

DeckCraft

ALPHA

clone of Microsoft PowerPoint

Slides, themes, charts, tables, transitions and PDF handouts. You describe the deck; Claude builds it through the `deckcraft` MCP server and shows you a picture of every slide.

v0.7.0

Driven from Claude Code via MCP
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Alpha software. DeckCraft is a pre-1.0 ArtCraft app. Expect missing features, rough edges and the occasional crash; keep originals safe and let Claude work on copies.

25

MCP tools

234

engine commands

8

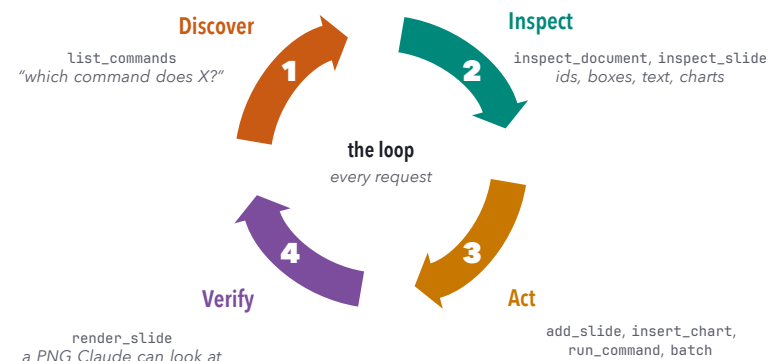
built-in themes

9

slide layouts

01 The idea in one picture

You never click a ribbon. You type a goal in Claude Code; Claude turns it into MCP tool calls; the server runs engine commands; and `render_slide` hands back a PNG so Claude (and you) can see the result before anything is saved.



i Check it is wired up

In Claude Code type `/mcp. deckcraft` should be *connected* with 25 tools. The deck lives inside the server process: nothing is on disk until Claude calls `save_presentation` or `export`, so always finish with “save it to ...”.

02 First five minutes

Every image on this page is real output from DeckCraft, captured through the MCP server while writing this guide. Paste the prompts as they are.

- 1 **Start a deck** “Use deckcraft: new deck with the Harbor theme and render slide 0.” You get a blank title slide back as a PNG. That proves the connection works.
- 2 **Give it an outline** Paste a few lines, top-level lines become slide titles, indented lines become bullets (storyboard 1).
- 3 **Add something visual** A chart from numbers you paste, or a SmartArt process diagram (storyboards 2 and 3).
- 4 **Look, then fix** Always end a request with “render it and check”. If text overflows, Claude shrinks it with `format.autofit`.
- 5 **Save** “Save as `~/talks/mcp-demo.pptx` and export a 3-per-page handout PDF.”

Storyboard 1: a deck from an outline

YOU, IN CLAUDE CODE

“Use deckcraft. New Harbor-theme deck titled “Why MCP?”. Then build slides from this outline:

*Enrollment is growing / MIS majors up 36% since 2023 / Capstone demand follows
How Claude drives DeckCraft / One protocol, 25 tools / Every button is a command id.
Render slides 0 and 1.”*

MCP CALLS CLAUDE MADE

- 1 `new_presentation` {"theme": "Harbor"}
- 2 `inspect_slide` index 0: finds the title placeholder ids (258, 259)
- 3 `batch` text.set title + subtitle; slide.fromOutline {"text": "Enrollment is growing\n\nMIS majors..."}
- 4 `render_slide` slide 0, then slide 1

WHAT CAME BACK

Slide 0: the Harbor title slide after `text.set`.

Slide 1: one outline line became a title, two indented lines became bullets.

