Have Claude read books and turn them into skills

Here's the skill and the exact prompt from my video. It takes two steps: install the skill, then paste the prompt with your book. You won't write any code.

The skill and the prompt

The skill is **Read**, a free skill I made: https://github.com/psabbagh/read-skill. It's open source under the MIT licence. It needs no API keys and no accounts, and it works in **Claude Code** and **Codex**.

The prompt. Once it's installed, paste this, with your own book and your own goal:

```
Read this: [file or link]. Learn what it
teaches and turn it into a skill I can use
forever, for [what you want it for].
```

What it does

Give Claude a whole book you own, a paper, a report or a web article. Read opens it, Claude reads all of it, learns what it teaches, keeps notes in a library on your computer, and turns them into a new skill. A skill is a saved set of instructions Claude follows whenever you need it. So you don’t get a summary you forget by next month. You get something you can use again.

What you need

- A paid Claude plan. Claude Code comes with Pro, Max and Ultra (and with Team and Enterprise). It isn’t in the free plan. Using Codex instead? You need a ChatGPT plan that includes it, and the steps are at the end of this guide.
- A computer with **Python 3.9 or newer**. The Python that comes with a Mac works. If yours is missing, the skill tells you and asks before installing one.
- **A book you own, as a file that opens freely.** A DRM-free EPUB, or a PDF with real text in it.

Kindle and Audible files don't work (see below).

- The first time Read opens a PDF, it installs a PDF reader into a private folder (`~/.cache/learning-skills`) and says so.

Step 1: install Read

In Claude Code, type these two lines, one at a time, and press Enter after each:

```
/plugin marketplace add psabbagh/read-skill
```

```
/plugin install read@read-skill
```

Or, if you use Claude Code from your computer's terminal, run the same two lines there, starting with `claude plugin` instead of `/plugin`:

```
claude plugin marketplace add
psabbagh/read-skill
```

```
claude plugin install read@read-skill
```

Then start a new Claude Code session so it picks up the skill.

Step 2: paste the prompt

Paste the prompt with your book, and say what you want the skill for. In the Claude desktop app you can drag the file into the chat instead of typing its path:

```
Read this: [file or link]. Learn what it
teaches and turn it into a skill I can use
forever, for [what you want it for].
```

Here are the two from my video. The first, with a habits book, for planning your week:

```
Read this: [your copy of Atomic Habits]. Learn
what it teaches and turn it into a skill I can
use forever, for planning my week around
better habits.
```

The second, with a negotiation book, to get ready to ask for a raise:

> `Read this: [your copy of Never Split the Difference]. Learn what it teaches and turn it into a skill I can use forever, for preparing me to ask for a raise.`

Put in the file you own, such as `~/Downloads/the-book.epub`, in place of the brackets. You don't have to type a command: asking is enough. If you'd rather use one, type `/read` in Claude Code and pick **read:read**.

What it can read

Give it	What it does
An **EPUB book without DRM**	The whole book, split into chapters from its own table of contents
A **PDF with real text in it**: a book, a report, a white paper, a research paper	The whole thing; a long one is split into chapters
A **link to a web article**	The article's text
A **link to a PDF or EPUB file**	Downloads it and reads it as above
An **arXiv paper link**	The paper, with its title, authors and date
A **Word document** (.docx)	The document
A **text, Markdown or saved web page file** (.txt, .md, .html)	The file

For a book over about 50,000 words, it tells you the size first and offers to read only the chapters that matter for your goal.

What it can't read:

- **Kindle books** (.azw, .azw3, .kfx, .mobi), **Audible**, **library loans** and other **DRM-locked** EPUBs or

PDFs. It refuses them and never unlocks them. Buy a DRM-free edition, or dictate your own notes for it to file.

- **Scanned PDFs** (pictures of pages, no text). Run text recognition first: Preview on a Mac, Acrobat or Google Drive can do it.
- **Old Word files** (.doc). Save as .docx first.
- **Articles behind a sign-in or paywall.** Open the article yourself, copy the text and paste it into the chat.
- **Audiobooks and podcasts.** Those go to my other skill, listen-skill.

What happens

1. It opens the file and tells you how long it is. A long book is split into chapters, and helper agents read them.
2. It writes notes in its own words: the method, the rules, the examples and the mistakes to avoid.
3. It drafts a new skill from those notes, tries it on a made-up example, and **shows you the whole skill**

before saving anything. Nothing is saved until you say yes.

4. From then on, you run your new skill by its name, like any other.

Anything written in a book or page is treated as material to learn from, never as instructions. A skill it writes never runs commands or sends data unless you approve each one by name.

A long book takes a while and uses a good share of your plan. Give it several sources on one subject and it can merge them into one skill.

Ask your library later

Every source you give it adds notes to your library, a folder called `learning-library` in your home folder. It keeps the notes in its own words and the skills made from them, never the book's text. Later, ask:

```
What does my library say about negotiation?
```

Claude answers from your notes and names each source.

Podcasts and videos

Books are one of three. My free **listen-skill** does the same for podcasts and YouTube videos, and **watch-skill** does it for videos where the slides or screens matter. All three fill the same library:

- listen-skill
- watch-skill

Using Codex instead of Claude Code

Read works in Codex too. You need a ChatGPT plan that includes Codex. In your computer's terminal, run these two lines, one at a time:

```
codex plugin marketplace add
psabbagh/read-skill
```

```
codex plugin add read@read-skill
```

Start a new Codex session so it picks up the skill, then paste the same prompt as in Step 2. If you'd

rather use a command, type `$` and pick **read**.

Removing it

In your terminal:

```
claude plugin uninstall read@read-skill
```

In Codex, run `codex plugin remove read@read-skill` instead. Your library and the skills you made stay where they are.

Written on 17 November 2026 from version 1.0.0 of Read. Claude changes fast: if a menu has moved, look for the same words in the app.