

Which Claude Model and Effort Should I Use?

Current as of August 2026

Use the **cheapest model** that can reliably do the job. Increase **effort** only when quality matters.

1 Model guide

1  Haiku 4.5 Fastest / lowest cost Best for: Formatting, extraction, classification, simple summaries Use when: The task is simple and low risk Relative usage cost 1x 	2  Sonnet 5 Default for most work Best for: Emails, reports, meeting notes, policy review, routine analysis Use when: You need strong quality at everyday scale Relative usage cost 2x 	3  Opus 5 For harder work Best for: Complex analysis, multi-document synthesis, coding, important presentations Use when: Reasoning quality materially matters Relative usage cost 5x 	4  Fable 5 Highest capability Best for: Hardest ambiguous work, advanced strategy, long-running agentic tasks Use when: The problem is high stakes and hard enough to justify it Relative usage cost 10x 
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i Mythos 5 shares Fable-level pricing and capability but is limited-availability for defensive cybersecurity, not general HQ use.

2 Effort guide

 Low Short, scoped tasks 	 Medium Routine knowledge work 	 High Best balance for important work 	 xHigh Demanding multi-step or agentic work 	 Max Only when the task truly justifies it 
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✓ For most HQ knowledge work, start with Sonnet 5 or Opus 5 at High only if the task is important. Use Low or Medium liberally for simpler requests.

3 Quick decision matrix

If your task is...		Use...
	Reformat text, extract fields, classify content	Haiku 4.5 • Low
	Draft or revise an email, memo, or slide	Sonnet 5 • Medium
	Summarize a report or compare documents	Sonnet 5 • High
	Build an important presentation or recommendation	Opus 5 • High
	Solve a hard multi-step research or analysis problem	Opus 5 • xHigh
	Tackle the highest-stakes, most ambiguous work	Fable 5 • High–Max