BEGINNER · 14 min read · November 18, 2026 · By Kelly Stratton

Claude Hidden Features: 17 Most People Never Touch, Including the Hard Mentor Prompt

Get real time back from the Claude you already have. Design a flyer in minutes, build your own budget calculator, have your to-do list waiting every morning, and get honest feedback on a plan before it costs you.

Most people use Claude like a search box. They ask a question, read the answer, and close the tab. Meanwhile, a few clicks away, there's a designer who will make your flyers, a builder who will make you a budget calculator in a minute, an assistant who has your to-do list ready every morning, and a mentor who will tell you the truth about your plans. These are the 17 Claude features I'd want every friend of mine to know about. Each one takes minutes to set up and pays off every single day after that, and the hard mentor prompt is right here, ready to copy.

> IN A NUTSHELL
>
> Claude's hidden features are tools already built into Claude that most people never open: Claude Design for flyers and slides, Artifacts for working tools, the Effort setting for careful thinking, and Scheduled tasks that run on their own. Many of them work on the free plan.

WHAT YOU NEED

A Claude account, at claude.ai, in the Claude desktop app, or on your phone. Many of these work on the free plan, and I'll tell you when one needs a paid plan. The $20 Pro plan covers every feature here except prompt caching, which is for people building their own apps.

THE SHORT ANSWER

What Are Claude's Hidden Features?

They’re the parts of Claude that sit outside the chat box: a design tool, working tools Claude builds for you, a setting that makes it think longer, jobs that run on a schedule, and prompts that turn Claude into a coach. Here are all 17 and the plan each one needs.

#	Feature	What it does for you	Plan
1	Claude Design	Builds flyers and slide decks in your colors	Every plan, including free
2	Artifacts	Builds working tools, like a budget calculator, in the chat	Every plan
3	Extended thinking (Effort)	Makes Claude reason longer before it answers	Levels depend on the model you pick
4	Scheduled tasks	Runs a job on its own, every day or week	Pro and up
5	The hard mentor prompt	Shows you the holes in your plan	Every plan
6	Projects	Keeps your files and instructions for every chat	Free has 5, Pro has unlimited
7	Memory	Remembers you from one chat to the next	Free, Pro, and Max, on by default
8	The personal psychologist prompt	Helps you talk through what’s on your mind	Every plan
9	The personal trainer prompt	Builds a workout plan that grows with you	Every plan
10	Practice a difficult conversation	Lets you rehearse before the real thing	Every plan
11	The devil’s advocate prompt	Argues the other side of a decision	Every plan
12	Claude in Chrome	Works inside your browser for you	Pro and up
13	Cowork	Does the task on your computer instead of explaining it	Pro and up

#	Feature	What it does for you	Plan
14	Skills	Teaches Claude a job once, for good	Every plan
15	Claude Code	Builds apps and websites from a description	Pro and up
16	CLAUDE.md	Gives Claude Code your rules every session	Comes with Claude Code
17	Prompt caching	Makes repeat requests cheaper in your own app	Claude API, paid by use

FEATURE 1 What Is Claude Design?

Claude Design is a design tool built right into Claude. Give it your colors and tell it what you need, like a flyer, a slide deck, or a one-pager, and it builds it on a canvas next to your chat. You can export it as a PDF or a PowerPoint file. It’s on every plan, including free.

