

Yap — install & use it, step by step

A free, open-source, on-device dictation app for macOS. No technical background needed — follow this top to bottom.

WHAT IT IS

A free app that types for you when you talk

Yap sits quietly in your Mac's menu bar. Press a shortcut, say what you want to write, press the shortcut again — and the text appears wherever your cursor was, already typed out. That's the whole app.

WHAT IT DOES

Turns your voice into text, anywhere on your Mac

- Works in **any** app — Messages, Mail, Notes, Slack, a browser, a coding tool — anywhere you can normally type.
- Shows a live waveform and a running preview of the text while you're still talking.
- Processes everything **on your Mac** — your voice is never sent to the internet.
- Keeps a private, local history of everything you've dictated, in case you need to copy it again.

WHAT IT REPLACES

Skip the typing — and skip paying for the alternative

Most people either type everything by hand, or pay a monthly subscription for a dictation app (several popular ones charge \$10–20/month for something your Mac can now do on its own). Yap replaces both: it's faster than typing for anything longer than a sentence, and it costs nothing, forever, with no account required.

BEFORE YOU START

Check your macOS version

Yap needs **macOS 26 ("Tahoe") or later** — it relies on speech technology Apple only added in that version. If you're on an older version, Yap will not install.

- **To check:** click the Apple logo (top-left of your screen) → **About This Mac**. Your version is listed at the top. If it says anything below "26", go to **System Settings → General → Software Update** and update your Mac first.

STEP 1

Open Terminal and install Homebrew

Homebrew is a free, well-known tool that lets your Mac install apps with one line of text instead of clicking through a website. Most Mac power-user guides start here — you only ever set it up once. **If you already have Homebrew, skip to Step 2.**

1 Open Terminal

Press **⌘ + Space**, type "Terminal", press Enter. A plain black-and-white window will open — this is normal, it's just text commands.

2 Paste this line in and press Enter

```
/bin/bash -c "$(curl -fsSL https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Homebrew/install/HEAD/install.sh)"
```

You may be asked for your Mac's password (the one you log in with). Type it and press Enter — nothing will appear on screen as you type, that's normal.

3 Wait for it to finish

This can take a few minutes. When it's done, Terminal gives you back a normal prompt.

STEP 2

Install Yap

1 In the same Terminal window, paste this and press Enter

```
brew install --cask frigatehq/tap/yap
```

2 Wait for "Installation successful"

Yap is now in your Applications folder. You can close Terminal — you won't need it again.

Prefer clicking instead of Terminal? Download the **.dmg** file from the project's Releases page on GitHub instead, and drag Yap into Applications. Either method gives you the same app.

STEP 3

Open Yap for the first time

Go to your **Applications** folder (or search Yap with **⌘ + Space**) and open it. A small icon will appear in your menu bar at the top of the screen — that means it's running.

STEP 4

Grant permissions

Yap will ask for four permissions on first launch. Say yes to each — it explains why as it asks:

PERMISSION	WHY IT'S NEEDED
Microphone	To hear you
Speech Recognition	To turn your voice into text, on-device
Accessibility	To know which app you're typing into
Automation	To paste the result into that app

Accessibility needs one extra click: if it doesn't turn on by itself, go to **System Settings → Privacy & Security → Accessibility** and switch Yap on manually. This is an Apple requirement for any app that types on your behalf — it's not unique to Yap.

STEP 5

Use it

1 Click into any text field

Email, a chat, a doc, a caption box — anywhere you can normally type.

2 Press the shortcut — default is **⌘⇧D**

A small window with a live waveform appears near the bottom of your screen.

3 Talk

You'll see a running preview of the text as you speak.

4 Press the shortcut again

The text is typed straight into the field you were using. That's it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Made a mistake mid-recording? Press **Escape twice** to discard it and start over.
Want a different shortcut? You can rebind it in Yap's settings — a single tap of Right Shift is a popular choice. Every past dictation is saved locally in Yap so you can find and copy it again later.