



# Getting Stared

## First stepsGetting Started

Goal: go from zero to a first working chat with minimal setup.

Fastest chat: open the Control UI (no channel setup needed). Run `openclaw dashboard` and chat in the browser, or open `http://127.0.0.1:18789/` on the gateway host. Docs: [\*\*Dashboard\*\*](#) and [\*\*Control UI\*\*](#).

## Prereqs

- Node 22 or newer

Check your Node version with `node --version` if you are unsure.

## Quick setup (CLI)

1

### Install OpenClaw (recommended)

- macOS/Linux
- Windows (PowerShell)

```
curl -fsSL https://openclaw.ai/install.sh | bash
```

Other install methods and requirements: [\*\*Install\*\*](#).

2

### Run the onboarding wizard

```
openclaw onboard --install-daemon
```

The wizard configures auth, gateway settings, and optional channels. See

### [\*\*Onboarding Wizard\*\*](#)

for details.

3

### Check the Gateway

If you installed the service, it should already be running:

```
openclaw gateway status
```

## 4

### Open the Control UI

```
openclaw dashboard
```

If the Control UI loads, your Gateway is ready for use.

## Optional checks and extras

### Run the Gateway in the foreground

### Send a test message

**Useful environment variables** If you run OpenClaw as a service account or want custom config/state locations:

- `OPENCLAW_HOME` sets the home directory used for internal path resolution.
- `OPENCLAW_STATE_DIR` overrides the state directory.
- `OPENCLAW_CONFIG_PATH` overrides the config file path. Full environment variable reference: [Environment vars](#).

**Go deeper** [Onboarding Wizard \(details\)](#) Full CLI wizard reference and advanced options. [macOS app onboarding](#) First run flow for the macOS app.

### What you will have

- A running Gateway
- Auth configured
- Control UI access or a connected channel

### Next steps

- DM safety and approvals: [Pairing](#)
- Connect more channels: [Channels](#)
- Advanced workflows and from source: [Setup](#)
- • `OPENCLAW_HOME` sets the home directory used for internal path resolution.
- • `OPENCLAW_STATE_DIR` overrides the state directory.
- • `OPENCLAW_CONFIG_PATH` overrides the config file path.
- • A running Gateway
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- • Control UI access or a connected channel
- • DM safety and approvals: **Pairing**
- • Connect more channels: **Channels**
- • Advanced workflows and from source: **Setup**