

CLAUDE-ALPACA PAPER TRADING PROJECT

Software Toolkit - What We Used and Why

ChatGPT



ChatGPT
(OpenAI)

Why we used it: Our guide, instructor, troubleshooter, and project/documentation manager.

How we used it: Planned the workflow, explained each step, helped diagnose problems, and created summaries, diagrams, and companion guides.

Claude / Claude Code



**Claude /
Claude Code**
(Anthropic)

Why we used it: The AI working inside the Trading workspace that could interpret ordinary-language trading instructions.

How we used it: Ran Python programs, checked the Alpaca paper account and positions, submitted buy and sell orders, and reported results.

Alpaca



Alpaca
(Brokerage
Platform)

Why we used it: The brokerage platform and API that let us practice trading safely with paper money.

How we used it: Used the approximately \$50,000 PAPER account; generated API credentials; accepted orders; reported cash, buying power, positions, and order status.

Python



Python
(Programming
Language)

Why we used it: The programming language used by the scripts that communicated with Alpaca.

How we used it: Installed Python 3.13 and ran programs such as `test_connection.py` and `place_order.py`.

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Supporting Windows Components



Windows Terminal
(Command Line Environment)

Windows Terminal

Why we used it: The command-line environment where programs and commands could actually run.

How we used it: Opened the Trading folder, ran Python scripts, and viewed connection and order results.



Git for Windows
(Version Control System)

Git for Windows

Why we used it: Development support required during Claude Code setup and useful for managing project files and versions.

How we used it: Installed Git for Windows, accepted setup defaults, and established a foundation for future version control.



Notepad
(Windows App)

Notepad

Why we used it: A simple editor for viewing and safely editing configuration text.

How we used it: Opened the .env file, entered the Alpaca endpoint, API key, and API secret, and saved the file.



.env File
(Configuration File)

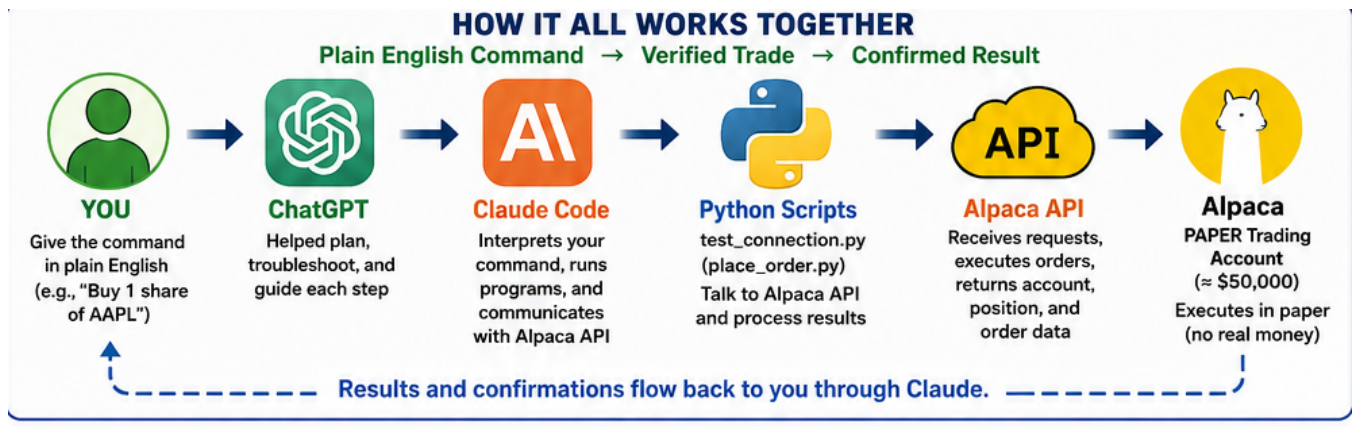
.env File

Why we used it: A configuration file that keeps connection settings and credentials separate from the Python source code.

How we used it: Stored the Alpaca endpoint, API key, and secret so the Python programs could connect to Alpaca.

HOW ALL THE PIECES WORKED TOGETHER

A pictorial view of the complete software chain



Forward flow: YOU -> ChatGPT -> Claude Code -> Python -> Alpaca API -> Alpaca PAPER account.

Return flow: Alpaca sends account, position, and order information back through the software chain so Claude can report the result to you.

KEY TAKEAWAY: No single program did everything. Each software component had a distinct job. Together they created a controlled environment where you could give ordinary-language instructions, have code communicate with a brokerage API, and verify every paper-trading result before moving on.