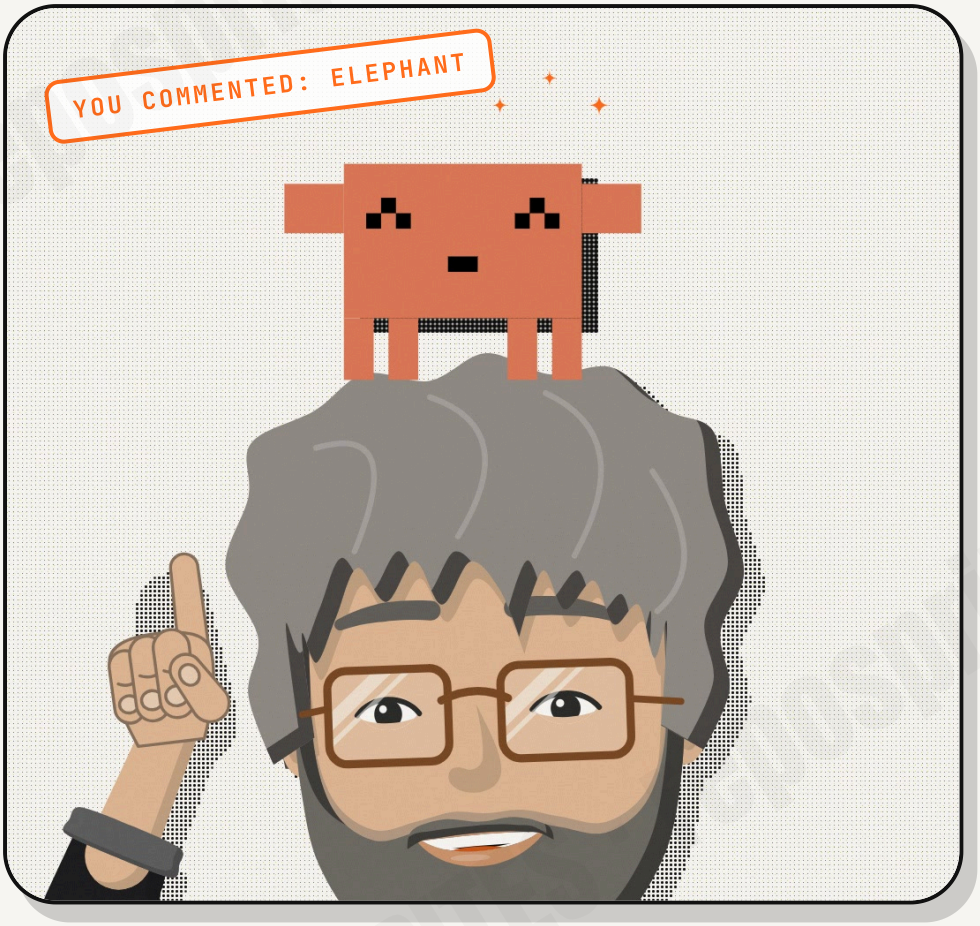
ELEPHANT

FREE GUIDE



The elephant plans, the *goldfish reviews*

The Elephant Goldfish Model for Claude Code, Codex and Antigravity: what it is, how to install it with two commands, the workflow step by step, prompts to copy, and how to use the idea without the plugin for websites, ads and content.

