AI ICON 2027 · MCP CONNECTOR GUIDE

Install the Obsidian MCP Connector

Connect Obsidian to Claude Desktop using the Model Context Protocol (MCP). Once connected, Claude can access notes in the workshop's practice vault, using the permissions you set.

Claude Desktop Installed and running	**Obsidian** Installed and running	**The practice vault** `Northstar-Brain` open in Obsidian	**Five practice files** Visible in the vault

Part 1 · Set up the connector in Obsidian

1 Review the security considerations

The MCP Connector is third-party software that creates a connection between Claude and Obsidian. For this workshop:

1. Use only the fictional `Northstar-Brain` practice vault.
2. Configure read-only permissions.
3. Don't grant permission to create, edit, or delete files.
4. Never share access tokens or credentials.
5. Install extensions only from sources you trust.

> **Important:** read-only MCP permissions restrict what Claude can do through the connector. They don't provide operating-system-level isolation for third-party software installed on your computer.

2 Install MCP Connector in Obsidian

1. Open **Obsidian** and click the **Settings** gear icon.
2. Select **Community plugins**, then click **Browse**.
3. Search for `MCP Connector` and find the plugin by **istefox (Stefano Ferri)**.
4. Click **Install**. When it finishes, click **Enable**.

Check: MCP Connector appears in your installed community plugins and is enabled.

3 Configure read-only access

1. In Obsidian, open **Settings** and select **MCP Connector**.
2. Find the **Access control** section.
3. Create a new access token, if supported, and name it `Northstar Workshop`.
4. Set the token's permissions, then save your settings.

ALLOW ONLY

- Reading notes
- Searching notes
- Listing files or notes

TURN OFF

- Creating files
- Editing files
- Deleting files
- Executing commands

If the connector offers a read-only permission profile, use it.

Check: the workshop token is restricted to read-only operations.

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4 Export the Claude Desktop extension

1. Stay in **Settings** → **MCP Connector** → **Access control**.
2. Find the token you set up for the workshop.
3. Click the **.mcpb** export button for that token, and save the file to your computer.

> The `.mcpb` file holds the configuration for connecting Claude to the Obsidian MCP server. Treat it as sensitive: it may contain or provide access to credentials. Don't upload or share it.

Check: you have an exported `.mcpb` file saved on your computer.

Part 2 · Connect Claude Desktop

5 Install the extension in Claude Desktop

WINDOWS

1. Open **Claude Desktop**, then **Settings** → **Extensions**.
2. In File Explorer, find the exported `.mcpb` file.
3. Drag it into Claude Desktop's Extensions area.
4. Follow the installation prompts.

MACOS

1. Open **Claude Desktop**, then **Settings** → **Extensions**.
2. In Finder, find the exported `.mcpb` file.
3. Drag it into Claude Desktop's Extensions area.
4. Follow the installation prompts.

If your version of Claude Desktop has an **Install Extension** or similar file-selection option, you can use that instead.

Check: in a chat, click + → Plugins. Obsidian MCP Connector is listed and switched on.

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6 Confirm Obsidian is ready

1. Return to Obsidian and confirm `Northstar-Brain` is the open vault.
2. Confirm MCP Connector is enabled.
3. Leave Obsidian running, and return to Claude Desktop.

Check: both applications are running and the practice vault is open.

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7 Verify the MCP connection

1. Start a new conversation in Claude Desktop.
2. Copy and paste this prompt, then send it:

```
Using the Obsidian MCP Connector, call get_server_info to confirm the connection. Identify the vault you can access. Do not modify any files.
```

3. If Claude asks permission to use the connector, review the requested action before approving it.
4. Confirm that Claude can reach the connector and identifies the practice vault.

Success: Claude connects to the Obsidian MCP server and confirms access to `Northstar-Brain`.

Stop here. The workshop will guide you through reading notes, searching decisions, and using the connected knowledge system.

Troubleshooting

MCP Connector doesn't appear in Obsidian	Confirm it was installed and enabled under Community plugins.
Can't find Access control	Open the MCP Connector settings and check the installed plugin version.
Can't export the .mcpb file	Confirm the access token is set up and saved.
Claude doesn't recognize the extension	Check Settings → Extensions, and in a chat, + → Plugins. Then fully quit and reopen Claude Desktop.
Connection fails	Keep Obsidian running, and confirm the plugin is enabled.
The wrong vault is accessible	Check the extension was exported from the correct practice vault.
Claude can't use the tools it needs	Check the token's permission settings.
Connection times out	Restart Claude Desktop and run the connection test again.

Additional resources

- Obsidian MCP Connector plugin: community.obsidian.md/plugins/mcp-tools-istefox
- MCP Connector GitHub repository: github.com/istefox/obsidian-mcp-connector
- Claude Desktop: claude.ai/download

Security reminder: use the workshop practice vault, restrict permissions, and never share access tokens or extension bundles that contain credentials.