

Build a Claude skill that actually fires.

Updated May 5, 2026 · One-page printable cheatsheet

1. YAML Formula

```
--- name: kebab-case-name description: What it does. Use when user says '[phrase]' or asks to '[action]'. ---
```

2. Description Rules

- ✓ What the skill does
- ✓ When to trigger it (user's own language)
- ✓ Under 1024 characters
- ✗ No XML angle brackets
- ✗ No "claude" or "anthropic" in the name
These prefixes are reserved by Anthropic and will fail validation.

3. Three Skill Types

1

**Document
& Asset
Creation**

2

**Workflow
Automation**

3

**MCP
Enhancement**

4. Ship Checklist

- Folder named in kebab-case
- File named exactly SKILL.md
- YAML has --- opening and closing delimiters
- name field: kebab-case only
- description includes WHAT and WHEN
- Tested trigger on 3 different phrasings
- Tested it does NOT trigger on unrelated requests

5. If It's Not Working

Won't upload → check SKILL.md filename (exact case)

Won't trigger → rewrite description in user language

Triggers too much → add scope/exclusions to description

MCP failing → test MCP independently first

Full guide: claudehq.app/skills

ClaudeHQ is an independent project, not affiliated with Anthropic. Content translated from Anthropic's official skills documentation. All Claude trademarks belong to Anthropic.

The web-based Skill Starter is a 60-second template generator for common tasks. For production or specialized skills, use skill-creator inside Claude.