START HERE

Hack for Humanity

Get set up.
Start building.

A beginner’s click-by-click guide

GEMMA + GOOGLE AI STUDIO / CLINE + OPENROUTER / YOUR OWN TOOLS

START HERE

Choose your starting track

Pick one path. You can switch later.

A

Gemma in Google AI Studio

Free browser-based coding help.

Choose Gemma and ask for a small prototype.

B

Cline Desktop Team API credit

Connect OpenRouter.

Share your team's $20 API limit.

C

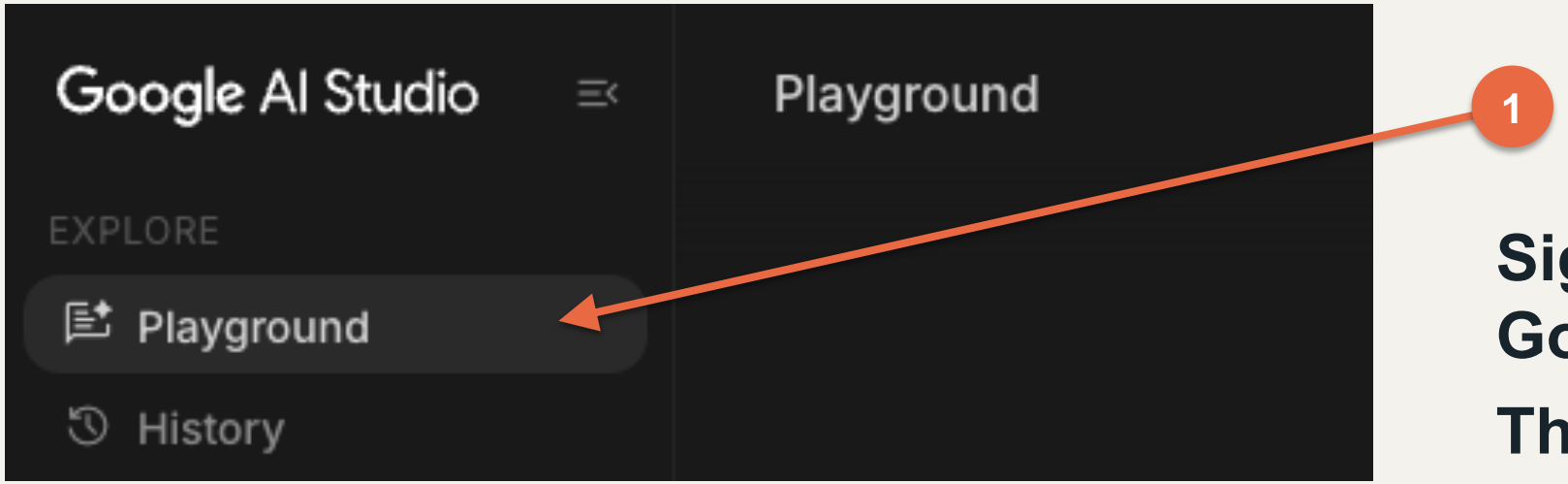
Your own accounts

Use tools you already have.

Your account, key and billing limits.

Open Google AI Studio

aistudio.google.com



Sign in with your Google account.

Then choose Playground.

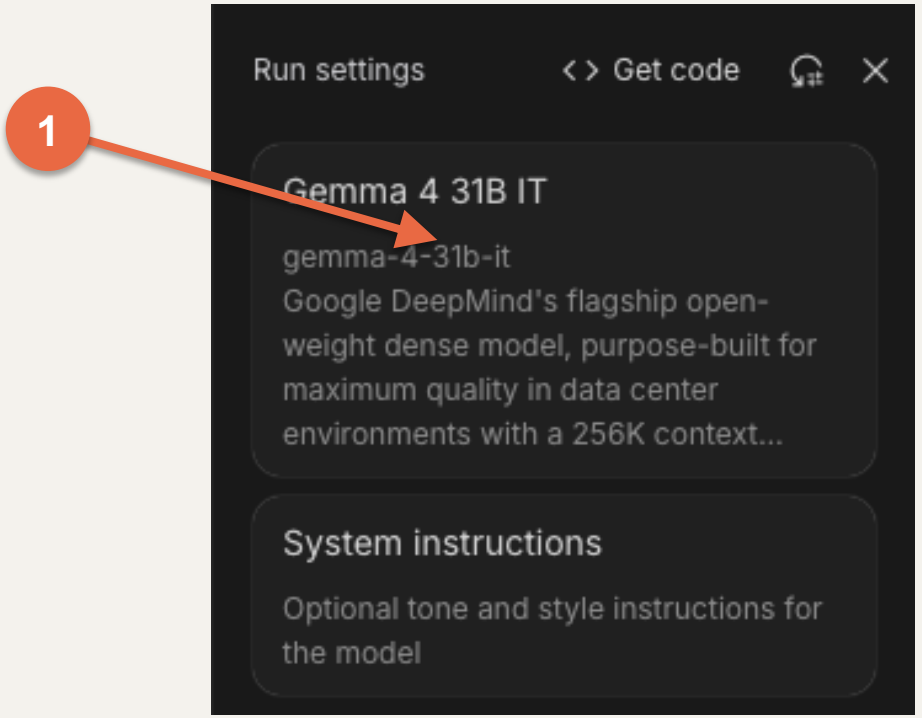
Gemma is available free in AI Studio, subject to usage limits.