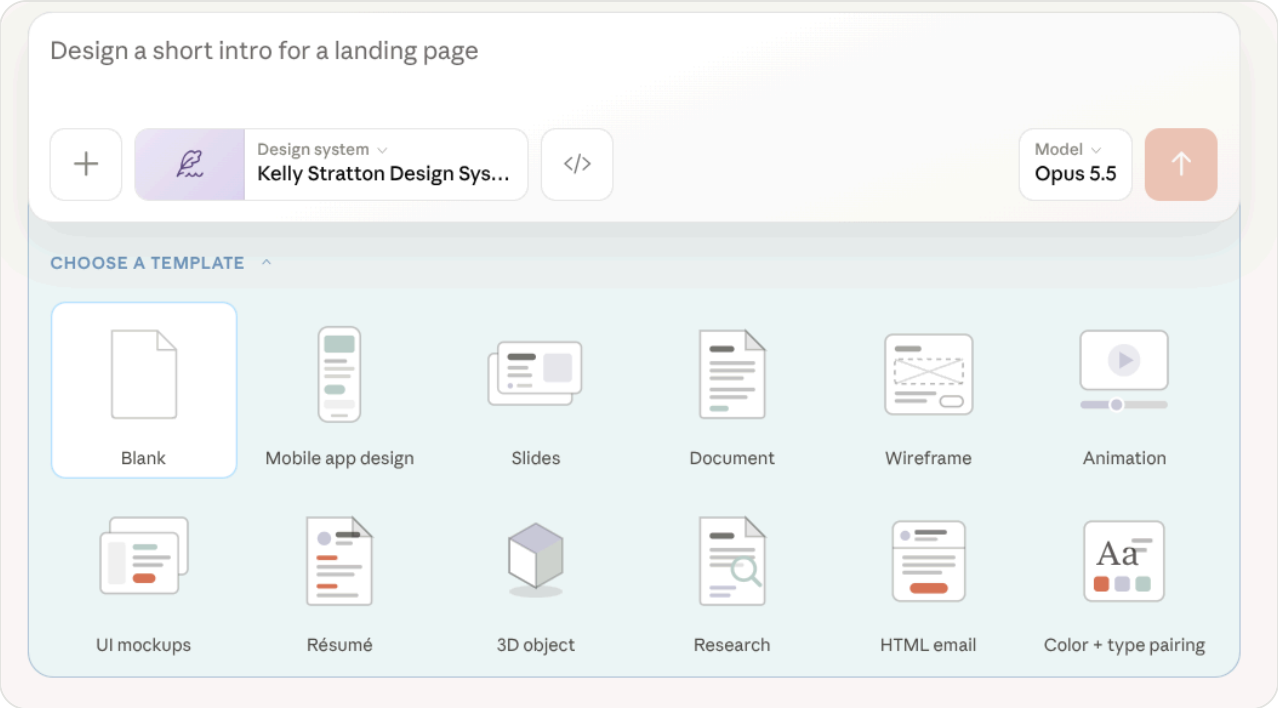
Everything you make matches your brand, and you don’t need a designer or a design app. Here’s how to make your first one:

1. Click **Design** in the left sidebar. You can also open **Artifacts** and click the **Design** tile under Make something new.
2. Tell it your colors. Type them in (“navy, coral, and cream”) or upload your logo and say “use these colors.”
3. Say what you need and who it’s for. Be specific about what has to be easy to read.
4. Ask for changes the way you’d tell a person: “make the headline bigger,” “try a darker background,” “now make this a five-slide deck.”

5. Click **Export** in the upper right and choose **PDF** or **PPTX** (PowerPoint). You can also send it to Google Slides or Canva.

PROMPT

```
Make a one-page flyer for a Saturday bake sale at the community center, 9am to noon. Use navy, coral, and cream. Big headline, the date and time easy to read from across the room, and a spot at the bottom for a QR code.
```



IF YOU USED THE SEPARATE CLAUDE DESIGN SITE

Claude Design now lives inside Claude, and new designs and slide decks are saved as artifacts. The old site at claude.ai/design closes on December 14, 2026, so download or move any projects you made there before that date.

FEATURE 2

What Are Claude Artifacts?

