AGENTS.md Template for Codex and Claude Code

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How Codex loads AGENTS.md

Run `/init` inside Codex and it creates an AGENTS.md with instructions for your project. Codex builds its instructions from these files each time it starts.

1. **Global:** your Codex home folder (`~/.codex` by default). It checks `AGENTS.override.md` first, then `AGENTS.md`, and uses the first non-empty one.
2. **Project:** it starts at the project root (usually the git root) and walks down to the folder you're working in, taking at most one file per folder.
3. **Closest wins:** files nearer your current folder come later, so their rules override the general ones.
4. **Size:** it stops adding files once they reach 32 KiB combined (the default `project_doc_max_bytes`). Keep each file short.
5. **Changes:** restart Codex after editing, because the instructions are built once per run.

The templates

Root `AGENTS.md` (whole project). Replace the [brackets].

```
# AGENTS.md

## Project
[Marketing site + booking for a small business]. Main users are on phones.

## Stack
- [Next.js + TypeScript + Tailwind]
- Package manager: [npm] (never switch it)

## Commands
- Install: `[npm install]`
- Dev: `[npm run dev]`
- Check before finishing: `[npm run lint && npm run build]`

## Code style
- Small components in `[components/]`. Reuse before creating.
- Tailwind classes only. No new CSS files.
- Every image has alt text. Every button has a clear label.
```

```
## Rules
- Make the smallest change that solves the task.
- Don't edit `.env`, lock files or `[content/legal/]`.
- Ask before adding dependencies.
- When done, list changed files and how to test them.
```

Subfolder `api/AGENTS.md` (extra rules for that part only):

```
# API rules
- Validate every request body before using it.
- Never log emails, phone numbers or payment details.
- Return clear error messages with the right status code.
```

Use it in Claude Code too, and check it loaded

- **Claude Code** reads `AGENTS.md` as your project instructions when there's no `CLAUDE.md` in your folder or above it. This needs Claude Code v2.1.277 or later.
- Already have a CLAUDE.md? Add a line `@AGENTS.md` to it, so Claude imports the same rules and you keep one source of truth.
- **Check in Codex:** from the repo root run `codex --ask-for-approval never "Summarize the current instructions."`. It should repeat your rules back.

I set this up for every client project so any AI tool follows the same rules. Need a website? DM SITE to @bigbongzy on Instagram.

Sources: Codex docs: AGENTS.md · Codex CLI · Claude Code docs: AGENTS.md