Open the model selector

In Run settings, click the model card.

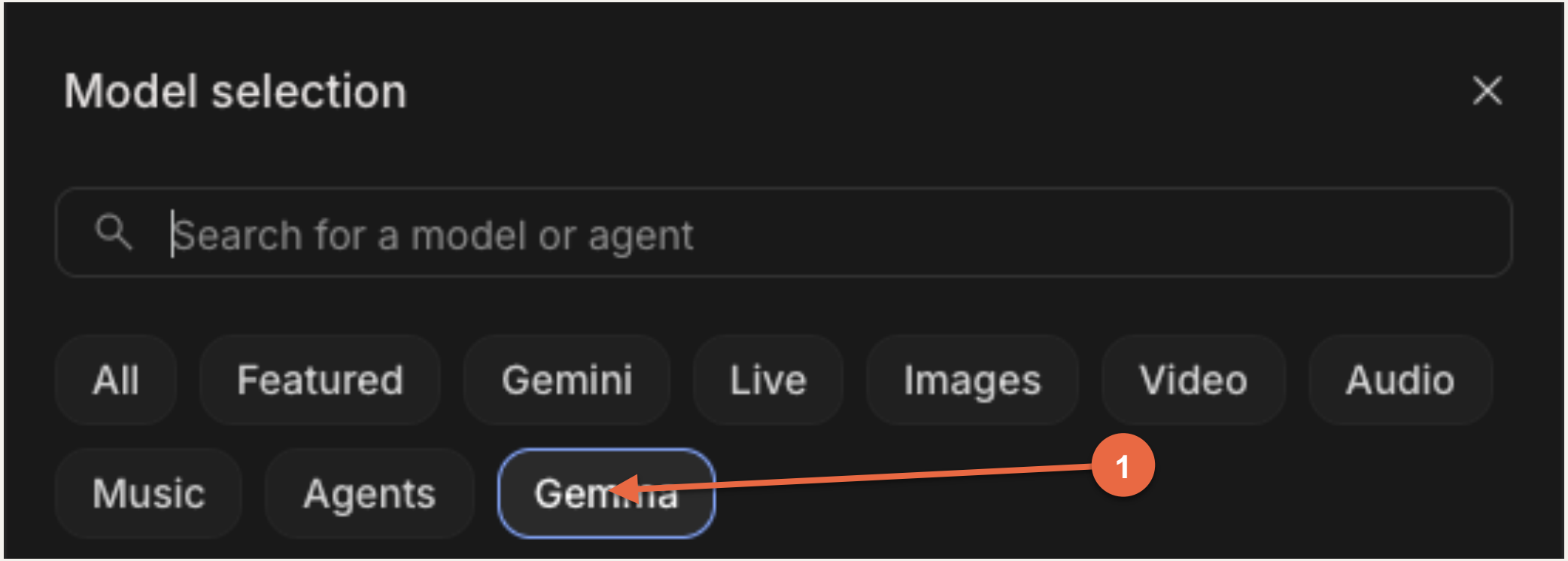
Look at the right side of Playground.

The card shows the currently selected model.