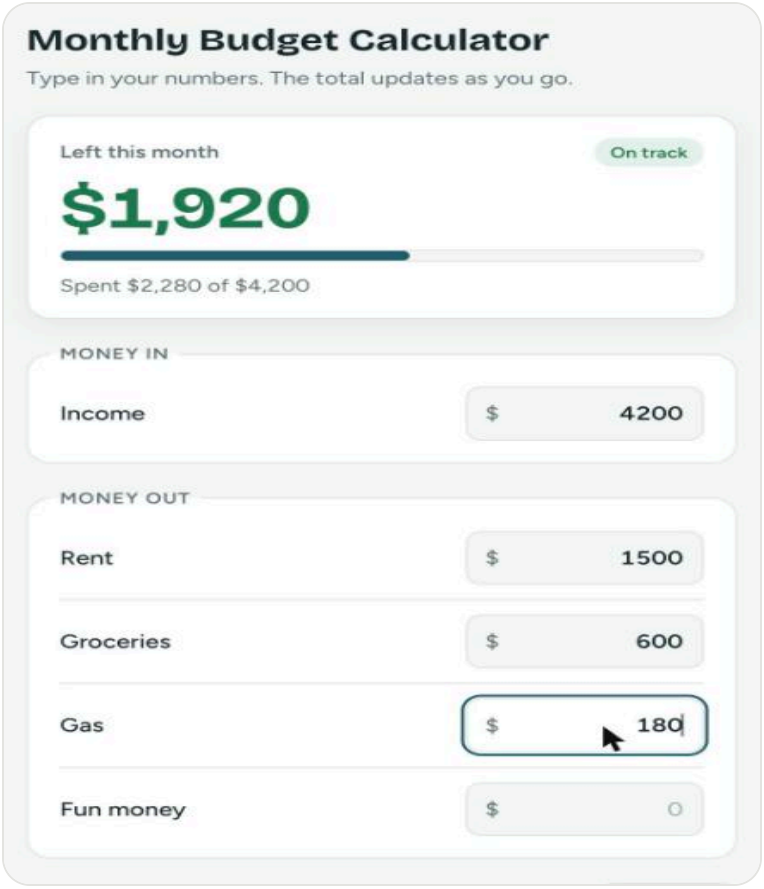
Artifacts are working things Claude builds right inside your chat: a budget calculator, a habit tracker, a chart, a checklist. You can type into them and use them on the spot, so you don’t need another app. They work on every plan, and you’ll find them again under Artifacts in the sidebar.

Ask for the tool the way you’d describe it to a friend, and say what should happen when you type in it:

PROMPT

```
Build me a monthly budget calculator I can type into. Put my income at the top, then rent, groceries, gas, and fun money. Show how much I have left this month in big numbers that update as I type, and add a bar that shows how much I've spent.
```

Here’s the one I made with that prompt. I typed in my numbers and it did the math as I went.



Want changes? Keep talking: “add a savings line,” “make it green when I’m under budget.” Claude updates it in place. Your artifacts are private until you share one. If you’ve shared some before, here’s how to check which ones are public.

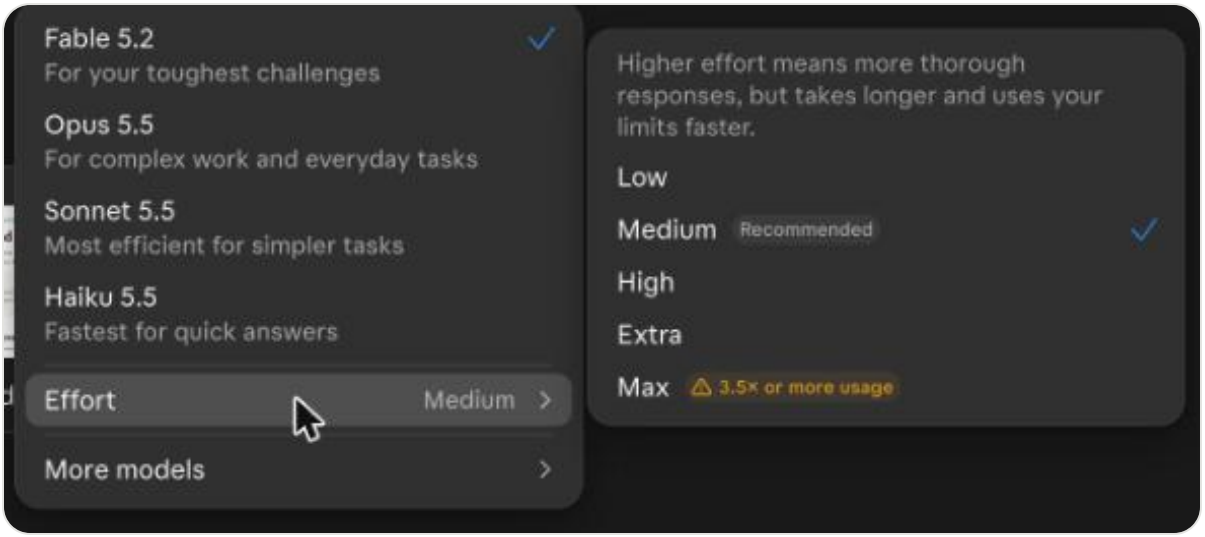
FEATURE 3 How Do I Turn On Extended Thinking in Claude?

