

# Using the Ruby Distribution

This page provides important information for users of the Ice for Ruby distribution.

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## Overview of the Ice for Ruby Distribution

Ice for Ruby is available as a collection of Ruby gems. Each package provides the following components:

- Ice extension for Ruby
- Standard Slice files
- Slice-to-Ruby compiler (`slice2rb`)

## Installing the Ice for Ruby Distribution

Linux and macOS users can install Ice for Ruby using this command:

```
sudo gem install zeroc-ice --version=3.6.4
```

This gem builds Ice for Ruby from source and supports Ruby 1.8 or later.

Windows users can install a binary gem instead:

```
gem install zeroc-ice-x64-mingw      (Windows 64-bit)
gem install zeroc-ice-x86-mingw      (Windows 32-bit)
```

These gems require Ruby 2.4.

## Using Ice for Ruby

The installation process automatically adds the Ice modules to Ruby's package directory and adds the Slice-to-Ruby compiler (`slice2rb`) to a directory that's likely already in your executable search path. To verify that Ice is installed, execute these commands:

```
irb
irb> require 'Ice'
irb> Ice::getSliceDir()
```

The output of `getSliceDir` shows where the standard Slice files have been installed.



### Ruby 1.8

Users of Ruby 1.8 must add the `-rubygems` option when starting the interpreter with `irb` or `ruby`:

```
irb -rubygems
irb> require 'Ice'
irb> Ice::getSliceDir()
```

The Ice manual provides a complete description of the [Ruby mapping](#), including the options for [generating Ruby code](#) from Slice definitions.

## Using the sample programs

Sample programs are provided in a separate [GitHub repository](#). You can browse this repository to see build and usage instructions for all supported programming languages. Simply clone this repository and use its 3.6 branch:

```
git clone -b 3.6 https://github.com/zeroc-ice/ice-demos.git
cd ice-demos
```