

Your Own Gemini API Key (only if needed)

AI Administrator · Day 3 · Session 6 · Adding AI Steps to Automations

Participant guide · fallback when Gateway credits are missing or used up

When to use this

Your n8n trial normally comes with **Gateway credits** (\$2.00) for the Gemini node, and the lab uses those: no key, nothing to paste. Use this guide only if:

- the Gemini node shows **no “Gateway credits”** option, or the balance is **\$0.00**; or
- you want to keep using Gemini **after the course**, outside the n8n trial.

A free Gemini key needs a Google account and **no credit card**. The free tier has daily request limits, which are plenty for ten test e-mails.

Get the key (3 minutes)

1. Go to **aistudio.google.com** and sign in with your Google account.
2. Left menu: **Get API key** (or **API Keys**), then **Create API key**. Accept the terms if asked.
3. If asked for a project, let AI Studio create one (for example “Gemini Project”).
4. The key appears once: click **Copy**.

Put it in n8n

1. Open your workflow, double-click **Google Gemini Chat Model**.
2. Credential: **Create new credential**. Paste the key into **API Key**. Leave Host as it is. **Save**.
3. Model: pick **models/gemini-2.5-flash** (it has a free tier) from the list.
4. Execute the chain once to check.

Keep it safe

- **Never paste a key into the Zoom chat**, a sticky note, an e-mail or a node field other than the credential.
- If a key was shown to anyone, delete it in AI Studio (**API Keys**, the three dots, **Delete**) and create a new one.
- n8n stores the key in its credential store; the workflow JSON you export does not contain it.
- If you later add billing to the project, set a monthly **budget alert** in AI Studio (**Spend**) on day one.