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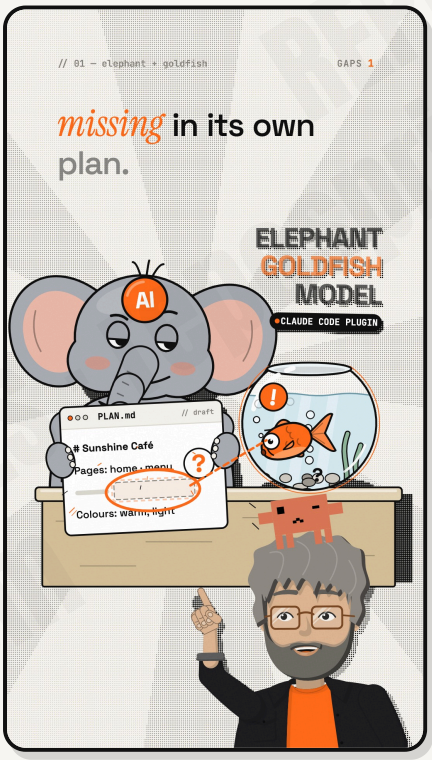
Independent: I have no connection to Google, and this isn't an ad. Everything here is based on my own research in the repo and the official docs.

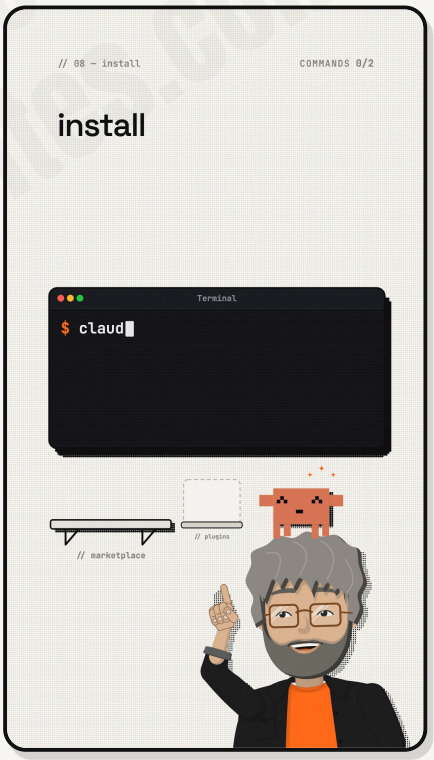
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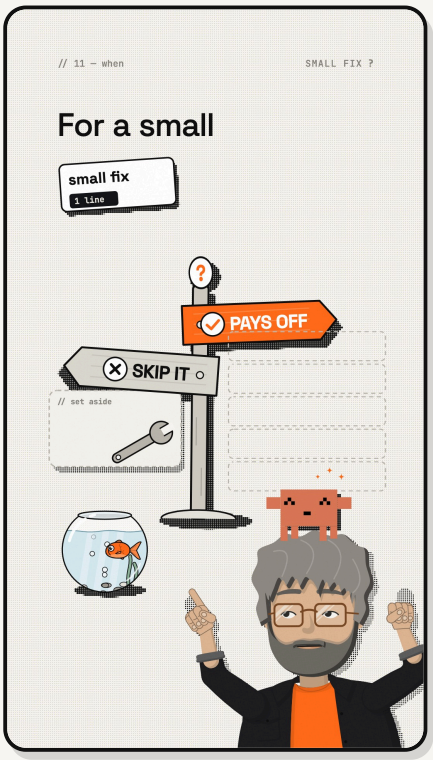
At a glance

QUESTION	IN SHORT
What is it?	An open-source plugin (Apache 2.0) that has your AI plan first, then has fresh sub-agents review the plan before anything gets built
Who made it?	Published in Google's GitHub (`google/elephant-goldfish-model`). The README says it is not an officially supported Google product
The idea	An essay by Dave Rensin, Distinguished Engineer at Google
Runs in	Claude Code, Codex, Antigravity (plus Claude Cowork and ChatGPT Work, according to the docs)
Cost	The plugin is free. It uses your existing plan or API costs, and a review starts several sub-agents, which uses noticeably more
When to use it	Whenever decisions have to be made before building. Not for a small, clear fix

// FROM THE VIDEO







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// 02

Elephant, goldfish, you: the three roles

The elephant is the AI you've been working with on your project for a long time. It knows your goals, your style and every decision. That's why it writes you a good, detailed plan.

