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Where Aider looks for .aider.model.metadata.json: home folder, repository and start folder

Aider

CODE	VERSION	COUNTRY · LANGUAGE
RLX-MZ-KB-3224	v2026.11.28	Mozambique · English

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Where Aider looks for .aider.model.metadata.json: home folder, repository and start folder

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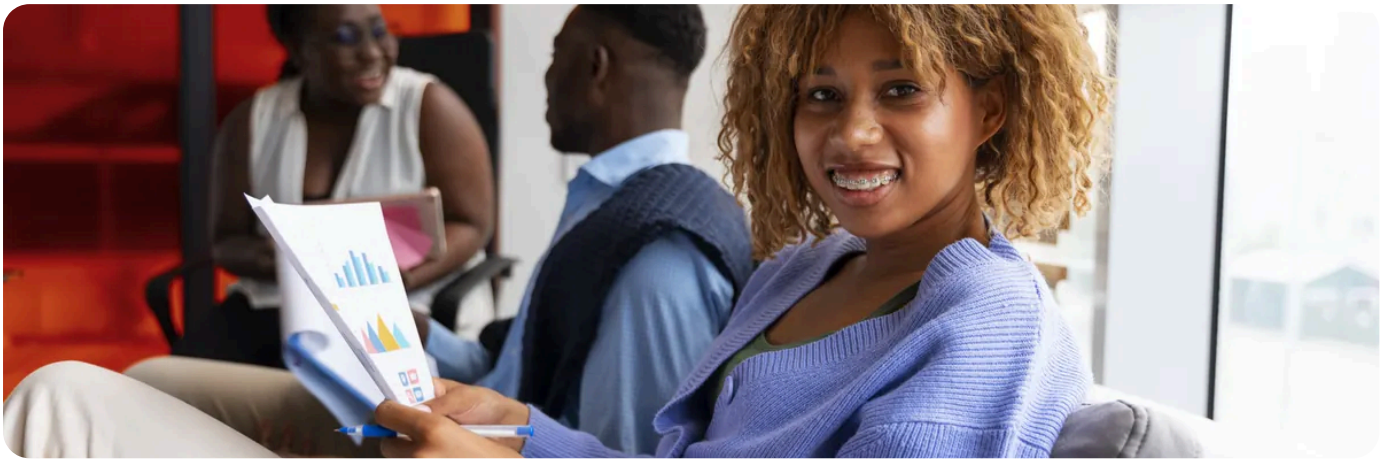

Aider looks for `.aider.model.metadata.json` in three places, always in the same order. Knowing which one counts saves you from editing a file Aider is not using.

The three places, in order

Order	Where	What for
1	Your home folder	Applies to every project. It is the simplest place.
2	The root of the Git repository	Applies to that project only and can go into Git with the code.
3	The folder where you start Aider	Applies when you start Aider in that folder.

Aider reads the ones that exist, in this order, and the one read last takes priority. If the same model is in your home folder and in the repository, the repository data wins.

The home folder on each system

System	File path
Linux	`~/.aider.model.metadata.json`, that is `/home/your-name/`
macOS	`~/.aider.model.metadata.json`, that is `/Users/your-name/`
Windows	`%USERPROFILE%\.aider.model.metadata.json`, that is `C:\Users\your-name\`

In PowerShell, `$HOME` is the same folder. To create the file there:

```
notepad "$HOME\.aider.model.metadata.json"
```

This article explains how to save it without Windows adding `.txt`.

A file with another name or in another folder

Tell Aider where it is, with `--model-metadata-file`:

```
aider --model-metadata-file ~/aider/models.json --model openai/moonshotai/kimi-k2.7-code
```

The same option can go in `.aider.conf.yml`, on the `model-metadata-file:` line, or in the `AIDER_MODEL_METADATA_FILE` variable.

In your team's repository

The file only holds model names and numbers, not the key. It can go into Git, at the project root, so the whole team has the same data. The key always stays out of the repository, in an environment variable.

`.aider.conf.yml` and `.env` follow the same rule: home folder, repository root and current folder, in this order, and the one read last takes priority.

RECOMMENDED

Want to use our models in Aider in every project? Visit the Coding with AI page.

See Coding with AI →

SEE ALSO

- **The .aider.model.metadata.json file: the context and output of each model**
- **Saving .aider.model.metadata.json on Windows without the .txt ending**
- **OPENAI_API_BASE and OPENAI_API_KEY: other programs on your computer will use them too**
- **Aider with All in One AI: the two variables, the openai/ prefix and the context window**
- **Coding with AI in All in One AI**

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