a packaged version of your directory and return the path to that package. The path will always be a file named "X.plt", where "X" is the name of the directory you gave to `make-planet-archive`, located in that same directory.

You can now test that your archive file works as intended using the planet command-line tool in its install mode:

```
planet fileinject <owner> <path to your .plt file> <maj> <min>
```

installs the specified file into your local PLaneT cache as though it had been downloaded from the PLaneT server with the given owner name and major and minor versions. After you run this command, you can require your package on your local machine using

```
(require (planet <file> (<owner> <.plt file name without path> <maj> <min>)))
```

to verify everything works. After you do so, you can use

```
planet remove <owner> <.plt file name without path> <maj> <min>
```

to remove the test package from your local cache. (Not removing it is safe as long as you use the same name and version numbers the package will have on the PLaneT server; otherwise you may experience problems.)

## 6.4 Determine Your Package's Backwards-Compatibility

If you are updating a previously-released package, you must decide whether your package is a backwards-compatible change or not. A rule of thumb is to remember that modules written to work with the previously-released version of your package should unmodified with the new package. This means that at a minimum, a backwards compatible update should:

- Contain all the same Scheme source files in that the previous version contained in directories intended for public access
- In each public file, provide at least all the bindings that the previous version provided
- For each name provided with a contract (see §7 “Contracts”), provide it with a contract that is at least as permissive as the previous contract

A backwards-compatible upgrade may, however:

- Change any behavior that reasonable consumers of your package would not consider guaranteed (*e.g.*, by fixing bugs or improving the efficiency of operations).
- Remove files in clearly-marked private sections. By convention, the contents of any directory called "private" are considered private and should not be relied upon by external users of your package.
- Extend the set of names exported by a module.

Currently these rules are guidelines only, but in the future some or all of them may be enforced programmatically. Ultimately, though, no technical device can precisely capture what it means for a package to be backwards-compatible with a previous version, so you should use your best judgment.

## 6.5 Submit Your Package

Go to the central PLaneT package repository web page and click on the link marked "contribute a package / log in" in the upper-right-hand corner. If you have not yet created an account, then do so on that page by providing your name, a user name, an email address, and a password and then responding to the confirmation message delivered to the email address you provide.

Once you have an account, then if this is a new package then upload it using the "Contribute a package" section in your user account page. If this is a package update then click "update this package" next to its name in the "Manage your packages" section of your user account page, then upload the .plt file and indicate on the form whether your update is backwards-compatible with the prior version or not.