

CloudFinOpsKit

How to Run the CloudFinOpsKit AWS Tool — Beginner's Guide

Plain-English, step-by-step. No scripting needed. This tool scans your AWS account and produces a friendly HTML report of where you can save money. The scan is **read-only** — it never changes, creates, or deletes anything in your AWS.

Before you start

There is nothing to install by hand. The launcher installs both free prerequisites for you, using Windows' built-in `winget` :

#	Prerequisite	Who installs it
1	PowerShell 7	The launcher, if it isn't already there
2	AWS CLI v2	The tool, on first run — it asks first, then installs it

The one thing left to you is **signing in to AWS**, because your credentials are yours to create and this tool never handles or stores them. Open a terminal and run **one** of these:

`aws configure` — paste an access key for an IAM user (simplest), or

`aws sso login --profile your-profile` — if your company uses AWS IAM Identity Center (SSO).

If you skip this step the tool tells you exactly which command to run, rather than failing part-way through a scan.

If **winget** isn't available on your PC (rare on Windows 10/11, but it happens on locked-down builds), the tool says so and gives you the direct download links instead of failing silently. Nothing needs admin rights except the installers themselves.

What permissions do I need? The built-in **ReadOnlyAccess** policy is enough to find waste. To see real dollar figures (instead of list-price estimates), the account also needs **Cost Explorer** enabled and the user given Cost Explorer / Cost Optimization Hub / Budgets / CloudWatch read access. Ask whoever administers your AWS account if you're unsure.

Run it (the easy way)

1. **Extract the ZIP first.** Right-click `CloudFinOpsKit-AWS-Tool.zip` → **Extract All...** → pick any folder (Desktop or Documents is fine). Don't run it from *inside* the ZIP — Windows only unpacks the one file you click, and the tool needs its other files next to it.
2. Open the **extracted** folder.
3. **Double-click** `AwsFinOpsTool.cmd` .
4. Follow the on-screen prompts. In one go the tool will: - **install PowerShell 7** if it's missing, - **install the AWS CLI** if it's missing (it asks first), - use your existing AWS sign-in, - scan your enabled regions — **read-only**, - build the report and **open it in your browser automatically**.

That's it — one double-click from nothing installed to a finished report. The whole thing usually takes a couple of minutes.

One quirk worth knowing. If the tool had to install something, Windows sometimes doesn't make the new command visible to the window that's already open. The tool handles this by looking in the standard install location itself; if it still can't see it, it tells you to close the window and double-click again. That second run will be clean.

"Windows protected your PC" / "Unknown publisher"? That warning is normal for any script downloaded from the internet — it's safe, not an error. Click **More info** → **Run anyway**. To avoid it even the first time: right-click the downloaded ZIP → **Properties** → tick **Unblock** → **OK**, *before* extracting.

What you get

An interactive HTML report with: - **KPI cards** — last month's spend, number of findings, potential monthly and annual savings. - **FinOps Insights band** — an executive summary, a 0–100 maturity score, commitments, allocation readiness, an optimization waterfall, governance posture, and an in-browser unit-economics calculator. - **Cost Anomaly Watch band** — ~3 months of daily spend per service scanned for spikes, sustained increases, slow creep, brand-new spend sources, and Bedrock token anomalies. Green band = clean.

Want alerts in Teams/Slack? Add `-WebhookUrl "https://hooks.slack.com/..."` and High-severity anomalies get posted automatically (the full detection math is in `ANOMALY-METHODOLOGY.md` — no black box). - **Savings by category** and **Well-Architected improvement cards**. - A **filterable findings table** — every opportunity, what it costs, and the exact `aws` command to fix it.

A `findings_<timestamp>.json` file is saved next to the report (in the `output/` folder) — you can paste it straight into the **AWS FinOps Dashboard Pack** workbook to track savings over time.

Common questions

Is it safe? Yes — the scan is strictly read-only. It only *reads* cost and configuration data.

It says Cost Explorer isn't enabled. No problem — the tool falls back to region-accurate AWS list prices (each finding is labelled so you know which is which). For exact billed figures, enable Cost Explorer in the Billing console (free; data appears within ~24h) and re-run.

Can I scan just one region? Yes. From PowerShell: `.\Start-AwsCostAssessment.ps1 -Regions us-east-1`.

Can I use a specific profile? Yes: `.\Start-AwsCostAssessment.ps1 -Profile prod`.

Multiple accounts (an Organization)? Run it from your management/payer account — it discovers member accounts automatically.

What next — turn the report into a habit

One report finds savings. A **rhythm** banks them. The four rungs:

1. **Measure** — you just did this. Run it monthly.
2. **Optimise** — work the report's **Remediation plan** band, top-down; it's already ordered by payback.
3. **Govern** — take the action items into a review cadence (*AWS Cloud Cost Governance Framework*) and stop the waste returning (*Tagging & Naming Standard* + Tag Policies / SCPs).
4. **Prove ROI** — record what you *actually* realised in the **FinOps Dashboard Pack** workbook. Projected savings are a forecast; realised savings are what protects next year's budget.

Want to ask questions instead of reading a report?

The **FinOps Agent** runs this *same* engine — identical findings — and adds an AI analyst you can ask "*what should I do first?*" or "*why is this EBS volume costing \$120?*". It stays read-only in your own account, and it's **grounded**: it explains the numbers the engine measured and refuses to invent one, so every figure stays defensible in Cost Explorer. It also shows AWS and Azure in one dashboard.

Included with Pro and Agency — cloudfinopskit.com/agent.

Need a hand?

Ask **Jeff**, the assistant on the CloudFinOpsKit website. The included **Assessment-Tool-Reference** (PDF / Word) is the complete reference if you want the full detail on every module and parameter.

CloudFinOpsKit AWS Tool — read-only AWS cost assessment. Built on the AWS Well-Architected Framework, Cost Optimization Pillar.