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Install & Updates

## Updating

OpenClaw is moving fast (pre “1.0”). Treat updates like shipping infra: update → run checks → restart (or use `openclaw update`, which restarts) → verify.

### Recommended: re-run the website installer (upgrade in place)

The **preferred** update path is to re-run the installer from the website. It detects existing installs, upgrades in place, and runs `openclaw doctor` when needed.

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



Notes:

Add `--no-onboard` if you don't want the onboarding wizard to run again.

For **source installs**, use:

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



The installer will `git pull --rebase` **only** if the repo is clean.

For **global installs**, the script uses `npm install -g openclaw@latest` under the hood.

Legacy note: `openclaw` remains available as a compatibility shim.

## Before you update



Know how you installed: **global** (npm/pnpm) vs **from source** (git clone).

Know how your Gateway is running: **foreground terminal** vs **supervised service** (launchd/systemd).

Snapshot your tailoring:

Config: `~/.openclaw/openclaw.json`

Credentials: `~/.openclaw/credentials/`

Workspace: `~/.openclaw/workspace`

## Update (global install)

Global install (pick one):

```
npm i -g openclaw@latest
```



```
pnpm add -g openclaw@latest
```



We do **not** recommend Bun for the Gateway runtime (WhatsApp/Telegram bugs).

To switch update channels (git + npm installs):

```
openclaw update --channel beta
openclaw update --channel dev
openclaw update --channel stable
```




Use `--tag <dist-tag|version>` for a one-off install tag/version.


See [Development channels](#) for channel semantics and release notes.

Note: on npm installs, the gateway logs an update hint on startup (checks the current channel tag). Disable via `update.checkOnStart: false`.

Then:



```
openclaw doctor
openclaw gateway restart
openclaw health
```



#### Notes:

If your Gateway runs as a service, `openclaw gateway restart` is preferred over killing PIDs.

If you're pinned to a specific version, see "Rollback / pinning" below.

## Update ( `openclaw update` )

For **source installs** (git checkout), prefer:

```
openclaw update
```



It runs a safe-ish update flow:

Requires a clean worktree.

Switches to the selected channel (tag or branch).

Fetches + rebases against the configured upstream (dev channel).

Installs deps, builds, builds the Control UI, and runs `openclaw doctor`.

Restarts the gateway by default (use `--no-restart` to skip).

If you installed via **npm/pnpm** (no git metadata), `openclaw update` will try to update via your package manager. If it can't detect the install, use "Update (global install)" instead.

## Update (Control UI / RPC)

The Control UI has **Update & Restart** (RPC: `update.run`). It:

1. Runs the same source-update flow as `openclaw update` (git checkout only).

2. Writes a restart sentinel with a structured report (stdout/stderr tail).
3. Restarts the gateway and pings the last active session with the report.

If the rebase fails, the gateway aborts and restarts without applying the update.

## Update (from source)

From the repo checkout:

Preferred:

```
openclaw update
```



Manual (equivalent-ish):

```
git pull
pnpm install
pnpm build
pnpm ui:build # auto-installs UI deps on first run
openclaw doctor
openclaw health
```



Notes:

`pnpm build` matters when you run the packaged `openclaw` binary (`openclaw.mjs`) or use Node to run `dist/`.

If you run from a repo checkout without a global install, use `pnpm openclaw ...` for CLI commands.

If you run directly from TypeScript (`pnpm openclaw ...`), a rebuild is usually unnecessary, but **config migrations still apply** → run `doctor`.

Switching between global and git installs is easy: install the other flavor, then run `openclaw doctor` so the gateway service entrypoint is rewritten to the current install.

# Always Run: openclaw doctor

Doctor is the “safe update” command. It’s intentionally boring: repair + migrate + warn. >

Note: if you’re on a **source install** (git checkout), `openclaw doctor` will offer to run `openclaw update` first.

Typical things it does:

- Migrate deprecated config keys / legacy config file locations.

- Audit DM policies and warn on risky “open” settings.

- Check Gateway health and can offer to restart.

- Detect and migrate older gateway services (launchd/systemd; legacy schtasks) to current OpenClaw services.

- On Linux, ensure systemd user lingering (so the Gateway survives logout).

Details: [Doctor](#)

## Start / stop / restart the Gateway

CLI (works regardless of OS):

```
openclaw gateway status
openclaw gateway stop
openclaw gateway restart
openclaw gateway --port 18789
openclaw logs --follow
```



If you’re supervised:

macOS launchd (app-bundled LaunchAgent): `launchctl kickstart -k gui/$UID/bot.molt.gateway` (use `bot.molt.<profile>` ; legacy `com.openclaw.*` still works)

Linux systemd user service: `systemctl --user restart openclaw-gateway[<profile>].service`



```
Windows (WSL2): systemctl --user restart openclaw-gateway[  
<profile>].service
```

```
launchctl / systemctl only work if the service is installed;  
otherwise run openclaw gateway install .
```

Runbook + exact service labels: [Gateway runbook](#)

## Rollback / pinning (when something breaks)

### Pin (global install)

Install a known-good version (replace `<version>` with the last working one):

```
npm i -g openclaw@<version>
```



```
pnpm add -g openclaw@<version>
```



Tip: to see the current published version, run `npm view openclaw version` .

Then restart + re-run doctor:

```
openclaw doctor  
openclaw gateway restart
```



### Pin (source) by date

Pick a commit from a date (example: “state of main as of 2026-01-01”):

```
git fetch origin  
git checkout "$(git rev-list -n 1 --before=\"2026-01-01\" origin/main)"
```



Then reinstall deps + restart:

```
npm install
pnpm build
openclaw gateway restart
>
```



If you want to go back to latest later:

```
git checkout main
git pull
```



## If you're stuck

Run `openclaw doctor` again and read the output carefully (it often tells you the fix).

Check: [Troubleshooting](#)

Ask in Discord: <https://discord.gg/clawd>

< [Installer Internals](#)

[Development Channels](#) >

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