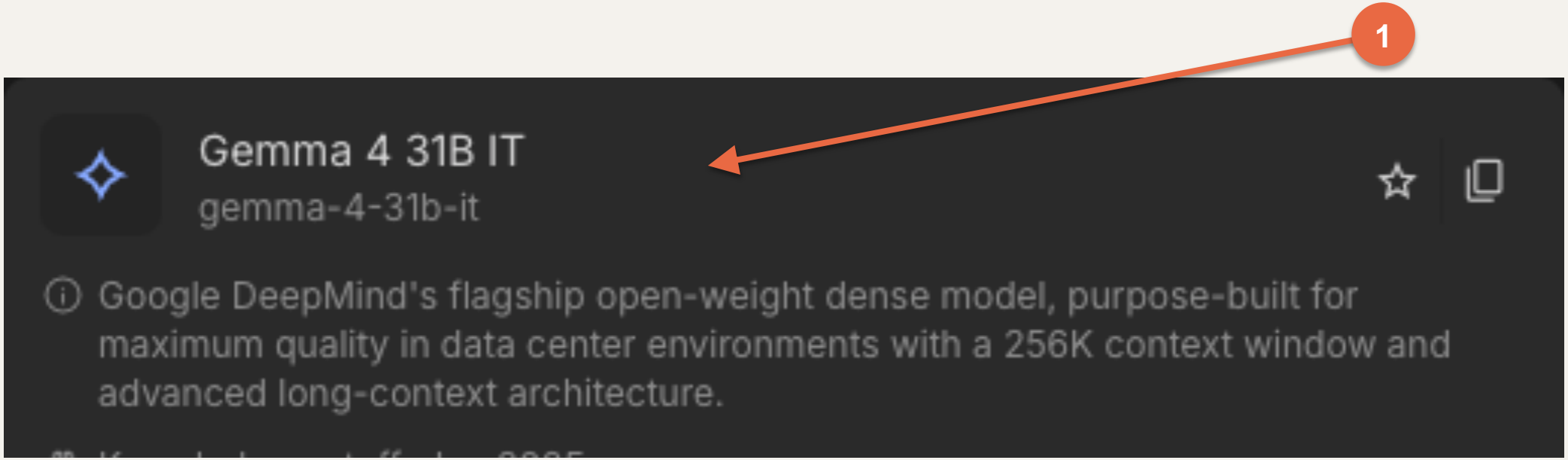
Choose the Gemma family

Click Gemma in Model selection.



Select Gemma 4 31B IT

Click the model row to select it.



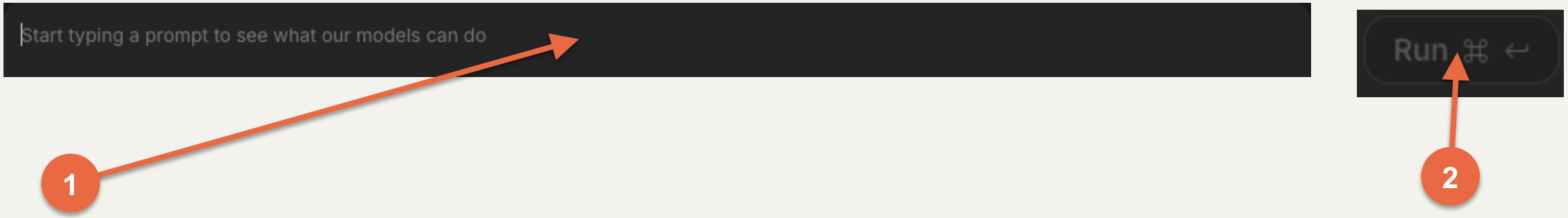
Alternative shown: Gemma 4 26B A4B IT. Use an available Gemma option.

Ask Gemma for your first plan

“Help me create a simple web page for a neighborhood food pantry.

Suggest three essential features and a five-step build plan.

Keep it beginner-friendly.”



Type in the prompt box, then click Run.

Turn the answer into a tiny prototype

Ask for one self-contained index.html file.

1 Copy the code

Ask Gemma to put HTML, CSS and JavaScript in one file.

2 Save index.html

Use a plain-text editor. Keep the .html extension.