In Claude, extended thinking now lives in the Effort setting. Click the model name next to the send button, then Effort, and pick Low, Medium, High, Extra, or Max. Medium is the default. Turn it up for a big decision, and Claude reasons through the whole problem before it answers.

You get a careful answer instead of a fast one. Here’s where to find it:

1. Start a chat and click the **model name** next to the send button.

2. Click **Effort**. You'll see five choices: **Low**, **Medium** (marked Recommended), **High**, **Extra**, and **Max**.
3. Pick **High** or **Extra** for a decision that matters. Save **Max** for the hardest problems.



Claude says it right in that menu: higher effort means more thorough responses, but it takes longer and uses your limits faster. So turn it up for a contract, a job offer, comparing two big options, or money math you'll rely on, and leave it on Medium for everyday questions. Which levels you see depends on the model you've picked.

PROMPT

```
I'm deciding whether to [take the new job / move / buy this car]. Here's everything I know: [paste the details]. Think it through carefully. Tell me what I'm missing, what each choice costs me over the next two years, and which one you'd pick and why.
```

> **LOOKING FOR A THINKING SWITCH?**
>
> On Claude's newest models, thinking is always on, so there's no separate switch to flip. Effort is how you ask for more of it.

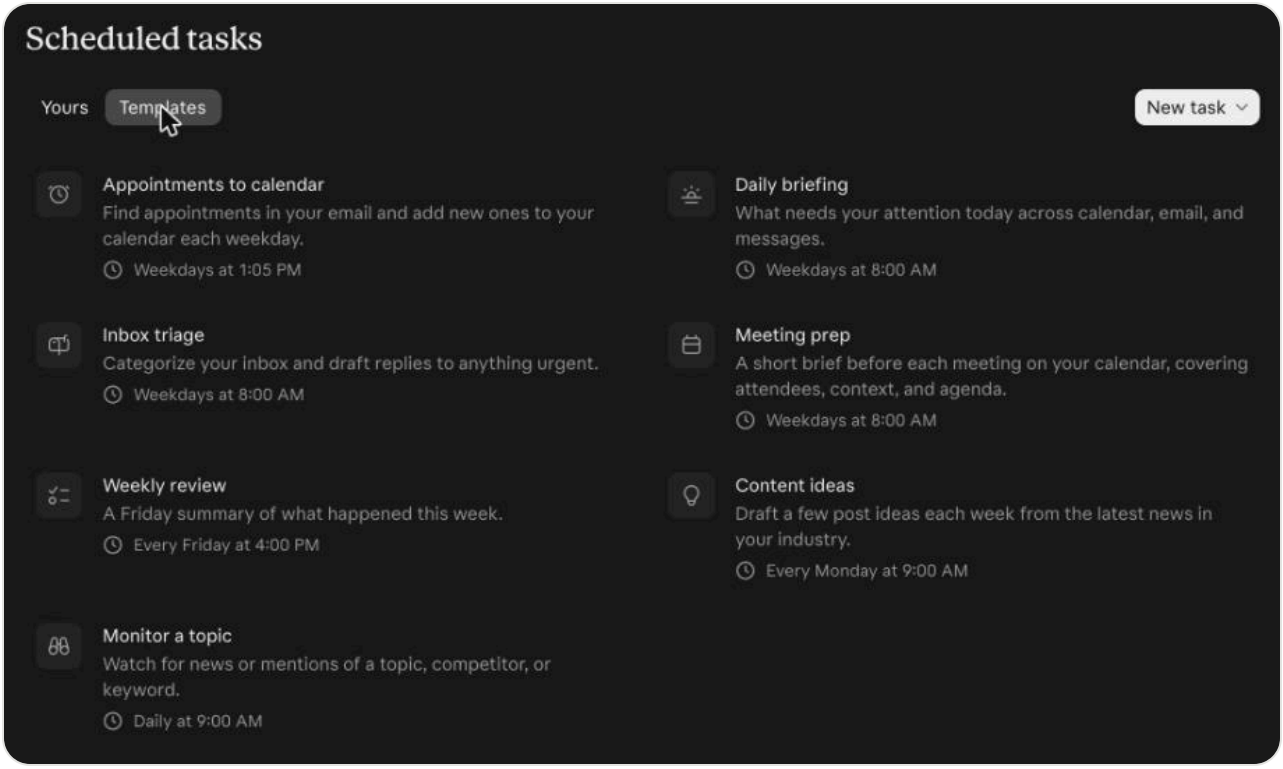
FEATURE 4

Can Claude Run Tasks on a Schedule?

