
Markdown Reader — User Guide

How to read, write and share Markdown documents with Markdown Reader and Markdown Pro on macOS, Windows and Linux.

VERSION

2.0

PLATFORMS

macOS 12 or later (Apple silicon or Intel) · Windows 10 and 11 (64-bit) · Ubuntu 24.04 or later (x86_64 or arm64) · Arch Linux and Omarchy (x86_64)

UPDATED

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WEBSITE

www.sortedsolution.com

Markdown Reader opens `.md` files as clean, formatted documents. Double-click a file to read it, find your way around a folder of notes, and print or export it as a PDF. The viewer is free and needs no account, and your documents never leave your computer.

Markdown Pro is the same app with collaboration, writing and sharing unlocked. Its headline feature is **collaborating with your AI agent**: run an agent such as Claude Code, Codex CLI or Gemini CLI in a terminal under your document, watch the document update as the agent writes, answer its questions in place, and see who wrote what. Pro also adds the editor with a live preview, formatting tools and templates, and branded PDF, HTML and Word export and email. Try it free for 14 days from inside the app.

💡 Tip

This guide is itself a Markdown file, and it's built into the app: choose **Help ▶ Markdown Reader User Guide** to open it, or **Help ▶ Collaborating with AI Agents** to jump to [Terminal and AI agents](#).

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Getting started

Install on a Mac

1. Double-click the downloaded **MarkdownReader-2.0.4.dmg**.
2. Drag the **Markdown Reader** icon onto the **Applications** folder.
3. Eject the disk image, then open Markdown Reader from Applications or Launchpad.

Markdown Reader is signed by its developer and notarized by Apple. The first time you open it, macOS asks you to confirm that you want to open an app downloaded from the internet. Click **Open**. You only need to do this once.

Install on Windows

1. Unzip **MarkdownReader-2.0.4-Windows.zip**.
2. Move **MarkdownReader.exe** to a folder you keep, such as Documents or a Tools folder.
3. Double-click **MarkdownReader.exe**.

There is no installer and nothing else to set up. Markdown Reader uses Microsoft Edge WebView2, which is part of Windows 11 and nearly all Windows 10 systems. If it's missing, the app

offers to open Microsoft's download page.

① Note

The first time you run it, Windows SmartScreen may show "**Windows protected your PC**". Click **More info**, then **Run anyway**. See [Troubleshooting](#) for details.

Keep **MarkdownReader.exe** in a folder you can change without administrator rights (not **Program Files**), so it can update itself.

Install on Linux

Markdown Reader for Linux uses GTK 4, WebKitGTK 6 and GtkSourceView 5 from your distribution; the package manager installs them for you.

Ubuntu 24.04 or later (x86_64 or arm64) — download the `.deb` for your processor and install it from the folder you saved it in:

```
sudo apt install ./markdown-reader_2.0.4-1_amd64.deb      # arm64: ..._arm64.deb
```

Arch Linux and Omarchy (x86_64) — install the downloaded package with pacman, or, once it's on the AUR, with an AUR helper such as yay:

```
sudo pacman -U markdown-reader-bin-2.0.4-1-x86_64.pkg.tar.zst
yay -S markdown-reader-bin
```

Open **Markdown Reader** from your applications menu, or run `markdown-reader` (optionally followed by file names) in a terminal. This guide is installed as `/usr/share/doc/markdown-reader/User Guide.pdf`.

① Note

If the window opens but the document area stays blank on Ubuntu 24.04, see [The document area is blank on Linux](#).

Open your first document

- Double-click a Markdown file (once Markdown Reader is the default app, below).
- Drag a file onto the Markdown Reader icon (on the Mac, the Dock icon works too).
- Choose **File ▶ Open...** (⌘O / Ctrl+O), or **File ▶ Open Recent**.
- Choose **File ▶ Open Folder...** to browse a whole folder of notes in the sidebar.

Markdown Reader recognizes `.md`, `.markdown`, `.mdown`, `.mkd`, `.markdn` and `.mdtext` files.

Keyboard shortcuts in this guide are written Mac first, then Windows and Linux, for example ⌘O / Ctrl+O. Where Linux differs from Windows, both are given; the [Keyboard shortcuts](#) tables have a column for each system.

When you quit with documents open, Markdown Reader reopens them next time. Turn this off with **Reopen documents from last session** in Settings.

When you close the last window

The free edition quits when you close its last window. **Markdown Pro keeps running**, so it's ready the next time you open a document:

- **Mac:** the app stays in the Dock. Click its Dock icon to see the Open dialog; **File ▶ New** (⌘N) and **File ▶ Open...** work from the menu bar. Quit with **Quit Markdown Pro** (⌘Q) in the app menu.
- **Windows:** a Markdown Pro icon appears in the notification area (at the right of the taskbar; it may be under the ^ arrow) while no window is open. Right-click it for **New Document**, **Open...**, **Open Recent** and **Quit**; double-click it to open a document.
- **Linux:** the app keeps running in the background. Open Markdown Reader again from your applications menu to see the Open dialog. To quit, choose **File ▶ Quit** (Ctrl+Q) while a window is open.

On Windows and Linux, Markdown Reader runs once per user: opening a document while it's running, for example by double-clicking a file, opens the document in the running app.

Getting help

Choose **Help ▶ Markdown Reader User Guide** (⌘? on the Mac, F1 on Windows and Linux) to open this guide in the app, or **Help ▶ Collaborating with AI Agents** to go straight to [Terminal and AI agents](#). The guide opens read-only: Edit and Split aren't available in its window. It's also installed as a PDF (`User Guide.pdf`) with the Mac and Windows downloads and on Linux.

Make it the default app for Markdown files

Mac

1. In Finder, right-click any `.md` file and choose **Get Info**.
2. Under **Open with**, choose **Markdown Reader**.
3. Click **Change All...** and confirm.

Windows

Markdown Reader adds itself to the **Open with** list for Markdown files the first time it runs.

1. Right-click any `.md` file and choose **Open with** ► **Choose another app**.
2. Select **Markdown Reader**. If it isn't listed, choose **Choose an app on your PC** and browse to **MarkdownReader.exe**.
3. Select **Always** (Windows 10: check **Always use this app to open .md files**) and click **OK**.

Repeat for other extensions, such as `.markdown`, if you use them.

Linux

In a terminal, run:

```
xdg-mime default com.sortedsol.MarkdownReader.desktop text/markdown
```

Most file managers can do the same: right-click a `.md` file, choose **Open With...** (in GNOME Files, **Open With...** ► **Markdown Reader**) and make it the default.

Staying up to date

Markdown Reader checks for a new version once a day. On the Mac and Windows, when one is available, a window shows what's new, with three choices:

Button	What it does
Install Update	Downloads the update, checks that it's genuine, installs it and restarts the app. You're asked to save any unsaved changes first.
Remind Me Later	Asks again at a later check.
Skip This	Doesn't offer this version again; you'll hear about the next one.

Version

Nothing is downloaded or installed until you click **Install Update**. To check right away, choose **Markdown Reader ▶ Check for Updates...** on the Mac or **Help ▶ Check for Updates...** on Windows. To stop the daily check, turn off **Automatically check for updates** in **Settings ▶ General** (Mac) or **File ▶ Options... ▶ General** (Windows); **Check for Updates...** still works.

On Linux, Markdown Reader tells you about new versions but doesn't install them; your package manager does. Check with **Help ▶ Check for Updates...**; the daily check is **Automatically check for updates** in **File ▶ Settings... ▶ General**. When a new version is available, the window shows what's new with **Later**, **Skip This Version** and **Download**:

- **Ubuntu: Download** opens the new `.deb` in your browser. Install it as before, with `sudo apt install ./<file>.deb`.
- **Arch and Omarchy**: update with your AUR helper (for example `yay -Syu`), or download the new package and install it with `sudo pacman -U <file>`.

The check sends only the app version, the edition (free or Pro) and your operating system version (on Linux, the distribution name and version, such as `ubuntu-24.04`). See [Privacy](#).

Markdown Reader and Markdown Pro

Markdown Reader is one app with two editions. Everything for reading is free; **Markdown Pro** unlocks collaborating with AI agents, writing and sharing. Unlocking Pro doesn't change your files or settings, and it takes effect in open windows right away. Once unlocked, the app calls itself **Markdown Pro** (for example **About Markdown Pro** and **Quit Markdown Pro** on the Mac).

