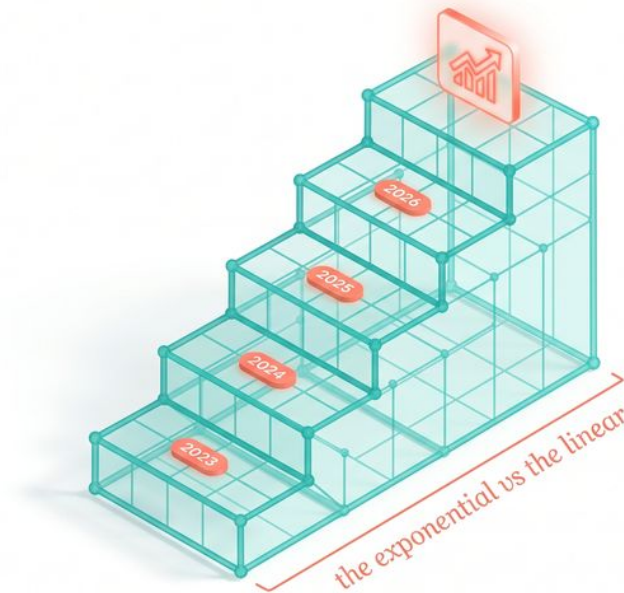


The Six Layers of the Claude Code Harness

Plus subagents as a delegation capability. The model is one layer of seven.



Six extension points

- **CLAUDE.md** — context loaded every session, lean and layered
- **Hooks** — event-triggered scripts for feedback and enforcement
- **Skills** — packaged expertise loaded on demand
- **Plugins** — bundles of skills, hooks, MCP configs for distribution
- **LSP** — symbol-level navigation for typed-language codebases
- **MCP servers** — connections to external tools and data

Plus one capability

- **Subagents** — isolated Claude instances with their own context, available anytime for delegated exploration or specialized review

Build order matters

- CLAUDE.md first because nothing else has anywhere to anchor
- Hooks next so the harness becomes self-improving
- Skills, then plugins, then LSP, then MCP last
- Teams that build MCP first end up with broad reach and poor judgment

From "Claude Code, Definitive Guide for 2026" — Chapter 1. Source: How Claude Code works in large codebases (Anthropic, May 14 2026).