Claude Code Cheat Sheet

Keyboard shortcuts

Key	Action
Esc	Interrupt Claude, close a dialog
Esc Esc	Clear the prompt input, or rewind
⇧ Shift + Tab ↹	Cycle permission modes
\ ↵ Enter or Ctrl + J	Insert a newline
Ctrl + C	Interrupt, then clear, then exit
Ctrl + O	Toggle the transcript viewer
Ctrl + B	Background the running task
Ctrl + T	Toggle the task checklist
Ctrl + G	Edit the prompt in `$EDITOR`
Ctrl + V	Paste an image (macOS/Linux)
Alt + V	Paste an image (Windows/WSL)
↑ ↓	Navigate prompt history
Ctrl + R	Search through prompt history
?	Show shortcuts (on empty input)

⇧ Shift + ↵ Enter also inserts a newline in Ghostty, Kitty, Warp, WezTerm and Windows Terminal. On macOS Terminal, run `/terminal-setup` once to bind ⌥ Option + ↵ Enter.

Prompt prefixes

Prefix	Description
`/`	Run a slash command
`!`	Run the line as a bash command
`@`	Add a file or directory as context

Permission modes

Mode	What runs without asking
`default` (shown as `manual`)	Reads only
`acceptEdits`	Reads, edits, `mkdir`, `mv`
`plan`	Reads only, and plans first
`auto`	Everything, with safety checks

Context management

Each session starts with an empty context window, and Claude compacts it automatically once it fills up.

Command	Description
`/context`	Usage, and loaded memory files
`/compact [hint]`	Summarize it to free up space
`/clear`	Start over, with empty context
`/autocompact <n>`	Set how full the window gets first

After compacting, the project `CLAUDE.md` is read again from disk. Nested files and path-scoped rules are not: they return only when Claude next reads a file they apply to.

Slash commands: conversations

Command	Description
`/resume`	Resume a previous session
`/rename`	Rename the current conversation
`/rewind`	Roll back to an earlier point
`/branch`	Branch off from this point
`/fork`	Copy it into a background session
`/background`	Detach and free up the terminal
`/btw`	Ask a quick side question
`/export`	Export the conversation to a file
`/goal`	Set a goal to achieve
`/copy`	Copy last response to clipboard

Slash commands: configuration

Command	Description
`/config`	Open the settings interface
`/hooks`	View the configured hooks
`/mcp`	Manage MCP server connections
`/permissions`	View and edit tool permissions

Slash commands: models & usage

Command	Description
`/usage`	Show plan usage and limits
`/model`	Select the active AI model
`/effort`	Set the model effort level
`/advisor`	Stronger model for key decisions
`/fast`	Toggle fast mode

Slash commands: session

Command	Description
`/add-dir`	Add additional working directory
`/diff`	View uncommitted changes
`/focus`	Show only prompt and answer
`/insights`	Report on your own sessions
`/plan`	Enable plan mode
`/remote-control`	Control this session remotely
`/status`	Show session and account status
`/tasks`	Show background work

Bundled skills

Skill	Description
`/code-review [target]`	Review a diff, branch or PR
`/verify`	Check code, changing nothing
`/security-review`	Security review of the branch
`/debug`	Log and troubleshoot a bug
`/batch <instruction>`	One change across the codebase
`/loop [interval] [...]`	Repeat a prompt on a timer
`/deep-research <...>`	Research, with sources cited

Add `--fix` to `/code-review` to apply its findings, or `--comment` to post them on a pull request.

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Installation

Install with the native installer:

```
curl -fsSL https://claude.ai/install.sh | bash
```

Then run `claude doctor` to verify the installation.

Starting a session

Run claude in a project directory to start an interactive session.

Command	Description
`claude`	Start an interactive session
`claude "fix the tests"`	Start with an initial prompt
`claude -c`	Continue the most recent session
`claude -r`	Resume from a session picker
`claude -p "..."`	Print response and exit (headless)
`cat log | claude -p "..."`	Pipe input into a one-off query

Useful CLI flags

Flag	Description
`--add-dir <dir>`	Add a working directory
`--agent <name>`	Use a specific agent
`--effort <level>`	`low` to `max`
`--ide`	Connect to a running IDE
`--model <name>`	`opus`, `sonnet` or `fable`
`--permission-mode <mode>`	Start in a permission mode
`--safe-mode`	Disable all customizations
`--worktree [name]`	Run in a new git worktree
`--output-format <fmt>`	`text`, `json`, `stream-json`

Useful configuration options

Setting	Effect
`outputStyle`	Style of assistant responses
`cleanupPeriodDays`	Days to keep transcripts
`permissions.defaultMode`	Mode to start sessions in

Configuration files

Settings merge from these files, later winning, except the managed one, which overrides every file and the CLI:

File	Scope
(depends on OS)	Organization-managed settings
`~/.claude/settings.json`	User (for all projects)
`.claude/settings.json`	Project (shared)
`.claude/settings.local.json`	Project (local)

Permission rules

Rules go under `permissions`, in an `allow`, `ask` or `deny` list.

Rule	Matches
`Bash(git *)`	Any `git` command
`Read(./.env*)`	`.env` files in the project root
`Edit(./src/**)`	Any file under `src/`, nested too
`Edit`	Every use of the tool
`Bash` in `deny`	Removes the tool entirely

Extending Claude Code

Feature	What it does
Subagents	Run a task in its own context
Slash commands	Reusable prompts, by name
Skills	Instructions loaded on demand
Hooks	Shell commands on events
MCP servers	Connect external tools
Plugins	Bundle all of the above

Subagents and slash commands live in `.claude/agents/` and `.claude/commands/`.

Skills are `SKILL.md` files in `.claude/skills/<name>/`, where the directory name also works as a slash command.

Memory & CLAUDE.md

Location	Scope
(depends on OS)	Organization-wide policy
`~/.claude/CLAUDE.md`	User instructions, all projects
`CLAUDE.md` or `.claude/CLAUDE.md`	Shared project instructions
`CLAUDE.local.md`	Local, git-ignored instructions

Run `/init` to bootstrap a file, `/memory` to edit. Keep each under 200 lines; `@path/to/file` imports load at launch too. Reuse an existing `AGENTS.md` with `@AGENTS.md`.

Claude's own notes live in `~/.claude/projects/<project>/memory/`, and `autoMemoryEnabled: false` turns them off.

Rules

Split instructions into Markdown files in `.claude/rules/`, or `~/.claude/rules/` to apply them to every project.

Rules with a `paths:` list in their frontmatter load only for matching files. Globs (`src/**/*.ts`) and brace expansion (`{ts,tsx}`) work.

Hook events

Event	Fires when
`SessionStart`	A session starts or resumes
`UserPromptSubmit`	You submit a prompt
`PreToolUse`	Before a tool runs; can block it
`PostToolUse`	After a tool call succeeds
`Notification`	Claude Code sends a notification
`Stop`	Claude finishes responding
`SubagentStop`	A subagent finishes
`PreCompact`	Before the context is compacted
`SessionEnd`	The session terminates

Configure these under `hooks` in `settings.json`. A `PreToolUse` hook is the only real enforcement point: `CLAUDE.md` is context Claude may not follow, but a hook that blocks a call always blocks it.

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