	Markdown Reader (free)	Markdown Pro
Title header, front matter, callouts, footnotes, code highlighting, Mermaid diagrams	✓	✓
Folding and copy-section	✓	✓
Sortable tables: click a column header to sort	✓	✓
Sidebar: Outline, Files and Search	✓	✓
Find, zoom, themes and styles	✓	✓

Links between documents, Back and Forward	✓	✓
Auto-reload, Open Recent, reopen windows, per-file zoom and scroll	✓	✓
Word count and reading time	✓	✓
Print and Export as PDF	✓	✓
Copy, Stylized Copy	✓	✓
Quick Look previews in Finder (Mac)	✓	✓
Built-in terminal with the Run menu for AI agents such as Claude Code, Codex CLI and Gemini CLI	—	✓
Authorship: see who wrote what — you, your AI agent or an outside edit	—	✓
Keeps running after the last window closes	—	✓
Edit and Split views, formatting toolbar and Format menu	—	✓
New, New from Template, Save as Template, saving edits	—	✓
Paste and drop images, table editing, Find and Replace	—	✓
Spell check (Mac), line numbers (Windows and Linux)	—	✓
Export Branded PDF and the Branding settings	—	✓
Export as HTML and as Word (.docx)	—	✓
Email as formatted text or PDF attachment	—	✓

What the free edition looks like

- The toolbar shows the sidebar, Back and Forward, the **Read / Pro** control and Find. Once Pro is unlocked, the control becomes **Read / Edit / Split** and the formatting tools appear. The **status bar** under the document shows the word count and zoom. The **Authorship** and **Terminal** buttons at the right of the toolbar carry a Pro lock.
- **Pro** carries a lock on the Mac; on Windows and Linux it's a blue **PRO** badge. Click it for a tour of Markdown Pro, with screenshots of each feature and links to start the free trial, buy, or enter a license key.
- Pro commands stay in the menus; choosing one, or pressing its shortcut (such as Edit, ⌘2 / Ctrl+2), opens the **Markdown Pro** window instead.
- **Settings ▶ Branding** shows a short description of branded PDFs with the same choices instead of the settings.
- Double-clicked documents always open in Read view.

The **Markdown Pro** window lists what Pro adds, with the price, and offers **Start 14-Day Free Trial**, **Enter License Key...**, **Learn More** (the Markdown Pro web page) and **Not Now**.

Pricing

Markdown Pro costs **\$29, one time** — no subscription.

- One license key works on **Mac, Windows and Linux**, on **up to 5 devices** in total.
- Every **2.x** update is included. A future major version may be offered as a discounted upgrade.

Try Markdown Pro free for 14 days

1. Choose **Upgrade to Markdown Pro...** — in the **Markdown Reader** menu on the Mac, or the **Help** menu on Windows and Linux. (Any Pro command opens the same window.)
2. Click **Start 14-Day Free Trial**.

Every Pro feature is unlocked straight away; there's nothing to buy or sign up for. The trial starts only when you click the button, not when you install the app. While it runs, the status bar shows **Trial · N days left**; click it to open the license window.

When the trial ends, Markdown Reader tells you once (**Your Markdown Pro trial has ended**) and goes back to the free edition. Windows that were in Edit or Split view switch to Read. Your documents, templates and branding settings are untouched, and everything you wrote stays readable. A trial can't be restarted.

Buy Markdown Pro and enter your key

1. Buy Markdown Pro at sortedsolution.com/markdown-pro, or choose **Buy Markdown Pro...** (in the **Markdown Reader** menu on the Mac, the **Help** menu on Windows and Linux). You receive a license key.
2. In Markdown Reader, choose **Upgrade to Markdown Pro...** and click **Enter License Key...**
3. Paste the key and click **Activate**. This needs an internet connection.

The same menu item then reads **Markdown Pro License....** It shows your edition and the key, partly hidden, for example `ABCD-••••-••••-WXYZ` .

Markdown Pro checks the license about once a day. Without internet it keeps working for 30 days; after that, the license window offers **Check Again** once you're back online.

Tip

Moving to a new computer? Choose **Markdown Pro License... > Remove License** on the old one first, so that device no longer counts toward your five. You can enter the key again at any time.

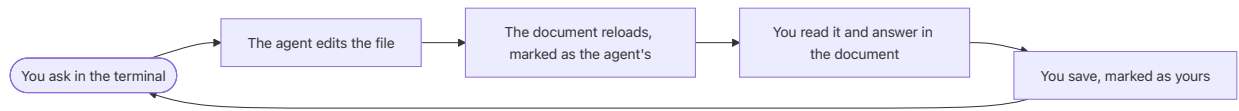
Terminal and AI agents

Note

Collaborating with AI agents is part of **Markdown Pro** (the trial included). In the free edition, the **Terminal** and **Authorship** buttons in the toolbar are marked as Pro features and open the Markdown Pro window.

Markdown Pro is made for writing *with* an AI agent. Every document window has a terminal built in, already in the document's folder, where you run an AI coding agent such as Claude Code, Codex CLI or Gemini CLI. You ask the agent for a draft or a change, it edits the Markdown file, and the document above reloads as soon as the file is saved — formatted, so you review a real document rather than raw Markdown. When the agent needs a decision, it can write its questions into the document and you answer them there. Throughout, **authorship** marks who wrote each part — you, the agent, or someone or something else — so you can see at a glance what the agent changed.

Markdown Reader doesn't include an agent and doesn't send anything to one. Each agent is a separate program that you install and sign in to yourself; see [Things to know about AI agents](#).



A session, step by step

1. **Open the document** you want to work on. To start from nothing, choose **File ▶ New** and save the document once, so there's a file — and a folder — for the agent to work in.
2. **Save your edits** (⌘S / Ctrl+S). The agent works on the file on disk, not on unsaved text in the window.
3. **Open the terminal:** the **Terminal** button at the right of the toolbar, **View ▶ Show Terminal**, or `^` / Ctrl+``. It opens in the document's folder.
4. **Start your agent** with the **Run** button, for example **Run Claude Code**. The first time, choose your agent from the ▼ menu beside it (see [Choosing an AI agent](#)). The agent may ask you to sign in or to trust the folder the first time it runs there.
5. **Ask for a draft or an edit** in plain language, naming the file:

```
In quarterly-report.md, tidy the Regional results table and right-align the numbers. Then draft a short "Next steps" section at the end, based on the notes in the Risks section.
```

6. **Watch the document update.** Depending on its permission settings, the agent explains what it plans to do and asks before it changes a file. Each time it saves, the document reloads in place and keeps your scroll position. Stay in **Read** view to review the formatted result, or switch to **Split** view (⌘3 / Ctrl+3) to see the source beside it. Files the agent creates appear in the sidebar's **Files** tab, and links to them work straight away.
7. **Answer its questions in the document.** Ask the agent to put its questions in the document instead of the terminal, then type your answers under them and save. Tell the agent when you're done; it reads your answers from the file. See the [example](#) below.
8. **See who wrote what.** With **View ▶ Show Authorship** on, the agent's work has a violet bar in the margin and yours a mint-green one. See [Who wrote what](#).
9. **Keep your unsaved edits safe.** If you're typing when the agent saves, Markdown Pro doesn't overwrite your text; it asks. See [Your unsaved edits are protected](#).
10. **Keep a history.** For documents that matter, work in a folder under version control, such as Git, and commit each good version. See [Keep a history with version control](#).

Ask for adjustments ("make the Next steps section shorter") in the same conversation. To stop, quit the agent as its documentation describes, or close the window, which ends its terminal

session.

Example: answering an agent's questions in the document

You're preparing a proposal for a client, with Claude Code running in the terminal under `proposal.md` and authorship shown.

1. You ask:

```
Draft a proposal in proposal.md for moving Larkspur Logistics' file shares
to SharePoint, based on notes.md. Where you need a decision from me, don't
guess: add an "Open questions" section at the end, with an empty
"Answer:" line under each question.
```

2. The document reloads with the draft. Every block has Claude Code's violet bar, and the legend at the top right reads **● Claude Code**. At the end:

Open questions

1. Should the move happen over one weekend, or in two phases?
Answer:
2. Does the \$40,000 budget include licenses?
Answer:

3. In Split view, you type after each **Answer:** and save:

1. Should the move happen over one weekend, or in two phases?
Answer: Two phases – Finance first, everyone else two weeks later.

The legend now reads **● You ● Claude Code**. Each answered question is a list item written by both of you, so its bar is split between violet and green; hover over it and the tooltip names you both. Everything else stays violet.

4. In the terminal, you reply: *I've answered the open questions in proposal.md. Update the plan to match, then remove the Open questions section.* The agent rewrites the timeline and budget paragraphs, which show its violet bar with the new time; paragraphs it didn't touch keep their author.
5. Before you send the proposal, click the legend: **Who wrote what** shows how many lines each of you wrote. Read every violet block once more, and fix anything you'd say differently — your edits turn green when you save. Authorship never appears in prints or exports, so the

Branded PDF you send is clean.

Open the terminal

Click the **Terminal** button at the right of the toolbar, choose **View ▸ Show Terminal**, or press `⌘`` on the Mac or `Ctrl+`` on Windows and Linux. Do the same again to hide it (the button stays pressed in while the terminal is shown, and on the Mac the menu item reads **View ▸ Hide Terminal**); the shell keeps running while hidden.