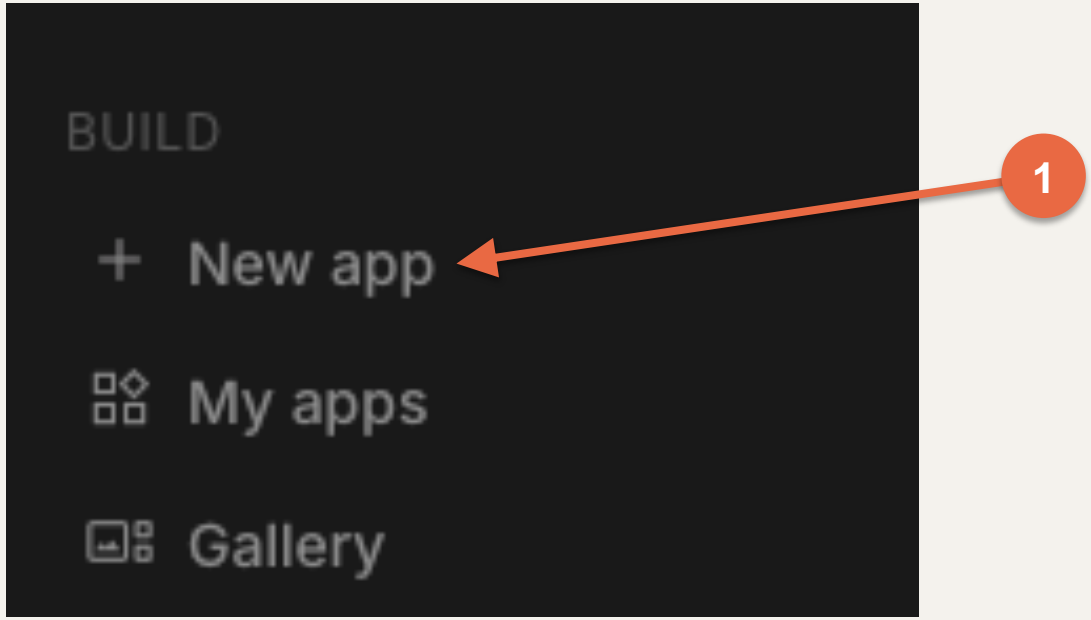
3 Open the file

Test one feature. Return to Gemma with one specific change.

Start with sample data and a browser-only prototype.

Optional: open Gemini Build mode

For AI Studio’s generated app preview, click New app.



Build mode uses Gemini.

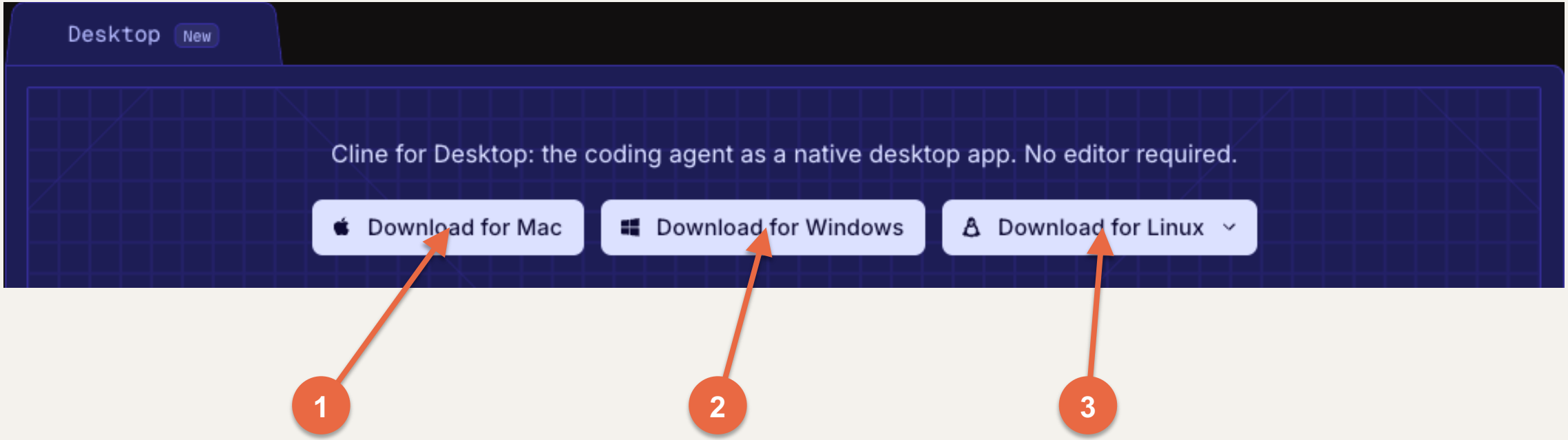
The Gemma walkthrough above

uses Playground.

Check the model and limits before starting.

