What is AI Open Source and why it matters for you

By Frank , 26 April 2026

What is AI Open Source and why it matters for you

> You've probably heard about ChatGPT or Google's Gemini. They're impressive – but they are **closed**. No one outside the company knows exactly how they work, what data they were trained on, or where your conversations go. But there is another world of AI. A world where the **recipe is shared**, anyone can improve it, and you can run it on your own computer without sending your personal data anywhere. That world is Open Source AI.



□□ The recipe analogy

Imagine two bakeries:

Closed source bakery – makes delicious bread, but the recipe is a secret. You can never change it, you don't know what's inside, and you must buy every loaf from them. That's ChatGPT

Open source bakery – shares the full recipe: flour, water, salt, even the oven temperature. You can bake it at home, change the ingredients, give it to a friend, or sell your own loaves. That's open source AI like DeepSeek or Qwen. Wouldn't you trust the open bakery a little more? And wouldn't it be nice to bake your own bread, for free, without showing your ID every time?

□ Why should you care?

A student: Use AI for studying without paying monthly fees. Summarise lectures, create flashcards, or get coding help – all locally, without sending your notes to a US

company.

Working: Automate boring tasks (emails, meeting notes, image editing) with free tools. No subscription, no “your data may be used to improve our model”.

Retired: Keep your privacy. Ask medical questions, organise family photos, or read articles aloud, the AI runs on your own laptop, even without being online.

Anyone: Understand how AI really works. Because the code is open, teachers, journalists, and citizen auditors can inspect it. No black boxes. Privacy is not a luxury – it’s a default

When you use ChatGPT, your conversations may be stored, reviewed by humans, or used to train future models. With open source AI on your own machine: nothing leaves your computer. That’s why hospitals, banks, and European companies are looking at open source, especially because of GDPR. Your data stays yours. And because we are in Belgium, we know how important digital rights are. Open source AI is one of the few ways to use powerful AI without handing everything over to tech giants outside the EU.

□□ But isn’t open source AI worse or harder?

Not anymore. Five years ago, you needed a supercomputer. Today, you can run a surprisingly smart AI on a regular laptop. Tools like Ollama, GPT4All, or LM Studio give you a ChatGPT like chat window but it works offline, forever free, and completely private. You download it, click “install”, and you’re done. Yes, the very largest models (like the one behind ChatGPT-4) still require big servers. But for 95% of daily tasks, writing, summarising, brainstorming, explaining open source models are already excellent.

□□ One honest warning

Open source AI is not magic. Because anyone can download it, bad people might use it for deepfakes, spam, or disinformation. That’s the dark side of openness. But the solution is not to lock everything away. The solution is transparency, education, and smart regulation. Just like we don’t ban kitchen knives because a few people misuse them, we shouldn’t ban open source AI. We learn to use it responsibly.

□□ So, what should you do next?

Stay curious follow this website. We explain open source AI without buzzwords.

Try a local AI if you’re comfortable installing software, search “GPT4All download” and chat with an AI that never phones home.

Ask questions reply to this post (or email us) with what confuses you. No question is too simple.

We believe AI should be understandable, private, and free. That’s open source AI. And it belongs to all of us.

https://youtu.be/Gmz24X86-5E