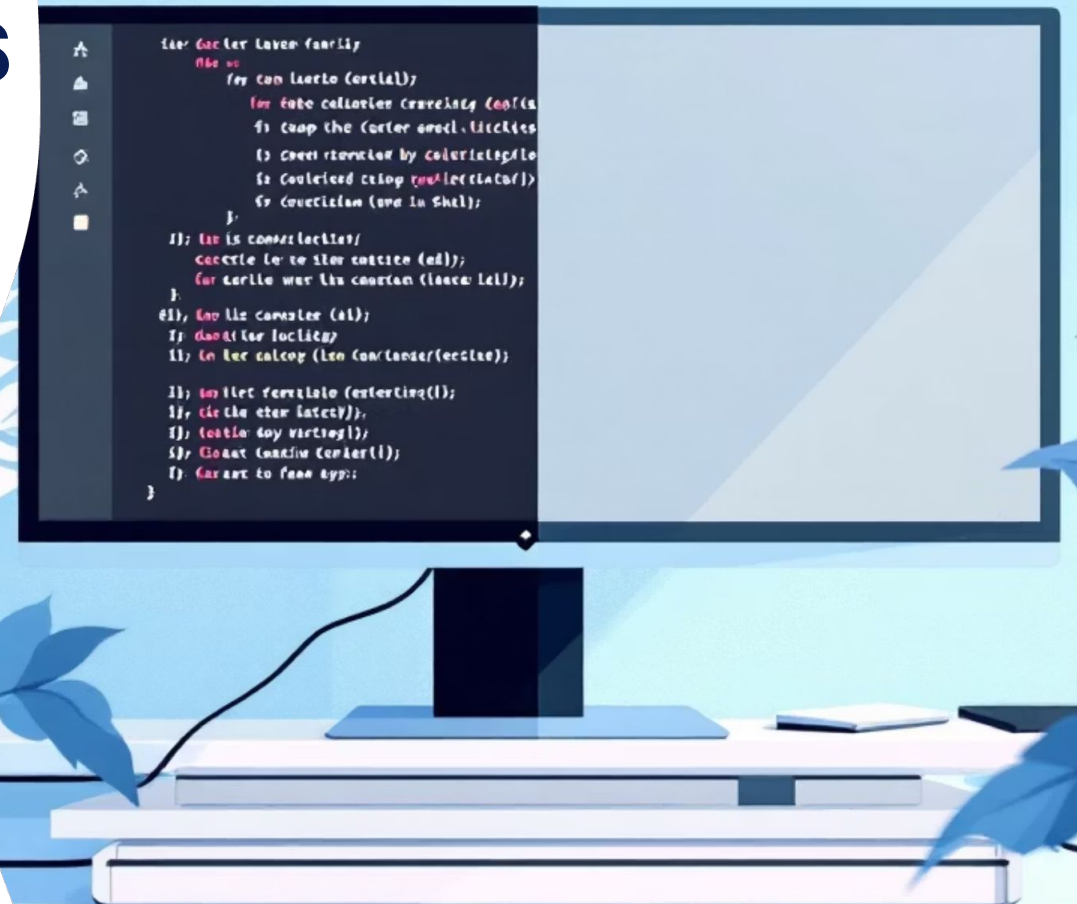


Slash Commands vs Subagents

Understanding two powerful approaches to workflow automation in Claude: when to use simple shortcuts versus independent processing







Side-by-Side Comparison

Feature	Slash Commands	Subagents
Execution	Same Claude instance	Separate Claude instance
Context	Shares main context	Isolated context
Parallelization	No	Yes
API Costs	Same conversation	Additional API calls
Token Usage	Main conversation tokens	Own token budget
Best For	Quick templates	Research & verification
Setup	Markdown files	Built-in feature
Invocation	/command-name	Ask Claude to "use a subagent"

Choosing the Right Tool for the Job




When to Use Slash Commands

-  **Repetitive Workflows**
Tasks you run frequently throughout your development process
-  **Quick Shortcuts**
Simple operations that don't require deep investigation
-  **Straightforward Tasks**
Clear instructions that don't need extensive research
-  **Typing Efficiency**
Save time by avoiding repetitive prompt writing

Common Examples

- `/test` - Run test suite
- `/deploy` - Deploy to staging
- `/format` - Apply code formatting

When to Use Subagents

-  **Investigation Tasks**
Deep research without cluttering your main conversation
-  **Parallel Research**
Check documentation while continuing to code
-  **Verification Needs**
Confirm specific details or validate approaches
-  **Context Management**
Running low on tokens and need isolated analysis

Common Examples

- "Use a subagent to check if this API pattern matches the docs"
- "Have a subagent verify security implications"
- "Let a subagent research framework best practices"

The Bottom Line

Slash Commands

About **efficiency and repetition**

Perfect for tasks you do daily

Subagents

About **context management and parallel work**

Ideal for deep research and verification

Practical Recommendation

Use slash commands for 90% of your repetitive tasks. Reserve subagents for when you need deep research without polluting your main conversation context, or when approaching token limits.

