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Getting Started with Craft Anything

Install the open-source rebuild engine, run your first project, and stay on the right side of the rules.

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What Craft Anything does

Craft Anything is an open-source tool, written in Rust, that studies an existing website, desktop app or game and then has your own AI coding agent build a new version of it. It checks the new build against the original and refines it. It comes from the ArtCraft team (published under the **storytold** organisation on GitHub) and ships as a desktop app, a command-line tool called `craft-anything-cli`, and an MCP server.

Early alpha. The project releases often and its commands can change. Treat this guide as a starting point and check the project README before you rely on any command.

The four stages

Stage	What happens
1. Study	Captures the original: screenshots at several widths and measured layout for websites; files and behaviour for programs.
2. Build	Your coding agent creates a new project in the stack you ask for, or a default one.
3. Check	Compares the build with the original and lists what doesn't match.
4. Ready	You open or preview the result, or ask for changes, which starts another round of refinement.

Before you install

- **Permission first.** The README says to use it only on software you own or are allowed to examine. It does not bypass DRM, logins or anti-cheat.
- **A coding agent you are signed in to.** Craft Anything doesn't ship its own building model; it drives the agent you already have. Claude Code is the best-tested option.
- **Rust 1.97 or newer** if you build from source.
- **Java** and up to half your machine's memory if you want Deep mode with the Ghidra disassembler.

Install from source

```
git clone https://github.com/storytold/craft-anything
cd craft-anything
cargo run --release -p craft-anything          # the desktop app
cargo install --path apps/craft-anything-cli   # the CLI
craft-anything-cli doctor                       # checks the install and agents
```

Prebuilt downloads are also published for Windows, macOS, Linux and FreeBSD. Note that the Flatpak build can't start a browser, so it isn't suited to website projects.

Your first project

Desktop app: point it at a target, type a request such as “Recreate this website”, and press Start. Each project page shows a progress bar.

Command line:

```
# rebuild a site you are allowed to study
craft-anything-cli rebuild https://example.com "Recreate this website"

# start from a description instead of a target, one refinement round
craft-anything-cli rebuild - "A snake game in Rust" --rounds 1

# ask for a change to an existing project
craft-anything-cli rebuild https://example.com "Make the header blue" \
  --continue-in "<project folder>"
```

Each project folder holds `craft.json` (your request and history), the capture, an `app/` folder with the build, `checks/` with the comparisons, and `inbox/` with open questions for you.

Clean room or Deep mode

Mode	What the agent can use	When to choose it
Clean room (default)	Only what a normal visitor can see. Tools that look inside the original are refused.	Rebuilding the look and flow of something you are allowed to study.
Deep	Every tool, including the disassembler, Ghidra if installed, and the site's JavaScript.	Your own software, for private analysis. The README marks it for private use.

Clean room is a rule about which tools Craft Anything offers, not an operating-system sandbox and not legal advice. If you plan to ship something that closely resembles a commercial product, talk to a lawyer first.

Stay safe while it runs

- Auto-approve is on by default. You can set each action type to allow, ask or refuse per project.
- On a machine that holds passwords or keys, keep **commands** on “ask”.
- “Always allow” for npm also runs package install scripts without asking, so avoid it unless you trust the project.

Known limits

- The likeness score measures how the build *looks*, not whether forms and other behaviour work. Test those yourself.
- The best experience currently needs a paid Claude plan. Building with a plain API key is only partly supported.
- Builders other than Claude Code are less proven; some have open issues with build loops.

Sources

- Project repository: https://github.com/storytold/craft-anything
- Independent review with install notes: https://andrew.ooo/posts/craft-anything-review-rust-reverse-engineering-ai-rebuild/
- Build-from-source walkthrough: https://byteiota.com/?p=26883