Download Cline Desktop

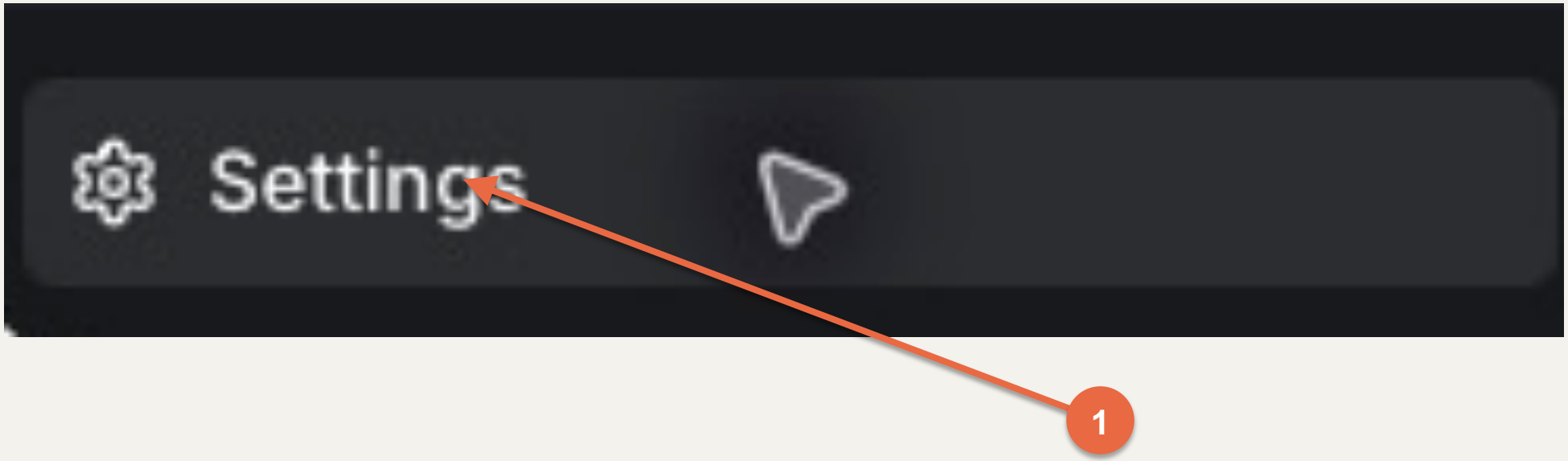
cline.bot



Choose your operating system. Open the installer, then open Cline.

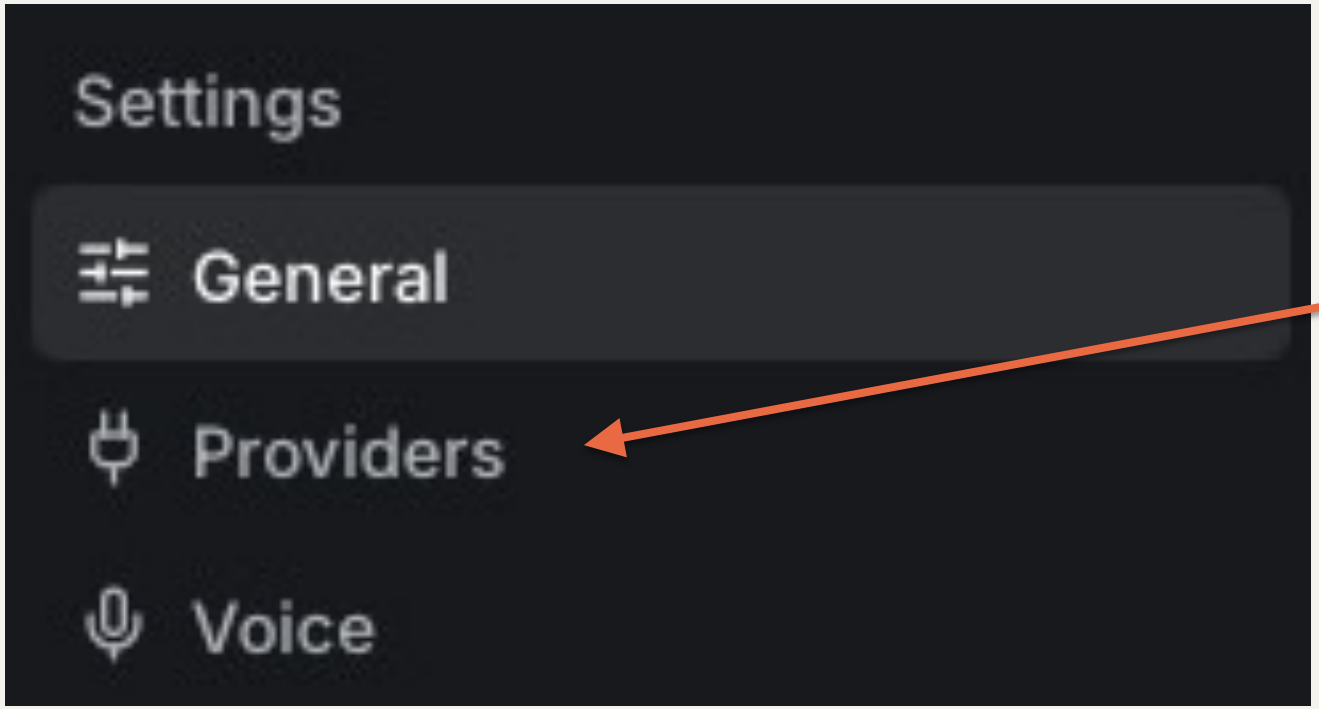
Open Settings

Click Settings in the lower-left corner.