Yes. Scheduled tasks let you set up a job once, like a daily to-do list or a Friday recap, and Claude runs it on its own at the time you pick, even when your computer is asleep. Click Scheduled in the left sidebar to start. It’s on every paid plan, starting with the $20 Pro plan.

It’s Claude on autopilot. Here’s how to set up your first one:

1. Click **Scheduled** in the left sidebar. You’ll see two tabs, **Yours** and **Templates**.
2. Open **Templates** for a head start. There’s Daily briefing, Inbox triage, Meeting prep, Weekly review, Content ideas, Monitor a topic, and Appointments to calendar. Pick one and change the time or the details to fit you.
3. Or click **New task**, choose **Create with Claude**, and describe the job in a sentence. Claude asks a few questions, then shows you the name, the schedule, and the task to confirm.
4. If the job reads your email or calendar, connect Gmail or Google Calendar first, in Settings under Connectors.



Here's a daily to-do list you can paste into Create with Claude:

PROMPT

```
Every weekday at 7am, look at my calendar and my email and give me today's to-do list. Put the three things that matter most at the top, then everything else. Flag anything with a deadline today. Keep it short enough to read in one minute.
```

On the newest version of Claude, you can also ask for a schedule in any chat. Say what you want and how often, answer any questions, and click **Schedule**.

FEATURE 5 How Do I Make Claude Stop Agreeing With Me?

Give it a job that requires honesty. Paste the hard mentor prompt at the start of a chat, fill in who you are and your plan, and Claude stops cheering you on. It names what could sink your plan, makes the best case against it, and ends with the question you most need to answer. It works on every plan.

Claude is built to be helpful and kind, so left on its own it tends to look for what's good in your idea. That feels nice and can cost you. This prompt gives Claude a different job: find the holes in your plan before they cost you money or time.

PROMPT

```
For this whole chat, be my hard mentor. Stop agreeing with me and show me the holes in my plan.

About me: [who you are, what you're working on, and the goal you're trying to hit]

When I share a plan, an idea, or a decision, pick the 3 to 5 of these that matter most for it:
- The question I haven't asked myself yet, the one that could send me in a different direction
- The best case someone could make against this plan
- What I'm not seeing because I'm excited about the idea
- How this could actually fail, with the specific way it would happen
- The bigger question hiding under this idea

When I answer you, don't just accept it. If my answer is fuzzy or skips the real issue, call it out and dig deeper. Keep going until the decision is clear.

Be direct but kind. Keep your sentences short. Don't open with praise, don't lecture, and don't pad. If part of my plan is strong, say so in one line. If something would sink it, say that first.

Finish every reply with the one question I most need to answer next.

Here's my plan: [paste your plan]
```

How to use it:

1. Copy the prompt into a new chat.
2. Fill in **About me** with a sentence or two. The more Claude knows about your goal, the sharper it gets.
3. Replace the last line with your plan, then send it.

4. Answer the question at the end of every reply, honestly. That's where the real work happens.

Good follow-ups once it's going:

- "Which of these would you fix first, and how?"
- "Pretend I'm three months in and it isn't working. What happened?"
- "Rewrite my plan with your fixes in it."

> THE TELL
>
> If Claude starts opening with compliments again, or the replies go soft deep into a long chat, paste this: "Remember, you're my hard mentor. Go back to it." To have the mentor ready every time, paste the prompt into a Project's instructions (feature 6).

> WHAT IT CAN AND CAN'T DO
>
> Claude only knows what you tell it. It's great at finding the holes in a plan. Whether people will actually buy, hire, or say yes is something you learn by asking them, and the mentor will push you to do exactly that.

FEATURES 6 AND 7 How Do I Get Claude to Remember Me?

Two features do this. Projects keep your files and instructions for every chat inside them, and Memory carries what Claude learns about you from one chat to the next. Together they mean you stop explaining yourself every time you open Claude.