Storyboard 2: numbers into a chart

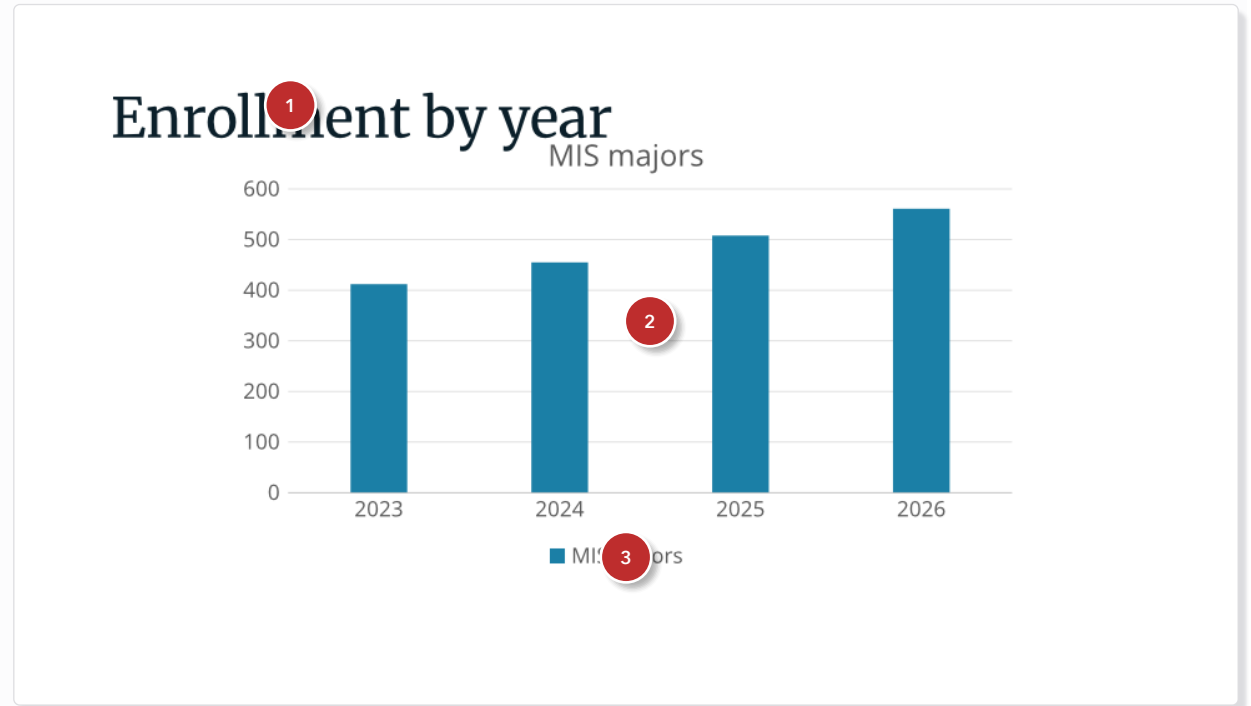
YOU, IN CLAUDE CODE

"Add a slide "Enrollment by year" with a column chart: 2023 412, 2024 455, 2025 508, 2026 561. Render it."

MCP CALLS CLAUDE MADE

- 1 **batch** `slide.new {"layout": "titleOnly", "title": "Enrollment by year"}`
- 2 **insert_chart** `{"type": "column", "categories": [...], "series": [{"name": "MIS majors", "values": [412, 455, 508, 561]}]}`
- 3 **render_slide** current slide

WHAT CAME BACK



- 1 Title placeholder from the `titleOnly` layout.
- 2 A native chart object: "make it a line chart" runs `chart.type`.
- 3 Legend at the bottom by default; "add data labels" runs `chart.options`.

Storyboard 3: a process diagram

YOU, IN CLAUDE CODE

"Add a slide "Pipeline" showing Collect, Clean, Train, Deploy as a process diagram."

MCP CALLS CLAUDE MADE

- 1 `run_command` `slide.new {"layout": "titleOnly", "title": "Pipeline"}`
- 2 `run_command` `insert.smartArt {"kind": "process", "items": ["Collect", "Clean", "Train", "Deploy"]}`
- 3 `render_slide` current slide

WHAT CAME BACK

Pipeline



SmartArt picks theme colours automatically. Hand-built alternative: `add_shape` with `preset chevron`, joined by `shape.connect`.

Prompts to explore with



"Use deckcraft: list the commands that contain "transition"."

See how Claude discovers commands with `list_commands`.



"Open ~/Downloads/any.pptx and describe it slide by slide."

`inspect_document` reads a real file; nothing is changed.



"Rebuild my last lecture deck in the Slate theme with a 400 ms fade on every slide, then render slide 3."

Theme, transitions, render, all in one go.

●●● warm-up ●●● real work ●●● stretch



"Put this CSV on slide 4 as a styled table with a header row and banded rows."