The terminal slides up as a panel across the bottom of the window. Drag the divider above it to resize it; Markdown Reader remembers the height. The panel's header shows the current folder and these buttons:

Button	What it does
Run agent ▾	Starts an AI coding agent in the terminal. The button names the agent it starts, for example Run Claude Code ; the ▾ arrow beside it lists the others (see below)
Go to Document Folder	Changes the terminal's folder to the current document's folder, for example after you follow a link to a document elsewhere
New Session	Ends the current shell and starts a fresh one
× (Mac) / Close (Windows, Linux)	Hides the panel; the shell keeps running

The terminal runs your usual shell: on the Mac and Linux, your login shell (the one set in `$SHELL`, normally `zsh` on the Mac and `bash` on Linux); on Windows, PowerShell 7 if it's installed, otherwise Windows PowerShell, otherwise Command Prompt. It starts in the folder of the current document, or in your home folder for a new, unsaved document. Each window has its own session.

⚠ Warning

Closing the window ends its terminal session, and anything still running in it, including an AI agent.

On Windows, the terminal needs Windows 10 version 1809 or later.

On Linux, copy and paste in the terminal with **Ctrl+Shift+C** and **Ctrl+Shift+V**, as in most Linux terminals; Ctrl+C interrupts the running program. While the terminal has the keyboard focus, the app's own shortcuts are turned off so the shell and the programs in it receive them — except `Ctrl+``, which still hides the terminal.

Choosing an AI agent

Click the ▼ arrow beside the Run button to see the agents Markdown Reader knows about:

- **Installed agents** come first, each with its maker's name in grey. A check mark shows the one the Run button starts. Choose one to start it; it becomes the Run button's agent.
- **Not Installed** lists the rest. Choosing one opens its installation instructions in your browser, and the terminal shows a note such as *Codex CLI isn't installed. Install it from <https://github.com/openai/codex>, then choose Refresh.*
- **Refresh** looks again for installed agents, for example after you've installed one.

The Run button starts the agent you used last. Until you've chosen one, it starts the first installed agent in the list; if none is installed, it reads **Run Agent** and opens the list.

Agent	Made by	Command
Claude Code	Anthropic	<code>claude</code>
Codex CLI	OpenAI	<code>codex</code>
Gemini CLI	Google	<code>gemini</code>
GitHub Copilot CLI	GitHub	<code>copilot</code>
Cursor CLI	Cursor	<code>cursor-agent</code>
Aider	Aider	<code>aider</code>
OpenCode	SST	<code>opencode</code>
Amp	Sourcegraph	<code>amp</code>
Goose	Block	<code>goose session</code>
Qwen Code	Alibaba	<code>qwen</code>

Install and sign in to an agent by following its maker's instructions — for Claude Code, [Anthropic's Claude Code documentation](#). Markdown Reader doesn't include, install or sign in to any of these

agents, and it doesn't send anything to them. Running an agent simply types its command into the terminal for you, as you could yourself; you can also run any other command-line tool by typing its command. An agent counts as installed when your shell can find its command (on the Mac and Linux, through your login shell's `PATH` ; on Windows, through the `PATH`), or when it's in the folder its installer normally uses.

The Run button types into the shell's prompt, so use it when the shell is waiting for a command. On the Mac and Windows, it beeps instead if a program is already running in the terminal.

Who wrote what

Markdown Pro records who wrote each line of a document and can color the document to match:

Color	Shown as	Which changes
Mint green	You	Changes you save from Markdown Pro's editor
Violet	The agent's name, such as Claude Code	Changes saved to the file while that AI agent is running in the terminal of the document's window
Amber	Outside edit	Any other change to the file: another app, an agent running somewhere else, or a change made while the document wasn't open in Markdown Pro
Other shades (aqua, lime, teal...)	Another person's name	Changes someone else saved from Markdown Pro on their own computer, when the history travels with the document (see Where it's kept)

Show or hide it with **View ▸ Show Authorship** (⌘⌘A on the Mac, Ctrl+Shift+U on Windows, Ctrl+Alt+A on Linux) or the **Authorship** button at the right of the toolbar (**Authors** on Windows), which stays pressed in while the colors are shown. It's off by default, applies to every window, and is remembered. Hiding it changes only the display; Markdown Pro keeps recording.

While it's shown:

- Each paragraph, heading, list item, table row and quote gets a thin bar in the left margin and a faint tint in its author's color. A block written by more than one author gets a split bar.
- Hover over a block to see who wrote it and when, for example **Claude Code • Today 2:14 PM**.
- A legend at the top right of the document lists the authors present, such as ● **You** ● **Claude**

Code ● Outside edit. Click it to open **Who wrote what**: each author's share of the document, with the number of lines, the percentage and when they last changed something. Lines from before tracking started are counted as **Before tracking** and aren't colored. Click elsewhere or press Esc to close it.

- In Edit and Split views, the editor tints each line in the same colors.
- Edits you haven't saved yet already show as yours; they're recorded when you save.
- Blank lines don't count and stay uncolored.

Authorship is for your screen only. Prints, PDFs, HTML and Word exports, email and copies never include it. The User Guide window doesn't track or show it.

How changes are credited

- **You save** in Markdown Pro: the lines you added or changed are yours.
- **The file changes on disk** while it's open: if an AI agent is running in the terminal of that document's window — started with the Run button or by typing its command — the changed lines are the agent's. Otherwise they're an **Outside edit**.
- **The file changes while you have unsaved edits**: nothing is recorded until you choose on the [changed-on-disk bar](#). **Reload** credits the new version as above; **Keep Mine** records nothing, and when you then save, your version's differences count as yours.
- **You open a document that changed since Markdown Pro last saw it** (while it was closed, or while the app wasn't running): the changed lines are an **Outside edit**.

Authorship is recorded per line: changing one word credits the whole line, and a line that moves can count as changed. The document shows it per block, so a paragraph where you changed one line and the agent wrote the rest has a split bar.

Where it's kept

Markdown Pro keeps each document's history in a hidden folder named `.markdown-reader` next to the document. For `proposal.md`, it's `.markdown-reader/proposal.md.authors.json`. The file lists, for each line, a short fingerprint of the line (not its text), who last changed it and when, and the names of the authors — including yours, as your computer account shows it. It's created the first time a change is recorded; a document that hasn't changed since you started using Markdown Pro doesn't get one.

Because the history sits next to the document, it travels with the folder: copy, sync, zip or share the folder and the history goes along. The file format is the same on Mac, Windows and Linux, so the colors are there when you open the document on another computer.

Tip

Using Git? The `.markdown-reader` folder is committed like any other folder unless you exclude it. To keep it out of your repository, add this line to the `.gitignore` file in the repository's top folder:

```
.markdown-reader/
```

If you rename or move a document outside Markdown Pro, its history stays behind under the old name; rename the `.authors.json` file to match, or start afresh.

Turn it off or clear it

- **Track authorship (who wrote what)** in **Settings ▶ General** (Mac), **File ▶ Options... ▶ General** (Windows) or **File ▶ Settings... ▶ General** (Linux) turns recording on or off for all documents. On Windows and Linux, **View ▶ Authorship ▶ Track Authorship (Who Wrote What)** does the same. While it's off, nothing is recorded or shown and no `.markdown-reader` files are written; existing ones are left alone. When you turn it back on, changes made in between count as outside edits.
- **View ▶ Authorship ▶ Clear Authorship History...** deletes the current document's history file after asking. The document itself doesn't change, and changes from then on are recorded afresh.

The free edition doesn't record or show authorship and leaves existing history files alone. If your trial ends and you buy Markdown Pro later, the history is still there; changes made in between count as outside edits.

Limits

- **Only the built-in terminal is recognized.** An agent running in another terminal app, an editor or a service that syncs your files counts as **Outside edit**. Run your agent in the document window's terminal to have its work credited to it.
- **One window, one terminal.** An agent is credited only in the window whose terminal it runs in. If it changes a document that's open in another window, the change is an outside edit there.
- **People are told apart by their computer account.** Your saves are recorded under your account's login and full name, so you are **You** on each of your computers as long as those match. A colleague who edits in Markdown Pro on their own computer appears under their name, in their own shade, when the history file travels with the document (a shared folder or Git); someone editing in another app is an **Outside edit**.
- **Per line, shown per block**, as described above.

Your unsaved edits are protected

If the document has unsaved changes when an agent (or any other app) saves the file, Markdown Pro doesn't reload. The bar **This file changed on disk** slides down instead:

- **Reload** loads the agent's version and discards your unsaved edits.
- **Keep Mine** keeps your text. Saving it later replaces the agent's changes.

To avoid choosing, save before you ask the agent for something, and leave the editor alone while it works. If you keep your edits by mistake, the agent's version is gone from the file but not necessarily from the agent: ask it to make the change again.