Choose Providers

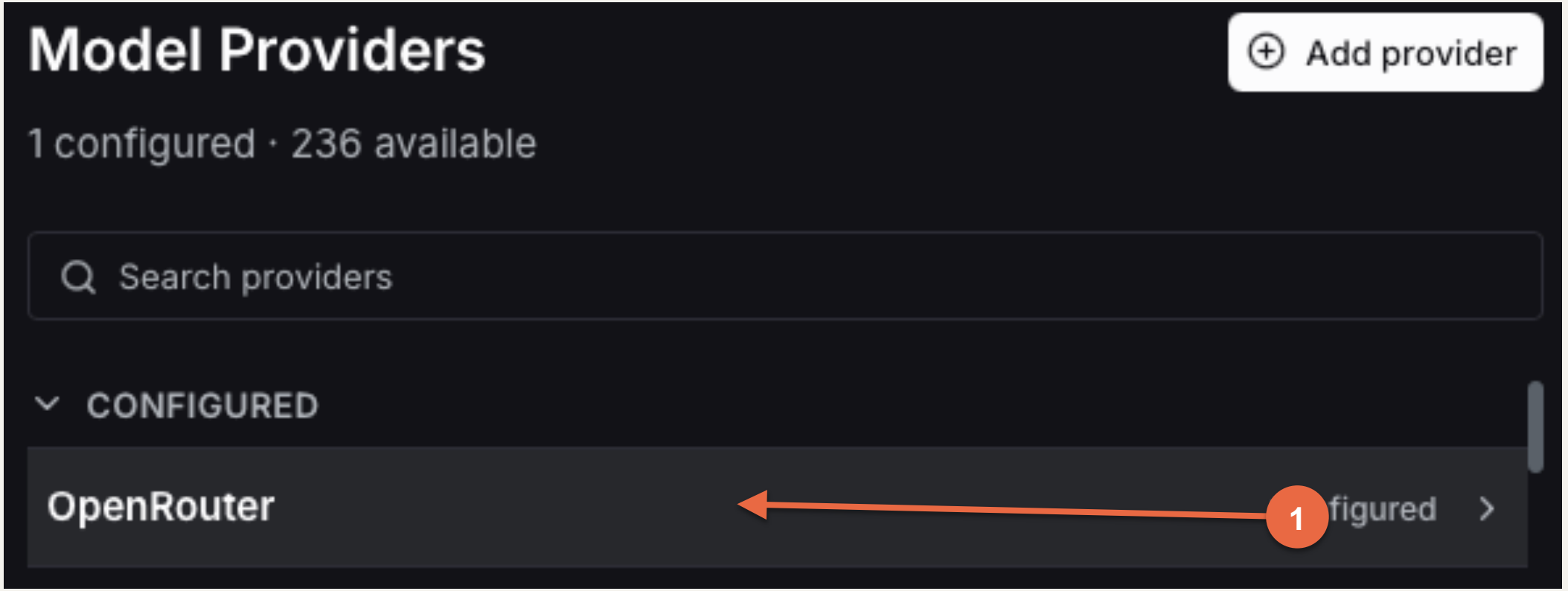
In the Settings sidebar, click Providers.



This opens Model Providers.