`insert_table` then `table.style`.



"Write 3 sentences of speaker notes for every slide and export a notes-pages PDF."

Claude reads each slide first, then writes.



"Audit ~/Downloads/pitch.pptx for accessibility and spelling, fix the alt text, save a new copy."

`review.accessibility,` `shape.altText,`
save under a new name.



"Make a 10-slide deck from this paper's abstract, one chart per key number, render every slide and tell me which ones overflow."

Stretch: Claude loops build, render, inspect, fix.

03 Goals → how

Each card is a prompt you can paste, the tools Claude reaches for, and the command ids doing the work.

Build a deck fast

1 Draft a whole deck from an outline

ASK CLAUDE

"New Harbor-theme deck from this outline (top lines = slide titles, indented = bullets). Save to ~/talks/intro.pptx."

TOOLS `new_presentation` → `run_command`
→ `save_presentation`

KEY `slide.fromOutline` `text`. Unindented lines become Title and Content slides, tab-indented lines their bullets.

2 Add a slide with a specific layout

ASK CLAUDE

"After slide 3, add a Two Content slide titled 'Before vs. after' with these bullets."

TOOLS `go_to_slide` → `add_slide`

KEY `layout`: title, titleAndContent, sectionHeader, twoContent, comparison, titleOnly, blank, contentWithCaption, pictureWithCaption; `title`; `body`.

3 Re-brand an existing deck

ASK CLAUDE

"Open ~/decks/q3.pptx, switch to the Slate theme, set accent1 to UNLV red, body font Open Sans; save as a new file."

TOOLS `open_presentation` → `batch`
→ `save_presentation`

KEY `design.theme` `name`; `design.colors` `colors`; `design.fonts` `major/minor`; `design.themes` lists all.

4 Write speaker notes for every slide

ASK CLAUDE

"Read each slide, write 3-4 sentences of speaker notes, then export a notes-pages PDF."

TOOLS `inspect_slide` → `run_command` → `export`

KEY `slide.notes` `text`, `index`; export `format` pdf, `layout` notes.

Add content

5 Turn numbers into a chart slide

ASK CLAUDE

"Add a slide "Enrollment by year" with a column chart of these numbers, data labels on, legend at the bottom."

TOOLS `add_slide` → `insert_chart` → `run_command`

KEY `type`, `categories`, `series`, `title`; then `chart.options` `legend b`, `dataLabels`. Later edits: `chart.data`, `chart.type`.

6 Paste a table and style it

ASK CLAUDE

"Put this results table on slide 5 under the title, header row on, banded rows."

TOOLS `insert_table` → `run_command`

KEY `rows`, `cols`, `data`, `x/y/w/h`; `table.style` (e.g. `medium2-accent1`), `table.options` `headerRow`, `bandedRows`.

7 Draw a process diagram

ASK CLAUDE

"Draw a 4-step pipeline (Collect, Clean, Train, Deploy) as chevrons joined by arrows on slide 6."

TOOLS `add_shape` → `run_command`

KEY `preset` `chevron`, `x/y/w/h`, `text`, `fill`; `shape.connect` `from`, `to`. Shortcut: `insert.smartArt` `kind` `process` (storyboard 3).

8 Place, crop and correct a picture

ASK CLAUDE

"Insert ~/Pictures/lab.jpg on the right half of slide 2, crop the top, brighten it, add alt text."

TOOLS `insert_picture` → `select` → `batch`

KEY `picture.crop` (`fractions` `0..1`), `picture.adjust` `brightness`, `shape.altText` `text`.

9 Tidy alignment and layering

ASK CLAUDE

"On slide 4, top-align the three icons, spread them evenly and send the backdrop to the back."

TOOLS `inspect_slide` → `select` → `batch`

KEY `arrange.align` `edge`, `to`; `arrange.distribute` `dir`; `arrange.sendToBack`, `arrange.group`, `shape.merge`.

10 Embed a video clip

ASK CLAUDE

"Insert ~/Videos/demo.mp4 full-width on slide 7, autoplay with a fade-in."

TOOLS `run_command`

KEY `insert.video` `path`, `rect`; `media.options` `autoplay`, `loop`, `fadeIn`, `trimStart`. H.264, HEVC, VP9, AV1.

