
Account setup: Gemini

Key takeaways

1. Gemini is optional; the gemini-ask scaffold ships ready on day one.
2. API keys reach git only as SOPS-encrypted files, never plaintext.
3. Treat a Gemini answer as a second opinion to check, not a verdict.

Gemini is optional; Codex is the required account

Useful optional tooling, not a required account

- Required path
 - Codex through UT ChatGPT EDU; checked by `codex login status`.
- Optional Gemini path
 - Never required for HW0 completion; `gemini-ask` ships in dotfiles either way.
 - Use the current student/free Gemini or AI Studio key path if you want it.
 - The exact free-student offer is a semester-freeze check.
- Safety rule
 - No plaintext `.env` files in git; self-check rejects them.

Gemini expands your review options; it is not a completion gate.

Setup flow

Key → SOPS → with-secrets → gemini-ask

1. Get a key

Use the current student/free Gemini path if available, or a personal AI Studio key. This is optional.

Confirm the offer at semester freeze

2. Encrypt it

Put GEMINI_API_KEY in secrets/gemini.env, then encrypt the file with SOPS before committing it.

Plaintext .env files fail self-check

3. Use it

Run gemini-ask through with-secrets. Each call is fresh; replay context in the prompt when you need continuity.

Second opinion, not a required tool

Commands

The key is consumed only through with-secrets

```
cp secrets/gemini.env.example /tmp/gemini.env # plaintext scratch copy
$EDITOR /tmp/gemini.env                      # fill in GEMINI_API_KEY
# encrypt before anything touches git:
sops -e --input-type dotenv --output-type dotenv \
    /tmp/gemini.env > secrets/gemini.env
rm /tmp/gemini.env                          # delete the plaintext copy

with-secrets secrets/gemini.env -- gemini-ask prompt.md # decrypt for this call
```

How to use the answer

A second opinion is input, not a verdict

- Gemini can catch mistakes that Claude or Codex missed.
- It can also be confidently wrong; disagreement means investigate.
- Because `gemini-ask` is stateless, include the needed context in every prompt.

The right habit: compare reasoning, then inspect the code yourself.

Key Takeaways

1. Gemini is optional, but the scaffold is ready on day one.
2. API keys are committed only in SOPS-encrypted form.
3. Use Gemini for independent review, not as an oracle.