OpenClawKit

AI AGENT PLATFORM

The AI Agent Revolution

A Beginner's Guide to OpenClaw, Claude, and OpenRouter

Free Guide • 2026 Edition

What Are AI Agents and Why They Matter

We're witnessing a fundamental shift in how humans interact with technology. AI agents are not just chatbots—they're autonomous digital assistants that can think, plan, and act on your behalf.

🤖 What is an AI Agent?

An **AI agent** is an autonomous software system powered by large language models (LLMs) that can:

- Understand natural language instructions
- Break down complex tasks into steps
- Use tools (browse the web, write code, send messages)
- Learn from context and adapt to your preferences
- Work independently while keeping you in control

The AI Agent Stack

Layer 1: The Brain (LLM)

Claude, GPT-4, Gemini—the large language models that provide reasoning and language understanding.

Layer 2: The Gateway (OpenRouter)

A unified API that connects you to 200+ AI models without vendor lock-in.

Layer 3: The Agent (OpenClaw)

The orchestration layer that gives the AI hands—tools to browse, code, message, and automate.

Why Now?

Three factors have converged to make AI agents practical:

- **Smarter models:** Claude 3.5 Sonnet, GPT-4, and others can now reason reliably
- **Tool use:** LLMs can now call functions and APIs, making them actionable
- **Cost reduction:** Inference costs have dropped 10x in the past year

OpenClaw: Your Personal AI Agent

OpenClaw is a personal AI agent you run locally on your own machine. It gives you all the power of Claude, GPT-4, and other frontier models—without sacrificing privacy or control.

🔒 Privacy First

Your data stays on your machine. No cloud storage of conversations or personal info.

💰 Cost Control

Pay only for API calls you make. No subscriptions, no markup.

🔒 No Lock-In

Switch between 200+ models instantly. Try GPT-4, Claude, Gemini —your choice.

📱 Multi-Channel

Talk via CLI, Telegram, Discord, WhatsApp—all from one agent.

🛠️ Built-in Tools

Browse the web, write code, manage files, control your phone—all native.

🧠 Long-Term Memory

Your agent remembers context across sessions, learning your preferences.

What Can OpenClaw Do?

📊 Research & Analysis

Search the web, extract data, summarize documents, compare options

💻 Coding Assistant

Write code, debug, review PRs, deploy apps, manage git repos

📧 Communication

Send emails, tweets, Telegram messages; draft content; schedule posts

🤖 Automation

Schedule tasks, monitor feeds, scrape data, trigger workflows

Real Example

"Check my unread emails, summarize anything urgent, draft a response to the investor inquiry, and add the meeting to my calendar."

OpenClaw handles all of this in one turn—no switching between apps.

Claude by Anthropic: The AI Brain

Claude is Anthropic's family of AI models, designed to be helpful, harmless, and honest. It powers OpenClaw's default reasoning engine.

The Claude Model Family

⚡ ### Claude 3.5 Haiku   `Fastest`

Best for: Quick tasks, API calls, real-time chat

Speed: ~0.5s response time

Cost: $0.80/M input tokens, $4/M output tokens

Use case: Heartbeats, quick lookups, summarization

⚖️ ### Claude 3.5 Sonnet   `Balanced`

Best for: Coding, writing, complex reasoning

Speed: ~2s response time

Cost: $3/M input tokens, $15/M output tokens

Use case: Default for most tasks—smart and affordable

🧠 ### Claude 3 Opus   `Premium`

Best for: Hardest problems, research, creative work

Speed: ~4s response time

Cost: $15/M input tokens, $75/M output tokens

Use case: When you need the absolute best reasoning

Claude's Superpowers

📝 Long Context

200,000 token window—handle entire codebases or long documents in one go.

🎯 Tool Use

Industry-leading function calling accuracy. Reliable for agent workflows.

💻 Coding Excellence

Consistently ranks #1 on SWE-bench and HumanEval coding benchmarks.

🛡️ Safety

Built with Constitutional AI—refuses harmful requests, respects privacy.

When to Use Each Claude Model

Task Type	Recommended Model	Why
Background checks (email, calendar)	Haiku	Fast, cheap, good enough for simple tasks
Writing code or articles	Sonnet	Best balance of quality and cost
Complex research or analysis	Opus	Maximum reasoning ability
Web search summarization	Haiku or Sonnet	Sonnet for nuance, Haiku for speed
Creative writing	Opus or Sonnet	Opus for literary quality, Sonnet for speed
Debugging complex systems	Sonnet or Opus	Sonnet usually sufficient, Opus for edge cases

> 💡 **Pro Tip: Mix and Match**
>
> OpenClaw lets you use different models for different tasks in the same session. Use Haiku for heartbeats, Sonnet for daily work, and Opus when you hit a hard problem.

