Distill

User Manual

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Contents

Distill

Key Features

Getting Started

Installation · App Store vs. DMG Edition · Onboarding · Your First Rename

Renaming Files

Drag & Drop · Other Entry Points · Preview Diff · Supported File Types · Conflict Resolution

AI Providers

Provider Overview · Pricing & Credits · Setup · Setting up Vertex AI · Region & data processing · Vertex AI troubleshooting · Switching Providers

Your Own AI Instructions

Why your own instructions? · Examples · What instructions can and cannot do · Effect and billing

Rules & Templates

NameBuilder Rules · Templates · Separator & Date Format · Regex Rules

Folder Watching

Adding Folders · Processing Existing Files · Queue and Progress · Auto-Rename · Settings Are Kept

History

Rename History · Search and Filter · Reverting · Export

API & Automation

REST API · MCP Server · Finder Extension

Settings

General · AI Settings · API Settings · Status Bar · PCS Integration · Diagnostics · Updates

FAQ

Distill

User Manual — Version 1.0

Distill is a macOS app for AI-powered file renaming. Drop files or folders into the app — Distill extracts text from PDFs, images (OCR), Office documents, emails and media files. The AI identifies date, category, description and sender, and the configurable NameBuilder generates consistent, structured file names. All suggestions are shown in a diff preview before renaming.

Key Features

- **Pay-per-use, no subscription** — 100 credits free, then from €1.99 for 100 filenames
- **5 AI providers** — Distill Cloud (default, with credits) plus, in the DMG edition, Claude, OpenAI, Gemini, and Ollama (local) with your own API key
- **Bring your own key** — use your Anthropic, OpenAI, or Google key without spending Distill credits
- **8 file processors** — PDF, Image (OCR), Office, Email, HTML, RTF, Media, Generic
- **Configurable rules** — templates, date format, casing, separator, regex
- **Folder watching** — auto-rename new files in watched directories
- **REST API & MCP** — 41 HTTP endpoints and 9 MCP tools
- **Finder extension & Dock drop** — right-click → “Rename with Distill”, or drop files onto the Dock icon
- **Auto-update** — built-in “Check for Updates…” (DMG build)

Getting Started

Installation

Distill is available in two variants: as a **direct DMG download** from the store and as a **Mac App Store version**. With the DMG, drag Distill to your Applications folder after opening; the App Store version handles that for you. On first launch you first confirm the legal notices (Terms of Use and Privacy Policy); the onboarding assistant then opens. Once your 100 free credits have been credited, a welcome window also greets you with your current balance.

System requirements: macOS 15.0 (Sequoia) or later, Apple Silicon or Intel.

App Store vs. DMG Edition

Both variants share the same feature core. Due to Apple guidelines, payment, AI provider selection, and helper features differ:

Feature	App Store	DMG
AI providers	Distill Cloud only	Distill Cloud + Claude, OpenAI, Gemini, Ollama, Vertex AI
Payment	Apple In-App Purchase	Stripe (web browser)
Promo codes	—	redeemable via code entry
REST API	opt-in (Settings → API)	enabled by default
Auto-update	via the App Store	built-in (“Check for Updates…”)
Sandbox	fully sandboxed	—

AI credit pricing is identical in both variants.

Onboarding

The onboarding assistant walks you through the setup:

1. Choose an AI provider — Distill Cloud (default, 100 credits free); the DMG edition additionally offers Claude, OpenAI, Gemini, and Ollama. In the App Store edition this step does not appear:

   Distill Cloud is preset, and a welcome window shows your 100 free credits
2. Distill Cloud and Ollama require no API key. Optional: enter your own key for Claude/OpenAI/Gemini to save Distill credits
3. Done — you can start renaming files immediately

You can skip onboarding and configure the provider later under Settings → AI.

Your First Rename

1. Drag one or more files into the drop zone
2. Distill analyzes the files and shows suggestions in the diff preview
3. Review the suggestions — names can be edited before renaming
4. Click **Rename** to apply the changes

Folders are processed recursively. Previously renamed files are skipped automatically.

Renaming Files

Drag & Drop

Drag files or folders into the main window drop zone. Folders are scanned recursively — all supported files are queued for processing. Alternatively, use the **Files** or **Folder** buttons to open the file dialog.

