ASSET·LAB Setup Guide · Linux

by Coastal Creative Lab

Asset Lab generates AI images and video using **Fal.ai** — a pay-as-you-go service that runs all the top models. You bring your own Fal account, so **you control your spending** and your generations stay yours. Setup takes about 5 minutes: create an account, add credits, create an API key, and paste it into Asset Lab — once.

1 Create your Fal.ai account

1. Go to **fal.ai** and click **Sign up**.
2. Sign up with **Google**, **GitHub**, or an email + password.
3. If it asks what you plan to use fal for, answer anything — it's just a survey.

New accounts usually include a small amount of free credit for testing.

2 Add credits

Everything is pay-per-generation — no subscription. You pre-load credits and each render deducts from your balance.

1. Go to **fal.ai/dashboard/usage-billing/credits**.
2. Add a payment method and top up. (Auto-top-up, if offered, is optional.)

WHAT	APPROX. COST
Draft image (FLUX.2 flash)	under a penny
Flagship image (Nano Banana 2, GPT Image 2)	$0.05 – $0.15
Short video clip (budget models)	$0.20 – $1
Flagship video clip (Seedance 2.0, Veo 3.1, Kling O3)	$2 – $5

$10 is plenty to start. Asset Lab shows the estimated price on the Generate button before you commit — every time.

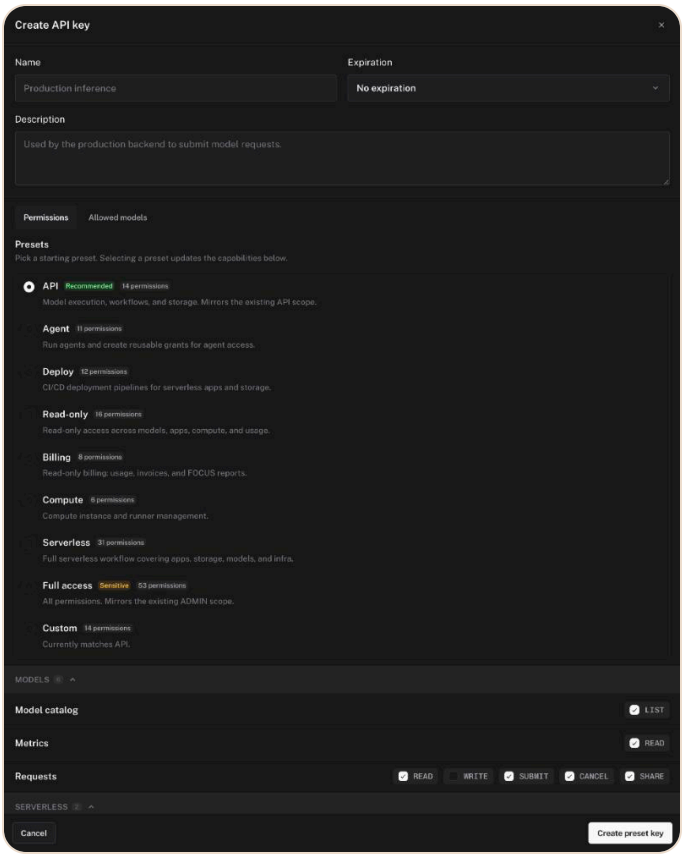
3 Create your API key — *the API preset is all you need*

The API key lets Asset Lab generate on your account — treat it like a password. Fal redesigned this screen in October 2026: instead of a Scope dropdown you now pick a **preset** from a list. **Pick *API* — it is the first one, fal marks it "Recommended", and it runs every model in Asset Lab.**

💡 **Easiest path — let Asset Lab do this with you:** on the app's welcome screen, click **"No key yet? Create or connect your Fal.ai account"**. fal.ai opens in your web browser — sign in (or create your account there), click **Add key**, leave the **API** preset selected, click **Create preset key**, then **Copy** — and the key drops into Asset Lab automatically. If you use that, you can skip the manual steps below (they do the same thing by hand).