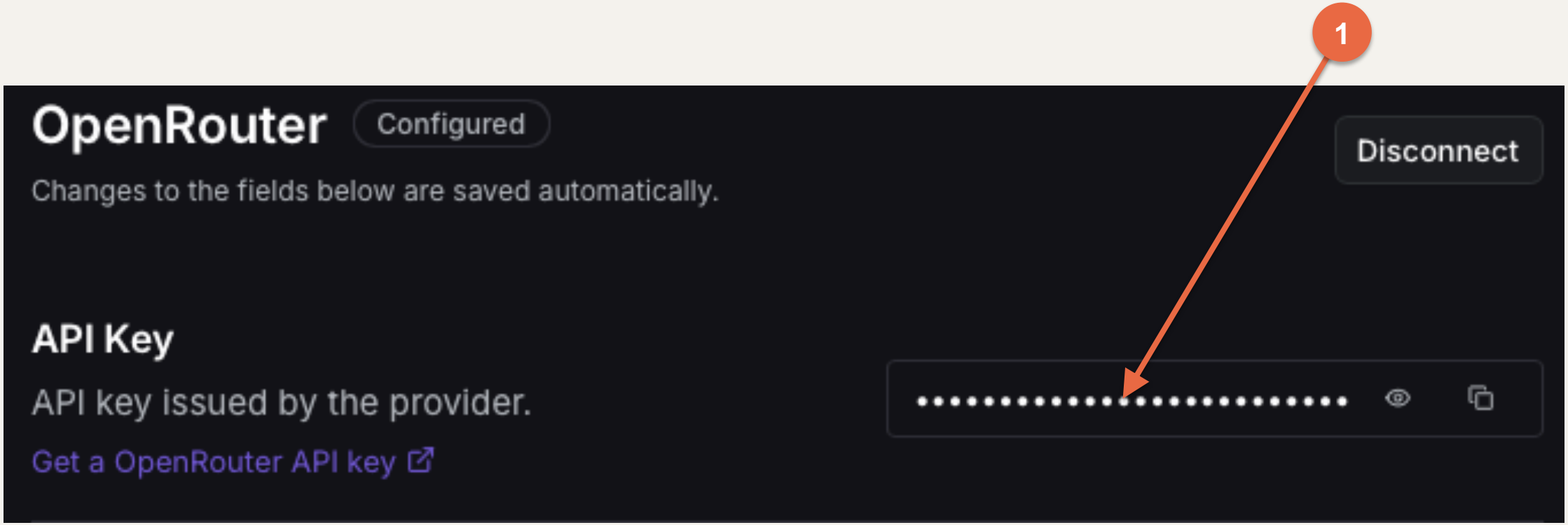
Choose OpenRouter

Use Search providers if you do not see it immediately.



Paste your assigned team key

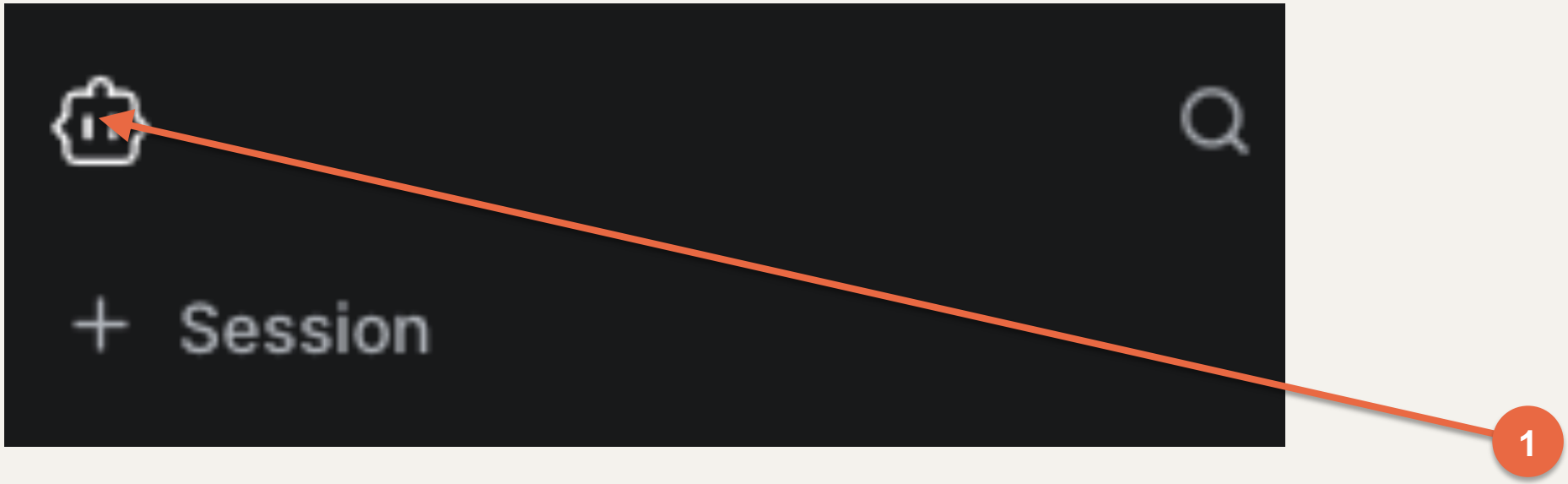
Enter the OpenRouter API key your team was given.



Fields save automatically. Keep the key private.