Up to 4 files are processed concurrently. For larger batches a progress indicator shows the current state.

Other Entry Points

- **Dock icon:** drop files directly onto the Distill icon in the Dock — even when Distill is not running.
- **Finder context menu:** select files and use “Open with” → Distill, or the Finder extension (right-click → “Mit Distill umbenennen”).
- `distill://` **URL scheme:** e. g. from scripts or Shortcuts. Format: `distill://rename?paths=/path/file1.pdf,/path/file2.pdf`.
- **REST API:** programmatic access via `POST /v1/suggest` or `POST /v1/rename` (see “API & Automation”).

Preview Diff

For each file, Distill displays the original and suggested name side by side. Changes are color-highlighted. The AI analysis confidence is shown as a percentage.

Each row has a checkbox — only checked files are renamed; the footer bar shows the number of checked suggestions. Newly submitted files arrive checked. If more files arrive while the review list is open (via Dock drop, folder watching, or the API), they are appended instead of replacing the list. Such late suggestions arrive unchecked so they cannot hijack an ongoing review — check them as needed. Meanwhile the analysis continues visibly in a progress footer.

To edit a suggestion, turn off the diff view using the toggle (`</>` icon) in the footer bar — the suggested name then becomes an editable text field. Double-click a row or use the eye icon to open that file in Quick Look; the space bar previews the first file in the list.

Supported File Types

Processor	File Types	Extraction
PDF	.pdf	Text, metadata, optional OCR via PCS
Image	.jpg, .jpeg, .png, .heic, .heif, .tiff, .tif, .bmp, .gif, .webp	OCR text recognition, EXIF data
Office	.docx, .xlsx	Text content and document properties
Email	.eml	Subject, sender, date, body
HTML	.html, .htm, .xhtml	Page content and title
RTF	.rtf, .rtfd	Formatted text content
Media	.mp3, .mp4, .mov, ...	EXIF data, ID3 tags
Generic	all others	Filename, size, creation date

PowerPoint and Outlook files (.pptx, .msg) are handled by the generic processor.

Conflict Resolution

If a file with the suggested name already exists, Distill appends a sequential number (e.g. `Filename-2.pdf`). File timestamps (creation and modification date) are preserved when renaming.

AI Providers

Provider Overview

Provider	Cost	API Key	Local	Description
Distill Cloud	1 credit/file (100 free)	No	No	Default. 100 credits free, then from €1.99 for 100 filenames
Claude	Billed at Anthropic	Yes	No	Anthropic's Claude models, high analysis quality — no Distill credits
OpenAI	Billed at OpenAI	Yes	No	GPT-4o and other models — no Distill credits
Gemini	Billed at Google	Yes	No	Google's Gemini models — no Distill credits
Ollama	Free	No	Yes	Local LLMs (Llama, Mistral, etc.) — fully offline
Vertex AI	Directly with Google Cloud	No (service account)	No	Gemini through your own Google Cloud project — no Distill credits

Note: Claude, OpenAI, Gemini, and Ollama are only available in the DMG edition. The App Store edition uses Distill Cloud exclusively (see Getting Started, App Store vs. DMG Edition).

Pricing & Credits

Distill Cloud is the default provider. **On first launch you get 100 credits free** — 1 credit = 1 AI-generated filename. You can top up at any time:

- **€1.99** — 100 credits
- **€4.99** — 400 credits
- **€8.99** — 1,000 credits

No subscription, no sign-up. If you provide your own API key from Anthropic, OpenAI, or Google, no Distill credits are spent — you are billed directly at the AI provider. Ollama is always completely free.

Payment channel: the App Store edition uses Apple In-App Purchases (StoreKit2). The DMG edition opens a Stripe checkout page in the browser; the balance updates automatically once the purchase completes. Promo codes can only be redeemed in the DMG edition (Settings → AI → “Redeem Code”, shown while Distill Cloud is the active provider, or from the buy-credits window).

You can check the current balance any time:

- In the **status bar** via a sparkles icon with counter (orange at 5 credits or fewer)
- Under **Settings** → **AI** with the “Buy More” button and — DMG edition only — “Redeem Code”
- When the balance hits zero, a banner with a direct buy button appears in the drop zone

Setup

Open **Settings** → **AI**. Select the desired provider from the list. For your own cloud keys, enter the API key — keys are stored securely in the macOS Keychain.

