Set Up a Claude Project for Your Class

Explain your year once. Use it until July.

A chat on its own starts blank, so it starts with explaining: the year group, the curriculum, the topic, the format. A project holds all of that for the whole school year. Explain it once, and every chat in the project starts informed.

WHY 01

It starts informed

Outside a project, every chat begins with "I teach Year 4, we follow the National Curriculum, this term's topic is the Romans". Inside one, Claude has your long-term plan, your schemes of work and your lesson plan template before you type a word.

YOU GET
Plans that fit your curriculum and your format, not a generic one.

WHY 02

It learns how you work

A project keeps its own memory of the chats in it: the units you've covered, the layouts you liked, the adjustments that worked. Your other projects never see it, and you can read and edit it at any time.

YOU GET
Less correcting by spring than in September.

WHY 03

It handles the 8.15am change

Supply cover. A closed hall. A pupil who can't hold a pencil this week. An observation moved to tomorrow. The project already knows the plan, so the change is one line to ask for, and the answer comes back in your format.

YOU GET
A workable plan in minutes, not a lunchtime rebuilding one.

THE ONE RULE

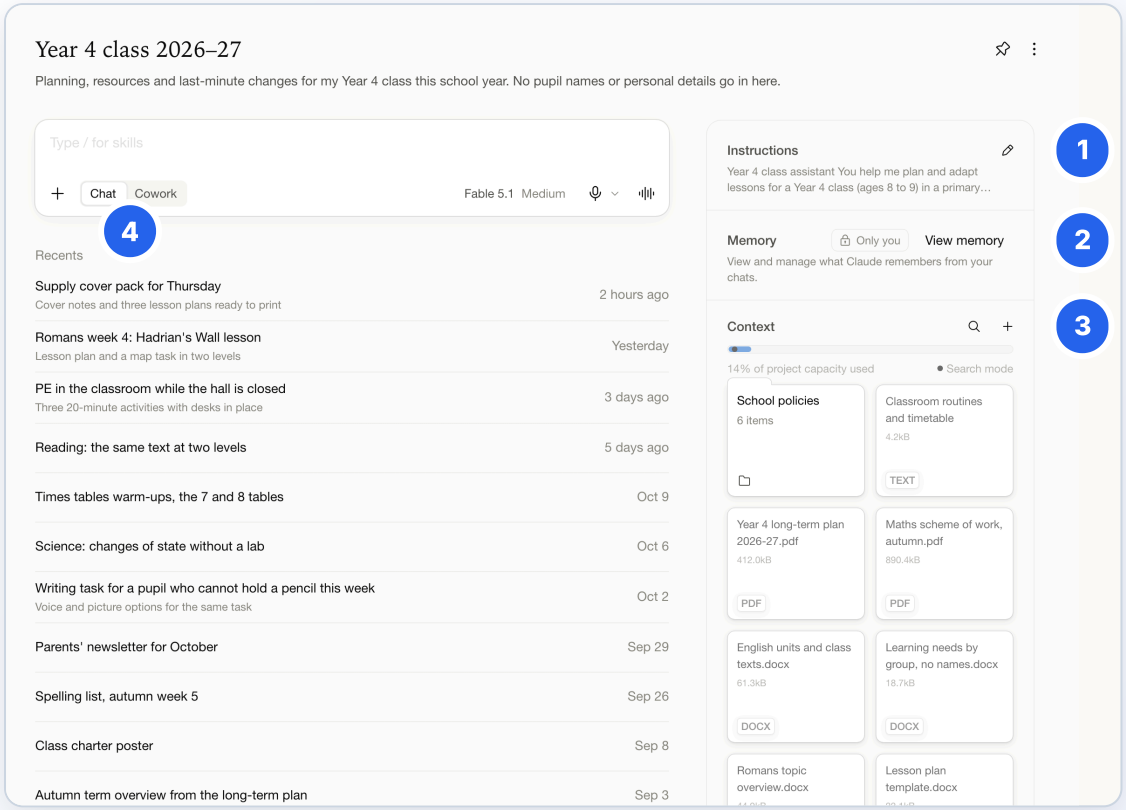
A project holds your teaching, never your pupils. No names, no personal details, nothing that could identify a child. Page 3 shows where the line sits.

Independent guide, not affiliated with or endorsed by Anthropic. Checked against the Claude app and its help centre in October 2026. Not legal advice: your school's data protection policy comes first.

