

Desktop, mobile and troubleshooting

MolDraw Docs · LabCanvas · 4 pages · moldraw.com/docs/

Desktop app for Windows

Short answer: Click Install Windows at the top right of the editor, or open the download page, and run the installer. The desktop app works offline for drawing, cleanup, export and 3D. Sign in, PubChem search and AI chat need internet.

Install the app

- 1 In the editor, click **Install Windows** at the top right. In the Educational layout it is in the  menu. You can also open Download MolDraw for Windows.
- 2 Run the downloaded setup file.
- 3 If Windows shows "Windows protected your PC", click **More info**, then **Run anyway**.
- 4 Open MolDraw from the Start menu or the desktop shortcut.

The installer is for Windows 10 or later, on x64 and ARM64 PCs. Mac and Linux builds are not out yet. On those systems, use the editor in your browser at moldraw.com.

What works offline

Works offline	Needs internet
Drawing and editing	Sign in
Clean up and 3D clean up	PubChem search and IUPAC names from PubChem
Export to PNG, SVG, PDF, MOL and other formats	AI chat
3D viewer	Plugins that fetch online data
My designs and settings	Community

When you are offline, an **Offline** note shows in the app. A feature that needs the network tells you it needs an internet connection.

Updates

The app checks for updates when it starts, every 30 minutes and when the network comes back. When a new version is ready, a note says **A new version of MolDraw is ready**. Click **Reload** to use it now, or dismiss it to apply it next time you open MolDraw.

Files it opens

The installer links these file types to MolDraw. Double click one in Explorer and it opens in the app.

Extension	Type
<code>.mol</code> draw	MolDraw design
<code>.mol</code> , <code>.mdl</code>	MDL Molfile
<code>.sdf</code>	Structure data file
<code>.cdxml</code> , <code>.cdx</code>	ChemDraw structure
<code>.rxn</code>	MDL reaction
<code>.smi</code> , <code>.smiles</code>	SMILES
<code>.cml</code>	Chemical Markup Language
<code>.xyz</code>	XYZ coordinates

On x64 Windows, Explorer shows a picture of the structure as the file thumbnail for `.mol`draw , `.mol` , `.sdf` , `.rxn` and `.cdxml` files.

Save back to the file

Open a `.mol`draw file from Explorer, edit it, and press **Ctrl** + **S**. The app saves over the same file. A new design asks where to save the first time. **File**, **Save as** uses the normal Windows save dialog for every format. See Download and file formats.

Sign in with Google

Google does not allow sign in inside desktop apps. When you click **Continue with Google**, your web browser opens. Finish there, and the app returns signed in. See Sign in and accounts.

Pictures for Word and PowerPoint

PNG, SVG, JPEG and PDF files that MolDraw copies or downloads carry the full design. Paste or open one in MolDraw and the structure comes back editable. See MolDraw in Word and PowerPoint.

Tips

- If 3D is slow in the app, update your graphics driver. See Troubleshooting.
- Uninstalling the app keeps your designs and settings on the PC.

Questions and answers

Is the MolDraw desktop app free?

Yes. The Windows app is free, like the web editor.

Does MolDraw work offline?

Yes, in the Windows desktop app. Drawing, cleanup, export and 3D work offline. PubChem search, AI chat and sign in need internet.

Is there a MolDraw app for Mac or Linux?

Not yet. The top bar says Mac and Linux are coming soon. Use the web editor in your browser until then.

Can the desktop app open ChemDraw files?

Yes. It opens CDX and CDXML files, and you can double click them in Explorer.

Source: <https://www.moldraw.com/docs/devices/moldraw-desktop-app-for-windows-and-offline-use/>

Phone and tablet

Short answer: Open moldraw.com in your phone or tablet browser. Common tools sit in the left rail, and the Atom, Rings and More buttons at the bottom open sheets with the rest. Pinch to zoom, drag two fingers to pan, and tap with two fingers to undo.

On screens up to 1024 pixels wide, and on touch tablets, MolDraw uses a touch layout. Menus open as sheets that slide up from the bottom.

Where the tools are on a phone

Place	What it holds
Left rail	Select, single bond, double bond, chain, benzene, reaction arrow, text, plus charge and erase
Atom (bottom)	The element picker, charges, lone pairs, Add H and Show C. The sheet stays open, so you can pick an element, tap the canvas and pick again.
Rings (bottom)	Ring templates in tabs: Common , Aromatic , Heterocycles and More
More (bottom)	Text, reaction arrows, shapes, brackets, atom labels, orbitals, images and glassware. Also Selection... , File , Export , Actions , Search and Settings .
Gear (top bar)	Settings, as a full screen sheet
⋮ (top right)	Account, Theme , Language , File , Actions , Settings , Landscape view , Fit drawing and Clear canvas

Tap a bottom button again to close its sheet.