Keep a history with version control

Changes an agent makes on disk aren't part of Markdown Reader's Undo. For documents that matter, work in a folder under version control, such as Git, or one with a backup:

- Commit before you ask for a large change, so you can compare (`git diff`) and go back (`git restore <file>`).
- Agents can usually run these commands for you: ask the agent to commit the current version, or to show what it changed.
- Authorship and version control complement each other: authorship shows at a glance who wrote the text as it is now; version control keeps every earlier version.

Tips

- **Name the file and the part** you mean ("the Risks section of quarterly-report.md"), and say what to leave alone ("don't change the Summary").
- **Ask for questions in the document.** They stay with the file, you can answer them in any order, and your answers are marked as yours.
- **Review in Read view, fix in Split view.** Small corrections are often quicker to type yourself than to describe.
- **Save before you hand back to the agent.** It reads the file on disk, so it only sees what you've saved.
- **Use the colors to review.** Violet blocks are what the agent wrote since you last touched them; the legend's **Who wrote what** shows how much is left to read.
- **Give standing instructions once.** Many agents read a file of instructions in the folder, such as `CLAUDE.md` for Claude Code or `AGENTS.md` for Codex CLI — a good place for your house style. See the agent's documentation.
- **Help ▶ Collaborating with AI Agents** opens this chapter at any time.

Things to know about AI agents

- **Each agent is a separate product.** It has its own installation, sign-in or API key, pricing, terms of use and privacy policy, set by the company or project that makes it. What you share with an agent is handled under those terms, not Markdown Reader's. Markdown Reader isn't affiliated with, or endorsed by, any of them.
- **Review what an agent proposes.** Agents can create, change and delete files, and run commands, with your permissions. Use their permission settings to decide what they may do without asking.
- **An agent works on the folder the terminal is in.** If you've moved to a document in another folder, click **Go to Document Folder** before starting it.
- **Changes an agent makes aren't part of Undo.** See [Keep a history with version control](#).

Reading

The title header

If a document starts with a `# Title`, Markdown Reader shows it as a title header. A short line directly under the title becomes the subtitle, and lines in the form `**Label:** value` become a row of details:

```
# Quarterly Review
```

```
Results and next steps for the operations team.
```

```
**Client:** Example Co.
```

```
**Prepared by:** Jordan Lee
```

```
**Date:** October 6, 2026
```

The top of this guide is an example. YAML front matter produces the same header; see [Front matter](#).

Zoom

Use **View ▶ Zoom In**, **Zoom Out** and **Actual Size (100%)** (⌘+ ⌘- ⌘0 / Ctrl++ Ctrl+- Ctrl+0), or the zoom buttons at the right of the status bar. The current level shows between them; click it to return to 100%. Markdown Reader remembers the zoom level and scroll position of each document you open, and restores them next time.

To change the zoom that new documents open at, use **Default zoom** in Settings.

Themes and styles

Two settings control the look of every document:

- **Theme** — **Automatic** (follows your system's light or dark mode), **Light** or **Dark**.
- **Style** — **Default** (clean sans-serif), **Serif** (a print-like reading style) or **Compact** (tighter spacing that fits more on screen).

You can also choose the body font, code font, font size, content width and line spacing. See the [Settings reference](#).

Find

Press **⌘F** / **Ctrl+F** to open the find bar. Matches are highlighted and counted. Press **Return** or **⌘G** / **F3** for the next match, and **⇧⌘G** / **Shift+F3** for the previous one (on Linux, **Ctrl+G** and **Ctrl+Shift+G** work too). Click **Done** or press **Esc** to close the bar.

In Read view, Find searches the formatted document. In Edit and Split views, it searches the Markdown source.

The sidebar

Click the sidebar button at the left of the toolbar, or choose **View ▶ Show Sidebar** (**⌘S** / **Ctrl+Shift+L**). The sidebar has three tabs:

Tab	What it shows
Outline	Every heading in the document, indented by level. Click one to jump to it. The section you're reading is highlighted as you scroll. In Edit view, the highlight follows the editor, and clicking a heading moves the editor to that line.
Files	The Markdown files and subfolders in the document's folder, or in a folder you choose with File ▶ Open Folder.... Click a file to open it in the same window. The list updates when files are added or removed. Hidden files, <code>.git</code> and <code>node_modules</code> are skipped.
Search	Searches every Markdown file in that folder and its subfolders. Results show the file and the matching line. Click a result to open the file with the match highlighted.

On the Mac, the sidebar opens to the line in the toolbar after **Read / Edit / Split**; drag its edge to change that, and it opens to the width you chose from then on. On the Mac and Windows, showing the sidebar widens the window to the left, so the document stays exactly where it is; hiding it gives the space back. When there's no room on that side of the screen, or the window is maximized or in full screen, the sidebar slides in inside the window instead. On Linux, it always slides in inside the window.

Markdown Reader remembers whether the sidebar is shown and which tab you last used.

Folding sections

Move the pointer over a heading to reveal a small arrow in the left margin. Click it to fold everything under that heading, up to the next heading of the same or higher level. Click again to unfold. Folded sections stay folded while you edit, and they're always expanded when you print or export.

Copying a section

Move the pointer over a heading (levels 1–4) to reveal a copy button at its right end. Click it to copy that heading and everything under it, with formatting, ready to paste into email, Word or a notes app. A check mark confirms the copy.

Sorting and wide tables

Click a table's column header to sort the rows by that column. Click again to sort the other way, and a third time to put the rows back in the order they're written. An arrow shows which column is sorted. Numbers sort as numbers (so 9 comes before 10, and amounts like \$1,200 or 45% work), and empty cells always go last. Sorting only changes what you see, never the file, and it stays put when the document reloads. Print and export use the order on screen.

Tables always fit the window: long links and code in cells wrap, and a table with many columns is set a little tighter so you never have to scroll sideways to read a row. Long lines in code blocks wrap too.

Links, back and forward

- **Web links** open in your default browser.
- **Links to other Markdown files** open in the same window. Use the **Back** and **Forward** toolbar buttons, or **View ▸ Back / Forward** (⌘[⌘] / Alt+Left Alt+Right), to move between them. If the current document has unsaved changes, you're asked to save first.
- **⌘-click** (Mac) or **Ctrl+click** (Windows and Linux) opens a linked document in a new window.
- **Links to headings** in the same document, like the Contents list above, scroll to that heading and unfold it if needed.

Hover over a link to see where it goes, at the left of the status bar, as in a web browser (with the status bar hidden, it appears in the bottom-left corner of the page): the full web address, the email address of a `mailto:` link, the file name (and section) of a link to another document, or the section of a link within the document.

Auto-reload

Markdown Reader watches the open file. When another app changes it, the document reloads in place and keeps your scroll position. If you have unsaved edits, a bar appears instead: **This file changed on disk**. Choose **Reload** to load the new version or **Keep Mine** to keep your edits. If the file is moved or deleted, a bar tells you so and your text stays in the window, so you can save it again.

You can also reload at any time with **File ▶ Reload** (⌘R / F5 or Ctrl+R).

Auto-reload is what makes Markdown Pro a good place to work with AI agents: the document updates as the agent writes, and [authorship](#) marks what it changed. See [Terminal and AI agents](#).

Word count and reading time

The status bar shows the document's word count and an estimated reading time, for example **1,234 words • 6 min**. Hover over it to see the character count. Reading time assumes about 230 words per minute.

Status bar

The status bar runs along the bottom of the document, above the terminal when it's open. On the left it shows where the link under the pointer goes. On the right are **Trial • N days left** while a trial runs, the word count and reading time, and zoom (–, the current level, +). The **Authorship** and **Terminal** buttons are at the right of the toolbar, next to Find.

To hide it, choose **View ▶ Hide Status Bar** (⌘/) on the Mac, or turn off **View ▶ Show Status Bar** on Windows and Linux. It's shown by default, and the choice applies to every window and is remembered.

Editing

① Note

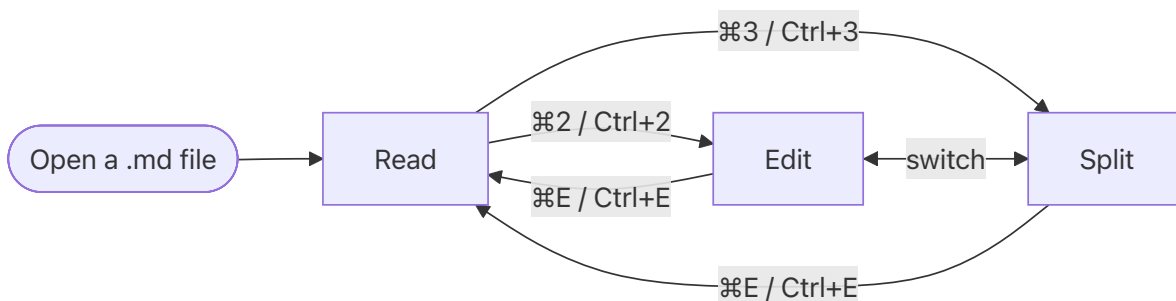
Editing is part of **Markdown Pro**. In the free edition, the Edit and Split views and the commands in this section open the Markdown Pro window, where you can [start a 14-day free trial](#).