What a Project Holds

Four parts, each with a job

A project is a workspace in the Claude app. Every chat you start inside it shares the same instructions, files and memory. Nothing in it spills into your other projects.



The project page in the Claude app, October 2026, drawn with a made-up class. Layouts change; the four parts don't.

1 Instructions

How Claude should work in this project. They apply to every chat in it.

FOR YOUR CLASS Year group, curriculum, your plan format, how you like resources laid out, and the rule on pupil data.

2 Memory

What Claude picks up from your chats in this project. Other projects never see it. You can view it and edit it.

FOR YOUR CLASS What you've taught, what worked, how you like a worksheet to look.

3 Files

Shown as Context on the page. Documents Claude reads and works from, up to 30MB each. On paid plans, when there's more than it can hold at once, it searches them for the parts it needs.

FOR YOUR CLASS Long-term plan, schemes of work, topic overviews, templates, policies, a needs summary by group.

4 Chats

Each conversation in the project. Every one starts with the instructions, files and memory already in place.

FOR YOUR CLASS One chat per job: next week's plans, a cover pack, the newsletter.

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Keep Children's Data Out

Build the project so it never needs it

BEFORE YOU START

RULES

The DfE puts it plainly: "It is recommended that personal data is not used in generative AI tools." Under UK GDPR your school decides how pupil information is used, and children's data needs extra care. So build a project that never needs it. Plan for groups and needs. Leave the names in school systems.

NEVER GOES IN

Who a child is

- Names, initials or nicknames
- Dates of birth, addresses, photos
- **SEND, medical or safeguarding records**, pasted or uploaded
- Assessment data or reports tied to a child
- Exports from your MIS, such as SIMS, Arbor or Bromcom
- Parents' names, emails or messages

FINE TO PUT IN

What you teach

- Curriculum, long-term plans, schemes of work
- Your templates, worksheets and slides
- Staff policies on marking, behaviour, homework
- **Needs by group:** "four pupils new to English"
- Your timetable and classroom routines
- Questions and examples you've written

CHECK FIRST

The grey areas

- **Work samples with the name removed.** In a class of 30, handwriting and a story about a pet can still say who
- A personal account for school work at all
- Sharing the project with colleagues
- Anything you'd not be comfortable showing the child's parents

ACCOUNT

Use the account your school approved. School Team plans aren't used to train models by default.

PUPILS

Claude is for adults: personal accounts are 18 and over. You use the project. Your pupils don't.

WHAT YOU SEND

Read everything before it goes out. The DfE is clear: the finished document is your responsibility.

Not legal advice. Sources: DfE, Generative AI in education (12 August 2025); DfE, AI and data protection in schools (14 October 2026); Claude help centre, October 2026.

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Create the Project

Three clicks and a name

STEP BY STEP
HOW

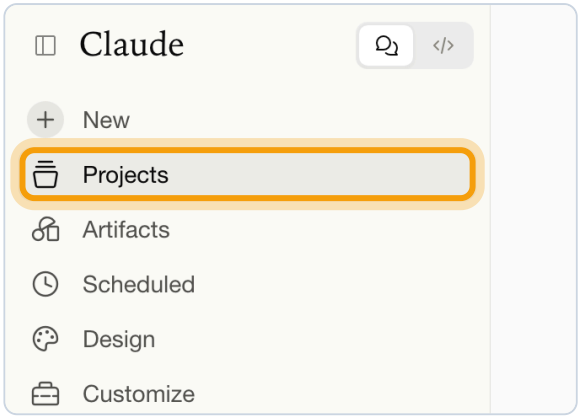
Everything on the next four pages happens once, at the start of the year. Follow the orange rings: each one marks what to click.

Before you start

1. Ask your school which AI tools you're allowed to use for work, and on which account.
2. Go to claude.ai in your web browser and sign in, or open the Claude app.
3. Gather your documents: long-term plan, schemes of work, templates. Take out any pupil names first.

