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Configuration and operations

# Troubleshooting

This page is the deep runbook. Start at [/help/troubleshooting](#) if you want the fast triage flow first.

## Command ladder

Run these first, in this order:

```
openclaw status  
openclaw gateway status  
openclaw logs --follow  
openclaw doctor  
openclaw channels status --probe
```

Expected healthy signals:

```
openclaw gateway status shows Runtime: running and RPC probe: ok .  
openclaw doctor reports no blocking config/service issues.  
openclaw channels status --probe shows connected/ready channels.
```

## No replies

If channels are up but nothing answers, check routing and policy before reconnecting anything.

```
openclaw status  
openclaw channels status --probe  
openclaw pairing list <channel>  
openclaw config get channels >  
openclaw logs --follow
```

Look for:

Pairing pending for DM senders.

Group mention gating ( `requireMention` , `mentionPatterns` ).

Channel/group allowlist mismatches.

Common signatures:

`drop guild message (mention required` → group message ignored until mention.

`pairing request` → sender needs approval.

`blocked / allowlist` → sender/channel was filtered by policy.

Related:

## Dashboard control ui connectivity

When dashboard/control UI will not connect, validate URL, auth mode, and secure context assumptions.

```
openclaw gateway status  
openclaw status  
openclaw logs --follow  
openclaw doctor  
openclaw gateway status --json
```

Look for:

Correct probe URL and dashboard URL.

Auth mode/token mismatch between client and gateway.

HTTP usage where device identity is required.

Common signatures:

`device identity required` → non-secure context or missing device auth.

`unauthorized` / reconnect loop → token/password mismatch.

`gateway connect failed:` → wrong host/port/url target.

Related:

## Gateway service not running

Use this when service is installed but process does not stay up.

```
openclaw gateway status  
openclaw status  
openclaw logs --follow  
openclaw doctor  
openclaw gateway status --deep
```

Look for:



Runtime: stopped with exit hints.

Service config mismatch ('Config (cli) vs Config (service)').

Port/listener conflicts.

Common signatures:

Gateway start blocked: set gateway.mode=local → local gateway mode is not enabled. Fix: set gateway.mode="local" in your config (or run `openclaw configure`). If you are running OpenClaw via Podman using the dedicated `openclaw` user, the config lives at `~openclaw/.openclaw/openclaw.json`.

refusing to bind gateway ... without auth → non-loopback bind without token/password.

another gateway instance is already listening / EADDRINUSE → port conflict.

Related:

[/gateway/background-process](#)

[/gateway/configuration](#)

[/gateway/doctor](#)

## Channel connected messages not flowing

If channel state is connected but message flow is dead, focus on policy, permissions, and channel specific delivery rules.

```
openclaw channels status --probe  
openclaw pairing list <channel>  
openclaw status --deep  
openclaw logs --follow  
openclaw config get channels
```

Look for:



DM policy ( `pairing` , `allowlist` , `open` , `disabled` ).

Group allowlist and mention requirements.

Missing channel API permissions/scopes.

Common signatures:

`mention required` → message ignored by group mention policy.

`pairing` / pending approval traces → sender is not approved.

`missing_scope` , `not_in_channel` , `Forbidden` , `401/403` → channel auth/permissions issue.

Related:

[/channels/troubleshooting](#)

[/channels/whatsapp](#)

[/channels/telegram](#)

[/channels/discord](#)

## Cron and heartbeat delivery

If cron or heartbeat did not run or did not deliver, verify scheduler state first, then delivery target.

```
openclaw cron status  
openclaw cron list  
openclaw cron runs --id <jobId> --limit 20  
openclaw system heartbeat last  
openclaw logs --follow
```

Look for:

Cron enabled and next wake present.



Job run history status ( `ok` , `skipped` , `error` ).

Heartbeat skip reasons ( `quiet-hours` , `requests-in-flight` , `alerts-disabled` ).

&gt;

Common signatures:

`cron: scheduler disabled; jobs will not run automatically` → cron disabled.

`cron: timer tick failed` → scheduler tick failed; check file/log/runtime errors.

`heartbeat skipped with reason=quiet-hours` → outside active hours window.

`heartbeat: unknown accountId` → invalid account id for heartbeat delivery target.

Related:

[/automation/troubleshooting](#)

[/automation/cron-jobs](#)

[/gateway/heartbeat](#)

## Node paired tool fails

If a node is paired but tools fail, isolate foreground, permission, and approval state.

```
openclaw nodes status
openclaw nodes describe --node <idOrNameOrIp>
openclaw approvals get --node <idOrNameOrIp>
openclaw logs --follow
openclaw status
```

Look for:

Node online with expected capabilities.



OS permission grants for camera/mic/location/screen.

Exec approvals and allowlist state.

Common signatures: >

`NODE_BACKGROUND_UNAVAILABLE` → node app must be in foreground.

`*_PERMISSION_REQUIRED / LOCATION_PERMISSION_REQUIRED` → missing OS permission.

`SYSTEM_RUN_DENIED: approval required` → exec approval pending.

`SYSTEM_RUN_DENIED: allowlist miss` → command blocked by allowlist.

Related:

[/nodes/troubleshooting](#)

[/nodes/index](#)

[/tools/exec-approvals](#)

## Browser tool fails

Use this when browser tool actions fail even though the gateway itself is healthy.

```
openclaw browser status  
openclaw browser start --browser-profile openclaw  
openclaw browser profiles  
openclaw logs --follow  
openclaw doctor
```

Look for:

Valid browser executable path.

CDP profile reachability.

Extension relay tab attachment for `profile="chrome"`.

Common signatures:



Failed to start Chrome CDP on port → browser process failed to launch.

browser.executablePath not found → configured path is invalid.

Chrome extension relay is running, but no tab is connected → extension relay not attached.

Browser attachOnly is enabled ... not reachable → attach-only profile has no reachable target.

Related:

[/tools/browser-linux-troubleshooting](#)

[/tools/chrome-extension](#)

[/tools/browser](#)

## If you upgraded and something suddenly broke

Most post-upgrade breakage is config drift or stricter defaults now being enforced.

### 1) Auth and URL override behavior changed

```
openclaw gateway status  
openclaw config get gateway.mode  
openclaw config get gateway.remote.url  
openclaw config get gateway.auth.mode
```

What to check:

If `gateway.mode=remote`, CLI calls may be targeting remote while your local service is fine.

Explicit `--url` calls do not fall back to stored credentials.

Common signatures:



gateway connect failed: → wrong URL target.

unauthorized → endpoint reachable but wrong auth.

## 2) Bind and auth guardrails are stricter

```
openclaw config get gateway.bind  
openclaw config get gateway.auth.token  
openclaw gateway status  
openclaw logs --follow
```

What to check:

Non-loopback binds ( lan , tailnet , custom ) need auth configured.

Old keys like gateway.token do not replace gateway.auth.token .

Common signatures:

refusing to bind gateway ... without auth → bind+auth mismatch.

RPC probe: failed while runtime is running → gateway alive but inaccessible with current auth/url.

## 3) Pairing and device identity state changed

```
openclaw devices list  
openclaw pairing list <channel>  
openclaw logs --follow  
openclaw doctor
```

What to check:

Pending device approvals for dashboard/nodes.



Pending DM pairing approvals after policy or identity changes.

Common signatures:

>  
device identity required → device auth not satisfied.

pairing required → sender/device must be approved.

If the service config and runtime still disagree after checks,  
reinstall service metadata from the same profile/state directory:

```
openclaw gateway install --force  
openclaw gateway restart
```

Related:

[◀ Multiple Gateways](#)

[Security ▶](#)

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