Read, Edit and Split

Every document can be shown three ways. Use the **Read / Edit / Split** control in the toolbar or the **View** menu:

View	Shortcut	What you see
Reading View	⌘1 / Ctrl+1	The formatted document only
Editor	⌘2 / Ctrl+2	The Markdown source, in a centered column
Split View	⌘3 / Ctrl+3	The source beside a live preview that updates as you type

View ▶ Toggle Editing (⌘E / Ctrl+E) switches between Read and whichever editing view you used last.



The editor colors Markdown syntax as you type. On Windows and Linux it can also show line numbers: choose **View ▶ Line Numbers**, or turn on **Show line numbers in the editor** in Options (Windows) or Settings (Linux).

Save with **File ▶ Save** (⌘S / Ctrl+S) or **Save As...** (⇧⌘S / Ctrl+Shift+S). Start a blank document with **File ▶ New** (⌘N / Ctrl+N). If you close a window or quit with unsaved changes, Markdown Reader asks first.

The toolbar and Format menu

In Edit and Split views, the toolbar and **Format** menu insert Markdown for you. Select some text first to format it, or click with nothing selected to insert a placeholder.

Command	Mac	Windows	Inserts
Bold	⌘B	Ctrl+B	<code>**bold**</code>

Italic	⌘I	Ctrl+I	<code>_italic_</code>
Strikethrough	⇧⌘X	Ctrl+Shift+X	<code>~~text~~</code>
Inline Code	⌘C	—	<code>`code`</code>
Link...	⌘K	Ctrl+K	<code>[text](https://)</code>
Paragraph, Heading 1–4	⌘0 – ⌘4	—	<code># to ####</code>
Bulleted List	⇧⌘8	Ctrl+Shift+8	<code>- item</code>
Numbered List	⇧⌘7	Ctrl+Shift+7	<code>1. item</code>
Task List	⇧⌘9	Ctrl+Shift+9	<code>- [] item</code>
Quote	—	—	<code>> quote</code>
Code Block	—	—	<code>a fenced block</code>
Horizontal Rule	—	—	<code>---</code>
Insert Image...	⇧⌘I	Ctrl+Shift+I	<code></code>

On Windows, toolbar buttons use short text labels (for example **B**, **I**, **Link**, **• List**); on the Mac and Linux they mostly use icons. Hover over any button to see its name and shortcut.

Lists

Press Return at the end of a list item to start the next one; the bullet, number or checkbox continues automatically. Press Return on an empty item to end the list.

Tables

Choose **Format ▸ Table ▸ Insert Table...** (⌘T on the Mac), pick the number of columns and rows, and start typing. While the cursor is in a table:

- **Tab** moves to the next cell and **Shift+Tab** to the previous one. Tabbing past the last cell adds a new row.
- The columns line up as you go, and when you move the cursor out of a table you've edited, it's tidied automatically. Undo reverses the tidy in one step.
- The **Table** menu (in Format and on the toolbar) can add or delete rows and columns, align a column left, center or right, and **Tidy Table** on demand.

A tidied table is easy to read even as plain text:

	Region		Q2		Q3		Change	
	:-----		-----:		-----:		:-----:	
	North		91.2%		95.8%		+4.6	
	East		89.7%		94.1%		+4.4	

The colons in the second row set each column's alignment: `:---` left, `---:` right, `:---` centered.

Images

There are three ways to add an image while editing:

- **Insert Image...** (⇧⌘I / Ctrl+Shift+I) links one or more image files you choose, using paths relative to the document.
- **Paste** an image (for example a screenshot) into the editor. It's saved as a PNG in an `images` folder next to the document, named after the document and the current date and time.
- **Drag** image files into the editor. They're copied into the `images` folder with their original names. Dragging other kinds of files inserts a link to them.

Either way, Markdown Reader inserts a relative link such as ``, so the document and its images can be moved or shared together. A new document has to be saved once before you can paste or drop images, so Markdown Reader knows where to put them.

Find and Replace

While editing, choose **Edit ▸ Find and Replace...** (⌘F / Ctrl+H). A Replace box appears under or beside the find field, with a **Replace** button (replace this match and find the next) and an **All** button (replace every match).

Spell check (Mac)

Choose **Edit ▸ Spelling ▸ Check Spelling While Typing** to underline misspelled words in the editor. The setting is remembered. **Show Spelling and Grammar** (⌘:) and **Check Document Now** (⌘;) are in the same menu. The Windows and Linux versions don't have spell check.

Templates

Choose **File ▶ New from Template** to start from a ready-made outline. Five templates are built in:

- **Meeting Notes**
- **Project Report**
- **Incident Summary**
- **Checklist**
- **Proposal**

Built-in templates use the title-header style and fill in today's date.

To make your own, open or write a document and choose **File ▶ New from Template ▶ Save as Template....** Your templates appear in the same menu. Write `{{date}}` anywhere in a template to have it replaced with today's date (for example *September 29, 2026* on the Mac, *2026-09-29* on Windows and Linux). **Open Templates Folder** shows where they're kept, so you can rename or delete them.

Rich content

Markdown Reader supports standard GitHub-flavored Markdown, plus the features below. All of them display in both editions.

Callouts

Start a quote with `[!NOTE]`, `[!TIP]`, `[!IMPORTANT]`, `[!WARNING]` or `[!CAUTION]` to turn it into a colored callout:

```
> [!WARNING]
> Back up the database before you run the migration.
```

Note

Useful information the reader should know, even when skimming.

Tip

Helpful advice for doing things better or more easily.

Important

Key information needed to achieve the goal.

Warning

Urgent information that needs immediate attention to avoid problems.

Caution

Advice about the risks or negative outcomes of certain actions.

Footnotes

Add a reference like `[^1]` or `[^source]` in the text, and define it anywhere in the document. Footnotes are numbered in the order they're first used and listed at the end, with links back to the text.^[1]

Revenue grew 12% this quarter.^[^source]

^[^source]: [Finance team's month-end report, September 2026.](#)

Code

Wrap code in a fenced block and name the language to get syntax coloring:

```
def greet(name: str) -> str:
    return f"Hello, {name}!"
```

Most common languages are recognized, including Bash, C, C#, C++, CSS, Go, HTML, Java, JavaScript, JSON, Kotlin, PHP, PowerShell, Python, Ruby, Rust, SQL, Swift, TypeScript and YAML. Blocks without a language are shown in plain monospace.

Diagrams

Fenced blocks marked `mermaid` are drawn as diagrams — flowcharts, sequence diagrams, Gantt charts, timelines and more. The diagram in [Read, Edit and Split](#) above comes from this source:

```
```mermaid
flowchart LR
 open([Open a .md file]) --> read[Read]
 read -- "%2 / Ctrl+2" --> edit[Edit]
 edit -- "%E / Ctrl+E" --> read
```
```

Diagrams follow light and dark mode and appear in prints, PDFs, HTML and Word exports, and emails. If a diagram has a mistake, Markdown Reader shows its source with a short error message so you can fix it. See mermaid.js.org for the full syntax.

Front matter

A block of YAML between `---` lines at the very top of a file becomes the title header. `title` becomes the heading, `subtitle` or `description` the subtitle, and other simple fields become details. Lists are joined with commas.

```
---
title: Website Relaunch – Weekly Sync
date: September 24, 2026
attendees: [Priya Raman, Marcus Webb]
tags: [website, launch]
---
```

If the document also starts with a `# Title`, that heading is used as the title. Nested values aren't shown.

Task lists

```
- [x] Draft the proposal
- [ ] Send it for review
```

renders as:

- ☒ Draft the proposal
- ☐ Send it for review

With Markdown Pro, use **Format ▶ Task List** (⇧⌘9 / Ctrl+Shift+9) to turn lines into tasks.

Line breaks

By default, Markdown Reader keeps single line breaks as you typed them, which suits notes and addresses. Turn off **Keep single line breaks as typed** in Settings for standard Markdown behavior, where lines next to each other join into one paragraph.

Sharing and exporting

Everything you print or export uses the light theme, whatever your Theme setting, and folded sections are always included.

| Output | Edition |
|---|--------------|
| Print, Export as PDF, Copy, Stylized Copy, copy-section | Free |
| Export Branded PDF, Export as HTML, Export as Word, Email | Markdown Pro |

Print

Choose **File ▶ Print...** (⌘P / Ctrl+P).

Export as PDF

Choose **File ▶ Export as PDF...** (⇧⌘P / Ctrl+Shift+P) to save a paginated PDF laid out the same way as a printout.

Branded PDF (Pro)

File ▶ Export Branded PDF... (⇧⇧⌘P on the Mac) produces a PDF ready to send to a client:

- A **cover page** with your logo, the document's title, subtitle and details (for example Client and Date), "Prepared by" your organization, and your contact line.
- A **header** on every following page with your logo and organization on the left and the document title on the right, above a thin rule in your accent color.
- A **footer** with your footer text on the left and **Page N of M** on the right. The cover isn't counted.

