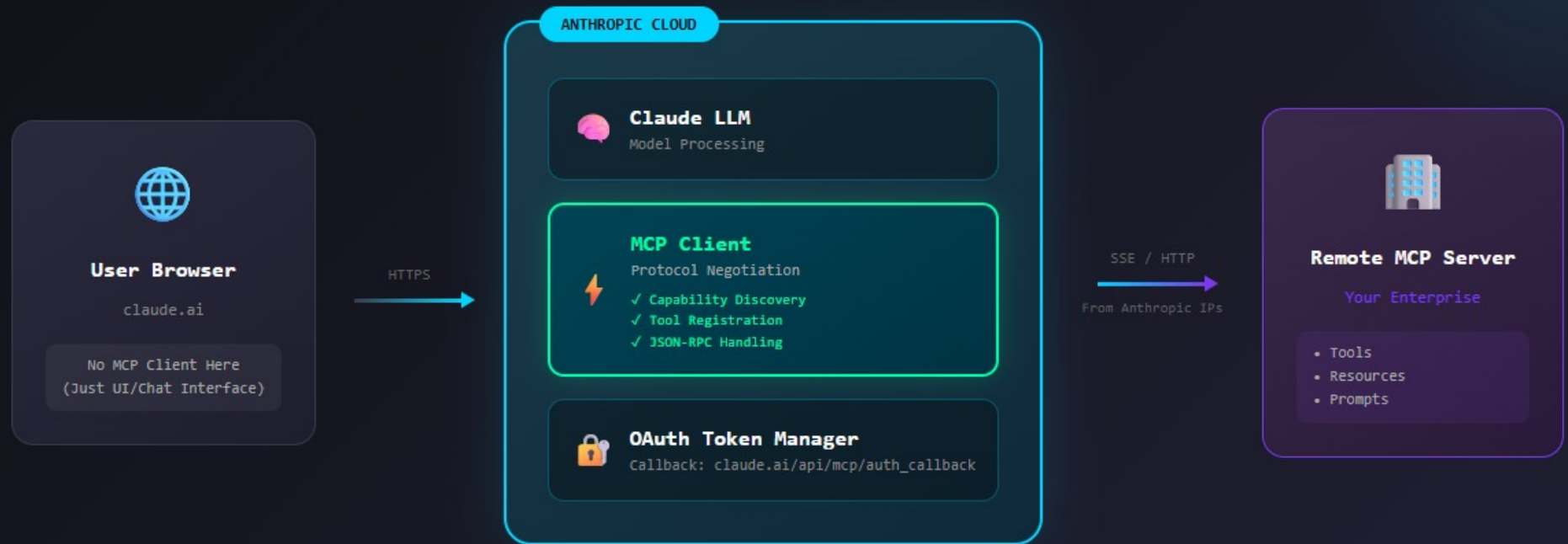
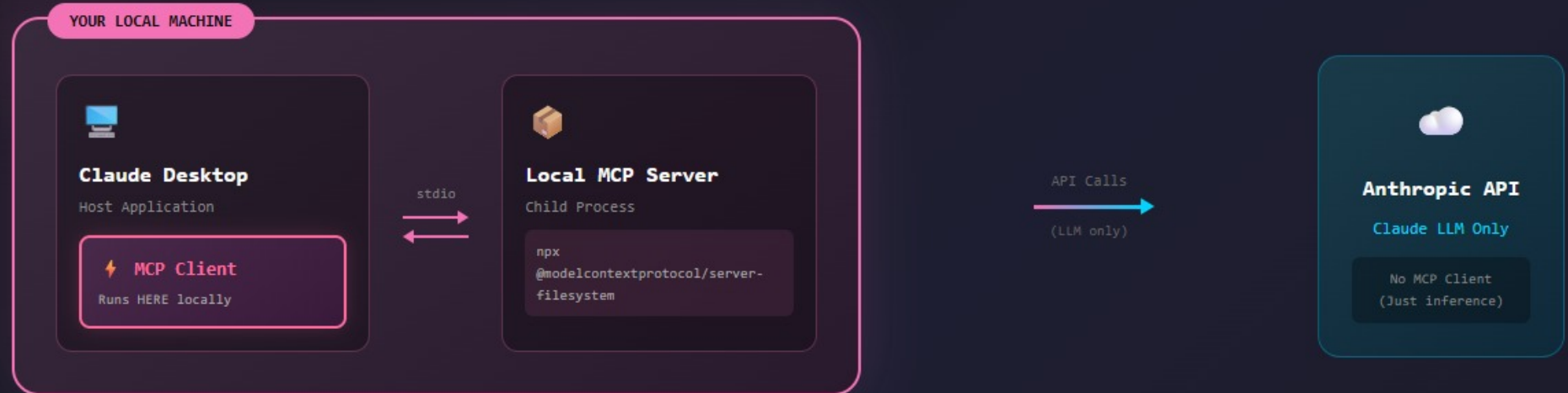


1 Claude.ai (Web Interface) + Remote MCP Server



KEY: MCP protocol negotiation happens **server-side** in Anthropic's cloud. Your browser only handles the chat UI – it never speaks MCP directly.

2 Claude Desktop + Local MCP Server (stdio)



KEY: MCP protocol negotiation happens **locally** on your machine. Claude Desktop spawns MCP servers as child processes and communicates via stdio.

3 Claude Desktop + Remote MCP Server (via Settings → Connectors)



KEY: When using **Settings → Connectors** (not `claude_desktop_config.json`), remote MCP connections are handled **server-side by Anthropic** – same as the web interface!

Summary: Where Does the MCP Client Run?

Claude.ai (Web)

MCP Server: Remote

Client Location: Anthropic Cloud

Claude Desktop

MCP Server: Local (studio)

Client Location: Your Machine

Claude Desktop

MCP Server: Remote (Connectors UI)

Client Location: Anthropic Cloud

Claude Code

MCP Server: Remote (OAuth)

Client Location: Anthropic Cloud