

COP509 Chat App — How To Run

Step 1: Open a Terminal

Windows: Press the **Windows key**, type `cmd`, press **Enter**.

Linux: Press **Ctrl + Alt + T**.

Step 2: Go to the Project Folder

```
cd path/to/COP509-chat-app
```

Replace with the actual path on your computer. Tip: open the folder in your file explorer, copy the path from the address bar, and paste it after `cd`.

Step 3: Create a Virtual Environment (once only)

```
python -m venv venv
```

On some Linux systems use `python3` instead of `python`.

Step 4: Activate the Virtual Environment

Windows:

```
venv\Scripts\activate
```

Linux:

```
source venv/bin/activate
```

You should see `(venv)` appear at the start of your terminal line. Do this **every time** you open a new terminal.

Step 5: Install Packages (once only)

```
python -m pip install -r requirements.txt
```

Step 6: Set Up Your API Key

Open the file called `env` in any text editor. It contains:

```
OPENROUTER_API_KEY=your-key-here  
MODELS=your-model-here
```

Replace the placeholder values with your actual API key and model ID(s). See **Task 0** in the Exercise Sheet for how to get these from OpenRouter.

Save the file, then **rename it** to `.env` (note the dot):

Linux: `mv env .env` **Windows:** `ren env .env`

The dot makes the file hidden, which is why we provide it without the dot first.

Step 7: Run the Server

```
python exercise.py
```

Open your browser and go to <http://localhost:8000>. You should see the chat interface.