6. Projects

Give Claude your documents and instructions once, and every chat inside the project starts with them. Make one for each part of your life you come back to: your business, a class, a move, your meal planning.

1. Click **Projects** in the left sidebar, then **New project**.
2. Add the files Claude should always have, like your price list, your resume, or your class notes.
3. Write a few lines of instructions: who you are, what this project is for, and how you like answers.

Plan: the free plan has five Projects. Pro has unlimited.

7. Memory

Claude remembers your work and how you like things done, so a new chat picks up where you left off. You can see everything it remembers and change it any time.

1. Go to **Settings**, then **Your Claude**, and make sure **Generate memory from chats** is on. (On the older settings layout, it's under **Settings**, then **Memory**.)
2. Click **Manage** next to **Your memory** to read what Claude has saved, edit it, or delete it.
3. You can also say it in a chat: "remember that I'm vegetarian," or "forget what I said about the old job."

Plan: on by default for Free, Pro, and Max. On Team and Enterprise plans, your company decides.

FEATURES 8 TO 11 What Prompts Turn Claude Into a Coach?

The hard mentor is one of five prompts that give Claude a role you need. These four work on every plan. Copy one into a new chat, fill in the brackets, and send it.

8. The personal psychologist prompt

For the thing that's been sitting on your chest. Claude listens, asks one question at a time, and helps you see your own thinking more clearly.

PROMPT

```
For this chat, be a calm, thoughtful listener, the way a good psychologist would be. I want to talk through something that's been on my mind.

- Ask me one question at a time, and wait for my answer.
- Reflect back what you hear me saying, so I can see it more clearly.
- Gently point out patterns in how I'm thinking about it.
- Don't rush to fix it or hand me a list of tips unless I ask.
- When we're done, sum up what I figured out and one small next step.

What's on my mind: [describe it in a few sentences]
```

Claude is a good listener, and it isn't a therapist. If you're struggling or thinking about hurting yourself, please reach out to a real person today. In the US, you can call or text 988, any time.

9. The personal trainer prompt

A workout plan built around your goal, your equipment, and your schedule, that gets harder as you get stronger.

PROMPT

```
Act as my personal trainer. My goal: [get stronger / lose 15 pounds / keep up with my kids]. Where I am now: [haven't worked out in years / walk most days]. Equipment: [two dumbbells and a mat / full gym / nothing]. I can do [3] days a week, [30] minutes each. Work around: [bad left knee / none].

Build week one as a table with a warm-up, then each day's exercises with sets, reps, and rest. Give me an easier and a harder version of every exercise. Each week I'll tell you how it went, and you build the next week from that.
```

Want the full 12-week version? It's in 9 Things You're Still Paying For That Claude Does for Free. Claude can't watch your form, so start lighter than you think, and check with your doctor first if you have an injury or a health condition.

10. Practice a difficult conversation

Asking for a raise, setting a boundary with family, telling a client no. Claude plays the other person so you can rehearse until the words come easily.

PROMPT

```
I need to have a hard conversation, and I want to practice first.

Who it's with: [my boss / my sister / a client]
What I need to say: [the main point]
What I'm worried they'll say back: [their likely reaction]

Play them the way they'd really react, based on what I've told you. Stay in character and
don't make it easy on me. After 5 back-and-forths, step out of character and tell me what I
said well, where I lost ground, and the one sentence I should open with next time.
```

11. The devil’s advocate prompt

For one decision or one opinion you want to test. The hard mentor stays on for a whole chat about your plans. This one argues the other side of a single question, as well as a smart person who disagrees would.

PROMPT

```
Here's something I've decided: [describe it]. Argue the other side as well as a smart
person who disagrees with me would. Give me the three strongest points against it, what
would back up each one, and what would have to be true for me to be wrong. Don't soften it,
and don't tell me which side you agree with until I ask.
```

FEATURES 12 TO 14 Can Claude Do Tasks for Me on My Computer?

Yes. Claude in Chrome works inside your web browser, Cowork works with the files and apps on your computer, and Skills teach Claude how you like a job done. Instead of telling you how to do something, Claude does it while you watch.

12. Claude in Chrome

Claude works in a side panel inside your Chrome browser. It reads the page you're on and can click, fill in forms, and move between tabs for you, so the comparison shopping or the form you've been putting off gets done while you watch.

