FREE FIELD GUIDE / 02

Set up Claude Code on Mac

Install. Try something useful. Check the result.

macOS

BEGINNER / FOUR PAGES

This guide uses Claude Code in macOS Terminal. Start with a small, fictional workflow so you can learn how to give instructions and check the result before using business information. The PDF is free; Claude access and usage are separate.

Before you begin

+ macOS 13 or later, at least 4 GB RAM and an internet connection. Check the official setup page for current compatibility.
+ An account or organisation that provides Claude Code access. Check your provider plan or Console billing before starting.
+ Terminal and a dedicated folder for the exercise. The native installer avoids an npm-based setup.

Checked against official documentation on 12 November 2026. Recheck linked sources for changes. Independent guide; not affiliated with OpenAI or Anthropic.

01 / FIELD GUIDE

Get set up.

01 Open Terminal

Open Spotlight with Command-Space, type Terminal and open it. Terminal runs commands on your Mac. Keep the exercise in its own folder so the files you create are easy to inspect and remove later.

02 Use the official installer

Visit the official setup page and check its macOS command before running it. The command below downloads and runs Anthropic's native installation script. You do not need to add sudo to this command.

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

03 Verify the result

Open a fresh Terminal window after installation. Run the version check. If the shell cannot find Claude, consult the official PATH instructions before trying another installation method.

```
claude --version
```

04 Choose a practice folder

Run these lines separately. The tilde means your home folder. Choose another folder name if ai-practice already contains important work.

```
mkdir -p ~/ai-practice
cd ~/ai-practice
claude
```

05 Complete sign-in

Follow the browser authentication steps for your intended account. Read any workspace-trust and permission prompts. Start with this small local folder and fictional information; connect other services only when an exercise actually needs them.

02 / FIELD GUIDE

Make something small.

Your first practice brief

Use fictional information. Paste this brief into your new conversation, then review the plan before continuing.

> Create a single-file HTML checklist for a fictional consultancy's client onboarding. Include five tasks, progress tracking and a reset button. Use no external services. Explain your plan first and wait for agreement. Then build it and explain how to check completion, reset and keyboard use in a browser.

Check it yourself

1. Ask why each proposed feature is needed before the build starts.
2. Open the generated HTML file in your browser and complete tasks in a different order.
3. Try the page with the Tab key and check that buttons have visible focus.
4. Reset the checklist and refresh the browser. Ask which information is stored and where.
5. Request a short handover covering files, opening instructions, checks and limitations.

A prototype is a learning tool.

A working screen is not the same as a production application. Shared access, data storage, integrations and ongoing support need their own decisions and checks.

03 / FIELD GUIDE

Keep moving.

If something goes wrong

- 'command not found: claude': reopen Terminal and follow the official PATH guidance.
- Installer or network error: read the exact message and use the official troubleshooting page. Do not disable system protections as a quick fix.
- Wrong folder: ask Claude which directory it is using before requesting changes.
- Unexpected output: explain the intended result and one failing example; ask it to correct only that part.

Official sources

Official installation and system requirements
https://code.claude.com/docs/en/setup

Terminal guide for beginners
https://code.claude.com/docs/en/terminal-guide

First-session quickstart
https://code.claude.com/docs/en/quickstart

Troubleshooting
https://code.claude.com/docs/en/troubleshooting

From experiment to useful business software

A useful prototype is a starting point. A shared business tool also needs deliberate choices about access, data, integrations, maintenance and ownership.

Start a conversation: dev@caffeineoutput.com