You'll need

1. About half an hour.
2. Your plans saved as Word, PDF or text files.
3. The example instructions on the next page.

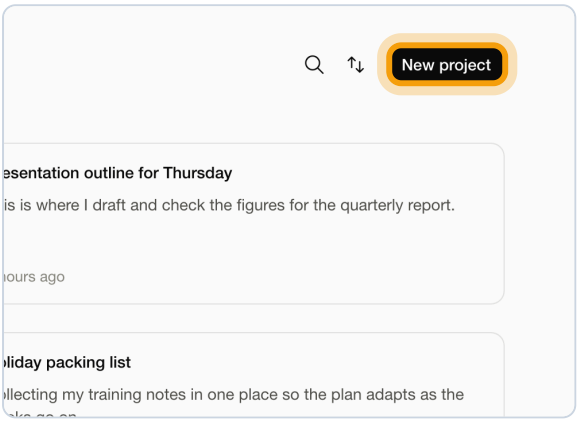


1

Open Projects

In the menu down the left-hand side, click **Projects**.

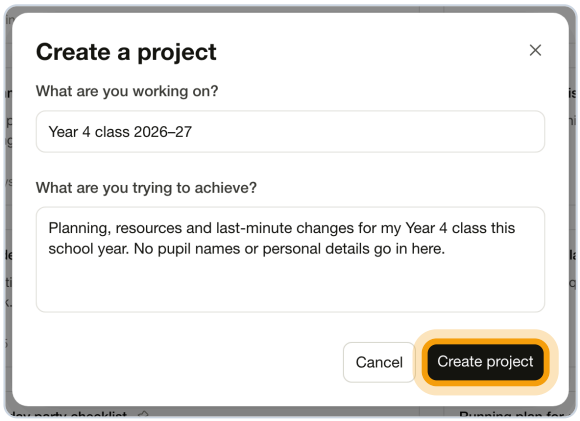
Can't see the menu? Click the small panel icon at the very top left.



2

Click New project

It's the black **New project** button at the top right of the Projects page.



3

Name it and describe it

Under **What are you working on?** type a name for the year, such as **Year 4 class 2026–27**.

Under **What are you trying to achieve?** say what it's for and that no pupil names go in. Then click **Create project**.

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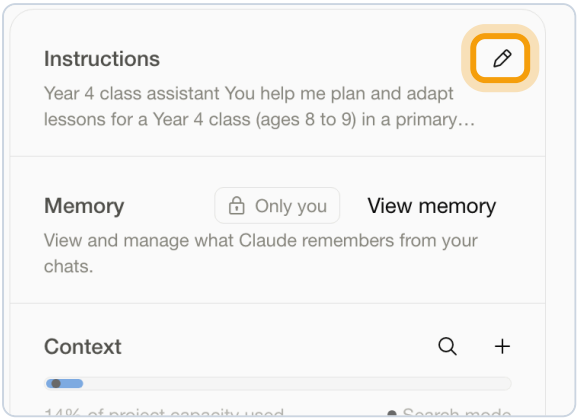
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Write the Instructions

Tell Claude how you work, once

STEP BY STEP
HOW

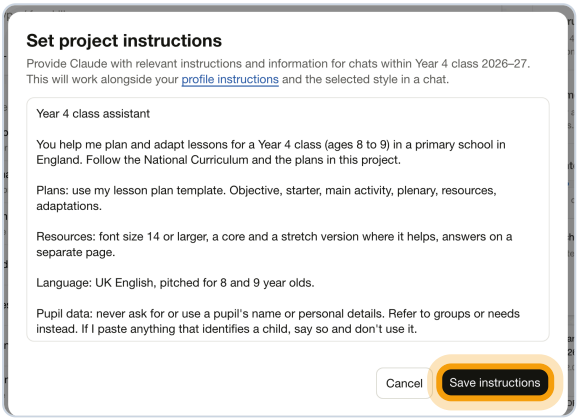
Instructions are the rules Claude follows in every chat in this project. Write them once and you don't have to repeat your year group, your format or the rule on pupil data in each chat.



4

Click the pencil

On your project's page, find **Instructions** on the right. Click the **pencil** beside it.



5

Paste, change, save

A window called **Set project instructions** opens. Paste the example on the right into the big box and change it to fit your class.

Then click **Save instructions**.

You can come back and edit this any time. Expect to add a line or two in the first few weeks.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

Paste, then make it yours

Year 4 class assistant

You help me plan and adapt lessons for a Year 4 class (ages 8 to 9) in a primary school in England. Follow the National Curriculum and the plans in this project.

Plans: use my lesson plan template. Objective, starter, main activity, plenary, resources, adaptations.

Resources: font size 14 or larger, a core and a stretch version where it helps, answers on a separate page.

Language: UK English, pitched for 8 and 9 year olds.

Pupil data: never ask for or use a pupil's name or personal details. Refer to groups or needs instead. If I paste anything that identifies a child, say so and don't use it.

