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Sharing the MCP setup with your team in .mcp.json without sharing the key

Claude Code

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Interweb Angola
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https://www.meu.interweb.ao/knowledgebase/3124

Sharing the MCP setup with your team in .mcp.json without sharing the key

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The `claude mcp add` command with `--scope user` saves the MCP server on your computer only, with your key. In a team, it is simpler to put the server in a `.mcp.json` file, at the project root, and push it to the repository. Each person uses their own key, kept in their own variable.

Before you start

1. Each person on the team creates a key in the **API Center** with the `ai:read` and `ai:write` permissions.

2. Each person keeps the key in the `INTERWEB_API_KEY` variable on their computer: `export INTERWEB_API_KEY="prod_..."` on Linux and macOS, or `setx INTERWEB_API_KEY "prod_..."` on Windows, followed by a new terminal.

3. The account has AI credits or an active Coding Plan in **All in One AI**.

1. Create .mcp.json

At the project root, create the `.mcp.json` file with this content:

```
{
  "mcpServers": {
    "interweb-ai": {
      "type": "http",
      "url": "https://api.interweb.ao/mcp",
      "headers": { "Authorization": "Bearer ${INTERWEB_API_KEY}" }
    }
  }
}
```

Claude Code replaces `${INTERWEB_API_KEY}` with the value of each person's variable when it reads the file. The key is never written down. The name `interweb-ai` is only the name Claude Code shows: it can be another one.

2. Push it to the repository

```
git add .mcp.json
git commit -m "Add the All in One AI MCP server"
```

3. What each person sees

1. When they open Claude Code in the project, it asks for approval before using servers from `.mcp.json`. Approve `interweb-ai`.
2. Type `/mcp` or run `claude mcp list`: the server must show as connected.
3. To undo a choice, run `claude mcp reset-project-choices`: Claude Code asks again.

Common errors

What happens	Why	What to do
The server gives 401 and shows as failed.	The `INTERWEB_API_KEY` variable does not exist on that computer. Claude Code warns about it in `claude mcp list` and sends the text `${INTERWEB_API_KEY}` as it is.	Set the variable, open a new terminal and start Claude Code again.
You used `${ANTHROPIC_AUTH_TOKEN}` in the header.	In the header of a remote server, Claude Code reads `ANTHROPIC_AUTH_TOKEN` and `ANTHROPIC_API_KEY` as empty.	Use `${INTERWEB_API_KEY}`, even if it holds the same key.
Someone already had the server with `--scope user`.	With the same name, the project one wins: the project scope comes before the user scope.	Nothing: the one in `.mcp.json` now applies.

Do not create this file with `claude mcp add --scope project` and the header in double quotes.
The terminal replaces `${INTERWEB_API_KEY}` with the key before running the command, and the key ends up written in `.mcp.json`, which goes into the repository. Write the file by hand, as in step 1.

Each request spends the AI credits, or the Coding Plan points, of the account that owns the key used. To test, use a `sandbox_` key: the model list and the balance are real and generations cost 0.

RECOMMENDED

Want to code with AI in Claude Code? Visit the Coding with AI page.

See Coding with AI →

SEE ALSO

- The All in One AI MCP server: images, video and voice inside Claude Code, Codex and ChatGPT →
- ANTHROPIC_AUTH_TOKEN or ANTHROPIC_API_KEY: which one to use in Claude Code →
- The All in One AI skill for Claude Code: downloading, installing and using it →
- An API key or token has leaked: what to do, in the right order →
- Coding with AI in All in One AI →

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