For **Ollama**, Ollama must be installed locally with a loaded model. Configure the endpoint (default: `http://localhost:11434`) and the desired model.

Distill Cloud requires no configuration — credits are debited automatically.

Setting up Vertex AI

Vertex AI is Google’s enterprise offering for the Gemini models. Instead of an API key you store a **service account key** from your own Google Cloud project. Billing goes directly to Google; no Distill credits are used.

You need three things in the Google Cloud console:

1. A project with the `aiplatform.googleapis.com` API enabled
2. A service account holding the **Vertex AI User** role (`roles/aiplatform.user`)
3. A JSON key for that service account (“Keys” → “Add key”)

In Distill, open **Settings** → **AI**, pick **Vertex AI (Google Cloud)** and click **Choose JSON file**. That is all: Distill reads the file, validates the key right away and shows the service account’s email address as confirmation. The **project ID** is taken from the file — nothing to type by hand. The key is stored in the macOS keychain, not in the settings.

If the file is rejected, Distill says why — for instance because it is not a service account key, or because the private key is damaged. In that case simply download a fresh key in the console.

Region & data processing

The **Region** field defaults to `global`, which carries the full model catalogue. To keep processing inside the EU, enter a region — together with a model that exists there: `europe-west3` (Frankfurt) answers for `gemini-3.5-flash` and `gemini-2.5-flash`, while the other EU regions carry only the 2.5 series.

Region and model have to match, otherwise Distill reports “model is not available in region”. Two things to know: Google has announced the retirement of Gemini 2.5 — the series stops answering on 31 March 2027, so anyone staying in the EU should switch to `gemini-3.5-flash` before then. And a region’s catalogue changes; if a name is suddenly rejected, try the other model or go back to `global`.

What a region buys you: the analysis then runs in that data centre, which is not the case with `global`. Either way your own Google Cloud agreement and data processing terms apply, and Google does not use your content there for training.

Technically, in Vertex mode Distill talks to exactly two addresses: `aiplatform.googleapis.com` for the analysis — prefixed by the region, so for instance `europe-west3-aiplatform.googleapis.com` — and `oauth2.googleapis.com` for signing in. The sign-in step transmits only your service account name and a signature — no document content.

Vertex AI troubleshooting

Message	Cause and remedy
The service account is missing the “Vertex AI User” role	The key is valid but the account may not access Vertex. Add `roles/aiplatform.user` in the console.
Project was not found, or the Vertex AI API is not enabled there	Check the project ID and enable `aiplatform.googleapis.com` in the console. It takes a moment to take effect.
Model is not available in the region	Inside the EU use `europe-west3` with `gemini-3.5-flash` or `gemini-2.5-flash`; otherwise set the region to `global`.
Google rejected the key	The key was revoked or deleted in the console. Download a new JSON key and load it again.
Google rejected the sign-in because of the clock	The system clock is too far off. Switch to automatic time in System Settings; renaming works again without a restart.
Your Google quota is exhausted	Check the quota in the Google Cloud console or try again later.

Switching Providers

You can switch providers at any time. API keys remain in the Keychain, so switching does not require re-entering them. The provider can also be switched programmatically via the REST API.

Your Own AI Instructions

Why your own instructions?

Distill ships with rules that fit most documents: the description stays short, the category does not appear in it, the sender is reduced to a short name. Sometimes you want something different — then put a few sentences in your own words under **Settings → AI → Your own AI instructions**.

The instructions apply **globally, to every provider** and to every file you rename. They are limited to 1,000 characters; the counter below the field shows what is left.

Examples

- “Include the invoice number in the description.” — overrides the default rule that specifically prevents this
- “Always write the sender in capital letters.”
- “For bank statements the description should contain the month.”
- “Use the category vertrag for contracts, even for amendments.”
- “Write descriptions in English.”

Feel free to write full sentences. Keywords work too, but a clear sentence gets you the result you want more reliably.

An instruction that reverses one of the built-in rules — taking the invoice number into the description after all, say — does not always land on the first try. Be more specific in that case: “Start the description with the invoice number” works more reliably than “Include the invoice number”.

What instructions can and cannot do

Your instructions may shape the **text content**: how the description is phrased, how the sender is written, which category the AI picks, which language it writes in. They can also override the built-in style rules.