Set it up once in **Settings ▶ Branding** (Mac), **File ▶ Options... ▶ Branding** (Windows) or **File ▶ Settings... ▶ Branding** (Linux):



| Setting | What it does |
|----------------------|---|
| Organization | Your company or team name, used on the cover and in the header |
| Logo | Choose... a PNG, JPEG or SVG file. Markdown Reader keeps its own copy, so you can move or delete the original. Remove clears it. On Windows and Linux, SVG logos appear on the cover but not in the page header, so use PNG if you want both. |
| Accent colour | The color of the cover bar, title rule and header rule. Default resets it to dark blue (#1F4E79). |
| Contact line | Free text for the cover, such as <code>example.com · hello@example.com · +1 555 0100</code> |
| Footer text | Shown at the bottom left of each page, such as <code>Confidential</code> |
| Include | Cover page , Header with logo on each page and Page numbers , each on by default |

Every field is optional. If you haven't set up any branding, Markdown Reader offers to open the Branding settings, or you can export anyway.

On Linux, the header and footer text use your system's default sans-serif font if it's a TrueType font (as `fc-match sans-serif` reports), otherwise DejaVu Sans or Noto Sans. If neither is installed, install `fonts-dejavu-core` (Ubuntu) or `ttf-dejavu` (Arch).

Tip

The branded cover picks up the title header, so write your document with a `# Title`, a subtitle line and `**Label:** value details` — or YAML front matter — to get a complete cover.

Export as HTML (Pro)

File ▸ Export as HTML... saves a single, self-contained web page with the document's styles, images and diagrams built in. It opens in any browser and can be emailed or posted as one file.

Export as Word (Pro)

File ▶ Export as Word (.docx)... saves a Word document with headings, lists, tables, code, images and diagrams, ready for colleagues who work in Microsoft Word. Diagrams become pictures, and bold, italic, code and links inside table cells keep their formatting.

Email (Pro)

File ▶ Email offers two options:

- **Email as Formatted Text** — starts a new message with the formatted document as the body. Diagrams are included as pictures.
- **Email as PDF Attachment** — starts a new message with the document attached as a PDF (the standard, unbranded layout).

On the Mac, the message opens in Mail (or the default email app chosen in Mail's settings). On Windows, Markdown Reader creates a draft message (an `.eml` file) and opens it in your default email app. Classic Outlook opens it as an editable draft; some other email apps open it read-only.

On Linux:

- **Email as PDF Attachment** starts a new message in your default email app, with the PDF attached (through `xdg-email`, which Thunderbird, Evolution and KMail support).
- **Email as Formatted Text** saves the message as an `.eml` file and opens it in the app set to open email files. Thunderbird shows it as a received message: choose **Message ▶ Edit as New Message** to turn it into a draft you can address and send.

Nothing is sent until you click Send.

Copy and Stylized Copy

- **Edit ▶ Copy** (⌘C / Ctrl+C) copies plain text.
- **Edit ▶ Stylized Copy** (⇧⌘C / Ctrl+Shift+C) copies formatted text, so headings, bold, lists and tables survive when you paste into Mail, Outlook, Word, Notes, LibreOffice, Thunderbird or similar apps.

Both copy the current selection, or the whole document if nothing is selected. To copy just one section, use the copy button on its heading (see [Copying a section](#)).

Settings reference

Open **Markdown Reader** ▶ **Settings...** (⌘,) on the Mac, **File** ▶ **Options...** (Ctrl+,) on Windows, or **File** ▶ **Settings...** (Ctrl+,) on Linux. Changes apply immediately to open windows. **Restore Defaults** resets the General settings; it doesn't clear Branding.

General

| Setting | Options | Default |
|--|--|---|
| Theme | Automatic,
Light, Dark | Automatic |
| Style | Default, Serif,
Compact | Default |
| Default zoom | 50%–200% | 100% |
| Body font | Any installed
font | System Default (Mac), Default (Windows),
the desktop's default (Linux) |
| Font size | 10–28 px | 16 px |
| Code font | Any installed
font | System Monospaced (Mac), Default
(monospace) (Windows), the desktop's
default (Linux) |
| Content width | Narrow,
Normal, Wide,
Full width | Normal |
| Line spacing | Compact,
Normal,
Relaxed, Loose | Normal |
| Line breaks: Keep single
line breaks as typed | On / Off | On |
| Reopen documents from
last session | On / Off | On |
| Updates: Automatically
check for updates | On / Off | On |

| | | |
|--|----------|-----|
| Authorship: Track authorship (who wrote what) (Pro) | On / Off | On |
| Show line numbers in the editor (Windows and Linux, Pro) | On / Off | Off |

Track authorship records who wrote each line of your documents; see [Who wrote what](#). On Windows and Linux, it's also in **View ▶ Authorship**.

Branding (Pro)

In the free edition this tab describes branded PDFs, with **Enter License Key...** and **Learn More**, instead of the settings below.

| Setting | Default |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Organization | Empty |
| Logo | None |
| Accent colour | #1F4E79 |
| Contact line | Empty |
| Footer text | Empty |
| Cover page | On |
| Header with logo on each page | On |
| Page numbers | On |

Remembered automatically

| What | Where you change it |
|--|---|
| Sidebar shown or hidden, and its tab and width | View ▸ Show Sidebar; the sidebar itself |
| Terminal panel height | The divider above the terminal |
| The agent the terminal's Run button starts | The last one you chose from its ▾ menu |
| Authorship shown or hidden | View ▸ Show Authorship |
| Status bar shown or hidden | View ▸ Show Status Bar |
| Spell checking while typing (Mac) | Edit ▸ Spelling ▸ Check Spelling While Typing |
| Line numbers (Windows and Linux) | View ▸ Line Numbers |
| The editing view that ⌘E / Ctrl+E switches to | The last one you used |
| Zoom and scroll position of each document | Your most recent 300 documents |
| Window size | The last size you chose |
| Recent documents | File ▸ Open Recent ▸ Clear Menu |

Animations

The sidebar, the terminal, the find bar and the changed-on-disk bar slide in and out quickly, and on the Mac and Linux, switching between Read, Edit and Split fades from one view to the other. Nothing is animated for longer than a fifth of a second. Markdown Reader follows your system's setting for reducing motion:

- **Mac: System Settings ▸ Accessibility ▸ Display ▸ Reduce motion.** The Read, Edit and Split fade stays, as a gentle dissolve.
- **Windows: Settings ▸ Accessibility ▸ Visual effects ▸ Animation effects** (Windows 10: **Settings ▸ Ease of Access ▸ Display ▸ Show animations in Windows**).
- **Linux:** your desktop's animation setting (in GNOME, **Settings ▸ Accessibility ▸ Seeing ▸ Reduce Animation**).

Keyboard shortcuts

A dash (—) means the command is available from the menu without a shortcut. Commands marked **Pro** need Markdown Pro; in the free edition their shortcuts open the Markdown Pro window.

File

| Command | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|-----------------------------|------|--------------|--------------|
| New (Pro) | ⌘N | Ctrl+N | Ctrl+N |
| Open... | ⌘O | Ctrl+O | Ctrl+O |
| Open Folder... | ⇧⌘O | — | Ctrl+Shift+O |
| Reload | ⌘R | F5 or Ctrl+R | F5 or Ctrl+R |
| Save (Pro) | ⌘S | Ctrl+S | Ctrl+S |
| Save As... (Pro) | ⇧⌘S | Ctrl+Shift+S | Ctrl+Shift+S |
| Export as PDF... | ⌘⇧P | Ctrl+Shift+P | Ctrl+Shift+P |
| Export Branded PDF... (Pro) | ⇧⌘⇧P | — | — |
| Print... | ⌘P | Ctrl+P | Ctrl+P |
| Settings... / Options... | ⌘, | Ctrl+, | Ctrl+, |
| Close window | ⌘W | Ctrl+W | Ctrl+W |
| Quit / Exit | ⌘Q | — | Ctrl+Q |

Edit

| Command | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|---------------------------------|-----|--------------|--------------------------|
| Undo | ⌘Z | Ctrl+Z | Ctrl+Z |
| Redo | ⇧⌘Z | Ctrl+Y | Ctrl+Shift+Z |
| Cut | ⌘X | Ctrl+X | Ctrl+X |
| Copy (plain text) | ⌘C | Ctrl+C | Ctrl+C |
| Stylized Copy | ⇧⌘C | Ctrl+Shift+C | Ctrl+Shift+C |
| Paste | ⌘V | Ctrl+V | Ctrl+V |
| Select All | ⌘A | Ctrl+A | Ctrl+A |
| Find... | ⌘F | Ctrl+F | Ctrl+F |
| Find Next | ⌘G | F3 | F3 or Ctrl+G |
| Find Previous | ⇧⌘G | Shift+F3 | Shift+F3 or Ctrl+Shift+G |
| Find and Replace... (Pro) | ⌘⇧F | Ctrl+H | Ctrl+H |
| Show Spelling and Grammar (Pro) | ⌘: | — | — |
| Check Document Now (Pro) | ⌘; | — | — |

