

# Slash Commands vs Subagents

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

```
for Doctor's office family
  if &lt; user &gt;
    for can doctor (certified)
      for todo collection (traveling (dest))
        for trip the doctor abroad (tickets)
          for cover insurance by creditcard (file)
          for collected expense (travel (status))
          for connection (done in shell)
        }
      }
    }
  }
}

if &lt; user is connected /&gt;
  connect to the user connection (id);
  for certif who has the connection (name: id);
}

End the connection (id);
For doctor (for locality)
  for location (loc)
    for calendar (loc calendar (eeclue));
    for outlet (outlet (existing (l)));
    for the item (date (y));
    for outlet day (working (l));
    for event (event (outlet (l)));
    for connect to phone app;
}
```

# 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.