What cannot be changed is the **shape of the answer**. Which fields exist — date, category, description, sender, amount, invoice number — is fixed, and no instruction lifts that. This is deliberate: Distill assembles the filename from those fields afterwards, locally on your Mac.

Your **rules and templates** are equally untouched. Date format, separator, casing, prefix, maximum length and regex rules are applied afterwards, regardless of what the AI returned. If you do not want a field in the filename at all, the template is the right place for that — not the instruction.

Effect and billing

A changed instruction takes effect from the next rename onwards. The same file with a *different* instruction is a new job for Distill and is analyzed again — with Distill Cloud that costs another credit. The same file with an *unchanged*instruction does not.

If you clear the instructions again, Distill behaves exactly as before — the built-in rule set applies unchanged.

Rules & Templates

NameBuilder Rules

After AI analysis, the NameBuilder applies a chain of rules to the file name. The order is fixed: template substitution (including de-duplication of category and invoice number from the description) → date normalization → casing → prefix/suffix → umlauts → separator → sanitization → truncation to the maximum length → regex rules.

Rule	Description	Example
Date Format	Format of the detected date	`YYYYMMDD`, `DD.MM.YYYY`
Casing	Letter casing	lowercase (default), Title Case, UPPERCASE, As from AI
Separator	Separator between name parts	Space, underscore, hyphen
Umlauts	Keep or replace umlauts	ä → ae, ö → oe, ü → ue
Prefix/Suffix	Text before or after the name	Prefix: `SCAN_`
Max. length	Truncates the name to the configured character count (default 80, range 20–200)	80
Regex Rules	Regular expressions for find/replace	`\s+` → `_`

Templates

Templates define the file name structure using placeholders. Available tokens:

Token	Description
`{datum}`	Detected date in the configured format
`{kategorie}`	Document category from the configurable list
`{beschreibung}`	Brief content description
`{absender}`	Sender or issuer
`{betrag}`	Amount for invoices and receipts
`{rechnungsnummer}`	Invoice or receipt number, taken by the AI from the document or the original file name (e.g. RE-2026-0815). If the number also appears in the description, it is removed there automatically
`{sep}`	Inserts the character selected under Separator

Placeholder names are identical (German) in all language versions of the app.

The values for `{kategorie}` come from a configurable category list (Settings → Rules). By default it contains: rechnung, vertrag, brief, foto, beleg, angebot, protokoll, sonstiges. You can add or remove categories — the AI assigns each document to one category from this list.

Default template: `{datum}{sep}{absender}{sep}{beschreibung}{sep}{betrag}` — with the default rules (ISO date, underscore, lowercase, umlaut transliteration) this produces e.g. `2024-03-15_telekom_mobilfunk_maerz_49.99.pdf`. Empty tokens (e.g. `{betrag}` for non-invoices) and duplicate separators are removed automatically.

Token buttons in the template editor insert the chosen token at the current cursor position. You can arrange tokens freely, use them multiple times, or mix them with literal text.

Separator & Date Format

Choose separator and date format under Settings → Rules. Available separators are dash, underscore, dot, space, or a custom string (up to 5 characters). For the date format, choose between `YYYY-MM-DD`, `DD.MM.YYYY`, `MM-DD-YYYY`, `YYYYMMDD`, the short-year variants, a custom format string (tokens: `yyyy yy MM M dd d`), or no date. The live preview immediately shows the effect on a sample name.

Regex Rules

Regular expressions are applied after all other rules. Each rule consists of a search pattern and replacement text. Rules are executed in the configured order. Each rule can be enabled or disabled individually via its checkbox; the combined result of all rules is shown by the live preview in the

Name Format section. Four rules ship enabled by default, removing camera prefixes (`IMG_` , `DSC_` , `DCIM_`) and counter suffixes like `(2)` — you can disable or delete them at any time.

Folder Watching

Adding Folders

Switch to **Folders** in the sidebar and click **Add Folder**. Choose a directory for Distill to watch. New files in this folder are detected automatically.

If Distill cannot watch a folder — for example because access was denied under System Settings → Privacy & Security — a yellow warning icon appears next to the affected folder in the list. Clicking it opens the folder picker: select the same folder again to grant Distill access.