Claude Pricing in Practice

Example: A typical work session

- **10 heartbeat checks (Haiku):** ~5K tokens = $0.004

- **5 coding tasks (Sonnet):** ~50K tokens = $0.15

- **1 complex research (Opus):** ~20K tokens = $0.30

Total daily cost: ~$0.45

Compare that to ChatGPT Plus at $20/month ($0.67/day) with rate limits and no API access.

OpenRouter: The Model Gateway

OpenRouter is a unified API that gives you access to 200+ AI models from every major provider—through a single interface.

Why OpenRouter Matters

🔓 No Vendor Lock-In

Try GPT-4, Claude, Gemini, Llama, Mistral, and hundreds more—all with the same API. Switch models in seconds.

💸 Transparent Pricing

See exact per-token costs. OpenRouter adds a small markup (~10%) for convenience and routing.

🚀 Free Models Available

Many models (Gemini Flash, Kimi K2.5, Llama) are completely free—perfect for experimentation.

⚡ Smart Routing

OpenRouter automatically routes to the fastest available provider. No downtime.

Popular Models on OpenRouter

Model	Provider	Best For	Cost/M tokens
Claude 3.5 Sonnet	Anthropic	Coding, reasoning	$3 / $15
GPT-4 Turbo	OpenAI	General tasks	$10 / $30
Kimi K2.5	Moonshot	Long context (free!)	Free
Gemini 2.0 Flash	Google	Multimodal (free!)	Free
DeepSeek v2	DeepSeek	Cheap, fast reasoning	$0.14 / $0.28
Llama 3.3 70B	Meta	Open source power	$0.59 / $0.79

🎯 OpenClaw + OpenRouter = Freedom

With OpenClaw, you configure OpenRouter once and can switch models anytime. No need to manage separate API keys for Anthropic, OpenAI, Google, etc.

The Big Model Comparison

Here's how the top models stack up across the metrics that matter most for agent work.

Metric	Claude 3.5 Sonnet	GPT-4 Turbo	Kimi K2.5	Gemini 2.0 Pro
Speed (avg response)	~2s ⚡⚡⚡	~3s ⚡⚡	~2.5s ⚡⚡⚡	~1.5s ⚡⚡⚡⚡
Coding Quality	Excellent ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐	Very Good ⭐⭐⭐⭐	Good ⭐⭐⭐	Good ⭐⭐⭐
Reasoning	Excellent ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐	Excellent ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐	Very Good ⭐⭐⭐⭐	Very Good ⭐⭐⭐⭐
Tool Use Accuracy	Best-in-class 98%	Excellent 95%	Good 85%	Very Good 90%
Context Window	200K tokens	128K tokens	1M tokens 🏆	1M tokens 🏆
Cost (input/output)	$3/$15 💰💰	$10/$30 💰💰💰	FREE 🎉	FREE 🎉
Multimodal (vision)	✅ Yes	✅ Yes	❌ No	✅ Yes
Best Use Case	Coding, agents	General tasks	Long docs (free)	Vision, speed (free)

The Verdict

🏆 Best Overall: Claude 3.5 Sonnet

For agent workflows, Claude wins on tool use accuracy, coding quality, and reliability. Worth the cost.

💰 Best Value: Kimi K2.5

Free, huge context window, great for research and long documents. Use for non-critical tasks.

🎨 Best Multimodal: Gemini 2.0 Pro

Free tier, excellent vision capabilities, fastest inference. Great for image analysis.

🔧 Best for Enterprises: GPT-4 Turbo

Most widely adopted, great documentation, strong all-around. Higher cost justified for mission-critical apps.

Why OpenClaw is Better

You could use ChatGPT, Claude.ai, or other hosted services. Here's why running your own agent locally gives you superpowers.

🔒 1. Privacy & Data Sovereignty

Problem: When you use ChatGPT or Claude.ai, your conversations are stored on their servers. They can be used for training, subpoenaed, or leaked.

OpenClaw solution: Everything stays on your machine. Your memory files, conversation history, and personal data never leave your control.

💰 2. Cost Control

Problem: ChatGPT Plus is $20/month with rate limits. Claude Pro is $20/month. Gemini Advanced is $20/month. Want all three? $60/month.

