Episode 084 Artifact

Always On: Inside Claude Duet

Anthropic's Proactive Background Agent, November 2026



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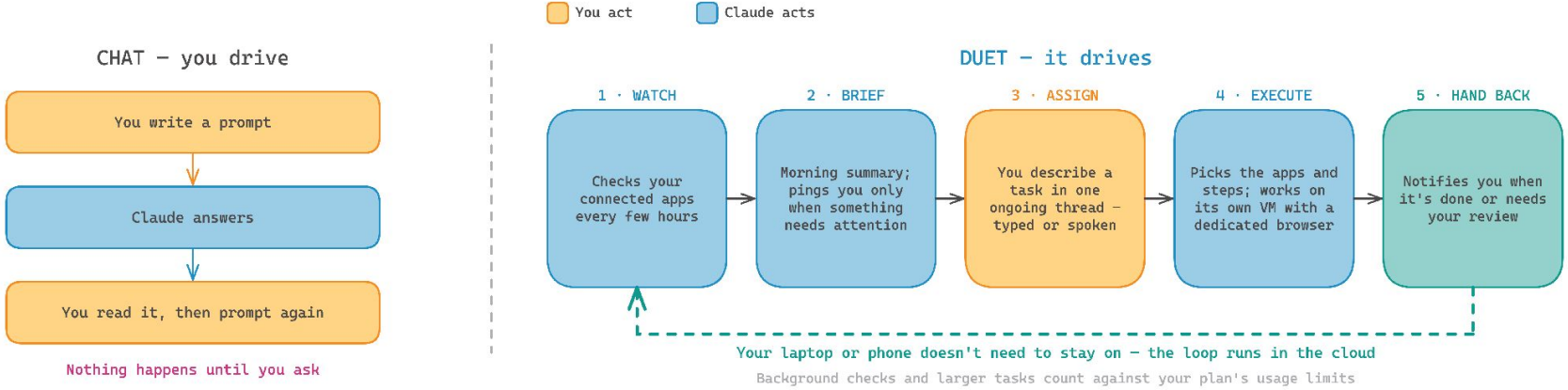
Anthropic's Proactive Background Agent – November 2026

Chat waits for your prompt. Duet works while you're away.
You stay in charge of anything that can't be undone.

Research preview · iOS, Android and claude.ai · reuses your Claude memory, skills and connectors

What Is It?

A loop that keeps running between your prompts — and hands control back at the key moments



Why It Matters

Autonomy with a hard stop wherever an action can't be taken back

AUTONOMY LEVEL	WHAT IT COVERS	HOW IT'S CONTROLLED
1 ON ITS OWN	Read, search, draft, prepare — plus background builds like dashboards, forecasts, prototypes and web apps	Runs unattended; you see the result when it's done
2 ASKS FIRST	Send a message · make a payment · sign a document · delete something	Shows the exact action and waits for your approval
3 BLOCKED	Trade securities · move money between accounts	Refused even if you approve — there is no override

UNDER THE HOOD

- **Credentials**
  The agent never directly sees passwords or sign-in tokens
- **Action checks**
  An auto-mode classifier reviews actions; prompt-injection defenses are built in
- **Sensitive data**
  Card numbers and government IDs are blocked; health and finance details only when you say so
- **Your control**
  Disconnect any connected app at any time

How Is It Used?

Real workflows from Anthropic's launch examples — each ends at an approval point

DOMAIN	EXAMPLE TASK	WHAT DUET DOES	WHERE YOU STEP IN
Inbox & chat	Catch missed Gmail or Slack messages	Scans threads, surfaces what's urgent, drafts the replies	You approve before anything is sent
Finance	Chase unpaid invoices; prepare payroll	Checks QuickBooks or Stripe for overdue invoices and drafts reminders; prepares payroll in Gusto	You approve the reminders and review payroll
Hiring & contracts	Post a job; get an agreement ready to sign	Drafts a LinkedIn job posting; prepares agreements for signature in Docusign	Posts and signs only after your approval
Sales & marketing	Follow up on deals; launch a campaign	Drafts follow-ups from HubSpot deal history; turns a product launch into a Canva social campaign	You review the drafts before they go out
Calendar	Catch scheduling conflicts	Spots a showing booked on the wrong day, or a client call right before a flight, and offers to reschedule	You confirm the change
Commerce	Set up and run a Shopify store	Manages the store; purchases go through Link, a virtual card, so your real card number isn't shared	Link requires your approval for each purchase

KNOWN GAPS

May misread a thread or misjudge urgency · personal errands like booking tickets are less developed · can't yet show you its browser

A chat agent answers. A background agent acts —
so the real feature is where it's required to stop and ask.

Thanks for watching.

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