Processing Existing Files

If the folder already contains files that Distill has not renamed yet, Distill asks right after adding it whether to process them now. The same dialog lets you turn on Auto-Rename for the folder. With **New Files Only** the existing files stay as they are, and Distill only takes care of files that arrive from now on. With Distill Cloud, each processed file uses one AI credit — the dialog shows your current balance.

The **…** menu at the end of each folder row offers **Process Existing Files** at any time — for example after you turned on Auto-Rename later. Distill hands over every file that is not in the history yet: to the queue with Auto-Rename, otherwise as suggestions in the Files tab. The same menu opens the folder in Finder or stops watching it with **Remove Folder**; the files themselves stay untouched. Only files directly in the folder are processed, not those in subfolders.

Queue and Progress

What happens to detected files depends on the folder's Auto-Rename setting. Without Auto-Rename, Distill switches to the Files tab and adds the detected files there as rename suggestions — you review and confirm them just as after a drag & drop. With Auto-Rename, new files go into a queue and are processed automatically in the background.

While the queue is working, the Folders tab shows an overview below the folder list:

- **Detected**, **Processed** and **Remaining** with a progress bar — how far the current run has got
- **Renamed**, **Failed** and, where applicable, **Skipped** (files already renamed, or whose name already fit)
- the file currently being analyzed, with how long it has taken so far; if a file takes unusually long, the time turns orange

That is also where you pause and resume processing. Once the queue is empty, the overview shows **Processing complete** with the result until the next run starts or you dismiss it. Failed files can be expanded: Distill names the reason for each file, can show it in Finder, and queues it again with **Try Again**. The status bar at the bottom of the window also shows the state of automatic processing; clicking it opens the Folders tab.

Auto-Rename

When **Auto-Rename** is enabled for a folder, new files are automatically analyzed and renamed without manual confirmation. Renaming uses the currently configured rules and the active AI provider.

Auto-rename is especially useful for scan folders or download directories where new documents arrive regularly.

Distill reports the result via system notification — once per run, not for every file: for a single file it shows the old and new name, otherwise the number of renamed and failed files. macOS asks for notification permission on first launch.

Edge case: same name, different file. Distill remembers every rename in its history and skips files already listed there — this keeps an already named file from being sent to the AI again on every folder event. If you later drop a *different* file under the old name into the same folder, the same protection applies: Distill takes it for the one it already handled and leaves it alone.

In that case, delete the matching entry from the history — the file is then processed normally again. Via the REST API that is `DELETE /v1/history/{id}`.

Settings Are Kept

Distill stores watched folders, history and templates in a database of its own and additionally keeps a backup of the folder list in the app settings. If the database is ever lost, Distill sets up the watched folders again from this backup on the next launch.

History

Rename History

Every rename is saved with timestamp, original name, new name and the AI provider used (SwiftData). The history is accessible from the sidebar.

The history also powers duplicate detection: files with an active history entry are skipped automatically when processed again. After reverting, the file counts as new and will be suggested again on the next run.

Search and Filter

The search field searches both original and new file names. The **“Reverted only”** toggle in the bottom bar restricts the list to renames that have already been reverted; when it is off, all entries are shown. The number of visible entries is displayed next to it.

Reverting

Click **Revert** on a history entry to rename the file back to its original name. The entry is marked as reverted. This feature is also available via the REST API.

Reverting requires the file to still exist under its new name in its original location. If it has since been moved, deleted or renamed again, the entry cannot be reverted. If another file now occupies the old name, it is left untouched; Distill tells you why instead of overwriting it.

Reverting many renames at once

Since version 1.3.6 you can revert any number of renames in one pass, for example after changing your rules so you can rename the files again:

- **Selection:** Select several entries (click with ⇧ or ⌘, ⌘A for all) and choose **“Revert Selected (n)”** from the context menu.
- **Everything shown:** The **“Revert All Shown…”** button in the bottom bar reverts every entry the list currently displays. A search term narrows the set, so you can revert only the renames of one folder or one keyword.

Distill asks for confirmation and then works through the entries from the newest rename to the oldest. This also unwinds chains where a file was renamed several times. Afterwards a summary shows how many entries were reverted and how many were skipped, with a reason for each skipped entry (file missing, old name taken, already reverted). A skipped entry does not stop the others.

