

## FoxML Core — License Decision Matrix

**Quick reference: Which license applies to your use case?**

**Important:** This matrix is for convenience only. In case of any conflict, `COMMERCIAL_LICENSE.md` is the authoritative and controlling document. See `COMMERCIAL_LICENSE.md` Section 22 for the complete document hierarchy.

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### Quick Decision Matrix

Scenario	AGPL-3.0	Commercial License	Notes
<b>Individual personal research</b> (not for any business purpose)	[OK]	[X]	Must be in personal capacity, not for any business or organization
<b>Non-commercial academic research</b> at degree-granting institution	[OK]	[X]	Results must not support commercial operations. See <code>LEGAL/SUBSCRIPTIONS.md</code> for full definition
<b>Internal evaluation at a company</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — no free trial for commercial use
<b>Proof of concept / pilot project</b> within a business	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — even if experimental or non-revenue
<b>Development / testing / staging</b> environments in a business	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — any environment within a business context
<b>Production use</b> in a business	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b>

Scenario	AGPL-3.0	Commercial License	Notes
<b>Trading, investment analysis, financial decision-making</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — regardless of revenue status
<b>Client services, consulting, freelance work</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — any work for clients or third parties
<b>Use by employees in scope of their work</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — regardless of role or department
<b>Use by contractors / consultants</b> for a business	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — even if temporary or part-time
<b>Use by interns in scope of their work</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — employment status doesn't matter
<b>Pre-revenue startup</b> or experimental project	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — revenue status doesn't matter
<b>Sole proprietor / freelancer</b> business use	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — any business activity requires commercial license
<b>Corporate research lab</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — even if non-profit status

Scenario	AGPL-3.0	Commercial License	Notes
<b>University research with corporate funding</b>	[X]	[OK]	Corporate sponsorship = commercial use
<b>For-profit university</b>	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — excluded from academic carve-out
<b>Academic partnership with commercial entity</b>	[X]	[OK]	If integrated into commercial operations, requires commercial license
<b>Selling outputs</b> (signals, analytics, predictions) to clients	[X]	[OK]	Allowed with commercial license, provided clients don't access
<b>Internal tools / dashboards</b> within a business	[X]	[OK]	Software <b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — any internal use in business context
<b>Research pipelines</b> within a business	[X]	[OK]	<b>ALWAYS commercial</b> — even if “research-only”
<b>Mixed use</b> (some teams AGPL, some commercial)	[X]	[OK]	<b>PROHIBITED</b> — if any part of org uses commercially, all use requires commercial license

Scenario	AGPL-3.0	Commercial License	Notes
<b>Subsidiary / parent company</b> sharing license	[X]	[OK]	Each legal entity needs its own license — sharing prohibited
<b>Hosting on AWS / GCP / Azure</b> for internal use	[X]	[OK]	Allowed with commercial license for internal use only
<b>Building competing infrastructure service</b>	[X]	[X]	<b>PROHIBITED</b> — may not build Competing Infrastructure Service (see <code>COMMERCIAL_LICENSE.md</code> )
<b>Reverse engineering</b>	[X]	[X]	<b>PROHIBITED</b> — under both licenses
<b>Benchmarking without consent</b>	[X]	[X]	<b>PROHIBITED</b> — under commercial license (Material Breach)
<b>Sharing / loaning / renting license</b>	[X]	[X]	<b>PROHIBITED</b> — each entity needs its own license

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## Key Principles

[OK] AGPL-3.0 is **ONLY** for:

1. **Individual personal research** (not for any business purpose)
2. **Non-commercial academic research** at degree-granting institutions (where results don't support commercial operations)

[X] Commercial License is **REQUIRED** for:

1. **Any use within a business, organization, or commercial entity**
2. **Any use that directly or indirectly supports revenue-generating activities**

3. **Any use by employees, contractors, interns, or Affiliates in scope of their work**
4. **Any use in any environment** (development, testing, staging, production) within a business context
5. **Any experimental, proof of concept, or pilot project** within a business context

[PROHIBITED] PROHIBITED under both licenses:

1. **Building a Competing Infrastructure Service**
2. **Reverse engineering**
3. **Benchmarking without consent** (commercial license)
4. **Sharing / loaning / renting licenses**

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## Common Misconceptions

Misconception	Reality
“We’re just evaluating internally”	[X] Still requires commercial license — no free trial for commercial use
“It’s not in production yet”	[X] Development/testing/staging still requires commercial license
“We’re not generating revenue”	[X] Revenue status doesn’t matter — business use requires commercial license
“It’s just research”	[X] Research within a business context requires commercial license
“Our interns are using it”	[X] Use by employees/contractors/interns requires commercial license
“We’re a non-profit”	[X] Non-profit status doesn’t exempt commercial use — still requires commercial license
“We’re a university”	[WARNING] Only non-commercial academic research at degree-granting institutions is exempt — corporate funding or commercial integration requires commercial license
“We’ll only use it for 30 days”	[X] Duration doesn’t matter — commercial use requires commercial license from day one
“It’s open source, so it’s free”	[X] AGPL-3.0 is free only for non-commercial use — commercial use requires commercial license
“We’ll contribute back to open source”	[X] Open source contributions don’t exempt commercial use from licensing requirements

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## Decision Flow

Are you using this for personal research (not for any business)?

| - YES -> AGPL-3.0 [OK]

+ - NO -> Continue

Are you at a degree-granting educational institution doing non-commercial research?

| - YES -> Is it funded by or integrated into commercial operations?

|   | - YES -> Commercial License [X]

|   + - NO -> AGPL-3.0 [OK]

+ - NO -> Continue

Are you using this within a business, organization, or commercial entity?

| - YES -> Commercial License [X]

+ - NO -> Continue

Are you using this for any business purpose, client work, or revenue-generating activity?

| - YES -> Commercial License [X]

+ - NO -> Review definitions in COMMERCIAL\_LICENSE.md Section 1

**Default rule:** If you're unsure, you almost certainly need a commercial license. When in doubt, contact [jenn.lewis5789@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.lewis5789@gmail.com).

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## Still Unsure?

1. Review COMMERCIAL\_LICENSE.md Section 1 ("Commercial Use" definition)
2. Review LEGAL/SUBSCRIPTIONS.md for usage scenarios
3. Review LEGAL/FAQ.md for common questions
4. Contact: [jenn.lewis5789@gmail.com](mailto:jenn.lewis5789@gmail.com)

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