

The Pay-As-You-Go AI Image Playbook

Cut AI image costs from 34 cents to 5 cents per generation with
Claude Code

01

Why Subscriptions Are the Wrong Default

Apps like Higgsfield are front-end wrappers around the same base models — Flux, Nano Banana, Kling — that pay-as-you-go aggregators expose directly. You're paying a monthly markup for a nicer interface, not better images, and that markup bills you even in months you barely generate anything.

💡 QUICK TIPS

- Do the math: a \$79/mo plan only pays off if you're consistently generating hundreds of images a month
- Cancel the subscription before you switch — don't run both at once

02

Pick One Aggregator to Start

Fal, Wavespeed, and Kie all give you direct, per-generation billing against hundreds of underlying models. You don't need all three on day one — pick based on what you're generating most.

💡 QUICK TIPS

- Fal — broadest model catalog, best for still images
- Wavespeed — strongest pricing once you start animating stills into video
- Kie — simplest all-around billing if you want one account to start

03

Set Up the Claude Code /generate Skill

A single Claude Code skill can route your prompts to whichever aggregator you've connected, so you never touch a raw API call. Once it's installed, you just describe the image or ad you want and Claude runs the generation for you.

PASTE THIS

```
/generate image ad for [your product] – [describe the look, audience, and platform]
```

QUICK TIPS

- Keep prompts specific: product, audience, and platform in one line generates better ads than a vague request

04

Go From Image to Video to Website in One Session

The same skill can hand an approved image off to a video model to animate it into a short ad, then scaffold a landing page around it — all in a single Claude Code session. Every file it produces saves locally, so you own the assets outright.

QUICK TIPS

- Approve the still image before animating it — video generations cost more per run
- Reuse the same Claude Code session for the landing page so branding stays consistent

05

Track Your Real Cost Per Generation

Pay-as-you-go pricing only pays off if you actually track it. Log what you spend per image and per video second for a month, then compare that total to what a subscription would have charged for the same output.

QUICK TIPS

- Budget roughly 5 cents per standard image and more per second of video
- Revisit the comparison every quarter as aggregator pricing changes

Ready to go deeper?

This playbook is the short version. Inside the hub you get the full build walkthroughs, the prompt library, and the systems I use to ship this in a weekend.

Join the Build →

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