Format (Pro, while editing)

| Command | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bold | ⌘B | Ctrl+B | Ctrl+B |
| Italic | ⌘I | Ctrl+I | Ctrl+I |
| Strikethrough | ⇧⌘X | Ctrl+Shift+X | Ctrl+Shift+X |
| Inline Code | ⌘C | — | — |
| Link... | ⌘K | Ctrl+K | Ctrl+K |
| Paragraph | ⌘0 | — | — |
| Heading 1 – Heading 4 | ⌘1 – ⌘4 | — | — |
| Bulleted List | ⇧⌘8 | Ctrl+Shift+8 | Ctrl+Shift+8 |
| Numbered List | ⇧⌘7 | Ctrl+Shift+7 | Ctrl+Shift+7 |
| Task List | ⇧⌘9 | Ctrl+Shift+9 | Ctrl+Shift+9 |
| Insert Image... | ⇧⌘I | Ctrl+Shift+I | Ctrl+Shift+I |
| Insert Table... | ⌘T | — | — |
| Next / previous table cell | Tab / ⇧Tab | Tab / Shift+Tab | Tab / Shift+Tab |
| Continue a list | Return | Enter | Enter |

View

| Command | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|-----------------------|-----|--------------|--------------|
| Reading View | ⌘1 | Ctrl+1 | Ctrl+1 |
| Editor (Pro) | ⌘2 | Ctrl+2 | Ctrl+2 |
| Split View (Pro) | ⌘3 | Ctrl+3 | Ctrl+3 |
| Toggle Editing (Pro) | ⌘E | Ctrl+E | Ctrl+E |
| Show Sidebar | ⇧⌘S | Ctrl+Shift+L | Ctrl+Shift+L |
| Show Terminal (Pro) | ⌘`  | Ctrl+` | Ctrl+` |
| Show Authorship (Pro) | ⇧⌘A | Ctrl+Shift+U | Ctrl+Alt+A |
| Show Status Bar | ⌘/ | — | — |
| Back | ⌘[| Alt+Left | Alt+Left |
| Forward | ⌘] | Alt+Right | Alt+Right |
| Zoom In | ⌘+ | Ctrl++ | Ctrl++ |
| Zoom Out | ⌘- | Ctrl+- | Ctrl+- |
| Actual Size (100%) | ⌘0 | Ctrl+0 | Ctrl+0 |

Show Authorship is Ctrl+Shift+U on Windows because Ctrl+Alt acts as AltGr on many Windows keyboard layouts.

In the terminal (Pro)

| Command | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|---------------------------|-----|--|--------------|
| Show or hide the terminal | ⌘`  | Ctrl+` | Ctrl+` |
| Copy | ⌘C | Ctrl+Shift+C, or Ctrl+C with text selected | Ctrl+Shift+C |
| Paste | ⌘V | Ctrl+V or Ctrl+Shift+V | Ctrl+Shift+V |

On Linux, the app's other shortcuts are turned off while the terminal has the keyboard focus, so

that the shell and the programs running in it receive keys such as Ctrl+R and Ctrl+E. Click the document to use them again.

Help, Markdown Pro and updates

| Command | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|--|-----|---------|-------|
| Markdown Reader User Guide (Help menu) | ⌘? | F1 | F1 |
| Collaborating with AI Agents (Help menu) | — | — | — |
| Upgrade to Markdown Pro... / Markdown Pro License... | — | — | — |
| Check for Updates... | — | — | — |

On the Mac, **Upgrade to Markdown Pro...**, **Markdown Pro License...** and **Check for Updates...** are in the **Markdown Reader** menu; on Windows and Linux, they're in the **Help** menu.

Quick Look (Mac)

On the Mac, Markdown Reader includes a Quick Look extension, in both editions. Select a Markdown file in Finder and press Space to see it formatted, with callouts, code coloring and diagrams, without opening the app.

- Quick Look becomes available after you've opened Markdown Reader from the Applications folder once. If Space still shows plain text, open **System Settings**, search for **Extensions**, and make sure **Markdown Reader** is turned on under **Quick Look**.
- Previews use the default look (follows light or dark mode), not your Settings.
- Very large files show their first 2 MB, with a note at the end.
- Images stored next to the file don't appear in Quick Look, because macOS limits what preview extensions can read. They appear normally when you open the file in the app.

Troubleshooting and FAQ

macOS says the app can't be opened

Markdown Reader is notarized, so normally macOS only asks you to confirm the first time. If you see a message that it can't be opened, make sure you dragged it into Applications from the disk image, then open **System Settings** ▶ **Privacy & Security**, scroll down, and click **Open Anyway** next to the message about Markdown Reader.

Windows says "Windows protected your PC"

SmartScreen shows this for new releases that haven't yet built a reputation with Microsoft. Click **More info**, then **Run anyway**. You only need to do this once per version.

The document area is blank on Linux

On Ubuntu 24.04 and later, AppArmor limits the unprivileged user namespaces that WebKitGTK uses to sandbox the part of the app that displays documents. When it blocks the sandbox, the Markdown Reader window opens but the document area — and the terminal, which is displayed the same way — can stay blank.

To find out whether this is the cause, quit Markdown Reader and start it from a terminal with WebKit's sandbox turned off for that one run:

```
WEBKIT_DISABLE_SANDBOX_THIS_IS_DANGEROUS=1 markdown-reader
```

⚠ Caution

This turns off a security layer. The sandbox limits what the display process can do if a document, or a web image it loads, exploits a flaw in WebKit; without it, such a flaw could reach everything your user account can. Use this only to confirm the cause, or for a session with documents you trust. Don't add the variable to your shell profile or to the app's launcher.

If documents appear with the variable set, the sandbox was the problem. Keep the sandbox on for everyday use: check for a newer version of Markdown Reader and of your system's WebKitGTK packages, or ask whoever manages the computer about an AppArmor rule for Markdown Reader, and let us know through www.sortedsolution.com. If documents are still blank with the variable set, the cause is something else; the output in the terminal may say what.

Markdown files don't open in Markdown Reader when I double-click them

Set it as the default app; see [Make it the default app](#). Each extension (`.md` , `.markdown` and so on) is set separately. On Windows, if Markdown Reader is missing from the Open with list, run **MarkdownReader.exe** once, or browse to it with **Choose an app on your PC**. If you move the `.exe` later, choose it again. On Linux, run the `xdg-mime` command shown there.

Edit and Split show "PRO", and I can't edit

You're using the free edition. Editing is part of Markdown Pro; choose **Upgrade to Markdown Pro...** to [start the free trial](#) or [enter a license key](#). If you used the editor in version 1.x, this is the change in 2.0.

My trial ended. What happens to my documents?

Nothing. They're ordinary files on your computer and stay exactly as they were. The free edition still opens, reads, prints and exports them to PDF. Enter a license key at any time to edit again.

Can I use one license on my Mac, my Windows PC and my Linux computer?

Yes. One key works on Mac, Windows and Linux, on up to 5 devices in total. Use **Remove License** on a computer you stop using so it no longer counts.

Do I have to pay for updates?

No, not for 2.x: every 2.x update is included with Markdown Pro, and the free edition is updated too. A future major version may be offered as a discounted upgrade.

Windows says it can't install the update

The app replaces **MarkdownReader.exe** where it is, so that folder must be one you can change without administrator rights. If it's in **Program Files** or another protected folder, move it to a folder in your user profile (such as Documents), or download the new version from www.sortedsolution.com and replace the `.exe` yourself. If the update says a document stayed open, save or close your documents and click **Install Update** again.

Linux: how do I update?

Markdown Reader for Linux doesn't install updates itself. When **Check for Updates...** (or the daily check) finds a new version, download the new package and install it the same way as the first one: `sudo apt install ./<file>.deb` on Ubuntu, `sudo pacman -U <file>` on Arch. If you installed it from the AUR, update with your AUR helper, for example `yay -Syu`.

An AI agent is listed as not installed

The terminal shows, for example, *Gemini CLI isn't installed. Install it from <https://github.com/google-gemini/gemini-cli>, then choose Refresh*. Install the agent by following its maker's instructions (choosing it under **Not Installed** opens them), then choose **Refresh** from the ▾ menu.

Markdown Reader looks for each agent's command the same way your terminal does: on the Mac and Linux through your login shell's `PATH`, on Windows through the `PATH`. It also checks the folder each agent's installer normally uses. If an agent you've installed still isn't found, type its command (for example `claude` or `codex`) in the terminal: if the shell can't find it either, its folder isn't on your `PATH` — fix that in your shell profile, then click **New Session** and choose **Refresh**.