The summary offers to rename the reverted files right away with the current rules: **“Rename Automatically”** puts them in the queue and renames them without further confirmation; **“Review Suggestions”** adds them as suggestions in the Files tab, where you check each name before applying. Both cost one credit per file, or one call to your own AI provider. **“Close”** leaves the files under their original names.

Via the REST API, `POST /v1/revert` accepts `ids` or a date range `from` / `to` to revert several entries; the MCP tool `revert_rename` accepts `paths` or `from` / `to`.

Export

Use the **“Export”** menu in the bottom bar of the history view to save the history as CSV (semicolon-separated) or JSON. The export contains the entries currently displayed — an active search or the “Reverted only” toggle also narrows the export.

API & Automation

REST API

Distill provides a local REST API on port 43821 (configurable). In the DMG build it is enabled by default; in the App Store version it is opt-in under **Settings** → **API**for Apple guideline reasons. Optional token authentication. An interactive Swagger UI is available at `/v1/docs`, the OpenAPI spec at `/v1/openapi.json`.

System

Method	Endpoint	Description
GET	`/v1/health`	Server status
GET	`/v1/version`	App version
GET	`/v1/docs`	Swagger UI
GET	`/v1/openapi.json`	OpenAPI spec

Renaming

Method	Endpoint	Description
POST	`/v1/suggest`	Generate suggestions (creates jobs)
POST	`/v1/rename`	Suggest + apply in one step
POST	`/v1/revert`	Revert renames — `{id}` for one entry, `{ids}` or `{from, to}` for several (newest first; the response lists `reverted` and `skipped` with reasons)
POST	`/v1/analyze`	Extract metadata without renaming

Jobs (interactive workflow)

Workflow: `POST /v1/suggest` creates jobs → edit or approve each job → `POST /v1/jobs/apply`. If the review list already contains jobs (from the app or from earlier API calls), `POST /v1/suggest` appends the new suggestions instead of replacing the list. Jobs added this

way start unapproved (`approved: false`) and must be approved via `PUT /v1/jobs/{id}` before `POST /v1/jobs/apply` picks them up. Suggesting the same path again replaces the existing job; the response of `POST /v1/suggest` contains only the newly created suggestions.

Method	Endpoint	Description
GET	`/v1/jobs`	Fetch current suggestions
PUT	`/v1/jobs/{id}`	Edit/approve a job
POST	`/v1/jobs/apply`	Apply approved jobs
DELETE	`/v1/jobs`	Discard all jobs

History

Method	Endpoint	Description
GET	`/v1/history`	History (filters: `search` , `provider` , `from` , `to` , `limit`)
GET	`/v1/history/{id}`	Single entry
DELETE	`/v1/history/{id}`	Delete entry
DELETE	`/v1/history`	Clear the entire history

Queue (batch)

Method	Endpoint	Description
GET	`/v1/queue`	Status + pending files
POST	`/v1/queue`	Enqueue files
POST	`/v1/queue/pause`	Pause queue
POST	`/v1/queue/resume`	Resume queue
POST	`/v1/queue/retry`	Queue failed files again
DELETE	`/v1/queue`	Clear queue

Besides the pending files, `GET /v1/queue` returns the state of the current or last finished run: `state` (`idle` , `running` , `paused` , `finished`) and, under `progress` , the counters `detected` , `processed` , `remaining` , `renamed` , `failed` and `skipped` , the files in progress (`current`) and the failures with their reason (`failures`). A script can tell from this when Distill is done.

Configuration

Method	Endpoint	Description
GET / POST	`/v1/providers`	Read / switch provider
GET / POST	`/v1/settings`	Read / write settings
GET / POST	`/v1/rules`	Read / write rules
GET / POST	`/v1/templates`	List / create templates
PUT / DELETE	`/v1/templates/{name}`	Update / delete template
GET / POST	`/v1/watch`	Manage folder watching
PUT / DELETE	`/v1/watch/{id}`	Update / remove watched folder
POST	`/v1/watch/scan`	Process the existing files of a watched folder
GET / POST	`/v1/pcs`	Configure PCS integration
POST	`/v1/pcs/check`	Check PCS connection

`GET /v1/watch` returns, in addition to the stored target state (`active`), a `watching` field that indicates whether the watcher is actually running (e.g. `false` when folder access is denied). Changes made through the watch endpoints take effect immediately — even with no Distill window open.

