✦ A FREE AI SETUP, MADE EASY

Colour grade a whole timeline with ~~one prompt.~~

Colour grading one video used to take me hours: adjusting every shot, matching every clip, again and again. Now I connect **Claude** to **DaVinci Resolve** with an MCP connector, give it one instruction, and it grades the whole timeline while I watch. Every box marked **My prompt** is one you can copy. Change the bits in [brackets] to fit your footage.

WHAT YOU GET

- **A graded timeline from one prompt:** Claude opens your project, goes through every clip and applies the grade inside Resolve. You don't click a single button.
- **Shots that match:** ask for one look across the whole timeline and Claude keeps every clip consistent.
- **Before and after:** keep your raw timeline untouched and get a graded copy next to it, ready for a split-screen.
- **A real Resolve project:** the grade lives in your normal Colour page nodes, so you can still tweak anything by hand.
- **Talk-to-edit:** "warmer", "less contrast", "match clip 4 to clip 2": plain-English follow-ups instead of wheels and curves.

The connector: DaVinci Resolve MCP by Samuel Gursky (github.com/samuelgursky/davinci-resolve-mcp), free and open source. It talks to Resolve through Resolve's own scripting API.

WHAT YOU NEED (ONE TIME)

- **Claude Code** or the **Claude desktop app**.
- **DaVinci Resolve Studio**, open and running. External scripting is a Studio feature, so the free version may not connect.
- **Python 3** and **git** on your computer.
- **A project with footage** already on a timeline.

STEP 1

Check your setup

Open your terminal and run these two lines:

IN YOUR TERMINAL

```
python3 --version
git --version
```

Then, in DaVinci Resolve: open **Preferences → System → General** and set **External scripting using** to **Local**. Restart Resolve. This one switch is what lets Claude in.

STEP 2

Install the connector

IN YOUR TERMINAL

```
git clone https://github.com/samuelgursky/davinci-resolve-mcp.git
cd davinci-resolve-mcp
python3 install.py
```

The installer finds your Resolve installation, sets up its own Python environment and adds the connector to your Claude setup.

Before you move on: keep Resolve open, then restart Claude. In Claude Code, type `/mcp` and check that the DaVinci Resolve server is listed and connected. The install steps change between versions, so if anything differs, follow the README on the GitHub page.

STEP 3

Grade your first timeline

Open your project in Resolve with the timeline you want graded. Then ask Claude in plain English:

MY PROMPT

Colour grade my timeline and show me. Open my current project in DaVinci Resolve, keep the original timeline untouched, make a copy called "[Graded]", and grade every clip on the copy: balance exposure and white balance, match the shots to each other, then give it a [clean, natural, slightly warm] look. Tell me what you did to each clip.

What Claude does, step by step:

1. Connects to Resolve and opens your current project and timeline.
2. Duplicates the timeline so your raw footage stays as it is.
3. Goes through every clip on the copy, one by one.
4. Applies the grade on the Colour page: balance first, then shot matching, then the look.
5. Reports back clip by clip, so you know exactly what changed.

Then look: flip between the two timelines in Resolve. Same footage, before and after.

STEP 4 · THE MOST IMPORTANT TIP

Tell Claude about your footage

Claude grades what it's told. One line about your camera and the look you want makes a bigger difference than anything else. Add whichever of these apply to your first prompt:

TELL CLAUDE	WHY IT MATTERS
Your camera and colour profile	“Sony S-Log3”, “iPhone Apple Log”, “Canon C-Log” or “normal phone video”. Log footage needs converting first; normal video doesn’t.
The look you want	“Natural and true to life”, “warm golden hour”, “teal and orange”, “moody, low saturation”. A reference film or creator helps too.
What must look right	“Keep skin tones natural”, “don’t crush the blacks”, “the product must stay its real colour”.
Which clips to skip	Screen recordings, graphics and titles shouldn’t be graded. Name the track or clips.

Always keep a copy: asking for a duplicate timeline (like in Step 3) means you can never lose your original, and you get your before-and-after for free.

STEP 5 · MY BUILD

How I graded the video in my reel

> MY PROMPT
>
> Colour grade my timeline and show me.

