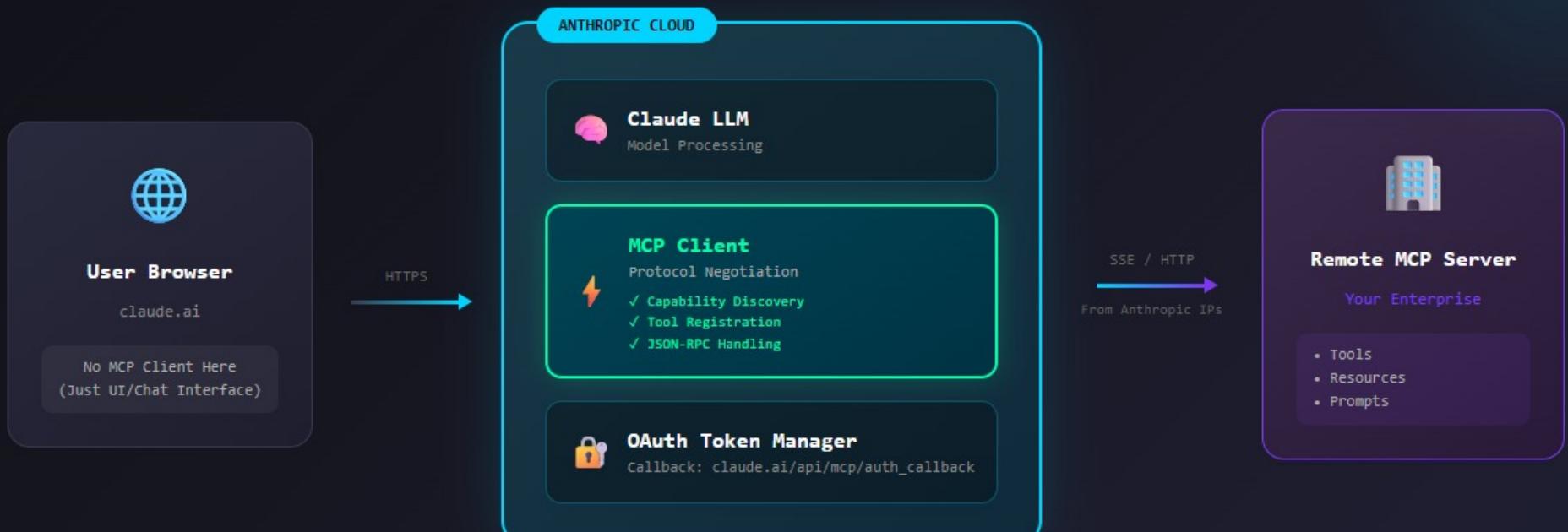
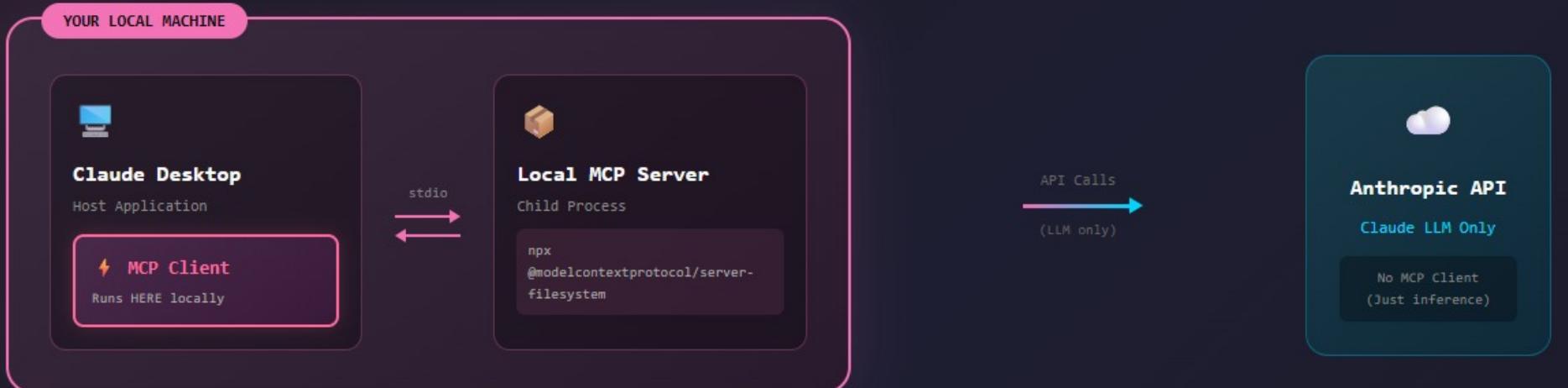


## 1 Claude.ai (Web Interface) + Remote MCP Server



**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 (stdio)**

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**