

# MCPs — Model Context Protocol



A USB-C port for AI. One standard plug that lets Claude reach into your real tools and data.

## ◆ WHAT IT IS

An **open standard** that connects AI apps (Claude, ChatGPT, VS Code, Cursor) to outside stuff — your files, calendar, database, GitHub, even a 3D printer.

Before MCP, every AI app needed a custom connection to every tool. With MCP, the connection works the same way every time.

*It is not a model. It is the wiring.*

## → WHY IT MATTERS

**Before:** “Claude, what is on my calendar tomorrow?” → “I do not have access.”

**After:** Claude actually checks Google Calendar and tells you.

It unlocks calendars, Notion, GitHub issues, Figma designs, internal databases — whatever the server exposes.

## ⚙️ HOW IT WORKS — THE 3 ROLES



### MCP Host

The AI app you actually use (Claude Desktop, Claude Code, VS Code, Cursor). It coordinates everything.



### MCP Client

A small connector inside the host. One per server. You don't manage these — the host does.



### MCP Server

A program that exposes one thing (filesystem, GitHub, a database). Runs locally OR remotely.

**Each server can offer 3 things:** *Tools* (actions the AI can take) · *Resources* (read-only data) · *Prompts* (pre-written templates).

## ▶ GET STARTED IN 3 STEPS

- 1 Install Claude Desktop**  
 Download from [claude.ai/download](https://claude.ai/download). It already speaks MCP.
- 2 Add a server**  
 Open *Settings* → *Connectors*. Pick a pre-built one from [github.com/modelcontextprotocol/servers](https://github.com/modelcontextprotocol/servers) — start with **Filesystem** or **GitHub**. Save and restart.
- 3 Ask Claude to use it**  
 New chat. Try: “List the files in my Desktop folder.” Approve the permission prompt the first time. Done.

## ⚠️ GOTCHAS

- **Trust the server.** An MCP server runs code on your machine. Start with the official Anthropic-curated list.
- **Read permission prompts.** “Whole drive” is not the same as “Desktop only.”
- **Local vs remote.** Local servers run on your computer. Remote ones run on someone else's.
- **Restart the host** after editing the config — it won't pick up the change otherwise.

## 📖 GLOSSARY

### MCP

Model Context Protocol — the standard.

### Host

The AI app (Claude Desktop, Cursor).

### Client

Connector inside the host; one per server.

### Server

Program that exposes a tool or data source.

### Tool

An action the AI can take.

### Resource

Read-only data the AI can pull in.

### studio

Local pipe between host and server.

### HTTP transport

Internet connection to a remote server.