The last line matters most. It turns the data rule from something you have to remember into something Claude checks for you.

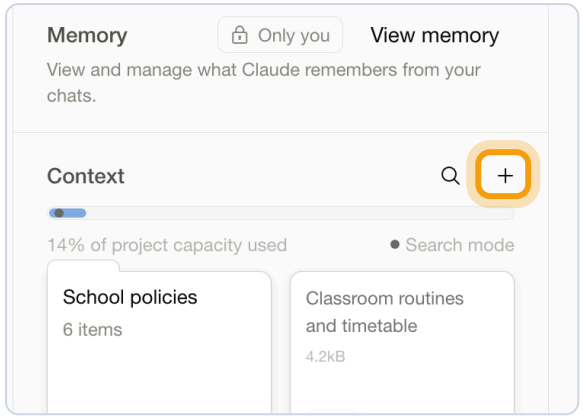
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Add Your Files and Try It

Give Claude your plans to work from

STEP BY STEP
HOW

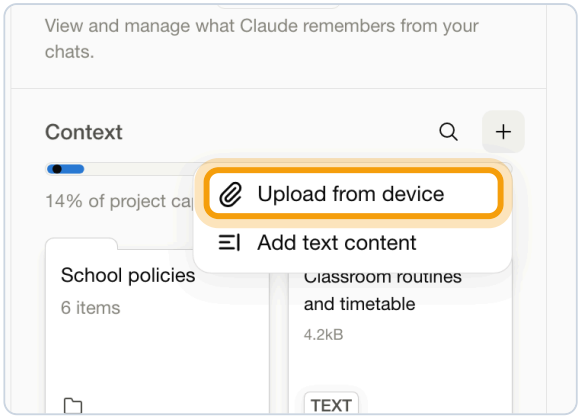
Files are what Claude reads before it answers: your plans, schemes of work and templates. Add them once and every chat in the project can use them.



6

Click the +

Under Instructions and Memory, find **Context**. Click the **+** beside it.



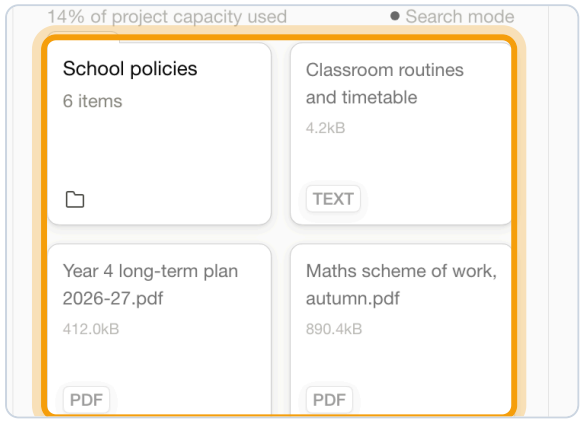
7

Upload your files

Click **Upload from device**, then pick your files from your computer.

To type or paste something in instead, such as your classroom routines, choose **Add text content**.

Word, PDF and plain text all work, up to 30MB each.

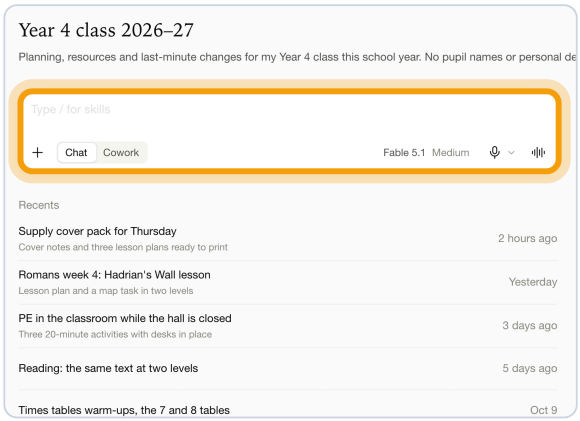


8

Check they're there

Each file shows as a tile.

For pupils' needs, add one short document that describes groups, not children: "Group B, six pupils, working towards expected in reading."



9

Start your first chat

Type in the box at the top of the project page. Try: **"Plan next week's maths lessons from the scheme of work."**

Correct what's off. If it's a rule you'll want every time, add it to the instructions.

