

# What is Claude Cowork?

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Claude Cowork is an AI- powered desktop virtual assistant from Anthropic, designed as a "no-programming" version of Claude Code , acting as a virtual partner to automate multi-step tasks on your computer. It can read, create, and organize local files, manage email, browse the web, and queue tasks, operating in a secure, user-controlled environment.

Cowork is now available on Windows with all the same features as macOS - file access, multi-step tasks, plugins, and all MCP connectors.

To begin using it on Windows, download the latest version of the desktop application from [claude.com/download](https://claude.com/download) . Cowork is still in research and development testing and is available on all paid plans.

### Update :

1. Cowork is now available for Team and Enterprise plans in a research beta phase. (January 23, 2026)
2. Cowork is now available to Pro users in a research/testing phase. (January 16, 2026)

When Claude Code was released, developers were expected to use it for programming. They did, and then quickly began using Claude Code for almost everything else. This spurred the development of Cowork: a simpler way for anyone—not just developers—to work with Claude in the same way.

## How is using Cowork different from a regular conversation?

In Cowork, you grant Claude access to a selected folder on your computer. Claude can then read, edit, or create files within that folder. For example, it can reorganize your downloaded files by sorting and renaming each one, create a new spreadsheet with a list of expenses from a pile of screenshots, or generate a first draft of a report from your scattered notes.

In Cowork, Claude accomplishes such tasks with far more autonomy than you would in a typical conversation. Once you assign a task, Claude plans and completes it regularly, while also keeping you informed of its progress. If you've used Claude Code before, things will quickly become familiar, as Cowork is built on the same platform. This means Cowork can handle many of the same tasks as Claude Code, but in a more accessible format for non-programming tasks.

Once you've mastered the basics, you can make Cowork even more powerful. Claude can use your existing connectors, linking Claude to external information, and in Cowork, developers have added an initial skill set that improves Claude's ability to create documents, presentations, and other files. If you pair Cowork with Claude in Chrome, Claude can also complete tasks that require browser access.

Cowork is designed to make using Claude for new work as simple as possible. You don't need to constantly provide context or convert Claude's output to the appropriate format. Nor do you need to wait for Claude to finish before offering further ideas or feedback: you can queue tasks and let Claude handle them in parallel. It feels less like back-and-forth communication and more like leaving a message for a colleague.

## **Maintain control**

In Cowork, you can choose which folders and connectors Claude can view: Claude cannot read or edit anything you haven't explicitly granted access to. Claude will also ask for permission before performing any critical actions, so you can control or fix errors as needed.

However, there are a few things to keep in mind before you grant Claude control. By default, it's important to know that Claude can perform potentially harmful actions (such as deleting local files) if instructed to do so. Since there's always a possibility Claude might misinterpret your instructions, you should provide Claude with very clear guidance on such matters.

You should also be aware of the risk of Prompt Injections: Attackers' attempts to alter Claude's plans through content it encounters on the internet. Developers have built sophisticated defenses against these attacks, but agent security—that is, the security of Claude's actual actions—remains an area of active development in the industry.

These risks aren't new to Cowork, but this might be your first time using a more advanced tool that goes beyond simple conversation. You should exercise caution, especially while learning how to use it.

## **Looking towards the future**

Cowork was released early because the developers wanted to understand what people were using it for and how they thought it could be improved. Experience what Cowork can do for you and try things you didn't expect: You might be surprised! Anthropic plans to make many improvements (including adding multi-device syncing and bringing it to Windows), and will identify more ways to make it more secure.

Claude Max subscribers can try Cowork now by downloading the macOS app and then clicking 'Cowork' in the sidebar. If you're using a different plan, you can join the waitlist for future access.

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