

# Claude Surfaces Cheat Sheet

Chat, Cowork, Claude Code, Routines: which to use, where the work runs, and whether your computer needs to be on. Every detail matches Anthropic's own docs (linked at the bottom).

SURFACE	BEST FOR	RUNS WHERE	COMPUTER ON?	PLAN
Web / browser	Quick questions, anywhere	Cloud	No	Free and up
Mobile app	Chat on the go	Cloud	No	Free and up
Desktop: Chat	Everyday back-and-forth	Cloud	No	Free and up
Desktop: Cowork	Hand off multi-step office work	Your computer	Yes, app open	Pro and up
Desktop: Code	Building software and tools	Your computer	Yes, app open	Pro and up
Routine (Remote)	Scheduled or triggered jobs, unattended	Cloud	No	Pro and up
Scheduled task (Local)	Scheduled jobs that need local files	Your computer	Yes, app open	Pro and up

## The one question that sorts them out

Does the work run on your own computer, or in the cloud? Local (Cowork, and any Local scheduled task) runs on your machine, so the app stays open and the computer stays awake. Cloud (a Remote Routine) runs on Anthropic's servers and keeps going with your computer off.

## Prompt: let Claude pick the surface for you

I use Claude and I'm trying to pick the right tool for a task. The task is: [describe it in a sentence]. Walk me through whether I should use plain Chat, Cowork, Claude Code, or a scheduled Routine. Tell me whether the work would run on my own computer (so it has to be on) or in the cloud (so it runs with my computer off). Keep it to a short recommendation with one reason.

## Sources (Anthropic docs)

Claude desktop quickstart: <https://code.claude.com/docs/en/desktop-quickstart>

Get started with Claude Cowork: <https://support.claude.com/en/articles/13345190-get-started-with-claude-cowork>

Automate work with routines: <https://code.claude.com/docs/en/web-scheduled-tasks>

Desktop scheduled tasks: <https://code.claude.com/docs/en/desktop-scheduled-tasks>

Claude pricing: <https://claude.com/pricing>

## Where do you stand with AI?

The free 7 Levels of AI Proficiency assessment takes about ten minutes: [assess.launchready.ai](https://launchready.ai/assess)