The problem: because it knows everything, it fills the gaps in its head. It assumes things nobody ever wrote down, and it stops noticing what the plan is missing.

The goldfish is a fresh sub-agent with no memory. It only sees the plan and the sources the plan points to, not your conversation. It reads the plan like a stranger, and strangers spot gaps instantly. In Claude Code these reviewers even get read-only access: they can't change files or run commands.

You decide. You look at what the goldfish found, pick what matters and approve the plan. Only then does it get built.



THE MENTOR SAYS

The elephant plans, the goldfish review, you decide. That's the whole principle, and that's exactly why it works.

// 03

What the video doesn’t say

- **"From Google" is only half true.** The repo lives in Google's GitHub and was introduced on the Google Open Source Blog. But the README says plainly: not an officially supported Google product.
- **Built for software planning.** The docs talk about design documents and specs before code. Using it to plan websites, ads or carousels is a transfer of the idea, not an official feature. It still works, see "Without code".
- **Sub-agents are required.** If your tool can't start fresh sub-agents, EGM stops the review. Claude Code can.
- **Check your version.** For verified goldfish isolation, the plugin's Claude docs ask for Claude Code 2.1.271 or later. `claude --version` shows yours.
- **Lots of feedback is intentional.** The guide says, in short: the review gives a lot on purpose. Take what's relevant, ignore the rest.
- **Not a replacement for tests.** According to the README, a review replaces neither tests nor your own judgment.

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Installing in Claude Code

In the terminal, one after the other:

```
claude plugin marketplace add google/elephant-goldfish-model
claude plugin install egm@egm
```

Then start a **new session**. If the plugin isn't active:

```
claude plugin enable egm@egm
```

Codex:

```
codex plugin marketplace add google/elephant-goldfish-model
codex plugin add egm@egm
```

In Codex you pick the EGM skills in the skill picker instead of a slash command.

Antigravity CLI:

```
agy plugin install https://github.com/google/elephant-goldfish-model
```

Elephant Goldfish Model · google/elephant-goldfish-model

the repo with README, skills and install guide

github.com ↗

The plugin's Claude Code guide · docs/claude.md

commands, permissions, known notes

github.com ↗

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The workflow step by step

In Claude Code every command starts with `/egm:`.

1. **Test the idea:** `/egm:egm-brainstorm` plus your idea in one sentence. You clarify requirements and trade-offs, fresh reviewers challenge the idea, and you end up with `concepts_brief.md`.
2. **Write the plan:** `/egm:egm-draft`. The elephant turns the brief into the plan `design_draft.md`, section by section, and pauses after each section so you can give feedback.
3. **Review the plan:** `/egm:egm-review design_draft.md` (use the path the agent gives you). Several goldfish review the plan in stages: the big picture, whether it's understandable, the design, the fit with the code, and whether someone could build from it.
4. **Choose:** You go through the findings and decide what to change. The `egm-resolve` skill helps with that.
5. **Build:** Only when you approve the plan do you tell your agent to build it.

The other skills

SKILL	WHAT FOR
resolve	Go through review findings one by one and agree on changes
review-loop	Run your own group of reviewers for a specific task
bootstrap	Generate READMEs bottom-up for an existing project so the elephant finds its way
drift-report	Compare plans with the current code. The docs recommend once a week



THE MENTOR SAYS

You don't always have to do every step. Use the skill that's your bottleneck right now.

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Prompts to copy

Replace everything in [square brackets].

