YAML YAML Syntax Guide

YAML syntax reference: scalars, collections, anchors, multi-line strings, and comparison with JSON equivalents.

Basic Types

Type	YAML	JSON Equivalent
String	name: Alice	"name": "Alice"
Integer	age: 30	"age": 30
Float	price: 9.99	"price": 9.99
Boolean	active: true	"active": true
Null	value: null # or ~	"value": null
Sequence	- a - b - c	["a", "b", "c"]
Mapping	key: value	{"key": "value"}

Collections

```
# Block sequence
fruits:
  - apple
  - banana
  - cherry

# Inline sequence (flow style)
fruits: [apple, banana, cherry]

# Nested mapping
address:
  street: Main St
  city: Kyiv
  zip: 01001

# Inline mapping (flow style)
address: {street: Main St, city: Kyiv}
```

Multi-line Strings

Operator	Name	Behaviour
|	Literal block	Preserves newlines
>	Folded block	Newlines become spaces
|-	Literal, strip	No trailing newline
>-	Folded, strip	Folded, no trailing newline

Anchors & Aliases

```
# Define anchor
defaults: &defaults
  timeout: 30
  retries: 3

# Reference alias (merges defaults)
production:
  <<: *defaults
  host: prod.example.com

development:
  <<: *defaults
  host: localhost
```

Common Gotchas

- Indentation: MUST use spaces, NEVER tabs
- yes/no/on/off are parsed as booleans (quote if literal)
- 123 is integer; '123' is string — quote when in doubt
- Colons in strings: must quote — title: 'Error: not found'
- YAML 1.2 (default) fixes many YAML 1.1 quirks (octal, sexagesimal)
- Multiple documents in one file: separate with ---

```
# Define anchor
defaults: &defaults
  timeout: 30
  retries: 3
```