1. Search **Claude** in the Chrome Web Store and add the extension.
2. Sign in with your Claude account.
3. Open the side panel on any page and tell Claude what you want done.

Plan: paid plans, Pro and up.

13. Cowork

Cowork is where Claude does the work instead of explaining it. It works inside your files and folders, uses your connected apps, and can run its own browser. Hand it a job in one sentence, like "sort my downloads folder into folders by type," and review what comes back.

1. Open the **Claude desktop app** (Mac or Windows).
2. If your message box shows **Chat** and **Cowork**, pick **Cowork**. If it doesn't, you already have the newer Claude where the two are one, so just ask in any chat.
3. Describe the job and what you want back.

Plan: Pro and up. For ten jobs to hand it first, see How to Use Claude Cowork's Built-In Browser.

14. Skills

A skill is a set of instructions for one kind of job, like writing in your voice or making slides that match, that Claude pulls out on its own whenever that job comes up. You set it up once and it's there for good, in chats and in Cowork.

1. Open **Settings** and click **Skills**.
2. Search for a skill and click **Add**, or upload one you downloaded as a ZIP file.
3. Make sure **Create and edit files** is on in Settings under Capabilities (some accounts call it **Code execution and file creation**), since Claude runs skills with its code tool.

Plan: every plan, including free. Five good ones to start with are in The Best Claude Skills for Beginners.

FEATURES 15 TO 17 What Can Claude Build for Me?

When you're ready to make your own app, website, or tool, these three are where to go. Claude Code builds it from a description, CLAUDE.md keeps your rules in front of it, and prompt caching makes your own Claude-powered app cheaper to run.

15. Claude Code

Describe an app, a website, or a tool, and Claude Code writes the code, runs it, and fixes it as it goes. You don't need to know how to code to try it. Say what you want, watch it build, and ask for changes.

1. Open the **Code** tab in the Claude desktop app, or go to **claude.ai/code**.
2. Describe what you want to build and who it's for.
3. Ask for changes until it's right.

Plan: Pro and up.

16. CLAUDE.md

A plain text file named CLAUDE.md that sits in your project folder. Claude Code reads it at the start of every session, so what the project is, your rules, and how you like things done are there every time, without you repeating them. Type `/init` in Claude Code and it writes a first draft for you to edit.

Plan: comes with Claude Code, Pro and up.

17. Prompt caching

This one is for when you build your own app on Claude through Anthropic's API. Prompt caching lets Claude hold on to the long part of a prompt you send over and over, like your instructions or a big document, so repeat requests come back faster and cost less. Anthropic's developer docs show how to turn it on in your request.

Plan: the Claude API, which is billed by how much you use, separate from the chat plans.

START HERE Which Claude Feature Should I Try First?

Start with the one that saves you the most time this week. If you're not sure, this order works for almost everyone:

1. **Today:** copy the hard mentor prompt and give it the plan you've been turning over in your head.
2. **Tomorrow:** set the Effort to High for your next big question and see how much more careful the answer is.
3. **This week:** build one artifact you'd actually use, like the budget calculator, and make one flyer in Claude Design.
4. **When you're on Pro:** open Scheduled, start from the Daily briefing template, and let Claude have your day sorted before you finish your coffee.

You don’t have to learn all 17 at once. Pick one, use it until it feels normal, then come back for the next.

FAQ Questions People Ask About Claude's Hidden Features

Straight answers

What are Claude's hidden features?
They're tools already built into Claude that most people never open. Claude Design makes flyers and slide decks, Artifacts builds working tools like a budget calculator, the Effort setting makes Claude think longer, and Scheduled tasks run jobs on their own. Projects, Memory, Skills, Claude in Chrome, Cowork, and a few coach prompts round out the 17.

How do I turn on extended thinking in Claude?
In Claude, extended thinking now lives in the Effort setting. Click the model name next to the send button, then click Effort, and choose Low, Medium, High, Extra, or Max. Medium is the default. Turn it up for big decisions, and remember that higher effort takes longer and uses your limits faster.

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Sources: Claude help center: Get started with Claude Design · Claude help center: Move from standalone Claude Design to Claude · Claude help center: Change the model, effort, and thinking settings · Claude help center: Schedule recurring tasks · Claude help center: Chat search and memory

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