Polish and present

11 Same transition on every slide

ASK CLAUDE

"Use a 400 ms Fade transition on all slides."

TOOLS `batch`

KEY `transition.set` `kind`, `duration` → `transition.applyAll`; `gallery`: `transition.list`.

12 Build bullets one at a time

ASK CLAUDE

"On slide 3, fade the body bullets in one paragraph per click."

TOOLS `inspect_slide` → `batch`

KEY `animation.add` `effect` `fade`, `start` `onClick`, `ids`; `animation.options` `textBuild` `byParagraph`.

13 Footer and slide numbers

ASK CLAUDE

"Add slide numbers and the footer "MIS 301 - Fall 2026" to every slide except the title."

TOOLS `run_command`

KEY `design.headerFooter` `slideNumber`, `footer`, `footerText`, `hideOnTitle`.

14 Sections, order and hidden slides**ASK CLAUDE**

"Group slides 1-4 as "Background", move the summary to the end, hide the backup slides."

TOOLS `batch`

KEY `section.add name, at; slide.move from, to; slide.hide index.`

Review, fix and export**15 Audit someone else's deck****ASK CLAUDE**

"Open ~/Downloads/pitch.pptx: summarise it slide by slide and list accessibility and spelling issues."

TOOLS `open_presentation` → `inspect_document`
→ `run_command`

KEY `review.accessibility`, `review.spelling` (built-in word list only); fix alt text with `shape.altText`.

16 Find-and-fix text across slides**ASK CLAUDE**

"Change every "FY25" to "FY26" throughout the deck."

TOOLS `inspect_slide` → `set_text`

KEY `set_text id, text` keeps first-run formatting; table cells: `text.set cell`.

● No global find/replace command exists; Claude edits shape by shape.

17 Handouts, notes pages or slide images**ASK CLAUDE**

"Export a 3-per-page handout PDF, and every slide as a 2x PNG into ~/out/slides/."

TOOLS `export` → `export`

KEY `layout slides/notes/handouts, perPage, dpi, textLayer`; images: `format png, all, scale`.

18 Convert formats or pull the outline**ASK CLAUDE**

"Convert this .pptx to .deckcraft and give me its plain-text outline."

TOOLS `open_presentation` → `save_presentation`
→ `export`

KEY Save format follows the extension; `export` format outline. Shell: `deckcraft-cli convert IN OUT`.

✓ Always add: "render it and check"

`render_slide` returns a PNG Claude can actually see (`scale 1 = 960 × 540`). Ask Claude to render after each change and fix overflow with `format.autofit (mode shrink)`, `format.size` or `shape.resize` before saving.

04 The command map (234 ids behind run_command)

Every ribbon button is a dotted command id. Darker tiles are bigger families. Ask Claude to “list deckcraft commands matching word” to open any tile.

39format.
bold, font, size, color, bullets,
numbering, paragraph, autofit

23shape.
insert, fill, line, effects, merge,
rotate, connect, altText,
freeform

17file.
new, open, save, saveAs, ex-
port, render, info, properties

17slide.
new, duplicate, delete, move,
hide, layout, notes, fromOut-
line

16table.
rows/columns, merge, split,
style, options, cellFill

15arrange.
align, distribute, group,
bringToFront, sendToBack,
nudge

15text.
set, get, insert, replace in a
shape or table cell

13insert.
textBox, picture, table, chart,
audio, video, wordArt, smar-
tArt

11edit.
undo, redo, copy, paste, se-
lect, duplicate

11animation.
add, remove, options, painter,
reorder

9media.
options, play, seek, info,
posterFrame, trim

8design.
theme, colors, fonts, back-
ground, slideSize, header-
Footer

5transition.
set, timing, applyAll, list

5section.
add, rename, move, remove

5comment.
add, reply, resolve, list

23other
picture, master, show, chart,
selection, view, review

05 Tool reference (all 25 MCP tools)

MCP tool	What it does
list_commands	All commands: id, label, menu place, shortcut, params, enabled. filter by substring.
run_command	Run any command id with JSON params.
batch	Run {command, params} in order; stops at first error unless keepGoing.
new_presentation	New deck (one title slide); theme, blank.
open_presentation	Open a .deckcraft or .pptx by path.
save_presentation	Save; format from the extension.
export	png/jpeg (one or all), pptx, deckcraft, outline, pdf (slides/notes/handouts).
inspect_document	Slides (index, id, title, layout, counts, transition, notes), sections, theme, layouts, media.
inspect_slide	One slide’s shapes: ids, kinds, boxes [x,y,w,h], text, fills, tables, charts, notes.
render_slide	Render a slide to PNG for visual checking.
add_slide	Slide after the current one: layout, title, body.
go_to_slide	Make slide index current.

