

# Switch To VSCodium From VSCode

2025-12-01

# Table of contents

*Today I Learned added on 2026-06-14, learned sometime around 2025-12-01.*

In reviewing which tools are comparatively better with respect to privacy on <https://github.com/pluja/awesome-privacy>, I noticed that VSCodium (<https://vscodium.com/>) was listed.

Curious, I went to their website and saw the following:

Microsoft's `vscode` source code is open source (MIT-licensed), but the product available for download (Visual Studio Code) is licensed under [this not-FLOSS license](#) and contains telemetry/tracking. According to [this comment](#) from a Visual Studio Code maintainer:

When we [Microsoft] build Visual Studio Code, we do exactly this. We clone the `vscode` repository, we lay down a customized `product.json` that has Microsoft specific functionality (telemetry, gallery, logo, etc.), and then produce a build that we release under our license.

When you clone and build from the `vscode` repo, none of these endpoints are configured in the default `product.json`. Therefore, you generate a “clean” build, without the Microsoft customizations, which is by default licensed under the MIT license

The VSCodium project exists so that you don't have to download+build from source. This project includes special build scripts that clone Microsoft's `vscode` repo, run the build commands, and upload the resulting binaries for you to [GitHub releases](#). **These binaries are licensed under the MIT license. Telemetry is disabled**

Sold, I switched that day to VSCodium and I have not regretted my choice!

As for the name “Codium” and the logo (which looks like some sort of sea coral), I found Codium (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codium>) on Wikipedia:

*Codium* is a [genus](#) of [edible green macroalgae](#) (or [seaweed](#)) under the order [Bryopsidales](#). The genus name is derived from a Greek word that pertains to the soft texture of its [thallus](#). One of the foremost experts on *Codium* taxonomy was [Paul Claude Silva](#) at the [University of California, Berkeley](#). <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> Silva was able to describe 36 species for the genus, and in honor of his work on *Codium*, <sup>1</sup> the species *C. silvae* was named after him. <sup>3</sup>