



macOS companion app > **Gateway Lifecycle**

macOS companion app

## Gateway Lifecycle

The macOS app **manages the Gateway via launchd** by default and does not spawn the Gateway as a child process. It first tries to attach to an already-running Gateway on the configured port; if none is reachable, it enables the launchd service via the external `openclaw` CLI (no embedded runtime). This gives you reliable auto-start at login and restart on crashes.

Child-process mode (Gateway spawned directly by the app) is **not in use** today. If you need tighter coupling to the UI, run the Gateway manually in a terminal.

### Default behavior (launchd)

The app installs a per-user LaunchAgent labeled `bot.molt.gateway` (or `bot.molt.<profile>` when using `--profile / OPENCLAW_PROFILE`; legacy `com.openclaw.*` is supported).

When Local mode is enabled, the app ensures the LaunchAgent is loaded and starts the Gateway if needed.

Logs are written to the launchd gateway log path (visible in Debug Settings).

Common commands:

```
launchctl kickstart -k gui/$UID/bot.molt.gateway  
launchctl bootout gui/$UID/bot.molt.gateway
```

&gt;

Replace the label with `bot.molt.<profile>` when running a named profile.

## Unsigned dev builds

`scripts/restart-mac.sh --no-sign` is for fast local builds when you don't have signing keys. To prevent launchd from pointing at an unsigned relay binary, it:

Writes `~/.openclaw/disable-launchagent`.

Signed runs of `scripts/restart-mac.sh` clear this override if the marker is present. To reset manually:

```
rm ~/.openclaw/disable-launchagent
```

## Attach-only mode

To force the macOS app to `never install or manage launchd`, launch it with `--attach-only` (or `--no-launchd`). This sets `~/.openclaw/disable-launchagent`, so the app only attaches to an already running Gateway. You can toggle the same behavior in Debug Settings.

## Remote mode

Remote mode never starts a local Gateway. The app uses an SSH tunnel to the remote host and connects over that tunnel.

## Why we prefer launchd



Auto-start at login.

Built-in restart/KeepAlive semantics.

Predictable logs and supervision.

---

If a true child-process mode is ever needed again, it should be documented as a separate, explicit dev-only mode.

[◀ Canvas](#)

[Health Checks ▶](#)

Powered by [mintlify](#)