- 1 Tap a tool in the left rail, such as the single bond.
- 2 Tap or drag on the canvas to draw.
- 3 Tap **Atom** and pick an element. Tap an atom on the canvas to change it.
- 4 Tap **Rings**, pick a ring and tap the canvas to place it.
- 5 Open **More**, then **Export**, to download your drawing.

Touch gestures

Gesture	Action
Pinch	Zoom
Two finger drag	Pan the view
Two finger tap	Undo
Three finger tap	Redo
Long press on an atom, bond, selection or empty canvas	Quick action ring, such as Label , + charge , Duplicate , Delete or Paste
Long press on a tool icon	Opens that tool's options

While you drag a bond, ring or chain, a 2× magnifier shows above your finger, so your finger does not hide the target.

Touch settings

Open **Settings**, **Touch screen**:

- **One-finger pan on empty canvas**: with the Select tool, one finger on empty space pans. Off by default.
- **Magnifier while drawing**: the 2× loupe. On by default.

See Settings reference for every option.

Landscape view

Turn your phone sideways for more room. On a phone held upright, open  and tap **Landscape view** to rotate the editor. In landscape, the atoms sit on the left and the tool strip runs along the bottom.

Tablets and pens

Tablets use the same touch layout, with a wider canvas. A stylus works like a finger. The Smart Draw plugin turns pen sketches into structures.

Tips

- Use , **Fit drawing** to bring the whole drawing back into view.
- The command palette needs a keyboard. On a tablet with a keyboard, press **Ctrl** + **K**.
- Your work saves in the phone browser. Download a **.moldraw** file from **File** to keep a copy. See Save and open your work.
- For 3D on a phone, see Troubleshooting if you see a 3D warning.

Questions and answers

Does MolDraw work on iPhone and Android?

Yes. Open moldraw.com in the phone browser. MolDraw switches to a touch layout with bottom sheets.

How do I undo on a phone in MolDraw?

Tap the canvas with two fingers to undo. Tap with three fingers to redo.

How do I zoom in MolDraw on a tablet?

Pinch with two fingers to zoom. Drag with two fingers to move the view.

Where are Settings on a phone?

Tap the gear in the top bar, or open the More sheet at the bottom and tap Settings.

Source: <https://www.moldraw.com/docs/devices/how-to-use-moldraw-on-a-phone-or-tablet/>

Troubleshooting

Short answer: Most problems have a quick fix. Turn on graphics acceleration for 3D. Check the spelling or your connection when PubChem search fails, and check your API key for AI errors. Look in My designs for a lost drawing.

3D view and graphics

Symptom	Fix
A banner says graphics acceleration looks off, or 3D view needs hardware acceleration	In Chrome or Edge, paste <code>chrome://settings/system</code> in the address bar. Turn on Use graphics acceleration when available , click Relaunch , then reload MolDraw.
"3D view is unavailable on this device" on a phone or tablet	The device cannot start 3D in this browser. 2D drawing still works. Try another browser.
"3D view may be slow on this computer" in the desktop app	Update your graphics driver.
The editor is slow while the 3D panel is open	Click the 3D button to hide the panel when you do not need it. See 3D viewer.

Click **Dismiss** or **OK** to hide the banner for this session.

PubChem search fails

Message	Fix
Not found on PubChem	Check the spelling. Try another name, the CAS number or a SMILES string.
Could not reach PubChem	Check your internet connection. A school or company network may block PubChem. The desktop app needs internet for search.
Search timed out	PubChem is slow right now. Wait a moment and search again.
Could not parse SMILES	The text looks like SMILES but is not valid. Check brackets, ring numbers and charges.

See Search PubChem.

AI assistant errors

Message says	Fix
Add an API key to start chatting	Open Settings, AI and paste a key for your chat provider.
The provider did not accept the API key	Copy the key again from the provider and paste it. Check for extra spaces.
Rate limit or quota reached	Wait a minute and try again.
The model is not in this key's free tier	Pick a Flash model in Settings, AI, Model .
The account has no credit left	Add credit with the provider or switch to another provider.
The provider is busy, or could not be reached	Try again in a moment, and check your connection.

See AI providers and API keys.

A drawing is lost

Symptom	Fix
The canvas is empty after reload	Open My designs and click the card. Check the other tabs above the canvas too.
My designs is empty	Designs are stored per browser and per site address. Open the browser and address you used before. A private window does not keep designs.
You deleted part of a drawing	Press Ctrl + Z to undo.
You cleared browser data	Designs in the browser are gone. Open a .molDraw file you downloaded, or a PNG or SVG you exported from MolDraw. Those carry the design.

See Designs and tabs and Privacy and storage.

The canvas is slow

- Turn on graphics acceleration as above. Without it, the browser draws on the CPU.
- Hide the 3D panel with the **3D** button while you draw large structures.
- Split a big poster into several design tabs.

- Close other heavy browser tabs.

