

Claude vs OpenClaw

Independent comparison · April 2026 · Prepared by AFTA

USE OPENCLAW IF

- You're a developer comfortable with DevOps
- You need local models or full data sovereignty
- You want to audit or fork the agent framework

USE CLAUDE IF

- You're a non-technical marketing team
- You want workflows that run without a server to manage
- You need enterprise security without enterprise overhead

OpenClaw is an agent harness — it needs a model connected to it. Most users connect it to Claude Max (\$200/mo). Add a VPS (\$6–200/mo), setup time, and ongoing maintenance, and you're paying more for the same model with added friction.

CAPABILITY	CLAUDE	OPENCLAW
Computer use	Native (Pro & Max)	Community wrapper, manual setup
Browser integration	Claude in Chrome — reads, clicks, multi-tab	CDP-based, requires config
Scheduled tasks	Cowork — supervised, human-approved	Cron jobs, self-managed
Slack / Gmail / Docs	Pre-trained, no config needed	Skills marketplace (security caveat below)
Security & updates	Anthropic, automatic	Community, self-applied
Open source	No	Yes
Local / private models	No	Yes (Ollama etc.)

Security: Snyk found 13% of ClawHub skills contain critical vulnerabilities including malware (CNN, March 2026). Prompt injection attacks — hidden instructions in web pages hijacking agent actions — are a documented OpenClaw risk. Chinese government agencies were barred from running OpenClaw on office devices in March 2026 (CNCERT/CC).

Sources: CNN Business — OpenClaw security fears (March 2026) · Anthropic — Claude plans & pricing · Anthropic — Claude release notes · OpenClaw — pricing & docs · Self-hosted infrastructure cost guide (yu-wenhao.com, Feb 2026)