

This article outlines the differences between the github.com/microsoft/vscode GitHub project (which we refer to as **Code - OSS**) and Microsoft's Visual Studio Code distribution.

The Code - OSS Repository

The **Code - OSS** repository is where we (Microsoft) develop the open source editor upon which we build the Visual Studio Code product. We contribute source code and manage issues in this repository. We also maintain the wiki, publish the Visual Studio Code roadmap, monthly iteration plans, and endgame plans for the product. The source code in this repository is available to everyone under a standard MIT license.

Visual Studio Code

Visual Studio Code is a distribution of the **Code - OSS** repository with Microsoft specific customizations, including additional source code and extensions, released under a traditional Microsoft product license.

What Goes Where?

We take great care to ensure that no proprietary code or assets are accidentally contributed to the **Code - OSS** repo, so that it can be cloned and freely used by anyone in the community.

Our guiding principle is that everything should be open source. If it isn't open source, it must be cleanly separated from the **Code - OSS** repository so that it is always possible to fork the repo and build a functional editor.

The small amount of assets and code that are not open source generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Trademarked assets that define the brand (e.g. logos and product names)
- Code that has a reliance on existing proprietary code or libraries
- Code that is shared with other proprietary licensed products, such as Visual Studio
- Code that may be used in, or provides access to, a service that we run in our data centers (e.g. access to the Visual Studio Marketplace)
- Pre-release code that is undergoing significant revision

The closed source additions to the distribution make up a very small percentage of the overall product.

While not open source, we believe that transparency is very important to the health of the project and community. Therefore, we want to outline “the last mile” between what you see in the repository and what is built into the Visual Studio Code distribution. Most customizations are done through the customization of `product.json`, but we do include a small amount of additional code and assets in the final product.

What	Why	How
Icons, Product Name (e.g. “Microsoft Visual Studio Code”), Documentation	Microsoft trademarks, which provide brand recognition for customers and helps to avoid confusion for downstream implementations. In other words, because we protect the brands, you know it is a product from Microsoft when you see it.	Static assets such as icons and the desktop image are included in the distro. Product names and documentation URLs are added to product.json .

What	Why	How
Visual Studio Marketplace Integration	The Visual Studio Marketplace is a service that we provide to users of the Visual Studio family of products (Visual Studio for Windows and Mac, Visual Studio Code, and Azure DevOps, formerly Visual Studio Team Services). The Marketplace not only provides discovery and hosting services, it provides ratings, comments, Q&A, publisher verification, virus scanning, conflict resolution services, payment services for Azure DevOps extensions, as well as support for publishers. The Marketplace is not a general purpose store designed to support any distribution or a subset of distributions. Access to the Marketplace is governed by the Marketplace Terms of Use.	<code>product.json</code> includes URLs that point to the Visual Studio Marketplace.
Extension Recommendations	We maintain a curated list of “important” and “general” extension recommendations that are subsequently installed from the Marketplace, therefore we only include these in the distro.	<code>product.json</code> includes an array of extension IDs.

What	Why	How
Remote Development	<p>Portions of the Remote Development extensions are used in developer services that are run under a proprietary license. While these extensions do not require these services to work, there is enough code reuse that the extensions are also under a proprietary license. While the bulk of the code is in the extensions and in the Code - OSS repository, a handful of small changes are in the Visual Studio Code distribution.</p>	<p>Parts of the code to negotiate a connection to the Visual Studio Code server are proprietary.</p>
Enable Proprietary Debug Adapters, Visual Studio Code Server	<p>Certain Microsoft extensions (e.g. C#/.NET debugger) and the Visual Studio Code Server are distributed under a license that restricts their use to the Visual Studio family of products (Visual Studio, Visual Studio Code, or Visual Studio for Mac).</p>	<p>The distribution includes a native node module that allows the extension to use a “handshake” to adhere to the license by ensuring it is being used from Visual Studio Code.</p>

What	Why	How
Extensions Using Proposed APIs	We follow a strict API process based on proposed APIs (Extension API Process). Because proposed APIs often break, we generally do not allow that any extension using proposed APIs can be published to the Marketplace and loaded into Stable builds. We do however maintain a small list of extensions that are exempted from this rule because the publisher (typically Microsoft) has agreed to track the API changes.	<code>product.json</code> includes a list of extension IDs that can be published to the Marketplace and use proposed APIs.
Telemetry, Surveys, Crash Reporting	Microsoft collects anonymous usage statistics, survey data, and crash dumps to help improve the quality of the product. No personally identifiable information is gathered. Any data we do collect, such as crash dumps, is persisted in compliance with GDPR guidelines (FAQ). You can disable telemetry collection, please see our FAQ for more details.	The App Insights telemetry keys, Hockey App URLs, Experiment URLs, and Survey probabilities and URLs are stored in <code>product.json</code> and are private so that other distributions cannot send us telemetry and we can maintain GDPR compliance.

What	Why	How
Update Services	Visual Studio Code periodically checks with a service that we host to see if there are updates to be installed or, in extremely rare occasions, rolled back.	<code>product.json</code> contains the URL of the update service.