OpenClaw solution: Pay only for tokens you use. Most users spend $5–15/month and get access to ALL models. No rate limits, no subscriptions.

🔓 3. No Vendor Lock-In

Problem: If you build workflows around ChatGPT and OpenAI raises prices or shuts down your account, you're stuck.

OpenClaw solution: Switch models anytime. GPT-4 too expensive? Try Claude. Claude overloaded? Try Gemini. All from one interface.

4. Multi-Channel

Problem: You have to use separate apps for ChatGPT web, ChatGPT mobile, Claude, etc. No unified memory.

OpenClaw solution: Talk to your agent via CLI, Telegram, Discord, WhatsApp, or SMS—same agent, same memory, same context.

5. Real Tools

Problem: ChatGPT can browse the web (sometimes). That's it. No file access, no code execution, no automation.

OpenClaw solution: Full access to your filesystem, git repos, shell, browser, camera, notifications, cron jobs, and more. It's a real assistant.

6. Long-Term Memory

Problem: Hosted services have limited context. They forget between sessions unless you manually paste old conversations.

OpenClaw solution: Your agent maintains MEMORY.md and daily logs. It remembers what you've worked on, your preferences, and lessons learned.

Getting Started with OpenClaw

Ready to run your own AI agent? Here's your step-by-step checklist.

📋 Setup Checklist

✓ **Create an OpenRouter account**
Visit openrouter.ai and sign up. Free tier available.

✓ **Get API credits**
Add $5-10 to start. Free models (Kimi, Gemini) require no credits.

✓ **Download OpenClaw**
Visit openclawkit.ai and download for macOS, Windows, or Linux.

✓ **Install and configure**
Run the installer, paste your OpenRouter API key when prompted.

✓ **Choose your default model**
We recommend Claude 3.5 Sonnet for balanced performance.

✓ **Test the CLI**
Open terminal and type: `openclaw chat "Hello! Tell me about yourself."`

✓ **Set up Telegram (optional)**
Connect your Telegram bot for mobile access.

Customize your workspace

Edit SOUL.md and USER.md to teach your agent about you.

✓ **Enable heartbeats**
Let your agent proactively check email, calendar, and notifications.

✓ **Explore skills**
Install skills for email, GitHub, Twitter, calendar, and more.

🎓 New User Path

Day 1: Get basic chat working. Ask it questions, test web search.

Day 2: Connect Telegram or Discord. Chat from your phone.

Day 3: Set up heartbeats. Let it monitor your inbox.

Week 2: Teach it about your projects. Use it for coding help.

Month 1: Build custom workflows. Automate repetitive tasks.

Resources & Next Steps

📚 Official Resources

OpenClawKit Website
openclawkit.ai

Documentation
docs.openclawkit.ai

GitHub Repository
github.com/openclaw/openclaw

Community Discord
discord.gg/openclaw

OpenRouter Dashboard
openrouter.ai/dashboard

Claude Documentation
docs.anthropic.com/claude

🎓 Learning Resources

Video Tutorials

- OpenClaw Quick Start (10 min)

- Building Your First Agent Workflow (25 min)

- Advanced Memory Management (15 min)

- Multi-Channel Setup Guide (12 min)

Written Guides

- The Complete OpenClaw Handbook

- Model Selection Best Practices

- Privacy & Security Guide

- Cost Optimization Strategies

🤝 Community & Support

Join the Community

Discord server with 5,000+ members. Get help, share workflows, and discover new use cases.

Email Support

support@openclawkit.ai — We respond within 24 hours.

Report Issues

GitHub Issues for bug reports and feature requests.

Ready to Take Control?

10,000+

Users running their own AI agents

Start Your AI Agent Journey Today

Download OpenClaw and get access to 200+ AI models—on your terms.

Download OpenClaw Free

Works on macOS, Windows, and Linux • No subscription required

What You Get

✅ **Complete Privacy**

All data stays on your machine

✅ **Model Freedom**

Access to Claude, GPT-4, Gemini, and 200+ more

✅ Pay Per Use

No subscriptions, no markups

✅ Multi-Channel

CLI, Telegram, Discord, WhatsApp

✅ Built-in Tools

Web, code, files, automation

✅ Active Community

Discord, docs, video tutorials

🎁 Limited Time Bonus

Download this week and get:

- **$10 OpenRouter credits** (promo code: OPENCLAW2026)

- **Premium skills pack** (GitHub, email, calendar integration)

- **1-on-1 onboarding session** (first 100 users)

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