`POST /v1/watch` also accepts `processExisting`: with `true`, Distill also processes the files already in the folder that have not been renamed yet. The response gives their number under `existing` — even without the flag, so a script can call `POST /v1/watch/scan` afterwards.

UI control

Method	Endpoint	Description
GET	`/v1/ui/state`	Current UI view
POST	`/v1/ui/navigate`	Switch tab
GET	`/v1/ui/screenshot`	Screenshot as PNG

MCP Server

The MCP server (`distill-mcp-server`) enables AI assistants like Claude to control Distill. In the DMG build it ships inside the app bundle and communicates with the app via REST. The App Store version does not include the MCP server. Configuration via env vars `DISTILL_API_PORT` and `DISTILL_API_TOKEN` .

13 MCP tools: `rename_files` , `suggest_names` , `revert_rename` , `get_rename_history` , `watch_folder` , `process_existing_files` , `queue_status` , `app_status` , `set_provider` , `get_rules` , `set_rules` , `search_manual` , `get_manual_section` .

Finder Extension

The FinderSync extension adds a **“Mit Distill umbenennen”** (Rename with Distill) entry to the Finder context menu. Selected files are passed directly to Distill. The extension must be enabled in System Settings under Extensions. Note: the menu entry currently appears in German regardless of system language.

Settings

General

- Auto-rename is enabled per folder on the Folders tab — not here in Settings
- **Preserve file timestamps** — Creation and modification dates are kept after renaming

The PCS integration settings are also located on this tab (see below).

AI Settings

Under **Settings** → **AI** you choose the active provider and configure API key and model. API keys are stored securely in the macOS Keychain. In the App Store build, only Distill Cloud is available; all other providers are available in the DMG version.

For Distill Cloud, this section also shows your current credit balance, with the **“Buy more”** button and (DMG build only) **“Redeem code”**.

API Settings

Under **Settings** → **API** you can enable the REST API server (enabled by default in the DMG build, opt-in in the App Store build), configure the port (default: 43821), and set an optional authentication token. A button opens the Swagger UI in your browser.

Status Bar

The status bar at the bottom of the window shows the active AI provider, a sparkles credit counter (Distill Cloud), folder-watch status, and the PCS connection state. All sections are clickable — the credit counter opens the paywall, the watch and history icons jump directly to the corresponding tab.

PCS Integration

If PDF Content Search is installed, Distill can use its OCR engine for improved text recognition on PDFs and images. You can find the PCS integration under Settings → General. It is enabled by default; Distill reaches PDF Content Search via the configurable port (default: 44477). A PCS token is only required if you have set one in PDF Content Search. Connection status is shown live.

Diagnostics

Distill keeps a record of what happens at startup, during folder watching, in the queue and while renaming. Use **Help → Save diagnostics…** or the button of the same name under Settings → General to write it to a text file you can attach to a support request.

It contains the app and system version, the database locations with their record counts, the active AI provider and the state of the REST API and the PCS integration. **API keys and tokens are not included** — only whether one is set.

Detailed diagnostics additionally records every single file. The log is capped at two files of one megabyte each; anything older is dropped.

Updates

The **DMG edition** ships with a built-in update mechanism (JKSUpdateKit). Use **Distill → Check for Updates…** from the app menu to check for new versions any time; if one is available it is suggested with release notes.

The **App Store edition** is updated via the Mac App Store.

FAQ

▼ Which file types are supported?

PDF, images (JPEG, PNG, TIFF, HEIC, WebP, BMP, GIF — with OCR and EXIF extraction), Office documents (Word .docx, Excel .xlsx), emails (EML), HTML, RTF, and audio/video files (metadata such as title, artist, duration). All other files — e.g. PowerPoint or Outlook MSG — are handled by the generic processor based on filename, size, and creation date.

▶ Are my files uploaded to the cloud?

▶ Can I undo a rename?

▶ How much does Distill cost?

▶ What is 1 credit?

▶ Do I need an API key?

▶ Can Distill watch folders automatically?

▶ How do the App Store and DMG editions differ?

▶ How do I update Distill?

▶ Can I redeem promo codes?

Contact & Support

For questions or issues, please contact support at: info@juergenkoller.software

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Distill — AI-powered file renaming for macOS.