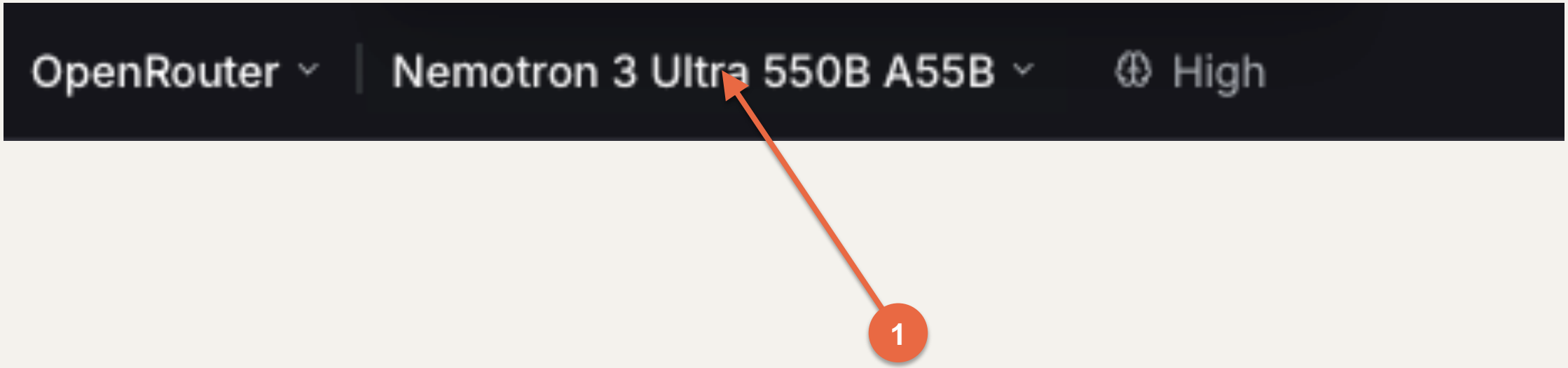
Return to the start screen

Click the Cline home icon in the upper-left corner.



Open the model menu

Click the model name next to OpenRouter.



The name in this screenshot is an example.

Choose a budget option on the next slide.

Start with a low-cost coding model



Search the model name, then select its result.

MODEL	INPUT / 1M	OUTPUT / 1M
DeepSeek V4.1 Flash 1017	$0.049	$0.375
MiniMax M3	$0.23	$0.96
Qwen3 Coder 480B A35B	$0.22	$1.80

OpenRouter listed USD per 1M tokens • checked 21 Oct 2026 • rates vary by provider

Stay within your team’s $20 API limit

$20

shared team API budget

Make small requests.

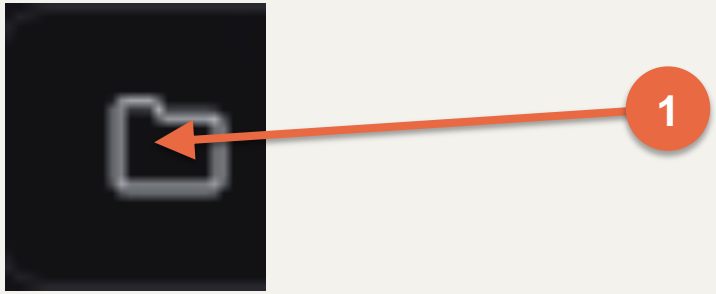
Review changes before continuing.

Ask the organizer to check remaining usage.

Gemma in Google AI Studio remains free, subject to usage limits.

Choose a project folder

Click the folder button above the prompt.



Open folder...

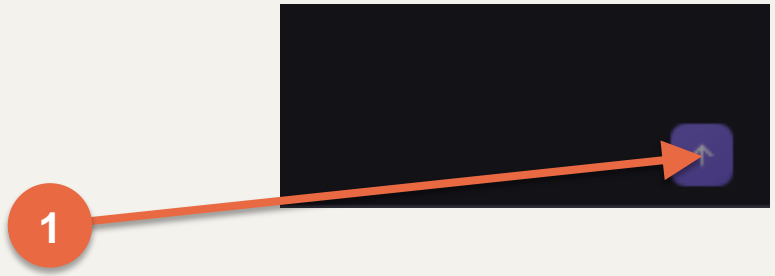
→ choose your hackathon folder

Use a fresh folder for your team’s prototype.

Ask for the smallest useful version

“Plan a simple food-pantry web page with sample data.
Use one index.html file. Show me the plan first,
then help me build and test one feature at a time.”

Type your request, then press Enter or click Send.



Already have an account? Use it.

Existing paid tools are welcome.

1 **Keep your workflow**

Use the coding assistant or model account you already know.

2 **Use your own billing**

Your account and key cover any extra paid usage.

3 **Separate keys**

Do not top up or change the organizer’s OpenRouter key.

Pick one person, one problem, one feature

A small working demo can help a real community.

1	**Food pantry helper** Build: add an item + filter needed / available.	Help volunteers match donations to needs.
2	**Volunteer shift board** Build: list shifts + reserve a place with sample data.	Help a group fill its open shifts.
3	**Accessible event guide** Build: searchable FAQs + large-text controls.	Help visitors find clear event information.

Copy this starter prompt

Use it in your chosen track, then work one step at a time.

Help me build a Hack for Humanity food-pantry prototype.

Create one accessible index.html using HTML, CSS and JavaScript. Use sample data, no backend and no paid APIs.

A volunteer should be able to add an item, mark it needed or available, and filter the list.

First give me a five-step plan. Then help me build and test one feature at a time.

Gemma: copy generated code into a local file. Cline: work in your chosen project folder.