1. Start the brainstorm

```
/egm:egm-brainstorm [What I want to build, in one sentence]. Audience: [who]. Must do: [3 things]. Must not happen: [1–2 things]. Ask me the questions you need first.
```

2. Have the plan written

```
/egm:egm-draft Turn concepts_brief.md into a plan. Stop after each section and ask me before you continue. Include everything a stranger needs to know to build from it.
```

3. Start the review

```
/egm:egm-review [path to design_draft.md]
```

4. Sort the findings

```
Sort the review findings into three groups: must be fixed before building, should be fixed, can wait. One sentence per finding on why. Show me the three most important first.
```

5. Then build

```
The plan in [path] is approved. Build it exactly like this, section by section. If anything in the plan is missing or unclear, stop and ask me instead of guessing.
```

6. Compare after building

```
Compare what was built with the plan in [path]. List everything that differs and say for each point whether the plan or the result should change.
```

// 07

Without code: the principle for anything a stranger sees

Every customer is a goldfish. Someone scrolling Instagram, seeing your ad or landing on your site doesn't know you and has no context. That's exactly how a goldfish reviewer reads.

You can rebuild this without the plugin too, in Claude Code with sub-agents or in the Claude app with a **new chat**:

1. Have your "elephant" (the chat with all your context) write a short plan: goal, audience, content, structure, copy.
2. Copy **only the plan** into a new chat, with no history.
3. Give it a role with the prompt below.
4. Bring the findings back to the elephant, choose, and only then build.

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```
You have never seen this project. You are [someone scrolling Instagram / a visitor landing on this page for the first time / a skeptical buyer]. Read only the plan below. Tell me: 1) What don't you understand in the first 3 seconds? 2) Which claim don't you believe without proof? 3) What's missing for you to act? 4) What would you cut? Plan: [paste plan]
```

Reviewer roles worth using

ROLE	CHECKS
Scroller	Does it make sense in one second with the sound off?
First-time visitor	Is it clear what you offer and what the next step is?
Skeptic	Which claim is unproven or sounds too big?
Buyer	Price, process, risk: is anything missing for the decision?
Phone checker	Is every text readable on a phone, every button big enough?

// 08

Who gains what?

WHO	PROBLEM	WHAT YOU DO WITH EGM
Developers	The AI starts building and guesses what's missing	Plan, review, then code
Freelancers with a website	The site looks nice, but visitors don't get the offer	First-time visitor and buyer review the page plan
Creators	A carousel or reel only makes sense with context	Scroller and skeptic review the script
Agencies	Client projects go back and forth five times	The plan gets reviewed before the client sees it
Teams	Everyone has a different picture in mind	The approved plan is the shared picture

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// 09

Limits and risks

- **More usage:** A review starts several sub-agents in sequence and in parallel. That uses noticeably more of your limit or API budget.
- **Time:** For a small, clear fix it isn't worth it. The docs say so too.
- **Permissions:** The reviewers read files from the plugin folder. Claude Code asks for permission. Only allow the folders the docs name, not everything.
- **No replacement for tests and people:** The goldfish find gaps in the plan; they don't test the finished result.
- **New:** The first release came out in October 2026. Commands and workflows can change. Check the README before you start.

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Your first hour

- [ ] Check `claude --version` (2.1.271 or later)
- [ ] Run the two install commands, start a new session
- [ ] Pick something you actually want to build right now
- [ ] `/egm:egm-brainstorm` with one sentence about your idea
- [ ] `/egm:egm-draft` and give feedback after each section
- [ ] `/egm:egm-review` on the plan
- [ ] Pick the three most important findings and work them in
- [ ] Only then have it built
- [ ] Compare the result with the plan (prompt 6)

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My tip

Don't start with your biggest project. Pick something a stranger will see: a landing page, an offer page, a carousel. That's where you notice fastest how much the elephant takes for granted.

And if the plugin feels like too much: a new chat with only the plan is already a goldfish. The plugin's own guide recommends doing the workflow by hand a few times before automating it.

All links and commands checked on the official pages on November 3, 2026.

Essay by Dave Rensin · Google Research

the idea behind elephants and goldfish

research.google ↗

Introduction on the Google Open Source Blog

October 22, 2026, why the plugin exists

opensource.googleblog.com ↗



THE MENTOR SAYS

Your elephant knows too much. Give your plan to a goldfish before your customers see it.

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