1. Go to **fal.ai/dashboard/keys** and click **Add key**.

2. Give it a **Name** like "Asset Lab". Leave **Expiration** on **No expiration** — anything else and the key stops working on that date and Asset Lab starts refusing to generate.
3. Under **Presets**, leave **API** selected, exactly as shown below.
4. Click **Create preset key**, then **Copy**. It looks like `a1b2c3d4-…:e5f6a7b8…`



⚠️ Fal shows the full key only once, right after creating it. If you lose it, delete it and create a new one.

Optional: the live credit balance. An API key cannot read your fal balance, so the figure at the foot of Asset Lab's sidebar stays "—". Everything else works normally, and the price still appears on the Generate button before every render. If you want that balance on screen, pick **Full access** instead of API when you create the key. Note what fal is telling you there: it is tagged *Sensitive* and grants all 53 permissions on your account, including billing and key management. Asset Lab only ever reads the balance with it — but a key that powerful is worth a deliberate choice, not a default.

4 Install Asset Lab & unlock it

1. **Debian / Ubuntu / Mint (recommended):** install the .deb — `sudo apt install ./Asset\ Lab-*.deb`. This is the smoothest route: it registers the launcher, pulls in dependencies, and sets up Chromium's sandbox correctly.
2. **Any other distro:** use the AppImage. Run `./install-appimage.sh` beside it first — that marks it executable and, on Ubuntu 23.10+, offers to install a small AppArmor profile so the sandbox keeps working.
3. On the welcome screen, paste your **license key** (it's on your Gumroad receipt — also findable anytime in your Gumroad library) and your **Fal.ai API key**, then click **Unlock the studio**.

💡 **Wayland note:** if your desktop runs Wayland (the default on recent Ubuntu and Fedora), the guided key connect picks up your key the moment you **switch back to Asset Lab** rather than the instant you copy it — Wayland doesn't let background apps read

the clipboard. Pasting the key by hand always works too.

That's it — both keys are saved on this computer and you'll never be asked again. They're stored only on your machine; the API key is sent nowhere except directly to Fal.ai, and the license is checked only with Gumroad. One license covers every computer you own. To change or remove them later, open **License & API key** at the bottom of the sidebar.

💡 No license yet? You can still open Asset Lab and look around in **demo mode** — generating unlocks once your keys are in.

Quick tour

- **Image / Video / Edit tabs** — pick a model from the pop-up catalog, write a prompt or edit instruction, hit **Generate**.
- **✦ Enhance** — AI rewrites your rough prompt into an optimized one; **Undo** brings yours back.
- **Price on the button** — every Generate shows its estimated cost first (e.g. "≈ $0.12").
- **Reference images** (Image) — attach photos on supported models to keep a character, product, or style consistent.
- **Balance** — live credit balance at the foot of the sidebar, with **Buy Credits** in the header for top-ups.
- **Start frame** (Video) — attach an image and supported models animate it.
- **Duration slider** (Video) — set clip length up to each model's true limit; the price updates live.
- **Social presets** — one tap formats for Instagram, Facebook, TikTok or X.
- **Mark up** (Edit) — click a source, draw boxes, type what changes in each; it writes the instruction for you.
- **Gallery** — auto-saves everything; the desktop app also saves every render to **~/Pictures/Asset Lab**. Group work into **projects** (Select → Project…) and the files organize into matching folders.

Troubleshooting

"That license key was not found"
Copy it exactly from your Gumroad receipt (it looks like `XXXXXXXX-XXXXXXXX-XXXXXXXX-XXXXXXXX`). Lost the receipt? Find your purchase in your Gumroad library, or email us.

"Invalid API key" when generating
Typo in the key, or it was deleted on fal's side. Open **License & API key** in the sidebar, re-paste, save.

Balance shows "—"
That is normal and expected: an **API** key cannot read your fal balance. Generating is unaffected. If you want the number on screen, create a new key with the **Full access** preset and swap it in — see step 3.

Generations fail instantly / "exhausted balance"
You're out of credits — click **Buy Credits** in the header.

One model keeps failing
Providers occasionally have outages. Try another model — your prompt carries over.

Costs feel high
Iterate on Turbo models (FLUX.2 flash / Seedance 2.0 Fast), then re-run the final prompt on a flagship.