MCP tool	What it does (cont.)
add_shape	Preset shape at <code>x,y,w,h</code> ; <code>text</code> , <code>fill</code> , <code>line</code> .
add_text_box	Text box; <code>size</code> , <code>color</code> , <code>align</code> ; height grows to fit.
set_text	Replace a shape's text by <code>id</code> ; leading tabs set bullet levels.
insert_picture	Picture from <code>path</code> or base64 <code>data</code> , optional box.
insert_table	<code>rows</code> × <code>cols</code> table with optional <code>data</code> .
insert_chart	Chart: <code>type</code> , <code>categories</code> , <code>series</code> , <code>title</code> .
select	Select shapes by <code>ids</code> for formatting commands.
pointer	Mouse events (down/drag/up/move/doubleclick) in slide points.
select_tool	Pick select, textBox, shape, pen, highlighter, eraser.
key	Press a key or shortcut (arrows, Enter, cmd+B...).
type_text	Type into the text being edited.
screenshot	Whole-window screenshot. <i>Desktop app only (--connect).</i>
call_app	Control-channel method (<code>ui.click</code> , <code>ui.set...</code>). <i>Desktop app only.</i>

06 Example tool calls

Storyboard 1 as one batch call (tool: batch)

```
{
  "commands": [
    {
      "command": "file.new",
      "params": {
        "theme": "Harbor"
      }
    },
    {
      "command": "slide.fromOutline",
      "params": {
        "text": "Enrollment is growing\n\tMIS majors up 36% since 2023\n\tCapstone demand follows"
      }
    },
    {
      "command": "design.headerFooter",
      "params": {
        "slideNumber": true,
        "footer": true,
        "footerText": "MIS 301",
        "hideOnTitle": true
      }
    },
    {
      "command": "transition.set",
      "params": {
        "kind": "fade",
        "duration": 400
      }
    },
    {
      "command": "transition.applyAll"
    },
    {
      "command": "file.save",
      "params": {
        "path": "~/talks/mcp-demo.pptx"
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Storyboard 2: the chart (tool: insert_chart)

```
{
  "type": "column",
  "title": "MIS majors",
  "categories": ["2023", "2024", "2025", "2026"],
  "series": [
    {
      "name": "MIS majors",
      "values": [412, 455, 508, 561]
    }
  ]
}
```

3-up handout PDF (tool: export)

```
{
  "path": "~/talks/mcp-demo-handout.pdf",
  "format": "pdf",
}
```

```
"layout": "handouts", "perPage": 3, "dpi": 200, "textLayer": true}
```

07 Limits and tips

! Alpha, and work on copies

README: 79% of PowerPoint's features by breadth (92% of core), "about 55% of the way" to replacing it. Saving rewrites a .pptx through DeckCraft's own model, and parts it cannot read are skipped on import, so always save to a *new* file name.

i Headless means invisible

The deck exists only in the server process until saved; a server restart loses it. Ask for `render_slide` checks and an explicit save path.

✓ Ids first, then format

Shape tools act on the *current* slide, so Claude calls `go_to_slide` first. Formatting needs ids from `inspect_slide`, then `select` (or `ids`) before `format.*`, `shape.fill`, `arrange.*`. In storyboard 1, `text.set` failed once with "no such shape" until slide 0 was current. That is the loop in action.

✓ Fonts, paths and the shell

DeckCraft uses bundled fonts or system fonts, so Microsoft-font decks may re-flow. Give absolute paths inside your home folder. Same verbs from the shell: `deckcraft-cli` commands `animation.`, `deckcraft-cli describe slide.fromOutline`, `deckcraft-cli render deck.pptx --all out/`.