

Which Claude do I use?

And how do I make it know my business?

The sheet we give every client. Four models, one effort dial, three ways to load your business in. Save it, share it, argue with it. Updated 9 Sep 2026.

01 · THE FOUR MODELS

Haiku 4.5

"the sprinter"

SPEED ●●● · COST ●○○○

Near-instant and the cheapest. Use it when the task is mechanical and volume is high.

- Sorting & tagging anything
- Pulling data out of emails/PDFs
- Meeting notes → summary
- Quick lookups & drafts

Sonnet 5

"the workhorse"

SPEED ●●●○ · COST ●●○○

The everyday default. Best smarts-per-dollar for 80% of real work.

- Client emails & documents
- Everyday coding
- Research & analysis
- Website & marketing copy

Opus 5

"the heavy lifter"

SPEED ●●○○ (FAST MODE) · COST ●●●○

Opus 4.8 is our stable pick. Still in the picker under More models, and it has not surprised us on a long run. Opus 5 is the newer, most capable one: sometimes the best of the four, sometimes it trails off before the job is done. Both read entire codebases and contract stacks at 1M-token context.

- Complex code & refactors
- Long documents, many files
- Proposals that must land
- Judgment calls with nuance

Fable 5.1

"the frontier"

SPEED ●●○○ · COST ●●●●

The newest flagship family. Hardest reasoning, longest agent runs, best taste.

- Strategy & pricing decisions
- Agents that run for hours
- Gnarly multi-step problems
- "This really matters" work

House rule: start on **Sonnet**. Drop to **Haiku** the moment the task feels mechanical. Escalate to **Opus** or **Fable** when being wrong is expensive, a lost client or a broken deploy. For a long unattended run, **Opus 4.8** is the one that has not surprised us.

02 · THE EFFORT DIAL (MOST PEOPLE NEVER TOUCH IT)

Every model also has an **Effort setting**, five steps from Low to Max: how long it reasons before answering. Low = instant answer. High = it works the problem first, and it is the default. Max uses 1.5 times your limits or more. This changes results more than most model swaps.

EFFORT	WHEN	FEELS LIKE
LOW	Lookups, rewrites, formatting, anything you'll check yourself	A fast colleague answering from memory
MEDIUM / HIGH / EXTRA	Debugging, planning, maths, anything multi-step	Someone taking a walk to think it through first
MAX	The genuinely hard stuff, let it grind	A specialist locking the door for an afternoon

Cheat: a mid model on **high effort** often beats a big model on low effort for puzzles and debugging. But for taste, writing, strategy, judgment, the bigger model wins even on low. **Puzzle → effort. Taste → model.**

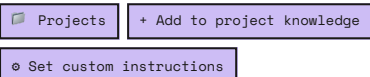
Where it lives: claude.ai → the model picker beside the message box → Effort → Low, Medium, High, Extra or Max · Claude Code → type /model → pick model and effort

03 · TEACH IT YOUR BUSINESS (THIS IS THE UNLOCK)

STEP 1

Make a Project, load your gold

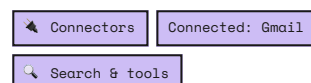
In claude.ai: sidebar → Projects → new. Upload your website copy, your 2 to 3 best proposals, 5 real customer emails. Then set instructions: "Write like these examples. This is our tone, our offer, our prices." Every chat in the project now knows your business.



STEP 2

Connect your real tools

Settings → Connectors. Plug in Gmail, Drive, Calendar (and any MCP tool your systems expose). Now it answers from your actual emails and files: "Summarise every open quote from this month's email."



STEP 3

Show, don't describe

The 3-example rule: paste two or three gold-standard outputs before you ask for a new one. Models copy patterns far better than they follow adjectives. "Professional but friendly" loses to three real examples, every time.

Here are 3 quotes we actually sent and won.
Match their structure, tone and length.
Now write one for: [new client details]

THE TASK	MODEL	EFFORT	PLUS
Label / sort / extract from 1,000 things	Haiku 4.5	LOW	Clear format example
Reply to a customer email	Sonnet 5	LOW	3 past replies as examples
Write a proposal or quote	Opus 5	MEDIUM	Project with your winners loaded
Debug code / fix a spreadsheet formula	Sonnet 5 → Opus 5	HIGH	Paste the error, not a description
Read a 100-page contract / whole codebase	Opus 5	MEDIUM	1M context, give it everything
Pricing, strategy, "what should we do?"	Fable 5.1	MAX	Real numbers in, always
An agent that works for hours unattended	Fable 5.1 / Opus 5	HIGH	Connectors + tight instructions
Meeting → summary → action list	Haiku 4.5	LOW	Your action-list template

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free to share · updated when the lineup changes

by Tech Horizon Labs