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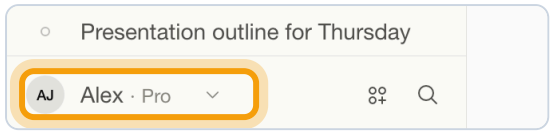
Check Three Settings

Five minutes, once

STEP BY STEP

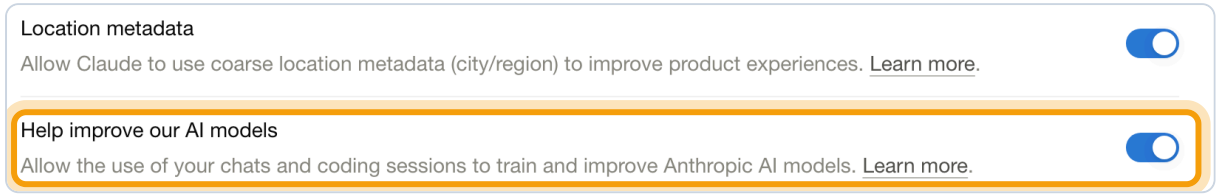
HOW

All three are in Settings. They decide whether your chats train Claude, whether it can make files for you, and what it keeps in memory.



10 Open Settings

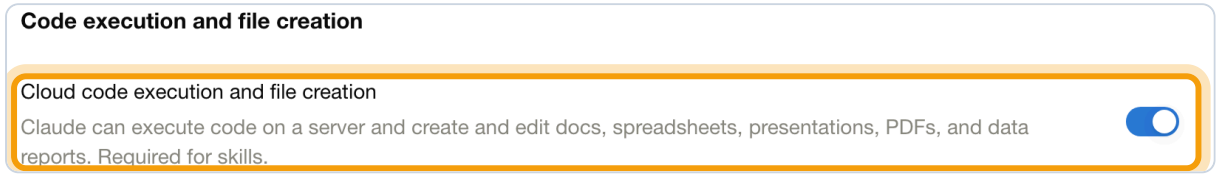
Click **your name** at the bottom left of the screen, then **Settings**.



11 Turn off training

Click **Privacy**. Switch **Help improve our AI models** off (grey). Your chats then aren't used to train Claude, and are kept for 30 days rather than up to five years.

On a school Team plan, chats aren't used for training anyway.



12 Check Claude can make files

Click **Capabilities**. Make sure **Cloud code execution and file creation** is on (blue). It lets Claude make Word documents, slides and PDFs for you to print.



13 Keep sensitive topics out of memory

Click **Memory**. Leave **Include sensitive topics in memory** off (grey). If a health detail slips into a chat, Claude won't save it to memory.

The chat itself still holds it, so delete that chat. On the same page you can read and delete everything Claude remembers.

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Use It All Year

When the plan changes at 8.15am

Because the project already holds the plan, a change needs one line. Each of these would take a long paragraph in a blank chat. Inside the project, this is all you type.

SUPPLY COVER

You're off tomorrow

> *Make a cover pack for Thursday from this week's plans: the timetable, three lessons a non-specialist can teach, and the sheets to print.*

Comes back in your plan template, with your routines in the cover notes.

THE HALL'S CLOSED

PE in a classroom

> *No hall this afternoon. Give me three 20-minute PE activities for a classroom with desks, linked to our current unit.*

It knows the unit from the scheme of work.

ONE PUPIL, ONE WEEK

Same thinking, another way

> *One pupil can't hold a pencil this week. Adapt today's writing task so they can do the same thinking by speaking or with pictures.*

The need, never the name.

TWO LEVELS

One text, every reader

> *Rewrite the Hadrian's Wall reading text as a core and a stretch version, with the same five questions for both.*

Ask for a Word or PDF file and print it.

OBSERVATION MOVED

It's tomorrow now

> *My observation is tomorrow, maths, period 2. Tighten the lesson: one clear objective, a hinge question, adaptations for Group B.*

Group B is already described in your needs file.

PARENTS

The newsletter

> *Draft the October newsletter from what we've covered this half term. Warm, short, no pupil names.*

Read it before it goes out. The DfE is clear: what you send is your responsibility.

KEEP IT CURRENT

Ten minutes a half term

Start of each term
Add the new topic overviews. Remove last term's, so old plans don't creep back in.

Each half term
Read the project's memory. Delete what's out of date or shouldn't be there.

When you correct the same thing twice
Move it into the instructions.

End of the year
Start a new project for the new class. Copy the instructions across, then update them.

Explain once. Adapt all year.

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