- **One instruction, the whole timeline:** Claude opened my project and graded every clip. I didn’t adjust a single shot or touch the software.
- **Raw vs graded:** the left side of my reel is the raw footage, the right side is the same clip after Claude’s grade.
- **Hours down to one prompt:** grading used to mean matching clip after clip by hand. This time I just watched it happen.

The connector drives Resolve’s real tools (nodes, colour corrections, LUTs), so every change shows up on the Colour page like a grade you made yourself.

Takeaway: Claude gets you 90% of the way in one go. For the last 10%, just tell it what looks off.

STEP 6

Keep talking to Claude

Once your timeline is graded, use whichever of these fits:

WHEN YOU WANT	MY PROMPT
Change the overall look	"Make the whole [Graded] timeline [warmer / cooler / more cinematic / less saturated], but keep skin tones natural."
Match one shot to another	"Clip [4] doesn't match clip [2]. Match its exposure, white balance and contrast to clip [2]."
Fix one problem clip	"Clip [7] is too dark and too blue. Fix just that clip and leave the rest alone."
Use a LUT	"Apply the [Rec.709 / my LUT name] LUT to every clip from my [camera], then balance each clip on top of it."
Start that clip over	"Reset the grade on clip [5] and grade it again, more subtle this time."

STEP 7

Show the before and after

The split-screen is what makes people stop scrolling. Two easy ways:

- **In Resolve:** on the Colour page, turn on the split-screen wipe to compare the graded clip with its original, and record your screen.
- **As a video:** put the raw clip and the graded clip side by side on a new timeline and export it. You can ask Claude to set it up:

> MY PROMPT
>
> Make a new timeline called "[Before After]" with clip [3] from my raw timeline on the left half and the same clip from [Graded] on the right half, then render it as a [vertical 1080×1920] MP4.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

Quick fixes

WHAT YOU SEE	DO THIS
Claude can't connect to Resolve	Open Resolve first, check **External scripting using** is set to **Local**, then restart Claude.
The DaVinci tools don't show up	Restart Claude after installing. In Claude Code, check `/mcp`. Run the installer again if it's missing.
It works in Studio but not the free version	External scripting is a Studio feature. Use DaVinci Resolve Studio.
The grade looks too strong	"Pull the whole grade back by half and keep it natural."
Log footage looks flat or grey	Tell Claude your camera and colour profile so it converts it first (see Step 4).

✦ @AMANJAIN.JPEG

All my prompts, in one place

Copy them in this order. Change the bits in [brackets] to fit your footage.

1. `python3 --version · git --version`
   Step 1, in your terminal, once. Then set Resolve's External scripting to Local
2. `git clone https://github.com/samuelgursky/davinci-resolve-mcp.git · cd davinci-resolve-mcp · python3 install.py`
   Step 2, install the connector, then restart Claude
3. Colour grade my timeline and show me. Open my current project in DaVinci Resolve, keep the original timeline untouched, make a copy called "[Graded]", and grade every clip on the copy: balance exposure and white balance, match the shots to each other, then give it a [clean, natural, slightly warm] look. Tell me what you did to each clip.
   Step 3, your first grade. Add your camera and look (Step 4)
4. Make the whole [Graded] timeline [warmer / cooler / more cinematic], but keep skin tones natural.
   Step 6, to change the look
5. Clip [4] doesn't match clip [2]. Match its exposure, white balance and contrast to clip [2].
   Step 6, to match shots
6. Clip [7] is too dark and too blue. Fix just that clip and leave the rest alone.
   Step 6, to fix one clip
7. Make a new timeline called "[Before After]" with clip [3] from my raw timeline on the left half and the same clip from [Graded] on the right half, then render it as a [vertical 1080×1920] MP4.
   Step 7, for your before and after

CREDITS

- **DaVinci Resolve MCP:** Samuel Gursky (github.com/samuelgursky/davinci-resolve-mcp), open source
- **DaVinci Resolve:** Blackmagic Design
- **Claude:** Anthropic
- **Before-and-after reel + grade:** made by me with Claude and the connector

Now go grade your first timeline tonight.

✦ If you try it, tag me, I'd love to see your before and after · @amanjain.jpeg · Questions? visualsmediaco@gmail.com