Lines my agent wrote show as "Outside edit"

Markdown Pro credits a change to an agent only when the agent is running in the terminal of the window that shows the document. Changes count as an **Outside edit** when the agent runs in another terminal app or an editor, in another Markdown Pro window's terminal, or when the file changed while the document wasn't open in Markdown Pro. Run the agent from the document's own window (the **Run** button, or type its command there) and keep the document open while it works. Lines already recorded stay as they are until they change again; to start over, use **View ▸ Authorship ▸ Clear Authorship History...**

An agent's changes show as mine

When a file changes while you have unsaved edits and you choose **Keep Mine**, your next save records your version, so its differences from the last recorded version count as yours. Choose **Reload** instead to take the agent's version with its authorship.

What is the `.markdown-reader` folder next to my documents?

It holds Markdown Pro's record of who wrote each line of the documents in that folder (see [Where it's kept](#)). It's hidden, and the sidebar doesn't list it. Deleting it deletes the history, not your documents. To keep it out of Git, add `.markdown-reader/` to your `.gitignore`; to stop creating it, turn off **Track authorship (who wrote what)** in Settings.

Markdown Pro is still running after I closed its windows

That's by design, so documents open faster; see [When you close the last window](#). Quit from the app menu on the Mac (⌘Q), from the notification-area icon on Windows, or with **File ▶ Quit** (Ctrl+Q) on Linux before you close the last window.

Images don't show

- Image paths are relative to the document. `` looks for an `images` folder next to the `.md` file.
- Spaces in file names must be written as `%20`, for example ``, or rename the file.
- Local images larger than 25 MB aren't displayed.
- Images from the web (`https://...`) need an internet connection.
- In Quick Look, images stored next to the file aren't shown (see [Quick Look](#)).
- On Linux, if no document shows at all, see [The document area is blank on Linux](#).

A diagram shows as code with an error

The Mermaid source has a syntax error. The message under the code names the line; fix it in Edit or Split view and the diagram appears as you type.

Code isn't colored

Name the language right after the three backticks that open the block, for example `python` or `bash`. Blocks without a language aren't colored.

Line breaks look different from GitHub

GitHub joins lines that aren't separated by a blank line. Turn off **Keep single line breaks as typed** in Settings to match.

Large files

Markdown Reader is built to handle long documents. If typing ever feels slow in Split view on a very long file, work in Edit view and switch to Read or Split to check the result. Quick Look previews show only the first 2 MB of a file.

My PDF is light even though I use dark mode

That's by design: prints and exports always use the light theme so they read well on paper and on other people's screens.

Linux: Export Branded PDF says no font was found

The branded header and footer need a TrueType sans-serif font. Install one — `sudo apt install fonts-dejavu-core` on Ubuntu, `sudo pacman -S ttf-dejavu` on Arch — and export again.

Email doesn't open a new message

On the Mac, set up an account in Mail first. On Windows, the draft opens in whichever app is set to open `.eml` files. If it opens read-only, set an app that can edit drafts, such as classic Outlook, as the default for `.eml` files in **Settings > Apps > Default apps**.

On Linux, set a default email app (such as Thunderbird or Evolution) in your desktop's settings. **Email as PDF Attachment** needs `xdg-email` (package `xdg-utils`); without it, it saves an `.eml` file like **Email as Formatted Text**. If Thunderbird opens the message as a received email, choose **Message > Edit as New Message**. If no app opens `.eml` files, Markdown Reader tells you where it saved the message.

Where are my settings, templates, logo and license stored?

| | Mac | Windows | Linux |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| Settings | <code>~/Library/Preferences/com.sortedsol.MarkdownReader.plist</code> | <code>%APPDATA%\MarkdownReader\settings.json</code> | <code>~/.config/markdown-reader/settings.json</code> |
| Your templates | <code>~/Library/Application Support/Markdown</code> | <code>%APPDATA%\MarkdownReader\Templates</code> | <code>~/.config/markdown-reader/Templates</code> |

| | Reader/Templates | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Branding logo (copy) | ~/Library/Application Support/Markdown Reader | %APPDATA%\Markdown Reader | ~/.config/markdown-reader |
| License key | Your login keychain (item com.sortedsol.MarkdownReader.license) | %APPDATA%\Markdown Reader\license.dat , encrypted for your Windows account | ~/.config/markdown-reader/license.json , readable only by your user account |
| Trial start date | Your login keychain | %APPDATA%\Markdown Reader and the registry | ~/.config/markdown-reader/trial and ~/.local/share/markdown-reader/trial |
| Downloaded updates | Managed by the app | %LOCALAPPDATA%\Markdown Reader\Update (cleared at the next launch) | None: your package manager installs updates |
| Authorship history (Pro) | In a .markdown-reader folder next to each document | Same | Same |
| User Guide copy (Help menu) | Inside the app | %LOCALAPPDATA%\Markdown Reader | ~/.cache/markdown-reader |
| Temporary files | Managed by macOS | %LOCALAPPDATA%\Markdown Reader\WebView2 (web view cache) | ~/.cache/markdown-reader (exports and email drafts) |

On Linux, the folders follow `~/.config/markdown-reader` , `~/.local/share/markdown-reader` and `~/.cache/markdown-reader` if you've set them.

To start over, quit Markdown Reader and delete the settings, templates and logo. Your documents are never stored there. Authorship history is kept with your documents instead; see [Where it's kept](#). To remove your license from a computer, use **Remove License** rather than deleting files.

How do I uninstall it?

If you have Markdown Pro, first choose **Markdown Pro License... ▸ Remove License** so the computer no longer counts toward your five. Then, on the Mac, drag **Markdown Reader** from Applications to the Trash; on Windows, delete **MarkdownReader.exe**; on Linux, run `sudo apt remove markdown-reader` (Ubuntu) or `sudo pacman -R markdown-reader-bin` (Arch). To remove settings too, delete the folders listed above.

Is it really free?

The Markdown Reader viewer is free for personal and commercial use, with no time limit and no ads. Markdown Pro is a one-time \$29 purchase. Please don't sell or redistribute the app; point people to www.sortedsolution.com instead. The full terms are in **LICENSE.txt**, included with the download.

Privacy

- **No account.** There's nothing to sign up for or sign in to. The trial runs on your computer without registration.
- **No tracking.** Markdown Reader doesn't collect analytics, usage data or crash reports.
- **The update check is the only thing it sends on its own.** Once a day (if **Automatically check for updates** is on) and when you choose **Check for Updates...**, Markdown Reader asks www.sortedsolution.com whether there's a new version. The request includes only the app version, the edition (free or Pro) and your operating system version (on Linux, the distribution name and version) — no name, no device identifier, nothing about your documents. As with any web request, the server receives your internet address. Turn the check off in Settings to stop it.
- **License activation.** Markdown Pro is sold through Lemon Squeezy. Entering a license key checks it with Lemon Squeezy, sending the key and a name for this computer so the 5-device limit can be applied. While a key is entered, Markdown Pro re-checks it about once a day, sending the key and this computer's activation ID. (Purchasing isn't open yet, so no key can be entered in this version.)
- **Your files stay on your computer.** Documents, templates, settings and your logo are stored locally. Markdown Reader never uploads them anywhere.
- **Authorship stays with your documents.** Markdown Pro records who wrote what on your computer, in a `.markdown-reader` folder next to each document; nothing about it is sent anywhere. That file contains your name as your computer account shows it, the names of the

agents that edited the document and the times of changes, but not your text. It goes wherever the folder goes, so if you share, sync or commit the folder, others can read it; add `.markdown-reader/` to `.gitignore`, or turn off **Track authorship**, if you'd rather not.

- **The terminal is yours.** Commands you run in the terminal run on your computer, with your permissions; Markdown Reader doesn't record or send what you type. Programs you start there, including AI coding agents such as Claude Code, can read your files and use the internet under their own terms and privacy policies. Recognizing which agent is running, for authorship, happens on your computer by looking at the program running in the terminal; Markdown Reader doesn't contact the agent or its maker.
- **Web links open in your browser.** Clicking a web link hands it to your default browser.
- **Web images load from the web.** If a document refers to an image by web address, that image is downloaded when the document is displayed, just as a browser would.
- **Email is a draft.** Emailing a document creates a draft in your own email app. Nothing is sent until you send it.

On Windows, documents are displayed with Microsoft Edge WebView2, a component of Windows maintained by Microsoft. On Linux, they're displayed with WebKitGTK, installed and updated by your distribution.

Markdown Reader and Markdown Pro are made by Sorted Solution. They include open-source components, among them marked (Markdown rendering), highlight.js (code coloring), Mermaid (diagrams), xterm.js (the terminal), on the Mac Sparkle (updates), and on Linux GirCore (GTK bindings) and the .NET runtime; their licenses are included with the app. The AI coding agents named in this guide are products of their respective makers; none is included with Markdown Reader, and their names are used only to identify them.

FOOTNOTES

1. Like this one. Click the ↩ arrow to jump back to where you were reading. ↩