Export problems

Symptom	Fix
PNG looks blurry	Open Settings, General, Image resolution and pick high (4×). It applies to white PNG, JPEG and PDF.
Labels in SVG look the wrong size	Transparent PNG and SVG use Font size from Settings, Style. Change it there.
Copy failed after Copy SVG or Copy SMILES	The browser blocked the clipboard. Allow clipboard access for the site, or use Download instead.
Another program cannot open the file	Pick a format it reads, such as MOL or CDXML. See Download and file formats.

Other problems

Symptom	Fix
The editor looks odd after changing settings	Open Settings and click Reset to defaults in that section. See Settings reference.
Plugins cannot be installed	Sign in first. See Sign in and accounts.
An atom has an amber dot	It has too many bonds. See Check for valence errors.
The wrong language shows	Pick your language in the flag menu. See Change the language.

If none of this helps, click **Help** in the top bar to open the support chat, or post in Community.

Questions and answers

Why does MolDraw say graphics acceleration is off?

The browser draws without the graphics card. Turn on Use graphics acceleration when available in Chrome or Edge settings, relaunch and reload MolDraw.

Why does PubChem search say not found?

PubChem has no match for that text. Check the spelling, or search by CAS number or SMILES.

How do I get back a drawing I lost in MolDraw?

Open My designs and look for its card, or check the tabs above the canvas. If you cleared browser data, open a .mol draw file or a MolDraw PNG you saved.

Why are my exported PNG images blurry?

Raise Image resolution in Settings, General to high (4x). It applies to white PNG, JPEG and PDF exports.

Source: <https://www.mol draw.com/docs/devices/mol draw-troubleshooting-common-problems/>

Privacy and storage

Short answer: Your drawings, settings and AI keys are stored in your browser on this device. MolDraw sends data to a server only for features that need one. Examples are PubChem search, name lookup, AI chat, sign in and Community.

What stays in your browser

Data	Where	Notes
Drawings in My designs	Browser storage on this device	Separate for each browser and site address. Not synced.
Open tabs	Browser storage	Restored when you reload
Settings	Browser storage	See Settings reference
AI API keys and chat history	Browser storage	Keys are never sent to MolDraw
<code>.moldraw</code> files you save	Your computer	Under your control

Drawing, cleanup, analysis and export run in your browser. Your structure stays on your device for these.

WARNING

Clearing site data, using another browser or a private window can remove designs. Download a `.moldraw` file, or use **Download all** in My designs, for anything important.

What is sent to a server

Feature	What is sent	Sent to
PubChem search	The name, CAS number or text you type	PubChem
IUPAC name in Info	The SMILES of the selected structure	PubChem

Feature	What is sent	Sent to
AI chat	Your messages and the structure details the chat needs	The provider you picked: Gemini, Claude, OpenAI or DeepSeek
Plugins that fetch data	The structure or ID you look up	The plugin's data source, such as ChEMBL or the PDB
Sign in	Email and password, or your Google sign in	MolDraw account service
Account profile	Email, name, designation and avatar choice	MolDraw account service
Community	Posts, replies, votes and uploaded images	MolDraw, shown in public
Request feature	Your email, title, text and images	MolDraw team
Help chat	What you type in the support chat	MolDraw support

AI requests go straight from your browser to the provider with your own key. The provider's own privacy terms apply to that chat.

If you use **Continue with Google**, Google shares your name, email and profile picture address with MolDraw. MolDraw does not get access to your Gmail, Drive or contacts.

MolDraw also uses analytics for basic technical and usage data, such as browser and device type. The Privacy Policy lists every service.

Cloud and accounts

An account does not move your designs to the cloud today. Designs stay in this browser, signed in or not. Cloud designs are not open to all accounts yet.

The desktop app

The Windows app keeps designs and settings on your PC. They stay when you uninstall the app. Online features send the same data as the web editor.

Delete your data

- **Designs:** delete cards in My designs, or clear site data for moldraw.com in your browser.
- **AI keys:** open **Settings, AI** and click **Clear** next to a key.
- **Account and Community data:** open **Dashboard, Profile, Delete account**. This removes your sign in, profile, posts, comments, votes and feature requests. See Sign in and accounts.

Tips

- Do not post unpublished structures or private data in Community. Posts are public.
- For confidential work, avoid PubChem search and AI chat for that structure. Draw it by hand and keep it on your device.

Questions and answers

Does MolDraw upload my chemical structures?

No, not for drawing, analysis or export. A structure leaves your device only when you use PubChem name lookup, AI chat or an online plugin.

Where does MolDraw store my API key?

In your browser on this device. AI requests go straight from your browser to the provider you picked.

Are my MolDraw designs saved in the cloud?

Not today. Designs are saved in your browser, even when you are signed in. Download a .moldraw file as a backup.

Is MolDraw safe for unpublished research?

Drawing and export stay on your device. Avoid PubChem lookup, AI chat and Community posts for structures you must keep private.

Source: <https://www.moldraw.com/docs/devices/privacy-and-where-your-drawings-are-stored/>